camera, pacing off the distance and being very careful in setting his lens openings and shutter speeds.

'I wish he'd look into the camera,' the man said loudly to a couple standing nearby, as if he were talking about an animal in a cage.

'You can't get any good pictures around here. Harold tried to get one of the five Dionney kids, but they wouldn't let him. The way they keep them quiet, you'd think they were made of china or something,' a woman standing by said.

She glanced at her companion for confirmation.

'They want you to buy their pictures,' the man said. 'We were disappointed in 'em. They used to look cute before, when they were small, but now they're just five plain-looking kids.'

'Yeah. My Gawd, you'd never believe how homely they got, would you, Harold? And everything's pure robbery in Callander. You know, Old Man Dionney's making money up there. Runs his own souvenir stand.'

'That's during the day, when he's got time,' her husband said.

The man with the camera, and the woman, laughed.

After lunch Big Tom watched Cooper prepare for his trip to North Bay. 'Is there anybody going fishing, Mr Cooper?' he asked. The man took the radiator cap off the old truck he was inspecting, and peered inside.

'Mr Cooper?'

'Hey?' Cooper turned and looked at the Indian standing behind him, hands in pockets, his manner shy and deferential. He showed a vague irritation as though he sensed the overtone of servility in the Indian's attitude.

'Anybody going fishing?' Big Tom asked again.

'Seems to me Mr Staynor said he'd like to go,' Cooper answered. His voice was kind, with the amused kindness of a man talking to a child.

The big Indian remained standing where he was, saying nothing. His old second-hand army trousers drooped around his lean loins, and his pocketbook was open at the throat, showing a grey high-water mark of dirt where his face washing began and ended.

'What's the matter?' Cooper asked. 'You seem pretty anxious to go today.'

'My kid's sick. I want to make enough to take him to the doctor.'

Cooper walked around the truck and opened one of the doors, rattling the handle in his hand as if it was stuck. 'You should stay home with it. Make it some pine-sap syrup. No need to worry, it's as healthy as a bear cub.'

Mrs Cooper came out of the house and eased her bulk into the truck cab. 'Where's Mary?' she asked.

'Up at the shack,' answered Big Tom.

'Tell her to scrub the washrooms before she does anything else. Mrs Anderson, in that trailer over there, wants her to do her floors.' She pointed across the lot to a large blue and white trailer parked behind a Buick.

'I'll tell her,' he answered.

The Coopers drove between the whitewashed stones marking the entrance to the camp, and swung up the highway, leaving behind them a small cloud of dust from the pulverized gravel of the road.

Big Tom fetched Mary and the baby from the shack. He gave his wife Mrs Cooper's instructions, and she transferred the baby from her arms to his. The child was feverish, its breath noisy and fast.

'Keep him warm,' she said. 'He's been worse since we got up. I think he's got a touch of the flu.'

Big Tom placed his hand inside the old blanket and felt the baby's cheek. It was dry and burning to his palm. He adjusted the baby's small weight in his arm and walked across the camp and down the narrow path to the shore of the lake where the boats were moored.

A man sitting in the sternsheets of a new-painted skiff looked up and smiled at his approach. 'You coming out with me, Tom?' he asked.

The Indian nodded.

'Are you bringing the papoose along?'

Big Tom winced at the word 'papoose', but he answered, 'He won't bother us. The wife is working this afternoon.'

'O.K. I thought maybe we'd go over to the other side of the lake today and try to get some of them big fellows at the creek mouth. Like to try?'

'Sure,' the Indian answered, placing the baby along the wide seat in the stern, and unshipping the oars.

He rowed silently for the best part of an hour, the sun beating through his shirt causing the sweat to trickle coldly down his back. At times his efforts at the oars caused a constriction in his chest, and he coughed and spat into the water.

When they reached the mouth of the creek across the lake, he let the oars drag and leaned over to look at the baby. It was sleeping restlessly, its lips slightly blue and its breath laboured and harsh. Mr Staynor was busy with his lines and tackle in the bow of the boat.

Tom picked the child up and felt its little body for sweat.

The baby's skin was bone dry. He picked up the bailing can from the boat bottom and dipped it over the side. With the tips of his fingers he