M.S. from Mrs. N. L. Finley

OFF TO ALEUT LAND.

by

Irene Finley

A Great Northern train was speeding us on to Bellingham, for at three o'clock that afternoon we were to embark for the land of the Aleuts. We clicked merrily in and out of the jungle-like, wet woods of Washington along the seashore where in places the mud-flat fingers of Puget Sound crept almost up to the track. The smell of morning was on the air, a whiff of fog on balsam boughs mingled with the tang of salt inlets. The sea had retreated almost out of sight, marked only by the intermittent, flashing line of a comber. My eyes came back over the expanse of gray ooze in the foreground to the wooded shoreline that curved swiftly on ahead of us, away and away to the north and west,- to Aleut land, those phantom shores where the caribou and the great brown bear roamed. So many happy events have begun on the first day of June!

It was evident that the approaching departure of the Catherine D. had touched the whole town where it hung on the forested hillside above the circling bay. In the harbor lay several gray battleships. We walked liesurely the block or so along the tracks from the station toward the dock. No need to be guided; one had only to look and listen. Trucks, autos, and pedestrians were migrating in the same direction and disappearing through one big gateway like bees diving into a hive. The confusion was contagious. We joined the procession and along with the others threaded in and out among the cars, or crowded them to the edge that hung over the restless, blue-black water. At the far end a big, white vessel hugged the pier. It had a strange attraction for me. I took in every movement about it. Freight of all kinds was being hoisted over the rail with dizzy regularity,- crates

of oranges and apples, boxes of green lettuce heads, along with heavy machinery and numberless oil drums. Groups of fluttering girls mingled with the hurrying workmen and the passengers on the pier. What a glamour invested the whole scene.

Evening found us in the Straits of Georgia, gliding effortless over smooth, wide water between the mainland and Vancouver Island. Behind this long guardian of the coastline the whole world moved softly by, waterfalls flashing down like white ribbons, mountain peaks rising out of pale clouds, a glint of sunset on a window pane revealing a little craft lost on the surface, a funnel of black smoke trailing into the sky, a spindle mast and a wavering wake on the water, little islands coming into being out of the blue, a low-flying bird late returning to home shadows,- and quiet, quiet, as if we were going nowhere and no matter.

I was swinging on the after deck with the children. Three new rope swings hung from the big spar by a genial captain were the most popular place on the boat. At times they were quite inadequate for some sixteen high school boys who were headed for fun and fortune in the salmon canneries, and two or three very small folk who were exuberant voyagers. Black-eyed Mickey, smiling from a hooded cape, was everybody's friend. She was going to some beautiful islands away up in the Bering Sea to live forever, and she had a new baby brother to take along. Later the Eider, a gray government boat, was to take Mickey, her baby brother and her parents, and a few others, crowded into unbelievably close living quarters, a ~~three~~ 2 days' journey up to the storm-swept Pribilofs to begin a new life. Just now a tall, quiet man in a checked mackinaw and cap drawn over his eyes was swinging her. He soon joined his own group again who were chatting at the rail. A distinguished, gray-haired man in a dark blue suit drew the others around him,- a young fellow in corduroys and heavy shoes, with eager eyes that devoured

everything in this new land, another frankly jovial one in a knicker suit and golf shoes, and corpulent Chris with a sheepish smile and a canny tongue. These were the salmon kings of Bristol Bay, each one longing for more fish, and still more fish to catch and can. And at the end of the short season, loaded to the limit, the salmon ships plied back and forth carrying away their freight of fine food. For the lure of Alaska today is the silver horde as yesterday it was the golden one. And the silver has not panned out as the gold did. The little streams that flash down from the snowy peaks are the beds for the silver rush as they were for the gold.

What a romance is cast about the life of the salmon. The snow and ice that mask the mountains and pile up on the shores have no more started the first spring freshet than the taste is caught by the myriads of salmon that have wintered in the coastal waters. The pulsing message beats as strong out here in the depths of the sea as the first warm breath of spring, blowing up from the south, is sensed by the dormant roots of the flowers. They have been hanging expectantly on the tap of the bell that loosens the winter-locked streams. All noses are turned to the north, and the dark waters throb with the awakening urge of that migration. Nothing can stop it. A million strong- yes, millions upon millions- they cloud the coastal currents, trailing like silver skeins along their way. They curve close around the shores of the Gulf of Alaska where the first toll of their numbers is sifted into the seines and traps. Unknowing and uncaring, the plundered schools push on, following the coast around to the southwest, leaving great numbers behind at the mouth of many a fine stream where the red roofs of the canneries brighten the bays. Threading the passes of the Aleutian chain of islands, they taste the cold, salt waters of the Bering Sea and swing sharply about on the last lap up into Bristol Bay, to the Nushagak, the Koichak, and the Naknek. Not far inland at the heads of these streams lie large lakes, Iliamna, Naknek, Ugashik, Becharof, and others, between which lies the Valley of Ten Thousand Smokes,

and over which hangs the caved-in crater of Katmai and other volcanoes smoking threateningly. For many of the fish, this is the end of the journey. A few forge on even into the Arctic Circle and straggle clear across to Siberia. The Bristol Bay region is the home of the little Alaska red salmon, or sockeye from the Indian name, sockaye. Along with the big king, or spring Chinook of the long mountain streams of the lower northwest, this is the finest fish food in the world, flavored, perhaps, with the clean strength and vigorous life of the race. What an imagination it takes to follow the course of the little red, a path as clearly marked to its leaders as that of the wild goose that heads the wedge from the southland to its nesting places on the northern tundra, that mystery place that drew our eyes ever to the west, lost out there somewhere in the sea.

That night at our sunset gathering on the upper deck, a white-haired man joined the crowd. Immediately there were whispers that his name was Gilbert, the guardian of the fish. He had been working at the wiers of Karluk, a noble salmon stream, where it was rumored that fifty thousand two-year old salmon were held and marked as they surged from their inland lake down the stream, seized by their first longing for the sea. And again, from a trap full of fine, big fish, he had asked for ten thousand to tag and turn again on their way to learn on what far shores they are finally stranded. All this, and more, in order that more may be known about the life of the salmon, and that the runs of these fish may be insured for those beyond our time. He was considered by the United States Bureau of Fisheries a fair judge in matters of this kind, so the right of his authority was settled without argument. The cooperation and goodwill of all concerned met his efforts for the welfare of those of today and those of tomorrow.

The boat plied peacefully on into the glowing twilight.

It was nine o'clock. A volcano belched black clouds against the red ~~orb~~ sun, sending brilliant rays flaring in a halo about its peak. As the sun dropped from sight, flashes caught and scintillated from one point to

another of the jagged, saw-toothed ridges, showering gold high into the sky. Islands stood on our west lighted by a pale sunset glow. On and on we slid from one bay to another under the eaves of these frosted ranges. The gulls and sea parrots of the seashores had deserted the ship and in their places were the jaegers, the shearwaters, and the alabatrosses. One "goonie," or black-footed alabatross that found us out, followed in our wake now on one side, now on the other, skimming low, slanting and curving on long, unbending wings. Planing down easily for a landing on the water, he glided smoothly into the hollow of a wave with his big, square-jointed wings only half folded. Deliberately he adjusted and shuffled them until they finally settled at his sides while he rocked gently in his cradle, eyeing the world serenely. He seemed like the spirit of the deep, whether of protection or premonition we could not tell. The whales were about, too, playing and blowing. The lazy, black hulks broke water and spouted in different directions about the boat with just their backs wallowing on the surface. Once in a while the round, black head of a seal bobbed up, looking us over curiously as if asking if we, too, were on our way to the Pribilofs. The water world was wide awake, each creature sporting with his fellows on their playgrounds in these long, pale nights, and each one on his way to his own summer home in the north.

Drip, drip on the roof. Drip, drip, and splash on the water. Drip, drip on the emerald hills that filled the window. It was morning and we were at Ikatan, the last westward port of call of the Catherine D. The raucus, complaining clamor of gulls somewhere near came to my ears. There was not much to be seen from the window but red cannery buildings backed by darkening hills. And continuously this strident din of the gulls came from somewhere out of the fog and rain. I thought the mouth of a stream must be nearby where the offal of the cannery is sent on its way to the tidal sewer. This is the usual hang-out of hungry gulls. But no: when

I walked out on the sodden dock, there sat the gray gull chorus in a row on the rail above the brailer that brings the salmon up from the scows. Intent and watchful every one, nor would they give an inch of advantage to a neighbor or a newcomer, but craned their necks and clamored with wide mouths,- for what, I could not understand. I looked around. It sifted into my mind that the morning fish from the traps were late in coming in, and the birds were impatient for their belated breakfast. Why shouldn't they be impatient? Weren't they partners of all fishermen to propitiate the finny gods and induce more runs of salmon for man and bird? So they cried and complained and worked themselves up to a fanatical frenzy for their rights. The air was filled with their weird screaming as I turned away at a new sound. A little white yacht was sidling in to the end of the dock, and I caught the black letters, Westward. It came over me that this was the end of one journey and the beginning of another for us. It meant a new home on the water, a new family to live with, and a new voyage to strange and little known shores far to the west. I stood looking as far as I could see into the fog that hung like another level sea at the middles of mountains, and more mountains, and beyond islands and more islands, until I could feel no further.

By noon we had said farewell to the big salmon ship and were new bedded and boarded on the little yacht. Tethered to her twin, the Morzhovoi, that was built for wild winds and waters, the Westward was provisioning and sniffing the sea for signs of a chance to make a spurt through the twisting, tricky tides that battle between the end of the Alaska Peninsula and the long line of Aleutian islands. The water gurgled like liquid through the narrow neck of a bottle. Time and tide ruled, and not till the appointed hour did the boat plow her way into False Pass where the currents of two oceans pushed and wrestled with each other, shoving and shifting the shallow sand bottom into shoals and bars barely under the surface. Bump! Bump! Grind! Grind! came the groaning sound as the boat scraped. The engines were still in the

act of slowing down when the bow heaved into the air, the tide caught under her and she lurched over on her side, stuck tight on the sand. The air was filled with the hissing and swirling of the water around her as she reeled helplessly in a wide channel increasing in its boisterousness as the wind rose. For three hours the boat tossed in the white-caps. Then gradually as the incoming tide rose, she righted herself. The engines rumbled again. We edged cautiously out.

All at once we were in the Bering Sea, but how we got there I don't know, for I was seasick and off in another country. It was night. The boat went to sleep. The lights went out. In the dark pilot house, the captain stood grimly at the wheel with eyes lowered upon the lighted well that held the compass. The slickered crew moved methodically about. Far into the night we climbed the crests and settled shivering into the troughs with the sickening sensation of falling, falling into the bottomless space of a bad dream. The intermittent crash of great seas smothering over the decks, the continuous clattering of a loose davit, the dropping of small articles within that scurried over the floor, the banging of an unlatched door, the complaining of the wracked body of the boat as she rolled first on one side and then the other, and the whistling of the sixty-mile gale were an all night accompaniment to my surging, onward march.

Anchored in a little bay which was not more than an indentation of the coastline of Unimak, the first big island of the Aleutian chain, the ship met a morning that was still wild. A vivid picture hung before us. We rocked on an indigo sea under the white dome of a volcano with rolling, green hills sweeping down at our feet. The sun broke a way through the clouds and sent a path of light across the water to us. We scrutinized these lifeless, Robinson Crusoe shores with curiosity and not a little doubt. They were lonely and fearsome, but we persuaded ourselves that this was the land of adventure. A dory with four men put off to scout along the coast for the

entrance of a nameless river near an abandoned native hut. These directions were anything but definite, for this land is full of nameless rivers and abandoned huts. Anxious eyes followed the course of the boat as it hunted the shoreline. We hunted, too, with the glasses, but the only encouraging signs were a few seals sporting in the waves and numberless birds winging and squawking near a silvery spot on the beach. All at once, voices: the explorers were back. From the boat they had seen a beautiful camping place on a little stream running close under the shelter of a hill, two Alaska brown bears on a slope, and some caribou asleep and unconscious of intruders. The words tumbled out for waiting ears. Hurry, so camp could be pitched before night! There was a day's work for everybody. White tents had to be set up for the commissary department, and oiled silk tepee tents for sleeping; and there was moss to be pulled from the thick tundra for carpets and pads under the beds, for the ground here was eternally sodden. There was instant stir of excitement. We looked with new interest on these wild shores.

That ~~One~~ evening we climbed the steep river bank behind the camp where the greedy stream persistently ate it away, and wandered over the higher fields picking flowers in the luminous twilight. Beds of blue violets softly tinged the hills ahead of us, splashed with the stronger tones of purple orchids in spotted, tiger-like leaves. On up the ridge of the sandy headland that banked itself boldly above the beach, with its face swept clean and bare by the wind, we tramped, to look down on a big band of birds rocking on the water of a sheltered curve of the coast. They showed the slim heads of harlequins, bluish-black with white cheek patches and collars. These richly barred and spotted ducks summer in the cold regions of eastern Asia, Greenland, Iceland and northern North America, going south to the middle states in winter. They are rollicking sprites of these white streams born of snowy summits, where they

bob and dive as they fish in the rough water. How does such a great, tempestuous mother as this arctic sea protect and nourish these countless, frail children of the wild? Surely she inspires them with unbounded courage and love of life.

Wading in wild grass to our knees on our way home along the roof of the sand dune, suddenly we came upon the habitations of men, but not of today. I wondered why the coarse grass was so tall here, and was looking for a trail around some large patches that blocked my way almost to my shoulders, when I stumbled against something hard. It was too much smothered for me to even guess what it was, but when I tried to avoid it in several directions, I found I was struggling along an overgrown wall of some kind. The tale of an old barabara or sod-hut village on this island flashed into my mind, and I began to search excitedly. Soon I found myself at the entrance of a doorway, and although it was almost entirely choked with grass, I felt along the edge and found the wall to be several feet thick and made of sod. As I pushed my way down into a square room through the tangle of grass that covered the floor and walls, the spirits of its builders came up about me, swarthy Aleuts with dull faces and slant eyes of the early days when the Russian invaders ruled here with a hard hand. I went softly and gingerly about, feeling the hard floor tramped and baked for more than a century, perhaps, until I was bewildered and lost in this ancient town. One room opened into another, with thick walls and foundations welded together like a fortification with narrow passageways between, until I had counted thirty or more. All at once I came out into the center of the village where a circular sod structure stood, a community gathering place, I thought. Searching about, I picked up a spear head, and then another. Were they early weapons? Certainly they were primitive in their clumsy hewing.

I stood at the top of the crest looking down on the bulging mounds

of tall grass that buried this early human fort, for that was what it had been. Why had it been built on the top of this wind-blown slope, the coldest and stormiest place on the island? I turned and looked down on the sea, crashing and pulling against the shore. Yes, these dark hunters and fishers had scanned the ocean in all directions. No invaders could land without being seen. And behind them on the island, they again were high above the river and the lower reaches which spread away on all sides. For all this, I remembered that they had been easy victims to their strong, cruel Russian masters, who made slaves of them and slaughtered at random. As I looked off over the green stretches, there was not a native village or human being of any kind living in the main extent of this large island. A couple of salmon ports brought fitful life to the eastern end, and a lonely lighthouse held the other. A native population was gone, leaving only buried barabaras. And this had been the history of the Aleut race in all of the islands of the Bering Sea and on this long chain which reached almost over to Asia as stepping-stones for foreign explorers and adventurers.

The next day was one of high adventure with a bounding, buoyant ending. There was subdued haste among the group that sat upon sawed-off wood blocks in front of the cook tent in the frosty morning. Cups of coffee and bowls of rolled oats were handed from the red-hot stove inside. Trickles of steam ascended into the air. The aroma of this bourgoo (as the Captain called hot porridge) mixed with butter and sugar, will always bring back to me the misty moors of that morning under a pendent volcano, and the muffled roar of a boreal ocean waiting for us.

We had been on these lonely shores for ten days, and still no bears. Those wanderers of island nights had softly passed us by. Food was low in camp, but no one wanted to leave. There were still rolled oats- which meant three times a day now- perhaps a dozen hardtacks, which tasted as good to us as dog-biscuits do to canines, and a little package of raisins. The rice,

(may the gods be praised for growing it!) was gone. There were only dribbles of butter and a few teaspoonsful of sugar and coffee. Still we lingered for just one more ~~exploring~~ hunting trip, up another little river, persuading ourselves that sufficient unto the day would be the food thereof. The scarcer it got and the smaller the portions, the better it tasted. It only served to draw us closer together, this subtle sharing.

Three small boats were loaded, the motor cruiser, the rowboat and the little canoe. Cameras, film cases, knapsacks, a waterproof bag of frugal lunch, with odds and ends for a day's trip were packed in. In the lead boat towing the other two, were Campbell, the captain and the engineer, with the camera man, ten-year old Betty and I in the rowboat behind, and Cam bringing up the rear in the canoe. For four or five miles we slanted eastward along the coast, bobbing dizzily over the waves which were fretted into froth by a high wind, as we searched for the entrance of a salmon stream that led back to the forty lakes. Towed sharply uphill and down, we were continually balancing the load and bating our breath, for the next moment we pulled up the face of a green wall just in time to slither down its towering crest before it combed over us. The singing of the water against the sides of the boat filled my ears joyously. As we topped a crest, I caught a glimpse of the mouth of the stream, but my eyes widened at the sea of tumbling breakers bewteen, piling one upon another. I looked at the nearing shore and instinctively braced my feet against it. All at once we were tossed this way and that: we were in the midst of an immense, roaring tumult. The waves broke over us faster than we could right ourselves, the lead boat still snaking us along. We cut loose, and jerked spasmodically as the rope gave way. Behind us the canoe did the same. It was each one for himself now. All three boats were pitching about like tooth-picks.

The three men in the motor boat ahead all wore slickers and rubber

boots. The latter were ponderous and would soon fill with water and drag them down if they had to swim. As I watched, I saw one boot come off, and then another. Campbell peeled off a heavy sweater. Confusedly I heard Cam calling behind me. He was standing up in the rolling canoe, gesticulating wildly. I looked ahead. The cruiser, which was heavily loaded, was settling slowly. She was long and slim and inflexible. Instead of jumping the waves, she plowed her pointed nose down into the green depths as if trying to commit suicide. Soon the men were sitting in water up to their arms. The next plunge submerged them. They were struggling in the breakers while the boat floated bottom up nearby. Frenzy seized us as a green bank poured down upon us and churned us shoreward. We back-paddled away from that seething sargasso where boat, bundles and human beings were boiled back and forth. Picking the least maddened spot between the crashing breakers, we rode helplessly to shore and were sprawled upon the beach like wreckage. The canoe had fared the same. Landing Betty and me, and emptying the remaining camera stuff out of the boats, back they went to the rescue. The three men were still tossing about in white-caps, trying to swim and pull off their clothing at the same time. But they made no headway toward shore, as there was a continuous surging back and forth of the currents. The water was ~~like~~ made of melted icebergs. The swimmers could not hold out long. I saw the captain trying to get astride the overturned boat which was twisting about in the whirlpool. But the waves washed him off faster than he could climb on. Something had to be done. Cam made a dash for it in the rowboat and somehow reached the middle of the maelstrom, and towed the drowning men back to safety.

It was a shivering party, blue with cold, that gathered about the little beach bonfire. There had been two dry matches in the crowd. The four of us who came through partly dry, pulled off our coats, sweaters and shirts to divide with the waifs. Betty and I tended the fire and hunted driftwood

along the sand and behind the mounds, boxes, bits of spar and any refuse washed up ~~by~~ from passing boats. But passing boats were almost as scarce as trees on these far, forsaken shores, and there wasn't even a ghost of a tree. Sodden socks and bedraggled garments ~~hung~~ steamed about the fire, and everybody lay on the warm sand refreshing his feelings and his vigor, talking of anything but boats and billows. It was just a part of the program of pilgrims on a strange island, and was all forgotten. Our buoyancy came back with a rush. As I lay behind a sand dune with the breath of the bonfire blowing warm against my back, I looked off in serene contentment over the wide quiet marshes.

By noon it was a hilarious crowd that explored the meandering mouth of the river, so thick with surging salmon that one felt he could almost use them for a bridge. They were pushing and struggling back to the spawning beds on the shallows. Three white-headed or bald eagles stood solemnly fishing on sandbars in the middle of the stream. And the gulls were congregated as usual, clamoring and gossipping in loud tones.

In the afternoon we girded ourselves for the long walk homeward on the beach. The ocean was still in no temper to brook any liberties, so the rowboat and canoe were pulled high upon the sand and left bottom up. The motor cruiser had drifted ashore some way further down, and was also left by the way as we passed it. When we came to a fair sized river that cut deep channels as it crossed the beach, we had to stop and consider our resources for fording it. With some delay and bolstered bravado, the army started to cross. There were seven of us. When it came my turn to step in, I took a look at the deceitful current. It was difficult to tell where the deep spots were waiting for me. In I went and instantly felt my feet going out from under me. The soft bed of the stream shifted constantly, pulling the sand away. It gave the boisterous current a chance to buffet me over. A wavering, a reached hand, and I was in shallower water, and over. The

river gurgled gleefully out to sea.

Tramp, tramp, sounded the feet on the sand, hardened by the constantly surging and falling sea. Up against the dark clouds above the vivid green of the shores, the sun flared, turning them to roseate salmon. Behind loomed Shishaldin, feathering his tip with a wisp of warm breath from his yawning throat. A little further back, dimly outlined in the evening mist, hung the white cone of Ragged Jack. And soon on the horizon ahead of us a thin column of smoke trailed into the air, and the tents came into view.

I lay in bed between eider-down quilts with a soft air mattress underneath on a thick layer of moss, basking in the glow of a fire in the little sheet-metal stove in my tent. On the rough rail behind, an unusually long array of heavy woolen socks were strung out, and on a line over my head were other damp clothes. Through the open door the ripples on the little river were lighted up. The sound of quiet voices sifted in from the other tents. There were a stillness and wideness all about. This was Aleutland.
Was there any place in all the world where I had rather be than this? Nowhere.

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LUNY

by

Irene Finley

"Where's that crazy pup of yours bound for now?" grumbled Jake.

A living streak of white doubled and straightened, doubled and straightened, along the faint line of road and faded into the moonlight. The silence of a desert evening stretched taut to the breaking point down the sagebrush slope and away and away over the dim reaches. Only the brittle sound of a porcupine gnawing pine bark in the stunted grove broke the stillness. The drooped, inert figure of a woman sat on the cabin doorstep, her eyes following the flight of that pale shadow down the road. On the ground against a log, a chunky man sprawled. A battle-scarred old airdale lay at his feet, and a little way off a mild-eyed sheep dog sat with pricked-up ears, also intent upon that soundless sea of sage. No living thing could be out there. (No living thing could be out there.) But yes. That hollow dearth of sound and moon mystery veiled phantom shapes astir, for night is the play time of the desert folk. And into that luminous stillness the white coyote had disappeared.

Connect with coyote after running

The air was breathless, ready to be shattered by sound or motion. Presently two round, furry shapes with puff-balls bobbing at the rear like corks and big ears set high like sails to catch every whisper of the wind, came hopping up and down, one behind the other, as softly as if the breeze were billowing them. And two more silent sprites came to life out of the sage and hobby-horsed into the open. Half protruding from a deceptive bush, a corpulent one squatted with flattened ears and a placid look in his round eyes. This magic meeting electrified the assemblage. One thumped a challenge with his hind feet. Another sprang into the air to his fullest height, lifted higher by the long ears, twisted in mid-air and snapped down again into a round ball with all four pads as one. So, after long hours of "freezing" close in the warmth of the day

till they were a very part of the sage that sheltered them, the jack-rabbits were gathering under the moon. Every bush gave up its little ghost till the desert danced and dervished.

Down in the waste sink of the valley below the rabbits' playground other forms were moving. The antelope had come in from the high mesas and rimrocks to the water hole for their evening drink. Twice a day only did the shy prong-horns visit the trysting place, in this pale, eerie night light, and again at the break of day when the red sun shot slanting shafts across the bluish wastes and the "plopping" of the strutting sage cocks sounded fitfully. Now night and the moon had calmed the withering wind of noonday and laid the stinging alkali dust to sleep. Lithe bodies with spindle legs , slim heads and hooked horns padded softly about in the crusted salt grass or out upon the scabby, cracked shore of the dwindling lake, the nauseous water thick with sediment. Here and there about the margin the up-turned horns of starved steers told the story of a mortal struggle. But in this ghost-garden the antelope played and pushed, ever pushed head against head, legs braced, sinews taut, in the oldest game of the desert, supremacy to the strong bucks. Just now it was play, or practice, for the season of battle for mates was over. Already behind them for miles around in the sage, fawns a few days old lay sleeping or nursing at their mothers' sides. Or alone, the lank, wobbly-kneed little forms lay flat with closed eyes in the bare,open spaces, peaceful under the wide skies; protected only by life's luck, and that the slenderest thread. For hark! A long, quavering, dog-like cry, eerie, mournful, full of longing, mellowed across the moonlit stretches--no, not sinister nor savage in sound, but a brute tongue telling his communion with the night and the tormenting moon. But brute he was, the melancholy prairie wolf, and death to others in the desert.

The clicking of horns at the water hole ceased abruptly. All heads lifted in the direction of the cry; sounded a dull thudding of front feet as

a challenge. Out over the whitening expanse not a movement. The baby antelope still slept peacefully in their moonlit beds.

The white coyote, low to the ground, slid back up the road toward the cabin. The hair bristled along his back and rose stiff on his neck. A half hour ago running, running down through the sage, his ears streaking back, his eyes unseeing, the ecstasy of the wide night carrying him on, he had come close to the realm of his own race, the coyote clan, as dim and unfathomable to him as the prairie that hid them. Running abandoned, a sound had shocked him into a paralysis of fear and he had slid into the sagebrush not far above the phantom parade on the lake shore. His straining eyes lost themselves in the shadows as he visioned the dim shapes below. His ears cocked tense for every small stirring, a scratching on one side, a cautious padding on the other, or a soft swish of some body coming through the air toward him. Every sagebush concealed something, he didn't know what. Perhaps the bushes themselves were alive. He tingled until he could hardly hold himself. Then came that unearthly, wailing cry just below him. Like a spring coil released, he hurtled into the air, and the next instant he found himself fleeing back up the hill with that awful thing pursuing him.

The open space in front of the cabin came into view. He felt the presence of the two people who were his own folk, the only ones he had ever known. There they were, sitting solidly as he had left them. The man's light shirt shone in the moonlight. The pup scuttled low and skirted the circle cautiously, coming up behind the still figures. Low voices came to him. Yes, everything was all right again. He stood tense a minute; then with manaical glee, pounced out of the stillness toward the shirt. A sidelong slash-- a tearing. He had jumped his victim, cut a throat and gone. It was the hunting instinct, the beginning of the keen, cruel killer, he who himself in generations behind had been met with human cruelty, trailed and persecuted to the extinction of his race. His sharp teeth penetrated deeper than the cloth shirt and took a nip in the man's

ribs. A back-handed cuff upset the little tormentor. But what was a mere rebuff to him? He couldn't sit still, so he trotted about for something new to tease. Here and there he flashed, a slim shadow like a moth befuddled by the night and the white light. But he wasn't befuddled. He was at his keenest in the night, but aimless and bewitched. Later when the darkness would become his day, his time of tracking, killing, gorging, he would be swifter, deadlier, under the moon. But he was young now, and it was late; so he dropped down in a ball in the grass and went to sleep. That fleeting, moonlight glimpse of the freedom and fear of the great desert had touched him lightly. But could he forget that chilling cry of his kind? He had never heard it before, could not even dream what it meant to him. Though it made his flesh creep and his hair bristle, and terror-stricken, sent him flying to his only known refuge, his human family, yet it would come back to him out of the dark and haunt him until he followed it.

The coyote pup had been a member of Jake's household for a week, an unlawful respite of life that didn't belong to him according to the sheepherder, but one that was due to the lonliness of a woman. No varmint should live that long and make himself so cussed and knowin' under foot, Jake said. He spat emphatically with his back to Maggie, who was as silent as the sagebrush plains. She had looked across these far, forsaken wastes every day, every day, until their wild distance and despair had settled in her dark eyes. Inevitably those burning eyes compelled Jake to turn and look at her with a furtive worry in his own. For many days now she had stared at him, and straight on through him, as if seeing strange things in a world far beyond his own, visions that held her suspended in a hollowness of sound and motion, watching, waiting. It made Jake feel creepy as if someone was spying on him, as if something awful might happen any minute. Maggie sure was queer these days. So, the irrepressible, romping pup, the only thing to break that distraught gaze in Maggie's eyes, still played about the dooryard to the increasing irritation of dog and master. Jake was peeved, too, because he couldn't collect the bounty on his "yaller" head.

And thereby hung the key to the secret, only part of which would ever be unlocked. The coyote's head wasn't yellow, nor any other part of him; and from all indications he never would become the tawny-gray of the ordinary wolf. For he wasn't ordinary at all, as the callous coyote killers had recognized that early morning in May when, gunnysacks clanking with shovels and traps, they had ridden across the evaporated alkali flats and jerked up before an old badger burrow. One man had knelt and examined the hole while the other walked around it, tapping the ground as he followed its hollow descent. About nine feet back from the mouth, he had stopped and begun digging. Soon a big mound of dirt piled up and the two were spelling each other at the perspiring task as they stood more than waist deep below the surface. For it had been a long, hard way through that baked soil to the bottom of the coyote den. But it was worth while for there might be ten or a dozen fuzzy, yellow pups down there, a feather in the cap of the government hunters.

Some time after noon the hunters had appeared at Jake's sheep ranch, the only source of food and shelter for many miles. Jake's band having been rid of this coyote menace, he wasn't surprised when the two men decided to stay with him for a few days. He had been grateful, of course, even if they did let the old female get away and brought this pestering, pale pup onto him. He hated the coyote tribe more than the hunters did, for he knew well that he had lost a lot of lambs by them.

That night the leader of the raid had spat tobacco into the low fireplace above a row of stretched-out boots. There was a gloating look in his bloated, red eyes, and a stained ring around his thick, puckered mouth.

"There was only four little brats in the bottom of the hole, bunched back against the dirt, their eyes almost poppin' out at sight of me. Then I seen something light and furry in a corner. I thought it was a dead rabbit they'd drug in. But I seen its eye wink, a funny-lookin' eye, pale,

bluish-gray with a black ring around like the watch eyes of them old polka-dot hounds that used to run under the wagons. It was a empty, stary eye and give me the creeps. 'Come out, you little cuss,' says I, and I snatched him by the back of the neck. Without a sound he turned and grabbed me with them devlish, sharp teeth. I thumped him on the head and threw him down with the other carcasses. Then somethin' made me look at him again. He was pure white, the first one I'd ever seen or caught in my life. And I been trappin' for fifteen years. And them blue eyes-- then I knew: he was a albino, one of them freaks that ain't got no color and just happens once in a lifetime. Quick I jerked him up by a hind leg to see if he'd come to life. He was plenty stunned all right, but he didn't want to wake up too soon with me lookin' at him. Well, I chucked the dead ones into a sack and him on top, and toted'em up here. Sure enough, he come to on the way. And see what I done for myself-- got the only record for a albino coyote in the state. And as soon as he's old enough to travel, he's goin' back to live among them fed-up animals in the government park. No starvin' for him, or snarlin' and fightin' with a badger for the carcass of a ground-digger. No traps or poison; just a easy, happy life with everybody lookin' purty at him."

The firelight had flickered on Maggie, hudled in a corner. She had listened to this sentence of lonliness for her when the white coyote should be taken away, and her eyes had glowed almost green like a wild animal's. She would find a way to keep him.

Now, as her eyes followed him into the dim well of nothingness before her, she thought of his coming a short time ago, sick and lifeless from mistreatment and disagreement of the only food she had for him. He had been a lop-eared, bleary-eyed runt with a limp rag of a tail, insensible to everything but hunger, and cold, and pain. The pathetic white form had lain feverish and glassy-eyed, languid and indifferent to the freshness of every new spring day. She had kept him warm, watched over him and fussed with his food as if he were a human baby. Only yesterday the tide had turned. He had pitched in and eaten his horrid

boiled porridge as if to get rid of it once and for all; then perhaps he could conquer the world. He started out to do it; and from that time on Jake had called him Luny.

With the coyote's return to health, the world suddenly became large and full of sunshine. He accepted at once the whole playground for his own, trotting like a busy child from one surprising thing to another. The movement of the wind in a thick bed of leaves, or the mere rolling of a rock in the road brought a shock to him, a quivering suspicion that they might come to life and chase him. For he wanted to be shocked and he wanted to be chased, perhaps with that sure intuition that nothing but the wind could catch him.

Luny was to learn that there was a good deal of difference between facing the opinionated old airdale and the good-natured sheep dog. From the beginning, Bob had no brotherly love for the presumptuous pup, Bob, the veteran who, when a tortured, raging old prairie wolf was found fast in a trap, fell to and finished him properly, his share being a good supper of hot blood. To him, coyote was legitimate game, anywhere, anyhow. Of all this, Luny was shockingly oblivious.

On the first day that the pup had the run of the yard, he ran amuck of old Bob. His gray eyes, roaming about, were caught and held by this magnificent one, and it was a case of love of dog for dog at first sight. The wild dog rushed whimpering, as he cringed low and fawned with flat ears, plump against Bob and began to nuzzle in his hair and nip eagerly. Luny didn't seem to notice the profound absence of welcome. Bob stood braced with a chip on his shoulder, his ears cocked over his smouldering eyes, his stiff tail hoisted as a danger signal. The small, white thing grovelled about him, till the offended old dog bared his teeth and snapped out a sudden warning. Shying back on short legs, the astonished pup cowered as if the whole world had fallen on him. Slowly he backed out of the presence of this arrogant one, till he could slink out of reach. Never a bark of remonstrance came from his mouth. He wasn't that kind

of a dog.

But a mere sore-head couldn't dampen Luny for very long. And now as the days went on, a hundred trivial happenings charged with burning curiosity, tempered by timely caution, furthered the growing pains of this reckless little wild dog. He lost his awe of old Bob, but not altogether his interest.

One morning ambling sidewise across the yard in search of relief from boredom, his nose lifted, his tail at a speculative angle, a movement from the old dog on the doorstep took him scampering in that direction, to pounce upon a hairy hind foot and tweak it sharply. When Bob woke up it was too late. The pale imp was clear across the yard, his eye bent on trouser legs near the tent. He was the essence of innocence and meekness. Coming to a tent rope, he butted head-on into it, tumbled over and rooted his nose in the dirt. No matter: the trouser legs were close by now. Tackling one, he buckled both fore paws around it and took in as big a mouthful as he could at the same time. Needle teeth sank into the flesh and hung on as he worried his victim vigorously.

"Let go my leg, you d--- little varmint! You're the meanest pest that's ever come on the place to harass a man!" The sheepherder's heavy boot lifted the furry ball and landed it out in the road. Luny didn't stop to figure things out. Swinging low, his gangling legs bent, his big knees sticking out, his frowsy feet flattened for running, he raced for his mistress, fell into her lap and lay quiet with his head burrowed under her arm. She patted him and smoothed his soft coat, fingering the limber body gently. He looked up at her and touched his pointed nose to her face in recognition of a haven in time of need.

Always he was a foolish, fanatic little pup that needed a guardian to watch his step for him. A month or so later, a spell of running nearly cost him his life. Pell-mell down the hill he sped toward the corral. Unable to check himself, he plunged headlong into the deep stream that had cut its own path in the bottom of the gulch. As he was carried along with the swift current, he paddled from one bank to the other and tried to clamber out. But the sides

of the ditch were almost perpendicular and the coyote's short legs clawed frantically for the top, only to slide back. It was just a matter of time when he would be exhausted and drown. But he wasn't going to die without a desperate effort. He did not whimper, his breath coming in quick puffs and his frightened eyes roving here and there for a way of escape. Shep, coming in from rounding up the sheep, took in the situation. His lifelong business had been to look out for foolish animals, and as a life-saver he didn't make any distinction between a lamb and its traditional enemy, a coyote. Trotting sure-footed along the bank opposite Luny, his knowing eyes watching for a chance of a quick movement, suddenly as the current billowed the bedraggled pup inshore, he knelt over the water and grasping the limp form by the back of the neck, lifted it out on the ground. The coyote was pretty well spent and flattened out without a sound. Calmly the sheep dog lay down beside him as if taking up an accustomed vigil. By and by when Luny had recovered his breath and shaken himself dry, they trotted up to the cabin for supper, as if life and death were only jokes anyway.

And thus it was that the strangeness began to happen around the place. From the very beginning, the white witch had woven a spell over Maggie, a good spell. Jake was a heavy sleeper and soon after nine o'clock the cabin was usually quiet except for his particular brand of midnight music. In the early days when the little coyote had been sick, Jake had become accustomed to be awakened by Maggie getting up in the night and covering the shivering little beast, or soothing its fretful whining with warm food. Once he had aroused enough to see her sitting as still as the night itself in a chair by the low fire, the white coyote in her arms. It was as if she was afraid to stir for fear of waking it.

In the morning Jake had remembered and pondered in his dull way. It had been evident that Maggie's whole day hung on the little waif. Jake was mystified that a scurvy varmint could mean so much to a woman. But the miracle had happened, and he didn't try to fathom it any further. The tension in the cabin had surely eased up. Maggie was as peaceful as the plains now and went about her simple

housework as if moved by some hidden rythm. Although she was not talkative, the haunted look had left her eyes. It was certain that his wife wasn't "queer" now. It didn't occur to Jake to ask what might happen when the coyote was not around the cabin any more and she was alone again.

But to Maggie, busy and contented though she was, it had occurred. At the sound of a horse's hoof in the dooryard, or a strange voice coming up the dusty road, she looked to see that Luny was close at hand and waited, afraid to go to the door. Then came word from headquarters asking Jake if he would keep the coyote till fall, as they feared to have a young animal travel across the country in the heat of summer. The government office would, of course, pay for his care. Jake was glum, growling that he wouldn't get even the price of a three-dollar bounty for the coyote's keep. But when he caught sight of Maggie's transfigured face, he bolted out of the cabin without another word.

Fall came and with it an eating suspense for Maggie. How could the day of doom for her be put off yet another time? Daily she scanned the thin line of road coming down the desert valley and her heart almost stopped beating for fear the shimmering heat waves might turn into dreaded human forms.

Luny had grown into a trim, self-poised young being, with cool eyes watching everything that went on about him, conjuring the meaning of this or that. There was a distinct understanding now between him and the dogs, a gentleman's agreement. Bob was old and accepted the changed positions by a studied indifference. Shep, mild-eyed still and puzzled, coming in from a long day's work with the sheep, gazed at the shimmering white coat of this lordly chosen one from afar, once the silly little pup that he had dragged out of the ditch in the nick of time. Luny acknowledged a brotherly relation to the other two because all three still lived in the dooryard and were ministered to by the mistress. And Maggie, happy but half grieved at the growing change in her "white dog," was filled with a presentiment of things to come. For many a day now she had watched him steal out to a jutting ledge of rimrock and sit silently looking far away over the misty sage. He

returned absorbed and restless, pacing back and forth like a caged creature. He was waiting for something. If only the quiet days would keep on going by till he was a full grown, wise wolf of the desert, till he felt the call of his own kind and should finally fade into that vacant vastness where no eye could find him!

One listless, hazy day came the rumor of rabies started by a wandering sheep dog that had been bitten by a mad coyote somewhere up the valley. And on the same day came the order from the government office for Jake to take great pains in crating the white coyote and to express him from the nearest railroad station on his long journey to his eastern home. But Jake was busy taking his turn at watching his prize band of sheep that pastured just below in the sink of the valley where a bottom seepage furnished green grazing. He had other bands that ranged out several days from the home ranch whose herders he could not even warn of the impending danger.

Maggie, working inside on that sinister day, saw only a neighbor sheep-herder down at the corral, nor did she ever know of the rabies rumor nor see the long envelope with the government seal on it. For her the wide spaces were as soundless and serene as on the first day. It seemed now as if no evil spirit could break the peace of that happy valley.

That same night a spark of that national holiday in July flared even to this baked and bleached valley hung high between barren, mountains when the camp crew gathered on the slope below Jake's cabin to show their patriotism. From the deep darkness at the water hole below and the surrounding sage spaces, startled eyes must have watched with a charmed fascination the mystery of the heavens as sizzling stars shot upward from the hillside as if fired from a pump-gun. Long gashes of flame curved into the sky to burst in showers of fire that fell sprinkling to earth, scattering the frightened beasts into a mad dash for higher lookouts.

The bonfire in front of the cabin was the scene of the innocent ex-

plosion whose lurid lights cast a spell over the desert. Maggie had her accustomed seat on the steps, while the men clumped about the fire, lost in the fun of the crackers and their coarse jokes. They were a grotesque group, these Basque sheepherders,-- tousled heads and red faces, high-heeled boots and high-water trousers, legs bowed like barrel hoops meeting in pigeon-toed feet, a waddling bunch of rioters. The dogs looked on suspiciously from a safe place in the shadows. Behind Maggie in the gloom of the doorway, Luny shivered in a panic of nervous fear, twitching as if each sputtering cracker hit him as it popped. Yet he couldn't take his eyes off that scene. A morbid curiosity forced him to see more.

A leering clown spied the trembling pup. Something flipped into the grass near the step. Luny peered down. Nothing stirred and the ground was dark. He crept out and stealthily approached the black spot. Without warning a red hole opened up under him and a fiery thing hit him square in the nose with a pop. His reflex muscles catapulted him into the air, and he didn't stop running until he was lost in darkness.

Soon he was in a deathly stillness. Even the pungent sage brushing his flanks filled him with terror. As softly as thistledown he ~~he~~ lifted each foot and put it down again. He couldn't stop: something pulled him on into the pulsing, black void, until he began to feel that he belonged there, was at home.

It was three days before Maggie laid eyes on Luny again, but if she had known where he had been and what he had seen, she would have rejoiced. For Luny had come into his own and was a real dog of the desert. That thoughtless firecracker had broken in one blow the chain that had held him to human beings. He would not miss even Maggie so much any more. But out in this boundless region of freedom, food was not plentiful, and he was such a slow wit at stalking that he went hungry most of the time. The jacks laughed at him, sitting

like staring stones under the bushes until he was fairly upon them. Then, as he sprang, a deft movement, and the gray forms shaded into nothingness before his eyes.

So, unexpectedly on the third day he found himself back at the cabin, his pointed muzzle poked in at the door, waiting for a bite of food till Maggie felt his eyes and turned with joy in her own. They were alone. Jake was down at the shed where he spent much time lately. She could hear a busy hammering, but she couldn't know that a prison was being built for Luny, a travelling prison that once entered would never open for him except to usher him into another, more strong and eternal. There would be light and food in abundance, and many people passing by. But always within those four impregnable walls the maddening hours would be ticked off till bones grew weary with lying on a bed of straw, and eyes grew dull with waiting. Better the weltering wastes with an empty stomach, and the long-limbed freedom of the starry nights as from the high rimrocks he answered the call of his kin. Better the startling clank of a steel trap and the agonizing hours under a blistering sun, perhaps with the frenzied anguish of gnawing off the paw that pinioned him, for freedom-- freedom, almost the only boon in a coyote's life.

Something was coming up the road, a lean dog with a bushy tail. Maggie's eyes followed him questioningly. He was too big for a sheep dog. Straight on he loped, his head hanging low and swinging from side to side. Once at a turn, the sage melting into the sky in the shimmering heat, hid him, and she thought he had turned off into the desert. But all at once, the huge, disheveled figure sprang out of the bushes almost in front of her, his jaw hanging, his frothing tongue lolling out, his blood-shot eyes half unseeing and full of savage misery-- a mad coyote! All of his desert wariness, all of his shrinking fear of a human being were gone. His brain crazed and on fire, all he knew was to wander, biting dogs, or sheep, or men, torturing something as he was tortured.

Maggie screamed, but the sound only drew his attention to her. At her side stood Luny, increased in size as every white hair on him stood on end, a horrible realization of this wild interloper gleaming in his eyes. How it came about, she never knew; but Maggie found herself inside the cabin, the door shut ~~slammed,~~ and she was leaning against it, dazed. She couldn't remember slamming the door, nor how long ago. A hollow silence all about struck her till she was afraid to move, afraid to look behind her in the dim room, terrorized at the thought of looking through the flimsy window out into the yard. The window sill was only a few feet from where she stood against the door. Shuddering, she pulled her body inch by inch along the wall toward that window. She closed her eyes for a minute, then peered around its edge. The yard was empty. Not a leaf stirred. The sage stood stiff and dry beyond the road; and Jake was coming along it.

He slouched down in a chair. "Supper ready?" he asked. "I've got to eat and get back to the corral. I've got some work to do yet." He watched his wife uneasily, and dropped his eyes when she turned to look at him. She said nothing, and he didn't notice the far-away look in her own eyes. When he went outside, he prowled around the cabin looking for something. Both dogs were there. After a little, he went down toward the shed as if he didn't find what he wanted.

Maggie stood looking out into the night, thinking of Luny, searching, asking where he was. She saw him in every little movement across the dim valley; saw him again in the lighted space in front of the cabin, his long nose on his paws, his pale eyes searching ever those far places that held the mystery of his life. But Maggie could not see another spot out there in the measuring sage, where the light fell softly on a sleeping white dog. No cage would ever hold him, nor would he ever stand a stiff, white wonder in a museum.

Winter was in the air. Of a morning now the stubby sagebushes rolled off across the valley, mile upon mile, in frosted rainbow tints. The aspens had already thrown their yellow leaves to the winds and stood bare and defiant.

And Jake, too, was in a defiant mood. He knew every coulee and ravine running into the hills in this country. He knew every trick of the wolf tribe that lies flat with nose sticking over the rim of an open mesa, eyes cool and unwavering till a horse all but trampled on him, when he melted away and no eye can pick him up. For two months Jake had used all the wiles of a wily hunter far and wide, and not even the ghost of the white coyote had he seen.

But Maggie's days were filled with the ghost of the white coyote. She knew all was well with him. Her eyes were full of peace as she returned to her old habit of gazing out upon those palpitating plains. For Luny lived out there. She knew it now. But she never told Jake, for the crated prison still stood down in the shed. Out there he was taking his part with the other free creatures, with the prong-horn bucks herding their harems jealously.

Echoed a long, dog-like cry, eerie, mournful, full of longing. It was Luny, singing from his lookout to the night!

Up in Bering sea two hundred miles north of the Aleutian chain of islands that stretch in a long string off to the west from the tip of the Alaskan mainland are the Pribilofs, a group of five small islands. These lumps of volcanic origin are bound up in the life history of a species of fur seal that lives no other place on the globe. No one knows how old the Pribilofs are yet from volcanic activity in these northern waters they may have been formed in a more recent period than the Aleutian chain. Yet from the fact that they are the ancestral home of the fur seal they may have appeared a thousand or more years ago. Early Russian trappers who took seals on the Aleutians saw the seals going off to the north e each season and followed them led to the discovery of the Pribilofs.

Tuffy and Cuffy.

AND THE WIND BLEW THROUGH HIS WHISKERS,-

JUST THE SAME!

The Story of Two Black Bear Cubs.

We're in the Bering Sea, but the Lord knows how we got here! Yesterday was an eventful day in the history of the American Nature Expedition on board of Mr. Campbell Church's yacht, Westward. The morning of June 12 came dull and cloudy, threatening a ~~little~~ blow on the open sea. The Westward lay snugly in bed by the side of the Muzhóvoi at False Pass, provisioning and sniffing the sea for signs of a chance to make a spurt through the twisting, tricky waters of this shallow way between Unimak Island and the mainland of the Alaska Peninsula. So while time and tide ruled, the twin mascots of the sturdy ship held sway, and open house. Cuffy and Tuffy, oblivious both to the impotence of man and the omnipotence of the sea, rolled and tumbled on the stern of the boat, now tugging on each other's ears, now worrying a coil of rope with the same gusto. From one thing to another they went as fast as they could shuffle on their flat feet, but always they went back to the greatest game of all, wrestling. This amused them for hours at a time.

And this is the way that Cuffy and Tuffy learned to forget their mother and some unhappy things that had happened to them not long ago. One day two hunters were plying a stream of southeastern Alaska, a wild and rugged region. Of course, they were looking for bears. Everybody who comes to Alaska has a dream of killing at least one "great big bear." Now these two were old hunters and had already killed their great big bears, and several of them. But bears are bears, and always to be watched. So they leveled their glasses on the old bruin and made out two cubs frisking along with her. In fact, all three were playing on a snow field. The black mother, for these were not the big brown or Kadiak bears, loped up the snowy slope, followed by the cubs pell-mell at her heels. But they had not climbed slippery slopes as many times as their mother had. After the first impetuous spurt, they began to slide and soon were tumbling head over heels down hill. Back they went to it again, only to repeat the perfor-

mance.

The hunters slipped in to shore and followed the banks of the stream on opposite sides, hoping to intercept the trio. The brush was too thick to see them from here. Old Mother Bruin, sniffing strangers perhaps, turned off to the left into the alders and for a while ~~the~~ her pursuers lost track of her. But, however, they were too close for her comfort, so to be on the safe side, she hustled the cubs up a fifteen-foot sapling, encouraging their unwillingness by shoves and pushes of her nose. Finally they settled on a limb and were as still as lambs. Mother Bruin then ambled along the trail as if cubs were no part of her existence. She had fooled her enemies. But not altogether. When one of the gunners picked up her trail and found that she was traveling ~~xxxxx~~ into a dense, narrow ravine, fearing that she would escape him altogether, he shot her. As he hurried along the trail to where she lay, he ran directly under the tree where the two hushed baby bears were perched. Finding no cubs with the dead mother, the hunters, who had come together by this time, back-tracked on the old bear's trail and as the big bear tracks ended under a tree, they looked directly up at the two fuzzy, black forms peering down silently at them. The minute one of the men started to climb the tree, the cubs both set up a wild and frightened bawling.

Now they had become partially accustomed to their new home and family and spent their days rolling and romping about the deck, with fried potatoes, hot cakes and syrup and other scraps from the table, and best of all, strawberry jam once in a while. to eat. ~~There~~ This was the next best thing to the red strawberries that grew on the hillsides, and they would never forget these. Now they had stopped cuffing each other to lick a jam dish, and as they came to the end of the jam, they licked faster and faster, reaching their soft ~~xx~~ tongues further and further under each other's noses. But one dish of jam wasn't really big enough for two cubs, so all at once there was an explosion. Without warning, Tuffy landed plump on ~~his~~ her brother and pulled and bit

his ribs, letting go to get a better bite on an ear or even his nose. When she nabbed his nose, this was too much, for a bear's nose is a tender spot. He wiggled from under her and scurried for a safer distance, while she hurried to lick the jam dish clean. Of course, if it had been anything but strawberry jam, she would have exercised more brotherly love.

Cont. — The Westward plowed her way through False Pass, a swirling battle of waters as tide pushed tide, shoving and shifting the shallow sand bottom into shoals and bars scarcely under the surface. Bump!. Bump! Grind, grind! came the groaning sound as the boat scraped. The engines were still in the act of slowing down when the bow heaved into the air, the tide caught under her and she lurched over on her side, stuck tight in the sand. The air was filled with the gurgling and hissing of the water around her, reeling helplessly in a wide channel increasing in its boisterousness as the wind rose.

Three hours the Westward tossed in the white-caps. Gradually as the in-coming tide rose, the boat righted herself. The engines rumbled again, and the ship edged cautiously out, The mate stood at the rail tossing the lead-line continually. As rythmic as the beat of the waves, came his singing voice; "And a half-two. And a quarter less-three. And a quarter less three." Monotously the tones trailed off into the mist as he stood like a statue of safety, swinging the heavy line with his purple-cold fingers and a smile on his face. The lights went out. The boat went to sleep, while the slickered captain and crew took the ship through the tumbling, mad tides out into the Bering Sea, heaving and roaring with a sixty-mile gale. Far into the night she climbed the crests and rode down into the troughs with the sickening sensation of falling, falling into the bottomless space of a bad dream. The intermittant crash of billows breaking over the decks, the continuous pounding of a loose

davit, the falling of small articles within, the banging of an unlatched door, the creak and groan of the timbers, the whistling of the speeding wind enveloped the courageous little sea-rover.

But this was not all that was heard. Listen! Were there voices in the air? Soft, singing tones wafted down, now here, now there, half pleading, clinging against the violence of the night as they were borne across the waters. Then one voice lifted lighter and sweeter, and the words came faintly,- "Honest and True." The secret of the siren voices was revealed, a victrola humming merrily in the closed living room with its accompaniment of stringed instruments. A nineteen-year old boy, lover of adventure, the sea and boats, keyed to the pitch of the storm gods who rode high that night, was keeping tune to their tramping. Satisfied, he curled up on his rocking cot and slept the sleep of the young and happy.

Anchored in-shore, the ship met the morning which was still wild. A dory with four men went ashore to find a camping place or locate a rumored cabin or barabara on the all but forsaken shore. In an hour or so they returned wet and cold. No shelter was to be found and no reindeer or other meat. The only game sighted was a big brown bear a couple of miles off on the flat. A few seals and numberless birds hung over the shallow entrance of a stream.

Later in the day when the waves were lulled some, the dory made another trip to the shore in another direction. Anxious eyes on the boat scanned its course as it hugged the shoreline. Then silence for a while. All at once voices, as the explorers returned. "A bee-utiful camping place on a little trout stream running close to the shelter of a hill, two big bears seen, and a herd of caribou lying asleep and unconscious of intruders. In the near distance a chain of lakes like invitations of adventure." The words tumbled out for eager ears.

That night before the sun went down, it broke a way through the three-

tening clouds and lighted a path of light across the water to the waiting ship. Up against the dark clouds above the vivid green of the mossy rounded shores it flared, turning them to roseate salmon. Behind loomed old Smoky Moses, snow-clad to his feet, feathering his tip with a wisp of warm breath from his ragged throat crater. Behind, dimly outlined in the mist, hung the white cone ofRagged Jack. So the lengthening line of the Aleutian Chain of islands is marked by sentinels of smoking craters, yet clad in their covers of ermine.

It was night again, and cold. And where would the bear cubs sleep now, poor things. Poor things? Two big dry-goods boxes, one covering the other, rocked in the wind on the stern of the boat. Inside the two black cubs lay hugged in each other's arms with their noses close together, as warm as kittens on the hearth in their wooly fur. Tuffy and Cuffy were children of the wild and sufficient unto themselves against the icy winds and the fury of the storm.