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Will you can't go the further old Farmer Jenson yelled, curving his milkmaid hands to his mouth so the words would reach the mail carrier five or six feet on the other side of the fence. At the same time he nodded significantly toward the road further on, where the snow had drifted entirely across, covering the fence on either side. "Five foot deep an' still driftin' an' plenty worse places on ahead just like it. Don't see how you got this far. Well, we'll shovel out the gate an' then you can drive in under my shed. It's thirty miles back to town an' you can't return any more than you can go ahead. It never does snow fly so fast. Maybe it'll calm up by tomorrow so we can start to plow the roads out, but it ain't likely you'll get the mail round under two or three days, or perhaps a week. You'll drive right in."

It was trying, for this was the first day of rural free delivery No. 3. The route had been started as an experiment, but now was thought to be worth while, and was to be dropped. John Holden had been one of the strongest advocates for it, and had obtained the route, leaving his oldest boy to look after the farm. The salary was not large, but in a year or so would enable him to stock the farm as he had wanted to since it all his life.

At length the snow was cleared from sufficient space for the gate to be opened and young Jenson backed his horse through, unhitched, and led him to the barn and stable, where he fed him generously with the hay which Benson threw down from the mow. Then the mail was transferred to the sleigh, and Jenson quickly scrambled and built himself a comfortable partition.

"We'll take it right into the house," said Benson. "It'll be safe there. Or you're also to go in."

"Rather guess not. Mail all back of it shall be right as rain. Up on the 'Mail must not be delayed,' you know Holden, a lot of this is Christmas mail."

"But, man alive, you can't do it," expostulated Benson, incredulously. "It's half a mile to the next house and that drift right ahead is up to your armpits, an' too soft to stand on an' too deep to push through. You're crazy!"

"Maybe," laconically, "but it's got to be done."

All this time he had been shifting the package securely upon his shoulder.

"Look here, Holden, don't try it," he said. "Now be straightened up, using the broken half of a rake handle as new axle.

"If you don't mind I'll just take along," he said. "It will help steady myself."

Benson placed his hand upon his shoulder.

"Look here, Holden," he said earnestly, "don't you try it. This thing's nothing more nor less than suicide and you know it."

Holden met the neighbor's look squarely and smiled. "I don't think so," he answered. "I don't try to creep along the fences where the soft and thick snow is, but right straight forward across lots, where the snow will be less deep. I reckon, somehow, I can make it all right. It's only a half mile to the next house, and never more than that between any two farms, and only

Then there's another thing, the main one," his face becoming grave, "you forget the folks who are waiting for their mail, especially at Christmas time. The days are getting short and the folks there. What will it mean to them if I don't get through? Of course, I don't know much about mails, but the mail, but there's the whole Creek River road, all the way to the end. I've got a mail to

"Look, Hiram, Holden Don't Try It," He Said.

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