

## CHICAUWAN, THE FLEET-FOOTED ONE, THE SEEKING ONE

I sat crosslegged on the balcony and gazed across the wooded plain. The trees were just beginning to change color; a few were scarlet red already. A cool wind from the North combatted with the hot sun of the South; autumn was beginning to make itself manifest. I felt a sadness in the air; all living creatures that dwell outside knew that the time was coming to sleep or die. The wasps could perceive it; they were struggling for their last meal before the winter of death kills them.

I began to breathe deeply and meditate. With my eyelids half-closed, I began to slip into the depths of a trance. I felt the North Winds close about me, strands of my hair brushing about my eyes. I could hear the distant sound of trucks from the wide Interstate, trucks carrying their loads to the North. I remembered hitchhiking once on that Interstate to go to New England, and the trucks would knock me aside with their waves of wind. And I began to remember something from long ago:

Once there was a time when these buildings were not here. And once there will be a time when these buildings will be reduced once again to rubble, and Nature will cover the earth again, as it was before. All things, I contemplated, rise and fall, come and go. Once there was a time when there was not the sound of trucks, but only the quiet song of birds. There was a time when none of these buildings existed and the Interstate was gone, a time when all this was but a vast woods, unmarked by the corruption of the white man.

Upon this hill was an Indian tribe that once lived here many, many centuries ago. They had their fire here and around the fire

was a ring of painted tipis. They looked upon this wide view also, but their vision was unmarred by the buildings that are now here. All they saw was Nature all around them and it was in Her that they lived and moved and had their being. To live, they hunted, fished, and gathered the wild herbs, but they took only what they needed. And whenever they shot a deer with their arrow, they prayed in their hearts to the Great Spirit that the spirit of that deer would go to the Paradise that the Great Spirit has set aside for the animals. They buried their dead to be fertilizer for the Earth, to return to Her that which they had taken.

And in this tribe was an Indian who was different from the others. His name was Chicauwan, the Fleet-Footed One. When the ceremonial races were held, he could run faster than anyone in his tribe. He could pursue a buck in the middle of winter for days, without pausing to rest, and bring it home, dead on his shoulders, so that his tribe may eat to survive the cold. He served as a messenger to quickly run along the paths to warn all the tribes that an evil people that kill their fellow men were coming from the South-East, or to bring good news that one tribe has more food than they need and has plenty to share with the other tribes.

But Chicauwan had thoughts that were different from the thoughts that his fellow men had. He wanted to know things that the others of the tribe did not know. He would wander the woods, distant from where the tribe lived, and would wonder what it is that makes the tiny seed become a giant oak tree or what it is that follows death and decay. He was not content with the way of life that his tribe lived. The ceremonies that his tribe performed seemed devoid of life to him and he had a restlessness within him that would burn constantly. Perhaps it was this restlessness that made Chicauwan so quick a runner.

He asked the Aged One of the tribe what it was that caused the movement of life. And the Aged One told him that it was the Great Spirit that caused all things to move and have existence. And Chicauwan asked the Aged One where could he find the Great Spirit. The Aged One said that the spirits of the Great Spirit dwelt in the Great Unknown Mountains of the West and perhaps he would find his answers there. And yet, the Aged One would tell him, the Great Spirit is in all things and He is everywhere and everything.

The Aged One told Chicauwan many things which puzzled him. He spoke of a distant land where all the tribes came from, a land that once lay beyond the rim of the Great Ocean of the East, and that this land sunk beneath the Ocean because of a Sorcerer with Evil Powers. In great canoes, the tribes all scattered far and wide over the Great Earth. Knowledge they once had, sunk beneath the Ocean with that Mighty Land called Atlanteous.

The Aged One spoke of spirits that dwell in the woods, in the clouds, and in the rocks themselves. There are spirits of the moon, the Aged One would say, that dance in the moonbeams at night, when men are fast asleep, resting from the labors of the day. There are spirits of the wood that dream in the shadows of the forests. There are spirits which give the clouds their shape and spirits high in the sky that sing like the wind. To have the power to command these spirits is great indeed, the Aged One would say, but knowledge of this power is forbidden, for it is this Power that caused High Atlanteous to sink beneath the Great Ocean of the East.

Chicauwan asked the Aged One what happens to the spirit of the man that dies. And the Aged One told him that if the man did not needlessly kill or take that which is not his, and if he provided his tribe with food, he will go to the Happy Hunting Grounds where

he will never die in a Paradise that is everlasting. But somehow this answer did not satisfy Chicauwan and he wondered also about the spirits that the Aged One spoke of.

One day, while wandering in the distant woods, Chicauwan pondered upon the things that the Aged One told him. He stood still in the silence of the woods and could sense the presence of the spirits the Aged One spoke of, but could not see them. He realized that he could not rest content, living with his tribe for the rest of his life. Perhaps the spirits of the Great Spirit that dwell in the Great Unknown Mountains of the West could tell him that which he desired to know. It was then that his resolution to go to Them was born.

When it was night, he went into the tipi of the Aged One and spoke thus, "Aged One, I crave to know the knowledge of the Great Spirit, therefore I must leave our tribe to go to the Great Unknown Mountains of the West. I know in my heart that I will never be completely happy to hunt, fish, and gather the wild herbs with the rest of my people. I wish to speak with the spirits of the Great Spirit that I may have the knowledge of all things."

"I can see that you are fully resolved, Chicauwan, and that there is nothing I can say to sway you aside from your purpose. I have watched you, Chicauwan, from the time when you were a child to the time now when you are a grown man. Your curiosity is insatiable and you will never be satisfied until you are filled with the knowledge of the Great Spirit.

"But there are things which I must tell you. No paths are there that go to the Great Unknown Mountains; you will have to wend your way through the wild woods. Halfway there, dwell a people that kill their fellowmen and eat their flesh. You must be wary of them and stalk unseen past them, if you can. You must avoid killing them, for

well you know that the way of our tribe is never to kill another man, unless that man is about to kill you. In the foothills before the Great Unknown Mountains, are spirits that will try to enchant you, but you must look the other way when you encounter them, for they will surely lead you astray if you pay heed to them. And, finally, Chicauwan, when you encounter the spirits of the Great Spirit in the high mountains, you must not speak or assert, not even in your mind itself, for you must listen. And you must be very still while you are listening, and you must listen not with your ears but with the spirit that dwells within you."

" How can I ever thank you enough, O Aged One, for all that you have taught me? But, nevertheless, there is more that I am compelled to learn and I must learn this elsewhere. To the people of our tribe, I wish great happiness and may their stomachs always be filled with meat and may the blessings of the Great Spirit always shine upon them. Farewell, O Aged One, I must go now."

" Chicauwan, wait, I must warn you now. You may never return. The rare ones, in the past, who left our tribe did not generally return, because of a thing up there that we do not understand. But I wish you good blessings in finding the knowledge that you seek. I know that even that will not sway you aside, for the power of curiosity makes a man brave enough to face any and all dangers."

" You are right, Aged One. Nothing can sway me aside. I see clearly where I must go. But never will I cease to be grateful to you for the knowledge you have taught me and the directions you have given me. Farewell, O Aged One, perhaps I will see you in the Land of the Great Spirit."

" Farewell, Chicauwan, and from this day on, your name shall be known by our tribe as the Seeking One. May the blessings of the Great Spirit shine upon you and guide your way on, for noble is your

purpose and Great is that which you seek. Farewell, O Seeking One."

And they gave each other the Indian handshake clasp. Then Chicauwan left the Aged One's tipi.

The half-moon shone through the branches of the mid-summer trees as Chicauwan went to his woman, Ramona, to tell her of his resolution. She was keeping the fire alive and roasting meat. After he told her of the journey he was about to make, she wept.

"O Chicauwan, what if you do not return? We shall never share our warmth with one another again. Do you want that to be?"

"If that must be, Ramona, that must be, but I seek greater things than warmth and food. As much as I love you, Ramona, I must go to seek this knowledge that the Aged One spoke of."

"But, Chicauwan, there will never be one like you again. Must you leave me?"

"I am sorry, Ramona, but I must. If I do not return, you will find another man to be your lover and provider. I can no longer be bound by these things, Ramona, for I am a man who must be free.

"Weep not, Ramona, for all wounds of grief heal.

"Do you remember when you were a child, Ramona, and found a baby squirrel which you took in your arms and fed? Then it grew up and ran away into the wild woods. How you wept, Ramona, but you eventually forgot that squirrel and grew up. So it is with this, Ramona."

Her tears ceased to run at these words and she saw the truth of Chicauwan's words.

"So it must be, Chicauwan. Farewell, I will miss you."

"Farewell, Ramona, my love for you will never quite die. Perhaps we shall meet again in the Land of the Great Spirit."

And they embraced for one long last time, and he left her. He did not turn back to look at her for the last time, for he knew the pain would be too great.

The next morning, the people of his tribe gave him what he would need for his long journey, and, as he departed, they sang a song for him, Chicauwan, the Seeking One.

I woke up from the trance-dream and surveyed the wide view. How could they have known of the mountains to the west? I cannot see them from here. Did the Aged One have a vision of them? I lost trace of where Chicauwan went from there. The trance-dream ended there as though it were the cut between the scenes of a movie. I closed my eyes and tried to retrace this pathless path of Chicauwan. I slowly began to get another glimpse of this lone Indian.

For days and days, Chicauwan struggled through the woods, away from the sun in the morning and towards the sun in the evening. The forest was thick and dense; no sign could he see of any mountains anywhere. He had to bypass briers, wade across creeks, climb over rocks and hills, and penetrate dense entanglements of closely grown trees. Many were the obstacles he had to overcome. His skin was slashed by briers and branches, he had bruises all over from stumbling over unseen logs or falling in unseen pits, and, as great a runner as he was, his legs were trembling from the strain. He was stung by bees and hornets and bitten by mosquitoes and gnats. Sometimes it rained and he had to wade through mud and bogs. Sometimes there was nothing to shoot with his bow-and-arrow and he had to go hungry or nibble on leaves or wood maggots. The moon went from one phase to another until it had completed a full

cycle, then repeated the cycle again. And all this time, he had seen no men, only wilderness, wilderness, and more wilderness until it seemed as though that were all that was. The faces he saw in his head of The Aged One, Ramona, and the people of his tribe began to appear to be the faces of some strange dream that had passed. Indeed, he began to wonder if they had ever existed at all, so long it had been since he had seen the faces of people. The ceremonies, the prizes he was given for winning the racing contests, the praises he got for bringing back the buck to save his people from starvation: all these things began to seem unreal and the only reality was in this wilderness and the drive to go westwards for a reason he had forgotten. Creek after creek he crossed; entanglement after entanglement he went around; rainstorm after rainstorm he endured. The nights began to get cooler. Sometimes, he ran into mysterious open spaces and saw spirits dancing in circles around in them; he instinctively avoided them, although occasionally, he watched them in awe.

The image ended here for an interval. I considered how easy it is to get to mountains now. All you have to do is just drive in a car along a highway that takes you straight there. But with petroleum beginning to run out, I don't know. And the white man has certainly pockmarked the land with his paved highways. But, never fear, the day will certainly come when all these buildings will be dusty rubble and trees will grow through the cracked pavement of long abandoned highways. I wonder where all the spirits have gone now? Ha! The white man is probably too blind to see them now. But the spirits of old will be back when there are far fewer men than there are now, men who will learn to treat Nature with respect as the tribes of Chicauwan wisely knew how to do. I went



back into the trance, trying to pick up the lost traces.

Chicauwan climbed up a steep slope and when he finally reached the crest, he saw far below him, a rushing rocky river that was huger than any fast flowing river than he had ever seen before. To the northwest, he saw his first glimpse of the Great Unknown Mountains of the West, faint blue in the distance. He could never hope to cross that river, but he saw that if he followed the ridge above and along the river towards the mountains, he would find a way up into them. But for the moment, he stood there contemplating the goal of his journey, wondering how much longer it would take to get to Them, The Great Unknown Mountains.

Suddenly an arrow flew by him and hit a tree nearby. It had crimson cardinal feathers and three red rings around it near its tip. This was the mark of the evil tribe that eats man-flesh. Another arrow whizzed by. He ducked down to the ground.

Like a snake, he began to slither along the ground, careful to break no twigs that would betray his location. Then an arrow plunged into the ground very close to him. Looking behind him, he made a slow peripheral survey of the ground behind him, looking for any sign of a human presence that might be hidden behind the trunk of a tree or behind a distant rock. He notched an arrow in his bowstring. Quickly he ran, crouching low, to get behind a large tree trunk. Another arrow nearly hit him. Fortunately, he mused, the man was a poor shot.

He kept behind there for an instant. Then he had an intuition. He slowly peeked around the tree trunk and, in the direction where the arrow had come from, he took a quick look up into the trees. There he saw the one who sought to kill him, prouched upon the branch of an oak tree, slowly pulling back the arrow on

his bowstring. Chicauwan knew well how to shoot quickly when he spotted his target. With his bow-and-arrow ready, he swung around the tree and let loose his arrow. The arrow flew swiftly into the breast of the man. The man screamed loudly as he crashed through the branches of the tree to thump upon the ground. Chicauwan knew that this scream would alert the attention of the other members of the man-flesh eating tribe.

And yet, in the midst of this, Chicauwan felt great remorse, for this was the first time he had ever killed a man, for it was forbidden by his tribes, since the days of Atlanteous, to kill another man unless it was necessary to save one's own life. Despite the necessity of doing what he had just done, Chicauwan wondered if perhaps he should have allowed the man of the evil tribe to slay him, rather than for him to kill the man. For, how can a man possibly conceive of killing his fellow man, when the life-breath of a man is so infinitely precious? One instant the man was breathing and alive, thinking the thoughts of a man, and the next instant he is dead, the blood gushing from his chest.

And Chicauwan perceived with a deeper perception than that of the thinking mind, that it was not the man's fault that he sought to do such an evil thing nor was it even the tribe's fault, but that it was the fault of the evil that was once conceived of in the mind of an unscrupulous man. This man taught this evil to others, and the evil passed from one generation to another. And yet, the evil that made the man in the tree seek to kill him for his flesh, caused Chicauwan to commit the same evil, the evil of one man killing another. Was he then, Chicauwan, better than the man who tried to kill him? Chicauwan prayed fervently in his heart, that the Great Spirit forgive the spirit of the man who tried to kill him, to see that the man was not intrinsically evil, but was

only following the ways taught to him by the tribe. He beseeched the Great Spirit, who knows all things in the minds of his creatures, to let that man enter the Happy Hunting Grounds and become good again, rather than let him go astray into the dark lands where the evil ones go.

And with a vision that reaches far, Chicaawan saw that this was not the beginning of this evil, but that it would spread from one generation to another, from one tribe to another, and from one part of the Great World to another, like the single flame that would set ablaze the entire forest. Endlessly, it would perpetuate itself until there would be a time when great numbers of men are killing one another with weapons far more powerful than rocks, spears, and bows-and-arrows. And all this would come to pass as the result of a man who once conceived of this evil in the first place. And this knowledge made Chicaawan very unhappy.

And he asked the Great Spirit if there would ever be an end to this evil, and why must it be this way? Why cannot men live forever in peace, as it was in days of old. But then, looking deeper, he perceived that it was necessary in the ever-unfolding plan, to aid men in appreciating the ancient good by contrasting it with the evil to come so that they will never wish to commit this evil again. And he prayed to the Great Spirit that he not be born in such days as he saw far in the future. And where this knowledge he now possessed came from, he did not know or understand. But perhaps the Great Spirit was making him see the underlying causes of things, so that he may understand the mind of the man who tried to kill him and forgive him, despite the evil the man tried to inflict upon him.

This vision came in a flash, though it seemed to last a long time, but swiftly he returned from it, realizing that he must move

quickly- for others of the tribe will soon follow the first one. With keen ears attuned to every rustle and whisper in the forest, he sensed from afar the tread of the moccasins of them who heard the scream, coming closer. Their tread was not silent like the tread of the moccasins of his tribe, but cracked every branch on the way.

With the vision that came to him, there arose another sense that he had not had before; he could see what was forming in the minds of the evil ones who were approaching him. They were planning to make a semi-circle to surround him so that he would have nowhere else to go but down into the river, rushing below him. Although he knew that they were distant and was unable to see them, he knew that this is what they were doing, for the sense that he now had far exceeded the range of his vision or hearing.

As fast as he could, he made his way down the steep slope of the riverside, silently leaping from rock to rock downwards, threading his way through the dense entanglements of the riverside vegetation. These entanglements of closely growing bushes would protect him, he knew; the arrows of the evil ones could not reach him there, but he knew that they would follow him down. He moved quickly, letting the gravity of the earth aid him by pulling him downwards. Soon, he was by the riverside.

With the sense that he had which penetrated even the thick hills and the giant oaks, he gazed across the river and saw that no members of the evil tribe lived past these waters, that indeed, for a very great distance, there lived no men at all. How could these rushing waters be bridged? Surely he would be killed to attempt to swim across these waters; he would be smashed against the rocks by the massive power of their force.

But he had to choose between the arrows of the evil ones

or the powerful waters of the river. Rather, Chicaawan decided, would he be smashed to bits in the waters than to be roasted flesh to be eaten by the evil ones. He looked up and down the river; perhaps there would be boulders that would lie close enough to one another for him to use as stepping stones. Further down the river he saw a moderate waterfall where the boulders seemed to be lumped closer together. He must try or face certain death by the arrows of the evil ones.

As he made his way towards the boulders of the waterfall, he could sense that the evil ones were close to the crest of the ridge by that time. In his mind's eye he could see them, surveying the dead body of one of their tribe's members, and could also see the malice of revenge burning in their minds. Some of them were beginning to hunt for him and a few were heading over the ridge to search the riverside. He must stalk carefully now, and hide behind every bush, rock, or tree that he can, not moving from one hiding place to another until he was certain that he was not seen. He finally got to the waterfall.

Upon seeing the waterfall, he saw a problem: the spaces between the boulders were much greater than he thought they would be, spaces far too great for a man to jump across. And he knew that, on the river, he would be an easy target for the men with the arrows, who he knew were beginning to approach closer, though they did not yet see him. He was trapped; where could he go?

In the midst of this utter perplexion, he invoked the aid of the Great Spirit: " O Great Spirit, who knows the minds of all men and creatures, I beseech you to aid me. On a journey, I seek to go to the Great Unknown Mountains that I may meet the spirits of Your Spirit in Their Heights, Heights that I glimpsed not long ago, before this danger came upon me. Must I die, after all this strug-

gle, before reaching this Goal: to receive the knowledge of Your Spirit? O where can I go now? Malicious arrows seek me out on one side and the rushing Powers of these waters put my life in danger on the other side. Must all my struggles then be in vain? If this is what must be, then I shall accept it and go to Your Land of Paradise. If this not to be my fate and if I am to overcome this obstacle, then aid me!"

And Chicauwan gazed up at the skies and at the cloud spirits that roam them. Suddenly, he felt a surging power tingling up his spine and he felt light, lighter than he had ever felt before, light as the grasshopper that leaps across distances far out of proportion to its size from grass blade to grass blade. No longer did the Earth seem to have its power to pull him down anymore and he felt that he could fly if he wanted to. And he felt an irresistible urge to leap across the boulders.

Suddenly an arrow whizzed by him at that very moment, and he jumped, or it seemed to him that he was flying, to the boulder nearest to the riverside. Then he leapt from boulder to boulder like a free-flying air spirit and the arrows sang by him, but never hit him. No matter what the distance between the boulders, he could easily leap across them. In a zig-zag pattern he jumped and the arrows could not touch him. In practically an instant, he had crossed the river. And with the same exhilarating effortlessness, he ran up the other slope of the riverside, jumping over bushes and boulders in his way. And when he reached the top of the other ridge, he saw the far blue mountains of the West. With the danger now behind him, he could rest. And a Voice spoke within him, saying, "It is not for nothing that your name was the Fleet-Footed One."

Meanwhile, the evil ones of the man-flesh eating tribe on the other side ceased to notch their arrows and shoot. "Truly," each

one thought in his heart, but dared not speak to the others, " This was a magical being we were shooting at, a being over whom we have no power." And they stared in awe, speechless, at the now empty river whose rushing waters would kill an ordinary man. They began to question in their hearts, that which they had never questioned before.

I came back out of the waking dream I was having. Or was it a dream? Was it perhaps a memory I had somehow tapped? It was as though I were witnessing an ancient, unwritten story about an Indian named Chicauwan, a Great One whose name never got put in the history books, at least, never in the white man's history books. It happened in the days when there was no paper to record exactly what had happened and, legends, as they were passed down from one Aged One to the next Aged One over the long centuries, became magnified, distorted, or finally lost. Perhaps the people of Chicauwan's tribe had legends and songs of the lost ones who go to the Great Unknown Mountains of the West, the ones who mysteriously never return. Perhaps the tribe of cannibals that died out, once had a legend of a magical bird-man, who was seen only once, dancing on the boulders across the precarious river. Who knows?

True it was, that which Chicauwan saw in his vision, that the evil of men killing one another would spread. Now, in recent history, we have chronicles of recycled wars, passed on from one generation to another, each one more deadly than the previous one. And now, we have major nations that have thousands of A-bombs pointed at each other, prepared to wipe one another out. Verily, the next war will be the deadliest and will be the war to end all other wars; then perhaps humanity will learn.

It is possible that there was an ancient age, an age which archeologists are unable to excavate, an age when Atlantis was young and pure, when there was not a single one who could even conceive of the idea of one human being killing another. The people of Chicaawan's tribe had a strong taboo against such killing, and yet, when evil tribes came upon them, they were forced to kill to protect themselves. Such was the origin of the attitude which says, "Kill them before they can kill us."

Suppose that in those ancient days there was one man who had conceived such ideas as killing, oppression, seizing what is another's, and many other distortions of the true way to live. Then this man communicated these ideas to others, and these others, in turn, spread these ideas far and wide, when once mankind loved peace and did no harm neither to himself or to nature. Thus, the Pandora's Box of evil was opened. But the day will come when these things will lose their potency and it will be clearly seen that peace is better than war and that balance is better than greed. But this will not come until after a massive destruction which will demonstrate fully to humanity, the ultimate effects of war and greed. Already, I see the winds, whistling throughout the piles of rubble that once made up this civilization.

I looked out at the view. The winds were getting colder and there were grey clouds covering the sky. It is beginning to look wintry already. Chicaawan, in the past, has gone quite a distance from here now. With his vision and with his power, he goes on in his search. I closed my eyes and tried to focus upon what happened next.

From then on, I saw one image follow another, the images flowing into one another like a stream. Chicaawan had found the mountains.



The days began to get shorter and the nights began to get cooler. A strong wind began to blow from the West at night and Chicauwan had to wrap his blanket tightly about him to preserve his warmth. The leaves began to change their color and the moon was beginning to get fuller every night. At night, through the swaying branches of the trees, Chicauwan would watch it as he fell asleep.

He was in the foothills now, inexplicably driven in north-western direction. He had left the riverside many days ago when something told him that it was to the North-West that he must go. And every time he arrived at the top of a foothill, each one steeper than the one he had climbed before, through the trees he could see a vast view of mountain range upon mountain range, higher than anything he had seen before. But the days also were getting cooler and he began to wonder how he would survive the winter, for it was cooler among these foothills for that time of the year than it had ever been in the land from which he had come. The wind from the West began to blow during the day and he had to have his blanket wrapped around him at all times.

One night, as he was lying upon a bed of pine-needles, looking up at the cold, nearly-full moon, shivering for the winds were very cold, he heard a whisper and then a muffled giggle.

At once alert, he propped himself up on his elbow and gazed into the moon-shadows of the swaying tree trunks. He listened intently. Then there were more whispers and he perceived that they were in a circle around him. Though he could hear whispers and giggles all around him, he could not see what manner of creatures were making them. He stood up, sensing that there were invisible creatures of diminutive size surrounding him.

Then a most unusual creature formed out of the invisibility

of the moon-beams, a creature that seemed tangible yet slightly transparent. He was <sup>a</sup>midget, wore clothes of green leather, had a green pointed cap on his head, and wore curious-looking shoes with curled up toes.

"Look," the little creature said, "here is another one of these tall people who has come into our midst." As he said this, others like him in appearance though a bit smaller than him, appeared in a circle around the giant Chicauwan. The first one continued to speak: "Well, what are you doing here, tall one? Why don't you go home and roast your toes by the tall people's fires that make so much smoke?"

"I have come to these mountains to seek the Great Spirit. I leave my people and their fires back on the plains."

And they whispered to one another, "Great Spirit? Great Spirit? What is the Great Spirit? He says he is looking for the Great Spirit."

Then they joined hands and danced in a circle around him chanting, "Great Spirit. Great Spirit. The tall one seeks the Great Spirit. Great Spirit. Great Spirit. The tall one seeks the Great Spirit, but doesn't know where he is." They sang this in a teasing way, not unlike children making fun of a stranger.

Then the taller one who seemed elder to the others said, "Silence!" And they stopped. Then the taller one went on: "You tall ones, you tall ones, always looking for things in the air, things in the air that aren't even there. You tall ones, you tall ones, always wearing such serious expressions on your faces, carrying your silly weapons in your hands, with your smoky fires." At this, the others grunted in unison, "Ugh! Smoky, smoky smoke! Ugh!", making childish grimaces.

"We must use these weapons to survive. We must have fires

to keep warm and to roast our meat."

"That's all you tall ones think about. Survival, survival, survival. And you use your silly weapons to kill animals and you snatch plants up by their roots. And that's not all; you fill up our air with smoke. Bad, bad tall ones."

And they joined hands together and danced in a circle again, chanting tauntingly, "Bad, bad tall ones. Making smoke, killing animals. Bad, bad tall ones. Making smoke, chewing plants." And then they all went, "Ugh!", and made faces of disgust.

"If we don't kill animals for meat or eat plants, we would die. Our people would freeze to death, if we had no fire in the winter."

"You silly, silly tall ones. Always so worried. Always so serious. Why don't you try to shoot us like the other tall ones do? Aren't you afraid?" And the others giggled.

"Because I know my arrows would go right through you. And why should I shoot you or fear you? I sense no true malice in you."

And then they all whispered among themselves, "But how does he know? How did he find out? What is he? Who is he?"

"Silence!", the taller one ordered. "What made you leave the fires of your people, tall one? Why are you so different, tall one?"

"Because I seek knowledge that my people do not know."

"You silly, silly tall ones. Always seeking for knowledge in the air that isn't even there. Always so serious, fumbling in the air for something that isn't there. Although, I do know of one like you, not too far away. He's also so silly, always playing with power. What does he want with power? Knowledge and power, that's all you tall ones who come out here want. Why can't you be

like us and play, play, play all night long? Come follow us and we'll show you the way to the power fool. It'll take us some time to get there, but what is time to us? But you'll have to go with us at night under the full moon because that's when we love to play the most. We can't stand the bright, bright daylight." And some said, " Ugh!" and others dashed off saying, " Wheee! Let's go!"

Although Chicauwan had been warned about these creatures, he decided to go with them anyway for perhaps, his curiosity told him, the Aged One was not completely knowledgeable about these things, and he saw that any malice these creatures had was only a playful pretense of malice rather than the violent malice that evil men have.

But night after night, Chicauwan wondered where they were leading him. He noticed that they were approaching a low, flat mountain that was covered all over with strange luminous lights that seemed to slowly wander about. But, the midget-spirits kept stopping, diverted by these little spirits that looked like tiny beautiful women with insect wings, who would flutter about pretty flowers and fly together in unusual dancing formations in the moon-beams. Also, these creatures would play by the sides of streams, pointing at spirits similar to the tiny women with wings, but these would dance and skate upon places where the waters were smooth. They were very colorful, nevertheless Chicauwan would sometimes complain about the delays and the taller creature would retort, " You silly, silly tall ones. Always in a hurry. Always wanting to get somewhere. Always looking for something." At times, far off in the shadows, Chicauwan would see a dark womanly spirit that was about his size, with dreamy eyes and long moon-blue hair that covered her naked body. So enchanting was she that he would try to

come closer to her, but she would drift away into the darkness, staring at him with her strange violet gaze. He perceived that she did not think, but only dreamed of the moon-spirit that she was. Another time, they ran into a short, fat spirit with stumpy arms and legs, no neck, and a flat head covered with warts, whom they called, "Grump". They yelled, "Go away, Grump. You're so ugly." But Grump would just sit there with an expression of contempt on his face. They threw mud clods at him, but he still sat up on his rock, looking down at them disdainfully. Chicauwan began to realize that the Aged One's warning about these spirit-creatures was not completely without truth. He may as well had chosen children to be his guides.

Finally, they reached the mountain that was covered with lights. Through the woods they would go and the lights would always be far away and never near. The midget creatures made a game of chasing these lights and trying to catch them, even though they knew they never would. The lights would manifest themselves in many ways. Sometimes when a light was not too far away to be seen, Chicauwan would perceive it, for example, to be a golden-skinned woman wearing white furs and jeweled rings, bracelets, and baubles. Or he would see a fat, jolly man with white skin, holding a be-jeweled scepter and wearing an elaborate crown. Or it would be a white horse, with a single spiraled horn emanating from the center of its forehead. At times, it would be a man with golden skin, having an animal's hind legs but with a man's trunk, with golden curly hair and madness in his eyes, playing enchanting music on a long wood pipe. Then there would be these ones with silly smiles on their faces, wearing absurd clothes and a cap with tinkling bells on their heads. Chicauwan was beginning to wonder what he had been led into, whether it was some sort of dreamland or whether

spells were being cast upon him. All these spirit-figures had an eerie light around them which was what made them so bright.

Finally he saw a fire. An Indian was sitting beside it, wrapped in furs.

The taller one who had led him, said, " All right, tall one, here he is, another one of your kind. You ought to get along with him just fine. How he dabbles in power and how you grasp in the air for hidden knowledge. Tsk! Tsk! You foolish, foolish tall ones." And then he said to the others, " Okay, we can go now. Let's go to the big river with its big cliffs. That ought to be fun!" And the others gleefully dashed off, yelling, " Wheee! Let's go! Leave these tall ones to their serious, serious mumbling and grumbling and pondering."

Chicauwan sat beside the one wrapped in furs. It was good to be beside a fire again. The winds made it flicker a bit.

The Indian wrapped in furs spoke: " I see you have met the elfin ones. That is what they were called in Atlanteous. Very playful creatures, that they are, wouldn't you agree? Oh, I am very well acquainted with them, living here on the Mountain of Lights. But tell me, why do you stare at me so, without saying a word? " And he laughed slightly as though he were a bit mad.

" It is a long time since I have seen one of my kind. I come here on a long search."

The Indian replied, " Yes, yes. None would venture here unless they are in search of something. So frightening are the lights on this mountain, that most would turn back or go far to bypass it. The lights you see here are spirits of Atlanteous who have taken refuge on this mountain and cast spells on those who behold them so that the spellbound ones believe that they are

seeing wondrous, magical creatures. They are very alluring, are they not?"

" Yes, they certainly can be, but it is not my intention to be allured. For I seek That which is most Real: the Great Spirit."

" Ah, the Great Spirit is what you seek. There are not many who come this far to seek Him. But, first, let me tell you what these spirits you have seen are. They are half-physical and half-spirit. They are made of a different material from what we, who reside in physical bodies, are made of. They are evolving on slightly different lines of evolution from what we are evolving on. Ordinary men are unable to see them and they, in turn, are repulsed by and frightened by what they consider to be the obnoxious habits of ordinary men. So we have a world on which their kind and our kind both live, somewhat oblivious of one another. Because they do not have to struggle to survive as we have to do, they foolishly imagine themselves to be immortal, but they, too, have bodies that disintegrate eventually, although it may not be until after thousands of years."

" You seem to have knowledge of many things that I heard of before, but who are you? "

" I used to belong to a tribe that lies far to the North, but I belong to no tribe now. I am Zozarion, Master of Power. I can command the spirits that lie within physical things and manipulate them to do my bidding. I can order a bird to die, then make it come alive again. I can make it rain, then make the clouds disperse again. I can keep my physical body alive far beyond the years of ordinary men. I can see things that ordinary men cannot. I see you have powers of a similar nature. Observe..."

And he made a piece of roasted meat appear out of nothing in his hands and handed it to Chicauwan. Chicauwan was hungry and ate

the meat in silence, for Indians do not talk while they are eating. He stared into the fire and felt an intuitive sense of dislike about this man's vanity.

When he finished eating, he asked, "And where did you learn these powers? In the tribe from which I come from, such powers are forbidden, for it is said that such powers destroyed Atlanteous."

"This is true," replied Zozarion, "most true. But that does not mean that these powers are evil in themselves; it is simply a matter of how they are used. These powers were quite useful to Atlanteous when She was yet young and pure, for no one had to struggle to live in those days. It was only later that the Mad Sorcerer blew up the whole thing.

"I learned these powers from another Master of Power who lives in these same mountains but lives far to the North. He has kept his physical body alive since the latter days of Atlanteous and thus has managed to preserve the ancient Arts of Power. Such powers would be very useful to mankind but We who preserve them do not deem mankind ready for them now, because as you have seen, a great evil is overtaking mankind now. I can see what is in other men's minds, too, you know."

"Yes, but the powers I have were granted to me from the Great Spirit. Can you tell me where I can find the Great Spirit?"

"From the Great Spirit all things come and to the Great Spirit all things return. He was called Od in Atlanteous and He will be called many other names in the future, but He is essentially nameless, formless, and without attributes. So the Masters of Wisdom say, but I am not among Them.

"But if you will stay with me, there are many other things I can teach you. I can teach you how to journey to other worlds, for example, and to the Venusia-Star where other refugees from sink-



ing Atlanteous have gone in vehicles which travel through space. I can tell you about the distant future and how a race of men with white skins will come from across the Great Ocean and how they will destroy the beautiful Earth and oppress our people. They will send the spirits into hiding. I can teach you all the Powers I have and many other interesting things, if you are willing to be my disciple."

" I desire no other thing than to know the Great Spirit and the Ultimate Mysteries of Life. I am interested in no other power than that which will help me reach the realm of the Great Spirit."

Then, Zozarion gazed at him in silence for a long time. The fire crackled and popped as the West wind blew upon it. Then he picked up a stick and dropped it into the fire. " Very well, then, I see that you have become one-pointed in your purpose. Many would offer their lives for the Powers I could teach them, but I see that you are not so easily swayed. Nevertheless, I shall help you, for it is a noble thing you seek.

" South-west of here lies the Great Mountain Range. They are the highest of the Great Unknown Mountains. Upon their crags dwell the spirits of the Great Spirit which you seek.

" But winter is coming. I shall give you furs and also shall teach you a method of breathing which will enable your inner warmth to keep you alive. It will be very cold up there and very difficult to get there. I shall also teach you to discern various kinds of spirits and the Art of listening to them, for your mind must be absolutely mute for you to be receptive to them. They are very subtle, very subtle indeed, far more subtle than any other spirits. Rare is the one who seeks the knowledge of the Great Spirit, but I shall help you on the way. It is too High for even Zozarion to reach.

" You must first go straight west of here and then go southwest. You will see the Great Mountain Range; there will be guides along the way."

And Chicaawan stayed with him awhile to learn the art of breathing to generate inner warmth, and of breathing in a certain way to open up certain non-physical senses of sight and hearing. Then he thanked Zozarion and went on his way.

And after he left, Zozarion often thought about this strange one, Chicaawan, as he peered into his fire at night. He began to lose interest in making birds drop dead to make them come alive again. He still made visits to other worlds, but nevertheless he felt that something was somehow missing. His powers only gave him pride, but they did not give him happiness.

Chicaawan struggled to climb the dome-shaped mountain by the flat-topped mountain. From afar, he saw the Indian's tipi, not far from the top, on the east side of the mountain. Perhaps the one who lived there could tell him where the Great Mountain Range is.

When he got to the tipi, he found the man standing straight up before it, his arms crossed, wearing a colorful woolen cloak which was flapping aside from the West winds. The man then greeted him with a smile and said, " Haw! What brings you up here? You must have had a hard climb. I've been watching you making your way up here, struggling against this wind. You have come from the Mountain of Lights, I presume? "

Chicaawan, with an expression of utter weariness, stood silent, the wind blowing strands of hair across his face. He was trying to catch his breath.

" Yes... I am seeking for the Great Mountain Range. I saw your tipi from below and came up here, hoping that you might know where it

is. Can you help me find the direction? "

" Certainly, I will be glad to. It can be seen from the top of this mountain. Come follow me and I will point it out for you."

And he led him up to the rocky peak of the dome-shaped mountain. The West winds were icy and biting up there, but the view was the greatest Chicauwan had yet seen. Straight below was a huge valley that had high cliffs lined straight along its sides, with a silver river far below with numerous waterfalls, a river that cut through the middle of the valley as if it carved the valley itself. The roar of the waterfalls could be faintly heard even up there above the sound of the winds. But beyond the valley, Chicauwan could see range upon range of mountains extending far towards the horizon. They sat down crosslegged, looking at the view.

" I come up here many times to feel this wind and to observe this view," the man spoke loudly over the whistling of the wind. " I have lived here on this mountain for many years and this is the same view and the same mountain, but it is all constantly changing. Sometimes there is ice up here and the peaks are all covered with snow that gleams in the sunlight. Sometimes a stray bird sings up here and the brown bushes burst open with flowers and leaves. That river below sometimes overflows when there have been rainstorms for days, yet there are times when it flows gently and peacefully. Once these mountains were green with summer, but now they are yellow, red, and brown and this icy wind is blowing. It is the same with life, constantly fluctuating, constantly shifting from one opposite to the other, but it is really always the same. I know that I am here and you know that you are here, but you feel that you have somewhere to go. So it is, so it always is."

He paused to let the wind blow awhile. Then he said, " The mountain range you are seeking for, is over there..." And he pointed

south-west where a long mountain range lay very faint blue in the distance. " It looks small from here, but as you approach it, it will get larger and larger until you will see that it is indeed higher than all these other mountains you see before you. Just keep heading in that direction. Remember its shape as you see it now. Everytime you climb a high mountain, you will see it again, a bit closer. Do you know how to keep warm? "

" Yes, a man named Zozarion taught me, when I was in the forests of the Mountain of Lights."

" Good! And do you know how to cross rivers such as that one down there? "

" Yes, the Great Spirit gave me the power."

" Then you'll definately get there. Come, let us go back down to my tipi, away from this wind." The man went on down, but Chicaawan stayed there awhile, gazing across all the other mountain ranges at the Great Mountain Range, his destination. He could see that he had a long way to go.

Back at the tipi, the man built a fire and prepared meat for roasting. He also made a tea brewed from wild herbs. After they ate the meat and were drinking the warm tea which was very stimulating, the man asked, " Why do you wish to go to the Great Mountain Range? "

" I seek the Great Spirit."

The man was silent and fed wood to the fire. The sun had set and there were hues of red flame in the Western skies. The sound of the wind was always in the background. It began to get very chilly. Finally, the man spoke in a very low voice:

" The Great Spirit is everywhere; He is ineffable. It is better to cease to seek and begin to find. Cut the wood to dust and find nothing in it; there He is. The roots of a great oak tree and

and the source of a hidden spring; He is like that, unseen, and yet That from which all things come, to appear to exist. Some seek power; others seek knowledge. He is beyond all of these things and yet so intimately within them. The Great Spirit is among the high mountains. He is also in the wind, the flowing waters, and the inner fire. Many seek to conceive the Great Spirit; not in thought can He be enclosed. Many seek to possess Him; no more can He be possessed than the sky or the air. Many seek to find Him in places; waste of time, He is everywhere."

" Are you a Master of Wisdom? "

" Is the Great Galaxy above our heads? I am nothing, nothing at all. I am but a product of my own thought. Thought creates many illusions; it creates a veil over That which is most Real. But the seasons still change and I still keep this fire alive. But I will pass and merge into something else. We are so attached to these 'I's' that do not really exist. What a great freedom it is when we cease the struggle of maintaining these 'I's'."

" What remains when the 'I' passes away? "

" You want an answer in words. Words are only words; they are not Truth as many would like to believe. The only answer to that is what you discover yourself; that is the only answer that will be real to you.

" There is nothing I can stop you from doing and there is nowhere I can stop you from going to. But someday you will see the joke; you have been carrying the Great Spirit within you all this time. Listen to the silence and the wind; there He is."

And he sat still for awhile. His eyes looked distant and yet seemed radiant with an inner joy.

Then he rose and said, " Well, this body must sleep while the mind journeys elsewhere. All this is but a dream, but no matter

what you do or where you go, you will come to realize Him. Your journey will be long and hard. I give you my blessings. We all ultimately pass away into That; some make the journey long and for others, it is short. Fare you well."

And the man went into his tipi. Chicauwan watched the flickering fire, pondering upon the man's words, until the fire died out. He fell asleep, looking up at the Great Galaxy.

Chicauwan went down into the huge valley and followed the river towards the South. He crossed the river with the same power that aided him to cross the other river. Then the valley came to an end and opened out upon a relatively flat forest, surrounded all around by high mountains. Through the trees, he discerned a high chain of mountains to the West. He penetrated through the forests towards them and then up them.

It was an exceedingly long climb to the top of this range and when he reached it, the trees were bare and the snows began to fall. The snows began to get deep, but fortunately he had the high deer-skin boots given to him by Zozarion, to wade through them. It was cold and silent all around, as the snowflakes fell about him.

There was little to shoot with his bow-and-arrow and he had to endure hunger for long periods of time. In the crusty snow, he would <sup>see</sup> frozen rats with icicles on their whiskers or frozen birds with the ice in their feathers. There was an occasional deer to shoot and he was sorry that he couldn't carry all its meat with him.

It was difficult to build fires in the wet snow and he had to huddle close to them to live through the snowy nights. During the day, he moved as quickly as he could to generate his inner warmth. He feared to rest for long, for the snows could lull him

into the sleep of icy death if he allowed them.

One grey day, on his westward trek, he came upon an open space on the top of a high mountain. It was there that he saw the true magnificence of the Great Mountain Range. It stretched across the entire Western horizon and he saw that all these mountains that he thought so high, were merely foothills extending towards the bottom of these Mountains. He could see the whiteness of the snow on Their cliffs and on Their Peaks. Their Peaks touched the clouds themselves. He could see that it would not be many a day's journey now. The winds from the West began to rise in a frenzy again, cruelly lashing his face with snowflakes. Surely he was near the Great Spirit now. He continued to wade through the snows over mountain after mountain, with the Great Mountain Range towering above it all. At times, he could hear the celestial spirits singing in those high mountains and he began to wander with a great ecstasy towards his Goal.

On the high, windy crag, Chicauwan had been sitting for many, many days. It was the highest of the mountains on the Great Mountain Range, so high that it was constantly enshrouded in clouds. On rare instances when the clouds had dispersed, there was a magnificent view Chicauwan could see, as if he were in the skies themselves, a view of all the ranges of the Great Unknown Mountains of the West. And he could see all the distances he had traversed, sitting crosslegged up there. He could see all the mountain ranges that he crossed through the snow over, the dome-shaped mountain where the wise man lived, the Mountain of Lights behind it where he learned things from a sorcerer, and even the wide plains far beyond towards the horizon where he once belonged to a tribe.

But now a shrieking wind was blowing, bringing with it snows that bite and sting. Chicauwan wrapped his furs tightly about him and had to labor hard to keep his inner warmth alive. He had not moved from this spot for days, and the snow clouds turned from blue to white to blue to darkness to blue to grey to white, again and again. His mind absolutely empty, he listened and he watched, waiting.

In the snow, he saw faces that would come and fade, thousands of faces that were ever-changing, all the archetypes of mankind and non-mankind. He heard voices in the wind that shrieked, babbled, whined, laughed, cried, howled... multiple voices that all merged in one great roar. And the winds swept around him, in the heights above him, and then straight through him, carrying his mind far, far away into the whiteness of the heights. And he forgot everything he ever knew, even his own identity, even what he was doing in those high mountains in the first place. To the wind he listened and he became one with the wind, flying with it, going wherever it goes. And he perceived the ice-elementals in the faces of the snow, and became the very ice that bit his cheeks, that caused the rocks to crack and crunch.

Then, high above the wind, he heard the Music of the celestial spirits and saw Light and Exquisite Colors all about him. And the Music and Light was everywhere; for days and days, he saw and heard nothing else. He ceased even to feel the snow and wind. And the Patterns of the Light and the Music were ever-changing, forever growing in Beauty and Intensity, leading him ever upwards. He felt that he was getting closer and closer all the time; he sought to follow that Music and Light to what must surely be Its Source.

Then, even above the Music and the Light, a Voice spoke and said: " I am eternally One and eternally All, and none is there



besides Me. The entire Universe and all the beings that struggle in It is but a manifestation of Myself. I am the Spirit within the Universe, but It shall pass away back into Me and only I shall be left, the One and Only. I am All there is; I am eternally Alone. The entire Universe and all the beings that struggle through Its Illusions is but My Dream that I eternally Dream for eons and eons.

" So, Seeker, if you desire to know what I know and see what I see and experience what I experience, I, who am eternally free, you must cease to be a being of the Universe. Only I can demolish you, the 'you' that has wandered and struggled for all these years, for all these lifetimes. You will never be a being in this Universe, which is but Imagination, again. Are you ready for this, Seeker? "

" Yes, I can endure this struggle and this separation from You no longer."

" So be it!"

And then, a lightning bolt passed through him, and that which passed beyond, can never be described. The winds and the snows continued to whirl about the husk that was his body.

And he sat there all winter, with a faint smile upon his lips, and yet his body did not die. Totally immersed was he in something that cannot be described upon paper. Spirits surrounded him and worshipped him, but he did not see them. The smile upon his lips was that of ineffable bliss.

Then the days came when the clouds began to disperse and the snows began to melt. The sun shone brightly and the running waters sparkled in its light. Birds began to sing and tiny red and violet crag flowers began to sprout.

And he, now nameless, came back from the Timeless State he had been in and yet was still There. He looked at all the beauty around

him and remarked, "How lovely is this Dream!" And he arose, stretching the arms and legs of his body.

Then he went to the edge of a cliff nearby and looked over the vast panorama of mountain ranges before him. He pondered:

"Shall I, in this man-form, go forth to teach those beyond the mountains? This Truth is so profound. Will they ever understand It? This Truth is so far beyond anything they have comprehended before. This Truth is open to all that earnestly seek It. How can It be uttered in words?

"Or shall I drop this man-form into the abyss below and be released from it, to experience eternally what I always was, always am, and always shall be, leaving this Dream of the Universe behind?

"Or shall I, who am eternally free, remain forever among these mountains, and welcome all seekers with open arms, to open their eyes to show them what the Truth is.

"What a long struggle it all was. There was once a man named Chicauwan who came to these mountains, seeking for That which he was all along. What a Supreme Joke this Dream was and all those who struggle within its illusory confines will come to see this Truth also. For nothing really ultimately matters, for this Truth is One and makes all those who struggle and seek, eternally free, free as the wind which blows where it wishes. May all beings eventually come to know this, the One and Only Truth."

And that was the last glimpse I had of him: standing by the cliffside, with the smile of Knowledge on his lips, his eyes gazing over All that is.