

WHITE STAR'S VISION

By Carolyn Miller - Schulz AKA "Singletree"



It was the winter of too many stars and it had been a hard one so far. The snow was deep and had lasted so very long. The "People" were hungry. Brother Wolf was also hungry, his mournful howls could be heard all through the night as he and his tribe searched vainly for food. There was no game to feed anyone. White Star slept fitfully one night in the deep winter, she dreamed of the buffalo, he called her by name, saying "White Star ! Come to the high place, White Star come now ! Hurry!" She woke up startled, it had seemed so real.

As soon as the sun danced, sparkling on the drifted snow, White Star sought council of Standing Otter, the medicine man. The dream was still so vivid in her mind , she felt drawn to the high place, but was afraid to go because of the depth of the snow and those howling wolves. Standing Otter listened intently to her dream and told her after much thought, that if the Wakan Tanka had called her through one of the Buffalo People, then she must do as she was asked, for not to obey would surely bring misfortune. Also, if she was going to go she should go this very night, because the Buffalo had told her to hurry and had come to her in the night while she slept. Standing Otter promised to make offerings for her to take with her and to speak of her in his prayers to Wakan Tanka this day.

That evening, White Star slipped out of camp, hugging close to her breast the medicine bundle so meticulously prepared for her by Standing Otter. The climb to the high place was more difficult than she had imagined, rocks and branches hidden under the deep snow cover reached out to grab her ankles. Many times she fell, floundering in the heavy wet snow but each time she fought her way to her feet, keeping her eyes on the point of the high place, willing her aching body to go on. Strangely, she was not cold, but the eerie howling of the hungry wolves in the distance was quite frightening, making her shiver as if she were cold.

Not long after the moon had climbed to it's highest, White Star reached the high place. It had taken much out of her, but she was finally there. Still gasping for breath in the frozen air, she carefully unwrapped her offerings and tied them to the branches of a small brush pine, the she stood and sang prayers to the Wakan Tanka, thanking them for helping her to reach this place in safety. Suddenly the wind became confused and seemed to blow in all directions at once and looking up, she watched as the clouds swirled and churned and began to form the shapes of White Buffalo and Brother Bear among the twinkling stars.

A voice like thunder shook the ground saying.."White Star ! White Star ! We know that your people have suffered much and we want to tell them that we have not turned our faces from them. " "We have held council and decided that since you have listened to

your dreams, we will ask North Wind to leave and South Wind to come gently to this place, further, since "The People" have honored us daily in prayer and offering even though they were suffering, we will cause this great famine to end. Even as they spoke, the warmth of the South Wind touched her face gently and the snow began to melt around her feet. "White Star, go now and gather your hunters, tell them to go to the foot of the mountain in the East, there in it's shadow will they find all that they need." Then, swirling like it came, the vision vanished.

White Star rushed quickly as she could through the melting snow back towards the camp and reached it just as the first rays of the sun touched the tops of the tipis. She raced excitedly to see Standing Otter and told him what she had seen and heard and he quickly sent the hunters to the place that had been spoken of. When the hunters returned they were laden with much buffalo meat and went back many times to get more. There had been an avalanche when the warm spell came, trapping a large herd of buffalo in a canyon at the foot of the mountain to the East. Thanks to White Star's vision they would not be hungry any more. From that day on, White Star was most honored among "The People" for her courage.