



RETURN OF THE INDIAN SPIRIT

together with
Laws of the Lodge
and
the Wisdom of the Old Ones

edited by
Phyllis Johnson

illustrated by
W Cameron Johnson



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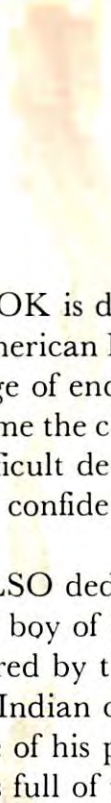
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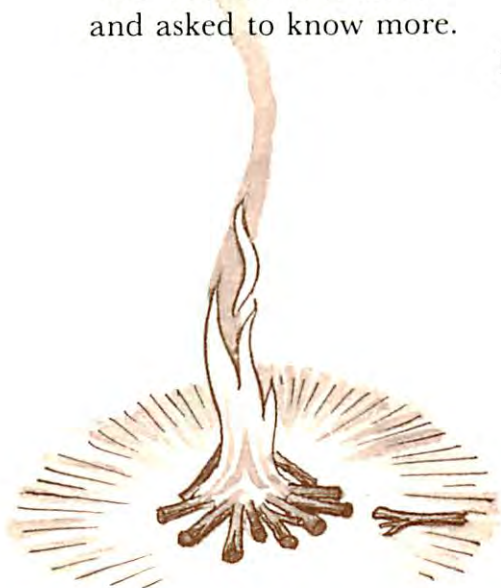
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THIS BOOK is dedicated
to the North American Indian children.
Their heritage of enduring values
has often given me the courage I needed
to tackle the difficult decisions in my life
with confidence...

IT IS ALSO dedicated to
Kalle, a boy of Sweden,
who was inspired by the challenging
role of an Indian chief in the
service of his people.
He was full of wonder
and asked to know more.

P.J.





VINSON BROWN, author of the story *Return of the Indian Spirit*, lives in California. He is a naturalist, writer, and long-time friend of the native Americans. He has written more than thirty books, most of them on natural history and about the American Indians, including *Great upon the Mountain* (a story of Crazy Horse), *Voices of Earth and Sky* (Indian vision search) and *Peoples of the Sea Wind* (native Americans of the Pacific coast).

PHYLLIS JOHNSON is American, and her British husband is the illustrator of this book.

She taught Indian children in Northern Michigan, where she felt the need to learn all she could of Indian history and culture in order that her students might know the riches of their own heritage.

This book has emerged out of those early years.

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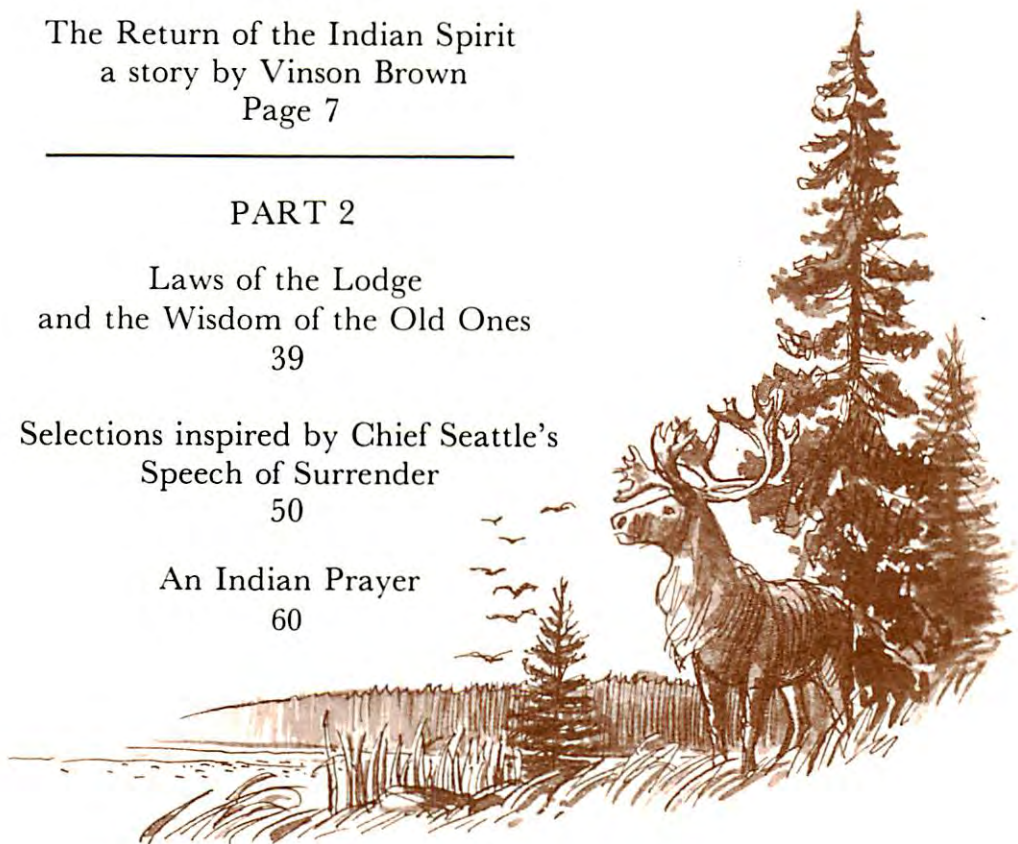
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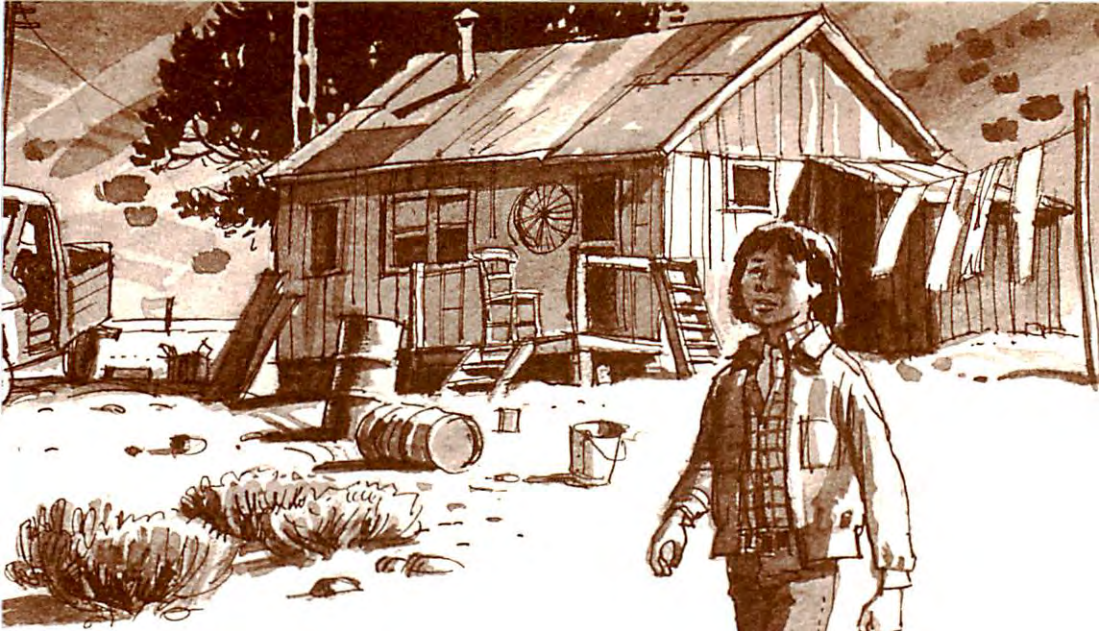
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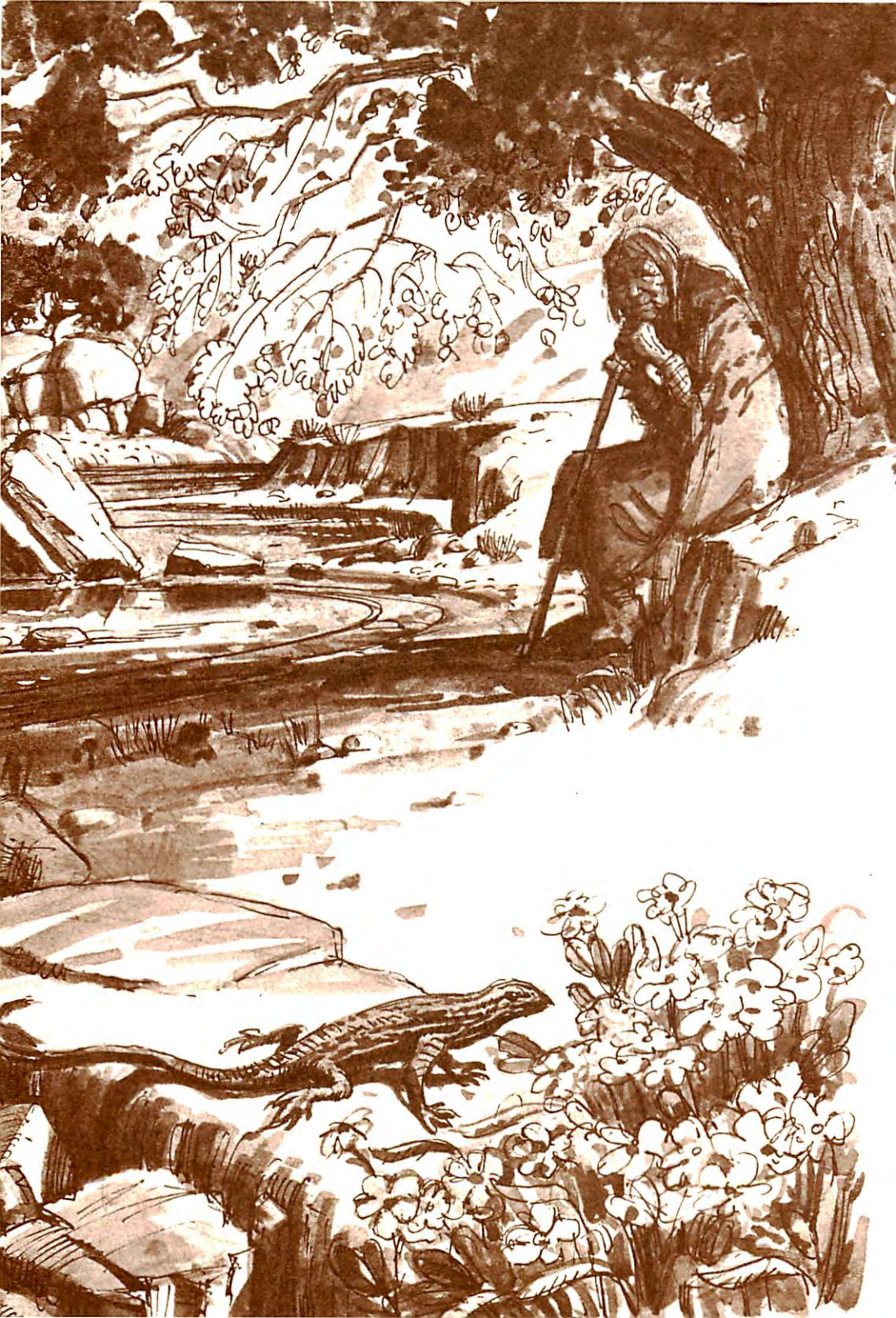


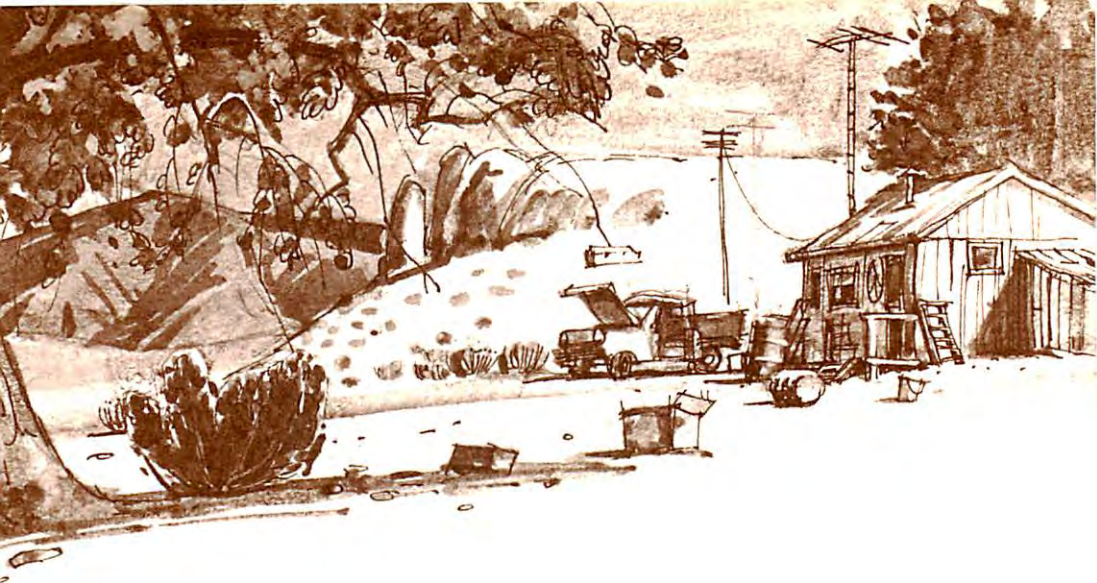




RETURN OF THE INDIAN SPIRIT

Vinson Brown





THE OLD WOMAN sat under the shade of the cottonwood tree by the creek and nodded her head, dozing a little. She was very old, so old that the wrinkles made little fine ridges all over her face and her eyes seemed hidden among the ridges like springs lost in a desert. But when a sand lizard ran among some rattleweed, brushing their stems, and causing the pods to rattle a little in the windless air, she opened her eyes and they peered out from among the folds of skin, bright and glowing with life like two points of black desert opal sparkling in the sun. Eyes of the Fire she had been called long ago when she was seventeen and danced on the prairie while half a dozen fine young hunters pressed forward to woo her. But that was long, long ago, in the days when the white men were still few in number and the Indians yet had some of their ancient freedom.

Now an Indian boy of about twelve summers came wandering down to the creek, a little self-conscious in store clothes, but his eyes gazing about him full of wonder. He was Jim, her great-grandson, recently come from the city where his father worked as a mechanic in a big garage, new to the mountain country, new and strange, and a little bit afraid of the other Indian boys, his relatives who lived there. It was getting near to midday and the other people had gone indoors to snooze through the heat, but Jim walked slowly and shyly down to the creek beside his great-grandmother.

Little flashing lights of laughter raced through the eyes of the old, wise one. She saw the wonder in him as he gazed at the mountains with their snow on top, and said tenderly,

“What do you want, Jim?”

Dust jumped in little spurts as the boy kicked the ground, and his lips trembled. Then they firmed as he looked straight into the lively old eyes.

“I want to ask a question, Oldest Mother.”

“Ask then,” she said quietly and suddenly her body seemed to grow less old, and it appeared almost as if she were sitting straight in a saddle on a spirited horse as she had done many a time in the long ago.

“Last night you told us stories,” said the boy, and you could see in the eager reach of his eyes, the clenching of his fists, how he had sat tensely in the firelight of the previous evening drinking into his very

pores the tales of old. "Last night you told of how the white man came and took our land, of how the Indians were struck by disease until their bones became so weak that thousands died, of how great-grandfather was killed by a white man because he tried to stop a robbery. All these things that you told us about, Oldest Mother, make me want to ask you something."

"Ask then!" she commanded, and her voice was like the wind in the mountains. The boy drew back, as if he would run, but he clenched his hands again and spoke.

"Why did our Grandfather in the sky allow the white men to take our land, Oldest Mother?"

Eyes of the Fire became as still as a desert fox crouched at the hole of a kangaroo rat. Only the eyes remained alive and moving, watching the boy as if she had seen him for the very first time. She saw the fine eyes and the proud way he held his head, the nose of him a little big, but strong and bold, and she saw in him something of his great-grandfather as he had been in his youth when the hunter's glow was about him and he came in proudly through the sagebush with an antelope over his shoulder.

"You are the first to ask that question," she whispered. "Your father and your grandfather never asked such things. Why do you ask?"

"Because I want to know," he cried impatiently. "Why have there been such bad things happen to our people? Why? Why?"

Again the old one became very still. Again she

looked at him long and silently. Could it be, she asked herself, that the spirit is returning? Could it be? Could it be? Something grew inside her, something so strong and powerful, that it roared inside of her like the wild grass fire. It thundered as mustangs do when they stampede down to a waterhole. It had been a small thing before, that hope, only a tiny flicker of flame, nourished somewhere deep within her by the stories of the ancient ones, the wise story tellers, keepers of the traditions of her people. She remembered the fires by the tents of long ago, the coyotes howling and laughing in the circling dark, and the mountains, great lumps to northward, from whence the winds shrieked down with their touch of ice. She remembered shivering deliciously on the edge of the light and the warmth, just a small girl person, unimportant in the tribe, but for awhile caught up with past glories and the great



dreams. Yes, the hope was growing, it was springing within her, like hunters coming home with buffalo rumps and tongues on their saddles and the wild, wild shouting. But she dared not let the hope show in her eyes, she dared not! There would be a long time yet before she could be sure. This was only a soft little boy from the city; time would tell if his will was strong.

She realized suddenly that Jim was looking at her eagerly.

“Listen, boy. who speaks his mind, this is a big question you have asked me. This is a question to be asked by a warrior, not a boy. When a boy your age asked such a question in the old days, the wise chiefs looked at him and said; ‘Ho, what a big question from a little one! Let us test him before we answer, let us send him into the wild places to find his spirit. Only big people can have an answer to such a question. Let us see if he is big.’”

“What do you want me to do, Oldest Mother?”

The question startled the old one. She had not expected it, but now her eyes crinkled and she began to laugh. Somehow it was not an old woman’s laugh. Somehow it breathed the wild laughter of the mountain winds, somewhere within it was the cry of the eagle and the scream of the mountain lion, somewhere also was deep pride that a boy child of her blood should ask such things.

But suddenly Eyes of the Fire grew worried.

“What I want you to do, and what your mother and

father will let you do may be two different things.”

The boy laughed defiantly.

“My mother and father want to lie in the shade and sleep. Or they want to watch the TV or listen to the radio. They have come to rest this summer, they say. But I want to run in the hills and watch the animals. Tell me what you wish me to do, Oldest Mother, and then answer my question. It will be a secret between us.”

“Look at me, Jim,” she commanded. “Do you really want to know the answer to your question? Do you really want to know why the Spirit of All let the white men take our lands?”

The boy nodded his head eagerly and looked straight into her eyes. Then he took a knife from his pocket and suddenly cut his finger. Triumphantly he cried,

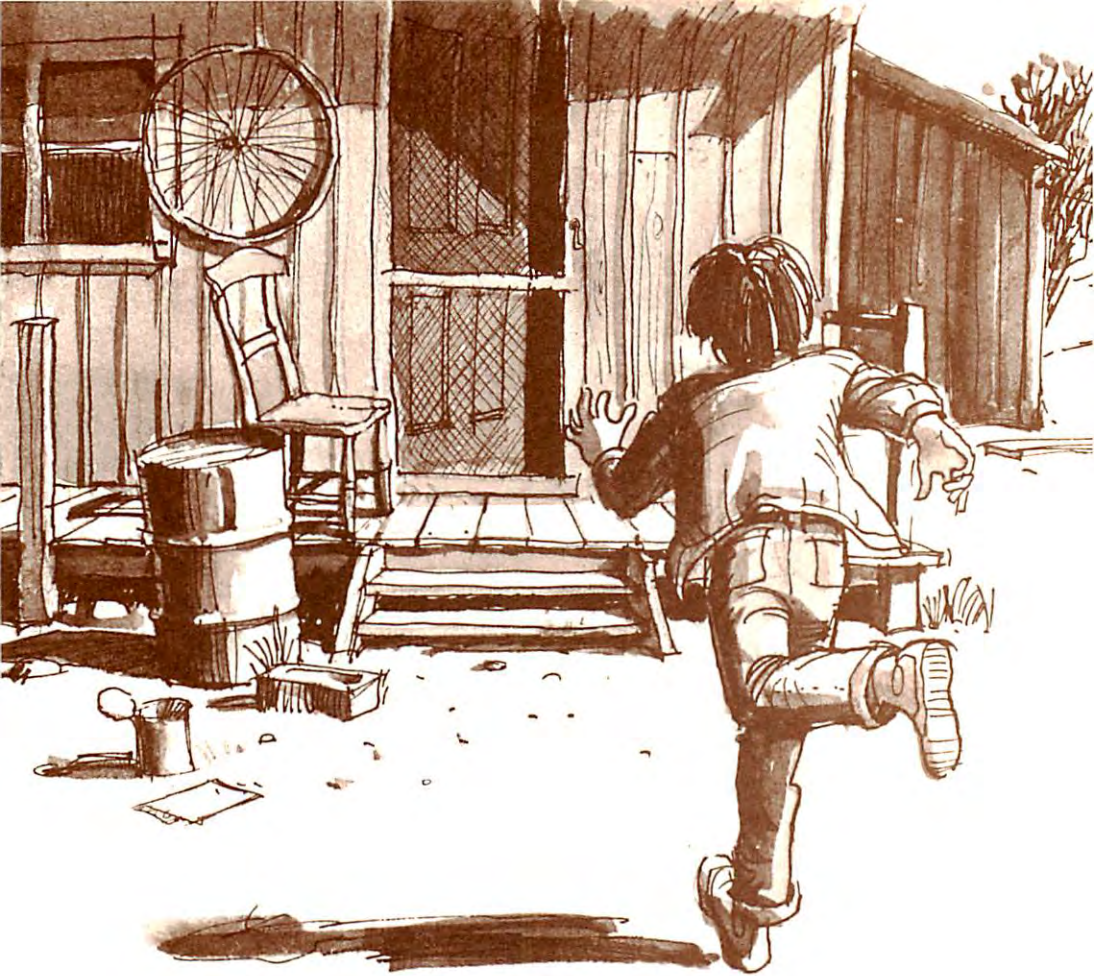
“See, Eyes of the Fire,” and it was the first time he had used her old name. “I have cut myself even as the old ones did when they sought visions. In my blood I have written my answer. Tell me what I must do!”

Tears rushed to her eyes. Blindly she reached out to touch him.

“Thank the One in the Sun I have lived to see this day! Go tell your mother and father that I want to see them.”

She sat up very straight, like a chief at the time of decision, like a warrior drawing his arrow.

The boy ran and his feet kicked up happy clouds of



dust. He was no longer the city boy, afraid of the strange things around him, shy and unsure of himself. He was like his great-grandfather in the long, long ago, joyously running down his first jackrabbit.

When the young mother and father came slowly and protestingly down to the cottonwood tree, led by their eager son, they saw immediately that the old woman was not as they had known her. Her eyes sparkled and

flashed. Even her body, old and bent as it was, seemed strangely young and vigorous.

“What do you want, Grandmother?” the man asked. He was stocky and strong, but he bowed his head a little in spite of himself, as one does to a great and wise chief, and his hands were nervous, for he saw the eagle look in her eyes.

“Sit down and listen to me,” the old one commanded.

They seated themselves in the grass, as cicadas shrilled in the cottonwood trees and the creek murmured over its sand.

She pointed to the boy.

“This one has asked me a question that is important. But it is so important that I can only give the answer to a purified one, a spirit seeker.”

“Oh Grandmother!” protested the young woman, “those things are of the long ago. We live in a new time now.”



The old woman seemed to grow bigger before their eyes. She took a stick and made a mark in the sand. It was the ancient mark of their people, and a sign made with the hands, when two strange tribesmen met.

“For eighty years,” she said slowly, “I have been waiting for this day. For eighty years I have seen the spirit of my people slowly being crushed by the white men. For eighty years I have seen my people trying to follow the white man’s ways. Some of these ways have been good. Some have been very bad. But worst of all has been the going away of the spirit of our people, for a people are nothing when the spirit is gone.”

“But we have learned the white man’s religion,” protested the man. “There is much good in it.”

“There is much good, that is true. But many white men use their religion as a child uses a toy. When they think it is useful to them they remember it, but when it interferes with their pleasure, they forget it.”

The old one was silent... a silence broken only by the soft whisper of the wind among the cottonwood leaves. After a time she began again.

“In the old days we Indians helped each other in trouble; even the weakest were helped; we really lived our religion. Then the white men came with ambitions to change the ways of the Indians. When they brought love, as some few did, this was good, but when they brought the breaking up of our people by the many different approaches to their religion, and laughed at our beliefs, this was bad.”

Her eyes narrowed, as though she were seeing away into the far distant future, and she whispered:

“Let the white men live again the truths of their own religion and no longer will they build walls between themselves and the other peoples of the world.”

The man looked at the ground.

“What do you want us to do?” he asked reluctantly.

“Let the spirit of this boy grow. Let it grow as big as the sky! I will send him to the mountain tops and to the strange places. He will learn the secrets of our people that you and your father have long forgotten. He will bring back the spirit that is almost lost. Long ago the ancient ones told me that these things would be. The white man would crush the spirit of the Indian peoples, and take it to a far place, but after awhile it would come back again, it would be born again. In time a new spirit would come to the world, they said, and we should look for it. Like the rain drops gathering in the clouds of the springtime so would the spirit come to a thirsty land and a dying people. It would bring back life and hope and make them great again. I have seen the beginning of this spirit in this boy. Let it grow! Let it grow!”

The old woman was very tired by her long talk, but her eyes still glowed like shining coals. Suddenly the young man remembered her as he had when a child and a great sense of loss came to him. In the deepest part of his heart, he whispered to himself, “I should have listened to her when I was young. Now it will be



my son who will have the honor.” He saw that his wife was about to protest again, for there was fear in her eyes and her lips moved. He touched her gently with his hand.

“The old one speaks the truth,” he said. “When we shall look deeply we shall understand. It is a great privilege the boy has been offered.”

“I will learn,” said the boy, and he stood as straight as a spear.

Even the young woman began to look at him with pride, and for a time they were all silent.

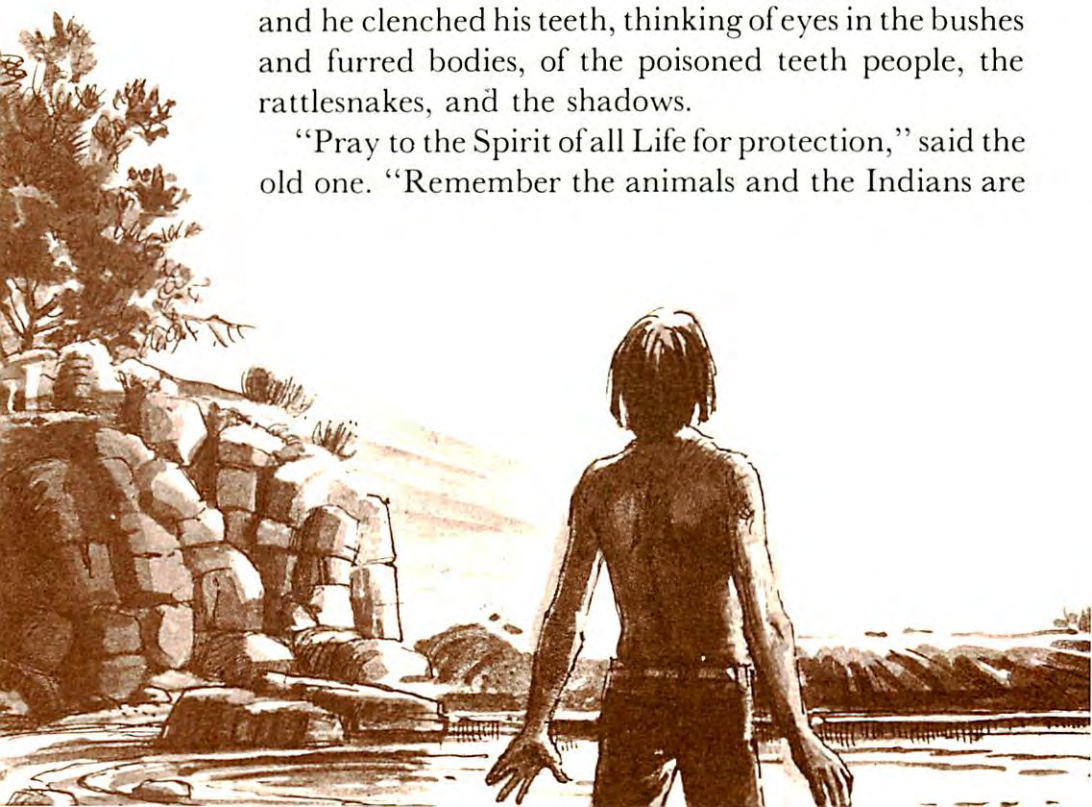
That night the old one told stories by the fire again and the children sat very still as they listened, their eyes big in the gleam of the flames. And it seemed that there was in the air a new thing, a new feeling, as if the spirit of the Indians, withdrawn far into the mountains, hidden in the mountains, came down into the valley again.

The next day Jim was awakened at dawn by a touch

on his shoulder and he looked up into the wise old eyes. He leaped to his feet, ready for the whispered command. So began his training. Each day he jumped into the cold dawn water of the creek and washed himself. He heard the meadowlark calling his morning song, and lifted his face shining to the first red rim of the sun, asking good of all Being. He ran on bare feet to the hills and his feet hurt a little, but he did not cringe. At the top of the hill he lifted his arms and prayed toward the sun, to our Grandfather in the sky, an old, old prayer that Eyes of the Fire had taught him. For ten more days he ran in the hills, till his thighs jumped beneath him as they do in antelopes springing over the prairie.

In the middle of the tenth night the old hand touched him, and he rose trembling to go out into the darkness. He knew that this was the test for courage and he clenched his teeth, thinking of eyes in the bushes and furred bodies, of the poisoned teeth people, the rattlesnakes, and the shadows.

“Pray to the Spirit of all Life for protection,” said the old one. “Remember the animals and the Indians are



brothers. If your heart is good, nothing will harm you. Do not worry about sticks and things in the darkness, but walk like a man and bring to me from the top of the highest hill a rock that strikes fire.”

As Jim walked through the dark night toward the hills, he trembled and looked about wildly. He banged his head on a branch, tripped on a rock, and fell, sprawling, into a prickly bush. A scream fought up in his throat, but he forced it back as a road runner bird seizes and forces back a striking rattlesnake. All round him he heard strange noises and rustlings. In the distance a coyote howled like a lost devil child and he was sure he heard the foot falls of a panther creeping softly beside him in the stillness. Then, even as he wished to cry for help and run back to the house, he heard in his mind the voice of his great-grandmother saying, “If your heart is good, nothing will harm you. The Indians and the animals are brothers.”

The spirit leaped like a stallion within him and he said a prayer as he gazed up at the stars. He also whispered an ancient song of past warriors, “The night is my friend, for it hides me, and I am a wolf in the night-time.”

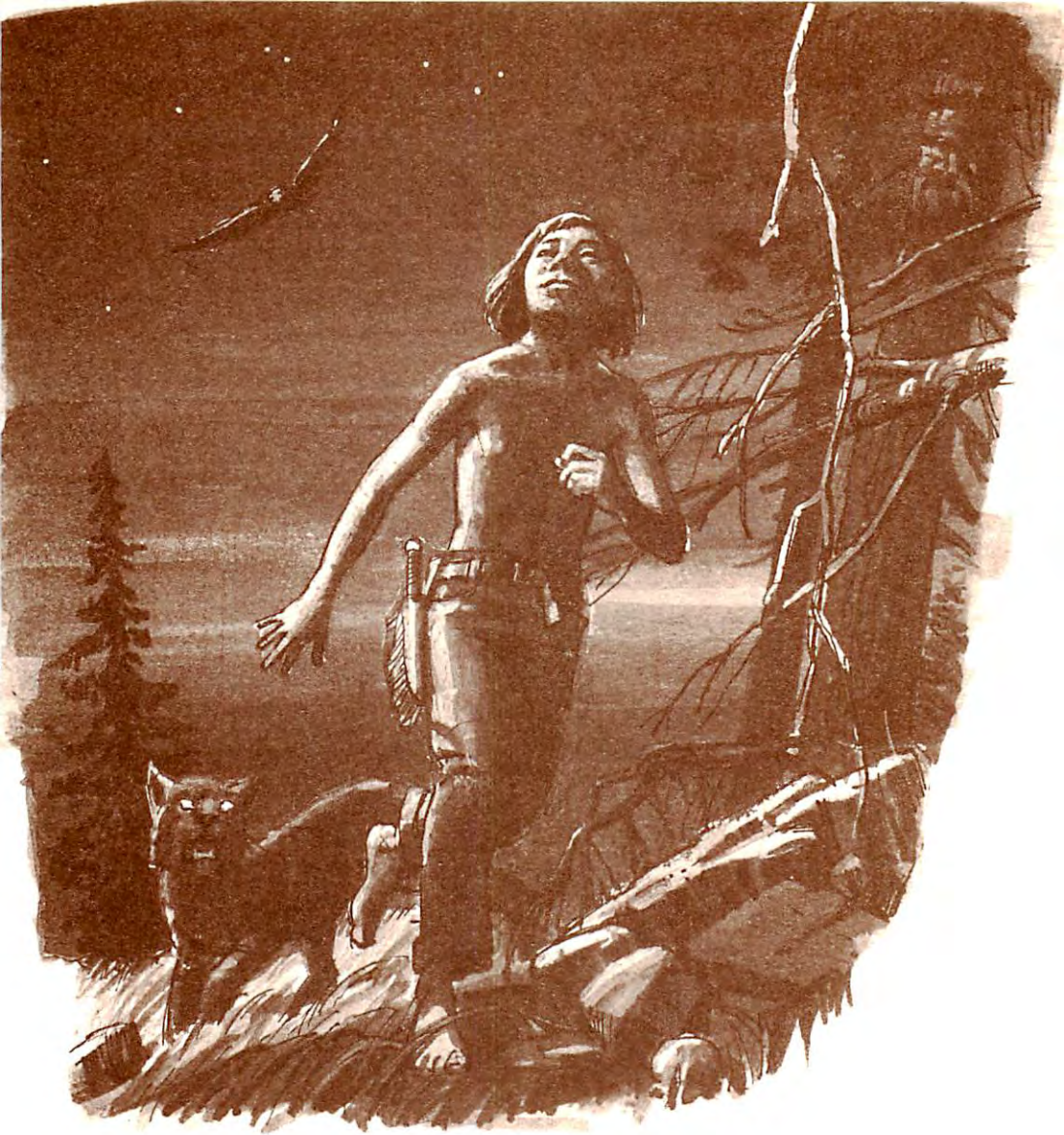


Now proudly he stepped through the starlight. He came to a clump of juniper trees and he walked among them without a branch touching him, for his body seemed as fluid as creek water. He began to run with feet that felt as if they had eyes in their toes, and his body sensed every rock and shrub and tree he passed. He flashed up the last bit of steep climb to the hilltop without panting. He seized a rock and knew by the feel of it that it was a fire stone. His fingers scrabbled over ground for another rock of the same kind, and he struck the two together until they made a shower of sparks. Far below, he saw an answering light from the valley and he sucked in his breath, knowing with joy that sang that the old one watched.

He laughed aloud, for he knew he had passed the first difficult test and he thrust his arms out into the coolness of the wind. All the darkness was full of little voices talking, whisperings and rustlings, squeakings from under the bushes, and in the far distance, an owl hooting weirdly. Once he had shivered at these sounds, but now they seemed to be saying over and over, "Jim has won! Jim has won!"

Day and night the training went on. He learned to lie perfectly motionless watching a squirrel until he knew all its habits. Day and night muscles and mind and soul were toughened, and his spirit grew.

After three weeks the old, wise one felt the muscles in his legs and arms. They were as hard as the black obsidian rock.



“Make your own bow and arrow,” she said.
“Forget the guns of the white men. They are only cold steel, but the bow of the Indian has a soul; it comes



alive in his hands. And the making of a bow, the very task done in love and worship, puts the strength of the Spirit within you. When you have made a bow your father cannot break, then bring me a deer from the mountains, remembering an Indian kills only for things that he needs.”

Jim had never made a bow before. The first one broke in his hands when he pulled on it. The second one, the old one told the father to test and, in the hands of the strong man, it snapped in two. In secret Jim wept because that bow had taken a long time to make and he was tired of bow making. The old one told him to go to a certain cave in the hills where he found a branch of seasoned hard wood and brought it back to the house. Stubbornly he gritted his teeth and set to work on the wood, but feeling the job was endless. Suddenly, on the second day, the old Indian

spirit of craftsmanship settled upon him. Cutting, filing, smoothing, he began to see the grain of the wood turn beautiful under his hands as it took on the shape of the ancient bow of his great-grandfather, a bow that hung under the smoked black rafters of the house by the creek.

This third bow did not break when the man tried it. It was strong and true and its bowstring of sinew hummed threateningly when Jim pulled it. Following the old one's instructions, he made arrows out of willows and mountain mahogany and feathered them with turkey feathers.

He went into the hills to practice because he wished no one to see him. At first the arrows went every way but the way to the target and many arrows were broken. Grimly Jim made more arrows, and slowly he grew better. His arm was raw where the bowstring struck it, until he learned to put on a guard of leather. At last he learned to hold two arrows in his mouth while shooting the first and soon could wing all three arrows singing into the target within a dozen seconds' span.



Two nights later he was alone in a canyon of the mountain, looking into the dancing flames and seeing the ancient hunters gather around him in the flickering shadows to give advice. He bent his head and prayed the age-long prayer that the deer people would forgive him for his kill, that he would partake of their strength and courage by eating their flesh, that his heart would be good.

Trees and shadows and grass merged with his spirit in the new dawn; the creek, laughing down over its rocks, sang in his blood; the movement of dark forms at the edge of a meadow in some cottonwoods keyed his nerves to tight alertness. Rocks and sharp leaves scarred his knees as he began his stalking. But he poured all his soul into his hunting until he became a part of the earth, until his brown body merged with leaf and rock and trunk as if no human being were there.

How his hand shook when he rose at last from behind a boulder and drew the arrow to its notched head, gazing down the waving line of it at the tan shoulder of a young buck! Suddenly the white tail flashed and the buck jumped away, hooves pounding. A new power surged into Jim and his heart let out a great shout as he heard the arrow sing its deadly song. It struck the fleeing buck and Jim plunged after it, shouting.

Suddenly he saw the deer lying near him under a bush, blood gushing from its mouth, and its great dark



eyes flooding with pain and terror. And, in those eyes, when he got close, he saw all the pain of countless animals wounded in the past by men, lying, writhing in traps, or with shattered limbs, and he knew suddenly what he had never understood before, why the wise Indians of old killed only in need for food or clothing or in self-defense. Even as he struck the blow that brought a merciful end to pain, his heart leaped with a great and silent prayer. He prayed that this would be the last time he needed to kill and that, instead, he would help protect and bring back to the earth the animals that

the white men had almost destroyed. He made a sign his people used only when making a sacred vow, promising the Great Spirit to make it so.

“It is well,” said the old, wise one, when Jim laid the meat and skin before her late that evening, “he is beginning to be a man.” She tossed some sacred seed on the fire until the flame blazed cherry red, but he was so silent that she looked long into his eyes until she understood and touched him gently.

“This one has seen pain in others,” she said solemnly. “Look you tonight, oh people,” and her voice rose thrillingly, “like a wise chief, this boy has been close to the heart of the Silent One and his spirit will be great in the years to come.”

In the warm silence the others understood. Into the stillness a drum began its thumping, and the people started to sing with the wonderful, lifting spirit of the days when the prairies had no fences, but were clean and beautiful for a thousand miles!

Still the training went on, the climbing of cliffs, the search for food and medicinal herbs, the watching, the running, until one day Jim stood before the old one with fiery eyes.

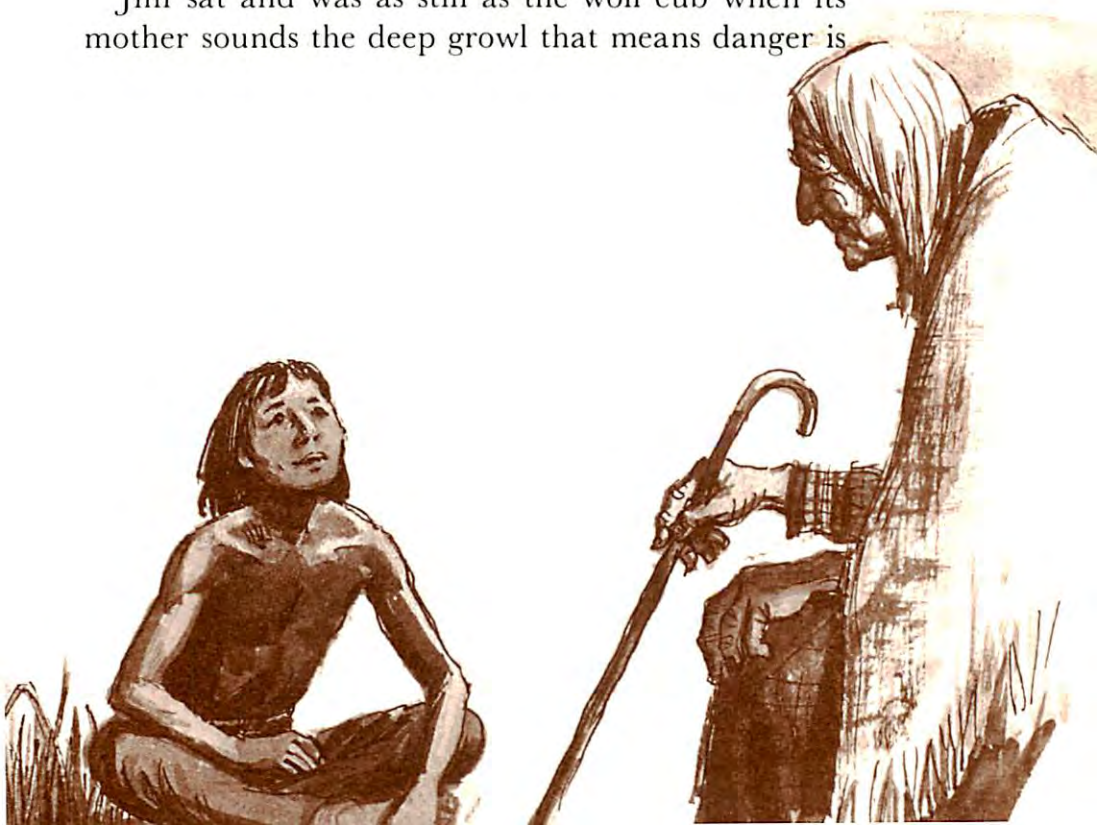
“Tell me now, Oldest Mother, why did the Old Man, the Lord of the Lightning, let the white men take our lands?”

She laughed the long, hearty laugh, the deep, wonderful laugh that is heard only when the people know that just friends are about. She reached down

with a stick and drew in the dust until she showed a mountain top and the figure of a man standing on the mountain with his arms reached to the sky.

“You have climbed and you have hunted, you have searched and you have found. You have made your muscles like the mountain lion’s and your eyes like the eagle’s. You have done all these things and there is only one last thing you must do to become a true man, and that is climb to the top of the great mountain over there and eat no food and pray for a vision to come to you from the Spirit of all Things. But, before you do that, I am going to tell you why the Oldest One let the white men take the land of the Indians. Sit and be still! For all I shall tell you will help you to find your vision.”

Jim sat and was as still as the wolf cub when its mother sounds the deep growl that means danger is





near. Eyes of the Fire made circles in the dust with her stick and then drew a big circle that surrounded all the little circles.

“These little circles are all the little nations and all the religions of the world, but the big circle...” she paused. “The big circle is the One Great Spirit that encloses them all, and knows them all just as a mother quail draws all the chicks of her brood under her wings and loves them all as a mother should.

“Long ago, the wise old chiefs and the wise old women taught the children how to grow up and to love one another. All the land belonged to all the people and all the children felt that every man or woman was a father or a mother. So there was no hurt child wandering alone and unloved, and there was no old person who did not have people who looked after him or her. When the young, strong hunters went out to kill buffalo or antelope or deer or elk, they would bring back to the old people, and to the widow and the



weak, the best of the meat. So there was goodness and a common purpose among the people, and there were almost never any thieves or murderers who do so much to harm the people these days.”

She was silent. Then she gently outlined again in the warm sand the Great Circle that surrounded the smaller circles.

“But what about the wars with other Indians?” questioned Jim.

“It is true that sometimes there were wars, but these were few before the white men came. You must know that they came from across the great ocean and then gradually moved west. As they moved they drove the Indians before them, so that tribes were pressed against each other and began to fight to protect their villages and hunting grounds. The more they pushed westward, the more fighting there was until finally there was fighting everywhere. And the white men brought their whisky that drove the Indians crazy so that they did

foolish things that never were done in the ancient days.”

Again she was silent, lost in the vivid memory of the scenes she herself had witnessed. The boy was silent too, until at last he quietly pressed his urgent question once more.

“But now tell me, Oldest Mother, why did the Spirit of the Earth let the white men take our people’s lands?”

Eyes of the Fire laughed again, a laugh like thunder in a distant canyon, and hid her mouth with her hand, rocking a little from side to side.

“All these things I have told you will help you to understand,” she replied. “The old wise ones told me long ago why the white men were sent. The Heart of all Being sent them because the white men come from a land where only white men lived and it was necessary for them to come to this place where they would learn about other races and learn to live with them, and that one day, when the Indians got the old spirit back again, they would teach the white men how to really love one another and how to love all mankind. Now, because the Indians have been humbled and made poor by the white man’s conquest, they have been cleansed of all selfish pride. They are ready for a great awakening and they will awaken others.”

Eyes of the Fire spoke with a commanding authority. She paused, as if summoning before her the ancient

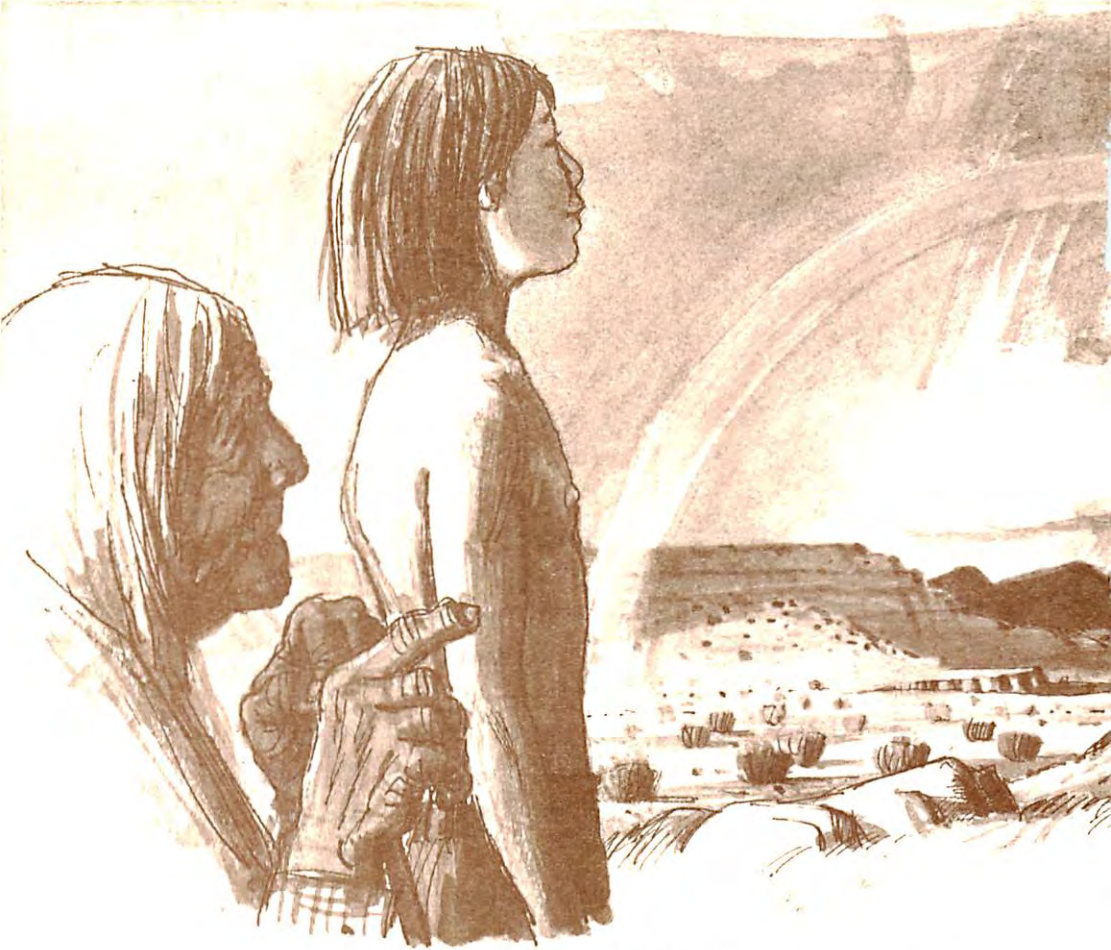
vision. A light breeze swirled sand across her finely beaded moccasins. At last she went on.

“In their dreams the old ones saw that the Indians would go through a very bad time, that they would lose their spirit, that they would be split up into many parts by the different religions of the white men. Like the white men, they would try to find what these strange people call success. But one day the Indians would begin to wake up, the old ones told me. They would see that those white people who chased after their pleasures left behind the truly important things in life. The Indians would see that their people in the old days were in tune with something far more wonderful, the Spirit of Life.”

Jim saw the fiery eyes of his great-grandmother flash and her body grow taut as she crouched in her old chair. Then she spoke again, her whispered voice slowly growing stronger.

“And you must realize that this is not all the old ones saw in their dreams. They saw that just when the Indians seemed to be growing like the more foolish of the white men, just when everybody thought they had forgotten about the ancient days, at that time a great light would come from the east. It would come into the hearts of some of the Indians, and they would become like the prairie fire, spreading not only love between all races, but also between the different religions.”

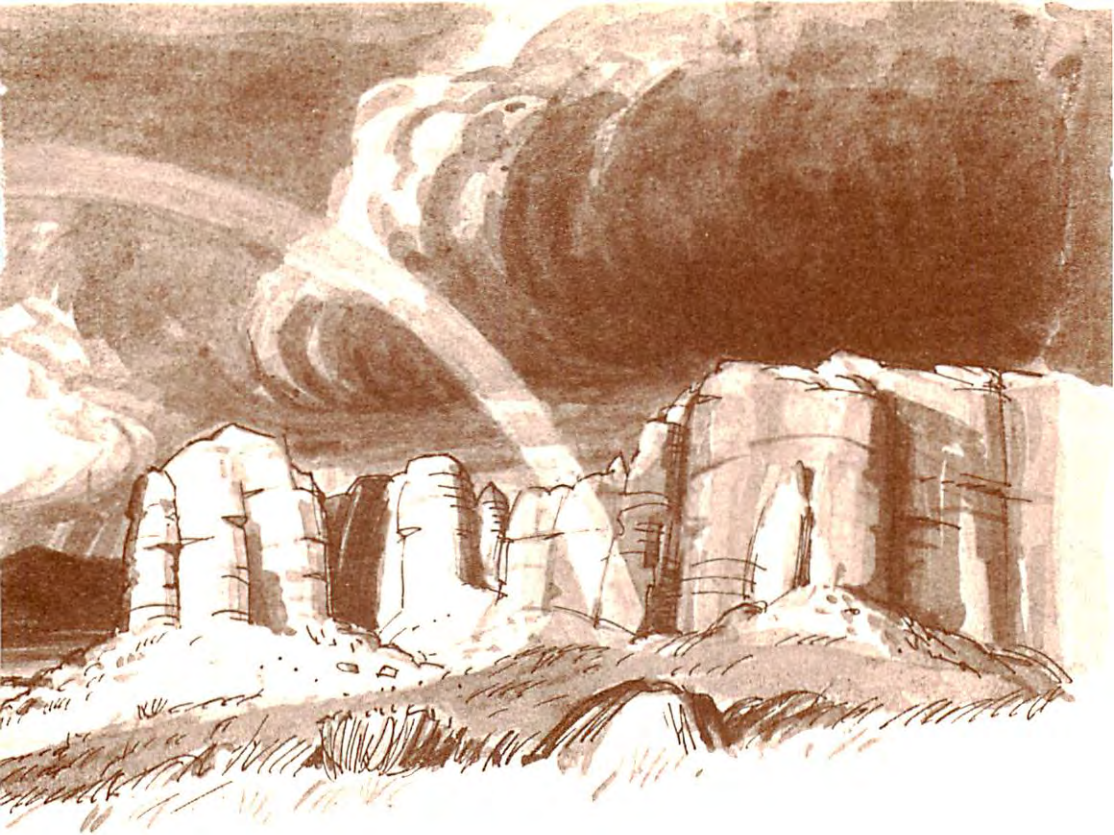
A shiver of excitement rippled through Jim’s alert figure as he too glimpsed something of what the old



one described in answer to his burning question.

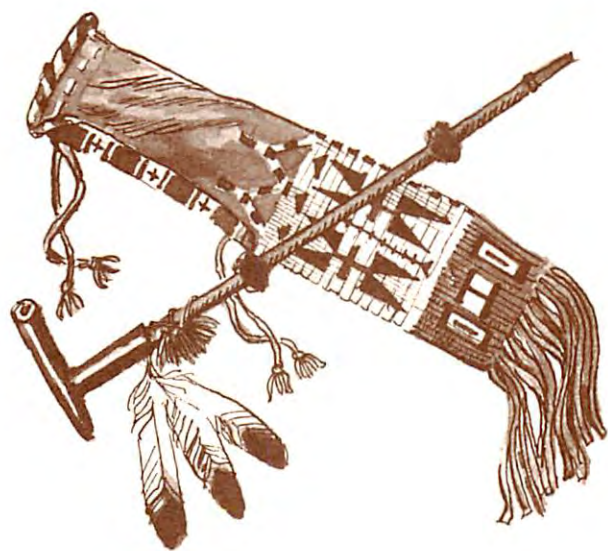
“This light you must find, oh son of my son’s son, my beloved. And I believe that when you seek for your vision on the mountain top you will be told how to find it. For it will be something so big and wonderful that in it, all peoples of the world can find shelter.”

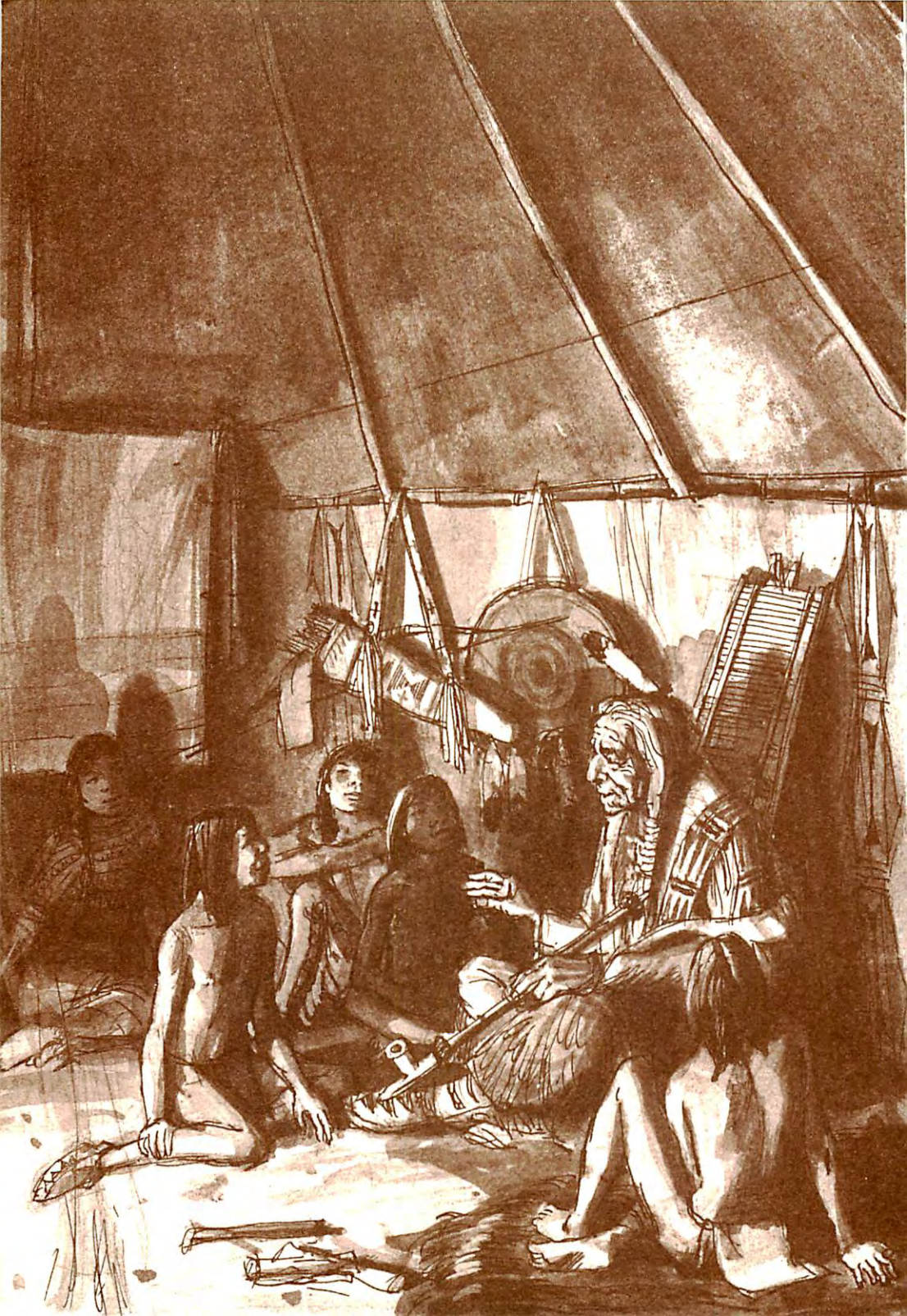
As she stopped talking, the old woman and the boy looked to the east and they saw a great rainbow flaming in the sky where a thunderstorm had passed.



“The rainbow is a sign from Him who is in all things,” said the old, wise one. “It is a sign of the union of all people like one big family. Go to the mountain top, child of my flesh, grow in the skills of manhood, learn to be a Warrior of the Rainbow, one whose strong obedient spirit will overcome, with love, the fear and hate in this world so that war and destruction shall end!”

PART 2





IN THE OLD DAYS, it was around the campfire that every boy and girl learned to know and love the rich heritage of their people, from the stories of the old ones.

They were eager listeners, for they soon learned that greatness lay in being equipped to serve their people. One day the safety of the tribe might depend on them!

The fundamental principles of life, shared by most tribes, have been passed down to us in the words of some of their great chiefs; amongst them, Sitting Bull, Crazy Horse, Tecumseh and Wabasha.

Listen now to the wisdom of their words.

Hear again the Laws of the Lodge as they were practiced.

Those who would be Warrior of the Rainbow will find in them much help in following that trail.



When you arise in the morning
Give thanks for the morning light.
Give thanks for your life and strength.
Give thanks for your food
And give thanks for the joy of living.
And if perchance you see no reason
for giving thanks,
Rest assured the fault is in yourself.

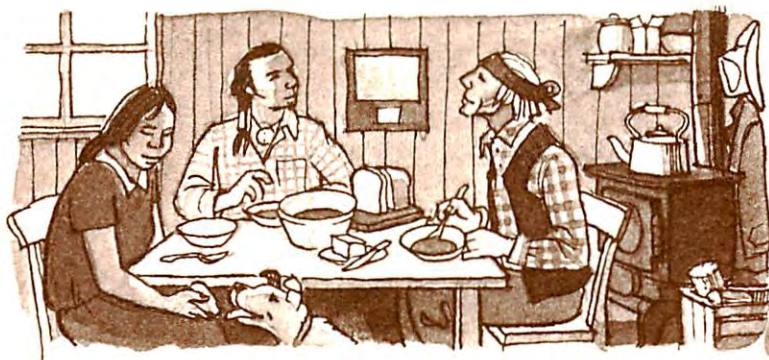
A chant of the Osages

When you are assembled in council
...light the Sacred Pipe, which is
the symbol of peace, brotherhood,
council and prayer, and smoke first
to the Great Spirit above, then to
the Four Winds, his messengers, and
to Mother Earth, through whom he
furnishes us our food. Let each
councillor smoke, passing the Pipe
in a circle like that of the sun
from east southward to the west.

Every village should have its holy
place, its Medicine Lodge, where men
may meet to dance the dance, smoke the
good smoke, make medicine.



Be hospitable. Be kind. Always assume that your guest is tired, cold, and hungry. If even a hungry dog enter your lodge, you must feed him.



Thank the Great Spirit for each meal; cast a bit of meat into the fire and pray, "Great Spirit, partake with us."

Go hungry rather than stint your guest. If he refuses food, say nothing, he may be under vow.

Always repay calls of courtesy. Do not delay.

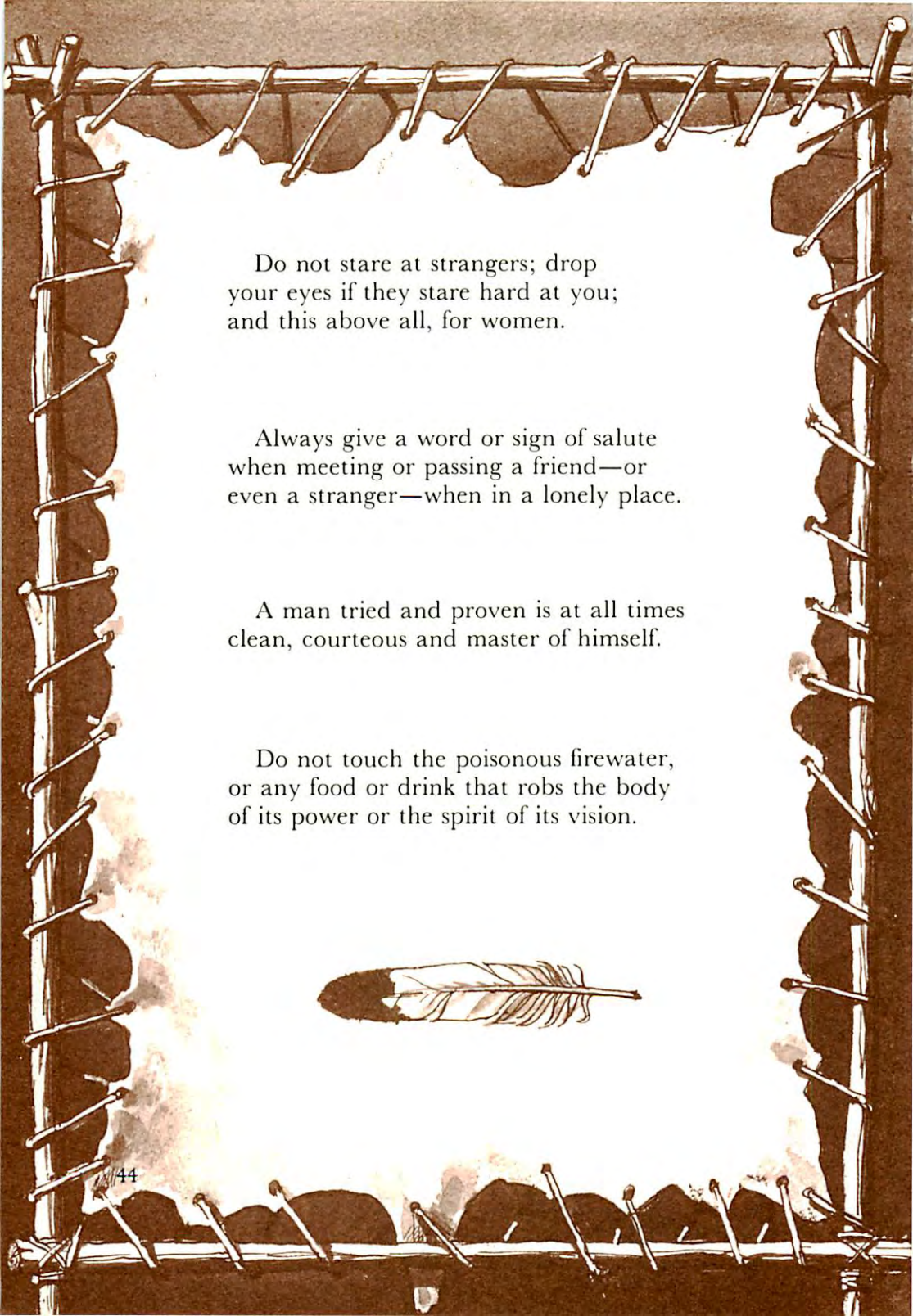
When you arrive at strange camp or village, first pay your respects to the Chief before you call on your friend of lesser rank. It may be the Chief does not wish you to be received at all.

When you leave the camp in the morning, clean up all rubbish, burn or bury it. Do not go about polluting the land or destroying its beauty.

In another man's lodge, follow his customs, not your own.

Every man must treat with respect all such things as are sacred to other people, whether he comprehends them or not.





Do not stare at strangers; drop
your eyes if they stare hard at you;
and this above all, for women.

Always give a word or sign of salute
when meeting or passing a friend—or
even a stranger—when in a lonely place.

A man tried and proven is at all times
clean, courteous and master of himself.

Do not touch the poisonous firewater,
or any food or drink that robs the body
of its power or the spirit of its vision.

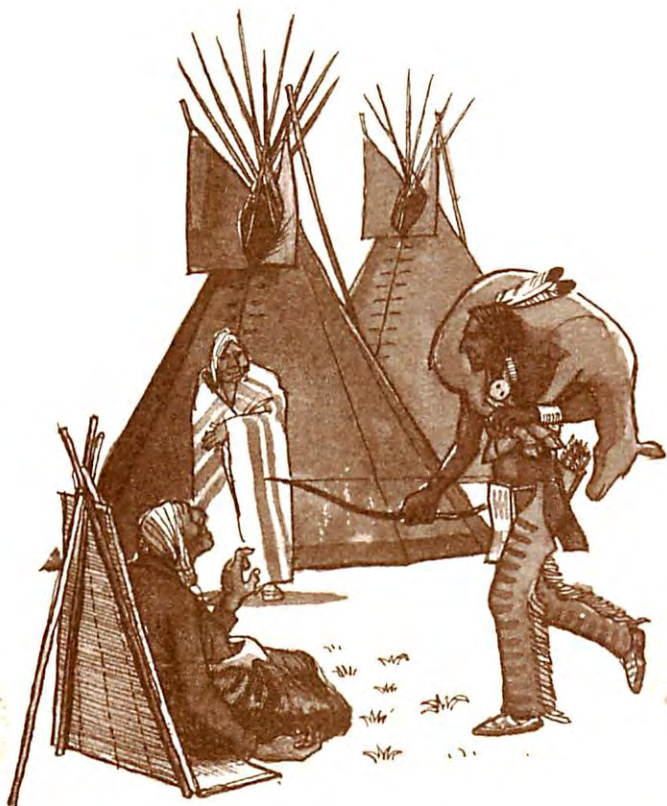


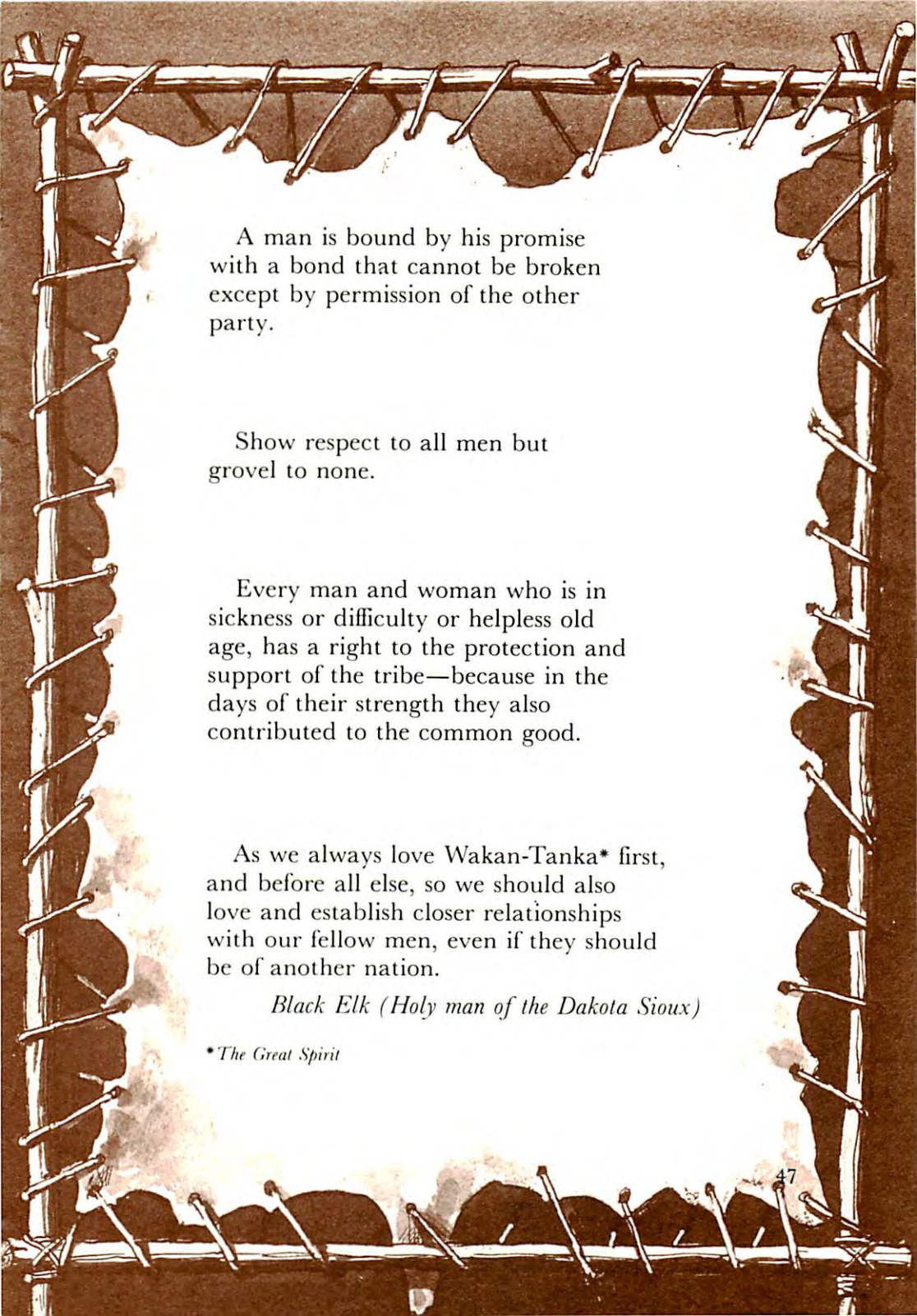


It is unworthy of a man to have great possessions, when there are those of his tribe in want. If he has more than he needs for himself and his family he should call the people together and give a Potlatch, or Feast of Giving, and distribute his surplus to those that have need, according to their need.

Be merciful to those who are in your power. It is the part of a coward to torture a prisoner or ill-treat those who are helpless before you.

It is the part of a Chief to take care of the weak, the sick, the old and the helpless.





A man is bound by his promise
with a bond that cannot be broken
except by permission of the other
party.

Show respect to all men but
grovel to none.

Every man and woman who is in
sickness or difficulty or helpless old
age, has a right to the protection and
support of the tribe—because in the
days of their strength they also
contributed to the common good.

As we always love Wakan-Tanka* first,
and before all else, so we should also
love and establish closer relationships
with our fellow men, even if they should
be of another nation.

Black Elk (Holy man of the Dakota Sioux)

**The Great Spirit*

No people is finished until the hearts of its women are on the ground; and then it is done, no matter how strong the warrior or how straight the lance.

An old Cheyenne saying

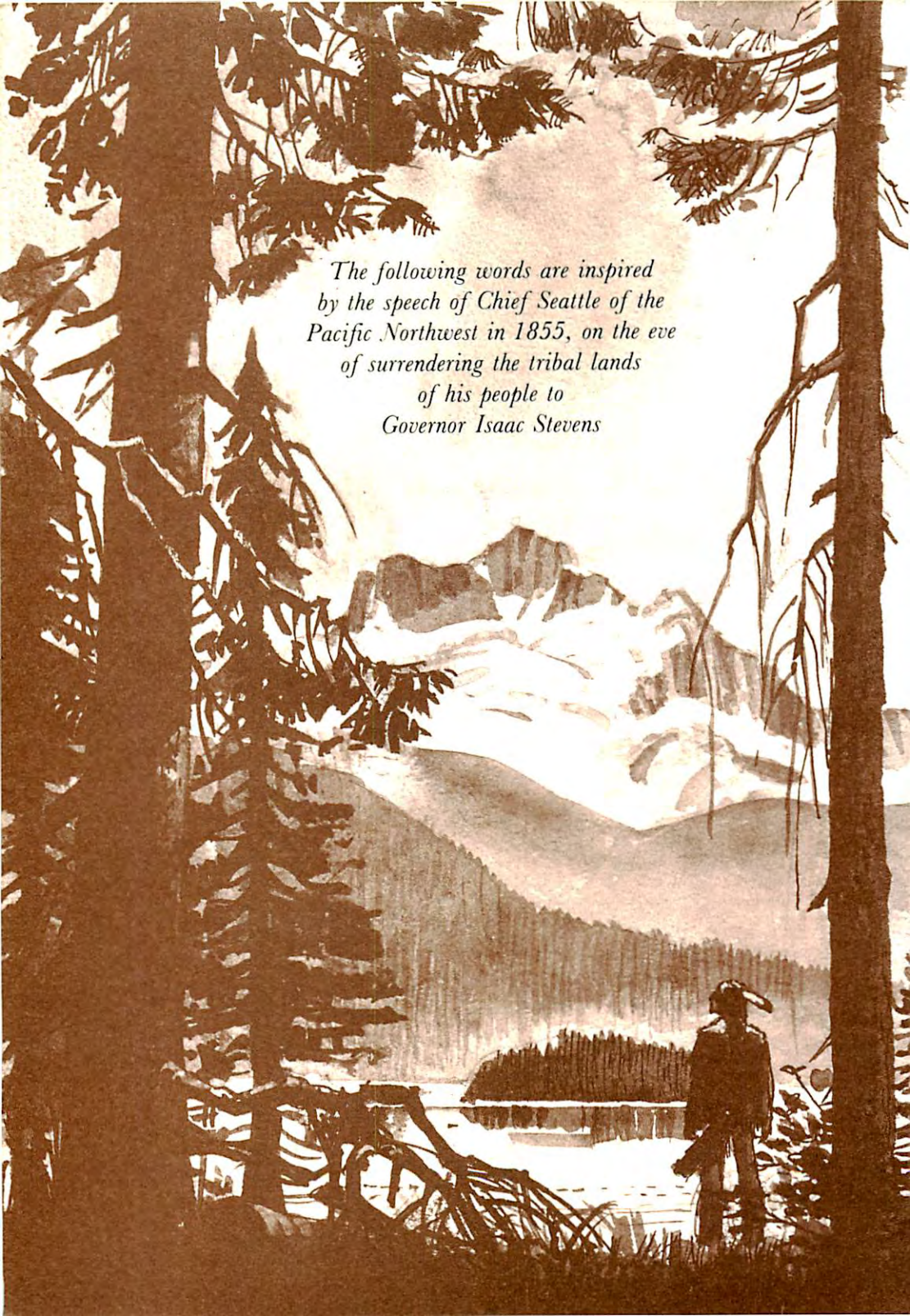


Silence is the cornerstone of character.


The fruits of silence are self-control, endurance, patience, dignity and reverence.

Ohiyesa (Dakota Sioux)





*The following words are inspired
by the speech of Chief Seattle of the
Pacific Northwest in 1855, on the eve
of surrendering the tribal lands
of his people to
Governor Isaac Stevens*



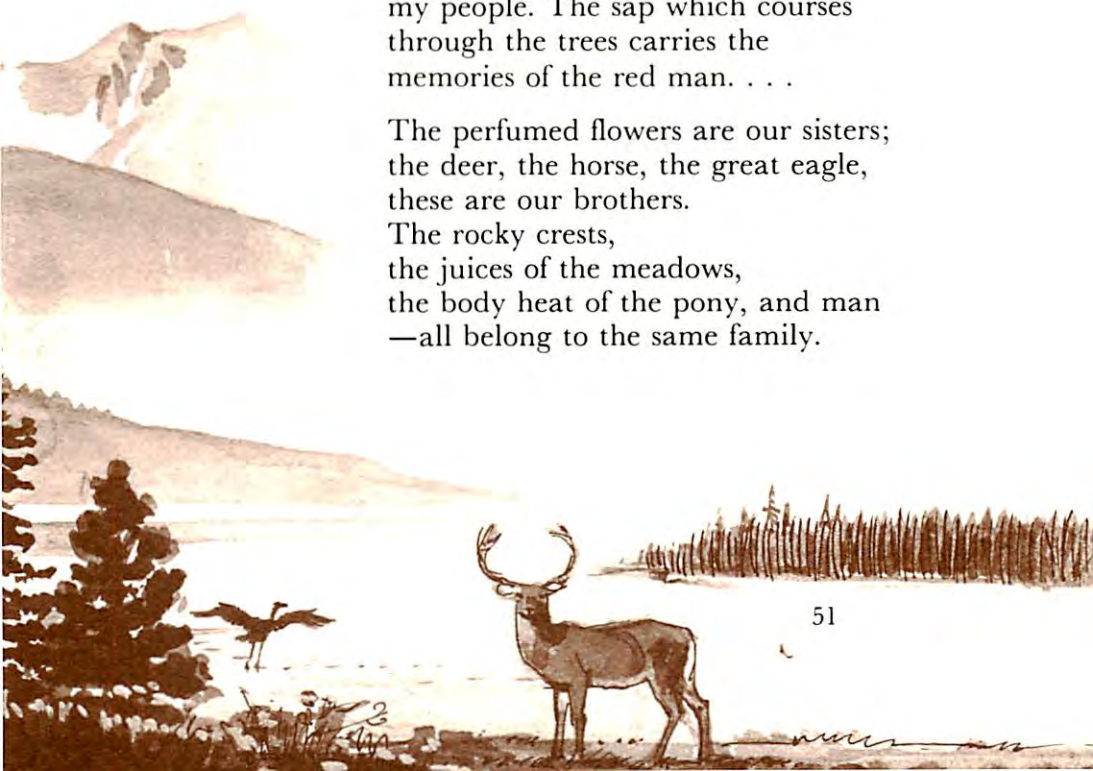
THE GREAT CHIEF in Washington
sends word that he wishes
to buy our land. . . .

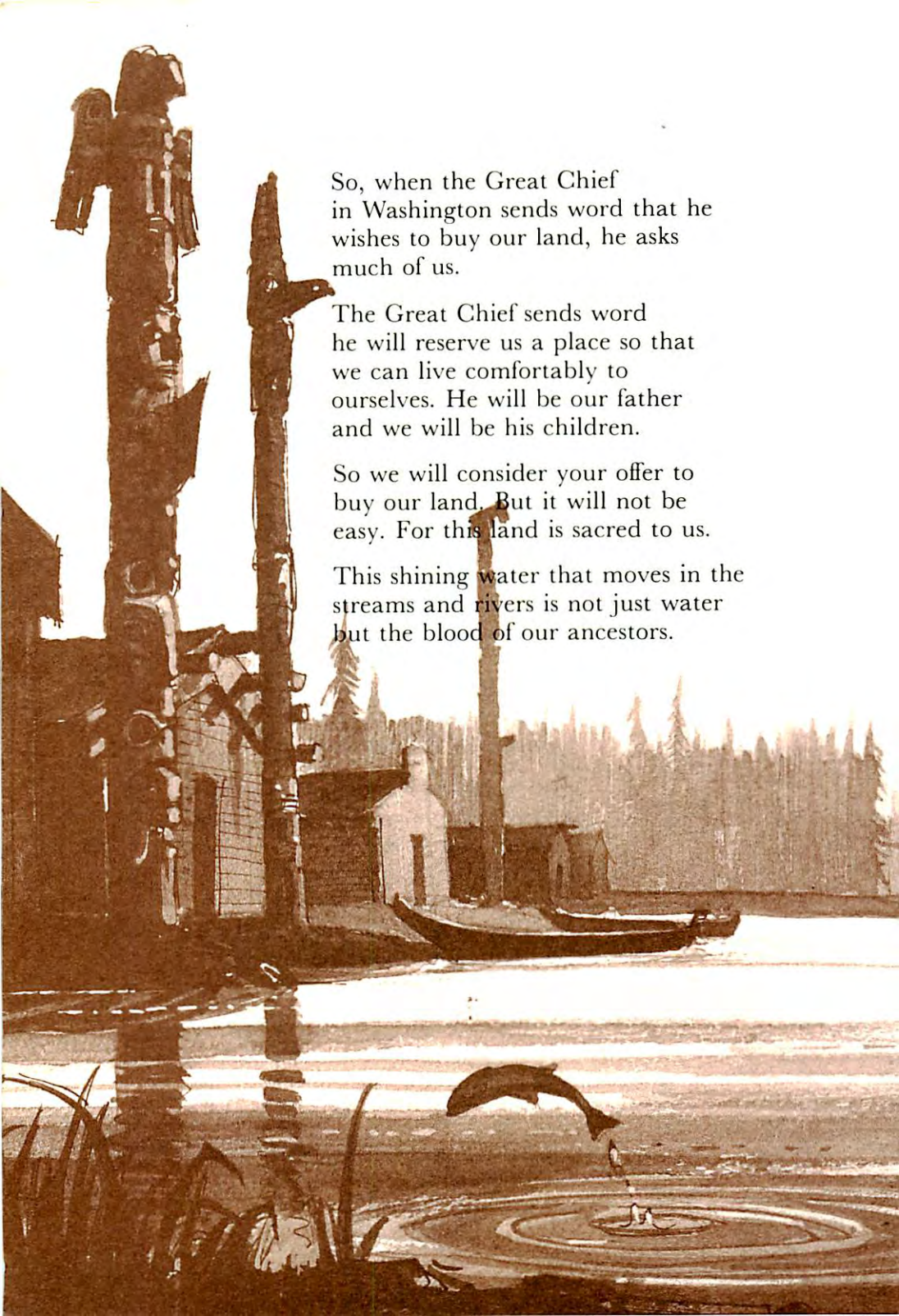
How can you buy or sell the sky,
the warmth of the land?
The idea is strange to us.

If we do not own the freshness
of the air and the sparkle of the
water, how can you buy them?

Every part of this earth
is sacred to my people. Every
shining pine needle, every
sandy shore, every mist in
the dark woods, every clearing,
and humming insect is holy in
the memory and experience of
my people. The sap which courses
through the trees carries the
memories of the red man. . . .

The perfumed flowers are our sisters;
the deer, the horse, the great eagle,
these are our brothers.
The rocky crests,
the juices of the meadows,
the body heat of the pony, and man
—all belong to the same family.





So, when the Great Chief
in Washington sends word that he
wishes to buy our land, he asks
much of us.

The Great Chief sends word
he will reserve us a place so that
we can live comfortably to
ourselves. He will be our father
and we will be his children.

So we will consider your offer to
buy our land. But it will not be
easy. For this land is sacred to us.

This shining water that moves in the
streams and rivers is not just water
but the blood of our ancestors.

If we sell you land, you must remember that it is sacred, and you must teach your children that it is sacred and that each ghostly reflection in the clear water of the lakes tells of events and memories in the life of my people. The water's murmur is the voice of my father's father.

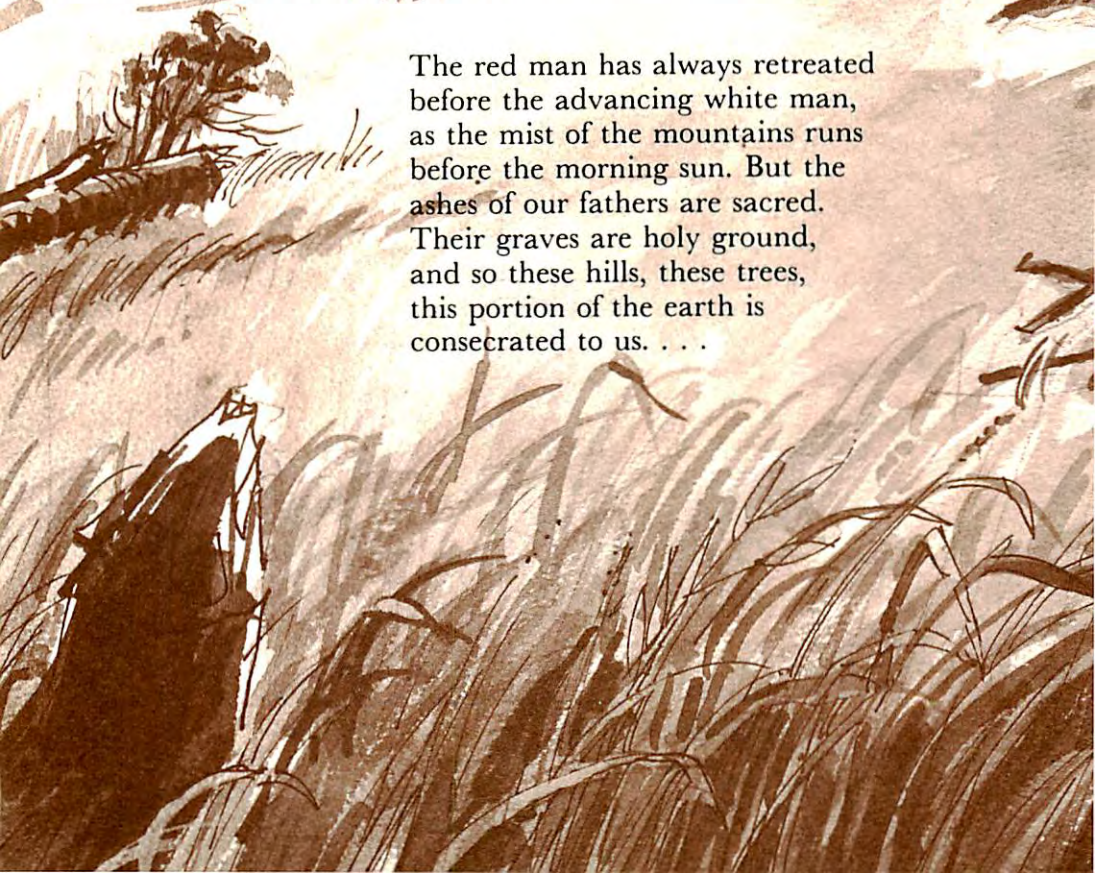
The rivers are our brothers, they quench our thirst. The rivers carry our canoes, and feed our children. If we sell you our land, you must remember, and teach your children, that the rivers are our brothers, and yours, and you must henceforth give the rivers the kindness you would give any brother.



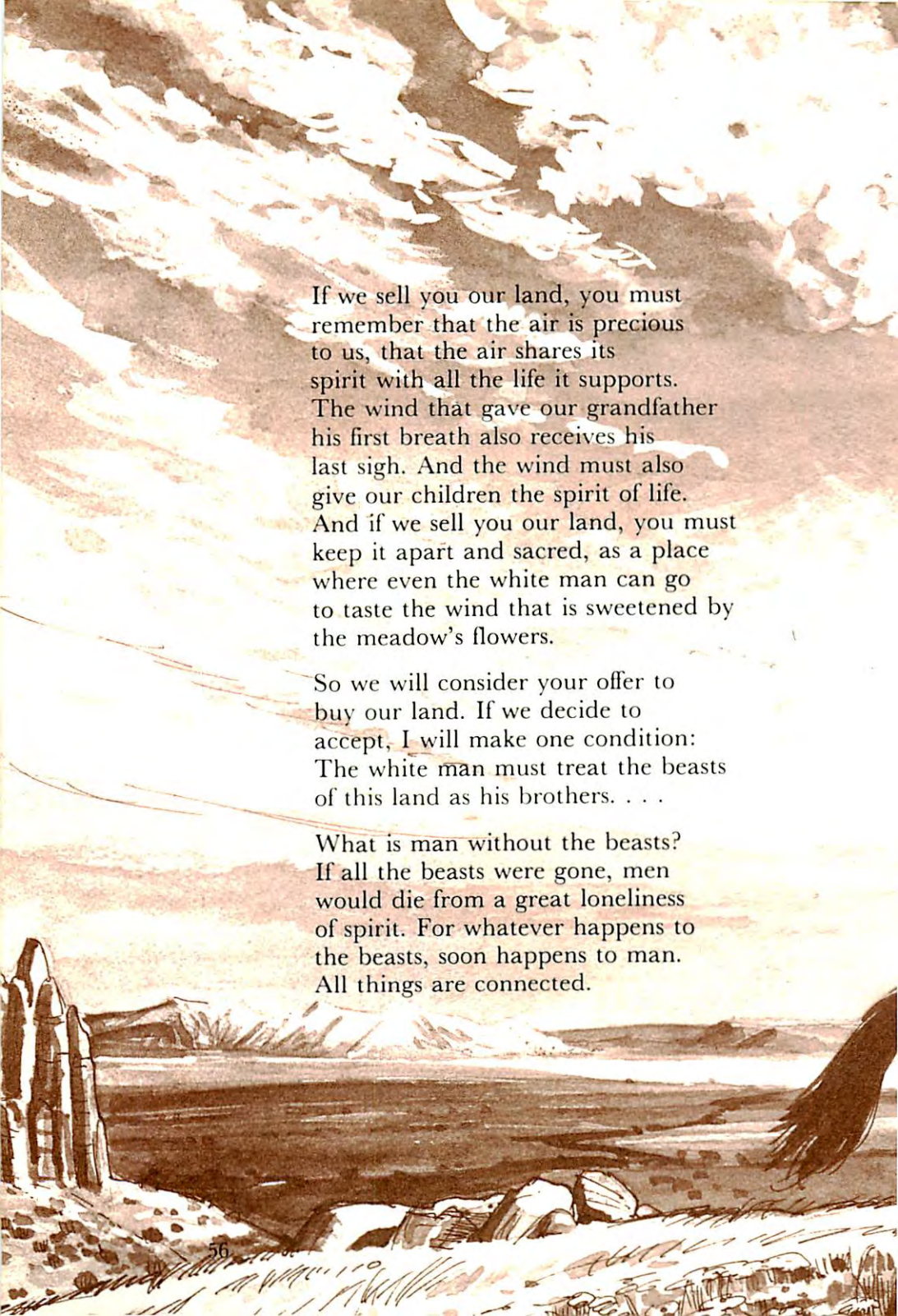
Totem poles, to the north of Chief Seattle's people, denote family ancestry and "events and memories" from the past.



The red man has always retreated before the advancing white man, as the mist of the mountains runs before the morning sun. But the ashes of our fathers are sacred. Their graves are holy ground, and so these hills, these trees, this portion of the earth is consecrated to us. . . .



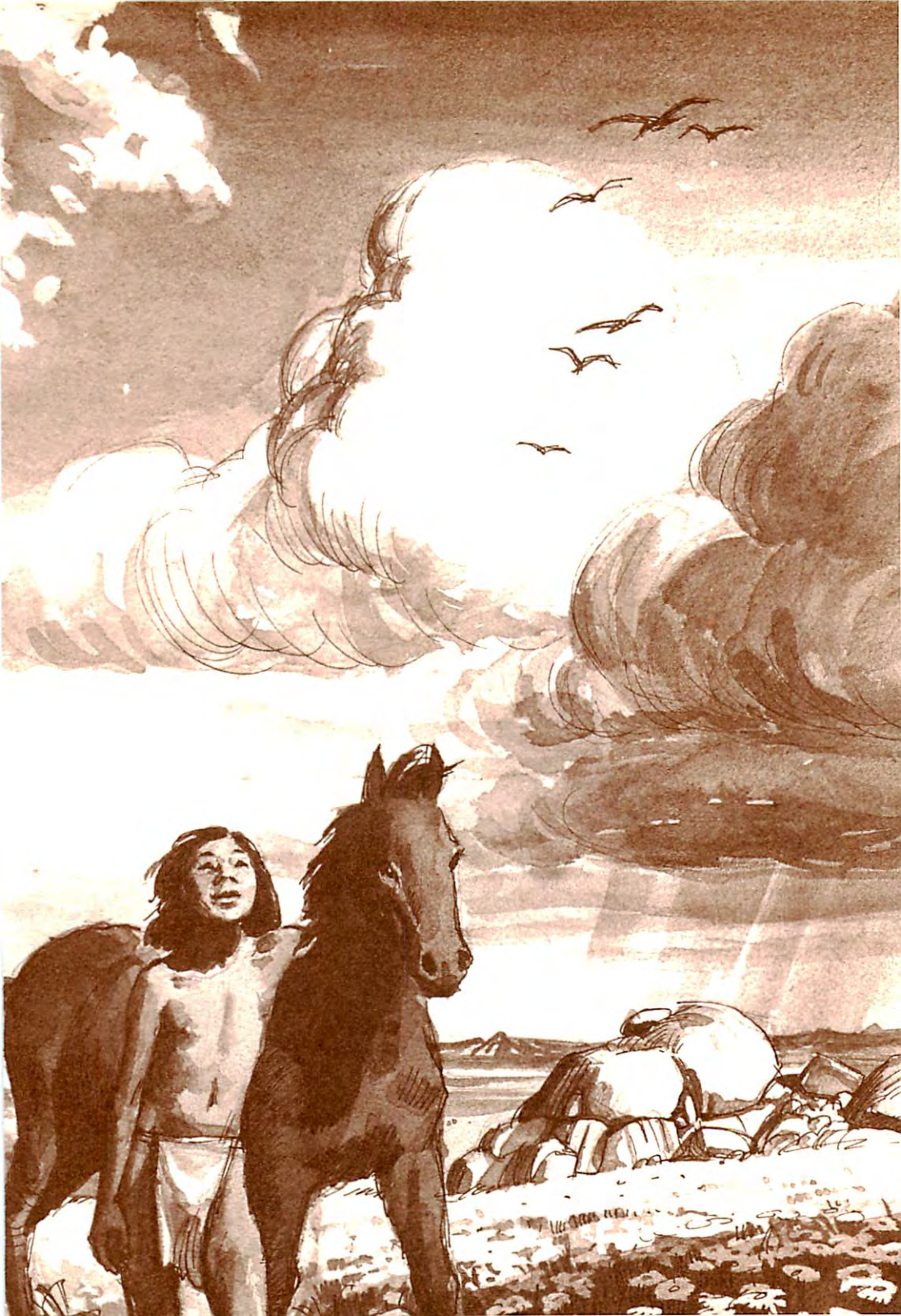




If we sell you our land, you must remember that the air is precious to us, that the air shares its spirit with all the life it supports. The wind that gave our grandfather his first breath also receives his last sigh. And the wind must also give our children the spirit of life. And if we sell you our land, you must keep it apart and sacred, as a place where even the white man can go to taste the wind that is sweetened by the meadow's flowers.

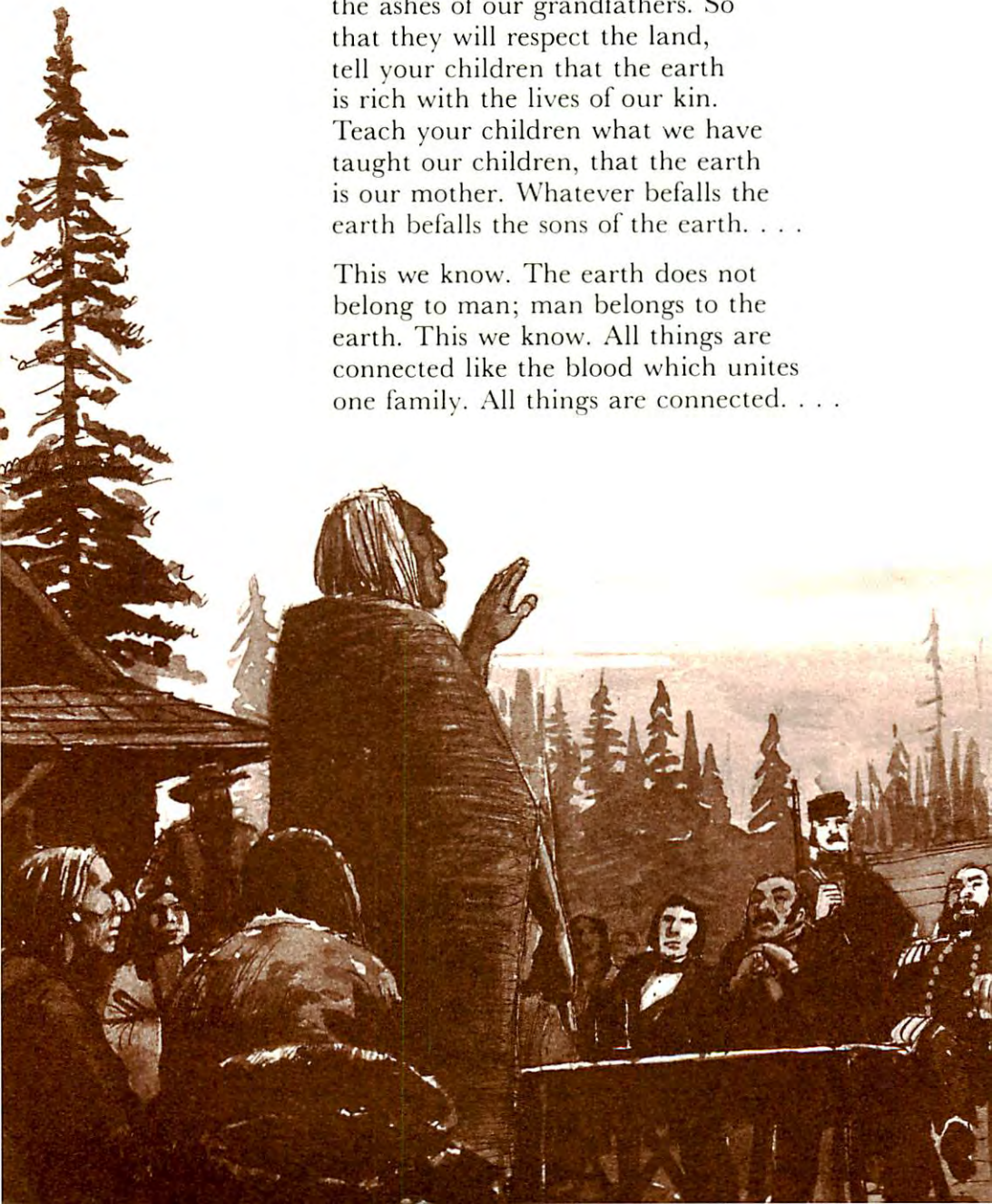
So we will consider your offer to buy our land. If we decide to accept, I will make one condition: The white man must treat the beasts of this land as his brothers. . . .

What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatever happens to the beasts, soon happens to man. All things are connected.



You must teach your children that the ground beneath their feet is the ashes of our grandfathers. So that they will respect the land, tell your children that the earth is rich with the lives of our kin. Teach your children what we have taught our children, that the earth is our mother. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. . . .

This we know. The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. This we know. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. All things are connected. . . .



So if we sell you our land, love it
as we have loved it. Care for it as
we have cared for it. Hold in your
mind the memory of the land as it is
when you take it. And with all your
strength, with all your mind, with all
your heart, preserve it for your children
and love it. . . .
as the Great Spirit loves us all.

*On the tribal lands of Chief Seattle arose
a great city which now bears his name.*



AN INDIAN PRAYER



O GREAT SPIRIT

Whose voice I hear in the winds
And whose breath gives life
To all the world,
Hear me. I am a man before you.
One of your many children.
I am small and weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.

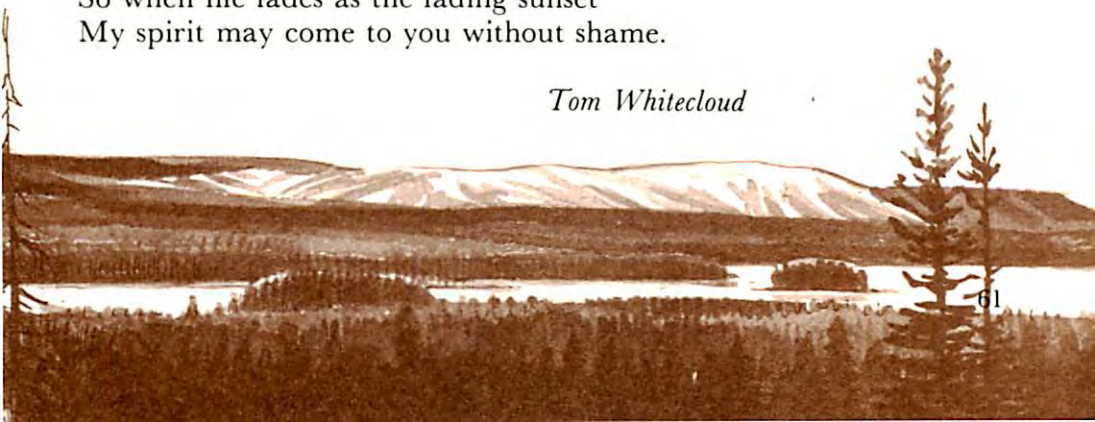
Let me walk in beauty.
And make my eyes ever behold
The red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect
The things you have made,
My ears sharp to hear your voice.

Make me wise, so that I may know
The things you have taught my people,
The lessons you have hidden
In every leaf and rock.

I seek strength,
Not to be superior to my brothers
But to be able to fight
My greatest enemy, myself.

Make me ever ready to come to you,
With clean hands and straight eye,
So when life fades as the fading sunset
My spirit may come to you without shame.

Tom Whitecloud



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