

Black Wolf proposed. I was to enter with him for a canoe race. The winner was to claim you, darling. You see he gave you no voice in the matter. But I had to consent. It was the price of my freedom."

"But, Eugène, you will win."

"I shall do my best, though they say no one can beat the chief in a canoe. The contest is to be to-morrow morning; the starting-point, Present Island."

Before the sun was well up next morning, a number of Hurons made for the Island, anxious to witness the race.

By six o'clock all is ready. The contestants are waiting. They glance anxiously across to the Point, now and then to a flag fluttering to the breeze. The one who lays it at Elimere's feet claims her hand.

At a given signal the canoes shoot out. With the rapidity of lightning they fly over the water. Ah, see! the chief is ahead. He is winning. Now they are nearing the flag, and Eugène is slowly but surely gaining. He has reserved all his strength for this final struggle. He reaches the goal; he seizes the flag, and is returning. Loud cheers are sent across the water. But now the chief speeds on with blind fury. He reaches Eugène's side, raises his oar, and, before the spectators are aware, strikes his unsuspecting victim with the fury of a demon, and overturns the canoe. Then, with a fiendish yell, he seizes the flag and makes for the shore. But, swiftly, silently, an arrow flies from the bow of an enraged Huron and lodges in his breast. With an unearthly cry, he throws up his arms, falls into the water, and the chief of the Iroquois is seen no more.

But who is this that comes struggling, dripping to the shore. It is Eugène. Willing hands lift him and lay him on the grass. Eager hands rub him till he glows with returning life. In the excitement, a stranger is not noticed till he is standing among them. It is the messenger from Quebec to convey to Eugène the tidings that as his brother had died he had succeeded to the estate.

And so, without further delay, a very primitive wedding took place at Sainte Marie, and Eugène and Elimere left for their new home.

Ouida's story had been interrupted as we boarded the boat, and she finished it just as we were passing Present Island. Almost instinctively we crept closer together as we looked at the sombre trees in the moonlight, half expecting the spirit of the departed chief to be peering at us from among the shadows.

As we landed, Midland looked like an enchanted city in the misty light, and with our thoughts still full of the dusky maiden, we looked across to the wood which encircled the little lake.

Ah! beautiful, dark-eyed Elimere, in your stately Parisian home did you think that two hundred years would elapse before the lake region would again teem with life, before the little lake would be a meeting-place for a happy maiden and lover, or a little birch bark canoe would go floating about among the water-lilies; that when that wilderness would again echo with the stirring notes of happy home-life, your life, and that of your nation would have become an unreal dream for ever and for ever?

