December 5th

Today was rough and I’m hoping we make it through. Our food supply is running low, as the harsh weather continues to hide all the animals. Mother says we must share our corn with our people. We all must eat. The heavy snow caused our longhouse to collapse so father and I went looking for young trees to make poles for a new longhouse. Thankfully our village people helped us. We try to keep warm and must save leaves and twigs to start campfires so we can survive. Yesterday we found a beautiful Birch tree and were able to put it to good use. We used the bark to cover our longhouse to keep out the rain, and to line clay storage pots to keep dried food safe from all the mice. Mother used the twigs to make more baskets and father is teaching me how to make tools. He makes the best spear you will ever see.

I heard mother crying last night. I know she fears we are running out of food. She calls on the spring gods who will bring good, plentiful crops so she can gather wild nuts, fruits and vegetables, mushrooms, and eggs laid by birds and turtles. We have enough sunflower oil that sister made which is useful when we wish to fry food. It has many uses actually. Yesterday I cut my arm when building the new longhouse and mother put sunflower oil on my wound to treat it. My skill feels so soft. Tomorrow father and I will go out in hopes of finding food. I made a brand new bow and arrow. Maybe I’ll catch a black bear, elk, deer, rabbit, or maybe even a wolf! Father always says we mustn’t waste any part of the animal. Come spring we it will be fishing season. Now we know to dry and store more for next winter. We will try to get some fish tonight. It won’t be easy. Father is going to go out with a torch. He says the light attracts fish into his net. I pray to the gods that we get through this winter. I will protect my family and village at all costs.