

waylay and attack the unfortunate Esquimaux, whom they expected to have the double satisfaction of killing and robbing. These Esquimaux have from time immemorial been the prey of the more southern tribes, whose persecution accounts for a large portion of the race having abandoned terra firma, to live on the islands in the Polar Sea, where they were found by Ross, Parry, Franklin, and other explorers.

Thee-kis-ho heard this decision with varied emotions, while another gave her unqualified satisfaction. It was determined that, as their prize was young and pretty, she should be the reward, at the end of the expedition, of the bravest and most distinguished member of the party. The journey with which she was threatened was long, arduous, and of doubtful issue; but it offered all the more readily, on this account, some chance of escape, and the occurrences of the two or three moons before her might still enable her to wed the young chief, a consummation which she resolved should never happen if she were forced first of all to be the squaw of an Athapascow. The moon rose about midnight, when the Indians were smoking, and the scout then returned, bringing word that their camp was admirably hidden, and that there were no alarming signs within some miles. Satisfied with this assurance, the whole party went to sleep, after tying both the arms and feet of their captive in such a way that, while not hurting her, the thongs completely precluded movement.

Wearied with her walk and her thoughts, the White Swallow went to sleep, and awoke only when summoned to cook the morning repast of her captors, after which they started along an arid plain towards the north, in which direction lay the villages of the Esquimaux. About mid-day a halt took place near a small wood; and while some went about in search of game, the rest set hard to work to make shields, which were absolutely necessary to defend themselves against the fish-bone arrows of their enemies. Thee-kis-ho received a knife—part of a sharpened hoop—to aid in the process, which, when the work was concluded, its owner forgot to reclaim, and the Indian girl gladly hid it about her person. The shields were ingeniously fashioned of small strips of wood fastened by deer-skin thongs, and when finished, were three feet long, two feet broad, and a couple of inches thick. It was nearly evening when the work was concluded; but the Indians, fearful of being pursued, after eating a hearty meal, continued their march some hours longer, and camped near a lake of small dimensions. The White Swallow took careful note of all the places they came to, that she might find her way back again if possible, and was not sorry to observe that the Indians left a pretty evident trail.

For several days after their progress was very slow indeed, as much game fell in their way, and the Athapascows, to whom eating was even more grateful than glory, revelled on the fat deer of the lakes. Much more, however, was killed than was consumed, from the mere love of waste, which is inherent in most savage people.