

and she redoubled her blows on the child, while an almost imperceptible murmur of approbation told of the sympathy of her companions.

A fierce light now flamed from the young girl's eyes, as she bent protectingly over the child. The old woman's stick, more by design than by accident, descended once or twice heavily on her shrinking form, leaving dark weals in its track. By this time the spectators were roused to take some part. "Let Wikpa go," said one; "Do not strike Numachwa," said another: "Beware! she is the Chief's woman now." The old woman muttered angrily, her little red eyes sparkled with malice, but she loosened her hold on the child, who crept sobbing into the bushes.

Without uttering a word, the girl picked up the bucket and disappeared in the direction of the river. Her absence proved the signal for an outburst of sympathy for the old Bas-lo-oo, as, still clutching her stick, she stumbled towards the fire, where she was speedily surrounded by the other women, the children hanging curious on the outskirts of the group.

Jealousy added zest to their malice, for though Numachwa was the chief's wife, yet the taunt of old Bas-lo-oo was truth—she was an Iroquois. Captured in some successful reprisal, her childish beauty had pleased her captor, and she had been adopted, as sometimes occurred, in place of a dead child.

Her protectors, however, had subsequently perished at the hands of her own tribe, in that frightful massacre, the horrors of which were still unforgotten.

She had been spared to become the drudge of the camp, and their revenge had sought an outlet in many words and acts of petty spite. Many a night had she scolded herself to sleep in the weariness of her lonely heart and aching little body. One day, however, brought an exception to the general rule; Ku-sa-wa-ga, the son of the old chief who had perished in the massacre, who was just taking his father's place in the tribe, heard her cries, and, attracted by her growing beauty, interfered to protect her: and there came a blessed immunity