

"you took my brother away. He was well and strong, but you come back without him, and you say he is dead. I do not know. I think maybe you not take good care of him. You let him be killed by evil spirits of paleface. I have great pain in my heart."

'Nachee was a sullen, taciturn Apache, true son of his father, Cochise. His attitude was not so much of sadness as it was of belligerency, revenge. He had not merely requested an explanation; he had demanded it. We were in an isolated canon, miles from my reservation headquarters. Nachee had with him his four hundred Chiricahuas; I was alone with my bodyguard of six friendly chiefs of other tribes. The Apaches were very superstitious; they believed in evil spirits and the incantations of their medicine men. Tahzay, during his illness, had been denied the help of an Apache medicine man.

'In the many emergencies of my sojourn with the Indians, I never thought faster, or with less success. I knew an ordinary white man's explanation would not appease the dangerous mood of Nachee. Frantically, I searched my mind--and the silence was ominous. The Chiricahuas shifted about uneasily. It was a dramatic situation; too much so.

'But Eskiminzin--dependable, faithful Eskiminzin--came to the rescue. Abruptly, he began speaking, and in a grave and quiet manner related the details of the illness and death of Tahzay. Eskiminzin's natural tendency to stutter lent an added impressiveness to his address. He told of the wise and serious paleface medicine men, and the nearly clad nurses who had attended and watched over the sick Indian; of our anxiety because of his illness, and of our great sorrow when he died; of the manner in which the body was prepared for burial, and of the coffin of polished wood, with its plate and handles of bright silver.