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The Snowshoe Trail

By EDISON MARSHALL

MY DEAR MR. BRONSON:

I am informed by the head of your provincial game commission that you can be employed as guide for hunting parties wishing to hunt in the Clearwater, north of Bradleyburg. I do not wish to hunt game, but I do wish to penetrate that country in search of my fiancé, Mr. Harold Lounsbury, of whom doubtless you have heard, and who disappeared in the Clearwater district six years ago. I will be accompanied by Mr. Lounsbury's uncle, Kenly Lounsbury, and I wish you to secure the outfit and a man to cook at once. You will be paid the usual outfitter's rates for thirty days. We will arrive in Bradleyburg September twentieth by stage.

Yours sincerely,
VIRGINIA TREMONT.

This was the note that brought Bill Bronson to the brink of Grizzly River on a snow-driven day of October. In his party were Kenly Lounsbury, his nephew's fiancé, Virginia, and Bronson's cook, Vosper.

The weather, promising fair when they had ridden out of Bradleyburg into the forest, had turned cold. A heavy snow blanketed the forest; a snow that might have induced Bill Bronson to turn back, except for two things.

One was the promise that he had given Virginia Tremont to find her lost lover—a man whom he dimly recollected as having met several years previously. The other was that this trip into the wilderness gave him one more chance to look for his father's lost mine, somewhere beyond Grizzly River.

Bronson's father and a man named Rutherford had discovered this mine; they worked it together for a season—and then no more could be learned of them or their whereabouts till it was verified that Rutherford had crossed from Canada into the States with the whole season's gleanings of gold, amounting to a vast sum. Beyond the border he disappeared completely—and the only possible deduction was that he had murdered the elder Bronson and stolen the gold.

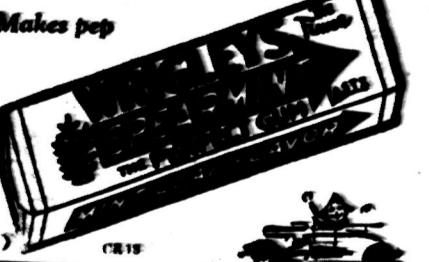


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ISSUE No. 20—'30

light to shake loose from the saddle. He had but an instant's glimpse of a white face in the gray water, of hair that streamed, and instant's realization of a faint cry: but the waters obscured.

He knew the terror of that gray whirlpool below. He had every reason to believe that by no possible effort of his could he save the girl; he would only throw away his own life, too.

Yet he was out of the saddle almost the instant that the waters engulfed her. He sprang with his full strength into the stream.

On the bank the two men saw it as in a dream. They called out in their impotence, and they gazed with horror-widened eyes. The waters swept the struggling figures down the stream and out of their sight.

Mulvaney, riderless, was battling toward them through the torrent. The storm recommenced, the wind wailed in the pines tops, and the snow sifted down into the gray waters.

The man seemed simply to leap through the water. And in an instant more his arm went about her.

"Give yourself to the current," he shouted. "And hang on to me."

He knew this river. They were just entering upon a stretch of water dreaded of old by the rivermen that had sometimes piled down the stream in their fur-laden canoes—a place of jagged rocks and crags and boulders.

Even in the shadow of death she was aware of the strong wrench of his muscles as he swam, the saving might of his powerful frame. She knew that he was not afraid for himself, but only for her.

Up to now she had not entered into comradeship with this man. She had held herself on a different plane.

But he was a comrade now; no matter the outcome, even if they should find only inhospitable Death at the end of their trail, this relationship could never be destroyed.

"If I let go of you, can you hang on to my shoulder?" he asked her.

"Then put your hand on my shoulder. I'll try to work in to the nearest shore."

Her fingers locked in the cloth of his shirt. And he began, a little at a time, to cross the sixty feet of wild water between them and the shore.

He had never been put to a greater test. Every ounce of his strength was needed. He was heavily clothed and shod, and the girl, exhausted, was scarcely able to give aid at all. More than once he felt himself weakening.

But the river gods were merciful, after all. A jack pine had fallen on the shore, and its green spire, still clothed with needles, lay half-submerged, forty feet out into the stream.

Bill's arm encountered it, then snatched at it in a final, spasmodic impulse of his muscles. And his grip held fast.

"Hang on," he breathed. Only a moment more.

He drew himself and the girl up on the slender trunk, then crawled along it toward the shore. Now they were half out of the water. And in a moment later they both felt the river bottom against their knees.

He drew her to the bank, staggered and fell, and for a moment both of them lay lifeless to the soft caress of the snow. But Bill did not dare lose consciousness. He was fully aware that the fight was only half won.

"Get off your clothes," he commanded; "you're soaked through—and I'll wring 'em out. If I don't you can't live to get to the cabin. Your stockings first."

The thought of disobedience did not even come to her.

"Rub your skin swiftly with your hands," he went on. "Above all things keep the blood going in your veins. Rub as hard as you can."

Already she had tossed him her drenched stockings, and he was wringing them in his strong hands. She rubbed her legs dry with her palms, and put the stockings back on. Then she threw off her coats and outing suit and he wrung them as dry as he could. Then quickly she dressed again.

"Now—fast as you can walk toward the cabin. We're across the river, you know."

(To be continued.)

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1 tablespoon butter
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2 eggs
2½ cups flour

3 teaspoons Magic Baking Powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup sweet milk

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs one by one, beat well. Sift dry ingredients together and add to first mixture alternately with milk. If batter not stiff enough, add a little more in a quick oven.

*This fact was revealed in a recent Dominion-wide investigation.

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The Hearst Tirade

The attempts at artificial respiration of the Naval Conference were not helped by the remarkable outburst published in the Hearst newspapers in America against Mr. Ramsay MacDonald.

The attack is quite venomous. In its opening passages it describes the Conference as "farical if it were not tragic." The attack itself might well be described as "tragic if it were not farical." Not everyone can love the Chairman of the Naval Conference with equal fervor, but the language of Mr. Hearst or his henchmen plunges beyond reasonable criticism into burlesque. Americans have always had a diplomatic inferiority-complex, but to see in Mr. MacDonald—a man patiently sincere about Disarmament—whatever else he may be—a cunning rascal in league with disreputable journalists to "do down" America is too fantastic to merit serious attention. Mr. Hearst has sadly overdone it. "The slyest, smoothest, and trickiest diplomat since Arthur Balfour"—this is charming language! Mr. MacDonald has his critics here on other issues, but in his unwearied effort to bring the Conference to a successful result he has the backing of the nation. The

British people will agree with Mr. Price Bell; Mr. Hearst's attack is just reckless and blackguardly. — Public Opinion.

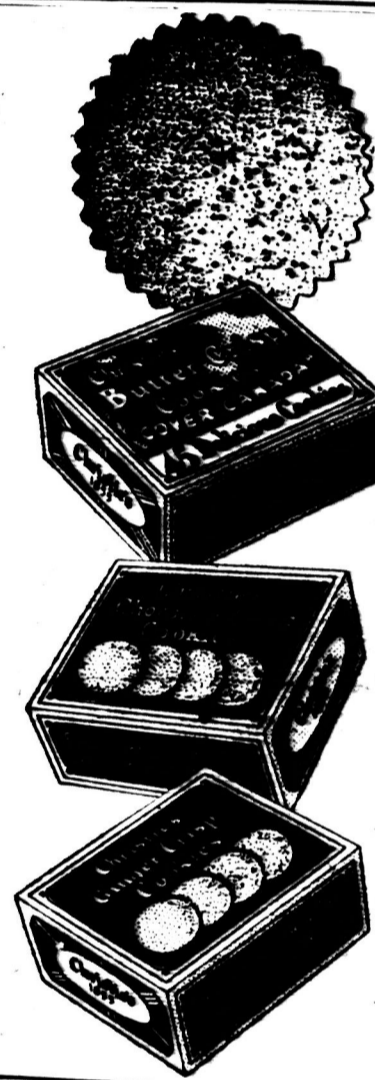
Young lady (just operated on for appendicitis)—"Oh, doctor, will the scar show?" Doctor—"Not if you are careful."

Speaking of the good old days, do you remember the old-fashioned girl who used to make ash receivers out of cigar bands? Well, she now has a daughter who makes one out of the parlor rug.

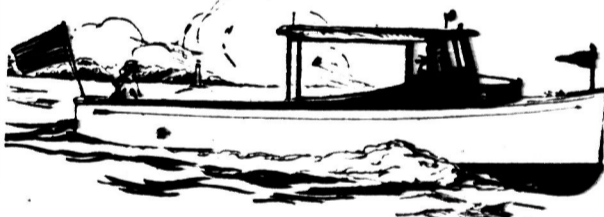
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