

Alaskan Trail Song

Foot off the brake and away they go,
Ears pricked forward and eyes alight,
Leaping away o'er the hard packed snow,
Shrilling a chorus of wild delight.

Down through the village on flying feet
(A flag of battle each plume-like tail),
White fangs bared to the strays they meet -
Streaming away down the river trail.

Parallel ribbons of glittering steel,
The miles slip under the racing sled;
Nothing to do but breathe and feel,
Grip the bars . . . and keep watch ahead.

Out of a thicket a red fox springs,
Races away down a wind-swept slough;
The dogs give chase (while the tow-line sings),
Deaf to all training they ever knew.

Snow in a torrent spews out behind,
A cloud of white as the brakes bite deep.
What can one do (they are deaf and blind),
But cling to the sled as it rocks and leaps.

Half up the face of a sheer, white slope.
Sheepish, they wheel to regain the trail,
Slouching away at an easy lope,
Shame and disgust in each down-turned tail.

Then in the quivering sunshine and shade,
Of frost-crystalled portage, they break to a run,
Gallant, high-hearted, and undismayed . . .
Eager alike for work or for fun.

- Author Unknown.