

moment I saw to the north a dark speck move down the height where the mate and Hansen ought to be. It divided into two, and the one moved east, just to the windward of the animals I was to stalk. They would get the scent immediately and be off. There was nothing for it but to hurry on, while I rained anything but good wishes on these fellows' heads. The gully was not so deep as I had expected. Its sides were just high enough to hide me when I crept on all fours. In the middle were large stones and clayey gravel, with a little runnel soaking through them. The reindeer were still grazing quietly, only now and then raising their heads to look round. My "cover" got lower and lower, and to the north I heard the mate. He would presently succeed in setting off my game. It was imperative to get on quickly, but there was no longer cover enough for me to advance on hands and knees. My only chance was to wriggle forward like a snake on my stomach. But in this soft clay—in the bed of the stream? Yes—meat is too precious on board, and the beast of prey is too strong in a man. My clothes must be sacrificed; on I crept on my stomach through the mud. But soon there was hardly cover enough even for this. I squeezed myself flat among the stones and ploughed forward like a drain-cutting machine. And I did make way, if not quickly and comfortably, still surely.

All this time the sky was turning darker and darker red behind me, and it was getting more and more