The Legend of

Jennie Wiley

by

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1.

Jennie and her children were ready to leave for an overnight visit with her sister, Delilah, and her husband, John Borders. Batt Sellords, Jennie's fifteen-year-old brother, reached for the heavy crossbar across the door but drew back without touching it. Her dog, Tige, sniffed at the crack under the door and growled. "What is it, Batt?", Jennie asked. But before Batt could answer here question, she heard war whoops. "Merciful Goodness!" she said. "It's Indians."

"Let's pile everything in the house against the door", Batt suggested.

On the side of the room opposite the door stood the heavy oak split-log dining table. They carried it across the room and set it against the door. Then they carried over the split-log benches and the wooden stools, and piled them on the table. "What's next?" asked Batt. Then, answering his own question, he added, "the firewood."

One corner of the room had been stacked full of firewood. Logs five or six feet long had been piled to a height of about four feet. These logs were stacked under the table and against the door. Then every other loose thing in the room was piled against the barricade.

"This should keep them out," said Batt. Jennie answered, "I hope so."

It was steadily growing darker inside the cabin. Outside the cabin the yelling and whooping kept up. Neither Batt nor Jennie could see what was going on, but they knew the Indians were going through the war dance. That, as Jennie well knew, meant death for them all if the Indians gained entrance. How could she prevent it? He mind went back to the earliest time she could remember when she used to kneel beside her parents at bedtime and say after them a prayer for God's care during the night. She had been taught to pray on other occasions, too; and she had taught her children to pray, not my will, but Thine be done. She bowed her head and repeated these words to herself.

There was a crash against the door, followed by the pounding of tomahawks. Then came the sound of chopping. There was nothing that Batt and Jennie could do but watch and wait and pray. They had no firearms with which to defend themselves. Thomas Wiley's rifle lay on the gun rack above the fireplace, but it was not loaded, and there was neither powder nor lead in the cabin.

Crash! Crash! Crash! Blows fell upon the door and shook the cabin.

"What are the Indians using for a battering ram?" Jennie asked. "The tree trunk I cut the backlog from," said Batt. "They'll knock the door off its hinges in no time."

Crash! Crash! Crash! The blows continued.

Jennie bowed her head. "Dear God", she said, "if it be thy will, spare us from the Indians; nevertheless, not my will but Thine be done."

There was a tremendous crash and the sound of splitting timbers. The Battering-ram came crashing through the door. Firewood, table, and split-log benches were flung to the four sides of the room. In came the Indians. The Cherokee chief was in the lead. Enraged by the death of his son, h had determined to seek revenge by wiping out the family of Tice Harmon, and he had mistaken the Wileys' cabin for that of the Harmans. It was not long before Jennie and Tommy, whom she held in her

arms were the only ones left alive.

Jenny held Tommy under her left arms while she defended herself with her right, wielding a three-legged stool in great arcs. One bronzed warrior after another fell to the floor under the impact of her blows. But still the fighting went on. A flying tomahawk, thrown from the farther side of the room, narrowly missed her. She ducked another, which buried itself to the hilt in a log over her head.

The Cherokee chief stepped forward, his tomahawk in his uplifted right hand. In his left was a rifle with which he warded off Jennie's blows. Back and forth they sparred. The battle continued. Jennie fought to save the life of her baby. The Cherokee chief fought to avenge the death of his son.

A Delaware warrior, feeling warmth coming from the fireplace, kicked the forestick back and forth with his foot. A bright flame shot up and burned with a steady glow. It shone upon Jennie.

Jennie was tall and slender. Her bonnet had fallen back in the struggle and revealed her long black hair, parted in the middle and done in a knot at the back of her head. The light from the fire gave it a reddish glow. Here eyes were black, her cheekbones high, her nose prominent. Was it true, as some people said, that her mother was half Cherokee?

Whether it was her likeness to an Indian squaw or that something else attracted attention, Jennie never knew. But suddenly an Indian - an old Shawnee chief whom Jennie had scarcely noticed up to this time - stepped between her and the Cherokee chief. He knocked the stool from Jennie's hand with his left and seizing her by the hand yelled, "my captive."

The two chiefs faced each other.

The Cherokee, six feet tall in his beaded moccasins, was big and powerful. He had broad shoulders. He was, perhaps, fifty years of age, old for an Indian. Around his head, a band of bright-colored cloth held a crown of feathers in place, and in his ears were silver rings of elaborate workmanship. He wore a red shirt and buckskin leggings. A hunting knife was stuck in his belt. He still held his tomahawk in his right hand. He carried a white man's rifle, with shot pouch and powder horn slung over his left shoulder.

The Shawnee chief, who, by his gesture, had claimed Jennie as his captive, was less than six feet tall. He was an old man, but he was strong and fearless. He, too, wore the silver rings and brooches of a chief as well as the ornaments of a medicine man priest. By the design on his beaded moccasins, Jennie knew he was a Shawnee.

The Cherokee chief was the first to break the tense moment of silence that followed. His voice was angry and threatening. The Shawnee answered in like manner. Though she did not understand their words, Jennie knew her life and that of Tommy, depended on the outcome of the argument between them.

The other Indians began to take places beside the two chiefs according to their loyalties. Jennie looked at the different design on their moccasins and recognized that for tribes were represented. There were two Cherokees, three Shawnees, three Delawares, and three Wyandottes. The Delawares and the Cherokees sided with the Cherokee chief. The Shawnees and the Wyandottes stood beside the Shawnee chief.

As the argument continued, the Cherokee chief became more and more

infuriated. Through his angry shouting came, again and again, the name of Harman. Jennie realized that the Indians had planned an attack on the family of Tice Harman, not that of Thomas Wiley.

She said, "This is not the home of Tice Harman!"

Jennie hoped that her words might win freedom for her. However, they seemed to have the opposite effect on the Cherokee chief, who shouted in still greater fury, stamping his feet and shaking his fist. As his rage increased, the Shawnee chief became firmer in his reply and more determined in his manner.

The next few moments were tense moments for all. The other Indians stood by, each ready to do the bidding of his chosen leader. As the argument went on, it became clear to Jennie that the Cherokee was willing to take her along as a captive, but insisted upon the death of Tommy.

Jennie turned to the Shawnee chief, "Don't let him kill my baby," she pleaded.

"Indians go fast," said the Shawnee chief. "Papoose die."

"Oh, please! Please! Save my baby! I'll keep up, I promise."

The Shawnee chief appealed to the Cherokee and again an argument followed, but in less violent tones. The Cherokee chief give in to the wishes of the Shawnee and they prepared to go.

The Indians piled things in the middle of the floor. They slit the feather bead and the pillows with their tomahawks until feathers flew about the room like snowflakes on a breezy winter day. The dragged the burning logs from the fireplace and set the pile on fire. As it began to burn, they threw onto it everything they could lay their hands on. They yelled and shouted. Though they had failed in their plan to attack the family of Tice Harman, they had wreaked vengeance upon the settlement. They had killed four members of one family and destroyed their home. Two members they were carrying off into captivity.

2.

As they set out upon the long journey, the Cherokee chief headed the line of march. Behind him in single file walked the nine warriors. Jennie, clasping Tommy in her arms, was the eleventh person in line. The old Shawnee chief walked behind her. In this order the procession started up the steep mountainside behind the Wiley cabin.

On leaving the cabin, the Indians climbed the hill immediately to the north. It was steep and rough and broken by jagged rocks and cliffs. But the Indians seemed to find little difficulty in climbing it. The Cherokee chief led the way and set the pace. He leaped over fallen trees and boulders like a cat. He crawled through thickets of laurel and wild plum bushes like a snake.

Jennie found it difficult to keep up. But she did her best. She took long, fast steps in the darkness without knowing where she was going. She was guided by the movement of the Indians in front of her.

"Faster! Faster!" the Shawnee chief warned repeatedly.

"I'll keep up," Jennie replied.

"Cherokee chief angry!" the Shawnee chief answered.

"Papoose make White Squaw slow. War chief no like papoose. He Kill."

"Don't let him kill my baby," Jennie pleaded.

"Faster, Faster," urged the Shawnee.

Jennie knew that she was the property of all the members of a band as long as the band was together. So, for the time being at least, she belonged to the band, not to the Shawnee chief only. Any one of the band could kill her if he wished, and none of the others could do anything to prevent it.

She would do her best to please all the Indians, no just the Shawnee.

"Oh, dear God, give me strength," she prayed. "Help me please all of them."

As the night wore on, Jennie's thoughts turned to her husband and to the neighbors she was leaving behind. She knew they would follow her as soon as they discovered that she and little Tommy had been taken. They would try to rescue them. When she could do so without attracting the attention of the Shawnee chief, she broke off twigs from the bushes and dropped them in the path. She overturned stones. She left footprint in the earth in every spot soft enough for her to dig in her heels. Se pulled out strands of her hair and dropped them in the path. And all the time, hardly knowing where she stepped, she followed on the heels of the Indian in front of her.

The Shawnee chief did a lot of talking. Whether he was talking to himself or to her, she was not sure; but she knew he was speaking in English.

Jennie heard him say "White Fawn - happy hunting ground." "White Fawn sew. White squaw sew now. White Squaw make chief happy." From these words Jennie concluded that the chief's wife or was White Fawn his daughter? she didn't know - had gone to the happy hunting ground, and that she, White Squaw, was to take her place.

The Indians reached the top of the hill and descended quickly the other side. From there they crossed a narrow swamp where Jennie often sank in water and mud

up to her knees.

Up the next mountain they climbed, and along the ridges. They seemed to be traveling with no particular direction in mind. Later Jennie learned that they knew by instinct, just where to turn and just what path to take.

Jennie's long skirt of heavy linsey-woolsey material soaked up water like a sponge. When out of the water, it was soon frozen and stiff. She was cold. Tommy cried continuously at first, but after a while ne nestled his chubby face in the curve of her neck and shoulder and sobbed only now and then. She patted his little shoulders. This comforted both of them.

By taking short cuts rather than the well-worn trails, the Indians had shortened by half the distance from the Wiley cabin to the head of Walker's Creek. Midnight found them between Wold Creek and Bluestone River. Here they stopped in the shelter of a large rockhouse.

The old Shawnee chief indicated to Jennie that she was to sit down.

She sat down and drew an easy breath for the first time since setting out from the cabin. Her dog, Tige, who had followed her, crept up beside her and lay down at her feet.

From somewhere in the darkness, perhaps from a crevice in the rocks, a Wyandotte warrior secured two pieces of flint, some dry punk, and dry leaves and started a fire. The other Indians added twigs and sticks. Soon a big fire was going.

The Cherokee warrior untied the thongs by which the pack on his back had been fastened and laid the pack upon the floor of the rockhouse. He unfolded the leather flaps and took from the pack several pieces of lean venison. These he distributed in equal amounts to each of the Indians and then to Jennie. On pointed sticks they secured the venison, which they held above the flames to broil. When it was done, they sat in a circle about the fire and ate.

The Shawnee gave some venison to Jennie. "Eat," he said. Jennie took the venison and ate as much of it as she could. She did not like its taste, but it gave her nourishment that she needed. She tried to give some to Tommy. but he refused to eat.

The rain had now turned to snow. The wind was blowing. The weather was getting colder. While it was still quite dark, the Indians put out the fire. They tried to conceal all trace of it by burying the ashes in the sand. Then they took up the march again.

3.

The Cherokee chief led the way. Jennie was the eleventh person in line. Her clothing had dried. She had rested. The broiled venison had provided some nourishment. She felt refreshed and equal to do the marching that was ahead of her. The Shawnee chief followed behind her and urged "Faster! Faster! Faster!"

Daylight found them at the head of Bluestone River. The creeks and branches were full to overflowing. Often they were in water up to their armpits. The water was cold, but that did not keep the Indians from wading streams as they came to them.

Jennie found it difficult to keep up. Her long skirt, now torn in many places, was a hindrance to her. Her heavy shows slowed her progress. Hard as she tried to keep up, the Cherokee chief was displeased and shouted, "Kill White Squaw. Kill papoose!"

The Shawnee chief had noticed that Jennie was marking the trail, and now he watched her at all times. If she overturned a stone, even by accident, he warned, "Cherokee kill!"

The marching had been fast the night before, but it did not compare with the speed of daylight marching. The Indians never seemed to tire.

The crossed the Great Flat Top Mountain. Giant trees stood leafless in the breeze. Crows flew from one tree to another. Bears and deer were frequently seen, but the Indians did not disturb them.

From Great Flat Top Mountain, they went south along the ridge between the Guayandot and the Tug rivers. They were on an old trail and were familiar with their surroundings.

The old Cherokee chief stopped under the overhanging roof of a huge rockhouse and gave the Indians direction to make camp. The order was met with cries which sounded to Jennie like "O-oh-yo-o! O-oh-yo-o! and which seemed to be cries of pleasure.

The Wyandotte who had started the fire the night before again found flint rocks and dry punk in some hidden spot. The other Indians brought branches of trees from the forest and soon a big fire was going.

The Indians seemed to be relaxed and happy. Jennie guessed that they were no longer afraid of being overtaken by a rescue party. This worried her for she had hoped that someone from the settlement would take up the pursuit at once.

The Cherokee warrior, who had provided the only food she had tasted since she had been taken captive, again took dried venison from his pack and served equal amount to each member of the band. Jennie accepted her portion gratefully. She realized that she must eat to keep up her strength.

"Thank you," she said. "Thank you very much."

The Cherokee looked at her and muttered something she didn't understand.

The Shawnee chief drew a wallet from the bosom of his shirt and took from it some parched corn which he handed to Jennie. "Eat! he said. She took the corn, thanked him, and ate. The parched corn tasted good after the unsavory dried

venison. She felt better.

During the twenty-four hours she had been on the march she had traveled many more miles that she had ever traveled before in a similar length of time. She had suffered more from exposure than she had ever suffered in her whole life. She had waded streams of icy water up to her armpits. She had climbed over jagged rocks and cliffs during the blackness of the night with little more than instinct to guide her. She had leaped ditches as the Indian in front of her had done, without knowing their width or depth. She had descended steep precipices. She had crawled through thickets of mountain laurel and wild crab apple. Her clothing had been badly torn. Her legs had been cut and scratched by rocks, thorns, and brambles. Her feet were sore and blistered. But in spite of all the hardships, she had kept the pace set by the Indians. For the present at least, she had saved her own life and Tommy'y life, also.

But little Tommy was in distress. He had cried until he was too hoarse to cry anymore. He had been drenched to the skin. He had been cold. He wheezed when he breathed. He refused to eat.

Jennie held him close to her and patted his back and shoulders. "My baby," she said. "My darling baby."

He was so little and helpless. How could he possibly survive the cold and the exposure

"God be merciful to and innocent child," Jennie prayed. The Indians relaxed before the fire. They, too, were tired from continuous marching. They talked very little. There was no laughter.

Before lying down around the fire, the Indians bound Jennie with narrow strips of deerskin. Her legs were tied so tightly at the ankles and knees that she could not move them. Her arms were pulled behind her until her elbows touched, and were tied so tightly that she could not move one upon the other.

Tommy was left to lie upon the ground beside her, but, tied as she was, she could do nothing to comfort him. His wheezing continued. He cried feverishly.

Jennie could not go to sleep, nor could she rest. Her body was bruised and beaten. Her ankles and wrists began to swell. Her muscles ached. Every time she closed her eyes she saw again the upraised tomahawks, heard the war whoops of the Indians and the splintering crash of the cabin door, as well as the death of Batt and her other children. Events crowded into her mind. She cried aloud.

Her cries awakened the Shawnee chief. He looked at her and knew that she was running a high fever. He took a knife from its sheath and, as gently as he could, he cut the strips of deerskin with which she was bound.

By the dim light of the slowly dying fire, he watched her as she tossed from side to side. From her cries he knew that she was in great pain. He got up, lighted a torch, and walked out into the forest.

Some minutes later he returned, carrying many different kinds of leaves. These he pressed into an earthenware vessel. He filled the vessel with water and set it on the red embers and let it simmer until the liquid became dark brown. Then he took it off the fire and stirred the liquid until it was cool enough to drink. Then he held Jennie's head with one hand and put the vessel to her lips with the other.

"Drink! he said.

The liquid was bitter, but Jennie swallowed it. Again and again he forced

her to swallow, until all the contents of the cup were gone.

Jennie dropped off unto sleep and she did not awaken again until she heard the Shawnee chief say,"Up, up, we go."

He was shaking her by the shoulders. There was gentleness in his manner. She knew the Cherokee chief was impatient. She rubbed her eyes and then she took Tommy in her arms. She held her ear against his chest. His heart was beating. He was still breathing.

"God be praised," she said. "Tommy still lives." The Shawnee chief gave her some venison. This she ate. Then he gave her some parched corn, which she chewed until it was soft and gave to Tommy. She was greatly pleased when he swallowed it.

The Cherokee chief sat in front of the fire without speaking. Jennie was fearful of what he might be thinking, for he seemed to be troubled. At length he got up and walked to a large rock outside the rockhouse. He sat down upon it and called to the Indians.

One by one the Indians left their positions around the fire and went to the chief. They seated themselves in a semicircle in front of him. They crossed their feet in front of them and held their knees with their hands. The chief did the talking. The Indians nodded their heads in approval.

Jennie could not be sure what the council was about, but she strongly suspected that it had to do with the possibility of being overtaken by men from the settlement. The words "Tice Harman," "White Squaw," and "papoose" occurred again and again, and often the Indians made gestures in her direction.

"How I wish the men from the settlement would come!" she said to herself. "What has delayed them?"

She knew she could not continue for long the pace that was set each day by the Cherokee chief. She was tired. She was cut, scratched, and bruised. Her feet were sore and blistered. Her muscles ached. She was fearful both for herself and for Tommy.

She was certain that Thomas Wiley would come to their rescue. She knew that Tice Harman would come, too, for Tice Harman and Thomas Wiley, in spite of the difference in their ages, were almost like brothers.

For two years, Thomas Wiley had lived at the home of Tice Harman. He had lived there during the time of their courtship. It was to his home that Thomas had taken her after their wedding. And it was there they had both lived while Thomas was building their own cabin on the land he had bought from Tice. Harman. Yes, Tice Harman would come to her rescue.

When the council was over the Indians rose to their feet. The Cherokee chief gave orders to put out the fire, to bury the ashes.

After the orders had been obeyed, he again took his place at the head of the line and the other Indians fell into positions that had taken on previous days. They resumed the march.

4,

The streams, filled to overflowing from the almost continuous rainfall of the past forty-eight hours, were swift and treacherous. The ground in the lowlands was under water. This made marching so slow and hazardous that the Indians took to the ridges as much as possible. The hills were high, rocky, and steep. Cliffs, jagged rocks, and boulders stood like sentinels to block passage.

Jennie made every effort to keep up. Time and time again she called upon every bit of her strength, but she could not make her way so quickly and skillfully as the Indians did. The Shawnee chief often kept her from stumbling, but the other Indians gave her no help at all. Instead, they complained constantly about her slowness, and now and again they threatened to kill Tommy. The Shawnee chief always protested, and so the Indians were continually quarreling and arguing about her among themselves.

Jennie was young and strong. She had lived an outdoor life, helping Thomas Wiley clear the forests, tend the crops, and gather the harvests. She had helped him dig ginseng in summer and run the trap lines in winter. But this experience was beyond anything she had ever had to endure. She began to show signs of weakness.

"Kill White Squaw," the Cherokee chief shouted. "Faster! Faster!" the Shawnee chief urged.

About an hour before sunset, the Indians came to another rockhouse. The Cherokee chief indicated that camp was to be made for the night. Although Jennie did not wholly understand his words, she understood his meaning, and the order to stop was good news. Her strength was almost gone. She doubted that she could have kept going for another hour. Tommy's condition had grown steadily worse during the day, and Jennie's one thought was of how she could make him more comfortable. She was thankful, therefore, to have a few hours when she could care for his needs and rest her own weary body.

A black bear had been sighted a short distance from the rockhouse, and a Wyandotte warrior was sent to kill it. It was not long before he returned with the carcass of the slain animal.

The Indians removed the skin and cut the meat into quarters. Then they cut the quarters into thin slices, which they broiled over the fire. They ate and ate and ate until they could eat no more.

This gave Jennie hope of a few hour's rest at least for, knowing the habits of the Indians, she remembered that they ate little while marching and much when they expected to spend some time in leisure. But her anxiety about little Tommy was greater than ever, for he seemed to be getting sicker and sicker. He was hot and feverish, it was hard for him to breathe, and his cries of distress were weak and hoarse. The Shawnee chief, noticing her anxiety, listened to the child's breathing. Then he melted some bear fat in a small earthenware pot. He gave the warm bear fat to Jennie and told her to rub the child's chest with it.

After Jennie had done this, she got

Tommy to swallow some of the melted fat. Tommy began to breathe more easily.

"God be praised!" said Jennie.

The old Shawnee, acting now as medicine man rather than as chief, turned his attention to Jennie, for he saw that her feet and ankles were badly swollen.

He took a leather bag from his shirt and disappeared into the forest. He was gone a short time. When he returned, he had a great collection of leaves, roots, and barks. These he mixed in the earthenware pat, and set the pot on the fire to boil. When the mixture had boiled until it was quite thick, he took it off the fire and set it upon the ground to cool.

When the mixture was not too hot, he had Jennie bathe her feet in it. It's effect was amazing. The swelling soon disappeared.

When the night was far spent, the Indians stopped their feasting and lay down around the fire and were soon asleep.

Since Jennie had not been bound with leather thongs as before, she was free to take care of Tommy. She rubbed his chest again with the warm, melted fat, and again it seemed to make him comfortable. Then she bathed her own feet again. She knelt beside Tommy and thanked God for His loving kindness and tender mercy. Then she lay down beside Tommy and, a moment later, dropped off to sleep.

5.

The Indians were up a break of day. But Jennie slept on, and the Shawnee chief let her sleep as long as he dared. He had bad news for her.

At last the time came when he had to awaken her. He shook her gently by the shoulders until she opened her eyes. She put out her hand to touch Tommy.

"No," said the chief. "No, Tommy. Happy hunting ground."

Jennie cried "They didn't. They didn't." She could not finish the sentence.

The Shawnee said, "Papoose safe from Cherokee now."

"Oh, no, no, no," she cried.

The chief answered, "Papoose go like White Fawn."

Jennie buried her face in her hands and wept. She said a prayer:

"God, Thy will, not mine, be done."

The Shawnee helped her to her feet. The third day's journey had begun.

Jennie was better able to keep the pace set by the Cherokee chief than on the previous days. He feet and ankles were not longer swollen. Though her heart was heavy, she made up her mind to keep up with the Indians at any cost, praying that they would spare her life until a rescue party came. She still had much to live for.

At times rain came down in torrents. The wind swept it around the mountainside in great white sheets. The Indians were forced many time to take shelter beneath overhanging rocks. This was a great help to Jennie. Each stop gave her a chance to rest. Each time that she took up the march, it was with renewed determination to keep up.

The old Shawnee chief was pleased with her marching. "White Squaw good Indian," he said.

He helped her over steep places, steadied her when she stumbled or tripped, and did all that he could to make marching easier for her.

The Cherokee chief gave her no encouragement or any sign of approval, though Jennie knew he could not help but notice that she was doing better. Now that Tommy was gone, she thought, probably he would be satisfied only when he could be rid of her, too. Sooner or later, she feared, he could find and excuse to hill her. She would postpone that fateful moment as long as possible by causing as little delay as she could.

The downpour of rain continued. It was accompanied by a terrific windstorm, which uprooted some trees and tore branches off others. The Indians too, were wet to the skin. They were cold and shivering. The Cherokee chief gave orders to take shelter in a small rockhouse.

The Indians went in immediately. The flint rocks, the dry punk, and the dry leaves were produced as on other occasions. Soon a fire was going.

The bear slayer opened his pack. He took from it huge chunks of lean meat, which he cut into thin strips and distributed in equal portions to each member of the party. Jennie broiled her portion as the usual manner, but she could scarcely force herself to chew it. For four days she had no nourishment but unsavory bits of dried venison, fresh bear meat and a few kernels of parched corn. He stomach simply rebelled at the sight of food.

Indians who had been sent on scouting duty that morning returned shortly after dark. The report they gave was entirely in their native tongue, but Jennie guessed that it contained good news for the Indians, for they showed sign of being pleased. The Cherokee chief had listened in a happier frame of mind than on the other occasions when a meeting of the council had been held. Could it be, Jennie asked herself, that Thomas was unable to pick up their trail?

After they had heard the report, the Indians lay down around the fire. The Shawnee chief lay on one side of Jennie and a Shawnee warrior on the other.

Again Jennie was not bound. She was in less pain than on previous nights, but she could not keep her mind from thoughts and fears of the future. Would she be able to stand another day of marching? When did not know. To attempt escape at this time could bring certain death to her she was sure. She could not sleep. She could not keep the thought of little Tommy's death out of her mind. She turned and tossed from one side to the other.

Long before daylight the Cherokee was up giving orders.

Soon they were off for another day of hard marching.

6.

Upon leaving camp that morning, Jennie had felt ill. She had been unable to take the nourishment she needed. Her strength were failing. She made every effort to keep up, but found it almost impossible.

"Faster!" warned the Shawnee. "Faster! Cherokee chief kill."

"I'll do my best," Jennie promised.

In the early afternoon the two scouts who had been sent back that morning to make sure there was no pursuit party on their trail, returned. They reported that they were being followed by men on horseback.

The Cherokee chief held a council meeting. He stood and talked while the other Indians sat in a semicircle about him. One of the Delawares suggested that some of them should remain behind and ambush the rescue party. But the Cherokee chief did not agree with the plan. Instead of waiting in ambush he proposed that White Squaw be killed, and that they change their course of direction.

The Shawnee chief came to her rescue. "White Squaw live," he said. "White Squaw keep up."

"Ugh! Ugh! Ugh! shouted the Cherokee angrily. And he gave the order to fall in line. The party proceeded in the direction of Tug River.

Each time she set her foot down, Jennie tried to put it in the track left by the Indian in front of her, but she just couldn't reach it. Neither could she step as fast as the Indians were stepping.

The small streams emptying into Tug River were not so full of water as were the streams they had crossed the day before. Consequently the Indians again changed their tactics. They no longer followed the

ridges, but waded the streams instead. When the water in one stream was too deep for wading, they looked for another. They seemed to be more concerned about leaving no trail behind them than they were in covering distance.

Jennie was not equal to wading. In spite of all she could do, she fell behind.

"Faster! Faster!' she Shawnee chief warned continuously. "Faster! Faster!, White Squaw, faster!"

Jennie tried, but without success. The continual warnings, the fear in her heart, the dreadful suspense almost overcame he in her struggle to keep up.

The Cherokee chief stopped the line of march and waded back toward Jennie. Realizing from the look in his eyes that her last moment was near, Jennie did the only thing she could think of. She ran out of the stream and into the forest.

"No" shouted the Shawnee chief. "No, White Squaw, no!"

But Jennie did not stop. She raced ahead with all her might. The Shawnee chief ran after her. He managed always to stay between her and the Cherokee chief who was close behind. He caught up with her. He seized her right arm above the wrist and holding up in the grip of his powerful left hand, he faced the Cherokee chief.

The Cherokee uttered a defiant cry and lowered his tomahawk. The world turned black before Jennie, and she fainted. When she regained consciousness, she was lying on the ground and the Shawnee chief was bathing her temple with water.

7.

When Jennie was able to resume her position in the line of march, she saw in some strange way as surely as it were a message from heaven, that her life was no longer in danger. With that dread gone, she marshaled her strength to meet whatever hardships the days ahead might bring.

There would be no more suffering for little Tommy. And dear as Tommy had been, she found that, without him it was easier for her to wade the streams and climb the difficult trails.

She seemed to have renewed strength, too. She did not know why, but after each ordeal she was better able to face the next one.

It was growing dark when the party reached Tug River. Ordinarily narrow and shallow, Tub River was now a sea of water. In the middle of the stream drifted treetops, logs and other debris. The river seemed even wilder and more violent because a thunderstorm was raging. Zigzag streaks of lightning flashed across the sky, and great sheets of white lightning lighted up the whole countryside. Thunder roared thorough the valley.

The Cherokee chief ordered the Indians to swim the river. The Indians prepared for swimming.

Jennie backed away.

"No! White Squaw! No!" shouted the Shawnee chief. "Swim river!"

Two Indians grabbed her by the arms and dragged her to the water's edge.

"No! No! Let me -" But her sentence was not finished. The Indians pulled her into the water.

The Indians swam in an almost upright position. With one on either side of her, Jennie found swimming for herself impossible. She could not use her legs as a swimmer usually does, and her arms were held by her captors. She scarcely needed to do more.

Jennie and the two Indians were carried down the river for what to Jennie, seemed miles. The other Indians swam in the water near them. Not a word was spoken by anyone. Flashes of lightning helped them to see one another and to stay close together. At last they reached the other side of the river at the mouth of a small creek. Here they found themselves in deep, still water. Here, where there was no swift current to carry them along in their upright swimming position, it was difficult for the Indians to progress and at the same time to keep their captive's head above water. But after a struggle, they reached the bank of a creek. As soon as they touched land, they released Jennie.

"Sit down," commanded the Shawnee chief. Jennie did not wait for a second command.

There was a change in the weather. The electrical storm was over. Stars appeared in the sky. The wind was blowing. It was much colder.

"Cold weather good," the Shawnee chief said to Jennie. "Indians march faster."

"God forbid," thought Jennie, but she made no answer.

From the top of the mountain the Indians went down steep slopes into the next valley. The way down was so much easier than the struggle to climb up had been that Jennie felt somewhat rested when she reached the foot of the mountain. The country seemed to be familiar to the Indians. They headed straight for a rockhouse.

Far back from the opening of the

rockhouse, in a passageway that seemed to lead still farther back into the mountain, a fire was kindled. Although the light could scarcely be seen from the outside, the Indians stood between the fire and the entrance. In this manner, they shielded the glow cast by the fire from the outside.

The night was already far spent, but to the Cherokee chief the importance of continuing the march was greater than the need for sleep. When the Indians were warmed and rested, he gave the order to resume the march.

Although they had scarcely eaten since the night-long feast on bear meat, they were in good marching condition. Jennie herself felt somewhat stronger and better able to keep up with them. By mid afternoon, they sighted the Louisa River.

Deer had been seen in the lowlands. The Cherokee chief sent one of his warriors to kill a deer for a feast.

Soon he returned with a nice buck on his shoulders. The Indians dressed the meat and roasted it over s spit they had erected for that purpose - and a big feast was on.

The Shawnee chief insisted that Jennie eat her share of the lean venison. "White Squaw need food," he said. "White Squaw eat."

Jennie was too tired to be hungry, but she knew she needed nourishment. And so she ate the broiled venison.

When the Indians had eaten, the Cherokee chief said, "Cover fire. Bury ashes. We go."

8.

The Indians put out the fire and headed for the banks of the Louisa River. The Louisa, like the Tug, had overflowed its banks, and its current was swift; its waters deep. The Indians plunged into the river. Two of them grabbed Jennie by the arms and plunged into the river. After crossing midstream, they released her to do her own swimming.

The Indians did not halt, when they reached dry ground but headed straight for the hills. Late that night they came to a rockhouse. The Cherokee chief said, "We sleep!'

Soon the Wyandotte had a big fire going. The Indians stood or sat around it, getting themselves warm and dry.

Jennie was weary but not completely exhausted. For the first time since being taken captive she felt rested. She went to sleep.

About midmorning, the Cherokee chief woke his sleeping companions, for it was time to think about eating. There were buffalo in the canebrakes nearby, and buffalo meat was what they needed. A Cherokee and a Wyandotte were sent to kill one.

Within an hour, they returned to the rockhouse with the choice parts of a buffalo. The meat was cut into thin strips and distributed among the members of the party in equal amounts. The Indians broiled the meat over the flames on a fire that was going. And then they ate until they could eat no more. Then they rested, slept and stored up energy for days of marching.

Following the feast a few days were spent in a leisurely manner. Indians hunted, fished, and rested according to their moods. They no longer worried about being overtaken. On the ninth day of the march, they reached the banks of the Ohio River., near the point where the Louise River empties into it. Both river were overflowing their banks.

The current in midstream was swift. Great drifts of logs, broken treetops, and other debris were floating downstream. In the stiller waters on either side of the swift current, the tops of trees showed the great depth of the water.

The Indians seemed to be disappointed. They repeated over and over again, "O-hi-yo! O-hi-yo! O-hi-yo!"

The Shawnee chief alone failed to call out, "O-hi-yo! O-hi-yo! O-hi-yo!" Instead, he pointed to the north bank and said to Jennie, "Over there, White Squaw become Shawnee chief's daughter."

The Cherokee chief decided the river was too wide and too deep to swim and headed for the hills and ridges along the south bank of the river. For several days they proceeded along the banks of the muddy river. Each day they hoped the waters would recede to the point where it would be safe to try to swim the river. When they reached the bank of Little Sandy, the found this stream, too, over flowing, its channel and the lowlands on either side were filled with backwater.

The Cherokee chief called a meeting of the council. Jennie could only guess what it was about, but she did not thing her own fate was being discussed. The Indians seldom looked in her direction.

Toward the end of the meeting the two scouts who had been sent back to spy upon the pursuit party rejoined the band. Jennie did not understand the report they made, but she guessed that it contained good news for the Indians. They danced and shouted and seemed more at ease than at any time since the march had begun.

When the council ended, the Indians looked across the waters of the Little Sandy River. Then at a word from the Cherokee chief, he and the other Cherokee, followed by two of the Delawares, and two of the Wyandottes plunged into the muddy water.

9.

Jennie and the Indians who were left stood on the bank of the Little Sandy river and watched them. Their heads and the tops of their shoulders were above water most of the time. When they had landed safely on the other side and had disappeared into the forest, Jennie said to herself, "God be praised!"

The Shawnee chief seemed to consider this separation a blessing, too. He and the Cherokee chief had quarreled constantly. The feeling of ill will between them had grown day by day. With the departure of the Cherokee chief, the Shawnee chief was not the acknowledged leader of those who were left. He was happy and thankful for the change in the situation. Since it had come about just as the moon changed, he gave orders for all to worship the new moon.

A fire was started.

The chief distributed a mixture of tobacco, dried sumac leaves, and the inner linings of dried bark among the Indians and Jennie and kept a portion for himself.

The Indians lined up behind the chief. First in line were the Shawnees, then Jennie. The Wyandotte was last. Jennie felt sure that this order of marching meant that she was now considered a member of the Shawnee tribe.

At a given signal the little band followed the chief around the fire, always moving to the right. Each Indian joined in chanting the words uttered by the chief. The words made no sense to Jennie but she did her best to imitate them because she reverenced any form of worship.

The mixture was cast on the fire a bit at a time. It crackled and sparkled and gave off many different colors. The pungent odor from the burning mixture added a sense of mystery to the rites.

The ceremony lasted for an hour. Then it ended in a kind of silent prayer. When the last words of prayer had been said, the little band left the bank of the Little Sandy River. "Good Weather," the chief said to Jennie.

"Yes," answered Jennie. She had decided to cooperate in every way possible. She would try to make the Indians think that she wanted to become a Shawnee Indian.

The march was made in a leisurely manner. The Indians hunted and fished and feasted. Fear of being overtaken seemed to have left them. And Jennie, despairing of rescue, turned over and over in her mind ways in which she might escape.

It was good for Jennie that the Indians were in no hurry, for steady marching exhausted her. Too often she had driven herself to the limit of her endurance. Now that the Cherokee was no longer a threat, she gave in to her feelings. She was so tired! Dead Tired! But she forced herself to keep up.

After crossing the divide that separates Dry Fork from Cherokee Creek, Jennie fell unconscious to the ground.

The chief picked her up and carried her to a rockhouse nearby. The rockhouse was divided into to unequal parts by a huge boulder. He placed her in the smaller part and left her to sleep off unconsciousness. When he returned the next morning Jennie was still unconscious and by her side lay a baby boy not six hours old.

"Papoose!" the chief shouted. "Little Otter. White Squaw live. Little Otter live."

He made a pallet of furs and skins for

them and put his own blanket over them. Then he gathered leaves, herbs, roots and bark and brewed teas and medicines for them. During many long nights he sat by Jennie's side and watched over her as she turned from one side to the other in delirium. To keep her fever down he bathed her forehead with icy water and kept cold packs on her temples.

To the other Indians he said, "Bring squirrel and partridge for White Fawn and Little Otter. Get Wood. Keep fire going."

10.

The damp, chilly weather of November was followed by a pleasant, dry December. The nights were clear and cold. The stars and moon shone in all their splendor. The days were warm and there was almost continuous sunshine. This was what Jennie needed. Fine weather, together with nourishing gruels and lean meats, teas and tonics brewed by the chief, soon brought her strength back to her.

As soon as she was able to care for herself and Little Otter, the chief left her to her own devices.

The Indians continued to bring her food. They brought her small game and the choice cuts of larger animals. The brought her skins and furs for blankets and clothing. But they no longer brought wood for the fire. Gathering wood was a squaw's job, and they treated Jennie, now that she was getting well, exactly as they would have treated her had she been a squaw in one of their native villages.

Jennie gathered reeds and coarse grasses. She cut willow branches from the trees nearby. From these things, she made a bed for herself and Little Otter and lined it with skins and furs to make it soft and warm.

She made needle from the splinterlike bones found in the leg of the wild turkey. She made sewing awl from the small bones of the deer. She used pieces of sharp flint that the chief gave her for cutting instruments. With these crude tools she made the skins and furs that were given to her into clothing for herself and Little Otter.

All her life Jennie had kept herself, her home, and her children tidy and clean. Now that she had the time and opportunity, she resumed her habits of cleanliness. With the grease of the bear and the lye from wood ashes she made soap, and this she used in bathing herself and Little Otter, and in keeping her living quarters and her cooking utensils clean.

It was good that she was thrown upon her own resources, for this kept her busy. The daylight hours passed quickly. She slept well at night. Instead of brooding over the tragedy that had befallen her, she began to thing of the future. Somehow or other she would escape and return to her husband.

When Little Otter was four months old, Jennie saw the chief coming toward the part of the rockhouse where he had permitted her and Little Otter to live. He was dressed in his finest ceremonial garments. The look on his face was grave and solemn. The chief and medicine man had now turned priest. Instinctively, she clutched her baby to her bosom. "Little Otter four months old," the chief said. "Him take test."

He told her to remove all of Little Otter's clothing, except a narrow band about the mid-section and to present the child to him at the bank of the creek where the other Indians had already begun to assemble.

She undressed her baby. Then she placed a kiss on his forehead and presented him to the chief.

The chief took Little Otter in his arms and said something, which to Jennie,

sounded solemn and prophetic. He lifted Little Otter above his head and then brought him down and then up again as far as his arms would permit, time after time, and said words which again Jennie did not understand. Holding Little Otter in his firm grasp, he led the Indians in a ceremonial dance. Around and around they danced in a circle chanting words which Jennie did not understand. When the dance was over, a warrior handed the chief a piece of bark three feet long and ten inches wide.

The chief tied Little Otter securely to the smooth side of the bark and eased it into the slowly-moving Cherokee Creek filled with mush ice. The frail bark drifted with the current as silently as does an Indian's canoe on placid water. The anxious, expectant Indians and Jennie followed along the bank as the bark drifted downstream. Not a word was spoken.

The mid-morning sun shone upon Little Otter's nude body, making him warm and comfortable. The bark drifted downstream for an hour or more without a whimper from Little Otter. Then it touched a small rapids and was tossed about. The icy water splashed over the nude body of the child causing him to cry in fright.

The chief scowled, "Ugh! Ugh! Little Otter no brave Indian," he said. "Him die."

The Indians began to chant a death song.

Instinctively, Jennie jumped into the stream, snatched up the piece of bark and waded to the opposite bank of the creek. Then she ran into the forest. This infuriated the Indians. They followed after her, giving war whoops, wielding tomahawks and flourishing scalping knives. Jennie begged the chief to have mercy but to no avail.

"Little Otter no brave Indian," he said. "Him die." A warrior snatched the baby from Jennie's arms and with his hunting knife cut the rawhide cords that bound it to the bark. Then he seized it by the ankles and, carrying it head downward like a slain animal, he walked rapidly in the direction of a small sycamore tree.

Jennie's knees trembled. Everything turned black. She fainted. When she regained consciousness, the chief was shaking ice water in her face. Little Otter was nowhere to be seen. She knew he had been killed. She begged the chief to permit her to have his body that she might bury it. He consented and the scalpless body of the dead child was brought to her by the warrior who had killed it.

With the shoulder blade of an elk, she scooped out a deep grave next to the wall of the cliff in the corner of the rockhouse. She carried large slabs of rock found along the bank of the creek and stood them inside the grave on their edges. She lined the willow basked she had made weeks before for her baby to sleep in with a soft deer skin, hairy side out, and placed his body in it and folded the skin over it. She placed the basket in the grave and covered it with a heavy slab of rock. She cut a few twigs from a black pine tree and dropped them, on at a time, on the rock. She filled the grave with dirt which the tamped firmly. Then she bowed her head, wiped the tears from her eyes, and said, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

11.

The Indians left the mouth of Cherokee Creek about the first of April. Jennie did not know the exact date. She had lost track of time. She did not know the day of the week. She guessed the month only by the position of the sun and by the change in the weather. They followed Cherokee Creek to the point where it emptied into Big Blaine Creek. They went up Big Blaine Creek to the mouth of Hood Creek. They followed Hood Creek for a few hours and turned to the right when they reached a small tributary. Soon they came to a rockhouse where they stopped for the night.

The sun was going down behind the hills when the party arrived, and its deep red glow crowned the hills with glory. There was steady roar from the waterfall, broken by the springtime call of the whippoorwills. Jennie was happy when the chief gave orders to stop.

The Wyandotte started a fire. Three of the Indians went to spear fish in the pool below, and, before dark, they had taken enough for a night of feasting.

Late at night, after the feast, everybody lay on the ground around the fire in wheel-like fashion and slept until morning. The chief, as always, slept on one side of Jennie and a Shawnee warrior on the other side.

The next morning, after the sun wa up, a visit was made to a broad plateau above the rockhouse. Here the Indians looked over the grounds, loitered among the trees, and made more conversation than on any other occasion since Jennie had been with them. Occasionally they picked up an arrowhead, a broken tomahawk, or a spearhead which lay upon the ground.

On leaving the plateau, the Indians turned to the right again and, for a short time, it seemed to Jennie that they were traveling in the same general direction from which they had come. Toward noon, they turned to the left. Through a narrow gap they crossed the ridge between the watersheds of Hood Creek and Laurel Creek and descended a small stream to its mouth. Here they found Laurel Creek and descended the small stream to its mouth. Here they found Laurel Creek full of water from melting snow. High cliffs lined the creek's banks on either side, and the swollen waters of the narrow creek were too swift and deep for crossing.

Farther on the Indians found a pine tree that had fallen across the creek. Its butt end rested on a cliff on the other side of the creek, and the tip end rested on a cliff on the other side. Here a crossing was made.

From this point they traveled to the flat country where they descended a small stream to Big Mudlick Creek near a point which they referred to as Buffalo Lick, so called because buffalo were often found

licking the ground for salt at this particular spot. Here they stopped and made camp. It was good for Jennie that a halt in marching had been called, for she needed rest.

For several days the Indians hunted for buffalo, but each day they returned empty-handed. No buffalo were seen, and the chief finally decided to go on to Little Mudlick Falls.

The sun was sinking behind the clouds on the western horizon when the Indians arrived. The tops of the hills and ridges in the west were hidden in a narrow streak of dark blue that stretched across the sky from south to north. The blue blended into streaks of fiery red and orange and gold, broken, here and there, with splotches of black and brown.

"War paint," said the chief, pointing to the western sky.

"War paint! War paint!" replied the other Indians.

"A lovely sunset," said Jennie.

The Indians were happier than Jennie had seen them at any time since they had stood on the bank of the Ohio and shouted "O-hi-yo! O-hi-yo!" They shouted over and over again words which Jennie was sure must mean, "Beautiful! Beautiful!"

From their great rejoicing Jennie suspected that the long march had come to an end. But this she could only guess, for she was never told anything. If the chief ever spoke of the future in her presence, it was always in terms of adoption and of what she would do for the Shawnees. He always ended by saying, "White Fawn teach Shawnee to read and write. White Fawn teach Shawnee squaws to sew. White Fawn marry Shawnee warrior."

The thought made Jennie shudder. But outwardly she gave no sign of her dismay. Inwardly she determined more firmly than ever that before such thing could befall her, she would escape from the Indians or die in the attempt to do so.

The main fall of Mudlick Falls was about thirty feet wide when the creek was full, and about fifteen feet high. At the bottom of this main fall was a beautiful round pool into which the water fell with a thunderous roar. There were other falls above the main fall; below it for a distance of two hundred feet down the gorge there were many rushing, foaming cataracts and cascades.

The banks of the gorge were covered with rhododendron, mountain laurel, ferns, holly, dogwood, and redbud, and above them towered poplar, beech, and spruce trees.

The bark had been stripped from many of the trees in the gorge and on the plateau above it. On their bare trunks had been painted outline pictures of bears, deer, snakes, and other animals, and pictures of human beings. The paintings were done in a single color, black or red. Many of the painting appeared to be old, while other were evidently very recent.

It was to a group of these new painting that the Indians directed their steps. They read the message like a newspaper.

12.

A rockhouse was located below the falls. It was more spacious than any the Indians had occupied since Jennie had been with them. It was somewhat the shape of a quarter moon, with a width of twenty-four feet at the center of the arc. Its ceiling was high in the front. It faced the gorge and was well protected from the weather. Although the steep bank of the gorge in front of it could be ascended, the best approach to the rockhouse was by means of a narrow ledge that ran along-side the cliff for three or four hundred feet. Sometimes the Indians approached it by climbing down the trees, the tops of which reached the plateau above, where they now stood. It could easily be defended.

This rockhouse, Jennie believed, served as a second home for wandering tribes and roving bands of Indians who might need shelter for short periods of time. She did not believe that there were any permanent Indians settlements in the vast expanse of land that lay between the Ohio and Tennessee rivers.

She did not know why the chief had stopped here at this time, but she guessed that the plan had been decided upon earlier at the meeting of the council held on the bank of the Little Sandy River shortly before the Cherokee chief had plunged into its muddy waters and disappeared into the forest. Whatever the plan, here Jennie was destined to stay until the return of the Cherokee chief.

Upon their arrival at Mudlick Falls the chief's attitude toward Jennie changed. He no longer treated her as a sick Indian but as a squaw.

He required her to cook for him and the Indians with him. Cooking meant following the Indians on the hunt, skinning and dressing the carcasses of the animals they killed, carrying the meat, the skins and the hides to the rockhouse, cooking the meat, and tanning and preserving the skins and hides.

Cooking for the chief and the Indians with him was no big problem. They ate only once each day - before lying down at

night - and no two of them ever ate at the same time. She kept a pan of meat simmering at all times. Vegetables she never had to cook until she had grown them herself.

But cooking for visiting Indians was another matter. She never knew when to expect them. They arrived - many of them - at all times of day and night; the Shawnees from north of the Ohio River, the Cherokees and the mongrels from everywhere out on scouting duty. The rockhouse was a place where they stopped for food and rest. Jennie kept cooked meat and meat ready for cooking at all times.

The chief took Jennie with him when he went to the forest to gather plants, roots, herbs and barks for making medicines. The looked forward to those trips with him. They provided opportunity to obtain knowledge that would be useful to her the rest of her life and also an opportunity to study the hills, valleys and streams that surrounded her. Over there, somewhere, was Walker's Gap. Over there, somewhere, were Thomas Wiley and her people. Some day, she would get back to them or die in the attempt to do so.

When the leaves on the sycamore trees were the size of a mouse's ear, the chief said to Jennie. "Time to plant."

From a shelf in the rockhouse he took down pots of maize, squash and turnip seeds. The he took her to an overflow bottom on the bank of Little Mudlick Creek and showed her how to plant a garden. With tools made from the bones of large animals she planted the seeds and tended the growing plants.

The hardest task assigned to Jennie was that of smelting lead. Some where a few miles from the rockhouse - but in which direction she did not know - there was a lead mine which the Indians worked on days when they did not hunt. They placed the ore under a large beach tree, always in the same place, for Jennie to carry to the rockhouse and smelt it.

13.

Late one afternoon a long, weird call came up Mudlick Creek. Jennie's blood ran cold. She had heard that voice before. It was the voice of the Cherokee chief.

The Shawnee chief took the Indians and Jennie to the plateau above the rockhouse where he gave the answering signal. There was an exchange of signals.

Shawnee chief said, "Cherokee chief come back. Him angry. Him fight battle.

Him lose warriors. Him take captive."

On the plateau above the rockhouse the captive - a boy of not more than twenty years - was tied to a small tree and slowly burned to death. Jennie was forced to witness the execution after which she was ordered to return to the rockhouse and cook meat for the visitors.

The Cherokee had a meeting of the council which lasted a long time. Then the Indians came down to the rockhouse and feasted for what seemed to Jennie to be endless time before they lay down for sleep.

The next morning, before the break of day, the Cherokee chief told Jennie that he had purchased her for many pieces of silver and that, after a buffalo hunt, he was taking her to the Cherokee village where she could teach his squaws to sew and cook the white woman's way.

Had the Shawnee chief betrayed her into the hands of her arch-enemy as Judas Iscariot had betrayed his Christ for pieces of silver? She didn't think so. There had to be some other consideration.

But then she thought "both the Cherokee chief and the Shawnee chief had acted out of character since she had been their captive." Ordinarily, the Cherokee Indians were a gentle, peace-loving people; on the other hand, the Shawnee Indians were a cruel and warlike people.

But this was no time for rationalization. She must accept conditions as she found them. She must not try to determine the reason why.

14.

Before the Indians left for the buffalo hunt later that morning, the Cherokee chief tied Jennie's hands behind her and tied her feet above the ankles.

After a few agonizing, painful hours she dropped off into a troubled sleep. She dreamed - or seemed to dream - for the dream seemed so real - that the young man whom she had seen burned to death the night before stood before her.

In his uplifted left hand he carried a sheep's skull filled with buffalo tallow. A wick that was anchored in the tallow burned with a low flickering flame. He said not a word but beckoned to her to follow him.

Jennie felt herself moving strangely through space. They moved down the gorge, across the narrow bottom through which ran Little Mudlick Creek. They followed it to Big Mudlick and then to Big Paint Creek. They crossed Big Paint Creek and went into the hills on the other side. They crossed creeks, climbed hills, and walked along ridges. They moved as gently as a breeze until they came to the top of a high hill overlooking a river.

The young man blew upon the small fluttering flame and it burst into a great glowing light which revealed a river.

On the opposite bank of the river was a fort and near it were white women and children. Jennie could hear the voices of the children as they called to each other in a game of wood tag. She wanted to call out to them, but the light from the candle slowly dimmed and then went out and she found herself bound and lying in the rockhouse.

"Was it a dream?" she asked herself. "Was it a dream? It all seemed so real. There were white women and children. The children were playing wood tag. It couldn't be a dream. But yes it was - it must have been - a dream."

She went to sleep again. The dream was repeated. This time it seemed even more real than it had been the first time. She was more bewildered than ever.

"I don't understand," she said to herself. "It was all so real. There was a fort. There were women and children. My people!"

She went to sleep again, and the dream was repeated a third time. Again she awoke to find herself bound hand and foot. However, she felt relaxed. She was thinking clearly. "Was it a dream?" she wondered. "Was it just a dream? It was all so real. I saw the fort. I saw the women and children."

She continued to talk to herself. "The young man took me down the gorge, across the bottom. We crossed Big Paint Creek. We crossed other creeks. We climbed hills. But in which direction?" She couldn't remember.

A terrific storm was raging. Great sheets of rain were coming up the gorge. There was thunder and lightning.

Jennie talked to herself. "The Cherokee chief will hunt buffalo today and tomorrow. Upon his return he will start to the Cherokee villages. If he succeeds in taking me there, I shall become a slave to his tribe of Indians. This dream is a sign that now is the time for me to make my escape."

"If I am caught," she thought, "death will follow. But death is to be preferred to a life of slavery among the Indians. I will try to escape."

She rolled over and over until she reached the spot where the rain fell upon

her. It was a cold, drenching rain. It came down on her head and shoulders. It ran down her neck. Only her garments of heavy leather prevented her from becoming soaked to the skin. She lay upon her stomach so that the rain could beat upon her wrists, which were tied behind her. She tried to move her wrists, but at first, swollen as they were, it was difficult and painful. She tried again and again and again. At last the thongs gave a little and she could move one wrist upon the other. The slight loosening of the thongs encouraged her and she renewed her efforts.

Finally the wet rawhide strips stretched until she was able to slip her hands out of them. It was an easy matter now to untie the thongs that bound her ankles.

It was a gray and misty morning. Rain was falling. It was difficult to tell the time of day, but Jennie guessed it was about midmorning.

The Indians had left before daylight. "Even if they have taken shelter during the storm," she thought, "they must be well on their way to the buffalo lick. I shall flee in the opposite direction so that there will not be any danger of meeting them.

15.

She called her dog. "Here, Tige," she said. "I must leave you."

Poor Tige! He had been her sole companion for eleven months. She had talked to him at times as if he were a person and he had seemed to understand. How she hated to leave him. But this was no time to be sentimental. If she were going to make an escape, the barking of a dog might betray her.

She made a muzzle of leather and slipped it over his nose. Then she tied him to the stone to which she, herself, had been tied so many times. She patted his head. "There now Tige," she said. "There now. Sometime perhaps -."

She did not finish her sentence. She knew that she had no time to lose.

"What do I need to carry with me?" she asked herself. "Just as little of possible."

She took two day's supply of meat. "After the meat is gone," she thought, "I shall find food by hunting for it."

She might need to fight for her life.

"What is here I can use for a weapon?"

By searching the possessions of the Indians she found a warrior's belt hold a scalping knife and tomahawk. She tied the belt around her waist.

On leaving the rockhouse she followed the path, which was full of running water, up the gorge to a place where she could step into Little Mudlick Creek. She waded down little Mudlick Creek to the place where it empties into Big Mudlick Creek. She waded Big Mudlick Creek to it junction with Big Paint Creek.

Big Paint Creek was swift and the water was deep. But she dived into the muddy water and tried to swim to the opposite side. In the middle of the stream she was caught in a swirling pool and was almost drowned before she could pull herself up onto a floating treetop which she rode to the mouth of the stream that now bears her name, Jennie's Creek, where she slipped into the quiet backwater. She swam up Jennie's Creek until she found the water shallow enough for wading. Then she waded the creek to its forks.

Here she was confused. She did not know which fork to take. She remembered only that in her dream she had seen a river and a fort on the other side of it. How far away had it been" In which direction? She did not know.

In marching with the Indians she had noticed that when they were in unfamiliar territory they followed their instinct. She, too, would follow her instinct. She took the left fork, believing it would lead her to the river.

She waded the left fork, to the Middle Fork, where, again, she instinctively turned to the left. She waded this stream for a distance and waded one of its branches to its source. She crossed a divide through a low gap and descended another stream. She continued down this stream to its mouth where she found water that was too deep for wading.

For almost twenty hours she had waded swollen streams. The night had been stormy. Only twice had she stopped, and then just long enough to eat a few bites of meat. She sat down by the edge of the water to gather strength, to give thanks to God for her safety, and to wait for daylight.

Jennie knew the Indians would follow her just as soon as they returned to the rockhouse and found her gone. "At best," she thought, "I could not have been gone many hours before they made this

discovery."

Much of the time she had traveled very slowly, especially during the time when she had to cling to the treetop that carried her around the bend in Big Paint Creek.

The Indians, once they had picked up her trail, would travel much faster than she had traveled. They could not need to wade streams to cover their tracks as she had done. They would take short cuts, too. Her greatest hope for time to complete her escape lay in the thought that she had not left a trail that could be picked up easily.

Except that she was, apparently, beside a larger and deeper river than any she had met so far. Jennie did not know what was before her. She must simply wait until daylight and the lifting of the fog to survey her surroundings.

As the first gray streaks of dawn showed in the eastern sky, Jennie saw the dim outline of a high bank overlooking the river. "God be praised," she said. "This is the river I saw in my dream."

16.

The morning was cloudy, and a foggy mist almost hid the river. Until the fog lifted she could not see the farther side of the river. There was nothing she could but sit and wait. She was happy, yet she was frightened.

"What if there is no fort on the other side of the river?" she asked herself. "What if the Indians come before I can cross the river?" These and other questions raced through her mind.

A squirrel jumped from one limb to another. It did not make a great noise, but it was enough to startle her and make her spring to her feet. Her nerves were on edge. "There now, she said, "I must keep calm."

She sat down again and waited for day to break. How slowly the time passed. At first she could see only the water, then willow trees, the bank on the farther side, then, at last a clearing. "Oh!" she shouted, "Oh! Oh! This is the river! This is the river! This is the river!"

The fog drifted from the valley into the chain of hills back of it. The sun was beginning to break through in places. Jennie shaded her eyes with her hand and peered into the clearing. "There is the fort," she said. "It is real! I am not dreaming. There is the fort."

As she stood gazing upon the fort, she saw some women walking toward it. They were carrying buckets of water from a small stream which flowed close by. Children played about them, chasing each other from one piece of wood to another.

"Wood tag," said Jennie. "That is what they were playing in my dream."

She called to the women, but they kept on walking toward the fort. The lapping of the water on the banks of the river and the rustling of a light wind in the trees kept her cries from reaching their ears. In desperation she screamed, "Save me! Save me!"

Her cried seemed to frighten the women and children. They hurried into the fort and closed the gate behind them.

Jennie wrung her hands and screamed again and again. "The Indians! The Indians! Save me from the Indians!"

An old man came out of the fort and walked toward the river.

Jennie called to him, "Save me! Save me from the Indians!"

"Who are you? the old man asked.

"Jennie Wiley," she shouted.

"Jennie?" the old man cried. "Jennie Wiley! Praise be! Of course, we will save you."

"Henry Skaggs! Henry Skaggs!" shouted Jennie. "Oh! Oh! Oh! Henry Skaggs!"

How fast Jennie's heart beat! Here was someone who knew her.

She told Henry Skaggs how she has escaped from the Cherokee chief less than twenty-four hours before. "He will be following me. He may be here any minute," she cried. "Help me! Oh, help me!"

"We'll save you, Jennie," he said. "We'll get you across the river before the Cherokee gets here. The men have gone from the fort with canoes," he went on, "and I shall have to make a raft before I can cross the river, but I'll save you. If the Indians should come before I can get there, start swimming. We'll get you across one way or another."

Many of the women had come down to the riverbank by this time. They, too, knew Jennie Wiley. For eleven months they had talked about her; hoped and

prayed for her return. "Get the axes," Henry Skaggs said to them.

17.

On the bank of the river stood a tree that had been struck by lightning years before. Part of its main growth had been ripped off at the time. Since then the bark and many of the smaller limbs had rotted and dropped off. What was left of it stood straight and tall. Henry Skaggs and two of the women took turns at chopping. The chips fell fast. Other women cut long, slender grapevines, pulled them out of the tops of tall trees, and carried them to the waters edge.

When the tree fell, it broke into three pieces of about equal length. These pieces they tied together with the grapevines and strips of leather.

Henry Skaggs tied strips of leather to two long rifles. These he slung across his back and shoulders with muzzle pointed downward to keep the powder free from any splashing water. Then taking a long pole for shoving, and a shorter one for paddling, he pushed the raft out into the swift, muddy water.

As a matter of safety all of the children and some of the women were sent back to the fort. A few women stayed upon the bank of the river to help with the landing when Henry returned with Jennie.

The raft drifted with the current and Henry Skaggs did not try to prevent it. All of his efforts were directed toward getting it to the other side of the river. He made rapid progress considering the swiftness of the current, but to Jennie his progress seemed terribly slow.

Now that she had discovered there were white people so close to Little Mudlick Falls, she believed that the Indians had known it all the time. She had never been taken with them when they had hunted in this direction. She was sure that the Indians, believing she knew that white people were at the fort, would suspect that she had fled to this very spot. If so, it could not be long before they would arrive. She ran along the riverbank keeping even with the raft as it floated down the river.

The women on the other bank of the river walked downstream with the raft, too. They expected the Indians would appear at any minute, as did Henry Skaggs.

The moment the raft touched the bank Jennie jumped on it. She threw her arms around the old man and clung to him for a moment. Then she seized the paddle, and they put the raft back to the east bank of the river.

On the west side of the river stood the Cherokee chief, accompanied by more than twenty stalwart Indians. Tige was with them.

18.

"White Squaw, come back! Come back!: the Cherokee pleaded. "Honor, White Squaw! Honor!" he shouted. "War chief buy White Squaw with many pieces of silver."

Henry Skaggs lifted a rifle and took deliberate aim at the Cherokee chief. He fired, but the distance was too great; the bullet fell into the river.

The Cherokee chief shot an arrow in return but it too, fell into the water. Then he gave a war whoop and he and the Indians disappeared in the forest.

Jennie's dog ran back and forth along the water's edge, barking.

Jennie held out her hands and called, "Tige! Tige! Come, Tige!"

With a bark, Tige leaped into the river and set out paddling for the other shore.

Jennie called, "Good dog, Tige. Come on, Tige."

The dog swam the river.

"You made it, Tige. You made it. We're both free!" said Jennie.

For a minute Tige was too tired to bark. Then he shook himself, and with wildly wagging tail and happy little yelps, jumped in Jennie's arms. For another minute they stood at the edge of the water. Jennie patted him. Then they went to the fort.

"How is Thomas?" Jennie asked her friends. "Is he in despair?"

"No," they told her. "He is, all right."

Thomas had rebuilt the cabin, they said, repaired the furniture, and put things in order. Day in and day out he had lived there alone, waiting for her return.

Thomas was eating supper when he heard a familiar knock at the door. He was startled! It was a knock that he and Jennie had used as a signal!

He listened. The knock was repeated. He ran to the door. His knees trembled. His hands shook. Could it be Jennie?

He took down the crossbar, turned the buttons and opened the door.

"Jennie!" he cried. "Oh, Jennie! You did escape. I never stopped praying that you would."