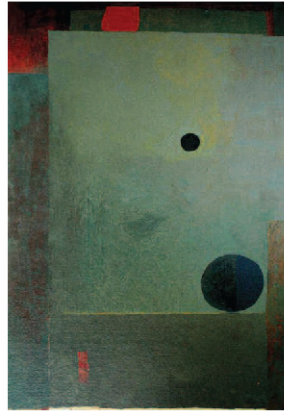


The following story is from the book

The Central Figures
The Báb
Volume Two



These stories are lovingly provided to download as a convenience to teachers or communities otherwise unable to acquire the book. Each book in this storybook series also includes an appendix with questions for discussion and reflection, a glossary of words and phrases used in the stories, a bibliography, and an index.

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Graphic Design by Pepper Peterson Oldziej

Bahá'í Publishing Trust, Wilmette, Illinois 60091-2886
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Published 2005
07 06 05 04 4 3 2 1

Printed in the United States of America

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National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States


Bahá'í Publishing Trust
Wilmette, Illinois



**Is there any Remover of difficulties save God?
Say: Praised be God! He is God!
All are His servants and all abide
by His bidding!**

— **The Báb**, *Selections from the Writings of the Báb*, p. 217

The Naming

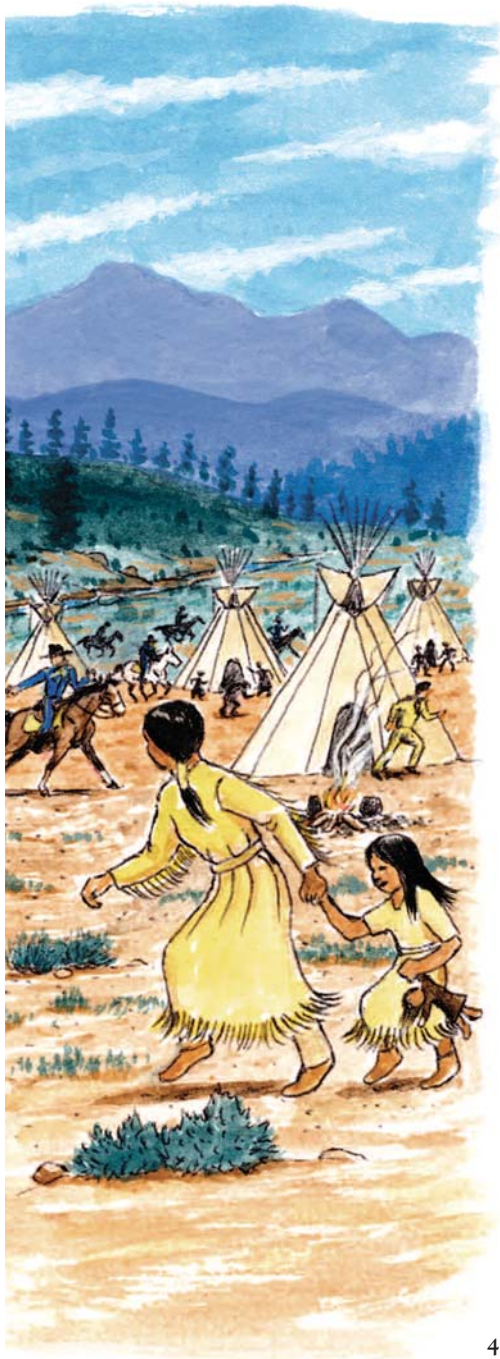
Written by Jacqueline Left Hand Bull

Illustrated by Chester Kahn



Lightning flashed and thunder exploded nearby. The ground shook, and rainwater streamed down the outside of the tipi. Again and again, lightning struck close on every side.

The young Lakota mother held her newborn baby closer and whispered, “The Thunder Beings have come to greet you, my son. But they have not taken you from me.” As he looked into her face, she said, “Perhaps your name will be Thunder Boy.” Tears brimmed over and wet her cheeks. She had looked forward to the day when her uncle would hold her son and announce his name. Her family would host a joyous feast, with gifts for those who had less than others or who were lonely. Now, that could not happen.



Now she was the one who was alone and lonely. Her young husband and her own relatives had been killed in a raid on their camp only the day before. As the enemy soldiers rode into the camp, her mother had quickly pushed her down and piled buffalo robes over her. It looked as though the sleeping area had only been disturbed. Her little baby had not yet been born on that morning. Later that day, after the noise had long quieted away, she crawled from under the robes and crept through the camp. Nearly everything had been burned. Everyone had been killed except her. Then she felt her baby ready to be born. Her own mother's tipi was only partly burned, and she took shelter in it.

Brave as she was, she wondered how she could outrun the enemy with her newborn son on her back. She should stay and rest first, but that would be too dangerous. Her world had become a frightening place. All the medicine men had been killed. There was very little food, because the tribe could not travel to the usual hunting or gathering areas, and now the horses had been killed or captured. She knew that one could take shelter in the hills where cedar grows and healing water runs. Now those beautiful blue hills were very far away. She remembered that the medicine men had watched the shooting stars and said that great changes were happening in the world. Visitors from other distant tribes talked of new attacks and sicknesses, and they had few supplies to trade.

The lightning storm was fierce and frightening. However, it was as nothing compared to the dangers in the world. The storm would pass, but tomorrow she would still not have her husband and family to help her.

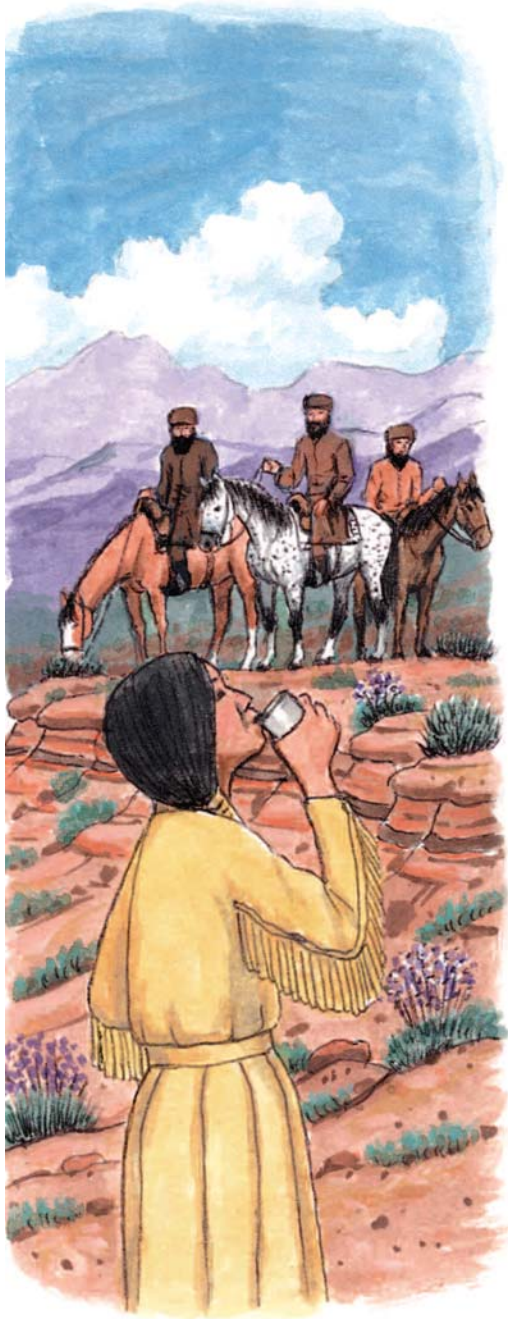
In the lonely years ahead, there would be no loving relatives to shelter and love her child, and to help to train him. The buffalo were almost gone, killed to destroy the source of life for the Lakota tribes.

Her name, Flies Alone, seemed to have been a prediction of this time. It reminded her that she would have to be strong to raise her child alone. She tried to think of what to do when the sun rose, and the storm was over. But all she could do was wonder why there was so much war, injustice, and fear in the world. Why did people fight and destroy one another? Why did the soldiers want to kill her people? Why was there so much new sickness? Had people forgotten that everyone and all things are related?

It felt as though her heart would break as she looked into her baby's trusting eyes. His tiny fist gripped her finger when she touched his hand. "Storm Boy?" she wondered. Would that be his name? She would need to raise him to be strong and gentle, humble and proud. Alone, she would have to teach him to hunt and help him make tools he needed. She would have to teach him to be ever wary of danger approaching.

She fed him, and then drifted into weary sleep as the storm moved away.





That night she had an amazing dream. In her dream, she saw a plain with mountains in the distance. It appeared to be her homeland, but she did not recognize the mountains. It was early dawn, and she could barely make out a group of men and horses. The men were wearing strange long robes, and she didn't know to what tribe they belonged. They had thick brown hair on their lower faces, like the soldiers who had attacked her family's camp, and she grew anxious. In her dream, she had modestly kept her distance from them. However, she noticed that one Young Man wore a green cloth wrapped around His head and also a green sash belt. She thought He was quite beautiful, and had a gentle yet strong spirit. The others were gathered around Him. He seemed to see her, and then gave one of the men a cup with water and motioned for him to take it to Flies Alone. Without looking into the face of the man, she accepted the water, and drank it—she was very thirsty and weary. The kindness of the One wearing green had calmed her broken heart.

She dreamt no more that night, and in the morning she slept so late that the warmth of the rising sun woke her. Her son was hungry, and she nursed him. She offered a morning song to thank the Great Mysterious for the new day and to ask for protection for herself and her baby. She had to quickly decide what direction to take in looking for other camps. She would have to go without a horse, and quietly, so as not to attract attention. Flies Alone felt great sadness and fear, but strangely, her inmost heart seemed calm.

She wrapped her baby snugly in a soft tanned skin and tucked a handful of fluffy fiber from cattails beneath

him to keep him dry. She felt awe at his smallness. She wanted to tell him about the mysterious sweet dream, but there was no time. They had to leave this place. One day, perhaps, she would tell him. Until then, Flies Alone knew she would keep the dream in her heart and wonder at its meaning.

Before she tied his little cradleboard onto her back, Flies Alone simply kissed her baby's eyes and forehead, and whispered, "Green. Your name will be Green, in remembrance of my dream in this terrible time. You will grow to offer people kindness and caring. We will pray in each new moon that the promise of peace will come true in your lifetime." His naming ceremony was as simple as her gentle kisses and whispers. There was not time for more. They had to hurry away from this place.

Now, so very many years later, another Lakota woman sat on the foot of the bed where her grandchildren were snugly tucked in under quilts and waiting for a story. In a soft voice, she told them, again, the story told to her by her Grandfather Green of how he got his name through a special dream his mother had on the night he was born. And she told them when she had learned of the Báb, she knew immediately that it was He Whom her great-grandmother had dreamt about so long ago, in the mid-1800s. She told them that the world desperately needed the Message He brought. She smiled as she thought how Flies Alone would have rejoiced at His Message. Then she asked the children who would like to recite the prayer she was teaching them, the one that started with "Is there any Remover of difficulties save God?" ★

