Acknowledgments

My soul resides on an island in Muskoka. But I am a settler. I am not indigenous to Muskoka. Like most of the people in the story that follows, I visit Muskoka for only part of every year. But my identity, who I think I am, and how I see the world, have been shaped by the place my family and I call “the cottage.” I started visiting it when I was very young. My parents brought my brother and sister and me to the cottage for two months every summer. And my father came every summer with his parents and siblings when he was young. The cottage was built in 1886 on land purchased from the Crown in 1873. The people who had it built, and each generation of settler families who spent their summers there since, including my own, have dispossessed the Anishinaabeg people who called (and continue to call) this part of the world home. This book cannot undo that injustice, but it can acknowledge that my own past, and my ongoing relationship with a place that means everything to me, is part of a larger history of colonialism, dispossession, and violence that shaped, and continues to shape, the lives of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

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