

# FROM THE PANE

BY CHARLES CLARK MURKIN  
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## SYNOPSIS.

Chip McGuire, a 12-year-old girl living at Tim's place in the Maine woods is found by her father, Pete Holden, in a half-drowned state. She runs away and reaches the camp of Martin Frisbie, occupied by Martin, his wife, nephew, Raymond Stearns, and gaidy aunt. Journey of Frisbie's party into woods to visit Frisbie, an old hermit, who has resided in the wilderness for many years. When camp is broken Chip and Ray occupy same canoe. Chip and Ray are old friends and former townsmen of the hermit. They settle in the woods for a summer stay. Chip and Ray are in love, but no one realizes this until Martin and his wife canoe makes found on lake shore in front of their cabin. Martin and Ray leave for settlement to get officers to arrest McGuire, who is known as outlaw and escaped murderer. Chip and Ray are friends. Pomsah, an Indian, visits camp. Ray believes he is on the river. Chip is stolen by Pete Holden who escapes with her in a canoe. Martin and Ray are captured by Martin and Ray that are returning from the woods. Chip and Ray are captured. Old Cy proposes to Ray that he remains in the woods. Martin and Ray are Amst and trap during the winter, and he concludes to do so. Chip and Ray return to Greenville, taking Chip with them. Chip stays with McGuire, who is Amst and finds his unpleasant at Aunt Comfort's. Old Cy and Ray discover strange tracks in the wilderness and discover a fortune telling place of the hermit. Chip is sneaking about their cabin. They investigate his absence. Holden finds McGuire during the winter. Ray, finding a Greenup ship waiting for work with the hermit, but she, feeling that the old comrademate had been over her, it is as if she were a stranger. She comes with Judson Walker, visits them, Aunt Mandy, Aunt Abby, Aunt Mary, Aunt Cove, Chip home with her to Christy family. She tells Aunt Abby the story of her life. Aunt Abby discovers that Cy Walker is a long lost brother. Her hiding place prevents her telling of Cy.

## CHAPTER XXIII—Continued.

It is said that great discoveries are almost invariably made by some trifling accident—a gold mine, found by stumbling over a stone, a valley profuse of diamonds disclosed by digging for water.

In this case it was true, for as Old Cy bent to light his second torch, he withdrew from the inner cave, a flash of reflected light came from beneath this slab, and for one second, but enough to attract his attention.

He stooped again and lifted the slab. Six large tin cans had been hidden by it. He grasped one and could scarce lift it. Again his fingers slipped, and over it. He crawled backward to the better-lighted cave and drew the cover off the can with eager motion, and poured a heap of shining, glittering coins out upon that gold-littered table.

Into that dark hole he bowed again, as a starved dog leaps for food, seized the case, two at a time, and tumbled back, and emptied them. Four had been filled with gold coin and two stuffed with paper money.

Foisted with these bills of all denominations from one to fifty dollars was a legal paper yellowed by age, with a red seal still glowing like a spot of blood.

It was an innholder's license, authorizing one Thomas McGuire to furnish food, shelter, and entertainment for man and beast.

With eyes almost tear-dimmed and heart throbbing at having found poor Chip's splendid heritage, Old Cy now gazed at it.

The sharp stones upon which he knelt nearly pierced his flesh, but he felt them not.

The glint of sunlight from the crack above caressed his scant gray hairs and white fringing beard, forming almost a halo, yet he knew it not.

He only knew that before him, on this rude stone table, lay thousands of dollars, all belonging to the child he loved.

"Thank God, little gal," he said at last, "I've found what belongs to ye, 'n' ye ha'n't got to wait for nothin' no more. I wish I could kiss ye now."

Little did he realize that at this very moment of thankfulness for her sake, poor Chip was lost to all who knew her, and, half starved and almost hopeless, knew not where to find shelter.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

When Old Cy emerged from the cave, his face distorted and heart throbbing with the meanings now his to give Chip, he looked about with almost fear. The two abandoned canoes and the trusty rifle had seemed an assurance of tragic import, and yet no proof of this outlaw's death. That this cave had been his lair, could not be doubted; and so anxious was Old Cy to rescue this fortune, that he trembled with a sudden dread.

But no sign of human presence met his sweeping look.

The lake still rippled and smiled in the sunlight. Two deer, a buck and doe, were feeding on the russet ground shore just across, while at his feet that rusty rifle still uttered its fatal message.

Once more Old Cy glanced all about, and then entered the cave again. Here, in the dim light and with trembling hands, he filled the cans once more, and almost staggered, so faint was he from excitement, he hurried,

to the canoe, and packing them in its bow, covered the precious cargo with his blanket.

Then he ran like a deer back to the cave, closed it with the slab, grasped his rifle, and not even looking at the rusty one, bounded down the path to his canoe again, launched it, and pushed off.

Never before had it seemed so frail a craft. And now, as he swung its prow around toward the outlet, a curious object met his eyes.

Far up the lake, and where no ripple concealed it, lay what looked like a floating log, clasped by a human arm.

What intuition led him hither, Old Cy never could explain, for he was from the lake was now his sole thought. And yet, with one sweep of his paddle he turned his canoe and sped across the lake. And now, as he neared this object, it slowly outlined itself and he saw a gruesome sight—two bloated corpses grasping one another as if in a death grapple. One had hair of bronze red, the other a hideously scarred face with lips drawn and teeth exposed.

Hate, Horror and Death personified. Only for a moment did Old Cy glance at this ghastly sight, and then he turned again and sped back across the lake.

The bright sun still smiled calm and serene, the morning breeze still kissed the blue water, and the two deer still watched him with curious eyes; but he saw them not—only the windows of a face and appealing eyes of Chip as he lay behind them.

And now in the prow of his canoe lay her fortune, her heritage, which

he scarce thought. To secure it and bear it safely away from this now almost deserted lake had been his sole thought and must be until lock and bolt could guard it better. That night Old Cy hardly slept a moment.

Two days after, just as the sun was nearing the mountain top, Martin, Angie, Levi and Ray entered the lake.

How grateful both Old Cy and Amst were for their arrival, how eagerly they grasped hands with them at the landing, and how like two boys Martin and Ray behaved needs no description.

All that had happened in Greenville was soon told. Chip's conduct and progress were related by Angie. Ray's plans to remain here another winter were disclosed by him; and gathered about the evening fire, Martin touched upon another matter.

"I met Hersey as we were coming in," he said, "and he says that neither McGuire nor the half-breed has been seen or heard of since early last fall. Hersey came in early this spring with one of his deputies; they visited a half dozen lumber camps, called twice at Tim's Place, and even went over to Pete's cabin on the Fox Hole, but none of them could hear anything of these two men. More than that, no canoe was found at Pete's hut, and there was no sign of occupation at this past winter. Nothing could be learned from Tim, either, although not much was expected from that source. It is all a most mysterious disappearance, and the last that we can learn of Pete was his arrival and departure from Tim's Place after we rescued Chip."

"I think both of 'em has concluded this section was gittin' too warm for 'em," remarked Levi, "an' they've lit out."

"It's good riddance if they have," answered Old Cy, "an' I'm sartin none on 'em'll ever set eyes on 'em agin'."

And Old Cy spoke the truth, for none of this party ever did. In fact, no human being, except himself and Martin, ever learned the secret that this mountain-idle lake could tell.

But another matter now began to interest Old Cy—how Ray and Chip stood in their mutual feelings. That all was not as he wished, Old Cy soon

No intimation of his real errand escaped him, and so adroitly had he laid his plans and timed his movements, that when his canoe was packed and he bade them good-by, no one suspected how valuable a cargo it carried.

But Old Cy was more than "warter canvas," for the only spot where he dared close his eyes in sleep during that three days' journey out of the wilderness was in his canoe, with his head pillowed on that precious gold.

## CHAPTER XXV.

When Old Cy joined the little party at the lake again he seemed to have aged years. His sunny smile was gone. He looked weary, worn and disconsolate.

"Chip's run away from Greenville," he said simply, "an' nobody can find hide nor hair on her. They've folloed the roads for miles in every direction. Nobody can be found that's seen anybody like her 'n' they've even dragged the mill-pond. She left a note chargin' it to that darn fool, Hannah, and things she said, which I guess was true. I'd like to dock her in the boss-pond!"

Such news was like a bombshell in the camp, or, if not, what soon followed was, for after a day Old Cy made another announcement which upset the entire party.

"That gal 'd best go back to Greenville," he said, "an' best a search for her. I ain't got nobody in the world that needs me so much, or I shoon. I'm a sorter outcast myself, as you folks know. That little gal has more comfort here. Amst don't need me so much as I need her 'n' I've made up my mind. I'll stay here 'n' find her. I've a notion, too, she'll head for the wilderness agin', 'n' I'm sartin she'll fetch up whar her mother was born. I want that gal muddin' cuss all last summer. She's true blue 'n' good grit. She won't do no fool thing, like Makin' 'way with herself, 'n' I'll find her some whar 'n' her own livin' if I live long 'nuff. From the note she left, I know that was in her mind."

Martin realized that there was no use in trying to change Old Cy's intent—in fact, had no heart to do so, for he too felt much the same toward Chip.

"I'll give you all the funds you need, old friend," he made answer, "and wish you God-speed on your mission. I'll do more for you than I've done for some one to watch at Gridstone here the next year, so if Chip reaches there, we can learn it."

But he held a consultation with his wife.

"I suspect you are somewhat to blame for this unfortunate happening," he said to her, "or, at least, some thoughtless admission you may have made led to it. It's a matter we are responsible for, or I feel so, anyway. I think as Old Cy made up his mind to be found if money can do it, and I propose that we break camp and return to Greenville. If Amst can't be convinced to do so, I must leave Levi with him. No power on earth can keep Old Cy here any longer."

But the old hermit had changed somewhat since that night he broke away and returned to his camp, and when the alternative of remaining here alone, or going out with them all, was presented, he soon yielded.

"If Cyrus is gone, I'll go to," he said. "I'd be lonesome without him." And to this assertion he adhered.

Ray, however, was the most dejected and unhappy one now here, though fortunately Old Cy was the only one who understood why, and he kept silent.

They were even more sad when Aunt Comfort showed them Chip's message, and Angie read it with brimming eyes.

And now came Old Cy's departure, on a quest as hopeless as that of the Wandering Jew and as pathetic as the Ancient Mariner's.

But the climate of Alberta may not be Old Cy gave Martin his parting message and charge:

"Here's a bank book," he said "that contains about \$60,000. It's the savin' of McGuire, belongin' to Chip. I found the cave whar 'twas hid, I found McGuire 'n' the half-breed, both dead 'n' in the lake cuss by, an' 'twas to keep for his money. I sent ye three weeks ago."

"If I never come back here,—an' I never shall 't'ought I find Chip,—keep it for her. Sometime she may show up. If ever she does, tell her Old Cy did all he could for her."

## CHAPTER XXVI.

Life at Peaceful Valley and the home of Judson Walker fell into its usual monotony after Chip's departure.

Each day Uncle Jud went about his chores and his crop-gathering and watched the leaves grow scarlet, then brown, and then yellow, as they came down the valley, or heep themselves into every nook and cranny for final sleep.

Existence had become something like this to him, but he could no longer anticipate a verbal budding forth of the leaves came, but only the year and sadly neglected chorchard at the Corners for its ending.

One day came and piled itself into fantastic drifts in the winter. The summer chatter was hushed. The chickens and his horse, with wood-cutting, became his sole care. Once a week for himself, and Mandy's and his weekly paper and Mandy's errands, always hoping for a message from Chip. Now and then one came, a little miniature in shape, but empty, telling how she longed to return to them, which they read and reread by candlelight.

## TO BE CONTINUED.

When an awkward man lends a hand he's apt to put his foot in it.

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