

J. K. Lord.

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birds. On they came, a perfect shoal of them, nearer and nearer, all evidently bound for the ship. I could make out clearly now that the specks were canoes filled with Indians. By this time our boat was lowered; how I got into it, I never clearly remember; I have a dim recollection of descending a rope with great rapidity, and finding myself sprawling in the bottom of the boat, and being dragged up by the captain, much after the fashion adopted by clowns in a pantomime to reinstate the prostrate pantaloon upon his legs. At any rate I was safe, and the boat, propelled by four sturdy rowers, neared the shore.

On looking round, I observed the canoes had all turned towards the boat, and we were soon surrounded with the most extraordinary fleet I had ever beheld; the canoes were of all sizes, varying from those used for war purposes, holding thirty men, to the cockle-shell paddled by a squaw. With the exception of a bit of skin or old blanket tied round the waist, the savages were all perfectly nude, their long black hair hung in tangled elf-locks down their backs, their faces and bodies painted in most fantastic patterns with red and white. Keeping steadily along with us, they continually relieved their feelings by giving utterance to the most wild and fiendish yells that ever came from human throats.

As we neared the landing, I could see the chief trader of the Hudson's Bay Company, conspicuously white amidst a group of red-skins, waiting to receive us. The boat grated on the shingle some distance from the beach, white with spray. "Surely you don't expect me to go ashore like a seal?" I appealingly inquired of the captain. Before he had time to reply, four powerful savages, up to their waists in water, *fisted* me out of the boat; two taking my heels, and two my shoulders, bore me (as I have seen "bobbies" convey a drunken man) safely to the shore. Having handed my letters of introduction from his Excellency to the chief trader, I was presented to the chiefs as a Hijas tyee (great chief), one of "King George's" men. So we shook hands, and I attempted to move towards the Fort: it was not to be done; to use the mildest term, I was "mobbed;" old savages and young savages, old squaws and young squaws, even to boy and girl savages, rushed and scrambled as to who should first shake hands with me. Had I been a "pump" on a desert, surrounded by thirst-famished Indians, and each arm a handle, they could not have been more vigorously plied. Being rescued at last by the combined efforts of trader and captain, I was marched into the Fort, the gates shut with a heavy clang, and most thank-

ful was I to be safe from any further demonstrations of friendship. The evening passed rapidly and pleasantly away; my host was a thorough sportsman, full of anecdote, and hospitable to a fault.

Awaking early, I wandered out, and up into the bastion of the Fort. The sun was just creeping up from behind the ragged peaks of the Cascade Mountains, tinting with rosy light their snow-clad summits; the wind had lulled, or gone off to sea on some boisterous errand; the harbour, smooth as a lake, looked like burnished silver. There was a wild grandeur about the scenery, that awoke feelings of awe rather than admiration; everywhere nothing but vast piles of craggy mountains, clad from the snow-line to the sea with dense pine forests; not an open grassy spot, or even a naked mass of rock, peeped out to break the fearful monotony of these interminable hills.

The Trading Post is a square, enclosed by immense trees, one end sunk in the ground, and placed close together. A platform, about the height of an ordinary man from the top of these pickets, is carried along the sides of this square, so as to enable anyone to peep over without being in danger from an arrow or bullet. The entrance is closed by two massive gates, an inner and outer; all the houses—the chief trader's, employes', trading-house, fur-room, and stores—are within the square. The trade-room is cleverly contrived so as to prevent a sudden rush of Indians; the approach from outside the pickets is by a long narrow passage, bent at an acute angle near the window of the trade-room, being only of a sufficient width to admit one savage at a time (this precaution is necessary, inasmuch as, were the passage straight they would inevitably shoot the trader).

At the angles nearest the Indian village are two bastions, octagonal in shape, and of a very doubtful style of architecture. Four embrasures in each bastion would lead the uninitiated to believe in the existence of as many formidable cannons; with rammers, sponges, neat piles of round shot and grape, magazines of powder, and ready hands to load and fire, and, at the slightest symptom of hostility, to work havoc and destruction on any red-skinned rebels daring to dispute the supremacy of the Hudson's Bay Company. Imagine my surprise on entering this fortress to discover all this a pleasant fiction: two small rusty carronades, buried in the accumulated dust and rubbish of years, that no human power could have loaded, were the sole occupants of the mouldy old turrets.

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