

CRESTWORD

THE IMPORTANCE OF VIMY RIDGE

BY: KATHERINE CHARNESS

From April 5th to April 13th, Zach Brown and I had the honor of accompanying 28 other high school students from across Canada on a trip to northern France as part of the Vimy Pilgrimage Award. Although the weather was less than favorable, the importance of this trip could not be washed away by a little rain. The other award winners were from all across Canada, from British Columbia, to Newfoundland, and all the way up to Cambridge Bay, Nunavut, all brought together to embark on the most incredible experiential learning adventure of our lives. After our overnight flight to Paris, we drove three hours north to the Nord-Pas-de-Calais region. Having had such long journey, especially the girl from Nunavut, on the first day we had a relaxing time shopping and touring Lille. However, the rest of the week was filled with visits to important monuments, cemeteries, and museums, to teach us about the Canadian experience in World War 1 on the locations it actually occurred. On an average day we had a breakfast of croissants and baguette at 8:00, and got in the bus to head to our first location at 8:45. While every site we visited was fascinating, there were a few that really impacted me.



One of our first stops was the Beaumont-Hamel Memorial. This Canadian National Historic site is a preserved area of the Somme battlefield, with a monument honouring the Newfoundland regiment that had particularly terrible losses at that location. The landscape was littered with shell holes and trench lines, some of which were preserved so we could walk through them. The tour guide was able to point out the front line, support, reserve, and communication trenches exactly how they were left after WW1. Walking down the path across no man's land to the German front line, Zach and I fully came to realize where we were, and the carnage that took place almost 100 years earlier right under our feet. The Canadian tour guide pointed out some of the barbed wire hooks that were left in place, and noted that there were probably a few hundred more bodies buried in that small section of the battlefield.

Driving through Northern France, it is impossible to forget what had happened in WW1. Although the towns were all repaired to their former

glory, and the view is of beautiful rolling hills and farmland, in an effort to bury the dead as close as possible to where they fell, many of these fields have little cemeteries in the corners. We visited quite a number of cemeteries during our tour, and the most impactful for me was the Neuville-Saint-Vaast German War Cemetery. The German cemetery was a stark contrast to the Commonwealth cemeteries we had visited. The first difference you noticed was the jet black crosses as opposed to gleaming white crosses or headstones. Next, you looked up and realized that you could not see where the cemetery ended.

The rows and rows continued for as far as the eye could see. Finally, upon further evaluation of each individual cross, we were startled to discover that each cross was dedicated to not one, but four individuals. With approximately 44,000 burials located there, this cemetery is the largest German war cemetery in France.

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VOLUNTEERING WITH A PURPOSE

BY: GABI SANDLER

In order to receive the Ontario Secondary School Diploma, all students are required to achieve 30 credits, pass the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test, and volunteer for a total of 40 hours. The community service appeals to certain students and they love the idea of getting involved. However, to others, taking time out of their busy schedules makes them cringe. They often find themselves rushing to finish before the end of Grade 12 in order to graduate. Volunteering can be an incredibly rewarding experience and can have benefits for everyone involved.

It has been said that if you love your job, you will never work a day in your life. The same can be said of volunteering. If the volunteer finds their service fulfilling and fun, 40 hours will fly by in no time. Volunteering can consist of any activity. The trick is finding something appealing that can be of service to someone. Athletes may try being the assistant-coach for beginner athletes of their favourite sport. Dancers may want to try helping

"...it is your world and your future that are at stake. By volunteering, young people can take an active part in working towards a sustainable future." - David Suzuki

with classes at their studio. People who enjoy working with children could take a trip down memory lane back to their primary school and spend time with the younger students.

Volunteering is no different than finding a student job. However, student jobs can sometimes be difficult to find. Students often claim that they cannot find a job because they do not have experience and they cannot gain experience because they do not have a job - the cycle is never ending.

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AMBASSADOR PROFILE: JULIA KROON

BY: MR. CHRIS JULL

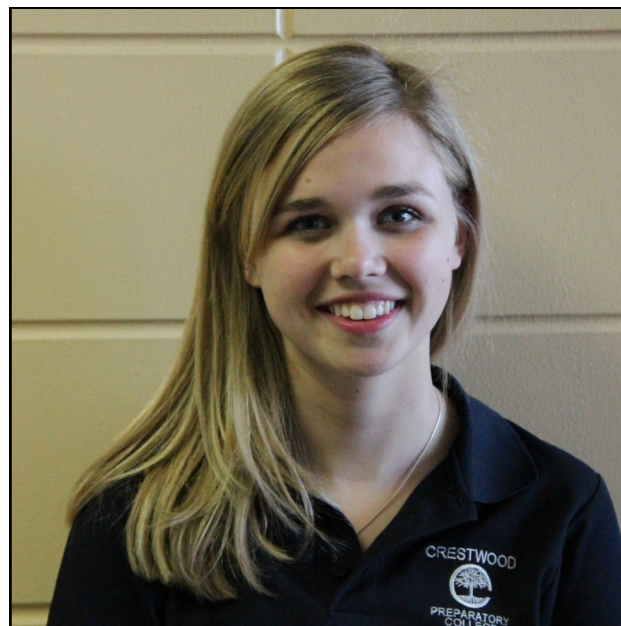
This article is the latest in a series profiling the leadership activities of Crestwood's Senior Ambassadors.

Julia Kroon thought to herself, "I'm actually being a leader now". Assistant coach Julia Kroon celebrated with players on the Junior Girls Volleyball team as they got their first serves over the net. Many of the members were playing competitive volleyball for the first time.

At first glance, Julia does not appear to be a typical leader. She is definitely not a Type-A, high-achieving perfectionist. What she is, though, is someone who leads by example: an enthusiastic, dedicated fount of energy who is up for anything.

This winter she turned her love for volleyball to being the student coach of the Junior Girls Volleyball team. Julia enjoyed the opportunity to see novices improve, and put the leadership training she has received at her camp and through the Ambassadors program into action.

As a student-coach, Julia demonstrated technical skills, led drills, and gave individual instruction where required. Since she played under Coach Chmatil last year, Julia was familiar with his techniques and systems, and was able to pass that experience on to her charges.



While not at school, Julia loves spending time with her friends and her two cats, Burt and Sally. She is currently preparing to be a Counselor-in-Training at her camp this coming summer for campers ages 6-14.

VOLUNTEERING WITH A PURPOSE, CONTINUED

Volunteer experience is a great resource for resumes and gives the opportunity to create a network of references. Love and passion for the task at hand makes it seem not like work, but as something to enjoy doing. Volunteering is also a great chance to try something new and break out of your comfort zone. If there is an area of interest that has never been explored, this is a great opportunity. Volunteers do not have to be pros at their task by any means. In fact, the volunteer supervisors would probably be thrilled at the interest. The athletes could try on an apron; the dancers could pick up a paintbrush. The list goes on and on. There is no limit to the possibilities of things to try and to explore.

Regardless of what the service is, community service is so important. There are truly only benefits to the experience. As the volunteer, there is so much to gain. There is a sense of responsibility that is instilled throughout the process. It is a great way to gain experience, create a network of contacts, and meet others with similar interests. Of course, seeing the positive impact on those being helped is absolutely priceless. It really shows how everyone in the community is connected and how everyone must look out for one another. The volunteer component of the Ontario Secondary School Diploma may be mandatory, but that does not mean it cannot be something to love.

Unsure how to fulfill your required 40 hours of community service? Stop by the Guidance Department!

THE IMPORTANCE OF VIMY RIDGE, CONTINUED

One of the most memorable visits on the trip was to a site less than 500 people have been able to see since the end of WWI. The location is known as La Maison Blanche, and these quarries were used to house the Canadians before the battle of Vimy Ridge. With hard helmets and flashlights, we descended the 42 stairs down into the quarries and were given a tour that pointed out some of the different carvings on the walls. These included battalion insignia, hearts and farm animals, a recreation of Edvard Munch's "The Scream", and a Toronto letterbox. It was a definite highlight for many on the trip, and an opportunity we will never forget. I felt it made me far more aware of the thoughts and personalities of the individual soldiers, humanizing an otherwise inhuman experience.



Finally, on April 9th, the anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge, we spent the entire day on location. The morning consisted of a tour lead by the Canadian tour guides through the trenches and tunnels, walking through the battle the same way the Canadians would have 96 years early. We were able to stand in the front line trenches and see exactly how close the German

trenches were to the Canadians. The landscape was permanently scarred with shell holes and craters, evidence of the brutality that occurred right under our feet. The ceremony took place in the afternoon with foreign dignitaries, French schoolchildren, and other tourists. There was a playing of The Last Post, and a wreath laying procession. Zach and I were each able to lay a wreath donated to us by our local legion. "The day at the monument was truly the pinnacle of the entire trip," said Zach Brown. "I was also touched to see that not only Canadians, but also individuals from throughout the world came to recognize the momentous importance of the battle of Vimy Ridge."

I am truly honoured to have taken part in The Vimy Ridge Pilgrimage. The First World War was an incomprehensible tragedy, one we must strive to ensure never happens again. However, from this tragedy we inherited the strength, character, and steadfastness determination that defines us. Awards like the Vimy Ridge Pilgrimage keep these lessons alive for a new generation of Canadians.

A MUSICAL TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

BY: JENNIFER FREEDMAN

On Wednesday, April 3, 2013, the grade eleven and twelve band departed Toronto at 7:00 A.M. for Washington D.C. In preparation for the competition, our suitcases, instruments and sheet music came with us. Little did I know, this trip would be the most memorable of my time at Crestwood.

Twelve long hours following our departure, we arrived in the heart of Washington D.C. where we would spend four nights and five days. After eating up a storm at Philip's Seafood Restaurant, we drove thirty more minutes to reach our hotel in preparation for the amazing events that were to come during the next four days.

An early 7:00 A.M. wake-up call roused us the next morning. Mike Hawaii, our tour guide, graciously took us to Arlington National Cemetery, the Smithsonian, the Abraham Lincoln Memorial and the National Archives. Later in the evening, we had the pleasure of seeing Hello Dolly! at the Ford Theatre, which is where Abraham Lincoln was assassinated. The next day, we went to the International Spy museum, the National Cathedral and had dinner at Bucca di Beppo. Mmmm!



Then it was time for us to shine. We headed to the Fiesta Val Music Festival where we were scheduled to perform "The First Suite in E Flat" by Gustav Holst. After warming up and rehearsing for a brief amount of time, we were called to the stage. Our hearts were beating as we prepared to play. The lights beamed on us as we gazed out into the audience to feast our eyes on our competition.

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CREATIVE WRITING: NOTHING BUT HARMONY

BY: NICOLE SEPIASHVILI

I must prepare before the storm begins. When I am taken by the music, there is no turning back. I am lost. My fingers will take on a mind of their own and I will feel disconnected from my body. I am prepared for this feeling, physically. Mentally, I must take a breath. My mind is a twister; it holds a whirlwind of music and melody. The rhythm pounds in my ears and steadies my heart. The notes dance in front of my eyes, turning the world around me into fog. My eyes scan the notes and my mind dashes through the harmony before me. There is nothing but the melody. The world has been tuned out. It is just the instrument and I.

I position my fingers over the keys and steady my breath. It matches the pace of the song and even the flow of my blood seems to still. My blood has become honey, thick and slow, so that even as my fingers prepare to dance along the black and white keys my mind can keep up. The battle has almost begun; the battle between my body, my mind, my soul, and the music.

I strike the first note and it sings. Everything has begun to move in slow motion, languidly and peacefully. My fingers delicately run up and down the black and white path, no finish line to be seen ahead. The melody rings clearly in the room and I must breathe evenly to keep my heart from beating too fast. It must beat steady and strong, matching the song. The keys are delicate shards of thin glass. I must be very careful when I strike a chord. My mind has begun to completely disconnect. There are no thoughts left, only chords, notes, beats, and tunes. Harmony is now more important than breath. The music has taken over and I am lost.

A MUSICAL TRIP TO WASHINGTON, D.C., CONTINUED

The other bands were from the United States, and we were the only Canadians. The Americans gasped as they announced our country of origin, which gave us more respect as a result of the long distance we had to travel in order to participate. Mr. Fong threw up his arms and the rest was history.

We played our pieces close to perfection, which led us to win three major awards including best band in our division, best overall band, and best section. The best section award was given to the section that I was a part of, which was the clarinets. It felt so rewarding receiving this honorable award. Graham Todd, Ryan O'Driscoll and I all played solos, and winning the award for our school instilled such a strong sense of pride. It felt rewarding when Mr. Fong chose me to go up to receive the awards. Shaking the hand of the award distributor really made our accomplishments sink in.

The next day we visited the Marine Corps Memorial, the Natural History Museum, the Holocaust Museum, Mount Vernon and the Mount Vernon Mansion. Our visits passed by in a whirlwind, as we were all still so elated from the previous day's fantastic accomplishment.

As a student in grade twelve, I can honestly say that this was the most exciting and rewarding trip that I have attended as a Crestwood student. I enjoyed being with a group of genuinely nice people who I can now call my closest friends. The memories that we created will last a lifetime – even as we venture to different places. My eight years of playing clarinet finally paid off in my final year at Crestwood Preparatory College. I could not be

happier. I can also gladly say that my Student Council presidency has been fulfilled by going to the capital where so many great presidents were inaugurated. Thanks for planning such a great trip, Mr. Fong! Congratulations to all!



STUDENT WORK—CREATIVE WRITING

THE PUDDLE

BY: BENJI BAKER

The clutches of winter hugged the autumn leaves with vacant love. "Folks, it's the coldest winter since 1907," moaned a voice on the radio. I didn't know much about what was happening in the outside world; as far as I knew, a pet dragon was just as real as you or me.

I sat on the floor parading around my toy soldiers when the door burst open. Uniformed men marched in commanding us to collect ourselves and follow, immediately. I took a seat in the beaten army car, but boy, was it cool sitting in a life-sized version of your favourite toy. Our ride halted at the Amsterdam Muiderport. The soldiers are very organized in Europe and I was placed with the elder people, while my father found himself with the other mommies and daddies. I watched him, a fully grown man, fall to his knees and begin to cry. Soldiers kicked him but he did not stir.

The elderly woman in front of me told me not to be afraid. She looked to the sky, held her breath and concealed me under her coat, quickly situating me next to my father. The guards were furious and took the woman behind a concrete wall. I wanted to run back since all of my schoolmates were in the other line.

The train whistle screamed, and the lines began to advance. I saw a puddle of slush by the concrete wall and couldn't resist a jump in the wet snow. When I leaped into the air, I noticed something odd - the slush was crimson. The viscous liquid drenched my clothes. I stood there for a minute before I realized what it was. I looked behind the wall to see the elderly woman with a hole in her head. The brevity of the situation penetrated me like the bullet in the bloody woman's skull. The essence of youth drained from my soul. As I looked into the empty eyes, I understood what was happening in the outside world; there are no dragons, there are no kings and queens, but rather the iniquity that is known as mankind.

WRITER'S CRAFT: SOUND DESCRIPTION

BY: ERIC CRAVIT

The street was filled with the thumping and stomping of eager fans ready the biggest day of the year. I could here the creaking of the doors and the chirping of the fans discussing their expectations of the games outcome. All of a sudden I hear a higher pitched yell of aggression followed by a bone crushing smack and then the inevitable thump as the victim hits the ground. I tried to listen for more but I couldn't zone in on anything due to all the noise around me. Whether it was the pinging sound of metal hitting metal as change is dropped in a homeless man's hat or the tire-screaming yell of ticket scalpers yelling "tickets here". I was overwhelmed by all the noise and yet I still wasn't even in the stadium.

I enter through the doorways and hear the beeping of men checking tickets. I hold my ticket in front of me and await to hear the reassuring beep that my ticket is valid. The shrieking of rusty turnstiles and the beeping of ticket guns I feel as though I am going to go mad. On top of everything I hear the constant chatter of the fans. The stadium is in an uproar but then the booming voice of the announcer comes through the speakers and the stadium goes silent. The announcer reads out the opposing team's players while the home fans snort and

boo. Then the home team is read out and the stadium is flushed with cheers. After every player is named off the fan's roar with excitement. The pittering and patterring of the players footsteps can be heard as they exit their locker rooms and run on to the court.

The fans continue to roar loudly until they are forced to stop when the microphone crackles as it is passed to the singer who will begin the national anthem. The shuffling hats are heard as the fans remove them from their heads and place them over their hearts. The sweet melody and feeling of family fills the stadium as the anthem is sung. The anthem comes to an end and the stadium is silent in anticipation for the game to begin.

The buzzer's ear shattering sounds is heard and the smack of the ball is heard as the tip off is won. Throughout the game the thumping of shoes running and crashing of jumps landing is heard. In unison the boing of the ball bouncing is heard and sometimes the ringing of the rim as a player delivers a monster dunk. The buzzer signals the end of the game and the stadium is filled with the chatter on the games outcome and the crunching of popcorn on the ground as it gets crushed by fan's shoes. The screeching of tires exiting the parking lot and finally basketball game is finished and my everyday sounds return.

Congratulations to Daniel Sugar, Rhys Eylott, Stephanie Cohen and Julie Cho for their recent publication in InCITE, which features writing and artwork from students across the Conference of Independent Schools. Particular recognition must be paid to grade 11 student Daniel Sugar, who was awarded second place at the 11/12 level. The judge described his use of the writing prompt as visceral and experiential. Well done!

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BY: DANIEL SUGAR

The transition to consciousness was slow and dull. Sleeping out here was surreal. The pitch black nights, and soundless twilights made you question whether your senses were working properly. Only the footsteps of some small mammal carefully finding its way through the deep snow would remind you that anything still existed. Footsteps so fastidiously positioned and faint only those whose ears were heightened by blackness could only hope to hear.

That's the only reason why I awoke from the deep slumber. It's the only reason the fast, nervous beeping seemed so loud. At home my watch would never be able to wake me from such a deep sleep. Out here, however, a sound so high pitched and consistent with its timing seemed so unnatural and out of place it almost always woke me up. That day was no exception; and with the eerie green light emanating from my watch, I lit a fire.

The warm orange glow permeated throughout the small wooden lodge and filled it with warmth. It illuminated various works of taxidermy. A wolf flaring its teeth stood next to me. The fire's blaze reflected in the glass eyes of the wolf, giving it a look of burning anger. "He ought to go to jail," I said aloud, although I was taken aback by how hoarse my voice was. That's what happens when you haven't spoken in seventeen days.

I stared at the pelt of a Siberian tiger that covered the floor. The image enraged me and added fuel to the fire of my personal vendetta. I got dressed in heavy winter clothes and went to the door, grabbed the handle and shielded my eyes with my free arm – a technique I learned on my first morning here. I opened the door.

Through the cracks in-between the sleeve of my coat and my nose, all I could see was shrill, white light. While my eyes adjusted, the light went from pure white to a still uncomfortable golden yellow. I pushed through the door and looked outside. This cabin was situated on the vertex of two long lines of mountains. Though this did not make for quick access to the woodlands below, it did make for an outstanding view. High above the snowy forest below all I could see was the sad branches of evergreen trees weighed down by large tufts

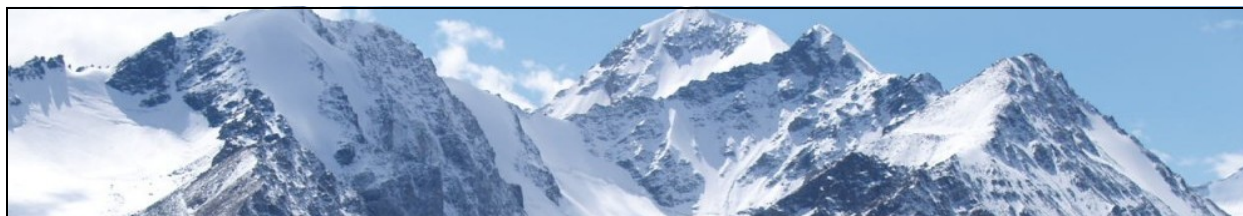
of snow. The snow-covered treetops stretched all the way to the horizon and blended into the sky in a way that made the land look dauntingly immense. In the hut I grabbed for my hunting rifle hanging from a sling, situated upon deer antlers mounted to the wall. I slung the rifle around my shoulder and onto my back, walked through the open doorway and closed it behind me.

The walk down the mountainside was not as difficult as it once was, after I had discovered the river covered by ice and snow. Though it was more treacherous, it provided a smoother, more clear path down to the woodlands. Once at the bottom, I walked, searching for any sign of the beast. Eventually, the peaceful serenity of my surroundings was shattered by a loud cracking noise that echoed through the woods and sent snow falling from the treetops. It amazed me how easily the snow fell, but my distraction was broken by a deadened growling. I recognized it instantly.

Grabbing the handle of my rifle tighter I headed off in the direction of the beast, ready to use deadly force. The snow here was deep and I struggled to get to the source of the sound. Dredging through the snow, I reached the source of the sound. Before me lay a small bank of snow. Climbing over it used so much energy once I got to the top I just stood there for a moment, paralyzed by exhaustion. I closed my eyes, put my hands on my knees and rested. After a few minutes I opened my eyes and started to stand straight when right in front of me there lay something. It was a large puddle of blood.

Poachers were common in this area although this one always hid the body of his kill, leaving only a temporary pool of blood as evidence. He was the one I was after. The sight of the crimson blotch on the pure white canvas etched itself in the very foundation of my memory. I stared at the graphic scene for quite a while, examining the colour and shape, piecing together the events of the scene. If it weren't for the piercing breeze the stung my face I think I might have never snapped out of it. I looked at the canopy above and followed a snowflake down wondering how it ever got through the impediment of the forest canopy. As the flake neared, I glared at its brilliance, fascinated by the intricate crystal structure.

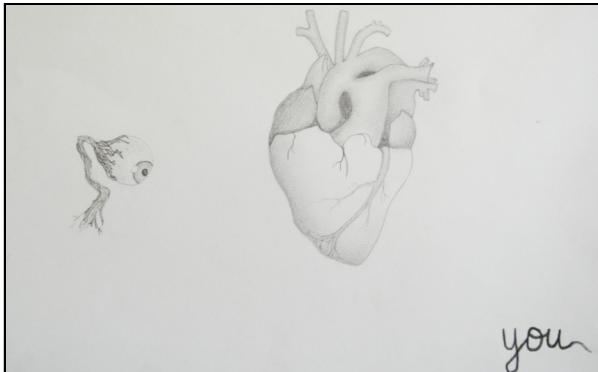
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INCITE PUBLICATION, CONTINUED



STEPHANIE COHEN, GRADE 12



RHYS EYLOTT, GRADE 12



JULIE CHO, GRADE 12

**Want to write for
The Crestword?**
Talk to your Editor
and send your articles
to Ms. Bryant

I followed it as it gently floated past my eye and landed in the pool of blood. As if in slow motion, I saw the tip of the snowflake dive through the surface. The red rose throughout the snowflake like vines on a wall until it was gone, completely enveloped.

In mere minutes the puddle disappeared, drowned by snow. It was dark now and the march back to the shack was long and tiresome. Too tired to undress, I fell atop the small mattress and fell asleep almost instantly. In my mind, I heard a steady drip – this dream contained no imagery, only sound. The drip began dull, then ever so slowly, it became louder and clearer until it reached an unbearable intensity.

I jolted awake, and thought about the dream for awhile. I was crossing the cusp of dreamland when I heard it: footsteps, quiet footsteps. These were not the usual footsteps of a wild animal. They sounded like they were coming from something maladroit, something big. I got up from the bed stumbling for my rifle and turned on the flashlight mounted at the end. I covered the light with my hand to mute its brightness and carefully, silently stepped outside. Whatever it was it was close. Now or never, I thought to myself as I released my hand from the flashlight and squinted through the sudden brightness.

Not twenty yards in front of me was a large hunched figure blanketed in black and white. Startled by the light it careened off in the opposite direction in a blundering shuffle. In my current state I would be unable to catch it, so I had one choice. I aimed down the sights of my rifle. This would be an easy shot. I fired, the deafening thud sending pain tearing through my eardrums. I was able to hear a loud thump as a large mass hit the ground, and was able to see a large pile of snow fall from a tree. I stumbled over to the pile of snow that fell from the tree. As I ran my finger over a bullet hole I had just made in the tree's trunk I was surprised at the effect of my quick actions. Within the pile of snow was a man with a recently cut tiger pelt – and within myself I felt pleasure in my capture.

It had been seventeen days since I found the cabin. I was starting to doubt if it was the right one. But I knew it was his. I knew he would have to come home eventually.

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