

cornstalk M, hayrick W

If there is an axis of life in every man, Melander's whirled where the rest of us have an ordinary tongue.

More and more often, Melander consulted his compass.



K sees the canoe:

This section is to link up, without saying so, to the lead: it doesn't become evident until M's death that this is happening at Kunghit. (Begin graf after M's death with narrative of canoe escaping from Kunghit toward mainland.)

K on seeing the canoe at 1st doesn't register that it's not theirs, but the 'Aidas'. Then the instant knowledge of that as he ducks from sight; returns to camp, rouses the others. The canoe has to be destroyed before they can get away, W had to do it ~~with~~ by smashing with a large rock. Then they canoe away under gunfire.

## RUNNERS

Melander's death: as they flee the Indians' shots, they bend forward in the canoe and paddle hard. The others straighten, Melander does not. "Sten," one of them says. "Sten?" The rifle ball has taken him in the head, striking him because he is the tallest, the largest target.

Out of the fear and excitement K at last began to sense a change about the canoe. The rhythm of its movement was changed: lessened, broken. He turned the upper half of his body to look, <sup>start back</sup> and saw what, inside, he already knew.

*at last*  
"Sten," he called. "Sten!?"

*a cross his bones*  
But at the stern of the canoe, Melander, silently and almost tidily, lay folded forward, the back of far enough toward canoeemen to show his head ~~wherein~~ <sup>1</sup> inclined ~~to the other three showing~~ where the musket ball had torn a red hole.

*as if  
to show*

*(before this: have M's last voice heard - urging speed - as they flee. Anders)*



That fancymouth M

taut lines in <sup>Melander's</sup> ~~my~~ head



sq,  
squire among them as usual,  
squirring

Have M tell a Cape Horn story?

(K and B would have been aboard same ship with him; Cape is the final precipice of ~~the~~ Pacific shoreline. See Alan Villiers material?)

To himself, M parsed their situation.



Melander's ideal escape would have been to seize the steamship; difficulties with that were overwhelming, not least of which the Old Nick's wallowing style once it got outside channel waters and its insatiable appetite.

Melander set them an iron schedule (to cross Dixon Entrance): 00 strokes and rest. 00 strokes and rest.

Melander sifted what they could do.



M: (We have luck.) Rosenberg is fretful about the Kolosh, and has ordered that the steamboat be kept in port so its cannons can be used.

M's strategy, since he could not rise at Sitka, was to stay carefully level.

Wennberg's talk was often double-edged ~~that~~ way.

Or: W was noticing that M's talk was often double-edged(?),  
or more



One wag whose own tongue was sardonic mocked Melander's gallivanting styles of locution and locomotion by calling him Deacon Step-and-a-Half.

# Melander ranked as much the cleverest of them, the other three considered, and Melander himself would not have been the first to disagree. In any day's comings and goings at that far-north shoreside assemblage of hewn logs and Russian tenacity, you would have spied his figure early.

What went unsaid was a quite different vector into the future, M's own.



M, somewhere along the route: "Red sky."



So, Melander's plan had slipped them from the seven-year shackle  
of New Archangel. Now <sup>would be seen whether it</sup> ~~all~~ it ~~needed to do~~ was somehow to conquer ten  
hundred miles of one of the earth's most wild coastlines.

carry  
them

Melander's notion of schedule was as iron-like as something Wennberg might have forged at NA, except that it had less flex.



M, as would be expected, had made it his business before they left NA to gather what he could of lore about the southerly coast. Indeed, some of what he had heard of the people of the coast he would have given much not to know.

and began to feel as if they had left New Archangel and all it

represented sufficiently behind them. That, at least, was what

✓ Melander was calculating on and preaching to them. Whatever they

encountered onward along the vast coast, and it might be much,

it probably now would not be Russian.

Even this ability of his to hover usefully was not Melander's highest.



So wind brought M to Alaska, and steam kept him.

The herwork done by M needed to be divvied...

Melander their shepherd, they did not stray...neither did they...