

Smuggling the Gold

It was getting late. They had to get to the Holms' farm before the blackout. It was three miles up the road from the beach. They'd have to hurry.

It was twilight by the time the little band turned into the farmyard. Here, they were on familiar ground.

They'd pass the German sentries a second time. Again they saw the friendly captain who had turned aside his soldiers. He was returning with his troops and he greeted them.

"Did you have a good sled ride?" he asked in excellent Norwegian.

Peter was sorry he wasn't allowed to answer him.

At the farm kitchen, Michael pounded on the door.

"Who is it?" a frightened voice called out.

When Michael gave their names, there was a scuffle inside. They had to be recognized before the door would be opened.

"But come in, come in," the farmwife called. And Peter thought that for all the sadness of that terrible day, there was still a cheerfulness about the good brown face. That they had succeeded in carrying the gold past the Nazi sentries seemed to bring hope for Norway.

"You had no trouble?" Her husband came out of a dim corner. Their supper was even now being dished into great earthenware bowls. Peter thought he had never smelled anything so good. Nor had he seen anything for a long time as pleasant as the flickering dancing light from the fire and from the candles on the dresser and great long kitchen table.

"First they eat, Papa. Then they talk." Mrs. Holm and her servant bustled back and forth between the fire and the table. "Draw up now and eat, you brave children. You must be famished."

Great steaming dishes dotted the red and white checkered cloth – meat, potatoes, dumplings, cabbage. On the table were also many cold foods; dried herrings, pickled eggs, mackerel, and great round sheets of the hard rye bread.