

---

*The Shagganappi*

---

chase, the old Indian would never understand, but would probably fire and kill the man who attempted to arrest him. The boy knew that, with his own perfect knowledge of English, he could explain everything away if only he could be at his grandfather's in time, or else intercept the police before they should arrest him. His grandfather would shoot; the boy knew it. Then there would be bloodshed added to theft. But Big Wolf-Willow's lodge was ninety miles distant, and it was the middle of a long, severe winter. What was to be done? One thing only—he, Little Wolf-Willow, must ride, ride, ride! He must not waste an hour, or the prison at Regina would have his grandfather, and perhaps a gallant soldier of the king would meet his death doing his duty.

Thrusting a pouch of pemmican into his shirt front, and fastening his buckskin coat tightly across his chest, he flung himself on to his wiry little cayuse, faced about to the north-east, and struck the trail for the lodges of his own people. Then began the longest, most terrible ride of his life. Afterwards, when he became a man, he often felt that he lived through years and years during that ninety-mile journey. On all sides of him stretched the blinding white, snow-covered prairie. Not a tree, not an object to mark the trail. The wind blew straight and level directly down from the Arctic zone, icy, cutting, numbing. It whistled past his ears, pricking and stinging his face like a whiplash. The cold, yellow sunlight on the snow blinded him, like a light flashed from a mirror. Not a human habitation, not a living thing, lay in his