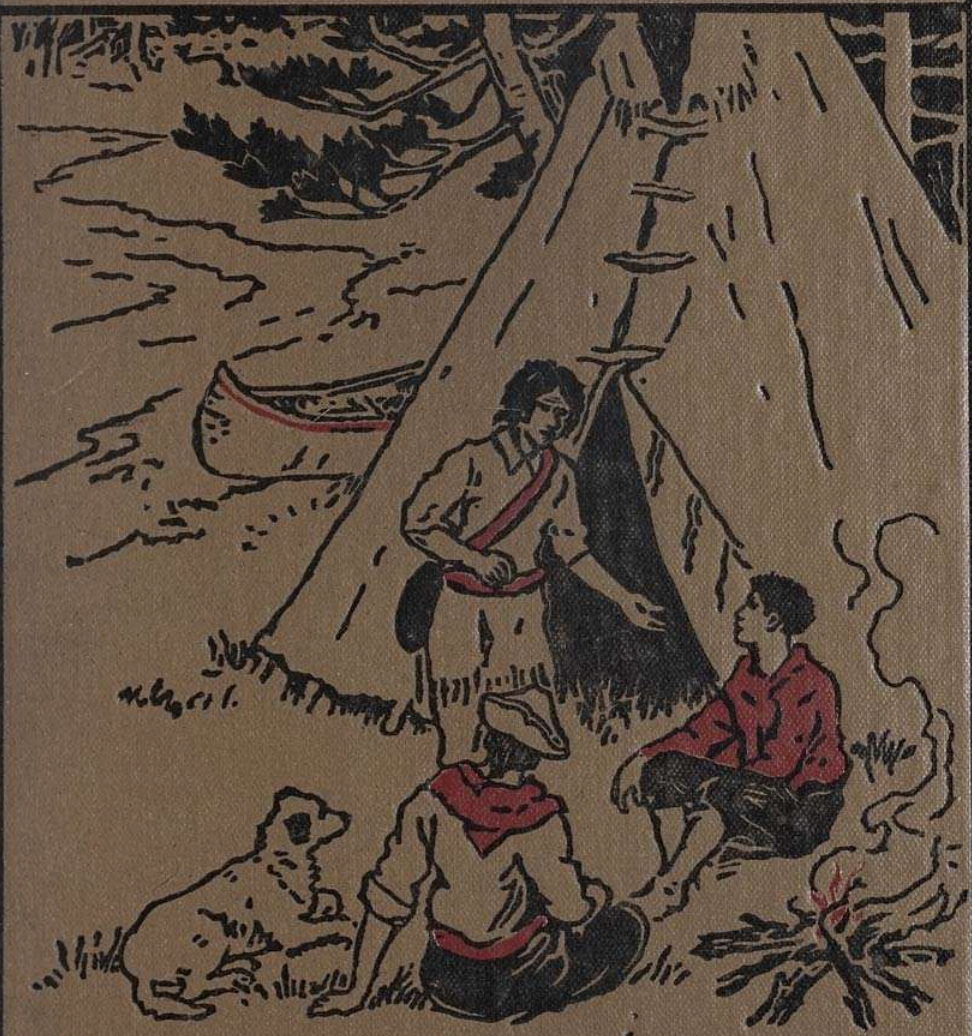


# THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA



D. LANGE

# THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA



D. LANGE

**THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK OF THE GOLD ROCK OF THE  
CHIPPEWA**

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OF THE CHIPPEWA \*\*\*

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By D. LANGE

12mo Cloth Illustrated

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THE SILVER ISLAND OF THE CHIPPEWA

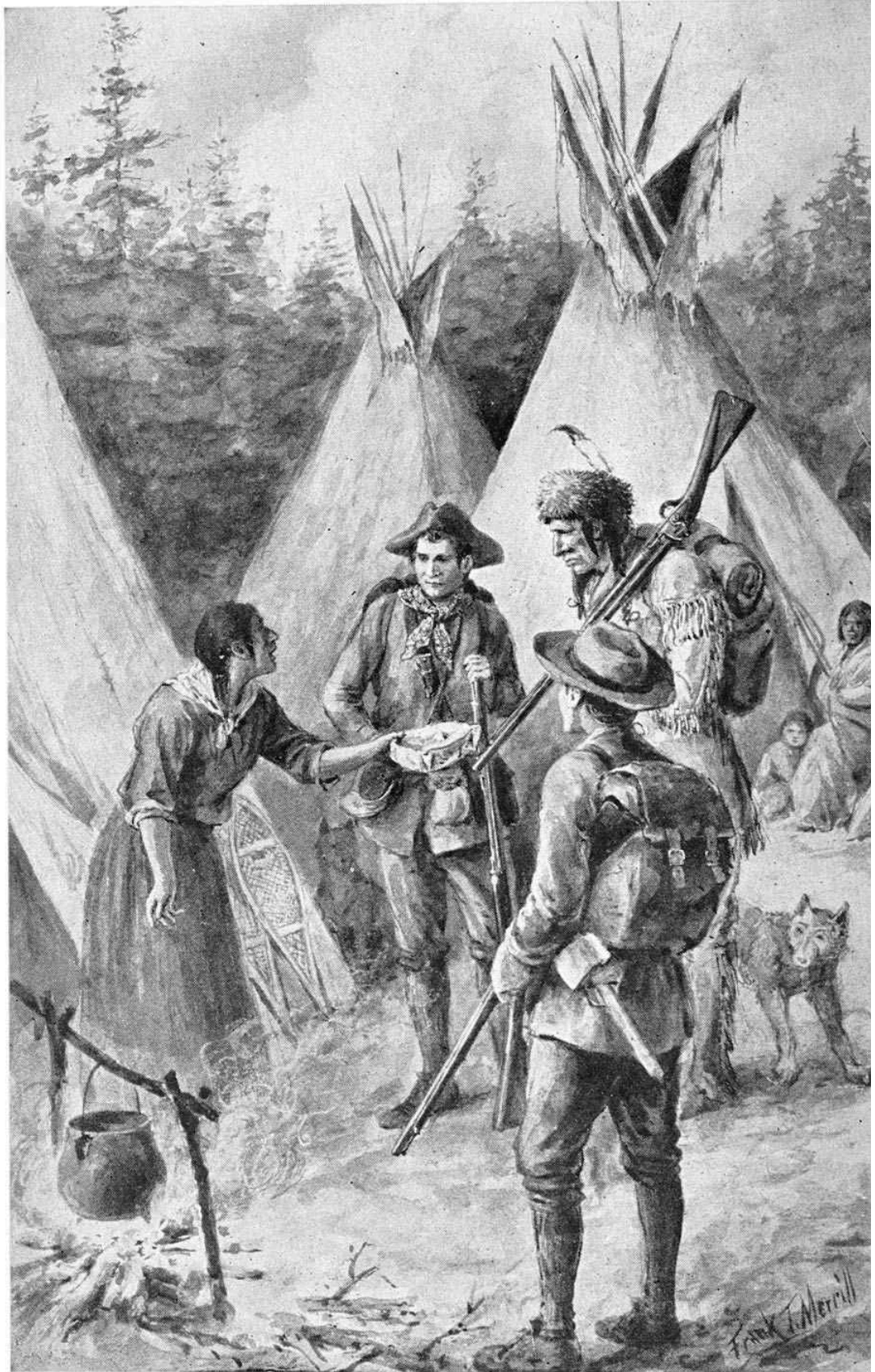
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THE SIOUX RUNNER  
THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA  
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# THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA

BY  
D. LANGE

*ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK T. MERRILL*



BOSTON  
LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.

**THE GOLD ROCK  
OF THE CHIPPEWA**

BY

**D. LANGE**

*ILLUSTRATED BY FRANK T. MERRILL*

BOSTON  
LOTHROP, LEE & SHEPARD CO.

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## FOREWORD

Robert Louis Stevenson, in one of his essays on the art of writing, says in substance that one of the methods of telling a story is to choose a background and then build in harmony with the landscape selected.

In *THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA* the writer has followed this method. The story opens in 1775, a dozen years after the Great Lakes region had been ceded by France to England. But it does not attempt to tell of the great war in which Wolfe and Montcalm gave their lives for their countries. It might be called "The Robinson Crusoe of Lake Superior," as the events of the whole story take place among the rocky wooded hills, on the cold streams, the clear lakes, the wild islands, and on the deep blue waters of "Gitche Gumee," the largest and most beautiful of the great inland seas of North America.

D. LANGE.

*St. Paul, Minnesota,  
August, 1925. [7]*

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# THE GOLD ROCK OF THE CHIPPEWA

# CHAPTER I

## THE COUNCIL

There was great excitement in the Chippewa camp on a small lake near the Sault Sainte Marie early in June, 1775. A council was going to be held to decide the fate of two Americans who had ventured into that part of the country as unwelcome visitors.

The prevailing opinion in the camp was that they should not be allowed to stay or to continue their journey, but should go back to their own country. However, there were a few warriors who demanded a much more radical proceeding against the strangers; and the most clamorous amongst these was Hamogeesik, who strutted about with his face painted black and bragged that [12]he was going to take the scalp of the two Englishmen, as he called them, because twelve years before at the siege of Detroit the English had killed his brother.

In the meantime, the two Americans, Bruce Henley, a young man who might be twenty-five years old, and his brother, Ray Henley, a lad of thirteen, kept rather close to the tepee of Ganawa, an old warrior who ridiculed the claims of Hamogeesik, whom he called a coward and “a much bad Indian.”

About an hour after sunset the beat of the tom-tom called the warriors to council. There were about twenty-five of them presided over by a chief who had seen many winters and had twice gone on the warpath against the Sioux, even then the enemies of the Chippewas.

The council-house was a very simple structure. It consisted of poles set in the ground, over which had been built a roof of boughs; but no white man's court or jury ever assembled with greater dignity and [13]listened with more gravity to the arguments of eloquent lawyers or the charges of dignified judges than the unlettered warriors in Chief Winnego's camp near the Sault Sainte Marie listened to the speakers.

Hamogeesik was the first to speak. He pleaded that the Englishmen should be turned over to him. That he should be allowed to keep them as slaves or to take their scalps,

because the English had killed his brother, a brave Chippewa warrior, in the fights at Detroit, when the great war chief Pontiac led all the Indians against the English.

When Hamogeesik had finished and sat down on his deerskin robe, Ganawa arose. He was a man over six feet tall. His hair was beginning to turn gray, but his shoulders did not stoop, and from his eyes flashed the anger and fire of a young warrior.

“My brother,” he began in a low, deep voice, “has told you that his brother was killed by the English at Detroit. In that Hamogeesik has told you the truth. But [14]I ask you now why Hamogeesik’s brother went to Detroit. That place, as you all know, is many days’ journey from our country, and we had no grievance against the English. You know that many of our wise men and our own chief Winnego advised our young men not to join in the great war of the Ottawas and their chief Pontiac, but to stay at home and hunt deer and keep the bears and the coons out of the cornfields, which our women were beginning to plant.

“If Hamogeesik’s brother desired so much to fight our enemies, why did he not make up a war party against the Sioux?”

“You know, brothers, that the young Englishmen are our guests, and live in my tepee, and you know what the little Englishman did only a day after he and his big brother came to our camp. You know that the little son of my daughter was fishing from a canoe and that the canoe drifted away with him. There was no other canoe on the beach and only our women and some [15]old men were in camp. When my daughter cried aloud and believed that her small son must drown, the little Englishman took off his shoes and plunged into the cold water. He showed that he was a better swimmer than most of us are. He reached the canoe and pushed it ashore, because there was no paddle with which to steer. You know that, when he reached the shore, his eyes closed and his legs would not move any more, so the women had to carry him to my tent. You know that the water which runs out of the great sea Gitche Gumee is so cold that it never gives up its dead.

“Here under this deerskin is a present for all of you, including Hamogeesik, and I ask you that the Englishmen be given to me that I may adopt them as my sons. They have shown themselves good and brave men and true friends of our people.

“We do not wish it told at the camp-fires of the Chippewas and the Ottawas that the warriors of Winnego have turned traitors to their friends and have forgotten the sacred [16]laws of hospitality that our fathers have taught us. I have finished.”

Contrary to Indian habit and custom the case was not held open for another council, but it was decided that the two Americans should belong to Ganawa, a decision which Hamogeesik heard with scowling silence.

Bruce Henley and Ray had surmised what the general drift of the two talks had been, but did not know what had been said until Ganawa translated the speeches to them after the council had broken up. [17]

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## CHAPTER II

## GANAWA SPEAKS

Bruce Henley knew enough of Indian etiquette to realize that his friend and Indian father would not ask him why he and the boy had come to the Indian country, and what their plans were for the future. He also realized that he must tell Ganawa the whole story.

A few days later, when he and Ray were alone in the tepee with Ganawa, Bruce unburdened his mind to the Chippewa hunter, who was now looked upon by the Indians as the father and protector of the two Americans who had for some mysterious reasons come to the region of the Upper Great Lake.

“My father,” he began, “I must now tell you why your white sons have come to the Chippewa country. We know that the [18]Chippewas and the Ottawas still love the French better than the English. We know that many Americans, or Englishmen, as the Indians call them, lost their lives at Mackinac twelve years ago, but we had a very good reason for coming to your country, although we knew that we might meet many dangers.”

“The English are brave men,” replied Ganawa. “I know that at that time an Englishman, whom the whites called Alexander Henry, came to Mackinac and to the Sault, and that our brother Wawatam adopted him as his son and saved his life. He is a very brave man; he has now left my people and has gone to trade with the Indians who live far to the west of us in the buffalo country. But I will now listen to my son, so I may learn why he and his little brother have come to our country. You have not come to trade because you have not brought many goods like the brave Englishman.”

“I shall truthfully tell my father why we have come,” Bruce then resumed. “It [19]is now about four years ago that my boyhood friend, Jack Dutton, went to the country of the Big Lake to trade and to trap beaver and marten. I wanted to go with him, but I had a mother and a sister for whom I had to make a home. My sister is now married to a good man, and my mother lives with her, and I was free to leave the colony of Vermont, where my white friends are living.”

“My son, I hear your words,” Ganawa replied, when Bruce was silent. “If you will tell me where your white brother is trading and hunting, it may be that I can lead you to him, unless he is living in the country of our enemies, the Sioux.”

“My father,” Bruce took up the story, “I cannot tell you where my friend is living. After he had been gone a year, he sent me a letter through some traders, saying that next summer he would look for me at Mackinac or at the Big Rapids that run out of the Big Lake. He said in his letter that I should not start till he wrote again, [20]but he has never written again. Now, my father, I have told you all I know of my friend.

“I fear,” Bruce continued when Ganawa did not speak, “that some evil thing has come to my friend. Perhaps he is sick and cannot travel. Perhaps he is held as a captive among the Indians, or he may have lost his life in the woods or in a storm on the Big Lake. Perhaps some bad white man or Indian has robbed and killed him.”

“My son,” Ganawa took up the talk, “you have not told me much. Was your brother tall, did he have brown hair, and did he walk with a long step?”

“Yes, my father,” Bruce warmly assented, “such was my friend. A tall man, thick brown hair, and he walks with a long stride.”

“I have seen your brother,” Ganawa declared. “But you, my sons, should have looked for him on the island of Mackinac, where many Indians and traders assemble every spring. But Mackinac is in the Lake [21]of the Hurons, more than a hundred miles by water from our camp.”

“My father,” replied Bruce eagerly, “we did visit Mackinac before we came to your camp, and he was not there. We talked to Indians and white traders, but none of them knew him or had seen him either this spring or last spring. A trader told us to travel to your camp on the lake through which runs the cold river between the Big Lake and the Lake of the Hurons. We travelled to your camp, you have become our father, and now we pray you that you tell us when and where you saw our brother.”

“I saw your brother at the Great Sault at the time of the strawberry moon. It was twelve or more moons ago. He had with him a Canadian, and Hamogeesik and his friends tried to rob him of his goods. But your brother showed a bold heart. He talked to the Indians while he was leaning on his gun and in his belt he showed two pistols and a hunting-knife. He told them if harm came to him and his men and if his

[22]goods were taken from him, the English soldiers at Mackinac would hear of it and would punish the guilty. He did not say with words that he would fight for his goods, but he told them with his eyes that he and his man would fight. Hamogeesik is a coward and he and his friends slunk away like dogs.

“During the night the moon stood south of the Big Lake and when a gentle wind sprang up from the east, your brother put all his goods in his boat and he and his man sailed away.

“When the sun rose and the Indians learned that your brother had sailed away, they laughed at Hamogeesik and said: ‘Hamogeesik, you are a fool, but the white trader is wise and brave,’ and they gave him a new Indian name, which means the Brave White Man. Now I have told you all I know of your brother, but to what part or to which bay or island of the Big Lake your brother and his man sailed away I cannot tell you.” [23]

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## CHAPTER III

## GITCHE GUMEE

Bruce Henley realized that the information Ganawa had just given him was not encouraging; but if he had fully comprehended the size of this inland sea, its sheer endless shore-line, which it would take years to explore and search in detail, he would have been utterly discouraged at the well-meant information of Ganawa.

On the usual small map of a school-book, Lake Superior looks quite commonplace and harmless, but no man can stand on its shore without feeling the overwhelming power and mystery of this sea in the heart of a continent. It is different from every other lake on earth.

The distance a boat must sail from its west end at Duluth to the canals which now pass the Sault Sainte Marie is greater than the distance from St. Paul and Minneapolis [24] to Chicago or from Buffalo to New York. Its shore-line would stretch more than half-way across the continent between New York and San Francisco.

On this shore-line there are great bays, more than fifty miles in length, such as Nipigon Bay and Black Bay, where a canoe or small boat might wind about for a whole summer in a maze of channels and among a world of large and small islands, and bold, rocky headlands.

On the other hand, there are great stretches of more than a hundred miles where the rocks, a hundred feet high, drop sheer into the lake, and where it is difficult for even a canoe or a rowboat to find shelter in a storm.

In area, Lake Superior is about equal to the combined areas of Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Its greatest depth runs close to a thousand feet, and depths of three hundred to seven hundred feet a few miles from shore are very common. The water is so clear that in quiet [25] bays one can see a fish at a depth of twenty feet, and the waves and the white spray have the color and appearance of waves and spray of the ocean.

The water is always ice-cold, except in midsummer within a few feet of the surface and in quiet, sheltered bays. But even in midsummer, the surface temperature does not pass fifty degrees.

The low temperature of the water is the reason that bodies of persons drowned in Lake Superior very rarely rise to the surface or drift ashore. The tradition that Lake Superior never gives up its dead is as old as the navigation of the lake by white men, and it existed among the Indians before the arrival of white men.

The writer has found no records of Indians ever travelling over the middle of the lake. Several of the red tribes were bold and skillful canoeists, but they were not sailors. They did, however, occasionally visit the large islands such as Michipicoten and Isle Royale, and in fair weather they [26]paddled boldly along the shore from the Sault to Grand Portage and Duluth, and in one recorded case the Chippewa woman, Netnoqua, and her adopted white son, John Tanner, beat a trader's sailboat on the voyage from the Sault to Grand Portage at the mouth of the Pigeon River. On this trip Netnoqua's canoe must have travelled nearly five hundred miles.

Unfortunately a school-book map cannot tell the story of the Big Lake, but a look at the fine large map of Lake Superior published by the United States Lake Survey suggests at a glance the spell of the Big Lake, of the clear cold water, of calm sunny summer days, of thick gray fogs, and of terrible autumn and winter storms.

Had Bruce and Ray Henley known all these things, their hearts might have failed them and they might never have ventured on the waves of Lake Superior and into the wild forests which, at that time, surrounded the whole of the vast inland sea.

A few days after Bruce and Ganawa had [27]had their talk, the Chippewa suggested that they might travel up the Big Lake a little way.

“My sons,” he told his white friends, “we shall learn nothing more of your brother and we shall never find him, if we stay in this camp and fish in the lake and hunt deer in the forest. I have friends who generally make their summer camp on Batchawana Bay. It may be that they can tell us more of your white brother. They may have seen French traders from the Grand Portage or even from a very distant place, which the French call Fond du Lac, which lies many leagues toward the setting sun and means ‘the End of the Lake.’”

“You must have noticed, my sons,” he continued after a pause, “that Hamogeesik and his friends have left our camp. I do not know where they have gone. You should not be afraid of them, although I believe that they are planning some evil, because their tongues are forked and their hearts are black.” [28]

A few days later, Ganawa and his two white sons paddled a large birch-bark canoe up-stream. When the water became too swift, Ganawa steered the light craft to a safe landing-place and stepped out into the shallow water.

“My sons,” he said, “take our axes, our blankets, and other things and follow me.” Then he lifted the canoe on his shoulders and walked away with it on a plain portage trail. After he had walked about a mile he put the canoe in the water again.

“My little son,” he said to Ray Henley, “you must now learn to travel in an Indian canoe. Here is a small paddle which I have made for you of cedar wood. It is very light and will not tire your arms.”

Then Bruce knelt on a piece of canvas in the bow of the boat. Ray took his place in the middle, while Ganawa knelt in the stern, which is always the place of the steersman.

“My sons,” spoke Ganawa, “I shall now steer you over the water of the Big [29]Lake to the beautiful and quiet Bay of Batchawana. You, my little son, must not be frightened if a big wave lifts up our canoe, and you must not put your hands on the sides of the canoe. When your arms are tired you may rest, but you must sit very still, for you know that the water of Gitche Gumee is very cold.”

The day was already well advanced when the three travellers started north on the open lake. The sky was clear and there was no wind, but a haze hung on the horizon and made the western shore invisible as Ganawa skirted along the east shore. A broad swell from the north added to the impression that the canoe was headed for the open sea.

“Bruce, I am afraid,” Ray whispered. “This lake is so much bigger than Lake George and Lake Champlain in Vermont. It looks like the ocean. I—I am afraid we shall all drown.”

“My son, you need have no fear,” Ganawa assured the young lad. “The lake is not very big here. If there were no haze [30]in the air you could see the blue forest to the west. I can tell from the sky that no wind is coming, and we are running so close to shore that we could land before the waves grow too big, if a wind did spring up.”

They might have been going about three hours, when Ray became more cheerful. “I can see land now,” he remarked, “ahead of us to the left.”

“You see an island, my son,” Ganawa told him. “The French call it Isle Parisienne.”

When the sun stood low beyond this island, Ganawa headed the canoe toward a point which is now called Goulais Point. “We sleep here to-night,” he said. “It is not good to travel on the Big Lake after dark.”

“My father,” asked Ray, “I thought you said it was only a little way to that bay where we are going?”

“It is only a little way,” Ganawa replied calmly. “After we have slept, we shall soon go to Batchawana Bay.”

Ray asked no more questions, but he [31]wondered what distance Ganawa would call a long journey, if he referred to a two-days’ trip as “only a little way.”

When Ganawa had gone off to gather boughs for the night’s camp, Ray could not resist expressing his anxiety to his older brother. “Bruce,” he said, “this lake and the country are so big we shall never find anybody. I am not afraid any more to go with you and Ganawa on the lake if you don’t go in a storm. But you will see we shall never find Jack Dutton. How can you find anybody here? There are no towns and no farms, just water and woods, and rocks and big hills and islands and a few Indians. Do you think there are wolves and bears in these woods? If there are, I am going to ask Ganawa to let me sleep in the canoe.”

Just then Ganawa returned with an armful of boughs, but Ray could not quite muster enough courage to ask him about the danger from wolves and bears.

After a supper of venison, roasted on a [32]fire of driftwood, Ray soon slipped under the blankets on the bed of balsam boughs, and long before Ganawa and Bruce

stopped talking he was fast asleep after the many new impressions and the fears and anxieties of the day.

The sun had just risen when Bruce called his young bedfellow. “Come, Ray,” he said, gently shaking the lad, “Ganawa is waiting for us. He is afraid the lake will get rough toward noon. There are clouds in the west.”

The drowsy lad arose, quickly put on his clothes and walked to the canoe with Bruce, and by the time Ganawa had pushed off, the sharp, cool air of Lake Superior had fully waked up the sleepy boy, who was not accustomed to start on a journey without breakfast.

However, they had started none too early. Before they reached the entrance to the bay, the waves began to roll uncomfortably high. The travellers, including Ray, plied a paddle with short quick strokes, and although the [33]young lad for a while suffered greater fear than the day before, he did not say a word, but paddled hard, with his eyes fixed on the quiet glistening bay ahead.

The sun indicated the approach of noon when they reached the north end of the bay, where they stopped at a small Indian camp near the mouth of the Batchawana River.

The thing that interested Ray most about this camp was a kettle of meat hanging over the fire in front of one of the tepees, for by this time the lad was ravenously hungry. [34]

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## CHAPTER IV

## VAGUE NEWS

Ray had learned at Ganawa's camp that the Indians had no set time for meals, but ate when they were hungry, provided there was something to eat in camp. There was no set time for anything. The women, indeed, did go in the afternoon to cut and bring in the firewood, but as it was now midsummer and no fire was needed in the tepees at night, they were not very regular in attending to this duty; although they were busy at some kind of work all day long.

The men had no such regular hours for anything as a white man must observe for his work. Their duty in times of peace was to provide the camp with meat, and to secure enough fur or dried meat so they could buy of the white traders whatever the family needed: blankets, knives, needles, steel axes, traps, and especially guns and ammunition. [35] There were in an Indian camp, just as there are in a white man's town, men and families who were thrifty, and those who were shiftless and always in trouble.

All trade was carried on by barter, no money circulated in the Indian country, but a beaver skin was the standard of value.

Ray was much pleased when one of the women handed to each of the three visitors a birch-bark dish and a wooden spoon and told them to help themselves to meat in a large kettle in front of her tepee.

The ideas of Indians concerning things that are clean often differed from those of white men. The kettle contained venison and two wild ducks all boiling together; and the Indian woman had not been very careful about picking the birds.

"I can't eat that mess," Ray said to Bruce when he saw Ganawa help himself to a liberal portion. Ganawa smiled at this remark of the white boy. "My little son, our friends offer us good meat," he encouraged the white lad. "Ducks keep their [36]feathers very clean. Fill your dish and eat, for I know you must be very hungry."

Ray was indeed very hungry, and as he began to eat he found that the meat was good, although it had been boiled without salt or other seasoning.

Ganawa learned from the men in this camp that the brave young trader of last spring had sailed his wooden boat along the eastern shore of the Big Lake, that he had reached Michipicoten Bay, which is sheltered from all winds except those that come from the southwest. They had also heard that he had paddled up the Michipicoten River as far as the rapids below the big falls. Whether he had made a camp at that place and remained there during the winter they did not know.

A young man, however, who was known by the name of Roving Hunter, told that about twelve moons ago he and a companion had met a family of Wood-Indians, called by the Chippewas Oppimittish Ininiwac. These Wood-Indians had told him that two [37]white men had made a camp on the Michipicoten River, nine or ten leagues above the big falls. They had also a camp on one of the big lakes of that country. He thought from the account of the Ininiwacs that they meant Lake Anjigami. But he could not understand the language of the Ininiwacs very well, and they might have referred to some other lake, because the Michipicoten carries the water of many lakes down to Gitche Gumee.

He and his companion had paddled up the river to visit the white hunters, but when they came to a stretch of rapids two miles long, his companion became discouraged and said it was too much work to visit the camp of these white men. Perhaps they would not find the camp, even if they carried their canoe past the long rapids and the big falls. So they turned back and did not see the white men. The Ininiwacs also told him that there were many beavers on the small lakes and streams in the Michipicoten country. The three white men were trapping [38]beaver and marten and otter, and they had also traded some beaver skins and marten of the Ininiwacs for knives and beads and needles, but they had no blankets and guns to sell and no fire-water. But Roving Hunter, like the other Chippewas, did not know if the white men were still in the Michipicoten country.

When Ganawa told his white sons what he had learned, Ray was much discouraged. "I told you," he said to Bruce when the two had gone to catch trout, "I told you, Bruce, we could never find anybody in this country. Every time we go anywhere, the country and the lake look bigger and wilder to me. We might find a big island, if it is not too far from shore, but how can you find a camp when nobody knows where it is? None of the Indians know where Jack Dutton is now. And perhaps the stories they have told Ganawa are not true; you know not all stories you hear among white people are true."

To one who has never lived in a wild and [39]thinly populated country it would seem that Ray's conclusion was right, but the facts are that it is much more difficult to disappear in a wild country than it is in a big city. There are so few people in a wild country that a stranger, coming in or passing through, is remembered for a long time by everybody who has seen him. In the same way, both whites and Indians who live in these regions know of each other, although their camps or homes may be more than a hundred miles apart and they may seldom or never see each other.

When Bruce told Ganawa of the fears of the young white boy, the old hunter looked at the lad with a serious but friendly smile.

"My little son," he told him, "you must not forget that in the country of the Big Lake there are not as many people as there are in the white man's country. My friends in this camp have told me much, and they have not told me lies. To-morrow or next day, when the wind has gone down, we shall start for the river Michipicoten. If we find [40]some of the Ininiwac people there, they may be able to tell us where your white brother is camping, and it may be that we shall find him very soon."

The wind went down next day, but Ganawa did not say anything of starting north. A hunter had come to camp with some moose meat and the women had caught plenty of fish in their nets; lake trout, pickerel, and some big brook trout, bigger than Ray had ever seen. These brook trout had come into Lake Superior out of the stream. Such brook trout are found along the shores of Lake Superior to this day. They thrive in the cold, clear water along the shore, and in places where there is little or no fishing they are at times very numerous. White fishermen at the present time call them "coasters."

As far as Bruce and Ray could tell, Ganawa and his friends did nothing all day but eat moose meat and visit. "Indians certainly have a good time," remarked Ray to Bruce. [41]

"Yes," admitted Bruce, "playing Indian is not so bad in summer, but it must be a tough life in winter."

At the close of the third day, Ganawa and his friends had eaten up most of the moose meat and Ganawa told his white sons that in the morning they would leave, provided the lake was quiet.

“Bruce, you had better ask our father,” Ray whispered to his friend, “to take plenty of meat along. You know we were all starved when we came to this camp, and I heard our father say that it is twenty-five leagues to the place we are going. Twenty-five leagues, that is seventy-five miles, so you see it will take us two or three days.”

The next morning Ganawa started at break of day without apparently thinking of eating any breakfast. This was the usual way for Indians to travel, and the voyageurs of the Hudson Bay Company and the Northwest Company adopted the same method of travel.

A very light fog lay over the water of [42]Batchawana Bay when the travellers started, but it had been dispelled by the time they rounded the point which marks the end of the bay. Here the open lake lay before them in all that splendor of a summer day, which one can experience in such perfection nowhere else but along the wild rocky shores of Lake Superior, when waves and wind seem to have gone to sleep for a long time, and when no fog hides the sight of green hills far and near.

White gulls sailed in the air on almost motionless wings, and from the spruces on shore came the clear whistle of the white-throat, one of the hardiest little songsters of the North, whose cheering voice may often be heard through a thick fog, in which one cannot see ten yards ahead.

Ray was glad to see the lake so quiet, but the feeling that he was travelling along the shore of the ocean came over him again. “My father,” he asked timidly, “are we travelling now where the lake is very big?”

“Yes, my son,” replied Ganawa, “on our [43]left toward the west the lake is very big, sixty leagues or more; but it is still much bigger, twice as big toward the northwest, toward the large island of Menong and Thunder Bay, where the Sleeping Giant lies on the rocks.”

The boy asked no more. He dipped in his light paddle in unison with Ganawa and Bruce, and his fear left him as he came under the spell of the scene which was at the same time beautiful and sublime. Mile after mile they glided along in silence. Some small islands to the northwest had been left behind. Westward the lake stretched out endlessly to the horizon, where the water seemed to rise to blend and unite with the sky. However, the nearness of the shore on their right made the lad feel that they were safe, although the steep brown rocks looked forbidding enough and the forests

on the high hills appeared almost black, because the travellers had to look at them against the light of the sun. After a while, the lad grew dull toward the beauty [44]and sublimity of the scene, and his healthy physical nature asserted itself. He had hoped that Ganawa would stop for breakfast at the end of the bay, but the old hunter had not even thought of stopping, to judge from the way he steered out of the bay. The lad was therefore more than glad when Ganawa steered toward a point and remarked, "My sons, we land there to eat."

It seemed to Ray as if it must be almost noon, but Ganawa told him that it was still early in the morning, that they had made about eight leagues and that the place, where by this time they had landed, was called by English traders Coppermine Point. The Indians, he said, had no name for it, because there were too many points like it all along the shore of the Big Lake. [45]

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## CHAPTER V

## THE WHITE BOY LEARNS

Ganawa seemed now to have plenty of time. He and Bruce lifted the canoe out of the water so that the lapping of the waves would not cause it to chafe on the rocks, for a canoe is very easily injured, and an Indian birch-bark is even more sensitive to rough handling than a white man's canoe.

Much to the surprise of Ray, Ganawa even built a fire, which he did by striking the edge of a piece of flint with a small piece of steel and catching the sparks on a piece of dry soft punk. This method of making fire was an improvement on the bow and fire-stick, which the Indians used before they came into contact with white traders. Steel, flint, and tinder are much more portable than the bow, stick, and block of dry wood used during the Stone Age of the human race, and now revived for an interesting and [46]valuable exercise in woodcraft by the Boy Scouts. It was also easier for a hunter to keep dry a small piece of tinder than to carry or make the older fire-making tools, especially in rainy weather.

Ganawa had another surprise in store for Ray. He produced a small package of tea and a little brown sugar. To have a drink of sweet tea was more of a treat to Ray than a box of the best candy is to a modern boy or girl, and Ray danced and shouted with joy when he saw what Ganawa was doing. Since Bruce and Ray had been with the Indians they had eaten nothing but meat and fish.

Indians were seldom more provident than white boys are in camp. The Indians around Lake Superior knew of only two kinds of vegetable food which they could gather and keep in quantities: wild rice and blueberries. The supplies of both had been exhausted in Winnego's camp and the new crop was not yet ripe.

There was, however, no scarcity of food in [47]camp. Moose meat, venison, grouse, and ducks were all plentiful. With the Indians, there could not be a closed season, because they lived largely on game; but as a general rule, they did not waste any wild meat. If for instance it was too difficult to carry the meat of a moose to camp, the camp was moved to the moose and remained there until the moose was eaten up.

*No decent white man or boy, however, should ever kill game in the closed season. The Indian days and the frontier days have passed, and to obey the game laws is as much a duty of a good citizen as to obey other laws. Unless that is done there will soon be no game left to hunt at any time.*

*One may, however, always hunt with a camera. Animals and birds shot with a camera will keep and be a treasure for a lifetime, and hunting with a camera is a finer and harder sport than hunting with a gun.*

As told before, Bruce and Ray did not go hungry, for moose meat or venison, either [48]fresh or dried, is very good food, and there are no better fresh-water fish in the world than the whitefish, lake trout, and brook trout caught in Lake Superior, but Ray often wished for some flour and hominy.

Ganawa gave his white sons about an hour to eat and rest at Coppermine Point. Then he steered the canoe almost straight north and he told them that for the night he intended to make camp at the mouth of the Agawa River.

“That is a long river,” he told his sons, “and it runs through a deep and beautiful canyon, where the trout live, those that are colored like the rainbow. My little son should be able to catch some big ones at the mouth of the Agawa,” he added with a friendly smile.

“How big are they?” asked Ray.

“That big,” answered Ganawa, holding his hands about two feet apart, “and they should weigh five or six pounds, and maybe more than that.”

“What big ones!” exclaimed Ray. “I [49]never saw such big ones. I am going after them;” and involuntarily he made a jump and swung his arms so as to rock the canoe.

“My little son,” Ganawa reminded him, “we are not in a white man’s rowboat. You know the water of Gitche Gumee is very cold for swimming.”

“I forgot, Father, I forgot,” Ray apologized. “I’ll sit still. I know a birch-bark canoe is very cranky, and I don’t wish to swim again in this cold water,” and Ray started in

to paddle as if he alone had to take the canoe to the mouth of the Agawa; until Bruce brought him up short, saying:

“Ray, what are you trying to do? Please keep time with us. You will be tired enough by the time we get to camp. It is nearly thirty miles to the mouth of the Agawa.”

There was very little conversation after this. Once or twice Ray asked how deep the lake was along this coast, to which Ganawa could only reply that it was very deep, because in those days no survey of the [50]lake had been made. Modern surveys have shown that the lake is indeed very deep along that shore, in some places dropping to a depth of four hundred and even six hundred feet close to shore, but there are a few shoals, where in still weather one can see the bottom, for they are covered with only seven to fifteen feet of water.

The three kept steadily on their course, and about noon an island became visible just above the horizon straight ahead. On their right, the wooded hills of the shore, rising about a thousand feet above the lake, were constantly in sight a few miles off; but on their left toward the west and the northwest there was nothing but the open lake which to the eyes of the travellers looked as endless as the ocean.

The day had turned very warm and as the sun passed the noon line, the air above the gentle glassy swells of the lake became filled with a hazy vapor.

The island began to look larger as the travellers approached, and Bruce judged [51]that it might be a mile, perhaps two miles in diameter.

“My father,” he asked when he noticed that Ganawa was not steering for the channel between the island and the lake, “are we going to camp on the island?”

“My son,” replied Ganawa, “do you see that the air is no longer clear on the water, but only high up in the sky? I am afraid we may run into a fog and then we might not be able to find the mouth of the Agawa. The fogs on this lake are very thick.”

Ganawa’s fear was realized all too soon. In about half an hour the shore disappeared, and then even the island, which a little while ago had seemed to be very close, straight ahead of them, disappeared completely from sight.

For some little time all kept paddling in silence, and Ganawa steered against the cold breeze that had come with the fog. But soon after the breeze had failed Ganawa stopped paddling.

“Wait, my sons,” he spoke, “we must [52]make sure that we are going right. It is very dangerous to be lost in a fog on the Big Lake.” And then he suddenly uttered a deep rolling yell: “Hoah—hoah!”

“Hoah—hoah,” a faint echo came from their right.

“We were headed for the open lake, my sons,” remarked Ganawa. “Now paddle carefully straight ahead to our right. We must not miss the island.”

Within a few minutes Ray gave a yell, but no echo returned from his weaker and more highly-pitched voice.

Then Bruce tried it and back came the voice: “Oh—hoh!” but not very strong.

“I hear the scream of some gulls,” remarked Ganawa. “I think they are sitting on the rocks near shore. We must go slow.”

Then Ray tried it again and back came the echo quickly and clearly: “Hi-yi, hi-yi!” and a few minutes later a rather low wooded island suddenly rose out of the fog as if it had just come up from the bottom of the lake. [53]

“Thank God,” Bruce said in a low voice. “I knew we were close to the island, but it seemed as if we should never reach it. Thank God we found it. It is the best-looking island I ever saw.”

In reality the island looked quite forbidding. Bold, jagged rocks seemed to form the whole shore, and it took some time before Ganawa found a safe pebbly landing-place. Rather small spruces, balsam firs, and birches formed a dense forest and were all dripping wet, and there was not a sign of any human habitation either white or Indian. As far as Bruce and Ray could tell, there had never been a human being on the island.

“We camp here, my sons,” Ganawa informed the white lads, “and we must set up our tepee, because the woods and the ground are too wet and cold without a tepee

and a fire. White men call this place Montreal Island, and it measures about a league if you go north and south, and a league if you go east and west.” [54]

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## CHAPTER VI

## A SPOOKY CAMP

Ray had a feeling that they had narrowly escaped from the horrible fate of being lost in a fog on Lake Superior. He had seen fogs in his native province of Vermont, but this was his first experience with a fog such as he had just seen. That a fog could come up so suddenly and could almost change day into night was a revelation to the lad. But he understood now why Ganawa had been so anxiously watching the sky for signs of a change in the weather and why he had steered for the island instead of for the mouth of the Agawa, which was about twelve miles farther to the northeast, and where Ganawa would have had to hold a true course over open water about ten miles wide.

“My sons,” remarked Ganawa, “I was afraid we should get lost if we tried to reach [55]the mainland even if we had used our little compass. When a fog comes up, every wise man paddles as quickly as possible to the nearest land.”

There was something spooky about the place where they had landed. They had carried their tepee-skin and other things a few rods through the dripping forest over very rough rocky ground and had laid them down in an open grassy spot, where to the surprise of both Ray and Bruce, they found two sets of tepee-poles already set up. But the fog had now become so thick that, if Ray walked over to one side of the clearing, he could not see the tepee-poles at the other side. He walked a few rods along a game trail in search of dry punk wood, but in the dense timber he had a feeling that the sun had set and that at any moment it might grow pitch dark. With a feeling of fear he turned back toward camp. He was puzzled when he came to a fork in the trail, which he had not noticed in coming from the camp. He took the fork [56]to his right and followed it for a time, which seemed to him to be twice as long as he had taken going away from the camp. But no open place and no tepee-poles came in sight; on the contrary the timber grew more dense and the trail began to lead uphill. He stopped and called, “Hoh, Bruce!” He listened for an answer but none came.

The blood rushed hot to his face. “I believe I am lost,” he thought. He listened a moment and heard the sound of some one chopping wood, but the sound came from the wrong direction, and Ray called lustily for Bruce.

“Come back here, you youngster!” came the reply. “Can’t you get wet enough without slashing around in the brush?”

When the badly scared boy returned to the camp site, Ganawa was just putting the last touches on setting up the tepee. Bruce was hard at work cutting wood. He had some dry spruce and balsam, but most of it was green birch, and under a large piece of old dead birch-bark he had gathered a pile [57] of fairly dry sticks and fine twigs, which Ganawa would use in starting the fire.

“My son,” Ganawa warned the flushed boy, “if you wander away from camp in a fog, some night you will sleep in the wet bush.”

Then Ganawa started to make a fire. He took a piece of tinder and a piece of flint between his left thumb and forefinger and with a sort of steel ring held in his right hand, he struck a few sharp quick blows at the edge of the flint. Ray was not sure that he had seen any sparks fly off the flint, but the tinder had caught fire and began to give off a little smoke. Ganawa placed it in a handful of dry moss, spruce needles and very fine dry twigs and swung the whole over his head. The smoke increased at once, and in a very short time a red, smoky flame burst forth, and Ganawa put his little fire under the dry sticks and twigs prepared for it. The fire started a little slowly, because none of the material used was as dry as it would have been on a bright, sunny day. [58] However, in about ten minutes the campers had a bright cheerful blaze, which only a heavy rain could have put out.

If one should camp on Montreal Island in a fog at the present time, he would hear through the fog the deep roar of the whistle of steamers headed for the canals at Sault Sainte Marie with iron ore or grain, and of other steamers that have come up through the “Soo” Canals with coal or merchandise from the east or from Europe. At the time of our story a few very small sailboats belonging to French or English traders were the only ships on Lake Superior larger than Indian canoes. Ganawa also built a small fire in the center of the tepee, “to take the cold out of it,” as he said. The fire on the outside he and Bruce built up until it was quite big; and on several stumps around it they piled up the spruce and balsam boughs, which were to serve for their beds.

“Wet boughs make a poor bed,” observed Ganawa. “We shall dry them before we take them in.” [59]

Ganawa was not in a talkative mood. Most of the time he sat and gazed into the fire, or seemed to be listening to the songs of white-throats and hermit-thrushes, which are not silenced in the North Country either by fog or cold weather.

When Bruce finally ventured to ask, “What is my father thinking of so long?” Ganawa replied: “I am thinking of your brother that sailed away on the Big Lake, and I am also thinking of Hamogeesik. He is a bad man, and I do not know where he has gone. He may have gone the same way that we are going. Two winters ago, he went with a white man from Quebec to Lake Manitowik and Lake Missinaibi to trap beaver and otter and marten. When the streams ran free of ice Hamogeesik came back with many furs, but the white man did not come back. Hamogeesik told that he had broken through the ice on Lake Missinaibi. Some of the Indians believed the story, but many of them did not believe it.” [60]

It grew dark early, so pitchy, inky dark that Ray was afraid to go out of sight of the camp-fire. He soon grew sleepy, rolled up in his blankets inside the tepee, and slept soundly till morning. But for Ganawa and Bruce the night was not so restful. For some time the white lad was kept awake by the thumping of the rabbits, which were numerous on the island. But several times during the night some larger animal prowled about the tepee. It never uttered a sound, but Ganawa said it moved through the brush like a wolf. “But I do not know why a wolf should stay on this island during summer,” he added. “They cross over on the ice in winter, but they leave this island and other islands before the ice breaks up.” [61]

## CHAPTER VII

## A WOLF

When the campers awoke, the fog was beginning to lift and a gentle wind was blowing from the northwest. The lake seemed to be quiet, but Ganawa suggested that they walk along a game trail to the southwest corner of the island, where they could have a look over the open water, which was not sheltered by being in the lee of the island. Here an unexpected sight met the eyes of the white boys. Past the rocky point of the island was sweeping a wild sea; at least that was the impression produced in the minds of the white boys by the ceaselessly rolling, swishing, breaking, splashing and pounding waves that kept rolling on and on from the great open sea to the northwest and were ever crowding, crowding in upon the shore and the islands of the southeastern part of [62]the lake over a stretch of open water of some two hundred miles.

“Ugh, look at them smash against the shore!” Ray exclaimed to Bruce. “You will see, Bruce, some day they will eat up the whole island.”

Ganawa, however, was not at all excited by the dashing and breaking waves. With a far-away gaze he stood and looked out upon the restless sea, and Bruce wondered where the thoughts of the old hunter were roaming. Perhaps he was thinking of Hamogeesik. Or was he trying to work out in his mind the best route, where they might search with some probability of finding a trace of Bruce’s lost white friend? Bruce himself felt utterly helpless and hopeless in this sublime great wilderness of lake, islands, rocky shores, and grand sweeping wooded hills, over which the silent forest stretched clear to Hudson Bay and the Arctic regions.

“If I had known,” he said to himself as he was standing alone under a weather-beaten spruce and looking out over the waves, [63]“I never should have had the nerve to come out to this region and try to find anything or anybody; but I should have expected to lose everything, including my life. On Lake George and Lake Champlain out east, one can see shores and water and woods, and everything has an end; but here everything stretches away into an endless vast; the lake, the shore, the hills and forest, and I suppose the rivers will do the same if we ever begin to explore them.”

While Ganawa and Bruce had each been busy with his own thoughts, Ray, after the manner of a young boy, had seen all that Ganawa and Bruce had seen; but upon him the grand sublime scene had a different effect. He drank it all in, and his young mind was eager for more new impressions. The past and the future did not worry him; he was living in the present.

The sun was out by this time, the white gulls were sailing and screaming near shore, and from the thickets came the whistle of white-throats and the wild melody of the [64]hermit-thrushes, but in the sunshine now the songs were much more vigorous and vibrant than they had been in the fog yesterday.

“My father,” asked Ray, “are we going to travel to-day?” On being told that the lake was too rough for a canoe, Ray asked if he might run about for a while on the game trails and along the shore. The sun was out now, he assured Bruce, so he would not get lost again.

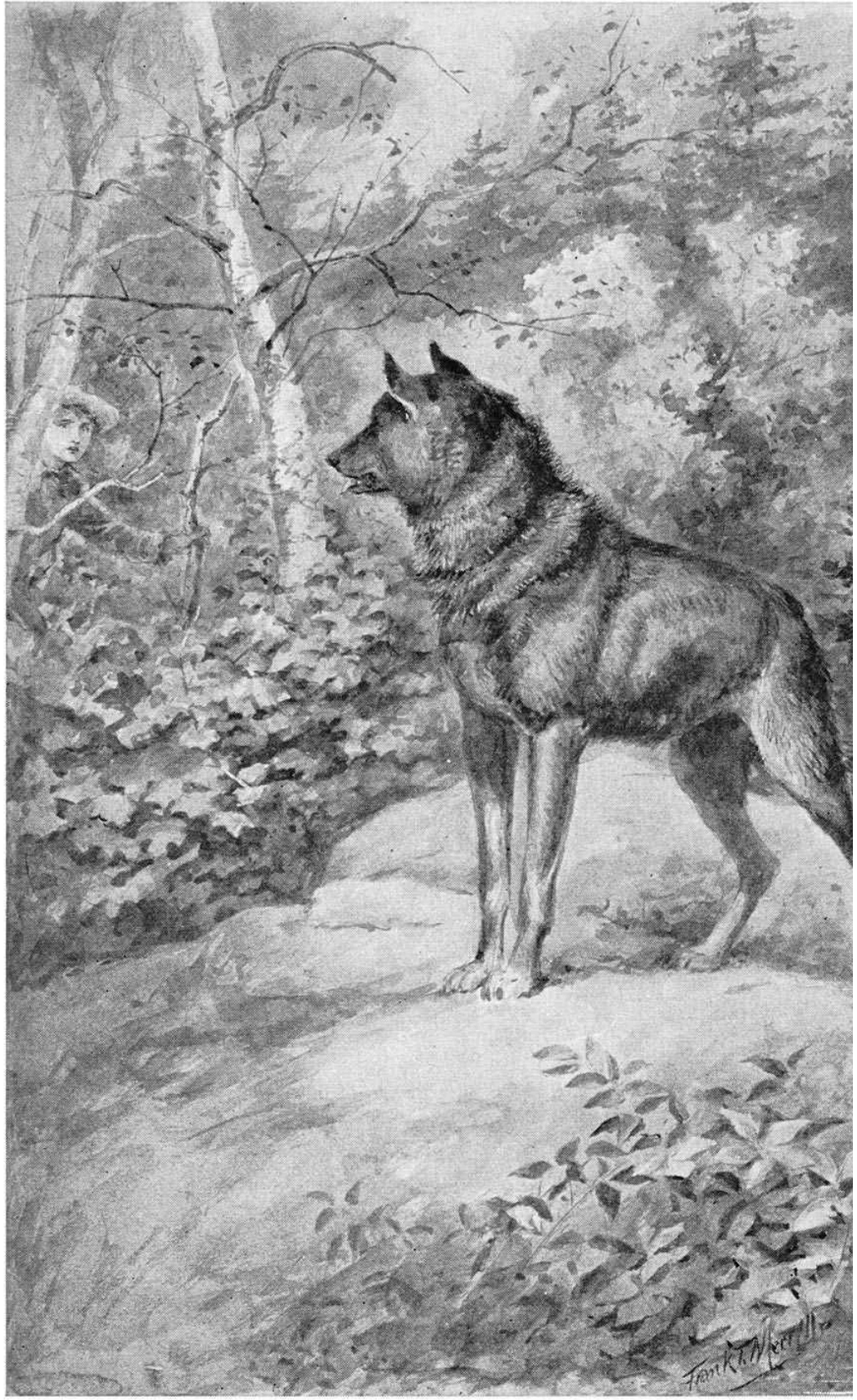
Neither Ganawa nor Bruce objected, and Ray started out along an old moose or caribou trail. He did not expect to see any of this big game, because Ganawa had told the white lads that all the large animals leave the islands near the coast before the ice breaks up in spring. One thing, however, Ray did not know, the visit of the strange animal to the tepee during the preceding night. If he had known of that strange beast, he would have been afraid to go exploring by himself.

He followed briskly a somewhat dim trail that led northward near the west coast of [65]the island, where waves and wind exerted their greatest force and where the island has for several thousand years received the most severe battering of the waves.

Ray followed this trail for the same reason that animals and men of all ages have followed trails; because it is so much easier to travel along a trail than to cut across the brush. The footing on a trail is much more secure than it is across brush, roots, and rocks, and one does not have to watch his direction so carefully.

Ray had walked, whistling and singing, about a mile, when the trail turned a little away from the coast to an almost bare area of several acres. At the end of this open space Ray saw something that for a moment almost made his blood freeze.

On a big bare rock stood a wolf looking at him. Ray's first impulse was to turn and run; but he was too scared to run. He knew that if the wolf followed him he would soon overtake him. So in sheer desperation and make-believe courage Ray stepped up [66] on a rock, swung his arms over his head and yelled. But this wolf did not do what wolves are supposed to do when they see a man in summer. He did not run, but he stood right there, and he even wagged his tail, and Ray could see that he had a big bushy tail.



And then before Ray's very eyes, the wolf on the rock became transformed. He suddenly lost the appearance of a wild wolf of the Great Lakes country, and took on the shape and almost the color of a creature with which Ray had often roamed the hills of Vermont, and Ray had cried bitterly when Bruce had insisted that Ray could not take him along.

Ray dropped the club he had picked up and for a moment he stood spellbound. Then he called: "Shep! Come here, Shep! Come here!" And he ran toward the animal. The animal also came bounding toward the boy. The boy threw his arms around him, and the animal, as if mad with joy, danced around the lad, and jumped up [67] on him and almost knocked him over in his unrestrained expression of joy.

"Come on, Shep, you go home with me." The boy spoke as if he were talking to a human being. "Don't you get lost again. You stay right with me. You are going with us. If they won't let you go with us, I shall stay right here on the island with you, and Ganawa and Bruce can go alone and hunt up their man."

And then the boy started back on the trail, the dog following close on his heels, as if the two had been friends for years. [68]

## CHAPTER VIII

## TAWNY

Ray approached the camp with his face flushed and his heart beating fast. He had been lonely on this trip thus far, but now he had found a companion.

“Oh, Bruce! Oh, Bruce!” he called when he had approached within calling distance. “I found somebody on the island, and I want to keep him.”

“What in the world did you pick up!” Bruce exclaimed, when he saw the animal that looked so much like the collie which Ray had been forced to leave behind in Vermont. Only this dog was bigger and appeared more wolf-like. Bruce felt almost a little afraid of the beast, but Ray stood with his right arm around the neck of the big tawny animal, who seemed to be as content and happy as the young boy.

“I am going to keep him!” Ray spoke [69]with his face set, without explaining just how he found the animal.

“There must be some Indians camping on this island,” Bruce suggested, when Ganawa stepped out of the tepee.

“No, my sons,” Ganawa replied, “no Indians camp on this island more than a few days, and this dog is no Indian dog. I have seen this dog with some miners that worked for the brave trader Alexander Henry, and they must have lost him on this island. It may be that he was hunting on a trail or was digging out a woodchuck, when the miners had to leave.”

Ganawa was, however, not at all pleased with Ray’s desire of keeping the dog. “We shall have to find food for him,” he said, “and we may have to be on our journey a long time. The country and the lake are very big, there are many islands and many rivers run into the Big Lake. Yes, my sons, very many rivers race and tumble into the Big Lake with much cold and noisy water. These rivers,” he continued after a pause, [70]“look very small on the maps which white men make of them and of the lake, but when you go to the place where they run into the lake, or when you try to cross them in the woods, you find that they are big rivers with swift currents. Some of them are big only at the time the snow melts in the forest on the hills, but some of

them bring the water from many lakes and are big at all seasons even if no rain falls from the clouds for many moons.”

Ray had listened with only one ear, so to speak, to Ganawa’s talk on the many rivers that fall into Lake Superior.

“My father,” he replied timidly, “I could hunt for my dog. Maybe he will also eat fish and maybe he can catch rabbits for himself.”

“My son, he may do that,” Ganawa admitted, “but I am afraid he may upset our canoe and that he may bark at a time when he should keep still. It is hard to teach a dog anything after he has grown up.”

Both Ray and Bruce had to admit the [71]truth of these points, but now Bruce came to the assistance of his small brother by saying: “My father, let us try this dog. Some dogs lie still in a canoe and do not bark much. If this is not a good dog, we can leave him on the mainland, where there is more game and where he may find some Indian camp or make his way back to the traders at the Soo.”

“Bruce, I tell you something,” Ray spoke up when the two brothers were alone, “if you are going to leave my dog behind in the woods, I am going to stay behind, too.”

“Don’t talk foolish,” Bruce replied sharply. “Do you suppose I would leave you stranded in this wilderness with a half-wild dog? Remember you promised that you would do what I told you when I took you along. Can’t you understand that nobody would ever see your face again or even your bones, if you were set out on this wild shore? Remember that there are no white men on the whole shore from the Soo to the Michipicoten River, and Ganawa told us he [72]did not know of any Indians except at Batchawana Bay and at the mouth of the Michipicoten, and he was not sure that we should find any at the Michipicoten.

“Then you want to remember that travelling overland is not as easy as gliding along in a canoe. You would have to go up-hill and down-hill, over rocks and fallen timber, through swamps and across many streams. Don’t you remember what Ganawa said when I asked him how we could reach the Michipicoten? He smiled when I told him you and I should like to travel through the forest on an Indian trail and said: ‘My son, travelling on land to the Michipicoten would be very hard work. You could carry only your gun, one blanket and very little food, and your moccasins

would wear out on the rocks. The black flies and the mosquitoes would eat you up and would not let you sleep. There is no trail from the Soo to the Michipicoten, because no Indians ever go that way on land. They always go in canoes on the lake. At night they camp [73]near the lake on shore or on an island where the cool air keeps away the black flies and the mosquitoes, and when the lake is stormy they camp till it is calm again.’”

“I did forget about the black flies and mosquitoes,” Ray admitted somewhat humbly, “but I don’t want to leave my dog. I am going to call him Tawny. Don’t you think that is a good name?”

“It is a good name for him,” Bruce agreed, “and I hope he will be a well-behaved dog in the canoe and in camp. Perhaps he will leave us of his own accord as soon as we camp on the mainland.”

“He will not leave us,” Ray replied indignantly. “He has no master and no place to go. I would like to know how he happened to be left on this island. Perhaps the boat of some white man, who owned him, was swamped near here, and Tawny swam to the island. The mainland is over three miles away and he never could have reached that through the ice-cold water of this lake, but he is not going to leave us!” [74]

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## CHAPTER IX

## THE PROVING OF TAWNY

Ganawa decided that they might as well camp another night on Montreal Island, because the lake was still somewhat rough with big long swells beating against the island from the northwest. But on the following morning the great clear sea lay spread out calm in all its summer glory under a clear sky. White-throats and song-sparrows were singing in the spruces on which the sunlight sparkled and was reflected from a myriad of dewdrops, while the forest on the high mainland toward the east bounded the clear glittering lake like a dark wall of mystery, and aroused in both white lads a strong desire to climb these dark, forested slopes and learn what there might be in the great inland behind.

Ganawa started early and steered a [75]course which left a group of small rocky islands now known as Lizard Islands on their right. At a distance of some twelve miles from Montreal Island they came to another island about a mile and a half by two miles in size. This is now called Leach Island.

Ray expressed a wish to land and explore this island. "Are you going to look for another dog?" asked Bruce. "This one will give us trouble enough."

The younger lad replied that he did not want any more dogs. "Do you think I am so stupid that I think there is a dog on every island?" he protested vigorously.

Ganawa laughed at the tilt of words between his sons and told them that this island was much like Montreal Island.

"We shall camp early this evening," he said, "in a fine little harbor, and maybe my small son will catch some big fish for our meal."

After they had passed Leach Island, Ganawa steered the canoe within a mile or [76]less of the shore, and never had the lads seen a more magnificent view. They were headed north. To their left lay the endless blue sea with no land in sight; but to their right stood the big forested wall of rocks, rising to a height of several hundred or even a thousand feet within a mile or two of the lake. The sun was now shining on this great forest so one could see clearly the mixture of spruce, balsam, fir, and

birch, with isolated white pines that were taller and seemed to belong to an older generation of trees.

It was still early in the afternoon when Ganawa rounded some cliffs to the right and landed the canoe, as he had promised, in a sheltered bay of shallow water, now known as Indian Harbor.

“We have come ten leagues,” he said, as he lifted the canoe to a safe place on land; “it is ten leagues more to the Michipicoten. My big son and I will make camp. My little son should catch us some trout for our meal.” [77]

“I do want to catch them,” Ray replied, “but I have no bait.”

Then Ganawa took a piece of red flannel out of his hunting bag. “Here, my son,” he told the lad, “that will catch them, if they are here.”

Ray was in high spirits. His dog had behaved well. When gulls and eagles soared rather close to the boat, Tawny did not even lift his head, and now after the canoe had landed, he showed no inclination to leave but literally dogged Ray’s footsteps. The fish were biting, too, and the lad was soon wild with excitement. Never had Ray seen such big rainbow trout. “Oh, Bruce, come and look,” he called; “they are too beautiful to eat,” after, with much splashing and yelling, he had pulled out three of the flashing, jumping fish, weighing from two to three pounds each.

And then came the climax of the day for the lad. A big five-pounder took a vicious bite at the red flannel, and pulled with much more strength than Ray had anticipated. [78]The lad held to his pole but in his effort to reach the line, he slipped on the rock and tumbled in amongst the boulders. Tawny uttered just two loud barks before he jumped after the lad, and when Bruce came rushing to the spot, boy and dog were struggling in the water and Bruce could not tell which one was trying to save the other. But in all the excitement Ray held to the line, and when the giant trout at last flashed his great mass of pink and his red spots on the rock, Ray fell on the wildly jumping fish, seized him behind the gills and then ran to the tepee yelling: “Look, Father, look, I’ve got him! I’ve got him!”

By this time a good fire was blazing near the tepee, and Ray was soon in dry clothes and as comfortable and warm as if he had never had a plunge-bath in Lake Superior. When Bruce taunted him with being pulled in by the big fish, Ray only laughed and

said, "The fish was worth a cold bath, and I should be glad to fall in again if I could catch another five-pound rainbow trout." [79]

"My father, this evening I shall make a feast," Bruce told Ganawa. The big trout was soon cleaned and now Bruce made use of a piece of bacon he had bought of a trader at the Soo and taken along as a surprise for Ray and as a kind of emergency ration, for he knew that even the best of Indians are likely to trust to luck for their next meal.

Bruce placed a strip of bacon inside the big fish. He slit the meat along the back and placed a strip of bacon in the cut, and to the outside of the fish he tied several strips of bacon with fine strips of willow bark, and he also used a little salt on the inside and outside of the fish. Then he fastened a smooth clean stick lengthwise through the fish, and for about fifteen minutes he kept the fish slowly turning over a hot fire of live coals, while each end of the rod used as a spit was supported in the fork of a stick set into the ground near the fire.

When the bacon began to sizzle and drip and the fish began to turn brown, Ray could [80]hardly wait until Bruce declared that the fish was cooked through and well done.

"It is a good feast," Ganawa declared as soon as he tasted the dark pink meat, and how Ray and Bruce liked it was shown by the fact that nothing was left for Tawny but the head and the bones.

But Tawny did not go hungry at the feast. In addition to several trout, Ray had also caught a pickerel, which the lad cooked over the coals before he gave it to Tawny for his feast.

"I don't like to see him eat a raw pickerel," Ray declared when Ganawa told him that dogs in the Indian country would eat anything that is given them.

When the three campers rolled up in their blankets in the tepee, Tawny curled up between the entrance and the fire and did not move all night, although some rabbits thumped outside the tepee and some wild mice scurried about.

"He is a good dog," Ganawa said in the morning, "and my little son may keep him."

[81]



## CHAPTER X

## THE RIDDLE

Before the travellers started next morning they had more broiled trout for breakfast, and Ray caught and cooked another pickerel for Tawny.

Ray and Bruce had not expected to catch brook trout and pickerel in Lake Superior, but Ganawa informed them that these fish may be caught in many places near shore in shallow water, but that they are never caught in nets set in deep water far from shore.

Rainbow trout found along the shore in Lake Superior are called “coasters” by fishermen and explorers at the present time, as has been told. These trout as well as pickerel come into the lake from the many streams that enter Lake Superior. They continue to feed along the shore, but never go into the deep water away from shore.

[82]

It was a surprise to Bruce and Ray to catch pickerel and brook trout in the same pool, but Ganawa told them that the big brook or rainbow trout are not afraid of either pickerel or pike and are often found in the same pools in some of the streams that flow into the lake.

Brook or rainbow trout must not be confused with the lake trout that live in both deep and shallow water of Lake Superior, as well as in a number of other northern lakes. Lake trout, whitefish, and lake herring are to this day important commercial fish of Lake Superior.

“It is ten leagues to the mouth of the Michipicoten,” said Ganawa when they were ready to start. Ganawa generally gave distances in leagues, because he had become accustomed to do so during his contact with the French traders and voyageurs. France had lost her vast North American possessions only two years before, and the Indians had not yet become used to English ways and English measures, but Bruce and Ray [83] had learned by this time that a league was equal to about three English miles.

The weather continued fine, so that Ganawa steered the canoe straight across from point to point, and while approaching Brule Point, they were three miles from shore. Beyond Brule Point the wooded hills rose to a height of seven hundred feet above the lake and made both lads feel that they would like to go inland and explore the mountains as Ray called them.

“Maybe we shall explore plenty of mountains,” Ganawa promised the lads, “after we have reached the Michipicoten.”

“There is a house!” exclaimed Ray, as they entered the mouth of the river, which at that time was not obstructed by sand-bars as it is at the present time. The log house to which Ray had pointed stood on a clearing south of the river. It was not occupied, but above the door were painted the letters H. B. C., which Bruce knew meant Hudson Bay Company.

Those were the days when this great English [84]company tried to extend the monopoly in the fur trade, which it enjoyed farther north, also along the Great Lakes. But it was never very successful in this attempt. Independent individual traders, and later the Northwest Company and American traders were active competitors of the Hudson Bay Company.

A little farther up-stream, on the north side of the river on a level sandy plateau, where now stands a small village of whites and Indians known as “the Mission,” the travellers found a small camp of Indians, consisting of Ininiwac people and a few families of Chippewas.

The arrival of the visitors caused a great stir in the lonely camp. A dozen cur dogs barked savagely at the men and at Tawny, who, however, treated the whole pack with an air of contempt. He walked erect close to Ray, with his hair bristling and his teeth flashing and uttering now and then a fierce low growl, when one of the half-starved curs made a move as if to snap at him. A few [85]small children scampered into the tepees at the sight of the strangers while several men arose from their seats outside the tepees, drove away the yelping dogs and shook hands with the strangers.

Ganawa was delighted to find some of his own people at the camp, for he did not understand the talk of Ininiwac people very well, and the Indians of the Great Lakes region were not good sign-talkers like the Indians of the plains.

By this time Ray and Bruce had picked up quite a number of Chippewa words, and when they joined the circle of Ganawa and his friends, they could understand enough of the conversation to learn that Ganawa was asking if they knew anything about Jack Dutton, or if they had seen him.

Later in the evening, when the three were inside of their own tepee, with a small bright fire of dry sticks burning in the center, Ganawa told the lads in English what he had learned.

Jack Dutton with another white man had [86]been in the Michipicoten country about twelve moons ago, last winter. There had been a rumor that the two men had made a valuable cache of fur within one or two days' journey of this place, the mouth of the Michipicoten. A hunter, who had been following the track of a moose, had accidentally discovered the camp and the fur cache of the two white men, because they had made their camp on a little stream near a moose trail which led from a big lake to a small lake farther back in the wilderness of rocky wooded hills that stretch northward from the Sault Sainte Marie and Lake Superior for a distance of fifty to two hundred miles, where they run out into a flat country of the greatest black spruce forest in North America, a sombre dark forest which extends northward almost to Hudson Bay and eastward a thousand miles from Lake of the Woods to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick.

The two white men, the hunter had told, had collected and bought of some Indians [87]only the most valuable furs, such as silver foxes, dark prime beaver, and marten. All lower-grade furs they had traded to the Indians for a few high-grade furs or had used them for clothing and robes. "They had a big canoe-load of furs worth ten hundred beavers," the old hunter had told, holding up the fingers of both hands to emphasize his story. "The white man gave me lead and powder so I could kill the fat moose, and my squaw and I had plenty of meat till the ducks came north and the ice left the streams so we could catch fish."

The Indians had understood that the lead and powder had been given the old hunter on the condition that he would not betray the location of the white men's fur cache. He had not even told them the distance of the cache from Lake Superior, but he had returned within four days and had then taken his squaw with him. "Where is the hunter now?" asked Bruce. "Perhaps he would tell us more, so we might learn if one [88]of the white men was my friend, Jack Dutton."

“He and his squaw have gone to visit a married daughter, who lives on Lake Winnipeg,” Ganawa replied.

“My father,” asked Ray after a brief silence, “do you know the way to Lake Winnipeg? Perhaps we might find the hunter and ask him to tell us more.”

“My son,” Ganawa answered kindly, “I know the way to Lake Winnipeg, but it is so far away that I fear the lakes and streams would be frozen again by the time we returned to this camp.

“And now, my sons, it is time to roll up in our blankets. To-morrow I shall tell you more news; and, maybe, we shall paddle up the Michipicoten, which is a good river, with clear cold water in which live many good fish of the color of the rainbow.” [89]

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## CHAPTER XI

## MYSTERY AND DANGER

In the morning Ganawa told the lads some news which he had kept to himself the evening before.

“There was a visitor at this camp only a few sleeps ago,” he said. “It was Hamogeesik. He is no good Indian, he is no good white man. He is a bad Indian and a bad white man in one. He asked my Chippewa friends if they had seen two white boys and he tried to find out from the Ininiwac people where two white men had made a cache of fur, and if the white men had been looking for any gold rock. Most white men, he said, were looking for gold rock all the time. The Ininiwac people told him they did not know where the two white men had cached their fur more than twelve moons ago; and none of the Indians here know [90]whether the two white men are still back in the hills or whether they have left and taken their furs away.

“But I know what is in the black heart of Hamogeesik. I think he is trying to follow us, for he has learned that we are trying to find the two men who made a cache of fur and looked for gold rock in the hills from which the waters run to the Michipicoten.”

The three travellers remained several days at the camp with the Ininiwacs and the Chippewas, because Ganawa thought he might discover more definite information about the place where the two white men had made their cache, whether they had found or had been looking for any gold rock, and whether they were still in the country.

On the fourth morning he said: “My sons, we must leave this camp. I have learned very little from the people here, and I know now that I shall learn nothing more; so we must travel among the hills up the river and look for signs of our friends. But [91]I fear we shall find nothing, unless the Great Spirit sends me more light. The country is very big, and there are as many hills and streams and lakes as there are leaves on a tree. There are many big lakes and many more small lakes. No Indian has ever found all the small lakes and small streams, only the beaver people have found them and the fish that shine like a rainbow. But we must now paddle up-

stream among the high hills and trust in the Great Spirit that he may let us find some sign that may tell us where to look for your friends.”

Had the three travellers been on a pleasure or camping trip, they could hardly have chosen a finer and more beautiful river. For a mile or two they passed through a level sandy country into which the river has cut its channel, making on the north side a steep bank more than fifty feet high. This level country was covered with a growth of jack-pine, spruces and balsam firs; and to this day a most beautiful, natural jack-pine park extends some miles up-stream toward [92]the big falls of the Michipicoten, of which we shall soon hear more.

The area of this jack-pine park was covered by the waters of Lake Superior a long time ago, when the big lake was even bigger than it is now; and over the whole Lake Superior region is written a most wonderful story of great ice-sheets and floods for those who can read the story of lakes and streams and hills and of the great deposits of gravel and small stones and large boulders.

While Ganawa and Bruce were paddling the canoe up the fairly swift current, Ray sat in the stern and had a line out, baited with a piece of flannel; and by the time Ganawa stopped for a meal and for rest, Ray had caught enough rainbow trout for the men, and a pike and a pickerel for Tawny.

The Michipicoten is carrying about as much water as the Wabash or the Minnesota, but its water is clear and cold with just a tint of brown in it, and pike and pickerel and large rainbow trout may still [93]be caught in its waters in the same pool. It is not to be thought, however, that they will always bite on a piece of flannel; for, like fish in other waters, at times no bait will tempt them.

If any of my readers should ever paddle up the Michipicoten from the mouth toward the big falls, they would naturally use a fly or they might keep a trolling-line out and enjoy the thrill of catching a big rainbow trout, for the country of the Michipicoten is still a wilderness and its waters still flow cold and clear.

In 1775 spoon hooks had not yet been invented and, of course, no trout-flies could be bought of any Indian traders.

Whenever the three travellers came to a place where some one had camped, they landed and examined the spot with great care.

“My father,” asked Bruce, “how would you be able to tell whether Indians or white men had camped on the river?”

“If I found a button,” Ganawa replied, [94]“or a coin, or paper with printed words, I should say that white men had made the camp.”

They spent the better part of a day in paddling some ten or twelve miles up-stream. They examined minutely three camping-places near the river. At each place the Indians had left their tepee-poles standing, as is their custom to this day. None of the places showed signs of very recent camps; however, at one camp Ray picked up a scrap of printed paper; but the words were French and the sign, therefore, gave no clue as to the whereabouts of the friend of Bruce.

At the foot of some rapid water, Ganawa made camp for the night, and the lads now saw the advantage of leaving the tepee-poles standing at each camp, for within a few minutes Ganawa had their long strip of deerskin wound around the poles, fastened it to the ground, and the tepee was ready.

“We had better sleep in the tepee,” he remarked, “for the night will be cool and [95]the air damp in the deep shaded valley near the river.

“To-morrow, my sons,” he added, “we must push our canoe with a pole or drag it on a rope, and in some places we must carry it, for it is a league from here to the big falls and the water is very swift all the way and many rocks have rolled into the river from the hills.”

That evening Ray lay awake a long time listening to the talk of the river, which gurgled and bubbled, roared and rushed and rippled past the camp, as if a crowd of living men or spirits talking in a strange language were for ever and ever marching past the camp.

Then the lad was bold enough to turn aside the tepee-flap and step out into the night. If Tawny had not come out with him, he would have been afraid. A strange sight met his eyes. Above the stream, which now looked uncanny and forbidding, hung a fog which in the moonlight looked like a long gray cloud. Patches of moonlight [96]lay bright on the trail and the high tree tops on the hills opposite stood out in bold relief, while the tree trunks near by stood like black spectres. A big owl was hooting in the

distance. Or was it the howling of a wolf? And some small creature rushed from the trail into the thicket.

The spookiness of the moonlight night seized Ray. He turned and walked quickly back to the tepee, crept under his blanket, head and all, and, listening again to the talk of the river, he soon fell asleep. [97]

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## CHAPTER XII

## BEGINNING THE SEARCH

Ray was surprised next forenoon at the ease with which Ganawa managed their journey up-stream. For the greater part of the distance the old Indian knelt in the stern of the canoe, and by means of a pole steered and pushed the craft safely past many rocks and through much swift water, while Bruce walked along the south bank and pulled on a long rope. In a few places they lifted the canoe out of the water and carried it a short distance over land. Ray, with his gun and his dog, walked along the trail as if he were furnishing the safe conduct for the two canoeists. Although Ganawa and Bruce worked the canoe up-stream with great caution, they nevertheless made such good progress that they reached the great whirlpool at the foot of the falls during the forenoon. [98]

The falls of the Michipicoten have the character of a mountain cataract. The water does not drop over a projecting cliff as it does at Niagara, but in some half dozen turns and twists it rushes down a steep cliff of granite. Over the last step the water rushes at an angle which makes a mad whirlpool, in which the water turns and turns like a caged animal that is vainly looking for an escape from its prison. At certain stages of the water, the outflow from the whirlpool seems to come entirely from below, while the whirling surface water will hold logs and other objects in its grip for days to leave them finally stranded on the rocks. When the water is at this stage, even the lumbermen find it at times impossible to break the whirling and milling movement of the logs.

From the whirlpool the travellers had to carry their canoe and packs up a steep trail of a hundred and fifty feet and some distance beyond, until it was safe to put the canoe in the water again; for above great [99]falls and rapids the water of a river acquires a vicious gliding swiftness, which seizes men and animals as with a vise-like grip from which they can seldom escape. The water above the falls of the Michipicoten is especially treacherous. The river is wide and quite smooth and one may wade into it near the shore, but in the deep water in the middle of the stream the river is madly rushing to the first chute of the falls, and a boat or canoe once caught in the midstream rush rarely escapes destruction. Even in recent years several white

men, who did not gauge right the danger of the smoothly gliding stream, have lost their lives by being carried over the falls.

About a mile above the roaring, thundering falls, Ganawa stopped at a camping-place close to a quiet pool in the river.

“My sons,” he said, “here we shall stay, maybe several days. You, my sons, may now set up our tepee and make us a good camp.” As in this place also a set of poles was standing in position, making camp was [100]quick and easy work; but Bruce and Ray, after the tepee was up, went to work at cutting a goodly lot of firewood. For this and other work, Bruce had brought a good heavy ax, because, as he said, it seemed foolish to him for a full-grown man to work with a small boy’s hatchet. He admitted that these small axes were valuable weapons for the Indian warriors and hunters and for the squaws in cutting firewood. “But for a white man,” he insisted, “give me a real ax, the kind used by the wood-choppers and farmers of New England. Ray may use an Indian hatchet; it is about the right weight for him.”

The lads chopped two kinds of wood. One pile consisted of short and dry pieces of pine, spruce, mountain ash, white elm, white cedar, a little black ash, and small sticks of dry willow, moose-maple, pin-cherry, and choke-cherry.

The moose-maple so common north of Lake Superior is not a real tree, but only a good-sized bush. The lads did not cut [101]any dry birch, because dead birch wood found in the forest is nearly always both wet and rotten and valueless as fuel. The bark of the birch does not allow the wood to dry, and within a few years the dead wood has changed to a kind of punk, which is good for smoking fish and meat, but quite worthless for a real fire. Sugar maple, soft maple, oaks, butternut, black walnut, and other trees common farther south and east do not grow along the Michipicoten River nor are they found in the region of Michipicoten Bay. Common broad-leaved trees in this region are the aspen, or common poplar, the balsam poplar, or balm of Gilead, and the white birch. The white birch is the most common; it grows to a good size and, if cut green, makes the best fuel found in the North woods.

After the lads had cut a supply of dry wood for purposes of cooking and for a fire in the tepee, they started to cut a lot of green birch for their outdoor camp-fires. Birch is the only kind of broad-leaved wood [102]found in the northern forest which will burn green. It will not sputter and throw sparks, but after it is well started by the use

of some dry wood it can be kept going indefinitely with a steady red glow by adding fuel as it is needed.

All the evergreens will burn green, but they are unpleasant to handle on account of their pitch and they make much black smoke; while green poplars, elm, oak, and ironwood are so sappy, especially in the summer season, that they will steam and sizzle on the fire and can hardly be made to burn with the aid of dry wood.

After the lads had cut enough wood to last them for a week or so, Ganawa told them that they must now secure food for several days before they could go and look for signs of the cache of their friends. Bruce was more than willing to do this, because he saw with much anxiety that the small supply of food which they had brought with them would soon be gone, if they touched it at all. [103]

The great country north and northeast of Lake Superior is very poor in wild plant food suitable for human beings. There is little or no wild rice, and there are no roots or bulbs which can be gathered in large quantities. There is, however, an abundance of blueberries and raspberries in good seasons; but a man who has no bread or meat cannot live long on berries.

In the matter of animal food, however, the case stands better for the North Country. The great swamps, valleys and hills of this region have long been and still are the home of the moose, the biggest animal of the deer family now living. At times woodland caribou are found in the region, and generally there is a supply of snowshoe rabbits. At the present time, deer are fairly common in the region, but the journals and stories of the old voyageurs and traders do not mention deer, which at that time had not spread so far north.

The most reliable food supply of the region is fish, and Bruce and Ray now set [104]about securing enough fish so they might later on give all their time to exploring and looking for some clue of the whereabouts of Jack Dutton. [105]

## CHAPTER XIII

## AT THE BIG POOL

Few streams in North America furnish a better place for rainbow trout than the Big Pool just below the falls of the Michipicoten, so Bruce and Ray naturally decided to try their luck in its black whirling waters.

“You should catch some big trout in that pool,” Bruce commented as Ray put a piece of red flannel on a hook which looked large enough to hold a three-pound bass. For a little while the trout, if there were any in this pool, seemed indifferent to this fake bait, as Ray called it. “If I could only find some worms in this country, you would soon see me pull them out,” he remarked a little impatiently.

“Well, you know, Ray, that there are no angleworms in a wild country, and you might as well try patiently to catch one on [106]the flannel bait. After you catch the first one, you will soon catch more.” After trying patiently in several places, Ray did land a small trout. “Now,” Bruce advised him, “dress this fish right away, and use its fins for bait and see what will happen.”

It has often been claimed that fish do not know one kind of bait from another, and that they will strike at anything that moves or is conspicuously colored. To a great extent that is true of such voracious fish as the pickerel, but rainbow trout are perhaps the most intelligent of all fresh-water fish. They may bite at times on a piece of cloth or on bacon or pork-rind; but the man who uses flies, worms, minnows, fins, or other parts of a fish for bait will catch more trout.

After Ray had baited his hook with a fin, it was not long before the fun began, and the lads were soon in the midst of more exciting fishing than they had ever dreamed of. Ray caught no more small fish. They were all bigger than any trout he had ever seen in the streams near his Vermont home. [107]Of course, Ray had no reel, no dip-net, no creel or stringer to take care of his catch. When the line suddenly tightened and began to cut the swift, whirling current, Ray grew wildly excited. “Get him, Bruce, get him!” he would call, while he made an effort to swing the line around so that Bruce could get hold of it, and the older lad in turn became almost as excited as Ray; and in truth to catch brook trout that run from two to three pounds and over in weight is exciting enough to make the blood of even an old man run fast again.

“Oh, Bruce, you let him get away,” Ray exclaimed, after they had been pulling out the most beautiful and lively fish for an hour. “It was a big one, a real giant. I saw him come after the bait almost to the surface. I was going to hit him with the pole, because I thought it was a big pickerel. He was almost a yard long. Honestly, Bruce, he looked as big as that!” and Ray indicated the size of the fish by holding up both of his hands. [108]

“How many have we? About thirty? Bruce, it’s lucky we had a sack, otherwise most of them would have jumped back in the river. I never saw such wild fish.”

“And I never saw such a wild fisherman,” Bruce remarked.

“I want to catch one more real big one,” declared Ray without replying to the older lad. “Bruce, I never want to catch any more sunfish and bullheads.”

For a short time the trout seemed to be taking a rest; but then suddenly there came a strike and a pull as if the hook had caught on a wildly spinning log. The limber cedar pole bent and the tip almost touched the water, as the fish rushed into deep water and toward the opposite side of the whirlpool.

“Help me, help me!” Ray called. “I can’t hold him. Maybe I’m caught on a log. No, I’m not. It’s a fish, Bruce! It’s a fish! I can feel it. It’s a big one!”

Bruce took the pole, for the younger boy was tired out with the excitement of the afternoon. “Look out, Bruce, look out!” [109]he called. “He will pull you into the whirlpool and drown you! Maybe I have caught an otter or a beaver.”

But Bruce had now gained control of the situation. For some ten or fifteen minutes he skillfully played the big fish on a taut line. Several times the desperately fighting fish broke water, but the line held and the hook could not be shaken out.

“Now then,” called Bruce, when the giant had calmed down. “Now, Ray, take the line and run up the bank.” And out of the black pool came a real rainbow giant, the like of which neither lad had ever seen. Bruce quickly caught the wildly jumping fish behind the gills and carried him up the bank.

“Look,” he called, “we came near losing him the last minute. He was off the hook when I caught him.”

“Oh, but he is a big one! Let me hold him a minute,” Ray pleaded. “The boys in Vermont would never believe that he was so big. What do you think he weighs?”

[110]

“He weighs six pounds if he weighs an ounce,” Bruce asserted, “and he is over two feet long. Ray, these trout are too beautiful to take home. I declare, if this black foaming pool were a big glass tank, I should put them all back, just to watch a host of rainbows swimming around.”

Bruce was just about to shoulder the load of fish when something happened that made them forget for a short time the wonderful time they had had catching that unheard-of mess of trout.

Tawny, who had acted a little bored at the sport in which he could not partake, suddenly rushed down the trail. The lads heard him bark viciously, as if he had cornered some wild beast and the creature had turned at bay on him. The lads, who had not taken their guns along, ran down the trail, but they could not overtake the dog, who for a short time was out of hearing. As the lads walked more slowly along the trail, the dog, still mad with excitement, met them. His hair was wet, but still bristling [111] and he evidently wanted them to come with him, which the lads did with some hesitation, because they were not armed.

“I am afraid a bear turned on him,” Ray suggested, “and we couldn’t fight a bear with sticks.”

“I have an idea that it was a moose,” Bruce suggested. “The animal probably crossed the river and Tawny jumped in after him.”

But when on examining the trail and the river bank very carefully, they found neither tracks of moose nor bear, nor tracks of any kind, they were still more puzzled.

“Perhaps he only saw or smelled something on the other side of the river and got himself wet in trying to swim across. He is just fool enough to try that; but let us go home now, Bruce. Perhaps Ganawa can tell us what Tawny was after.”

They found Ganawa sitting in front of the tepee, as if deeply absorbed in thought. He was much pleased with the big catch of trout the lads brought to camp, but when

they [112]told him of the strange behavior of Tawny, Ganawa's eyes flashed and he asked, "Did you look for moccasin tracks? Moccasin tracks are hard to see on a trail where there are many stones."

"We did not see any," Bruce replied, "but we did not think of looking for them; we thought only of moose or bear."

"We shall go and look for them in the morning," said Ganawa. "It is getting too dark now." [113]

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## CHAPTER XIV

## A PUZZLE

Thus far the three travellers had enjoyed a long spell of that perfect fair weather, which during some seasons is common in the North Country, while at other seasons summer comes near missing the great wilderness which lies between Lake Superior and Hudson Bay.

By the time Ganawa and the lads had each finished a pink-fleshed broiled trout for supper the western sky was overcast and they could see the reflection of distant lightning on the far-away clouds, although above them the stars were shining, and a westerly wind soughed somewhat uncannily through the tops of spruces and birches and played about the crowns of old white pines which far overtopped the dense mixed forest of spruce, birch, balsam, fir, and white cedar, which campers and fishermen may find over [114]much of the great North Shore country to this day.

“My father,” Ray had asked, “why are there only a few big pines in the forest?”

Ganawa thought a few moments before he answered. “I cannot tell you, my son. As long as I remember, and during the time of my father, this was always a country of a few big pine-trees, but south of the Big Lake, where there was for a long time the country of the Chippewas, there are large forests of very big pine-trees.”

The question which Ray asked of Ganawa is somewhat of a puzzle even to the scientific foresters and naturalists of to-day. If one asks the oldest present-day Indians for information, he receives about the same answer which Ganawa gave to Ray. As long as the oldest of them remembers and far back into the time of their grandfathers, isolated giant white pines have towered over the other forest trees that do not grow to the size of giants.

In some regions, as those in the poplar [115]forests of the Big Fork country in Minnesota, and in the Itasca Forest, the big pines are probably the only trees that survived a destructive fire between seventy-five or a hundred years ago. Of the time of these fires neither white men nor Indians have now any definite recollection, but unfortunately forest fires have not been rare in this great region of variable rainfall and much wind.

North of Lake Superior and in the Michipicoten country, the big pines may really tell another story. Perhaps they are an advance guard in the northward spread of the forest trees, after all that vast region had been covered by ice. Some of these big white pines are very old. They have been slow growers. Three hundred narrow rings of growth are not rare, and if one could carefully examine the rings close to the ground he might find four hundred. These rings mean that the trees are between three hundred and four hundred years old. There is no doubt that many of these lone giants [116] were struggling seedlings or even lustily growing youths when John Smith was saved by Pocahontas and when the Pilgrims landed on the coast of Massachusetts. Careful investigation might even show that some of these lone sentinels were already beginning to reach up to the sunlight when Columbus landed on San Salvador.

It may be that the red squirrels retarded the spread of the white pines northward. In regions, where these pines are not numerous, the squirrels are likely to strip every cone and eat practically every seed.

Ganawa knew of this habit of the red squirrels and he also told Ray that perhaps the winters were too long north of the Big Lake. "About thirty leagues farther north," he told the lads, "begins the great forest of the spruce, and no white pines grow there, but only spruce-trees; and where the land is high and sandy, the jack-pine grows, the pine that keeps its little crooked cones for many years. And there is only one other tree that you would find plentiful, if [117] you would paddle your canoe down one of the rivers which flow into the cold salt water bay; that tree is the poplar, whose leaves whisper and talk in every little wind. The poplars grow on good soil near the rivers, where a fire has killed the other trees."

By this time Ray was glad to slip away into his blankets. A small fire was burning in the tepee to keep the place dry and warm and also to prevent any mosquitoes from coming in at the top; for almost every year through June and July the mosquitoes are a fearful pest through the whole Great Lakes region, and they are often worse north of the lakes than south of them.

Bruce and Ganawa sat for an hour or more at the camp-fire, which Bruce kept supplied with green birch logs, while they talked over the events of the day and discussed plans for finding a clue to the whereabouts of Jack Dutton.

“We must look sharp along the river for signs of a white man’s camp,” said Ganawa, “and if we do not find any, then we must [118]go to another river or to some lakes where the hunting is good for fur animals. And we may find some Indians that can tell us where a white man made a camp, but this country is very big and very few Indians live in it, and only few of them travel through the region on their way to the English traders who live far to the north on the shore of the salt water.”

By this time the storm had come up from the west, not with the violence that often accompanies rainstorms on the plains and along the Missouri, but quietly, with almost no wind. Bruce poured water on the camp-fire and for a short time he stood in the darkness enjoying the view of the hills and the wild forest as it was illumined from time to time by the lightning that played back and forth on the clouds, and he listened to the thunder which rumbled and crashed and echoed from hill to hill, and it seemed as if at times the very rocks were trembling. Then a steady roaring noise began, and Bruce wondered what it was, as it seemed [119]to be approaching rapidly. It was a heavy rain moving eastward without any wind, and when the first big drops began to play on the tepee, Bruce slipped inside and carefully closed the tepee flap behind him.

Ray was sound asleep, and Ganawa, who had experienced many storms in a wild forest, also seemed to be asleep. But Bruce lay awake for some time listening to the play of the rain on the tepee and to its strange music on the river and in the trees, a music which people who always live in cities and white men’s houses never hear. Thus wondering and half dreaming about the vast uninhabited region, the big trout in the pool, and the strange unknown man or beast which had made the dog so madly excited, Bruce also fell asleep.

When Ray went to bed the dog had also curled up in his place and the two had been asleep now for several hours. To rain, thunder, and wind, Tawny paid no attention; they were sounds that meant nothing to him. In the morning the wild forest appeared [120]in all its summer glory under a clear blue sky. White-throats were whistling, the song of the hermit-thrushes rang from the thickets with its peculiar ecstasy, and the bumblebees were at work among the white flowers of the wild raspberries.

After the brush had dried off, the three campers went down to examine the trail below the big pool; but if there had been any tracks or marks, the heavy rain had obliterated them all. Tawny sniffed at the ground here and there, but found nothing

to excite him. However, he seemed to know what the investigation was about, for again and again he looked at his human companions with a funny quizzical expression, as if he would say: “This is the place where he was last night. If you will just tell me where he is now, I will go after him.” [121]

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## CHAPTER XV

## THE SMOKE-HOUSE

“I do not know what made the dog mad,” said Ganawa, when they had returned from the pool. “Perhaps he smelled a bear or a wolf, or a moose came to the river to drink. Some dogs do not know enough to leave a porcupine alone, and then they get mad when they smell one. Or it may be that the dog smelled an Indian, although I do not know why a good Indian should have run away when the dog came. If it had been a bear, I think the dog would have held him at bay and would have done much barking, and a young bear would have climbed a tree. If it had been a moose, I think the dog would have followed his trail a long time, perhaps all night. So I think it was either a wolf or an Indian. One dog cannot fight a wolf, and an Indian might have gone down the river in a canoe. But now, [122]my sons, you must take care of the fish you caught.”

The trout had all been cleaned in the evening, and Bruce had laid them in a big basin of birch-bark and put just a very little salt on them. Bruce had taken along about a peck of salt, because he knew that it is hard for most white men to learn to like meat and fish without salt. The lads had planned to smoke the fish, so that they would keep indefinitely. Then they could take smoked fish on trips when they would have no time to hunt or fish, or when they would have no luck with hunting or fishing.

The lads proceeded to smoke the fish in a way which any campers or fishermen may follow. It is a method which the Indians discovered long ago and it is well known to many white campers and hunters.

Bruce drove some stout poles into the ground so they made a rectangle about three feet wide and six feet long. Then he tied two slender green poles to the uprights, one on each side of the rectangle. [123]

Ray quickly cut a number of thin green sticks and laid them crosswise on the poles which Bruce had tied to the uprights. When Ganawa saw what the lads had done, he said, “My sons, you have made a good scaffold for smoking the fish.”

“We shall make it better,” Bruce replied. “We shall make a little smoke-house, so they will be smoked more evenly than on an open scaffold. Go and get some large

pieces of bark, Ray; any kind of bark you can find.”

In a short time the lads had enclosed three sides of their smoke-house with pieces of birch-bark and other bark. Then Bruce dug a shallow trench in the ground, and in this he built a small fire of sticks and chips. As soon as this fire had a good start he covered it with damp birch punk, rotting birchwood, which he gathered from a dead birch that had been lying on the ground for several years. The wood had rotted to such an extent, as birch on the ground always does, that one could have dug it out with a stout shovel. [124]

The fish had all been split along the back, and Ray had carefully spread them out on the frame above the fire, from which a thick smoke now began to rise.

“Say, Bruce,” exclaimed Ray, “the thing begins to work like a smoke-house on a New England farm. I guess we won’t starve if we can catch enough fish or find game.”

The lads now covered the top of their smoke-house with birch-bark, and partly closed the front with a piece of buckskin. After this they took turns watching the fire, taking care that there was always enough fire to make a good dense smoke. By this method, meat and fish are slowly cooked and cured in such a way that they will keep for a long time, even in warm weather, if they are protected from flies and other insects.

Bruce and Ray smoked fish till dark, and then Bruce took the fish into the tepee and let the fire go out.

“A hungry bear might steal that whole business,” Bruce remarked. “We must take no chances like that.” [125]

In the morning Bruce started the fire again, and about noon the fish were declared well smoked and cured. The outside felt hard and dry and the dark pink meat had been nicely browned. The fish not only looked but smelled appetizing, so that the lads were sorely tempted to eat a piece at once.

Ganawa had made a birch-bark tub and in this the lads stored their smoked fish, and after carefully closing the tub with a piece of canvas, they hung the tub up in the tepee, for in this way the fish would keep indefinitely.

They had now time to explore the country several miles up the river, searching for indications of a white man's camp or a cache of fur.

“The cache or the camp,” said Ganawa, “will not be far from a lake or stream. It may be on a very small stream, but you need not look for it far from water. Both Indians and white men never make a camp more than two or three hundred paces from [126]water, and at most camps the distance to water is much less.”

For about a week the three campers devoted their time to exploring the wild country for some ten miles up-stream. Sometimes all three went as one party, at other times Ganawa went in one direction and the two white boys went in another direction, but neither of the white boys ever went alone any great distance from camp, for Ganawa was always a little afraid that the lads might get lost.

“You must remember, my sons,” he told them, “in what direction you went from the river and from the tepee. If you can find the river, you can find the tepee. If you get lost you must not be scared and begin to run, but you must camp, build a fire that will make a big smoke and then you must wait till I have time to find you.”

On every trip they carried a piece of smoked fish, a small ax, steel, flint, and tinder; and hooks and fish-lines. They also never went without Bruce's small compass. [127]About the use of the compass Ganawa had laughingly cautioned them on one point, saying: “My sons, I have seen several white men get lost with their compass. The compass is wise and can always tell you where the north star is and where the sun is at noon, but it cannot tell you where your tepee is; so you must always remember in what direction and about how far you went from your tepee.”

In this manner they examined every creek, lake, and pond that might have tempted trappers and traders to camp. They found several places where at some time Indians had camped, but in all their search they discovered just one spot which Ganawa pronounced to have been a white man's camp. It was close to the river at the mouth of a cold-spring stream.

“The men who camped here cut big wood and built a big fire,” explained Ganawa. “Indians do not cut big wood and do not build a big fire. The dry balsam boughs of their bed show us that there [128]were two men, and they made camp about twelve moons ago after the balsam-trees had begun to make a new growth. They camped here more than one night, because they cut and burnt a good deal of wood.”

Bruce and Ray tried hard to read more from the signs of the camp. In what direction were the men travelling? With what object did they come to this wild part of the continent? The lads even looked with great care for some written message, but they found absolutely nothing to give them more information than Ganawa had read from the signs of the camp.

“I wish something would happen,” Ray said one evening as he and Bruce were returning tired and hungry from one of their fruitless exploring trips. “It isn’t much fun to be eaten up by the black flies in the brush,” and a few days later something did happen. [129]

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## CHAPTER XVI

## A DOUBLE SURPRISE

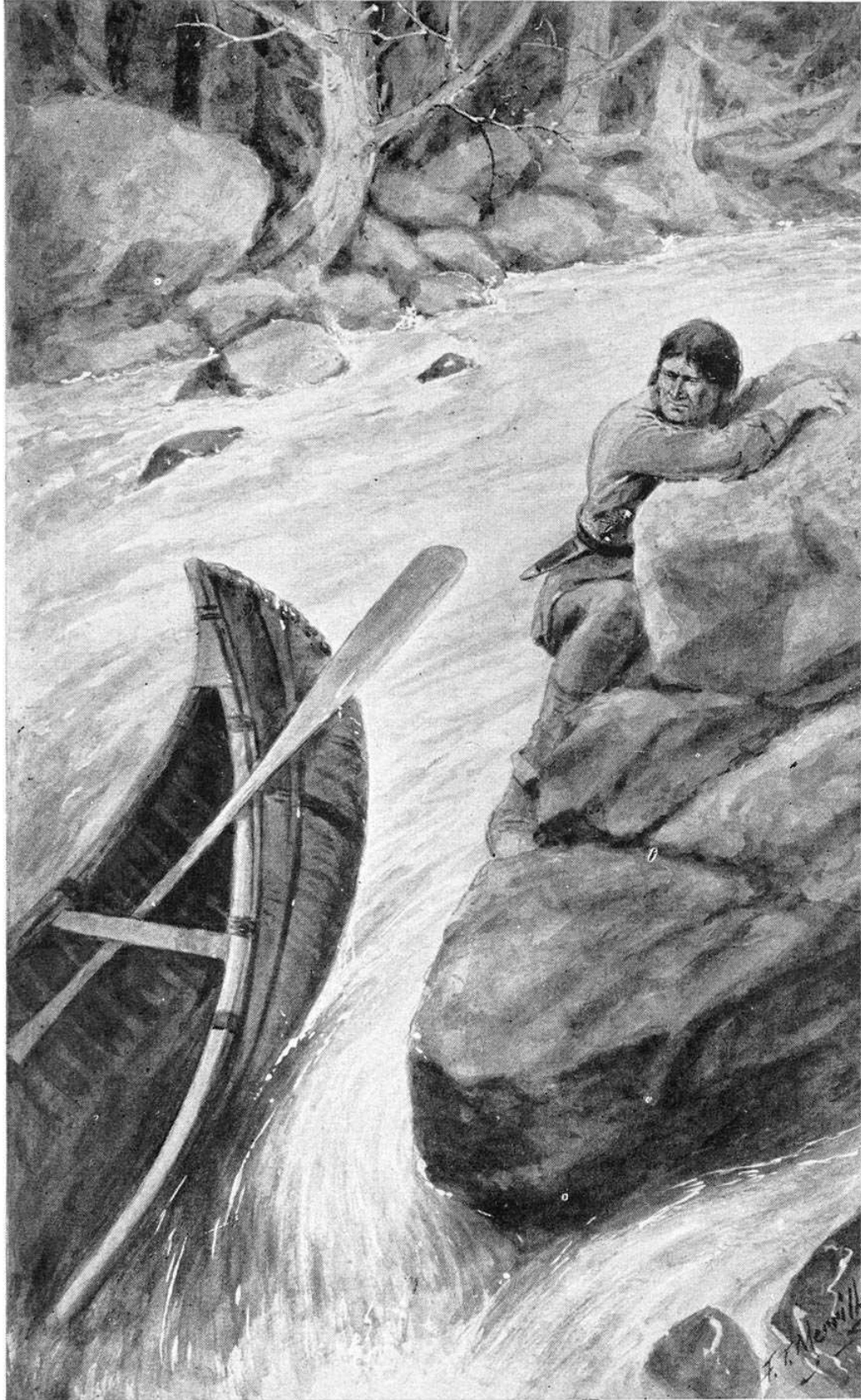
The thing happened on a fine quiet summer afternoon. Ganawa and Ray were enjoying the fine weather near the tepee. Bruce had taken the canoe and the dog across the river and was sitting on a knoll from which he had a fine view of a short stretch of the river. He was thinking over the plan that Ganawa had proposed for the future. "We must either travel up the river," Ganawa had said, "or we must start off for another part of the country, perhaps to some big lake."

The whole plan seemed sort of bootless and headless to Bruce and he felt decidedly blue about the whole outlook. "We might as well," he thought, "hunt for a certain pebble somewhere on the shore of Lake Superior, as expect to find Jack Dutton or [130]anybody else in this endless wilderness of a million lakes and streams and rivers and rocky hills. If anybody lived in this God-forsaken country, the black flies and mosquitoes wouldn't be so hungry. I think Jack and I were a couple of big ..." and then the train of his thought was suddenly broken by something he saw coming around the bend in the river. Bruce stood up to make sure he was not mistaken. No, there it was. An Indian in a small birch-bark canoe was paddling hard up-stream, and the fellow had a gun leaning in the bow of the canoe. He was close to the other shore, and would see Ganawa's camp before Ganawa or Ray were likely to see him. Bruce knew that Ganawa expected no friendly visitor, in fact, he thought he recognized the Indian. Bruce was too far from camp to call to Ganawa. For a moment he did not know what to do, and then he did a desperate thing. He fired his gun and let out as wild a yell as he could utter.

At the sound of the gun the Indian [131]stopped, turned his canoe and paddled downstream as fast as he could go. Bruce and Tawny did their best to follow along the bank, but as there was no trail on that side of the stream they could not keep up with the fleeing canoe. It was with some difficulty that Bruce restrained the dog from jumping into the swift current. Several times Bruce almost kicked the dog back into the brush. "Get back, you fool dog," he called. "You will go over the falls!" And while Bruce tried to keep the fleeing Indian in sight, he wondered if Ganawa and Ray had heard his shot and his yell, and he felt much provoked that they did not turn out to capture the fellow when he had to land above the falls.

Only once the fleeing Indian looked around and Bruce yelled in Chippewa: “Stop! Stop! Get him, Ganawa!” And again he had to restrain the madly barking dog from jumping into the treacherous smooth current just above the falls.

And then Bruce felt as if his heart was [132]going to stop beating. That Indian was losing control of his canoe. He was straining every muscle to land on the left bank; but, as if pulled by invisible hands, that canoe was drawn to the right and was approaching that terrible narrow chute, which is the beginning of the roaring falls. For a brief half minute Bruce watched the struggle between the man and the river. But just as Bruce expected the man and the canoe to be drawn into the chute, the Indian stood up, dropped his paddle and, with a mighty effort, sprang to a rock at the very head of the chute. He barely clung to the rock with hands and feet, but the recoil of his spring pushed the canoe into the chute, where a second or two it seemed to stand on its head, and then it disappeared. For a moment it looked as if the Indian was hurt and would not be able to move; but he recovered quickly, bounded over the rocks, and ran down the steep trail to the Big Pool.



Bruce walked back swiftly to the place where he had left the canoe and crossed over [133]to the camp. "I bet," he thought, "Ray and Ganawa are both asleep in the tepee." But he was mistaken; the two had gone fishing to the mouth of a small creek. Bruce at once followed them and found them about a mile up-stream. When Ganawa heard what had happened his eyes flashed, he dropped his pole and said, "We must go and follow the man's trail."

On the way to camp he asked a number of questions of Bruce. "How did the Indian look? What did he wear? Did he have a gun?"

"He was short and squatty," Bruce told. "He wore his hair sort of half-long, not in a braid. I did not get a good look at his face, but when he looked around I thought he looked like a bad man, but I thought he also looked scared.

"I was surprised to see him jump out of the canoe. He missed the rock with his feet, but clung to it with his hands. He wore moccasins, leggings, and a hunting-shirt of buckskin." [134]

"Did he have a gun?" Ganawa repeated somewhat eagerly.

"Yes, he had a gun," Bruce asserted. "It was leaning in the bow of the boat, but he jumped for the rock without it, and the gun went over the falls with the canoe."

"We must follow him," repeated Ganawa. "If he had been a friend, he would not have run away. He was a man who had some evil in his heart. You must take Ohnemoosh, but you must tie a rope to him so he cannot run away from us and make a big noise with barking and tell the man that we are coming."

On the way down the steep trail to the Big Pool, Ganawa pointed to some tracks and whispered, "Wet moccasins," and when Tawny smelled at the tracks his hair bristled and he tried hard to break away from Ray.

If the lads had expected to find the Indian at the Big Pool, they were disappointed. Several pieces of the canoe were travelling round and round in the pool, and Ray caught a cedar-wood paddle, but of the [135]gun they found no trace. They followed

the trail past the two miles of the rapids below the pool with the dog eagerly leading and straining at the rope, but a few rods below the rapids where the water flows along placidly, carrying patches of foam on its surface, the dog lost the trail.

Ray led him back several times and then released him so he could range as he pleased, but it was all in vain; the trail either ended suddenly or, for some reason, the dog could not follow it any farther.

The three sat down to think it over. The dog also sat down and with a puzzled whine looked at his human friends as if to say: "I don't know what this means. Can't you tell me?"

And then Ganawa arose and said: "My sons, I can tell you why the dog cannot follow the trail beyond this point. The man stopped here, jumped into the river and swam across. It is good that he lost his gun, for we know now that he cannot come back and harm us during the night. We [136]should not follow him across the stream. It may be that he will never come back, for he knows that his gun is lost and that his canoe was broken where the river leaps over the big steps of the rocks to the whirling pool. And now we must return to our camp, for we have not tasted food since this morning, and we are all very hungry." [137]

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## CHAPTER XVII

## INTO THE UNKNOWN

After the evening meal, the two lads built a big camp-fire of green birch logs, mixed with such dry sticks as they could find, so as to make a ruddy blazing fire, which grew so hot that both men and dog had to back away from it. Ganawa smiled as he watched the lads pile on wood and then back off.

“White men do strange things,” he said laughing. “Here, my sons, you have been working hard at cutting wood, and now you have built a big fire, which is so hot that we all have to back away from it. Why did you not build a small fire and sit close to it?”

The lads looked at each other, but neither of them had a good answer. “I suppose, my father,” Bruce replied after a moment of silence, “white men just like to see a big fire, and most white boys would rather cut [138]and gather much wood and watch a big camp-fire than sit close to a small fire.”

The lads had expected that Ganawa would talk about the man who had almost gone over the falls and whose trail had abruptly ended below the rapids, but after his remarks about the camp-fire of the boys, the tall lean hunter lapsed into silence. He sat motionless looking at the fire or gazing into the black darkness which surrounds every camp-fire at night. The lads had learned that it was useless to try to make him talk when he had fallen into this mood. “There will be no talk,” Ray had remarked some days ago, “when Ganawa starts looking at the fire without batting an eye.”

One who is used to the noisy summer evenings of more southern regions where crickets, locusts, katydids, and tree-frogs open their noisy nocturnal concert as soon as the red orb of the sun has sunk below the horizon cannot help being strongly impressed by the solemn mysterious silence of the Great Wild North. [139]

As the fire began to burn low, Ray went into the tepee and brought a blanket for each man, for as usual in the north the night was growing cool. After each man had wrapped a blanket around his shoulders, they sat again in silence. There was the murmuring and rippling of the river, for like all rivers that drop into the north shore of the Big Lake, the Michipicoten runs almost everywhere with a swift current.

These cool, clear northern streams live, and they sing as they run. Crickets and tree-frogs are not found in the North Shore country, but the night-hawks flew screaming over the glowing fire, a lone whippoorwill called near the stream; from a large pine behind the camp came the spooky call and the guttural notes of “kookookehaw,” the big owl; and from the hill across the river came the long-drawn howl of a wolf.

Next morning Ganawa told the lads to make breakfast and roll up the tepee. “We move after we have eaten,” he added. “I [140]go down and watch a while for the man who ran away.”

Tawny wanted very much to go along, but Ganawa would not let him. “Ohnemoosh,” he said, “you stay in camp. I go alone with my gun and watch for him.”

Ganawa might have been gone an hour or two hours. To Ray it seemed two hours, and he was just about to go and look for the hunter when the tall red man came striding back into camp.

“I did not see him,” he told the lads, “and I do not think he is coming back to follow us, because he has lost his gun, and it is hard for a poor Indian to buy a new gun. But we shall go away now on a long journey to some big lakes and many streams to the north and northeast of our camp. The lakes are large, they lie in the rocks in the forest and many little streams run into them, and the beaver people build their dams and houses on these little rivers, and they also build houses on many small lakes, which no hunter has ever found; for this [141]is the country which the Great Spirit has made to be a refuge for the beaver people and the moose. In this country the hunters shall never kill the last beaver and the last moose, because the animals can always find a trail that leads them to a safe place.”

“My father,” asked Bruce, “shall we stop looking for the camp of my friend while we go to explore many lakes and streams?”

“My son,” replied Ganawa, “we shall always be looking for the camp of your friend and for signs that tell us where he may have gone; and if we do not find him and find no signs of his camp, then, maybe, we shall have to go back and tell our friends that the wilderness has swallowed the white man.”

Bruce and Ray wanted very much to know if Ganawa knew who was the man that had followed them, but on this subject Ganawa did not utter a word and the lads knew it would be useless to ask him. He talked of moose and caribou they might find [142]in the country ahead, of many big lakes, some of which he had never seen himself; but the strange Indian, who had fled from them as if driven by an evil conscience, he seemed to have forgotten.

“We must look for moose,” Ganawa told the boys when they entered the narrow bay of a large lake one morning. “My sons are getting thin from eating nothing but fish.”

Ray’s heart began to thump when half an hour later Ganawa pointed toward the north shore of the lake and called in a low voice, “Moose!” and began to steer the canoe so as to approach the animal without alarming him.

“He is too big,” said Ganawa when they had approached within gunshot. But now the moose, a big bull with antlers in the velvet, became suspicious. He left the shallow water, in which he had been feeding on aquatic plants, and circled around far enough so he could get the wind of the hunters. Then he stepped out of the spruce forest, gazed at the hunters and sniffed the [143]wind, and Ray thought he saw him shake his head. Then he disappeared among the big black spruces which grow around the shallow bays of almost every northern lake.

“Let him go,” said Ganawa. “He is old and poor. Did you see his ribs? The black flies and the deer-flies and the big bulldog-flies have worried him, and he needs much food to make his big horns grow. We must try to get a young moose.” [144]

## CHAPTER XVIII

## REAL TROUBLE

It was now midsummer and Bruce and Ray learned something which even to this day few eastern people seem really to know. They became more acquainted every day with two terrible pests of the North Country, two pests which make some parts of North America practically uninhabitable during the time these pests are at their worst. During this time even the Indians, who are not thin-skinned when it comes to enduring mosquitoes and black flies, keep out of the worst infested regions.

Mosquitoes breed in shallow stagnant water, where small fish and minnows cannot destroy their larvæ, the wrigglers; while black flies breed in rapidly running water. As the three friends travelled northward, Ganawa was careful to select camp-sites that [145]were not near shallow warm bays but were exposed to such breezes as might be blowing.

Mosquitoes are weak fliers, and do not venture out in a good breeze, nor do they like hot sunlight, but on warm muggy days and during fairly warm nights, they are a fearful pest to both man and beast and to some extent even to young birds in the nest. At several camping-places, although Ganawa had chosen the best sites within reach, the mosquitoes were so bad that immediately after sunset the travellers had to withdraw into their tepee, in which they kept a smudge going, so the mosquitoes would not come in through the opening at the top. On warm nights there were, however, always some mosquitoes in the tepee. Ganawa protected himself against these by sleeping, Indian fashion, with his head under the blanket, but the white boys spent several bad nights before they could get used to this way of sleeping.

When the lads asked Ganawa where mosquitoes and black flies were during winter, [146]their guide looked puzzled and admitted that he did not know. "The Indians do not know," he said, "where the little biters go when the frost comes. It may be that a bad spirit makes them every summer."

If the mosquitoes caused the boys to spend several miserable nights, the black flies annoyed them much during the day. Whenever they had to make a portage, or when they explored a brush-covered region, these little pests attacked their faces and hands. Many people do not at once feel the bite of a black fly, but the insect leaves a

puncture from which the blood will run, and on several days Ray and Bruce looked as if they had been in a big fight.

During the next few days, the travellers saw many moose, but they were all so poor that the lads claimed to be able to count their ribs. Nearly all the moose they saw were in the water and Ganawa explained to them that they feed on plants in the bottom of the lakes only on warm days when the flies are bad. "On cool days," he told the [147]lads, "they eat brush, and they eat brush during the winter." On one short exploring trip Ray suddenly let out a yell as if he had stepped on a rattlesnake. Then he rushed away brushing his ears and face with his hands. "Don't go there!" he called to his friends; "a moose has been lying down there and he has left a million black flies."

These were hard days and weeks for Ray and Bruce; they both lost much weight and grew almost as thin as the moose they saw in the lakes.

The months of June and July are what woodsmen call the "fly season" in the country of the Great Lakes and the Upper Mississippi. But this is also the time when the birds sing and the early flowers are in bloom and when the fish bite most actively. By the first of August, the beautiful fire-weeds are still in bloom, but the birds are silent and the fish are more sluggish. By this time the lake trout, for instance, have retired into deep water, where it is difficult to catch them. [148]

However, with modern protection against flies and mosquitoes no boy or man need fear to go into the North Woods in June and July. And the one condition on which he must not fail is complete and absolute protection from mosquitoes at night. Flies and mosquitoes may worry a man in the daytime, he may get much heated on a long march, or he may fall into cold water, but if he can have a good sleep at night, a man in good health can laugh at all hardships.

And here is the way to do it, the recipe, so to speak, for happy camping. If you are going to live in a cabin, take with you a small screen tent, bobbinet is best, to put over your bed or bunk. If you are going to live in a tent, that tent must be absolutely mosquito-proof, which means that it must have a sod cloth all around the bottom and that the opening must be protected by a double piece of mosquito-netting or by a piece of good bobbinet. The mosquito-netting or the bobbinet is sewed to one flap and is pinned to the other flap with safety-pins. [149]If a hole is left one inch square, the tent will fill up with mosquitoes and make sleep impossible.

Some mosquitoes will always find their way into the tent. Every one of these must be killed before the campers try to sleep. They should be burnt with a candle as they are found sitting in the tent. With reasonable care, canvas and bobbinet will not catch fire in this process, but a lighted candle must not be brought in contact with the ordinary mosquito-netting or with cheese-cloth. A person who fights mosquitoes at night does not know the A B C of camping.

There are other pests in the woods in early summer: wood-ticks, horse-flies, deer-flies, and once the writer was besieged in his cabin for a whole day by the common barn-fly. There are also the little “no-see-’ems,” but they never last long. The arch-demon in the whole list of abominations is the mosquito; the female mosquito. Mosquitoes come early in the season, stay late, and work day and night. [150]

One is sometimes asked about the danger from snakes and wild animals in the North Woods. There are no poisonous snakes in the North Woods. *The most dangerous wild creature in summer is the mosquito, and the only good mosquito is a dead mosquito.* There is one thing that may be even worse than mosquitoes, and that is the toothache; therefore, every wise camper sees his dentist before he leaves town.

It is now fitting that we should again take up the thread of our story. [151]

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## CHAPTER XIX

## ON WILD LAKES

On a lake, which is now called Whitefish Lake, the travellers secured the young moose they had been looking for, and here they stopped a few days to smoke and dry the meat and to rest. Until now they had been living on fresh and smoked fish and on rabbits.

Ganawa then told the lads that they would now travel northward. An old Indian at Michipicoten Bay had told him that two white men had gone northward to look for gold rock on a high cliff on one of the big lakes. He thought it was Oba Lake. Now Ganawa wanted to try to find the white men and the gold rock and he also wished to see several big lakes on which his father once made a great hunting trip, but which Ganawa had never seen. His white sons could now go with him, he said. He did [152]not have to provide any longer for his Indian sons and daughters, and so he wished to see these big lakes before he was too old to go on long hard journeys.

It was the middle of July when they reached Lake Manitowik. From this lake they portaged to Dog Lake, and from Dog Lake they crossed a mile overland to Lake Wabatongushi.

Whitefish Lake and Manitowik Lake are narrow lakes with simple shore-lines which run from southwest to northeast; but on the other two lakes the lads felt completely lost. They passed an endless number of bays and not a few islands, and several nights they camped on an island where they were entirely free from mosquitoes.

“Bruce, I think we are pretty close to Hudson Bay,” remarked Ray when they had been several days travelling along the west shore of Wabatongushi. “It is right that this lake should have a long name, because it is so long that I think we shall never reach the end of it. [153]

“We shall never find Jack Dutton, Bruce. This country is so big that you might as well tell me to find a carpet-tack you lost in Vermont as to expect to find Jack Dutton. I wonder if Ganawa knows where we are. Pretty soon it will be winter and then we shall freeze to death in our tepee.”

As they travelled along under the lee of the west shore where the water was quiet, they saw the whitecaps breaking on the east shore, although the lake is in most places less than a mile wide, but it is about twenty miles long and runs straight north and south.

While they were travelling northward, they were constantly looking for a camp or signs of a camp, but the whole country seemed an endless wilderness, uninhabited by either Indians or white men. They discovered several old camp-sites of Indians, but only one where white men had camped on the northwest bay of the lake.

“Look, my sons,” said Ganawa. “It [154]was a white men’s camp. They built a big fire and let it run up the hills and it killed all the pines and other trees, but we shall go up there and look for gold rock.”

If the lads had thought that looking for gold rock, which is now called prospecting, was easy, they learned something new. Ganawa led them up a steep rocky hill where hundreds of dead trees lay in all directions, and where birches and pin-cherry bushes had begun to cover the destruction wrought by the fire. At last Ganawa stopped on the top of a ridge over a vein of white quartz about a foot wide. “This should be the gold rock,” he said. “It looks as my father and a white man described it to me; but I cannot see the gold.”

They followed the vein over the hill until it was lost in some green timber in the valley beyond, then they returned to the bay and made camp for the night.

Next morning Ganawa sat a long time thinking, then he rose up and pointed to the northwest. “My sons,” he said, “there is [155]another large lake, Oba Lake, in the direction of the setting sun, and if you are not tired of travelling with me, we shall go there, but there is no portage trail to it and it is more than a league away. There are many beavers on the streams that run into that lake and your friend may be on that lake, but I do not know if we shall find any gold rock near its shore.”

“My father,” replied Bruce, “if you think our friend might be on that lake, we should go there and look for him. We might build a raft and leave our canoe at this place.”

“My son,” Ganawa answered, “it is much hard work to build a raft on which three men can travel and, when you have built it, you will find it hard to travel on it, because it travels very slowly and you cannot steer it against the wind. And

sometimes your raft will float to-day, but to-morrow it will sink, because the logs have sucked up much water during the night. If we go we must carry our canoe across the hills to the lake. [156]We can leave our tepee here and take only our blankets and some dried meat.”

So they tied their blankets and provisions in the canoe and started out. Ganawa and Bruce carried the canoe while Ray was told to walk behind and mark the trail, which he did by blazing some trees and breaking the tops of some brush.

“It will be much easier for us to return over a blazed trail,” said Ganawa, “and we shall be sure to strike the place where we left our tepee and other things.”

Ganawa held a northwesterly course, directing himself by the sun. “We cannot miss the lake,” he remarked, “because it is six leagues long.”

As Ray worked along, blazing more trees and breaking more brush than was necessary, he had the feeling that they were all hopelessly lost in a trackless wilderness. “We shall never find Jack Dutton in a hundred years,” he thought. “I wish I were back home in Vermont. I could never find my way back to the Big Lake, and I don’t [157]believe Ganawa knows where we are. We have passed a thousand bays and I can’t tell one from the other.”

They might have been travelling three hours when Bruce gave a shout, and he and Ganawa set the canoe down for a rest, as they had done many times.

“What have you found?” called Ray and ran over to see.

“Look ahead,” answered Bruce, “and see.” Before the travellers lay spread out a most beautiful sheet of blue water, for the sky was clear and the wind had not yet sprung up, as it nearly always does in the middle of the forenoon.

“But there are no big hills around the lake as there are around Lake George and Lake Champlain back home,” remarked Ray. “It is all just a wild country, not a soul living in it. I wish we were home, Bruce.”

The country of Dog Lake, Wabatongushi, and Oba Lake is still nearly as wild as in the days of our story. A few Indians, [158]trappers, miners, lumbermen, and railroad men now live in the country, but it is still a great playground of lakes and forests,

although fire has ruined much of the fine green timber. All three of the lakes may be reached by rail, and any one who wishes to do so may follow the trail of Ganawa and his white sons. [159]

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## CHAPTER XX

## FARTHEST NORTH

Ganawa quickly built a brush lean-to in a place where the campers had a fine view of the lake. There were no mosquitoes and black flies at this camp, and after a good meal of smoked moose meat and sweet tea, Ray rolled up in his blanket and slept all afternoon with Tawny curled up at his feet.

The tea and sugar had been a treat; for the supply of both was so limited that they could use these luxuries only on special occasions when they felt that they had deserved some kind of a feast. Any one who has helped to carry a canoe three miles across “the bush,” as present-day woodsmen call this kind of country, will admit that he has earned a treat of some sort.

Bruce and Ganawa felt no more inclined to further exertion than Ray, so they sat [160] in the shade, enjoying the gentle westerly breeze and the beautiful panorama of blue water and dark green forest spread out before them.

There was very little talk, for each was busy with his own thoughts. Bruce shared to some extent the fatigue and discouragement of Ray. He also had a feeling that they had, so to speak, come to the ends of the earth without finding as much as a real clue to the whereabouts of Jack Dutton. “I reckon I shall never see my old friend again,” he thought. “I have a feeling that he is dead. Death and danger lurk everywhere. One may drown in a storm or in some wild rapids or waterfall almost any day, he may freeze to death, and unless he is a good hunter and fisherman, he might in winter even starve to death; and in summer the terrible pests of mosquitoes and black flies might almost kill a man or drive him crazy. Thank God, there are none of the pests at this camp!” And then Bruce spread his blanket on a bed of lichens and [161] moss that covered the rock, and very soon he was as sound asleep as Ray.

The next thing he knew Ganawa was gently shaking him and saying: “Wake up, my son. I have caught a mess of trout in a small stream and it is time that you build a fire and broil them for our evening meal, for the sun will soon sink behind the forest.”

The white lads ate their trout with a little salt, but Ganawa ate them just as they came off the green willow sticks without salt. “The Indians cannot get salt in this country,” he said, “unless they buy it of the traders, so we often eat our meat and fish without salt as our fathers did, before the white traders came to our country.”

After a long nap and a good supper, the lads felt more cheerful. For a while they sat and watched the most gorgeous sunset they had ever seen. The western sky was covered with scattered clouds, which the sun painted at first with a golden orange which gradually changed to an indescribable red, such as one sees only in the great wild [162]forests, where no smoke and dust fill the air. “It may rain to-night,” said Ganawa rising and looking at some dark low clouds in the west. “My sons, we must make our shelter larger and put more boughs on the roof.”

Then for half an hour the three worked diligently on their lean-to. Bruce and Ray cut and carried long boughs of balsam, and Ganawa laid them in place like shingles and tied them with strips of willow bark.

When it grew too dark to work, the lads built a camp-fire of driftwood and for an hour or longer they all sat enjoying its gentle warmth and listening to the voices of the forest. Some night-hawks were screaming overhead as they hunted for flying insects over the lake. A bat circled back and forth near the fire and now and then uttered its faint high-pitched squeak. From across the lake came the call of wolves, and kookookehaw, the big owl, made Ray’s hair stand up when he suddenly uttered his unearthly hoot and deep guttural notes almost above [163]the camp-fire, as if he were protesting against the invasion of his realm. These sounds, however, were not unknown to the lads, but there came a new sound which brought Ray to his feet.

“Listen!” he called. “There is somebody coming. They are throwing rocks in the lake and slamming the water with a paddle. Let us get away. They may shoot at us if we stay near the fire. I’ll throw some water on the fire.”

“Stop, my son,” Ganawa spoke. “They are not going to attack us. They are the beaver people and they are making signals to their friends. The wind has changed and their keen noses have caught the man scent. They do hit the water with paddles, but their tails are the paddles, and then they dive with a plunge which makes a noise, as if a man threw a rock into the water.”

It did rain during the night, but the thatch of boughs had been so well built that no rain fell on the sleepers; in fact Ray did not know it had been raining until he saw [164]little pools of water on the rocks next morning.

On an ideal summer day the three paddled slowly northward to the outlet of the lake without seeing a sign of other human beings, except a few old Indian camp-sites, as indicated by the usual tepee-poles. At the outlet they spent a day exploring the region. Bruce and Ray each climbed a tall tree from which they could look miles away to the north. The rough rocky hills had disappeared, and as far as their eyes could see the country seemed to be one great monotonous level forest of black spruce, the pulpwood trees of the present time.

“My sons,” said Ganawa, “I believe this little Oba River joins the big river Missinaibi far to the north. My father and I once travelled to the English traders on Hudson Bay by way of the Missinaibi. It is a bad river with many falls and rapids, and it took us all summer to make the journey. Your brother is not camping on this lake and I have seen no white streaks of [165]gold rock. To-morrow we start back for the Michipicoten and look for your brother and the gold rock in other places.”

The lads were glad to hear these words, for, although after plenty of rest and sleep, they had lost the feeling of fatigue and discouragement, they still felt as if they might travel on and on forever and never get out of the level black spruce forest where one tree looked like another, and where even the small brown creeks wound about as if they were lost in an endless monotony of trees, and thick soft knolls and patches of moss and Labrador tea without a piece of solid ground anywhere for miles and miles. [166]

## CHAPTER XXI

## WILD FRUIT

After a swim in the clear water of Oba Lake the travellers turned their canoe to the south.

“I am glad we are going home,” remarked Ray. “The black spruce forest looked so big and so much the same everywhere I just could not help feeling that we should get lost if we ever went into it.”

Bruce smiled at Ray’s mention of home. “We are very far from home, my boy,” he answered with a sad smile. “I sometimes think that we shall never see our Vermont hills again. It seems to me that we have been gone for years and that we have just turned around at the end of the world.”

“Oh, I didn’t mean home in Vermont,” replied Ray. “I meant the country along the Michipicoten River. I just felt homesick [167]for that country when I saw the endless spruce forest north of this lake.”

Both lads were surprised when in about four hours of easy paddling they had skirted the west shore of the lake and had also crossed the lake back to their carrying-place or portage on the east shore, where their lean-to was still standing just as they had left it.

“Bruce, I wonder if Ganawa would stay here over night,” asked Ray. “I like this camp very much and we could have another camp-fire of driftwood. It is lots of fun to make a fire when you don’t have to cut a lot of wood.”

Ganawa was quite willing that they should spend another night at this fine camp. “I have now travelled on the blue lake that I have wished to see for a long time. We can travel back slowly, but we shall still make good time, because we know where we are going and we do not need to stop to look for signs of your brother. My little son may play or fish at this camp till evening.” [168]

Ray first took a swim in the warm water in a cove with a sandy bottom. Then he picked a kettleful of berries; raspberries, pin-cherries, and blueberries all mixed. It was now past the middle of July and all the North Woods berries seemed to be ripe

at the same time. There was another berry which hung in beautiful red bunches on the bushes, but they were tasteless and Ganawa said that the Great Spirit had made them for the wild birds, and the lads observed that about every kind of bird in the woods was feeding on them. They were the red berries of the elder, which in the latitude of Central Minnesota are ripe early in June, but in the region north and northeast of Lake Superior summer comes about six weeks later, thus crowding all wild fruit into a much shorter season.

Ray did not care to play all by himself and he did not feel like sleeping so he asked Ganawa to show him some Indian woodcraft, and Ganawa showed him the willow, whose bark the Indians use for strings. "It [169]is a tall bushy willow," he said, "and it grows almost everywhere. The Indians also use the inner bark of basswoods and white elms for strings, but these trees do not grow here. However, I know that we can find a few elms on the Michipicoten."

All native willows have a tough stringy bark, but the common pussy willow, *Salix discolor*, furnishes very good strings. All these bark strings are tough and flexible only while green or wet. Even present-day Indians always keep a supply of these bark strings on hand. All of them are brittle and useless when dry, but they regain their toughness and flexibility when they are soaked in water for a short time.

Then Ganawa showed Ray how the leaves of the low, white-flowered bush called Labrador tea might be used to take the place of the tea sold by the traders. "This plant," he explained, "and a plant which the white people call sweet fern, make a good tea in camp if you have some sugar. The sweet fern does not grow here, but it [170]covers much sandy land south of Lake Superior."

The Labrador tea grows in every northern swamp, but the sweet fern the Indians often tie in bundles and take with them as they travel about to their favorite summer camping-places for picking blueberries or gathering wild rice.

The lads were surprised at the progress they could make now that they no longer paddled into every cove and wasted no time examining old camp-sites. Three days of easy travel brought them to a high and level camping ground, where a railroad now crosses the Michipicoten River.

"My sons," spoke Ganawa, when they reached this spot, "at this place we should camp and make a store of food. For it may be that we shall have to spend a winter in

this country, and you, my sons, will often wish that you had some of the berries that are now ripe in the woods, so you could eat them with your meat and fish.

“To-morrow you must each take a basket [171]of birch-bark and pick blueberries, which you will find in the hills and under the pines, where the sun shines through the branches.”

Blueberries were so abundant that each lad could pick about a bushel in a day, because they found many patches where the ground was literally blue.

While the boys were away gathering this wild fruit, the best in the whole of North America, Ganawa sewed together several large pieces of birch-bark and spread the whole in a sunny open place. On this birch-bark the lads emptied their filled baskets. Ganawa stayed in camp and with an improvised wooden rake he stirred and turned the berries from time to time so they would dry faster.

“It may start to rain,” he remarked, “and then our berries might spoil before we can dry them.”

When the lads went out picking berries on the third day, Ray had grown a little bit tired of harvesting berries, and near the top of a ridge he lay down and fell asleep and [172]Tawny lay down near him. The lad was awakened from a sound sleep by a loud barking and a strange growling noise, and when he sat up and opened his eyes, a big black bear was coming straight for him, while Tawny was madly barking at the animal but was afraid to close with so large a beast. For a moment the bear seemed in doubt whether he should cuff the dog or punish the being whom he had smelled up the wind and who had suddenly risen up before him. And when he walked toward the dazed lad, and arose on his hind legs and uttered a vicious growl, Ray’s nerves gave away. He ran for the camp as fast as he could go, and when he reached it he was ready to drop and so out of breath that he could utter only a few words: “A—bear! He chased me! Run with the gun, Father. He—he’s killed my dog.”



A BIG BLACK BEAR WAS COMING STRAIGHT FOR HIM.

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## CHAPTER XXII

## ON A NEW TACK

As soon as Ray had recovered from his fright he seized his gun and ran after Ganawa. He wondered why Ganawa had not fired, but now he saw the Indian point to a tall pine, from which two bear cubs were coming down, just as a boy comes down out of a tree, feet first.

“There, my son,” said Ganawa, “you see why the bear attacked you and the dog. She was afraid you would harm her cubs. You must never kill a mother animal that has young. We must not harm these bears. We do not need the meat, and killing them would bring us bad luck.”

It took fully a week before the berries were dry enough so they could be kept in two large birch-bark tubs, which Ganawa had made, and which each held about half a bushel, although the lads were sure they [174] had picked at least four bushels. Blueberries hold their moisture with a wonderful tenacity. Ripe berries will remain fresh and plump on the vines for about two weeks, and even after they have been picked it takes much time and patience to dry them; but after they are well dried, they will keep all winter. Blueberries and wild rice and maple sugar were the only wild vegetable foods which the Indians of the Great Lakes region could gather in large quantities.

“My sons,” said Ganawa in the evening, when all the berries had been dried, “we must decide what we shall do. If you, my sons, are very homesick for your own people, then you should not stay with me through the winter for we may never find your friend, even if we search for him again after winter has passed.”

Ganawa was silent, but Bruce saw that he expected an answer, and Bruce replied frankly, saying: “My father, it is true that your white sons were homesick when we travelled far north to the great level spruce [175] forest. At that time we were very tired, because the mosquitoes and black flies had worried us so much, the black flies during the day and the mosquitoes during the night. But now the nights are cool and the hungry flies and mosquitoes are gone. We are no longer tired and homesick, we are strong and we wish to stay with our father as long as he will keep us and search for our lost friend.”

Ganawa sat in silence for some time, his eyes fastened on the hills down-stream as if he were trying to look into the future. "My sons," he said at last, "we have searched the big lakes to the north of this river. There is one large lake and many small ones south of this river. If we do not find your lost friend on one of them and find no sign of his camp, then I cannot tell you where to look for him.

"But now the nights are getting cold. Very soon the leaves on the poplars and birches will turn yellow. The north wind will blow them down and will bring snow [176]and storms from the great sea beyond the spruce forest.

"My sons, we must find a camp for the winter. It must be sheltered from the storms and it must be in a place where we can find food, a place near which we can catch fish and find game. There is a lake about one league south of this camp. To this lake we should carry our canoe and all our things and then we should make a good camp for the winter."

Both white lads were much surprised at the confidence with which Ganawa travelled across the forest toward the winter camp. There was no trail, but he seemed to be guided by a ridge of high granite cliffs, which ran in a general north and south direction. In making a portage on a trail, Ganawa generally carried the canoe alone, but on this long portage he put one end on his shoulder and Bruce carried the other end, the canoe resting bottom side up on the shoulders of the two men. In this way the leader could look ahead and pick out the [177]best going through a country of many rocks, fallen timber and patches of thick brush and small bushy timber.

When they had been going about two hours, with many short rests, they struck a well-marked moose trail leading down a gentle slope to their right, while to their left the high cliff of red granite arose steep and bold only a few rods away. As they followed this trail Ray noticed that it did not branch or grow dim, and suddenly they stepped into a small clearing with several sets of tepee-poles, and before them a beautiful lake spread out between two ranges of well-timbered rocky hills.

"Anjigami! Anjigami!" Ganawa called. "My father and I camped here once many years ago, and I have never forgotten the lake and its green hills. Here we must make a good camp for the winter. There are plenty of fish in this lake and there are some moose in the country, and on streams and small lakes not far away we should find plenty of beaver." [178]

The three men had to make two more trips to the Michipicoten to bring their blankets, meat, berries, and other things. They tried to make Tawny stay at the new camp, but he did not seem to comprehend what was wanted of him, and in the evening after a total march of about fifteen miles, he was footsore. They had learned that it was useless to tie him with any kind of rope. If Tawny were left alone, he would always gnaw off his rope and follow the men, although he learned to stay far enough behind to be unseen. On the return trip he went ahead, and when they arrived Tawny would be lying quietly with his head on his paws, but his appearance and the gnawed rope told the story.

“My little son,” Ganawa said, laughing, “Ohnemoosh is a great liar. He thinks he can fool us. We have no white man’s chain, but some day I may show you how to tie up Ohnemoosh so he has to stay in camp.” [179]

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## CHAPTER XXIII

## THE BEAVER HUNT

If Bruce and Ray had ever had the idea that Indians in camp led a lazy life, they now found out their mistake.

Ganawa had made two chisels out of the big bones of a moose, and these chisels the lads learned to use in peeling spruce and cedar bark for a winter bark-house. They also secured some pieces of birch-bark, but most of the birches would no longer peel. However, with the aid of their bone chisels they soon secured enough spruce and cedar bark to build a round hut of poles and bark, such as the Chippewa Indians have built for many centuries. No nails were used in the construction of the house, the pieces of bark being tied in place with watap, rawhide, or thongs of willow bark.

“We need this house if our tepee gets too cold, and if we live in the tepee we [180]need it to keep our meat and other things so we do not lose them in the deep snow,” Ganawa told the lads.

When the bark-house was finished, he told the boys that they must secure some kind of skins to make themselves a robe for winter. “Our women make very warm blankets,” he explained, “by weaving together many strips of rabbit skins, but rabbits are very scarce around here. The hide of a moose is too heavy, so we must try to get some beavers. But we have no traps and we cannot wait till the ponds freeze over; we must try to catch them when they are cutting trees. I think in this country the beaver have not been hunted much, and we may find them working in the daytime.”

A few days later, the Chippewa returned to camp and told that he had found a beaver pond not far away, and on the following afternoon the three campers started out to try their luck on the shy and wary beavers. Tawny was also allowed to go along, for he was a good hunting dog, and never broke [181]until he was told to go. The hunters approached with the utmost care, against the wind, the place where the beavers were cutting their winter food supply of poplars. The pond had been occupied for several years, the trees near the pond had all been cut, and as a result the animals had to work more than fifty yards from water.

In the water and in his house surrounded by water, a beaver can laugh at all his enemies with the possible exception of the otter. But even the otter, although like the beaver, he is an expert swimmer and diver, probably has to be content with catching a careless young beaver now and then. However, on land the beaver is less at home than any old-time sailor ever was; he can neither put up a good fight nor make a good run for safety.

When the hunters carefully peeped over a ridge to the beavers' lumber-yard, the hearts of the white boys almost stopped beating. Close by, within twenty yards they saw eight or ten beavers. "They are working [182]like beavers," Ray whispered. And so they were. Some sitting on their haunches were cutting down trees, others were busy cutting felled trees into sections four or five feet long, and still others seemed to be lopping off the smaller branches.

But there was not much time to watch a scene which very few white men have ever been lucky enough to observe. When Ganawa gave the signal to fire, four beavers toppled over, and Tawny caught and killed two more before the frightened animals could scamper to the safety of their pond.

Ray let out a shout and was going to run over to the game, but Ganawa reminded him that a good hunter always reloads his gun before he does anything else.

Neither of the lads had ever closely examined a beaver, and they had many questions to ask about its peculiar structures. They were curious about the flat hairless tail, which looks as if it were covered with black scales; the short and stubby forelegs, the powerful hindlegs with webbed feet, and [183]the sharp front teeth with which the beaver people can cut down trees much faster than any Indians with primitive stone axes.

But Ganawa fingered fondly the dense woolly fur under the long dark brown hair. "The fur is good," he remarked. "It will make a good warm robe for my sons."

On the way to camp, the lads received another jolt to their former idea about the lazy life of an Indian hunter. Ganawa carried three beavers, Bruce took two and Ray carried one. An adult beaver weighs from thirty to fifty pounds, and when Ray dropped his game at the end of a three-mile walk through brush and timber, he felt sure that his beaver weighed a hundred pounds.

Ganawa quickly skinned the smallest beaver, cut up the best of the meat and put it in the kettle. Then he scalded the black tail over the fire, and the skin blistered and came off easily. He cut the tail into several pieces and added them to the meat in the kettle.

“My sons,” he spoke, “put a little salt [184]in the kettle and some of the wild onions you have gathered. And when the meat is almost done, you must add a little of the wild rice I have in my pack. To-night we shall make a big feast. We shall have beaver meat and beaver-tail soup. Some white hunters say they do not care much for beaver meat, but all are very fond of beaver-tail soup. I have cut up the meat of a young beaver and you will find it very good.”

The lads had grown accustomed by this time to a diet of fish and meat, but they were glad of any change and both of them said that beaver meat and beaver-tail soup were the best foods they had ever eaten. The meat was dark and tasted much like the dark meat of a chicken.

The tail of a beaver does not consist of muscle, but of a peculiar white, fatty, and gristly texture. When boiled it looks and tastes like very young fat pork, and the boys left none of it in the kettle. It is this part of the beaver which furnishes the beaver-tail soup, highly praised in many old journals [185]but never described in detail. The writer of this story has cooked beaver meat and beaver-tail soup and can testify to the fact that both are good.

If any of my readers ever have a chance to make a beaver stew, or beaver-tail soup, I would advise that they boil the meat with a liberal pinch of “mixed spices”—the kind one buys in paper boxes. Beaver-tail soup with wild rice thus properly seasoned is much too good for a king, but just the food for a tired and hungry camper.

Bruce and Ray could not get enough of the soup and when the feast was over there was nothing left but some bones and scraps for Tawny. It had been a real feast, and when the few dishes were washed, the lads built a camp-fire and asked Ganawa to tell them of his own boyhood of long ago. [186]



## CHAPTER XXIV

## MUCH WORK AND A CLUE

Next day the lads learned still more about the work of an Indian hunter. There were five more beavers to be skinned, and of all fur-bearing animals the beaver is the hardest to skin. The skin will not peel off like that of a rabbit, but almost every inch of it has to be cut and great care is needed not to cut into the fur. It took Ray and Bruce as long to skin one beaver as it took Ganawa to skin three.

When this work was done, Bruce built a scaffold to cure and smoke the meat. "We cannot let so much good meat go to waste," said Ganawa, "and the weather is still too warm to keep it without smoking." Each beaver furnished from fifteen to twenty pounds of meat, and all of them were fat, as beavers nearly always are, although they [187]are strict vegetarians, living on bark, brush, and aquatic plants.

Ray helped Ganawa to stretch the skins in hoops of willow. A beaver skin, when thus stretched by thongs inside of a hoop, is set aside to dry, but before it is dried all adhering flesh and fat must be carefully scraped off, otherwise the skin will spoil.

"I don't think I want to be a beaver-trapper," remarked Ray, when he saw how much work it took to prepare a skin for use or for the market.

A large beaver skin, when thus stretched and dried, is oval in shape about three feet long by two and a half wide. It took about a week to dry the skins, and then the lads found that there was still much work to be done before they could enjoy a warm beaver robe. As there was no time to tan the skins, Ganawa and the lads softened the dry skins by other processes as much as possible. They worked them with their hands and feet and beat them with sticks until they were quite soft and pliable, although not as [188]soft as tanned skins. Then Ganawa laid the six skins flat on the ground and with a charred stick he marked them for cutting. "The Chippewa women can do this much better," he remarked laughing, "but in this camp we have to be our own women."

The lads wondered still more at the skill of an Indian when Ganawa, after cutting the skin with his sharp hunting-knife, showed to the boys the fine white threads he had made of the tendons of the moose. These threads had to be moistened before they

were used, but unlike threads of bast, they remain very strong while they are dry. An awl and some needles Ganawa had brought with him so that he could make and repair moccasins. "A long time ago," he told the lads, "my people used awls and needles made of bone or thorns, but with the needles of the white traders we can work very much faster."

A few days later the campers secured four more large beavers, and the skins of these were used to make a sleeping-robe for [189]Ganawa, while they cured the meat as they had done with the first lot of beavers.

While the last beaver skins were drying, the lads cut a lot of wood for winter. Dry spruce, balsam, and mountain-ash and moose-maple, but also much green birch, which they split and piled up to dry in the sun near the camp-fire. All the dry wood was piled up in the bark-house, where the smoked beaver and some smoked fish were also hung up, so that the inside of it looked and smelled like a farmer's smoke-house at Christmas time.

The campers had now made the most necessary preparations for winter, and they decided that some other work could wait until they had explored Lake Anjigami and its neighborhood. The nights were growing frosty, birches and poplars had turned a golden yellow, and a strange silence pervaded the autumn woods. The gay-colored warblers, the merry wrens, and even the white-throats had all left.

"We must explore the lake before ice begins [190]to form," said Ganawa. "To explore this country by walking over it is very hard work."

Bruce steered the canoe and Ganawa occupied the bow, as they began skirting the eastern shore of the lake, while Ray and Tawny took things easy sitting in the bottom. Ray had not been willing to stay in camp with his dog, and Ganawa had looked at Bruce and said, "My little son should come along; some evil might come to him if we leave him in camp."

Lake Anjigami is about eight miles long, running southwest and northeast, and they paddled slowly to the extreme southern end, where Ray caught a fine mess of small brook trout, but of any recent white man's camp they found not a trace. They were, however, not satisfied with merely exploring the shore. They walked up a small stream till they came to a beaver pond, where they carefully examined the dam, two

houses and the high land, where trappers or hunters might camp, but the pond had not been [191]visited by either white men or Indians for years.

They even picked their way laboriously to the top of the highest ridge on the east side, some three hundred feet above the lake. From this point they scouted carefully for tepees and bark-houses and for the smoke of a camp-fire, but they saw no sign of any human being on the lake except their own tepees and bark-house, which, at the distance of two miles, looked quite small.

On the following day they skirted the north and west shore. They were about to pull for camp with the same result when Ray examined with a little more care a low rocky knoll near the outlet. "Oh, Father, oh, Bruce," he called, "come here and look! Somebody has camped here! I know they were white men, too!"

Here indeed was a white man's camping-place. "There were two white men," Ganawa told the lads. "They had a big ax and cut much wood. They made a lean-to and slept here several nights." [192]

"My father," asked Bruce, "how long ago did the white men sleep here?"

"They slept here about twelve moons ago," replied Ganawa after he had closely examined a few chips and ax-cuts near the fire.

Then the lads took up the dried balsam boughs of the campers' bed; they examined every inch of ground near the camp, but they found no further clue as to the purpose or identity of the men who had made the camp. [193]

## CHAPTER XXV

## A MYSTERY

When the three campers had explored the shore of Lake Anjigami, they decided to extend their search to a smaller lake now called Pickerel Lake, which is connected with Anjigami by a short channel. This latter lake is crescent-shaped, and at its western end Bruce discovered signs of a camp, which had been made by the same men that had camped near the outlet of Anjigami. "How do you know that they were the same men?" Ray asked. "You are just guessing at it, Bruce."

"No, I am not guessing," replied Bruce. "Come here, I shall convince you. Look, the ax that made this cut had two nicks in its blade. The nick marks here are exactly the same as those we found on Anjigami."

"I'm convinced," Ray admitted. "Bruce, you are a real scout." [194]

Ganawa agreed with Bruce as to the identity of the campers on the two lakes. "The two camps were both made about twelve moons ago," he asserted, "and they were made by two white men."

"And I believe," Bruce added eagerly, "these two camps were made by Jack Dutton and his companion. And I think they were doing what we are doing; they were exploring the lake and looking for a good place for a winter camp. But why didn't they camp where we are camping? It is the best place on the lake. Perhaps they camped some distance back from the lake in the brush for some reasons of their own."

"Indians always camp near water," remarked Ganawa with a smile, "but white men sometimes camp in strange places."

"If these men did not lose their lives," asserted Bruce, "they spent the winter within ten miles of our camp. The season was too far advanced and travelling in this country is too difficult for them to go far before they made their winter camp. Perhaps [195]they wanted to find both a good camp and a good hiding-place."

"From whom should they want to hide?" asked Ray.

“I don’t know,” admitted Bruce. “Their action is a puzzle to me.”

“I tell you something else that is a puzzle to me,” Ray said in a half-whisper, when he and Bruce were alone. “Who was that fellow that you pretty nearly chased over the big falls? And why was he snooping around after us? Maybe he will come again. Believe me, Bruce, if I did not have the dog you would not get me to stay alone in camp for one hour. Maybe that fellow isn’t an Indian; maybe he is one of the evil spirits that Ganawa tells us about.”

“Ray, don’t you know that the belief in evil spirits is just an Indian superstition? It is time I should get you back to Vermont and send you to school. The idea of your believing in evil spirits!”

“But why doesn’t Ganawa tell us who the fellow was, and why he was following us? I [196]almost wish you had chased him over the falls. I am afraid of him.”

Ganawa and the boys searched the whole shore of Anjigami once more. They traced every small stream entering the lake some distance back into the timber, and they even followed several game trails that led away from the lake. It was all in vain; they found no other clue. If those two men had planned to vanish without leaving a sign, they had completely succeeded.

Some time ago Ganawa had prepared the frames for three pairs of snowshoes, using for this purpose the wood of young black-ash trees he had found near their last camp. He had also prepared enough rawhide strings for the web, and all three of the campers now spent a few days finishing the work. “They are not very good snowshoes,” Ganawa admitted, “but they will last through the winter.”

About the first of November the weather turned cold. Ice began to form along the shore of the lake, and small lakes and [197]beaver ponds were entirely covered with their ice.

“My sons, to-day we must go and catch some more beavers,” said Ganawa one morning. “Winter has begun and we shall soon need warm mittens and caps, or we cannot leave the camp in cold weather.”

When they arrived at the pond, Ganawa asked the boys to walk with him as quietly as possible around the edge of the pond. “We must learn where their washes are,” he

told the lads, “before we make any noise at their houses.”

Neither of the lads knew what beaver “washes” are, but they soon learned that this is the name used by Indians and white trappers for the burrows which the beavers excavate in the banks of their ponds. The pond was a large one and the hunters found half a dozen washes.

“Now, my sons,” said Ganawa after they had explored the whole pond, “each of you pick up a good stick and then we shall go to the two beaver houses.” [198]

“Make a big noise,” he told the lads at the first house. “Strike the roofs with your sticks and make a big yell, then the beavers will think we are going to break into their house.”

Ganawa had scarcely finished his directions when down came three clubs on the pole-and-mud roof of the beaver house, and the boys uttered such piercing yells that Ganawa laughed aloud and said, “My sons, you can yell like Sioux warriors. You almost scared me.”

The beating and the yells certainly scared the beavers. Eight or ten of them, big ones and little ones, dived out of the house and swam for the washes. “There they go! There they go!” cried Ray, and he ran after them on the clear ice.

The same process was repeated at the second beaver house, and Ray became so excited at the beaver hunt that he had a narrow escape from breaking through the thin ice near the house.

The lad wondered how they were going to [199]get the beavers out of the washes. “We have no traps,” he thought, “and no hooks or snares.”

When the hunters reached the first wash, they knew at once that one or more beavers had taken refuge in this burrow, because the water which had been perfectly clear a short time ago was now roiled. Ganawa broke the ice with his hatchet and pushed a pole under the bank to find out how far back the beavers were, and with a paddle, which he had brought along, he dug a hole into the cavity near the end where the beavers were hidden. Then, to the great surprise of both lads, he lay down flat on the ground, and before the lads realized what was happening, he had reached into the

wash and had flipped out three beavers, which Tawny caught and killed as quickly as a good terrier disposes of rats.

“An Indian surely knows how to do and get things in the woods,” exclaimed Ray. “Don’t they ever bite you?”

“Yes, my son, they bite,” replied Ganawa [200]laughing, “if you give them time. But this is the way our fathers always caught beavers before the white traders brought us iron traps.”

By opening two other washes, the hunters caught a total of eight beavers, but some of them were small, being the young of the previous spring. Ganawa said they had now enough beaver skins so he could make a cap and some warm mittens for each of them.

“After the snow has come, I think we can find a moose to furnish us meat during the winter. If we had to live on beaver all winter, we should have to catch some more now, for when the ice gets thick and the ground is frozen, we cannot catch them in their washes.”

During the week that the beaver skins were drying and were being made up into caps and mittens, the boys tried fishing through the ice, but they had very little luck, because pickerel, pike, and lake trout seldom pay any attention to dead bait, and the boys could find no minnows, although they had [201]made a crude dip-net out of a piece of gunny sack.

A few days later there was a light snowfall, and the three campers began to look for moose tracks. However, there seemed to be more wolves in the country than moose; for, almost every night, they heard wolves howl and they found wolf tracks within a few rods of their camp. [202]

## CHAPTER XXVI

## STALKING A MOOSE

One morning, when the lads awoke at day-break, Ganawa was gone. The lads arose, started the fire in the tepee and boiled some fresh beaver meat. The night had been quite cold and some hot broth seemed good for breakfast.

The boys had guessed right that Ganawa had gone scouting for moose tracks, and in a short time he returned to tell the boys that during the night a young moose had crossed the lake near their camp and had travelled east against the wind.

“We must eat,” he said, “and then we must follow the moose. We must wear our warm winter moccasins and we must take our blankets, for no hunter can tell how far he may have to track a moose.”

It took some time before the hunters were ready to take the trail. “The moose may be [203]a long way ahead of us,” Ganawa told the lads, “because I cannot tell at what time of the night he passed our camp. We must follow him slowly and you, my sons, and the dog must travel a good way behind me so we do not scare him. If we scare him, he will start running and we shall lose him.”

The animal had been going at a walk. He had followed the general direction of a small spring stream that enters Lake Anjigami near the camp of the hunters. This spring brook heads in a spruce swamp about a mile from the lake. “If he has gone into that swamp it will be very difficult to follow him,” remarked Ganawa, as the hunters started on the trail.

It was found that the game had passed along the spruce swamp. At the end of the swamp it had turned leisurely a little more easterly until it came to a high ridge within sight of one of those small lakes which are scattered by the tens of thousands over a region north and south of Lake Superior.

On the high ridge the moose had fed on [204]the twigs of young poplar trees, breaking down some of them of the thickness of a man’s wrist. At the north end of the lake it had crossed the outlet and had stopped to feed on some low willows and juneberry bushes. It had not touched pin-cherry and choke-cherry, but it had fed

freely on young white birches and on the bushy moose-maple, which never grows to tree size.

“How can an animal grow big and fat when it eats nothing but wood?” asked Ray.

“The little twigs, my son, which the moose eats are not all wood,” replied Ganawa. “There is much food in them and in the buds. Moose and deer live on browse in the winter, grouse and fool-hens live on buds, rabbits and mice live on bark, and if the squirrels have not enough hazelnuts and seeds they also eat buds.”

After they had cautiously followed the trail for about two hours, Ganawa sat down on a log.

“My sons,” he said, “take a rest. This track was made last night. In some open [205]spots the wind has filled in the footprints and in some sheltered spots the sun has melted the edges of the snow just a little bit. I fear he is a long way ahead of us, but if it does not begin to snow, we must follow him till we find him; for when the weather gets cold the wolves may drive all the moose out of the country.”

During the afternoon, the hunters found several places where the moose had lain down. As the wind had veered toward the north, the game had also turned north. “He smells danger ahead of him,” Ganawa told the boys, “and he listens for danger behind him. He has not been scared and does not know that hunters are following him.”

About an hour before sunset, the hunters made camp in a sheltered hollow near a small stream, and built a fire on the leeward side of a big log.

“We may build a fire,” said Ganawa, “but we must not use our axes. If the moose hears the sound of an ax, he will get up and run a league.” [206]

After the hunters had eaten their meat and drunk some hot broth, they scraped away the snow from the ground and made a bed of spruce and balsam boughs. Bruce and Ganawa gathered some more dead wood for the fire, but Ray was so tired that he wrapped himself in his blankets, and very soon he fell asleep with Tawny curled up at his feet.

For some time Bruce and Ganawa tended the fire in silence, for the ever-changing flames of a camp-fire seem to incite the imagination to recall the past and to peer behind the veil of the future. During the night Bruce and Ganawa took turns replenishing the fire, for no camp-fire can be built in such a way that it will keep a man warm all night without being replenished several times. This is especially true if dry and dead wood has to be used. But even under the most favorable circumstances, when the camper has cut stout back-logs or can use rocks as a back-wall and can use green birch, hickory, ash, or hard maple as fuel, he will have to [207]get up once or twice, for even the green woods mentioned burn fast with the free access of air.

The night was not cold, as winter nights go, and when, after a hearty breakfast of toasted meat, boiled meat and hot broth, the hunters again took up the trail, each of them felt fit to follow the trail all day.

It was just light enough to see the tracks when they started, and Ganawa cautioned the lads to avoid all noise. "Be very careful not to break any sticks, and you must not talk. It may be," he explained, "that the moose is leagues ahead of us, but we cannot tell; he may not be far away. You, my sons, should walk about fifty paces behind me, and you must be sure not to let Ohnemoosh break away when I see the moose."

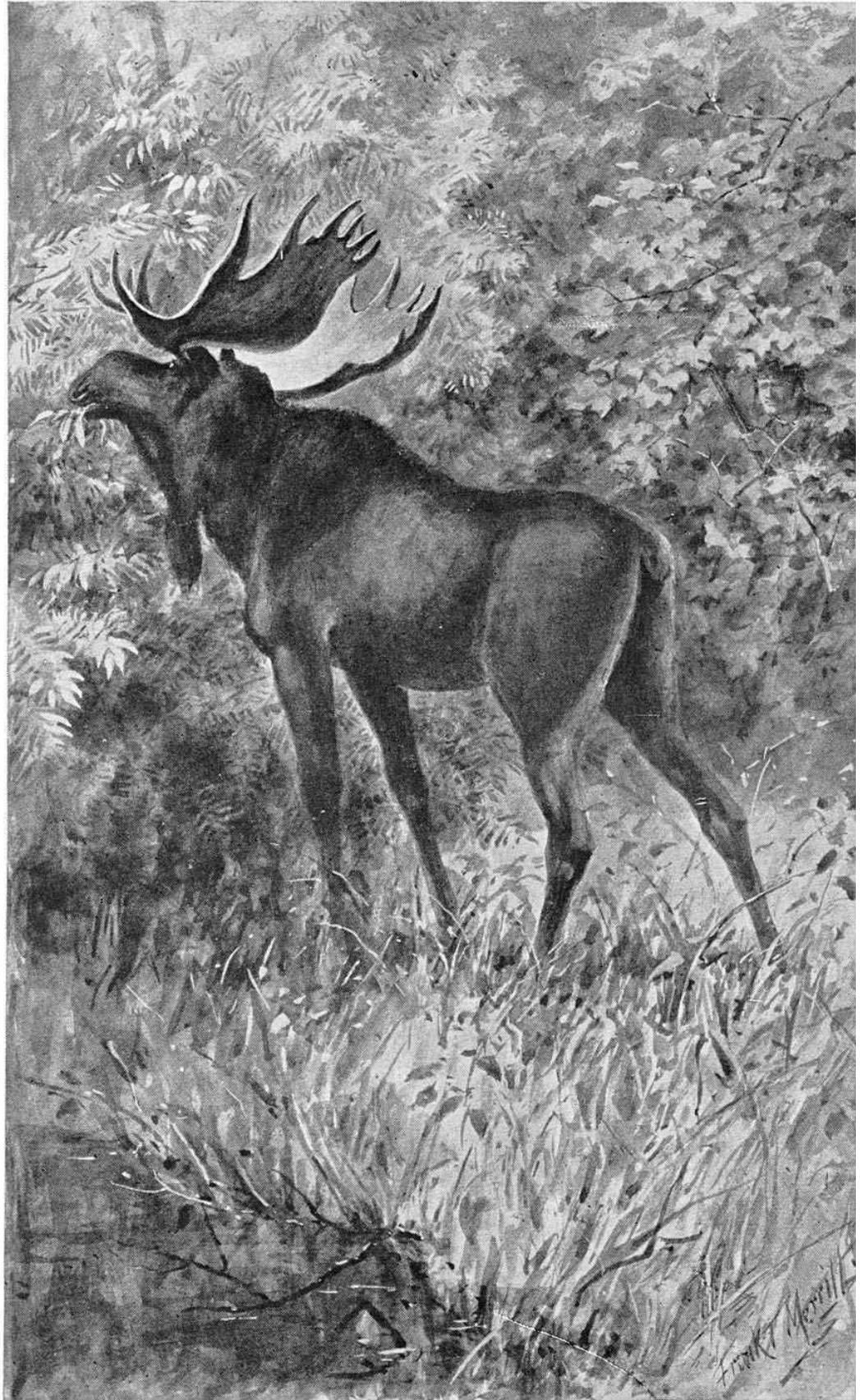
They had travelled about a mile when the lads were made to realize that their guide had not needlessly cautioned them against making noise. He now halted suddenly and motioned the lads not to come nearer. Then he peered carefully through some bushes just [208]ahead, but presently motioned to the lads to come up to him.

"Look!" he said, pointing to the bed of a moose. "It is almost warm yet. I think we scared him." The tracks showed plainly that the moose had stood for a moment facing his back trail. Then he had turned around short and trotted off in a northwesterly direction against the wind, for during the last twenty-four hours the wind had swung around from northeast to northwest.

"We must wait here," Ganawa advised, "so he will get over being scared." And as the hunters stood and looked around, they saw that the evening before the moose had fed freely on poplar and birch brush close by, and had then selected a well-sheltered bed behind a thicket of spruce, where he had been apparently lying down all night.

After an hour's rest, the hunters again took up the trail, and they found that the moose had soon slowed down to a walk.

Early in the afternoon the moose suddenly appeared in plain view, as the hunters peered [209]over a ridge. There he stood, a fine young bull moose, feeding on some willows. By crawling a few rods westward behind the ridge, Ganawa approached within thirty yards and brought down his game with one carefully aimed shot. Ganawa carried an old Hudson Bay smooth-bore gun, and he seldom fired at moose or deer at a longer range.



Lead and powder were so very expensive to the old-time Indians that they could not afford the wild shooting of many present-day white hunters, but were compelled to stalk their game until they had approached within close range.

The hunters set to work at once to dress their game, but the afternoon was well advanced when the meat was cut up and hung up in trees out of reach of the wolves. Certain choice parts they had laid aside for a big hunters' feast: The tongue, a piece of the stomach which makes excellent tripe, the kidneys, a piece of liver and some choice fat steak and a piece of suet. The hunters had [210]walked some ten miles; they had not eaten fresh moose meat for weeks and they felt ravenously hungry.

In a very short time there would be meat broiled, meat fried, and meat boiled, and they would have a feast such as only hungry hunters and explorers ever enjoy.

So busy had the boys been cutting out the meat and hanging it up in trees that they had not noticed a change in the weather. And now a great disappointment was in store for them. Ganawa climbed up on a big rock and pointed toward the northwest. "Look, my sons," he said earnestly. "Do you see the black clouds? They will bring snow and a big, cold wind; and very soon it will be dark. Take up the meat for our feast and follow me. We must walk fast to find a good shelter, or we shall freeze to death. This ridge and the small bushes will give us no shelter in a storm and no wood for our fire." [211]

## CHAPTER XXVII

## THE STORM CAMP

They had gone about a mile when Ganawa put down the moose-hide and his blanket at the foot of a high granite cliff in the lee of a dense spruce forest that sloped down to one of those innumerable small streams that wind their way through every valley and ravine of the Lake Superior region, little streams that are destined to feed the Big Lake as long as the northern forest shades their pools and ripples. The trees of the north: pine, spruce, balsam, birch, poplar, and alder; they are indeed the keepers, the preservers of the small brooks in whose pools the wild violets are mirrored in June; and if the forests are ever destroyed, the music of the little brooks will die away.

“Here we must camp till the storm has passed,” said Ganawa. “We must lean our tepee-poles against the cliff.” [212]

The lads understood at once what was wanted. Bruce swung his big ax, and with one or two blows a pole came down. As Bruce felled the poles, the other two hunters trimmed them and leaned them against the cliff. “We must make a long tepee,” the Chippewa told his white sons, “long enough for two beds.”

In a surprisingly short time the frame of the long tepee stood complete, and now Ganawa again displayed to the lads the resourcefulness of the Indian in the wilderness. He first tied the moose-hide to the lower part of the poles, with the hair side in. “It will soon freeze hard,” he said, “and will not slip.” Then he tied several slender poles crosswise to the upper half of the leaning tepee-poles, and with the aid of a supply of rawhide strings, he fastened a thatch of spruce and balsam boughs to the upper part of the long tepee.

The most difficult part of the work was making a bed for the boys. There was a fairly level sleeping-place for Ganawa, but [213]the rest of the tepee floor was a jumble of angular rocks, and over these the lads had to build a pole platform. However, as young spruces and poplars grew in abundance close by, even this was finished in a short time. When in addition to all this an abundant supply of spruce and balsam boughs had been cut and spread on the two beds, the camp itself was ready for the night, but more work had to be done before it would be a safe place for

the hunters during the coming storm. Such severe weather would require a good shelter.

Bruce now set to work cutting firewood: green spruce and birch, with some dry stuff mixed in for giving the fire a good start or for making it come to quickly when it was low. While Bruce was cutting wood, Ganawa first made the beds and then carried the heavy billets to the camp, where he piled them up, some inside and others just outside the entrance. Ray also had work to do. He brought a kettleful of water from the stream, washed the moose tripe in the brook, started [214]a fire under the slanting granite wall and began preparations for the feast.

The tongue, the kidneys, and a piece of tripe he set boiling in the kettle. On a grill of green sticks, as soon as he had enough live coals, he broiled some choice steak, while he fried other pieces of steak and liver in a panful of melted suet.

Daylight was just beginning to fade outside when the three hunters were ready for the feast. Ganawa, who was the last one in, closed the opening with a piece of buckskin and the boys could not help wondering at the shelter they had contrived to put up in this lonely uninhabited wilderness. The fire burnt freely in front of the red granite and the smoke drew off perfectly through an opening between two poplar poles. The hot bed of coals and the heated rock spread a gentle warmth through the camp which, for the time, made this makeshift shelter as comfortable as a log-house with a fireplace.

“My sons, you must not eat too fast,” [215]said Ganawa, “because we have now much time to eat and to sleep and to talk.”

The broiled and the fried steak was soon disposed of, and the boys agreed it was the best meat they had ever eaten. The young moose had been in good condition and the meat was tender and well-flavored.

Within an hour the meat in the kettle was done; and with his hunting-knife every one fished out what he liked, using a piece of bark for a plate. The white boys ate their meat and drank the hot broth with a little salt, but Ganawa ate his meat and drank his broth without any salt.

“I can’t eat any more,” Ray admitted, after he had sampled every kind of meat and had emptied his second cup of soup, “and I’m as warm as I ever was at home in

Vermont.”

To both of the lads it seemed a little unreal that they should be sitting here warm and cozy at a bright fire, inhaling the odor of fresh spruce and balsam. The long, weary trailing after the moose seemed like [216]a dream of something that happened long ago.

Outside over the tops of the spruces and through the scattered pines on the cliff above, the storm began to roar with that peculiar dull monotone which makes one be truly grateful for a safe and warm camp.

Ray put his head out for a few seconds. “Ugh,” he exclaimed. “It is pitch-dark, the snow is coming down fast, and it is getting awfully cold. We should surely freeze to death if we had not put up this camp.”

As the hunters were very tired they soon stretched out on their beds of spruce and balsam. The moose-hide kept the cold air from their beds and both dog and men were soon sound asleep. Bruce and Ganawa each arose once to replenish the fire. Ray had also intended to take his turn at this work, but when he woke up, daylight was shining through the smoke-hole, and over a fire of birchwood coals Bruce was broiling moose meat for breakfast, while Tawny was sitting [217]up, intently watching the cook, in anticipation of his own breakfast.

Ray muttered as he sat up and rubbed his eyes, “I never slept as I did in this storm camp. I tell you, Bruce, a good Indian hunter certainly knows how to take care of himself in the woods.” [218]

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## CHAPTER XXVIII

## FIGHTING A WOLF

The storm had not abated, but so well had the hunters built their camp that the snow and the cold had even improved it; for the snow had drifted in around the bottom of the tepee making the shelter much warmer than it would have been without the snow. Some of the snow had partly melted on the spruce thatch, but with the falling temperature it had frozen and thus made the thatch of boughs almost as tight as a roof of shingles; of course some of the fine snow had drifted in, but that had been expected, and the lads scraped it together and threw it out. The outside of their cover blanket was a little damp from snow that had sifted in and melted, and the lads hung up the blankets so that the reflection from the fire and the warm rock would dry them.

There was now plenty of time for everything [219]at this camp. Cutting wood, fetching water, cooking, and eating were all the campers had to do besides sleeping and talking. For two days the storm continued and it grew so cold that Bruce spent two hours a day cutting wood for the fire. As long as the fire was kept burning, the camp was very comfortable, but naturally when the fire went out, the camp grew chilly; however, the lads had a feeling that they had miraculously escaped freezing to death, and minor discomforts did not annoy them.

On the third morning, the weather had cleared, although it was now colder than ever.

“We must start for our lake camp to-day,” Ganawa said, after he had taken a look at the weather. “We must each take some meat with us, but we cannot carry much, because it will be hard travelling.”

Travelling was much harder than the lads had anticipated. Their snowshoes were, as Ganawa had said, not of the best, and the going was very tiring, because a crust had [220]begun forming over the surface of the snow, but it would not yet support the weight of a man.

They struck straight out for their camp, which was not more than twelve miles southwest of them, but it took them all day to complete the trip, and Ray was so tired that he claimed he could not have walked another mile. They found their home

camp not at all inviting, and the five days they had been away seemed like a long time. Much snow had blown into both the tepee and the bark-house; however, after they had cleared out the snow, built a fire in the tepee and saw the smoke come curling out of the top, the camp looked like home again.

There was only one thing that disturbed the boys, and Ganawa did not seem to like it, either. On the trip from the hunting camp they had not seen a track or sign of a living thing except a few woodpeckers; but near their home camp they saw many fresh wolf tracks, and one of the beasts had boldly walked up to the bark-house. [221]

“The mahungeens are hungry and they smelled our meat in the bark-house,” Ganawa told the boys. “If we had much powder and lead we should kill some of them, so they do not get too bold.”

The three hunters were now snowed in for the winter. “We have denned up like the bears,” Bruce told Ray, “and now is your chance to make up rest and sleep.”

However, the campers were not idle. Wood had to be cut and carried in, two meals had to be cooked and eaten, and moccasins, clothing, and blankets needed attention. There was very little dishwashing, because the hunters had no dishes outside of a kettle, a frying-pan, and three tin cups. The lads tried fishing, but they had no luck.

All the campers made three snowshoe trips after the moose meat. On these occasions they always spent a night at the storm camp, which made a pleasant break in the monotony of their winter life, and robbed the trip of all hardship. [222]

On these trips they saw grouse, rabbits, and squirrels, but no big game. The moose had left the country. On the last trip, several wolves followed them almost to the home camp. “We ought to shoot them,” Ganawa said again, “if we had more powder and lead. Hunger is making them bold.”

“How often does a wolf eat?” asked Ray.

“My son, a wolf does not eat often in winter, when game is scarce, because on many days he cannot catch game. If he can make ten good meals or twelve all winter, he will not starve, but he will be thin. The wolves are hungry. We have seen no tracks of moose or caribou. There are not very many rabbits in the country, and wahboos

and his tribe are wise. They know enough to live in the thick brush of swamps, where it is difficult for mahungeen to catch them.”

A few days later Bruce had an experience with a wolf which made him sorely regret that he had not heeded Ganawa’s warning [223]never to go away by himself without taking his gun along.

Near the spruce swamp, which they passed on their way to the hunting camp, Bruce had seen a number of grouse. The three hunters had really lost all count of the days, but after they had moved into their winter camp they decided to keep one day a week as Sunday. So one Saturday afternoon Bruce started with a bow and some blunt arrows to get a few grouse for their Sunday dinner, for all felt that they would be a welcome treat.

About a mile from camp he saw a lone wolf come out on the trail. The beast had heard and smelled Bruce and now he came slowly forward, his teeth flashing and his shaggy hair bristling on his back and shoulder. The brute looked lean and hungry, and Bruce felt his own hair rise on his head. He had never seen a wolf act so bold as this one, and he reached instinctively for his hunting-knife, and found to his horror that he had forgotten to put it back in the sheath [224]after he had cut some birch brush for a new broom.

To shoot blunt wooden arrows at the wolf would have been useless, to turn and run for home would mean sure death if the hungry beast followed and attacked him. There was only one thing to do. Fight for his life barehanded. Bruce had done considerable boxing with the boys in Vermont, and now he squared himself for the attack.

The wolf made a high leap for the man’s throat, but with the skill of a trained fighter, the man thrust the open jaw upward with his left arm and delivered a heavy blow on the chest of the beast with his right. The blow threw the wolf back but his heavy fur and loose skin protected him from being knocked out. A second time the grim, hungry beast sprang to the attack and again the man parried the open jaw and drove home a blow with his right. This time with so much force that the ugly gray beast reeled and fell on his back. But he was not stunned, and before the man realized that [225]he might have fallen upon the prostrate brute, the wolf was up again and was coming to repeat his attack.

However, there had been just enough of a pause to enable the man to form a plan, and when the wolf sprang at him for the third time, he did not merely ward off the gaping jaw, and he did not try to deliver another blow. His mind had hit upon a plan of closing with the fierce hairy monster. He shot out his right hand, seized a firm hold on the skin just behind the wolf's left jaw, and brought his full weight down on the beast as he fell on top of him in the snow. The man let out a wild yell as for a second he felt the wolf limp under his weight. But he had rejoiced too soon. A wild animal, when cornered, never stops fighting until he is dead or completely overpowered and made helpless. The wolf was fighting again. True, his formidable vise-like jaws he could not use and the man had clenched his powerful hands around the wolf's throat. It was a battle to the death, [226]with neither wolf nor man as yet the victor. The claws of the wolf are dull tools as compared with the sharp steel-like claws of the panther, but driven by hard, powerful muscles they are no mean weapons. Had not the man been protected by tough buckskin clothing, his skin would have been lacerated and he might have bled to death, holding his savage victim. The man was winning now. The struggles of the gray beast grew less and less violent, then they became like cramps and spasms, and then the long gray body lay still.

The man was sweating and bleeding; he still clenched the throat of the wolf as if unconscious of the fact that the animal no longer moved. And then he heard a long-drawn-out howl, the hunting call of the wolf pack. That brought him to. He sprang to his feet. He snatched off a young poplar, brittle with frost, and with it he crushed the skull of the beast, for he was still mad with the fear and rage of the battle.

Then he seized the dead beast by the forelegs, [227]flung it over his shoulder and ran for camp. The joy of victory seemed to give him unlimited strength. Half-way down to camp, he heard again the call of the pack. They were nearer now. He turned back and shouted, "Stay back, you dirty brutes!" and ran on.

He reached the camp when it was almost dark. "Father, I killed a wolf, I killed him," he called as he staggered into the tepee. "He is right out there! I killed him, but he pretty near got me." And then he fell into a dead faint like a runner who has used up his last bit of energy in winning a race. [228]



## CHAPTER XXIX

## A DISCOVERY

Ray at once made his older brother comfortable by placing a rolled blanket under his head. "Good gracious, Bruce!" he exclaimed, "you certainly look as if you had been in a fight." And with these words he began to wash the blood from Bruce's face, and Bruce came to very soon. But he could not tell how his left hand had become lacerated, nor did he even know that he had several bad scratch-wounds on his legs and body. Ray washed the wounds with warm water, dressed them with softened moose tallow and bandaged them with strips of clean bandanna handkerchiefs, the only thing in camp suitable for this purpose.

Ganawa had rushed out with his gun, and in a few minutes Ray heard him shoot. "I killed two," he reported when he returned. [229]"The others ran away, and I think they will not trouble us again."

The wolf which Bruce had killed was very lean. Bruce estimated that he weighed at least seventy pounds, ten pounds more than a bushel of wheat. In good condition he would have weighed about ninety pounds.

Fortunately the wounds which Bruce had received in his fight with the wolf did not fester, and a week later the campers had boiled wild chicken with wild rice and hominy for their Sunday dinner. It was Bruce who had brought a little hominy from the "Soo" to be used on very special occasions. Bruce had not found it very difficult to secure three grouse with blunt arrows, but he had not forgotten to take his gun and knife along, although no wolves had been seen or heard near the camp since he had had his great fight.

Ganawa was very proud of the victory of his white son. "If you were a Chippewa," he told Bruce, "you would be allowed to [230]wear an eagle feather for killing mahungeen. I know of only one Indian who killed mahungeen in a hand-to-hand fight, but he had a knife."

Winter lasts a long time in the North Country, but the campers always found something to do, and as Ganawa could tell stories and Indian legends by the hour, the lads had no time to be unhappy, although they eagerly watched and waited for

signs of spring. From time to time they tried fishing through the ice, but by the middle of February the ice was three feet thick and cutting a hole through it meant a great deal of labor.

At last, about the middle of April, the margins of the lakes began to thaw, ducks and geese began to come north, and on warm, sunny days the sap of the white birches ran freely. The sap of birch-trees runs as freely in spring as the sap of maples, but it contains so little sugar that it is not suitable for the making of syrup or sugar.

It was on a warm afternoon late in April, [231]when Ray came to camp greatly excited by something he had discovered.

“Father,” he called out of breath to Ganawa, “I have found a log cabin. It is a very small cabin. Nobody lives in it, but it must have been built by a white man.

“Come along, Bruce; let me show it to you. It is in the Wolf Swamp, only about a hundred yards from the spot where you killed the wolf.”

This was indeed real news to the camp. Could this be the clue to Jack Dutton’s camp? Why should anybody want to hide himself in the Wolf Swamp, as Ray had called the place, when there was a good camping-place on Lake Anjigami?

Ray proudly led the way to his discovery. Sure enough, there was the log cabin, but it was not a cabin any man had lived in.

“It was a cache,” Ganawa told the lads. “A place where somebody kept fur. But they must have had a camp close by,” he added. A dim trail led away from the cache to the other side of the narrow swamp, [232]and there was the camp-site plain enough, and several signs indicated that the campers had been white men. The camp showed a larger outside fireplace than Indians would have used, and they had cut much wood.

Bruce began at once to examine the cuts on the stumps near the camp-site, and very soon the young man, who was generally very calm, sprang up, swung his arms around and called: “I have found it, Father! I have found it! Look, here is the same ax-mark we found last fall at the camp-site on Lake Anjigami. I noticed the same marks on the logs in the cache cabin.”

“No, Bruce, you are mistaken,” Ray argued. “The ax-marks are not the same. The ax at this camp had a much smaller nick.”

“It had a smaller nick,” Bruce admitted, “and I can tell you why. The campers, of course, had no grindstone. They may have had a file or a small whetstone, or they may have used an ordinary rock to keep their ax in fair condition. Had they had a grindstone, [233]they would have given their ax a complete keen edge, but as it was they only reduced the nick in size. But you will notice that the nick is in the same place, near the front part of the ax.”

Both Ganawa and Ray were convinced that Bruce was right, but the question who these mysterious campers were was not at all solved by what they had found. Were they Jack Dutton and his partner or some unknown strangers? Perhaps two adventurous Frenchmen had penetrated into this region while it still contained an abundance of the most valuable fur-bearers: marten, beaver, and otter. All three of them searched carefully for signs to solve this riddle, but darkness came on before they had discovered any further clues to the solution of their problem.

“If this was Jack Dutton’s camp,” Bruce remarked as they walked along the trail, “something must have muddled his head. He does not meet us at Mackinac nor at the Soo, and he leaves no letter or word [234]with anybody. If there were whales in Lake Superior, I should say he suffered the fate of Jonah. A trader at the Soo told us that a man cannot disappear in the Indian country. It seems to me Jack Dutton did the trick to perfection.

“If the camp-sites we have found belonged to him, why didn’t he leave some kind of message? I have had a vague hope that we might find him in this region. It is the kind of country he and I used to talk and dream about when we were boys on the farm. But now I begin to fear that Jack is dead. Perhaps the wolves finished him as they came near doing with me. Jack was always a dare-devil and he would not realize that the wolves in this wild country are much bolder than they are in Vermont.”

Soon after daylight, the three hunters were again diligently searching for some clue that might point to the identity of the mysterious campers. Ray was the first who pointed out something that aroused some discussion. Who tore off half of the birch-bark [235]roof of the log cabin cache? A bear might have done it, but no claw-marks

were visible. If it had been done by a storm, why were there no indications of a violent wind on the trees close by?

“Somebody tore off the roof,” Ganawa gave as his opinion, “but I cannot tell why he did not open the cache by pulling out the logs that were put in loose to serve as a door.”

Bruce followed a plan of his own in the search for a clue. He slowly walked around the old tepee poles of the camp-site in a gradually enlarging spiral. “If there is anything,” he thought, “I am bound to find it in this way.” And he did find a broad blaze on a rough old birch-tree and on the blaze was some lettering, but it was hard to read. The letters seemed to have been scratched in with the point of a knife and then blackened, or rather made dull gray, with a piece of pointed lead. Bruce’s heart beat fast and he forgot to call his friends as he tried to decipher the scrawls, and no [236]discoverer of long buried records has ever been more absorbed in deciphering their meaning than Bruce was in reading the words on the blaze:

GONE A WEEK THIEF STOLE  
MARTEN FUR ROTTEN LUCK  
LOOK YOUNG BIRCH TREE

Bruce could make nothing out of the lettering until he discovered that the writer had run two or three words together and had misspelled “week”; after that the message suddenly flashed out plainly enough.

“Gone a week. Thief stole marten fur. Rotten luck. Look young birch-tree.”

It took Bruce but a moment to find the young birch-tree with smooth white bark, on which a longer message was written a little more plainly. [237]

“We go back to lake,” read the message. “Bad luck here. Intend to go to Michipicoten Island, and to Island of Yellow Sands. Rotten luck here. Maybe the yello will never steal again.

J. D.

And then Bruce gave a yell. “Come here, friends!” he called. “I have found a message from Jack Dutton.” [238]

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## CHAPTER XXX

## GANAWA IS FRIGHTENED

“Where is Michipicoten Island? Where is the Island of Yellow Sands? How far is it? Have you ever been there?” These and other questions the lads asked of Ganawa.

Fortunately the writer of the message had signed his initials in script, which Bruce recognized as Jack Dutton’s signature. But one thing Jack had forgotten; the message bore no date. Ganawa said the blaze on the tree had been made last spring, before the trees stopped growing for the season, and he added: “If your friends were foolish enough to go to the big island Michipicoten and to the small island of the Yellow Sands, they would not go before the Moon of Strawberries, because before that time the Big Lake is too rough. Only [239]foolish white men paddle out on the Big Lake in a canoe.”

After this discovery there was no holding the boys in camp any longer. Within a few days they had carried everything to the nearest point on the Michipicoten River, and with Ganawa in the stern they glided down the swift stream, in which the water was running so high that most of the dangerous rocks and rapids were covered with a swift gliding current. So rapidly did they travel that they reached their old camp above the big falls in less than a day.

After the camp had been set up, they walked down to the falls, which roared much louder than they had done at the time of low water in autumn, because the river was now high from the melting snow, of which much was still left on north-facing slopes.

Ray could not resist pushing a stranded log into the current and see it go through the chute and over the falls. The big white log shot like an arrow over the first two drops, then it turned on end and was hurled [240]almost clear of the third and fourth steps, and when it arrived in the big pool it was broken in two and one part followed the other in the mad whirl of the pool, as if the spirit of the tree were still alive in the battered and broken logs.

Another day brought the travellers to the mouth of the river, to the camp of the Ininiwac people, whom they had last seen in the autumn before. Of these people

they learned one thing of much interest to all of them.

Hamogeesik had also gone up the Michipicoten last autumn, but he had soon returned without his canoe and his gun. He had told that a storm had set his canoe adrift down the falls. The canoe had been broken and he had not been able to find his gun. He had then bought an old gun of one of the Indians and had promised to return in the spring and pay for the gun with furs. Thus far he had not returned and the Indians did not know where he had made his winter camp. [241]

Bruce and Ray had been fully determined that they would follow Jack Dutton to the islands in Lake Superior, but when they saw the immense white waves break on the rocky shore and then looked at their little frail bark canoe, both of them lost heart.

As Ray looked at the sad face of Bruce he felt like crying, but he swallowed hard and only said: "I guess we can't make it, Bruce. She is too big, just like an ocean. If we only had some boards and tools so we could build a big boat. I know, Bruce, that you could sail her."

"Yes, brother, I could sail her," Bruce replied sadly, "but we have only an ax, no nails, no auger; I don't see how we could build a boat."

That night the boys went to bed early to sleep off their grief, but Ganawa visited with the Indians and sat long at the camp-fire talking to them and letting them talk to him.

"My sons," he had told the boys, "Indians are not like white men, who say a few [242] words quickly. Indians need much time to talk. If you try to hurry them, they will tell you nothing."

The old-time Indians were very superstitious, and each tribe and clan observed a kind of taboo on certain places. A lake where some one had drowned, a place where somebody had been killed or had met a serious and strange accident, was likely to be avoided for years or even for generations.

In his talk with the Ininiwac people, Ganawa had learned that a small island near shore about three miles east of their camp was one of those tabooed places. Years ago an Indian in a canoe who had been caught in a sudden squall had tried to take refuge on this islet, but a wave had thrown his canoe on shore and dashed him

against a sharp rock, injuring him so severely that he died a few hours after the accident. Since then no Indian had set foot on the island and they had not even taken away the canoe of the dead man.

“My sons, would you be afraid to go to [243]this island with me?” Ganawa asked the boys. The lads assured him they would not be afraid, but they wondered what might be on the island to attract their guide, but Ganawa only smiled and said, “Come with me and see!”

The island itself is a beautiful spot, covered with trees and shrubs and the common northern flowers and small plants. It lies only a few rods from shore, and the three explorers found hidden under some bushes of this islet something which they wanted much more than a boat-load of gold rock. They found a staunch twenty-foot wooden boat on this uninhabited island.

“Father, how did you know it was here? Who left it?” Ray asked as soon as he saw it.

“The Ininiwac people told me about it, and it was left here by some white miners who dug for gold rock on shore. They found no gold rock and they went back to the white man’s country.”

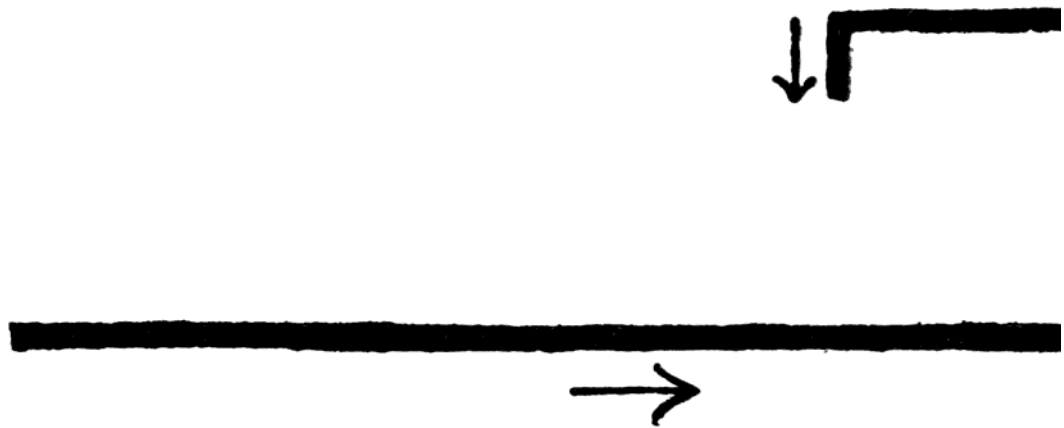
Bruce was busy examining the boat. If [244]it was seaworthy or could be made so, there was a solution to the problem of reaching Michipicoten Island and the Island of Yellow Sands, the latter a small island in the middle of Lake Superior.

The boat did not look hopeless. It was dried out and showed a number of big cracks, but it was all sound. As Bruce looked around for oars, he discovered something which made his heart give a leap. There was a box with some three dozen nails, a hammer and a cold-chisel, and an old linsey-woolsey coat. “I can fix that boat! I can fix it!” Bruce exclaimed when he made this find; for Bruce had built and sailed boats on Lake Champlain. He caulked the cracks in the boat with strips of linsey-woolsey. He hewed a keel out of a young pine, and nailed it to the bottom of the boat. “She will sail safely now,” he said. He made other needed repairs and then hewed out two pairs of oars, so the islet looked like a pirate’s shipyard.

Michipicoten Island lies only ten miles [245]from the north shore of Lake Superior, but the distance from the mouth of the river is fully thirty-five miles in a

southwesterly direction. The island, as seen from the deck of steamers, stands out boldly as a wooded mountain rising between eight hundred and a thousand feet above the level of the lake. Its north side drops steep into the lake without a single cove or bay to shelter even a rowboat.

Sailors fear a shelterless coast much more than they fear storms and waves of the open sea. Although Ganawa was afraid to sail over the open lake for thirty-five miles, Bruce persuaded him that with the wind in their favor, it would be much safer to sail directly for Quebec Harbor on the south side of the island rather than creep along the harborless north shore, then approach the island on the wind and wave-swept north side and then paddle or sail around to the harbor on the south side. On such a trip, Bruce convinced Ganawa, they would surely have to travel against the wind or even in [246]the trough of the waves part of the time. "Look, Father," Bruce closed his argument, drawing a figure in the sand, "we should have to go something like this:



Let us sail straight with the wind."

Bruce had put a mast in the boat and made a sail out of a blanket; and when he showed Ganawa how quickly he could unfurl and reef his sail, the old hunter was convinced.

"My son," he said, "a good Indian can paddle a canoe on a mad river and a good white man can sail a boat over the mad waves of the sea and the Big Lake. My sons, we shall sail straight to the island over the open lake." [247]



## CHAPTER XXXI

## SAILING THE “PIRATE”

A few days later with a gentle easterly breeze Ganawa and his white sons sailed for Michipicoten Island with their bark canoe in tow. Bruce handled the sail, Ray steered, and Ganawa used his paddle.

Ganawa’s heart nearly failed him when he found how strongly the wind blew after they had cleared the sheltered bay. The sky was almost cloudless, and a few white gulls lazily accompanied the travellers as if they were curious about the strange craft that had appeared on their own blue sea. As Ray watched them gracefully sailing around the boat, he wondered very much how they could sail up and down, back and forth without any apparent motion of their wings.

The faster the boat sailed, the harder Ganawa paddled, for he knew only too well [248]how quickly a breeze on Lake Superior may change to a dangerous gale. In fact when the sailors came abreast of the east end of the island, the spray began to fly over the stern, and Ganawa applied his short quick strokes faster than ever. The distance from the mouth of the river to Montreal Harbor is close to fifty miles, but the pirate boat sailed the course in about six hours. Bruce furled his sail and rowed the *Pirate*, as Ray had named the boat, into Quebec Harbor soon after the sun had passed the noon line.

All three of the sailors were in high spirits after their successful trip and, after enjoying a hearty meal, and setting up their camp, they lost no time exploring the harbor and a part of the island. They found no signs of caribou or moose on the island, but the snowshoe rabbits, now in their summer pelage, were extremely abundant. When the travellers discovered a grove of good-sized sugar-maples, Ray regretted that they had not camped on the island in April or early in May, when the sap was running, [249]for he was very fond of maple syrup and maple sugar.

They spent two days exploring a number of small coves and bays on the south side of the island while the open lake was too rough for their boat. Bruce and Ray had great fun catching both lake and brook trout, and Tawny caught a big rabbit, but what they desired most they did not find. They discovered no message anywhere from Jack Dutton. There were plenty of signs that the miners of Alexander Henry

and other white men had camped on the island at Montreal Harbor, but the ax-mark of Jack Dutton they could not find.

Ganawa also looked carefully for signs of Indians and especially for signs of Hamogeesik, but he found none. As far as the three explorers could tell, there were no other human beings on the island.

However, the white lads, as well as Ganawa, were by this time fully determined to reach the Island of Yellow Sands, which is now called Caribou Island. Ganawa had [250]never been there, but he knew that it lay six leagues straight south of Quebec Harbor. On very clear days the island is visible from high points on Michipicoten, but there is nearly always a little haze over the water and the three sailors, on a day when there was a gentle breeze from the north, set out for an island which was not visible and which neither of them had ever seen.

On this trip the wind did not increase, but after they had sailed a few miles, the sail dropped on the mast and the *Pirate* lay becalmed on the glassy swell of a lake that seemed the most peaceful of all waters in the world. Rowing a boat on Lake Superior out of sight of land gives one the feeling of being lost at sea. They rowed one hour, they rowed two hours, and now the thickening haze made it impossible for them to see either Michipicoten in their rear or Caribou Island ahead of them. Bruce pulled the oars with all his strength, Ray paddled, and Ganawa used his paddle in the stern.

“Bruce, what are we going to do if a [251]fog catches us?” asked Ray, for he had noticed that the haze was getting thicker and the sun was not as bright as it had been in the morning.

“Better paddle, and stop asking foolish questions,” Bruce replied curtly. And Ray concluded that Bruce was worried as much as he was. It seemed to Ray that they had been rowing and paddling many hours, when at last a low black patch hove in sight directly ahead of them. “Yellow Sands! Yellow Sands!” Ray called out. “Thank God, we are not lost!”

The Island of Yellow Sands, or Caribou Island, is a bit of ancient rock left in the middle of the eastern part of Lake Superior. It lies just north of the International boundary, and it is uninhabited and seldom visited even to this day. But there is a lighthouse built on an islet just south of Caribou, and on this islet the lighthouse-

keeper lives during the season of navigation from May till November. While lying almost in the path of steamboat lines between [252]Lake Superior ports and the “Soo” canals, Caribou Island still remains in its ancient solitude. Very rarely do any people or any boats except lighthouse-tenders visit the island.

If one would feel strongly the beat of the great northward and southward surging waves of migrating birds, he could not do better than spend a season with the lighthouse-keeper of Caribou Island, and some day the island may become as famous in this respect as the island of Helgoland in the mouth of the Elbe. At the time of our story there were no lighthouses on the whole of Lake Superior.

Caribou Island is about three miles long from north to south and about a mile wide from east to west. Its eastern shore runs almost straight, the western is more broken, but there is no natural harbor on the island.

Ganawa and his boys steered for a hill, about a hundred feet high, in the southeastern part of the island, and they rowed and paddled with all their might, for the [253]haze was gradually changing to the dreaded Lake Superior fog. For a little while the top of the hill remained visible, while the near-by shore was lost in the fog. By this time the sailors had turned the southeastern point of the island, and they could hear the white-throats and thrushes sing in the woods of the island, although for a few minutes they could see only the gray fog around them. But guided by the song of a white-throat, as by the whistle of an invisible pilot, they carefully used oars and paddle until the bow of the *Pirate* grounded on the reddish-yellow sand of the island. Then they laid down three short birch logs in front of the boat and using the logs as rollers, they pulled the heavy boat up on land, and secured their canoe, while each man silently offered a prayer of thanks to Him Who had delivered them from the night of the fog and the perils of the sea. [254]

## CHAPTER XXXII

## CARIBOU ISLAND

No place in the heart of North America could be more suited for a real game of Robinson Crusoe than Caribou Island; but books were scarce in most American homes of the Colonial period and neither Ray nor Bruce had ever heard of Crusoe and his island. Nor did they know that the famous trader Alexander Henry had visited this island only a few years ago, attracted by the strange name, for Henry had at that time caught the “mining fever,” and he thought that the “yellow sand” of which the Indians spoke might be gold. Henry and his companions found the island well stocked with caribou and provided themselves with plenty of meat; and since Henry’s time, the island became known as Caribou Island and as such it appears on all modern maps.

The fog lasted all night and all next day, [255]and the lads felt as if they and Ganawa were the only people on earth and that they had been cast away on an island in the sea. Even Ganawa, who was no stranger to solitude, confessed that he would be afraid without his white son that could make and sail a white man’s boat, and as the white boys sat and listened to the lapping of the waves, for Lake Superior like the ocean is never entirely quiet, and as they tried in vain to peer through the fog, the words of the Bible ran through their minds: “And the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

The second morning broke clear and warm, and as the lake was quiet, the three sailors launched their canoe and started to paddle around the small island. The first thing that attracted their attention was the host of big rocks, as Ray called them, that they found scattered over the shallow water south of the island. If they had struck one [256]of them they might have been wrecked within a stone’s throw of the island.

With eyes and ears keenly alert and with throbbing hearts, the lads peered toward the land for signs of human beings. Unless they found some sign of Jack Dutton on this island, they would have to give up the search. Once Bruce thought he saw a man slip out of the spruce timber, but it was an animal, a deer. No, it was a caribou, Ganawa told them.

And then Ray spied something that made them all stop. “Look there! Look!” Ray cried, and pointed to the top of the hill. “There is a rag tied to a pole. Some man must have been there.”

They landed at once and climbed the hill. They found the signal. It was a piece of a butternut-dyed shirt. To the pole was also tied a piece of birch-bark with a message:

“Am stranded here. My partner is gone. I have no ax. Camp on east shore, near south point. J. D. April 26.” [257]

The lads cheered and danced around the pole and then all of them started for Jack Dutton’s camp. For the moment all their hardships and dangers were forgotten.

They found his camp-site, but the camp had been moved, and they found no message. What did it mean? Had he been taken off by somebody? A man without an ax cannot build a raft or boat. If he is still on the island they ought to be able to find his camp-fire. Ganawa knew that there were several small shallow lakes in the interior, but a man who wishes to be taken off an island would not camp in the interior. He would set up his tent or tepee near shore and he would keep a fire going. So the three men paddled around the whole island and looked sharp for signs of a camp or a human being. From time to time they sang out Jack Dutton’s name, but no sign or sound greeted them in reply to their calls except the echo of their own voices. The mystery, which for a brief hour they had thought solved, had grown only deeper and darker. Jack Dutton [258] must either have been taken off the island by some chance trader, or he was lying dead somewhere in a thicket or swamp of the island. It seemed not probable that he had been taken off, for so rarely was the solitary island visited by either Indians or white men that neither traders nor Indians knew that the island was stocked with caribou. Although the existence of the island was known to the Indians with whom Alexander Henry traded, their information was vague and none of them had ever been to the island.

That evening Ganawa and his sons were more downcast than they had ever been on their whole long journey. Even the rare treat of sweet tea with their supper of broiled lake trout failed to revive their spirits. Each drank his share of the tea, but most of the fine broiled fish was left on the birch-bark platter. And after the meal was over, hardly a word was spoken, as each man sat and stared blankly into the fire. And this time, the spirit of the white lads [259] had even drooped deeper than that of the old Indian hunter.

“My sons,” he said when he poured water on the camp-fire, “to-morrow we shall hunt again for Jack Dutton. If he is alive we must find him, and if he is dead we must find him. If he is alive, maybe Ohnemoosh can find him, if we cross his tracks.” [260]

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## CHAPTER XXXIII

## THE LAST SEARCH

In the morning the three friends started on foot to search the island. They made Dutton's old camp their starting-point and from there went north on the east side of the island. There was no doubt about the place having been the lost man's camp-site, but all the signs about the camp were old. The dog sniffed at some caribou bones, but showed no indications of scenting recent footprints. They had gone about a mile north, following a plain caribou trail, when Bruce raised his hand and stopped short. "I smell fire," he announced, turning back to his companions. "Do you smell it, too, or is my imagination deceiving me?"

Ray and Ganawa could not smell it, but Tawny sniffed the air, and looked at Bruce as if he would say, "You are right, I can smell it." The young man increased his [261]pace, and very soon he turned back a second time, his face flushed and his nostrils dilated. "Can't you smell it?" he asked anxiously. "It is getting stronger. I am sure now that I am not mistaken."

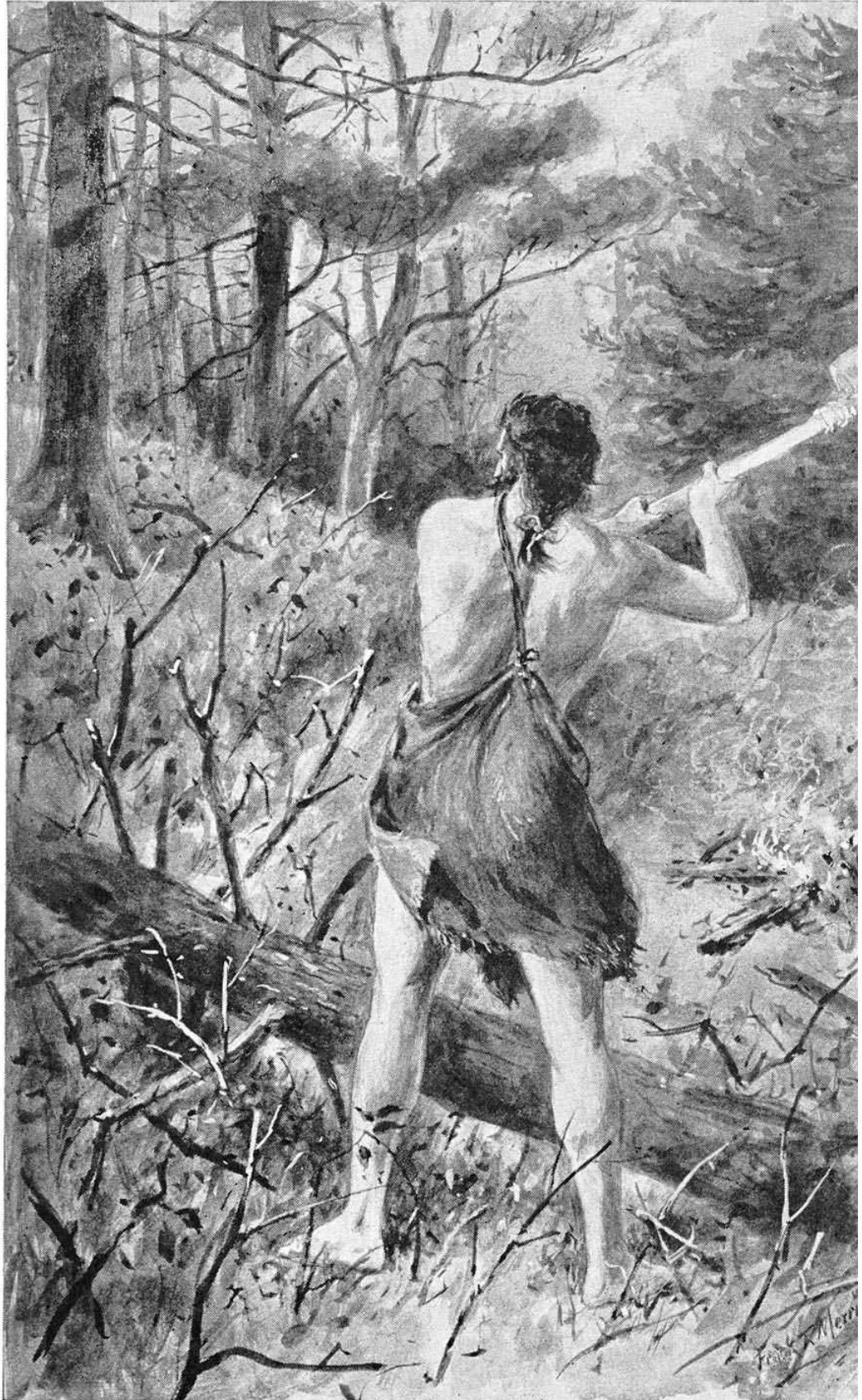
Ganawa smelled it, too, in fact the pungent odor of burning peat was now quite plain. "My sons," he explained, "I think it is a peat fire started by lightning."

But Bruce scarcely heard the old hunter's explanation. "Let us go on," he spoke in a low voice. "It may be Jack Dutton's fire." And he walked forward so briskly that his companions could hardly keep pace with him.

In a little while he stopped again. "Listen, friends," he asked with a trembling voice, "do you hear a noise? A man working in the timber? With an ax? Listen! Can't you hear it?" And Bruce walked ahead without waiting for an answer. The sound ceased, and he remembered that Jack Dutton had lost his ax. "I must be dreaming," he thought. "I certainly smelled a [262]peat fire but I must have heard a caribou break through the brush. Poor Jack is dead and gone!"

No, that was not a caribou. The sound came plainly now. Once, twice, half a dozen times. It was the sound of a man breaking or cutting branches with an ax or sledge or some other tool. Bruce forgot his companions. He rushed forward until he stood within sight of a small clearing. A man was swinging a stone sledge or ax breaking

the branches off a number of spruce-trees. And there were small peat fires burning all around him. But the man swinging the stone ax was not Jack Dutton. He was some fearsome wild giant. He was naked, except for a caribou skin tied about his waist. His long dark hair was tied at the back of his neck, and his face was covered with a heavy dark beard; and the color of his skin was almost as dark as that of Ganawa.



Now the man raised up and drew his arm across his forehead to wipe off the perspiration [263]and for the first time Bruce caught the deep blue color of the man's eyes. And suddenly the whole man changed in the eyes of Bruce. Gone was his tanned skin, his beard, and long hair. Bruce rushed up to him, crying: "Merciful God! Jack Dutton! Is it you? Or is it a wild man?"

When Ganawa and Ray came running to the clearing, Bruce and the wild man were having a wrestling match, with Tawny savagely barking and dancing around them, ready to take sides in what looked to him like a real fight.

And then Jack Dutton had to tell his story. "We hunted around so long," he related, "after the thieves who stole our best fur and our gold ore that we did not reach this island before the first part of September. We had recovered the fur, but we never caught the thieves and our specimens of gold we did not recover. When we had explored this island and become convinced that the reddish sand wasn't gold but just ordinary sand, the autumn storms set in and [264]we were afraid to risk crossing the open lake in our canoe; and as the island was well stocked with caribou, we decided to do something which no man had ever done: We decided to winter on Caribou Island. It was lots of fun. We lived on the fat of the land. We not only had an abundance of caribou meat, fat and lean, just as we liked it; we also laid in a supply of smoked geese, ducks and swans. We caught the finest whitefish and lake trout. Early in fall we caught them with hook and line and after the lake froze over we speared them through the ice, Indian fashion. We also had a little flour and corn-meal and had a bushel of dried blueberries. We lived like kings and had more fun than a hundred Indians.

"We had almost made up our minds to spend another year on the island, for I never heard from you, and thought you had given up coming to the Indian country. Then about six weeks ago something happened. One morning I went up the island after a young caribou and my partner, Pierre Landeau, [265]took out the canoe to catch a few trout among the big rocks south of the island. And that was the last I ever saw of Pierre Landeau and his canoe.

"The first night I spent alone in camp I didn't worry much as I came home very late myself. I thought Pierre had just run in somewhere and lain down to sleep. We often did that, because black flies and mosquitoes never bothered us on our island. Next

day I circled the island in search of Pierre. I spent a week looking for him in every corner of the island. He might be somewhere with a broken leg. I was beside myself with grief, for Pierre and I had become close friends. When I regained my balance of mind, my clothes had been torn to shreds in my search through the brush and thickets, but I never saw a sign of him.

“Pierre was one of the best canoeists in the country, but he had the habit of ballasting his canoe with rocks when he went fishing alone. I had often asked him to use logs instead of rocks. I have thought it all [266]out many times, and I think this is what happened: A squall filled his canoe, it sunk to the bottom, and Pierre drowned in the ice cold water. He had left our ax in the canoe. I was marooned on an island, which nobody ever visited. I had no canoe, and no ax to build even a raft. I had my gun and ammunition, but my only tool was a hunting-knife.

“For a few days I was in despair. I thought of building a raft of driftwood, but most of the material was too small. The large logs were still attached to the roots and I had no way of cutting and clearing the trunks. Then I braced up. ‘I am going to get off,’ I said to myself. ‘I will find a way.’ I had no ax, but I had fire; for each of us always carried flint, steel, and tinder. I found a place where lightning had started a fire and killed two or three dozen black spruces big enough for a raft. These dry logs were just what I needed. I built a fire around a tree near the ground, and when the tree fell, I burnt off the top. [267]With rawhide I tied a handle to a sharp rock, and with my stone ax I knocked off any remaining branches. After I had worked on this plan a day, I was sure that I could build a raft. I planned to tie the logs together with watap, spruce roots. Rawhide stretches when it gets wet, but watap does not. I wanted dry logs because they float much better than green ones, and they are not nearly so heavy. Remember I could not use logs that were too heavy for one man to drag or carry.

“I figured that it might take me two days and a night to reach the mainland with a favorable and gentle west wind. I intended to hoist a sail, and I had planned to build a kind of bunk above the wash of the waves, so I might snatch a little rest and sleep, if necessary. I don’t know how my raft would have worked, but in about a week I should have been ready to start, if you had not found me.

“Now, friends, come along to my camp. We’ll make feast and celebrate.” [268]



## CHAPTER XXXIV

## A BOLD VENTURE

The feast lasted until the morning sun reddened the waters of Lake Superior and awoke the white-throats and thrushes of the island, for Ganawa and his sons had as much to tell to Jack Dutton as he had to tell to them.

On Michipicoten Island, Jack Dutton and Pierre Landeau had stopped only two nights; but by this time Jack had so completely given up the idea that he should ever see his friend Bruce on Lake Superior, that he and Pierre had struck out for Caribou Island without leaving any message or blazing any trees near their camp.

On the first quiet day the four rowed their boat among the big rocks in search of Pierre Landeau's canoe. They found it on the bottom in fifteen feet of water, sunk by the rocks Pierre had used to balance the craft [269]while he was fishing. If the canoe had not sunk, Pierre might have reached shore. But for the body of the drowned man they searched in vain; wind and waves had carried it into deep water.

Jack Dutton put up a cross on the southern point of the island with the brief inscription: "Pierre Landeau, Partner of Jack Dutton. 1776."

Bruce and Jack salvaged the sunken canoe. By means of a long pole with a hook at the end, they raised the craft on end. The stones rolled out and the canoe rose to the surface by its own buoyancy.

Two canoes and a sailboat gave the campers more than enough room to take away all their furs and other things. So they remained an extra week for drying and smoking a canoe-load of caribou meat.

There was some discussion as to the route they should take to the mainland. They rejected the plan of returning by way of Michipicoten Island, because that route would have landed them on a shelterless [270]coast nearly two hundred miles from the Soo. With a steady northwest breeze they struck out boldly for Whitefish Point, over a stretch of open water of some sixty miles. Every man was keenly alive to the risk they were taking. One man steered and managed the sail, while the other three used paddle and oars. The summer breeze blew steadily in their favor, and although

the two canoes which they towed decreased their speed, the *Pirate* rounded Whitefish Point when the sun was still two hours high. They remained several days at this camp to fish and rest. Although the adventurers brought no gold rock with them, they sold their fur and dried meat at good prices to the traders at the Soo.

The three white men decided not to return to New England, but to remain as traders in the Great Lakes country; and for years till the time of his death, Ganawa camped near the post of his white sons, who saw to it that his old age was made comfortable.

[271]

There was a strange story told by Indians and Frenchmen, which the lads at first could not understand. The Bostonnais had made war on the English and the king was sending over many redcoats to conquer them, but the Bostonnais under their chief, George Washington, had driven the English war canoes out of their harbor.

It took some time before the three white men learned the real meaning of this story; but after some months they understood that the long-threatened Revolutionary War had broken out, that the battle of Lexington had been fought and that Washington had compelled the British to evacuate Boston.

Of Hamogeesik no news ever reached the Soo. Bruce and Ray felt sure that he had been the man that had followed them on the Michipicoten. When Hamogeesik left the Ininiwac people a white man of bad reputation was with him. There was a rumor that the two had planned to go to Caribou Island. If they went, they never returned. In some way the great wilderness [272] of lake and forest had swallowed them up, and there was nobody to mourn their death.

During the trying years of the Revolutionary War, Jack Dutton and the Henley brothers did much to keep the Northwestern Indians from actively joining the British as the Iroquois had done under their great chief Joseph Brant.

Many streams have been polluted and many lakes have disappeared since the days of Ganawa and his white sons, but the waters of Lake Superior are as clear as they were at that time, and the islands of the big lake and many parts of the shore are as wild and beautiful as they were more than a hundred years ago.

May Gitche Gumee, the Big Blue Sea Water, its wild islands and wooded shores remain for ever a playground and a land of joy and adventure for All America!

THE END

[273]

# COLOPHON

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