



*Virginie T.*

*My ottawa eagle  
In search of the soulmate*



*The ottawas - Volume 2*



# Virginie T.

## My Ottawa Eagle

### Аннотация

A paranormal love story set on a backdrop of Amerindian legend.

Apenimon: I temporarily left my tribe to go in search of my soul mate. I didn't think this journey would put me in trouble.

Cayla: I came to Canada escaping from my former infidel looking for studying wildlife. Even though I am a veterinarian, I never thought I would be treating the largest bird of prey I have ever seen. And why do I feel an indescribable bond between him and me? Between magic, poachers, jealousy and misunderstanding. Come and discover the love story of an extraordinary native American and a veterinarian who can't stay silent.

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In search of the Soulmate

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Translated by Mustapha Naceur

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My Eagle Ottawa

## Chapter 1 Apenimon

I return from work in no hurry, driving on the winding path through the mountain on autopilot. It's the same thing every day. My job with the island's police is rewarding, but somewhat monotonous. In Manitoulin, there is no crime or traffic. Only petty theft among tourists or accidents that require an investigation to find out the circumstances, which are usually closed quickly.

Manitoulin is a small island with a limited number of inhabitants year-round, so everyone knows everyone. This phenomenon is reinforced by the fact that 90% of the natives belong to one of the six clans of the Ottawa tribe led by Tye Pontiac, reinforcing my impression of being frozen in time.

My clan has always lived away from the others, at the top of the mountains, where the air is pure and where you are not likely to be disturbed by your neighbors. Our totem animal needs space and height, with an unobstructed view and thousands of fir trees. So, the mountains are the place to be. This had never bothered me before and allowed me to have an intimacy almost impossible

to obtain in the valley. I am the descendant of a long line of warriors, hence my profession as a man of order, and our people have been at peace for a long time, which gave my solitude an escape from boredom. But lately, even the majestic landscape of trees bending in the gusts of wind is no longer enough to soothe my spirit. I feel like those trees that eventually crack and break down through hardship, without the protection of those around them. My heart is empty, on the verge of breaking, and my friends can do nothing for me. On the contrary, their presence only amplifies my malaise. They don't understand me. At just thirty years old, most of them only think about having fun and enjoying life, But I don't. I'm not a person who can do anything for myself. I'm looking for something deeper and infinitely more lasting.

Since our shaman, Achak, has found his soul mate, the sweet Isabelle, I pray to the Great Spirit to grant me this blessing as well. I have been waiting for this happiness for so long, since I was old enough to understand the importance of a soul mate. I heatedly wish it as I have been preparing myself for it for months, having already made room at home for the one created for me. I have also understood that destiny is playful. My wife is probably not part of the tribe, is not even Amerindian, just like Isabelle. As a security manager, I have attended every Pow Wow since I was old enough to drink, I have met all the members of the Pontiac tribe and all those from clans a little further away and more tourists than I can count. Yet my bride never showed up, she

never showed up on the island. I would have met her a long time ago otherwise. So, I must change my tactics and stop standing still. It is also time for us to change our vision of life to embrace our destiny if we want to continue to prosper. Because, let's be honest. If we've always welcomed tourists with open arms, it's only out of self-interest. After all, they are the lifeblood of most Manitoulin Islanders, and while we are grateful, we remain wary of outsiders who wish to settle here, which is why there is so little diversity in the origins of our people. Like Achak, who refused to hire a foreign nanny for the chief's daughter. I remember his thoughts. He was convinced that her coming would bring misfortune to the tribe. A nanny who, ironically, eventually turned out to be his half. As for misfortune, Isabelle's arrival represented the biggest upheaval in his life and his happiness every day since they bonded. I must therefore be open-minded in my turn. I think it's high time for me to get out of my comfort zone and explore the surroundings around the island to try my luck. I'm heading to my boss, Tyee, to inform him of this, and I'm heading to his beautiful house next to Blue Jay Creek Park, which he manages as a tourist attraction.

I run into Isabelle and Aiyanna playing together in the garden. Our chief's daughter looks more and more like her mother, Aquene. Beautiful mischievous blue eyes and jet-black hair shining in the sun. She will make a magnificent lynx, all in finesse, which will make the most seasoned Ottawas crack in a few years from now with a simple glance. At the age of four, she

cannot yet take on her animal form, we only get there around our tenth anniversary, and that's preferable, because this little tornado is already difficult to hold when she's on two legs, I can't imagine the mischief she'll show on all fours. Tyee's got a lot to worry about. I'm also noticing something that gives me a twinge, as it always does. Isabelle's belly is getting rounder every day. The announcement of her pregnancy on the day of the Pow Wow took us all by surprise, including Achak, who didn't know anything about it and had a hard time containing his joy. The French origins of our shaman's wife are betrayed by her skin as pale as ivory, but her place among us is no longer to be proven. She accepted our rites and customs without the slightest hesitation and I hope my companion will be as tolerant. Isabelle is part of the Ottawa tribe just like me and the tribe will welcome a baby lynx in the coming months. It will be a great moment for all of us and a great celebration will take place to celebrate this event. I ardently wish to experience the joy of fatherhood in my turn and I hope to go to this ceremony with my soul mate on my arm. This would be a major step forward in my dream of starting a family.

When you think of the lynx. There's Achak coming out of the huge family home, followed closely by his brother Tyee, our leader.

— Hello, Apenimon. You're looking well. It's good to see you, you hadn't left your mountains to visit us for too long. We only see you from afar during your patrols. What can we do for you?

— Hey, guys. How did you know I wanted something? Can't

I come to you for the pleasure of your company?

Achak laughs as he takes his companion in his arms, placing his hands on her navel in a possessive gesture. Isabelle snuggles up against him, laying her hands on his. There is an obvious osmosis between them. I want to know the same alchemy with the one destined for me.

— The door will always be open to you and you know it. But you forget that the spirits speak to me, my friend. And you will not make me believe that you came down into the valley just to see our faces.

Tyee watches me observe the couple with a desire that I can't hide because it's so intense. I too want to hug the woman of my life and look at her rounded belly, irrefutable proof of our love.

— I figured you'd be coming to see me soon. I'm even surprised it didn't happen sooner. Well, I know you. We grew up together, don't forget that. You've wanted a companion for a long time, and Achak's union with his soul mate only rekindled your desire to find your true love, didn't it?

Yes, he does know me well. We made a lot of mistakes together as kids. And even more so as a teenager. Have you ever seen a bobcat fly? You couldn't? No, not when it's carried through the air by my pet. But don't be nostalgic.

— That's right. I also believe that my soul mate is not on the island. If you'll both allow me, I'd like to go away for a while and try to find her. We're in a slow tourist season, so my colleagues will do fine without me.

The two brothers look at each other and communicate silently, only by looking at each other. They often do that. It's confusing and frustrating. How can you counter their arguments if you don't hear them? It is Achak who takes the floor again.

— You're probably right. Your soul mate is not among us, you would have discovered it by now with all the people you come across all day long. Besides, the fox clan hasn't taken any reprisals since Takhi's death. Her family has accepted the fact that she acted badly and knew her well enough to know that she died because she refused to submit. So you can go exploring quietly. We can get along just fine without you for a while. You're not as indispensable as you think you are!

Despite what she says, her sparkling eyes prove to me that I matter to them as much as they matter to me. His joke helps me relax. I didn't realize until that moment that the idea of this confrontation had gotten on my nerves. It would have been very bad for me if they had refused.

— Where do you plan to go?

— The Great Spirit remains vague in spite of my prayers. All I know is that I have to go to the northwest, which remains vague.

Achak nods his head. He knows something I don't know, no doubt about it. Logically, he communicates with all spirits without exception. Our shaman is very powerful and close to the totem spirits.

— Head for Kipawa Lake, but be very careful. You will find the object of your quest, but you will have to prove your worth

to get it.

Ah, that's right. Spirits love riddles and mysteries. They keep us on our toes, but they never give us all the answers. It's up to us to decide which path we'll take to reach our goal, because after all, the path is as important as the destination. I didn't expect it to be. I have their blessings, which is very important to me, and most importantly, a clue as to where I will find the love of my life. For the first time, I'm touching my dream with my fingertips and I don't plan to miss it. It's up to me to do everything I can to make it happen now and I won't back down from any obstacle.

— I'm sorry I can't give you more details. I know it's not a lot of information.

— Don't worry about it. I wouldn't expect so much, so thank you. I could really use your help. Thanks to you, I'm not going in blind. My pet should be able to do the rest. He's as impatient as I am and will do everything in his power to find the one that belongs to us. I'll see you soon. I'll come and introduce you to my wife as soon as I get back.

— See you soon, Apenimon. And don't hesitate to call us if you need any help. We're here for you, even from afar. Bring your soul mate home.

I'm going back to my house to pack while I think about the shaman's warning. I should prove my worth. What did the spirits mean? I am a warrior, my strength and loyalty are no secret to anyone. Not from any Ottawa, anyway. My soul mate is certainly outside this world, and as a matter of fact, my name will tell him

nothing about me, I'll be just another man in those eyes. And value certainly doesn't depend only on physical strength, it takes more than that to impress a woman. I set off as soon as my travel bag is ready and loaded into the car, my head full of hope and questions. I can't wait to meet the woman who will fill my soul and that of my pet. I am ready to do anything to seduce her and keep her close to me.

## Chapter 2 Cayla

Leaving on a whim in the middle of the Kipawa Lake Ancient Forest seemed like a good idea at the time. When the MFFP, the Ministry of Wildlife, Forests and Parks, proposed this mission, I thought "great, I will be able to combine my passion with my need for solitude". Now that I find myself in the middle of this vegetation that has been preserved for more than 400 years, certainly magnificent and lush, but completely lost, I am less convinced by my flash of genius. Solitude is nice, but certainly not when there are only trees as far as the eye can see and orientation is far from my strong point. I am still convinced that I had all the right reasons in the world to exile myself in this way, but it is no help to me when my map does not give me any information about my position. How do you read this thing? I have no idea where I am and my head is buzzing with parasitic thoughts, short-circuiting my rational, calm side. My last love affair ended with loss and smash and left me more bruised than

I had told my family, leaving me full of bitterness. My parents thought that a change of scenery would help me bounce back and so supported me in my wish to go to the other side of the world, alone. Anyway, my family never liked Richard and it was essential for my mental health that I change my mind.

I am originally from Lorraine, where I discovered my passion: animals. Since I was very young, as far back as I can remember, I was in admiration of them and I forced my parents to go to the Amnéville zoo at least once a month. My parents knew the alleys by heart by dint of driving me there constantly and despite their weariness, they always acceded to my request. The zebras and tigers with their irregular black stripes, the white lions with their thick fur and all the other inhabitants of the animal park had captivated me at first glance, like all children I suppose, but more than anything else, I fell in love with the birds of prey. Their aviary is one of the largest in the world and their spectacle is simply breathtaking. Harris' huge falcons, fishing eagles and buzzards, among others, fly freely in an exceptional ballet that ends with a final flight of more than sixty birds simultaneously that leaves you speechless. For the little girl I was on my first visit, it was a revelation. I envied their freedom in the sky and their so majestic appearance. I felt as if I was tiny under these masters of the skies. So, I decided to become a veterinarian and work in this zoo. I studied, persevered and studied some more. I immersed myself in this universe with every fiber of my body, regularly putting my life as a carefree party student on hold and

telling myself that I would make up for it later. While my crazy roommates dressed up to laugh, flirt and be honest, have sex, I immersed myself in my books on dog anatomy and animal behavior. I achieved my goal at age twenty-five and have never regretted my sacrifices.

Only here I am four years later away from home because I made the wrong choice. A bad choice from the beginning of my life and I find myself thousands of miles away from my family. If I do have one regret, it is that I gave in and put my heart before my brain. I should have gone on as before and listened to my head screaming at me not to do that. Dating my boss was a big mistake. And yet, it had started so well. The zoo director, Richard Watson, 10 years my senior, gradually gave me attention and I felt flattered. True, who wouldn't have been. Richard is rich, charismatic, pleasant to look at and I respect his work and his fight to save the species. We sailed in the same professional environment, which was an advantage for me. I naively thought I had found my alter ego. It was flattering to attract such a leading authority in his field. It started with small attentions: he kissed me instead of shaking my hand, he regularly came to the care centre to check that I didn't lack equipment, regularly asked my opinion on the animals to come... Then one day, everything became more concrete.

"I really like you, Cayla. I've been watching you for months now, and I've been telling myself that I'm your boss and that employee relations are not recommended, but I can't stay away

from you anymore. "Come and have a drink with me.

I had thought about it, weighed the pros and cons, and finally agreed. His manly smile on firm, full lips and his eyes shining with desire for me had gotten the better of me. Our relationship had begun a year earlier with a fiery kiss. The kind of kiss that leaves you with wobbly legs and wet panties and I naively thought we would end our life together. Even though we didn't live together, we sometimes talked about babies. Finally, looking back, I realize that it was mostly me who envisioned this logical continuation of our love, while my lover systematically dodged the subject.

"I feel so good for you. Do you ever think of a little person who looks just like us? A mixture of you and me?"

There's plenty of time to think about it, Cayla, there's no rush".

I didn't necessarily agree with that remark. After all, we were a decade apart and I sometimes wondered if his reluctance was not due to that fact. Richard is in his late 40s, and I suppose that made him hesitate when I thought, "This is the time to have a child," I thought. I didn't want Richard to be an "old" dad by taking our child to school. It's embarrassing when you say to a child, "Here's your grandpa," and he says, "That's my father. The reality had turned out to be much more painful and humiliating. He was not considering offspring at all, now or ever, and age was indeed an issue in our marriage, but it was not his, it was mine. Twenty-nine years is his age limit for his conquests.

I remember perfectly well that day that shook my life and changed my future. I went to surprise him. I was off that day and I had planned to meet him for lunch. I'm very happy about that. I was the one who was stunned, and not in the best sense of the word. I went home without knocking, as usual, and was paralyzed by the vision in front of me. Richard was sitting in the chair behind his desk, his fly open, a trainee moaning in his lap. It was my boss's voice that had brought me out of my torpor.

"Cayla, what are you doing here?"

— That's all you have to say? Maybe you could pull your pants up.

— It's not what you think it is.

— It's not what you think? Well, let me guess. Our new reptile trainee wanted to feed your snake? "Forget it, kid, it's not an anaconda, it's a tiny little asp".

I left, slamming the door with the giggle of the too-young lady and the crimson face of my now ex-child. This pitiful revenge did not relieve me, however, and coming to work the next day as if nothing had happened, after ignoring countless calls from the other idiot, it was revealed as torture, as all my colleagues knew the reason for our break-up. Their support and compassion in the face of Richard's betrayal only intensified my sense of suffocation in this place I had loved so much. I could no longer bear to walk down the aisles filled with happy families and colleagues who knew too much about my problems and Richard's sex life.

So that night, I set out to find a new job that would allow me to get away from it all while keeping in touch with the birds of prey. I wasn't ready to forget my priorities. After a lot of research, I came across the website of the Ministère de la Forêt, de la Faune et des Parcs du Québec. The MFFP was looking for veterinarians specializing in poultry to study eagles and thus better adapt their protection on the territory. Neither one nor two, I applied and was hired. Richard did try to hold me back, claiming that I had advance notice, but the threat of filing a harassment complaint, via text message, got the better of him. This is how I find myself in the riding of Temiscaming, with my camping equipment and observation gear in a small hand trailer, driving along Lake Kipawa through hemlock groves with yellow birch, a distant cousin of our common fir trees, to observe the majestic eagles that nest there. I feel laughed at in the middle of this immense landscape, some specimens reaching more than 30 meters, but also in peace. The weeks after the breakup had been morally trying and Richard's insistence on holding me back, God knows why, hadn't helped. My resignation put a definitive end to this page of my life and this peaceful silence is a real soothing balm for my bruised heart.

### Chapter 3 Apenimon

Fatigue is felt after driving for four hours, three-quarters of the journey, forcing me to stop in North Bay. The place is rather

deserted at the end of the day. I find myself in a small, simple but functional hotel with a comfortable room and an adjoining bathroom. It's strange to be far from the island. I had never left it, except during my years at the police academy, and this change of scenery, even if it's for a good cause, stresses me out. All I need is a hearty meal and a few hours of sleep to get back on track towards my destiny. I'm feverishly impatient, but I won't reach my goal if I fall asleep at the wheel and my empty stomach won't stop gurgling. So I go to the little grill restaurant next door to get my fill before taking a well-deserved nap. The big pickups parked in the adjacent parking lot make me nervous. It's not the vehicles themselves, but rather the load they are carrying. There are cages on the rear trunk, awkwardly covered with a tarp, as well as locked metal crates, probably filled with shotguns. As a hunter myself, and one of the best, in all humility, I don't like this imbalance of power. What can an animal do when faced with a weapon that can hit it from several meters away? My beast shivers in my head at this unpleasant thought. I doubt that men who possess such an arsenal, fight fair, and when you hunt for food, you certainly don't need a cage to lock up your dead prey. Poaching may be prohibited, but wildlife trafficking is very lucrative and encourages unscrupulous people to defy the law. I do not intend to linger here or get involved in matters that do not concern me, but I will contact the county authorities to inform them of my suspicions once I get home.

At this late hour, there are few people in the establishment and

I can easily find a table to sit at. As on Manitoulin Island, this part of Quebec is mainly inhabited by Amerindians, which allows me to go relatively unnoticed. Even with a matte complexion and the same accent, I could easily pass for a local guy. At least, that's what I thought until the waitress came up to me and imposed a formal interrogation on me about anything other than my choice of menu. Besides, she was reluctant to give me the menu before she had answers about a situation that had nothing to do with her.

— Hello. I haven't seen you around here before. Where are you from?

Why that suspicious, highly disturbing look? She's looking at me like a juicy piece of meat that's in front of her while she's on a diet. Don't they ever get tourists in this town? On closer inspection, it's a small snack bar that doesn't look like much with only a few men looking at me like a curious beast and this middle-aged waitress who doesn't seem very friendly. Visitors shouldn't crowd at the gate. Her blonde mop tangled in a shapeless bun and her screaming lipstick barely distract my eyes from her clean, but not at all fresh, outfit. Might as well play the game and get it over with. I have nothing to hide or blame myself for and this should be over soon.

— I just came in from Lake Huron.

— And what are you doing in our neck of the woods?

— Sightseeing. I'm just passing through.

— Where do you go if you're just passing through?

That's enough now. I'm willing to be cooperative, but there

are limits. I'm a warrior, not a defendant in a police station. I usually ask the questions, and this woman lacks the subtlety of poking hard at the men at the counter. I came here to eat, not to give a lecture on why I'm here at this particular time. I take a brief look at the menu and order the specialties, cutting short her intrusion into my private life.

— Could I have a smoked meat sandwich and poutine, please?

She looks at me sideways, unhappy with my dodge, but finally gives up after taking another look at the hunters. Obviously, they know each other. She answers in a dry tone.

— I'll get it to you right away. With water?

— That would be perfect.

She turns not without a suspicious glance in my direction. Her comments, supported by the reason I'm here, have drawn more than adequate attention from the hunters. They seem nervous and squinting, and the waitress is probably trying to identify a threat to them. The animal welfare kind of thing. I stop staring at them when my plate arrives. I don't want to get into trouble, that's not why I'm here, but I make a mental note to warn the authorities without fail.

I take advantage of my meal to think of my companion. I wonder what she looks like. I have no preference for her looks. I don't have one type of girl that attracts me more than another, as long as she's natural and I'm confident. I'm sure the spirits have reserved the perfect woman for me. I'm more demanding about character, though. Isabelle is an adorable woman and I appreciate

her a lot, but she is too shy and reserved for my taste. I would like a strong woman with a strong character who can stand up to me and who doesn't hesitate to make her own choices without fear of consequences. My animal is a predator and is far from being tamed. He and I need a companion who tells us what she thinks, who takes the initiative, and who is not afraid to put us in our place when we need her. I swallowed my meal in one go without even noticing it, so much my thoughts were monopolized by my soul mate, as often. I pay and go home right away to go to bed. I'm getting tired and a restful sleep will allow me to leave tomorrow morning, without wasting any more time.

There is a lot of fog around me. It's hard to make out anything in this mash. I'll have to transform; my vision will be much better and the weather won't bother me above the clouds any more. Only I can't do it. I'm stuck in my man's body. Something's holding me down, motionless. I can't move an inch; I can't move an inch. Even my head is stuck in an unnatural position, looking upwards, so that I can't even see my body, only the treetops and a blue sky clear of clouds. Suddenly I hear a voice. A bewitching voice that speaks to me with such affection. I guess a figure nearby, but I can't make out its features. It has to be her. The right person for me is there. She tells me to stay calm, that she will take care of me. It's nice to hear her say that she's going to take care of me after all these years of taking care of others, but the truth is, it's my job to take care of my wife. Unfortunately, I sense a threat looming around us. Why am I paralyzed? A mere bystander? It's

as if I'm outside my body, without seeing myself. And why is my bride a shadow? I must defend my wife, it's my duty. I'm an Ottawa warrior and a policeman, I'm fit to protect her, as long as my body responds to me. Danger is closing in, sneaky. And suddenly everything turns red in front of my eyes, darkening my vision and making it useless. Blood, blood spreads all around me and my love starts to move away, disappearing from my field of vision. No. There's no way I'm losing my half, not now, not when I've just found it. I'm struggling with my torpor. I'm fighting my own body to move; I have to save it.

I'm so fidgety I end up... falling out of bed. A dream, it was just a dream. No, not just a dream. A warning message from the spirits. I must hurry. My companion is in great danger. I must find her and quickly if I don't want this nightmare to become reality. The alarm clock on the bedside table reads six thirty and I can guess the first rays of the sun through the gaps in the shutters. It's impossible to transform myself discreetly from here to take flight. This is the most important rule of my tribe, no one must know of our powers outside the clans. A wild animal coming out of a hotel room would be a mess.

I'm not wasting a second. I throw my stuff in the trunk of my car, go through the hotel reception to return the keys and pick up, thanks to the concierge, a vital piece of information: the address of a quiet place. I get back behind the wheel and head for the Widdifield Forest indicated by the receptionist, only a few kilometers away.

I leave my vehicle on a small path along the large fir trees. Everything is quiet, no hikers or campers in sight, as the hotel employee assured me. It's just perfect. I undress out of sight, turn into a spray of sparks and gain height. My beast is delighted to spread its wings and feel the wind on its head and along its plumage. However, it is not enjoying this moment of freedom as usual. No circle on the spot to spot prey, no stake dive to the ground to get an adrenaline rush. We hunt for a bigger booty, the biggest of treasures. Our companion is waiting for us at Lake Kipawa. She needs us. Lake Kipawa is huge, over three hundred square kilometers, and stretches across five different townships. Finding my soul mate in the middle of such a vast territory will be like looking for a needle in a haystack. Fortunately, my bird of prey is used to spot a little mouse in the middle of a forest. His sight is the best in the animal kingdom. So my animal runs like an arrow towards the body of water a hundred kilometers southeast of my position, on the lookout for the slightest sign of my companion's presence.

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