F. J. Bergmann - Companion to the Guide to the Norton Reader

Norton Reader, though experienced enough in the more civilized English forests, was understandably reluctant to venture into our savage wastes without a trusty pathfinder—the uncultured lout in whose concubinage I languished. I had come from significantly further west, with a native gift for language and communication. Despite the squalling infant at my breast, I managed to recover memories of landmarks that would beckon us to our objective, furnishing a personal report of people, place—and the lay of the land. I had not foreseen how Norton’s magnificent breadth and splendid, upright stance would dwarf my common-law spouse’s less-robust frame—the comparative considerations were not lost on me. Despite our educational disparities, our minds were one, and my heart was a moon that swelled with wordless longing, metaphorically speaking. I began dwelling upon analytical considerations, and, in rhetorical mode, made circumlocutous suggestions as to the unreliability of firearms, the judicious introduction of vipers into sleeping-blankets, the unusual variety of herbs and fungi at hand; but the critical resolution was ultimately provided by a perturbed grizzly bear—coincidentally, also a mother.

“Norty,” I murmur, “Oh, Norty!”

Reader, I ...

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