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CHAPTER I.

TOM SCOTT TO THE RESCUE.

"Here's Dyea, and this is Skaguay. The White Pass starts off here and goes right plumb over the mountains like this—"

And the speaker made a bold stroke with a huge piece of chalk with which he was ornamenting the floor of the village store in Merrivale, where everything was dispensed from postage stamps to lace curtains.

Clustered about his kneeling figure were a dozen men of all ages whose eyes were eagerly following the rude map of Alaska which Hank Merritt was drawing for their benefit.

For stories of the wonderful wealth of this far-off Eldorado had penetrated even this remote place among the hills of New Hampshire, and the Globe reports of the lucky strikes made by venturesome argonauts had stirred the blood of every man in the village until the riches of the Yukon valley had become the all-engrossing topic among those who met every evening at this public rendezvous to pass an hour or two after their day's toil was finished.

"This is where you strike the lake," he continued, "and then it's 'bout all water the rest of the way, near as I can make out. Gold is so plenty they dig it out just as easy as we spade up worms to go fishing with. Gee whizz! I'd like to try it if it wasn't so darned far off an' didn't cost so much to get there."

The arrival of the mail interrupted his artistic efforts, and when the handful of letters had been put away the postmaster was called upon to read aloud from the papers anything new regarding the favorite topic.

"The steamer P. W. Wear had eight miners on board who brought out a total of \$460,000. Others had \$10,000 to \$30,000 apiece, and some refused to give their figures. The steamer Portland brought down \$1,000,000. One man got \$216 from a pan of dirt, and two miners cleaned up \$6,000 in a single day's work."

As the reader paused one might have heard a pin drop, so intense was the silence for fully a minute. Then a dozen voices broke out in exclamations of amazement and disbelief and in the turmoil nothing intelligible could be distinguished.

There was one listener, however, who said nothing, but after the rest had calmed down a bit he secured a copy of the paper and hastened to the farm where he was employed with a wild impulse surging through his brain. In his little room under the eaves he eagerly devoured the article he had heard at the store, and in another column he found an interview with one of the pioneers of Dawson City, giving full details as to the proper outfit and its cost.

It was midnight when the stalwart young farmer sought his couch, and for the first time in his healthy life sleep refused to come to him, for he had made up his mind to leave the village where the greater part of his youth had been spent and seek his fortune in this distant land, where a stout heart and strong hands seemed able to force Nature to relax her icy grip on her golden stores.

Tom Scott's life had been an uneventful one. He was the only son of a sea captain and until the death of his mother they lived on Cape Cod. Then an uncle took him on his farm at Merrivale and his father continued his roving life. A few years ago, however, Obed Rider, a native of Merrivale, who had sailed with Tom's father as mate, returned to the village with a story which made a great sensation at the time. It was to the effect that Capt. Scott had deserted his ship at San Francisco and absconded with a large sum of money belonging to the owners.

Tom was a lad of 18 at the time, but few eye-witnesses would ever forget the scene when he hurled the lie at a young tiger until overpowered by the brute strength of his father's defamer, whose nose was disfigured for life in the encounter and who vowed vengeance for his injury.

This was four years ago, but Tom Scott still felt the disgrace cast upon his name. His uncle had now been dead over three years, and Tom had saved the wages paid him by the farmer for whom he had worked since that time, until he possessed about \$400, which was deposited in the village savings bank. This would buy him a miner's outfit, but how to reach the far northwest was the problem.

His sleep was troubled that night, but with the morning came the determination to start at once for Boston and trust to fortune to join one of the numerous expeditions organizing there.

His announcement was received with amazement, but Tom Scott was a man of prompt action, and that afternoon saw him in Boston. He had been in the city several times before, and had no difficulty in finding a respectable hotel where the rate was within his means, but by the time he had eaten his supper it was growing dark and a thick snow-storm set in. He determined, however, to lose no time in his search, and made his way to the water front, where he had no doubt he could obtain all the needed information.

Atlantic avenue was practically deserted when he reached it, and the big flakes had covered the ground with a white mantle which made his footsteps inaudible as he walked along, not without a slight feeling of uneasiness as he thought of his little capital strapped about his waist under his clothes in a waterproof belt which had been his first purchase.

As he approached a saloon from which came a confused murmur of voices and a sharp clinking of glasses, two men came out directly in front of him and turned in the direction in which he was walking, being only a few feet in advance. Coming from the well-lighted saloon as they did into the thick storm, they failed to notice Tom, and upon this fact his whole future depended, although he was far from suspecting such an improbable thing at the time.

"I tell you he's going on that bark to San Francisco," said the taller of the two men, eagerly. "He's bound for the Klondike, and he must have a fat roll with him. I heard him say he would buy his outfit out there. We can lay for him on the dock when he is going on board."

"It's a risky job," replied the other, nervously.

"Oh, what's the matter with you?" was the angry rejoinder.

"Nothing, but we take great risks. I don't like it."

"There's no risk at all," urged the other. "All we have to do is just tap him on the head and go through him. The whole thing won't take a minute, and we can be at the West end before he knows what struck him. I'm going to have his stuff, and if you want to go back on me, I'll—"

The rest of the sentence was indistinguishable. The word Klondike had naturally attracted Tom's attention, and he had involuntarily strained to catch the men's conversation, but he felt a sudden thrill of horror as he realized the full import of what he had just heard.

What could he do? That the men were planning a robbery, if not a murder, was evident. He could not warn the intended victim, for he had no means of finding or knowing him, and to lose sight of the men to find an officer was out of the question. Then the athletic young fellow set his teeth and shrugged his broad shoulders, while under his gloves a pair of hard fists balled up involuntarily.

To some it might have occurred to pay no attention to the matter, but Tom Scott was of different caliber. It was true that he had seen little of the great world, but he was brave to a fault, and nature had added a tall, well-knit frame to this gift. He determined to prevent the villains from accomplishing their purpose if it lay in his power, and had no doubt of his ability to do so.

Fearful that the men might turn and see him, he slackened his pace and allowed them to gain several yards on him, keeping close to the buildings himself and hoping each moment to see an officer.

But none appeared, and soon the two thugs turned into a dark, narrow alleyway, which led to one of the wharves, and were lost to view.

Tom was in a quandary. To venture into the place was to invite attack from the villains, and he decided to wait in a convenient doorway until the intended victim came along or an officer should appear to whom he could tell his story.

A few yards to the right he found a sheltered recess in front of a block, and took up his station, keeping a sharp lookout in the direction of the saloon, where he naturally supposed the man was enjoying himself. A short distance away a street lamp shone dimly through the falling snow and threw a broad band of light on the sidewalk, across which no one could pass without being seen by him.

It was a situation to try the stoutest nerves, for Tom was unarmed, and the man he was trying to save might be intoxicated, while the two robbers would surely be provided with all the tools of their trade. A dozen schemes flashed through his mind as he crouched in the shadow, only to be discarded as useless. The time dragged slowly enough, but his resolution did not falter.

Suddenly a dark figure came staggering across the lighted space and Tom's heart gave a bound. Was this his man? Would he have sense enough to understand his danger?

No, the drunken sailor lurched heavily along and turned up a side street a short distance beyond the alleyway, where the men were hidden.

Another and still another followed at intervals, but none paused on their way and Tom began to wonder if his ears had not played him false. He was beginning to waver when a slight crunching noise at his left caused him to turn quickly in time to see the form of a man disappear in the alleyway, having approached from the opposite direction while Tom was looking up the avenue.

What was to be done? He stood for a moment with his heart beating tumultuously and every nerve tingling. Then from the dark opening

came a muffled cry, followed by an oath and the sound of a struggle. Tom cast one quick look about him. No one was in sight and the next instant he had pulled off his gloves and darted up the passageway at full speed.

The darkness was intense for a short distance, but after a few yards he emerged into a small open space in the midst of which the three men were writhing and twisting in desperate struggles. Tom was unable to distinguish one from another, but as he reached the spot one man tore himself free and shouted:

"Help! Police! Stand back or I'll shoot—"

The rest of his throat was drowned by a heavy blow from a blackjack, which knocked the weapon from his hand.

"Stop!" cried Tom, springing toward the assailant.

He was too late, for a second blow stretched the stranger senseless and bleeding on the snow, and with an angry snarl the robber turned just as Tom's right fist shot out with tremendous force.

Down went the man like a stricken ox and Tom grappled with the other with a shout of triumph. His blood was up, and, lifting his smaller opponent bodily from the ground, he shook him as a mastiff would a terrier.

"Hands off!" panted the helpless man, fiercely. "Curse you, what are you trying to do?"

He was not long in doubt, for Tom hurled him against the side of a (stone building with such force that he fell in an inert heap and lay motionless.

Tom turned to see what had become of the taller man, but at that instant he felt a sharp pain in his side and a strong hand seized him by the throat and bent him backwards, while a hoarse voice hissed in his ear:

"Take that for your pains, you meddling fool!"

With a desperate effort he twisted himself free from his assailant, springing aside barely in time to escape another lunge of the murderous knife he had just felt.

Again the fellow lunged viciously at him, but Tom caught his wrist, and a desperate struggle ensued. Although much the stronger man, Tom found it no easy task to avoid the blade, and the two swayed back and forth over the snow, the man trying to free his hand for a decisive stroke, and Tom bending all his efforts to prevent it. Soon, however, his iron grip began to tell, and he felt his enemy's muscles relax. Putting all his strength into a supreme effort, he wrenched the knife free, exclaiming:

"I've got you now, you murderer, and I don't leave you till you are behind the bars!"

But even in the moment of his victory he felt a cold ring of steel pressed against his ear, and these ominous words sounded behind him:

"Hold up your hands, mister, or you're a dead man! Quick, I say, or I'll shoot!"

It was a moment of fearful peril. There was murder in the man's tones, and Tom felt it. He released his grasp slowly, and the larger man pushed him suddenly backward, crying:

"Shoot him, you idiot!"

His action saved Tom's life, for the other man pressed the trigger at the

same instant, the bullet passing a foot in front of the young man's face, and flattening against the wall at his side.

Tom still retained the knife, and with a quick slash he struck the hand which held the revolver, causing the owner to drop it, with a yell of pain, and dash off toward the street at full speed, followed by his companion, who had evidently no desire to face Tom alone.

As the men disappeared he turned, to find the stranger he had rescued groaning with pain, and trying to get on his feet.

"Take my arm and see if you can't stand," said Tom. "Are you badly hurt?"

"My right arm is helpless, and my head goes round like a top," was the faint reply; "but I'm coming round all right, I guess. I got a nasty clip from one of them cutthroats. I came to just as that chap pulled his gun on you, and I tried to get up, but everything swam round so I couldn't. You're a plucky chum—"

"Can you get up?" interrupted Tom, hastily. "If you can I'll just find that pistol and we'll get away from this place. If not, I'll leave you the weapon and go after help. I'm cut in the side, but I don't know how bad it is."

A moment's search discovered the weapon, and after assisting the injured man to his feet they were moving slowly up the wharf when a bright ray of light suddenly penetrated the darkness and a tall policeman appeared before them, throwing the searching beams of a dark lantern upon them.

"What's going on down there?" he demanded. "Didn't I hear a shot just a moment ago?"

Tom was about to reply when his companion exclaimed:

"Two men knocked me down and would have robbed me but for this man here, who pitched into them. They both ran up this way."

"I passed two men," said the officer.

"One was tall and the other short. Were they the ones?"

Upon receiving an affirmative reply, he turned on his heels and dashed off in pursuit of the evildoers, who by this time had made good their escape.

As the avenue was reached a herdie happened along and Tom halted it at his companion's suggestion.

"Take us to the police station on Battery street," he said to the driver, and in a few moments they stood before the official in a well-lighted room telling their story. A physician was in attendance upon a prisoner and he soon made a rapid examination of their wounds.

"A few strips of plaster will fix your scalp all right," said he to the elder man, "and your arm is only numb from the blow. You'll be all right to-morrow. Then turning to Tom, he added:

"You have had a very narrow escape from death, young man. That knife was meant for your heart. As it is, it is glanced on a rib and there's no damage done. It is only a slight flesh wound, which will give you no trouble whatever."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

STORY OF A FRANC.

Pretty Incident Told of Baron Rothschild of Paris - Charity Rewarded.

One of the closest friends of Baron Rothschild of Paris was Carolus Duran, the artist. During the entire course of a certain large dinner party the great financier noted that the painter kept looking at him with a most intense and peculiar expression. After the coffee and cigars the baron drew his friend aside and said: "My dear fellow, pray tell me why you have stared at me so peculiarly this evening?"

"I'll tell you with pleasure," answered Duran; "I am painting a beggar for the salon, and have looked all over Paris for a suitable head to draw from. I've finally found it. Yours is the ideal."

Rothschild laughed heartily and promised to sit for his friend in suitable attire on the following day.

During the progress of the sitting a young artist, one of Duran's pupils, came into the room. Naturally he had not been in a position to meet people of Baron Rothschild's importance, and so did not know him; but the beggar's miserable rags, wan face and wistful expression appealed deeply to the young man's sympathies. Waiting until his master was busy mixing colors, the pupil took a frame from his vest pocket and held it out behind his back to the model, who seized it with feigned avidity.

When the sitting was over Rothschild made inquiries of Duran concerning the philanthropist, and was informed that he was a student of great promise and attainments, but among the poorest of the inhabitants of the Latin quarter.

Six months after this occurrence the young man received a note which ran about as follows:

"Dear Sir: The frame that you gave in charity to a beggar in the studio of Mr. Duran has been invested by us, and we take pleasure in forwarding to you our check for 2,000 francs, the principal and increment of the same. Yours, etc., Rothschild & Co.—Harper's Round Table.

Hints for Marriageable Girls. Do not "choose an opposite." You will be opposite enough in time. Either put down your foot on his cigar before marriage or make up your mind to keep quiet about it afterward.

Learn to cook and sew, and above all things, to learn to look sweet and keep still when you feel mad enough to take the roof off.

See and hear all the plays, operas and concerts you can during the engagement; had weather is apt to interfere after marriage.

Take your mother's advice on the question of a husband, provided she took her mother's.

Don't ask your brother about the personal habits of a suitor; he can't tell you enough to matter without giving himself away, and he won't do that.

Do not be offended when his sister wonders what any woman of taste can see in him to admire. Just remember how much you know of your own brother's shortcomings.—Chicago Tribune.

The Church Bells in a Tree. Rather more than 20 years ago the church in Therfield, Herts, was rebuilt; altogether including the rebuilding of the chancel, for which the rector was responsible, a sum of \$27,435 was spent on the work. There were not, however, sufficient funds to complete the rebuilding, and the upper portion of the tower and the porch remain unfinished to the present time, about \$5,000 being required for completion. As there was no belfry in which to place the bells, one was hung on the branch of a large walnut tree in the rectory, close adjoining the churchyard. There it does its duty, calling the people of Therfield to church, and patiently waiting for the time when, through the liberality of friends, it may be removed to a belfry where it will join with five old companions (now stored away in the church) in a merry peal on their restoration to their proper home.—London Sketch.

Why He Didn't Desert. The inquisitorial magisterial inquiries have elicited some humorous answers. An old sailor of 75, who reminded the magistrate that he had helped to work the ship that took Sir George Gray and Bishop Selwyn to England, was asked had he ever been in prison. "Not to my knowledge," was the reply of the ancient mariner. The court smiled again when, in answer to the query whether he had ever deserted his wife, the ancient mariner indignantly retorted: "I never had no occasion to." "Some do it without any occasion," dryly observed the magistrate.—London Chronicle.

THE ICE MACHINE'S PART.

At Last There Has Been a New Feature Introduced into Uncle Tom's Cabin.

There is a new wrinkle in "Uncle Tom's Cabin" theatrical companies. One of them, which is ransacking the state of New Jersey for audiences, has hit upon the device of buying a refrigerating machine and using real blocks of ice in the scene in which Eliza, pursued by a pack of barking mongrels, crosses the river carrying in her arms a stuffed doll.

The ice-making machine has proved an enormous success. At the Ridgewood opera house, where the ice machine played a few evenings ago, a frantic crowd fought its way through the doors. At the first performance the ice machine was kept in the background. Several cakes were manufactured before the performance and placed on the green baize river. They were carefully sanded on the surface, so that when Eliza made her grand dash for liberty she would not turn undignified somersaults. The ice machine, however, had been so largely advertised that yokels wanted to see it. They sat in their places after the curtain descended upon the solemn death of Little Eva and howled for the ice machine to come out and show itself. The stage manager and a couple of deck hands had to carry it down to the footlights. Then they turned the handle and, amid uproarious applause, the machine produced a cake of real ice.

Since then a part has been written in the play for the ice machine. When the river scene opens a couple of southern speculators are discovered experimenting with the machine. They produce their ice, and not having any immediate use for it turn it into the river, and it sits upon the river surface at proper intervals to accommodate Eliza's footsteps. A colored man comes out and sprinkles sand over the ice in full view of the audience.—Chicago Chronicle.

DRAMATIC CRITICISM.

"East Lynne" as Reviewed by a Wild and Woolly Topekka Reporter.

The reports from those who attended the production of "East Lynne" in all its gorgeous misconception the other night might be pronounced a little the worst show before ever cracked 14 square yards of plastering off the ceiling of the opera house in this city. Lady Isabel was about as bewitching as a sun-kissed maiden of Senegambia, and a man who would fall in love with her would fall into a coal pit through the mountains of Germany as Miss Vane to play the nursery maid to her son she looked as though she had played hokey on a millipede graveyard. The special scenery where she met Sir Francis Levinson and made a post-mortem contract to run away with him looked like a cross between the malaria-smear hills of Arkansas and a diseased vermiform appendix.

Mr. Carville had a voice which had to be raised with a derrick in order for the people in the back part of the audience to hear it, and then when it was at its highest pitch the tackle would break or some one would knock the blocking from under it and it would fall like the price of wheat during a democratic administration. Barbara Hare looked as though she had been left over from a bargain sale and didn't care much whether her insurance ran out or not. Aunt Cornelia had a voice that sounded like a cross between an armie with a nagworm and a cross-cut saw, and was built a good deal like an Oklahoma cyclone on stilts. The only good thing about the entire show that a good deal of it was left out and it could have been improved upon by taking a meat ax and cutting out the rest of it and turning the actors into the cornfields and kitchens where they belong.—Topekka Journal.

The Life Saver of Children. It is the only safe and sure cure for croup and pneumonia. No opium to stupefy. No ipecac to nauseate. 50 cents. A. P. Hoxsie, Buffalo, N. Y.

He who builds according to every man's advice will have a queer structure.—Chicago Daily News.

To Cure a Cold in One Day. Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund money if it fails to cure. 25c.

Some people say a great deal, but talk very little.—Chicago Daily News.

THE MARKETS.

	New York, Nov. 23
FLOUR—No. 2 red	73 3/4
WHEAT—No. 2	40 1/2
OATS—No. 2	29 1/2
RYE—No. 2 western	61 1/2
BEEF—Prime	10 00
PORK—Family	17 1/2
LARD—Western steamed	5 20
BUTTER—Western creamery	22 1/2
EGGS—Waters	14 1/2
WOOL—Domestic fleece	21 00
CATTLE—Steers	4 25
SHEEP	2 50
HOGS	4 25

CLEVELAND.	
FLOUR—Winter wheat pat	4 00
WHEAT—No. 2 red	38 1/2
COHN—No. 2 yellow on track	30 1/2
BUTTER—Creamery	24 1/2
CHEESE—York state, cream	18 1/2
EGGS—Fresh laid	20 00
POTATOES—Per bush	3 1/2
SEEDS—Clover	4 00
HAY—Timothy	9 50
CATTLE—Steers, choice	4 50
SHEEP—Fair to good	2 25
HOGS—Yorkers	2 50

CINCINNATI.	
FLOUR—Family	2 25
WHEAT—No. 2 red	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2 mixed	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

TOLEDO.	
WHEAT—No. 2 cash	68 1/2
COHN—No. 2 mixed	27 1/2
OATS—No. 2 mixed	24 1/2

BUFFALO.	
BEEVES—Stockers	3 50
SHEEP—Mixed sheep	3 50
HOGS—Yorkers	2 50
Pigs	3 00

PITTSBURG.	
BEEVES—Extra	5 75
SHEEP—Fair wethers	3 00
HOGS—Prime heavy	4 50
Pigs	4 00

ST. LOUIS.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

KANSAS CITY.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

CHICAGO.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

ST. PAUL.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

MINNEAPOLIS.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

DULUTH.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

SIOUX FALLS.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25

WYOMING.	
WHEAT—No. 2	70 1/2
OATS—No. 2	25 1/2
RYE—No. 2	50 1/2
HOGS	3 25