

# The Settlers' Sickness

My Short Story Features two characters; Kewanee and Wapon. They are very close and rarely do anything without the other. Wapon is very tall and thin, with light brown hair and an olive complexion. She was found in the woods at age five, at which point the chieftain took her in. She grew to be one of the best hunters in the tribe, and always left the village for days at a time when food was low, returning with up to five deer and elk carcasses, along with rabbit, bird and porcupines too. She usually wears a deerskin tunic and deerskin leggings. She makes her own rabbit skin moccasins, which she only wears on hunting trips. She always leaves for hunting trips with her moose hide on her back, rolled up with the essentials inside. She is very quiet and shy. She prefers the wilderness to her village, and she is really only good friends with Kewanee, who often goes with her on hunting trips.

Kewanee is tall, with olive skin and leaf green eyes and short black hair. She is thirteen years old, and farms for her tribe quite a lot. She is also very good at fishing, and farming. She is usually farming, fishing, swimming or climbing the trees around the village. She wears knee-high moccasins most of the time and moose skin leggings, usually paired with an embroidered deer skin tunic. She is very bubbly and outgoing, but she can be very quiet when she needs to. She was born and raised in her village. She is very learned in herbs, so she can cook very well, along with being able to sew and tend to wounds. She is very close with Wapon, seeing as they are both very skilled in their areas, and are very in tune with the wilderness. She often goes on hunting trips with Wapon, checking if any animals got caught in Kewanee's traps.

Kewanee and Wapon became friends when they were both tending to the injured chieftain, Wapon bring him strength building meats and warm hides, and Kewanee bring him healing plant pastes. They eventually became closer. They had become inseparable by the time the chieftain got better.

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*Kewanee:*

Wapon and I were just packing up for our next trip into the forest.

``Kewanee, do you have the knife?`` asked Wapon

“Yes Wapon, here it is.” I said, placing it on the large roll of moose-skin along with the fire-stones, bone needles, thread, braided moose-hide, wig-wam poles, a birch-bark bowl of un-cooked rice, a sharpening stone, a assortment of knives in sheaths, a warm deer-hide and a pouch full of spices. She also wore a quiver full of arrows on her back, and a bow in her hand I brought with me only my deer hide satchel, in it my herb-grinder, my collapsible birch bark bowl, my knife on my hip, my sharpening stone, and my fire-stones. I also had my skillfully woven deer-hide basket on my arm. Wapon rolled up the moose hide, stuck on the straps, and put it on her back. I shouldered my satchel, picked up my basket and hurried after her. We soon found some slightly fresh deer tracks, and started following them. We tracked them for a few days, with me hurrying over whenever I see a useful herb. We caught up to them by dusk of the third day and Wapon shot two good size bucks, lots of meat on them.

*Wapon:*

We had both the deer, but it was too late to return home, so I decided to set up camp for the night. I found a small clearing, that was relatively sheltered and close by. Kewanee and I each took a buck and carried them on our shoulders, but heaven forbid this stop Kewanee talking. It seems the only time she *doesn't* talk is when we are tracking animals. I took off the roll of moose skin and unrolled it. I laid all the tools and other things on the ground. With Kewanee watching excitedly. I knew it was a matter of time until she said something. I was correct.

“Oh, are you gonna set it up the way you do?” She asked, positively bouncing with excitement.

“What do you think?” I responded tiredly.

I quickly took out the wig-wam poles and set up the frame. I then took out the moose hide and inserted the holes in the hide into the protruding bits in the poles. An instant wig-wam! I crawled through a gap in between the ground and the fabric. I put the deer skin on the ground and we settled in for the night, but it took a *very* long time for Kewanee to stop talking. When we woke up I disassembled the wig-wam and re-assembled it into a kind of sleigh, except with no snow. When we arrived back at the village three days later it was deathly quiet.

*Kewanee:*

“Hello!” I immediately called out. “Is anyone here?” I said in a slightly worried tone, noticing that no one was out. A village elder came out of his wig-wam. “Thank goodness you are here!” He said. “Half the village has fallen ill with the same thing the chieftain had.” We followed him to the sick bay where most of the village lay. I

set about mashing up the herbs I had collected, but only the ones that would help. Willow bark, dittany, and other herbs all were grinded to a paste. I had it fed to the sick people and hurried to my wig-wam. I always had a birch-bark chest, filled to the brim with herbs and bark. I quickly found the pouches of the herbs I needed, and set about mashing them up. I put the pastes in birch-bark pots, and then hurried of to my garden in the nearby Willow Grove. I picked all the ready helpful herbs and carved huge chunks of bark off of the trees. I put it all in the basket and hurried back to the village. Well we were feeding the ill, I asked the village elder something that had been bothering me ``Why didn't the village doctor do this already?`` The village elder struggled to reply. ``Because...`` he seemed to steel himself ``Because he is dead.`` I gasped, almost dropping the bowl I was holding. ``How?`` I asked ``what happened?`` He responded grimly ``The settlers. They...They came in the night and demanded food from us, threatening us with weapons. When the doctor asked why we should help them, when they held us at sword point, they ran him through. They killed seven others before we gave them food and they left.`` I was trembling by now, and there was one question that I dreaded to ask but I needed to know the answer. ``Who? Who did they kill?`` I said, dreading the answer. ``Not anyone you know, not at all!`` He said. ``They came just after you left. They brought this plague to our homeland and killed our people.

This is how it was for the next two summers. We lived in constant fear of the settlers, but whenever they came, we gave them what they wanted, if only in the fear that they would kill us if we didn't. Wapon taught all the young girls and boys to hunt, so that if the settlers ever put them in danger they could survive out in the wild until the danger passed.