

He had also reefed in his belt so that his stomach and spine seemed to be camping together. The snow continued to fall. The trees swam past him as he ran. And the snowdrifts lifted and fell as he jogged heavily forward. Of course, he declared to himself, he was not dizzy. It was the snow blindness or the drifts. He was well aware the second night that if he would have let himself he would have dug a sleeping hole in the snow and wrapped himself in a snow blanket and slept and slept; but he thrashed himself awake, and set out again, dead heavy with sleep, weak from fatigue, staggering from hunger; and the wings on his feet had become weighted with lead.

He knew it was all up with him when he fell. He knew if he could get only a half hour's sleep, it would freshen him up so he could go on. Lots of winter travelers have known that in the North; and they have taken the half hour's sleep; and another half hour's; and have never wakened. Anyway, something wakened Hall. He heard the crackle of a branch. That was nothing. Branches break to every storm, but this was like branches breaking under a moccasin. It was unbelievable; there was not the slightest odor of smoke, unless the dream odor of his own delirious hunger; but not twenty paces ahead crackled an Indian fire, surrounded by buckskin tepees, Indians warming themselves by the fire.

With an unspeakable revulsion of hope and hunger,