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## WHERE THE LOON LAUGHS

"Of course you are not well, and I doubt that you are particularly happy," says Kitchener at the close of a twenty-page letter, "and for the reason that you have forgotten the traditions of your lusty youth, that you have drifted away from the sweet and satisfying things that used to put the tan on your cheek and the brawn on your shoulders. Man! how long is it since you had a gun in your hands with a cocker ranging the blueberry scrub ahead of you, or held a troll in your teeth while you drove your canoe softly over the water in the shadow of the bank where the black bass lie? Sick Thing, will you yield to the snare I have tried to set for your unwilling feet through all these many pages? Will you come with us for one glorious month to the land where the loon laughs in the hush of the night and the crane stands on one leg to gravely consider your camp in the half-light of the shadowy dawn; to the haunts of the wood duck, the partridge, the big fight-full bass and pickerel, to the land where high serene thoughts come unbidden and the town-worn, weary man sits humbly at the Master's feet, learning again the half-forgotten lesson of life? Or do you intend to remain upon your knees, babbling sordid prayers to the unresponsive wooden god you glorify by the name of Business, until such time as Death comes stalking silently and lays his cold hand upon your shoulder?"

The Sick Thing heaves a great sigh and then reads Kitchener's long letter all over again. But he has made up his mind before the sigh is well begun, and the rereading of the letter is now only for the further delight of the thing. When he has finished, he touches a button under his desk.

"John," he says to the boy who appears in response to the summons, "find out for me the quickest and best way to get from New York to Toronto. And when you have done that, secure me a through sleeper for to-morrow night. Then telegraph to this address in Toronto and say I am coming."

Forty-eight hours later Kitchener meets him at the railway station in Toronto.

"Everything is ready," he announces. "All the stores are bought and the canoes have gone on by express. We leave at noon for Orillia, and the other two men are to meet us at the South Parkdale station."

"What about the guides?"