

WILLING HEARTS, WILLING HANDS

- 1 *Read **The Legend Of The Blue Flowers** and say what the Indian girl did to save her people from hunger.*

The Legend Of The Blue Flowers

(an Indian tale)

Indian Tales. Long, long ago there lived in the American State of Texas ['teksəs] Indian tribes called the Commanche People. Those were brave people who had their own customs and way of life. They did not believe in one god. They believed in many spirits¹ who could give something to them. They asked the Deer Spirit for life, the Eagle Spirit for strength, and the important Buffalo Spirit to send them buffalo for the hunt. The Crow Spirit was evil.

The Indian legend of the Blue Flowers is a tale about how a flower is born, and it is a tale of the courage and sacrifice² of a young person. She-Who-Is-Alone's act of burning her beloved doll in the fire to save her people was a courageous action, the kind of action that gives birth to miracles.

“Great Spirits, the land is dying. Your People are dying, too,” the long line of dancers sang.

“Tell us what we have done to anger you. End this drought³. Save your People. Tell us what we must do so you will send the rain that will bring back life.”

For three days, the dancers danced to the sound of the drums, and for three days, the People watched and waited.

And even though the hard winter was over, no rains came. Drought and hunger are hardest on the very young and the very old. Among the few children left⁴ was a

¹ **spirit** ['spɪrɪt] — дух

² **to sacrifice** ['sækrɪfajs] — приносить жертву; **sacrifice** — жертва

³ **drought** [draʊt] — засуха

⁴ **the few children left** — несколько оставшихся детей



small girl named She-Who-Is-Alone. She sat by herself watching the dancers. In her hands was a doll made from buckskin¹. The eyes, nose and mouth were painted on its face with the juice of berries. On its head were brilliant blue feathers from the bird who cries “Jay-jay-jay”. She loved her doll very much.

“Soon,” She-Who-Is-Alone said to her doll, “the shaman² will go off alone on the top of the hill to listen to

¹ **buckskin** ['bʌkskɪn] — оленья кожа

² **shaman** ['ʃæməŋ] — шаман

the words of the Great Spirits. Then we will know what to do so that once more the rains will come and the Earth will be green and alive.”

As she talked, she thought of the mother who made the doll, of the father who brought the blue feathers. She thought of the grandmother and the grandfather she had never known. It seemed long ago that they had died from the hunger. The People had named her and cared for her. The doll was the only thing she had left from those distant¹ days.

“The sun is setting,” the runner called as he ran through the camp. “The shaman is returning.” The People gathered in a group and the shaman spoke.

“I have heard the words of Great Spirits,” he said. “The People have become selfish. For years, they have taken from the Earth and have not given anything back. The Great Spirits say the People must sacrifice. We must burn our dearest things. The ashes of the burnt things shall then be scattered² to the four points³ of the Earth, the Home of the Winds. When this sacrifice is made, the Great Spirits will stop drought and hunger. Life will be returned to the Earth and to the People!”

The People sang a song of thanks to the Great Spirits for telling them what they must do.

“I’m sure it is not my new bow⁴ that the Great Spirits want,” a man said.

“Or my beautiful carpet,” a woman added, as everyone went to their tipis⁵ to talk and think over what the Great Spirits had asked for. Everyone, that is, except She-Who-Is-Alone. She held her doll close to her heart.

¹ **distant** [ˈdɪstənt] — отдаленный, далекий

² **to scatter** [ˈskætə] **the ashes** [ˈæʃɪz] — разбрасывать пепел

³ **point** — *зд.* часть света

⁴ **a bow** [baʊ] — лук, самострел

⁵ **tipi** [ˈti:pi:] — вигвам (*жилище индейцев*)

“You,” she said looking at the doll. “You are my dearest thing. It is you the Great Spirits want.” And she knew what she must do.

When the night came and everyone was asleep, She-Who-Is-Alone ran to the place on the hill where the Great Spirits had spoken to the shaman. Stars filled the sky, but there was no moon.

“O Great Spirits,” She-Who-Is-Alone said, “here is my doll. It is the only thing I have from my family who died in this hunger. It is my dearest thing. Please take it.”

Then she made a fire and, before she could change her mind¹, put her doll into it. The small girl watched as the fire began to catch and burn. She thought of her grandmother and grandfather, her mother and father and all the People — their suffering, their hunger. She watched until the flames² died down and the ashes had grown cold. Then, the girl scattered the ashes to the Home of the Winds, The North and the East, the South and the West.

And there she fell asleep until the first light of the morning sun woke her. She looked out over the hill, and saw that the ground was covered with flowers — beautiful flowers, as blue as the feathers in the hair of the doll, as blue as the feathers of the bird who cries “Jay, jay, jay”.

When the People came out of their tipis, they did not believe their eyes. They gathered on the hill with She-Who-Is-Alone to look at the wonderful sight³. They were sure the flowers were a sign of forgiveness⁴ from the Great Spirits.

And the People sang and danced their thanks to the Great Spirits, a warm rain began to fall and the land

¹ **to change one's mind** — изменить свое решение

² **flames** [fleɪmz] — пламя

³ **sight** [saɪt] — вид, зрелище

⁴ **sign** [saɪn] **of forgiveness** [fə'gɪvnɪs] — знак прощения

began to live again. From that day on, the little girl was known by another name —
 One-Who-Dearly-Loved-Her-People.

And every spring, the Great Spirits remember the sacrifice of a little girl and fill the hills and valleys of the land with the beautiful blue flowers. Even to this very day.

Do You Understand The Story?

- 2 *Choose the correct ending to each sentence.*
- 1 The Indian people were very unhappy and suffered a lot because:
 - they were afraid of the Great Spirits.
 - there were no rains and their land was dying.
 - the Great Spirits wanted them to burn their dearest things.
 - 2 She-Who-Is-Alone made up her mind to burn her doll because:
 - she was too big to play with dolls.
 - she believed her sacrifice would help her people.
 - the doll was already old and ugly.
 - 3 The Indian people began to call the girl One-Who-Dearly-Loved-Her-People because:
 - she sang songs of thanks to the Great Spirits.
 - she sacrificed her dearest thing to help her people.
 - she was the best dancer among those who danced in front of the Shaman.
- 3 *Find in the legend and read the sentences which:*
- describe how unhappy the Indians were;
 - explain why the girl loved her doll so much;
 - explain why the Great Spirits were angry with the People;

- prove that some people were really very selfish;
- prove that the girl was willing to help her people;
- describe what the hills and valleys looked like after the girl had made her sacrifice.

4 *Answer the questions.*

- 1 What did the Indian people suffer from?
- 2 What did the girl's doll look like? Why was it so dear to the girl?
- 3 How did the shaman explain to the people why the Great Spirits had punished them?
- 4 How could the Indians save themselves from hunger and suffering?
- 5 What did the girl decide to do after the shaman's words?
- 6 What did the girl do with the ashes after she had burnt her favourite doll in the fire?
- 7 What did the hills and valleys of the land look like the next day?
- 8 What other name was She-Who-Is-Alone given by her people? Why?

How Good Is Your English?

(see pp 70—71)

What Do You Think?

- 5 *Do you think it was very hard for the girl to burn her doll? Why?*
- 6 *Say what you think of the Indian girl and her sacrifice.*
- 7 *What do you think makes this legend powerful and poetic?*



How Good Is Your English?



8 Use the proper word from the box.

- 1 The sky was a , cloudless blue.
- 2 Birds lose their old and get new ones at least once every year.
- 3 Doctors tried their best to keep their old patient
- 4 I was so tired I fell at once.
- 5 Someone who is only thinks of himself and his own interests.
- 6 These people are ready to everything to win a victory.
- 7 The blue flowers in the valley were a wonderful

sacrifice
brilliant
sight
feathers
alive
selfish
asleep

9 Match the words in column A with the words in column B.

A	B
wonderful	people
<u>hard</u>	winter
beautiful	feathers
selfish	stars
brilliant	sights
hot	ashes (flames)

10 Find the words which are opposite in meaning.

selfish	to give
<u>dark</u>	to die
cold	generous
to live	hot
dry	wet
to take	<u>light</u>
to fall	to rise

11 Use the correct preposition.

- 1 three days the people waited for the rain which could bring back life.
- 2 People take a lot the earth.
- 3 The girl made a fire and then put her doll it.
- 4 The Indian dancers danced the sounds of their drums.
- 5 Every spring the hills and valleys of the land are filled beautiful blue flowers.

to
from
with
for
into

12 Report the following sentences.

- 1 "Tell us what we have done to anger you", the people said.
.....
- 2 "Soon," the girl thought, "we shall know what to do".
.....
- 3 "I have heard the words of Great Spirits", the Shaman said.
.....
- 4 "You are my dearest thing", the girl said looking at the doll.
.....
- 5 "I'm sure it is not my beautiful carpet that the Great Spirits want," a woman said.
.....
- 6 "O Great Spirits," said the girl, "my doll is the only thing I have from my family. Take it."
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