

**Far North**  
By Will Hobbs

**Characters:**

**Gabe Rogers** - Lives in San Antonio with his grandparents. Mother was killed by drunk driver. Wrestles and plays football. In the 10th grade, born on December 21 (turned 16 in the book).

**Gabe's Dad** - From Texas. Nicknamed "Tree." Working the diamond boom in Canada to save up money to buy land back in Texas. Had every fourth week off from work.

**Clint** - Bush pilot, about 22 years old, big grin, friendly as a puppy dog, big head of curly blond hair, and square jaw with dimple. Plays hockey.

**Raymond Providence** - Gabe's roommate, born on December 21. From Nahanni Butte. Played electric guitar. Native people called **Dene** ("Dih-nay") who speak **Slavey** dialect. His father was a diesel mechanic in Nahanni Butte. He had a sister (Monique, 19), a brother (Alfred, 9) and another sister (Dora, 7)

**Johnny Raven** - Raymond's great uncle from the Dene tribe. His name in Slavey means "Raven's Eye." When he was 11, his father starved to death.

**Mary Canadien** - Nurse at a hospital in Yellowknife who wrote down Johnny's last testament.

**Timeframe** - November 1 thru mid March.

**Questions:**

What kind of vehicle did Clint drive? (an old Suburban)

How fast did Clint drive his vehicle? (140 kilometers per hour)

Gabe flew from Texas to **Fort Nelson**, British Columbia where Clint met him to fly him onto **Yellowknife**, the capital of the Northwest Territories (NWT).

How many times bigger than Alaska is the NWT? (Twice as big)

How many people live in the NWT? (60,000)

What is the "**Hammer**?" (Winter in the NWT)

"**Virginia Falls**" - Waterfall on the Nahanni River that is twice as high as Niagara.

Where did Gabe spot his first moose droppings (Mooseburger Café in downtown Yellowknife)

What was on the zipper pull that Gabe's dad gave him? (a thermometer)

What was Gabe's hood ruff on his parka made from? (Wolf fur)

What was Raymond's parka hood made from? (Wolverine fur)

What was Gabe's nickname for Raymond? (the "Great One" like Wayne Gretzky)

What kind of plane did Clint fly? (Red and white Cessna 185, single-prop, 4-seater, float-plane)

What did Clint go back to the plane to get just before it went over the falls? (Box of rifle shells)

What did they eat in the wilderness? (**Bannock** (fried bread), porcupine, cranberries, currants, blueberries and raspberries, tea, beaver, ram, and moose)

"**Chinook**" - Warm winds from the west that come and go in early winter. Raised the temp to 50 degrees *above* zero.

What did Gabe, Raymond and the old man make to travel faster? (a raft, 16' x 12')

What did Gabe and Raymond make to carry their gear over the snow? (a toboggan)

What was Johnny's favorite part to eat from the moose? (the tongue)

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What kind of shelter did Johnny lead the group to? (Patterson cabin. 13' x 13')

What was the inscription carved on the logs in Patterson's cabin? (RMP and GM and Deadmen Valley 1927)

Where did "**Deadmen Valley**" get its name? (two brothers tried to winter in the valley in 1908, starved to death and lost their heads to the bears)

What did Johnny do over Raymond's body one night as he lay sleeping? (he danced by hopping on both feet and flapping his arms, trying to pass on strong "raven medicine")

How did Johnny die? (froze to death on Christmas day as he was hunting)

What did they do with his body? (burned it)

What happened to the cabin when the boys tried to hike out of the valley? (a wolverine got inside and slashed everything to shreds)

How did Raymond know where the ram might be in the cavern? (He heard a raven flying around above the cavern opening)

What happened to the meat from the moose that Raymond shot? (grizzly bear broke the elevated cache and ate the meat)

How did Raymond hurt his ankle? (jumping out of the tree where they were hiding from the grizzly bear)

What did Gabe and Raymond do in the cabin to pass time (Gabe made a model of a log cabin and Raymond re-made Johnny's drum)

How did the boys eventually get out of Deadmen's Valley? (Gabe pulled Raymond on the toboggan for 100 miles)

What did they do in Nahanni Butte at the end of the story? (They had Johnny Raven's "potlatch" with over 300 people. They tossed straps of bear fat into a fire as a way of honoring Johnny.)

**In What Book...**

Did someone say, "I wish I knew where I was going to die, for I would never go near the place." ?

Was there a waterfall twice as high as Niagara Falls? (Virginia Falls on the Nahanni River)

Did a boy heave an electric guitar into a waterfall?

Did someone say, "Some of the best hunters these days have gotten so good at loading up their VCRs they've forgotten how to load their rifles."