



American Indian Stories (Native American)

Zitkala-Sa

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Born on South Dakota's Yankton Reservation in 1876, Zitkala-Sa felt "as free as the wind that blew my hair, and no less spirited than a bounding deer." At the age of 8, she traded her freedom for the iron discipline of a Quaker boarding school. Forever afterward, the Lakota Sioux author struggled to find a balance between Indian and white society. These autobiographical essays, short stories, and political writings offer her poignant reflections on being stranded between two worlds.

Zitkala-Sa, who attended and taught at the Carlisle Indian Industrial School in Pennsylvania, was a founder of the National Council of American Indians and among the first Native Americans to record tribal legends and oral traditions. This collection opens with her reminiscences of the reservation, her schooling at an institution determined to "civilize" Indians, and her experiences as a teacher. Zitkala-Sa also recounts tales rooted in Sioux traditions, including "A Warrior's Daughter," in which a courageous woman risks everything for her husband-to-be; "The Trial Path," an account of tribal justice after a murder; and "The Sioux," in which a son must kill twice to save his father from starvation. The book concludes with incisive observations on government mistreatment of Indians and a call for the complete enfranchisement of Native Americans into mainstream society.

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