

# Story summary ( two old women )



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Summary of "Two Old Women" One a brutal winter famine, a nomadic band of arctic Alaska, becomes obliged to leave behind the two elderly women to die for lives of the band people. They get two things from Ch'idzigyaak's daughter a bundle of babiche and a hatchet from her grandson In these circumstances, at first they lose their hope to survive from death. But, The two women, Sa' and Ch'idzigyaak try their best to survive. They take the decision to help each other in any situation and decide to prove that they have the right to live. So, they make snowshoes and catch a rabbit to eat. The two women then move on to a place where they can avoid dreadful memories and probable enemies. They walk for an uncertain destination until they become exhausted. They halt the night there but the next morning, with their aching joints, freezing lungs and swollen feet and also fatigue, they continue on their journey up to the middle of a frozen lake. The next day, they become success to cross the lake despite Ch'idzigyaak's misery. When four days is gone over, they come to a slough that reminds Ss' that they are in the right path. They smile first to their conversation after a long period of time. But, after a tiresome journey, they feel again of death. Being hungry, they eat the rabbit head and broth. Now, taking their belongings, they move on to follow the river. On the sixth day, Sa" can see an opening to the creek. After crossing the river, they see there remains of the long desired fishracks. At the scenery of the fishracks, they feel at home. But, the next day the two older women prepare for colder weather ahead. At this time, they feel that they are much closed to be abandoned. Now, they begin to share their memories of their family and childhood. Ch'idzigyaak remembers the time the family left her grandmother behind and Sa' remembers how she grew up more interested in what boys did than the girls

and how her family accepted her. She tells Ch'idzigyaak, women spend their idle time telling stories and weaving rabbit fur blanket and clothing. In this very day, they capture a grouse and get a change of meat from rabbit squirrel and beaver to the meat of grouse since they start their journey. Now, the winter is passed and it is spring. They catch muskrats and beaver and freeze dry the meat. Now they don't trust ' the young generation'. The women decide to move to a safe place where no one will want to go in the fear of mosquitoes. They spend the spring and arctic summer fishing and hunting. They use their ingenuity to store and protect their dried meat from the predators. After the finishing of summer hunting, Sa' decide to discover a hill in front of their campsite. She finds ' vast patches of cranberries' but follows a rutting bull moose and gives up her decision. Now, they are habituated to follow the routine of assembling stack wood, checking rabbit snares and melting snow for water. They also assemble cranberries. They all do for the next winter. They waste their evening keeping the company and telling story of their past. In this way, a full year has been gone. But the band suffers again from extremely hunger and weariness. The chief of the band can recall his disorder at having left the women. The band returns to the place where they have left the women but there was no signal of the women whether they alive or dead. The chief teaches an elderly guide named Dagoo and three other hunters find out the women. At the reach of their first campsite they became despaired of no any trace of the women. At the end of failed searching, the hunters see that bark is being torn from the birch trees. At this sudden sign of women, they become discouraged again. But, Dagoo smells smoke from a campfire. Then he calls out the names of the two women. The women respond with conflict and fear. When Dagoo reaches, he

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gets the women with spears and equipped to defend them. After a little bargaining, Sa' and Ch'idzigyaak feed the four hunters dried fish and rabbit broth. After listening Dagoo's plea and promises and the worsened condition of the band, Sa' and Ch'idzigyaak decide to assist the band.