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THE SELAWIK

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

SELAWIK, properly Sílivik, village is reached from Kotzebue sound through Hotham inlet, and across the length of Selawik lake and several minor bodies of water. In late spring and in summer and fall the inhabitants scatter in family groups along Selawik river and spread over the territory between that stream and the Kobuk, as well as over an equal stretch of country to the southward.

In the village proper the houses are built over a pit about three feet in depth, from the bottom of which rise four corner-posts, the rear pair slightly shorter than the others in order to give a slant to the roof; these are connected with horizontal beams. Split timbers extend from ground-level to the horizontal beams, and similar timbers from the roof. The whole is covered thickly with sod, but if sod is not available, mud is made to serve the purpose. In the roof is a smoke-hole, which is provided with a cover of intestinal parchment, or, in winter, a slab of ice. A doorway opens from the higher end of the dwelling into a small chamber built against it; this serves not only as an entranceway, but for the storage of the weapons, sleds, snowshoes, dried meat, and clothing. A firepit is dug in the floor of the living quarters, near the entrance.

Formerly the summer habitations were semicylindrical, with squared ends. The framework was of willow withes bent semicircularly, with ends stuck in the ground, and strengthened with horizontal willow strips. This frame was overlaid with moss or grass, or with squares of spruce-bark which had been soaked in water, flattened with stones, and allowed to dry; then the structure was weighted with stones. The doorway was in one of the squared ends.

Caches are of the platform type, high enough to be beyond reach of dogs and other marauding animals. These, with drying racks of willow, are situated near the winter homes, but when much meat is obtained on a hunt, temporary caches are erected.

Cooking is done in wooden pots filled with water and brought to a boil by dropping in hot stones with the aid of tongs consisting of two sticks bound together at one end. Food bowls are made of willow wood or of birch-bark. The younger people eat with their fingers,

while the elders use spoons of wood or horn.

In former times the clothing of the Selawik Eskimo consisted of caribou-skin parkas, trousers, and boots. Some of the people, however, remained upstream and traded with Athapascan Indians of the interior for caribou-skin shirts and moccasins. These upstream people are said to have intermarried with Indians, and, while retaining their own language and customs, spoke an Indian dialect when engaged in trade.

The spring season is occupied in hunting and in fishing. The terrain about Selawik village is flat and low. Small lakes, lagoons, and sloughs abound, making it an ideal country for muskrat, which are the chief object of the spring hunt. After the spring thaw, when the water is open, the hunters formerly set out in bark canoes, or in kaiaks obtained by trade with the coast Eskimo; but nowadays kaiaks or small wooden boats patterned after those used by white men are employed entirely. The hunters paddle from one stream to another, and along the other waterways, following their banks closely in search of muskrat. In earlier days these animals were shot with spruce arrows tipped with two prongs of caribou-horn; now the weapon is a small-bore rifle, with which, it is said, a good hunter can bag as many as a hundred muskrat in a day. The meat is eaten fresh or is dried and stored for use in winter. Skins are made into clothing and form also an important item of trade.

Fishing is done during spring and summer, when the families scatter along the streams and erect their summer shelters. Canvas tents have superseded the native structures. The streams are narrow enough to permit the use of gill-nets, which are stretched from bank to bank. The nets of former days, about four fathoms long by two and a half or three feet deep, were woven of willow-bark and are said to have lasted about three years with careful use. Fish-traps of willow-bark were also anchored in favorable places. The most common fish caught by these methods are a small whitefish and pickerel; but few trout are gilled in the nets. Fish are dried on racks and stored for winter consumption; fish-eggs are dried, and fish-oil is put away in pokes.

The women gather blackberries, blueberries, cranberries, salmonberries, and the Alaskan potato. The berries, stored in baskets, are used chiefly in winter. In autumn, before the freeze-up, Selawik traders in their large skin boats and wooden craft, laden with muskrat-fur, go to Kotzebue to traffic for seal-oil, sealskins, blubber, and kaiaks, and there they purchase such staples as flour, tea, coffee, and sugar, as well

as guns and ammunition. Others go upstream to trade seal-oil to the Indians for baskets, beads, moose-skins, and such articles of skin clothing as shirts and moccasins. When the days grow short, the families return to the village. Soon afterward is held a feast for the dead, directed by medicine-men, at which food, clothing, and various other articles are given away by relatives in accordance with the last wishes of the departed.

Before they were superseded by reindeer, caribou were hunted during the winter with bow and arrow, some of the hunters stampeding a herd while others shot the animals as they passed. The Selawik people also used the corral with strong snares, as elsewhere described. They still trap fox and wolverene, and snare ptarmigan and rabbit. In former rabbit-drives a long line of people, shouting and beating bushes and underbrush, drove the fleeing rabbits into a large net held by two men.

A special hut is erected for occupancy by a woman in labor. Old women function as midwives, but if delivery is retarded, the husband is called in to hasten the birth by squeezing the wife's waist. Mother and child must remain in the shelter three months if the infant is the first-born, otherwise two months; then she is allowed to go to her home, where the family hold a feast amongst themselves. At this time the child receives a name, that of a medicine-man, a successful hunter, a relative, or perhaps the name of a person recently deceased.

When a boy catches his first game, it is given to some man who has a young daughter. The acceptance of the gift by the father is an indication of the betrothal of his daughter, and that the two young people will marry when they reach the proper age. If no betrothal takes place, the meat is cooked and pieces distributed to the villagers, that they may know the boy has caught his first game. A dance and a feast follow.

When a girl picks her first berries, or catches her first fish, the product of her industry is given to the old people of the village. As they eat, they hope that the girl will become successful in fishing and in gathering berries. When a young woman has reached the age of puberty, she must dwell by herself in a corner of the house and eat from separate dishes served by her mother. After this time she is eligible for marriage.

Marriage takes place when an early betrothed couple attain marriageable age, or when two people, mutually attracted, decide to

marry. The young man's parents make clothing for the young woman. The pair live with the parents-in-law of either, or reside at alternate intervals with both. After the first child is born, they live together in a home of their own.

Divorce consists merely of separation by mutual consent, and is usually the result either of inability to perform work or of adultery. Should the latter be the cause, the adulterer might be slain by the husband.

When a person is about to die, all but immediate relatives remove their belongings from the house and live elsewhere. As soon as death occurs, the legs of the corpse are tied together, the hands bound to the sides, and the body wrapped in a skin and lashed. All the possessions of the deceased are divided amongst relatives and children; nothing is put in the grave. The body is carried away as soon as possible and placed on a small platform raised a few inches above ground, the head of the corpse directed toward the east. To keep away marauding animals, split timbers are leaned against the platform, as in the case of the houses, but they are not sod-covered. A stick is thrust in the ground at the head of the burial as a marker. The family must build a new dwelling, and those who have handled the dead are required to throw away or to burn the clothing worn when the funerary offices were performed. During the period of mourning, which lasts several days, the relatives must eat from separate dishes.

MYTHOLOGY

THE RESCUER

Many families once dwelled together in a large village on a high hill which overlooked a lake. None believed that there were other people in the world, although some of the old wise men claimed that another village existed on a hill near the Kobuk river. In this settlement lived two brothers, Kógruggluk and Aksigyókok.

It happened that a deluge swept over the land. The land soon disappeared, and the waters rose until only this village and that on the Kobuk, situated as they were on high hills, remained dry. All else was fathoms deep under water. Kógruggluk was lost in his kaiak, for he had been hunting when the water began to pour down.

After the storm had subsided, Aksigyókok set forth to find his brother, but returned discouraged after a long search. Word ultimately reached him that Kógruggluk had taken shelter in the Kobuk village. Aksigyókok decided to bring his brother back, so began to build a large skin boat, because the waters still covered the land. He constructed the frame and covered it with sealskins. He carved a paddle blade from the flipper-bone of a whale, and attached a handle of willow. When all was finished, Aksigyókok chose a crew of eight men and started on a trial trip. As they paddled, they saw a flock of ducks. Vainly they endeavored to catch up with and to pass the birds in their flight. Aksigyókok returned home and pulled the boat up on shore. He examined the craft and found a slack lashing. Then the boat was relashed by the whole crew until it was very tight and strong, and the frame re-covered. Again a trial trip was made, and this time, when a flock of ducks was sighted, they easily overtook and passed the birds. Now that the boat was in perfect condition, Aksigyókok placed a large blue bead of great supernatural power in a hole drilled in the stern-sheets.

When all was ready for a long journey, the boat provisioned and the crew embarked, Aksigyókok put on an old parka, rubbed fish-eggs on his arms to the elbows and on his face, and they set out. While he sat amidships, in order not to rub off the eggs, another man steered. The whole crew were afraid of him, because they now knew that he was a medicine-man and had great powers.

Arrived at the Kobuk village, whose inhabitants were said to be very cruel in the treatment of strangers, the boat was tied up, leaving the crew with it, while Aksigyókok alone walked to the men's house. His gait and bearing were those of an old man, shaking and tottering. He was taken inside and brought before the headman, who ignored him for a long while. Many others entered the room, rudely pushing aside Aksigyókok whenever he was in their way. He saw his brother, Kógruggluk, dressed in a ragged parka, seated near the headman. When the people filled the urine pot, the headman took pleasure in emptying the contents over the head of Kógruggluk, deriding him all the while. The brother, Aksigyókok, saw that many people had pity on Kógruggluk and fed him pieces of blubber when the headman was not looking.

Aksigyókok became very angry. He did not like to be pushed aside, and the treatment of his brother enraged him. He stalked up to

the headman, and cried, "I am going to take my brother home, where he will be well treated!"

The headman retorted: "Be still, old man! If you talk in that fashion I shall have my warriors kill you right here!"

The angry Aksigyókok shouted: "Do not answer me like that! I shall treat you as you have treated my brother. I shall empty a urine pot over your head!"

The villagers, none of whom liked their headman, who ruled through fear and by the support of his warriors, clamored: "Yes! Yes! Kill our headman! He has stolen our women and mistreated us. Treat him as he has abused your brother. We do not want such a man to rule us!"

The headman contemptuously glanced over his subjects, then replied to Aksigyókok, who still pretended to be an old man: "Ancient one, you are stirring up trouble amongst my people. 1 shall put you in your place. I shall stand you beside your brother and empty a urine pot over your head, that all may see what happens to those who dare to taunt me."

The headman, confident in his ability to overcome easily an old man, stalked close to Aksigyókok. Aksigyókok wiped some of the fish-eggs from his arms, and quickly seized the headman, forcing him down by his brother so hard that he was unable to rise. All the warriors and henchmen of the headman were so surprised at the strength shown by one whom they had supposed to be an old man, that they too could not move out of their places. The people shouted with joy at the discomfiture of the headman.

Aksigyókok stripped the urine-soaked parka from his brother and clothed him in that of the headman. He pulled off the headman's arms and legs, one by one, and threw them out of the entranceway. He also smashed in the headman's chest and wrung his neck, while the people shouted and danced in their joy at being relieved of their cruel master.

Aksigyókok carried his brother Kógruggluk on his back to the boat. The people crowded to the shore and offered him many gifts. One old man said: "When you came here first, we thought that you were an old man, and weak; but when you rubbed off the salmon-eggs, we saw that your arms were as large as a man's legs. You are strong and powerful. Now that our cruel headman is dead, and we can live in peace, we want you to become our headman."

Aksigyókok replied: "I shall take Kógruggluk, my brother, home to our village, but I shall return and be your headman. I am very strong."

They set out for the Selawik village and encountered nothing but fine sailing until they almost reached the shore. Then some jealous medicine-woman from the Kobuk village caused huge waves; but Aksigyókok, with his great paddle and blue bead, rode safely over the waves and put his brother ashore. He returned with his crew to the Kobuk village, where he drove away the medicine-men and followers of the former headman and ruled peacefully over the people. Long afterward his boat, with the blue bead in the stern, was found half-buried on a mountaintop.

THE POWERFUL ORPHAN

Two brothers once dwelled in a large village near the mouth of Selawik river. The elder was the headman, very wealthy and powerful, but cruel and disliked by the people; the younger was a great hunter, the best in the village, and popular with everybody. In the same village was a poor young man, an orphan, who lived in the men's house. He had no family ties, no home of his own, and no one to teach him the use of weapons, songs, or dances; but he was a good story-teller. The headman, the elder of the two brothers, greatly disliked the orphan. He beat the youth, and often tried to force him to sing, because he knew the orphan had no songs.

The younger brother took pity on the orphan and adopted him into the family. He had his wife make clothes for the orphan, and his daughter served food to the youth. The hunter brought home much marrow, because it was a favorite dish of the youth. But he was forbidden to play with other young men, because the hunter wished to rear the orphan in his own way. The cruel headman still abused him whenever he caught the orphan in the men's house, where he still slept, and tried to make him sing, beating him savagely when he could not utter a note. The orphan wondered and planned how to learn to sing. When others played games or told stories, he remained quiet, his thoughts continually on singing.

One night, in a restless state of mind, the orphan put on new clothes and walked upstream. Soon he came to a house which he had never seen before. The entrance was low and deep in the ground, and light streamed from the smoke-hole. As he came to the door, some-

thing seized him and whisked him inside. Fear almost overcame the young man, but he was soon reassured when he saw only an old couple smiling their welcome. The old man ordered his wife to bring food, and when the youth had finished eating, asked why he had come to their house. The orphan answered: "The headman in my village has always treated me cruelly. He scolded me, beat me, and tried to make me sing songs. I can tell stories, but I have no songs. That did not please him."

"I have heard of you and I have seen you in my mind. I brought you here by my thoughts, because I pitied you. Now, if you are not afraid of what I am going to do, I shall teach you a song.

The orphan sat beside the old man and listened to a song twice repeated. Told to sing it, he rendered words and tune correctly at the first trial, which greatly pleased his instructor, who said: "Now you have learned a song. Keep singing it loud and clear. My wife and I are going out. We shall return in a moment, but have no fear when you see us in other forms. When we come toward you, push our muzzles aside, shove us through the door and close it. You must keep up your singing all the while."

As the old couple departed, the orphan commenced his song. After he had repeated it several times, he heard growling and scratching in the entranceway — sounds which frightened him so that he abruptly broke off the song and looked about wildly for a hiding-place. At once the noises ceased and the couple reëntered in their human forms. The old man warned: "You can never learn to sing if you take fright so easily. Nothing will harm you. We shall try once more.

This time, after they left, the orphan closed his eyes and sang loudly. The scratching and growling commenced again. The youth raised his voice. Then two huge Bears came through the door, with frightful snarling and gnashing of teeth. Though alarmed, the orphan, still singing, pushed their noses aside and shoved them through the door.

Soon the two old ones entered again as humans. The old man spoke: "This song will always belong to you. Whenever you use it, sing it loud and clear. If that headman tries to make you sing again, have him sit beside you. Then we shall come, but do not push us aside. Let us attend to him, and no one will suffer harm. It is daylight now and time for you to return to the village."

He slept in the men's house for a short time, but arose when the

women brought in food, because all the men ate together there. A friendly man gave him a portion. Soon the headman, the elder brother, entered. He went at once to the orphan, slapped him until he cried, and tried to make him sing. The orphan begged: "You have been very cruel to me. If I begin now, you must sit beside me, and all the people must be here, because this is my first song."

Then the youth sat in the middle of the room, the headman beside him, and the people gathered around. The orphan said: "Now you will hear my song. Do not be afraid."

"I shall not be afraid of any song that you can sing," retorted the headman.

In the midst of the song, growling and scratching were heard at the entrance. The head-man became frightened. In order not to betray his fear, he whispered to the young man to stop singing. As he sang harder, two huge Bears came through the entrance, snarling, and gnashing their teeth.

The headman, in great fear, cried: "Stop! Something will happen to us!"

The orphan sang louder in spite of the headman's efforts to clap a hand over his mouth.

The headman offered, "If you will only stop, I shall give you a house, clothes, weapons, caches, and my daughter to wife."

The orphan sang on. The Bears circled the room, touching no one, though all were paralyzed with fear. They came to the headman and began to drag him out by the legs. The orphan cried to the luckless headman: "You have always asked me to sing! I have sung! These are my powers, and they may do with you as they like!"

He turned to the headman's family, and said, "If you want to ask for his life, do it now while I am here."

They answered: "He was as cruel to the people and to us as he was to you. We are glad that he is being taken away."

The orphan again spoke, " If any one else wants to speak for this headman, let him rise."

The younger brother arose: "I am glad that my brother is being taken away," he declared. "The people can now dwell in peace. I was ashamed of my brother. Tomorrow let us all bring wood and build a house for this young man. I am going to give him my daughter."

The orphan smiled to himself and motioned the Bears to drag

away the headman.

The younger brother continued: "I am now the headman. I am glad my brother is killed. He treated me cruelly, because I was the younger. Let us not build a rough house for this youth, but build one as fine as we can. Let it be big and well built, so that no one need be ashamed of it. Let it be big enough so that he can work inside of it. I shall teach him to hunt so that he can have many furs."

Another man, a son of the old headman, said: "I shall give half of my weapons to this orphan. When he has many skins, he may return them."

The new headman appointed men to bring timbers, others to search for moss for chinking, and the best builders to erect the frame. Ground was prepared beside the younger brother's house, and the orphan divided the work of building. Some were told to set up the framework. Two front posts were put in place, and two rear posts slightly lower to give a slanting roof. These were connected with beams, and the whole was covered with timber splits leaning against the framework. The chinkers piled on earth and moss while the caches were built. The men filled the caches with meat, and the women brought skins and furs in plenty, so that the room was lined with them. Even the big head-logs, on which people sat when singing or telling stories, were covered with furs. A storehouse was built against the main house and filled with meat and fish, fresh and dried, and marrow.

All the people rejoiced, because the new headman was kind and a great hunter. They were glad that the now powerful orphan used his powers in a good way. They were proud of the new house, the best in the village.

When all was finished, the villagers gathered in the new house. The daughter of the headman stood by the orphan. The younger brother spoke: "These two are man and wife. If at any time any one wants to know something, or asks aid, seek this orphan, my son-in-law. He will now be the headman, for I am growing old. He will direct you when to hunt caribou and when to fish."

The orphan, as headman, now assigned families to certain sloughs on the river. He warned them to fish until ice could hold a sled. He told all the best hunters of the young men to go to the mountains for caribou. He advised the women where and how far to search for berries. Many things the orphan talked about, and answered many questions.

He advised the people to do so much because he foresaw a period of famine. This was the first time that tasks were assigned the people.

The orphan himself hunted caribou; but while others used arrows, he cast spears and in this manner killed entire herds, so that other men ceased their hunting to carry in the meat. The orphan listened to much advice from his father-in-law on how to rule the people. Now the caches were full, and the winter was occupied with feasting and dancing. Thus life with plenty went on for several seasons.

One night the orphan called a gathering of all the people. He said: "A time will come when we shall see no more caribou or fish for a long period. Let the families be sparing of their food, and eat no more than three times a day. Let each cache be filled with one kind of food. Build a big, new storehouse and fill it with all the food you can get."

The people obeyed, and brought in much food. In the winter the orphan hunted with his father-in-law for fox and wolverene. Of these a great number were killed. The skins were given to the people for clothing, until all were supplied.

THE RESCUE OF THE STOLEN WIVES

There were once two villages on opposite sides of the lake far up the Selawik river. In one lived a famous hunter with his wife and youthful brother-in-law. He had meat caches both in the village and over the countryside. Whenever the hunter made a kill, he would return home and send his wife out with a sled to bring in the game. The brother-in-law, while a good hunter, spent a great deal of time in running and in practising games of strength.

One night the wife, sent after meat, failed to return. In the morning the hunter followed her tracks to the meat, but found only the empty sled. There was no trail leading away, so he returned home disheartened. The whole village searched for the woman, but finally all had to give up; no trace was ever found.

The hunter heard that in the village across the lake a woman had disappeared also, so he sent for the husband to discuss ways and means of locating their wives. This man had a grown brother-in-law, who accompanied him. After much discussion, the three men and the youth had women of the village make them light travelling clothes: parkas, trousers, mittens, and boots. Then they set out up the river. They travelled light and hastily, killing game only when necessary for food, and

even then they left most of the meat behind, rather than be troubled by packing it.

One day, as they walked swiftly on the ice, a rabbit crossed their trail. One of the men tried to catch it, but it scurried into the willows. The youth who had spent so much time in games of skill and strength, jeered: "The rabbit ran slowly, but you could not catch it! If I ran, I should catch it alive!"

The man was angry, but said nothing. The youth advised: " If we see another, we shall chase it to see how fast we can run. Some time some people will want to kill us, and we should be able to run fast."

As they saw rabbits, each of the three men in turn pursued, but none was able to catch or even appear to keep up to the animal. The youth exclaimed: "None of you men can run! Any enemy could catch and kill you easily!"

As they went on, a jack-rabbit jumped from cover and crossed their trail. The men were glad, for a jack-rabbit is faster than other kinds. In their turn they jeered at the youth. He ran, caught up with the animal, and with one kick killed it. As they ate the meat for supper, the youth instructed the men not to eat caribou while they had rabbit. Camp was made in a thicket, and the youth said, "We must have a shelter."

He walked to a tree, solid in the frozen ground. He boasted, "If any one comes here, I shall kill him with this."

At the same time the youth tore the tree up by the roots. He said to the others, "Show how strong you are, and pull up more trees for the shelters."

None of the men could stir a tree, not even a dead one. The youth derided them, "If an enemy came here, you would be killed and I should be left alone."

They followed the stream to its source in the mountains; then they climbed to the peaks and looked about. Far in the distance a large lake sparkled in the sun, and smoke arose from two villages on the shore. The party carefully descended and approached the first village, which was near the shore; the other was farther away toward the mountains, but both had many food caches. Many people were playing kickball in a playground between the two villages. The people continually sniffed the air like dogs. At nightfall the party changed from their travelling clothes to new garments, and left weapons and packs by a cache. Then

they entered a large house where lived an old couple, two young couples, and a young single woman. The men and the youth uttered no word, but sat down, and the young woman offered them food. She addressed them: "I have seen no strangers here for a long time — not for many seasons. Perhaps you may be killed."

After they had eaten their fill, the people began to tell stories, but the youth interrupted them: "We did not come here to tell stories. We want to know if your people carry off women."

The old man replied: "I am glad that you have come to my house; my daughter will feed you whenever you are hungry. There are five big brothers in the other village, who are cruel and steal women. They have just brought back two fine young women, but we do not know whence they came."

The two hunters immediately thought of their lost wives, and began to weep, but the other man and the youth questioned the family. More people came in and talked in a friendly manner to the searching party, but they looked grave, and said: "You are strangers. You are young and strong, but those five brothers will kill you."

One old man said that one of the recently captured women resembled the youth, so he knew it must be his sister, and the husband knew it must be his wife. The youth became attracted to the young woman who had served them. The old man said: "Those five brothers are the best runners and ball-players. No one can beat them. I want you men to help us in our game today. If we alone try to beat them, and give them a hard game, they always kill our young men. So we always let them win."

While they were making ready for the game on the following day, a messenger came from the other village, and said: "The five brothers have learned of the presence of strangers. They want them and your village to play today. They say that they will kill you if you do not win. They are very angry."

The youth who had assumed the leadership of the party answered, "We shall come over." He also instructed the others to say nothing during the game; that he would be the spokesman for all. The old man of the house advised them to wear light clothes during the game. He said, 'We like to have visitors tell us of other places, but those five brothers always kill them."

The youth replied: "I am a fast runner. I can beat them."

Around his parka he wore a wolverene belt with two weasel-tails on it, and wore mittens of caribou fawn. All drank water and went out. The villagers commented: "Those poor men! If they do not win, they will be killed. They are fine-appearing men, and it is too bad they are about to die."

The other village trooped out, and both sides lined up on the take ice. A huge man, one of the five brothers, stalked out with a ball between the two lines. He said, "I want one of those strangers to help me put the ball in play."

The youth went out opposite the huge man. As he walked, he sang:

I want to play against him, although I think he is too big for me.

I want to fight this huge man, although he is too big for me.

The giant put his foot against the ball, and growled: "Now, you little fellow, you have dared to play against me! I always kill small people, and you are the smallest I have ever played against. You may be brave, but I am stronger. When I kick a ball, it goes farther than you can see.

The youth retorted: "I have come a long way from my home. I am looking for my sister and I think she is here. She is the wife of this man. Another woman you have stolen is the wife of that man. You are big, but I shall play against you. You are large, but I am going to rescue my sister."

Each put his foot by the ball and grasped the other by the shoulder. The huge man said: "Let us see who can kick the ball out first. If you can push my leg aside, it will go; or if I kick your leg away, it will go."

Both pushed with their feet so hard that the ball broke. The huge man exclaimed: "You are the first who has ever broken my ball! You must be strong, even if you are small. You must be brave. Let us try another ball."

The second ball broke likewise. The huge man became angry, and the youth taunted: "You have balls that any one could break. I did not even kick it. Why do you not make one of stone? Put those balls aside and let the women sew them up for games against weaklings!"

The third ball also burst; but the youth succeeded in pushing aside the huge man's leg and kicking the fourth ball far down the lake. Both sides then gave chase, but the youth easily outstripped both villagers. Close behind him panted the five brothers, and behind them the oth-

ers of the rescue party. The youth reached the ball first and kicked it toward his village. Whenever it landed, he was the first to kick it. As he ran, he jeered over his shoulder at the slowness of the five brothers. Finally he kicked the ball into the house in the village where he was guest, and the game was won. All the villagers cried out, "That's the first stranger to win a game!"

The huge man approached the youth, saying: "This is the first time a stranger ever won with my ball. I want you and your party to come to my village and eat with me in the playing place. I always play there with strangers."

The four went to the playground and sat on a shelf by the entrance, while the villagers took their usual places. The huge man ordered, "Prepare food for these men!"

A naked woman with her hair bound in at the waist entered with food. She stood with head bowed in shame. The youth and her husband at once recognized her. The other hunter wondered where his wife was.

The huge man commanded: "Eat! You can not play games without food in your stomachs!"

The youth in anger at the degradation of his sister, retorted: "Yes! I shall eat! Thus!" He hurled the pot of steaming meat in the face of the huge man. The people watched, breath less. The huge man made no move, but quietly said: "This small man is always against me. He must be very brave. Food is scarce and should be eaten. He has wasted his, so I shall have to punish him. I shall try him out to see how strong he is."

He had men bring in a whale-bone with a hole in the centre just large enough to contain a man's head. It was bloodstained. The huge man removed his parka, tightened his belt, and said: "Now, you little man; you have said you were so strong, let us wrestle and try your strength. No one, not even medicine-men, can kill me. That hole in the bone will be your grave!"

The youth could reach only to the waist of his opponent, who derided: "This poor little man is only scratching my skin. He can not reach around me."

The youth squeezed hard, and panted: "I have never before fought a huge man. Wrestle me as you always wrestle strangers."

The huge man threw the youth, and cried, "You have tried to win, but you are going to lose now."

The youth, undaunted, retorted: "I can not throw you, because I can not reach around you; but soon I shall beat you. I shall get even for that throw."

The youth took a hold beneath the arm-pits, and wrestled hard. All the people were wishing in their hearts that he would win, because the five brothers were very cruel and ruled harshly. The huge man laughed: "See this little man try to throw me! He is only tearing the skin from my shoulder!"

But with one mighty heave the youth flung his antagonist to the floor, where he lay dazed. Soon he arose, crying, "I shall kill you now, little man!"

He dragged the youth toward the whale-bone, but when near, he twisted away. The surprised huge man bluffed: "I let him go. I was only playing with him. I do not want to kill him yet."

The angry youth answered: "I twisted away from him, but now I shall kill him, because he tried to kill me."

The youth seized the man and bore him struggling to the whale-bone. Then he forced the head through the hole and cut it off. A second huge brother, angry, jumped down, crying: "I am stronger than my brothers. I shall kill you now!"

The youth easily disposed of him. The people were now smiling and glad, but the remaining huge brothers were greatly frightened. They offered to free all prisoners and to give great wealth if only the youth would spare them. The people shouted: "Do not stop! Kill the others, or they will be cruel to us after you are gone!"

One after another the youth killed the evil brothers, until none remained. He offered to kill any other bad men who might be in the village, but he was told that all the rest of the people were good. The youth smashed the whale-bone against a wall, and cut up the bodies and threw them outside. Then he commanded all to leave the bloody place. Outside he saw that the pieces of flesh had become meat of whale, walrus, and seal. He freed all prisoners who had been changed into sea-animals. The youth found an eagle parka and several polar-bear skins that the five brothers had used for hunting. He finally ordered both villages to live in peace.

The youth, with the aid of the woman who had first served him food, changed his clothes and entered the men's house, where much feasting took place. The stolen women were returned to their hus-

bands, and all were happy.

The young, man remained a year in the village and married the young woman after obtaining her parents' consent. He always hunted alone, and took no weapons but clubs, with which he struck off the heads of caribou. His wife skinned and dressed the game; she was the best and fastest of any in the village at this work. He hunted for both villages, and gave away much meat to the poor and old. The people, though afraid of his power, respected and loved him for his goodness. When asked how he became so fleet of foot and so powerful, he replied that while others never practised, he had always trained himself for running; that he pulled up trees by the roots to become strong.

After two years, the party with their wives went downstream to their old village, killing many caribou on the way. They received warm welcome in their two villages. The youth, however, travelled continually between his own village and that of his wife, killing much game and helping all the people. He taught the people to pack skins to the coast, and to trade them for seal meat and oil.

THE HUNTER WHO WENT TO THE MOON

A large village was situated on one bank of the river far from all other people. In those days the people knew nothing of sealing or sea-fishing, but lived on caribou and river fish. One fall, when all returned to the settlement on an appointed day after the caribou-hunt, a youth was missing. No trace of him was ever found. After snow came, another young man was lost, and all the village was perturbed and at a loss to explain the disappearances.

A young man lived with his grandmother. He was not as other youths, because the old woman had taught him many things. He thought that some medicine-man had stolen the lost young men, so decided to find out where they had been taken. For many nights after all were asleep, he watched and walked about the house. One night the watcher saw something coming from the moon, which he soon made out to be a woman no taller than the width of his palm. She went in the entrance of the men's house, where the youths slept, but soon came out carrying a naked young man, who was still sleeping. She went up into the sky toward the moon, and the young man watched until she became a tiny speck in the distance, and finally was out of sight. The young man said nothing the following day when the excited

villagers puzzled over this fresh disappearance.

He now determined to go to the moon himself, but was unable to rise from the earth, even with all the power he possessed through his talismanic headband, the complete skin of a white bird given him by his old grandmother. He was forced to await the reappearance of the Moon-woman. One night, very late, she returned to earth. The waiting young man accosted her: "Who are you? Why did you come down to our village?"

"I am seeking a husband," she answered.

"Then take me with you."

"I shall take you for my husband if you will wear nothing, nor carry anything away with you from here."

He removed all clothing, even the bird-skin headband, and followed her to the moon. There he saw a house and a pathway leading to the sun. In the dwelling were an aged couple, the parents of Moon-woman. She instructed him, "If you obey my parents and me, all will be well with you, and you may remain here always."

The young man asked for weapons. The old man said: "I have spears and arrows. They have not been used for a long time, so I do not know how they will work."

He took the proffered equipment and set out. Soon he found a herd of caribou and easily killed one. While packing back the meat and skin, the young man was bothered by a butterfly which persisted in fluttering in his face, nor could he brush it aside. At the house he said nothing about it, but gave the meat to the old woman and Moon-woman. For many days as he hunted, the butterfly troubled him, but on one trip the young man succeeded in crushing it on his face.

He was happy to be able to go his way in peace. While still far from the house, a fog came over the land, till the young man could no longer see the trail. Then he removed his pack and sat down. He knew that some supernatural power was trying to destroy him. He thought of his grandmother, and his own talisman left behind, and was sad. Then he began to sing:

Grandmother; O, Grandmother!
Soon I shall be dead!

At that moment the young man felt something strike his forehead,

and on reaching up found it to be his bird-skin headband. The fog cleared slightly, and he saw a huge man with a body of flint standing near. In sudden fear, the young man cried: "Grandmother; O, Grandmother! Soon I shall be killed!"

Immediately the fog cleared away, and a new spirit surged through the young man's heart and made him strong. He whirled the bird headband around his head and flung it at Flintman. It struck the forehead so hard that the man fell apart in small pieces of flint.

When the exultant young man reached the house, he found Moonwoman tear-eyed and sad. Dropping his pack, he patted her, and asked, "Why are you so sad? I have never seen you this way before."

She answered: "You have killed one of my husbands. He was the best hunter I ever had. I am not angry at you, but what am I going to do now?"

But she soon became happy again, and the whole family talked of leaving the moon and of hunting seal on the ice. Four men, sons of the old couple, came from afar to help man the boat. One day, during a hunt on the ice, the young man became separated from the others and drifted to sea on an ice-floe. The others, when they found him missing, searched far and wide all summer and well into the winter, and then for several seasons.

The young man continued to drift, and finally the floe grounded. He sat on land, tired, hungry, and dejected. He had lost his weapons. Now he thought his end was near. He sang:

Grandmother; O, Grandmother! Soon I shall be dead! Grandmother; O, Grandmother! Soon I shall be dead!

At once he thought of his bird-skin headband. He stretched it in his hands until it was very soft. He made himself small and crawled into the skin. After some practice, the young man became able to fly. He took on the habits of the bird and flew down to look at every floating thing in the water. If it was edible, he ate. Nights he rested on ice-floes.

One night, during the fourth season of his absence, the young man heard voices not far off, saying: "It is too bad we can not find our hunter. He probably is lost forever. We have been searching so long that we had better go home now. We shall look over that large floe, and if he is not there, nor any trace of him, even a piece of parka, then we shall go home."

The young man located the boat and tried to follow it. His strong bird habits forced him to alight and examine every floating object, and in so doing he nearly lost the boat. He saw the floe that they were headed for, and alighted there at last. After some difficulty, he removed the bird-skin, for he had been in it so long that it stuck fast to his skin. Then he resumed his own size and put the headband back on his forehead. As soon as he overtook the searchers, they rejoiced to see him again. The party then returned to the moon. The young man soon lost all his bird habits; he became a mighty hunter and medicine-man. So many supernatural powers came to him that he was bothered with them. He could not sleep at night. One power was a tiny drum, which became large when he beat it.

One night he told the family that he was going to try out his powers. While all watched, he brought in buckets half-filled with water. Then the young man spread out his bird-skin headband, made himself small, entered it and flew about the room. As a bird he dived into each bucket and brought up fish. The young man removed the bird-skin, and addressed the family: "I want to visit my home on earth. There will be plenty of meat here for you while I am gone. But if you think I will die soon, or if you need me, I shall not go. If you will let me go, I shall return soon."

For a long time the family remained silent, but finally all gave their consent. The young man donned his bird-skin once more and dived into a water-bucket. In a few moments he was once more on earth and in his grandmother's home. She knew that he was coming, and had prepared food and new clothing. He learned that all was well in the village. At the playground, the young man told the people about the disappearance of the youths, and of his adventures on the moon and the sea. He told them that he was now a great medicine-man with many super-natural powers, but that he had never killed any one.

After a short visit, he returned to the moon, where the family were still awaiting him, talking about his last words, but not looking into the water-bucket. He was the only husband of Moon-woman, and he spent the remainder of his life there.

THE SIX MEDICINE-MEN

Two powerful medicine-men, brothers, ruled a large village up the Selawik river. They were lecherous men who kept their house filled

with women, married and single, and killed all who might object to their desires.

In the same village dwelled two brothers with their two sisters, and two dogs, one male and one female. The parents of the family had been slain by the medicine-men. The brothers removed to an inland lake, where they lived in a grass-thatched house with a willow frame. The elder brother, who was also a medicine-man, erected a tall stalk of grass, higher than the tallest tree, on the opposite shore of the lake. If any medicine-man approached, the stalk quivered and shook down frost which immediately killed the invader. However, the strongest wind could not remove a single bit of the frost. The elder brother also wore a dried weasel-skin on his breast, which he could imbue with life and send out to kill game. The two dogs brought in meat for the family.

For a long time, through the days and nights, the elder brother sat, with head bowed, trying to think of some means to protect his sisters from the cruel medicine-men of the village whom he knew would soon try to steal them away. A thought came to him at last, and by supernatural power he surrounded the younger sister with heavy stones, while the elder he turned into darkness. The home became a solid rock. Satisfied with his powers, the elder brother restored sisters and house to their former shapes.

The following morning, the elder brother saw the grass stalk shaking down frost. He knew then that an attempt would be made to steal his sisters. He informed the family: "One of those evil medicine-men who killed our parents will come here tonight. Fear not; I shall match my powers against his. Even should he prove to be stronger, be not afraid."

That night, while all were sitting about the fire, the elder brother remained quiet a long time, head bowed on his hands. He spoke slowly and quietly: "That medicine-man is now starting. He is coming this way. I see him near the lake, but do not be afraid when he enters. Now he is close. He will enter, but not through the door."

Suddenly the evil medicine-man appeared through the firepit, head and shoulders rising like a seal's. Immediately the elder brother caused a sheet of flint to slide beneath the medicine-man, so that he could not escape.

The medicine-man spoke, "I have come to take these young women to my home."

"Do not talk that way about my sisters. They will never leave here," rebuked the elder brother.

"Just watch. If you oppose me or think I can not take them, you will die!" was the threat.

"'Try all your powers. Though you work hard, or even kill me, my sisters can not go. They must not become your wives, because you have killed their parents by your supernatural powers."

All night long the talk and threats went on between the two. At last the exasperated elder brother cried: "Because you want my sisters so much, I shall kill you right here! If you talk about them any more I shall slay you now!"

The medicine-man again threatened: "Your power is not strong enough to kill me. I am a great medicine-man. I shall strike all of you dead if you try to prevent me from taking your sisters!"

"I have no weapons in the house, but something else will surely destroy you if you persist in trying to take my sisters."

Just then something began to claw, scratch, and eat at the feet and legs of the medicine-man. He used all his powers, but was unable to escape. Meanwhile, the elder brother changed the house to stone, surrounded the younger sister with stone, and transformed the elder into darkness. He and his younger brother became arrows and shot themselves into the grass outside the house. At daybreak they found the evil medicine-man dead beneath the tall grass stalk.

After restoring his sisters and the house to their original forms, the elder brother changed the dogs into serpents, which ate the medicine-man's body. He then killed the serpents and commanded their bodies to become dogs again. Now the evil medicine-man was forever dead. The elder brother next gave the dogs flints to eat. Each time they failed to swallow the stones, he killed them and reanimated them until at last the dogs were able to eat and digest stones. Finally he hung chains of flints about the dogs' necks.

That night the elder brother ordered the male dog, "Find and kill the brother of that medicine-man!" He threw the dog into the ashes of the firepit, where it soon sank from sight. He flung stones after the dog, and these became a swarm of mosquitoes to aid the animal.

Arrived at the medicine-man's home, the dog, with a cloud of mosquitoes about his head and chains of flints clinking about his neck, circled about, and, as he went, the walls became stone. The medicine-

man saw the dog enter and became greatly frightened; he knew at once that his powers could not harm the beast. The dog flung his flinty chain about the medicine-man and dragged him about the room, shrieking, promising to free the people, swearing to kill no more, and begging to be freed. The dog pulled him outside and away from the village to the tall grass stalk, where the medicine-man died. The elder brother again changed the dogs into serpents, which ate the body. After killing the reptiles, the elder brother transformed them into dogs again.

The family moved back to the village, and the elder brother told the people to be afraid no longer, for they would never be troubled again by these medicine-men. He also released the imprisoned wives and returned them to their own husbands.

A villager informed the elder brother, "These medicine-men had been sent here by two powerful brothers who live beneath the sea."

"I can kill them, no matter how strong they are," replied the elder brother.

"But there are still two more who live yet farther away under the sea, who are much more powerful, and they will avenge these others."

The elder brother informed the people: "I am going to kill these medicine-men under the sea. They will never again ravish our village of maidens."

The hearts of the people were gladdened, and they rejoiced.

To the dogs, with their jade breasts and flint chains and swarms of mosquitoes, the elder brother gave instructions: "Go to the first village under the sea and kill the two evil medicine-men there. I shall follow through the air."

The dogs went below the surface of the sea until they came to a village. There the people were all gathered on a playground, where the medicine-men dwelled. While passing through the entrance, two huge sea beasts attempted to seize the dogs, but the mosquitoes settled in the throats of the monsters and choked them to death. The dogs entered the playground, where they saw men on one side, women on another, and the two evil medicine-men sitting by the rear wall. They circled the enclosure, snapping at all who stood in their way. The medicine-men saw them, and became greatly frightened, for they knew that their own power was of no avail. They cried to the dogs, "If any one has sent you here, we shall give him anything he desires if he will take you away and let us go!"

The dogs made no reply. They quickly flung the chains of flint about the bodies of the medicine-men, so that they were helpless, and dragged them outside. The dogs moved swiftly to the surface of the sea, and there devoured the two evil medicine-men. The elder brother then appeared, and said: "I am glad that you have obeyed my instructions. I shall tell these people that they too can live in peace, and I shall restore the women to their husbands. Now you must go under the sea again to another village, where dwell more powerful medicine-men. These also you must kill. I shall follow through the air."

After a long journey, the dogs came to another village under the sea, where dwelled the last two medicine-men, the most powerful of all. As they started to pass through an entrance-way to a large house, two ferocious beasts sprang at them. The mosquitoes again flew down the throats of the attackers and choked them to death. Inside, the dogs saw many people, many captured women, and the two medicine-men. They endeavored to catch the medicine-men in their flint chains, but each time the men threw off the chains and healed their bodies from bruises and cuts by rubbing themselves with flints. Finally they became exhausted, and an easy prey to the dogs, which dragged the medicine-men through the door, so that none of the people might see what was about to happen. The tall grass stalk sprang up and showered frost on the medicine-men, who died immediately; the dogs changed to worms and consumed the bodies, afterward becoming dogs once more. Then the elder brother appeared, and went to the people, saying: "My dogs have done well in ridding the village of these evil medicine-men. Never more will you be ill-treated by them. The women the have stolen I shall return to their families. If other evil medicine-men bother you, send for me and I shall destroy them."

The elder brother, with his dogs, then returned to his own village and family.

THE POWERFUL MEDICINE-WOMAN

At one time a number of people formed a village on the seacoast. Here dwelt a single man who never- hunted or fished for himself. He dressed shabbily, but was always well-fed, because he was very strong and in the habit of entering homes to take what he wished. He not only snatched away food, but wantonly destroyed furnishings of homes. He was so strong that none dared oppose him.

In the same village a woman lived by herself. She was very powerful, and the greatest medicine-person in the community. All the hunters gave her half their catch, which she stored away in her caches. The people had fear of the strong man, and thought that with his power he would some day begin to kill people. They knew that he feared the woman, so they went to her and asked to be relieved of his presence. She answered that she would use her powers as they wished, and send him away.

As she finished her reply, a skin boat with a crew of four men drew up on the beach before her home. While the whole village watched, one of the strangers beckoned the strong man to him. Drawn by some power and unable to resist, he walked to the boat. The leader grasped him firmly, and said: " I have heard that you are a cruel man. Now I have you in my arms. If you are really cruel, speak!"

The man remained silent.

The stranger resumed: "We have come for you. The medicine-woman sent for us. You have always made an easy living. In the place where we are going to take you, you will work harder and be treated far worse than you ever have been treated before. All your life you will have to fight and work hard to keep from being killed."

The strong man did not want to be taken away. He cried and pleaded: "The power I have used just came to my mind. I could not help it. I am sorry. If you will let me go I shall not do as I used to do. I shall bother no one, and shall not try to become stronger."

The stranger replied: "If you had kept on with your ways, you would have become the strongest and cruelest medicine-man around here. You would have killed people. That is why we have come for you. Even if we allowed you to remain here, you would become powerful and we would have to give you the same punishment."

With these words, the four strangers picked up the strong man, threw him in the boat, and cast off. Far out of sight of the mainland, an island loomed. There the crew put him ashore. The strong man looked about and saw that he was on a bleak island, inhabited only by countless worms and insects. To these latter the leader of the stringers spoke: "Do not kill him at once, but gradually destroy him, so that he will have a long, hard time dying. We shall bring to you any others who are becoming cruel."

The boat departed, leaving the strong man alone. He soon became

thirsty, but there was nothing to drink. The worms attacked him in great numbers, and in spite of his enormous strength they quickly stripped him of clothes. Then the insects alighted on the strongman and devoured his flesh, bit by bit, until only the skeleton remained. But, through his power, the strong man still lived.

Meanwhile, in the village the medicine-woman informed the people: "That strong man is being eaten by worms and insects. Some power must be helping, him, because he is still alive. If any one, else is trying to become strong and cruel, I shall send him to the same place."

From that time all the people became kind and helpful toward one another. The younger, especially, aided the older and poorer with gifts of food and clothing

The medicine-woman, powerful and wealthy, lived alone in a great house always well lighted. It could be seen from afar at night. The walls were transparent, so that all the people could see her at work. Her power was such that she could see, watch, and read the thoughts even of all in the village. The medicine-woman remained single, because no man dare marry her; they were afraid of her powers. One time she called the people together and asked that some poor young man be brought to her for a husband. A poor youth who lived with his grand-mother became her husband. The medicine-woman ordered a new house to be built for the old grandmother and that she be cared for by some young woman.

That fall the fish did not run and caribou became scarce. A famine occurred in the village. The caches of the medicine-woman were filled, because she had always taken half of all the catches. From her stores she fed the village, so that none starved. She sent out the best hunters, but they returned empty-handed. Then she ordered her husband to remain home and to divide food amongst the villagers, while she hunted. He, however, begged the medicine-woman that he go out, and was allowed to take weapons and a sled, and depart. Away from the village, on shore ice by open water, the husband saw a boat filled with whale meat. One of the boat crew stood up and addressed him: "We have heard about the famine in the village. We know that the medicine-woman has fed the people from her stores. We have taken pity on you and are going to give you this whale meat to take home. Let people come out with sleds and take home whale and seal meat."

The man loaded his sled, returned home, and sent out men. They

brought in meat of whale, sea-lion, and seal, until all the caches were completely filled.

The husband, soon growing tired of sea-food, asked permission of the medicine-woman to hunt caribou. After walking far, he met an old man, seated on a snow hummock, who said "There is a big herd of caribou near by. Go and kill."

The young man, armed with a spear, soon rounded up the herd. When he waved his weapon in a circle about his head, the caribou milled about and he killed all with ease, piling the carcasses in two heaps. He searched for the man who had directed him, but he was nowhere to be seen. He went home to the village, and ordered the people to go out with sleds and bring in the meat. He told them to hunt thenceforth for themselves, because he would not live forever to support them. All were saved from starving, and since that time the people have lived in plenty.

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