

However, if I had known how mistaken I was, and how truly eventful that summer was to be, I should have astounded my parents by an unseemly haste to get away, instead of the slowness with which I actually prepared for my visit. Certain it is that I should have been in a far more pleasant state of mind for the hearty welcome I received from my relatives, had I but known that — but I am getting ahead of my story.

“Kenneth,” said Uncle Henry as we arose from the breakfast table, (war had not even been hinted at during the meal), “you ought to go to the lake and try your luck with the cattles. They’ll bite like sharks today. Take your rod and go over to ‘The Point.’ That’s the best place for ’em. But you’d better borrow some old clothes, for it’s mighty brushy through the woods.”

Seeing that there was nothing else to do, I togged myself out in a pair of blue overalls, a brown jacket and a rather dilapidated straw hat which Cousin Anne had resurrected for my use from the darkness of the garret. And then, laden with my camera, my tackle and a basket of lunch prepared by the ever-thoughtful Aunt Clara, I tramped bravely off. ‘The Point’ was a jagged promontory of rocks on the opposite shore of the lake, down through a cleft in which rushed a brawling mountain stream, feeding the lake and making a deep pool in which lurked the most voracious catfish. It was an exceedingly picturesque formation, and I congratulated myself upon my forethought in bringing my camera along, as I caught occasional glimpses of it through the woods. Nor was this the only cause for congratulation, as events proved.

I had skirted the shore for a mile or more, and as yet had not traversed half the distance to ‘The Point,’ when, as I came out into a clearing I perceived a small boy trudging along with an immense market basket on one arm. Evidently the load was a weighty one, for at intervals he stopped to shift burden from arm to arm. It was at one of these periodic pauses that I slipped up behind him and unslung my camera. Then, as he picked up the basket to move on, I gave a shout and pressed the button. The result far exceeded my expectations. With a gasp that was almost a sob he turned, at the same instant dropping the basket, and I heard an ominous breaking sound come from the latter. The boy, frightened almost out of his wits, stood stock-still for a moment, surveying first the basket, then myself, and then, in a high, piping wail, he burst out,