

He held out an attenuated hand, the fingers of which were as fine as any lady's, and pointed to a patch of trees springing from the side of the hollow a hundred or more yards away. The gesture and his words were sufficient explanation of his meaning. If the sleigh were taken there without its human load, and the feat could be accomplished without Hurley seeing, then all could mount and start away before the murderer had become aware of their intentions.

"It aer a cute move, and we'll work it," said Hank instantly. "Now, Joe, which of us'll stay; you or me?"

"My place," came the ready answer. "I suggested going, therefore I do the work which will help us to fool Hurley. I'll give him a shot now and again."

Hank at once slid down into the hollow and joined Beaver Jack. Joe watched them as they sprawled on their faces, first placing their weapons on the sleigh; then he saw them slowly move away, the Redskin beside his team, crawling on all-fours, talking to the dogs and keeping them well under cover.

Crack! crack! Zip! zip! Two bullets swished overhead, the crisp sounds they made proving that they had been aimed at Joe and not at his comrades. At once he bobbed up, aimed for the place where he knew Hurley was in hiding, and fired; but he saw nothing of the enemy. This was a duel waged between contestants who kept beneath cover, and hoped only for a lucky chance to hit an enemy. Joe waited