

# THE BIG MUSKEG

By  
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CHAPTER XII—Continued.

He seemed to tremble at her words. He turned fiercely upon her. "To Scotland!" he shouted. "I'm done with this country. A man's thoughts turn in his old age to his homeland. To Aberdeen!"

Molly was awed by the old man's fanatical enthusiasm. "When shall we go?" she asked.

"This autumn, lass—before the snows fall. But—" he clutched her by the arm—"ye'll say nought about it?"

"But you must arrange with the company for a new factor, and, if he isn't trained—"

His clutch became convulsive. "Not a word!" he cried fiercely. "Havena I done weel by the company? It won't be the sufferer. If they thocht I was going away they'd—not a word, lass! Promise me! Molly, lass, ye winna go back on me now?"

"No, I won't go back on you," she answered.

But she did not like the idea of stealing away, although the company would suffer little. And then there would be the forfeiture of his pension. But she dared not bring up that subject in view of his evident obsession.

After a while they began to make preparations. They spoke of the journey as being weeks, instead of months away. Then came a night when the factor tapped at Molly's door. She dressed quickly and went out of her room, to see the whole skyline ablaze. Clouds of smoke were whirling down on them. Suddenly a rig with two horses came dashing across the portage and drew up at the door.

Molly recognized Lee Chambers and Hackett, and turned and faced them, though her heart was beating with fear.

"We've come for you, Miss McDonald," shouted Lee Chambers. "The fire's across the muskeg, and there won't be anything left of this store in twenty minutes. Come along!"

He shouted and gesticulated wildly, and seemed hardly master of himself. McDonald started and looked out through the smoke clouds. But as they approached the girl she drew herself away.

"It's not true!" she cried. "The fire's on the other side. Why should you come for us?"

"I tell you you'll be burned to a cinder inside of fifteen minutes!" yelled Chambers. "We've got no time to waste. We're going to drive you out of danger. Come along!"

"I won't come!" cried Molly. "Don't go with them, father. He's not speaking the truth! Look at his face!"

Hackett pushed Chambers out of his way and strode up to the door. "I guess that's true enough, what you said, Miss McDonald," he said. "The fire ain't this side—but Will Carruthers is dying. They pulled him out of his shack. He's in a bad way. Mebbe he'll just live till morning. He's calling for you."

"Will—Will burned?" gasped Molly, looking at him with eyes of horror.

"It's gospel truth!" cried Chambers. "He can't rest till you go to him."

"Then why did you tell us an untruth?" asked the girl, searching his face as if to read to the bottom of his soul.

"Because we wanted to break it gently," shouted Hackett. He seized her by the arm. "We haven't no time to waste!" he shouted. "He may die any minute while we're talking here."

"He didn't send you," cried Molly with sudden conviction. "Why should he have sent you? We won't go! You're lying! Let me go!"

She pushed her father back into the store and tried to bolt the door in their faces, but they set their shoulders against it and broke through. Molly ran to her room; they were there almost as soon as she. She screamed. She heard McDonald's feeble shout cut off as Chambers grasped him by the throat. And then she was struggling madly in Hackett's arms.

"Curse you!" he shouted, with a string of vile oaths, seizing her by the hair and dashing his fist into her face.

She fought back like a tigress, broke from him, and, snatching up the water-pitcher, smashed it across his head, cutting his face with the fragments of porcelain. He grasped her by the throat. She clung to the bed, the table, to the door, screaming the while until his fingers tightened on her throat and the room swam blackly around her.

She was faintly conscious of a gag set into her mouth, of being carried, struggling, out of the store, of lifted into the rig. Then she realized herself huddled upon the other father bending over her with wrists tied, and mumbling in her ear.

The engineer, seated in front of her was driving furiously along the southward. Hackett, with one hand thrust out on either side of the rig, was wiping the blood from his

operate as she was. Molly would try to leap from the rig but her father. She heard him mumbling; and at length the clang of his words reached her and the horror of them numbed

her and repressed all thought of fighting.

"It'll be all right, my lass," the old man was muttering. "They won't hurt ye no more. They're taking us to Tom Bowyer, I reckon. He's bested us. We'll have to give in. We'll make the most of it."

The old man shook with fear, but he laid his hand caressingly upon her head. And afterward Molly recalled that gesture, and remembered that it was his right one.

At the time she thought nothing. She lay back with her head against the seat, resolved to husband her strength for a more desperate struggle later, if need be. Her dress was rent, her hair fell to her waist. Rain had begun to fall; the horses, lashed incessantly, tore madly through the darkness, and the rig swayed dangerously from side to side.

Molly's thoughts ran on as fiercely. They were taking her to Bowyer, then! But Bowyer was at Cold Junction, and surely he could not harm her there! And he was taking her father. She must remain at his side and protect him. She sat passively upon the floor, hearing the frenzied babbling of the old man, and soothing him with one hand stretched out upon his.

But this was not the way to Cold Junction. This led toward Chain of Lakes, where several fishing clubs had purchased ground and water rights and set up camps. Her heart sank. She caught at Hackett's arm.

"Where are you taking us?" she pleaded. "Won't you let us go back? I'll say nothing if you let us go—I'll say nothing!"

Hackett grinned at her and tried to put his arm about her. She struck out at him, and, with an oath, he pushed her back violently into the bottom of the rig.

She gathered all her courage to wait. And the waiting was not long. The upland was surmounted, and a lake came into sight, a neck of land, and the dark outlines of camp buildings upon it. A light showed in a window. Chambers pulled up the horses.

He leaped to the ground and, catching McDonald by the arm, pulled him roughly out of the vehicle. He hammered fiercely upon the door, which opened. Tom Bowyer appeared on the threshold. The factor began to tremble. Bowyer pulled him unceremoniously inside.

"Bring her in!" he yelled to Hackett. The outlaw caught Molly by the waist and swung her to the ground. She tried to break from him, but Bowyer, having thrust McDonald inside, snatched her from Hackett's grasp and, picking her up bodily, carried her into the lighted room.

Bowyer deposited the girl on the divan, went out and pushed McDonald in after her. Outside Molly heard a fierce altercation in progress—Bowyer's threatening tones, Hackett's sullen answers and Lee Chambers' querulous whine.

Presently the two men went out and Molly heard the horses being led



"Bring Her In!" He Yelled to Hackett.

away. She tried to adjust her torn dress, to fasten up her hair. Bowyer came back.

"Now we'll have a few words together," he said, leaning at Molly.

CHAPTER XIII.

Wilton carried the dead man into his room and laid the body on the bed. His face was set like flint. In this he traced the work of Bowyer; but the tool, Lee Chambers, was the object of his immediate vengeance.

Before anything else he must discover the motive of the burglary. He opened the safe, which he had shot, and went through the papers very deliberately. He was astonished to find that everything appeared intact and just as he had left it.

Wilton could not understand it. He tried to figure it out. He had already come to the conclusion that the fire

had been started with the purpose of drawing himself and those in the vicinity away from the office, while the burglary was being committed. But why had it failed? And what had Chambers been after?

He must have known that there was no money in the safe. The men's pay came up monthly by special messenger, and was handed out the same evening. It would arrive on the Monday. Chambers could not have been after spoil of that kind.

Wilton looked through Joe's papers again. Everything seemed intact, and nothing had even been tampered with. It must have been that Chambers took fright after the murder.

Suddenly Andersen came running across the smoking ground, followed by some half-dozen of the engineers. The foreman came panting up to the door of the shack.

"The men are crazy drunk, Mr. Carruthers, and they're planning to attack the office!" he gasped. "Somebody's been telling them the safe's full of money and that they're going to be laid off because of the fire."

Wilton reflected a moment, while the engineers gathered anxiously about him.

"They can't open the safe," said Wilton. "At least, there's only one man can, and he's been at it already. No, never mind what I mean! I don't want bloodshed. I'll open it and show it to them." He turned to one of the engineers. "Take four men with you and hurry to the store and see that no harm comes to Miss McDonald and her father," he ordered. "And take this," he added, picking the revolver out of the drawer and handing it to him.

"You'd better come too, Mr. Carruthers," the man suggested.

"No, I'll stay here," said Wilton. "Hurry!"

The engineer picked four men and they hurried down the road. Andersen and two others remained with Wilton. Hardly had the party left when the mob came streaming out of the bunk-houses toward the office, shouting and yelling.

Seeing the four men standing in the doorway, however, they hesitated to rush them, probably in the belief that they were armed, and stood off, cursing them.

"Speak up!" shouted Wilton. "What is it you men want?"

The shouts died away to a muttering. A spokesman stepped forward.

"We want the money in the safe, and we'll have it!" he shouted. "We all know you set the fire because the line's busted, and you've got the safe chock-full of money. You've worked us like dogs all summer, and now you're going to lay us off because the company's busted. You'd better hand it over."

Evidently somebody had been telling the men that tale.

"There's no money in the safe," he answered. "Send a deputation of three men and you can examine it."

The Hunkies, who for the most part understood him very well, looked at one another uncertainly. They were as docile as lambs without leadership. But they had a leader; the outlaw Tonguay stepped forward out of the crowd.

"Come along, boys, he's fooling you!" he yelled. "Smash his head for him! Give them what's coming to them!"

But he slunk back into their midst as the howling mob rushed forward. Wilton noticed that he was fingering a revolver in his coat pocket. He waited till the mob was close upon the shack. He had calculated that an instant's hesitation would follow, seized it and sprang into their midst, striking out right and left and felling a drunken laborer at every blow. As Tonguay fumbled desperately with the trigger of the weapon in his pocket, Wilton dealt him a smashing blow that knocked him senseless. He stooped, took the revolver and turned and faced his assailants.

"Now, men," he said crisply. "I've told you that you shall examine the safe, and I'll keep my word. Three of you enter. The rest will wait outside."

After a pause three of the workmen came forward uncertainly. Wilton took them inside the shack, opened the safe door and took out the contents, package by package.

"Satisfied there's no money?" he asked.

"I guess that's so," admitted the leader of the men, reluctantly.

"Then get out," said Wilton, driving them toward the door.

The three rejoined their companions and, with sullen mutterings, the workmen lurched away aimlessly, and totally unable to unite on any further plan for aggression now that their leader was gone. Andersen and one of the engineers picked up Tonguay and brought him into the shack. The man was still unconscious. However, he showed signs of coming to shortly.

"Jules is dead," said Wilton quietly.

"Jules dead?" shouted Andersen.

"Murdered. It was Lee Chambers. He must have been hanging round the camp. He got into the safe, too, but was scared away before he took anything. Come inside!"

At the sight of the dead man on the bed Andersen swore softly.

"He must have been with those two liquor peddlers," said Andersen. "I guess they set the fire, all right."

"I guess they did," said Wilton. "And I want you to go on to the next camp and telephone in to Clayton and get the police up here right away."

"I done it, Mr. Carruthers," said Andersen. "You see, sir, just as soon as the fire began I seen that gasolins on the engine sheds. And I'd heard the men talking, because I picked up a little of their language. I knew there was trouble coming, and I phoned Mr. Quain. He said he'd get an engine and come right up with some of his men."

"Well done!" said Wilton. "We'll have this man for them, at any rate." Tonguay stirred, muttered and suddenly sat up on the floor, looking at



Tonguay Screamed and Started Away.

his captors in bewilderment. Wilton quietly took the revolver out of his pocket and walked toward him.

"I'm going to ask you a few questions, Tonguay," he remarked in a casual tone. "You'll find it to your advantage to answer them. Who sent you here?"

Tonguay broke into a short laugh. "You tink dey tell that to me?" he sneered. "Jim Hackett don't tell me nothings. He say you got de job—you do it!"

"You came with Hackett; but what was the game? You were told to sell liquor round the camp and make the workmen drunk and discontented. I guess you have an idea whom you were working for, besides Jim Hackett, eh, Tonguay?"

"Mebbe I do," muttered the outlaw. "I guess you shoot me unless I say Mr. Bowyer, eh?"

The parry was effective. "You came here with Hackett and Lee Chambers to fire the camp," said Wilton. "Lee Chambers' job was to steal papers from the safe while we were fighting the fire. You were going to meet somewhere afterward. Where was it?"

The man burst into scornful laughter. "You don't bluff me," he jeered. "I guess you don't want to be charged wit' another murder, eh?"

"Do you?" asked Wilton.

"How's dat? You don't fix no murder on me."

"Come here!" said Wilton, taking him by the arm and leading him to the door of the bedroom.

The moon, sloping in the west, threw a flood of light on the white face of Jules, showing the crushed skull and the blood-clots that stained the pillow. Tonguay screamed and started away, but Wilton held him fast.

"What you want to know?" babbled the outlaw.

"Where were you three going to meet afterward?"

"In de clubhouse of de fishing camp at Chain of Lakes, twelve miles south," groaned Tonguay, slinking back against the wall.

"That's where we'll find them," said Andersen.

Wilton handed him the revolver. "You'll guard your prisoner, and hand him over to the police when they arrive," he said.

Then he saw men running toward the shack, and stepped outside. It was the party whom he had sent to the portage.

"They're gone!" panted one of them.

"Gone? What do you mean?" shouted Wilton.

"Miss McDonald and the factor. They went to bed last night. Now—they're not there. There's been foul work done, and a fight. Her room is all in confusion, the bedclothes dragged into the store, a pitcher smashed to pieces."

Andersen pulled at Wilton's sleeve. "We'll catch the horses at the muskeg," he said. "You stay here. It's our job, sir."

"No, it's my job, Andersen," answered Wilton, "and, by G—d, it'll be a thorough one!"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

## Jewelry is New Fad

Craze for Necklaces, Pendants, Bracelets, Earrings.

WHITE IS IN THE LIMELIGHT

Buyers Are Enthusiastic Regarding Bright Future They See in Store for Decorations.

The craze for new types of jewelry, particularly for necklaces, pendants, bracelets, brooches, earrings and head-dresses, is steadily increasing, states a fashion correspondent in the New York Tribune. Combinations of pearls, brilliants and platinum, pearls and onyx and the use of semi-precious stones, such as lapis, jade and colored crystal in sets that are especially designed to accompany certain costumes, are having a wide vogue. Manufacturers of imitation jewelry are hastening to copy these new designs brought out by the leading jewelers and launched by the most exclusive dressmakers and their smart clientele.

Several American buyers returning from abroad expressed great enthusiasm regarding the bright future which they consider is in store for novelty jewelry, especially pieces in black and white effects, such as in combination of crystal and onyx and jet and pearls. Crystal, jet and pearls are frequently combined, especially in necklaces. The combination of these three is exceedingly pleasing, the whiteness of the crystal offsetting the blackness of the jet.

There are necklaces formed of long, twisted chains of fine pearls finished with a tassel which has as the last bead an onyx somewhat larger than the last pearl, the whole being held by an onyx slide. Others consist of a tassel of pearls having an onyx top, which is suspended on a long black silk cord. Still others have silver and marcasite tops and small pearls set between links of silver for the chain.

Plaque pendants or cabochons, which are suspended from silk cords or narrow velvet ribbons, are made from crystal or from onyx set in steel frames having a small motif of either enamel or stones. These are distinctly reminiscent of the Second Empire period. Other cabochons are of crystal set in a frame of steel and decorated with a motif of marcasite.

Those who are fond of colorful effects will take kindly to crystal



White occupies the center of the stage, so fashion decrees, and when of crepe and beaded in bugle beads, it becomes a gown of charming appearance. The pointed skirt and black mesh are its chief characteristics.

cabochons in colors and to the dull gold novelties set with colored stones. Frequently the cabochon is of colored galalith with a motif applied to it of fine metal. Again the pendant is of the metal ornamented with colored stones.

DISCREET COLORS IN PLAIDS

Brown is Leader for Daytime Wear; Blue Stands Out as Marked Shade for the Year.

Plaids in discreet colorings are featured for outdoor and tailored wear. English mixtures and wools in mixed colorings are strong for all type of tailored garments. Brown is the great leader for daytime wear, in all shades from dark tete de negre to fawn. Green is being pushed by many of the manufacturers, in intense shades, also in reseda and dark myrtle.

In silks, as in woollens, for day wear, brown, green and black are good. For evening, all the shades with a reddish base, such as flame pink, orange and purples, are favored.

Blue in bright tones, on the order of king's blue and blue with a gray base, of the Copenhagen family, also are favored. Bright blue, in fact, stands out as the marked color note for the year, but used chiefly as a decoration, or in combination with black.

PETTICOATS AGAIN IN STYLE

Interest in the Garment is Stimulated by Fact That Outer Skirt is to Be Longer.

The increased skirt length, which is an assured fact for fall and winter, has served to stimulate interest in the petticoat. This garment, which to a large extent has been taboo in favor of bloomers during the last few seasons, seems destined to have a run of favor again.

Among the undergarment novelties recently seen, one that is distinctly practical, as well as novel, is a step-in chemise, with platted petticoat section both back and front.

Corsets continue to be light of weight, both as to fabric and boning, with short tops and as much elastic as possible used so that they give to and with the figure.

TAFFETA FOR YOUNG GIRLS



Taffeta is always charming for the young girls, and the basque bodice, as shown here, is particularly attractive if becomingly worn upon a dainty figure. The wheels of fluted taffeta are decorative.

POIRET TWILL FROCKS FOR FALL

New Tailored Street Models Have Received Stamp of Approval for Coming Season.

Devoting the entire line shown for the fall to tailored models in poiret twill, one manufacturer has a wide assortment of street frocks that already have had a successful response in the market. Depending strictly on tailored lines for their effect, these dresses have but little trimming and it is applied with careful attention to detail and artistry. In most every case the models are created to fill the needs of the smart walking dress and the practical frock that can be worn indoors and out with due consideration of the fall weather.

The colors are navy and seal brown, besides black. Almost all the models are developed in the two shades used by this house, with corresponding touches of color in embroidery and bead effects. The models are imported designs and feature Jenny necks, Poiret necks and the V-neck with an insert of the same material. In almost every model there is at least a suggestion of the uneven hemline and the draped effect.

One model that is rather unique was developed in Poiret twill with bands of red and black imported embroidery. The essential feature of the frock is the fact that it can be worn with a hanging panel from the shoulder, or the panel turned up presents a blouse effect on the back, with the band of embroidery forming a standing collar. The shoulder panel lined with canton satin, when turned

up over the shoulder, gives the dress a satin back that is quite unique. The panel fastens on the front of the blouse in tiny points that affect a coat design. The embroidery on this dress is brilliant with color and is a particularly good example of the dress that can be worn in different ways.

Sweaters in Colors. Shetland and thin wool silpions are popular sweater numbers in plain and figured effects, but always in black and white, gray and white, pastel blues or neutral colorings, sometimes repeated in stockings and hat. Bright colors are conspicuous by their absence.

Headgear. Turbans of maline, a shade of brown being particularly fashionable, are replacing those of satin and straw cloth that have been so popular. Though there is much talk of the large hat on the street the close turban is more than holding its own.

Porch Frock. The porch frock has developed into a straight-line frock, made up in bright colored fabrics, or printed designs, not too conservative in color. Usually they have round necks, short sleeves and elastic bands at the waist.

Gingham. Gingham dresses are amazingly cheap this year, compared to the prices they attained the last few seasons. For less than \$10 you may get a very snappy one.