

THE GREAT SPIRIT OVERPOWERS THE COLD AND FROST OF WINTER, STONE COATS

Characters

GÉNO^oSKWA

Stone Coats (Frost and Cold)

IN the old time when men got lost while hunting it was supposed the Winter God (Stone Coat) ate them up.

Once three Senecas started off on the war-path, going toward the West. At night they camped in a deep ravine at the head of a stream.

When they had made a fire, a fine looking man came and said to them, "I think it is right to do what I am going to do. I have come to tell you that there are many people, man-eaters, on the war-path. To-night they will make their camp in sight of yours. One of you must go to their fire and say, "Hallo! I've found your fire. Where are you going?"

"They will answer, 'We are on the war-path.' The man must say, 'I am on the war-path too.' They will say, 'Well, we will fight.' Then the man must leave them and come back to your camp."

The stranger disappeared and soon people came and camped a short distance from the Seneca camp. One of the three Senecas said, "I will go over there." As he approached he called out, "Hallo! I've found your fire! Where are you going?"

"We are on the war-path."

"So am I," answered the Seneca.

"Well, we must fight," said the chief of the Stone Coats.

As the man turned to go away he saw stone clothing leaning against a tree; the owner of the clothes was lying on the ground.

The next morning the Stone Coat warriors came up the ravine toward the Seneca camp. They made a terrible noise for they sang, "We are going to eat up the Seneca nation! We are going to eat up the Seneca nation!"

When they were about half way through the ravine, they gave a war whoop and moved forward quickly. But that moment huge rocks began to roll down on them and great trees to fall on them. The Senecas saw a strange man running along on top of the rocks and trees. Whenever he saw a Stone Coat head sticking up, he struck it and killed the man.

Of all the warriors only one was left alive and he was never seen again. All the time the stranger was throwing rocks and trees he sang, and the song said, that the Seneca nation could stand against anything, could stand against the whole world.

When the battle was over, the stranger came to the three men, and said. "I am he whom you call HÁWENIYO (Great Spirit). I have saved you. I did not make the Stone Coats, some one else made them. I want you, the Seneca people to be the most active of all tribes, in war, in games and in hunting."

The stranger disappeared and the three Senecas went home.

One day a Seneca, who was out hunting in the woods, saw that a Stone Coat was following him; he was frightened and began to run. When he saw that the Stone Coat was gaining on him, he climbed a tree that had fallen part way and lodged on another tree.

Stone Coat came to the tree and stopped but he couldn't see the man for he couldn't look up. Taking a finger from his pocket he placed it on the palm of his hand. The finger raised up and pointed at the man. The man was a swift runner. He slipped down from the tree, snatched the finger and ran off with it. Stone Coat shouted after him, begged and promised to be his friend forever if he would give him the finger. The man, afraid of being deceived, wouldn't go near Stone Coat, but he threw the finger back to him. Ever after this, this man and the Stone Coats were good friends.