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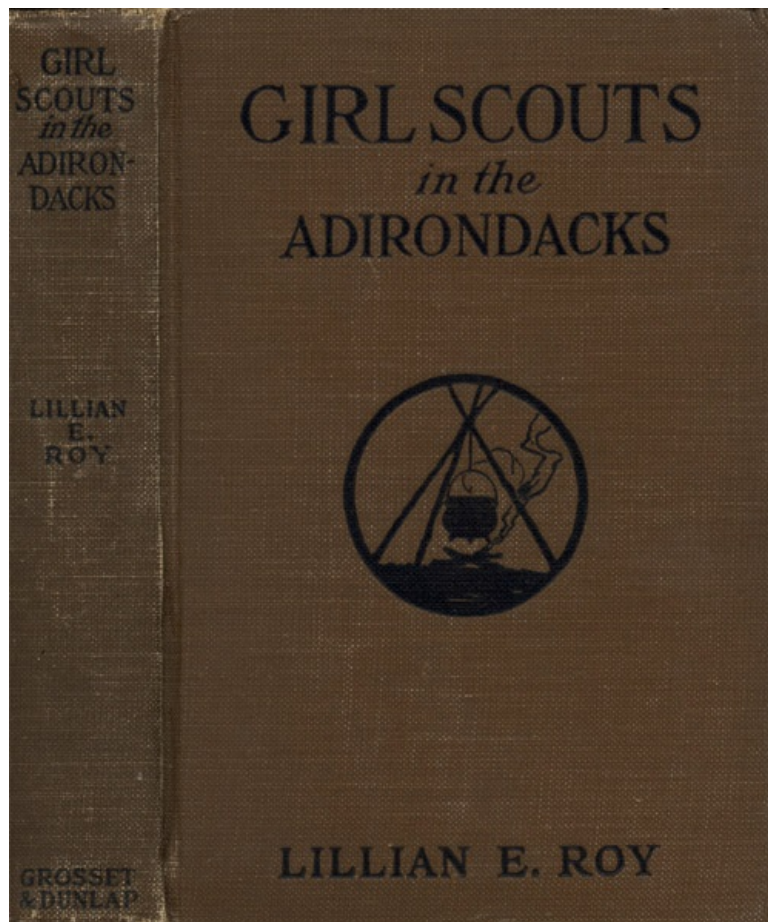
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# Girl Scouts *in the* Adirondacks





"Thus they started in a line, Yhon leading" [Page 182](#)

# GIRL SCOUTS IN THE ADIRONDACKS

BY  
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AUTHOR OF  
THE POLLY BREWSTER BOOKS,  
THE LITTLE WASHINGTONS BOOKS

ILLUSTRATED



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## CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE FRIDAY JINX	<a href="#">1</a>
II. ANOTHER DAY OF TROUBLES	<a href="#">24</a>
III. IN THE MOUNTAINS AT LAST	<a href="#">41</a>
IV. A VISIT TO GREY FOX CAMP	<a href="#">60</a>
V. A STORY OF CREATION	<a href="#">72</a>
VI. LOST ON THE TRAIL	<a href="#">91</a>
VII. A LITTLE BUSINESS	<a href="#">106</a>
VIII. JAKE'S INTERVIEW WITH A SKUNK	<a href="#">127</a>
IX. LESSONS IN TRACKING	<a href="#">139</a>
X. THE GIRL SCOUTS ENTERTAIN	<a href="#">157</a>
XI. A CANOE TRIP	<a href="#">179</a>
XII. FIRST AID	<a href="#">190</a>
XIII. SHOOTING THE RAPIDS—AND OTHER THINGS	<a href="#">204</a>
XIV. THE GRAND SURPRISE	<a href="#">214</a>

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## ILLUSTRATIONS

"Thus they started in a line, Yhon [Frontispiece](#) leading" ([page 182](#))

	PAGE
"Would you prefer to sit here and dream, Betzy, or go back with me and eat sandwiches"	<a href="#">16</a>
"We are lost, come find us"	<a href="#">98</a>
"Where—which way did you hear them?" questioned Joan	<a href="#">211</a>

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# GIRL SCOUTS IN THE ADIRONDACKS

[1]

## CHAPTER ONE

### THE FRIDAY JINX

"ARE we ready to start, girls?" called Mrs. Vernon, the Captain of Dandelion Troop of Girl Scouts, as she glanced at her protégées seated in two large touring cars.

"Ready! Why, Verny, we've been waiting for you these ten minutes," retorted Juliet Lee, one of the original members of the troop.

"And we're just crazy to be off before that black cloud overhead adds to mother's fear lest I never come home again," added Ruth Bentley, another of the first four girl scouts of Elmertown.

"Well, then, it seems that all the baggage and outfit we need with us on the trip is safely stowed away, eh, Jim?" said Mrs. Vernon, looking at the driver of the other car.

"Everything that I found waiting to be packed when I drove up to the side door," replied the chauffeur. [2]

"All right! Then we're off, folkses, but we'll send you word the moment we arrive at Old Forge in the Adirondacks," called Mrs. Vernon, to the crowd of relatives of the various girls, all gathered to watch the scouts drive away.

"Good-by! Good-by!" now shouted many girlish voices, and "Good-by! Good-by!" was shouted back as the two seven-passenger cars started on the long journey.

Mrs. Vernon led the way in her luxurious automobile, and as they turned the bend of the road, where the last of the group still watching on the Vernon lawn was lost to sight, she laughingly remarked:

"I never thought a crowd of girls could get ready for such a long outing in so short a time."

"It all depends on how badly the girls *want* to be ready, Captain," retorted Joan Allison, the fourth girl of the number who founded Dandelion Camp of Girl Scouts the summer before.

"Say, girls! I just felt a drop of rain from that inky cloud!" Betty Lee warned. She was Julie's sister, and they were two who had first suggested a scout organization.

Mrs. Vernon slowed down and turned to the scouts. "Shall we stop to put on the rain-curtains?"

"Mercy, no! It's only a sprinkle, and we're not sugar," exclaimed Joan, glancing at the sky. [3]

The other girls followed her gaze, and Julie said: "See all the blue sky! Enough to make the proverbial 'night-cap'."

In case the reader has not yet met the four girls who had such a thrilling time while at camp the previous summer, it will be best to make their acquaintance now.

As stated before, Juliet and Elizabeth Lee were the two sisters who planned having a scout troop for girls in Elmertown. Joan Allison and Ruth Bentley, both schoolmates of the Lee girls, eagerly agreed to add their efforts to the others' and secure the interest of enough girls for them to be able to apply for a charter from the Girl Scout Headquarters in New York City.

Before they closed their camp on "Verny's Mountain" that summer, five other girls had been admitted to membership in the young Patrol, namely: Hester Wynant, fourteen; Anne Bailey, fourteen; Judith Blake, thirteen; her sister, Edith Blake, twelve; and Amy Ward, thirteen.

Then during the winter, other girls who had heard of the good times the scouts had had in camp that past summer became so insistent to mothers at home that permission to join the organization was granted them.

Having nine girls in their original Patrol, with Julie as Leader, and Joan for Corporal, the scouts now felt experienced enough to pass all the tests required to apply for a Troop Charter. The young scouts were an active group and when the Charter arrived from National Headquarters the same day the girls had planned to start for camp, there was great rejoicing. [4]

True to his promise given the Girl Scouts the summer previous, Mr. Gilroy had sent word to Mrs. Vernon when the camp in the Adirondacks was ready for them. When the girls found that Mrs. Vernon planned to use her large touring car for half of the number in the Troop to go in, and Ruth Bentley's father had offered his car for the other half, thus saving them great expense for railroad tickets, and giving them the pleasure of autoing the whole long distance, the excitement rose and would not be calmed down again.

So it was not only a happy Troop that shouted good-by to relatives, but also a flushed, merry group of nine girls who could not keep silent for long.

Ruth was in the rear seat of her father's car, which Jim was driving, when she suddenly sat up and called out to the chauffeur:

"I'm sure one of our suitcases on the trunk-rack at the back must be loose, Jim. I hear it bump about every time you go over a rough place in the road."

"It can't be, Miss Ruth," returned Jim, trying to peer out and see the baggage; "I strapped 'em on good and tight before we left."

"Well, it happens to be my suitcase that's on top, and I'm sure I don't want to lose it," declared Ruth. [5]

"Maybe we'd better stop and make sure about it; we can soon catch up with Verny again," suggested Judith.

So Jim sprang out to investigate. "The suitcases are all right, Miss Ruth, but somethin's wrong in the back all right."

At that Ruth jumped out and joined the man. "What is it?" asked she, anxiously.

"The sag in that spring 'pears to me to say it is about done for. We'll have to travel slow till we find a garage."

"For mercy's sake! Didn't you and Pa's chauffeur overhaul both the cars thoroughly when you knew we were going on this trip?"

"Your father sent this machine to the garage in Elmertown, 'cause he said they'd know how to do the job up better'n us," explained Jim.

"Then it serves Dad right if he has to pay for a new spring! The idea of trusting strangers with his car at this important time! But here we are with a wornout old spring on our hands!" cried Ruth, stamping her foot impatiently.

"Oh no, Ruth, not on our hands—but what is ten times worse—on the rear end of the car," laughed Hester.

"Well, we've got to go slow, I suppose, and stop somewhere to replace the old thing," grumbled Ruth, climbing back in the car. [6]

"If 'Liza knew of this mischance, wouldn't she gloat over her 'Friday Bad Luck' prophecy?" laughed Ann.

Jim started again, but carefully avoided the ruts and bumps in the road until he came to a large garage. Fortunately for all, they found a new spring in stock and the men were soon at work replacing the bad one.

"Hurrah for us Jinx-breakers! This bit of luck in finding a new spring on hand more than offsets a Friday curse," gleefully cried Ruth.

"You young ladies sure are lucky, but it will take some time to do the work, an' you may as well take a walk and see our nice Jersey town," suggested the proprietor of the garage.

The scouts followed this sensible advice and stopped at a shop where they treated each other to soda, candy, and peanuts. There being nothing more thrilling to do, they sat down in the Park and ate the plebeian delicacy and talked.

"I love peanuts, don't you?" Anne asked of the girls.

"Yes, but they have to be enjoyed away from home, or folks will make fun of you," added Ruth.

"Not any more, Ruth. When a five-cent bag of peanuts, these days, only contains ten nuts that lifts them out of the cheap class," laughed Hester. [7]

"And makes them a luxury, eh?" added Judith.

By the time the peanuts were gone, Jim signaled the girls and they hurried back to the garage. It took but a moment for them to jump in and urge Jim to hurry after Verny's car, somewhere in the lead.

Mile after mile of beautiful woodland, with now and then a small town, but with many flourishing farms along the way, were reeled off rapidly as the machine sped along as if on wings. Finally they reached a crossroad where the signboard warned them: "All travel limited to eight miles per hour."

"Slow down, Jim, or you'll land us in a county jail," called Ruth.

"Then Mrs. Vernon must be in jail—'cause she ain't in sight along the road, and to get as far as this she *had* to speed," declared Jim.

"It's funny she wouldn't stop to find out what became of us, when we dropped so far behind," ventured Hester.

"They'll look us up at mealtime, never fear," laughed Anne. "We've got the hamper with us, you know."

The others laughed at this remark, but they had not gone much farther along the road before they spied the Vernon automobile waiting under a great oak tree. When the tardy car came up, both parties began to shout, some asking where the delinquents had been, and the unfortunates to demand why folks wouldn't look behind once in a while! [8]

Finally Jim could make himself heard, and he explained about the spring and where they had to stop to replace the old one.

"Well, we stopped to discuss ways. We ought to decide the route we want to take before we reach Jersey City," said Mrs. Vernon.

"Which is the route you'd chose, Verny?" added Ruth.

"Well, we can save a lot of time by going along to Edgewater and cross on the Fort Lee boat. That takes us right to 130th Street and Broadway, New York. We avoid all crowds and city streets, but you will not see anything of the life and bustle of New York City."

"How much time will we save?" asked Julie.

"Because we've lost so much over that old spring," added Ruth.

Mrs. Vernon smiled. "From upper New York we can drive right onto the State Road that runs direct to Albany. By selecting that way we will save a great deal of time, because traffic in the city is so congested that every driver has to travel slow and fall in line back of endless cars. At every corner when the signal holds up the entire line one has to stop to permit crosstown traffic a chance."

"Then for goodness' sake, let's go through the country on this side of the Hudson, and cross where you said—Fort Lee Ferry," declared Julie. [9]

Every one agreeing to this decision, the plan was carried out as outlined by the Captain. Once on Broadway, where it passes Van Cortlandt Park, the girls called to Mrs. Vernon.

"How about lunch—we're famished?"

"Oh, don't let's stop here for lunch. Let's go on till we find a nicer spot in the country," returned Joan.

"Maybe there won't be any better place," demurred Judith.

"Oh, yes, there is. After we leave Yonkers we will find lots of spots, Verny says," called Julie, from the first car.

"We need a shady place where a spring will give us water," said Betty.

"A spring failing to bubble up at the proper place, we may have to be satisfied with a pump at some farmhouse," retorted her sister.

The two cars sped swiftly along Broadway, through Yonkers, Hastings-on-Hudson, and Dobb's Ferry. At this last place the Captain pointed out the famous old Headquarters used by General Washington at the close of the Revolution.

"Girls, there doesn't seem to be any picnic grounds for us along this State Road," remarked Mrs. Vernon. "Suppose we take a bite as we travel along, and cook a regular dinner when we are out in the country somewhere?" [10]

"We're willing, in fact, I am more than willing to eat," called Anne, the scout with the healthy appetite.

So they drove on while refreshments were passed around, and every one admired the river scenes of the ever-changing panorama of the Hudson.

Just beyond Peekskill the road ran under a culvert and a sharp turn on the other side made it impossible to see what was on the road ahead. The Captain made the turn very neatly and Jim was about to follow the leading car, when several shrill cries from the girls ahead caused him to put on the emergency brakes.

The passengers in the second car could just see what had caused the frightened shouts from their friends in the first car. A gaunt farm horse was standing on his hind legs pawing the air madly, while a rickety old spring wagon seesawed uncertainly on the edge of a deep ditch beside the road. But the driver of the horse was on the road, hanging on to the bridle while plying a stout hickory stick freely over the animal's back.

"Git down! Will yuh come to arth, yuh rascal?" shouted the irate woman who was garbed in a man's farm hat and a long duster.

"Do you need any assistance?" called Mrs. Vernon, anxiously. [11]

"Not ef I kin git him to plant his feet on arth agin. He ain't got no spunk left to run away, 'cause he's ben out plowing all day, and it w'ar a shame to drive him to the store. But it hed to be, 'cuz the ole man tuk t'other hoss to go to a meetin'."

As the unusual character talked, she tugged at the bridle until she finally had the horse quieted down again. Then he allowed his long ears to droop lazily, his spine to sag in the middle, and his erstwhile springy legs to bend as if he felt too weary to stand up.

The woman with the weather-beaten face and toughened hands was a fluent speaker, even though she paid little attention to the latest style in dress for women. She leaned against the shaft of the wagon and plied her questions to the tourists as freely as she had plied the hickory stick to the horse.

"Be you-all out fer a lark?" asked she, eyeing the number of girls in both cars.

Jim thought to move his car gradually along the road so the scouts in his charge could join in the conversation with the woman. But the moment the horse saw the automobile crawling towards him, he jumped aside. The wagon-wheel turned suddenly and the unexpected happened;

the woman who had been leaning heavily on the wheel was unceremoniously dropped to a sitting posture in the dusty road.

Several of the scouts had to smother with handkerchiefs, a keen desire to laugh, but the owner of the horse seemed to take the situation good-naturedly. [12]

"Wal, ef that ain't jus' like Samson! He does the mos' onexpected tricks, so's that he keeps us guessin' what next."

Jim sprang out of the car when he saw the result of his innocent action with the engine, but the agile woman was up before he could reach her side. She brushed the dust from her long coat and chuckled aloud: "I allus said that animal oughter be called Delilah 'cuz *she* was so sly, but my ole man says 'Samson' was close enough to that critter, and this animal hez such long hair that it suits with the name."

"You've just had him clipped, I see," ventured Mrs. Vernon.

"Not clipped, Captain—but shorn of his locks like Samson," laughed Julie.

"Maybe that's why he feels so tired," added Joan, quickly.

Every one but the farmer's wife laughed. She seemed very serious over the conversation, and nodded her head affirmatively.

"Well, we have to drive on, madam, but we're sorry to have frightened Samson," said Mrs. Vernon, in order to make an end to the scene.

"Say, couldn't you tell us where there is a nice picnic place near here?" called Jim, as the first car started. [13]

"Yeh—a few miles further on. You'll find a nice little brook in a grove of sugar-maples, with green grass on all sides."

Jim thanked the woman, and started his car. Mrs. Vernon was informed of the grove which was to be a stopping place for dinner, and all were eagerly on the lookout for the spot that would offer such an ideal resting place.

But it was the longest "few miles" any of the scouts had traveled, for the meter showed many, many miles before any grove was seen. There was no brook in it, but the grass was very green, and the maple grove, which crowded a knoll a short distance from the road, looked cool and inviting.

As usual, Julie was the first one out of the cars and over the fence. She started to cross the very green grass, but instantly sank into the water that was hidden under the green blades.

"Help! Oh, I'm drowning!" shouted she, struggling to pull her feet clear of the bog. But she would free one foot, and instantly the other would sink. Then she tried to drag that one out, but the first one would go down again. Both together she could not get out.

"Oh, oh! See the mess poor Julie's in!" called one of the girls.

Mrs. Vernon was gazing quickly around for some sort of help to get the scout out, but the girls stood about the place sympathizing with the furious scout. [14]

"Is it like that all over there, Julie?" called Betty, anxiously.

"How do I know? Come over and find out for yourself!" snapped her sister.

The girls laughed at the retort, but Betty added: "I only wanted to know if it was safe for me to come over and help you out."

Julie straightened up and glared at her soft-hearted sister. "You sound just like our Sunday school teacher when she reads: 'Come over into Macedonia and help.'"

Again the audience of girls laughed appreciatively, but Julie was too busy keeping her feet "treading water" to pay any attention to their enjoyment. Meantime, Jim had removed some rails from the fence and was bringing them to the scout's aid.

"Now, Miss Julie, when I shove these over, you manage to work an arm over each one, and sort of lift yourself out that way. I'll shove others over for you to step on next, and in that way you can get out and across to us," advised Jim, working as he spoke.

Finally Julie was rescued from the mire, and then the Captain said: "Every one walk along that elevated bank, over there, to reach the grove, as this entire area may be a boggy spring." [15]

But the grass under the trees in the grove was found to be hard and dry, and they soon began to prepare luncheon. While Mrs. Vernon unpacked the hamper, the scouts were detailed on various duties: some to build a fire, some to hunt spring water, some to set table on the grass. But Julie was excused from all these tasks, as she had more than enough work to do in cleaning the mud from her boots and stockings.

When luncheon was almost ready, Judith and Amy, who had been sent to find the spring and bring back drinking water, reported: "We couldn't find any spring."

Julie looked up and jeered: "You are fine scouts! Couldn't find a spring when all you have to do is to find the source of all that water where I went down!"

"Water! That looked like mud," retorted Judith.

"We'll go for the water," volunteered Joan, catching hold of Betty's sleeve to take her along.

So they started, and as Julie had said, the spring that fed the boggy spot was not far back in the grove. The water gurgled down from a cleft in a huge rock, and on either side of the small pool wood violets dipped their fragrant petals into the sparkling mirror. [16]

Betty sat down upon a flat rock beside the pool to enjoy the scene. But practical Joan filled the pail with cold water and then laughed at poetical Betty.

"Would you prefer to sit here and dream, Betty—or go back with me and eat ham sandwiches?"

"Oh, I forgot where I was," laughed Betty, rising reluctantly to help carry the pail of water.

"That's what I thought," tittered Joan, "but the rest of the girls prefer something more solid than dreams."

During the luncheon the Captain said: "Wouldn't it be splendid if each one of us kept a diary of what happens during this summer's camp? Then we can rewrite the facts when we go home and make a good story of it. Perhaps a real publisher will buy it from us and thus give us a fund for next year's outing—if we have one."

"Oh, that is great!" exclaimed several voices with girlish enthusiasm.

"Well then, when we camp to-night, we'll jot down the episodes of the day's trip—not forgetting to dwell at length on 'Samson,' and Julie's side-plays," remarked the Captain, smilingly.

"Has any one thought of a stopping place for the night?" asked Jim.

"Not definitely, Jim; but I hope to cross the river at Poughkeepsie and drive along the west shore as far as possible. Then we can pitch camp at any good place we find," replied the Captain. [17]

They had not gone much farther before Ruth called: "It looks as if the rear tire on Verny's car was flat!"

The Captain slowed up, and every one tried to see the tire. "That's what it is, all right, Captain!" ejaculated Jim, impatiently.

"Dear me! That means another delay!" sighed several girls.

The car had to be jacked up and Jim went to work to mend the puncture in the tube, then pumped and pumped until the tire was properly inflated once more.

As the tourists climbed into their respective seats in the automobiles, Joan said: "Well, Captain, this wasn't such a bad day after all—in spite of being a Friday."

"I'm thankful for it, too," sighed Betty, fervently.

The cars made good time after that and passed over the ferry at Poughkeepsie, to travel northward on the road that ran along the west shore. They pitched camp in some woods and soon had a fire started to heat the canned soup they had brought. When all else was ready, the Captain banged upon a tin pan to call the scouts to dine.

"Um! That tomato soup smells good!" exclaimed Joan, sniffing audibly, as she saw the contents of the pan that stood over the fire. [18]

"Will you serve it, Jo—you are nearest the pan?" said Mrs. Vernon, passing the basket that held the tin cups.

"Here! Everybody hold up a mug to fill, while I come around with the pan!" ordered Joan, taking hold of the pan-handle that had been over the fire a long time.

"Oo-ooouch!" cried the girl, whipping her hand up and down as she danced wildly about.

"You didn't spill the soup, I hope!" exclaimed Anne, with deep concern.

"What difference would that make—a little cheap soup? But my hand—oh, it's got a trail blazed clean across the palm!" wailed Joan, showing her red-skinned hand to sympathizing friends.

"Poor old scout! We have to learn all kinds of blazing, I suppose," murmured Julie.

"And the soup *is* all safe—Jo never dropped the pan!" declared Anne, with gratification in her tones.

"Here, Miss Jo," said Jim, who had gone for a bottle kept in the kit. "Pour this olive oil all over the hand and the smart will soon stop."

He hurried to give the bottle to Joan but his toe caught in a bramble and tripped him. The bottle flew from his hand and struck the root where Joan sat. The glass shattered and the oil ran out the grass at the scout's feet.





"Would you prefer to sit here and dream, Betzy, or go back with me and eat sandwiches" [Page 16](#)

"Well, well! it must be the Friday Jinx that still pursues us," remarked Jim, gazing regretfully at the glistening oil that formed beads on the blades of grass. [19]

The girls laughed merrily, but Mrs. Vernon seemed serious. She was about to speak, when Amy asked Joan to pass the crackers. She picked up the box that was nearest her, and turned to hand them to her next neighbor, when her foot slipped on the oily grass and she sat down suddenly upon the stump. The box fell in Hester's lap, but Joan clapped a hand over her mouth and smothered a howl.

"Goodness me! What's the matter now, Jo!" cried Ruth, seeing the girl's convulsed face.

Joan shook her head helplessly, but her eyes were filled with tears. Every one wondered what could have happened, and when the scout could speak she said thickly: "Oh, that oil! I slipped and bit the end of my tongue clear off—I'm sure of it!"

"Stick it out and let's see," demanded Ruth.

"That's what comes of having too much of a good thing!" declared Julie, teasingly.

Every one but the Captain laughed, and she said seriously: "Do you know, girls, that I've had an idea about all this talk over Friday being a 'bad luck' day. Of course it is perfectly absurd to intelligent people, but there are enough superstitious folk left in the world who actually think Friday has some power to bring ill luck with it. [20]

"Now I believe that it is the *fear* and general belief in the superstition that carries any weight with it. If we, as good intelligent scouts, will try to break this silly fear for others, we shall have to begin with ourselves, by not referring to the superstition with the sense of its having *any* power to act."

The girls listened seriously, as they always did when their Captain started one of her "sermonettes" as Julie called them; and when she had concluded, Joan said: "In other words, you want us to starve the poor wraith still more by withdrawing any thoughts from the matter whatever?"

"Exactly! You've worded it better than I could have done myself," responded the Captain, emphatically.

When supper was over and everything about camp had been prepared for the night, Joan suggested taking a stroll down the picturesque country road.

The gloaming was so inviting that the scouts decided to saunter down the woodsy road. They continued along the inviting footpath for more than a mile before they noticed a heavy fog

settling upon everything.

"Better turn and go back, girls. This fog is obscuring everything along the way," suggested Mrs. Vernon. [21]

"B-r-r-r! Isn't it damp!" shivered Joan.

"Yes, and it will be worse before we get home," added Judith.

They retraced their steps, but the fog came thicker and heavier all the time, and before they had gone more than half the way back, it was necessary for the scouts to go single file in order to keep in the footpath that ran along the top of a high grassy bank beside the narrow road.

"It would be so much simpler to hike along the road, Verny," suggested Hester.

"But there are so many machines traveling back and forth, and we'd have to scramble up this wet slippery bank to get out of the way every time one rushed past," explained Julie.

Julie was in front, heading the line. Being Scout Leader of the Troop, she naturally led in most things. Suddenly she stopped short and warned those back of her:

"Look out for this big boulder right in the pathway—have to detour towards the fence!"

"Boulder! Why, there wasn't any boulder here on our way over," argued Ruth.

"The fog's in Julie's eyes," laughed Joan.

"Maybe we didn't notice a rock before," ventured Amy.

"Maybe we are on the wrong road," said Anne. [22]

"We're right, all right, but I see a boulder in the way. If you don't believe me, come here and sprain your toe kicking it!"

A few of the scouts crowded in front to peer through the puzzling fog to see the questionable boulder, but it unexpectedly got upon its clumsy feet and started for the girls. In the fog it loomed up as big as an elephant.

"Murder! Fire! Help! Help!!" came in confused screams from the scouts in front, as they turned precipitously to flee from this unknown danger. The confusion, as they fell back upon the scouts behind, while the great "boulder" still advanced slowly, was awful!

But the soft earth of the bank had been washed out from under the top layer of roots and grass, and when so many stamping, crowding girls brought their weight upon the crumbling ground, it caved in with them. Jumping, screaming, tumbling scouts now went headlong down the slide of five feet into the roadway.

The Captain and Betty had been far enough in the rear to escape this general stampede, but they, too, saw the dark object trying to skirt the newly broken-down embankment, and they slid quickly down the wet weedy bank to get away from this ghostlike creature that crept towards them.

While brave scouts were getting up from the little ditch where they had rolled, a plaintive call from the "boulder" above identified the creature as belonging to the bovine kingdom. A second "Moo-oo," as the cow passed slowly down the bank to the road, where she hoped to find some one to lead her home, created a wild laugh from every one. [23] [24]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER TWO

### ANOTHER DAY OF TROUBLES

EARLY in the morning the scouts heard Jim rattling the pans while he essayed to cook breakfast. They were soon up and dressed, and being ready for another day's adventuring, they offered their services to the cook.

"Last night after you-all went for that hike, I mooned around some myself. I saw a little farmhouse over that hill, and I think a couple of girls might try to get some milk for breakfast," suggested Jim, pointing over the brow of a slight grade.

"All right, Hester and I will go for it, Verny!" exclaimed Amy.

"Very well, girls; the rest of us will do what we can to help Jim. Breakfast will be all ready by the time you return, so don't dawdle on the way, will you?" replied the Captain.

"Take the big thermos bottle that will keep the milk cold all day, and bring the breakfast milk in this pail," suggested Julie, handing the girls both articles as she spoke.

Hester and Amy disappeared over the brow of the hill where Jim said the farm was located, but breakfast was ready and waiting a long time before a sight of the girls was had again. [25]

Hester carried the pail very carefully, and Amy held the bottle, so it was evident that they had milk, but why should they seem to laugh so merrily over something, as they drew near the scouts?

"What do you think happened to us?" called Amy.

"You'll never guess—we got chased by a bull!" added Hester.

"Oh, never!" cried the scouts who had been waiting anxiously.

"Yes, sir! We heard a cow and knew there must be a farm," began Amy excitedly, but her companion interrupted her and said: "That wasn't a cow we heard, but the bellow of this bull!"

"Do tell us all about how you escaped," chorused the eager voices of many girls.

Every one was anxious to wait on the heroines, and after they had been served everything at one time, they began to munch and talk.

"Well, first we left here and thrashed through those bushes back there," said Hester, nodding her head towards the alder bushes, "to reach the place where we heard the cow—as we thought."

Here Hester choked over the egg, and Amy quickly took up the story: "And we were halfway across a pasture lot when Hester, who was first, yelled wildly and waved her arms. I looked up, 'cause I was watching where I walked, the lot was pawed up into such hummocks, and saw Hester racing for the low boughs of an apple-tree. Then I heard a thumping, and saw a big bull charging across the meadow, making straight for us!" [26]

Amy gasped and needed a drink of water, then Hester continued the tale: "Oh, girls, it was thrilling! I managed to scramble up in the apple-tree, and turned to see what had become of Amy. There she was, sprinting like a Marathoner for the barbed-wire fence that enclosed the lot. She back-trailed over to it, and up over it she went, just like a swallow flies, but look at her stockings and skirt!"

Every one looked at Amy's apparel and sympathized with her, yet every scout wished she had had such an exciting time.

"Now they can win a badge for story-telling, can't they, Verny?" said Betty, glad for her two pals.

"And another one for mending," laughed Julie, vindictively.

"Poor Julie's awful sore about that mud," murmured Amy, winking an eye at the others.

Every one laughed, but the Captain said: "Go on and finish the yarn."

"Well, I left Hester in the tree—safety first, you know—with the bull standing under it, waiting for her, while I skirted the lot and reached the house. When I told the old lady how we happened to be in such a fix, she threw her gingham apron over her head and sat down on the doorstep to laugh. [27]

"I was beginning to feel offended, when she glanced up. She understood, and said: 'Deary, that ole bull has to be helped to his stall every night after a day in the pastoor. He oughter been butchered years an' years ago, but you see he saved me from a wicked tramp one day, an' father sayed Bill had earned his life-pension fer that. So Bill's safe from the slaughter-house, but he sure is a nuisance these days. Why, this mad run of his'n will keep him wheezin' fer a hull week. Now come with me an' I'll show you how he's payin' the price fer actin' like a three-year-old!'"

"I followed the old lady to the fence, and there, sure enough! Bill was sprawled out under the tree, puffing for breath, but poor Hester sat in the branches wailing because she dared not come down while the bull was making such a snorting noise!"

The scouts laughed heartily at the graphic picture of Hester crying up in the tree, but the girl retorted, "Well, isn't 'Discretion the better part of valor?'"

"Of course it is! We'd have done the same thing," agreed Mrs. Vernon, still laughing at Amy's story. Then she suggested breaking camp.

After cleaning away all signs of camping, the scouts climbed into the cars which were soon speeding along. They were keen, now, for something new that they could write in their diaries, and many interesting things were seen and dilated upon as they rode past. [28]

As the autos neared Schenectady, one of the scouts began singing; in a few moments all the girls were singing with her. But a hound ran out of the gate of a farmhouse and barked at the oncoming singers. Then the distracted dog sat down and lifted his snout high in the air. His dismal prolonged howl of protest at such singing effectually ended the song, and Julie called to the animal, "Wise doggy—to be able to tell singing from *singing!*"

The weather was all that could be desired, and the two cars were in fine shape for the run. After they left Amsterdam, where the large carpet-mills would have offered interesting entertainment had not the scouts a greater ambition in view, that of reaching camp—they voted to stop for no sightseeing along the way. So they kept along the road to Fonda. Here they left the railroad turnpike and went northward to Johnstown.

At this place Mrs. Vernon made an error in judgment. She should have gone westerly, through Rockwood, Lascelville, Oppenheim, and so on to Delgeville. But she took the northward road, which looked better and was more traveled. Not until she came to Gloversville did she realize the mistake. Then she stopped and questioned a policeman how to reach her destination. And he explained about the country road she must follow due west in order to reach Rockwood, where the state roads would be picked up again. [29]

This advice was followed, and they traveled over the bad road until a crossroad was reached. There was no mention made of this spot on the road-map, and there was no signpost to direct a lost tourist. So the Captain said, "We'll take the right-hand turn, it looks best."

Further on, the road descended and ran close to a river. "Dear me, I hope we didn't take the wrong turn, anyway!" cried Mrs. Vernon. "That officer never told me about a crossroad."

"And it's going to pour, too. Just look at that black cloud," said Joan.

"It hasn't thundered yet," Hester said, trying to be cheerful.

At the same moment a flash satisfied every one that a shower was imminent, and Jim failed to relieve their fears when he said, "We don't want to get caught on this low land when it rains. The road is lower than the river and will soon be flooded over."

That spurred on the Captain, and she made the car fairly fly, in order to reach higher ground before the shower came. But the storm won out.

"I felt a drop of rain!" called Julie.

"So did I—two drops more!" seconded Ruth. [30]

"We'd better stop to button down the rain-curtains, Captain," advised Jim.

"Maybe we can reach high ground soon, Jim!" called back Mrs. Vernon, still speeding along the marshy road.

A loud peal of thunder and inky clouds warned her, however, that this would be no trifling shower, so she stopped reluctantly for the curtains to be fastened down over the sides of the cars. The girls got out while the rain-curtains were sought in the box under the seat, and Jim removed numerous items before he reached them in the bottom.

"Gee! everything under the sun was piled in here!" growled he. And by the time he did get the covers out, the rain was falling hard.

While Jim and Mrs. Vernon secured the curtains on the buttons, the scouts transferred the pyramid of camping necessities back into the boxes under the seats. Then when all were snugly sheltered from the rain, the Captain proceeded to start her car. It failed to respond, however. She tried again, with no success. Then she turned and called to Jim.

"Something must be wrong, Jim!"

"Mebbe it's 'cause the wheels is sunk so deep in that soft mud," said he. "It's 'most up to the hubs."

"No—something is wrong with the engine," returned she.

"I'll slip on my oilskin and see," said Jim, finally. [31]

"Oh, Jim! Don't slip on it—just *put* it on," giggled Julie, the irrepressible.

"Humph!" was all the reply she got at the stale joke.

"Jim, I'll help you," now offered Betty, willingly.

"You gals just sit still, will you?" growled Jim impatiently, as he jumped out into the muddy road.

The wind came tearing down the valley that lay between the mountains, driving shreds of storm-clouds before it. Gusts of rain dashed against Jim's face as he peered and poked about the stubborn engine, but still the obstinate machine refused to budge.

"I can't see a darn thing that's the matter with it!" shouted he, trying to make himself heard above the whistling of the wind.

"Better get back in your car until the worst is over," called back Mrs. Vernon.

So they all waited patiently for the rain to cease, but the storm grew worse, while the clouds seemed to fairly empty themselves right over the stalled cars. Suddenly Jim gave a frightened cry:

"Great Scott, Captain! The river's overflowin' her banks, and this road's gettin' under water!"

"Then we've just *got* to get out of this fix somehow!" wailed Mrs. Vernon, gazing helplessly around for aid.

"I'll try to work my car close up to the other and see if I can't push you ahead," suggested Jim, starting his engine as he spoke. But this idea failed to render the assistance they looked for. [32]

"I think you need a good hard impact to send you out of that mud. The wheels are stuck," called Julie, who had been considering the plight.

"But how can we *get* an impact? Jim can't crush in the radiator on his car, you know! And the fender won't do it," said Ruth.

"Let a few of us get some of those stout rails from that fence and shove them under the back of the machine. The rest of the girls can tie a rope to the front and pull. Then when we give a signal, Jim can push with his machine, while Verny throws hers into high—something ought to happen with all that!" suggested Julie.

Anything seemed better than sitting helplessly while seeing the water slowly rising in the roadway. So the plan proposed by Julie was put into operation. Two long rails were shoved, one under each side of the back of the car, with two scouts ready to apply all their youthful muscle up on each rail. Four scouts stood in front holding to a rope, ready to pull. The Captain sat at the wheel ready to speed, and Jim waited in his car behind, ready to drive on.

"Now, when I yell 'go,' every one strain your muscles fit to crack. It's the only way we'll get out of this," ordered Julie. [33]

"Tell us when you're going to say 'go!'" begged Ruth.

"I'll shout 'One, two, three—go!—then *go!*'"

Julie braced herself, took a deep breath, and cried, "All ready—one, two, three—go!"

Four in front pulled with might and main. Mrs. Vernon's engine chugged ready to break. Jim almost pushed the radiator in, and the four scouts pushing on the rails—well, "they were not."

Jim was heard roaring unrestrainedly, while four girls in front were standing and staring as if at an apparition. All the time, the rain fell in a deluge, but Mrs. Vernon jumped out into the mud to see what had happened at the rear. Then she, too, gasped.

Both the rails were completely worm-eaten, but how should girls have known that? They were placed under the car at a dangerous angle for their future use in the fence, and when the good strong muscles of four scouts brought their weight upon the rails to lift the car somewhat, the timber quickly split up and precipitated the four boosters, face downward, in the mud.

"Oh, dear me! This is the last straw!" moaned Mrs. Vernon.

"No—the last rails!" sputtered Julie, trying to laugh.

"Girls—hold your faces up to the rain and it will wash the mud from your eyes!" yelled Judith, who waited on the running board for further developments. [34]

She had hardly spoken when a swift shaft of blinding light and a deafening crack of thunder sent a panic into every one. They were stunned for a moment, and then such a howl as went up from nine lusty throats!

"We're struck!" yelled some.

"Oh, we're killed!" added others, but it took only a second after they had caught their breaths to pile, willy-nilly, into the cars, where they huddled until the fright had subsided.

Shortly after the lightning had struck a large tree further up the road, the rain suddenly stopped and the sun shone out as hot and bright as ever.

"My! I feel like Pollyanna would," sighed Julie. "'I'm glad, *glad*, GLAD' we weren't standing under that tree!"

"We can only die once," responded Ruth, sighing as she gazed down at the flooded road.

"Ruth thinks she'd rather die quickly, than by slow degrees in being choked in this mud," laughed Julie, catching Ruth's thought.

Every one laughed and that made them feel more cheerful. Then just back of them came the sound of horses' hoofs and a kindly voice called out, "Well, well, this is some plight you-all are in, eh?"

They turned and beheld a nice old man sitting astride one plow-horse and leading a second. [35]

"Reckon you didn't know this was one of the worst roads in the county when it rains."

Mrs. Vernon explained how it came about that they were there, and the old man said, "Fortunately, I cut across that field in order to reach home. I was late and, as this is meeting night, I have to leave home earlier than usual. Now I can help you pull out, 'cause my team is pretty powerful."

He hitched his horses to the front of the stalled car, and it was soon pulled up on higher ground where Jim could crawl under and see what was wrong with the works.

"We are most grateful to you, sir, for your timely help," said Mrs. Vernon. "How much do we owe you for this great service?"

"I'm glad I could help, madam. I am the parson of the district, hereabouts, and I try to do good by the wayside as I walk this life-road."

"Then, if you will not accept a gift for yourself, you cannot refuse it for your flock. We will give to any needy one in your parish," said Mrs. Vernon, handing him a folded bill.

Being sent along the right road with the minister's directions and blessing, the cars soon reached Rockwood, and from there, followed the usual route to Delgeville. The highway now ended, and a pretty country road took its place as far as Salisbury, where a turnpike road began and continued as far as Middleville. From the latter town onward, the roads were indifferent or bad as far as Gravesville. [36]

There were many interesting experiences for the scouts to write up in their books later on, such as running into a balky herd of cows and being threatened for damages by the farmer; holding their breaths when Mrs. Vernon ran over a lot of broken glass sprinkled across the road—but the tires held and no damage was done; stopping to bargain for a string of fish that a little freckled-face boy had for sale; and last, but not least, just before reaching Gravesville, being warned by a girl of twelve of a masquerading constable, further up the road, who arrested more speeding drivers than any other constable in the county.

When asked why she showed the scouts this partiality, the girl said: "Because I'm going to be a scout myself, as soon as that new Manual gets here. I wrote fer it t'other day, and I've got five schoolgirls ready to start with me. Maw says she will ask the teacher to be our Captain."

Thereupon followed a good scout talk by Mrs. Vernon, the country girl listening with all her wits alert.

"How'd you know we were scouts?" asked Julie, curiously.

"By that pennant flyin' in front, of course!" retorted the girl.

As the scouts drove away, Mrs. Vernon said, "She'll make a first-class scout, because she uses her eyes and other faculties." [37]

After leaving the town of Gravesville, the scouts took a short cut to Prospect, but the roads were steep and rough, and it was all the engines could do to mount the grades. Then the opposite down slopes were so steep and sudden that it was necessary to put on all brakes and shut off the engines.

One of these down grades had a sharp turn at the bottom, with a purling stream running under a rustic bridge immediately at the base of the mountain. On the other side of the bridge, the road rose abruptly up the side of another mountain. The descent was made nicely and the Captain's car crossed the bridge, but Jim's car stopped unexpectedly just as it reached the bridge at the foot of the mountain.

"Another case of push!" laughed Julie.

"All out!" ordered Jim.

"What now?" called Mrs. Vernon, as she also stopped her car to ask what was wrong.

"If only your car was behind, you could shove us across the bridge, but there isn't enough room in this trap to do anything."

"Every one will have to help, Jim; the girls can push and pull the car back to the grade, while you work the engine. Maybe it will start that way," suggested Mrs. Vernon, waving her passengers out to help the stranded car. [38]

After half an hour's work, Jim suddenly called, "My! what a lot of cotton-heads we are! Here, Captain, just back up and give us a tow across the bridge—that's all!" At this simple remedy every one laughed.

The steep climb of the mountain was accomplished without trouble, and there the road wound back and forth like a serpent's trail. Rocks, weighing tons, overhung with lovely vines, jutted out from the sides of the cut-out road that edged the cliff. Again, mossy dells where maidenhair fern waved fragile fronds at the girls, nestled under giant groups of pines. The chorus of wild birds mingled with the subdued music of falling water, to the keen appreciation of the tourists who delighted in this impressive scene as only scouts can.

The cars continued slowly through this peaceful place, but Jim's engine suddenly stopped short again. He frowned and got out to examine it.

"Gee, Captain! the tank needs gas and no place at hand to buy the feed. What shall I do?"

"We didn't cross that other bridge until we came to it," giggled Julie, quickly.

"I suppose I've got to tow you along until we find gas, somewhere," said Mrs. Vernon. So the

second car was harnessed to the leader and they started again.

In this manner they traveled until they came to a small settlement that boasted an "Emporium" where all the "latest styles and goods were sold." On the front porch of this store, in a low rocking-chair, sat the owner, a lady of doubtful years. She jumped up spryly when the cars stopped at the steps, and smiled invitingly.

[39]

"Do you sell gasoline?" asked Mrs. Vernon, politely.

"I guess I kin oblige you," replied the lady, going indoors.

Jim jumped out and began to unscrew the plug on the tank.

"Now who'd a thought we could get gas in this little shop?" declared Ruth, surprised.

"You never can tell! I s'pose she wants to make all she can in every way," added Hester.

Meantime the lady returned to the door and called out, "Won't you please step this way?"

Jim thought she had to fill a measure from some barrel in the back, so he went in. But the lady was searching diligently along a shelf of bottles until she saw the one she wanted.

"Here they be—I knew I had 'em somewhere. One's ten cents, and the other's a twenty-five cent bottle. But you have to take keer of fire, you know."

Jim scratched his head, as he said, "I'll take a five-gallon can, please, ma'am."

For a second, the old lady was amazed, but she rose to the occasion and showed herself a true business woman, "Oh, I'm sorry, I'm just out of that size to-day, but can't you come back to-morrow—I'll have it then?"

[40]

Jim laughed. "I need it for the tank. The car won't go on nor come back, unless I get some gas for it."

"Oh! I thought you wanted some to clean gloves, or shoes. That's the only kind I keep on hand."

"Maybe you can tell us where we can get a gallon or so," said Jim, trying hard to keep a straight face.

"If you kin wait until Jed gits back I kin send him to Prospeck Junction for a gallin. He can't carry five gallins, I fear."

Jim started out and the shopkeeper followed as she spoke. So Mrs. Vernon asked, "Where is Prospect Junction?"

"Jus' over yander, a bit of ways. It's quite a gay resort, I've hear'd Jed say, where they sells gas to riders what come through. But I hain't never gone there, 'cause I don't mingle with society. I am a church member and 'tends to my business." The lady tossed her head with a self-righteous air as she said the last words.

Jim said: "I'm sorry that four-ounce bottle wouldn't do, Missus." And the scouts bowed as they left her standing on the "stoop."

[41]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER THREE

### IN THE MOUNTAINS AT LAST

THE scouts finally reached Old Forge, where they had been due a full day sooner. Mr. Gilroy was worried at their non-appearance and had telephoned to their homes to learn that they had left on time. Then he followed them along their route and at some places he heard they had stopped and gone again, and at others that they had not yet arrived. But the moment the girls saw him and heard his complaint, they laughed at his concern.

"Nice way to treat your adopted father—laugh at him, because he worried over his girls!" said he in pretended grievance.

"But what could possibly happen when we had Jim and Verny at the wheels?" asked Ruth.

"That's just it! With the Captain leading, I was sure you would be jailed for speeding, and would need me to bail you out," teased he.

"We needed baling out when we got in the river-flood, but not in jail!" laughed Julie.

"If we had dreamed you had a 'phone way up here, we would have called you to help us, that time," added Joan.

[42]

Then the story of the mud and flood had to be told, while Mr. Gilroy sat on the side-door of the car and directed the Captain which road to take to reach his bungalow.

"Did our outfits get here all right, Mr. Gilroy?" asked Ruth.

"Yes, and they have been down at your camp several days now," replied their host.

"How far is our camp from your bungalow, Mr. Gilroy?" asked Betty.

"Not very far—just a nice walk. Your camp is right on the shore of one lake, while my bungalow is on the shore of First Lake, one of the Fulton Chain, you know."

The scouts then learned that Mr. Gilroy's estate extended from First Lake, where his bungalow was built, across country to Little Moose Lake where their camp was to be. This was a distance of about three-quarters of a mile between the two places.

"We'll stop at the bungalow first and give you a good square meal after all your experiences; then we'll go on over to camp. When your baggage is all out of the cars, Jim and I will drive back to my garage where the machines can stand."

"Oh, Jim is going back home with Dad's car, to-morrow," said Ruth.

"And Verny is going to keep hers here for the summer," added Julie.

The cold luncheon had been waiting a long time, and when the scouts finally arrived they did justice to the viands. Then, every one being eager to see the new camp-site, they started for the Lake. Here everything was in order to receive the tenants. Three fine tents, fully equipped with every possible comfort for the campers, were waiting for the girls, and a smaller tent for the Captain. [43]

"Oh, how wonderful! Why, this won't be like roughing it," declared several of the girls as they inspected their camp.

"Everything is ready but the fancy touches. You girls will have to add them as your experiences pile up," said Mr. Gilroy.

"What do you mean?" asked Julie.

"Oh, collections of butterflies, flower-prints, willow-work, and birchbark articles—all these are fancy touches."

It was late in the afternoon when the scouts arrived at the bungalow, and it was twilight before they had their baggage all unpacked and in their individual tents. Then when the cars were emptied and it was time to drive them back to the garage, Mr. Gilroy said:

"As this is your first night, and everything is strange, you'd better come back to the house for a light supper. Get your beds all ready to turn into, and then let everything else go until morning."

Mrs. Vernon approved of this plan, so they finished their tasks and jumped in the cars to drive back to the bungalow for the evening. Darkness crept into the woods and everything was silent as they reached the house. [44]

While Jim followed the host to the garage with the cars, the scouts sat on the verandah and enjoyed the quiet of the woods. The stars now began to peep out of the deep blue that could be seen here and there through the trees, and the Captain reminded the girls:

"Now that we are here for the summer, you must resume your study of the stars. You dropped that, you know, when schoolwork took so much of your time."

"Most of us know all the stars by heart, Verny," said Betty.

"The names of them, yes, but how many of you can find them as they are placed in the sky?" returned Mrs. Vernon.

"I can show you where the Pole Star is. Look there!" replied Joan, running out on the grass to find the bright point of light.

"And I can find Great Bear and The Pointers," added Ruth, joining her friend on the grass.

The other scouts now jumped up from the verandah and ran to join the first two, so the Captain followed, also.

"I know Alcor, Mizor, and the Square of Pegasus," said Amy.

"That panlike group of stars is known as Andromeda," added Julie, not to be outdone by her chums. "And those three little stars are called The Kids. Off to the left of Perseus—oh, I forgot to say that Perseus is a group of stars at the end of the pan-handle,—well, to the left of them are the bright stars known as Capella." [45]

"Bravo! you scouts are going to be marvelous astronomers some day," came the approving voice of Mr. Gilroy, as he joined them.

"I was just telling the girls they would have to take up the study of the heavens again," mentioned Mrs. Vernon.



"And we were showing off to let the Captain hear how much we know," laughed Julie.

"Who can find The Lady in the Chair or The Guards?" asked Mr. Gilroy of the scouts.

The girls eagerly sought for and described these groups, then their host asked for the Seven Sisters and Demon's Eye. When they had answered these, Ruth said:

"If the trees were not so thick I could show you Orion, Taurus, and lots more, like the Lion, the Sickle, Canis Major, etc."

"Hoh! Some of those—and the Clown, the Ox-Driver, the Southern Cross, and the Northern Cross—can't be seen at this time of year, Ruth," said Julie.

Ruth frowned at the correction, but Mr. Gilroy quickly calmed the troubled waters with praise for the girls. [46]

"You scouts certainly know the stars better than the boys of Grey Fox Troop. I should like to have the two Troops have a match game about the stars, some time."

"Who are the Grey Fox boys, Mr. Gilroy?" asked Julie.

"Do you remember I told you, last summer, of some Boy Scouts who camped in my woods every year? Well, four of those boys are here now. The rest of the Troop are coming up in August, but these four have all summer to camp in. I'm going to introduce you, soon."

"Verny, why can't we see all the stars all the year?" now asked Ruth.

"Because the earth turns on its axis, you know, so that certain planets are out of sight for us, and are seen on the other side of the globe. Then when the earth turns fully around we see them again."

"And the Pole Star is reckoned to be the center of the star-sky for all the others to move about it. The Pole Star is always in the same fixed place, so we can always locate it. But not so with the other stars," added Mr. Gilroy.

"I wish some one would tell us a story about the stars," Hester now said.

"Who will tell one?" asked Mrs. Vernon.

"I know that Mizor and Alcor were used by the Turks in past days as a test for eyesight. Soldiers who could not sight those two stars were disqualified for fighting. But in these times I don't believe a little thing like bad eyes will hold up a Turk from fighting!" said Julie, comically. [47]

Then Joan added: "The Pole Star and Ursa Major, or The Great Bear as it is also called, form a shape like a wagon; so in olden times it was called King Charles' Wain. Each star in this constellation is known by a Greek letter. The two stars 'a' and 'b' are called the 'Pointers' because they point to the Pole Star."

"Oh, I didn't mean lesson stuff, like this," complained Hester. "I meant a real live legend!"

"You tell one, Verny," begged Betty, sweetly.

"Mr. Gilroy is better able to do it. Besides he is the host and is supposed to entertain us," returned Mrs. Vernon, glancing at Mr. Gilroy, who was stretched out comfortably upon the short grass.

"Your host claims to be completely disabled for the time being, Captain. Pray proceed with the legend yourself," laughed Mr. Gilroy.

Then Mrs. Vernon said: "I never could see why Cassiopeia, or The Lady in the Chair, should be named that. To me, the stars look more like a tipped-over letter 'W' than a lady in a chair."

"Don't you know the story, Verny?" asked Julie, eagerly. [48]

"You do, so why not tell us?" retorted the Captain.

"Oh, well, then, all right!" said Julie. So she began:

"Once there was an Ethiopian Queen, the wife of Cepheus, who was very proud of their only child, a daughter named Andromeda. They were always praising her and speaking of her beauty to every one, so that after a time folks who also had lovely daughters felt jealous of the princess.

"In the depths of the Inner Sea, which is now the Mediterranean, lived Old Nereus and a number of charming daughters. They heard of the Queen's bragging about Andromeda, and they made up their minds to stop it. So they got their father to help them.

"Then Nereus and the nymphs sent a flood of water over all the country of which Cepheus was king, and devastated the kingdom. This caused famine and pestilence, and in the wake of these awful plagues came a sea-monster in the form of a dragon. This fearful beast bellowed——"

At that moment a deep thrilling call from some creature close by in the forest-edge caused every one to jump, and they all huddled together. They turned and stared apprehensively at the darkness behind them, but Mr. Gilroy instantly whispered, "S-sh! Don't breathe, and you will see a sight worth watching for." [49]

The moon now sailed from back of the cloud that had obscured it for a time, and its cold white light etched everything it touched. Again the strange whistling call sounded directly back of the group, and a crashing and tearing of underbrush ended with the sudden spring of a fine buck, that landed him out on the grass not twenty feet from the scouts.

At the same moment, a plaintive call came from the direction of Silver Falls, which was up on the mountainside in front of the bungalow. The buck lifted his gigantic antlers in the moonlight, and his sensitive snout sniffed angrily as he sensed the invaders of his range; but another imperative call from his mate at the Falls compelled him to leave these usurpers; so he wheeled gracefully and, with an answering call to let his doe know he was coming, trotted down the trail until he reached the stream that came from Silver Falls, and there he disappeared in the forest.

"What a wonderful sight!" breathed Mrs. Vernon, when the buck was gone.

The girls listened to the dying echoes of those pounding hoofs, and sighed. Mr. Gilroy sat up and spoke eagerly, "That is the first buck I've ever seen near my bungalow. There are deer in the Adirondacks, but they seldom come near a habitation. It is said that they feed in the barnyards in winter, looking for stray grain, but I am not here in winter, you see."

[50]

"How I would have loved to have had a snapshot of him," said Julie, sighing.

"You've all got it in your memory—the best place to frame a picture for all time," replied Mrs. Vernon.

"You know, girls, there is an old hunter's saying, that goes: 'A deer to welcome you on your first night will bring luck to you all that year,'" said Mr. Gilroy, as he turned to lead the way into the bungalow.

"Wait, Mr. Gilroy; Julie never finished her story. She broke off just where the beast bellowed—then came the buck!" said Joan.

"The deer finished the story better than we ever could," laughed the Captain, as she followed Mr. Gilroy.

"But, at least, tell us what happened to those Nerieds?" asked Betty, who wished to see the wicked punished.

So Mrs. Vernon had to end the story, although it was condensed in the telling. But Betty persisted, "You haven't told us yet what the Nerieds did when they found the wonderful Prince Perseus saved and married to the Princess."

Every one laughed, but Julie replied, "Why, like most jealous people, the Nerieds had to move away from town when every one found out how it all had happened!"

The "bite" they had before leaving for camp would have been classed as a first-class supper in the city restaurants, and then, when good-nights were being said, the host gave Jim a laden basket to carry for the scouts.

[51]

"You'll be glad of this in the morning, for breakfast. If you need anything else, run over here and get it from my man who cooks," explained Mr. Gilroy.

But next morning, the contents of that basket were found to be more than enough for any one breakfast. The fruit, cereal, biscuits, and ham to broil, were highly appreciated by the hungry girls. This was soon gone, and then Mrs. Vernon said they must buckle down to genuine camp life.

"I'd rather sleep out under the trees, Verny, when the weather is so fine," suggested Julie.

"So would we," agreed the other scouts, and the Captain said, "Well, we might make willow beds for out-of-doors, and keep the cots as they are."

"How do we know we can find any willows around here?" asked Ruth.

"I saw some early this morning when I was snooping about. I got up at dawn and left you girls sleeping, while I investigated the premises. Girls, the place is simply perfect for *anything* we might choose to do this summer," declared the Captain, enthusiastically.

"Tell us where the reeds are, and we will get them," said Betty.

[52]

"They grow about a spring not far from here. We must follow a wild-animal trail along the lake to reach the spot."

So the scouts each took an axe and knife and followed the guide to the willow-brook where the reeds grew. Mrs. Vernon showed the girls how to select the wands, and then began to cut down her own. She took about six dozen reeds as thick as a lead-pencil, and many smaller ones; these were bundled together, and then she was ready to start back to camp. Finally the girls were ready, also, and they trailed back.

"Now girls, each one must cut notches about three-fourths of an inch from the butt-ends of the reeds. Then peel the sticks carefully—do not crack or break them while doing it." Mrs. Vernon did hers as she advised.

"Now come with me, and select your posts for the beds. I take four young birch saplings for the

bed-frame," announced Mrs. Vernon, as she chopped down the required birches, "and stout birches about four inches thick for my bedposts."

Each scout cut hers and then went back to the camp-ground to begin work on the Indian beds.

"Every one measure the birch saplings and have two of them seven feet long, and two shorter ones three or four feet long," instructed Mrs. Vernon. "Lop off all the twigs, and place the two long ones for sides, and the two short ones for top and bottom of the bed-frame." [53]

"Now, this done, watch me carefully, girls. This is the important part of making the bed," advised the Captain.

Mrs. Vernon took a ball of heavy twine and doubled a long strand so that it was half-length. This was twisted into one strand, and a loop tied in the middle. Many of these strands were stretched across the frame at equal distances apart, until the entire frame had a warp across it.

"Now I'll weave in the reeds," said the Captain, taking one of the thin willows and weaving it in and out of the cords. At the loop, the rod was thrust through it to hold it centrally in place, then the weaving process went on until the end of the frame was reached.

The weaving of each reed was done the same way until the whole frame was crossed with willows held firmly in the middle by the loops in the cords.

"Next thing, girls, I will cut the posts as I need them. I want them about three feet high. One end of each post must be sharpened so it will go down into the ground." This was done and the four stout birch posts were driven firmly into the ground where Mrs. Vernon wanted her willow bed to stand.

"And next, I tie a loop of heavy cord, or rope, about the top of each post, in which I can hang my willow-frame." This was also done, and the scouts helped place the woven mat in position. [54]

"Well, isn't that simple, when you know how!" said Julie.

"Everything is, my dear," laughed Mrs. Vernon.

"Your bed is too wide for me. I don't want one four feet wide," said Ruth.

"You can make it as wide, or as narrow, as you like. I think three feet is wide enough for each girl," returned the Captain. "But the best of these beds is, that when one is invited to visit, one can roll up the mat easily and carry it along to sleep on. They are very light and not cumbersome to roll and carry."

All that day was given to weaving the beds, and the scouts not only enjoyed the novel employment, but had great fun in joking each other over the work. About four o'clock that afternoon a shrill whistle was heard from the trail that ran to the bungalow and soon thereafter Mr. Gilroy was seen coming down towards camp.

"Hullo, there! I waited all morning for visitors, but at last decided to come and see if my tenants had abandoned the premises!" explained he, as he went over to the weavers to watch them.

"Now you understand why we couldn't visit," said Joan.

"I came over to ask how many of you have been fishing? And what did you catch?" said he. [55]

"No, we haven't fished yet. We planned to try it the very moment we are through with these beds," replied Joan.

"Then perhaps you have not been near the lake-cove since you went hunting for willows this morning," remarked Mr. Gilroy.

"The cove? I saw two boats there early this morning," said the Captain.

"And now there are two canoes there, also," added Mr. Gilroy.

"Oh, really! But how did you manage to get them there—by paddling in from the lake?" asked Mrs. Vernon.

"No, I had them brought from my boathouse this morning. While Jim was here, I made use of him by having him help Hiram carry two canoes over to the boat-wagon, and then drive down here. Not a soul nor a sound was seen or heard about the camp, so I surmised you had all gone on a lark. Then we launched the canoes and tied them to a stump to surprise you when you should go for the boats. We never dreamed you could keep away from temptation so long as this."

"Goody! Then the first scout that finishes her bed can go and catch fish for supper," declared Amy, who was the slowest of the weavers.

They all laughed teasingly, and soon afterwards, Julie cried, "I'm done! Now for the fish!"

Joan and Ruth soon completed their beds, too, so Mr. Gilroy went out with them to fish. That evening he was invited to sup with the scouts, and a jolly time they had. In the evening, while sitting about the dying campfire, he said to the girls: [56]

"The first rainy day that comes along I want you all to come to the bungalow and see my

collection of moths, flowers, birds, and butterflies. I have a fine exhibit of butterflies, among them are rare specimens that have seldom been found in these mountains. You scouts will want to start collecting after you see what I have done."

"I shall be delighted to look at them, as I have always wanted my girls to do something along those lines," said Mrs. Vernon.

"If you know anything about butterflies, you will prize the specimen of swallow-tail I found in these woods," said Mr. Gilroy.

"Really! But I've heard they were never found in America, Mr. Gilroy," exclaimed Julie.

"I know that is a common belief, but I have one, nevertheless, and a friend who devotes his time to studying insect-life assured me that the one I caught was genuine. Then, the very next day this friend caught one quite near the place where mine was taken. This led us to investigate, and we reached the conclusion that there are rare butterflies hatched out in isolated sections of this land, but are not found; so, of course, no mention is made of them.

"Even if the farmers see a swallow-tail, or any other rare butterfly hovering over their gardens, they don't know the difference, and it passes safely. If that same farmer knew the value of the specimen he would leave all else to chase the gauzy flutterer."

[57]

When it came time for the visitor to say good-night, he said, "Oh, I forgot all about the very object of my visit!"

"It must have been awfully important," laughed Julie.

"Well, *we* think it is," chuckled Mr. Gilroy. "The boys of Grey Fox Camp sent me to invite you to have dinner with them to-morrow, if it is clear."

"Why, Mr. Gilroy!" exclaimed Julie, scarcely believing her idol could forget such an important matter.

Every one laughed at his guilty look, and Judith teasingly said, "We ought to call him 'The Man Who Lost His Memory,' for that!"

"All fooling aside, scouts, I have a suggestion to make on that very remark. I've wanted to mention it before, but always there was some exciting or important matter that could not be interrupted. Now I wish you girls would stop 'mistering' me! I am such an old friend by this time, I should think I could be to you as much as the Captain is. She is 'Verny' instead of 'Mrs. Vernon.'"

Julie was ready with an answer before he had quite finished his complaint. "Oh, we would love to give you a pet name, Gilly, because you do mean as much to us as our best friends anywhere. By taking a few letters away from your proper name and adding a little 'nick' to the syllable, we have one ready-made."

[58]

"Fine! 'Gilly' it shall be henceforth!" laughed Mr. Gilroy.

"But it is so disrespectful, I think," remonstrated Mrs. Vernon. "Couldn't we find some other affectionate term that will do without impressing strangers with our lack of courtesy to our friend?"

"Why do you object to 'Gilly?'" asked Mr. Gilroy, quizzically.

"I can't really find any tangible excuse, except that it makes me think of gilly-flowers, you know," laughed Mrs. Vernon.

Every one joined in the laughter, but Mr. Gilroy said seriously, "Well, I am not old enough to be 'Granny' to the girls and I dare not request to be called 'Daddy' by them, or their rightful parents will call me out to fight a duel, so do let us leave it 'Gilly.' The boys of Grey Fox always wanted to use a friendlier name than a 'Mr.' but they never came to it. Now we will begin the habit."

Before Mr. Gilroy left the camp, the name was established.

They were to meet at Mr. Gilroy's bungalow early in the morning, so he could start them on the right trail. He was going over in the car with supplies for the boys, but the hikers preferred the novelty of adventuring on foot.

[59]

Early the following morning, breakfast being cleared away, each scout was advised to take an axe, a clasp-knife, a bit of twine, a tin cup, and some waterproof matches.

"But why should we bother with such stuff?" asked Amy.

"One never knows whether one will arrive at the right destination or not. Should we get lost, we at least have something with which to get a meal," said the Captain.

"Are you going to carry that little bag of flour?" asked Hester, curiously.

"Yes, and a strip of bacon that is wrapped in the paper. I'm not going to starve, if worst comes to worst," laughed Mrs. Vernon.

"A lot of good a strip of bacon will do for ten of us!" said Judith. But she had not been with the scouts when they camped at Verny's Mountain the foregoing summer.

When Mr. Gilroy heard about the bacon and flour, he laughed. "Why, it is only two or three hours' tramp over the ridge, and a big dinner will be waiting when you get there."

Mrs. Vernon held her peace, but carried the bacon and flour just the same. She was not to be jeered out of what she knew to be a wise act, whether the food would be needed or not.

[60]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER FOUR

### A VISIT TO GREY FOX CAMP

EACH girl wore hiking boots, her camp uniform, and carried a light pack containing the ax, cup, knife and matches. A few of the girls, secretly following the Captain's example, packed a strip of bacon and crackers, or other eatables in their packs. Mr. Gilroy saw them safely started on the right trail, and then drove away in his car. He followed a woodcutters' road that wound around the mountain, but the scouts were to use the trail that ran over the crest to the boys' camp.

The scouts were brimming over with spirits (Julie said, "not the kind made in the moonshine, either"), and spent so much time examining flowers or watching wonderful birds that the time sped by unawares. The trail led through small clearings where a brook or waterfall made life worth living. But the higher they climbed the more rugged grew the trail, until there were long stretches that seemed to be sheer wilderness.

At such places, the scouts had to hunt about and find a blaze to guide them further. In this way, the hours passed and noon came; still the hikers were far from Grey Fox Camp.

[61]

"And I'm starved to pieces!" Joan assured them all.

"So'm I!" admitted Ruth. Then it was learned that every one present would appreciate something to eat.

"But what? We only brought flour and bacon," laughed Amy.

"How would a fine juicy steak taste about this time?" asked Mrs. Vernon, winking at her old scouts. They knew what she meant.

"Oh, 'Home and Mother'!" sighed Judith, rolling her eyes heavenward.

Every one laughed, but the Captain added: "I really mean it! We may as well stop now to cook that steak as to keep on in a half-fainting condition."

"But, Verny! We didn't bring one bit of meat to camp, and the butcher drives his rounds once a week," cried Amy.

"We'll just hunt around and chop down a steak," suggested Mrs. Vernon. "Who wants to go with me to find the wooden animal that grows a steak ready-made?"

Of course, they all went, except Julie and Joan who remained to build a fire and start the bacon sizzling in the tiny pan. A scout-twist of flour and water was kneaded by Joan and put to bake near the fire, and then the girls sat and waited for the others to return.

[62]

The Captain blazed a way slowly into the forest wilderness, peering under bushes and wherever a tree had been cut down—on its stump of a trunk she always looked eagerly. After about ten minutes' search she saw what she wanted.

"Ah! Here it is—a porterhouse, this time."

The new members saw a great chestnut stump, its jagged spears of wood protesting against its untimely end. But all over the trunk grew fungi—some larger, some smaller, and all of the same flat horizontal shape, like a huge palm-leaf. These were carefully removed and handed to the girls to carry.

"What are they for?" asked Judith, looking at the red juice that ran over her fingers when she took the fungus.

"That's your steak—think it is too big for one?"

"The what?" exclaimed the other new members, skeptically.

"Beefsteak mushroom—finest steaks ever tasted," came reassuringly from the Captain. "The ones growing on a chestnut stump are always the sweetest, but the chestnut trees are disappearing so fast that soon we will have no such mushrooms from them."

When they had gathered enough steaks for that meal, they returned to the clearing where Julie and Joan awaited them. On the way back, Mrs. Vernon showed the scouts the earmarks of the

[63]

beefsteak mushroom.

"When I cut these from the tree they bled exactly as flesh will bleed when it is cut. Now turn them over and you will see on the under side that they have veins of red. That is the life-sap. We will broil or cook them exactly as if they were steaks and then you shall judge of their flavor."

"Isn't it thrilling to think that man can go right into any wilderness and, without carrying food, clothing, or shelter, live with what Nature provides," remarked Judith.

"Yes, and without paying the outrageous prices charged at the present time for actual necessities," replied the Captain.

The bread-twist was baked, and when the steaks were washed and sliced, Mrs. Vernon dropped them into the hot fat tried out from the bacon. Immediately the smell of frying steak made every scout smack her lips in anticipation.

"If we weren't sure of such a fine dinner awaiting us, I would have had a few of you girls gather young bracken for a fresh green vegetable to eat with our steak. But we must not stop and enjoy too much by the wayside," said the Captain.

There was a liberal slice of steak for each one and the girls pronounced the taste of it delicious.

"And so tender, too! I never had such a juicy bit of meat," said Hester.

[64]

Having refreshed themselves considerably, with the fun of finding the mushrooms and cooking them, to say nothing of eating them, also, the scouts continued the hike along the trail. Just as they reached the crest of the mountain, Julie came suddenly upon a fawn, standing in the shadow of a tree; it was watching these queer two-legged creatures.

It is hard to say which was most surprised, Julie or the deer, but the fawn recovered first and bounded away through the forest.

"Oh, shucks! There we've gone and left that camera home again!" cried Julie, stamping her foot angrily.

"Wouldn't that have made the most wonderful picture!" added Judith.

"No use crying now, but, for goodness sake! Julie, remember to bring it next time," said Joan.

"Let *every one* remember—the last thing to do when we start anywhere, every one is to say to herself: 'Remember the *Maine!*' then we will surely take the camera," giggled Julie.

The scouts now began descending the other side of the crest, and found a better trail than on the side they came up. So, being able to go faster, they soon reached a lovely camp-site, where the voices of several boys announced that Grey Fox Camp was reached.

"We were just being sworn in as deputies to go out and hunt for strayed or stolen scouts," called Mr. Gilroy, jocularly, as the girls picked their way down from the great rocks that formed a wall back of the camp-ground; then he introduced the two Troops to each other.

[65]

"You told us it was about a two-hours' hike!" said Ruth, shaking her head at Mr. Gilroy, as if in despair of saving his soul.

"Well, so it is, when the boys are in a hurry to get to the bungalow."

"We've been five hours coming, and had to stop for lunch along the way, too," said Judith, eager to talk about the beefsteak.

The boys stared. "Why, you were to have dinner with us! Didn't Mr. Gilroy tell you that?"

"Yes, but we couldn't wait so long. We're ready for more dinner, now," said Joan.

"What did you cook for luncheon?" asked Alec, the oldest boy in the Troop.

"Oh, only a beefsteak-mushroom and a scout-twist," returned Julie, nonchalantly.

The boys exchanged glances. "Did you find the mushrooms along the way?" asked another boy named Bob.

"Sure! Did you think they came preserved?" laughed Joan.

"No, but *we* have never found any on this side of the hill. Bob often goes out to hunt, but so far we've never seen any," explained another boy, Ned Thompson.

[66]

"When we go back, you can go with us a ways, and we will show you where we found the ones we had for luncheon," said Betty.

"Is dinner ready, boys, or will there be time to show the girls about the camp?" asked Mr. Gilroy.

"Show them about, as it will take us ten minutes more to finish everything in style," replied Alec.

So the girl scouts were invited to pass judgment on the fine camp the boy scouts had made. Everything was neat as wax, and the boys had constructed many convenient articles from

wildwood material only.

"Last year we had eight boys in camp, but this season only four could come in the beginning; so they have lots of room in their big tee pee. When the other boys come out, they will have to make another tent. They made and water-proofed this one themselves," explained Mr. Gilroy, showing the visitors the fine big tent.

"They built this dining-room, too, to use if the weather is very bad. I told the boys about your corduroy floor that you made in your huts last summer, so they tried it here with very good result."

The girl scouts now saw their own idea put into use in a different manner. The log floor was hard and dry, but at each corner rose a stout pole, and upon the tops of the four pole ends was stretched a canvas roof, making a shelter underneath.

"Girls, we ought to do the same thing, to use for meal time when it rains, or if the rays of the sun are too hot," observed Mrs. Vernon. [67]

Mr. Gilroy then pointed out to the girls how careful the boys had been in selecting this camp-site. They had high, dry ground, near plenty of fine spring water, on the same lake where the girl scouts camped, but an arm of high land extended out into the water and separated the two camps.

"You see, they have ample firewood about without cutting down any trees; they get the early morning sun, and shade all the rest of the day. They ditched the entire place to carry off all the rainwater that might wash down from the crest during a heavy storm. And they built a refrigerator to keep things cold; and over there they have a chicken-coop."

"A chicken coop! where did they get the chickens?" asked Julie.

"Ned had some at home and he crated them and brought them along. The boys get fresh eggs in this way, and when the season is over, they will kill the hens for a special occasion and eat them."

"Verny, that's what we need, a few chickens in camp," was Joan's decision, the moment she saw the hens scratching.

"I noticed Gilly had a lot of chickens running about the barnyard. Maybe he will loan us a few, just to provide us with eggs this summer. We can return them in the fall, you know," ventured Julie, daringly. [68]

"Who will buy their corn?" asked he, laughingly.

"No one. We will feed them scraps and they can scratch!" promptly replied Julie.

"You'll starve them and then they won't lay any eggs," now said Alec, joining the party.

"We'll smile on Hiram and get him to bring us some corn from the barn, now and then," said Ruth.

"I came over to tell you dinner was ready to serve. We had better go now, and eat it while it's good," said Alec.

The boys had various things hanging over the fire, but the great novelty that caught the girl scouts' attention, at once, was the roaster upon which a nice brown chicken was swinging before the fire.

"There! That's a fine idea. How did you make it?" asked Mrs. Vernon, looking closely at the contraption.

Alec described to the Captain the method of making the roaster. "We took a forked stick, as you see there, of about a two-foot length. We drove that down into the ground about six inches. Next we took a long pole, six or eight feet long, and drove the end down into the ground just back of the short stick with the forks. It rested in the crotch made by the forks so that its tapering end slanted upward at an angle, as you see here.

"From the end of this long pole we hung the cord that holds the chicken. Wire is just as good to use. Then we arranged that flat, paddle-like fan halfway between the top and the rope end where the roast will hang. As your chicken roasts before the fire, that mill-fan keeps it perpetually turning about so it browns alike all over." [69]

Julie wanted to make one like it as soon as they went back to their own camp, so she hastily sketched a model.

"It is a great stunt, all right, and we've cooked many dandy roasts this way, and never scorched any," said Bob, when Alec concluded his description.

The dinner began with oyster-mushroom stew, then they had roast chicken, baked wild-potatoes, stewed bracken that tasted exactly like young spinach, dandelion salad, and scout cakes for dessert.

It was mid-afternoon when the girls finally said good-by to their hosts, and invited them soon to visit Dandelion Camp. They started on the return hike, but when they reached the highest

boulder back of the camp, the scouts stood and waved good-by again.

"Come as soon as you can, but give us a whole day's warning, first!" shouted Julie, to the four smiling boys below.

They made much better time going back, as the trail from Grey Fox Camp was plain, and going down the other side of the crest was much simpler than climbing up. They got back to their own camp by seven o'clock, and were surprised to find Mr. Gilroy there before them, with supper all ready to eat. [70]

"Well, this sure is good of you!" sighed Julie, dropping upon the grass with healthy fatigue.

"I thought you'd appreciate it; I had no exercise to-day, except what I got running the car, so I decided to 'do a good turn' and digest that dinner at the same time," said he.

After supper, which was unusually late that night, the tired scouts and their visitor were sitting about the campfire hoping some one would tell a story, when Julie spoke:

"Last summer, Gilly said he would tell us all sorts of Indian legends when we visited camp in the Adirondacks. Now we're here and this is the right sort of an evening to tell them."

The other scouts seconded the suggestion, but Mr. Gilroy said: "Funny, but I don't remember that promise."

"I told you you've got an awful memory—didn't I want to dub you 'The man-with-a-poor-memory?'" teased Judith.

The guest sat gazing silently into the fire for a few minutes, then he began:

"I'm going to tell you a story that is told by the Alaskan Indians. These ancient legends have been handed down from one generation to another, but the original goes back before the days of Moses. I was deeply interested in a few of these tales because they sounded so much like our story of Creation as told in Genesis, that I wondered if a white missionary had sown his seeds of Christianity in the fertile soil of the Alaskan Esquimaux' mind. [71]

"But as far as I could ascertain this legend was told many hundreds of years before white man ever stepped on Alaskan ground. Recently I learned that Iceland has similar legends, and it may be that the Alaskan Esquimaux are descended from those of Iceland. It is well known that Iceland is the oldest civilized land in the world—that it was famous for its learning before the days of Solomon the Wise." [72]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### A STORY OF CREATION\*

#### A Legend of Raven

"No one knows just how Raven first came to be, and we have many different beginnings to start from, but in Sitka we know that Raven never had beginning nor will he have an ending.

"Raven was always the All-in-all, and, as he knew all things and made all, he began to wish to have a form of his wisdom that, too, would live on with him forever. So it was that he made him a son to help in the creation. And the son's name, also, was Raven. And now it is of Raven, Son of Raven, that we speak.

"Raven was instructed in every form of knowledge and he was trained in every wise thing, so that when he grew up he would have everything necessary to make a glorious world, where all beautiful wishes and every good idea would be objectified, and would remain forever a praise and prayer to Raven, the Father Creator. [73]

"So Raven made the world, but he found there was no light with which to show the beauty and form of what he had created. Then, after deep thinking, he remembered his father to have said that there was a large lodge far up the Nass where One kept all the Light that ever could be found.

"Raven tried many ways in which to reach this house on the Nass, but the way was unknown to every one, so he wandered afar, seeking for the true trail. One day he helped an old lame man along the path and, for gratitude, the old man said: 'You seek the One of Nass who keeps the Light?'

"Raven replied, 'Yea, for many days have I sought Him.'



"Then the lame old man smiled a strange smile, and said, 'I know of but one way to bring this great Light into the world you made, and that way is to send forth that Light through the daughter of the One with the Light.'

"'But, Brother, how do I know there is such a daughter? And if there be, how shall I receive the Light through her?'

"'O Raven, thou art a great creator! Thy father is All-in-all of the North, and the daughter of Light will joyously send forth this Light you need to show the beauties of your world,' said the old wayfarer.

"'Then tell me this, O Brother, for I seem not to know how to reach the Virgin of the Light, despite all the wisdom I have been taught,' anxiously begged Raven. [74]

"'Then hark to my words, O Son of Raven: I will turn you into a small drop of water, and fly with you over the House of Light. As I pass the pool whence comes the water for drink, I will drop you into a glass the Virgin holds ready to quaff. Then you will know what to do.'

"Raven showed his surprise, for he had believed the old man to be lame and helpless, and now he found he was a Wise Man who could find his way wheresoever he would go.

"Then the old man, with the wonderful drop of water held carefully in his palm, flew over the House of Light, and passed low down over the pool where the Virgin stood ready to drink.

"As she raised the cup to her lips, the drop of pure water which had been Raven, fell into the liquid, and she drank all that the vessel held.

"Now this drop of clear water grew and became a man-child, and the Virgin knew she was to bring forth the Light unto the World, that all might enjoy the beauties of creation. So she was happy and praised Raven and the Father of Raven, day and night, for having given himself to become a little drop of water that the Light might be born.

"When the time came for the Light to be revealed, the Virgin prepared a royal bed of furs of great value for the Man of Light to be born on. But the babe struggled and refused to be born in a state of riches, and he whispered to the Virgin: 'The world of joy and riches needs me not, but the world of sorrow and darkness needs me. I will shed this Light on such as are heavily laden and weary.' So the Virgin knew the Light must be born in meekness and humility, that all brothers could find Raven without pomp or pay. [75]

"So the birthplace was lined with common Iceland moss, and the child of Light was born thereon. The moss-bed was made up in a room that had been used for the humblest things in the Great House of Light: that is, for the storing of queer bundles, some large, some small, and all of various shapes and colors. And when the babe looked around at the walls of his birthplace, his eyes shone like stars and a heavenly smile beamed from his face, for *he* knew what those bundles contained!

"As the child waxed strong and beautiful, the mother saw that it yearned for something she had not hitherto given him, so a servant was ordered to seek everywhere and find what it was the babe craved.

"Finally, the attendant moved a bundle that hung at the farthest end of the room. And as he did so, the child laughed and his eyes shone brightly.

"'Bring that bundle here—it is what the Babe wanted!' declared the mother. So the unwieldy bundle was placed upon the bed. [76]

"The mother carefully removed a wrapper, but found still others to undo. Finally all the wrappers were taken away and but one remained. This was of a wonderful shimmering material such as no one had ever beheld before. The mother reverently opened this cover, and lo! there lay revealed all the Stars of Heaven!

"The Child gurgled with joy, and took the corner of the shimmering cover and drew it, with the contents, over to himself. He looked upwards, and with a wonderful expression in his sweet face, suddenly flung the bright cover and all the Stars it held, up through the smoke-hole of the lodge.

"With a happy, joyous laugh, he watched the Stars scatter far and wide to rest finally in the Firmament, and there they shine to this very day!

"The Virgin Mother then knew that this child truly was Raven, the Son of Raven, and she commanded every one to bow down in worship, for he had been given the power to bring Light to the world of darkness, and no more would darkness cover the people.

"Soon after the Stars were fixed in the Firmament of Heaven, the child again yearned and seemed to pine for something. But now the mother knew what had to be done, so she commanded an attendant to take down the bundle that hung in the corner whence the Stars came. [77]

"This bundle was brought over to the mother, but it was smaller than the first bundle that had held all the Stars. The Mother carefully undid the many wrappings of this bundle, and found the last covering was made of a filmy frosty texture which had no opening or end that might be unrolled.

"But the child held out his hands eagerly for the bundle, and the moment it had been given him,

he found the secret opening and then unrolled the cover. When the last frosty bit of gauzy cloud fell away from the contents so carefully preserved, every one exclaimed in wonder at the beauty they beheld. There was a big Moon, cool and shining, then as now!

"The child clapped his hands with delight, and wafted the Moon with its frosty gauze covering up through the smoke-hole of the room and it became fixed as the Stars, to give light through the hours of darkness, that the earth need not stumble and fall upon a black pathway.

"The third bundle was great and difficult to reach, but the child cried for it and the servants had to work and struggle to reach it, until finally, down it came. And as it fell, it sent forth sparks of strange fire that consumed not a thing, yet prevented any servant from handling the bundle.

"The child laughed and clapped his hands, but finding no one could hold the flaming bundle, he crept over and took it. The mother stood affrighted lest the Child of Light be consumed. But he unwrapped each covering himself, and when the last dazzling wrapper was revealed, no human being durst gaze upon that Light. But he who was born of Light looked upon what was hidden in that covering and flung all up through the smoke-hole to take its place in the Firmament of Heaven, where it shines like unto a Sun—to-day, as in those days. And it was given the world to shed its rays of Light upon the earth by day, even as the Moon shines for Light by night, and the Stars sing for joy and gladness that Light came to the world. [78]

"After the Sun, and Moon, and Stars were made, this man-child did many wonderful things that astonished all who came to the House of Light to hear and see such a marvelous being. But there was still one bundle left hanging in a very gloomy corner of the birth-chamber, and this bundle was left until the child grew to the stature of a man. Then he demanded that it be given him.

"'No, no, my son,' wept the mother, 'do not ask for that—it contains Death.'

"'Know then that I know it,' returned the young man, seriously. 'Knowest thou not why I came to be born of the Light? Not only that the world might have eternal Light, but also to dispel all darkness that Eternal Life might come through the overcoming of this Death. [79]

"'The Light I had, and the Light I gave, but through forever closing the gates of Death to the world I forever fix this Light of Life in the Heavens that no one can darken it more.'

"The mother wept for she knew her son must die if he took down that bundle, but he replied: 'For this great mission was I sent to you that, through you, should be given birth to Light, and thus establish for all time the Light for the world.'

"Sorrowing, the mother herself took down the bundle and brought it to her son, and no servant might remain in the room when Raven, Son of Raven, removed the coverings of Death. As the last wrapper was removed and the mother saw the heavy shroud that folded itself clingingly about the ghastly contents of that bundle, she ran weeping from the room, for she dared not watch her son accept it.

"So the birth-room remained closed while Raven fought with Death, but after three shinings of the Sun, and three shinings of the Moon, and with the shining of the Stars as they sang softly, a blinding Light shone through all the walls of the House of Light, and the mother with her attendants ran to open the door of the birth-chamber, now called the Room of Death. But behold! the man Raven himself was revealed in shining raiments, shining like the Sun, and he smiled upon those who fell down in awe at sight of him. [80]

"'I have destroyed Death for all, and now I go to shine in the Heavens with this Light of Life that was given me. All who will may follow where I go,' said Raven.

"'And at that, he rose through the smoke-hole and took his place in Heaven, but his Light shone then and shines now into every corner of darkness in the world. And the day is come when there is no more darkness, for rich and poor, good and bad, and every created thing made by Raven, see the Light that transforms everything into lights that find their places in the Firmament of Heaven.'

"Raven, Son of Raven, sat hidden in the Great Light that he received when Death was overcome, but he saw that the earth was without form. Then he desired to create seas and mountains upon the face of the void, and he sat thinking and thinking for many a time.

"Suddenly he remembered that in the House of Light there was a wonderful pool of clear water. So he sent a ray from the Sun down through the clouds and thereby drew up enough water to drink. But he did not swallow the cooling water. He held it in his mouth and flew with it over the whole earth which was void of form.

"He spat forth a drop of this water and it became the source of the River Nass. Another drop from his mouth became the Stikine River, and the third drop became the Taku River. Then followed the Chilkat, the Alsek, and finally, all the great rivers of the North. [81]

"But Raven found he would need more water for seas and oceans and lakes, so he sat again, and by thinking and thinking he received the idea.

"It was not according to his wish to send a sunbeam to the pool of eternal water in the House of Light, to bring up more of that pure water to him, and he was happy when he conceived the idea that came to him. And this it was:

"If the rivers I made, run on eternally because their source came from the House of Light, why shall I not guide them all to one great meeting-place and call that the Ocean? But as they run to this one rest, even so will I give them smaller rests along the way, and at these resting-places they may spread out upon the bosom of the earth. These rests will I call Lakes. Then there will come times when the Ocean, which is continually filled from the eternal source of the Rivers, must needs overflow its boundaries. And these overflows will fill up the great holes in the earth. So these I will call Seas.

"Even as the Sun sent his ray to carry me the drink from the pool that is in the House of Light, so will I command the Sun and the Moon and the Stars to govern the waters of the earth, and thus the Lights in the Firmament of the Heavens will draw up any surplus overflows, that these may turn to moisture in the cloudy coverings that wrapped the Lights before they became fixed in the Firmament. The Clouds will rain down refreshing drink upon all lands on the earth, that all things may replenish themselves and so live eternally, in one grand bond of Brotherhood, loving and helping each other, from the Great to the Small, and from Small to Great.'

[82]

"And it was as Raven desired. So to this day, the Sun and Moon and all the Stars work together in harmony to keep the Rivers and Lakes, and Seas, and Ocean within their bounds and to replenish all things.

"But Raven found afterwhile that so much water flowing ceaselessly from the Source, and the rain that fell from the Clouds upon the land, made the earth so wet that it was not a good place to dwell upon. Then he began to think and think again, of how he might create something to dry up the surplus moisture.

"Now he was walking by a great ocean, one day, still thinking of plans to dry away any unpleasant dampness, when he saw a Petrel sitting on a rocky promontory.

"'Brother,' called Raven to the bird, 'how came you here?'

"'I? Oh, I was born when the waters were sent to earth. How came you here—and where were you born?' asked the Petrel.

[83]

"'I? Oh, I was born before the world was thought of, so I have no beginning and no end,' replied Raven.

"'Ha! Tis well said, but rings not true,' the Petrel jeered. 'No one ever was before this world was created, and no one ever shall remain when this world ends.'

"'I am Raven, Son of Raven, and because you know not the Truth of Creation, but believe the Lie, you shall henceforth go about in a fog. Your name shall be earth-made, and you shall dream dreams in this fog, but you may not see the Light until that day when the whole world shall be freed from all forms of darkness!'

"And instantly, a fog-cover fell over Petrel, because he knew not the Truth told by Raven, Son of Raven. And the fog so hid from the eyes of Petrel the Sun and Moon and Stars that came from the House of Light, that he believed *them* to be controlled by a Lie, also.

"But Raven learned that the fog he had called forth from the waters on the earth made the place still more moist and not good for a place of sojourn. Then he planned to dry it away quickly.

"Petrel, the earth-bound, was left groping in the fog for the Truth he had scorned and now could not find, and Raven passed to a place where he saw something floating on the wave not far from shore. He failed to recognize it as of his creating, so he wished to reach it.

[84]

"While looking about for something to use to reach it, he saw a bird with a very long bill, watching him. This bird was not like anything he had created so he knew it must be an offspring of the fog, mist-made, and related to Petrel.

"Raven then commanded this bird, 'Fly out over the water and bring back yon floating object.'

"The bird with a long bill was a chicken-hawk, and it lived by killing weaker and smaller birds than itself. Raven knew this was its way the moment he saw it was mist-made, and so he sent it on this errand.

"The chicken-hawk dared not refuse to go after the bright object floating on the wave, but he said to himself, 'I'll drop it if it is not good for me to carry!'

"Raven knew this evil intent, and said, 'When you have taken hold of the object, do not drop it till you have brought it ashore.'

"So the chicken-hawk left in no good humor, and flew out to the wave, where he found a mass of fire floating there. He was a coward, such as all mist-made creatures are, and he feared to bring in the great ball of fire, yet he dared not disobey the command of a superior being like Raven. So he tore off a mouthful only, and that is how he came to be so badly burned. Had he caught hold of the whole mass of flame, the outside of which really had been cooled as it rolled about upon the waves, he could have escaped without an injury.

[85]

"He brought the piece of fire to shore, and Raven said, 'Because you were cowardly and obeyed me only through fear, your beak shall remain forever burned off and short as it now is.'

"And so it is to this day, and shall be until Light redeems all things.

"Raven then took some chips of red cedar and some white stones, and mixed them in the fire. These were distributed over all the earth, so that many great forests grew up from the cedar shavings, and thus absorbed the surplus moisture on the land. And mighty volcanoes were formed of the red-hot stones, and these, in consuming the water under the surface, steamed and spewed forth the massive rocks and varied-hued stones that gave peaks and cliffs as pleasant places for deer and sheep to roam upon.

"Thus, with the face of the earth so beautiful, Raven sat down and rejoiced. But Petrel and Chicken-hawk were left to wander in the fog.

"Finally, Raven's mother died, and he sorrowed greatly, for she saw not the Great Light that he had established to overcome the darkness of Death. Still, because she had always dwelt in the House of Light and had given birth to Raven, Son of Raven, she was given an honorable place in the Firmament of Heaven.

[86]

"And Raven, as the custom was in the realm where his mother had lived, prepared a great feast in honor of his mother. But he began thinking how he might honor her in a different way. So he cut a witch-hazel wand with which to point at anything he wished to use in the preparation of this feast. Thus he collected wood and stones and many things on the face of the earth. And when all this was assembled he built him a great house.

"Then he called the rain and sunshine to hide the house until he was ready for the feast. He then sat down to think and think, and this is what he thought, and what came of it.

"I want fish to swim in the waters, and birds to fly in the skies, and creatures to live in the forests, and beings to live on the land, to be found in this house when it is opened. And they will all be perfect, lovely, and good, to live with this creation I have made."

"Thus, having thought all these things, Raven stood up and stretched out his hand that held the wand, and pointed it over the house that was hidden as yet by rain and clouds.

"And, suddenly, the rain ceased its downpour, the sun smiled, and the house stood revealed in all its beauty. Then Raven sang:

"This made I for an honor to my mother!"

[87]

"And as he sang his song of honor and praise, the house opened and all manner of living creatures came forth—beautiful, perfect, and an honor to the earth upon which they would dwell.

"So it is that even to this day, when one makes a feast to honor a dead person who will sit in a place in the firmament, the house of the living is opened to all, from the greatest to the least of the earth.

"When the feast was over Raven wished to leave an eternal monument to his mother, the Virgin who gave birth to the Light, so he called to him the four winds to help.

"South Wind, in the spring and summer when all the sun's rays are warm, blow gently upon the earth and sing of my mother."

"North Wind, sit on top of the ice-mountain yonder, and when the earth is chill and sorrowing for my mother, blow fiercely from your snow-laden hills and sing over her grave."

"East Wind, when the earth-people weep salt-water over the biers of their dead, and sigh because of their loss, sing to them of my mother."

"West Wind, when you blow gently, and tell the earth that storms and cold and sorrow may come but Light shines in the end to bring them joy and peace, sing low and sweetly of my mother."

"Thus the four winds came to earth to sing to the peoples dwelling here, and every one heard of the mother who gave birth to Light—Raven, Son of Raven.

[88]

"But after all these things were done, Raven sat down and thought and thought deeply, and as he thought he called upon his father, the Great Raven, the All-in-all, for advice.

"And having received advice, Raven stood up and lifted his hands to the Heavens, and sang with a loud voice:

"I shall make men in my image and likeness, and they shall dwell in the Light and be given dominion over all this earth I have made for my joy and pleasure. Thus we shall be happy and live forever!"

"So Raven made all men like unto himself. They were good and perfect and beautiful and they all dwelt in love in the Light. And thus they dwelt many, many days, and were happy.

"But the fog which had been called out for Petrel's error harbored many birds of evil omen, and these, guided by Petrel, swept through the fog and attacked the Men of the Light. The fog covered all things and caused every one to grope about, seeking to find one another and escape from the mist that hid the Shining Light.

"And thus any one who had the slightest degree of fear or greed or malice or lying in his heart, breathed in the fog and thenceforth lived in a dream. They were thenceforth born of the fire of wrath that the Chicken-hawk tore apart from the floating mass, and were consumed with fear.

[89]

They lived their days in the fog that came upon Petrel when he believed a lie, and they suffered and sorrowed and died, all in a dream caused by the fog; and afterwhile these mist-men forgot there ever had been a perfect earth created by Raven, Son of Raven, where love and beauty and joy rule everything.

"So Petrel ruled his world of fog, where hate and sin and death were his servants, and thus it happened that a Petrel is the sign of storm and trouble and blinding mist, but the Raven is known to be wise and patient for it knows where its Light dwells.

"So Raven sits, and patiently waits for Petrel's dreams to lose themselves in the fog, for such will surely come about. And as the Lights ruled by Raven shine stronger, the fog grows fainter and still lighter, until breaks the Day when all mist vanishes and Raven's Creation is seen forever beautiful and perfect."

When Mr. Gilroy concluded his beautiful legend, the scouts were silent. It was the greatest praise they could bestow at the moment, for the story was not one to call forth applause and noise. Then they began to speak, but in soft voices.

"And to think that this story of creation, so similar in many ways to our Bible Stories, was handed down from ancient days," remarked Mrs. Vernon, thrilled by the realization. [90]

"I find many interesting similarities between our Bible and the Holy Legends reverently told by the Esquimaux. But this one always struck me as being as fine as any. That is why I told it," explained Mr. Gilroy.

Then their Camp Entertainer, as Julie now named Mr. Gilroy, bid them all good-night and went up the trail. And the scouts were soon in bed, their last waking thoughts being of Raven, Son of Raven, the All-in-all of Creation. [91]

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\*This legend, given in various ways by different tribes of the Icelandic and Alaskan Indians, each with its own variations, but all with one thread of similarity woven through the tales—was partly interpreted and grouped by the author into the legend that appears in this book. It is said to date back thousands of years before Abraham and our Bible. Acknowledgments for original texts and tales are due the Smithsonian Institute.

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER SIX

### LOST ON THE TRAIL

A FEW days after the girl scouts' visit to Grey Fox Camp, they were agreeably surprised by having the boys visit them. Mr. Gilroy was with them, and as each boy carried an ax and a woodman's knife, the girls knew they came to work.

"We decided to cut a shorter trail over the crest, and as to-day is so cool, we thought it would be a fine time for work," explained Alec, the leader in the boys' camp.

"One day's as good as another! We're ready to help any time," replied Julie, as leader of the Girl Scouts' Troop.

"Why didn't you let us know, then we might have blazed the trail up our side of the mountain, and you boys would have worked from your side. When we met on top, we might have celebrated with a feast," ventured Mrs. Vernon.

So the girls ran for axes and knives, and all began work together, back of Dandelion Camp. They cut and chopped, and blazed a fine trail up past Silver Falls, where the doe had called to her mate the first night the girls were at Camp, and so on to the top of the mountain. But it took the greater part of that morning to go as far as they did. [92]

"We'd better stop here, and go back to see how the trail seems," suggested Mr. Gilroy.

"Why not finish the job, now that we're on top?" asked Alec.

"Because you boys can easily blaze from here on to your camp, and I am beginning to worry lest my dinner is burning," laughed Mr. Gilroy.

"Your dinner! Where's the Indian cook?" asked Alec.

"He's cooking for fifteen! I have invited guests coming to dine at the bungalow this evening,"

returned Mr. Gilroy, meaningly.

"Oh, hurrah! Isn't that fine? Now we won't have to wash any supper-dishes!" exclaimed Ruth, who still disliked doing dishes.

The girls laughed, for they understood, but Alec said, "Why talk about a supper so distant! I'd rather plan about something to eat this minute."

"So would we all. I guess we are nearly starved," said Ned.

"Why not stop work and cook a few steaks?" suggested Bob.

"You boys have done all the talking about something to eat, but the girls said nothing. Maybe they are not hungry!" ventured Mr. Gilroy.

"Hungry! We're too *weak* to speak," sighed Julie, rubbing the spot under her belt. [93]

"I can eat reindeer moss without its being cooked," said Amy.

"That settles it! Cook we must, but what?" declared Joan.

"Well, some of us will hunt up the mushrooms; some must gather bracken, some, the lichen; and Gilly can hunt up the coffee beans, *alias* roots and acorns," said Alec.

"What will *you* be doing, meantime?" retorted Mr. Gilroy.

"Oh, I'll just remove that package of flour from your pocket and use this strip of bacon that I lifted from Dandelion larder; and when the steaks come back, I'll have bread and fat ready over a fine fire."

"Bacon! When did you manage to steal that?" demanded the Captain, amazed.

The boys laughed, for Alec's clever sleight-of-hand was an endless source of fun for them.

"Don't all hunt together. Divide your strength and see that results come back with you," advised Alec, rolling up his sleeves preparatory to starting his fire.

"I can't fish like the other boys, so I'll go with the girls who are going for the beefsteaks," said Dick.

"All right. And where will you go, Captain?" asked Alec.

"If Gilly is sent for coffee, I shall hunt for tea. I do not care for his brand of coffee, but I *do* know where to find the ingredients for a nice fragrant cup of tea." [94]

A laugh circled the group, and Mr. Gilroy said, "All right. Now see to it that you don't ask for a drop of my coffee, hereafter."

So they separated, some of the scouts going with Mrs. Vernon; Bob and Ned going for trout; Hester and Amy with Mr. Gilroy; and Julie, Joan and Judith with Dick, for mushrooms.

After breaking a way through a dense jungle, the latter four scouts came out to a small clearing, but they had not seen any mushrooms.

"What a fine baseball diamond this clearing would make!" said Julie, as they looked around.

"And there are some chestnut stumps—on the far side of the clearing!" exclaimed Dick, crossing to the spot.

But they found no mushrooms on the stumps, much to their chagrin. "There'll be other trees about here, where we're sure to find what we need," said Dick, eagerly.

So into the woods they plunged, winding about here and there, but not finding what they sought. None of them thought to blaze a trail as they wandered, consequently had no means of telling how far or in what direction they had gone before Dick found a few small mushrooms.

"Only enough for a few of us. We need more than these," he remarked. [95]

"There's sure to be more where these are. Let's keep on hunting," urged Julie.

So they kept on winding through the underbrush, but with no good results. Finally Dick found a plant that he believed to be a wild potato.

"No, it is not. It hasn't the leaves or blossom of the Indian potato," declared Joan.

"That may be, but when it grows old it dries up, you know," argued Dick, beginning to dig at the root.

The girls wandered about seeking for signs of more mushrooms, but could find none. Then Dick stood up and stretched his back-muscles.

"My that was tough digging when you have no tool. And it wasn't a potato after all."

"Well, we've been gone a long time now. Suppose we go back with what we have," said Joan.

"Yes; even if we can't fill up on steaks to-day, let us eat more of the greens," added Judith.

So they turned to go back to camp. They climbed over the boulders similar to those over which they had already climbed, over similar fallen timber, and finally came to a stream.

"I don't remember a brook when we came," remarked Julie.

"Neither do I," added Judith.

"All places look alike when you're hunting anything. We may have crossed a bog or a brook and never have noticed it," said Dick.

[96]

"Oh, I would have noticed it! I wouldn't be such a poor scout as not to know where I was going," returned Julie, defensively.

"Now, Dick, I'm sure there was no bog where we came through, but here's one right ahead of us," called Joan, who was a few paces ahead.

"No, there was no bog!" affirmed Julie.

"Did you bring a compass?" now asked Dick.

"No, we never thought of being lost," murmured Julie.

"We're not lost, just strayed a bit," Dick assured them.

"'Lost, Strayed or Stolen'—it's all the same if we have to miss our dinner," sighed Joan.

They managed to cross the boggy spot and then trailed to a place that Dick claimed was the clearing. But it turned out to be a little fen made by a tiny spring.

"What we should have done was to leave our marks as we came through—broken twigs, or trampled grass, or some such signs," said Julie.

"But we didn't, and now is no time to talk of it!" Dick said impatiently, for he began to realize that they really were lost.

"We can begin right now, however, and then not keep circling around without recognizing that we were there before!" snapped Julie.

So the girls began, then and there, to leave their signs as they followed after Dick, who really knew not where he was leading.

[97]

"Had we better separate and go in different directions to hunt the camp?" asked Dick finally.

"Mercy, no! Better be lost together than get lost each one alone!" exclaimed Joan.

"Sort of 'United we stand,' etc.," chuckled Julie, in spite of her concern over not finding the way.

They kept on forcing a way through the thick bush and resting now and then when they found a little clearing; but finally Judith cried: "You'll have to go without me! I'm so weak from hunger I can't walk another step."

"Girls, suppose we stop and cook the steaks?" asked Dick.

"I say so, too," agreed Julie.

So they cleared a little space in the woods and with two rubbing-sticks soon produced fire. While two of the girls were doing this, Dick washed the mushrooms in the little spring they had seen, and then sliced them with his knife.

"We haven't any salt or bacon, but they'll taste good to starved wanderers," said Dick, holding one over the fire to cook.

Each girl spiked one on a sharpened stick and held it out to broil. When the mushrooms were cooked they each ate until they felt better. Then Dick made a suggestion.

"Making this fire gave me an idea. Why not make 'two smokes' for signals. If Alec or any one else is looking for us, they can see them."

[98]

"Why didn't we think of that before! Fine idea, Dick," said Joan.

"What will 'two smokes' mean?" asked Judith.

"Means 'we are lost,' come find us," said Dick, busy with two heaps of firewood.

"But you can't signal here under these trees, Dick! We've got to find an open place where the smoke can rise up above the tree-tops, you know," advised Julie.

Dick realized he had been caught napping by a girl, and he didn't like it very much but he could not show his annoyance, for Julie was right. So he stood up and said: "I'll shout as loud as possible,—maybe they will hear us." So he shouted until he was hoarse.

"In this dense forest, where the trees break every sound, the smoke signal is as good as any other. Let us find a clearing," suggested Julie.

So they sought again, and soon found an open spot where the sky was visible without any

obstructing tree-branches overhead.

"Why, this looks like the same clearing that I said would make a fine baseball diamond," declared Julie.

"So it does! And here is a broken twig where we went out," said Joan.



"We are lost, come find us" [Page 98](#)

"Then we can't be many miles from home," laughed Julie, her spirits rising again at the slightest encouragement. [99]

They made two smokes, however, and waited to watch the thin spirals rise above the trees, side by side, until they dispersed in the blue ether far overhead. But no sound came in answer to the signals.

"Maybe no one remembered the smoke idea," ventured Judith.

"And they'd have to be in the open, or climb a tree, to see it," asserted Joan.

"Maybe they made signals, too, and are waiting for us to answer them. Did you bring a rifle, Dick?" said Julie.

"No, none of us did. But I can climb one of these trees and see if the others made any smokes."

"Choose that towering pine,—you ought to be able to see everything from that high top," advised Julie.

So Dick climbed the tall pine, but after he had reached the top he saw nothing that might lead him to find the other campers. He shouted and whistled as shrilly as he could from the lofty perch, but no answering sound came to his ears, so he slid down again.

"See anything at all, Dick?" asked Julie, the moment he came down.

"A great sea of waving green tops, one wave back of the other, without a break," said he.

"Well, what now? Shall we keep on hunting for the way back from this clearing, or just sit and let them find us?" asked Joan, despondently. [100]

"You know they say a flock of ducks will always fly towards water. Now, I saw some ducks flying in one direction when I sat up in that tree," remarked Dick.

"Then you *did* see something other than waves of green! Why didn't you say so!" snapped Julie, impatient with his poor scouting sense.



"I thought they might be flying down towards Little Moose Lake, where Dandelion Camp is, and we want to find our party," said Dick, in justification.

"Anything to get out of this tangle. We'd just as lief wind up at Dandelion Camp as elsewhere," said Joan.

"All right then, follow me and we will go in the direction the birds flew," said Dick, and he started down hill.

Down and down they tramped, chopping away smaller obstructions, until they were stopped by a wide fen that belted the section. Advance was impossible, for every time one tried to step upon the ooze the foot would begin to sink in.

"Oh, how awful!" wailed Judith, ready to cry.

"How can we cross? If only we could find a fallen tree that happened to fall right across," sighed Joan.

"If only we had a drink of cold water I'd be thankful," declared Julie, mopping her warm face. [101]

"That's the easiest part of the whole trouble," quickly said Dick.

"What do you mean? I wouldn't drink that slimy liquid for anything," said Julie, frowning at the water.

"Now, just wait a second and you'll see what I can do with that water!" bragged Dick, glad to redeem his reputation as a scout.

With hands and a stick he quickly dug a hole to the depth of the marsh. Then he squinted carefully at his well, then at the marsh, and back again. The girls watched him curiously.

"Guess I can go a few inches deeper,—the well has to be about six inches below the surface of the nearby pool, you know."

He dug deeper and soon the well began filling with muddy water. "There, now I've got it!" said Dick.

"Do you expect us to drink *that!*" scorned Joan.

"No, but wait." Dick hurriedly baled out the well until it was almost emptied. Then he allowed it to fill again.

He baled it out a second time, and permitted it to fill again. The third time the water was almost clear, so he baled once more, and this time the water filtered in as clear as crystal.

He stooped, drank from it, and said: "It's cold and pure!" [102]

Then the girls drank, and found it most refreshing to their parched tongues and throats.

"Well, I never knew that before! We've learned two things by being lost with Dick as guide," said Julie frankly, and Dick was delighted to hear such nice things about himself.

"Shall we try to circle this fen and get across, or go back again?" now asked Dick.

"It's hard to tell just what is best to do," murmured Julie, puckering her brow in thought.

Suddenly two shots echoed down the mountainside, and after an interval of six seconds a third shot rang out.

"There! Alec's seen our smoke. His signal means 'Where are you?' What shall we do?" cried Dick, excitedly.

"How can we answer them?" wondered the girls.

"We'll have to back-trail to our clearing. That's where the shots sounded from," said Dick.

"Dear me, if only we had waited there, they would have found us," complained Judith.

"But we didn't, so the next best thing to do is to get back as soon as we can, or they'll go away again," declared Julie.

They climbed, scrambled and tumbled up the rugged slope, keeping as far as they could to the rough trail they had made in coming down. When they thought they were near the clearing, they shouted with all their lung-power, and the welcome sound of answering calls soon greeted their ears. [103]

"Oh, Dick, give that cat-call again so they will know we're on our way," asked Julie, anxiously.

So Dick gave his ear-splitting whistle by placing his fingers between his lips and blowing through the crevices. In less than ten seconds afterwards, two shots sounded in quick succession.

"That means they've heard us and are waiting," cried Dick. "Come this way,—that echo is misleading."

So the girls followed their young guide, and soon they broke through the fringe of great trees into the clearing where the rest of the party stood. Alec gave them no time to explain. He was

angry, and no mistaking it!

"Dick, can you tell me of any concession made to you that allows you to start two fires and then go away and leave them to work their will in these forests? If we had not found the fires you left, what might have resulted to this area of mountain land?"

The girls and Dick stood amazed, for they had forgotten all about the fires started as smoke signals.

"When I broke through the underbrush into this clearing, the fires were blazing away like fury. They had encroached upon all the brush and handy leaves, and were eating a way to the timberline. In half an hour more those same *little* fires would be raging over the crest and destroying acres and acres of forest-trees, to say nothing of causing the work all the farmers and forest-rangers would have in trying to control it. Just because a brainless scout *forgot* his duty!" The scorn in Alec's last words was cutting.

[104]

Dick began to apologize, but Alec held up a hand. "No apology will answer for such a thing." Then he turned to Ned and said: "Put Dick down for penance at camp."

"We ought to be punished as well as Dick," said Julie. "We never remembered the fires, either."

"That's up to your Captain,—I am merely doing my duty to *my* Troop," returned Alec.

"Had anything to eat?" asked Anne, who always felt sorry for any one who was hungry.

"We ate the mushrooms we found," meekly replied Joan.

"Then come back and eat what we left for you. We had fish and greens and biscuit," said Hester.

While they were munching the cold food, Alec questioned them further. "Why didn't you use what scout-sense you had? You know you could have found the way you came through those woods by looking for broken cobwebs across the bushes; by overturned stones with the damp under side showing; or by broken twigs and crushed blades of grass; and last, but hardest, you might have looked to see where leaves on trees and bushes were turned awry from your brushing against them. They do not right themselves immediately, you know."

[105]

"We never heard of that before," admitted Julie.

"But Dick has, even though he has forgotten it," said Alec. "He had to learn it from the Manual—what he would do in case of being lost in a forest."

"But even if you knew nothing about that, you all knew it would simplify things for us if you were to blaze a way to guide us the way you went. You could easily have broken twigs and left them hanging, or piled little heaps of stones along the trail you took."

"Oh, for goodness sake! Let up on us now, and wait until *you* are lost, will you?" cried Julie, placing her palms over her ears.

"Yes, it's so easy to tell the other feller what to do!" was all the retort Dick made.

"Well, children, after all I have my inning!" declared Mr. Gilroy, chuckling.

"What's that?" demanded every one.

"I wanted you to come home and dine with me, but no! you must stop to cook in the woods. Now you'll all be glad enough to hurry home and come to my party. And the dinner won't be slighted, either, from so much overeating up here!"

[106]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### A LITTLE BUSINESS

At breakfast the day following the "Lost Scouts" adventure, Mrs. Vernon remarked: "Girls, yesterday's experience taught me an important thing, and that is, we need a set of rules for camp, so that every member of Dandelion Troop will have her proper share of work and duty to perform.

"We have been keeping house in a haphazard way, with no responsibility attached to any one but Julie and me. Now, each day there must be some sort of regulations and punishments, if duties are neglected. The fire yesterday showed me that that system was good."

"Your idea is all right, Verny, but what will the rules cover, and why have punishments?" asked Julie.

"Because every day will probably bring new problems to us, so that set rules will not do, but each day must have added rules. If these rules are not obeyed, the scout who is negligent ought to be made to pay for her lack of obedience."

"Have you formulated any plan to begin with?" asked Joan.

[107]

"I thought that Julie, as Scout Leader, could consult with me about that. Although I think we ought to select a new orderly for each day, to see that the other scouts do what is required of them. If we begin with Ruth, Betty next day, and so on through the new membership, one each day, it brings us to the eighth day. Of course Julie, Joan and I will not be orderlies. But the Leader and Corporal are over the Orderly, and the Captain over all of you."

"What do you expect the Orderly to do, Verny?" asked Joan.

"She will read the rules for the day immediately after breakfast. Every scout must take turns in being cook for camp one day. One must be wood-gatherer, one must see that food supplies are on hand, some must do the fishing, and so on through the entire housekeeping list. This trains every one alike, and no partiality will be shown one who is a fine cook or one who is an awful one!"

The girls laughed, and the Captain continued: "Then, we don't expect one to do all the heavy work while another goes free, and by partitioning the work and control each one does her bit. In case of any gross negligence or breaking of rules, the Officer of the Day, the Corporal and the Leader will decide the punishment. Should need arise, the whole Troop may act as a jury to judge the matter."

After the Captain had finished speaking, the scouts sat down and compiled a set of Camp Rules, and Ruth was asked to print them neatly on cardboard, because Ruth was the artistic scout of the group.

[108]

This business disposed of, Julie said: "Now what shall we do to-day, girls?"

"But you haven't chosen an Orderly for the Day!" called Judith.

"Oh, that's so! Well, it lies between Ruth and Amy, as they are the more experienced scouts, to act the first day."

"Don't choose me. I've got my work cut out already, if you expect these rules nicely printed," declared Ruth.

"All right, then; it's Amy. No partiality meant, girls," Julie reminded them.

"More like 'malice aforethought,'" giggled Joan.

"Why? Isn't it an honor to be the Orderly?" demanded Julie.

"It may *seem* like an honor, but when it is thoroughly investigated it turns out to be just plain old hard work!"

"Sure, Julie! Don't you see, all the other scouts go scot free for the day, while the Orderly has to see that everything is done properly and then take the blame if nothing is right," laughed Judith.

"Well, Amy is able to carry the burden, and it is only for a day; then another one has to do it," said the Captain.

When the weighty business of selecting rules and deciding on a recreation for the day was over, Mrs. Vernon said, "Which did you decide to do first, hike or swim?"

[109]

"Is Mr. Gilroy coming over to visit us to-day?" asked Ruth.

"He invited himself to supper to-night, but I doubt if we see him before that time. Why?" answered the Captain.

"Because if he was coming, he would hike with us, and we'd rather wait for him, and swim first. But it doesn't matter now."

"We'll go for the hike first, and when we get back a fine, cool swim will feel good," suggested the Orderly for the day.

"Verny, do you know of any places one might choose for an objective on a hike?" asked Joan.

"Yes, Mr. Gilroy gave me a county map that shows every good trail within twenty miles of here. I'll get it and we'll look it over." So saying, the Captain went to her tent for the paper.

They all sat about Mrs. Vernon as she studied the map and read aloud of various trails that sounded interesting. At last she said: "Here's one that seems inviting. It is named 'River Bend,' and the trail winds along one of the streams that is an outlet of our lake. The description says the blazes are old but distinct, and no one can miss the way. Shall we try that trail?"

"Where does it end?" questioned Hester.

[110]

"How long is it to anywhere?" asked Anne.

"It's seven miles, and forks when one reaches the hut of an Indian canoe-builder. One fork runs to River Bend village, and the other to a ravine that is said to be most picturesque."

"We'll take that trail and decide which place we prefer to see, the village or the ravine, after we have hiked a while," said the Orderly.

"Why not take a little flour and fat and catch some fish at noon, and sup while on the trail?" asked Julie.

"Why not carry our dinner stuff and have a *regular* meal while we are about it," said Anne, who could not forego a dinner.

The other scouts laughed, and Mrs. Vernon replied, "All right, it sounds inviting."

So each scout carried a tin cup and platter, while the Orderly saw to it that each one carried part of the dinner material. It fell to the Captain's lot to carry the frying-pan, and to Anne to carry the two-quart pail; the others had the flour, bacon, potatoes, etc.

River Bend trail led down to the end of the lake, where the stream started. It wound in and out, as it followed the uneven edges of Little Moose Lake, running over mossy knolls, through rivulets, past waterfalls, and around impassable obstructions. Thus the detouring added greatly to the distance the map had vouched for.

[111]

The scouts had paper and pencils in case they wished to sketch anything interesting, but most of the paper was used in writing notes along the way, to be entered later in their records. They had gone about two miles when Julie stopped short and held up a warning hand.

"Verny, listen! I heard a baby crying pitifully over in those high bushes."

"Mercy me! Do you suppose there can be any gypsies here?" cried Amy, the timid.

"Gypsies—nothing! But how could a baby get in that jungle?" retorted Joan.

Then they distinctly heard the plaintive wail, as of a very young child in fear and distress. Even Mrs. Vernon turned pale at the picture that presented itself to her thought.

"Girls, we've got to investigate this. It doesn't seem plausible that any one would bring a kidnapped child to this wilderness to lose it, but one can never tell!" declared Julie.

"It's a baby, that we know, so it's up to us to save it," added Ruth.

"The poor little dear!" wept Betty, the tender-hearted.

So the scouts began cutting a way through the almost impenetrable growth that divided the trail from the place whence came the cries. But as they went deeper in the jungle and got nearer the spot they were aiming for, the cries ceased.

[112]

"Dear, dear! I hope the little thing isn't past aid?" murmured the Captain, anxiously.

That urged the scouts to greater endeavor, and finally Julie broke into a tiny clearing of about three feet across, and saw a little grey rabbit, which had been caught in an old mesh-wire trap set by some one long before and forgotten.

"Oh, you poor little creature!" cried Julie, falling upon her knees to rescue the soft little thing.

"Is it alive, Jule?" asked a chorus of anxious voices.

"Yes, but it is awfully afraid of me. I can't do anything for it."

"Maybe it will bite you—do be careful, Jule!" called Amy, deliciously thrilled at this fearful risk her friend was taking.

"Bite!" scorned Julie. "It's starved, and too weak to even nibble."

"Wait, Julie! Let me throw my hat over it so it won't see what we are doing. Then it won't feel so frightened. Remember the 'Boulder' we all saw, and when it moved we had a panic? Well, our sense of sight was all that caused that fear. It is the same now—what the rabbit doesn't see it won't fear," explained Mrs. Vernon.

While it was hidden under the broad-brimmed scout hat, the rabbit was not aware of the willing rescuers, and soon Julie had the snare open, and Mrs. Vernon held the little creature in her hat.

[113]

"Shall we let it go now?" asked some of the girls.

"It may have an injured leg where the trap caught it. I think we will carry it home and feed it well, and then if it is all right, it can run away. It is sure to be caught by some larger animal if it is unable to jump or run," said the Captain.

"This will make a dandy story to write down in our record book, Verny, won't it?" asked Ruth, eagerly.

"Yes, but it will also show how inexperienced we are in wildwood sounds,—to mistake the rabbit's cry for a child's wail."

"But it *did* sound exactly like a baby, there's no denying that!" exclaimed Julie, frowning as she realized how they all were caught napping.

"This reminds me of a story Alec told us yesterday when we were waiting at the campfire for

you lost scouts," said Hester. "He and his Troop went on a three days' hike in the country last year, and at night they found an old abandoned barn where they decided to sleep. The floor was in good condition, with a bit of hay piled up in one corner. But the loft overhead was in such bad condition that in many places the flooring was broken down completely. As there was no ladder or stairway to reach it, the boys concluded there was no use in examining it—no one would be up there!

"So they stretched out on the hay and were soon sound asleep. But some time after that—no one knew how long they had been asleep—Ned nudged Alec and whispered: 'Some one's in the loft!'" [114]

"Alec sat up and listened. Sure enough, he could hear a man snoring as distinctly as he could hear Dick breathe.

"So he roused the other scouts, and they very quietly crept over to the side where they could get a grip on the joists to help themselves up. Each scout had armed himself in some way. One had an old pitchfork with but one prong. Another had a rake handle, one found the curved handle of a feed-grinder, and so on.

"When they got to the shaky, decayed floor above, the snoring had stopped, so they knew the tramp was aware of their approach. They had to be awfully careful, too, so as not to fall through any of the broken places in the floor. But they each had their lanterns, and used them before they took a step. Alec went first, and threw the light back and forth to avoid a sudden surprise from the tramp.

"There's something moving over on that pile of old burlap sacks!" whispered Alec, the instant he saw a creeping movement there.

"Several of the boys then jumped and began beating up the sacks violently. But as suddenly, a pair of wings flapped up in their faces with a whirring sound, and a barn-owl began to screech madly as she rose and flew through a hole in the roof." [115]

Hester laughed as she reached this part of the story, and all the scouts joined in. Julie, who had not heard it before, said:

"Thank goodness, we girls are not the only ones to be taken in, then!"

"Alec said there are lots of wild creatures that make sounds exactly like human beings. And that owl snored just like a man."

By this time they had regained the trail, and Mrs. Vernon tenderly adjusted the trembling rabbit. The hat so covered it that it could curl inside and not see a thing to cause it any fear, and thus it was carried along, to be cared for later on and then regain its freedom.

The scouts found many interesting subjects for discussion along the trail, until they reached a wide shallow stream that came down the steep mountainside and emptied into the river.

"It's not on the map, and it sure cuts off further progress," said the Captain.

"It's shallow—we can wade it," suggested Julie.

"Let us go upstream and find a narrow ford, or some rocks that we can cross on," added Mrs. Vernon.

They went up on the near side of the stream, but the banks became so rocky and impassable that they found it was useless to try to climb them. The scenery was wild and wonderful, so several good pictures were taken of the tumbling waters and rocks, and then they all retraced their steps. [116]

"Now, it's wade or go back," declared Joan.

"Stuff your stockings down in your boots and sling them about your necks by the strings," advised Julie.

This was done, and one after another the scouts waded through the stream, shouting, screaming if one slipped on a stone, laughing when one stepped in a hole and got wet to the waist, but having plenty of fun.

"How did bunny stand the voyage?" called Julie, the moment the Captain stepped up on the bank.

"Bunny is curled up fast asleep, I guess," said she.

"I wish it was noon. Did any one hear the twelve o'clock whistle blow?" laughed Joan.

"Why—are you hungry?" questioned Anne.

"Aren't you?" retorted the Orderly.

"Sure! I always am," laughed Anne, frankly.

"Then why not say it is dinner-time, Verny?" asked Ruth.

"You must be hungry, too!" declared Judith.

"I bet we all are, if Verny will take the count," asserted Hester.

"Well, we may as well stop here beside this stream and eat, as to go on and fare worse," admitted the Captain. [117]

"Some one's got to fish," said Judith.

"Why not all fish and the sooner catch what is needed?" advised Mrs. Vernon. So this suggestion was followed out.

Four goodly sized fish rewarded the combined efforts of the fishermen that time, and then two scouts were detailed to clean them, while two went to build a fire. Others were tolled off to attend to other work, and in half an hour a savory meal was ready.

When all signs of cooking and eating were cleaned away, Mrs. Vernon took the bunny again and said they had best go on.

"Outdoor cooking and eating always makes me feel fine. I can walk a hundred miles now, and feel it no more than if it were a trifle," said Julie, taking a deep breath.

"All the same, we haven't gone five miles yet, according to Verny's map, and there is still that walk home, so don't brag too much, Julie," advised Betty, seriously.

"We haven't voted yet whether we want to go on to the village or to the ravine," now said Ruth.

"I'd like to visit the old Indian canoe-maker, and have a chat with him," said Joan.

"His time is money, so he will charge us for chatting," returned Julie, grinning.

"I think Joan's idea of visiting the Indian a good one, girls; why not go there instead of to either of the other places?" [118]

The Captain's suggestion was agreed upon, and the scouts turned in at the willow-arched walk that led to the Indian's hut. A wide brook ran under the willows, and here they saw several canoes waiting to be used. The pathway that ran alongside the brook was littered with rubbish of all kinds,—the accumulation of years of slovenly housekeeping and lazy carpenter work out of doors.

But it was evident that the Indian was neither slovenly nor lazy when it pertained to making canoes. Every canoe there was a splendid example of workmanship. When the scouts reached the door, the owner came out to see them.

"Morn'," said he, bowing seriously to his visitors.

"Are you Mike, the Indian?" asked Mrs. Vernon, after acknowledging the salutation.

"Me Mike—wan'da canoe?"

"No, we came to visit you. We are friends of Mr. Gilroy's," explained the Captain.

"Huh! Mees'er Gilloy use Mike's canoes."

"So he told us. He says they are the finest anywhere," said Julie, ingratiatingly.

"Bedder buy one," came from the Indian.

"Verny, we might *rent* another one—we only have two in the lake, you know, and we all prefer canoes to boats," whispered Joan. [119]

"We can't afford any added expense," replied Mrs. Vernon.

But Mike understood the meaning of that whisper, so he wisely said: "Come see fine canoes."

He led the way to his shop on the banks of the little stream and displayed the various methods of his trade. The girls found it all very instructive and interesting. Then he said:

"Mike take canoe to lake fer leddy—no charge."

"What do you mean by that?" wondered Julie.

"Mike give fine canoe—one week try; leddy not like, Mike come take him home. No pay."

"But we don't want any more canoes. We have two now," asserted Mrs. Vernon.

Mike shrugged his shoulders silently.

"How much you rent canoe for?" asked Julie, believing the Indian could comprehend better if she used bad English.

"Mike no rent his canoe—sell him cheap."

"We can't afford to buy one, but we might rent it if you make a low price," bargained Julie.

Mike shook his head decidedly. "No rent—onny buy."

"Come, girls! We must start on, now that we've had our visit," said the Captain, turning to go.

The scouts reluctantly turned also, but Mike saw their faces, and also knew that the lady was boss. So he seemed to reconsider.

"Mike got good fren' by Mees'er Gilloy. Mebbe fren's of him be fren's of Mike. How much you give for rent canoe?"

[120]

Every one turned suddenly at that hope held forth.

"What do you ask?" countered Mrs. Vernon.

"Got money now to pay?" asked Mike, cutely.

Julie exclaimed, "Certainly!" But the Captain saw through the shrewd bargainer, and said: "We'll have Mr. Gilroy do this business for us."

Now Mike had no idea of losing these customers, nor of having to deal with a good business man like Mr. Gilroy, so he said guilelessly: "Solly dese gals no paddle home in dis canoe."

Several of the scouts instantly wished to do so, but the Captain said: "Corporal, see that your Troop does not fall for this enticing snare."

The scouts laughed when they comprehended Mike's intentions, and Mrs. Vernon courageously walked away. But Mike followed.

"Canoe rent for four dollah week."

"What! that's sixteen a month! I guess not!" cried Julie.

"Fren's of Mees'er Gilloy get him fer tree dollah week."

"No sir-ee!" retorted Julie. "Mike, I'll pay you two dollah week—or six dollah mont—or feeftteen dollah season. What you take?"

All the scouts laughed, but Mike frowned. "Me tak feeftteen dollah now to Augus' furst," said he.

[121]

Every one hushed to get every word of this bargaining.

"We want him in Augus', too. Him worth feeftteen dollah, no more, till September ten," declared Julie, slapping her palms together to emphasize her words.

Mike sighed audibly. "All light. But Mike no carry him an' lose day. Gals mus' tak now an' pay down."

Then every one turned to every one else, and word ran round: "Who's got any money?"

"I've got three dollars—that's all," said Mrs. Vernon.

"Mike, we got tree dollahs only. Come to camp and get rest," said Julie.

"You tak him along?" asked Mike, anxiously.

"Are you 'fraid to trust us?" countered Julie.

"Oh, no! Mike no wan' trouble carry him so far, da's all."

So the three dollars was paid down, balance to be paid when Mike called for it; canoe to be taken along with no added work expected of Mike.

Mike launched the canoe in the stream that passed his shop, and several of the girls squatted in the bottom. But it proved overweighted for such a shallow stream, and two had to get out again. Julie and Joan then paddled it safely to the deeper river, where Amy and Judith, being lightest of the scouts, got in and sat in the bottom.

[122]

Mrs. Vernon and the rest of the Troop stood watching eagerly while the two girls paddled silently and swiftly up the river to the place where the tumbling stream joined River Bend. Here they halted to allow their other friends to catch up with them.

Julie and Joan were complimented upon their prowess, and when Ruth and Betty exchanged places with Amy and Judith, the canoe went on its way up the river, while the other scouts continued hiking back towards camp.

"It wouldn't take us long to reach home if we were all in canoes," said Anne.

"It would if *you* were in one—you are so heavy!" laughed Hester.

A titter sounded from the girls, but Mrs. Vernon held up a hand for silence. "Was that thunder I heard from over the mountain?"

"No, that was only Julie's paddle echoing down the stream," giggled Judith. But a louder rumble told the Captain she was right in her surmise.

"Dear me! I hope we won't be caught in another thunder-storm," said she, holding the bunny closer to her side.

But in answer to her fear, a sudden flash and a nearer peal of thunder warned them all to seek shelter if possible.

"If it rains we're bound to be soaked!" sighed Anne.

"You big silly! Did any of us think water was dry?" asked Hester, scornfully.

"I do wish those girls hadn't left us in the canoe! If it rains they may upset," worried the Captain.

"They didn't leave *us* in the canoe, Captain. And we are just as likely to meet with mishap as they," laughed Judith, to cheer every one up.

"Well, it's going to break mighty quick! See that inky cloud scudding across there?" exclaimed Amy, pointing at the sky.

"Verny, why not make a quick shelter to crawl under?" suggested Anne.

"Think you can do it?" answered the Captain.

"Hester's got the rubber cover that Mike gave us for the canoe when it is not in use, and we might stretch that between four trees," added Anne.

"That's so. Let's try it!" agreed Hester, eagerly.

Quickly, then, the scouts chopped down the scrub bush where four young trees were found for the corners, and then, while Anne and Hester secured the four corners of the cover, the other girls ditched around the spot so the rain would run off and not soak their camping place.

Anne and Hester completed their work before the others, and then hastily bunched a mass of chopped-down bushes all around the temporary tent to break the driving rain when it came. The spot thus enclosed was not large, but by huddling together they managed to keep dry.

[124]

"How nice it is to sit in a dry place and watch everything else gradually soak with the rain," ventured Amy, comfortably.

"No one would have dreamed that a shower would come up to-day, the weather was so perfect when we left camp," said Judith.

"Do any of you girls understand weather-lore?" asked Mrs. Vernon.

No one did, so the Captain continued: "If you study wind and cloud, wildwood creatures and other animals, you will find much to interest you in the weather.

"When rain is coming you will see the sheep turn their tails to windward, but if the day is to be fine the sheep will graze with faces to the wind.

"Cows always gather and huddle together at a sheltered end of the pasture lot when a storm is approaching. Cattle are restless and uneasy before a storm breaks. And cows will fling up their heels, or sheep will gambol as if to make the most of the sunshine just before a prolonged spell of bad weather. Pigs, too, will grunt loudly and cavort about uneasily in their pens, carrying bits of straw from their bedding in their mouths, before a heavy rainstorm.

"With wild creatures you will find partridges sitting in the fields when thunder is in the air. But the moment the storm blows over, the birds are alive with energy again. Rabbits and other night-feeders can be found out hunting on a sunny day, but that means there will be a wet night.

[125]

"Most of our birds in field and forest know when a storm is brewing, and they can be seen seeking for extra food to carry home, or, perhaps, devouring it quickly, storing it up against the time everything is soaked with the rain.

"Bees seldom fly far from the hive when rain is threatening; flies are annoying and sting sharply before rain, and many times they cling tenaciously to wall or furniture,—that is to keep flat to a surface, so their bodies will not become damp.

"A large ring can be found to encircle the moon the night preceding a rainstorm. Should the storm be two or three days off, the ring is wider and you will find fainter shadows inside the main circle,—one for each day.

"Mountain moss is found to be soft and limp, and smoke generally beats downward when the East Wind presages rain. Callouses on the feet will ache painfully; spiders will be seen strengthening their webs against moisture-weight; morning-glories will close up tightly; mushrooms are found to be numerous; and there are a dozen other weather-signs that I forget now."

The scouts had listened with interest, for this was new to them, although Hester added: "I've heard the saying, 'Mackerel sky, twelve hours dry.'"

[126]

"Yes, and another one goes, 'Rain before seven, fine before eleven,'" said Judith.

"You will find in summer that heavy dews in the night mean fine weather the following day," added Mrs. Vernon. "Also any thunder-storm that comes with the wind soon passes away, but let it come against the wind, and it is apt to last."

"This one came with the wind and is blowing away already. See!" exclaimed Amy, eagerly.

"Yes, girls, now we can do as the Arabs—fold our tent and steal away," said Mrs. Vernon, rising



carefully so as not to jar the bunny which had remained very quiet all this time.

"I wonder what the girls in the canoe did while the rain was falling," said Judith.

"Leave it to Julie to find a way. I'll say she landed them all on the bank and then turned the canoe upside down over their heads," laughed Hester.

When the canoeists arrived at camp, sometime after the hikers got there, they exchanged experiences. Hester's surmise turned out to be exactly right, and the girls in the canoe were as dry as those who sat under the rubber cover.

[127]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER EIGHT

### JAKE'S INTERVIEW WITH A SKUNK

"GILLY, do you know of any vegetable dye we can find in the woods to dye some burlap for decorations?" asked Julie one day.

"Yes, you can take the berries and leaves of red or staghorn sumac and boil them together to make a black dye, or ink. If you need ink in a hurry, you can take the *Genus Coprinus*, commonly known as the ink mushroom, and pluck it at the end of its first day. The spores are black, and the gills turn into a black fluid at the last. This produces a splendid writing ink, or will dye grass, quills, and other wildwood stuffs."

"Speaking of quills, Gilly—why can't we have chickens as the Grey Fox boys have?" asked Joan.

"What would you do if they got the gapes, and no one would feed them chopped onions?" laughed Mr. Gilroy.

"I'm not looking for trouble, but for pets to have about camp," retorted Joan.

"I'd hardly call a chicken a pet!" laughed Julie.

"Even so, Julie, it would cluck and *appear* to be friendly, even it wasn't."

[128]

"What you scouts need is a good frisky dog for a pet. You can have chickens, if you like, but they are a nuisance. They stray away to lay their eggs, and if they were kept cooped you'd have to spend valuable time making a suitable inclosure. But a dog will go hiking with you, guard you at night from elephants and other prowling animals of the jungle, and be a fine old pal to boot," said Mr. Gilroy.

"Oh, why didn't we think to bring Jippy," exclaimed Amy. Jip was a little poodle of about fifteen years and had had the rickets for the past five years, so he had to be carried about.

The moment the scouts saw that Amy was in earnest they fairly roared, and Judith finally said: "Oh, Amy's catching the *ingénue* habit from Betty! What shall we do with two of them on hand?"

"Had we but known of this dire need of a dog, we would have brought Towser—had he lived. He was only twenty-two this March, and had full use of his bark even though he had no teeth or eyesight. But, alas! alas! Towser is no more!" sighed Julie, rolling her eyes.

As Towser had been one of the "old settlers" in Elmertown, he was known to every man, woman and child there. Many a time, because he was stone-deaf and had not heard the blast from the horn, some one would have to rush out to rescue him from a passing automobile. So Julie's lament caused a new burst of merriment.

[129]

"Stop all fooling now, scouts, and listen to me," said Mr. Gilroy. "I mean a regular dog—an Irish terrier, or a bulldog, to chum with and be of some good to you. How'd you like it?"

"There ain't no sech critter in camp," retorted Julie.

"But I know where to get one! His name is Jake, and he is very fond of the ladies, I'm told."

"His name sounds dreadfully rakish, Gilly," teased Joan.

"If Jacob is as faithful as his name would imply, we'd like to meet him," added Mrs. Vernon, smiling.

"You shall. He lives at the farm where my overseer is, and the next time Mr. Benson is due here, I'll see that Jake accompanies him. If both sides are mutually attracted, the dog shall stay to give you scouts something to do," declared Mr. Gilroy.

"What kind of a dog is he, Gilly?" asked Betty, eagerly.

"He is a prize Airedale. But he is so clever that he tries to run everything on the farm, consequently Mr. Benson always has to separate Jake from the other dogs in the neighborhood."

For the next two days the scouts were kept busy constructing a fine kennel for Jake to live in when he joined their camp. Everything imaginable was done to add to the comfort and luxury of this "dog's life"; and the third day they started for the bungalow to be introduced to Jake, who was expected to arrive that morning. [130]

It was a warm, drowsy day, and the wildwood creatures seemed to be keeping quiet. Even the bees hummed less noisily over the flowers they were robbing of nectar. The girls strolled slowly along the pathway, stopping now and then to watch a bird or examine a flower. They were just passing the bend where the tumbling brook could be plainly seen from the trail when, suddenly, Julie held up a warning hand for quiet.

Every one stopped short and waited. She pointed silently across the bushes in the direction of a long fallen tree that lay on the bank of the stream. The scouts looked, but saw nothing to cause this interest. Then she whispered warily, "I saw a big creature creeping along that log!"

"Really!"

"What did it look like? Which way did it go?" were questions hoarsely whispered.

"It crawled on that log and suddenly disappeared. Maybe it jumped into the water when it saw us. I am thinking it was a beaver," returned Julie.

"Oh, how wonderful! If we could only see it at work," cried some of the scouts.

"How big was it, Julie?" now asked Mrs. Vernon. [131]

"It went so fast that I couldn't see well, but I should say it was about as big as a very large cat, —maybe larger if we were closer," said Julie.

"Dear me, if we didn't have to go for Jake we might sit and wait for it to appear again. If it is a beaver, I'd love to watch it build a dam," sighed Ruth.

"I hope Jake won't want to chase it, on our way back," Betty worried, as the thought struck her.

"We'll hold Jake on a leash. And if he doesn't make a fuss we might creep over and watch for the animal's appearance again," added Julie.

"Then the sooner we go and get Jake, the sooner we'll be back here," was the sensible remark of Joan.

The scouts now hurried along the trail and soon reached the bungalow, where a splendid Airedale was sleeping in the sunshine. He was stretched out full length right in the way where one would have to pass to go up the steps to the verandah.

"Oh, are you Jake?" called Julie quickly, when she saw the dog.

"Isn't he a beaut?" cried Joan, admiring the shapely form as it jumped up to growl at the visitors.

"Why, Jake, don't begin our relations with a growl! Don't you know we have to keep the peace all summer?" laughed Julie, snapping her fingers to the dog.

Mr. Gilroy heard voices and came out on the verandah. The moment he greeted the scouts familiarly, Jake wagged his stump of a tail and ran up to show his friendship for his master's friends. [132]

The girls fussed over the dog immediately, and Mr. Gilroy smiled. "Well, what do you think of him, scouts? Is he homely enough to win your pity? You know it is said, 'Pity is akin to love.'"

"He's a regular peach, Gilly!" exclaimed Joan.

"Just what we need at camp," added Judith.

And in the next ten minutes the dog had won high favor with his future companions. Then the scouts told about the animal they believed to be a beaver, so they wanted to hurry back and watch.

"But hold to the leash if you go near the log. Jake is a born hunter," advised Mr. Benson.

"Oh, he is very obedient if you speak sternly to him," added Mr. Gilroy. "If he tugs or wants to run, just command in severe tones, 'To heel, Jake,' and he will obey like a lamb."

Jake wagged his tail as he watched Mr. Gilroy, and when the order was given, 'To heel, Jake,' he crept behind his master.

"Oh, the darling! Doesn't he mind splendidly!" cried several of the scouts.

"I'll come along pretty soon. Wait for me near the log where you saw the beaver. I'll finish up with Benson and then join you there," said Mr. Gilroy, as the scouts started down the trail again, leading Jake by the leash. [133]

Every one was delighted with the meek and obedient dog, and the fussing was accepted by him

as his due, but he paid no attention to the numerous pats and endearing names given him as they walked along. Then they reached the open space where the log bounded the edge of the running water. It was about a hundred yards from the trail and distinctly visible because the brook was lower than the footpath where the scouts stood.

"There it is! I saw it!" exclaimed Joan, excitedly.

At the same moment Jake also saw something doubtful moving swiftly out of sight back of the log. The girls ran over to the bushes to see the better, and Julie's hold on the leash relaxed unconsciously. In that same second, Jake took mean advantage of her inattention to him and darted away.

"Oh, oh! Come back here, Jake!" yelled Julie instantly.

But the dog stood upon a rock, his ears erect, his nose sniffing as he pointed it in the direction of the log. His tail trembled spasmodically and the hair along his spine stood up stiffly.

"I say, to heel, Jake. Come back, to heel!" shouted every scout in the group. But Jake was deaf to their calls.

Then the Captain called to him, but he bounded from the rock and managed to force his way through the bushes, the leash catching here and there on stumps, on sharp rocks, or on bushes. [134]

"What shall we do? Now he'll kill the little beaver!" wailed Betty, wringing her hands.

"Some one run back and get Gilly! *He'll* make him mind," ordered Julie.

"Who's Orderly for the Day? I want to wait and watch what he does," said Joan.

"Oh, pshaw! I'm Orderly, and I s'pose I've got to go," declared Judith, impatiently.

"I'll go for you, Judy, 'cause I can't bear to wait here and see Jake kill anything," said Betty, deeply distressed.

"All right, Judy,—let Betty go instead, if she likes," agreed the Corporal. So Betty ran swiftly away while the other scouts resumed their coaxings to draw Jake away from the log.

Julie now started to break away through the bush to get the dog, and several of the girls followed closely at her heels. When they reached the place where they had seen something move, they also saw tracks in the soft soil.

"It really is a wild animal," said Julie, excited at sight of the footprints.

"But what? Do you know?" asked Judith.

"No, but it must be a beaver—or a fox. I don't know which," confessed Julie.

But they couldn't get at Jake. He was racing excitedly up and down on the log, his nose close to the strangely odorous scent, and all the commands and persuasions from the scouts failed to make the least impression on him. His nervous short yelps showed how keen he was to have a face-to-face bout with the animal. [135]

Julie tried to step on the leash, but he dragged her foot so that she suddenly sat down violently on the ground. Then he nosed under the grass that hung over the brook, and finally swam over to the other side. There he stood and watched nervously, but the girls could not get him back again.

"Talk about his minding! Why, he's the cussedest dog I ever saw!" complained Julie, as she got up and shook her clothes free of the briars.

"There's no use standing in this baking sun to look at Jake standing on the other bank!" exclaimed Joan, angrily eying the disobedient dog.

"We'll go back to the shady trail and watch for Gilly," said Julie, starting back to join the Captain. But they kept calling to Jake as they retraced their steps.

When they got back to the slight elevation where Mrs. Vernon and Amy had waited, anxiously watching results, they saw Jake make a leap and swim quickly back across the brook to the log.

"He must have seen or heard something that time," whispered Hester.

"Yes, 'cause he's stretched out on that log nervously wagging his tail with his eyes glued on something," admitted Amy. [136]

Then they caught their breath. The scouts saw a movement in the green leaves at the end of the log and then—Jake was creeping stealthily across that log, as if he also saw what he wanted to pounce upon.

"Oh, oh! Jake's got it! He's jumped upon it!" screamed Julie, frantically.

"Why, it's a great big tomcat! They're fighting!" cried Hester, too excited to stand still, but jumping up and down.

"A cat! Gilly hasn't a cat that color!" declared Joan.

"Girls!" fairly hissed Julie. "I bet it's a wildcat—and it will kill Jake as sure as anything!"

"No, no! Oh, girls, I just saw it, too! It's a skunk! Run, run—for your lives!" cried Mrs. Vernon, turning to run up the trail towards the bungalow.

But several of the scouts would not desert the dog. He had carried the skunk off its feet with his unexpected leap upon it, and the two rolled and fought madly for supremacy. The leash, instead of tripping Jake, got tangled in the skunk's legs, and both animals rolled back and forth.

The enraged beast fired the deadly fluid to blind her antagonist, but it drenched the fallen tree only. Then Jake caught a grip on her throat and shook her head; still she was game and kept on struggling. [137]

Again they rolled over together, the skunk trying to get to the brink of the water, where she would manage to roll them both in. But Jake understood that motive, too, and braced his feet against the stones in their way.

A second volley of the ill-smelling spray from the skunk struck at random, and then Jake gave her neck another sudden shake. This time it was effective, and the head suddenly hung limp. Jake had broken her neck, and was the victor!

He now took great pains to drag the trophy through the brush to present to his friends in the roadway. The leash caught several times and almost snapped his own neck, and the skunk was heavy, but he managed to drag it along.

When Julie saw his intent she screamed and warned the girls to flee! And in running up the trail they met Mr. Gilroy, who had been summoned by half-crazed Betty's crying, "Jake and the beaver are killing each other!"

Mr. Gilroy did not stop to hear what Julie tried to gasp, but he ran down and saw Jake bringing the skunk out into the pathway.

"To heel! to heel, Jake!" shouted Mr. Gilroy, holding his nose when the dog tried to jump upon him in the ecstasy of having achieved such a great deed.

"What shall we do with him? He can't sleep at Dandelion camp to-night," wailed the girls, as they, too, held their noses. [138]

"I'll have to take him back to the barn and have Hiram turn the hose on him for twenty-four hours."

"Isn't there a reward for skunks in the country?" now asked the Captain.

"Not only a reward, but the pelts are valuable since they became so fashionable," remarked Mr. Gilroy, complacently.

"Well, Jake's earned his keep to-day, then," declared Judith.

"But it will cost more than the skunk brings to pay for the nine hundred and ninety-nine bottles of *fleur-de-lis* toilet water Gilly will have to use to change Jake's scent!" laughed Julie. [139]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER NINE

### LESSONS IN TRACKING

"WELL, scouts! That shows us how little we know about wild animal's tracks," remarked Mrs. Vernon, after Jake had been made to go back to the bungalow, and the Troop went on to camp.

"I could have sworn that skunk's footprints were a coon's or a fox's,—or something big!" exclaimed Julie, trying to justify her mistake.

"To me, the tracks in the soil looked like a lynx's, or something," added Joan, hoping to cover the ignominy of having unearthed a skunk without knowing the animal.

"Isn't there some sort of book that will teach us how to recognize tracks, girls?" asked Hester.

"Is there, Verny? Maybe we can get one at the bungalow," added Julie.

"I don't know of any at this moment, but Mr. Gilroy surely will know," replied the Captain.

So they all went to the bungalow the next morning to inquire after Jake's scent, and also to borrow any books on the subject they had discussed.

"Yes, I have several books, and let me tell you they are precious, too. There are but few on this subject, and the one I consider the best was compiled by Ernest Seton-Thompson under great difficulties. He had to gather all information from plaster casts made in the tracks themselves, or [140]

from sketches, or from camera pictures taken on the spot.

"As every different animal leaves a different track, there are many illustrations necessary in such a work, and that makes the book most desirable and also very expensive. But it is great fun to study the pictures and then try to recognize the tracks in the woods."

"We haven't found any about camp," said Judith, regretfully.

"There must be all sorts of tracks there, but you don't know how to find them. Now, if you want to study this book and then practice early some morning, I'll come down and help find the tracks," Mr. Gilroy said.

"Oh, great! Will you come to-morrow morning?" asked the girls.

"Hadn't we better study the book first, scouts, and let Gilly know when we are ready to go tracking?" suggested the Captain.

So for a time every one was busy reading the book and trying to discover a track in the woods near camp. But Julie laughed as she said, "It isn't likely that a wild animal will prowl close to our camp at night. We'll have to hunt one some distance away."

[141]

Mr. Gilroy overheard the remark as he came down the trail. "Sometimes the animals will come quite close to camp just to find out what it is that is intruding on their forest domain."

"Well, then, I wish they'd hurry and come here!" declared Judith.

"When you are ready to hunt tracks, I'll arrange some baits around your camp grounds; and the next morning I'll vow you'll see that you've had callers while you slept. So quiet are they that you won't hear them, either," said Mr. Gilroy.

"We are ready to hunt now, Gilly. We know everything in the book and are crazy to test it," said Joan, eagerly.

"Then I'll tell you what we might do. I was going over to Grey Fox Camp, but if you girls will deliver a message for me, I will go home and attend to the bait I spoke of. Hiram and I will do the rest."

"All right—what do you want us to say to the boys?" agreed the scouts.

"Now, listen! Tell them that I want them to start out at dawn in the morning and hunt up all the tracks they can trace about their camp. Then to-morrow afternoon they are to come over here with their reports and have a match with you girls. The side showing the best results and most interesting experience shall have a prize. How does it strike you?" Mr. Gilroy glanced at the pleased faces as he concluded.

[142]

"Fine! Do they know much about tracks?" returned Julie.

"Oh, yes, but then you must understand that they have been scouting for more than four years. Tell them that this is your first summer in a genuine forest camp, and they need not expect you to accomplish wonders. Then you girls must turn in and do your best!" laughed Mr. Gilroy.

The scouts were most enthusiastic, and gaily agreed to follow Mr. Gilroy's suggestions. When they were ready to hike over the crest, the Captain said, "We may as well invite the boys to supper to-morrow and make a party of it."

"That will be splendid. And I'll contribute my quota to the dinner instead of eating it at home," added Mr. Gilroy.

"We may have quail or partridge for dinner if we track the birds carefully," suggested Joan, giggling.

"Venison steaks are better," hinted Mrs. Vernon.

"What's the matter with bear steaks, while we're about it? They're said to be gamier in flavor," laughed Julie.

"We'll have all three, and serve a ten-course dinner to the boys," added Ruth.

With light banter the scouts left Mr. Gilroy where the trails diverged,—they to cross the crest and invite the boys over for supper the next day, and Mr. Gilroy to go home to find the "bait."

Dandelion Camp was abandoned for a long time that day, and it was too late in the afternoon when the scouts returned, to ask what had been done in the woods during their absence; but a great deal had taken place there, as Hiram and his master could have told had they been so inclined. Even Jake could have testified to mysterious actions, and many queer maneuvers of familiar animals from the barnyard, but the girls never asked *him*. Their faith in Mr. Gilroy was sublime!

[143]

While the Dandelioners sat eating their camp supper, they discussed the boys they had visited that day.

"I declare! I wonder if we ever *will* know as much about the woods as those Grey Fox boys do," sighed Hester, taking a bite of baked potato.

"Sure! We know almost as much as they do already," bragged Joan.

"They gave us a lovely luncheon—and all with nothing to do it with," added Judith.

"And it's up to us, girls, to give them a dinner that will make their eyes pop out to-morrow!" declared Ruth.

"Let's plan it now, and do as much towards it as possible, then we can give that much extra time to tracking," suggested Julie.

"And, scouts! I want you to display every bit of fine work you have done since we've been in camp, and all the work we did at camp last summer, as well, and brought with us this year," advised the Captain.

[144]

"Yes, we don't want those boys to think we don't know a thing! The stuff we've made is so different from what they have, too," admitted the leader.

So the evening was employed in arranging many exhibits to impress the visitors the following afternoon. Then the scouts rolled into bed.

"Verny, you'd better set the alarm clock for four in the morning," called Julie, the last thing.

"Yes, we want to be up and ready to start when Gilly comes for us," added Joan, the Corporal.

"All right. Go to sleep now, or you'll all over-sleep," laughed the Captain from her tent.

But there was no need of an alarm clock. The girls were up half an hour before it rang, and were impatiently waiting for the arrival of their instructor in tracking. Some of the scouts had gone into the bushes to begin a search, but had found nothing.

It took but a few moments after Mr. Gilroy arrived to outline his plans for the work and fun. "We will scatter in couples to hunt for any sort of track whatever. The first couple that discovers any genuine track must call out, then we all will run and study it for what it is, or where it leads to. Now, pair off, scouts, but the Captain and I will follow at a distance and hurry to the first pair who find a track."

"There are nine of us—how about the odd one?" asked Julie.

"Let the three youngest go together," returned the Captain. So Amy, Betty and Judith hunted in trio.

[145]

It was a "still hunt" for a time, since every one was too intent on finding a track to speak. Most of the scouts took to the dense bushes and woods, but the Leader sought in a clearing and was the first to summon the others.

"Oh, come, every one! We've found a great big track!" called Julie, as she and her companion knelt to inspect the prints.

Every one raced wildly to the clearing, and, sure enough, there were hoof prints distinctly marked in the soil. The trail led across the clearing into the dense forest.

"Aren't they big?" excitedly asked Joan.

"They're made by a deer!" said Julie, boastfully.

"Are they, Gilly?" asked the girls as the Judge came up.

He pretended to study them carefully, and then said: "I shall have to wait and compare them with those in the book."

"Maybe it is a reindeer?" suggested Betty, eagerly.

"Mercy no! We don't have reindeers south of the Pole!" declared her sister.

"Look here, girls! This creature only had two legs—it left only two hoofmarks, one for each side," cried Judith now.

"Then I know what it was! It was that familiar animal that carries a pitchfork, smells of sulphur and is known to have hoofs," retorted Julie, making them all laugh merrily.

[146]

"I'm sure I have no desire to trail *him*!" said the Captain, holding up both hands as if to ward off such a danger. "Let him go to his lair in peace!"

"All joking aside, girls, this is a queer track—only two feet instead of four. Let's follow and see where it goes," suggested Mr. Gilroy.

So they trailed the plainly visible tracks, and after a distance, Julie said: "Whatever it is, it couldn't have traveled so far as this if it was a cripple. It just *couldn't* walk on two hind legs all this way."

Mr. Gilroy had to laugh loudly at this, but he said, "No, but don't give up hope! You may stumble right over the prostrate buck."

But the trail now crossed itself several times, and the scouts wondered which way the two-legged creature finally went, for all tracks were obliterated after that criss-cross place in a tiny

clearing.

The Corporal was determined to pick it up again somewhere, so she finally came out to the trail that ran from the camp to the bungalow. Here she wandered up and down for a short distance, and then spied the tracks again.

"Oh, I've got him again. He goes right up this trail," so she followed.

The others followed at a distance, and then she shouted, "He prowled around Gilly's house, too, last night, for I see the hoofmarks here."

[147]

Julie would have gone after the tracks to the right "lair," but Hiram came forward from the barnyard to meet her. He had heard her call to the others, and offered a solution to the problem.

"I seen them tracks this mornin', too, Miss Julie, and I'm sure that animal come to the barnyard las' night to feed offen the hay and corn he could find around there."

"Oh, really! Would one do that?" asked Julie, amazed.

"Sure he would, if he was a deer. An' them tracks ain't no grizzly, er fox, er other critter, you know."

"No; of course, it is a deer, as one can see by the tracks. But I'm sorry we have to end in such an ordinary place as the barnyard," sighed Julie.

"I see'd some queer tracks down by that log where Jake caught the skunk," now hinted Hiram.

That was enough! In another moment every scout was bounding down the trail in order to reach the spot first and win honor by knowing the track correctly.

Hester found these tracks first, and shouted to her friends, "This has small cloven feet, but there are only two legs, also! Now and then you can see where one track looks as if a hind foot had broken in on another one!"

"Oh, girls! That explains that other two-footed animal!" now exclaimed Julie, quickly.

[148]

"What, what?" demanded every one eagerly.

"Most likely the deer stepped daintily with its hind feet directly in the same track made by its forefeet. It said something about that in the book, you know."

"Do you think that is it, Gilly?" now asked several anxious voices.

"Exactly! I was hoping you'd find that out," agreed he.

"Well, does this creature show any unusual tendencies, girls, by which you can recognize it?" laughed Mrs. Vernon.

"Not a thing! It starts from the trail and goes right through the brush where we broke a way that day the skunk was killed, and it stopped to question nothing. It must have been in a hurry to get a drink," explained Joan.

The trail plainly led to the brook, and ended there. No sign of anything going back again could be found, although the girls looked carefully over the entire place. Then Julie thought she saw something in the soft soil upon the opposite bank. To make sure, she waded through the shallow but swiftly running water, and there, on the steep bank, she saw the tracks again.

"Ha! I found 'em! plain as day. Come and follow!" called she. And off she started.

Not more than a dozen yards along the top of the bank she found the tracks go down again; and through the brook she went, up the other side, and back to the brush-clearing on a new trail, following the cloven-footed tracks. Out on the hard trail they were lost.

[149]

"Now, that makes two I've trailed and lost. It's a shame!" cried Julie, stamping her foot.

"Better to have trailed and lost than never to have found at all," misquoted Mrs. Vernon, laughingly.

"If the first one was a deer, this second one must have been a little fawn," said Judith.

"Is there any other animal that wears hoofs?" asked Ruth, of no one in particular.

Now, Mr. Gilroy must have dreaded the reply, for he quickly changed the subject. "How many of you brought the plaster and bottle of water?" Every one had.

"Well, why not make a little cast of both the tracks you do not recognize and then compare them with those in the book when we go back to camp?"

This sounded fine, so the scouts were soon busy making casts of the tracks. When hard, they were handed to the Captain and Mr. Gilroy to carry carefully until they all reached camp.

Quite near the camp ground Hester made a discovery. "Oh, come and see! Here is something with toes. As big as a wildcat, or maybe a little bear!"

Yes, there were toes in this animal's tracks—as plain as could be. So the scouts guessed every animal known, excepting the coyote and water-loving creatures. After many futile suggestions,

[150]

they made a plaster cast of these tracks also.

"I'm going to carry this load back to camp, girls, and be ready for the next one you give me," announced Mr. Gilroy, starting to go down the trail.

The next two tracks, one that of a large-toed animal and the other of one whose tracks showed how the hair grew down low on the hind legs,—for the hair showed in several of the imprints made of plaster,—strangely ended near the bungalow, and on the other side of the hard trail again, they ran as far as the barnyard.

"I never saw the beat of it! Any one would think Gilly hung the bait on the barn door to entice the animals here," said Julie, who was angry at winding up at such a place three times running. Mr. Gilroy had to laugh in spite of himself.

"Say, where did you put that bait, anyway, Gilly?" demanded the scout leader, watching the man skeptically.

"Where we knew it would attract the best results."

"Gilly, I verily believe you are hoaxing us!" cried Julie. Mrs. Vernon smiled at her bright scout, but Mr. Gilroy shook his head protestingly.

"Why should I hoax any one? I was laughing at the way you brave scouts dodged when Joan said the animal they lost might be crouching on a bough of the trees." [151]

"No, that wasn't what made you laugh." Then Julie went over and held a secret conference with her corporal and Ruth, and they, grinning, urged her to do as she suggested.

So Julie took a sample of the different casts made in the tracks, and left the others engaged in finding new and intricate tracks. Mr. Gilroy and the Captain were not taken into the three scouts' confidence, but they must have suspected where Julie proposed going, for soon after she had gone Mrs. Vernon said:

"Girls, if we expect to entertain the Grey Fox boys at dinner this afternoon, we'd better go back now and begin work."

"Without a clue to any wild animal we tracked?" sighed Judith.

"Oh, yes, Judy—we've got some fine clues, and by the time we're at camp and have our books out, Julie will be back with proofs! Come on," was Joan's assurance to the girls.

On the way, the scouts discussed the last track they had discovered. "I was sure it was a crow's," asserted Amy.

"No, it was more like a chicken-hawk's," Hester added.

"There wouldn't be any chicken-hawk around here in these woods," said Joan. [152]

"Maybe it was the American Eagle," laughed Mr. Gilroy.

"Yes, it got tired of sitting on the flagpole where the colors have hung for four days without being taken in at night, as they should be," remarked the Captain.

"Dear me, Verny, there is so much to remember in camp. We always remember the flag after we are in bed at night," complained Ruth.

"The Orderly will have to appoint a flagman for each day after this," said Mrs. Vernon.

They finally reached camp, and had a light luncheon ready before Julie returned. She came down the trail sprightly, with one hand holding something behind her, and singing as she came.

"Where have you been, Julie?" asked several of the scouts.

"Did you find out what you went for?" asked others.

"Yep! I learned that we have among us the queerest sort of creature, girls. It really walks on two legs, holds its head upright, and belongs to the fox class. I tracked it right to our midst," laughed Julie.

The scouts seemed perplexed, and Julie, too full of her discoveries to tease very long, said, "His name is 'Foxy Grandpa,' and you all know him well!"

Every eye glanced at Mr. Gilroy, and he laughingly replied, "Why do you all seem to think I am that animal?" [153]

"Because you are, Gilly!" retorted Julie. "And I'll prove it now, to every one's satisfaction."

"First, then: Did Hiram miss any calves or pigs or other domestic animals from his barnyard yesterday?"

Mr. Gilroy threw up both hands in submission when he saw the knowing look in the leader's eyes.

"Because here are the molds we made of the tracks found in the forest, girls. And here are molds I made of the heifer, a pig, the Great Dane, and a chicken, at the bungalow. Can you find



any difference?"

Both the Captain and Mr. Gilroy laughed, but the scouts gasped in unbelief, "Would Gilly do such a thing?"

Not one bit of difference was found when comparing the molds of each animal, and then Mr. Gilroy had to tell how he did it. Of course, the scouts laughed mirthlessly, for they were thinking of how those Grey Fox boys would jeer at their woodcraft. But Julie now brought out in front, the hand which had held something behind her.

"Here is the hawk—or American Eaglet. I brought it with me for dinner to-night. To Gilly it will be crow-pie, but to us it will be spring chicken." And the Leader tossed a dead chicken upon the grass. Then she added:

[154]

"That's what happens to all 'critters' that trespass on our land. Hiram tells me that when a farmer catches an animal on his land, he generally holds it for ransom, or for food for himself, so we have not fared so badly, scouts, in this day's work!

"Behold the other trophies coming! I took them because they broke the law and trespassed on our estates last night." Julie waved a hand dramatically towards the trail, and every one turned to look.

Hiram was slowly advancing toward camp, leading with one hand a fractious pig, and with the other hand dragging an unwilling half-grown heifer on a chain. Jake was jumping about and barking excitedly as they came over and stood like prisoners at the bar.

"Mr. Foxy Grandpa," began Julie, as severely as she could, "because of your crime of misleading trusting scouts into a snare, I pronounce this judgment upon you, and therefore levy upon your property to satisfy the judgment.

"This wild deer and its little fawn shall henceforth be the property of the injured ones—insulted past all forgiveness by your fraud. And the innocent victims used to perpetrate your schemes, being as free from guile as the scouts themselves, shall dwell henceforth together in peace and tranquillity!"

Every one laughed heartily at the dénouement for it was so like Julie; but Mrs. Vernon added, "Julie you speak exactly like the millennial times, when the lion and the lamb shall dwell in love and peace together."

[155]

"The lion will dwell with the lamb, all right, but the lamb will be the *piece* inside the lion," added Mr. Gilroy; "just as this pig will live in camp! Such a life as it will lead you!"

"No good talking 'sour grapes', now, Gilly," advised Julie, wisely. "The calf and the pig remain, no matter what sort of life they lead us."

"What can you expect to do with two such pets?" asked Mr. Gilroy, who was honestly amazed at the scouts' unexpected appropriation.

"First, build a pen for them, and second, have veal and pork before we leave for home!" retorted Julie. She then ordered all the scouts to fall to work and construct a temporary shelter for the two creatures.

Mr. Gilroy seemed too surprised to comment, and when Hiram finally delivered the calf and pig into Julie's custody, Mr. Gilroy turned to her and said, "Do you *really* mean to keep the beasts, here in camp?"

"Why, of course! Why should we go to all this fuss for nothing?"

"Well, I can't see, yet, why you should?"

When the calf and pig were temporarily tied to a tree, where they seemed as much at home as back in the barnyard, Julie said, "By the way, Gilly, what did you call the pets when they were yours?"

"They have never been christened, because I waited for an opportune time. It is here now!" returned Mr. Gilroy, picking up one of the bottles of water that had done duty to make plaster casts that morning.

[156]

He held it over the calf's head and poured half of its contents out while he said solemnly:

"Dear little deer, henceforth you shall be known as Julia, in honor of the intrepid scout that captured you, single-handed.

"Likewise, this sweet little fawn, known by its tracks through the wilderness, shall be named Ant-and-ett because of its peculiar habits,—busy as an ant and eats all that comes its way!" Then the rest of the water was emptied over the pig's head.

"*Antoinette* it shall be, now and forever," declared Julie, while the other scouts laughed uproariously. But the two names stuck, and thereafter the calf was "Julia" and the pig was generally called by the name of "Anty."

After the christening Mr. Gilroy beckoned for the Captain to join him where the girls could not over-hear his conversation. "You don't suppose the girls are in earnest about keeping the pig and

calf at camp, do you?" asked he, anxiously.

"Yes, certainly," laughed Mrs. Vernon. "You don't know girls of this age, or you'd understand that they enjoy all these silly pranks thoroughly, and really, they act as safety-valves."

[157]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER TEN

### THE GIRL SCOUTS ENTERTAIN

"Now, Gilly, you've got to help us build the sheds for Julia and Anty, or go home until its time for the party," exclaimed the Leader, calling to the still-wondering man.

"If we're to have any dinner ready for the Grey Foxes; I think Hiram and Gilly ought to do the building of the sheds, and let us get busy with the cooking," added the Corporal.

"Yes, that's a better plan," admitted Julie. "Come on, now, Gilly, don't shirk your duty!"

So Mr. Gilroy and his man were set to do construction work, while the scouts ran to and fro, fetching and carrying, arranging exhibits, baking, cooking, and what-not, that Dandelion Troop need not take a "back seat" in comparison with the Grey Foxes.

"Verny," whispered Julie, soon after the two men were sawing and nailing at the sheds, "it's as plain as the nose on my face, that Gilly thinks those boys are far cleverer than we girls."

"What makes you think so, Julie?" asked Joan, who was passing at the time.

[158]

"Never mind, now, Jo, but we've just got to show him, as well as his boys, that girl scouts know a heap more than they talk about. That's why I'm anxious to make a 'ten-strike' with dinner!"

"It is too bad we were tricked with false tracks," said Mrs. Vernon.

"I don't believe those boys would have known any better, under the circumstances, but of course, they won't admit it."

"Forget it!" said Julie, shortly. "And listen to me. Take all the contents of our boxes out upon the cots, and call upon all the girls you need to help in the work. Turn the packing cases upside down and cover them with some of our embroidered covers; then arrange to the best advantage, everything we can show for our past year in scoutdom.

"Try to group our exhibits according to their relationship with each other, but leave all the Indian pots and dishes scattered about carelessly as if we were accustomed to using them daily. The birchbark baskets and articles can be hung about on tents or trees where they will show off best,—but don't let it look as if the stunt was done on purpose for this occasion—see?"

Joan smiled. "Yes, I see! Leave it to the Girl Scouts!"

So, although there was plenty of activity before, now there was no end of rushing and laughing and planning between the scouts. The pots and dishes Julie spoke of were left to Mrs. Vernon to place, and she accomplished the task of studying carefully the apparent carelessness of leaving the vessels about.

[159]

These Indian pots and dishes were the most interesting things the scouts had made. It was simple work, and took but little time and no cost to produce the results. And most effective they were.

They took a lump of clay and worked out all the hard bits, and sticks or stones, then shaped it for the bottom of a bowl or pot. In its first step it looked like a flat saucer, then it was left an hour or two, according to the thickness of the clay, to dry well. After that the sides were built up on this saucerlike bottom.

It was shaped the desired form, and patted into the thickness required, then smoothed out nicely, both inside and out, and again dried as before. Now it was baked in a hot fire for several hours, so that when it was cool it was a fireproof bowl.

The only trouble the girls had had with this interesting art was the carelessness of a few of them in cooling the dishes too quickly. They found the clay invariably cracked when the pots were too quickly cooled after taking them from the fire. But by slow degrees of cooling, which took about three hours, they came out perfect.

The scouts had decorated their pots as they felt inclined, so that they presented a varied and pleasing array as they stood about camp, in places where the eye would see them to their best advantage. Some were painted with wood-dyes, and others were etched in relief patterns.

[160]

When the Captain had finished her task, she silently drew the attention of the scouts to the groups, and they all stood and smiled proudly at their handiwork.

"We didn't see anything like that at Grey Fox Camp," bragged Judith to Joan.

"No sir! Nor did they have a cookstove like ours! Alec may have made a roasting-fan such as we never heard of before, but we can show him a thing or two when he comes over!" exclaimed Joan.

At this moment Julie was heard calling the Orderly.

"How about that chicken? Some one's got to draw it so it can be cooked. It ought to go on the fire in another half hour."

At this Mr. Gilroy called out, "You're not going to eat my chicken, are you?"

"Sure! That's why I had Hiram wring its neck. I knew the poor thing wouldn't object to being cooked if once its breath was gone," laughed Julie.

"Dear me! It's my turn to draw the fowl and I hate it!" complained Ruth.

"S-sh!" warned Julie, waving a frying-pan at Ruth, "it is for the Cause of Woman this time, so don't cry, Ruthy!"

"I'll help do it, Ruth," Betty now offered kindly. "I know how you dislike the work, but 'Liza showed me how to do it so that it really isn't half bad."

[161]

Betty poured scalding water over the chicken, and the feathers came off easily. Then she slit the throat and breast and removed the entrails without causing any repulsion in Ruth. When it was ready, Ruth admitted that she knew she could do the work the next time without a qualm.

The cookstove the scouts were so proud of was a remarkable affair—even Mr. Gilroy admitted that. Mrs. Vernon had discovered a heap of fine flat stones, such as a surveyor uses for his "corners," and these were used. The largest stones were placed against a tree that would act as draught to the fire, and the mound was built up until it was a convenient height to use without bending uncomfortably low, as is necessary with campfires.

Through the center of this mound was a well, and on four sides of the rounded mound were windowlike openings backed with tin; in these niches various pots or pans could be kept hot while other viands were cooking on top of the stove.

The top was made of a sheet of thin stove-iron which the Captain had brought from home, and near the bottom of the mound was a tipping-stone upon which the fire was laid. When the fire was out, its ashes could be removed by tipping the flat stone over and letting the cinders fall to the bottom, where they could be raked away quite easily.

[162]

This opening provided draught for the fire, and at the back, from the fire-stone, an opening had been left, and here to several feet above the top of the stove, a length of stove-pipe carried all smoke out and above the heads of the scouts.

The girls had also built a fireless cooker in the ground just beside their stove, where fish, or any article needing steady heat, could be placed. This cooking-pit was constructed after the plan adopted by most scouts, and described fully in the manual.

While Ruth and Betty were busy preparing the chicken, Mrs. Vernon built a good fire in the stove, and had several of the girls heat the stones in the fireless cooker, to be ready for use.

Mr. Gilroy had donated several fine lake trout that day, so these were cleaned and washed and placed in the cooker-pit, where they would need no watching but be done to a turn when wanted.

The chicken was cut up for a fricasee, and diced onions and potatoes were prepared to add to the boiling liquid about an hour before serving. This would provide not only soup for the first course, but chicken with dumplings for a third course. They proposed having the fish with butter sauce for the second course.

Just as Julie added the diced potatoes, Hester exclaimed, "Oh, Jule! what did you do that for? Those duck-potatoes were meant to make the boys' eyes bulge!"

[163]

"What duck-potatoes? I never touched them!" declared Julie, defensively.

"Didn't you cut them up and use them just now?"

"I should say not! After all the work we had in finding and digging them! Why, they ought to be preserved—not eaten," laughed the Leader.

"Thank goodness!" sighed Hester, in such evident relief that every one laughed sympathetically.

"Who's doing the Indian cucumbers?" called the Corporal.

"I am!" answered Judith. "They're all peeled and sliced ready to serve. And Amy gathered the dandelion greens to go with them."

"Fine! Verny is making a mayonnaise to use with the salad. My! Won't those boys have the wind taken out of their sails when they see the duck potatoes and Indian cucumbers!" giggled Joan.

Mr. Gilroy had not missed much of all this whispering and joyous confusion, and he chuckled to himself as he and Hiram finished nailing the last boards on the sheds and turned Julia into her new home. The small pigsty was soon completed, and then a fence was built about it, but it was not calculated to keep a full-grown pig in bounds; it was strong enough for Antoinette, however, at that time.

Before the pig-pen was quite finished, the scouts heard the whistles and calls from the Grey Fox boys, as they hiked over the crest trail. So they fluttered about anxiously to see that not an item on the programme was forgotten. [164]

Hiram was on his way to the bungalow, and Mr. Gilroy had hurried down to the lake to wash up and make his dinner toilet, when the boys came gaily into camp. After greeting their hostesses, the Grey Fox scouts looked around.

"Well, guess you girls are planning to spread yourselves for dinner, eh?" asked Alec, jocularly.

"Oh, nothing more than usual; we live high every day," returned Julie, tossing her head.

Nothing more was said about dinner just then, but a loud call from "Julia" drew all attention to her shed. The boys stared in surprise at the two buildings they had never noticed before.

"Isn't that a pig—in that pen?" asked Ned, amazedly.

"No, it's Antoinette—our latest girl scout!" giggled Amy.

The boys laughed, for the name struck them as awfully funny for a pig. Then they walked from Anty's pen to the shed, which had a door swung on leather hinges, but it was closed.

"And what sort of scout do you lock up in here?" asked Bob, condescendingly.

"Bob Veal!" retorted Julie, causing every one to roar at the questioner.

Bob flushed, but walked over to the stove where the Captain stood stirring the dumplings in the chicken soup. "That's a fine stove, Captain," ventured he. [165]

"Yes, it is something like the one we built last year in camp. That was so convenient we decided to have another this summer. Wouldn't you boys like to examine it closely?"

Thereupon the Grey Foxes did examine it closely, much to their advantage on useful ideas of kitchen equipment. Then they saw the fireless cooker that was in use for the time being; so they passed on to inspect the various birchbark hanging-baskets filled with flowers; the rustic fern-boxes, and all the useful articles the scouts had manufactured of birchbark and acorns.

"It takes a girl to do fancywork, all right. Now, we boys are not gifted that way, you see, but we can make other things, instead," remarked Alec, bestowing a male's compliments on feminine accomplishments.

"Just what can you make, or have done, that we girls are not able to do?" demanded Julie.

"Oh, I wasn't personal in any way,—I just meant that it is quite natural for women to do the light things while men have to look after the business of life!"

"Well, the quicker you open your eyes to facts, and see that we women of the present age are fast outstripping the men in *every* calling, the better it will be for your own good!" said Julie.

"Just glance around, boys, and tell us if you can make a better showing for *your* four years," added Joan, waving her hand at the various exhibits. [166]

It happened that the girls had each been given a cue by Julie, so that when the Grey Fox boys came into camp, Judith was found sweeping carefully with a camp-made broom, Amy and Betty were placing a tabletop upon its legs and then starting to set the table, and the other scouts were busy with other unusual things. Now Dick walked over to Judith.

"How did you know you could make a broom like this?" said he.

"Why, this is an old one made the first day we came to camp. You ought to see our new ones. They are fine!"

Dick examined the broom, and called Alec over. "They can make brooms, all right, Alec!" said he, showing the article in question. It was made of long hickory shavings, well bound about a good handle, and promised to outlast any dozen store brooms.

"But why sweep this grass,—that's foolish," said Alec.

"No, because this is where we will sit about the table. We always sweep away the crumbs or trash that fall during mealtime, so the ants and other insects won't annoy us. This morning, however, we were in such a hurry to get out with Gilly, that we forgot the usual routine work in camp," explained Judith.

The two boys exchanged glances, but Judith saw them. Alec then said, smilingly, "Oh, yes! How did that track-hunt come off? I suppose you scouts knew every animal, eh?" [167]

Judith now realized that Mr. Gilroy had had the whole joke planned out with the Grey Fox boys, and that the boys were only waiting to have a good old laugh on the girls. So she deliberately told

a lie,—fervently praying that it be forgiven for the "Cause of Women."

She glanced roguishly up at Alec, and winked one eye. "Wasn't it too funny for anything,—the way we led Gilly about by the nose?"

The boys stared in surprise for a moment, then Dick said, "What do you mean? Didn't you scouts go out at dawn with Gilly to study tracks?"

"Sure! But didn't you boys know about the joke we made up on him about those tracks? That's why he is so late to dinner."

"Tell us about it?" eagerly begged both boys.

"Oh! I can't. I thought you knew something about it or you wouldn't have grinned the way you did. I'm so sorry I let the cat out of the bag, for likely, our Leader wants to tell you the story while we all are at dinner," cried Judith, the picture of regret.

"Oh, come on and tell! Now that you've said so much!" coaxed Dick.

"Well, you boys walk around and look over our work and I'll run and ask Julie if I may tell you the story," whispered Judith, giggling, and running over to the Leader's side. [168]

When Julie heard the truth from Judith, she was furious, but she soon saw that she must thrust anger behind her, and plan some clever way to reverse the joke and make it fall upon the originator. In fact, at that moment, the scouts wished all kinds of dreadful things upon their benefactor, Mr. Gilroy.

He, however, unaware of their ire, was walking up the trail from the lake to the camp-site. And the boys, who were told to amuse themselves for a time, were certainly finding more good ideas put into useful form at that camp than they ever dreamed of.

The large square table was constructed of the boards removed from a piano-case which Gilly had at the barn. These were all nailed to a frame and furnished a strong, heavy top that could be placed, at will, on the four sturdy posts that were driven into the ground. These table-legs were only fifteen inches above the ground, so one could sit on the grass and conveniently use the top.

The four boys met at a large rustic shelf-cupboard, constructed of short-length boards taken from a cereal box, and placed so as to make four shelves. Two sides were made of boards that came from one of the packing-cases from the city. This cupboard stood against a great pine tree that furnished the backing, and on the shelves were the array of lanterns and candlesticks made and used in camp. [169]

"Gee! They've got the bottle-neck holder, the tin-can lantern, and all the rest. It seems they know the scout stunts, all right," whispered Ned.

"Yes, and look at these candles! Do you suppose they made them in camp? They look like hand-dipped products," added Alec, examining the tallow candles.

"We won't let on that we're curious, but we'll find out from Gilly just how they made these candles," suggested Bob.

From the shelves that held candles and some clay ornaments the boys wandered over to the sun-dial.

"It's better than the one we made," admitted Ned.

"Humph! So it is," said Alec, reluctantly, but willing to be just.

"Whoever did that burnt-wood etching around the edge sure made a fine job of it. And the numerals are very good," added Bob.

"Gilly said Ruth is the artist of the Troop," said Dick.

But the Grey Foxes never found out that the Indian Clock had been made during the previous winter when there was ample time to spend over such a work. The large wooden slab was sent to camp with many other highly decorative things made the same winter.

Mr. Gilroy now joined the boys and offered to act as official guide in viewing everything. So interested were the boys in all they saw that they temporarily forgot about the joke of the tracking. [170]

"Come and see the Indian willow beds the scouts made the first day in camp," said Mr. Gilroy, boastfully, now that he wanted to impress the boys.

So the beds, the weaving looms, the birdhouses here and there, and other things were duly seen and admired. But the exhibit that interested the boys as much as anything that day was the neat and beautiful work done with wild flowers and a deal of patience. There were blue-prints of delicate flowers, as well as shadow-work and pressed and mounted flower-groups.

Alec recognized the three-leaved arrow-head, and showed it to the other boys who had never seen it before. This particular specimen was white and waxen in contrast to the indigo-hued paper.

The spiderwort was a rich blue with its two large petals rounded, while the third one was tiny

and colorless. There was also a purple variety known as "Job's Tears."

The wild leek and garlic flowers made dainty blue-prints, scarcely recognizable as coming from such humble family trees as the despised onion. Wild spikenard, with its crown of tiny white flowers, also reproduced beautifully in the blue-print. The Seal of Solomon and purple Twisted Stalk made scraggy pictures easy to identify.

Betty had pressed a white trillium that made an imposing picture, retaining all its beauty and lines. The boys had the painted trillium in their collection but had never seen the white one.

[171]

In the flower collection made by the other scouts were many orchids,—fringed-purple, ragged-fringed, yellow-fringed, and others. Also the Indian pink, the rattlesnake plantain, the pink snake-mouth, monkshood, bloodroot, pitcher plant, and numerous others that formed a wonderful exhibit which it would take a long time to do justice to.

While the Grey Foxes were poring over the flower books, Mrs. Vernon came up beside them. "When you boys are through here, we will sit down to dinner, as everything is ready to serve."

"Oh, we'll look at the rest of these another time," said Bob, quickly.

So the Captain led them over to the table, where the appearance of the festive board caused them to smack their lips. Mr. Gilroy and the Grey Fox boys were seated according to Julie's directions, then the girls all went over to the cookstove.

At each place on the table sat a flat clay-made plate that was to do service for many needs. Beside the plate were the birchbark cup to drink water from, a birchbark napkin ring that held a paper napkin, and the usual knife, fork and spoon.

In the center of the table stood a lovely fern centerpiece, the holder woven of split willows, and the fern dug up in the woods and transplanted into a tin pail that did not show inside the basket.

[171]

The fernery was flanked by two other handwoven baskets of sweet-grass. One held the scout-biscuits just baked, while the other was piled high with light little puff-cakes. On either side of the centerpiece stood two large flat clay platters,—one held the Indian cucumber salad, and the other a dandelion salad.

"Aren't the girls going to sit down, too?" called Alec.

"Yes, but each girl has to serve a boy's soup as well as her own. Then we will sit down," answered Julie.

Meantime Joan was whispering anxiously, as each girl held out the clay bowls for soup, "Now remember! Leave the tracking tale to Julie, and agree with her everytime! Don't you dare be caught napping this time!"

And as each scout left the stove with her two bowls of soup, she whispered. "No, leave it to me! We'll get the best of Gilly for this joke."

The chicken soup was highly praised, and truly it was a good broth and deserved all praise. Then came the fish,—all done to a turn and served piping hot with butter sauce. The Indian cucumber went well with the lake trout, and here the boys had another surprise.

"Indian cucumbers! We never knew they grew around here," ventured Alec, but delighting in the salad just the same.

"Oh, didn't you? Well, you see, it takes a girl's fancy touches to secure these sort of things. You boys, of course, have to give your time to doing big things," was Julie's sarcastic reply.

[173]

The third course consisted of the chicken and dumplings, stewed bracken, and a side dish of vegetable that looked for all the world like small potatoes. The boys studied these curiously.

"It's quite digestible," laughed Mrs. Vernon.

"But be sure to appreciate them,—they are the only Wapitos we've ever found!" declared Joan, proudly.

"Wapitos! You don't mean it!" exclaimed Alec, eagerly.

"Why, where did you find them?" asked the other boys.

"One morning when we were out tracking," said Julie, with a careless manner. Then quickly added, "Oh, Captain, where are the Brussels sprouts? We almost forgot that vegetable."

The Orderly jumped up and ran to the stove where, in one of the niches, stood the bowl of charlock hearts, a wild green that tastes exactly like tender sprouts. These are easy to cultivate in a garden, too, and are not as expensive as Brussels sprouts.

"My, what a spread this is!" sighed Bob, ecstatically.

Every one laughed, for Bob and Anne were the gourmands of the two troops, and were never ashamed to admit when they enjoyed a thing.

[174]

"Yes, it's some dinner, all right. Made a lot of work, didn't it?" added Alec.

"Oh, not so much as usual," returned Julie. "We really had planned a more elaborate affair, but

the joke we played on Gilly took longer than we allowed for it, and so we had to scramble the dinner."

Julie smiled benignly upon the guests, but they exchanged looks with Mr. Gilroy at the mention of a joke. So she continued:

"Because of that joke, you have ordinary chicken for a meat course, whereas I had hoped to give you a real dainty, stewed wild rabbit. But our snares were left unbaited while we planned to come in first on Gilly and his proposed prank. I don't suppose you know a thing about it, do you?"

The girls gasped at their Leader's mention of a rabbit snare,—this was the first they knew of such a thing! And since Buntz Grey had taken up his residence nearby their camp, after his recovery from the old trap down on River Bend, not one scout girl could be made to taste rabbit.

The boys were keen to hear about the joke on their friend Gilroy, but *he* wanted to know about rabbits. So he asked:

"Where did you set any snares? This is news to me!"

"Is it? Why we caught a rabbit in a snare set down by River Bend, but we haven't stewed it yet," returned Julie, smiling angelically at Mr. Gilroy.

[175]

"Never mind snares, but tell us about the tracking," now urged Alec.

"There isn't much to tell—excepting that we let him indulge himself in the belief that he was fooling us," began Julie. "While we were at your camp, to invite you here to-day, Gilly had all his hands turn the barnyard beasts out and led them a dance about our campgrounds, believing we would fall for his little game.

"He took so much pains and trouble over the joke, that we hadn't the heart to undeceive him, so we played the game through.

"But it was hard work to keep straight faces, wasn't it, girls?" Julie appealed to her companions.

"Yes, indeed! And when Julie left us to bring back the proof of his joking, that was best of all," added Joan.

"Yes, you see I got him to say that hunters who found a wild animal could claim it, if it was in season, so I went to the barn where I *knew* our 'wild animals' would be, and not only found them, but caught them, also. Being in season, we claimed them. Thus we turned Gilly's joke on himself, as he sure was amazed to find that we took him at his word, and kept the 'ferocious' beasts!" Julie laughed so heartily that every one joined in, never doubting but that the merriment was natural and genuine.

"So that is how we became owners of the calf, the pig, and the nice spring chicken you just finished," added Julie.

[176]

Mr. Gilroy now cleared his throat to say something in self-defence, but every one laughed loudly again, the boys believing Julie's tale, and the girls hoping to keep up the deception.

"Poor dear old Gilly! We renamed him this morning. He is to be Foxy Grandpa hereafter, you know; not alone because he told the Grey Foxes what he was going to do, but because he planned such a beautiful snare and ran into it himself," said Joan.

"As if you boys would believe we were 'greenies' in camplife! Why, just look around and see our work! Is there anything here to prove we are such ignoramuses as to believe a calf-track could possibly be a deer-print?" asked Julie, scornfully.

"You're right, you girls sure can do scout things," said Alec, admiringly.

"This dinner alone would prove it!" exclaimed Bob.

"Any one who can find Indian cucumbers and Wapitos, when we boys have hunted and hunted, and never succeeded, is a first-class scout, and no mistake about it!" declared Dick, enthusiastically. So Mr. Gilroy decided not to speak in self-defence any more.

The dinner wound up with wild-current tarts, puff-cakes, and coffee made from roots and roasted acorns, pulverized.

"Lady Scouts, let me toast you for this wonderful success, not only in culinary art, but also in founding a curious menagerie," said Mr. Gilroy, standing and holding up his coffee before drinking it.

[177]

"Before we adjourn from this feast, let me ask one question," said Alec, as they prepared to get up from the table.

"What was it in that salad dressing that gave such a palatable flavor? I never tasted anything like it before."

The scouts smiled with pleasure, and Mrs. Vernon said, "That taste was given by adding a few leaves of burnet to the salad. It was not the dressing; but few people know what a wonderful flavor burnet gives to salad. It would be used more often did chefs know this simple little wildwood fact."

While the girls were clearing away the dishes, Mrs. Vernon spoke very seriously to Julie about the tale she told. "You did not tell an absolute untruth, yet you did not voice the truth, because we all *were* taken in by those tracks!"

"But, Verny! surely you wouldn't have these mere males *think* we were such gullible scouts, would you? It would be a disgrace for the whole organization!" cried Julie.

"I never advocate self-righteousness in covering up an error of judgment or knowledge. The Scout Committee on Ideals would not approve of the tale you told to vindicate the 'Cause of Women,' as you claim." [178]

"I suppose you are right in your viewpoint, Verny, but it wasn't fair of Gilly to play that prank on us, and tell those boys beforehand, too," pouted Julie.

"Well, let it pass this time, Verny, and we'll promise never to be guilty of misappropriating the truth again," said Joan.

"And don't give us away to the Grey Foxes!" added Judith.

The Captain shook her head in disapproval, but she said nothing more, so the girls ran off to whisper to Mr. Gilroy that he was the cause of a dreadful quarrel! [179]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### A CANOE TRIP

THE scouts were so busy with canoeing, swimming, and hiking, during the week following the dinner-party that they saw very little of Mr. Gilroy, although they knew whenever he called at the camp, because he generally brought feed for the calf and pig. These two unusual pets were becoming quite sociable, and would follow the girls around the clearing when meals were being prepared. Jake always went wherever the scouts went, and he particularly enjoyed the long walks. But he ignored the calf and pig completely when in camp.

About a week after the Grey Fox boys had visited Dandelion Camp, Mr. Gilroy came down early in the morning.

"I have to get up at dawn if I want a word with you scouts, these times," laughed he, as he caught them eating breakfast.

"Sit down and have some," Julie invited, making room for him beside her.

"Can't—haven't time. I've got an important engagement with the Grey Fox boys, but you were first on my calling list." [180]

The girls all halted further progress on the breakfast and listened intently. "What have you plotted, now?" asked Julie.

Mr. Gilroy laughed as he remembered the tracking joke. "I'm almost afraid to tell you." But after much coaxing he spoke.

"Well, then, I am going on a little fishing trip to Racquette Lake, so I wondered if you scouts wouldn't like to canoe with the party and spend a few days that way?"

The girls gave such a chorus of approval that Mr. Gilroy pretended to stop both ears.

"Oh, do tell them all about it, Gilly, or we'll be deaf!" begged Mrs. Vernon, laughing at the commotion.

So Mr. Gilroy described the itinerary to the great delight of his hearers. "But remember, girls, no extra baggage is allowed. You wear your uniforms, take bathing suits, and sandals, a wide soft hat that will stick to your head, as few toilet requisites as possible; individual eating outfit, blanket and sleeping-bag, fishing tackle, and your powder puffs."

The last item caused a jeer, for the girls hadn't thought of beautifiers, other than those Nature presented, since they joined the scout organization. Nor did they need any,—they were all fine and rosy, with perfect complexions and good health.

"My Indian, Yhon, is going in a canoe with the cooking outfit and other necessities for so large a party. He is a splendid guide, you know, and knows the country like a book." [181]

"What can we do about our pets?" Betty asked, concernedly.

"Oh, Jake will go with us, of course, and Julia and Anty will have to depend on Gilly's man for meals. They will learn to appreciate us if we are absent a few days," replied Julie, audaciously.



"When did you plan to start?" now asked the Captain.

"Day after to-morrow, as early in the morning as we can. That gives you all day to-morrow to get ready and come up to the bungalow for supper at night. Yhon will be ready with the canoes at dawn in the morning, and we start from our boathouse. The canoe-wagon is coming here to-day to carry your three canoes over to First Lake so as to be in good shape for the trip. Yhon will overhaul them all, and look after any caulking or repairs."

"Dear me, I can't wait for the time to come!" exclaimed several of the scouts.

"And if you become seasick on the voyage, you'll be just as anxious to get back," laughed Mr. Gilroy, causing the girls to giggle in chorus at his ridiculous speech.

So on the morning mentioned, a merry crowd of girls and boys followed the Captain and Mr. Gilroy to the boathouse on the lake. Yhon was waiting with everything ready, but it was still dim and misty over the water, as the daylight was not yet strong.

[182]

Jake instantly jumped into Yhon's canoe as if he knew it paid to be near the larder. Mr. Gilroy arranged the party so that one lightweight member was in each canoe with one of the heavier girls, and one of the boys. He took charge of another canoe with two girls in it, while the Captain managed still another one with two in it. Thus they started in a line, Yhon leading.

As they moved noiselessly out from the shadow of the overhanging rocks and foliage, the dew sparkled like silver drops on all the leaves; every now and then a hungry fish would leap up to bite the paddles, and then whisk its tail angrily as it flashed away again.

The newly awakened sun had not yet risen high enough to cast its rays upon the lake, and the mountain that threw somber shadows over the face of the lake, still hid the shining of the orb of day. The expectancy and hush that always precedes the bursting forth of shining light, enthralled all the wild creatures in the woods.

Yhon had been silently guiding his flock over the water, closely hugging the shore all the way, when the high treble call of a young fawn echoed far over the lake. It was so unexpected that the scouts were startled, but the Indian called over his shoulder, "Li'l deer lose mammy—call her back!"

Then, not twenty yards further on, Yhon stopped paddling, and pointed with a long finger towards the shore. There stood the fawn on a rock near the water's edge, its head held high as it gazed with consternation at so many queer things floating on the lake.

[183]

Mrs. Vernon took a splendid picture of the deer, before a crashing of branches and the rattle of pebbles announced that the doe was leaping to the rescue of her little one. But she could not be seen, as she was wise in woodlore and remained safely screened from men. Possibly she knew that a human carried a death-dealing weapon when he sought her in the forests.

The canoes passed through First Lake, then through Second Lake, and at last through Third Lake—all of which were really one large continuous sheet of water. Where Third Lake Creek emptied into the large body of water, Yhon led the canoes close to shore. He knew that the best lake trout were to be caught where the creek emptied, and here he proposed to fish for the dinner supply.

"But we don't want dinner, yet, Yhon," called Mrs. Vernon.

"We eat on Cedar Islan' but him got no fish dere. Get my fish here," explained Yhon, as he jumped ashore.

All were glad of an opportunity to stretch their legs, and then they tried their luck at fishing, also. After a time this became monotonous for the active young ones, and they started up the Creek to adventure. The Third Lake Creek came down over moss-covered rocks, which were held in place by gnarled roots of giant trees. These ancient foresters stood looking benignly down upon the placid waters of the lake, as if watching the play of a little child.

[184]

Where the Creek swirled out to join Third Lake, the purplish circles made there gradually lost their foaming haste and gently merged into the wavelets of clear cold water.

As the scouts climbed up the rugged bank of the Creek, the towering trees were not the only things that watched silently. Although the happy young mortals were deaf and blind to the many alert curious eyes that followed their movements, still those eyes were there, wondering at this daring trespass over their domains. Some of these wildwood inhabitants were furtively anxious, some hostile, but all were curious to follow the movements of these queer creatures.

Finally the scouts could not penetrate further, and they retraced their steps. Yhon had caught enough fish for the day's needs, and was ready to continue the trip.

From Third Lake Creek he paddled across to the opposite shore and thence through Fourth Lake. They stopped at Skensowane to purchase crackers, candy, and other sweets, while Yhon took on a supply of staples.

Cedar Island was at the extreme upper end of Fourth Lake, and long before the scouts saw the green knob standing plainly up from the water, they were hungry enough to eat the grass on the island. So every one assisted with the dinner to facilitate the eating of it.

[185]

Yhon was one of the best guides in the mountains, and his experience in cooking was unsurpassed; hence the scouts enjoyed an exceptional dinner.

When all were ready to continue the trip, Yhon led across from Cedar Island to Inlet, where there was a "carry" of a mile to reach Sixth Lake.

"Phew! Carry the canoes a mile in the hot sun!" cried Bob.

"That's part of the fun in canoeing," remarked Mr. Gilroy, as they disembarked and prepared to carry.

"I'm glad of the change," said Judith. "My knees are all out of joint from sitting with them doubled under me."

Thereupon every one declared it a relief to walk and get the kinks out of the leg-muscles. But after a mile in the heat, with canoe and outfit to carry, every one was just as glad to get back and sit down in the canoes.

The trip through Sixth and Seventh Lakes was wonderful. The grandeur of the mountains and the marvelous greens of their verdure reflected in the narrow lakes, made the water seem a dark emerald green as clear and transparent as a perfect jewel.

[186]

Occasionally, faint shadows of birds flying overhead, or deer leaping on the rocks on the banks were reflected in the water as the canoeists silently paddled along, and such entrancing pictures seen in the placid lake thrilled the scouts with delight.

Here and there, where a stream rushed down into the lake, the scouts could look up through the wide rifts cleft between the forest-trees, and the eye could follow up where falls tumbled over boulders; or to the higher view, where the blue sky showed a tiny streak between the pines.

Once a flight of wild ducks suddenly rose from the lake, quacking noisily. The boys called to Yhon to shoot, but he held up a warning hand to show that this was no season for duck-hunting.

In nearing the upper end of Seventh Lake where the inlet empties into it, Yhon called out, "Nudder carry—mile to Eight Lake."

But before they reached land, the Captain called for a halt. She wanted to take a snapshot of the picture made by the inlet, seemingly in such a hurry to reach the lake, yet making no noise nor showing any froth in its haste. The Lake seemed to draw its shores close together to hug the Inlet, just as a mother draws her babe to her bosom in love. In small coves on either side of the Inlet were patches of green marsh grass and cattails, the home of the wild ducks which rose to escape the coming of the canoeists.

[187]

As the faint odorous whiff of marshgrass reached the nostrils of the scouts, they wanted to paddle in and cut cattails, but Yhon said there was no time then. "Plenty time on home trip."

Through Eighth Lake to Brown's Inlet Carry was a distance of about two miles, and when they reached shore on Brown's Inlet, Yhon called out, "Nudder carry—mile-half dis time to Brown Tract Inlet."

The command to carry began to sound tiresome to the scouts, and they were glad to hear Mr. Gilroy say that this carry would be the last one, as Brown's Tract Inlet brought them right to Racquette Lake where they planned to camp for the night.

It was quite late when they reached the lower end of Racquette Lake, because the progress had been slow and safe. Mr. Gilroy had not telephoned for accommodations at any hotel, as they planned to camp at night.

But the wind that came with the setting of the sun also threatened a storm during the night, and Mr. Gilroy thought it best to find a place near a large hotel, in case they had to seek shelter. So they paddled to find a grove quite near one of the larger hotels. The scouts were eager to land and get their camp ready before darkness handicapped them, so when within a few yards of land, Hester turned to pull out her blankets.

The sudden motion overturned the canoe, and all three occupants went headlong into the water. The frightened screams of the three scouts caused consternation in the others, and many turned around quickly to see what had happened behind them. Thus, two more canoe-loads were unexpectedly emptied into the lake.

[188]

They were soon out on shore, but drenched and shivering from the cold water. "Now, isn't that the worst thing that could happen to us, at night!" sighed Mrs. Vernon.

"We'll have to stop at a hotel, now, and let the scouts get in bed while their clothing dries," said Mr. Gilroy.

So the wet ones were advised to dance about to keep warm, while Alec and Mr. Gilroy hurried over to the hotel to engage rooms. But they soon came back with surprised looks.

"Not a corner to be had, and the manager called up other large places along the shore only to get the same answer—no room. He said there was a family boarding-house some distance along, where we might get in. The woman, a Mrs. Dickens, was a nice landlady and might tuck us in somewhere. Shall we try it?" said Mr. Gilroy.

"It is so dark now, and we haven't started supper or found a spot to camp, so I think we had best try Mrs. Dickens," replied the Captain.

In chilly silence the entire party got back into its canoes and skirted the shore until Mr. Gilroy called out to Yhon, "This must be the spot where I was told to land. The house is back from the lake, a bit."

[189]

The canoeists had no difficulty in locating the boarding-house, but they were too late for a hot dinner, although the cold supper served was very good, especially to hungry young people.

"I haven't any rooms left in the main house," explained Mrs. Dickens, "but I can give you several rooms in the annex. That used to be the help's cottage, but I had it done over to rent this season."

"Any port in a storm,' madam, and our 'storm' consists of several soaking suits that have to be dried," returned Mr. Gilroy.

"The cottage has a small kitchen where you can quickly light a fire in the stove and dry everything. I think you will be very comfortable there," said Mrs. Dickens. So arrangements were made for the use of the cottage for that night.

As they planned to start early in the morning again, the entire party retired soon after supper. The wet clothing had been hung on lines about the kitchen, where a servant had built a roaring fire. Although they had to "double up" in bed, or sleep on the floor, they were too healthily sleepy to mind such little things, and before ten o'clock every one was asleep.

[190]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER TWELVE

### FIRST AID

MRS. VERNON was a very light sleeper, consequently she was aroused a short time after midnight by cries and calls for help. She sprang from the bed and ran to a side window that opened towards the kitchen side of the boarding-house. All she could see was a dull glare that filled the kitchen windows. But she understood.

Instantly, she ran to Mr. Gilroy's room and knocked loudly while she cried, "Get up—everybody—the boarding-house, next door, is on fire!"

In a moment Mr. Gilroy jumped up and shouted, "All right—we'll be out in a jiffy!" Then Mrs. Vernon ran back to pull the girls out of bed and have them dress as speedily as possible.

The clothing in the kitchen was dry, and soon the girls were dressing and, at the same time, talking excitedly of the fire.

"I'm sorry Mrs. Dickens has had this misfortune, but as long as it happens while we are here, we must try to earn a medal," said Mrs. Vernon, as she breathlessly pulled a middy-blouse over her head.

[191]

"What can girls do?" asked Amy, eagerly.

"I don't know yet, but every little thing helps in a time like this. Just obey orders from Mr. Gilroy or me, and follow the example Julie is sure to give you," said Mrs. Vernon, glancing at the scout she mentioned, because Julie might run unnecessary risks for herself, but if she thought she was responsible for the other girls her zeal would be tempered wisely.

"What do they give scouts a medal for, Verny?" now asked Judith, as she twisted her long hair up in a tight coil on her head.

"If occasion arises for a scout to display great heroism, or if she faces extreme danger in trying to save a life, she can have the bronze medal—the highest award given. If she does a brave deed with considerable danger to herself, she wins a silver cross. But no scout is to run needless risk just to win a medal of any kind."

While the Captain spoke, the scouts finished their hurried dressing and now followed her out to the lawn in front of the large house.

Here the scene was one of great confusion and panic. Men were hastily moving articles of furniture and boarders' personal effects out of the three-storied building. Smoke poured from all the rear windows, and the roof seemed enveloped in heavy smoke-clouds.

"Isn't there any volunteer fire department?" called Julie, to every one in general and no one in particular.

[192]

"Where is it?" asked Alec of a man standing next to him.

"We got a ring and hammer up yonder, and a hand-engine, but I hain't hear'n no one strike the signal," said he.

"Come along, show me where it is," ordered Alec, catching hold of the man's sleeve and pulling him away from the staring crowd.

Once the man had broken away from the mesmeric influence of the fire-watchers, he ran quickly with Alec to the knoll where a metal hoop and hammer were kept for the purpose of alarm in case of fire. Almost before the two reached the spot, Alec caught the hammer and was striking the metal at regular intervals. The man then offered to remain and send the volunteer firemen to the place where they were needed, so Alec ran back to help as best he could.

Meantime, the girl scouts realized there was much to do to help others, and the Captain ordered every one to use the utmost presence of mind in doing anything they were called upon to do.

Julie hastily whispered to Joan, "I'm going to run to the cottage and get that coil of rope we brought from the canoe last night, we may need it."

"I'll run with you, Julie, for we must tie wet towels over our mouths, if we have to go inside there," added Joan.

Both girls raced to their room, and when they came out they were provided with the rope, and the dripping towels were tied across their nostrils and mouths. As they stood momentarily on the little porch of the cottage to see where they might render the best service, the uproar from the upper stories in the rear was awful.

[193]

"There may be some people trapped in their rooms up there!" exclaimed Julie to her companion.

"We can climb up this rose-trellis quite easily, Jule, and get in at the windows of the second story where the piazza roof gives us a foothold," hastily returned Joan.

In another moment both girls were quickly climbing up the strong trellis, and as soon as they reached the tin roof they ran to the window. Here they found a young mother sitting on the floor, rocking a baby back and forth while she cried wildly with hysteria. The child was held so tightly that it, too, was screaming.

While Julie uncoiled the rope, Joan ran to the washstand and dipped a towel in the pitcher. But Julie called to her, "Bring the jug of water here, we've got to break this hysteric spell!"

Joan carried the towel in one hand and the pitcher in the other, so Julie caught the jug from her, and dashed the water in the woman's face. The sudden choking and shock broke the spell. Then the towel was hastily pinned over the lower part of her face and she was hurried to the door. But the smoke and heat caused the girls to slam the door to again and run to the window.

[194]

"Hey—down there!" yelled Julie, to a group of men on the flower-bed. "Hold out a blanket while we drop the baby down."

"No—no!" screamed the mother, trying to get away from the grasp of strong young Joan. "You'll kill it!"

"Give me the child, I'll carry it down the trellis," said Julie, but the mother would not relax her grip on her baby.

"Where's that rope, Jo?" now asked Julie.

"Over by the window we went in at," cried Joan, having all she could do to restrain the woman from throwing herself and babe down from the roof.

So in another moment, Julie had the rope tied to a window shutter, and with the other end in hand was over by the woman.

"Here—stand still, will you, while we fix this and let you down to the ground!" commanded she, and the woman instantly obeyed.

Then both girls lowered the two slowly over the edge of the roof, down to where willing hands were raised to catch them. There was a wild acclaim as mother and child were saved, but the two scouts were not aware of it, as they were back inside the room again, taking their precious rope with them. Before they could determine what to do next, a queer form burst into the room.

[195]

"Where's the rope you've been using, girls?" demanded the voice of Alec. But he was completely covered by his rubber sleeping-bag, in which he had slit holes for his feet and arms.

Had it been any other time than such a moment, both girls must have doubled over in merriment at his appearance.

"Here it is, Alec. Where did you come from?" cried both scouts in one voice.

"Upstairs. I got up on the roof by climbing the water-spout, and in a dormer-room up there I found an old crippled woman, crying for help, but with no one to hear her until I climbed in from

the scuttle-hole. A little old-fashioned stairway runs from the third floor down into the closet in this room. But I can't get her down those narrow stairs, and the other stairway and halls are a mass of fire. I've got to lower her from the roof, but I need help."

"We'll help!" eagerly offered both the girls. So, with the coil of rope, they followed Alec through the smoke-filled room into the large dark closet, and thus, up the scuttle-hole stairs that had been abandoned for many years,—perhaps forgotten entirely, until this need.

In the front end of the third story there was not much smoke as yet, so the three could see their way plainly. And in a small gable-room having a small window high from the floor moaned an old woman of more than seventy years. The moment she saw Alec return with two girls to help, she stopped wailing and tried to be courageous. [196]

"Now we may hurt you some when you are being moved, but you must bear it, Gran'ma," said Alec, gently. The old lady smiled reassuringly.

"Children, anything is better than being roasted up in this little room. Don't worry over hurting me but do whatever is necessary," quavered the sweet old voice.

"Now, girls, I'm going to shinny up the scuttle-hole in the roof and carry the rope with me. I'll tie it securely to the chimney on the roof and let down the other end. Fasten this about Grandma's waist and we'll try to lift her out that way. You two must help by holding her as much as possible, and by boosting from below."

While Alec climbed up the wall-ladder and got out to the roof, Julie and Joan made a roll of blankets and placed it about the old lady's form under the arms. Then they looped the rope over this and secured it also under her arms.

"All ready, Alec!" called Julie, holding her charge by one arm while Joan held her by the other.

As Alec hauled, hand over hand on the rope, the two scouts beneath lifted and then boosted the old lady until she was safely through the opening in the roof. Then Alec leaned over and called to them:

"If you can manage to run down and get through that room again, escape by way of the piazza-roof and send the firemen up from the outside with their ladders. I'll wait on the front roof with Grandma." [197]

So Julie and Joan rushed down the little attic-stairs, back through the smoke-filled room which was now dreadfully hot from the fire, and out of the other room window to the piazza roof. Once on the ground, a curious mob tried to surround them to ask all sorts of foolish questions, but Julie was equal to two mobs. With muscular arms and fists striking right and left, she quickly forced a passage and made her way to the spot where the Fire-Chief was ordering the men about.

"Mr. Chief, run a ladder up to the roof where you see that scout standing. He's got an old crippled woman to save. Maybe the rope will reach and maybe it won't, so use your own judgment," called Julie, pointing up to where Alec could be dimly seen through the smoke.

"Hoist a ladder, boys! See that scout up on the roof with Mrs. Dickens' mother?" shouted the Chief, anxiously watching the roof.

While every one stood and in breathless suspense watched the firemen run up a long ladder and assist Alec in saving the poor helpless woman, Mrs. Dickens came distractedly from the rear of the house and ran about seeking for her mother. When she learned that it was her mother they were trying to save, she fainted with fright. But the old lady was safely brought to the ground, and a great fuss was made over Alec. Then Mrs. Dickens was revived, and when she found her aged mother beside her on the grass, she almost fainted again from joy and gratitude. [198]

The house was doomed even before the firemen reached the scene, for it was constructed, as so many summer boarding-houses are at seashore and mountain resorts, of thin novelty-siding outside and oil-stained ceiling boards inside; these act like kindling wood once they are ignited.

The crowd stood, now, and watched the flames lick up everything in sight, but every one was thankful that no lives were lost. The scouts, both girls and boys, had worked so faithfully that all the silver and linen were saved, and the men had removed much of the best furniture in the ground-floor rooms.

The sun, that morning, rose on a scene of confusion and pathos. Guests who had been able to save most of their effects were assisting less fortunate ones to dress in all kinds of apparel. Neighbors from nearby cottages were caring for the homeless boarders, until order could be brought out of the chaotic condition.

But the cottages were few, and the guests many, so some one must suggest a plan to meet the immediate needs. It was Mr. Gilroy who thought of a way.

"We all sympathize with Mrs. Dickens in her distress, but it might have been worse, friends,—we all realize that,—and so we feel grateful that no lives were lost. But here it is breakfast-time, and there are many hungry mouths to fill, and I would suggest that you accept a scout breakfast with us as soon as it is ready." [199]

Every one responded to such a hearty invitation, and Mr. Gilroy added, "Then we'll show you how to prepare a good meal with no stove or kitchen, and with but few pots or pans."

The boys were sent out on the lake to get the fish; the girls were told to knead the dough for scout-twists, and place them at the fire Mr. Gilroy was building. To interest the weary boarders, Mr. Gilroy had started his campfire with rubbing-sticks and had arranged the bread-sticks upon which the dough was twined, to the best advantage for all to watch while the twists baked.

Most of the dishes had been saved from the fire, and these were now used for breakfast. Several large tablecloths had been spread out upon the smooth grass, and plates set around on the squares of linen.

The fish had been cleaned by Yhon when caught, and now the boys returned with a nice mess—enough for every one that morning. Mrs. Dickens kept all her extra stock of food in the little loft of the cottage, and as this annex was spared any damage by the fire, there was a supply of cereals, flour, bacon, and other necessities for meals. With the thrift of a good housekeeper, Mrs. Dickens had laid in a stock of purchases when the Army Supply had been sold off at auction in the city. So Mrs. Vernon found gallon cans of stewed prunes and other food-products on hand. [200]

In spite of all trouble and perplexities that morning, breakfast was a cheerful meal. Prunes for fruit; hominy and other prepared cereals for a second course; then fresh fish, fried in corn-meal jackets and browned in bacon-fat, furnished a delicious third course with the hot scout-bread. And all this was topped off with fragrant coffee.

Naturally, the conversation was about one thing—the fire and the courage shown by the three scouts. The equally helpful work done by Mrs. Vernon and the other scouts in caring for those who were rescued, received but small notice. But they never as much as thought of it—with Julie and Joan in a fair way to win a medal that would lift the entire Troop to recognition at Headquarters in New York.

When breakfast was over, Mr. Gilroy expressed his other idea. "I have a plan that may meet with general approval, but that remains to be seen. Now listen carefully, while I speak, and then do as you like afterwards. My boys and these girls are willing to teach you how to do what I am about to propose, and help in any way we can to make every one comfortable for the time being. [201]

"You have no house to sleep in, and Mrs. Dickens will have no boarders to help her meet her expenses and loss, unless we immediately find some way to change all this seeming trouble. So this is my suggestion:

"We scouts are accustomed to sleeping out-of-doors and thus we know how to make the finest beds out of the material Nature provides. We will show every one how to weave these balsam beds that are superior to any handmade spring and hair mattress.

"While you people are completing your beds, we will paddle up to a place Yhon told me about, where a number of Indians camp. They make and sell tents to parties coming to the Adirondacks for the summer. Then at the end of the season they will buy them back and pay prices according to the condition the tents are in. Perhaps we can rent a number of tents, as the summer is now half over.

"If enough boarders agree to this plan, and will insure the risk to Mrs. Dickens by advancing the money necessary to pay for the tents, we scouts will go after the tents for you and bring them back in our canoes.

"Mrs. Dickens says she can quickly have a pavilion built that will answer for a dining-room, but any one who does not care for 'roughing' it in tent-life must find other accommodations. All such can have meals in the pavilion, but must take second table as boarders remaining in camp will naturally have first claim on the hostess' service." [202]

After a noisy debate, in which most of the ousted guests found these plans and future delights pleasant to discuss, the majority voted to remain and take up tent-life. Thus it happened that Mrs. Dickens was helped out of the financial ruin that had stared her in the face a few hours before, and the guests were treated to a rare experience,—living in the open in the wonderful woods.

The scouts started every one cutting the young tips of the balsams for their bedding, then paddled after Yhon in the canoes, up the Marion River to Bear Creek, where the guide knew several of his friends to have camps for the summer. They had tents to hire or for sale, and were only too glad to furnish all that were needed for the houseless boarders at Dickens' Landing.

The tent-outfits were carefully packed inside the canoes, and the scouts joyfully paddled back, realizing that "What blesses one, blesses all" in this working out of a good idea.

When the scouts landed with the tents and found that enough balsam had been stripped for the beds, they began to weave the tips as all scouts know how to do. Meantime, Mr. Gilroy, Yhon, and several of the men raised the tents and secured them in such places as Mrs. Dickens selected. The balsam beds were then made up in the tents, and before evening, every one was provided with room and beds, thanks to the scouts. [203]

As the canoes left that shore, they were sped with many blessings, for they had done a great thing for those standing on the rocks, watching them depart. [204]

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### SHOOTING THE RAPIDS—AND OTHER THINGS

"WELL, 'where do we go from here, boys?'" called Mr. Gilroy, laughingly, as he looked back over his shoulder at the scouts.

"Anywhere but home!" exclaimed Julie.

"Why not there? Don't you like my camp-ground?" asked Mr. Gilroy, teasingly.

"Of course, but after such a night and day we won't want to settle down again into quiet life. We have to let ourselves down gradually," laughed Alec.

"Well, then, we'll ask Yhon where to go to-day," agreed Mr. Gilroy.

"Ride the rapids," returned Yhon, as if that was enough said.

Such a shout that greeted this suggestion proved he was right in his surmise. Finally, when Mrs. Vernon could be heard, she asked, "Where are they—far from Raquette Lake?"

"Yhon, I suppose you mean those on the route to Forked Lake, through Raquette River to Long Lake, eh?" said Mr. Gilroy.

"Um! Up Raquette Fall to Corey an' 'en to Sar'nac."

[205]

"Saranac Lake! Oh, I've always wanted to see it!" cried Julie.

"Do let's go, Gilly!" begged other voices.

"Shall we take a vote on it?" laughed Mr. Gilroy.

"Why waste time—it is unanimously decided already," retorted Alec for the boys.

"Yhon, I'm afraid you've let me in for trouble!" cried Mr. Gilroy, but he turned his canoe just the same, and led the way.

The scouts now followed Mr. Gilroy and Yhon across the mouth of the Marion River, and rounded Woods' Point. Across Boulder Bay, to Bluff Point, they paddled, and carefully rounding this point they entered Outlet Bay. Then the usual route was taken up the bay until they reached Forked Lake Carry.

They were all in high spirits and the short carry only added to their enjoyment. The canoes were launched again in Forked Lake waters and they paddled until the end of the lake was reached. Where it joins Raquette River was a carry of a mile and a half, and seeing that it was noon and time for luncheon, Mr. Gilroy said:

"Why not have something to eat first, and carry afterwards?"

"Oh, that will add to the work of carrying," retorted Julie. "Not only canoes but food!"

But the boys were for eating, so they scanned the shore carefully as they slowly moved through the water, until Yhon saw a place he considered suitable for camp. Here a fire was soon started, and the four boys were sent out to fish. The girls were left to bake the bread and prepare the rest of the meal.

[206]

In spite of their most skillful efforts, the boys did not have good luck, and returned with but a small catch of fish. Hilarity due to the way the boys told how they had to fish made up for the lack and for everything else. When everything was packed neatly again, and all were ready to start, Jake gave a wild leap and landed too near the edge of Yhon's canoe. Over it went, staples and outfits all going down into the water.

"Oh, all our sugar and salt—and everything!" cried Julie.

Yhon never changed a muscle of his face, although he must have been taken by surprise when he was precipitated into the water. The outfits, hampers, and other things were quickly salvaged and restored to the canoe, but Jake sat in disgrace on the bank, and hung his head as if he understood just what he had done.

So much time had been used in rescuing Yhon, in fishing their food-stock out of the water, and coaxing Jake back into the canoe, that it was late when the scouts reached Deerland Lodge.

"What say you, scouts,—shall we stop at the Lodge, or take a chance up Long Lake until we reach a point where we can strike off to reach Hendrick Spring, the fountainhead of the Hudson River?" asked Mr. Gilroy.

[207]

"And where shall we camp?" asked Mrs. Vernon.

"It might be nice to camp at the spring," suggested Alec.

"Oh, yes, let's do that, Gilly!" cried several voices.

So they kept right on, paddling swiftly along until they reached a place on the shore where Yhon said they must land if they proposed going to Hendrick Spring.

"Oh, I thought we could canoe there," ventured Julie.

"No, we must leave Yhon here to watch the canoes while we hike along the trail that goes there. We can carry our sleeping-bags and take enough food for supper, then come back early in the morning for a good breakfast with Yhon," explained Mr. Gilroy.

"Is there no way we might take to return to Fulton Chain Lakes other than going back the same route?" questioned Mrs. Vernon.

"No, we shall have to go the way we come, or be willing to *carry* overland for many miles, from one water to the other."

"Oh, no, that is out of the question," said the Captain.

So each scout took a sleeping-bag and cup and plate, while the boys carried the extra cooking outfit, and Alec his rifle.

The trail led through a most wonderful primeval forest where lichened stones, moss-clothed fallen trees and luxuriant foliage of standing timber furnished homes for countless wild creatures.

[208]

They had not gone far before a ruddy-hued fox tried to back out of their way on the trail, and managed successfully to merge his color with that of the yellow-brown verdure about him. Further on, Alec suddenly lifted his rifle and aimed, but the furtive mottled animal that had been crouching along the mottled limb of a tree leaped back with the least possible noise or disturbance of the foliage, and was gone!

"That was *some* wildcat, but she was too slick for me!" said Alec, when questioned about missing it.

The scouts saw so many unfamiliar birds that they wished they had carried a bird book on the trip to help them identify all they now saw. Notes were taken, however, to help them look up and catalogue the varieties, later, in camp. There were many other interesting living creatures, also; some half-hid under leaves or twigs, others squatting daringly in the open, with questioning eyes fixed on these clumsy intruders.

Finally the scouts reached Hendrick Springs, but to their consternation the place was already tenanted with undesirable tramps. Mr. Gilroy politely questioned the three men who claimed to be timber-jacks, but their empty package that had contained food and the quart bottle that had once been filled with whiskey, now also empty, belied their story.

[209]

Their hardened faces, unkempt appearance, and other earmarks caused a little apprehension in the hearts of the girls and Mrs. Vernon; but soon after the new arrivals started their fire to cook supper, the three tramps got up and quietly left.

Scanty beds of balsam were soon made for the night for the girls, but the boys preferred to sleep upon the grass. After a few campfire tales, they decided who was to keep the fire burning all night to ward off any wild animals, and also to guard against the return of the evil-looking tramps.

"We girls want to take our turn in watching, as well as the boys, Gilly!" declared Joan, when she heard how the guard was to be divided up for the night.

"Oh, you girls need sleep, but we don't," said Bob.

"We are just as hale as any of you boys, and we want to do our bit!" exclaimed Julie, decidedly.

"Well, then, if you must, you will!" sighed Mr. Gilroy, comically. "Now I have to begin all over again and figure out this problem. Let's see:

"First, Alec and Bob mount guard two hours; then Dick and Ned guard for two more; then Julie and Joan; and lastly, all the other girls and myself. How is that?"

Every one laughed, for Julie and Joan were now getting all they bargained for. So Alec and Bob went on duty, while the rest stretched out and fell asleep.

[210]

At eleven o'clock the next two boys were called; but at one o'clock, when it was time to rouse Julie and Joan, Mr. Gilroy crept over and motioned the boys to let him mount duty for a time. It was nearly three when Julie woke up and rubbed her eyes. She instantly realized that no one had called her, so she nudged Joan and got her up. Then they crept over to the campfire and scolded Mr. Gilroy for breaking faith with them. He laughed and gladly went back to finish his night's repose.

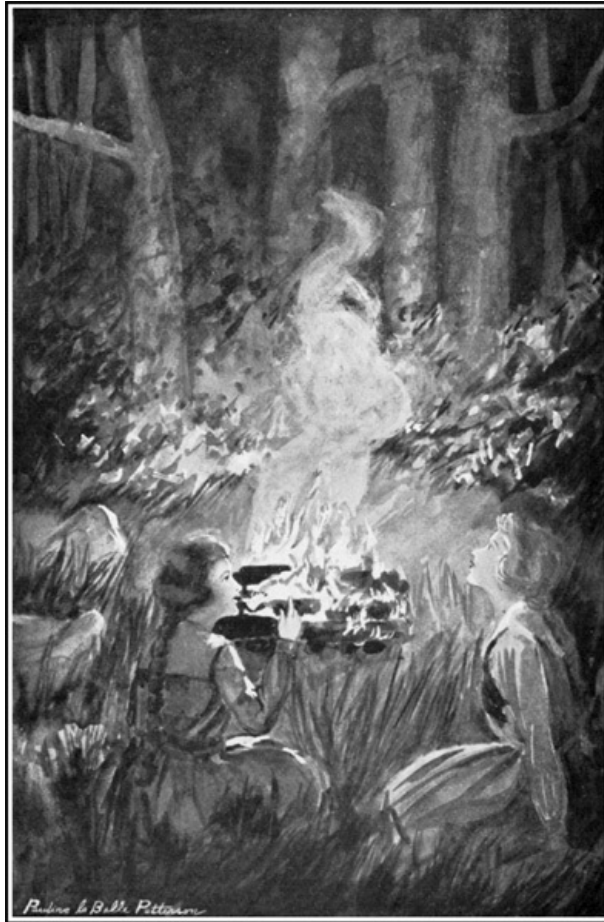
Having been so sound asleep just before going on duty, and being utterly tired out with the day's experiences, the two girls sat by the fire endeavoring to keep each other fully awake. But the Sand Man was too powerful for them to resist his dreamy influence, and soon Joan dozed while Julie yawned and did her best to keep her eyelids open.

An hour passed and Joan was sweetly sleeping, while Julie was nodding, heavy with sleep. Suddenly a crackling of branches behind them caused Julie to start wide awake.



"Joan, are you awake?" whispered Julie fearfully, shaking her friend.

"Sure—why?" mumbled Joan, sitting up to rub her eyes.



"Where—which way did you hear them?" questioned  
Joan [Page 211](#)

"I heard some one—maybe those tramps are back to do something," whispered Julie, trying to peer through the misty night. [211]

"Where—which way did you hear them?" questioned Joan, now fully awake, too.

"See those long shadows by the trees, over there?" returned Julie. "I'll pile a lot more wood on the fire and make it blaze so we can see them if they come nearer."

So saying, she threw so much wood on the fire that it instantly smothered the red glow and began smoking like a chimney. The smoke drove the girls from that side of the fire and caused them to cough violently, while there was a lively scrambling of feet over by the trees, and both girls began calling:

"Gilly! Gilly, wake up! The tramps are here!"

That cry brought every one to his feet, and the moment all heads got the benefit of the smoke, every one began coughing. But they managed to creep along the ground to the side of the fire, where the two girls stood gazing at the trees in question.

Just as Alec crept up beside the scouts with rifle up ready to aim at whatever he found skulking about them, there sounded a frightful screeching, and hoarse calls came from the lower branches of the tree.

"I knew it! I saw them creep over and heard them climb," cried Julie, quaking with excitement.

"They planned to drop something on our heads, I guess," added Joan, her eyes bulging as she tried to see into the foliage. [212]

Just as Alec decided to take aim and fire haphazardly, knowing that he could not see in the dark but could frighten the tramps, Bob caught hold of his arm. He was unaware that it held a gun that was cocked ready to fire.

The rifle went off prematurely, the shot hit the mark without Alec's trying for it, and a heavy thud informed the scouts that the bullet was fatal! Instantly, however, there was such a commotion in the leaves, and such a Bedlam of screeching! Finally a great flock of crows swept out of the high tree and flew away to find a less dangerous roost.

The first streaks of dawn were penetrating the forest's darkness when the offended crows left their ancestral tree; and the scouts looked at each other in surprise. But Alec was sure it was not a crow he had downed—it was too heavy for that!

So the boys crept carefully over to the place where they thought to find the body of a tramp, while the girls followed at a respectful distance. Then the relieved cry from Alec, and the laughing calls from the other boys, hurried the girls to join their friends.

There they saw a dead wildcat of truly awesome size. In its clenched teeth it still held the young nestling—the object of its nocturnal climb into the tree. Alec's unexpected shot had hit true and had done for the crafty animal.

[213]

"Well, this is some trophy to carry back home, eh?" cried Alec delightedly, as he turned the cat over with his foot.

"I'm glad you didn't kill anything more than the wildcat," added Mrs. Vernon.

"If you boys intend carrying that back to camp, you'll have to skin it now and take only the pelt. You can't be bothered with the heavy beast itself. Leave the carcass for the wild denizens that will be glad to feed on this, their enemy," advised Mr. Gilroy.

"And do give us the crow! If it hadn't been for Joan and me you wouldn't have had the wildcat!" exclaimed Julie.

"If it hadn't been for you two imaginative scouts we all would still be snoozing peacefully beside the fire," laughed Alec.

[214]

[Back to Contents](#)

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## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE GRAND SURPRISE

WHEN the scouts returned to their camp beside Little Moose Lake, they were impressed anew with the peace and beauty of the spot. The canoe trip had been delightful and exciting, but all were glad to get back to a simple life once more.

Having seen the scout girls safely back home, and their canoes in the lake for future use, Mr. Gilroy sighed and said, "Now I shall take a long rest and recover from the past few days' work!"

A few days after their return from the "voyage," as they called it, the scout girls received a bundle of mail. In it were newspapers, many letters, and other interesting items. The papers were all "marked copies," and the mail proved to be letters filled with congratulations and words of praise for the brave girls.

"Why, they must be crazy! Every one's writing about what we did at the fire!" laughed Julie.

"Yes, just listen to this from 'Liza, every one!" called out Betty. And she read: "'So I sez to yer Pa, yu've got two fine scouts in them girls, Mister Lee, and this proves it. Any girl what will climb the side of a house to save folkses from burning, is wuth a lot of lazy, good-fer-nothin' boys, I sez.'"

[215]

Every one laughed heartily at the praise thus bestowed upon them; but Betty said regretfully, "It's too bad I didn't do as much as Julie did at that fire. Daddy won't feel very proud of me, I'm afraid!"

"Oh, but you did, Betty! You ran for the Captain and did all sorts of stunts we couldn't have done. But not every one could climb like Jo and I do!" said Julie, soothingly.

"Oh, girls!" exclaimed the Captain, who had been hurriedly glancing over one of the papers received. "Listen to this from a New York paper. Oh, I am so proud of you all!" Then she read:

"'At a recent fire that destroyed Dickens' Hotel at Raquette Lake, Adirondacks, a group of girl scouts known as the Dandelion Troop saved many lives and did heroic work in saving property. One of the hotel guests told our local reporter the story and we print his own words.'"

Then followed an account of the fire, and how it started because of a defective flue in the kitchen chimney. It told in detail all that the girls did, but the story merely mentioned Alec and *his* courageous act. At the last of the story, a full description was given of how the balsam beds were made, and how the boarders were now enjoying themselves in tent-life and out-of-door camp cooking. And all this was due, it said, to the Girl Scouts being able to teach the homeless boarders how to help themselves with the bountiful supply from Nature.

[216]

That morning, Mr. Gilroy came down to the camp to hear the news, for he also had received

several papers with the story of the fire in them. After the excitement of reading it all over again to him, the girls quieted down to hear what he wished to say.

"I came to see about your plans for next summer's outing," said he.

The girls looked at him quizzically, for they thought he was joking. Mrs. Vernon gasped, "Next summer! We're not through with this year yet!"

"I know that, but 'In times of peace prepare for war,' you know," laughed he.

"Tell us why you asked?" demanded Julie.

"Because I am planning a trip for my next outing, and I am debating whether to invite any girl scouts to go with me."

"Where? Aren't you going to stay here next summer?" was the answer from several girls.

"No, I have had an important letter to-day. And I am going to accept the offer made me by the Government, but it will cost any girl scout more to go with *me* than it did to come to the Adirondacks."

"Then that settles our going! We haven't a cent left over after this outing. If it hadn't been for those escaped felons last year we wouldn't have been here, I suppose!" sighed Julie.

[217]

"If it had not been the reward for the capture of the two felons that proved to be the means to bring you to the Adirondacks, there would have been some other way of finding the supply for you. You see, girls, there is always plenty of everything for you when the Source is unlimited," said Mr. Gilroy.

"Not one of us in Dandelion Troop have such a banker," laughed Judith.

"Then, if this is so, why need we worry about expenses for next summer's outing with you?" added Joan, in response to his remark.

"I didn't ask you to worry," retorted Mr. Gilroy. "I only asked you to remember that you have the invitation, but it is up to you to find the channel of supply and break down the dam, so the supply will run smoothly and continuously for your needs."

"How much shall we need, Gilly?" asked Julie, deeply interested in his words.

"More than a thousand dollars for you all, I know that! But how much more depends upon our itinerary, and that depends on the Captain."

"Oh, does she know about it?" chorused the girls.

"Not yet, but she will, shortly," laughed Mr. Gilroy.

All the coaxings from nine persuasive girls failed to move Mr. Gilroy from the stand he had taken—not to tell about the next summer's plans.

But a week later, when the scouts were well nigh forgetting all about his conversation, he brought a pleasant-faced gentleman to the camp to visit the girls.

[218]

"This is Mr. Everard, scouts. He is anxious to meet Julia and Antoinette, since I told him what clever rascals they are. Do you think they will do their tricks for company?"

Mr. Everard laughed merrily, and it was readily seen that he had not come to see the calf and pig do the little tricks which the scouts had taught them. However, the calf and pig were brought out, and they performed as they had been trained to do, during many strenuous hours, and they won the applause of the stranger. Then he spoke of the real cause of his visit.

"I am one of the investigators of the Carnegie Reward Society, and having heard of your bravery in the recent fire at Raquette Lake, I was sent here to ascertain various facts. From all accounts, the rescues you made were not only courageous and daring, but spectacular as well. It made a fine tale for the newspapers. One of the leading men on a metropolitan daily sent us a note asking whether such deeds were not rewarded by us."

The scouts were too amazed to speak, but Mrs. Vernon spoke for them. She thanked Mr. Everard for coming, and said how pleased they all were that others appreciated the deeds performed by the Dandelion Scouts.

"The medal will be given at the same time the reward of money is presented. So I need the names of the girls who took an active part in the rescues. Those who rendered First Aid to the sufferers may be awarded minor medals—I am not sure of that yet," explained Mr. Everard.

[219]

"But Alec did as much as Jo and I, Gilly," said Julie, "although they didn't say much about him in the papers."

"That has been corrected, but you didn't see the papers of the following day. And Alec is to receive exactly the same reward as you girls," returned Mr. Gilroy.

Mr. Everard did not mention the amount of money that was likely to arrive with the medals, but Mrs. Vernon spoke of it later. The two men left camp, and Mr. Everard was taken over to Grey Fox Camp to meet the boys.

"Verny, maybe that reward will be the nest-egg of the supply we must have to go with Gilly next summer!" declared Julie excitedly, after both men had disappeared from view.

"I was thinking of that when Mr. Everard spoke," said Mrs. Vernon.

"I wonder how much they give to one—about a hundred dollars, I suppose," ventured Joan.

"Oh, no! I've heard their cash rewards range from a thousand and down to five hundred dollars, according to the valor of the deed," replied the Captain. [220]

"A thousand!" chorused the scouts in amazement.

"Why, that would take us all on Gilly's trip," said Julie.

"Maybe; but we don't know where he plans to go. If it is around the world, I fear the reward will not carry you all that far," rejoined Mrs. Vernon, smilingly.

A few days after Mr. Everard's visit at camp, Mr. Gilroy came again. "Well, scouts! was I right when I told you not to limit your supply to any old-fashioned mill-pond?"

"You're always right—how could you *ever* be mistaken?" was Julie's retort.

He laughed. "Now, this flow of supply from the boundless Source I preached about will give you the means to accept my invitation for next year."

"We have already accepted, and are arranging to be absent from home for the length of time it takes to go to Jericho and back again," answered Julie.

"Not to the Far East," laughed Mr. Gilroy, "but to the most wonderful mountains on earth, though the public has not realized that fact, because they are not yet the fashion. They are fast reaching that recognition, however. At present one can go there without being pestered by souvenir peddlers."

"Do tell us where it is, now that you've told us this much," begged the girls. But Mr. Gilroy shook his head and left them guessing.

The last of August was passing quickly, and the scouts sighed whenever they remembered that they must close the wonderful camp the first week of September. There was still, however, one delight in store for them. That was the County Fair, held the first three days of September. They had entered Julia and Antoinette to compete for prizes in their individual classes. [221]

The boys, as well as the girls, spent those days at the Fair Grounds, showing the tricks Julia and the pig could do, and also going about seeking votes for their pets. The result of this faithful work was seen when the prizes were awarded.

Dandelion Scout Camp won First Prize of a hundred dollars for having the heaviest and finest pig exhibited that year. Another fifty dollars came for Antoinette's being the best amateur trick animal shown that year.

Julia won second prize of fifty dollars for having the required number of points in breeding and development. Then, after the fair closed, an animal trainer who made his living going about giving shows of trick animals made an offer for the two pets, saying he had seen them perform at the fair.

"What shall we do? Suppose the man is cruel to them?" asked Julie, worried over the disposal of Julia and Anty.

"It can't be much worse than sending them to a butcher," remarked Mr. Gilroy. [222]

"Oh, mercy! We never could sell them for meat!" cried Joan.

"I shall never eat another mouthful of veal or pork," added Betty, fervently.

"None of us will ever eat meat again!" declared the others.

"But that doesn't answer this letter," the Captain reminded them.

"The man offers a good price, girls, and having so much capital invested, he will surely take care of the investment," said Mr. Gilroy.

"Y-e-s, that's so! Well, I'll tell you what, girls," said Julie. "Let's make him double his offer, and that will make him still more appreciative of Julia and Anty. If he takes it, all right. If he doesn't, we can write to some other Zoo trainer, now that we know we have two fine trained pets."

But the animal trainer expected a "come-back," and was only too glad to secure Julia and Anty at the price the scouts mentioned. And that added materially to the fund for the next summer's outing—wherever it was to be.

The day the trainer came to take possession of his newly acquired pets, the girls felt blue over saying good-by to them. Anty had been so thoroughly scrubbed that she glistened, and Julia had been brushed and currycombed until she looked like satin.

"Oh, Anty! Shake hands just once more," wailed Judith, as she held out her hand to the pig. [223]

Anty immediately stood upon her hind legs and held out a hoof that had made such distracting

imprints for the scouts early in the summer.

"I'll buy the little bark shed, too. I know that all pets love their own little sleeping-places and get so used to them they never feel at home in new quarters. I'll take the pen with me," said the trainer.

So Anty was the means of adding to the coffer of gold the scouts were now dreaming of. And the artistic little bark house was taken away for Anty's especial use thereafter.

After the departure of Julia and Antoinette, the scouts felt lonely, and the camp was soon dismantled of all the exhibits that had been used for decorations that summer. Everything was packed and shipped back home, and then came the day when Mr. Bentley came in his touring car to assist in the transportation of the campers to their old homes and families.

As they all stood on the verandah of the bungalow shaking hands with Mr. Gilroy and telling him what a precious old dear he was to have bothered with them all summer, he said:

"But you haven't asked me for the itinerary for next year."

"We have, again and again, but you said it was not yet time for that!" exclaimed Julie.

"Well, it *is* time now. I have to spend all next summer in the Rocky Mountains collecting specimens of glacial deposits, so I need your company to keep me cheerful. It is up to you to win the consent of your people and save the money for the trip." [224]

Such a chorus of youthful voices as greeted that wondrous prospect made the adults laugh.

"You seem to welcome the idea of camping in the Rockies?" suggested Mr. Gilroy, as the scouts piled into the cars ready to go home.

"Do we! Well, Gilly, just you wait and see if we are not with you next year in those Rockies!" [225] laughed Julie.

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[227]

[228]

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Transcriber's Note:

The word catalogue appears in the main text, but is catalog in the advertisements at the end of the book. Raquette Lake is also shown as Racquette Lake.

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