

# THE TERRIBLE, MAGICAL FLYING CANOE

DEC. 31, 1823. A LOGGING CAMP IN THE FORESTS OF WEST QUEBEC, ABOUT 200 KILOMETRES NORTH OF WHAT IS NOW OTTAWA.







LA CHASSE-  
GALERIE?!!



NO! I WILL NOT SELL MY  
SOUL TO THE DEVIL FOR A  
TRIP IN THE MAGIC  
CANOE!



DON'T WORRY  
SO MUCH!



WE'LL FLY SO FAST WE'LL BE THERE AND  
BACK AGAIN IN NO TIME. WE JUST HAVE  
TO BE CAREFUL AND WE'LL STAY OUT  
OF THE DEVIL'S  
CLUTCHES.



WE ALSO HAVE TO  
GET BACK BEFORE  
SIX TOMORROW  
MORNING.



I'VE MADE  
FIVE TRIPS LIKE  
THIS AND THE  
DEVIL HASN'T  
GOT ME  
YET!



THE IMPORTANT  
THING IS NOT TO  
DRINK ANY LIQUOR  
WHILE WE'RE GONE  
SO WE KEEP OUR  
HEADS CLEAR.



WELL THERE  
IS SOMEONE  
I'D LIKE TO  
SEE...



YES! EVERYONE IN  
THE BOAT AND  
REPEAT AFTER  
ME.



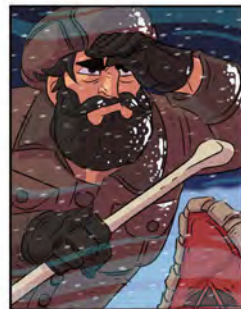
I SELL YOU MY SOUL IF I SHOULD  
PRONOUNCE THE NAME OF GOD OR  
TOUCH THE CROSS ON A CHURCH  
IN THE NEXT SIX HOURS.



ABRACABREE! ABRACABRA! ABRACARAM!  
TAKE US FLYING OVER THE MOUNTAINS!



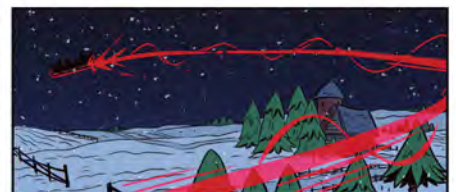














THE STORY OF LA CHASSE-GALERIE IS ONE OF FRENCH CANADA'S OLDEST AND BEST-KNOWN TALES. SOMETIMES THE MEN ARE COUREURS DE BOIS. SOMETIMES THE DEVIL HOPS IN THE CANOE TO TRY TO MESS UP THE RETURN TRIP. AN ACADIAN VERSION HAS A LOG OR AN AXE HANDLE INSTEAD OF THE CANOE. IN ONE VARIATION, THE MEN DON'T MAKE IT HOME AND ARE DOOMED TO PADDLE THE SKY AS GHOSTS ON NEW YEAR'S EVE FOREVER. THE DETAILS VARY, BUT THE MAGICAL CANOE AND THE TERRIBLE DEAL TO MAKE IT FLY ARE ALWAYS PART OF THE STORY. (BY THE WAY, THERE'S NO ENGLISH TITLE THAT REALLY EXPRESSES THE MEANING OF THE FRENCH — "THE MYSTERIOUS CANOE" OR "THE MAGICAL WILD HUNT" DON'T QUITE WORK.) SIMILAR STORIES ABOUT A DEAL WITH THE DEVIL ARE TOLD IN EUROPE, BUT THE MOST FAMOUS VERSION OF LA CHASSE-GALERIE WAS WRITTEN BY HONORÉ BEAUGRAND. HE PUBLISHED IT IN FRENCH IN THE QUEBEC MAGAZINE *LA PATRIE* IN FIVE PARTS STARTING IN 1891, AND BROUGHT IT TO ENGLISH-SPEAKING READERS IN NEW YORK'S *CENTURY* MAGAZINE THE NEXT YEAR.