

THE LADY OF THE CROSSING

down there," remarked Marsden, "would bang him into a kind of grave of his own making. Nothing to do but pile stones over him to keep bald-headed eagles and coyotes off." He considered the place, a frown between his brows. "Guess they get wolf up here," he said. "Last year, away below the Fraser Mine, I came on a bear and two cubs. Fortunately, I wasn't between the old lady and the kids."

"Oh! What did they do?"

"They were picking berries. Just sat up and watched me. I took a circumbend off the wagon-road to pass them. They watched me like this"—and he showed—"as far as they could, looking that way, and then they all gave their heads a jerk round the other way—like this—and pieked me up over the other shoulder. Kind o' weird. After I got away a good bit, me looking round, they began eatin' berries again. 'Well, good-bye to that gorge," he finished, for the road veered away again to lead over the lower summit to the Fraser mine.

He did not speak again until they came to a place where the tramway passes over the road. One of the buckets was then sliding under the arm of the nearest trestle.

"Sam Haig," Marsden broke out, "you can have her. I've been figuring out what to say to you, and that's it. You can have her. To say anything else would be out of place. But you can have her, all right—all right."

"Have who?" said Sam, very quietly.

Marsden, very puzzled (and can one wonder at