

The Ohio Series: 1977 words, with Tori and the snake in the canoe

written by Holly

May 9, 2019

By Holly Lisle

Fun, fun fiction writing day today. My heroine, Tori Gage, is in Ohio now, in the house she inherited from her grandma, and she's just started doing the rounds – and has started in the basement.

Where there are three freezers, one with meat, one with home-grown vegetables, and one with a lock and no key.

I also discovered an old aluminum canoe in the basement, and found out something about Tori that came from some experiences from my own childhood.

Here's the snippet where discovering the canoe reminds Tori of her past.

With the usual caveats: Don't quote. This might not be in the final version. Don't bug-hunt. I don't look for bugs until I've done the revision, and this might not make it to final draft. This snippet is copyright to me on the date posted, and all rights are reserved.

We would glide along the Tuscarawas river in silence wearing our bright orange flotation vests, watching summering ducks and geese and their fuzzy-chick offspring, silently pointing out the ripples of sunning bass disturbed by our passage – with the occasional plop behind us as a sunning snake got startled by our passage and fell into the water. I had the snake stick, though – a three-foot-long metal gripper that I

was to use if any of the snakes we disturbed fell into the canoe. I practiced endlessly, and the one time it actually happened, comported myself calmly, making both my mother and my grandmother proud.

It was only a garter snake. Having it fall into the boat was startling, though, and exciting.

I could have picked it up with my bare hands, but I had the stick.

And I'd always hoped when the snake finally fell in, it would be a copperhead, because calmly removing one of those would have made me a hero.

But Mom and Grandma bought me ice cream at the Dairy Queen anyway, because I hadn't screamed even a little bit, and I hadn't hurt the snake getting him out of the canoe.

The canoeing, the life jackets, the snakes – all real, but my father and I were the folks in the canoe when I about seven. The wishing to be a hero – that was me, too. We never had a snake of any variety fall in the canoe when I was a kid, though a lot fell very close.

The real snake in the canoe landed when I was an adult. And I got it out without hurting it, but no one bought me ice cream.

Contents © Holly Lisle. <https://hollylisle.com> All Rights Reserved