

MAY 21, 1981

Doctors say my vision and hearing will be normal in six to eight weeks. The worst part has been the soreness in my neck and the splinters from the broom handle that are lodged deep in the muscles. It's so hard to explain that filing a report with the insurance carrier is going to be equal to answering a government investigation.

I guess the simplest way to start is to tell you that Child Who Sits in the Sun took a job without my permission. I don't know exactly when she started to work. She was taking a course at the college in San Angelo either last fall or this spring. I vaguely remember that she registered after the futurity at Ruidoso and before a partner of mine finally decided to enter his filly at Sunland, out at El Paso. To tell the truth, I might have the dates mixed up as I had to call New Mexico twice to be sure that the Sunland race was set up for the May schedule. So many important things were on my mind that I might have had my wife's matriculation at college confused with a horse that was scratched for the Derby.

Anyhow, when I found out that she'd sneaked around and got a job, I was plenty mad. The confrontation happened at 5:13 p.m. (My watch was broken in the fracas). It ended at dark somewhere about 200 yards from the kitchen door.

An exact quote of the last exchange of words before the shouting started are as follows.

Monte: "They told me down at the store that you had a job. Where's the pay check been going to, some injun relief fund?"

Child Who Sits in the Sun: "Ask the spirits, Paleface, maybe they will settle the oil of your curiosity."

Monte: "Keep your distance, working girl, or you'll trip yourself in that new found freedom that's going to end up corrupting..." (Pause for light scuffle and table over turning and lamp falling.)

Child Who Sits in the Sun: "Pain is the curse of my ancestry. She who marries outside the tribe lives in darkness and tears. Demons inhabit the lodge of a white-eye. My master is the sun and the sky. Your boot is on fire!"

I know I didn't fall for the boot trick, yet something must have distracted me for a split second. From there, I remember hearing glass crack and wood splinter. I don't think I ever landed a solid blow. The wire binding and the straw from what I call a warehouse broom cut slashes in my cheeks. It was uncanny the way she kept such dead aim on my eyes, considering that I must have backed and fainted over a 50 ft. square area.

I can't swear that the battle ended at darkness. My doctor says that probably the shock factor brought on a blackout. He's quite good at this sort of work. As I think I've told you before, he trained as an intern during the big riots in the North years ago. I'd take him over any doctor for bruised tissue and mangled flesh. The blue coats in those days, you know, used to really swing those billy clubs, so he had lots of excellent training for the field of marital disputes.

Each day I feel better. She moves around the house without making a sound. The job must pay well, as there's been no mention of her weekly allowance. I'm going to teach her a lesson this time that she'll never forget. Instead of starting another ruckus over her

insubordination, I'm going to act like I don't care. No Indian squaw is going to run my house. As soon as I'm on my feet again, we'll see who the boss is.