

The Snow Falls - Chapter 2 - Atalin

By : Micheal Grey

Feanra and Talia's journey with Atalin.

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/Micheal Grey

Copyright © Micheal Grey, 2015
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Table of Contents

The Snow Falls - Chapter 2 - Atalin Chapter 1

The Snow Falls - Chapter 2 - Atalin Chapter 2

The Snow Falls - Chapter 2 - Atalin : Chapter 1

i;½

The world around them seemed to grow deeper as they drew further north. The snow that had melted in the afternoon light in their village began to stay, crunching beneath their feet as they moved through the forest. And all too soon they both wore their winter furs as they followed Atalin's enduring trot, which at times would take him far ahead as he scouted the trail ahead of them.

It was a silent journey for the most part. Both Feanra and Talia were still nervous around their new companion, even as they felt an instinctive trust, and something deeper, which neither understood. It was if they knew where Atalin always was, could sense his presence and life all around them, through them. When they flagged in the steady pace of the journey, it was as if a strength came out of Atalin, giving them the will to go on hours after they would have stopped. By the same token they slowly found a sense of peace as forests came and went, as the steady beat of the world pushed them onwards. Their burdens became lighter and minds clearer, while a light grew in their eyes, the light of a predator sure of its place in the world.

On the third night of their journey they stopped early. Feanra and Talia set a fire and boiled tea, and cooked part of a rabbit on a spit over the fire, while Atalin ate the other part near them, the rabbit held between his paws as he lay down, worrying it clean. They had been trotting along Atalin's trail when the rabbit had dashed in-front of them, and without thought Feanra had pulled out his belt-knife and thrown it in one fluid motion. When they had caught up to Atalin there was a look of approval in his wolf-eyes.

Now they all sat by the fire, Feanra and Talia drinking tea, having finished their meal, stared into the fire. Atalin, finishing his own meal, then moving closer to the fire to lay down, eyes shut and breath slow. His fur was glistening healthily in the firelight, a deep gray.

Talia broke the silence first, "Atalin, where are you taking us?"

One of his eyes opened up to look at the two, the firelight reflecting in it, dancing wildly. "We are going back to my, our pack. It is still far from here."

Both Talia and Feanra were staring at Atalin now, their nervousness burned away and replaced by questions.

"Who are you Atalin, that you can speak as we do, and know our father? And you spoke of our father as if he was still alive, is he? But we buried him. How far away is this.. our pack? When did you last meet our father? Where? Did you know our Mother? Can you speak to her?..." Feanra and Talia asked in a stream, cut-off by Atalin raising his head to look at them fully.

"Who I am, and all these questions will be answered, but not now. Now you must rest your hearts and bodies, lose yourself in the way for a time. But for now, know that I am like you, one of the last of my kind." Atalin's eyes went distant as a sadness grew about him. "But who knows what is in-store for us all. For now, sleep, it is another long day of travel with the dawn. And know that you are safe here, if anywhere." His voice grew softer as it continued, lulling them to sleep, and by the end of his talking both Talia and Feanra's eyes were heavy, as they lay down, backs to one another, and fell asleep. Atalin looked at them for a time, a fierce love in his eyes that would have brought tears to Feanra and Talia's eyes if they had seen, then lay his head down and slept as wolves do, half in this world and half in the next. The fire sparked softly.

The Snow Falls - Chapter 2 - Atalin : Chapter 2

Breakfast was a small piece of dried fish each for Feanra and Talia, which they ate while waiting for Atalin to return from wherever he had gone. It was a brilliant and clear morning, the sky without a cloud.

Before the sun had properly risen Atalin came trotting silently back into the camp. Instinctively brother and sister rose, put on their travel packs and followed him into the woods, setting a tireless and brisk pace. They traveled like this for hours in silent companionship before stopping by a stream as the sun reached its noon peak. As Atalin went ahead again, Feanra and Talia cut thick willows near the water's edge and quickly improvised some fishing rods, soon enough both had caught 3 fish between them in the deeper pools of the stream, which they quickly cleaned and hung off their packs for later.

Near the end of the day they came to a place where the trees stopped, and a vast plain stretched out into the horizon. The snow was in patches, saved from the sun in depressions within the ground, or protected by a scraggly shrub that would rise from the ground randomly. Atalin and Talia quickly went about gathering a large bundle of sticks each, which they tied and carried on already heavy packs. Soon they were trotting behind Atalin through a treeless landscape, both with a feeling of being exposed creeping through them.

"How long does this treeless place go on for Atalin?" Feanra asked as they were settling in for the night, in a mini-valley within the plains, which while it was colder than other areas, offered some shelter and privacy against passing eyes. Their small fire was burning merrily, slowly fed by the sticks Feanra had gathered earlier.

Atalin looked up from the fish he held between massive paws that he'd been tearing large chunks off of. "Some days yet, and after that an even longer journey to where the pack waits." His deep voice seemed to rumble through Feanra and Talia. Made deeper still from the prolific traveling he'd done recently.

Suddenly Atalin's manner changed completely. His ears and fur stood straight and his eyes narrowed. With deathly grace Atalin silently stood. The look he gave Feanra and Talia instantly drying their mouths, and freezing the blood in their veins. "Silence the fire, and wait here." He hissed, then moved so quickly and quietly he vanished into the night. After a few stunned seconds brother and sister shakily smothered the fire, waiting with chilled breaths in a pitch-black night, each clutching to the other.

Through long tense minutes they waited, shivering, half from cold, half from a sudden fear, having seen a part of their companion unmasked and unprepared, and having seen something they'd not have believed possible in his eyes, fear. A scream broke the night. It was long, sharp and hollow, filling their senses completely. It was the promise of pain, vast and unending, seeping into them, harmonizing with each nerve, one by one. It was only when the scream was suddenly cut-off that they both realized they were each balled-up on the ground, palms pushed against their ears, their own screams adding to a chorus. Covered in sweat and shaking violently they both stood with trouble, looking at each-other in the moonlight that had broken through the clouds. The thought of Atalin both struck them at the same time, as they began to race towards where they felt he was, and nearly bowled him over. With cries of relief they threw their arms around him, hugging fiercely, then wetting his fur with their tears. He sat and let them cry, knowing he'd been no better off in his first encounter with what he'd just dispatched. Eventually they fell asleep, each against Atalin's warm fur, safer than they knew. Atalin didn't sleep that night. He lay down with his head resting on his paws and stared into the night, worry in his eyes.

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2015-01-25 11:33:49