
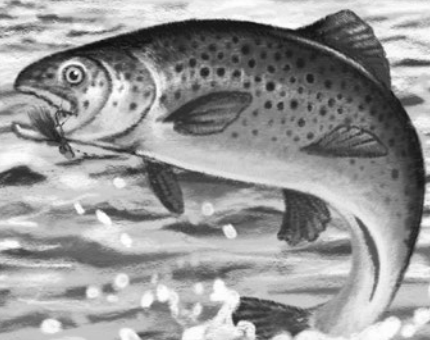


The
Snake River
CHALLENGE



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 LUCKY LUKE'S
HUNTING
ADVENTURES



By Kevin Lovegreen
Illustrated by Margarita Sikorskaia

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Cover Illustration by Margarita Sikorskaia

ISBN 13: 978-1-7327646-1-3

Printed in the United States of America

First Printing: 2019

23 22 21 20 19 5 4 3 2 1

Cover and interior design by James Monroe Design, LLC.

Lucky Luke, LLC.

4335 Matthew Court

Eagan, Minnesota 55123

www.KevenLovegreen.com

Quantity discounts available!



Chapter 1

My eyes pop open, and a smile hits my face. I quickly sit up in this unfamiliar bed. My own bed with my favorite soft blue comforter with airplanes on it is a thousand miles away.

Pale light sneaks into this little one-bedroom cabin. That tells me morning is trying to show itself. I look out the window to see the beautiful South Fork of the Snake River racing by only a short distance away. The soft morning fog floating above the

surface of the water tells me it's chilly out there. It seems surprising—after all, it's July. But the weather is probably different out here in the mountains than home in Minnesota.

I look over to my right at the bed a few feet away. There's a lump in it, but there's no visible sign of my older sister, Crystal, or her long red hair.

My dad, Crystal, and I all have red hair, which is kind of cool. Mom has dark brown hair. Sometimes people joke with her, wondering if she's really our mom.

Crystal loves to sleep. She won't like getting up this early. But it's time to get going. This Idaho fly-fishing adventure is ready to begin.

Fly-fishing is so different than “regular” fishing, like we do in Minnesota for walleye, northern, and bass. Fly-fishing uses special rods, lures, and techniques. Instead of jigging for walleye, I’ll learn how to softly cast a fly—which is a lure that really looks like a bug. With any luck, the colorful trout living in this cold river will see the fly floating downstream and *bam!* The fight is on! I can’t wait to learn how to fly-fish!

Mom and Dad have been coming here to the Lodge at Palisades Creek for their annual fly-fishing trip for as long as I remember. My dad’s cousin Justin has been running the lodge for years. This is the first time Mom and Dad have brought us along for their Snake River adventure. Maybe they feel we’re old enough now that Crystal is fifteen and I’m thirteen.

We're the luckiest kids on earth that our parents share their love of the outdoors with us. Mom enjoys fishing, hiking, and spending time with us at our cabin back in Minnesota. Dad loves all hunting and fishing, and he does a great job showing Crystal and me the ropes.

I might be the only one who has more energy and excitement for hunting and fishing than Dad. And I usually have the best luck. That's why they call me Lucky Luke.

The Lodge at Palisades Creek looks like a little village to me. From the appearance of this place, I can picture a group of settlers living here a hundred years ago. And now, *we're* here, and Crystal and I get to go fly-fishing for the first time.

The main lodge building has a small restaurant, a gathering space with a big rock fireplace, and some old leather couches perfect for hanging out. Settled among the trees around the property is a handful of small log cabins.

There's also an awesome fly-fishing shop filled with cool stuff. It has a million flies for fishing. They're made with real feathers from pheasants, turkeys, peacocks, and other birds. The feathers make the lures look like a real bug to trick the fish. The shop is also filled with wooden-handled nets, sunglasses, hats, and shirts. There's a bunch of mounted trout hanging on the walls too.

When we first arrived at the lodge last night, I couldn't help but stare at those trout with their speckled, colorful bodies. They fill me with wonder. I can't wait to catch

something so colorful and cool looking. This will be awesome!

But first . . . I need to wake up the sleeping lump in the other bed!

“Crystal . . . Hey, Crystal—it’s time to get up.” I do my best to keep my voice from scaring her out of her deep sleep. I carefully pad around the fluffy comforter until I find what I think is her head. “Crystal. It’s time to get up.”

“Mmmm. Whaaat? It can’t be morning already,” Crystal mumbles from somewhere under the sheets.

“It is, and it’s beautiful outside. C’mon—we have to get up and get going. We gotta go wake Mom and Dad, eat breakfast, then go meet our fishing guides. This will be an amazing day!” I can hardly contain myself.

“What time is it?” Crystal asks as her mass of snarled red hair slowly emerges. It looks like a bird’s nest covering her face.

I glance at the red glowing numbers of the clock on the nightstand. “Six thirty-six!” I proudly say.

“No way are you waking me this early, Luke. Go wake up Mom and Dad, and leave me alone.”

She slides back under the sheets and disappears like an alligator slipping under the water. I guess that’s what you can expect from a fifteen-year-old girl!

Giving up on her, I rummage through my duffel bag and find my clothes. I put on the supercool fly-fishing shirt Justin gave me last night. The material is really lightweight and smooth. It’s tan with a patch from the

lodge on the chest. It has big pockets on the front, where I can stash a box of flies or other fishing gear. The most important thing about the shirt is that it makes me feel like a real fly fisherman.

For now, I put my new polarized sunglasses in there. They are extremely cool, and Justin says they will help me see the fish under the water. I can't wait to see how they work.

I tiptoe over to the old wooden door and slip on my shoes. As soon as I pull the door open and step outside, the cool morning air sinks deep into my soul. I quickly realize I should have grabbed a light jacket. But I'm too excited to turn back—it's time to get going!

I scoot down the dirt path to the little log cabin right next to ours. I lightly knock and then creak the door open.

“Morning, buddy,” Mom whispers, still snuggled in bed next to Dad.

From the soft snoring, I can tell Dad is doing what Crystal is probably back to doing in our cabin.

“Good morning! Aren’t you guys ready to get some breakfast?” I say in a quiet voice out of respect for my still-snoring dad.

“Looks like someone’s excited to go fishing,” Mom says.

“That’s for sure! C’mon—let’s get going!”

Dad's snoring stops, but his head doesn't rise from his pillow.

"How about you run up to the main lodge and get your dad a cup of coffee? By the time you get back, we'll be ready to go," Mom says, finally sitting up.

"I'm on it. Back in a jiffy!" Out the door and on my mission I go.