

ONCE MORE TO THE LAKE

EN – source text

I wondered how time would have marred this unique, this holy spot--the coves and streams, the hills that the sun set behind, the camps and the paths behind the camps. I was sure that the tarred road would have found it out and I wondered in what other ways it would be desolated. It is strange how much you can remember about places like that once you allow your mind to return into the grooves which lead back. You remember one thing, and that suddenly reminds you of another thing. I guess I remembered clearest of all the early mornings, when the lake was cool and motionless, remembered how the bedroom smelled of the lumber it was made of and of the wet woods whose scent entered through the screen. The partitions in the camp were thin and did not extend clear to the top of the rooms, and as I was always the first up I would dress softly so as not to wake the others, and sneak out into the sweet outdoors and start out in the canoe, keeping close along the shore in the long shadows of the pines. I remembered being very careful never to rub my paddle against the gunwale for fear of disturbing the stillness of the cathedral.

The lake had never been what you would call a wild lake. There were cottages sprinkled around the shores, and it was in farming although the shores of the lake were quite heavily wooded. Some of the cottages were owned by nearby farmers, and 2 you would live at the shore and eat your meals at the farmhouse. That's what our family did. But although it wasn't wild, it was a fairly large and undisturbed lake and there were places in it which, to a child at least, seemed infinitely remote and primeval.

I was right about the tar: it led to within half a mile of the shore But when I got back there, with my boy, and we settled into a camp near a farmhouse and into the kind of summertime I had known, I could tell that it was going to be pretty much the same as it had been before--I knew it, lying in bed the first morning, smelling the bedroom, and hearing the boy sneak quietly out and go off along the shore in a boat. I began to sustain the illusion that he was I, and therefore, by simple transposition, that I was my father. This sensation persisted, kept cropping up all the time we were there. It was not an entirely new feeling, but in this setting it grew much stronger. I seemed to be living a dual existence. I would be in the middle of some simple act, I would be picking up a bait box or laying down a table fork, or I would be saying something, and suddenly it would be not I but my father who was saying the words or making the gesture. It gave me a creepy sensation.

We went fishing the first morning. I felt the same damp moss covering the worms in the bait can, and saw the dragonfly alight on the tip of my rod as it hovered a few inches from the surface of the water.

PT – target text

Perguntava-me se o tempo tinha manchado este local único e sagrado – as baías e as correntes, as encostas por onde o sol se punha, as cabanas e os caminhos por detrás das cabanas. Estava certo de que a estrada asfaltada o teria encontrado e questionava de que outras maneiras estaria destruído. É estranho como nos lembramos tão bem dos lugares assim que permitimos que a nossa mente entre pelas ranhuras que nos levam atrás no tempo. Lembramo-nos de uma coisa que, de repente, nos faz lembrar outra. Acho que me lembrava com mais clareza das madrugadas, quando o lago estava frio e imóvel, lembrava-me do cheiro da madeira de que o quarto era feito, e da floresta húmida, cujo perfume entrava pela janela. As divisórias da cabana eram finas e não chegavam ao teto, e, como eu era sempre o primeiro a levantar-me, vestia-me silenciosamente, para não acordar os outros, e saía, sorrateiramente, para o ar livre e partia na canoa, mantendo-me perto da costa, na sombra alta dos pinheiros. Lembrava-me de ser cuidadoso para nunca bater com a pagaia na borda da canoa, com medo de perturbar a tranquilidade da “catedral”.

O lago nunca tinha sido aquilo a que chamariam de lago abandonado. Havia cabanas espalhadas ao longo da costa. Era num país agrícola, ainda que a costa do lago fosse abundantemente arborizada. Algumas cabanas pertenciam a agricultores das redondezas. Vivíamos na costa e tomávamos as nossas refeições na quinta. Era o que a nossa família fazia. Mas, apesar de não estar abandonado, era bastante grande e sereno, e havia sítios que, pelo menos para uma criança, pareciam infinitamente remotos e primitivos.

Estava certo sobre o alcatrão: ia até aproximadamente oitocentos metros ao longo da costa. Mas quando lá voltei com o meu filho e nos instalámos numa cabana perto de uma quinta, no tipo de verão que eu conhecia, percebi que ia ser praticamente como era antes – soube quando, deitado na cama, na primeira manhã, ouvi o rapaz a esgueirar-se silenciosamente para a rua, seguindo ao longo da costa num barco. Comecei a acreditar na ilusão de que ele era eu e, portanto, por transposição simples, que eu era o meu pai. Esta sensação persistiu, continuou a aparecer durante todo o tempo que lá estivemos. Não era uma sensação completamente nova, mas neste ambiente, tornou-se muito mais intensa. Parecia estar a viver uma vida dupla. Estivesse eu a meio de uma tarefa simples, a apanhar uma caixa de iscos, a pôr um garfo na mesa, ou a dizer algo, e, de repente, não era eu, mas o meu pai a dizer as palavras ou a gesticular. Deu-me uma sensação assustadora.

Na primeira manhã, fomos pescar. Senti o mesmo musgo húmido a tapar as minhocas na lata dos iscos, e vi a libelinha a pousar na ponta da minha cana, enquanto pairava a uns centímetros da superfície da água.