

he reached with unerring accuracy on the third day. But no trace of the warriors of his tribe did he find. Still, the lad hesitated not a moment; climbing a lofty and prominent eminence, he cast his eyes for some ten miles round the horizon. Satisfied with this scrutiny, he tightened his belt, descended, and darted across a long low plain, at the very extremity of which he had seen a rather remarkable column of smoke, which the boy at once attributed to the pale face who accompanied his friends.

After three hours of continuous running, he gained a small lake, on the borders of which was a fire in the centre of a grove of trees. He clearly distinguished a man engaged in the classical and time-honoured art of cooking. It was Mark, as he expected; who, being a little wearied, had volunteered to pass a day in the camp, cooking and inhaling tobacco smoke, with eating, which is the *acme* of luxury in the eyes of a prairie hunter. The lad advanced straight towards the fire, and, without speaking, sank exhausted and fainting at the feet of the Englishman. Mark seized his double-barrelled gun, fired both barrels, and then, these preconcerted signals given, piling a great armful of green boughs on the fire, stooped to attend to the boy. He raised him up, gave him water, a little brandy, and then food. In a quarter of an hour he could tell his story. Mark heard him with dismay. He had formed a warm attachment for his Indian friend, and a proportionate one for his future wife. He knew at once how agonizing would be the feelings of the young warrior, who, having but this one squaw in view, had fixed on her his ardent affections far more strongly than is usual with a Red-Skin.

It was not long ere the whole party were collected round the fire. The Indians came in from all sides at the sight of the signal. A dead silence then ensued, not one of the Red-Skins asking any questions. All saw the boy; but not even his own father evinced any womanly or unusual curiosity by taking notice of him.

"Matonaza is a great warrior," said Mark Dalton solemnly, after a certain pause; "and his heart is the heart of a man. The Athapascow Indian is a snake: he has crept in and stolen away the Swallow."

The young chief said nothing, but Mark plainly saw the muscles of his face working, and knew how he felt. But he took no note of the warrior's emotion, but bade the boy tell his story.

The lad stepped forward, and briefly narrated what had happened.

"Ugh!" said Matonaza after a pause; "my brothers will continue their hunt. Let them keep hawk-eyes about them. Matonaza and the Roaming Panther," pointing to the runner who had formerly gone with him to the Prince of Wales fort, "will chase the thieves who steal away women. Let us go!"

Mark started to his feet, caught up his rifle, took a substantial piece of deer's meat, and was ready in an instant to join them. A few words passed between the chief and his people. He directed them to proceed with their duties. He would send the women to join them at once; and with Mark and the Roaming Panther, he