SYNOPSIS

As Alan Garth, prospector, is preparing to leave for his mining claim in the Far North, a plane lands at the airways emergency station. In it are Burton Ramill, millionaire mining magnate; his daughter, Lilith, and Vivian Huxby, pilot and mining engineer. Believing him to be only an ignorant prospector, the men offer to make an air trip to Garth's claim, although they refer to his samples of platinum-bearing ore as clearly "worthless." Lilith Ramill, product of the jazz age, plainly shows her contempt for Garth. Through Garth's guidance the plane soon reaches the claim site. Huxby and Ramill, after making several tests, assure Garth his claim is nearly valueless, but to "encourage" young prospectors they are willing to take a chance in investing a small amount. Sensing treachery ahead, Garth secretly removes a part from the plane's motor. Huxby and Lilith taunt Garth with his "gullibility," but their tone changes when they try to start the crippled plane. Returning to shore they try to force Garth to give up the missing part. Garth manages to set the monoplane afloat and the current carries it over falls. He points out to the snobbish trio that he is their only hope of guiding them out of the wilderness. Garth begins the work of preparing for the long journey. He insists that the others help. Ramill and his daughter must be hardened for the hardships ahead in their toilsome trek to the outpost on the Mackenzie. Returning from a long sleep in the woods, Garth finds the party has stolen the tea and sugar he has been saving for emergencies. He makes no objection, simply pointing out that he is accustomed to a strict meat diet, and that they are hurting only themselves. The work of getting ready for the trip continues. Huxby refuses to help, and works on the mining claim. The long journey begins. They reach the swamp, where a halt is called.

CHAPTER VI—Continued

—9—

The girl showed the whisky flask that he had left in her father's care. It was full of fly dope—spruce oil mixed with caribou tallow. She put the flask into her foxskin bag, along with the pouches of tea and salt.

Mr. Ramill was already walking off. Garth had made a tump-line for his pack. As he fitted the band across his forehead and stood up, rifle in hand, he glanced over his shoulder at the girl.

She turned and met his glance. Her lips curled in their old scornful smile. "What are you waiting for? Aren't we ever to get out of this beastly valley?"

He started off without any reply but with a glow of exultance under his outward show of indifference. Lilith Ramill thought she was about to escape from the Wild.

He had promised to guide them all to the Mackenzie. The probabilities were now in favor of even her father making it. The girl would go back to what she called civilization—to luxury and self-indulgence, to jazz and nightclubs—the vapid pursuit of sensation.

Yet a part of her would linger behind in this lost valley of the desolate subarctic Rockies. She had eaten of wild meat; she had smelled the tang of smoke from man's first friend, the camp fire. She had come face to face with the Primitive—and had lived it.

Fortunately, she had already been hard. Now she was fit. Under the smear of mosquito dope, the lines had smoothed from her face. The drawn look had disappeared. Instead of the scarlet of rouge, her lips were cherry red with healthy natural color. She had gained weight. Her body now looked lean rather than emaciated.

As Garth overtook the girl's father, he eyed him with a smaller yet no less genuine satisfaction. For every pound gained by the daughter, the father had been rid of three or more.

Garth himself swung briskly ahead. So far, nothing had been said to Huxby about the cache cave in the ice tunnel of the glacier stream. He knew only that the caribou carcasses had been put on ice.

The one thing of which Garth felt most certain regarding the engineer was that he would never give over trying to get the platinum placer until every possible scheme had been balked. Mr. Ramill might quit. He already possessed a fortune.

But Huxby was still a relatively poor man, and he had now made certain that the placer was worth at least a million dollars. Behind his polished front, he was no less unscrupulous than his millionaire partner, and he was absolutely calculating.

Among the cards that the future held in deal in the game, the ice might prove to be anything from a two-spot to an ace. If the ice should shift back to the valley, a cache full of meat would mean benefit the player who knew about it.

Lilith made the last climb to Garth without effort. But Huxby plodded up almost as winded as Mr. Ramill. He lowered from his shoulders the small but heavy load in his wolfskin knapsack. The chunks of frozen caribou meat beside the bulky blanket-wrapped bundle on Garth's packboard drew his displeased attention.

"You can't expect me to carry any of that venison. I'm no pack jack of the woods. Forty pounds is quite enough to suit me."

Garth hefted the wolfskin sack.

"My guess is forty-five. Figuring roughly, that makes forty-one troy pounds, or four, ninety-two troy ounces. Call it five hundred even. Platinum is around sixty dollars an ounce troy. The values of the alloy will average at least thirty. That gives us a total of say, fifteen thousand dollars. Not so bad for a few days' panning."

Huxby's face showed that this was no news to him. For all his cool self-control, his fingers clutched tight hold of the wolfskin as he drew it out of Garth's careless grasp.

Though Garth smiled at the engineer's betrayal of cupidity, he took note of it as an additional warning.

Garth's sideward glance caught an amused twinkle in Mr. Ramill's shrewd eyes. The hard training had put the millionaire in better health than he probably had enjoyed for many years. Also, his mind was bigger and better poised than that of his prospective son-in-law. He could smile with Garth over Huxby's obsession—smile and put aside all thought of the placer until in a position to take it from its discoverer.

Lilith saw the situation from a still different angle. She opened the wolfskin sack to peer inside. At sight of the nodules, she dropped the flap, with a look of disgust.

"Worth only fifteen thousand dollars," she bantered her fiance. "You've dug dirt all this time for a trifle like that, and lugged it all the way up here. Don't tell me you're so dumb that you plan to pack it for the weeks Alan says we'll need to get back to the Mackenzie!"

"With my blanket and the meat that's in it, I'm starting off with something like two hundred pounds," Garth said. "Game was scarce on the other side of the pass when I went out the other time. The weight of our metal in meat may be worth more than the fifteen thousand dollars. Let Huxby choose which he prefers to pack."

The engineer compromised by shoving one of the twenty-pound chunks of caribou meat in the sack, on top of the metal.

Garth hacked up to his boulder-perched pack, slipped the tump-line over his forehead, and started up the great cleft as if his 200-pound pack weighed no more than Huxby's 65 pounds of meat and metal.

He halted only when the other men were compelled to stop for breath. Huxby, though carrying a load only a third the weight of Garth's, had soon begun to strain and puff as hard as Mr. Ramill.

In places the pitch of the glacier became too steep for ordinary climbing. Garth had to draw his belt-ax and chop foot holds. The last of these steep rises was far up towards the head of the pass.

The remaining distance to the summit was not so steep, and there were no dangerous crevasses. Garth made the climb at a swinging pace. He was halfway down before he met Huxby plodding again upwards with Mr. Ramill. The engineer looked at him with cold-eyed rancor.

Mr. Ramill panted a wistful question: "Wh-when—do we—eat?"

"At the top. Take your time."

Lilith had chosen to wait for Garth down where he had left them all. His pack lay on the snow below the boulder upon which he had set it. She pointed her slender finger at the fallen bundle.

"I tried to find out if you were lying about the weight. I couldn't even lift one end. But you see how the top of the stone slopes. The beastly thing slid off."

"That's all right, Miss Ramill. Easy enough to up-end it again."

"Easy!" Her blue eyes glowed with an odd light. "You carried Dad back to camp that day. But it was down-hill. Now—to pack this frightful load all the way up here! Alan Garth, you're a man!"

"Well, it's a bit of a stiff pull-up," he admitted. "But we'll soon make the downslope. I left the knife on the knapsack. Go up and slice that caribou meat."

The girl whom her own father could not command met the order with a cheerful nod. She started briskly off up the gap. Garth's steady climbing brought him to the top of the pass a few paces behind Huxby and Mr. Ramill. Lilith was sprinkling salt on slices of the raw meat.

The pass was barren even of caribou moss. The meat had to be eaten cold or uncooked, or not at all. Six hours had passed since the party left the camp in the valley bottom. After the long, hard climb, even the girl was hungry enough to have eaten rawhide.

Less than half of the 20-pound chunk of caribou remained by the time even Mr. Ramill found he could eat no more.

All were so refreshed by the food and rest that no one objected when Garth gave the word to start on. There would be no more slogging up-hill, with lungs bellowsing for air. One would only have to hold back.

But that was the rub—the holding back. The south side of the pass was far steeper than the north, and there was no glacier to offer stretches of smooth footing. The bed of the sharply tilted cleft frequently dropped over small cliffs. Between these high ledges were slides of frost-shattered rocks. Patches of ice here and there made the footing doubly treacherous.

Garth himself was ready to quit when, in the twilight, they came down to where the steep pitch eased off on a small patch of tundra. He opened his pack and spread the blanket on the dry gravel in a hole under a pile of boulders.

At sight of the fat with the frozen caribou and smoked moose meat in the pack, Lilith at once gathered dry moss. This time the raw caribou flesh was seared over a fat-fed fire of the moss before being eaten. After the meal, Garth opened the gold-mounted cigar case and handed one of the Havanas to its owner.

Mr. Ramill hastily bit off the end and lighted the cigar in the flame of the fat and moss fire. As he put it to his lips he hesitated, then, with a perceptible effort he turned to offer it to his daughter.

"Uh—ladies first, my dear."

Lilith started to thrust out her hand. Something seemed to catch it. She glanced at Garth and stood up.

"You need it more than I do, Dad. Good night, everybody. I'm dog tired."

Her father and Huxby looked at each other in astonishment. Garth was less surprised. He smiled to himself as he put more moss and fat on the fire and coiled up beside it.

Before sunrise, Garth was again awake. He filled the little pot with ice and set it in the edge of the rebuilt fire, then began cooking

"Alan Garth, You're a Man."

caribou meat. The others wakened almost too stiff to move. But all managed another big meal of the meat. To top it off, Garth had Lilith boil a little tea in the water from the melted ice.

After the hot drink, even Mr. Ramill managed to hobble down the now fairly easy slope. The exercise gradually warmed and relaxed stiffened muscles.

The end of a long day's hike at last brought the party down the miles of tundra slopes to the edge of timberline.

Garth predicted they would reach canoe water on the seventh day. But during that morning Mr. Ramill turned an ankle. Even after much soaking in a cold spring and tight bandaging by Garth, the sprain held the millionaire down to a slow hobble. An aspen staff enabled him to travel slowly until the noon meal. After that the pain overcame him. He refused to move.

Garth looked doubtfully at the none too large supply of food that was left. His pack now weighed little more than the platinum alloy in Huxby's wolfskin knapsack.

He had allowed everyone to eat without stint. That had been necessary in order to keep up the strength of the chechahcos. But, as he had foretold, the country was barren of game. There was none too much meat left in his pack.

"If you can't carry on, Mr. Ramill, you'll have to stay here and keep bathing your ankle in this rill," he said. "We're too short of food, though, to lose any time. The stand of birch at the stream is so small that I'll need a full three days to build our canoe. The three of you follow down this brook as soon as you can."

When he picked up a few pieces of meat and his rifle, Huxby spoke: "I should have the gun to protect Miss Ramill."

"There's nothing here to attack you," Garth replied. "Just possibly, I may find game at the stream."

"Could another pair of hands be helpful in making the canoe?" Lilith asked.

"Well—yes."

The girl looked at Huxby. He did not speak or move. She stood up. "Dad, you'll be all right with Vivian. I am going to help Alan."

Her father shook his head. "You should stay here with me. Let Vivian go."

Huxby rose, frowning. He looked at Garth with cold rancor. "I see no need for anyone to go. I certainly cannot permit my fiancee to accompany you."

"She might have helped. You'd be only a hindrance," Garth replied.

He swung away at a rapid pace. But behind him he heard the girl speak sharply: "Don't be silly, Vivian. Get out of my way."

After that came a quick patter of moccasins. Garth kept on for some distance as if he did not hear the sound. Then he halted behind an alder thicket to face the girl. She was so close behind that she almost ran into him. He smiled into her eager eyes.

"This is a happy surprise, Lilith."

Her eyelids sank, and her cheeks crimsoned under their coat of pitch-and-grease mosquito dope. "You needn't fancy I'm running after you. It's—it's only because I want to get out of this beastly North country of yours—and be rid of you, too!"

"So, that's it. Well, you're a good hater, but you're a real sport. You're game. Tag along, if you wish."

At the edge of the swamp he stopped beside a game trail. Lilith came up beside him, breathing deeply from the long and rapid walk. He pointed to the big water-filled hoof prints in the mud.

"We may be in luck. Moose passed here yesterday—the water is clear in the tracks. They may not have gone too far. Stay here, or be quiet."

An uptossed leaf showed that the wind was in his favor. He started along the trail. The tracks were still a day old when they turned out into the muskeg toward a lily pool.

Garth skirted on along the border of the swamp to where a bend of the stream twisted in close to dry ground. Here was the grove of birch of which he had spoken. He pointed to the fringe of willows below the birch.

Those bitten twigs—still white. They've been eaten off less than an hour ago. Stay here."

After another test of the wind, he went ahead alone, silent as a lynx. Luck was with him. As he rounded the bend he saw the immense antlers of an old bull moose rise above the willows on the bank. Before the startled beast could plunge into the water Garth dropped him with a bullet through the brain.

At the crash of the shot, three moose cows with calves broke cover beyond the bull. The distance was considerable and brush obscured Garth's aim. He had to shoot four times to bring down one cow and her calf. But that was enough.

His shout brought Lilith on the run. She looked delightedly at the bull. "Oh, no chance now of starving!"

"That's not all," he said. "I can build a hide canoe in two days; a better one than can be made from those small birches."

When, a day later, Mr. Ramill came limping after Huxby to the smoke-marked camp, Lilith was still hanging moose meat on alder poles over the smudge-fire.

Huxby dropped his full-stuffed knapsack and wiped his sweaty forehead with the back of his hand.

"Pah! To think I've lugged all that old meat, and he's killed again. Why didn't he come back and tell me?"

The girl gave him an odd glance. "We've been too busy, old dear. Where's the blanket?"

"I couldn't pack everything. If I'd known, I could have left this confounded smoked moose and brought the blanket instead."

"Why not have left your load of metal? Didn't you consider that Dad and I will get far more than fifteen thousand dollars' worth of comfort out of that blanket?"

His lips tightened. "Sorry, darling. The thought of a common dirty blanket as against all the platinum—I did not even think of it. Now of course I realize. But it's too late."

"Yes," she agreed, "it's too late. Dad, you were a real sport not to wait for Alan to come back and carry you."

The millionaire had slumped down to rub his swollen ankle. He looked up at Huxby, with a bantering smile. "We couldn't permit our girl to elope with a wooden vagabond, could we, Vivian?"

The engineer did not smile. His face went blank. "Where is that roughneck, Lilith?"

"Down in the willows, working hard for us. Won't you be glad when we're rid of him?"

"Won't you?"

"Well, I'm not so sure as I was. At present he is far more agreeable company than you are."

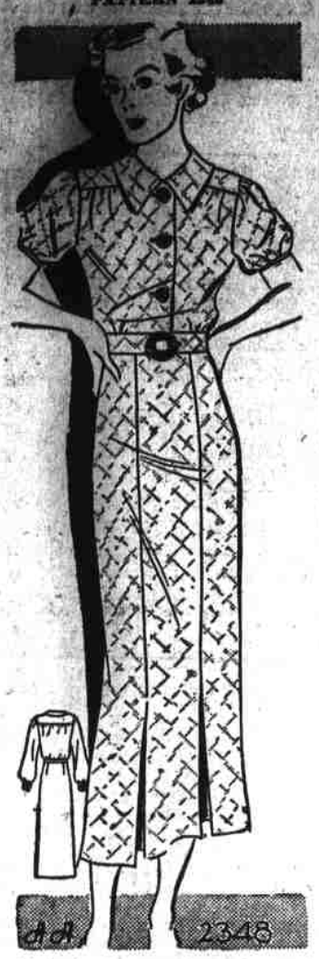
Huxby stiffened and went off towards the willows without any reply. Mr. Ramill peered up shrewdly at his daughter.

"That was pretty hard even from you, Lilith. Try to keep in mind how matters will stand as soon as we get out of this damnable mess."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

A GLEAMING SATIN SHIRTWAIST FROCK TO LEND VARIETY

PATTERN 2348



Just about now, when everyone is getting a wee bit tired of seeing the "usual" type of shirtwaist frock scattered all over town—and country too!—fashion peps us all up with delicious, cool-looking satins of every pastel hue. These satins need soft handling though. Ingenious mind and nimble fingers fashioned this one for you with soft bodice fullness, fetching puff sleeves and delightfully young collar. Long sleeves are included, for you'll want this version in your Fall wardrobe, too. If you haven't succumbed to the charm of satin, choose pastel sport silk, or novelty checked cotton. Crystal or contrasting buttons and buckle.

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Fearlessly

Some histories of these United States skate right over the controversial questions like a skater on thin ice.

Guard Gives Impressions in Brief of 7 Presidents

Richard L. Jervis, the man who walked at the side of seven Presidents as chief of the secret service White House detail, recently gave his thumbnail impressions of them.

They follow:

Theodore Roosevelt—"He loved a good, clean fight. He was truly a great American."

William Howard Taft—"He was the greatest traveler of all the Presidents."

Woodrow Wilson—"He was the most regal of all; he made kings look like commoners."

Warren Harding—"He has been cruelly slandered. He was a good man."

Calvin Coolidge—"Strangely enough, he had the greatest sense of humor."

Herbert Hoover—"He perhaps was the most studious; he charted with a blue print."

Franklin D. Roosevelt—"He has the happiest, gayest disposition of any President."

Bright Colors Keep the Children on Safe Side

Dress children in bright-colored outer garments in wintertime for their own safety, says the bureau of home economics of the United States Department of Agriculture. While children should not play in city thoroughfares or even on country highways, because of automobiles, there are occasions when they have to cross streets or when they try to retrieve balls or other playthings from the path of traffic. They must be taught caution, but they can be further protected by dressing them in bright, conspicuous colors which motorists can see from a distance.

Children like to wear gay colors. Those of nursery-school age choose them by preference. Those a little older are governed to some extent by what others wear, so it may be necessary for mothers to get together and "create" a vogue for vivid colors in outer garments.

Interference

"Are you still writing profound articles?" asked the lady with a roll of manuscript.

"No," answered Miss Cayenne, "I found it interfered with my more serious duties. You can't spill ink and pour tea simultaneously."

Hawaii Discovery Made Possible by Franklin

To Benjamin Franklin is due "safe conduct" that enabled the discovery of Hawaii, today one of the most powerful units of America's national defense in the west.

In the Archives of Hawaii, on the grounds of the former royal palace in Honolulu, reposes a photostatic copy of a letter written from France in 1779 by Franklin, who was then minister plenipotentiary from the United States to the Court of France.

The document is addressed to "all captains and commanders of armed ships acting by commission from the congress of the United States of America now in war with Great Britain," and explains that as Captain Cook's expedition had been fitted out before America and Great Britain were at war, the great navigator and explorer should be given a safe conduct and not considered as an enemy.

Br-r-r; That's Cold

The lowest temperature so far obtained chemically is forty-four ten thousandths of a degree on the Kelvin scale, which starts at absolute zero, or approximaetly 459.6 degrees below zero on the Fahrenheit scale, according to the American Chemical society.

HIGH NOTES

"How did your daughter come to take up singing?"

"She found it pleasanter work than helping mother with the dishes."

Just the Man

Hostess—Are you really a bank examiner, Mr. Tompkins?

Mr. Tompkins—Yes, madam, I happen to be.

Hostess—Then I hope you will have time to examine the baby's bank. No matter how much we shake it, nothing ever comes out of it.

Print