

BAREE

Son of Kazan

By JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

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Chapter XVI—Continued

—26—

Close to the deep, dark pool in which he and the Willow had disported so often Baree, too, had stopped. He could hear the rippling of water, and his eyes shone with a gleaming fire as he gazed for Nepeese. He expected to see her there, her slim white body shimmering in some dark shadow of overhanging spruce, or gleaming suddenly white as snow in one of the warm splashes of sunlight. His eyes sought out their old hiding places; the great split rock on the other side, the shelving banks under which they used to dive like otter, the spruce boughs that dipped down to the surface, and in the midst of which the Willow loved to screen her naked body while he searched the pool for her. And at last the realization was borne upon him that she was not there, that he had still farther to go.

He went on to the tepee. The little open space in which they had built their hidden wigwam was flooded with sunshine that came through a break in the forest to the west. The tepee was still there. It did not seem very much changed to Baree. And rising from the ground in front of the tepee was what had come to him faintly on the still air—the smoke of a small fire. Over that fire was bending a person, and it did not strike Baree as amazing, or at all unexpected, that this person should have two great shining braids down her back. He whined, and at his whine the person grew a little rigid, and turned slowly.

Even then it seemed quite the most natural thing in the world that it should be Nepeese, and none other. He had lost her yesterday. Today he had found her. And in answer to his whine there came a sobbing cry straight out of the soul of the Willow.

Carvel found them there a few minutes later, the dog's head huggled close up against the Willow's breast, and the Willow was crying—crying like a little child, her face hidden from him on Baree's neck. He did not interrupt them, but waited; and as he waited something in the sobbing voice and the stillness of the forest seemed to whisper to him a bit of the story of the burned cabin and the two graves, and the meaning of the Call that had come to Baree from out of the south.

Chapter XVII

That night there was a new campfire in the open. It was not a small fire, built with the fear that other eyes might see it, but a fire that sent its flames high. In the glow of it stood Carvel. And as the fire had changed from that small smoldering heap over which the Willow had cooked dinner, so Carvel, the officially dead outlaw, had changed. The beard was gone from his face; he had thrown off his caribou-skin coat; his sleeves were rolled up to the elbows, and there was a wild flush in his face that was not altogether the tanning of wind and sun and storm, and a glow in his eyes that had not been there for five years, perhaps never before. His eyes were on Nepeese. She sat in the freight, leaning a little toward the blaze, her wonderful hair glowing warmly in the flash of it. Carvel did not move while she was in that attitude. He seemed scarcely to breathe. The glow in his eyes grew deeper—the worship of a man for a woman. Suddenly Nepeese turned and caught him before he could turn his gaze. There was nothing to hide in her own eyes. Like her face, they were flushed with a new hope and a new gladness. Carvel sat down beside her on the birch log, and in his hand he took one of her thick braids and crumpled it as he talked. At their feet, watching them, lay Baree.

"Tomorrow or the next day I am going to Lac Bain," he said, a hard and bitter note back of the gentle worship of his voice. "I will not come back until I have—killed him."

The Willow looked straight into the fire. For a time there was a silence broken only by the crackling of the flames, and in that silence Carvel's fingers weaved in and out of the silken strands of the Willow's hair. His thoughts flashed back. What a chance he had missed that day on Bush McTaggart's trap-line—if he had only known! His jaws set hard as he saw in the red-hot heart of the fire the mental pictures of the day when the Factor from Lac Bain had killed Pierrot. She had told him the whole story. Her flight. Her plunge to what she had thought was certain death in the icy torrent of the chasm. Her miraculous escape from the waters—and how she was discovered, nearly dead, by Tuboa, the toothless old Cree whom Pierrot out of pity had allowed to hunt in part of his domain. He felt within himself the tragedy and the horror of the one terrible hour in which the sun had gone out of the

world for the Willow, and in the flames he could see faithful old Tuboa as he called on his last strength to bear Nepeese over the long miles that lay between the chasm and his cabin; he caught shifting visions of the weeks that followed in that cabin, weeks of hunger and of intense cold in which the Willow's life hung by a single thread. And at last, when the snows were deepest, Tuboa had died. Carvel's fingers clenched in the strands of the Willow's hair. A deep breath rose out of his chest, and he said, staring deep into the fire:

"Tomorrow I will go to Lac Bain."

For a moment Nepeese did not answer. She, too, was looking into the fire. Then she said:

"Tuboa meant to kill him when the spring came, and he could travel. When Tuboa died I knew that it was I who must kill him. So I came, with Tuboa's gun. It was fresh loaded—yesterday. And—M'sieu Jeem"—she looked up at him, a triumphant glow in her eyes as she added in a whisper—"You will not go to Lac Bain. I have sent a messenger."

"A messenger?"

"Yes, Oookimow Jeem—a messenger. Two days ago. I sent word that I had not died, but was here—waiting for him—and that I would be Iskwa now, his wife. Oo-oo, he will come, Oookimaw Jeem—he will come fast. And you shall not kill him. Non!" She smiled into his face, and the throb of Carvel's heart was like a dream. "The gun is loaded," she said softly. "I will shoot."

"Two days ago," said Carvel. "And from Lac Bain it is—"

"He will be here tomorrow," Nepeese answered him. "Tomorrow, as the sun goes down, he will enter the clearing. I know. My blood has been singing it all day. Tomorrow—tomorrow—for he will travel fast, Oookimaw Jeem. Yes, he will come fast."

Carvel had bent his head. The soft tresses gripped in his fingers were crushed to his lips. The Willow, looking again into the fire, did not see. But she felt—and her soul was beating like the wings of a bird.

"Oookimow Jeem," she whispered—a breath, a flutter of the lips so soft that Carvel heard no sound.

If old Tuboa had been there that night it is possible he would have read strange warnings in the winds that whispered now and then softly in the

low cry of exultation. He came to the edge of the forest; chance directed his steps to the overgrown trail; he followed it, and the smoke smell came stronger to his nostrils.

It was the forest man's instinct, too, that added the element of caution to his advance. That, and the utter stillness of the night. He broke no sticks under his feet. He disturbed the brush so quietly that it made no sound. When he came at last to the little open where Carvel's fire was still sending a spiral of spruce-scented smoke up into the air it was with a stealth that failed even to rouse Baree. Perhaps, deep down in him, there smoldered an old suspicion; perhaps it was because he wanted to come to her while she was sleeping. The sight of the tepee made his heart throb faster. It was light as day where it stood in the moonlight, and he saw hanging outside it a few bits of woman's apparel. He advanced soft-footed as a fox and stood a moment later with his hand on the cloth flap at the wigwam door, his head bent forward to catch the merest breath of sound. He could hear her breathing. For an instant his face turned so that the moonlight struck his eyes. They were aflame with a mad fire. Then, still very quietly, he drew aside the flap at the door.

It could not have been sound that roused Baree, hidden in the black balsam shadow a dozen paces away. Perhaps it was scent. His nostrils twitched first; then he awoke. For a few seconds his eyes glared at the bent figure in the tepee door. He knew that it was not Carvel. The old smell—the man-beast's smell, filled his nostrils like a hated poison. He sprang to his feet and stood with his lips snarling back slowly from his long fangs. McTaggart had disappeared. From inside the tepee there came a sound; a sudden movement of bodies, a startled ejaculation of one awakening from sleep—and then a cry, a low, half-smothered, frightened cry, and in response to that cry Baree shot out from under the balsam with a sound in his throat that had in it the note of death.



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It was midnight when the big moon stood full above the little open in the forest. In the tepee the Willow was sleeping. In the balsam shadow back from the fire slept Baree, and still farther back in the edge of a spruce thicket slept Carvel. Dog and man were tired. They had traveled far and fast that day, and they heard no sound.

But they had traveled neither so far nor so fast as Bush McTaggart. Between sunrise and midnight he had come forty miles when he strode out into the clearing where Pierrot's cabin had stood. Twice from the edge of the forest he had called; and now, when he found no answer, he stood under the light of the moon and listened. Nepeese was to be here—waiting. He was tired, but exhaustion could not still the fire that burned in his blood. It had been blazing all day, and now—so near its realization and its triumph—the old passion was like a drunken wine in his veins. Some where, near where he stood, Nepeese was waiting for him, waiting for him. Once again he called, his heart beating in a fierce anticipation as he listened. There was no answer. And then for a thrilling instant his breath stopped. He sniffed the air—and there came to him faintly the smell of smoke.

With the first instinct of the forest man he fronted the wind that was but a faint breath under the starlit skies. He did not call again, but hastened across the clearing. Nepeese was off there—somewhere—sleeping, beside her fire, and out of him there rose a

low cry of exultation. He came to the edge of the forest; chance directed his steps to the overgrown trail; he followed it, and the smoke smell came stronger to his nostrils.

It was the forest man's instinct, too, that added the element of caution to his advance. That, and the utter stillness of the night. He broke no sticks under his feet. He disturbed the brush so quietly that it made no sound. When he came at last to the little open where Carvel's fire was still sending a spiral of spruce-scented smoke up into the air it was with a stealth that failed even to rouse Baree. Perhaps, deep down in him, there smoldered an old suspicion; perhaps it was because he wanted to come to her while she was sleeping. The sight of the tepee made his heart throb faster. It was light as day where it stood in the moonlight, and he saw hanging outside it a few bits of woman's apparel. He advanced soft-footed as a fox and stood a moment later with his hand on the cloth flap at the wigwam door, his head bent forward to catch the merest breath of sound. He could hear her breathing. For an instant his face turned so that the moonlight struck his eyes. They were aflame with a mad fire. Then, still very quietly, he drew aside the flap at the door.

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In the edge of the spruce thicket Carvel rolled uneasily. Strange sounds were rousing him, cries that in his exhaustion came to him as if in a dream. At last he sat up, and then in sudden horror leaped to his feet and rushed toward the tepee. Nepeese was in the open, crying the name she had given him—"Oookimow Jeem—Oookimow—Jeem—Oookimow Jeem—" She was standing there white and slim, her eyes with the blaze of the stars in them, and when she saw Carvel she flung out her arms to him, still crying: "Oookimow Jeem—Oo-oo, Oookimow Jeem—"

In the tepee he heard the rage of a beast, the moaning cries of a man. He forgot that it was only last night he had come, and with a cry he swept the Willow to his breast, and the Willow's arms tightened around his neck as she moaned:

"Oookimow Jeem—It is the man-beast—in there! It is the man-beast from Lac Bain—and Baree—"

Truth flashed upon Carvel, and he caught Nepeese up in his arms and ran away with her from the sounds that had grown sickening and horrible. In the spruce thicket he put her feet once more to the ground. Her arms were still tight around his neck; he felt the wild terror of her body as it throbbed against him; her breath was sobbing, and her eyes were on his face. He drew her closer, and suddenly she crushed his face down close against hers and felt for an instant the warm thrill of her lips against his own. And he heard the whisper, soft and trembling:

"Oo-oo, Oookimow Jeem—"

When Carvel returned to the fire, alone, his Colt in his hand, Baree was in front of the tepee waiting for him. Carvel picked up a burning brand and entered the wigwam. When he came out his face was white. He tossed the brand in the fire and went back to Nepeese. He had wrapped her in his blankets, and now he knelt down beside her and put his arms about her.

"He is dead, Nepeese."

"Dead Oookimow Jeem?"

"Yes. Baree killed him."

She did not seem to breathe. Gently, with his lips in her hair, Carvel whispered his plans for their paradise.

"No one will know, my sweetheart. Tonight I will bury him and burn the tepee. Tomorrow we will start for Nelson House, where there is a Missioner. And after that—we will come back—and I will build a new cabin where the old one burned. Do you love me, ka sakahet?"

"Ooi—yes—Oookimow Jeem—I love you—"

Suddenly there came an interruption. Baree at last was giving his cry of triumph. It rose to the stars; it walked over the roofs of the forests and filled the quiet skies—a wolfish howl of exultation, of achievement, of vengeance fulfilled. Its echoes died slowly away, and silence came again. A great peace whispered in the soft breath of the tree tops. Out of the north came the mating call of a loon, about Carvel's shoulders the Willow's arms crept closer. And Carvel, out of his heart, thanked God.

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[THE END.]

Probable Reason
"Well! well! Look at that fellow running and turning his head first one way, then the other, as he fires!" exclaimed a guest. "What do you suppose he is doing that for?"

"Not knowing the gent, can't say for certain," replied the landlord of the tavern at Peeveecuddyhump, "but probably it is 'cuz he ain't able to turn both ways at once."—Kansas City Times.

Ensemble Sweater Strikes New Note

Two Sweaters, One Over Other, Favored by Motion-Picture Actress.

The sweater as a fashion item for summer has "conspicuously" returned. This season it is not only smart for resort and country club wear, occasionally showing itself in town, but it has become a practical outfit which is smart for traveling as well as for general day-time wear. Particularly is this true of the new pure silk knitted sweater costume which comes in delightful pastel shades for the seashore.

The new note in the sweater family is the ensemble, consisting of two sweaters, one of which is worn over the other. Generally, the sweater



Two Sweaters, One Over the Other, Makes Ensemble Outfit.

worn beneath is a colorfully striped slip-on. This, worn with a plain-colored mannish coat sweater the same shade as the skirt, makes a delightfully chic costume.

To wear with the popular youthful plaited silk skirt, a slip-on sweater of finely woven wool such as Eleanor Boardman, popular screen actress, is wearing, is smartly fashionable this season. The finely turned student collar worn with a bright-colored tie gives it an added youthful zest. Many of these sweaters are shown in horizontal stripes of striking colors, either in equal-sized stripes or wider and narrower combinations. Block effects in brilliant contrasting colors are particularly chic.

As to necks, one may choose from the popular student collar with its youthful becomingness, which Miss Boardman wears so charmingly, the smart Jenny neck which introduces a new note by having the neck bound with crepe de chine, or the chic V neck, which looks so smart with the popular choker necklace.

Uneven Hemline Found to Be Liked Feature

The uneven hemline distinguishes the majority of French garden party gowns that are made of any solid material. Scalloped edges have enjoyed such a long popularity that dressmakers have been forced to seek something new, and after doing clever things with little rectangular turlets, they have now produced a hemline with the scallops reversed, so that the points instead of the curves reach the lowest line.

A Molynex ensemble worn at a garden fete at the American embassy consisted of a straight black coat lined with black and white polka-dotted foulard. This latter also formed the simple gown that had a pretty one-sided bow effect in the arrangement of the cravate.

Disclosed Hemline Is British Fashion Note

The disclosed hemline will be featured this autumn, according to the plans of the British haute monde.

Two and three-piece suits will be worn, with full-length coats that are to terminate just an inch above the skirt hemline.

The ensemble in its original form is also favored by smart English women. Apparently all opposition to this theme as being hackneyed and out-moded has disappeared, and the ensemble may now be said to have won a permanent place in the mode.

Evening Frocks Low in Back

The evening frocks present a most staid and sober appearance from the front. The neck line at that point is very high and only slightly rounded. But the back—all there is to the back of many evening dresses is a pair of suspenders of self material which attach to the dress at a low waistline and cross at a point on the spine where the low décollete was wont to be.

Elbow Bracelets

The graduated bangles which have been worn around the neck now have been adapted for the arms and are worn just above and below the elbow. They are of gold drawn wire and are broad and flat in shape. Five are usually worn on the arm, but only one arm is so decorated.

Carmel Myers in Chic Cowboy Hat and Scarf



The cowboy hat and scarf outfit is new. Carmel Myers, the "movie" star is first to follow this fad by tying a gay printed scarf rakishly at the side in cowboy fashion to accompany the white felt cowboy hat, so popular this season, and which she wears in "Tell It to the Marines," her latest production.

Fashion Briefs That Will Interest Women

The latest version of the popular frock of Chinese damask has a chemise front to add to its aspect of manliness.

Afternoon and evening frocks of more often exploit a new shade of deep red, which is one of the smartest colors for autumn.

The white wool suit on tailored lines, worn with the rather elaborate white silk or organdie blouse, is charming with the colored hat and colored footwear.

Just as suddenly as belts disappeared from all our gowns, so have they returned. The suede belts in bright colors vary in width from a quarter of an inch to three inches. Suede hat bands often match the belts.

A material for which success is predicted in early fall is moire. It is used both for evening frocks and for day-time costumes. One of the most attractive dresses is made of dark blue moire with touches of white in the collar and jabot.

One of the very feminine conceits of the mode is the use of the flower bracelet—a flower the color of one's frock, is slipped into one's bracelet or a ribbon band allowed to fall over the hand. Needless to state, this style is only for evening.

The red shawl for evening is given a conspicuous place as a complement to the white chiffon dance frock. Another charming fashion is seen in a slim gathered cape of red velvet which is worn over a white evening dress.

New sport handkerchiefs made of heavy-quality silk in light shades and having rolled hems and thread-line borders are just as useful as they are decorative. One corner is richly embroidered in raised work in small flower designs that take in a variety of colors.

If asked what is the outstanding feature of midsummer fashions, one would answer without hesitation, the vogue of printed chiffons. Sheer and lovely in texture, either striking or subtle in coloring and with designs which reveal the artistry of the modern textile designer, this material has achieved an amazing success.

Untrimmed Slippers to Maintain Popularity

Plain, untrimmed slippers retain their popularity and are to be found in the wardrobes of the most fashionably dressed.

The vogue for the unusual has brought the fancier shoes into great prominence. Their selection must be discreet, for there is a vast difference between gayety and vulgarity of taste.

This is equally true of frocks as well as slippers. Brilliance of coloring and broadness of pattern must go hand in hand with discrimination. Colors cannot be too bright, but they must be beautifully combined and the frocks they decorate must follow the lines of fashion.

Jumper Frocks Sleeveless

Sleeveless jumper frocks accompanied by short sports coats are among the summer sports styles. One lovely model made of cherry red silk broadcloth has its skirt portion of red, its jumper of white, dotted with huge cherry-red dots, and its red coat is lined in the white-dotted jumper material. A black satin steamer tie sets off the boyish color of eton type.

Gowns to Suit Style

If a woman finds it unbecoming to wear the straight lines and abbreviated skirts of the present-day evening dresses, she always has the "robe de style" to fall back on. This term simply means a gown which in its composition is not in style, but which is becoming to the wearer and consequently thoroughly in style for her.

Artificial Tub Satin

A new material, which has beauty as well as practical qualities to recommend it, is an artificial satin said to launder satisfactorily. It comes in a wide range of colors and has a beautiful luster.



A Little Bit Humorous

SILVER LINING

There had been a blowout, and the father of the family was perspiring and profanely changing tires.

"I don't see why you have to talk that way," said his wife reproachfully. "You act as if it were a total loss. You never see the good in things."

"Well, what good is there in this?"

"Why, it tickled the baby so. He laughed right out loud when it went bang."

A CHEAP WIFE



Bridegroom—How much? Officiating Clergyman—Whatever she is worth to you. Bridegroom—Can you cash a check for \$2 and give me the change?

Musical Mystery

Mysterious and all profound
The ways of music are:
The worse a tune is made to sound,
The more it's "popular."

Talented

First Artist—I painted a lump of pig iron once to look like cork, and when I threw it into the water it floated.

Second Artist—That's nothing. I painted a lump of pig iron to look like a roast of beef and my dog ate three-quarters of it before he discovered his mistake.

Not His Machine

Brown—Your lawnmower woke me up at six o'clock this morning.

Green—No, it didn't.

Brown—Do you mean to say you weren't cutting your grass?

Green—I was cutting it, but the lawnmower belonged next door.—Good Hardware.

That's Him

There goes the most sophisticated man I know.

But he looks like a bum.

He is.

Hour of Silence

Why do you think restaurants are more quiet after 1 p. m.?

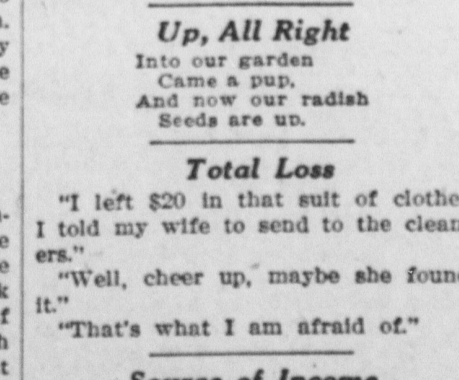
Well, the soup is usually used up by that time.

A Specter to the Good

Assistant—The seance is going pretty good.

Medium—Yes, just a shade more and it'll be a success.—Collier's.

NEWLY WEDS



"I wish we had been married years ago."

"Me, too—we would have been divorced by this time."

Up, All Right

Into our garden
Came a pup,
And now our radish
Seeds are up.

Total Loss

"I left \$20 in that suit of clothes I told my wife to send to the cleaners."

"Well, cheer up, maybe she found it."

"That's what I am afraid of."

Source of Income

Old Doctor A—I've no patience with imaginary complaints.

Young Doctor B—Patients with imaginary complaints furnish most of my income.

Real He-Girl

Tess—Oh, I'm just sick of going out with boys in autos.

Bess—Have to walk home much, dear?

Tess—Not at all, but every time I go out I have a new type of car to drive home after I throw the sheik out.—Allston Recorder.

Nonsense

"What's the use of saving \$500?"

"None whatever. It's too little for a car and too much to give the wife."