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CHAPTER I.

THE REMITTANCE MAN.

The idea came to Big Chris, as he stood on the beach gazing out through the narrow, darkened harbor mouth into the night and the storm, that this world of his was an outcast world, a land that God had cursed and forsaken, a pariah land outlawed from the kindly, sun-kissed world where the races moved and teemed. Because it has had home, because its grim, strange spirit of desolation and death had long ago got hold of him, it was as if he were a pariah, too, God-cursed and God-forsaken, scarcely less so than the Remittance Man, with whom he had just become acquainted and who now lay in a drunken stupor in one of the tumble-down shacks in the native village behind him.

Such ideas did not haunt him often. He was huge and blond and rugged—not a dreamer in any sense except as all men of the northern races, knowing life to its cruel depths, are given to dream—and his last name was Larson. His job, that of a web foreman in connection with the fishing that was the one industry in these far, forsaken waters, kept him too busy for such moods as this. But the North was showing its teeth tonight. Besides, he was inwardly ill at ease from purely material considerations—he had caught the canner launch Jupiter at Nushagak, with the idea of connecting up with the mail boat at Squaw Harbor, the Jupiter's home port, in a race to the "outside," but the swiftbreaking storm had forced the launch into a miniature cove, far up in one of the most desolate and stormy stretches of seacoast in the entire North, there to remain for an uncertain time.

Of course it was only a squall in the tradition of seafarers. Captain Jim of the Jupiter—on the way home from a scouting trip for a new trap site—had driven his staunch little ship through seas twice as high. But Captain Jim did not care to take a chance when a mere passenger's haste was the only consideration. Shiels, at Bellingham, and Bradford at Squaw Harbor, had given definite instructions against that very thing, needless risk of the lives of his crew. Yet, Chris had to admit that this was no night for landlubbers.

In all his travels he had never known a land quite like this narrow, treeless, storm-blasted peninsula that was the fence between the Pacific Ocean and Bering Sea. Perhaps that was why he hated it, and by a grotesque paradox that no mind such as his could ever explain, loved it, too. The hill behind him sheltered him from the lash of the wind, yet he felt that odd dryness in his head that always marks zero weather, and the icy touch of the frost, as a hand crept under his heavy shirt. He wished he had his heavy sea-coat that he had left in a cabin in the village. Thence his thought turned to the Remittance Man, wondering how he was making out. It is not wise, on the Peninsula, to soak oneself in distilled sour dough and then lie in the cold. This was November; he made a bet with himself that the Remittance Man—granted

that he sustained the drinking pace he had set and which, because it surpassed all records in this hard-drinking land, was already famous clear to Nushagak—would not participate in the Russian festival with which all far-western Alaska celebrates the Christmas season.

As Chris watched, the storm seemed to increase; the beat of the waves on the rocks had a deeper, more sinister sound. He had the sensible notion to follow the Remittance Man's example and forget his predicament, the storm, and all the moods it had brought, in sleep.

Yet it was not to be that he should lie in his bunk, or that the Jupiter should lie in safety in the harbor. The darkness without the harbor was suddenly split by a queer, upward-darting flare of light.

The signal came from far away, evidently from off the rock-ribbed shore miles farther up the Peninsula, but the clear, icy air enabled him to



Then he saw the yellow flare again.

distinguishing it with entire plainness. He stood almost motionless, peering. There was only a short wait. Then he saw the yellow flare again.

The Jupiter's course was decided for her. She was not to lie in the snug cove, nor yet to carry her eager passenger to the home shelter of Squaw Harbor. Big Chris stepped to the water line.

"Captain Jim!" he called. His voice, ringing and low, carried easily to the launch in the little harbor. Captain Jim stepped to the door of his pilot house, and his reply rolled back out of the darkness like a wave out of the dark sea. "Yes"—he said, and only the droll flattening of the sea—always marked among men of Scandinavian birth—saved from sublimity that full, mysterious sound.

"Did you see dat light?"
"No."
"Den look. East by north-east—"
They watched, and the rocket made a long, yellow path through the darkness. There was no immediate change in Captain Jim's expression. He reached a hand and sounded a gong that told his chief engineer to stand by. Then he gave certain other orders—brusquely, bawlingly, as was his habit.

"Before you take in dat skiff come in and put me aboard!" Big Chris called from the darkened shore. It was not that he had any delusions in regard to this cruise of the Jupiter. The launch would not head toward its home port; nor would there be any great thrill in battling these angry waves. If Big Chris had kept silent, the captain might have pushed out and forgotten him; they had met only a few days before, and therefore had no instinct to turn to each other in a crisis. However, it did not so much as occur to him that he could refrain from answering personally that distress call from the deep; or that he was entitled to any special credit for doing so.

Captain Jim's brain moved deliberately and slow, but certain as yoked

oxen. It was true, he knew, that no seconds were to be wasted in reaching that sinking ship. Yet every available man would be needed in the work of rescue, and particularly great-muscled, "scokem" fellows, such as he had observed Big Chris to be. At his command one of his meager crew pushed off in the skiff and, standing bent in the boat, rowed in swift, sure strokes to the shore.

Big Chris was standing ready to jump in, but he paused for one instant. "Is dar nobody else in dis village wort' taking?" he asked.

"No. The storekeeper's a cripple, but Lord, he'll be mad. There's only one other white man in the village, and that's the Remittance Man. Get it."

It did not occur to either of them that they should take natives on this rescue trip. This was a white man's job, and it would take the white man's steel of heart. And they would not even go to see about the Remittance Man. Surely he was too lost to manhood and self-respect to be of any aid in this night's work.

But they were suddenly brought up sharp in their work of pushing off by a voice in the darkness behind them.

"Wait a second, you fellows," the voice said. It was abrupt, almost commanding in tone, and there was the sound of hurrying feet in the snow. "I want to go."

Even his irremediable disgrace—a disgrace that the northern men guessed at, but never knew in full—had not destroyed a certain quality of charm in the Remittance Man's voice. It was rich, full baritone, and it had an irrefragable boyish quality, a frankness and open-heartedness that appealed instinctively even to these hard-fisted men of the North. The Remittance Man was from "the States" and the particularly section of which he was native could usually be recognized by his accent; a softening of hard consonants and mellowing of vowels that is indigenous to the country south of the Mason-Dixon line. The two men in the boat heard no thick speech to show his drunkenness.

In an instant his great breadth pushed between them. The two men tried to probe the dusk to see his face.

"Are you skerry?" the man from the Jupiter asked bluntly.

"Not entirely," was the answer. "Sober as I ever am. I'll be as sober as a saint by the time we get out to that sinking ship."

"Then pile in. Push off, Larson."

In a moment more all three were aboard the Jupiter, the powerful, rugged engines had begun to rumble, and the launch was struggling out to sea.

Captain Jim, at the wheel, steered straight out until he was comparatively out of danger of close-lying reefs and shallows, then turned east.

He was a northern man, and the love of the seas was in the fibre of his being; but there was no joy to-night in this battle under the star-studded welin. He found himself wishing that he was like that unexpected passenger, the Remittance Man, too near drunk really to understand. He had a deep feeling against going on—not fear, but rather a secret knowledge that he could not trace—and yet he could not turn back. It was not in him to turn the wheel and steer back to the harbor when those yellow rockets signaled for help. The laws of the sea are few and old, but they hold like iron shackles. It was not that he went on against his will; that he could not, if he had so desired, find excuses to turn back. Men obey the sea laws through love, not through hate; and it was simply part of him, and part of all the sea breed that he represented to push on in answer to that signal in the darkness. But he wondered that the Remittance Man should voluntarily choose to come.

He turned to Big Chris Larson—mostly a stranger to him but yet one of his own hard-sailing breed. "Are you a sailor?" he asked.

The man stood up from the bunk where he had been bracing. "Yes, sir," he answered with instinctive respect. "I sail in win'yammers for ten year."

"There's no reason we shouldn't spread her canvas. The wind's fair, and that little mainsail will help to hold her steady. Get out on the deck. I'll give you Erikson to help."

(To be continued.)

Minard's Liniment for Neuritis.

Fruitful performance.

First Actor: "Your efforts to win over your audience in Coldtown were not entirely fruitless, I understand!"

Second Actor: "Alas, no. Nor vegetable-less."

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Hail the Winner Tilden's Tribute to Lacoste's "Miraculous Tennis" "Howlers"

Jean Rene Lacoste, of France, is champion of the world in tennis, "undisputed and outstanding," declares "Big Bill" Tilden in a copyrighted article in the New York World. When the imperishable Frenchman added the 1927 United States championship to his French title and his two Davis Cup victories, "all questions were silenced," continues the American veteran. "Never has any player clinched his place more conclusively nor more deservedly, for he won it against all opponents in various countries. He met the greatest at their best and beat them all." And here Mr. Tilden gives a glimpse of his personal reactions in his recent moments of glorious defeat; thus:

It is with mingled feelings that I write of the United States championships. No one, I am sure, will grudge me a little feeling of disappointment that Lacoste was not stopt in his triumphant march, but that disappointment is lost in the admiration, that I, like all who witnessed it, have for the miraculous tennis that Lacoste played.

I have played many tennis matches, but seldom, if ever, have I played better than against Lacoste in the final round. I was keen and at my best physically and mentally, but it was not quite good enough. Lacoste is the better player, and I am glad to state it.

His defense is flawless against any attack I can find. His judgment keen and reliable. His courage and unflinching determination to win, remarkable for their continued presence under adversity or success. Many players can play from behind, while others can play when ahead, but Lacoste can play from both positions.

I was delighted with the final match in every way, but the result, I would have liked to win, but my best was not good enough, so let the match pass into history with no regrets, but only sincere admiration for a mighty champion who won.

I still regard Lacoste as a machine, but he is now a thinking and human being as well as a great machine, and it is the added quality of humanity that has carried him a bit above the rest of the world. He is not a genius like Cochet. His very best is not quite as good as Cochet's very best, but he plays it so much more often.

I sincerely trust Lacoste will reconsider his decision to retire. We need his marvelous tennis for years to come.

Many people regard my 1927 year as a failure. Personally I consider it successful beyond my right to expect last year. I have lost three times to Lacoste, but that is far from failure. I have lost to Cochet, but I have beaten him twice. I have not won a single one of the French, English or United States championships, but I have played in them and played what I am foolish enough to consider good tennis, and defeat can not rob me of my pleasure of having had a crack at the three events. We have lost the Davis Cup, but it is a challenge to us all to go in and attempt to get it back.

I have no intention of retiring at this time. I have no idea of turning professional. I am planning to play tennis next year. It is possible that I may not be considered good enough to be a member of the United States Davis Cup team, but if not, at least there are still our tournaments. I do not feel I have gone back. I feel our French friends have gone ahead of me. It is a healthy thing for the game. It is progress. Now let our coming stars go ahead of them.

The curtain has fallen on the 1927 tennis season, with France the undisputed champion nation. I do not believe that its fall is the death-knell of United States' hopes of success. I do not believe it is the setting of our tennis sun. Let us halt the achievement of France, and then let us set out to better that achievement. The Kings are dead, long live the Kings. All hail, Lacoste, Cochet et al, and then take a look at George Lott, John Degg, John Hennessey and John Van Ryn.

Every man should remember that it is much easier to live without an income than to live without one.

Lady (to tramp who has solicited a pair of boots): "What size do you take?" Tramp: "Dunno, Mum. I ain't never 'ad boots that way. I can't either get my feet into 'em—or I can't."

Funds From Orient In British Columbia

Investments by British Officer Believed to Represent Chinese Capital

Vancouver, B.C.—That funds from the turbulent Orient are seeking secure investment in western Canada is a conclusion reached here as a result of a series of large deals involving Vancouver real estate and British Columbia mining and farm land. The purchases have been made by General Frank Sutton, adventurer extraordinary, late military adviser to the North China war lord, Chang-Tso-lin. General Sutton, a Major in the British Army, distinguished himself in the recent fighting in China by introducing some elements of European strategy into the tactics of the Northern forces.

For many years it has been the practice of wealthy Chinese to invest in property under British or other foreign protection in China, the Occidental sacredness of property rights creating that preference. Latterly, with the Nationalists openly avowed to break the control of foreigners on Chinese territory, real estate in or around foreign concessions has been rated considerably lower as an investment by the shrewd capitalists of the Far East.

General Sutton signaled his arrival in Vancouver by announcing the purchase of several hundred acres of placer leases in the once famous Cariboo gold fields of Central British Columbia. Subsequently he bought a large ranch adjacent to the placer ground and put regular forces to work on both enterprises.

In Vancouver he caused a sensation when he bought for more than \$1,200,000, one of the largest office buildings in the heart of the city and followed that by acquiring another office building for \$400,000.

He bought a Fokker airplane and announced that he would cruise in north central British Columbia to study the prospects for extending the Provincial Government's Pacific Great Eastern Railway into the Peace River country. He intimated that he might arrange finances not only for that undertaking but for the purchase of the railway by private capital.

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There is now talk of putting two horns on motor cars, the idea being doubtless to have one say "Look Out!" and the other to say "I told you so!"

Fifty-Fifty.
They can't cook in certain apartment houses in Toronto. They can't cook in certain restaurants, either.

Mistaken Valuation.
The prohibition agent who said he had seized liquor worth \$50,000 had probably not tasted any of it when he made his report.

One-Sided.

A movement is on foot to bring the Scotch and the Canadian close. All the work will have to be done on the Canadians.

Annoying.

It must worry Mussolini a lot to think that Alexander and Julius Caesar didn't live long enough to envy him.

Why is a little dog's tail like the heart of a tree? Because it is farthest from the bark.

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