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A Rejection Letter From Doubleday Canada

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Bahish.

In the shadow of a great rock beneath a thicket of stout stunted unoblown shrubs Bahish was born. There was no doctor no nurse no anaesthetic for his mother was an Indian. Her father was a mighty chief of the Blackfoot tribe. She had been the most prized of all the chieftains' possessions. He loved his wild daughter who had the courage and spirit of a man. The old chief often looked at her and wished she had been a son instead of a daughter.

on the scene. Babish gazed immobile
It seemed like a dream.

Natural beauty was not marred
by human hands. Nature colored
the leaves, the water, and the
sky with a lavish brush.

It was a harmonious riot
of glorious tones. And as
if for fear some human
^{hand} might copy it there was
constant change. a cloudy
might cast a shadow,
or reflect the setting sun.
a wind might with a
gentle wafting of a wand
erase all reflections from
the lake.

And It was warm
even when the sun no
longer shone, and orchids
grew in great profusion
and of many kinds.

(3)
— yet he did not even count
these paltry things among his
treasure. So ~~use~~ this Indian
might seem to have a strange
sense of values — for to Bahush
his storehouse was his treasure.

It was a cave high up
the mountain side, ^{the entrance} was a narrow
cleft in the rock was all
~~that could be seen and~~
hidden by shrubs. yet the
cave was spacious and deep
and from its depths there
came a tiny stream of cold
crystal water. Its vaulted
roof sparkled with ~~crystals~~
amethyst and topaz and
emeralds when the torch of
bullrush was lighted.

yet Bahush did not like
the torch to burn too long
for it left a black
smudge on the white crystal

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shining walls and ceiling.

The cave was cold almost to freezing, and dry so that fruits and meats ^{& game} could be preserved as fresh as when put in, for as long a time as Babush wished.

Here were to be seen baskets of red raspberries, ^{blue} huckleberries, black thimbleberries, red and black currants, grapes both red and green. Over here wild duck hung in rows, ~~and~~ wild geese, & prairie chickens too were ~~to~~ in abundance. Buffalo tongues and steaks and whole deer and moose were suspended from the poles. And even a bear or two were there for those who like bear meat.

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nothing but the best of fish
were here - They lay in rows
on a shelf of rock - trout
from the lake - and speckled
trout from the fast streams.
- salmon from the rivers
enough to supply a tribe
for months - On the
other side of the cave
were huge heaps of
yellow corn partitioned
off from piles of wild
rice. and beans and peas.
And then there were thousands
of pemicans and cords of
dried deer meat.

Babish kept this great
storehouse for fear of famine
- not for himself alone but
for his tribe. He loved his
people. They were his children
and though he was kind

he was firm and could be
 cruel. He ruled them with wisdom.
 No one questioned him; no one
 disobeyed. All trusted and respected
 him as lord and master.
 In battle, he led them, in peace
 he directed them, in trouble, he comforted
 them.

Babush was the strongest
 chief of North America. He had not
 conquered any tribe but ^{many} ~~they~~ allied
 themselves to him, and he protected
 them. His own tribe had increased
 enormously through his care.

He was now old. He ^{had} watched the
 white man slowly creep across the
 continent from the east. They now
 had ² spreading settlements and
 ① trading posts ③ in the West. His
 greatest worry was for his beloved
 people.

He would sit motionless
~~and this was~~
 for hours on end thinking
 how his race might be preserved
 how the white man might be

kept back from the plains
 and the mountain strongholds.
 How he ~~could~~^{might} keep his people
 free from sickness that caused
 the death of whole villages and
 whole tribes — How he might
 keep his tribe away from
 fire water that transformed
 them into fiends. He had always
 encouraged his young warriors
 to take a wife and have a family.
 He had always cared for all
 so that in times of famine so
 that there was no want for
 food. He had always tried
 to prevent the tribes of Indians
 from warring among themselves
 and killing each other for he
 wanted them all to unite and
 be strong in their stand
~~among~~^{against} the white man.

Bahish loved his home here in
 the valley of the hot springs yet
 he fear it. ~~He would not have his~~
~~people share it~~ He feared that
 he would become ^{too} soft to stand
 the rigors of the life of the
 red man; Too fond of ease
 and pleasure to be strong and
 brave & fearless in the face of
 foes. Yet it was to this isolated
 mountain stronghold that he came
 when he wish to think and plan.
 Here he could be free from all
 distractions. Here he could be
 alone.

Babush
"As you know the deliberations
of this meeting are ^{as usual} of a secret
nature" — The chairman ~~stopped~~ ^{paused}
and his eyes searched the
eyes of the ~~five~~ six men before
him — he seemed satisfied

"But this time I ask of
each of you, a gentleman's
oath that the discussions
will not be even hinted
at to closest friend" — again
he paused.

The ^{right} hand of
Corporal Williams, on his
right, ~~raised~~ moved up
from the table — and
in turn a hand of each
~~constable~~ moved perceptibly.
They were already sworn
and this was but a
added precaution and

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Babush Who turn to the blue
on his right.
allegiance to their chief! "You three

"Men ~~you~~ are now on
special duty. You ~~for~~ have
been selected because of
your records and your
qualifications. Routine
duties are henceforth
suspended until further
notice. During these deliberations
we talk as man to man." ~~etc~~

He paused again. a slight
smile passed over his firm
face. He rose, undid the
colour of his tunic, ^{and top} ~~and top~~
^{buttons} ~~has tunic~~ & loosened his belt.

~~and passed the~~

"You may do likewise"

~~But their~~ ~~has~~

Each man hastened to
comply while he passed

a package of cigarettes.

"Any one prefer a pipe?"

Angus MacKay sloped his body sidewise in his chair and drew from his trouser pocket a black pipe and small pouch and ^{carefully with his right} filled the ^{face} small black hole in the ^{finger} centre of the bowl.

Each man about the table grew in his own ~~own~~ opinion of himself. and each one thought how human their Chief was. And Corporal William thought to himself "I thought the chief was such a sticky old bloak but I guess I must have been wrong." And ^{Constable} ~~the~~ ~~address~~ thought "Now what the hell is he trying to pull off?"

Babush (4)

~~All this happened~~
The chief shared his throat as
a signal that the committee
was again in session and
at the head of the table began
this "As you know gentlemen"
The Royal Canadian North West
Mounted Police always get
their man - such are the
traditions of the Force - yet
I have here a letter from Ottawa -
It seems the ~~broader~~^{question} was brought
up on the floor of the House -
He coughed again & looked
about the room and then
continued "at any rate it
has been called to my attention
that there have been certain
murders committed in ~~our~~^{the}
territory ~~the~~ over which
we have jurisdiction - and

And for these occurrences
we have neither a culprit
~~nor~~ an explanation."

Again there was a pause
and the Inspector cast
his eyes about the room
and then in a more
confidential tone he continued

"Of course you younger men
would not be expected to
remember ~~that~~ ~~that~~ and I
was not in this district then
but back in winter" - - -

he glanced at his notes
"nine it was - before the war
- the two Mac Lach boys
were found murdered
in their camp - each
in his sleep - with a
bullet in his head - The
bodies when found were

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too much decomposed to
tell the range, — but ⁱⁿ each
each case a gold bullet was
recovered from the skull.

"That was in the Nahanie country."

~~At~~ At this juncture Sergeant
Garley spoke up and said

"I saw them as they lay
each ^{it was} ~~was~~ wrapped in
their blankets. They must
have each died instantly
for there ^{their bodies} ~~they~~ lay. Nothing
in the camp had been disturbed.

No papers were found on
them. There ~~no~~ rifles had been
taken but they had tins of
food and every else was
there as they had left it."

(The Sergeant having spoken settled lower in his chair and his eyes ~~of~~ took on a far away look ~~the~~.

The Inspector continued.

"Again a few years later a swede went into the Nahannie country and has not been heard of since."

Again a pause but no one spoke. The Inspector looked at his notes.

"In 1914 ^{the spring} ~~two prospectors~~ ^{trappers}

by the name of Rodgers and Dale came to Fort Resolution. ~~They were~~ from the north.

They had probes of gold and large nugget. They spent the night and paid for ~~supplies~~ ^{supplies} they bought in gold.

They told no one from where they came nor where they got the gold and two days later these two men were found each dead in their blankets shot while they slept - this time at close range - and in the brains - but with lead bullets."

The speaker paused again and gazed at the men and then about the room, as if he called for help. His face seemed pained. He looked at Sergeant Caperon and ^{nodded his head} ~~nodded~~ The sergeant said "Yes Sir I was stationed at Resolution at the time and I was called to the scene of murder. I was a constable then."

Beads of perspiration stood upon the sergeant's brow. He had been waiting to give he called. He did not mind any sort of ~~the~~ work ~~but~~ giving evidence was ~~giving~~ like making a speech after a banquet.

"proceed"

Carpenter ~~thought~~ glanced at the notes which he already knew by heart.

"Early in the morning of ~~the~~ Mar. 7. 1914 - It was reported to me at the Barracks at Fort Resolution by Joe Smith - a half breed that ~~the~~ two men were dead in their camp but ~~not~~ ^{eight} ~~days~~ ^{hours} ~~ago~~ ^{ago} ~~in~~ ^{to} the south.

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Joe Smith was returning from
Fort. McMunck with the
mail when he came across
their camp. He said he
had touched nothing.

Since it was moonlight
he had come right through.
~~he pitched up~~ the dogs
I pitched &
& followed his fresh trail
and arrived before Stark
~~Stark~~ ^{on the} had set same
day.

Babish
"The Bad Indian"

Babish made good his oath that no white man would enter the Nahani country and live. They all died. Gold bullets killed them. Some died ^{with} in the country. Some reached Fort McMurchie and showed their gold nuggets but none lived to tell their story. He was known as the Bad Indian. There are however when the truth is known, but few bad Indians. It is true that Babish murdered every white man who entered the vast territory where he lived but there are two sides to every story and that is why this tale is written.

Babish lived at a time that is within the memory of the older trappers and gold seekers of the north country, yet no white man now living has ever seen him. The story of his life and of his hate comes to us in a most peculiar way.

Everyone referred to him as Babish
-the bad Indian, but the Indians
who knew him, loved him and
respected him and held him as
their greatest chief. About their
campfires in the mountains they
told the young braves of the
deeds of skill, courage and
bravery of Babish until he became
a legend. The deeds lost none
of their thrill with the telling.

Of Babish's parents nothing
is known. As a consequence
tales of supernatural birth
were spread about. Some
thought that he was raised by
a mountain lion farther south.
Some said a great eagle
carried him over the mountain
tops and brought him to their
tribe. He was very different
from the rest. He was head
and shoulder above the
the other men. He was stronger

could run faster, and could endure the greatest hardships. He could endure cold, and hunger (and above all he was wiser) in Council than any.

These were the essential qualities for the life of an Indian but in addition to all these he had great wisdom in Council. Even as a young man he was so outstanding that the old men listened to him.

He was the keenest of observers and had a great memory for if he had ever been to a place he could always remember every contour of the rocks, the lakes, the mountains and the rivers, even the trees he could remember how they stood.

He knew the habits of the birds, animals and fish. and where to find them and how to hunt them. And although he joined the others

of his ~~toilette~~ in feasts and even gave great feasts himself he was like a squirrel in that he always stored part of his food so that he and his family were never hungry as many of the indian families are. He was a great Hunter and clothed his family with the best of furs. And still the white man called him the bad indian.

He was born an ~~and~~ Indian and therefore had in full measure inherited those ~~not~~ standing characteristics of his race - cruelty to his enemies, desire for revenge, pride & cunning and superstition yet he was true to his friends, brave, resourceful, and wise.

(16)

"So hell with women" said
Corporal Williams as he threw
the book down. She said the
words half aloud but there
was no one to hear them so
it did not matter. The experience
through which he had been living
that ~~he had~~ ^{in the book} reminded him of his own
experiences. He had left
civilization and joined the
Royal Canadian Mounted Police
to get away from all that.
"And damn these love stories."

The lone Banachs was chilly.
His partner was on patrol.
He rose, stoked the fire &
looked out of the window.
Every thing was snow. The
earth was covered with it
the air was full of it & ~~the~~ ^{the} clouds

spoke of more of it. Williams¹⁷
liked snow. For some unknown
reason it gave him pleasure. It
was white and clean, ^{pure} when newly
fallen at least, like children
born into this world. Cynically he
thought of the snow when it
was brown and dirty and when
it would run down the gutter of
the city, ^{street} ~~as dirty water~~. But ~~the~~ here
in the far north it remained
white until the warm sun of
^{late} spring transformed it into a
crystal rivulet ~~which was~~ ^{to be lost}
~~lost~~ in the eternal river
of time. He liked the ^{fantasy} ~~thought~~.
He knew he should be studying
^{his language} but he picked up the book &
turned the pages until he found
the place where he left off.
He was glad Constable Barnes
was not there for he might
have to explain ~~to~~ He never read

trash — thrillers and love stories^(B)
— he read only those books that
supplied the food for intellect.

Corporal Williams read for
some minutes. It was growing
dark. The short ~~day~~ of winter day
was drawing to a close. He banked
the book to the declining light of the
window. The snow hastened the
closing day.

"Ah well there will be nothing
to do for these next four days"

"Time — you old rascal, once ~~you~~
I was foolish enough to be rushed &
pushed about by you but now
I am your master — I do things
in my own sweet time". He closed
his eyes. "To morrow & tomorrow
& tomorrow, creeps in its petty pace
from day to " Corporal Williams
dozed in his chair. "Pauli"
from Owah * ~~was~~ ^{were} the last sounds
that crept into his subconscious as

For those who live a busy life and
who never get time to think or be
alone, the life of the far north
of Canada is a most enviable thing.
How wonderful it is to read to ones
heart content, or sit and look into
the fire, or write about any thing
you wish to write about - to rest
to be alone - and greatest of all
to only have to do things when
the spirit moves you.

(9)

It was mid winter at Fort
McMurrich. The days were short.

By two o'clock the sky began
to darken and it was scarcely
light by ten in the morning.

Travel by dog team made best
time ~~when~~ there was moonlight.

(3)

Inspector Williams of the Royal Canadian North West Mounted Police Edmonton ^{detachment} sat upright in his chair. He had just read the report of Corporal Wakham and Constable Brown ~~had just been read~~. He searched his memory for a similar crime. — Two men murdered while asleep — they each had a shamoo bag of gold nuggets tied to their waist. Inspector Williams rose from his chair and looked out of the window. His eye saw the curved row of white-washed stones that skirted the driveway to the Police Barracks; It saw the great wide curve of the Saskatchewan; It saw the ^{low flat} city stretching ~~along the north bank and his flat~~ ^{up to} basked in the golden rays of the setting sun. His eye saw them but his minds eye was searching for the report that it had seen before.

(4)

There was snow everywhere -
on the ground, in the air, on the
lake - the clouds were made of
it. Corporal Williams rose
from his easy chair, poked
the fire - looked out of the
window - put his ~~hands~~^{thumbs} behind
his braces & stretched. He looked
at the ~~up~~turned book and then
at the ruffled bedcouch.

- There would be nothing in
today. Nothing until tomorrow
or the next day - or the day after
that. He glanced at the unopened
package of books and at the
half dozen that remained in the
opened package. He blinked
his eyes - "Oh" he thought ~~the~~
to himself "I have been reading
too much." so he filled his
large bowled pipe ~~with~~ &
lit it & sat down with outstretched

(5)

legs to read some more.

He had scarcely read a page when he heard a muffled footfall in the snow. Nothing ever happened at Fort Resolution - some of the boys were dropping in - He put down the book as the door opened & ^{closed}. A snow covered individual stamped & shook and there was a spray of snow within the room.

(6)

drifted into the realm of total
unconsciousness. The Indian
greeting was repeated louder
and clearer and Williams as
in a dream half rose. The movement
woke him. A cold blast restored
him to full consciousness. There
was a squaw standing before
him covered with snow. The
fading light served, ^{by reflection} to outline
the figure in the darkness.

"One moment" "An moment"
he searched his memory for a
suitable phrase in the Indian tongue
which he was studying.

"Oai wem um saugh" he said and
was wide awake and alert.

"Corporal Williams" a full woman's
voice spoke through the darkness
"I am sorry to intrude" but
I have come to tell you that
Constable Barnes has been
in trouble and was killed"

(77)

Williams was dumfounded for a moment but the blunt statement brought him to life and reality with a quick start. Baines has been his partner at ~~down~~ this isolated post. Discipline took command when all things failed and he said.

"Let me have the particulars. One moment until we have a light." He sprang to the shelf where the matches & lamp were always kept. Then asked politely that the visitor be seated ^{at} ~~by~~ the ^{end of the} central table dishes were pushed aside. He had his note book & was ready for the report.

And then for the first time Corporal Williams gazed into the eyes of an unknown Indian maiden. In that ^{instant} ~~of~~ he lost all thought of Barnes or duty

1 (6)

She was the most beautiful Indian maiden he had ever seen. It was true that ~~her~~^{her} ~~high~~^{high} cheek bones, ~~and~~^{were slightly high and that she had} straight black hair. Her nose was ~~slightly~~^{slightly} flat above and ~~slightly~~^{slightly} below, but her eyes and mouth ~~and~~^{and} ~~had~~^{chin} the proper balance & proportion. Her forehead was high & ~~wide~~^{broad}. He wondered how much Indian blood flowed in her veins. Her eyes were as jet in blackness. They were larger than is usual for an Indian.

All of these points flashed thro' William's mind in instant. Even her keen sight did not notice his transitory embarrassment. He ~~his~~ mind was again ~~wrapped~~^{wrapped} up in ^{his} duty.

She told her story in few ⁽⁹⁾
words. Her use of English
was limited. She was on her
way with a party of her tribe
to Fort Resolution. They were
one day and a half from
Fort Rae when they saw the
dogs. They were hungry.
They found Constable Barnes
dead in his sleeping bag
that afternoon. His camp was
as he made it only his dogs had