November Joe

The Detective of the Woods.

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CHAPTER VI.

Volumest understand that from this time on my association with November Joe was not continuous but fiftul and that after the events I nave just written down I went back to Quelsee, where I became once more immersed in my business. Of Joe I heard from time to the generally by means of sandead

of a bull NOVEMBER
This was the letter which caused me to seek Mrs. Harding's, but owing to a slight accident to the rig. I was driven up in. I arrived into to find that November and gene up to a neighboring farm on some business, leaving word that should I arrive I was to start for his shack and that he would start for his slack and that he would caird me up on the way. November struck may trail and it was long after dark when we reached November's shack that evening. As he opened the door he displaced something white which my just inside it.

"It's a letter," he said in surprise as he handed it to me. "What does it say, Mr. Quaritch?"

I rend it aloud. It ran:
I am in trouble, Joe Somebody is robing my traps. When you get home, which I pray will be soon, come right over.

"The skunkt" cried November.

"The skink!" cried November.

I had never seen him so moved. He had been away hunting for three days and returned to find this message.

"The darned skunk," he repeated, "to

rob her traps!"
"Her—a woman?"
"S Rone stands for Sally Rone.
You've sure heard of her?"
"No; who is she?"
"I'll tell you." said Joe. "Sal's a mighty brave gtri—that is, she's a widge.
She was married on Rone four mighty brave girl—that is, she's a widow She was married on Rone four years ago inst Christmas, and the autumn after he got his back broke to the Red Star tumber camp, leaving Sally Just enough dollars to carry her over the birth of her son. To make a long story short, there was lots of the boys ready to fill dead man Rone's place when they knew her money finst be giving out, and the neighbors were wonderful interested to know which Sai would take. But it soon come out that Sai wasn't taking any of them.

Bai would take. But it soon come out that Sai wasn't taking any of them, but had decided to try what she could do with the trapping herself.

"Just that. Rone worked a line o' traps, and Sai was fixed to make het living and the boy's that way. Said a woman was liable to be as successful woman was liable to be as successful a trapper as a man. She's at it near three year now, and she's made good. Lives with her hoy about four hours' walk nor west of here, with nor an.

to be out such a lot."

Not much later I was following November's almbly moving figure upon as bard a woods march as I ever care to try. I was not sorry when a thong of my moccasin gare way and Joe allowed me a minute to tie it up and to get my wind.

re's Tom Carroll, Phil Gort and

wind.

"There's Tom Carroll, Phil Gort and Injin Sylvester." began November abruptly—"those three. They're Saily's pearest neighbors, them and Val Black. Val's a good man, but"—

"But what?" said I absently.

"Him and Tom Carroll's cut the top notches for Saily's favor so far."

"But what's that got to do with"—

"Come on." snapped November and hurried forward to Saily's lonely cabin.

Joe knocked at the door, calling at the same time: "It's me. Are you there. Saily's"

The door opened an inch or two, "Is it you, Joe?"

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November thrust his right hand with its doen scar across the back through

The door opened an inch or two, "Is it you, Joe?"

November thrust his right hand with its deep scar across the back through the aperture. "You should know that cut. Sai; you tended it."

"Come in! Come in!"

I followed Joe into the house and turned to look at Saily. I saw a silm girl with gentle red brown, eyes that matched the red brown of her rebellious hair, a small face, pale under its weather tan. but showing a line of milk white skin above her brown. She was, in fact, extremely pretty, with a kind of good looks I had not expected, and ten seconds inter I, too, had fallen under the spell of that charm, which was all the more powerful because Saily herself was unconscious of it. "You've been long in coming. Joe," she said, with a sudden smile. "You were away, of course?"

"Aye, just got back 'fore we started for here" He looked around. "Where's young Dan?"

"I've just got him off to sleep on the bed there" She pointed to a deerskin curtain in the cornet.
"What: They been frightening him?" hirs. Rone looked oddly at November.

November raised his eyebrows, "Hub That's heree," he said, "Dan-ny's rising three, ain't he? He could tell."

nys rising three, ain't be? He could tell."

"Nothing at all, it was after dark, and the men had his face muffied. Danny said be was a reat good man He gave him sugar from the cupboard, said Saily
"His hands, what like was his hands? He gave the sugar"
"I thought of that, but Danny says he had mitts on It's more'n three weeks now since I found out the traps were being meddied with. It was done very cunning, but I have my own way of balting them, and the thief, though he's a clever woodsman and knows a heap, never dropped to that. Sometimes he'd set en and bait em like as If they were never touched at all, and other times he'd just make it appear as if the animal had got itself out."

"He must have left tracks," said Joe. "Some, yes. But he mostly worked when snow was failing. He's cun

"Did any one ever see his tracks but you?"

"Sylvester did."
"How was that?" said Joe, with sudden interest.

"I came on Sylvester one evening when I was training the robber." "Perhaps Sylvester himself was the

Mrs. Rone shook her head."
"It wasn't him, Joe, He couldn't 'a'
known I was comin' on him, and his
tracks was quite different."

"Well, but tonight? You say the thief come here tonight? What did be do that for?" said Jee, pushing the to-bacco firmly luto his pipe bow!

bacco firmly late his pipe bowl.

"He had a good reason," replied Saliy, with bitterness. "Last Thursday
when I was on my way back from putting my letter under your door I heard
something rustling through the scrub
ahead of me. It might have been a
lyux, or it might have been a dog, but
when I come to the tran I way the when I come to the trap I saw the thief had made off that minute, for be'd been trying to force open the trap, and when he heard me he wrenched hard, you bet, but he was bound to take care—not to be too rough."

and when he toard me he wrenned hard, you bet, but he swas bound to take care—not to be too rough."

"Good?" Sally's face flushed a soft crimson. "Good? Why, I've never seen one to match it. It was a black fox, lying dead there, but still warm, for it had but just been killed. The pelt was fair in its prime, long and silky and glossy. You can guess, November, what that meant for Danny and me next winter, that I've been worrying about a lot. The whooping cough's weakened him down bad, and I thought of the things I could get for him while I was skinning out the pelt." Sally's voice shook, and her eyes filed with tears. "Oh, Joe, it's hard—hard! The skin was worth \$800 any where, and I come home just singing. I fixed it at once, and then, being scared-like, I hid it in the cupboard over there be hind those old magazines. No one but Ruby knew that I had got it. I left Ruby here, but Mrs. Scats had her seventh yesterday morning, and futhy ran over to help for awhile after she put Danny to bed. The thief must have been on the watch and seen her go."

"Where's Ruby now?" Joe inquired. "She's stopping the night. They sent over to tell me." replied Sally. "Well to go on, I had a lynx in one of my traps which got dragged right down by Deerhorf pond, so I was more that special late. Danny began at once it tell me about the man that came in I rushed across and looked in the cup board. The black fox pelt was gone of course!"

"What did Danny say about the

"What did Danny say about the

neckerchief. He didn't speak a word gave Danny sugar, as I have said. He must 'a' been here some time, for he's ransacked the place high and low and took nearly every pelt I got this sea

Joe looked up. "Those pelts mark

inmp, he began carefully and method ically to examine every inch of the room.

"Any one but me been using tobacco in here lately?" he asked
"Not that I know of," replied Sally.
"A cool hand," said November.
"When he'd got the skin he stopped the cartridge—It came out of his pocket with the pipe, I expect. All that I can tell you about him is that be smokes Gold Nugget"—he pointed to the shreds—"and carries a small bore make of English rifle. Hello! Where's the old bitch?"

"Old Rippah? I dunno, less she's gone along to Scats' place. Ruby'd take her if she could, she's that scarif of the woods, but Rippah's never left Danny before."

Joe drained his cup "We've not found much inside the house." said he "As soon as the sun's my we'll try out mick outside. Till then I guess we'd best put in a doze."

Mrs. Rone made up a shakedown of skins near the store and disappeared behind the deerskin curtain.

When I awoke next morning it was

to see, with some astonishment, that a new personage had been drawn into our little drama of the woods. A dark bearded man in the oniform of a game warden was sitting on the other side

Quaritch, she said. He was a Scats last night. There he heard about me losing fur from the traps and come right over to see if he couldn't

Him and me's been talking about the black fox pelt. Joe's wasting his time all right I can tell him who the

"How?"
"Care to see?" He rose and went to the door "Guess Joe missed it." he said, pointing with his finger.

I turned in the direction indicated and saw that upon one of the unils which had been driven into the door of the cabin some bright colored threads were banging. Going nearer I found them to be strands of pink and gray worsted, twisted together.
"What dyon think of that?" asked Evans, with a heavy wink.

Before I could answer Joe came into sight round a clump of bush on the edge of the clearing.
"Well," called the game warden, "any inct?"
"Not just exactly," he said.

"Not just exactly," he sam.
"What do you make of that?" asked
Evans again, pointing at the fluttering
worsted, with a glance of suppressed of just exactly," he said.

umph at Joe. Huh!" said November. "What do

Pretty clear evidence that ain't #15 The robber rought his necker on those nails as he slipped out. We're getting closer. English rifle, Gold Nugget in his pipe, and a pink and gray necker. Find a chap that owns all three. It can't be difficult. Wardens have eyes

"Suref" agreed Joe politely, but with an abstracted look, as he examined t door. "You say you found it here?" "Yes."

"Huh!" said Joe again.

November looked at him. "He shot

Rizpah."

"The old dog't I suppose she attacked him and he shot her."

"Yes, he shot her.-first."

"First? What then?"

"He cut her nigh in pieces with his

knife."
Without more words Joe turned back into the woods, and we went after him. Hidden in a low, marshy spot about half a mile from the house, we came upon the body of the dog. It came upon the body of the dog. It was evident she had been shot—more than that, the carcass was hacked about in a horrible manner. "What do you say now. Mr. Evans?"

"What do I say? I say this: When we find the thief we'll likely find the marks of Rizpah's teeth on him



"Val Black has one like that I made it for him myself long ago."

"And he has a ritle of some English make," added November.

Mrs. Rone started. 'So he has, but I never remembered that till this min nte." She sooked hark into lose's gray eyes with indignation. "And he smokes 'Nugget' all right, too. I know it. All the same, it isn't Vall?

"It's queer them bits of worsted on the doornalis," observed Joe judicially. Her color famed for a moment. "Why queer? He, been here to see m. as more in once this time back. The nalls might have caught his neck er any day," she retorted. "It's just possible," agreed November in an unconvinced voice. "It can't be Vail" repeated Mrs. Rone steadily. When we were out of sight and of earshot I turned to November.

"The evidence against Black is pret ty strong What's your notion? "Can't say yet I think we'd best join Evans: he'll be trailing the thief" oth Evans, he draining the three We made straight through the woods toward the spot where the dog's bedy lay As we walked I tried again to find out Joe's opinion "But the motive? Haven't Mrs."

"But the motive? Haven't Mrs. Rone and Black always been on good terms?" I persisted. Joe allowed that was so and added. "Val wanted to marry her-years ago." "But surely Black wouldn't rob her, especially now that he has his chance

again."

"Think not?" said Joe. "I wonder!"

After a pause he went on: "But it ain't hard to see what'll be Evans' views on that He'll say Val's scared of her growing too independent, for she's made good so far with her traps, and so be just naturally took a hand to frighten her into marriage. His case frighten her into marriage. I agin Val won't break down for

man?"

November Joe looked up with his quick, sudden smile. "It'll be a shock to Evans if be ain't." said be

Very soon we struck the robber's trail and saw from a second line of tracks that Evans was ahead of us following it.

tracks that Evans was ahead of us following it.

"Here the thief goes," said Joe
"See! He's covered his moccasins with
deer skin, and here we have Evans'
tracks. He's burrying, Evans is He's
feeling good and sure of the man he's
after."

feeling good and sure of the man he's after."

Twice November pointed out faint signs that meant nothing to me.

"Here's where the robber stopped to light his pipe. See! There's the mark of the butt of his gun between these roots. The snow's thin there Must 'a' had a match, that chap." he said after a minute, and, standing with his back to the wind, he made a slight movement of his hand.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Saving myself trouble." He turned at right angles and began searching through the trees. "Here it is Hung up in a snag. Sendog match he used." Then, catching my eye, he went on. "Unless he was a fool he'd light his match with his face to the wind, wouldn't he? And most right handed men 'nd throw the match therebouts where I hunted for it."

Well on in the afternoon the trail led out to the banks of a wide and shallow stream, into the waters of which they disappeared. Here we overtook Evans Ele was standing by the ashes of a fire almost on the bank.

He looked up as we appeared. "That you, Joe? Chap's took to the water." said the game warden, "but he'll have to do more than that to shake me off." "Chap made this, too?" inquired. November, with a glance at the deaftire.

Evans nodded. "Walked sten Evans nodded. "Walked steady til he came here. Dunno what he lit the fire for. Carried grub, I s pose."
"No; to cook that partridge," said

Joe

I glanced at Evans. His face dark ened. Clearly this did not pieuse him "Oh, he shot a partridge?" "No," said Joe; "he noosed it back in the spruces there. The track of the wire noose is plain, and there was some feathers. But look here, Evans he didn't wear no plak necker."

Evans' annoyance passed off and

Evans' annoyance passed off sud denly. "That's funny," said he. "for he left more than a feather and the scrape of a wire." The game warder pulled out a pocketbook and showed as wedged between its pages another

pulled out a pocketbook and showed us wedged between its pages another strand of the pink and grey woo! "I found it where he passed through those dead spruces. How's that?"

I looked at Joe. To my surprise he threw back his head and gave one of his rare faughs.

"Well." cried Evans, "are you still sure that be didn't wear a pink necker?"

"Surer than ever," said Joe, and be gan to poke in the asses

Evans eyed him for a moment, transferred his glance to me and winked Refore tong he left us, his last words being that he would have his hands or "Pink Necker" by night.

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Ein Schwiegers

Ra, das gibt's fünf Taufender an menn er bas De ja, bas muß er feine Bürfteln!" So brobelte ber

mon Breitegg al

mieber ein neuer einziges Rind, Die einstellte. Die S aber in Breitegg und barum blieb gang aus. Rur ben Mut nicht, Rarl, ein armer ! porn, ber noch Behner im Bern ber einen heller Rutigen ift das so auch dem Bese dönen Tages to auf bem Berg i ichneiden. Da f Selmbauer mit Cad auf bem Hü Beier zwischen Sträucher.

dächtig vor; er li nach in das Bu nicht gesehen zu fo, daß er den 211 ten tonnte. Die lang herum, en richtigen Blat ge es war ein Stein hohen Lärchenba Steine fcnell in feinem Bidel ein te angelegentlid tungen - tat ba in bem ein bar Borichein tam. er in bas Loch, in ber felben &

Das tam bem

spähte abermalischlich bann wie Der Befenbin aut eine balbe @ Sträuchern lieg fich porfichtig. fr um und als er t rein fand, fcbritt suchung, was f auer unter be er war geft taler. - Dem 8 Gedanke durch

Best werder lein, Die Gett. In ber folge zwei Tage nach dweren Taler

inbelte:

ichweren Taler in sechs papiere Eine Woche in auch schon festi helmbauers Saller Form um "Ja was mei ber Bauer, " ber auf ber schwimmt, geb Das muß sch sein."