

# UNDER FROZEN STARS

by GEORGE MARSH

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## CHAPTER V—Continued

"Paradees plays with you to get your fur," went on Omar in Ojibwa. "He is a liar, and LeBlond is through with him; he has sent him away to the south. You will see him no more."

At the words, the Indians exchanged surprised and puzzled looks. For a time the older man smoked in silence, his eyes on the fire; then he addressed Jim. "You do a foolish thing to come to the Pipestone country. The hunters fear you."

"Do I look like one to be feared?" demanded Jim opening his arms. "I come from the old company who gave you and your fathers honest guns and blankets, flour and tea, before LeBlond poisoned your hearts against us. I come here now to seek your friendship and kill the lies of this Paradis. This moon, in the south, he tried to have me shot, and his master LeBlond has sent him away. If I say but the word the fathers in Ottawa will send men and take him to the railroad to be punished."

As Jim spoke the Indian's small eyes probed his frank features as if attempting to measure his sincerity. "You seem to speak with a single tongue," said the Ojibwa. "Your eyes are not the eyes of a liar, but the hunters fear your medicine. They say you are the friend of demons. I came to warn you not to journey into the Pipestone country."

"What is your name?" asked Jim, impressed by the speaker's sincerity. "My name is Baptiste Wagosh. This is my son."

"Where is the shaman, Jingwak?" asked Esau, abruptly.

Wagosh scowled at the question. He looked hard into the smart faces of Omar and Esau thrust toward him.

"Why do you ask?" "Because," answered old Esau with a grin, "he is a false shaman, a wabeno, and is paid by Paradees to keep the trade for LeBlond."

Wagosh and his son exchanged significant looks. "Jingwak is a big medicine man," replied the older man, quietly, "this is his country. Go back to Mitawangagama, before it is too late."

The blood darkened the bronzed face of Jim Stuart as he replied: "Go back and tell your people that the old company traded with their fathers' fathers, and wishes to trade with them. I have come to talk to them as their friend and will not be driven out by this false shaman, this wabeno, Jingwak, who is paid by the French."

With muttered "ho-jo's" the Indian and his son went to their canoe and paddled away into the gloom.

"Well, what d'you make of it?" asked Jim of his friends. "You think they'll do as he said—try to drive us out of the country?"

"Eef dey t'ink we got devil wid us, dey might try somet'ing, ah-hah."

"Well, are we going to be driven out by this Jingwak?" Omar spat into the fire and puffed for a moment before answering. "Esau and Omar tak' good care ov dis Jingwak—nevalre fear dat. But we want de fur dis long snows—so we go easee."

"You're right, Omar, we'll go slow. They're wild and superstitious—these people. They might even ambush us if we don't handle them right. We've got a tough job ahead of us, but it's the only thing that'll save Sunset House—reaching these Indians."

Jim rolled up in his blanket to struggle with the problem which faced him, while the voices of Omar and Esau, smoking by the dying fire, reached his ears in muffled monotone. But desperate as were the present fortunes of Jim Stuart and Sunset House, he shortly found himself back on the sand beach at Mitawangagama, gazing into the dark depths of Aureole LeBlond's changing eyes; watching the sunlight caught in the meshes of her thick hair, listening to her low laugh.

Long since, the embers of the fire had grayed and died, leaving the camp in gloom. Overhead the night had thickened, masking the stars. Through the spruce no air stirred. Like a blanket, the murk had settled upon the great lake. Except for the heavy breathing of three muffled figures there was no sound.

Curled near his master, nose buried under bushy tail, Smoke dreamed of snow-shoe rabbits leaping before him, of lurking timber wolves and the white sterna of fleeing caribou. Then, of a sudden, his visions of the chase faded and he stirred uneasily in his sleep. Presently a faint sound drifted to his pointed ears. He slowly lifted his head. His black nostrils quivered, but the air told him nothing.

Again his keen ears caught an almost imperceptible sound. The great dog rose to his feet, his back hair stiffening, his nose testing the air, as he listened. Then, satisfied, with a roar he leaped toward the lake. There was a muttered warning, the sound of

**FROM THE BEGINNING**  
At his fur post, Sunset House, in the Canadian north, Jim Stuart, trader in charge, with his headman, Omar, rescues a girl from an overturned canoe in the lake. She is Aureole LeBlond, daughter of Stuart's rival in the fur business. In a spirit of fun, she and Jim arrange to exchange notes on a certain island. LeBlond, with Paradis, his half-breed lieutenant, arrives in search of the missing girl. Paradis displays enmity toward Jim, though LeBlond acknowledges his debt of gratitude. Going to the island to see if Aureole has left the promised note, Jim is ambushed by Paradis and forced to travel toward the LeBlond post. On the way he overturns the boat, leaving his enemy on the beach. Jim's superior, Andrew Christie, displeased at Stuart's trade showing, allows him, at his request, one year to "make good." Paradis bribes an Indian to ambush Jim and Omar. The attempt fails, and Jim takes the Indian to LeBlond. After hearing the story, LeBlond discharges Paradis. Jim and Aureole arrange a rendezvous, and Jim has planned a canoe trip to make a personal appeal to the Indians, who have persistently refused to trade their furs with him.

moccasined feet, the churn of paddles, as the husky reached the beach to snarl his challenge to the unseen enemies who had faded like ghosts into the gloom. Then Omar, grasping his gun, followed by Esau and Jim, reached the shore.

Seizing the dog by the nose to choke his yelping, Omar listened, head close to the water, to get the direction of the retreating canoe; then fired twice. "Take dat!" he muttered.

"Light a candle, Esau. They were after the canoe when Smoke heard them," said Stuart. "They may have ruined her!"

Already Omar was groping with his hands over the upturned petterboro on the beach, seeking possible damage, when Esau returned with a lighted candle.

"Not a mark," he announced; "dey want to steal her, but Smoke he hear dem too quick."

"Well, we know now what to expect from the Pipestone country," said Jim gloomily, with a shake of his head. "Do you suppose it was that Wagosh?"

"No," said Omar, "he know de dog was here."

"We'd better paddle straight to the islands in the morning and talk to them as if nothing had happened."

"Ah-hah, we go to de camp, first t'ing. I see w'at dat Wagosh say."

By sunrise they were on their way. As the strange canoe approached the fishing camp on the islands, groups of shawled women gathered in front of the tipis. Men, visiting their gill-nets set in the channels, stopped their work to call to each other, curious of the identity of the strangers. For the canoe of a white man had seldom nosed its way over the waters of the Pipestone lakes, deep in the heart of Keweenaw.

A rabble of wolfish dogs met the canoe as it slid into the beach of an island. Leaving Esau in the boat, with the challenging Smoke who, with stiff mane and bared fangs, answered the snarl of the Indian huskies, Omar and Jim stepped ashore.

"We are from the Lake of the Sand Beaches," announced Jim in Ojibwa, to an old Indian, with face seamed with wrinkles, who left the group of women by the tipis and met them. "I wish to speak to the hunters who trade there. Send word to the other islands."

With face immobile as stone, the grizzled veteran scrutinized Jim and Omar through keen, mink-like eyes, before he replied.

"What are your names?" he asked quietly.

"I am Stuart, of the old company," said Jim, "and this is Omar, my head man." There was a shrewdness, an intelligence in the rugged features of the old man which impressed Stuart, and he wondered if he, too, were under the spell of Jingwak, the sorcerer.

"You have journeyed far. What have you come to the Pipestone to tell us?"

Irritated by the calm insistence of the Ojibwa, Omar broke in, "You will hear when you have called the hunters together. Send these boys here with word to the other islands."

The weathered skin of the Indian's face creased with a dry smile as he countered: "Who are you to give orders in the Pipestone country?" Omar laughed goodnaturedly as he passed the Indian a plug of niggerhead. "My father has swallowed the fins of a dore and they prick his throat. There is tobacco and tea in the canoe. Send for the hunters."

With a grin, the old man ordered some boys, who stood near the group listening to the talk with hushed interest, to take Stuart's message.

"What d'yuh think of him? Has Paradis got him?" whispered Jim to Omar.

"Hard to tell." Jim sauntered to the old Indian as he talked rapidly to the group of curious and awed squaws near the tipis. "You have seen many long snows 'You come and go," he said in Ojibwa. "You come and go, and see the faces of have lived long and seen the faces of many men. Look at me! Do I speak with a single tongue?"

The old Indian met Jim's eyes with candid gaze. He removed the pipe he had filled with Omar's tobacco, spat,

then replied: "I know the face of the white man. In my youth I voyaged many long snows for the old company down at Fort Hope on the Albany. There I learned from the Ojibwa father that there is no truth in medicine men. But the people here will not listen to me."

"They believe this Wabeno, Jingwak?"

"Yes, many believe him and the Frenchman, Paradis."

Jim was stirred by the open speaking of the shrewd old man. Here was a possible ally. He must be cultivated.

"What is your name?" "Ovide Zotaire, they called me at Fort Hope; my father was half French."

"Where is this Jingwak, now?" "He summers in the Sturgeon river country, three sleeps toward the big water."

"Have you ever seen this Frenchman, Paradis?"

"Yes, he was here the last long snows; he came with a dog-team."

"What does Jingwak tell the Ojibwas about me and the post of the old company to keep them from bringing me their furs?"

Old Zotaire laughed as he replied: "He says that the good spirits he talks with tell him that the House of the Settling Sun is the home of devils. He says you have the evil eye."

"And the people believe him?"

"Some do, but not all."

"What do you think?" "Jingwak is a jessikib, a liar. Paradis keeps his tipi filled with tobacco and flour."

Jim glanced at Omar, who listened beside him. The face of the half-breed was black with rage. The muscles of his square jaws bulged as his teeth crunched. His little eyes snapped, as he leaned toward the old Indian. "You show me de trail to de Sturgeon riviere?"

Zotaire calmly gazed into the blood-filled features of the half-breed.

"I am an old man, and it is far," he answered.

A look of satisfaction touched Omar's fierce eyes. "In our canoe is flour, tobacco and tea. You are a wise man and our friend," he said significantly. "The old company will not forget Zotaire."

Gradually the bark canoes from the fishing camps assembled at the island where Jim and Omar waited. Some of the men and women came forward with friendly "ho-jo's" and shook hands with the strangers. Others hung back, conversing in whispers, their grave, questioning faces picturing their misgivings concerning this white man from the House of the Devils. From the actions of the men and squaws it was evident to Stuart that Jingwak's efforts, successful as they had been in keeping the trade of these people from Sunset House, had failed to instill fear of him personally, except among the most superstitious. For at his request, they had come to look at him and listen to his words.

After passing tobacco to the men, Jim told them that their fathers for two hundred years had traded with the old company, and always had received fair treatment. To save them from a longer journey south, the old company had built a post on the Lake of the Sand Beaches, and wished to trade with them. But Paradis had come among them with lies which only children would believe. In his pay was a false shaman who lived on the bounty of the North-West company.

As Jim mentioned the name of Jingwak, from a group of young men in the rear of the Ojibwas rose groans of protest.

"It is a lie!" shouted a youth; but the voice of Zotaire lifted above the clamor of dissent.

"Bisan! Keep quiet!" commanded the old man. "You listened to Paradis when he said that this man who speaks had the Evil Eye and talked with devils. Now listen to him, and judge for yourselves who speaks with a double tongue."

Jim's heart leaped at the old Indian's defense of him. Here was a friend in need. Then Jim told the Indians that he would come in December, the little moon of the spirit, with dog-teams loaded with honest trade-

goods, and save them the long trip south.

At the announcement there was a nodding of heads among the older men, but from the rear of the assembly, groans and cat-calls. However, when Omar told them of the disgrace of Paradis by his own chief—how he had been sent to Nipigon, a hush fell upon the swart-faced audience.

Shaking hands with most of the older men and women, Jim returned to the canoe, to find Esau and Omar squatted on the beach, watching Zotaire trace with his fingers a rough sketch of the trail north to the Sturgeon river.

Through the afternoon the three friends paddled down the first of the Pipestone lakes and made camp on an island near the outlet. To the north lay other and larger lakes of the Pipestone chain, which formed the headwaters of the Sturgeon river.

Eating their supper of bannock, fried pike, and tea, they considered the situation as they smoked.

"Too bad old Zotaire wouldn't come with us," regretted Jim. "He seems to have influence with these people."

"He had fear to travel to de Sturgeon," replied Esau. "He tell me dey might keel heem eef dey foun' heem wid us."

"Paradees and Jingwak got plentee fren' up dere," added the brooding Omar.

"We're in for trouble on the Sturgeon, I guess. But I'm going to find that crooked fakir, trouble or no trouble," snapped Jim. "I've got just one year to get some of that fur, or quit."

For a space, Omar looked at his discouraged chief, as he sat, elbows on knees, head in hands. Then the half-breed rested an iron-hard hand on Jim's shoulder, as he said: "We stay een dees cuntry and hunt for dat Jingwak until de ice drive us sout'."

"But suppose we do find him, how're we going to break his hold on the Indians?"

"Leave dat to Omar and Esau."

"What d'you two intend to do? You can't kill him, you know, you old wolf. You'd ruin me if you did. And they'd get you before you got out. Remember, you've got a family."

The black eyes of Omar twinkled as they met the sphinxlike gaze of the old Indian. "Esau and Omar find de way to feex dat wabeno."

But Jim saw little hope in the situation. He had recklessly undertaken to double the trade of Sunset House within the year by getting some of the Pipestone and Sturgeon river fur from LeBlond. But would these Ojibwas trade with him when he stole a march on his rival and came to them on the snow in December? However, there was but one line of action open at present, and that was to visit them, show himself, and talk to them as he had talked to the fishing camps up the lake. Then the thought of the girl who had begged him to stay at Mitawangagama until she went south drove his present quest from his mind. Was he ever to see her again? Would she come back in the spring? If she did, she would find a defeated fur trader, out of a job, who had had the boldness to make love to a girl who could only pity him. As the quiet lake went rose colored under the flush of the afterglow, and the shadow-packed spruce of the adjacent shore of the mainland deepened from purple to violet, Jim smoked with his bitter thoughts, while Omar and Esau talked together in low tones. Then, as his clouded gray eyes lifted from the embers of the supper fire into which he had been staring, a cold nose touched his hand and a massive, hairy head nudged his arm, while a pair of slant brown eyes sought his.

"Hello, Smoke!" Jim circled the neck of the dog with his arm. "Smoke loves Jim, even if he's a poor fur man, and a fool to love her."

As if sensing the mood of the man who held his devotion, the dog whined, his red tongue caressing Jim's hand.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

### Touching

The landlady was in a sentimental mood when dinner was served.

"This is the anniversary of the death of my poor, dear uncle," she sighed. "He was a sea captain, and went down with his ship this day five and twenty years ago. I was only a child when he went away, but I remember he gave me a pet lamb as a parting gift."

The boarder regarded his lamb cutlet with mournful interest.

"Poor, dear lamb!" he murmured reproachfully. "And you've killed it at last!"

### Be Considerate to Job

An old job is like an old friend. We become so accustomed to its virtues that we may overlook its value and helpfulness. We never knowingly slight or abuse an old friend. Isn't it the part of wisdom then to guard an old job just as zealously?—Grit.

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### Digging into the Past

The annual Smithsonian exploration reports tell of science's march through jungles, deserts and mountains in an unceasing quest for more knowledge about human beings, bugs, birds and beasts. Important among the fossil-gathering expeditions was that under Dr. Charles W. Gilmore. In Montana and Wyoming it found 600 specimens of fossil animals. The prizes were the partial skeletons of a rhinoceros-like creature and six skulls of ancient crocodiles.

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### Iberian Village Found

Workmen have unearthed an Iberian village and necropolis of the Third century, B. C., in the park at Guinardo, at Barcelona, Spain. The discovery was reported to the Archaeological Society of Catalonia, who have found in the park sarcophagi, urns containing bones of the ancient inhabitants, works of art, bronze pieces and many vases.



For lazy liver, stomach and kidneys, biliousness, indigestion, constipation, headache, colds and fever. 10¢ and 35¢ at dealers.

### Impediment

Debuchi—Isn't Hamstring going to marry Irma Keute? Penuchi—No, he says Irma has an impediment in her voice. Debuchi—What is it? Penuchi—She can't say "yes."—The Pathfinder.

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**Fast Worker**  
Harry—Darling, I love you. Gretchen—Good! gracious! Why, we've just become acquainted. Harry—Yes, I know; but I'm only here for the week-end.—Chelsea Record.



Preparing the Case  
Lawyer—Now the first thing to do is to prove an alibi. I suppose there is somebody who saw you at seven o'clock—the time when the crime was committed?  
Client—No, thank goodness!

