

A Friend of the Indians

By Joseph Bruchac

A man who was known
as a friend of the Indians
spoke to Red Jacket¹ one day
about the good treatment
the Senecas enjoyed
from their white neighbors.

Red Jacket walked with him
beside the river, then suggested
they should sit together
on a log next to the stream.

They both sat down.
Then Red Jacket slid closer
to the man and said, "Move
Over."

The man moved over, but when
he did
Red Jacket again slid closer.
"Move Over," he said.

Three times this happened
until the man had reached
the end of the log near the water
then, once more, he was told,
"Move Over."

"But if I move further

¹ Red Jacket was an Iroquois leader of the late 1700s.

I shall fall in the water,”
the man pleaded,
teetering on the edge.

Red Jacket replied,
“And even so you whites
tell us to move on when
no place is left to go.”