

# Hemingway's Pure Michigan

by Lily Rosenberg

The Pure Michigan experience is centered on being immersed in the beauties of pure nature. Because many people only know Michigan's reputation for being the Motor City, they don't recognize the complex beauty that Pure Michigan holds. The natural elements of Pure Michigan are simple yet complex in every way. They are beautiful on the outside and yet still hold a complex history and artistry beneath the surface. Hemingway was able to capture this concept of duality between simplicity and complexity in his writing. His writing was down to earth and realistic yet had a deeper meaning behind every sentence, just like the elements of nature.

One specific example of this duality in Hemingway's writing is found in "The Big Two-Hearted River" which was set in the Upper Peninsula. On the surface, the story seems incredibly simple. In fact, it seems nothing more than a man going fishing on the river. Some critics have even said that his stories, particularly "The Big Two-Hearted River," were about nothing at all. What those critics failed to see was the symbolism behind the simple imagery of the ruined city Nick Adams sees on his journey. The deeper meaning of the story tells of a man who has come home to destruction after the war. Pure Michigan relates to the simplicity and complexity of the story. Although the lakes, beaches and sunrises are simple, beautiful sights on the surface, they hold great wonder and history beneath. For example, the simplicity of the great lakes is nothing compared to the amazing story of how they were formed.

Most importantly, Hemingway is able to show that there is no greater truth than what can be learned from nature. Every life lesson or experience has a parallel in nature. For instance, when a flower blooms it can be compared to a girl blossoming into womanhood. Experiencing the ambiance and beauty of Pure Michigan as well as reading the works of Ernest Hemingway can bring greater understanding and awareness of these great lessons of life. Hemingway's writing relates to the message of Pure Michigan in that it is simple on the surface yet deep within has great beauty and truth that all people should be able to experience.

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