

the tortured engine pumping to bursting strain. I cursed the hampering clothes and the buttons that seemed ever drawing tighter, the thongs that cut deep now, and the nets that had to be swung true while they felt like lead to the feet.

At last came the blessed "second wind," and none too soon, for it found me rocking. The snow-padded back was ten yards ahead now, rising and falling with the same old motion. Ever and anon a savage swirl would hide it in a blur of white, but I was going easier and felt I could close the gap at will. Presently it vanished, and on the instant of its disappearance I realized my danger and spurted vigorously. Before I had time to think, Jo was again in view, and I mentally vowed that not for my life would I let him out of my sight. Indian-like, he had no idea of halting or looking round to see how I fared. I was to follow — if I failed to do so, that was my affair. When an Indian gets scared, he's the worst scared thing imaginable; and Jo was going to the cabin by the shortest route. If I failed to make it, he'd hunt for me — after the weather cleared.

Through the roar and the whine and the icy fog of it all we pounded ahead. First, an uneasy dread took hold of me. Did Jo know whither he was drifting? Had his instinct for the once failed? We seemed to have covered an awfully long route. Then another and worse fear came, I was getting tired. No mistake about that. No one knew better than their owner why leg muscles were complaining so. One quarter of a mile farther, if we had to do so much, and I'd be done so brown that a bake-oven couldn't tan me more.