The Sled Race

Swish! Little Willy’s sled flew by the schoolhouse on the outskirts of town, and then by the old deserted barn.

Swish! Swish! Swish! Other racers followed in hot pursuit.

“Go, Searchlight! Go!” little Willy sang out. The cold wind pressed against his face, causing his good eye to shut almost completely. The snow was well packed. It was going to be a fast race today. The fastest they had ever run.

The road was full of dangerous twists and turns, but little Willy did not have to slow down as the other racers did. With only one dog and a small sled, he was able to take the sharp turns at full speed without risk of sliding off the road or losing control.

Therefore, with each turn, little Willy pulled farther and farther ahead. Swish! The sled rounded a corner, sending snow flying. Little Willy was smiling. This was fun!

About three miles out of town, the road made a half circle around a frozen lake. Instead of following the turn, little Willy took a short cut right across the lake. This was tricky going, but Searchlight had done it many times before.

Little Willy had asked Mayor Smiley if he was permitted to go across the lake, not wanting to be disqualified. “As long as you leave town heading north and come back on the South Road,” the mayor had said, “anything goes!”

None of the other racers attempted to cross the lake. Not even Stone Fox. The risk of falling through the ice was just too great.

Little Willy’s lead increased.

Stone Fox was still running in last place. But he was picking up speed. At the end of five miles, little Willy was so far out in front that he couldn’t see anybody behind him when he looked back.

He knew, however, that the return five miles, going back into town, would not be this easy. The trail along South Road was practically straight and very smooth, and Stone Fox was sure to close the gap.