

Brothers of the Wild

CHAPTER I

THE MAN FROM THE WASTES

“**G**REAT guns, lad, that means trouble of some kind—it ain’t hunting ’spedition, leastways not game-hunting. Guess we goes out tew see what’s afoot, eh?”

Red Mackintosh, factor of the Hudson Bay Company at Death Point on the Nelson River, slipped into his snowshoes, grabbed up his musket, and made for the door. Harry Newlands, his assistant, followed his example, reaching the snow-clad waste outside the cabin a moment or so after his chief. The cause of that sudden exit in fighting fashion was that there had come to them the crack of several guns, followed by one solitary explosion and, after that, the volley again.

“It’s one man against a number, Hal,” Mackintosh said, as they slid along on their snowshoes. “It can’t be Injuns, or oughtn’t to be, for there’s nothin’ fer them to come out for jest now—not here, anyway, as there’s no feed to be got this way now. Therefore it ain’t food forage but——”

“But what?” Hal asked, something telling