

carried all our canoes and lodge skins. Sometimes I would help Athildza with her load, and then they would laugh at me and call me a woman; but I did not care, for we found that the time went very pleasantly together.

It took many days to come to the head of this river, to where the trees grew small in the valleys, and there is no wood on the high land, so that it was late in August when we pulled up our canoes at a level, sheltered place in the deep river valley, where there was a thicket of small spruce-trees and willows.

Here they made the camp, sending out hunters above the valley upon the rocky plains to find if the caribou were coming into the neighborhood as yet. Now, all this time Hetsory, the conjuror, had desired to make Athildza his wife, for his other wives were old and useless to dress the food or build him lodges; but seeing that she was under the care of the chief, he dared not to take her forcibly, nor would she willingly go to him. And none of the tribe were wishful that it should be so, but they were afraid of the conjuror and his magic.

We had waited many days, but the reindeer did not come. The old men said that in some years they passed by other ways; for they do not always come down by this or that place, but change at times from east to west. Others said that the Esquimaux, whom they greatly fear, had driven them out into the sea. At anyrate, they failed to appear, and we were without food, save a few fish and white part-ridges. Then all the people called for the medicine man, Hetsory, to conjure and to show them where the deer might be found, so that they might get skins for their lodges, and clothes and meat for the winter; otherwise they would perish as many a band has done in that country.

But Hetsory would not conjure—for he was bitter against them—"unless," he said, "they would freely give him Athildza to be his wife." Now though

the people were not willing that this should be; they called a council, and it was told him that if he would bring them to the deer, she should be given to him and a great feast be held. Then Hetsory took four tall saplings and planted them very firmly in the ground, one at each corner of a little square, and in between them he passed boughs and sticks, and put blankets all about until he had made a tall bower which none might see into.

When all the people had drawn a little aside, the medicine man stripped himself bare and crept into this place that he had built. It was evening, just at the sunset, when all was still and the shadows of the hills ran across the little valley. Presently he began to chant his medicine song in a low voice rising and falling in a monotonous sort of harmony. Then the medicine tent began to shake, until it reeled and swayed as if it must be lifted bodily up and thrown to the earth, while a fearful struggle was heard going on inside, as of two persons wrestling, and two voices cried to each other. Then came a sound like the flapping of great wings, and a cloud seemed to cover the tent. After a time, everything became silent, so the council-men came near to hear what the conjuror had to tell them. His voice was weak and exhausted, yet he had good news, for he said that he had seen the caribou. "They were coming," he said, "in thousands, more than ever he had seen before, straight for the camp, and if the hunters would go northwards in the morning, they should meet them before mid-day." All the camp was now joyful and full of preparation for the coming plenty and slaughter. Only I and Athildza were sad, as we sat beside a fire a little way apart from the happy crowd, where we were free from the sinister gaze of the conjuror, who was far too much done up by his late endeavors to be prowling round the camp.

"Now," I said to Athildza, "to-morrow night you will be given to Hetsory,