which these lost and revering waifs addressed to them.

When they had danced until they were weary they stretched themselves tightly rolled in their blankets upon the sands and, with renewed trust in the future, fell asleep.

CHAPTER XII

FLIGHT

Again a balmy spring morning with no stir of wind and the woods silent save for the scream of a jay or the chirruping of pine-inhabiting birds.

It was nearly sunrise when the voyagers crawled out of their blankets. After the first buoyant breath they remembered that the plentiful pigeons had flown away at sunset of the evening before and, in their feast to Grandfather Inyan, they had eaten all the birds they had.

There was nothing to regret, but they were so hungry and there were no birds in sight. There were red squirrels in these woods and, though they were very small, a number of them would make a suitable meal—and so Etapa strung his bow to hunt for them.

"Hoye, sister," he said, "if any birds arrive at these trees, cry out to me and I will come to shoot them."

He was about to go after the squirrels when he saw in Zintkala's face the dawning sense of fear and uneasiness which, for no apparent cause, he himself was beginning to feel. When he finished speech he failed to move in the direction he had intended. Both children stood in listening attitude.

At first they looked away from each other as though to search for the game which Etapa would kill. Far away and from some distant lake they heard the quavering cry of a loon. Deep within the woods a bluejay shrieked, repeating a trio of screams several times.

What was it suddenly chilled the blood in their veins? Not the cry of the loon nor the whirring call of a crane, dropping from the sky, neither the frantic shriek of the bluejay.

No, it was a stirring of the sixth sense of the wilderness child—the sense of long-range personal contact whereby the magnetic force of one being is acted upon—at surprising distances—by the electric aura of another. Given an undisturbed environment, a perfect condition of the atmosphere, and the "untutored savage" will infallibly discover—long before it is due to appear—the approach of a hostile or of a friendly presence.

The enemy! Coming—coming—coming—this was the message, borne upon the still morning air, which reached the consciousness of the little voyagers and froze them in their tracks. They only waited to make certain of the impinging of a hostile force and they seized upon their bundles of effects and fled, as certain of pursuit as the deer which flees a baying hound.

They ran as they had never run before, a breathless, skimming, dodging flight, throwing

tree trunks, hillocks, bushes behind them, instinctively and unerringly as the partridge flies to foil the gunner's aim.

They heard presently, too, and with scarcely quickened pulse, the baffled and unguarded whoop which announced the discovery of their abandoned camp and their sudden flight therefrom—though the Indian's yells might have been intended as a signal and thus the enemy would arrive in force upon their trail.

On—on—on they fled. Reaching hard, even ground, among the tall pines again, they turned at a right-angle to their former course and ran toward the east, the direction which they might least be expected to take.

The eyes of an eagle, the nose of a fox, these alone could have followed their tracks at the pace they took. In that brief, tense moment before their flight the attitude of all things was changed for them. No bird, beast, tree or rock now offered them its protection; there was another sky and another earth, and the face of Wakinyan himself was turned from them.

They glimpsed furtively the spaces in front as they sped—each tree, each bush, each rock was suspected of hiding an enemy in wait. The aisles of the tall pines were gloomy and threatening spaces, embittering the frightened souls, withholding the atmosphere of protection, giving sweeping views to the hidden foe. With

a sense of desolation in the heart, each throbbing, panting little creature fled, seeking any fate whatsoever, save a return to slave captivity—on—on—on—scudding like the hunted hare.

The sun rose high above the tops even of the tallest pines and found them running with scarce abated speed. Noon came—the weary legs still carried them forward, going now at the swinging trot which the hunted man or the chased wolf finds best adapted to a lengthened run.

Now and then they halted at some pool or running brook to quench a raging thirst. They only stopped running when the stout boy, not the slender girl, dropped and from sheer fatigue could not regain his feet.

For eight hours or more they had run to the eastward, a good part of the way over ground clear of undergrowth, through a vast forest of white and Norway pines. The distance they had covered without food would seem incredible to any who have not actual knowledge of the Indian's powers of endurance. A strong adult would have made sixty miles in such a run, and with less fatigue; and it is hazarding nothing of truth to say that Etapa had fallen finally at forty miles or more from their morning's camp.

The voyagers could go no farther. They lay upon their blankets and slept the sleep of exhaustion. The chill night air alone awoke

them. Zintkala was first to open her eyes upon the blank darkness of the pine forest. The woods were still, with the silence which can be felt.

Suffering with hunger, but more from fright, the little girl drew her blanket close about her head and shoulders, that she might shut out the black vacant space and its terrors. Thus she sat for a long time with suppressed breathing, a shapeless little bunch which the keenest eye of a night prowler might have passed unnoticed.

Then Etapa awoke and stirred, shivering with cold.

"Tanké!" He spoke in a scared whisper. The "big sister" heard as in a dream and gave no answer. "Tanké!"—this time aloud and with affright.

"I am here," Zintkala answered simply, in a voice muffled in the folds of her blanket. The boy's terror, but not his whole misery, abated.

"I want something to eat," he pleaded. "I am hungry. I suffer very much."

He was again the "little brother" appealing to the wise, older sister for succor. Somewhere within her parflêche, which she had clung to in her long flight, Tanké (older sister or big sister) should have preserved some pieces of all the birds they had cooked. His tone implied as much, and the sister's heart smote her for improvidence, but she answered in the same far-away, indifferent tones:

"I have nothing—there is nothing until Wi gives his light. Thereafter I shall dig some roots, presently."

Then for the first time since the night of their capture Etapa wept. "I want my mother," he said, and cried bitterly for a long time. The sister sat in silence, while the hitherto stout-hearted boy, lost within the vast wilderness, a thousand miles from his own Oglala village, bone-weary, shivering, half-starved and desperate, gave way to his grief.

At length, out of fear, Zintkala spoke. She hitched herself toward the weeper and laid her face against his.

"Younger brother," she murmured, "do not cry thus loudly. Heretofore you have not wept, and now I fear some wicked wolves may come to devour us."

This admonition checked the boy's crying aloud. His head fell forward upon his sister's lap, and he sobbed himself asleep while she warmed his shoulders with her blanket.

The little girl felt worn and old—oh, so old! All her muscles were stiff and sore and, in the miseries of hunger and the ache of bones, she forgot her terrors of the unknown and so kept a weary vigil until daylight came.

Gaunt, hollow of cheek and hollow of eye and limping painfully, the little voyagers took up their march so soon as they could see among the

dim aisles of the trees. They were still within the depths of a great pine forest—the greatest of all the northland. They traveled now—in such fashion as they could—toward the south, again finding their course from the source whence the sun's light came.

Deep draughts of cold water, at the first pool they came to, revived their lagging vitality for a time, and they pressed on more eagerly, looking for squirrels or grouse or even some small birds to shoot, or perchance to discover the dead top of some edible root.

But they looked in vain. They had penetrated into the heart of a forest lacking in insect and vegetable life, and therefore shunned of the life which preys upon life. There was only growth-room for the sky-scraping trees. The children in this desperate strait gathered and chewed, occasionally, bits of resin and the seed scales of the pine cone. These served, in a small measure, to appease the incessant gnaw of hunger.

After several hours of walking, however, hunger so asserted itself that they might even have surrendered themselves to 'Lizbet's clutches for a mouthful of meat. If by going in that direction they could have been assured of finally getting out of these gloomy pine woods and into the land of game again, they would readily have traveled toward Tall Gun's village. Not knowing, they kept on toward the south or as nearly

so as occasional glimpses of the shifting sun would permit. They ceased to look for game or roots, but stumbled on with ears open for signs of life in some outer world. But neither whistle of wing nor honk of goose fell out of the still sky.

At midday, both exhausted, they fell upon the ground and slept again. Thus they were enabled to rest for two or three hours, forgetting the pangs of hunger. And again they plodded on and in a little time were overjoyed to discover the glimmer of a lake in their front. But they were astonished and further disheartened, in coming upon its rocky shore line, to see no signs of life—just a placid deep blue sheet of water hemmed with interminable lines of cloud-touching trees. A pair of loons were finally sighted, the sun glimmering upon their flapping wings far out in the center of the lake.

Although they scrambled wearily among the rocks to look down into deep waters, there were no fish to be seen. The only animal they found upon this lakeshore was a huge turtle, upon a flat stone, getting the sun's heat upon its back, and which craned its neck in amazement at the unwonted noise of their approach.

This edible creature they might easily have secured and, with the aid of knife and hatchet, have gained an abundant supply of food. But it did not occur to them to kill it, for the turtle was the taboo of their gens and they would no

sooner have eaten of its flesh than of their own.

They passed hopelessly around this desert lake and again were about to drop from exhaustion when they came upon a tiny inlet. In the shallow water of this brook they saw some small, sickly-looking fish.

Instantly, with all faculties alert, the voyagers set their cunning to match that of the finny ones. They could only get these little fish by a strategic surround. To this end they shed moccasins and leggins, and prepared to sacrifice their blankets to a wetting.

Zintkala went above to get securely around the fish, while Etapa stopped in the brook below. The boy weighted two corners of his blanket with stones and also laid some small weights about the center so that one-half or more of its surface was submerged, and the whole quite blocked the brook's narrow channel.

Thus prepared he awaited eagerly the movements of his sister. Zintkala also tied stones in the corners of her blanket. Holding this before her so as to sweep the bed of the creek she walked slowly and cautiously down the stream. Soon the little fishes, six or seven of them, were fairly cornered between improvised drag-nets. A sudden easy swoop of the boy's fish trap captured four of the finny ones, and the others escaped in a swift flight into the lake.

These thin, small fish, half-roasted on a smokeless blaze of dry twigs, were barely sufficient to stay the keenest pangs of hunger, and Etapa was too nearly exhausted—he shivered miserably from his wetting in the brook—to attempt further travel, fishing or hunting.

Something, in the bones perhaps, told them they must, at all hazards, rest by a warm fire until another morning. A huge dead pine, uprooted by a wind, lay across the brook. To this they repaired and made a camp. Zintkala regarded her shivering brother furtively and with solicitude. She built a hot fire against the log and bade him sit close to the blaze while she staked their blankets on either hand to dry.

This was quite a reckless proceeding in view of the persistent chase of Tall Gun's Ojibwas, but the pinch of hunger, cold or illness shuts out other considerations. Zintkala knew that if the Ojibwa possessed the skill and patience they had shown as far as the camp in the sand hills, nothing now could save herself and Etapa from capture. If they had, as was equally probable, given over the chase upon discovering the wary flight from that camp, there could be no necessity for extreme caution. The voyagers had done their utmost to foil and to outrun the Raratonwan, and the evil spirit had prevailed thus far. It remained to see what might yet happen.

Etapa slept for a time, while the blankets were drying. He awoke hollow-cheeked and heavy of eye. "Why do you not sleep?" he asked.

"The wicked wolves might come," the sister suggested, "and—and the fire will keep those evil ones away."

"Then I shall keep the fire. I have enough sleep," he said. "I am not any more hungry."

This was a bad sign, and Zintkala looked at the brother uneasily. But she had nothing to oppose to his suggestion, and so wrapped herself in her blanket.

When she awoke the sun had arisen, and she found Etapa, with a strange flush upon his face, stumbling along the brook toward the lake. She called after him to know what he would do and, as he did not answer, she hurried on to inquire. It seemed that he wished to find some fish for her breakfast. He was not hungry, he said, but older sister must be very much in want of food.

"Come," said Zintkala, "I will do without food. Let us go on quickly to some open country."

The brother yielded without remark and again they took up their journey. Etapa disclaimed hunger, but he had a strange feeling at the pit of his stomach whch caused him to draw in his belt until he resembled some giant, ambling insect.

It was mid-forenoon when the plodding and nearly lifeless children came at last out of the lifeless woods. Suddenly they emerged into a world of plenty, upon the shores of a great lake so wide as to reach to a far, unbroken horizon. This lake was flecked with herds of water-fowl. There was a wall of sand and a wide sand beach as far as the eye could reach along the shore line.

The woods were small and again there were wild pigeons, grouse and squirrels in abundance. But all this life now mocked at the Dakota boy, for when he had succeeded in stringing his bow he had not strength to bend it for a shot. He made several unsuccessful efforts, and then looked at his sister with a drawn and pitiful face.

"Rest, brother," she said. "Lie upon these sands and I will go to dig some roots." She drank a great deal of cold water and then took her knife and went into the woods. She could shoot with the bow and arrow, but not well enough to hit birds unless they were very close indeed. So she betook herself to the resort of a hungry Indian woman, who will find roots and berries where all others fail to find them.

"I must look also for medicine roots," said Zintkala to herself, thus compelled to admit that Etapa was ill or about to become so. She found the dead leaves and stems of many plants strange to her; but when she dug and tasted

them they seemed neither medicine nor good to eat.

After a time, however, in a well shaded spot among some young, hardwood trees, she found the dry foliage of some plants which she recognized as belonging to a delicious kind of root which the Ojibwa had dug during her march with them in autumn.

The plants were ginseng, and Zintkala used her knife eagerly in uprooting them. She found quite a quantity, and they were waśte-śte—good, good. She scraped the earth from several large pieces of root and ate them ravenously. Anything which tasted good could not fail to allay the fearful gnaw of hunger.

She thrilled with the thought that these roots might make a good medicine for Etapa, and so she passed out of the woods onto the beach to make haste in getting back to him. As she walked over a slope of gravel and loose stones her eyes fell upon a heap of freshly opened clam shells, and near at hand she saw tracks of mato-sapa upon the sands. So the bear had found many clams. These were not much eaten by her people, but she knew that hungry folk sometimes ate great quantities of them raw.

So she dropped her roots, stripped her feet, and waded among the stones to explore. Clams, and big ones, were indeed plentiful and she had no difficulty in securing all she wished.

Then, without waiting to clothe her feet, her eye sought the line of beach until it fell upon a little gray object lying in the sunshine under a wall of sand. Making certain that Etapa slept, she seated herself and, cracking the shells of clams between two stones, devoured the tough but edible mollusks until she had, as nearly as she dared, appeased her hunger. Doubtless no epicure of modern days ever tickled his palate with "Little Necks" of a more delicious flavor. They were fat clams of the full-fed sort found in lakes which abound in vegetable and animal life.

Etapa was sleeping heavily when Zintkala reached him and she did not wake him at once, for she wished him to rest and then to have some clams, roasting hot. So she made a fire and, while the clams were baking, she built a "sweat house" by digging a pit with a draft, lighting a fire within and piling some large stones upon the burning wood.

Then she awoke Etapa and put roast clams, nicely opened with her knife, before him. But his hunger had gone. He ate one or two of the brown lumps because she urged him. But his face was burning, his eyes shone with a strange light, and he complained of pains in his head and side.

So, when the stones in the pit were sufficiently heated, the sister laid poles on them and made

the boy sit over them while she folded parflêche and blankets about him and piled sand upon the edges so as to retain the heat.

The Dakotas, like other people, are divided upon social and religious customs and practices. A class, nearly always those of larger natural abilities, have little or no faith in their conjurers and medicine-men. Many diseases are known to them, in a way, and they go about curing them with such genuine remedies as nature provides. Zintkala's people—on both sides—were of this sort. The cures which they had faith in were largely of the well directed powers, sweating, herbs, dieting and many simple and universal remedies.

Therefore Zintkala did not wish for a wakan-wicaśa (medicine-man) to treat her brother with his drummings, his chantings and his mummeries. The little doctress gave her patient a thorough sweating, then raked away the ashes of her cooking fire and made him lie upon the heated sands rolled tightly in blankets.

Then, tired though she was, she selected a shelving, sunny bank against the lake wall of sand and proceeded to build a wickiup. Against the scarp of the wall she began operations, digging away the slope with a clam shell to make a level spot, yet pulling down dry sand finally for her floor. Then she took Etapa's hatchet and attacked some young growth near at hand.

She drove two crotched stakes and laid a pole upon them parallel with the top of the bank, laying sticks thickly across from this pole and again slanting from the pole to the ground beneath. A cross pole and more sticks inclosed an end of the structure and the other was left open for entrance and exit. The roof of this framework she covered thickly with young pine boughs, thatching them cunningly with vines and strips of tough bark.

By the time the energetic little maiden had her roof finished night was coming on. So she built a swift fire of dry leaves and sticks upon the floor of her wickiup until the sands were heated. Then she raked out the embers, awoke Etapa, half dragged and half persuaded the stupor-ridden lad inside and put him to bed with a parflêche drawn over his feet and another about his shoulders.

Fortunately for this small nurse and her plans, spring comes quickly in the northland. The weather had come on warm; buds were swelling upon the trees; bluebirds, thrushes and other warblers sang joyously, with promise of summer, among the small woods. And the sun sank in a great red glory beneath the waters of the lake.

CHAPTER XIII

THE LITTLE NURSE

Zintkala built a large fire at the opening of her wickiup. She dragged a number of dry limbs in place and chopped them into fagots, for the air was yet chill after nightfall and she wished to keep a fire going until morning.

It was after midnight, and Etapa was yet breathing heavily, when the little nurse composed herself to sleep with only a parflêche covering for her shoulders. She slept until the sun was shining when Etapa in delirium awoke her with his mutterings. She knew that he wandered in mind, for he said things which were witko (foolish and incoherent).

She rebuilded her fire and sat near her patient with a great fear in her heart. With an almost fierce insistence, however, the little girl shut out of her mind a thought of the end which might come to such illness. Such fevers were frequent among the Indians, but with the violent sort they were ill-prepared to contend. So, despite her brave spirit, the sister listened with a pinched face and heavy heart to the brother's mutterings and watched his restless tossing, well understanding how powerless she was to do for