

The Snoring of Swunkus

Charles Skinner

North American

Advanced
2 min read

The original proprietor of Deer Isle, off the coast of Maine—at least, the one who was in possession one hundred and thirty years ago—had the liquid name of Swunksus. His name was not the only liquid thing in the neighborhood, however, for, wherever Swunksus was, fire-water was not far. Shortly before the Revolution a renegade from Boston, one Canary, moved up to the island and helped himself to as much of it as he chose, but the longer he lived there the more he wanted. Swunksus was willing enough to divide his domain with the white intruder, but Canary was not satisfied with half. He did not need it all; he just wanted it. Moreover, he grew quarrelsome and was continually nagging poor Swunksus, until at last he forced the Indian to accept a challenge, not to immediate combat, but to fight to the death should they meet thereafter.

The red man retired to his half of the island and hid among the bushes near his home to await the white man, but in this little fastness he discovered a jug of whiskey that either fate or Canary had placed there. Before an hour was over he was “as full and mellow as a harvest moon,” and it was then that his enemy appeared. There was no trouble in finding Swunksus, for he was snoring like a fog horn, and walking boldly up to him, Canary blew his head off with a load of slugs. Then he took possession of the place and lived happily ever after.

Swunksus takes his deposition easily, for, although he has more than once paraded along the beaches, his ghost spends most of the time in slumber, and terrific snores have been heard proceeding from the woods in daylight.

Read more fairy tales on Fairytalez.com