

Young Indiana Jones and the  
Phantom of the Klondike

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# Chapter 1

## A season in hell

*Utah, July 1912, 40° C in the shade*

“May he who illuminates these pages, illuminate me,” whispered Henry Jones in a grave voice.

He was alone in his office, sweating in the oppressive heat. But if someone else were there, he could have testified: distinguished professor Henry Jones was indeed “illuminated!”

To be convinced, one need only to consider this strange-looking character, hunched over his medieval manuscript. Dressed in a moth-eaten robe, wearing a night cap, his reading glasses fogged by a thick layer of grime, he was by all appearances a phantom that escaped from some Scottish castle.

“Dad! You and I have to talk!” exclaimed the young Indiana Jones, storming into the dusty office. Covered in sweat, he began waving his arms, as if trying to cool off.

“Our sheriff is a crook, employed by a miserable

vulture<sup>1</sup>...”

“Junior, in the name of the Holy Grail, calm down!” the Professor grumbled. “Have you finished counting to twenty in Greek, like I told you to do five minutes ago?”

In his excitement, Indy began dancing around the room, like an Indian on the eve of war.

“But Dad, aren’t you listening?! The sheriff is in cahoots with the bandits that just stole the Cross of Coronado! That cross belongs in a museum...”

The boy’s complaints were received by deafening silence. His father had closed his eyes and appeared now to be deep in meditation.

“D... Dad? Have you heard... anything?”

Suddenly, Professor Jones sprung from his armchair like a jack-in-the-box.

“The name of the rose!!” he cried, pointing a triumphant finger at his flabbergasted son. “But of course!! Why did I not consider it earlier? Junior, your father is an incomparable idiot!”

Indy shook his head with weariness. What an exaggeration! No, Professor Jones was far from being stupid. His brain simply worked differently from that of ordinary people...

“During all this time,” said the Professor, “I had the solution right under my eyes and I saw it no more clearly than if it were in the oven!”

In frustration, he pulled at his night cap.

“I just need to figure out the name of this mysterious rose, and I will have solved the mystery of the Holy Grail!”

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<sup>1</sup>See the beginning of the film *Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade*.

Awestruck, Indy's mouth was sewn shut. He had to accept the sad facts: since his wife died a few months earlier, Henry Jones lived in another world. A universe far removed from reality, where Indy rarely had access.

With bulging eyes, Henry Jones stared at his son through a wall of dirt. "It's a miracle, Junior! A miracle! Thanks to me, humanity will take a gigantic step forward."

For his part, Indy resigned himself to take a step backward. Then another. A moment later, he closed the office door behind him. When his father reached this level excitement... and unreason... it was best to withdraw on tiptoe.

Lying on the floor of the lobby, Indiana, faithful German Shepherd, issued a compassionate grunt. His young master came to sit cross-legged beside him.

"At least you understand me..." groaned Indy. "Here, we can try to stay cool together. I'm fed up with days like this! You know what I mean?"

The dog did not move.

"Well, there is no justice on this earth."

Silence shows consent, and the German shepherd continued to observe his silence.

A moment later, a hand struck hesitantly at the door of the modest home of the Jones' father and son.

"Hi, Herman," said Indy.

A round face, reddened as much by confusion as the heat, appeared troubled.

"I.. I'm sorry, Indy. I.. I didn't know. I.. I thought calling the sheriff would help."

Indy gestured for his friend to enter.

“I know, Herman. I didn’t see it coming either, if it’s any consolation. Who would have guessed that the defender of law and order was in cahoots with those robbers?”

“It’s really a nasty blow. But tell me, where’d you get that swell hat on your head?”

“It was a gift from the leader of the gang. He gave it to me before leaving to loot other archaeological sites. But he won’t win in the end. I will recover the cross, even if I have to wait twenty years...”

Herman had no doubt: Indy would succeed. Nothing scared him.

“Hmmm... What courage! Here, the postman stopped by. He dropped this letter in your mailbox.”

The boy that his classmates nicknamed “Fatty” handed Indy an envelope all curled. It looked like it had been sent from a humid place, unless rain had been responsible for the large spots that made the address almost illegible. It was impossible to read the intended recipient: Indy or his father?

“I might as well open it,” said Indy. “If I give it to Dad, it won’t be opened for weeks anyway. He’s too busy trying to solve the mystery of the Holy Grail!”

“The Holy Who?” Herman asked, wide-eyed behind his thick, iron-rimmed glasses.

“The Holy Grail is the cup Jesus Christ used during the Last Supper, his last meal. And Joseph of Arimathea was said to have collected his blood in it.”

“Joseph of... of Arithmetic! The... the inventor of calculus?” stuttered Herman, incredulous.

Indy threw his arms up in the air.

“No, the man who... oh, whatever!... Let’s just open the letter.”

The letter in question came from a certain Archibald Malloy. And it was as difficult to decipher as a message written in hieroglyphics.

DEA HENRY  
I KNOW THAT I HAVE NOT SEEN  
YEARS, BUT IMPORTANT  
FIND GOLD MINE KLOND 1896.  
DORADO BONANZA DISCOV MY  
SECRET MANITOU  
HAUNTS HUT. I HAVE SUP-  
PLIES ONLY BUT .  
IF YOU CAN HELP, I GIVE  
PART OF MY TREASURE. GO FIND  
. WHITE RSE.

Arch b d Mall y.

Herman shook his head in bewilderment. “I don’t understand much, Indy. How about you?”

Indy thought of his detective heroes. Of course, Indy would be able to decipher the contents of the letter.

“Well, I think our friend has Malloy discovered a vein in the Klondike in 1896, during the gold rush in the Yukon.”

“You mean the North Pole?”

“Not quite. The Klondike is part of Yukon. It is a province located between Alaska, which has just been declared the an American territory, and the Northwest Territories, which belong to Canada.”

“Pppppffftttt!!...” Herman said.

Automatically, Indy stroked his dog, who followed the conversation in one ear.

“Thousands of men thirsting for wealth journeyed there in the hope of returning with pockets sewn with gold,” he said. “For them, gold held the same allure the Holy Grail holds for my father; a discovery that meant the dream of a lifetime...”

Then suddenly, Indy frowned and leaned toward his friend, his brow heavy, his eyes threatening. Emphasizing each syllable, he uttered this icy warning:

“But the climate is so extreme there, in the winter, that many never returned; they were frozen on the spot, swept away by a blizzard, or starved to death... It takes more than hot coffee to keep bones from freezing. Can you imagine, Herman?”

The latter could not imagine being cool, let alone freezing. At that moment the dog stood on its hind legs and began to bark with enthusiasm.

“What do you want?” asked Indy.

Looking at the animal, he guessed immediately what was wrong. Deep in his research, the Professor had forgotten to give him his bowl. The poor beast was neglected...

Without waiting, Indy stood and headed for the kitchen, flanked by his two most loyal companions.

“Faced with such terrible circumstances,” he said, “these adventurers would not hesitate to kill their neighbor. For gold... or for even a mouthful of bread. That’s undoubtedly what scared Malloy.”

With a face smug with admiration for the intelligence of his friend, Herman nodded his head.

“So he kept his discovery secret until the gold diggers left?” he asked.



“That’s right. Especially since, according to his letter, the vein was as rich as El Dorado and Bonanza together. Once the gold fever had subsided, he had to retrieve the gold and carry it to Whitehorse, a city founded at the time of the gold rush. You can take my word, each of those bags weighed at least fifty kilos.”

“Ppppfffttt! That would take a lifetime!” Herman said.

“Some years, surely.”

The prospect of such an effort froze the blood of young Herman. He would have been happy to take a nap for several years, but certainly not to carry fifty-kilo bags, even if they were filled of gold dust!

Indy put a bone at Indiana’s feet.

“Here you go, boy. Enjoy it!”

The dog wriggled his tail and licked the hand of his master.

“What happened then?” asked Herman, once he had recovered his senses.

“Malloy claims a manitou—that’s an Indian spirit—has been haunting a hut in that land for nearly fifteen years. And he hopes that my father will come to his aid.”

“Does he believe in ghosts?” asked Herman in a skeptical tone.

Indy finished wiping his hands and opened the little door which opened onto an abandoned garden.

“Not at all. But I guess that he and Malloy were friends and that Malloy has nobody else to turn to.”

Having descended the three steps of porch, Indy

walked along the length of the wooden house, stopped a moment to inspect a window frame where the paint was flaking, and finally reached the end of the garden.

There, fully enjoying the midday sun, a young woman covered from head to toe was lying in the grass, busy reading *A Midsummer's Night Dream* by William Shakespeare. This young lady answered to the sweet name of Miss Seymour.

Miss Helen, to friends.

Henry Jones had asked her to look after his son while he was on a world-wide lecture tour. She had been enchanted by this trip, which had let her see the world. Since then, this "bad luck charm," as Indy called her, almost never left his side.

The crunch of dried grass caused her to lift her nose from her book.

"Indyyyyyy!" she cried emphatically. To make things worse, Miss Seymour liked to accentuate certain syllables of each word, like an excited parakeet.

"Deeefinitely, I will neeeeeeeever tiiiire of the the sun in Utaahh! Everyday I thank God that I was nooooot born in Alaaaaaaska!"

Normally, Indy's skin crawled whenever his "nanny" opened her mouth. But for once, he was all ears.

An idea was germinating in his mind.

An idea that could only be described as grandiose.

Since the beginning of the summer he had alternated between homework and holiday horse riding in the company of scouts. However, nothing was more annoying than those slow processions through Monument Valley.

As for the heat, it was...tiring, in every sense of

the word!

So the time had come for action... time to take refuge under a less hostile sky.

Despite his gratitude to Miss Seymour, Indy was careful not to hug her too tight. Her corset might burst open!

## Chapter 2

# Bad omens

“Why would I go to the Klondike?! To help Archibald Malloy? Don’t even think about it, Junior!” cried Professor Jones.

For once, Indy refrained from commenting on this ridiculous nickname which his father insisted on calling him. It did not particularly upset him.

“Dad, I know you have a heart of gold,” pled Indy. “And this is an opportunity... a golden opportunity!”

In spite of his son’s fireworks, the professor remained unmoved.

“Dad, think: Archibald Malloy has offered you some of his treasure. This will pay for your research... and your travels.”

“Pshaw! Don’t fool yourself, son: Archie was with me at school. And he was a real dunce, especially in history. Apparently he has not changed: only fools think you can get rich without work.”

“Without work?” Herman thought. “What about

carrying around all those fifty-pound bags for years?"

"In addition, Junior, I just told you that I was about to solve the riddle of Grail, and you tell me to go waste my time in the Far North? You unreasonable..."

"Don't worry, Dad! If you don't have time to go... I'll just have to go there alone. We are in the middle of summer, and even in Yukon, the weather is mild."

"No, no, no, and no!" said Henry Jones.

"Certainly noooooooooot!" added Miss Seymour. "That country is filled with caribous, moooooooooose and saaaaaavages."

Indy turned to his "governess" and gave her a nasty look.

"Yes, there are moose; but those animals are perfectly harmless. As for the Athapaskan and Tagish Indians that populate this country, their traditions are as rich as those of Westerners. It seems to me that a person so... erudite and informed as you should not say such things. This is the twentieth century, after all!"

Herman rose to applaud his friend. It was a well-spoken argument.

"Hmmm... Certainly... We should be more tolerant," muttered Henry Jones. "But the subject is closed. We will not be going to the Yukon. Archie had to stay in Utah to raise cattle. Can I go searching for gold in the North Pole, me?"

Eager to return to his gloomy Middle Ages, Professor resumed his reading.

At the end of arguments, Indy turned to Herman, in the vague hope that he would voice his support. But all Herman could do was shrug.

There remained only one solution.

It would be a cruel sacrifice, putting a damper on the adventure to come.

But he had to go through with it. Indy accepted his fate with an open heart.

“And if Miss Seymour came along to protect me?” he suggested in an innocent tone. The British woman shuddered. Her face grew rigid, pale as a winter moon.

“Herman could come, too. I would be surrounded!”

Now Herman’s ruddy cheeks turned cadaverous white. Had Indy lost his head? For Herman, the idea of attending the jamboree<sup>1</sup> was a source of intense anxiety. So the prospect of climbing up to the top of the world caused indescribable panic.

“It’s a puurrfectly absuuuurd idea, Indianaaaa!” cried the unfortunate Miss Seymour.

“I.. but... I.. no... it’s impo... impossible” Herman sponged his forehead with his Scout scarf. “I.. I get hay... hay... hayfever...”

The scene was right out of a nightmare. The atmosphere was tense enough to be cut with a knife. Why had this cursed letter ever arrived? Why had it not been caught by the sea fury?

Three pairs of eyes focused insistently on the impassive face of Professor Jones. It was up to him to make a decision.

His gaze drifted from Miss Seymour to Indy, then from his son to the manuscript that would change the face of the world, then from the manuscript to Herman, who would not change the face of world even if he teamed up with a genius endowed with supernatural powers.

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<sup>1</sup>The international scout meeting.

The stakes were high.

If these three disruptions disappeared for some time, if he was left in peace, Henry Jones could discover the key to the mystery that obsessed him.

In contrast, if he was constantly disturbed for these trivialities, he would never discover anything. The fate of all depended on it!

“Alright!” He finally conceded.

It was a tough pill to swallow for Miss Seymour. As for Herman, his legs gave out, and he dropped all his weight on his worm-eaten chair: the seat broke net, and the poor boy collapsed on the floor in a cloud of dust.

“Thanks, Dad!” exclaimed Indy, filled with happiness. “I can see you have the blood of the Scots in your veins!” He gave his father a big kiss.

He turned to Miss Seymour and Herman.

“You knew that his ancestors distilled a single malt whiskey that would stroke your throat like velvet?”

“JUNIOOOR!!” the Professor rumbled. “I have already asked you to behave. If your poor mother had heard you, you’d be condemned to do the dishes for a whole week...”

The Professor stopped suddenly, as if his last words had escaped without his knowledge. He was not yet... accustomed to the absence of his wife.

Indy himself had heard this remark with a pinch in his heart. He had not spent a night without thinking bitterly about the mother who had left too early, a victim of a scarlet fever.

Wiping a tear with a trembling hand, Professor Jones held his son against him.

“Promise me only to be prudent, Junior. I do

not want anything to happen to you...”

“Sure, Dad,” said Indy. “You know me: I don’t take risks.”

A “gulp!” of dismay rose from the floor to break the silence of the moment. Indiana Jones doesn’t take risks?! Now Herman had heard everything!

As for Miss Seymour, her dismay was bottomless. It was a rare event, worthy of printing in the next day’s local newspaper.

“Flannel shirts, woolen underwear, a heavy knitted sweater, a corduroy suit, two pair of heavy pants, two pair of outer pants, a fur-lined leather jacket with hood, a sailor’s raincoat with a waterproof hat, a rubber coat, six pairs of fitted socks and six pairs of socks one size larger, mittens, stuffed leather gloves, hobnailed hunting boots hunting, knee-length mocassins, a pair of snowshoes, a dozen handkerchiefs, towels...”

“Hey!” Herman said with a shrug, “do you want to set up a supply shop in the capital of the Klondike! That’s enough to last us ten years!”

Indy turned to his best friend and sent him a knowing wink.

“You’ve read this too? It’s an exciting book, isn’t it? Of course, I prefer the writings of Jack London: he, at least, lived during the gold rush.”

“Hey, what the heck are you talking about?” Herman stuttered, confused.

“Well, *The Golden Volcano* by Jules Verne! I was reciting the passage where Ben Raddle takes inventory of all clothing needed for his expedition to the Klondike... and you responded the same way that Summy Skim did...”

“Nonsense!” Hermie muttered.

“No, just Jules Verne...”

Just then, Herman wondered if Indy had gone crazy. What were those things he had mentioned: “fur-lined leather jackets... a sailor’s raincoat with hood... knee-length mocassins... Snowshoes...?” What kind of sport required gear like that? It didn’t sound like tennis.

“Don’t forget the balls, ok?” Herman stammered, hoping Indy would pick up on the joke.

“I suppose you want to talk about... bundles?” the latter replied with a quizzical smile. “We need a few, yessir. And a big trunk.”

“Oh, go bundle yourself!” responded Herman, red with anger. “First of all, you never even asked my opinion. Who told you that I want to get frost-bite in Canada?”

Indy did not give the time to respond. He was confident that his most loyal friend would accompany him to the end of the world.

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And indeed, a week later, Indy, Herman and Miss Seymour embarked in Oakland on the *City of Puebla*, in the Bay of San Francisco.

Six years earlier, the city of San Francisco was devastated by an earthquake which had triggered a massive fire. Some neighborhoods were rebuilt, but they still saw the scattered remnants of the disaster.

“It seems that an earthquake can strike at any time” observed Herman, himself visibly shaken.

“It’s true, Herman. It’s because of the San Andreas Fault, a sort of crack in the earth’s crust: it measures 1000 kilometers in length.”

“Ppfffftttt!” Herman sighed and sponged his forehead. “A thousand kilometers! It doesn’t go into the Yukon, at least?”

“No, you coward! It only goes as far as Colorado.”

Indy was a well of science. He had all the answers. Still, he couldn’t predict when the next earthquake would happen. Herman couldn’t wait until the *City of Puebla* embarked, leaving the port of San Francisco behind.

As if he could read his friend’s thoughts, Indy took perverse pleasure in bringing up another troubling topic.

“Don’t think you’re any safer on the boat. Have you forgotten the sinking of the Titanic, after only three months? Miss Seymour and I were on board, remember<sup>2</sup>, and I can say one thing: these tubs are not seaworthy...”

It was Miss Seymour’s turn to tremble. Would Indy never learn to hold his tongue?

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<sup>2</sup>See *Young Indiana Jones and the Titanic Adventure*, in the same collection.

## Chapter 3

# Norma

After a wait that seemed interminable to all three, the ship's smoke stack began puffing black clouds. The dirty air burned the nostrils of those passengers leaning against the rail.

"By Jove," said Miss Seymour, "this vehhhhhs-sel does not offer the same comfort as the Titaaaaanic."

The *City of Puebla* belonged, in fact, to the smallest category of passenger ships. But the cabins in first class had to satisfy the most demanding passengers. To begin with, the cabins were spacious and situated on the upper deck, where seasickness was less common.

Second, the bedding was changed every day and the bathroom boasted soap, clean towels and a bathmat. In such luxury, ladies concerned with their looks could powder their noses in front of a mirror.

This was not the case in second class...

"You mean that we have to share that shoe box

for three nights?" Herman protested upon discovering their cramped quarters, barely wide enough to accomodate his corpulent frame.

Booking their passage at the last minute, the two friends had had no choice but to accept the last cabin available in second cabin class. It was either that, or else summon all their courage for the dreaded... third class.

The bottom of the abyss.

Miss Seymour was not in first class thanks to the galantry of a British gentleman who had succumbed to her charm. A first indeed!

"I'm afraid so, my poor Herman," Indy sighed. "Try not to snore... and don't scratch at the fleas in your bunk!"

"Fleas!!! In my... bunk?"

"It's common, yes," assured of an Indy detached tone.

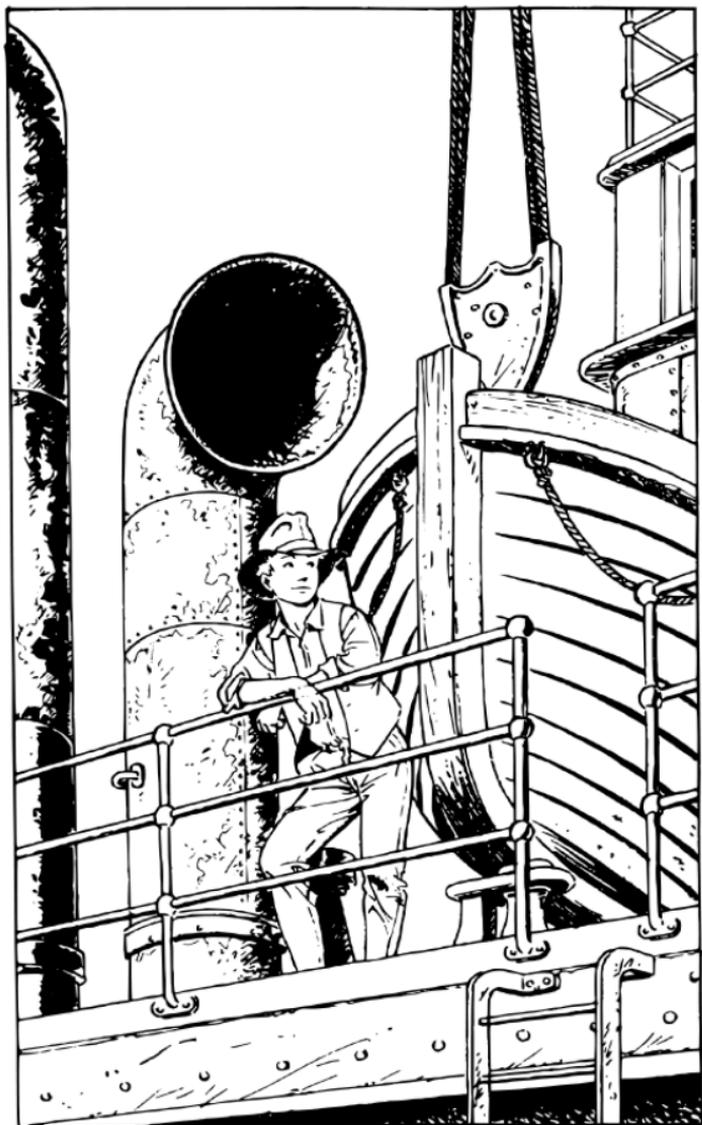
Herman swore, after fully contemplating the horror.

For his part, Indy threw a glance through the porthole. The steamer was crossing San Francisco Bay in a crowd of small boats. Among these frail skiffs, the *City of Puebla* was a giant on the world seas.

"Well, I think I'll go exploring," announced Indy after a few minutes.

"And me, I will explore my bunk," Herman replied, already plagued by imaginary itching.

The bold ocean air did not last long before it was overwhelmed by the sickening smell of the engine room, where Indy now found himself.



Since his misadventure on the Titanic, he had been careful to ensure that any ship he boarded was in good working order.

When we come close to death, we take all possible precautions to keep it away... for as long as possible. Indy contemplated the gaping mouth of the boiler and the glistening torso of the men shoveling coal into it.

Feeling melancholy, he recited two verses of a poem he had learned by heart a few weeks earlier:

*“One step and everything is finished,  
A dive, a bubble, and nothing more.”*

Life is precious, but so fragile, he thought as he returned to the upper deck.

“If you continue with this sour tone, *signor*, I have half a mind to slap you!” heard the boy.

Indy pivoted on his heels and was face-to-face with a young woman with long brown hair. His eyes threw lightning bolts at him.

“I... I beg your pardon,” he answered civilly. “But I didn’t even say anything!”

“I wasn’t speaking to you, but to this... this rascal, this boor!”

Indy looked around. There was no boor anywhere within ten meters.

“Maybe you’re seasick?” he asked in a tone of compassion. “I don’t get seasick, but I know my friend Herman...”

“No, I am not suffering the pain of seasickness!” stormed the traveler. “I’m talking about the captain of this boat, who tried to use his charms on me. When I think he could be my father!”

The eyes of the young woman were filled with tears. To judge by her accent, and her impetuous character, she was born Italian. But her face showed Indian ancestry.

She was very beautiful. But God had made her hot-blooded!

For his part, Indy decided to maintain his cool.

“Your father told you?”

“My poor father. He is so sick... It is for his sake that I am here. If he only knew! What indignity!”

The young Italian began by shaking her fist toward the sky, then she grabbed her head with both hands. For good measure, she then began to pound her chest. Finally, she let out a long, strident scream, loud enough to overpower the *City of Puebla*'s whistle.

The whole ship was left breathless.

Somewhat taken aback by such despair, Indy tried to alleviate the suffering of the unfortunate.

To give her a tear of joy in this ocean of sadness.

“Hmmm... How come you call yourself *signorina*?” he asked with a toothy grin on his face.

Would she pulverize him to punish his impertinence?

No, the expression of *pasionaria* had softened and her cheeks began to firm as gingerbread hot out of oven—the effect on Indy was surprising, to say the least.

He was already in love...

“My name is Norma Butterfly,” she answered as she looked away toward the open sea. “My father loves the opera, so that’s what he named me.”

“Oh, I understand!” said by Indy, who took a step closer, hoping to get a better look of his new

friend. "In tribute to *Norma*, Bellini and..."

"...Puccini's *Madame Butterfly*," the girl's sweet voice interrupted.

Indy felt at home. Indeed, Professor Jones spent whole nights listening to operatic arias on his phonograph. Sometimes he even tried singing along, hoping to emulate the great Caruso. Meanwhile, Indiana, the dog, would howl his heart out. Together, the duo could wake the dead.

"Do you... sing, yourself?" Indy asked.

Norma Butterfly's made a deep sound in her throat, as if it were convulsing in anger.

"Do I sing? Do I sing, me, Norma Butterfly? I have been nicknamed the Italian Nightingale! I have the most beautiful soprano voice in all of Italy."

With these words, she inflated her chest, inhaling as much air as her lungs could contain, and opened her eyes wide.

"Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah! Bello a me-ritooooooooooooorna!  
Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah! Bello a me-ritooooooooooooooooorna!"

In the seconds that followed, all the passengers on the *City of Puebla* rushed on deck in a wind of panic.

"Man overboard?!"

"Are we taking on water? Who said that we were taking on water?"

"The alarms have gone off! We should put on our life jackets!"

"Women and children first!"

Faced with so much alacrity, the singer began to exercise her most beautiful vocal chords.

"Do you waaaaaaaaant me to stooooooooop?..." she sang at the top of her lungs.

It would have been difficult for Indy to answer yes. In fact, he wanted nothing more than to embrace the beautiful Italian.

But the rest of the passengers had their own judgement of her performance. Everyone returned to their cabins to shield their ears.

Even the gulls circled the ship in silence, mystified by the sound below.

Ignoring the desertion of her audience, Norma Butterfly's arms opened wide, as if she sought to embrace the entire Bay of San Francisco. Indy closed his eyes, to experience this nectar to the very last note.

It that precise moment, as the *City of Puebla* left the bay, the San Andreas Fault stirred and the earth began to shake...

## Chapter 4

# The flea and the songbird

In the evening, dining in the company of Miss Seymour and Herman, Indy saw Norma Butterfly, sitting at table located in the void.

The young woman sat alone.

Indy sent her his best smile and turned to his companions:

“If you’ll excuse me, you two, I am going to say hi to *Signorina* Butterfly. I won’t be long, I promise.”

Miss Seymour cast a sidelong glance at Indy, but she came to see her escort, the one who had sold her his cabin in first class. His silly smile persuaded her to go sit at his table.

As for poor Herman, he remained planted in place for long time, wondering: why, oh why, had Indy insisted on dragging to the North?

For starters, he would have to dine alone, before

falling asleep in a flea-infested bed.

Once in Whitehorse, he would face the rigors of the Canadian summer and take on a confusing quest for gold.

And why do all this, exactly? Herman had no idea.

He shook his head with spite. Had he completely lost his head? That was the question that had plagued him since birth. And he had not yet found the answer. Would a steak and a giant cake with ice cream help?

Maybe, he thought as he turned toward the table.

Once he had ordered, he tied his napkin around his neck, firmly grabbed his fork and his knife, and waited patiently, salivating.

"I'm going to the Klondike to learn about my Indian family," explained Norma to her table-mate.

With consummate skill, she wound her spaghetti around her fork.

"One of my cousins died at the age of twenty during the gold rush. My parents wanted to attend his funeral, but it was an impossible trip at the time. I resolved to visit as soon as I could. So here I am!"

Indy could not help feeling admiration for the strong will of the young Italian.

What guts! To travel alone to the other side of world!

"And you, Indy, what are you doing on this boat?"

The boy could not answer. He was struggling with a difficult strand of spaghetti, which took wicked pleasure in falling from his fork every time

it was within range of his mouth.

“Use your spoon to help you,” advised Norma with a mischievous smile. “Look: do like me.”

Eyes wrinkled, Indy saw the girl.

“And poof!” she said with a brilliant, sparkling laugh.

Indy had never seen teeth so white. Such a bright smile...

But he focused again on his spaghetti, more successfully this time.

“So tell me, what are you going to do in the Klondike?”

“Well... (munch, munch)... I’m going to help a friend of my father get rid of a ghost.”

“A ghost? That is exciting! And where does he live, this ghost?”

Indy’s face took on a conspiratorial air.

“On the coast of Whitehorse. In the cabin of a gold prospector. Apparently, this ghost wants his treasure.”

“What a coincidence!” exclaimed Norma. “I am going to Whitehorse, too! From Seattle, I intend to take a boat from Goustavous Fishing. There is no regular commercial line, did you know?”

Indy shook his head.

“From there,” the girl continued, “we must travel along the coast by road to Skagway, Alaska. And then, we have to take the train to Whitehorse.”

“From what I read,” said Indy, “we can admire beautiful landscapes from the train.”

The young girl thought about it, her eyes filled with enthusiasm.

“Are you saying, then, Indy, that we could perhaps do the rest of our trip together?” she asked

straight out.

His fort in the air, Indy began to blush. He never would never have dared suggest it, for fear of looking like a heel. And Miss Seymour would not have forgiven such audacity.

But Norma found it only natural to make friends with this young boy she'd come to know.

God, those young, twentieth century Europeans certainly were modern! But Indy was not going to complain about it.

The cabin door closed gently on a ray of moonlight.

Inside was complete darkness, a bad omen. The *City of Puebla* glided on a glassy sea, with only the faint hum of machinery disturbing the night silence. It was almost too quiet.

The hum of machinery and... the hiccups of irregular breathing, betraying the terror of the nocturnal visitor.

For some time, the hesitating silhouette, massive and mysterious, remained motionless.

Then the owner of this figure uttered a deep sigh, and struck a match, disturbing the tranquility of the night.

A halo of light appeared on the nearby wooden wall. With slow calculation, a trembling hand moved a candle from left to right, then from right to left. It approached the upper bunk and lifted the covers, then the sheets.

After a careful examination, the hand that held the candle approached the lower bunk. The same operation was repeated. The cover was lifted, and then the sheets, according to a well-established rit-

ual.

A drop of sweat came crashing to the ground, then a second. The visitor considered them, one after another, in the light of his candle, lighting the second bunk, before sticking his ear against the sheets. It was a well-designed ear, with prominent ears, and a rim wide open to the world.

At this moment, the door handle was operated from the outside and an oil lamp flooded the cabin with a blinding light.

Indy, returning from the dining room, was surprised to discover Herman kneeling on the ground, his ear pressed against the sheets of the lower bunk, a candle in his hand.

“Herman? What are you doing?” asked Indy, raising his eyebrows.

Caught red-handed, Herman didn’t have time to invent a plausible explanation for his odd behavior.

“Well... I... um... uh,” he sputtered.

Large beads of sweat dripped from his forehead.

Indy contemplated his friend with indulgence.

“Don’t tell me...”

In shame, Herman lowered his eyes:

“I... um... the Captain said... to be sure that there were no fleas in the bunk, you should... well...”

“Well?” Indy pressed.

“Hmmm... He said that... you should stick your ear against the sheet. If there are fleas there... you can hear them... laughing.”

An embarrassed silence greeted this admission.

“But it’s... it’s not true, huh, Indy? The Captain was joking, right?”



His best friend was so out of breath, that even though he had fallen into this stupid trap, Indy did not have the heart to laugh.

“No, it’s not true, Herman. And don’t worry: there are no fleas in your bed. I was joking, too, when I told you that.”

“Oh yeah?”

“Yes. And I ask forgiveness. Don’t worry anymore. We should go to bed. After a good night’s sleep we will avenge the Captain’s misdeeds.”

Calm, Herman undressed and slipped between the sheets, his mind settled. Five minutes later, he was snoring, while Indy counted sheep patiently...

\*

\* \*

Three days later, the *City of Puebla* proudly entered in the Port of Seattle, in the north-western United States. Hanging on the arm of Sir Alexis Saint-Light-Light, English diplomat, poet in his spare time, Miss Seymour radiated happiness.

Indy was fun to see, too, alongside Norma Butterfly. For the occasion, the girl had worn her finest jewelry and chosen the music of the foggy banishment scene from the well-known opera Norma...

This morning, the enchanting sound of “*Caaaaaasta diiiiiiva... caaaaasta diiiiiiva...*” woke up the innocent people of Seattle, capital of the state of Washington, the first step in a search for gold that could lead to wealth... or to death.

One of the passengers of the *City of Puebla* had a gray expression. He was a boy of dozen years, with large cheeks red with cold, who kept scratching himself.

Indeed, he had just spent three nights of hell in a second-class bunk... infested with fleas.

Having cast a sidelong glance at his best friend, who strut in the company of the ship's most beautiful passenger, the young boy in question cursed his predicament, a little too late.

And he pondered this painful question: why, oh why, hadn't he chosen the top bunk?

That bunk he had offered Indy.

## Chapter 5

# Jack London and Jack Daniel's

Dazed after sixty-two hours on the sea, blinded by the cottony fog, deafened by the cries of street vendors, the passengers of the *City of Puebla* followed one after another, stumbling over the bridge which led to the mainland.

The platform teemed with crowds of the great days. There was a carnival atmosphere, but no merry-go-round turned, no neon lights pierced the sinister paleness of this early morning without charm.

“Fur coats... hunting boots... Come on, ladies, gentlemen, it's a good deal...,” screamed a hefty crier.

“Do not hesitate to buy my elixir of youth! With it, you'll always stay young... and you'll find your fortune...,” yelled a toothless old man.

Judging by his state, he did not abuse his elixir: the poor man had no shoes, his moth-eaten jacket

was a sorry sight, and he appeared to be about a hundred and twenty years old.

“This is a real flea market!” cried Indy in seeing the trestles of greengrocers, and the pans of boiling oil used by the fritter merchants.

This comment earned him an elbow jab from his friend Herman. Surely, he could not have chosen a worse term!

“God, these people are salty!” said Miss Seymour, pouting in disgust. “And it is soooo cold at these laaaatituudes!”

“My dear, must you really accompany these young people on their perilous journey?” Asked Alexis Saint-Light-Light, visibly worried about the future of his companion.

No, Miss Seymour would not fail in her responsibilities for anything or anyone—not even for the most distinguished representative of the Saint-Light-Light dynasty.

In a sweet voice, he accepted his defeat with grace.

“Well, darling. You will find me here when you return from the snow.”

“I will dream of you each night while I sleep,” promised the governess, full of emotion.

If she had actually been paying attention, instead of cooing in the fog, Miss Seymour would have seen that Indy had already left her side.

Indeed, he had approached a funny rogue, who, wearing a leather jacket and with a pipe in the corner of the mouth, quietly observed with one eye the colorful crowd on the platform.

This was neither a sailor nor a merchant. And Indy had the strange impression of having met him

earlier.

But where?

He thought hard, but it was impossible to place a name to this face.

“Bah!” thought Indy, “I’d better go buy our equipment. Then I can start to search for this paradise of gold. And I may even find my Eden!”

Suddenly, his mind clicked. Eden, a paradise! But of course, why hadn’t he thought of that before? This man in the leather jacket, this man who drew on his pipe, taking notes on a notebook, was the author of *Martin Eden*, the famous Jack London!

He was probably back on the trail of his past exploits; he had participated in the Gold Rush of 1896.

In the grip of the deepest excitement, Indy rushed to this emperor of adventure, to this titan of literature.

At first glance, the titan of literature hardly seemed delighted to see a mopheaded kid tumbling toward him, staring at him with bulging eyes.

“Sorry, son, but I’m not talking to anybody. I’m here as an observer.”

“You’re... you... you... are J...Jack Lond... London, right?”

The writer stepped backwards. Obviously, this kid was too young to have met him fifteen years earlier in this place. Could he therefore have read his novels?

“Indeed, my boy, that’s me,” he answered in a gruff tone.

“I knew it! I saw a photograph of you once. And I admire your work so much that I never forgot

your face. It's true! What chance to speak with you. Do you have a little time? What are you doing here? If I'm bothering you, you must tell me. I am so happy to meet you. I'm travelling with Miss Seymour, and Norma, who I met on the boat, and we're going to Whitehorse. There is a ghost there, and we..."

Indy stopped short. The writer stared at him scornfully, but with a twinkle in his eye. In all his years, Jack London had never met such a talkative boy!

"Start by telling me your name, son."

Indy felt ashamed. Would he ever learn to keep his mouth shut? A man like Jack London had no interest in the travels of a thirteen-year-old kid. And he was obviously tired of all the harrassment by his admirers.

"I... I'm Indiana Jones, sir."

The writer's heavy eyelids lifted with difficulty up to his eyebrows, and his face turned round face with happiness.

"Indiana Jones?"

He paused, then repeated:

"Indiana Jones?" as if convincing himself that he had heard the name correctly.

"Yes, sir," confirmed Indy, a little embarrassed.

"You said In-di-a-na-Jones?"

And he burst out laughing.

"Haaaaa... ha... ha... ha...! That is one funny nickname! I'll have to use it in my next novel. Indiana Jones? Haaaaa... ha... ha... ha... "

Indy frowned. He wasn't so sure this legendary man was very nice...



“Sorry, kid. I didn’t mean to offend you. Come on, let me buy you a hot cocoa.”

He had already turned his heel and was headed to the nearest tavern.

“Indiana Jones... ha... ha...” he repeated with delight.

A few minutes later, a strange quartet who made its entry into Happy Moose, bar-restaurant-hotel-dive that stunk of alcohol, tobacco and cards.

Indy was first, eager to present his new friend to his nanny, who had read all the great writers of the day. He was followed by Herman, who was scratching obsessively, and the lovely Norma Butterfly. Miss Seymour, flustered by the spectacle before her, closed the procession.

“My dear Indyyyyyyyy, this dehghh of inehhh-hquity is quite ouuut of the question,” she said as she entered the “vile shanty.”

All the poker players turned their heads toward her.

...or was it toward Norma?

The pianist stopped in the middle of his Scott Joplin rag-time and, behind the counter, the owner swallowed a mouthful of bourbon.

Petrified, Miss Seymour and Herman took Norma by the arm, just to steady themselves, and all three went to join Indy, who had already sat at a table alongside Jack London.

Once Norma was seated, the conversations resumed, the piano began to creak out its tune, and the owner served himself a full glass of Jack Daniel’s.

“Pleased to meet you, Miss Seymour and Miss Butterfly,” the writer said gallantly, without rising from his seat.

Then he leaned toward them and looked at them conspiratorially.

“I presume that you are on holiday with the young... Indiana Jones?” he quipped, biting his tongue to keep from laughing.

“This is a fine mess,” said the Englishwoman. “A fine mess indeed... No, really, this expedition appears to be a complete waste of time.”

Her face was completely serious, before softening with unconcealed pride:

“Fortunately, I met a chaaarming man: the Marquis de Saint-Light-Light.”

Again, the eyelids of the famous writer raised a good half-inch.

“Saint-Light-Light? This is another funny nickname! And it belongs to a joker, too. If I were you, Miss Seymour, I would avoid him like the plague. He’s a trickster. He is well known on this side of the Pacific.”

The nanny’s face was full of shock. The Marquis had imagined that she was wealthy? Or was there another explanation for his boundless passion for Miss Seymour?

“I hope you didn’t tell him about our expedition,” muttered Indy in a sour tone.

“Well, that is to say that... uh... I believe that... indeeed I did!”

So that’s why the phoney Marquis focused so closely on Miss Seymour. Indy should have guessed!

Dramatically, London said:

“It would be a wonderful title for a novel: *Indiana Jones and the Phantom of the Klondike!* Haaaa... haaa... haa...”

And he slapped his thighs forcefully.

“Or even a film, with Norma Butterfly and the Marquis de Saint-Light-Light as principal characters! Haaaa... haa... erm... hmm!”

The angry glare of the young Italian cut his joke short. Humbly, he turned to the owner of the business.

“Hey, Frankie, bring us four cocoas and a bottle of Jack!”

Then he turned his attention back to his guests.

“Seriously, my friends, why would you drag your boots to these parts?”

“I’m looking for my cousins in Indian country,” Norma began.

“And as I said earlier, we’re going to Whitehorse,” said Indy. “A friend of my father has hidden a treasure there. And he claims a ghost wants to steal it.”

“Another one of those poor guys who gambled everything on a treasure hunt and who wound up crazy... or dead. I remember it as if it were yesterday,” said London, drifting off. “Three-quarters of them couldn’t run a hundred yards in less than two minutes, and they wanted to cross the Chilkoot Pass in minus 70°!”

Miss Seymour turned gray instantly.

“Minus Sehhhhvehhhnty!”

The eyes of the writer burrowed into their sockets, as if searching his mind, to retrieve memories of unspeakable barbarism.

“At the temperatures there, all your extremities freeze. Imagine the ice cold fingers of a corpse, snapping in two like a twig. Not to mention man-eating bears rapids, Indians...”

On hearing this alarming catalog of disasters,

Herman's teeth began chattering.

"We had to drag thousands of pounds behind us, eating only bacon and boiled water," said the writer, turning his focus toward the young boy. "One day, I won at roulette enough to buy some coffee: I boiled it and left it in the cup for thirty seconds. Well, that's all it took; it froze. Hard as a rock."

The owner of Happy Moose, who himself did not look very happy, placed four cups of cocoa and a bottle of bourbon on the filthy table.

"Put it on my tab, okay, Frankie?"

Frankie nodded his head without conviction.

"Well, friends, here is your cocoa! If you want my advice, go back where you came from. Forget the Klondike: even in summer, it's hell! And woe be to you if you're there in the winter, because I would not want to be your skin in that situation..."

"It is advise that we will follow... to the letter, Mr. Man-of-Letters!" clucked Miss Seymour.

Insensitive to English humor, London concluded with a hollow voice:

"I'm sure you have better things to do."

For his part, Indy had listened to the writer without saying a word. But suddenly an idea came to him. And if...? Why not...?

London had finished his fourth glass of Jack Daniel's.

"You want me to accompany you, son? Oh, wait, no! I take the *City of Puebla* in three days, with Charmain, my woman. And even if I weren't, I wouldn't go with you. I have had enough of the Klondike! And I'm going on long trip that should be rather eventful. I'm crossing Cape Horn, the

fortieth howling in full storm, my lad! And I only have three days to recuperate..."

He again took the bottle with one hand.

"Then I will take notes for my next novel, *Smoke Bellew*. This will be the last that I will devote to this darn gold rush. It's ruined my health," he said as he emptied his fifth glass of bourbon.

After a moment, an appalling grin twisted his face.

"Aaaahhh! This rot-gut could send a man three hundred meters from his shoes! Stone cold dead!"

For the first time since he started on this journey, Indy felt his enthusiasm diminish. Maybe he overestimated the fortitude of his group. Perhaps it would be better to turn back before being devoured by a bear, or swept away by the rapids?

"I think we should go home," Herman groaned.

"Very wise," added Miss Seymour.

"Do what you want," Norma intervened in a brash voice, "but I will continue on. If I am surprised by the winter, my cousins will provide a roof. I did not take this trip to give up so easily..."

In the eyes of Jack London, Indy was surprised to see admiration for Norma. To travel a road without ever taking any risks, that was not adventure.

Instinctively, Norma had understood this. Just as Jack London before her.

In that instant, Indy had made up his mind. He would continue, whatever the cost. If Norma could do it, he too would rise to the occasion. At thirteen years, the time had come for him to challenge himself. To push himself to the limit.

As if he could read his thoughts, the writer

flashed him a small smile and raised a glass of bourbon to his health.

## Chapter 6

# More than mosquitoes

Their eyes still bright, remembering the wonders that they had seen on the road, Indy, Herman, Norma, and Miss Seymour arrived in Whitehorse on a sunny morning.

Before leaving Seattle, Jack London had recommended that Indy contact one of his friends, a man called Chinook. “In case something goes wrong, he can help you,” he had said.

Exhausted by the “intehhrrrminable” journey, Miss Seymour was more than eager to get to her hotel room.

In normal times, the trip from the station to the hotel would not pose any particular problem. You only had to hop in a horsedrawn carriage—Whitehorse, at the edge of the Yukon, had no automobiles—and get going.

Only not here. The maps and travel guides con-

sulted by Indy and Norma missed a crucial point: it was the summer season, the time of year that generated huge plumes of... mosquitoes!

And so, Miss Seymour was the first inside the wagon. The trunks and bundles followed immediately after.

They soon realized that the vehicle was too small for all of them, and that Indy, Norman and Herman would have to walk. But what appeared at first glance appeared to be the epitome of boredom was revealed soon as... a blessing.

At first, Miss Seymour heard a humming, or more precisely a distant roar. She saw the bystanders rush to return home or dodge into the nearest shop.

A moment later, the coachman abandoned his post, and took off running toward the horizon.

Taken aback, Miss Seymour did not know what to do.

The humming soon grew louder, until it resembled a fast approaching aerial attack of some enemy force: but what enemy? And how could they have assembled so many airplanes in the sky above the Yukon?

Panicked, Miss Seymour turned and when she realized the truth, she cried in horror:

“The mosquiiiiitooooes!! HELLLLLP!!”

But nobody came to her aid.

She alone had to face a flood giant insects, determined to do battle with the British invader. The victim managed to knock several of her attackers wings with her umbrella, but most came to rest shamelessly on her alabaster face.

The most daring bugs even penetrated inside

her bodice, with very unpleasant consequences...

Her only salvation was the presence of mind of the horse, which charged into a full gallop to escape the mosquitoes.

In a state of shock, Helen Margaret Seymour, her hat pulled over her swollen face, had not spoken a word for a half-hour.

Frozen on her bed, she was deaf to Indy and Norma's council.

"I am sure that tomorrow there won't be anymore," assured the young Italian, without believing it.

"Come and eat some hot sausages," Indy advised. "You must replenish your strength."

"Oh, yes, that's a good idea!" said Herman, who was starving.

In light of his perpetual appetite, it seemed natural to ask: how many stomachs did Herman have?

But, as far as Miss Seymour was concerned, nothing seemed to help.

She remained silent, a living image of despair.

A swollen statue, symbolic of the human condition in all its terrible horror.

Indy could only empathize.

"Well, in that case, I suggest that you rest, Miss Seymour. Meanwhile, we'll take a short trip to see Archie Malloy. I look forward to hearing what he has to say. How about you, Herman?"

In response, he had to be satisfied with dead silence—from the sore governess; and the hiccup of disappointment—from one of Herman's many stomachs, at the thought of being deprived of lovely hot sausages.

Located on the left bank of the Yukon, the city Whitehorse was built on a plain and surrounded by cliffs and perpetually snow-covered mountains.

It was on these heights that Archibald Malloy had built his log cabin. The “hermit” of Whitehorse was well known to the locals, so the three friends had no problem finding it.

Smoke poured out of the small chimney. Other, infinitely less pleasant things, emanated from the cabin. Approaching, Indy and his companions heard unsightly sounds that the “hermit” might consider a song:

*“My cabin in Canada  
It’s not Copacabana  
But I make a good ratafia  
In my cabin in Canada...”*

His rattling voice made Norma’s flesh crawl. This first contact with Archie Malloy did not bode well.

When the rickety door opened, the three astonished friends witnessed an appalling performance before them.

Barely forty years old, the master of the house appeared at least sixty. His emaciated face bore the scars of fifteen years carrying bags of gold dust to a mysterious secret hideaway.

To see him, one wondered if he would live long enough to enjoy his gold.

“My word! You came?!” he exclaimed in a quavering voice. “I was desperate to see you come. I can hardly believe my eyes.”

They were eyes drained of all expression.

“My dear Henry sent you to help me, right? He finally received my letter?”

Painfully, his eyes moistened, and a small tear ran down his paper-maché cheeks.

“God be praised!” exclaimed the hermit. “My prayers have not been in vain... But come in, young people, welcome to my modest abode.”

The place in which Archie Malloy had stagnated for fifteen years was bathed in a gentle warmth. It smelled of moldy wood. A strange smell in truth... and quite nauseating. Nothing like hot sausage.

“I’m Indiana Jones, and this is Norma Butterfly and my buddy Herman. Norma has an Italian father and an Indian mother. She came to visit her cousins of the Athapaskan tribe, whom she’s never met.”

“The Athapaskan, huh...?” muttered Malloy.

Imperceptibly, his face had darkened, then settled on an almost jovial expression.

“Pleased to make your acquaintance, Miss Butterfly. If you would allow me a compliment, you have the grace and lightness of a butterfly.”

Far from being offended, Norma accepted this flattery with a smile. Indy scowled.

“Hmmm... Mr. Malloy, what do you mean by ‘he finally received my letter,’” he asked. “When did you write to my father, exactly?”

Malloy looked at him as if he had just spent a century on the planet Mars.

“Damn... it must have been... five years,” he replied. “And when did you receive it?”

“Fifteen days ago,” said Indy.

When he recovered from his surprise, Herman whispered:

“You should have sent it by Indian Express.”

“Indian Express?” asked Norma.

“Sure, smoke signals...”

Silence filled the log cabin. Herman had no luck. Whenever he tried to the delicate art of tasteful joke, he found no success.

“My letter took five years to reach you?” repeated Malloy, twisting his white-haired chin with an emaciated finger. “That’s amazing! I could have been left to die here in the hands of manitou.”

“Exactly,” Indy intervened again, “Tell us about this... manitou, as you say. As I understand, the manitous are Indian spirits, who can be good or evil depending on their personality?”

“That’s right, my boy. I have come across a bad manitou. As long as I breathe, it will not leave me in peace. I have never hurt to fly. I am only a poor digger.”

Indy and Norma exchanged a look. Clearly, the girl could understand little more than Indy.

“What does he do, your manitou?” asked Norma.

“Well, in general, he begins at the stroke of midnight. And he starts to beat on the walls of my hut, uttering incomprehensible threats. The next day, I can be sure some misfortune or another will occur. One day, a huge branch fell from a tree and nearly crushed me. Another time, my horse broke his leg tripping over a big stone: I had to kill the poor animal. After the manitou’s last visit, I was poisoned by harmless mushrooms...”

“Mushrooms? Hmmm!...,” whispered Indy.

“MUSHROOMS?!” exclaimed Herman, who hadn’t been following the conversation. “Where are they?”

Indy quickly arrived at two decisions.

First, it was essential to feed Herman. Then,

it might be wise to visit Archibald Malloy a little before midnight to check the digger's story. And if the manitou did not come that evening, they would return the next day.

"We can come by tonight, a half-hour before the stroke of midnight. Okay, Mr. Malloy?"

"I agree, my boy. But I advise extreme caution," he said with a squint.

Then, a sinister tone, he added:

"I wouldn't want anything bad to happen to you..."

## Chapter 7

# Tom-tom in the night

Back at the hotel, Indy and his companions found Miss Seymour in the room eating.

The dinner she had ordered was more than frugal: a plate of hot sausage and potatoes cooked in the oven, and a appetizing little legume-based local salad...

The three friends were relieved she had recovered her speech. But the relief did not last, as her sickly silence was succeeded by a verbal avalanche.

The governess had returned with a vengeance.

“My dear Indyyyyy, I knew this triiip would be nothing but trouuuble. I was not mistaaaaken. Look at the state I am in!”

She gently lifted a corner of her veil.

“I am cooovered in biiiites the size of silver dollars. I look hideous. Furthermore, the itching is unbearable.”

They peered under the corner of her veil, and they could see she wasn't exaggerating. Poor Herman felt his own itches acting up in sympathy.

"I'm really sorry for you," Indy offered. "But we have not yet completed our mission."

The boy stopped because Miss Seymour had begun a strange dance in her chair.

"Hmmm... We can't leave now for San Francisco. Moreover, right now you need..."

Before the wide-eyed Norma and Herman, the English governess shifted painfully in her seat from buttock to the other.

"...rest, out of the sunlight," said Indy, himself stunned by this dance of St. Vitus.

Unable to take anymore, Miss Seymour rose and left the dining room in a hurry.

The three friends looked on, unable to decide whether to follow... or wait without doing anything. Indy resolved the dilemma quickly. He wrote a note to the hotel server to make a second plate of sausages and hot baked potatoes.

His napkin tied around his neck and mouth wide open. Herman glared enviously at the food on a neighboring table.

It must be said that it was full of goodies of the most appetizing variety: giant steaks, leg of lamb and cream cakes. The irony was that the table's four guests were too busy talking to eat!

There really was no justice in this world...

Fortunately, Indy, Herman's genius friend, was there to help. The three friends needed their strength; the night would be cold... and long.

Moments later, Miss Seymour returned to her seat.

"You must excuuuuse me, but all of these feel like burning coals. My dear Indyyyyy, if I have any advice to give you, it is to avoid those mosquiiitoes like the plague."

"That's a promise," assured the boy.

"You, too," she continued, addressing Herman and Norma.

"Scout's honor," Herman said.

"As for this 'miiiiission' of which you speak, Indyyyyy my dear, I beg you, be cautious," said Miss Seymour.

She turned toward the other two.

"I expect you to keep him from taking any supe-hhrfluous risks. This story of the manitou giiiiives me goosebumps."

"Oh, if I were you, I would not worry!" commented Norma. "I do not believe in these evil spirits. I think it is probably just a hungry bear."

"A bear, heeere?" cried Miss Seymour in a strident voice.

"H... h... h... h... Hungry...?" stammered Herman, who had suddenly lost his appetite.

But Indy shook his head vigorously.

"No, that would be too simple. Malloy wasn't born yesterday. He would recognize a bear. I think that's it's probably another digger after the gold, exploiting his fear."

He took a beat and leaned forward, pointing a finger at Herman.

"For that man is scared to death."

"L... like me?"

"Oh, he was much more afraid than you, Herman!" observed Indy. "The gold represents his whole life. He sacrificed everything. At the thought

of losing it, he can't drink, eat or sleep. You've seen how he looks?"

The server brought a second plate of hot sausages.

"I... I must admit that I never can't eat," confessed Herman.

For the first time in three days, everyone burst out laughing. Then for a minute or two, there was no more than the clatter of forks and knives on the plates.

It was Herman who broke the silence first:

"I think that we spend the night in the hotel. You know, I sleep late... and I don't want to meet any hungry bear..."

"Sorry, Herman," insisted Indy. "I can't take the risk of taking only Norma, at night, to Malloy's den. We need at least three to defend ourselves in case we're attacked."

The young girl turned to Herman and spoke with intensity.

"I know that ultimately, you are very brave. A woman can sense these things..."

Herman opened his eyes wide, then turned a cherry red. He did not used to receiving such compliments. Especially not from the mouth of a young woman as attractive as Norma Butterfly.

"So we will both go along, will we not?"

Herman did not have to think twice.

"Oh, for su... uh... for sure!"

Even before Miss Seymour had time to issue a final protest, Indy got up.

"I'll prepare our backpacks," he announced. "You two be ready to go in an hour."

He turned his heels and walked away.

In the middle of summer in the Far North, the days lengthened indefinitely. Thanks to the midnight sun, which colored the horizon a monochrome purple, there was no need to bring torches or lamps for light. But just in case, Indy would bring a small oil lamp.

He was well aware that, even in the middle of July, temperatures could drop below freezing, so he planned to bring blankets...

It was justified, because that evening, around Whitehorse, the midnight sun provided no warmth. And for once, when Herman's teeth chattered, it was because of fear and cold. The sun of Italy seemed distant to Norma, too, who shivered under her greatcoat.

When the trio reached the lair of Archie Malloy, snowflakes descended softly from the sky. In the middle of the hut's door, a pair of moose antlers of pointed proudly: a warning against unwelcome guests?

Nevertheless, the three friends were greeted by a refrain as discordant as the one they heard that afternoon:

*I am just a poor digger  
My earnings are meager  
Nothing to pilfer  
I could not live elsewhere...*

Where the "hermit" of Whitehorse got his rhymes, none of the nocturnal visitors could say.

"They must been on sale at Chip's Market," suggested Indy with a giggle.

Which earned him a nudge from Herman.

“Enter, my friends!” Malloy began after hearing the knock at his door. “I was warming my bones with my ratafia.”

“Your ratafia?” asked Norma.

“Rot-gut, if you prefer. From Spain. It’s alcohol, yes!”

Norma passed her nose over the glass in Malloy’s hand. A grimace of disgust appeared on her face.

“You mean death water?” Indy asked, remembering what Miss Seymour’s preferred term.

“It’s more than a quarter-hour before midnight. I am tired. So, I propose that we warm ourselves by the fire.”

“Good idea!” exclaimed Archie Malloy. “I could sing you some songs from my repertoire. I haven’t had an audience in years...”

“Wouldn’t you rather listen to Norma?” Indy interrupted. “She is a very talented singer. She was nicknamed the ‘Italian Nightingale.’”

The prospect of a recital from Archie Malloy would freeze the blood of the most enthusiastic music fan. Indy had to cut him off. A little disappointed, the master of the house lifted his eyes to the beautiful mixed-race girl, and gallantly decided to give her a chance.

“I suggest a piece from *Il Trovatore*, by Giuseppe Verdi,” Norma said in an affectionate voice.

“Go for *Il Trovatore*,” said Malloy.

The hut was silent, disturbed only by the crackle of logs in the hearth.

Norma inflated chest, closed her eyes, opened her mouth wide, and then, the whole valley was filled with her powerful voice.

“Taceaaaaa the mat plaaaaacidaaaa...”

When she finished, a round of applause greeted the performance of the artist. It was all the more admirable that her vocal cords were not damaged.

Indy consulted his watch, trying to hide his nervousness.

“Just five minutes to midnight” he announced in a low voice.

It was more than enough time for Norma sing an aria from Handel’s *Alcina*.

“Miiiiii restanooooo the lagriiiiime...”

Two minutes later it was Rossini’s turn, with an excerpt from *La Cenerentola*:

“Non più accanto al mestaaaaaa fuoooooooooooo...”

The three spectators were in love, and Indy especially. But their happiness did not last. Because, in addition, a “manitou” had no ear for music. Norma was interrupted during a high C.

Immediately, Indy checked his watch.

It was the midnight tapping. That was the word...

Because the racket that followed was worthy a gun salute.

BAM-BADABAM-BADABAM! BAM-BADABAM-BADABAM!

Herman curled himself into a ball and buried his head under his blanket. As for Archie Malloy, he was readying another large tumbler of ratafia. Only Norma remained calm in the face of the threat coming from the cold.

After one minute, the manitou toured around the fragile shelter, emitting deafening screams the whole time. It seemed like a wild beast.

And it struck with such violence that Indy began to regret that Archie Malloy had not built his hut out of bricks, instead of logs...

Norma had problems.

Herman was crouched under the table.

There was a brief moment of respite, then the din returned unabated. The “spirit-rapper” was having a fine time, so much so that the walls of the cabin began to shake.

“I... I... didn’t think... that the San... San Andreas Fault ran all the way to the... the Yu... Yukon,” stuttered Herman, terrified. “But th... th... there must an... another one... here...”

“Come on, don’t panic!” launched in Indy bombast torso. “I’m going to have a word with this big manitou.”

“Indy! No, I beg you!” cried Norma immediately.

The sincere concern that he discovered in the gaze of the young woman caused his heart to skip a beat.

“I beg you,” she repeated. “Be careful...”

Indy squeezed Norma’s hand with his, then took Archie Malloy’s gun and his oil lamp. With the girl’s support, he was even more determined to show that evil spirit...

BAM-BADABAM-BADABAM-BADA-BAM... They heard it again.

“I’m tired of this tom-tom!” launched Indy, inspiring a gasp flavored with ratafia. “I’m going to teach him a new sound!”

Listening to only his courage, he opened the door of the hut and ran into the night.

## Chapter 8

# A dull manitou

Along with the snow, darkness enveloped the hut. With the oil lamp, Indy began by looking for footprints, or any recent disturbance...

However, when he scanned of the carpet of white, he did not see anything.

Nothing at all.

The freshly fallen snow did not reveal any tracks. It was silent.

Indy frowned. If it had been a another gold digger, as he suspected, or a bear, the “manitou” would have necessarily left footprints.

Necessarily.

A spirit, on the other hand...

He shook his head vigorously. No, it was impossible. Indiana Jones did not believe in manitous or ghosts of any kind.

And yet...

Suddenly, the boy felt an invisible presence brush him. Like a spinning top, he twirled around, wav-

ing his lamp in the hopes of catching a glimpse.

But he did not see anything except flakes tossed by the breeze. Or rather by the... chill. The temperature was below zero.

“Brrrr... I would rather be in Copacabana than near this hut in Canada...” thought Indy with a smile.

At the same time, he felt it touch him again, strong enough to topple him. And this time, he heard a hoarse scream close to him. Unnerved, he dropped the lamp, which fell in the snow.

When he had recovered it, the silence was everywhere. The silence of the cotton snow. Only the rustling of the wind through the redwoods could be heard.

His heart racing, Indy strained his ears. He did not hear anything within the hut, either.

And suddenly...

BADABAM... BADABAM... BADABAM...

The “manitou” should have been within a few yards of Indy. This time he could not miss! He was going to settle his account.

The boy took large strides toward the “tom-tom” sound.

It began around the cabin by the left. Then a sharp cry tore the silent night. A cry that came from inside.

Norma! It was Norma!

But Indy did not have the opportunity to retreat from his path. An invisible hand struck him so violently on the skull that he fainted and collapsed in the snow.

“Indy? Indy, answer me, I beg you?”



He would recognize that voice among a thousand; it was caressing, as smooth as honey. It was a sound so delicious that Indy could not bring himself to stir, he wanted so much to hear Norma whisper again:

“Indy! My poor Indy! Why can’t you hear me? Why are you knocked out? Wake up, I beg you!”

No, a true gentleman could not extend the suffering of his admirer any longer... Indy lifted one eyelid and then the other, and discovered a smile on lips of the young woman.

“Oh, come quickly! He opened his eyes! It is wonderful!”

Nobody had ever been so happy to see Indy open his eyes, except perhaps his mother...

His mother...

Indy immediately drove those haunting thoughts to the back of his mind. Rather, he chose to make Norma smile.

“Looks like I’m unconscious?” he said with a wink.

He had a conscious pain between his neck and the top of his skull.

“That monster knocked you!” said Norma, squeezing his hand. “If it had been me, I would have scratched, I would have bitten, I would have...”

“You would have had a hard time,” interrupted Indy. “Considering it was... invisible.”

“Invisible?!” cried the other three in unison.

“Invisible,” Indy confirmed.

Using his elbows, he propped himself up with difficulty and sat on the wooden deck.

“This is a true manitou. I felt it brush by me, once, twice, yet I saw nothing. Although, one thing

is sure: it has a heavy hand.”

And he began to massage the base of his skull, grimacing in pain.

“Tell me, Norma: Why did you scream back there?”

“Because I saw a silhouette through the window.”

Indy turned to the window in question. It was exactly there that he was attacked.

But if Norma had seen something..., how could the manitou be invisible?

There was nothing to understand.

The experiences of his short life had taught Indy an useful trick: sleep on it.

“I think we had better sleep here,” he advised. “Tomorrow it will be day and we may have clearer ideas.”

Everyone shared his opinion. In fact, Herman was already wrapped in his blanket.

The others quickly imitated, secretly hoping they would not be awakened by the invisible manitou...

They first saw a stranger, covered with a sheet. The rays of sun, almost horizontal, bathed the room in a light golden brown.

At the sound of the door closing, the human form lying on the bed turned, still concealed under its blanket.

“Indyyyyyyyyy? Normaaa? Herrmaaan?”

“Yes, Miss Seymour. We are unharmed in spite of our minor expedition last night. You see, there was nothing to worry about.”

“Nothing to worry about?!” Norma objected.

“What he forgets to tell you is that he was attacked by the manitou, and has a big bump on his head!”

“Good Loooord!” cried the governess. “And I’m here naaailed to this bed because of those hoooorrrible mosquiiiiitoes!”

Indy approached her.

“Why are you hiding under the covers? Are you afraid of catching cold?”

“No, it’s because I am deeffiiigured!” groaned the unfortunate woman. The biiiites swelled during the night and I look like I have the Bubooonnnic plaaague!”

Indy bit his lip to keep from laughing. Because the situation did not lend itself at all to laughing. Poor Miss Seymour!

“Be assured, my dear Indyyyyyy, I still would have arisen to alert the poliiiiice of your disappearance! It sent a chill down my spine when the the hootel manager informed me that you had not returned by dawn.”

“We spent the night in Archie’s hut. It had started to snow. I thought we would be more safe there,” said Indy.

“Be that as it may, Indiaaaaana, I forbiiiiid you from walking in these mouuuntains without my permission. If you disobeey me, we will take the first train to Skagway.”

For the sake of Miss Seymour’s pitiful condition, Indy did not prolong the discussion. And he promised to keep quiet... for at least a few hours.

After breakfast and good hot bath, Indy, Herman and Norma surrendered to the police station in Whitehorse.

Indy had the intention to glean some information about a friend of Jack London, called Chinook. With a name like that, he must have been of Indian descent, and perhaps he could explain to them more about the manitou.

Lieutenant Dawson raised his eyebrows and exchanged a glance with his colleague, Sergeant McPherson.

“Hmmm... No, it’s been years since I have seen Chinook roam the area. No, really, I can not help you, my boy...”

“But one of his friends told us he still lived in Whitehorse,” Indy insisted.

“One of his friends?” asked the lieutenant. “And who is this friend?”

“It was Jack London, the famous writer.”

Again, the two officers exchanged a look. Indy would have sworn they knew more than they wanted to confess.

“You don’t say? Jack London? Hmmm... I see... I see...”

“What do you see?” launched Norma, who was upset at the poor treatment they had so far received.

Lieutenant Dawson adopted a most formidable expression, and a gaze of steel tore into the impertinent girl.

“I see that you are not from this region, miss... and that you should not walk in the mountains in the middle of the night. You may have some bad experiences...”

Now three friends to exchanged a look, speechless.

“How did you know that we...? “

Indy turned to see the cost of his insolence. The eyes of the lieutenant pointed it him like two daggers.

“My boy, know that the Canadian mounted police have eyes and ears in every corner of these mountains.”

Confounded by this last comment, Indy shrugged.

“Well... hum... Well... we don't want to waste any more of your time, do we, friends?”

Norma and Herman nodded their heads in unison. Moreover, Herman had his hand on the door handle.

“We are at your service, children,” the Lieutenant began with a quizzical smile. “It is our pleasure...”

At this moment, the door opened and Herman nearly lost his balance. He found himself obstructing the path of an Indian, apparently one in a very bad mood.

When he noticed the three young people, he paused. His gaze lingered on Norma, then looked away and approached the two policemen.

“Dawson, McPherson, I would like a word...”

He turned to the three intruders.

“In private...”

Indy, Herman and Norma did not hesitate. They ran out one after the other and carefully closed the door behind them.

“Gosh! Indy whispered. “I wouldn't want to meet him among the redwood...”

Herman turned to him and asked innocently:

“What's a redwood?”

## Chapter 9

# Bizarre blizzard

“In any case, I think we can rule out Chinook,” Indy commented sourly. “We must act without his help.”

“I find it odd that Jack London recommended we make contact with him,” Herman remarked, puffing his big cheeks. “Because that Chinook looked like a ghost.”

“Bizarre... bizarre, indeed,” Indy agreed.

After raising the ear flaps on his hat so he could hear better, Herman turned back to Indy:

“Bizarre, you say that it’s bizarre? “

Thinking about it, Indy frowned.

“Me, I said it’s bizarre? Now that’s bizarre...”

In the main street of Whitehorse, life followed its usual course: people watched, passing the time... and beautiful ladies lifted their skirts to mid-ankle to avoid getting soak in mud...

“I think that we should begin by persuading Malloy to show us his treasure,” Norma advised.

“Then, we can be sure it exists.”

Indy nodded his head.

“You’re quite right, Norma. And I suggest that we get to it.”

“Right now?” Herman objected. “You want to go immediately?”

Indy cast a determined glance at him.

“On the spot, Herman. Sorry, you can have lunch later. I’m sure the hotel’s cook will keep a little salad, and perhaps even a bowl of broth with noodles for you...”

“That sounds worse than a Scout’s lunchbox during a jamboree,” Herman lamented.

“You want me to show you my treasure?!” exclaimed Archie, holding his bottle of ratafia.

A well-fed fire crackled in the fireplace. It must be said that outside, the wind had picked up. A strange phenomenon indeed, because blizzards are rare in the middle of summer, even in the North.

“Why?” Malloy objected. “You don’t trust me? I’m one of your father’s oldest friends, Indiana.”

Indy chose to keep to himself Professor Jones’ commentary about Archibald and his “prowess” at school.

“If Henry sent you to help me, then he must have trusted...”

“He didn’t exactly send me, Archie,” confessed Indy. “In fact, I was strongly discouraged from coming. It was I who took the initiative.”

“And why, my boy? You can’t tell me that you thought Alaska would be the ideal destination for a summer holiday?”

“Oh yes! He can tell you...” muttered Herman under his breath.

Indy cast a glance out the window: outside the log cabin, the storm threatened to snow. The boy raised one hand dramatically.

“Say what you will, but I’ve always had a taste for adventure... and the unexpected.”

From the face of the emaciated digger, one could guess what he was thinking. He had not considered the situation from this angle. Could he trust these kids from the South? Or would they take his treasure?

His eyes bloodshot, he sized up Indy, Norma and Herman. After a while, he resigned himself to the only possible decision.

“It’s okay, I’ll take you there. My treasure is hidden somewhere in the mountains.”

“Is it far?” asked Indy.

“Not very, no. But I don’t want any of these vultures to follow us, so we should wait until dark. Assuming that damned sun finally sets!”

“Well, hmmm... how about midnight?” Indy suggested.

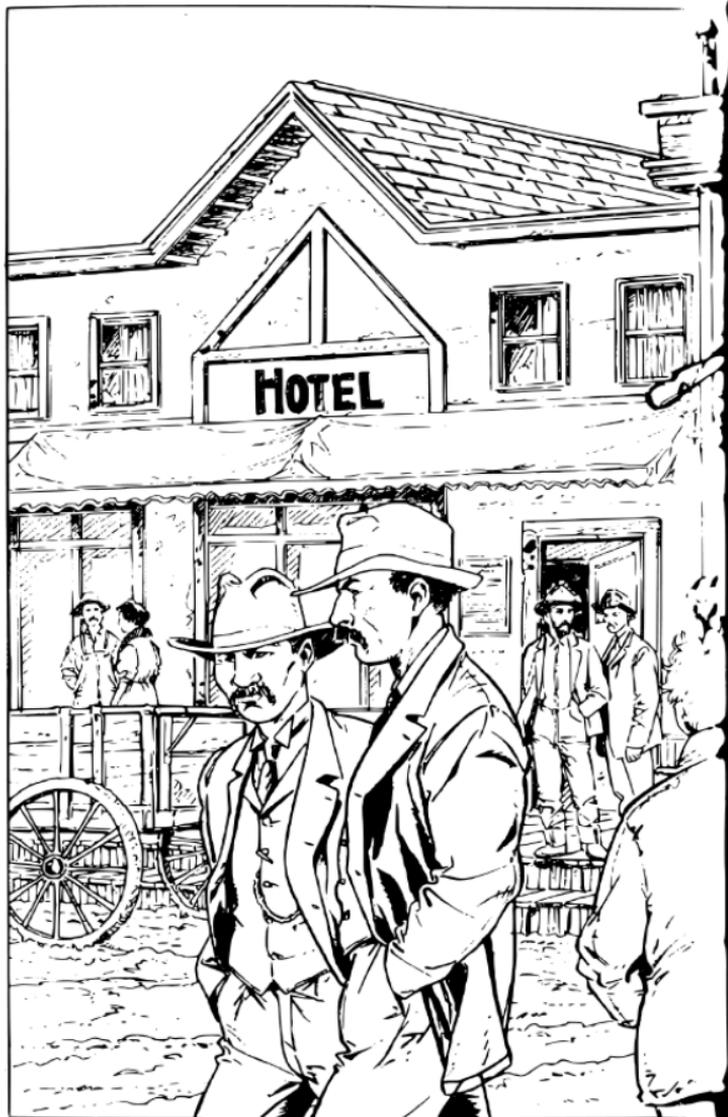
“Sounds good, son!”

Then Malloy tended the kettle on the fire.

“Before you leave, do you want a cup of hot water with a little melted lard?” he asked. “In this weather, you might need it.”

This unusual offer at least aroused Herman’s interest.

“Hey, hey! I bet you’ve never drunk it, eh? You kids are spoiled, in your fancy clothes! Hey, hey! Well, this was the only drink able to warm the body during the rush. And believe me,





with melted lard, it'll keep you warm!"

The three friends looked at each other, stunned. None of them dared face the sorry old man before them.

"Uh... I think Miss Seymour is waiting for us with tea," said Indy, turning to Herman.

"Oh, yes!" the latter replied with confidence. "With tea and cupcakes."

"Tea and cupcakes!" cried Malloy, before bursting out laughing. "I hope you have a good appetite, Master Jones, Sir Herman and Lady Butterfly... Tea and cupcakes! Hey! Hey! Hey!"

He showed a row of rotten teeth, with several hanging by a thread, threatening to break off in the next strong wind. And, when Indy opened the door of the hut, a violent gust hit him.

But by some unexplained miracle, Archie Malloy's teeth stayed in place.

By evening, another unexplained phenomena, the blizzard, had ceased. Clearly, the strange phenomena proliferated around the log cabin. The meteorologists would have lost their heads!

The silent procession made its way to the "Cave of Ali Malloy," as the man himself had nicknamed the cave in question. Just to be safe, Herman brought with him a bag of candy.

And...

They had hardly traveled twenty meters before Indy whispered in his ear:

"Listen, Herman. I'm a little hungry. Could you give me a handful of your candy?"

If Indy had possessed the gift of night vision, he would have seen an ugly grimace on the face of his best friend.

“You could have told me earlier,” he protested with vehemence. “I would have brought more...”

“Hush, speak lower! I don’t want him to hear us...”

Herman had witnessed many of Indy’s pranks, enough times that one might think he could no longer be surprised by his strange behavior. However, in this case, they would be wrong.

It threatened to freeze that night, and the four “hikers” were warmly dressed: each wore a lined parka, two pairs of wool socks and hunting boots. The midnight sun provided their “moonlight.” They did not need any lamp or torch. In these circumstances, it would have been very difficult to guess their presence.

After fifteen minutes, Archie stopped suddenly, like a guard dog on the lookout. Then he cupped his ear, listening for any suspicious sound. He seemed satisfied when they heard the hoot of a scared owl.

Immediately, Archie lay down on the hard, cold ground.

“Lie down!” he ordered.

“It was only... a hooting owl,” Indy whispered.

But obviously, Archie did not agree.

“Clearly, you don’t know this country, son. If that was an owl, I will be hanged. It was an Indian who has tracked down a moose and is alerting his brothers.”

“The Indians hunt at night?” wondered Norma. “That’s a funny thought!”

“Miss Norma, I mean no offense, but Indians have a variety of... funny thoughts,” Malloy muttered. “You’ll learn all about it when you find your

cousins.”

A few minutes passed, during which one could hear the rustle of a candy wrapper, then another... then another... then...

“Stop stuffing your face, boy,” Malloy insisted. “You will eventually attract ants... or Indians!”

In the darkness, Herman blinked his eyes, stunned by his own folly.

“Okay, okay, we can go,” Malloy finally declared. “I must go first, because otherwise you won’t live to see the cave... ha... ha...!”

“Why?” Herman asked, naively.

“Because I installed wolf traps, son, hidden among the bushes. Moreover, I developed a complicated path through...”

Obviously very proud of his installation, Archie paused, as if to savor the details that would follow.

“If an intruder tries to enter inside, he would certainly hit one of the tripwires... ha... ha... or he’d set foot on one of the tiny levers. Either will activate the detonators and... BOOM! Our late friend would be buried under the debris...”

Norma shivered in indignation. The lengths men would go for love of money... they would not hesitate to resort to barbarism. They would ignore the importance of a human life, as long as they saved their valuable wealth!

But she had promised to let Indy take the initiative and not to intervene. This was the condition Indy had insisted upon before he’d let her accompany him and Herman.

Far too tempted by this adventure to part company, she had complied with the will of this strange, clever, and brave American. She had confidence in

him.

As if he could read her thoughts, Indy whispered in her ear:

“Yes! ‘Man is a wolf to other men’ is a well-known saying...”

## Chapter 10

### “Bats” can!

It took ten minutes for Archie to defuse his death-trap.

“You can come!” he called to them from the entrance of the cave.

On the inside, it was cold and wet. Drops of nearly frozen water seeped through the walls. Indy had lit his oil lamp and pointed it toward the ceiling, to assess the height of the corridor that led to the treasure.

Norma cried in horror.

“Shut up! Do you want to alert the mounted police?” Archie roared, froth forming on his lips.

“I beg your pardon. Is... is...”

On the shiny ceiling of the cave hung hundreds of bats, dozing upside down. Resting for a night of hunting, no doubt...

“Oh, *mamma mia!*” Norma groaned. “I have an unholy fear of bats.”

“Fear not, Norma,” Indy whispered. “As long

as we don't drop our lamps, and as long as you keep your hood on your head, you'll be okay."

They advanced a few yards further, watching the shadows in search of Archie "Ali Baba" Malloy's fabulous treasure...

And suddenly, the glare that appeared before them could have been the eighth wonder of the world. Bigger than the Crown Jewels of England, more gold than had ever been sealed in the pyramids of Egypt. In his cave, Archie Malloy looked like the Pharaoh of modern times.

"Open Sesame" Indy whispered, fascinated by the brightness of tons of chips and gold powder.

Wide-eyed, the three friends contemplated this spectacle with disbelief. They never could have imagined that a man could hide this much gold all by himself. It was a task fit for Hercules.

Eyes filled with tears, as if looking upon it for the first time, Archie admired the results of fifteen years of hard labor. His face, miraculously free of the signs of age, shone full of health and happiness.

"Hopefully he won't succumb to the same misfortune as King Midas," whispered Indy in Norma's ear.

"Midas?"

"According to Greek mythology," Indy explained, "the god Dionysus granted a wish to Midas. The king, a very greedy man, requested that everything he touched would transform into gold. But he soon regretted his choice when his girl turned into gold statue! Everything he ate also turned into gold! He begged Dionysus to release him from his curse, that the god had placed on him."

"Unfortunately for him," said Norma, "I doubt

that Malloy has read much Greek mythology. And even if he did, he is too attached to his gold to take advantage of such a apt lesson.”

“You’re probably right,” Indy agreed.

When he was satisfied with the golden vision before him, Archie turned around. He was again the frightened old man they knew. A prisoner of the spider web that he himself had created.

A cobweb where black thoughts were trapped forever...

“Now, get out of here,” he ordered with a frightening grin. “I will replace the security devices.”

Indy, Norma and Herman made their way out. But when they were just about to return to the open air, a terrible growl tore their eardrums.

“A b... a b... a b... Bear...!” Herman hiccuped, terrified.

“No, this is the manitou!” shouted Archie. “This phantom can take any appearance! Even an animal!”

A moment later, a huge bear came tumbling out of the thicket and crashed toward them, its mouth gaping, dripping with slime.

“I can assure you that it is indeed a bear,” said Indy with the lucidity of a man sentenced to death. “It’s a hungry grizzly! Run!”

Herman hurried to the back of the cave.

“Norma, hide!” ordered Indy.

He stooped to pick up a big stone and hurled it towards the angry bear, which let loose with a louder growl. Unfortunately, the stone missed the mark completely.

Drunk with anger, the animal charged at Indy.

“*Mamma mia!*” Norma yelled. “Indy, no!”



At this time, they heard a shot and the bear collapsed on the floor. Indy turned to see Archie, who had gotten his hands on a gun concealed within the cave.

But the four survivors were not end of their ordeal. Because the shot echoed on the walls of the cave...

And its occupants awoke in response.

Hundreds of bats released themselves from the ceiling and began to flutter towards the exit, sounding their piercing cries.

"Everyone duck!" yelled Indy as he shielded Norma from the flying mammals' claws.

"Why didn't I wisely choose to stay at the hotel?" groaned the unfortunate young woman. "Is it too late to change my mind, Indy?"

Above them, they felt a tornado in motion, as though the cave was sneezing in response to the virus represented by the intruders.

"Yes!" replied the boy, who was still shielding her. "But, like me, you feel a sort of irresistible impulse, driving you to do things a normal person would avoid. And you're never disappointed! I always find myself in situations like this."

He stopped to pick up one of the bats, which had knocked itself against a wall.

"But rest assured, Norma: this attitude serves us well..."

And he released the bat, which took off flying.

Not everyone shared Indy's opinion. Someone, huddled behind a mountain of rocks, would never have volunteered for such a perilous journey. He had also swallowed his last candy!

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\*   \*  
\*

When the cave had finally breathed its last bat, Indy got up. His eyes locked with Norma's, filled with gratitude. He gave her a hand and the girl stood up by his side.

Once standing, she gently laid a kiss on Indy's forehead.

"Thank you, my knight. Without you, I would have died of fear."

"Damn bugs!" Malloy snarled. "As if the bears were not enough... "

The bear's body blocked the exit of the cave, and the three "men" were not strong enough to move it.

"Ppppppppppppppfffft! You're right... Mister Malloy. What bad luck! I'm starting to get tired of being attacked by all these animals: fleas, mosquitoes, bears, bats... what's next, wolves?!"

At that moment, as if some "spirit" had heard Herman, a howling sound fulfilled his wish.

"Ooooooooooooooooouuuuuuuuuhhhhhhhh... ooooouuuuuuuuuuuhhhhhh..... " was heard up the valley.

"It's still that damned manitou, or other vengeful spirits," Archie grumbled, the gun pointed at an imaginary target.

"When we speak of a wolf, we immediately see its tail," Indy remarked on the irony.

"It sounds like a choir," Norma commented, charmed by the sounds.

"I have the impression that we've fallen into the lion's den!" Herman lamented, knees shaking.

Indy threw him a sidelong glance before concluding:

“Hopefully it doesn’t have the hunger... of a wolf!”

This last joke did not amuse him.

## Chapter 11

# Indian... better than two that you have

It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when the expedition commanded by Archie Malloy was back in his log cabin.

Along the way, Indy had been a certain of a number of issues.

On the one hand, he began to foster doubts about the "manitou" which "haunted" the home of poor Archie.

But on the other hand, it was important to recognize he could not explain the absence of footprints in the snow, the night before.

Furthermore, he could not understand what had brushed by him twice, finally knocking him out.

Assuming that the manitou was real, Indy should

start by asking Malloy the question: why would a manitou be after him?

When everyone was seated cross-legged before the fire, cups of “hot water with melted lard” (to use Archie’s expression) in their hands, Indy decided to move further into his investigation:

“Mr. Malloy, could you tell us under what circumstances you discovered this extraordinary bonanza?”

“Ooooh!...” the melancholy Malloy gasped in a painful voice. “That was fifteen years ago, and my memory is fading...”

“I’m sure that you have not forgotten such a day, *Signor* Malloy,” Norma said, sweetly.

The gold digger swallowed a gulp of his vile drink, wiped his mouth with the back of his filthy sleeve and began to search his failing memory.

“It was a Wednesday in September 1896... No, rather on a Thursday... But of course, it doesn’t matter... I went in the morning, with my backpack on. It had to be -5 °C or -10 °C... The sun remained hidden behind the clouds... The previous evening, I ate a leg of smoked caribou... A beautiful beast which was at least one hundred and fifty pounds... I had caught it in the middle of the forest...”

Indy and Norma exchanged a look. The memory of “Archie Baba” could compete with that of an elephant... But his endless rambling was already trying Indy’s patience.

“Let’s get to the point, if you please,” he interrupted, not without impertinence.

“Ah! I hear your father there, son. The same thirst to know everything, right away. The same contempt for the passage of time... You do not

have time to engage in contemplation, neither one nor the other. Always something in the fire: a manuscript to read or a train to take... “

Herman twisted his face in disgust: he'd rather die of cold than to “warm his guts” with this concoction: it was worse than cod liver oil!

“Finally, since you're such a rush,” said Malloy, “I discovered my vein of gold. I spent two hours swinging my pickaxe at the rock, before I spotted a something shiny. I continued to hammer, and soon became aware that I had a mountain of gold on my hands. Literally! More than anybody had ever seen, even during the gold rush of California, fifty years earlier.

“You weren't alone?” asked Indy.

This innocuous question had the effect of freezing Archie Malloy's face, as if it were in an iron mask.

“How did you guess?” he grumbled. “Are you yourself a spirit with visions of the past? Do you possess supernatural powers?”

“No, the question just seemed... natural,” Indy replied simply.

Instinctively, he felt he was right. And he would not delay in learning more, to be sure.

“No, I was not alone,” confessed Malloy, his trembling hand reaching for the bottle of ratafia. “I hired a Indian to help me carry all my equipment and food for a week. It was more than five hundred pounds, and I was not strong enough alone... “

He stopped, his lips shiny with alcohol.

“We found the vein on the first day. What luck! But coming back, we had to cross a river. The water was icy, and the stones slippery. I suggested

to my companion that I cross first, and I tie a rope between two trees, one on either side. If I could cross I thought he would have had no difficulty in crossing the river..."

"But he insisted on going first," Indy guessed.

"In front of his white master," Norma added.

Archie Malloy swallowed another of the strong liquid.

"It was a horrible tragedy," said Malloy, "a tragedy that shattered my life."

"What happened?" asked Norma, chin lifted.

"In crossing, he slipped on a rock and... he was swept away by the currents."

Archie dropped his head, as if he had receive a blow. Even after fifteen years, the memory of the dead man did not stop haunting him.

Indy looked down in turn. His mother was dead only a few months, and yet every night, her ghost came back to haunt him, too.

"When I found myself alone, I waited for a long time," said Archie. "I had no taste for anything, not even the gold so dearly won. I wanted to forget about everything. Forget the vein, forget the death of my companion. And then I realized that the best tribute I could pay to this man, who had sacrificed everything for me, was to carry out our mission."

Archie looked up at Norma.

"Alone. Because now I was alone in the world."

"Alone or with your gold," Norma said.

Indy's mind began to wander. It was lost somewhere among the mountains that formed an impenetrable wall around Whitehorse.

The words of Jack London returned to his memory:



“Another one of those poor guys who gambled everything on a treasure hunt and who wound up crazy... or dead. I remember it as if it were yesterday, Three-quarters of them couldn’t run a hundred yards in less than two minutes, and they wanted to cross the Chilkoot Pass in minus 70!”

Unfortunately for him, Malloy’s Indian companion had not met the famous writer. He did not survive the terrible ordeal of the Far North.

As for Malloy, he seemed sincere, even if Norma openly accused him of having let another take his risks.

So what should we conclude?

And was the manitou the spirit of the dead Indian? And did his soul escape from the realm of shadow, to loom over the fate of Archibald Malloy, and his gold blessed by the gods?

And if so, why?

Why would the manitou seek revenge on the innocent “Archie Baba”?

He had to wait for a response to this question, because the last log had spawned its final flame. Time came to lie on the ground, in restful sleep.

Herman was far ahead the others: he was asleep already, with closed fists. And his snoring would keep the wolves and bears away for the whole night.

Or at least what was left it.

The embers glowed in the hearth, spreading a gentle heat, and the four occupants of the log cabin took a well-deserved rest.

Suddenly, a familiar sound, a noise that conjured bad the memories for each of them, pulled

them from their slumber.

BAM-BADABAM-BADABAM... BAM-BADABAM-BADABAM...

Archie jumped from his bunk and ran to his rifle.

“This time I’m going to blast a hole in that cursed manitou!”

Sitting up, with his hair in tangles, Indy shook his head.

“No, let me, Archie. Let me do this my way.”

But neither had the chance to act on their plans. The door of the hut flew open and a man came storming in. Snowflakes evaporated as they hit the still hot embers.

“Your time has come, you Cheechako of doom!” barked the intruder. “You stinking sourdough!”

His face was tanned by the sun, and his brown hair floated on his shoulders. Clearly, this was an Indian. However, in the dark, it was impossible to discern his features accurately.

“The... the... the... ma... manitou...” stammered Malloy, shaking uncontrollably. “Indi... Indi... Indiana... do something, I... I beg you.”

“Oh yes, Indi. .. Indi... Indiana,” Herman added. “I... I will give you a... all the... candy you w... want... I... promise... s... scout’s honor...”

The Indian moved threateningly towards Archie, who was as still as the trees in the Petrified Forest.

“You have a debt to pay me,” he rumbled. “And you will pay, you lying double-crossing traitor. Your friends will also pay. With their lives! “

He was no further than a yard and a half from Indy. Already, the first rays of the sun were on the horizon and a ray of pinkish light broke through

the hut's only window.

That is why, when the Indian turned to Indiana, he could see his face with more sharpness.

Then he gasped.

He suddenly recognized...

He was the one Indy had crossed at the Whitehorse Police Station.

## Chapter 12

# A story without words

“Dress yourself and follow me, my band of cheechakos!” the Indian ordered in a sour tone. “And no stories, or you will regret it!”

In order to convince his audience, he took out a gun concealed within his cloak.

“Say, Indy...” Herman murmured. “What’s a Cheechako?”

“A tenderfoot,” Indy said. “A person like you or me, who just shoves his nose in other people’s...”

“Quiet, kids!” the Indian shouted. “Come, follow me, all four of you. And you, you sourdough, if you open your trap, I’ll kill you first.”

This last remark was aimed at Malloy, who was picking up the rear.

“Indy?” Herman whispered again. “What’s a sourdough?”

“It’s like the bread. It’s an allusion to the smell

of the gold when it hadn't been washed for several weeks..."

The Indian had begun walking. As for their destination, none of his prisoners had the slightest idea.

But it certainly was not the Hotel Whitehorse, where Miss Seymour slept tossing and turning.

"Go on in!"

They had walked for ten minutes in the frigid night and were now at the entrance to a log cabin similar to Archie's, but smaller in size and without a fireplace.

"Sit on the floor!" barked the Indian. "We will spend the rest of the night here. I spotted wolves in the area. And I do not want to attract attention with my rifle."

He then began to bind and gag his prisoners, with a professional skill worthy of a member of the Canadian Mounted Police.

When it was Norma's turn, she muttered:

"I imagine that with any group of people, there are black sheep, even among my Indian brothers."

His jailer looked up at her. He opened his mouth to reply... but stopped. He was content to silence the Italian Nightingale.

In the morning, Miss Seymour awoke with a bad feeling. For starters, she looked in the mirror and saw with bitterness that the blisters had disappeared overnight.

But along with them, Indy, Herman and Norma had disappeared. The governess had visited their rooms one after the other: the beds had not been slept in.

With a downcast expression, Miss Seymour wrapped herself in her sheet and descended the stairs in this strange outfit. Stopping at a door in the hall, she pressed the doorbell several times with all her strength.

“Hold on! Hold on!” grumbled the owner. “What’s happening?”

“Sir, this is an emeeeeeergency! I can not go out in my cooocondition. The doctor I spoke with yesterday said it was striiiiiictly prohibited.”

The owner of the hotel looked on with dismay.

“I understand, my dear lady. It would be better if you wore a dress, or a...”

“Do not interrrrrupt me, please. Where was I? Oh, yes! I can not leeeave. And so I pray you will inform the local sheeeeeeriff that my dear Indyyyy and his two friends have diiiiisappeared! Do you hear? They’ve diiiiisappeared!”

“Come, come, Miss Seymour, calm down. Maybe they simply wandered off early this good morning. There must be a very simple explanation.”

Under the sheet, the owner of the hotel saw Miss Seymour’s head shake in a sign of agitated denial.

“No, Indyyyy prooomised not to disobey me, and he aaaallways keeps his promises! He and his friends must be in trouuuuble. I have the feeeeeeling, sir. Call it... femiiiiine intuition.”

“Well, if you insist, I can not refuse. I will go to the police station right away.”

Exhausted, Miss Seymour collapsed in the nearest chair.

Moments later, two employees crossed the hotel lobby. Seeing this white inert mass, they ex-

changed questioning glances.

“This idiot let John leave a bag of dirty clothes in the entrance. What nerve! Come on, Jack, let’s take it to the cleaners.”

The two men took hold of the bag of “dirty clothes,” which began to cry in disapproval.

“Heeey! Heeeey! But what are yooouuu doing? Heeeeelp!”

Panicked, the two employees jumped back three paces.

“Jack, did you hear what I heard?”

“Yes. And you, Irwin, do you see what I see?”

And they cried out in unison: “A ghooooost!!” before squealing like a pair of rabbits.

Disregarding their emotions, Miss Seymour murmured:

“But no, I’m not a ghooooost. Indeed... I do not belieeeve in ghooooosts...”

Meanwhile, in the den of Indian...

“Get up, you lazy folks! It will be 8 am soon. You cannot sleep all day!”

Indy opened one eye, as did Norma. Herman was dead to the world. As for Archie, he could not sleep; he was too nervous about what he knew inevitable.

“You, sourdough, you will lead us to where you have hidden your treasure.”

“No, not that ! I will resist...” Malloy said in a choked voice. “Anything but that! I did not deserve this! Not after fifteen years of sweating blood for that gold.”

Then he glared at the “manitou” and shouted a challenge:

"I'd rather die!

"So be it!" replied the other without hesitation.

And he grabbed his gun, and pointed it in Archie's direction.

"You would not shoot an unarmed man at close range, like a dog!" Norma protested. "I never thought that an Indian would act like this. Just like the whites who conquered this land!"

The Indian turned to her and they stared each other down, as two animals who engaged in a savage struggle, assessing the determination of each other. In these silent battles, the loser gives up without a fight. There is no need to fight when the two adversaries know who is the strongest.

On this occasion, the stronger prevailed. The Indian dropped his gun.

Archie bared his toothless smile.

"So that's it? Looks like you lost your nerve!"

It was one word too many. The Indian turned around and drew his gun on Archie. Then, without hesitation, he applied the barrel to the digger's temple, who shook with terror and collapsed to the floor.

Still without weakness, he placed a steady finger on the trigger, and slowly squeezed.

"I'll count to three, you sourdough devil. If you do not agree to lead us to your treasure, you'll carry your secret to the grave. One..."

Archie, knees weak, stared the "manitou." Like a lifeless puppet, his head drooped, unable to utter a word.

"Two..."

Herman, awakened by Norma's diatribe, looked on open-mouthed.

“Th...”

Norma threw herself against Indy’s chest, closing her eyes.

“No, I cannot watch; it’s too awful!”

“...ree...”

“Stop! Okay, I will take you to my treasure. You win!” Archie exclaimed.

Norma turned slowly, obviously relieved. Just then, the Indian’s knowing gaze pierced her vision, and the shadow of a smile appeared on the edges of her lips.

The young woman instinctively understood the message he wanted to convey: there is no need to fight when the two adversaries know who is the strongest.

## Chapter 13

# An explosive situation

The four prisoners and the man who had captured them walked for several minutes, when the Indian lifted an arm.

“Wait here... I thought I saw a bear, ahead. Not a word! “

He advanced cautiously a few steps, then turned to ensure that none of his prisoners had tried to escape.

Satisfied, he started moving forward again, limping slightly.

“This manitou isn’t worth anything,” Archie whispered in Indy’s ear.

“Oh, no?”

“Moreover, is he really a ghost? I wonder...”

For his part, Indy had been asking the same question since the beginning of this whole adventure!

"I didn't know what he was in the middle of the night," said Malloy, "I couldn't see anything, but in light of day, it's another matter..."

Archie paused, before adding:

"But I've never heard of a ghost who limps!"

"So what do you think?" asked Indy quietly.

"Well... I'm beginning to wonder if this is just my Indian, who fell into the river. That would at least explain the slight lameness... He could have gotten hurt down the stream."

Archie's face hardened.

"We must get rid of him," referring to his unfortunate companion.

Immediately, Indy shook his head. Then he narrowed his eyes.

"No, for now, I suggest that you follow his orders. Trust me: I will find a way out of this."

"You? You'll find a way...? You make me laugh, my boy! The Indians are clever as foxes, and if we escaped, he'd track us down before we knew it!"

"Well, wait and see," Indy said.

Since Malloy did nothing, Indy hoped he was convinced.

Because, in truth, he had no intention to organize an escape. What he wanted was to find out what motivated the Indian. What did he and Archie know?

But if Archie tried to intervene, the worst might occur, and he might kill his enemy. If that happened, this mystery would never be solved.

Indy suspected that although the Indian appeared cruel, he would not hurt a mosquito. If this was indeed Archie Malloy's former companion, he probably only wanted to recover his share of the

treasure.

Once in the cave, the two enemies would battle for keeps. And this confrontation would answer the puzzle.

Moments later, the Indian returned.

Archie had a look: it was true. He was limping slightly. Indy cursed himself in silence for not having noticed earlier.

“False alarm,” he said to the other four.

“Pppppppffffttt!” Herman sputtered, who had acted thus far with courage worthy of praise.

The procession continued on and soon reached the cave where Archie had his hidden mountain of gold. Again, the Indian stopped.

“I wonder if...”

He was not able to finish the rest of his question. A fierce roar split the air, still wet with morning dew. Then came an ear-piercing shriek, like a wolf.

But no animal was in sight...

This time, Herman could not keep it together. His teeth began chattering violently. With such a strong fear, Indy was afraid that his friend would not be able to recover.

“Take care not to bite your tongue!” he said slyly, hoping to raise a smile.

Not a chance...

Meanwhile, the Indian had approached the entrance to the cave alone.

The time was right to move to action. Indy sent a wink to Archie, and led Norma by the arm. Taken aback, Herman followed the movement, and soon the four fugitives plunged among the trees.

Indy turned, and saw with amazement that the Indian had not noticed. Things were not going as planned. If they were able to escape for good, he would never know what he wanted.

He then pretended to trip and twist his foot...

“Ouch!!” he shouted, loud enough so that even a hard-of-hearing Indian could hear.

“Stupid!” Malloy cursed. This time we are really in deep trouble!”

“So, you wanted to be clever, huh, you miserable sourdough?” rumbled the Indian.

“B... but n... no,” stammered Archie. “This... was the ki... the kid...”

“And that’s your excuse, huh? You would like him to take all the blame, scoundrel? Well, I have a little surprise for you.”

“O... oh really?”

Again, the Indian turned to Norma, as if trying to convey a message that she alone could understand. Then he focused his attention on Archie.

“Yes. It is you who will enter the cave first. And if you refuse, you know what will happen.”

Archie had not forgotten the episode in the cabin. He had not forgotten the contact of cold metal against his wrinkled skin.

He gazed forlorn into Indy’s eyes: he had promise to save him from execution. Did he still have a plan? But Indy remained impassive.

Normally, equipped with an oil lamp and the plans for his “clever” security devices, Archie would not hesitate to enter the cave first.

But without lighting or plans, and also badly shaken, Archie feared the worst. He had made it

was safer, more secure, but would he himself be able to avoid the jaws of the iron wolf traps!

Seeing the digger's hesitation, Indy finally understood. he had to act, and quickly! Otherwise, poor Archie would be done for, caught in his own traps.

"Listen to me!" he shouted at the Indian. "Congratulations: you've guessed that Malloy trapped the entrance of the cave. But if something happens to him, you'll never lay a hand on his gold."

"Oh no?" the Indian said with confidence. "Why not?"

"Because the concession is in his name. And the document that proves it is in a safe, in the bank in Whitehorse."

An eloquent silence greeted this observation. The vein operated by Archie was his officially. He alone could claim the gold.

Norma nodded her head, full of admiration for Indy's intelligence. Archie, for his part, could not understand Indy's argument. Was panic clouding his thoughts?

He turned around and retorted:

"But I never said... "

Indy's stern face shut him up.

Yes, now he understood... Indy simply invented this excuse to fool the Indian.

Unfortunately for the digger, he was not fooled.

Furthermore, he turned to confront Indy:

"If, as you say, the concession belongs to sourdough, why would he have needed to hide his gold? He had only to collect it openly and publicly..."

Indy had to admit that this argument was convincing.

The Indian pointed his gun again at Archie and ordered him to enter the cave first. Trembling with terror, Malloy had no choice but to comply.

In a few seconds, it might all be over...

At the entrance to the cave, Archie easily discerned the first wolf trap and disarmed it skillfully. It was more difficult to locate the second, but he disarmed that one too.

From the outside, they could no longer see him: he was swallowed by the gaping mouth of the cave. This is what Archie himself was depending on...

With infinite caution, he extended his arm into a crevice: the same place where he had hidden the rifle he had used to kill the grizzly. He seized his weapon and started running toward the entrance: indeed, he could not kill the Indian unless he took him by surprise. He could not give his target the time to draw and shoot.

Archie was the first to draw.

He bravely approached the exit of the cave, but his foot hit one of the tripwires, activating a detonator.

"Damn, I forgot...!" the others heard outside.

This exclamation was followed by a desperate, resounding BOOM!

## Chapter 14

# The last fifty minutes

At this point, the cave sneezed a cloud of blinding dust. The Indian protected his face with his hands.

It was an opportunity for Indy to try his luck. He rushed on him and pulled his gun away. Now, the boy controlled the situation.

“*Mamma mia!*” Norma said.

“I want my mommy!” Herman cried, from the bush where the blast had thrown him.

His face and hair covered with dust, the Indian turned to Indy.

“I warn you, my boy. You are making a serious mistake. If you hurt me you will all go to prison. Because I am...”

He did not finish his sentence. In the face of the young boy who was threatening him, he could tell something was happening behind him. And indeed, pivoting on his heels, he saw Archie Malloy

emerge from the cave, rifle in hand.

“I know who you are!” he shouted to the Indian.

Disheveled, covered from head to toe in a mixture of earth and gold powder, he looked like a scarecrow. A scarecrow that glittered in the sun.

For nature, which delighted in contradiction, had created another phenomenon. While a blizzard had swept through the valley of the Whitehorse the previous evening, now the sun shone brightly on the surrounding mountains.

For now, Archie had a power of life or death over the one he threatened with his weapon.

“I know who you are!” he repeated, drunk on revenge. You are the miserable wreck that I pushed into the river! Well, I have some news for you. You will remain in this cave in the company of your accomplices, without anything to eat or drink... until a grizzly comes to eat all four of you!”

Indy, Norma and Herman stared at each other, stunned. What fly had bitten Archie? Had he lost his mind? Or was he more evil than he pretended? If so, Indy could understand the double play.

Indy did not know what to do. If he fired, Archie might have time to shoot the Indian and who knew, Norma and Herman? He could not take that risk.

Wisely, he dropped his gun, which landed in the dirt with a thud.

“You can admire my gold up close,” Archie continued. “Me, I’ll wait outside. I’ll wait as long as necessary. But one thing is for sure is that nobody is going to rescue you.”

He walked past the group, finally standing be-

hind his four victims. Then, in silence, he motioned for them to enter the cave.

When all had disappeared within, Archie called after them:

“And consider yourself lucky: the grizzly hasn’t returned yet. But he’ll be back soon! Ha, ha, ha!”

Being trapped in the cave quickly proved to be a blessing, for that day, the area was covered in a sweltering heat.

Inside Archie’s cave, immersed in darkness, his prisoners were comfortable. But outside, their jailer roasted in his juices. But to drink, he had brought his... ratafia. The “death water” whose alcohol content bested 50 proof...

“This time, I think it’s the end,” groaned Herman. “And we can’t see anything in this cave. I have a feeling there’s some creature running around above us. It’s creepy!”

“Herman, I’m telling you, calm down,” Indy cried. “We are all in the same boat. So we need to get down to business, instead of lamenting our fate.”

“Well said,” Norma whispered.

One of the four prisoners had not opened his mouth since they had entered the cavern. He was breathing so quietly that the other three came to wonder if he was still there.

However, Indy had a burning desire to ask him a ton of questions.

“Hey? Mr. Indian?” Indy risked.

“Yes?” a sour voice responded.

“Hmmm... uh... never mind, it’s nothing.”

Herman stared wide-eyed at his friend.

“Careful,” he murmured. “He’s dangerous, you know? You better leave him alone...”

“No, I’m not dangerous,” said the Indian, whose hearing must have been particularly sensitive.

“Oh no?”

“I can assure you, my boy.”

To be sure, the tone of his voice had changed. All aggression had disappeared. In his mind, Indy thought he had probably been right: this Indian would not hurt a mosquito.

“But, you threatened us with your gun?” Indy persisted. “And you were on the verge of killing Archie Malloy right before our eyes! “

The other had no answer. He observed a new silence.

“Before our eyes!” Norma repeated, hoping to persuade him to defend himself.

The attack had been successful. The three friends heard the Indian stand up and come closer to them.

“I think the best thing to do is to reveal my true identity,” he began.

“We do not even know your ‘false identity’”, Norma pointed out.

Sitting cross-legged in a corner, Herman listened to this conversation with anguish. But why would Indy and Norma want to provoke this blood-thirsty nut? He would strangle them all!

“You’re right,” admitted the Indian. “To execute my plan, I had to be very discreet...”

“Which plan do you mean?” asked Indy.

“Fourteen years ago,” the Indian explained, “my brother discovered a gold mine of fabulous wealth. At the time, men from the United States, and even Europe, rushed to the Klondike in hopes that they

too would discover a vein. This madness began on exactly August 17, 1896. Three Indian tribe Tagish discovered a bonanza of gold nuggets in a river. But the law was clear, that in order to exploit their discovery, they must first declare it."

In the darkness, Indy felt the Norma's hand land on his arm.

"Of course, as soon as the news was known, it caused a wildfire. It was then that my brother discovered the vein. When he realized that some unscrupulous gold diggers would not hesitate to plunder the discoveries of others, he became afraid. He wanted to be sure that this gold would be returned to his tribe."

"So he kept silent about his find," Norma guessed.

"That's right. He thought that the gold rush would be over by fall and by then the tribe could operate with or without an official permit."

Norma's grip tightened on Indy's arm. He could feel the breath of young girl against his cheek.

"What happened then?" she asked with emotion.

"One beautiful morning, Archibald Malloy by chance stumbled on the find. My brother had taken all the possible precautions. Malloy had to have a sixth sense..."

"And he was smart!" Indy started. "I bet he proposed a contract to your brother: he would help carry gold dust and nuggets, and in return take part of the treasure?"

"Indeed," replied the Indian.

"And at the first opportunity," concluded Norma in a monotone voice, "he got rid of your brother. "

A long silence ensued. Nobody dared speak a

word, as if the soul of the deceased had awoken, now that the secret of his death had finally been lifted.

“Since that day,” murmured the Indian, “I have worked tirelessly to find his killer. But I had no luck, until six months ago!”

“What happened?” asked Norma.

“On one of my patrols, I came across Archie Malloy carrying some bags. I found his behavior suspicious, so I followed him up to that cave, then to his cabin. I was hoping to be able to stop him for a legal reason, but I found nothing that would justify granting an arrest warrant.”

“A patrol... a legal reason... an arrest warrant...?” Norma repeated.

“What then...?”

She was so curious to learn more that she would have pretended not to hear the growl.

But her three companions, they heard the sound.

“Look out!” said Indy.

“It’s the... the... grizzly!” stammered Herman.

“Quiet!” ordered the Indian.

Without a noise, he went to scope out the entrance of the cave, hoping not to see the dreaded enemy that Archie had intended for them.

A few seconds later, he rushed to the back of the cave.

“We do not have much time!” he warned. “The grizzly is about to enter. Our only chance is to hide behind the gold. And pray!”

The prisoners ran behind the mountain of gold nuggets and gold dust that Archie Malloy had stolen from the Tagish. Then they held their breath.

The tunnel leading to the outside formed an

elbow, beyond which it was normally impossible to see anything. But on this particularly clear day, the sunlight managed to pierce the darkness and illuminate the cave beyond the elbow.

Crouched behind the eighth wonder of the world, the four entrapped people saw the silhouette of a huge grizzly against the slick cave walls.

The most faint-hearted of these human beings started a countdown to disaster:

“Five... four... three... two... “

## Chapter 15

# A ghost who caught another

While our friends fought off death in their cave, the mounted police, alerted to their disappearance by Miss Seymour, were sparing no effort to find Indy, Herman and Norma.

Lieutenant Dawson's men had searched every nook of the mountains that surrounded Whitehorse. In vain.

Finally, their investigation—and their snitches, recruited from old gold diggers jealous of the Archie's vein—had led straight to the Malloy's hut, which they found deserted.

"What do you suggest, lieutenant?" asked Sergeant McPherson.

"We have searched the north side from top to bottom. But on the south side, we skipped sectors of Crimson Creek and Chipmunk Cheek. I propose that we divided into two groups and we go explore

them. McPherson, choose ten men and come with me. We will check out Crimson Creek. Sergeant Rushmore, take the remaining ten men and ride to Chipmunk Cheek. We'll meet back here in two hours."

The two large horses ran in semicircles with a precision worthy of West Point, the largest school of United States military, and each group went on its way.

"What heat, lieutenant!" McPherson noted; the jacket of his uniform was damp with sweat.

"Quite right, sergeant. Nowadays, the seasons blend together..."

Lieutenant Dawson's visual acuity had become a true legend all across Canada. And he knew when to use it.

"McPherson?"

"My lieutenant?"

"Look. "

Sergeant McPherson shifted up in his saddle and peered at the mossy soil.

"I see nothing, lieutenant."

"You don't see anything?"

Determined not to dishonor his rank, the Sergeant dismounted and knelt to sniff the ground like a pig looking for truffles. But for all his scanning, sniffing, and scratching, he discovered nothing.

"There, to the left of the first redwood, in the vast spaghetti of vines, just to the right of that mosquito!"

"Lieutenant??"

"Clearly, McPherson, you will never make Captain!"

In turn, Dawson dismounted from his horse

and ran towards the first redwood and the vast spaghetti of vines.

Arriving at his destination, he pointed a triumphant finger:

“There!”

McPherson stared with embarrassment.

“What?”

“You still don’t see?”

“No.”

“Well, I urge you to get your eyes examined, Sergeant. You don’t see any better than the bats at the bottom of Crimson Creek Cave. Here, among the vines that devour this voracious mosquito, there is... a candy!”

Still four feet from the site, Sergeant McPherson rushed to the leaf in question, like a caterpillar about to turn into a butterfly.

“Lieutenant, you are right. It is a candy. But what is it doing here?”

Dawson raised his eyes to heaven.

“Have you forgotten that we are looking for two young boys, twelve or thirteen years old? It is a well established fact: twelve- or thirteen-year-old boys love candy. Do you follow me?”

Impressed by his leader’s deductive logic, Sergeant McPherson nodded his head respectfully.

“So what are you doing?” Dawson pestered. “Get yourself in that saddle and go! I am willing to bet that we will find other sweets on the way to Crimson Creek.”

In fact, they discovered other sweets, planted at regular intervals on the road that led to the cave Archie Malloy. The candy that Indy “Tom Thumb” Jones had stolen from Herman two days earlier.

“...One...” cried Herman, shaking in convulsions.

Then the bear, distracted by a noise from outside, halted its slow approach. An animal endowed with reason would not have made that choice, but unfortunately for it... a bear is not reasonable!

A champion of animals, Lieutenant Dawson avoided killing it. He fired several shots into the air and the bear fled.

Along the way, he saw Archie Malloy asleep under a redwood. The shooting had failed to stir him. Because he had completed his entire bottle of ratafia!

“Hey! Is anyone there?” called the Lieutenant.

“We’re here, Andrew,” said the Indian.

The four prisoners finally surfaced, after ten hours in complete darkness.

“Wait a second!” Indy intervened. “You know each other?”

The Indian and Lieutenant Andrew Dawson exchanged a complicit look.

“Indiana Jones,” the latter said with the authority that gave him his badge, “May I present you with police officer Adam Chinook.”

“Chinook?!” exclaimed the chorus of Indy, Norma and Herman.

The Indian shook his head.

“Sorry, but I could not reveal my identity to Malloy. He would have easily figured out that I was the brother of... Brandon Chinook, the Indian that he drowned in the river. My brother...”

He then turned to Norma Butterfly.

“Your cousin, Norma...”



“My... cousin?”

“Yes, you heard me right. I’m sorry you had to learn it this way, but you and I belong to the same family. The same blood flows in our veins.”

A broad smile lit the face of the young woman and she threw herself into the arms of the first member of her Indian family she had ever known.

“I had guessed,” she confessed. “But I must say that I had doubts when...”

“I know, Norma. I beg you to forgive me for having to submit you to that scene in Archie’s cabin. I had no choice.”

“I understand, and I forgive you.”

As for Lieutenant Dawson, he had a comment full of Eastern philosophy:

“When I think of the evils Archie Malloy was driven to commit, all for some gold that would never really belong to him... Truly, the hen does not always lay the egg fertilized by the rooster.”

Ignoring the expression of his amazed junior officer, he returned to the saddle and gave the bag of candy to Herman, who took it with joy at the end of twenty-four hours without sugar.

Then he turned to Chinook and gave him this speech.

“The Concessions Office has been closed for several years now. Furthermore, I declare the cave of Crimson Creek inaccessible due to risk of collapse. That said... if you want empty its contents to benefit the Tagish tribe, I will look the other way. But I hope it takes fifteen years!”

And without even waiting for Chinook and Norma, moved to tears, to thank him, he gave a kick of his spurs to his horse and took off down the road to-

ward Archie's cabin, followed by his men... and Archie himself, in handcuffs.

When Indy, Norma and Herman returned to the hotel in Whitehorse, they indeed discovered the existence of a phantom of the Klondike, somewhat different from the one which they had imagined.

Miss Seymour, still shrouded in white, paced the hall, howling at all who wanted to hear her anguish and anger.

"My dear Indyyyy must have been eaten by a grizzlyyyyy. But what have the poliiiiiice done? And poor Hermaaan, so sweeeeeet if aalssoooo greedy? And my dear Normaaa, equipped for the opera? Oh, I am distraaaught! Everything is my fault...!"

Norma gestured for Indy and Herman not to stay silent. Then she inflates her lungs with oxygen, opened her mouth wide and began to sing:

*"Aaaaahhh! I deeellight to see my beauuuty in the mirroooooor!"*

Miss Seymour stopped and immediately walked up to them, lifting the sheet that covered her face.

"Normaaa! Indyyyy! Hermaaan! Oh, I am sooo happy!"

"Yes, and you can even watch in the mirror there, down in the hall."

"Ceeehrtainly not, I aaam a hooooorrrible sight!"

No, no, I assure you,! Norma insisted. "Trust me, go ahead!"

Miss Seymour along the floor with the lightness and grace of a mosquito during the snowy season.

All trace of the bites had disappeared.

"Mirror, mirror, on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?" Indy whispered with a quizzical smile.

“She’s the Snow White of the Klondike...” Norma said.

And they both looked at each other for a long time. Then they heard a voice ask, as if nothing had happened:

“When do we eat?”