

come down, Jim. He's asleep. Just *reach* down and help me climb out!"

"Good gracious!" burst from Jim's lips, as his eyes made out the huge shape at Melissa's side—which he had at first mistaken for the fur robe. Only the swift thought that he must come down straight upon Melissa's body saved him from plunging in beside her to get between her and that terrible form. But he was a lumberman, a woodsman, a riverman, and trained to think quickly in emergencies. Flinging himself flat on his face he reached down, seized Melissa under the arms, and half dragged, half swung her clear out into the moonlit snow. From that position it was a difficult feat, even for his great strength.

"Run!" he panted. "Run for the sleigh. I've got my gun here!" And he whipped out a heavy Colts from his belt.

But Melissa caught his arm with both hands and hung to it.

"Don't *dare* to hurt him, Jim!" she gasped. "He's saved my life! If it hadn't been for him I'd have been dead now. When I fell in—right on top of him with all my weight, he woke up, and I thought he was going to eat me. But he just grumbled a