

THE THRALL OF LEIF THE LUCKY

their sweethearts' necks, they began to hint at their brave adventures and to boast of the grain and the timber and the wine. The home-keepers heard just enough to set their curiosity leaping and dancing with eagerness for more. And each succeeding boat-load of burly heroes worked their enthusiasm to a higher pitch.

Then, gradually, the song ran into a minor key, as Thorir's pitiful crew landed upon the sand. Haggard and worn and almost too weak to walk, they clung to the brawny arms of their rescuers; and the horrors of their privations were written in pitiless letters on Gudrid's fair white face. The rejoicing and laughter sank into wondering questions and pitiful murmuring.

While Thorir told the Red One briefly of their sufferings, the throng listened as to their favorite ballad, and shuddered and suffered with him. Then, in words that still rang with joy and gratitude, Thorir told of their rescue by Leif Ericsson.

Strongly speeding arrows need only aim to make them reach their target. Flights of wildest enthusiasm had been going up on every side. Now Thorir gave these a mark and an aim. Curiosity and triumph, pity and rejoicing, all merged into one great impulse and rose in a passion of hero-worship. Toward the boat that was bringing the Lucky One to land, they turned, face and heart, and laid their homage at his feet. Never had Greenland glaciers heard such a tumult of acclaim as when the throng cheered and stamped and clashed their weapons.