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A VERY MERRY XMAS.

thought, too, that Zinto was not so kind to her now.

The winter days grew longer and longer, the snow got wet and heavy, the caribou commenced to return from the big woods, on their journey to the sea, and though fur was rather scarce, the lodges all had abundance of meat.

With blustering March at their heels, those Indians who had plenty of dogs, arranged another musk-ox hunt, and Zinto was unable to go as he had but two dogs. This proved a successful hunt.

Again did Gloona think of Ateachili's often repeated words, "Bad medicine is on Zinto's lodge," and she sighed heavily.

Zinto's canoe was the most empty looking of them all when the Big Lake once more carried them lightly on its bosom, and the Indians started on their journey to the spring gathering at the fort. On this journey Ateachili's old mother died, and Zinto hospitably welcomed him to his lodge.

It was about two weeks after their arrival at the fort, when Ateachili entered the lodge and sat down before the fire where Gloona was hard at work.

"Zinto is at the big house," said Ateachili; "he has very little fur, and his debt is large. The master," he continued, "has given me much for my foxskins; I have tea and flour and tobacco in plenty, and two new blankets."

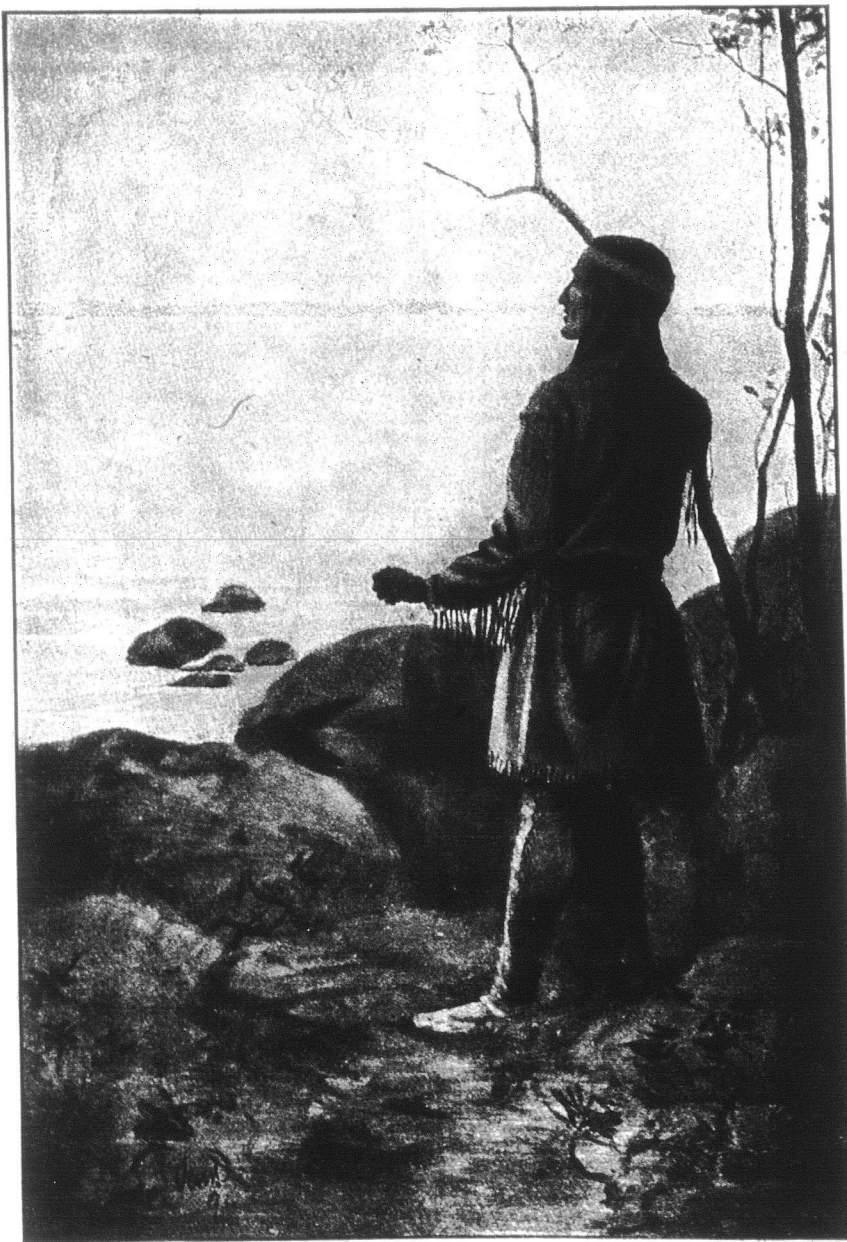
Gloona sighed: Zinto was sick, had no new blankets and very little tea.

"I have also some new knives, and a shawl and a bright petticoat like the interpreter's wife wears."

"You have no wife," said Gloona, turning a shade darker as she spoke. "Why do you buy those things?"

Ateachili bent forward and caught her hand. "Come with me," he whispered; "come to my lodge, and all is yours. See, you have no warm clothes, no tea, no tobacco, no new knives or axes, no new blankets. All these I have and much more; I have new iron traps that will catch the black foxes easily next winter, I have plenty of powder and ball to kill the caribou. Come with me 'little one' and we will join another tribe far away!"

Gloona shook her head. "Zinto is good to me," she said; "it is not his fault we have no fur to trade."



"I SEE IT BEHIND YOUR CANOE."

"No," Ateachili replied, intensely; "bad medicine is on his lodge. He will never dream good dreams. No children will ever come to hunt and trap for him. He has seen *The Enemy*, and evil will ever be on him."

Gloona shuddered. With the children of the North superstition is deeply a part of their nature, and she believed that evil was on Zinto's lodge, and perhaps must ever remain there, if he had seen this thing. A great dread fell on Gloona. She felt sure something dreadful would happen to Zinto. If it did, why—Ateachili was a lucky hunter, and she would have to find another man or go as drudge in some lodge she disliked. But when she thought of strong, tall, brave Zinto, her mind was instantly made up, and she said, nervously, "No, Ateachili, while Zinto lives he is my hunter; you must not ask me this thing again, for I love him, and will not leave him. Forget that these words have been spoken, and share our lodge as before." A mocassined foot-fall sounded softly outside, and Zinto entered. Gloona's tireless fingers still weaved the hunting bag, and she sighed moodily.

"The master is hard to deal with this year; he will give me no more debt except a little powder and ball. I have had bad luck since the musk-ox hunt."

It was a week or so later than this when Ateachili proposed to Zinto they should go together to an island he knew off the Big Lake, where he had seen birch trees straighter and bigger than anywhere else, and they would together make canoes for the summer caribou spearing.

"But," quoth Ateachili, "only to you and Gloona will I show this place, or all the Indians will come and take bark, and there will be none left for another year."

"I will get Tsziena's light canoe," remarked Zinto.

It was the tenth day after leaving the fort that the little canoe was headed towards a small rocky island far to the southeastern side of the Big Lake. They were out of the track of all Indian travel and in the middle of a big bay quite unknown to Zinto.

Gloona had objected to taking the journey, and her obstinacy had even com-