

Chapter Two

packages of pelts and duffel, sat a stranger. The canoe was that of the post at Kettle Portage.

She saw the stranger to be a young man with a clean-cut face, a trim athletic figure dressed in the complete costume of the *voyageurs*, and thin brown and muscular hands. When the canoe touched the bank he had taken no part in the scramble to shore, and so had sat forgotten and unnoticed save by the girl, his figure erect with something of the Indian's stoical indifference. Then when, for a moment, he imagined himself free from observation, his expression abruptly changed. His hands clenched tense between his buckskin knees, his eyes glanced here and there restlessly, and an indefinable shadow of something which Virginia felt herself obtuse in labelling desperation, and yet to which she discovered it impossible to