

CHAPTER XVIII

OUR saga closes far from the sea and the sad tales it has to tell. Here were fresh odours of moss and fern in place of the salt ones of brine and sedge. The murmur of the wind in the tall pines is sweeter far than wave-talk . . . but there were other murmurs of which we must take account.

At the foot of a tall pine were Hermione and Applebo. Behind them the late autumn woods and at their feet a small expanse of crystal water, smooth as a mirror except where broke by the rush of some avid trout. A glorious jewel of a lake was this, rimmed about with emerald and rubies, set in gold and reflecting an azure as pure as it is possible for an Adirondack sky to hold.

On the far shore nestled a little camp in a clump of beeches and a thin column of blue wood smoke rose straight into the still, spicy air. From the shadowed bank to the right came the flash of a canoe-paddle and a splash of crimson colour.

If Hermione and her lover were Nereid and Triton when we saw them down there by the sea