



point, I thought it was better to stay put in the tent. I didn't want him to think I was a threat. After awhile, I heard a loud clanging sound as he carried off my pot set and everything else in my pack, and disappeared into the bush.

What do I do? I began to stuff my sleeping bag and my clothes into their respective sacs. Then stopped. What was the point? It was very dark outside with no moon or stars. The boat was on the far side of the campsite, and I wasn't going to leave my gear behind. Besides, he was still out there. I unstuffed my sleeping bag and tried to sleep. I brought my paddle inside the tent, and had a firm grip on it.

I thought I heard him come back a third time, but I'm not sure. I even believed he was looking at me in the tent, but my night vision is not very good and I was tired and maybe a little scared, so I might have been seeing things. I thought I was hearing things too: at about 3 a.m., I heard what sounded like someone canoeing past my site. The noise got louder and I was right. I could hear two people, a man and a woman talking excitedly. Then I heard the man say: "Did you see how that bear attacked that garbage bag!" Now they had my full attention. I contemplated if I should get out and stop them, but now I feared there was a bear as well as a wolf wandering around out there too. I managed to convince myself that both the bear and wolf were probably not a threat any more as each had what they wanted. Besides I needed some sleep, it was going to be a long three-hour paddle out in the morning with no breakfast. Worse, no coffee!

Around 6 a.m., I got out of the tent to survey the damage. The pack was still attached to the rope, but the bottom had been ripped out. I searched around and found my pot set, cutlery bag, and my bowl with a large hole in it. I found my toothpaste with several bite marks. But that was all. Not even any garbage! Mr. Wolf took everything with him. I gathered up what was left and broke camp.

As if I didn't have enough problems, it was very overcast and a large black cloud was just behind me. I thought I should have enough time to at least get to the portage into Canoe Lake before the rain hit. Only just. I pulled out the rain suit and started out onto the big

lake. The wind had come up and I was having difficulty in the bay even before I got to Canoe Lake proper. I hoped this was going to be a quick storm. As I got into the lake, I was going two strokes back for every stroke forward and the waves were up to two feet high. As I neared the Tom Thomson memorial, I knew I had to land and wait out the storm. I didn't want to end up like the famous painter.

I paddled past a cottage, where a woman and her daughter were securing their motor boat. The woman motioned me over to her dock. "Do you need some help?" she asked. I nodded and attempted to land the Osprey without damaging it. It took two attempts to get the boat docked. I climbed out and the woman and I pulled the boat up onto the shore. She invited me up to the cabin to warm up by the fire and after hearing of my wolf encounter, gave me some toast and coffee (two cups!). What a godsend.

The cabin itself had once belonged to Tom Thomson; it was really just one big room with a wonderful stone fireplace. The woman, Laura, and her family had a lease on the place and had added a kitchen on the back. She had some boys from the camp nearby helping to clear some debris away from the renovation work and they offered to take me across Canoe Lake in their freighter canoe. I hate to say it, but I accepted. I was too wet and cold and tired to cross the lake. Besides as it turned out the storm lasted all day.

I got to the Canoe Lake store and immediately had another hot coffee. I then reported my close encounter with the wolf to the Park staff. They inquired if I was sure it was a wolf and not a bear, as there was a bear encounter at the next campsite to mine — the people I heard paddling past me in the night. I assured them that it was indeed a wolf and they admitted they were aware of a one wolf harassing campers in that area. Thanks for the warning! I wrote an incident report for them and left to return the boat to Algonquin Outfitters.

About a week or so after returning home, an article in the newspaper caught my eye. On 18 August 1996 a wolf was reported to have "attacked" a child who was sleeping "under the stars" at Tom Thomson Lake, a day before I got there. The article indicated the wolf was tracked down and shot by the Park staff around the 25th. I called up and spoke to the Park Superintendent about my encounter. The park was preparing a report on this wolf. Apparently he had been going around "collecting" things. He had taken people's running shoes, towels, and on one occasion a pillow from under someone's head while sleeping under the stars! They don't think this wolf intentionally tried to hurt the child, but was probably going for this kid's pillow too and, finding some resistance, had bit him in the head area. Since they couldn't be sure what was wrong with this wolf, they felt they had to shoot him and do some tests. As it turned out, he was a perfectly normal wolf. DNA tests were done to prove he wasn't a wolf-dog hybrid which might have explained his behavior. The Park had no explanation for this wolf's un-wolflike actions.