

for, like that old hunter, he was shrewd and observant, but to the full as simple and kind-hearted. As great a charm as any other to me in the society of my ancient friend, was his many and never tiring narrations of accident, and peril, and adventures, in the course of his *voyageur* life. Dangers in ascending or descending raging and terrible rapids—privations and toils of the portages—sufferings at the gloomy winter posts from hunger—attacks from hostile Indians—excursions to hunt the buffalo, the bear, or the stately elk—winter journeys on snowshoes from one distant post to another—the strange manners of different savage tribes—and the details of a thousand similar interesting subjects and events, were ever sure to beguile the time swiftly and delightfully away.

I recollect one fine moonlight evening, after we had made a large offing in the spreading and beautiful lake, and had disposed our lines for a particular species of fishing, a remark of mine on the loveliness of the night drew an assent from him, and an observation that it reminded him strongly of a similar one, and an event connected with his *voyageur*-life in the North West territory, bearing its date some thirty years before. I had forgotten the old man's story till within a short time ago, when recurring to memory, I deemed it worthy of preservation; and shall now give in, as near as I can recollect, his own form of expression.

"The middle of summer had arrived, when the brigade to which I belonged halted for some days at an island in one of the many and distant lagoons or lakes, and which we voyageurs have to navigate in our wearisome course to the several trading posts in the company's territory. The purpose of our stay was to repair our damaged canoes, and to rest the men after a continuance of severe labour in getting over a number of toilsome *portages*. As is customary, we had with us a number of young men, junior clerks—adventurers in this sort of life—and who were under the control of one of the partners of the company, accompanying, and of course, commanding the party. With this gentleman came another,—a man of about thirty-five years of age, particularly handsome and noble in his appearance, but repulsively stern and gloomy in his manner—from pride and haughtiness as was thought by the men of the brigade. He had no official connection with the business of the expedition, but merely, from a traveller's curiosity, became the *compagnon de voyage* of our Superintendent, and with whom, it was said, he was in some way connected by blood. It was moreover hinted, among the many other *on dits* dropped by the young clerks in the hearing of the men, that he was a man of superior fortune,—and in fact the costly profusion of his outfit for the voyage, and his unsparing liberality of its *matériel* to his canoe men—however unpopular in his customary demeanour—told as much. He was reserved

in manner, and rarely held familiar intercourse with any but his friend. He was given to much of solitary rambling wherever we were constrained to land; and I noticed he wrote a great deal, and drew a great many sketches in a large portfolio, which he usually had slung in a cover by his side. The wise ones with us said it was for a book which he would publish on returning to his native country, somewhere beyond the seas,—and I think myself such was his intention, for he devoted much time and attention to it. He was clever in the chase, as our hunters said, whenever he accompanied them, which, however, was but seldom; and they gave him the credit of being as indefatigable in pursuit and as good a shot as the best among themselves.

"We had been but a few days at our resting place, when we were joined by another brigade of light canoes, which had left Lachine within a week after our departure, and had made exertions to join us if possible on the route, as it brought some dispatches of consequence to our principal.

"Among some five or six young lads, newly articulated clerks to the Company, brought along by this arrival, there was one who excited the notice and interest of many of our people. He was a tall, slender boy of a beautiful countenance, though something tanned in its fairness from exposure to the weather—soft dark hair,—which though cut short and tarnished by neglect, was still glossy and silken—and large, sweet blue eyes of a melancholy expression that affected one strangely to look upon. The impulse with us all, when we first saw him land on the island, was to pity him for his apparent incapability, from his youth and delicate frame, of sustaining the fatigue and privations of our way of life—and of which we knew, he had as yet experienced but a faint sample in his progress up to our present rendezvous,—as the brigade to which he belonged was one ably equipped for a particular service of expedition, and especially prepared for a ready surmounting of every obstacle.

"I was not by at the time,—but was told that circumstances took place at the first interview of the young lad with the traveller of our party, which denoted some previous acquaintance between them;—the recognition must have been attended by something peculiar, or it would not have been noticed by our rough spun fellows, generally so careless of every thing of the kind,—however, they told me of what even to myself appeared strange—but which, in the bustle of our departure to resume our route, I quickly forgot.

"On quitting the island, we left the newly arrived brigade behind us, as they were to proceed on a different course from ourselves; but the young boy, noticed before, by some arrangement between the travelling gentleman and his friend, accompanied us, and was placed in the canoe to which I was attached.—I could not account for it, but I never