

STORY-TELLING

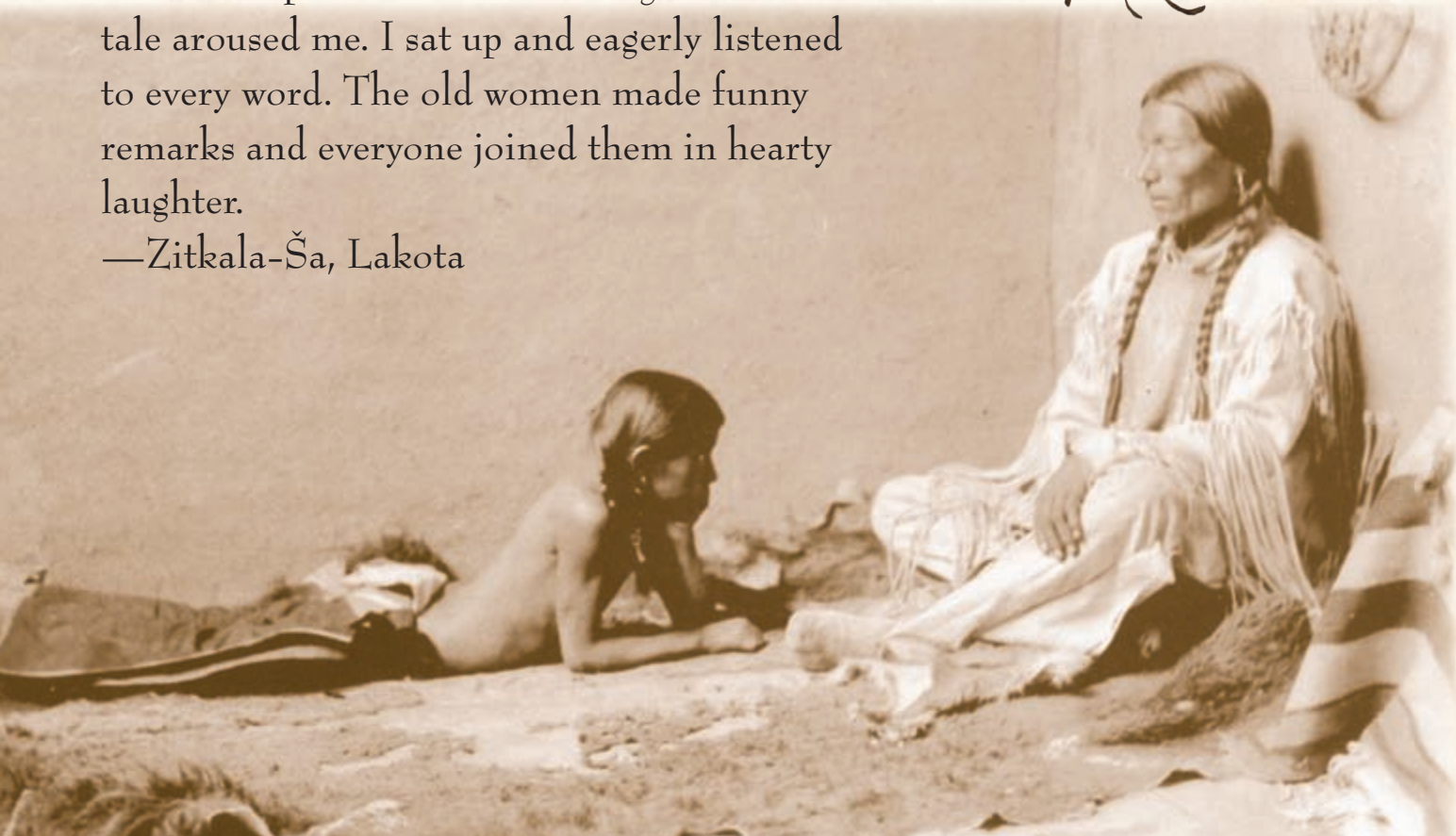
Kids learned just through listening and watching. Then they tried. Our folks didn't lecture us much. They told stories, especially on the long winter nights. We listened and learned what to fear, what to do, and what to respect.

—Agnes Yellowtail Deernose, Absaroke

I loved best the evening meal, for that was the time old legends were told. I ate my supper in quiet, listening to the old people. As each began to tell a legend, I laid my head on my mother's lap. Then the increasing interest of the tale aroused me. I sat up and eagerly listened to every word. The old women made funny remarks and everyone joined them in hearty laughter.

—Zitkala-Ša, Lakota

headdress



MOTHER EARTH

The Lakota loved the earth and all things of the earth. The old people came to love the soil. They sat on the ground to be close to a mothering power. It was good for the skin to touch the earth. The old people liked to remove their moccasins and walk with bare feet on the sacred earth.

The old Lakota was wise. He knew that man's heart away from nature becomes hard. He knew that lack of respect for growing, living things led to lack of respect for humans. So he kept his youth close to nature.

—Standing Bear, Oglala Lakota

