

did not offer to move. But Hank was watching eagerly, and a second later a morsel of flesh flew across, landing close to Jimmy. Others followed, and in an incredibly short space of time the dogs were all aroused and standing.

"Jest watch fer the signal," whispered the hunter. "I'm agoin' to put 'em into their harness."

It was just at that moment that Joe heard a movement within the lean-to, and promptly applied his eye to the opening he had made. Hurley had turned over, and was now blinking at the spluttering torch, while one arm was spread out over the box. Something seemed to have alarmed him, for he sat up, giving the box a kick, which Hank heard; then he got to his feet swiftly and, bending low, stepped toward the opening, just outside which blazed the fire, and just beyond which Hank was mustering the team of dogs. Hurley saw him; for the instant he took him to be one of his own following, then he became suspicious.

"Who's that?" he called. "Hi! Someone is tampering with the dogs."

Joe did not venture to wait longer. He leaped on to the top of the lean-to, the flimsy thing breaking down beneath his weight at once; he trod upon the wretch beneath, sending him tumbling to the ground; then he stood ready for the next movement. It came with startling suddenness. Hank had found a whip close to the dogs, and sent it cracking over the team. The brutes sprang forward the next instant, and in spite of the fact that Hurley had tumbled across the sleigh,