

Chapter One

The girl stood on a bank above a river flowing north. At her back crouched a dozen clean whitewashed buildings. Before her in interminable journey, day after day, league on league into remoteness, stretched the stern Northern wilderness, untrodden save by the trappers, the Indians, and the beasts. Close about the little settlement crept the balsams and spruce, the birch and poplar, behind which lurked vast dreary muskegs, a chaos of boulder-splits, the forest. The girl had known nothing different for many years. Once a summer the sailing ship from England felt its frozen way