



IT was a few months later, when Samantha was twelve years old, and I was fourteen, and winter come on, and the wind was blowing a gale, and dark was a thing we dreaded, that the panther called on us again.

For six years, Samantha had been waiting in a way that was eager. It seemed sometimes that all she did was wait. Under such circumstances as these you might think the panther's return would be no surprise to either of us when it did come back. To the contrary, it was a shock. It was like death, in that way. A person might have it fixed in his mind that death must call on him some time, but that time will startle him nonetheless.

That night it was quite windy. Samantha and me was alone in the house and had us a fire going. The wind bothered us a great deal. It come down the chimney and messed with the flames, and the noise of it made us uneasy. We felt mischief was afoot. We did not know in what form it might be, if in the fearsome form of Comanches or other assailants, and we did not know who would come to our aid if we was visited by evil...

The Which Way Tree **A novel by Elizabeth Crook**

“This book is the stuff of legends, tales told for a hundred years around Texas campfires....*The Which Way Tree* is unlike anything I’ve read before.” —Attica Locke, author of *Bluebird, Bluebird*

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