

HOOYAHMI

Stories and poems for children ages 5 to 10



by
J. J. Anderson

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*Dedicated to the children
of our planet:
God bless them
with Light and Love
and Peace.*

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HOOYAHMI

In the little New Mexico town of Silver City, there was a toymaker named Sedu. He was very old and very wise and *very* good at making toys. He was a *Master* Toymaker.

The toys Master Sedu liked best to make were teddy bears. He would make each teddy with extra special care, always placing each bunch of stuffing, each eye and each ear in just the right place—and noses, too, of course.

When he finished making a teddy bear, the old toymaker would give it a good, strong hug. Then the teddy bear would wake up, see Master Sedu and smile.

Sometimes, people in Silver City would tell the toymaker many of his teddy bears looked exactly alike.

Master Sedu would just smile and say, “Every teddy bear is special in its own way. You need to take time and pay attention and get to know a teddy. Then you’ll find out what’s special about it and what makes it different from all the other teddy bears in the world.”

One day, the old toymaker made a certain small, tan teddy bear with button brown eyes, a big dark brown nose and huge feet with white on the bottoms. He made it with small, soft fuzzy ears that were white inside. It had a white tail so small you would hardly notice it. And it had extra long arms.

When Master Sedu hugged this teddy and woke it up, he was surprised to find the young bear was very fidgety and full of energy. This tan teddy was so fidgety and impatient it started for the door to go out into the world almost the instant it was awake.

But Master Sedu said, “Wait, young bear, wait! There is something I must tell you before you go out into the world! And there something you must tell me, too, you must tell me your name!” (Every teddy bear knows its own name, of course, and will tell you, if you ask it politely.)

The new little teddy looked at Master Sedu, scratched an ear, wiggled some toes, fidgeted, and then exclaimed, “Hooyahmi! My name is Hooyahmi!” So saying, the fuzzy young bear started again for the door.

The old toymaker quickly said, “Wait! Now I must now tell *you* something.” But Hooyahmi was already reaching for the doorknob. Master Sedu continued, “If you ever need to know something *really* important, be very, very still and listen to your heart.” But the speedy little teddy bear was already out the door and starting down the street.

Master Sedu hurried to the door and called out after the impatient teddy, “Remember! If you ever need to know something *really* important, be very, very still and listen to your heart.”

Even though Hooyahmi was nearly around the corner and out of sight, the old toymaker knew the little bear had heard him. Master Sedu also knew someday Hooyahmi would choose to remember what the toymaker had said.

Hooyahmi enjoyed the sights and sounds and smells of Silver City but wondered, “What shall I do, now that I’m out in the world?” The teddy scratched an ear, wiggled some toes, fidgeted, then hurried up and down the streets of Silver City looking for something to do.

As the teddy bear passed a parking lot filled with cars Hooyahmi shouted, “I know!” causing an old man with a white beard passing by to look over at the teddy in surprise. “I’ll be a race car driver!”

Off Hooyahmi went to race car driver school where that fuzzy young bear studied very hard and quickly learned to drive a race car. “My extra long arms help me turn the steering wheel when I’m rounding the race track curves,” Hooyahmi smiled happily, “I’m a *natural* race car driver!”

In truth, that fuzzy young bear *was* very good at driving race cars. So good, Hooyahmi won first prize in a car race. The prize was a big gold cup called a trophy.

Hooyahmi shouted, “Hooray! *Hooray!* I’m the *best!*”

Hooyahmi took the trophy home and put it in the bedroom on the dresser where the socks and the underwear are kept. But the little teddy wasn't happy. "I really like my trophy but I'm tired of racing cars. What shall I do now?"

Hooyahmi scratched an ear, wiggled some toes, fidgeted, then hurried up and down the streets of Silver City looking for something to do. The little teddy heard a noise in the sky and looked up to see an airplane.

"I know!" Hooyahmi shouted, causing two napping fat cats to look up at the teddy in surprise. "I'll be an airplane pilot!"

Off Hooyahmi went to airplane pilot school where that fuzzy young bear studied very hard and quickly learned to fly a plane. "My extra long arms help me to hold onto the controls when I'm flying upside down," Hooyahmi smiled happily, "I'm a *natural* airplane pilot."

In truth, that fuzzy young bear *was* very good at flying airplanes. So good, Hooyahmi won first prize in an air show. The prize was a red, white and blue ribbon with a big gold star hanging from it. That kind of prize is called a medal.

Hooyahmi shouted, "Hooray! *Hooray!* I'm the *best!*"

Hooyahmi took the medal home and put it in the bedroom with the car racing trophy on the dresser where the socks and the underwear are kept. But the little teddy wasn't happy. "I really like my medal but I'm tired of flying planes. What shall I do now?"

Hooyahmi scratched an ear, wiggled some toes, fidgeted, then hurried up and down the streets of Silver City looking for something to do. As Hooyahmi passed a department store, there was a famous singer performing on a television set in the store window.

"I know!" Hooyahmi shouted, causing a scruffy stray dog watching the TV to look over at the fuzzy teddy in surprise. "I'll be a TV star!"

Off Hooyahmi went to music school where that fuzzy young bear studied very hard and quickly learned to play the guitar and sing. “My extra long arms help me to hold the guitar when I’m singing and dancing around on stage,” Hooyahmi smiled happily, “I’m a *natural* TV star.”

In truth, that fuzzy young bear *was* very good at singing on TV. So good, Hooyahmi won a gold record for selling a million copies the famous hit song “Doobie Doobie, Fuzzy Doobie!”

Hooyahmi shouted, “Hooray! *Hooray!* I’m the *best!*”

Hooyahmi took the gold record home and put it in the bedroom with the car racing trophy and the air show medal on the dresser where the socks and the underwear are kept. But the little teddy wasn’t happy. “I really like my gold record but I’m tired of singing on TV. What shall I do now?”

Hooyahmi scratched an ear, wiggled some toes, fidgeted . . . and then remembered what the old toymaker Sedu had said, “If you ever need to know something *really* important, be very, very still and listen to your heart.”

Well, Hooyahmi was one fuzzy young teddy bear not used to being still at all, let alone very, very still. But after scratching an ear and tapping some toes and fidgeting and thinking about driving race cars and thinking about flying airplanes and thinking about singing on TV, Hooyahmi was finally able to be very, very still.

And from Hooyahmi’s heart there came this one word: HUG!

Hooyahmi jumped up and shouted, “Hooray! *Hooray!* *That’s* what I’ll do! I’ll spend the rest of my life *hugging*. My extra long arms make me a *natural* hugger,” the excited young teddy bear exclaimed. “I can give one million hugs and still have millions and millions more to give. I’ll never run out! And I don’t have to go to school to learn how to hug! I’m already a *natural* hugger!”

The rest of Hooyahmi’s life *was* spent hugging, even after both ears had worn off and one eye had popped out and the teddy’s fur was almost gone.

Hooyahmi didn't win any more trophies or medals or gold records. The little teddy bear never again shouted, "Hooray! *Hooray!* I'm the *best!*" Hooyahmi was too busy giving hugs to anyone who wanted to be hugged.

But Hooyahmi *was* the best.

And Hooyahmi was *very* happy.

And Hooyahmi never forgot what Master Sedu had said, "If you ever need to know something *really* important, be very, very still and listen to your heart."

The end.



THE WIGGENKRANTZ

Once there was a Wiggenkrantz,
colored green and morple;
how the kids would laugh and dance
whenever he would dorple!

Sometimes he would come to town
riding on his grokus
and follow children all around,
snorting through his glokus.

All the kids would laugh and shout
but their teachers would be somber,
especially when the Wiggenkrantz
would jump around and glomber!

He dressed in long and flowing robes
and polka dotted pants;
of course, he had galupernobes,
this marvelous Wiggenkrantz!

Dogs and pups would yap and howl,
as down the street he bounced;
but moms and dads would frown and scowl
and say he should be trounced.

So,
if the Wiggenkrantz comes your way
and wants to play and prindle,
make sure your parents say OK
before you run and grindle.

RASCAL

Rascal was a skinny dog
 In love with a gray fat cat.
He lived beneath the trailer house
 Where the cat was at.
The cat's name was Sweetness
 Though she really wasn't very.
But Rascal knew she was the one
 Someday he would marry.

Sweetness wouldn't share her food
 And otherwise was very rude—
While Rascal watched with hopeful eyes
 Waiting for her to realize:
 He's the one!

Sweetness did this and that
 And didn't pay much attention—
Which drove poor Rascal wild,
 I suppose that I should mention—
Until cranky Billy Bulldog
 (Who ruled the neighborhood)
Chased Sweetness up a mulberry tree
 And vowed to keep her there for good.

But Rascal bit Billy on his south side
 (That's the opposite of his mouth side)
And sent him yowling, howling, scowling,
 racing down the street!
So Sweetness gave dear Rascal—oh that lucky pooch—
 A great big furry hug and a sloppy, slurpy smooch!
But she still doesn't share her food . . .
 Unless she's in the mood

THE GOOD FRIENDS

The Clamparoo and the Bamblar
were very good friends, indeed;
but whenever they went hiking
the Clamparoo would always lead—
well, the Bamblar never did complain
(that's not the Bamblar's way)
and, to tell this story's end ahead,
they're still good friends today.
But they had a Great Adventure
neither one will soon forget
and there are folks
who live 'round here
who talk about it yet.

It was a broad and beauteous day
when the two climbed Hunkly Ridge
and hiked the Mighty Frizzeree
clear out to Bogan's Bridge.
Of course, the Clamparoo took the lead
with the usual excuse
the two of them might run into
a mountain goat or moose—
and Clamparoos knew what to do
when trouble's on the loose.

But not a soul
from 'round the town
who knows Frizzeree
can recall
a goat at all,
let alone a moose;
and all agree
the only squall
of trouble on the loose
to ever hit these parts at all
was Annie Framby's goose,
who ate up half of Annie's shawl,
fell over in a swoon,
curled up in a bloated ball
and slept that way 'til noon.

As the two hiked Hunkly Ridge
someone heard the Rambler say,
“I think, dear friend,
the time has come
for me to lead the way.
I really know this path quite well
and,
on such a lovely day,
I doubt there’s any danger here.
From what the town folks say,
they’ve never seen a goat or moose
or any danger near.”

No one heard
the Rambler’s reply
but from afar they saw the trail,
with the Rambler in the lead,
the Rambler bringing up the tail . . .
and talking still,
some folks recall,
though that’s not
the Rambler’s way at all.

No one knows where
the pair had reached
when all the noise began—
it must have been near Echo Mound,
nearly *everyone* could hear the sound!
Some folks jumped up and ran through town
and gathered in the Square
and gabbed about fearsome noise
from the Mighty Frizzeree.

“It just might be
as the Rambler said
there are beasts up there
we don’t know about!
What we hear is our friends’ great shout
for us to go and help those two
before they end up dead!”

As most folks gabbed and milled around
and fretted at the rumbling sound
from the Mighty Frizzeree,
the grocery clerk said, “Follow me!
We’ll all go out past Hunkly Ridge

and, if we must, to Bogan's Bridge,
to help our friends!"

But it took so long for that brave bunch
to find their hats and pack their lunch
they missed their chance
(and none deny it)
because all at once
it got strangely quiet.

Well, bravery is one thing
in the face fearsome noise
but then it's quite another,
I can tell you girls and boys,
when all you hear is . . . *nothing!*

Some folks fretted even more
and cried, "Let's take a vote!"
while others figured out a way
to catch a grumpy goat
(or moose)
and what's the best thing they could do
when trouble's on the loose.
Then someone cried,
"Look! *There* they are!"
And to everyone's surprise
the Clamparoo and the Rambler
came walking over the rise
and down through town.

There was no harm,
it was plain to see,
from hiking the Mighty Frizzeree
because there they were,
after all those miles,
arm in arm
with pleasant smiles.

Folks gathered around
and questions flew:
"What was that awful, rumbling sound?"
someone asked.
"Oh! We just *knew*,"
another said,
"the two of you would end up dead!"

The two friends didn't want to talk
but after all the noise and squawk
from everybody else,
the Clamparoo said, "Well, ah,
there's not much we have to say . . .
except to tell a lesson
we've learned this hiking day:
It's a very good thing
to share your thoughts,
to say your piece right out.
After all, we have learned,
that's what friendship's all about.
And if *grumpy* thoughts are on your mind,
you should really give them say.
Don't store them up *and all at once*
let them go their way!"

With that,
the two walked arm in arm
down towards Annie Framby's farm,
followed by her cat.

The Clamparoo and the Bamblar
are very good friends, indeed;
now whenever they go hiking
they take turns with the lead.
About their Great Adventure
neither one has much to say;
but the Bamblar and the Clamparoo
are still good friends today.

DEER-CROSSING- MEADOW

— 1 —

The great buffalo plains, with their grass that swayed in the daily winds, ended just north of the canyon made by South Running Creek. Buffalo had not been seen on the plains in fifteen summers. The people who lived in the villages up and down the creek's long craggy canyon no longer expected the great buffalo herds. Instead, they lived on deer and on their corn, beans and squash and on roots and berries. They also hunted rabbits, turkeys, and quails. If they were willing to send a hunting party south into the rugged nearby mountains, they might enjoy elk meat during winter.

— 2 —

The village called Meadow-Near-the-Creek was not small, not big. Half a day's walk to the north was a larger village of more than one thousand people. It was called Many Fires. A short walk to the west was a small village of about two hundred people. It was called Near-the-Bluffs. To the south were two even smaller villages, Berry Bushes and Quiet Pond.

All of the nearby villages had friends and relatives of the Meadow People. Many of the Meadow People would visit them in their villages, especially at times like marriage celebrations. Sometimes friends and relatives would come to Meadow-Near-the-Creek. There would almost always be food and games and dancing when visitors came.

For the young, Meadow-Near-the-Creek was an excellent place to live. They could fish and wade in South Running Creek or just sit and watch the water dance by. Its water ran all year. The meadow's trees offered shade and its bushes were hiding places for games and for practicing hunting skills. The meadow was large and rolling and rich with shrubs, flowers and other vegetation, including berry bushes. It was sunny and inviting. The Meadow People grew corn near where the creek ran through.

Village homes in the steep nearby cliffs along the creek were warm in winter, cool in summer. The homes offered excellent views of the creek and meadow, of the bluffs and the mesa west of the village, and of the mountains to the south of the village. In summer, a few of the Meadow People camped along the creek. But most of them lived in their cliff homes year round.

— 3 —

Deer-Crossing-Meadow was a maiden of fifteen summers whose mother's father, Many Scars, was a village elder. He was also a holy man but not a chief. Meadow-Near-the-Creek did not have a chief. In Many Fires, there was a chief of all the villages by the name of Skillful Beaver. Sometimes Skillful Beaver called councils. Then Many Scars and other village elders would go to Many Fires to discuss matters of importance to the villages.

Deer-Crossing-Meadow's father, Cloud Dancer, was a good hunter and a well-known dancer of great skill. When he was young, his name was Quiet-Boy-Who-Sits-Alone. In his twelfth summer, the village elders guided him and other village boys his age through their Dream Walks. In silence, the boys fasted for two days. And for those two days the elders prayed over and blessed the boys. Then each boy was taken to spend a night alone on the mesa or by the creek or some other place the elders left him to have his Dream Walk. The elders came for the boys the next morning and took them to the village sacred place. The place was called Hands Lifted Up and it was here each boy told of his Dream Walk.

Quiet-Boy-Who-Sits-Alone told his.

"I heard all the noises of the night I have heard all my life but they seemed different and strange because I was not with my family in our village. I worried I would not be able to sleep. But I did sleep and I did have my Dream Walk.

"In my dream I climbed the bluffs west of the village and looked out over the canyon and off to the plains. A great wind came and the Grandfather Spirit stood next to me. He said, 'Stand tall!' Then he touched my feet with a forked willow stick and said, 'Now your name is Cloud Dancer. Your feet will dance lightly as if on clouds. You will lead the dancing in the villages. Go tell everyone your new name.' I woke up and it was morning and I saw Many Scars looking down at me and smiling."

The elders agreed Quiet-Boy-Who-Sits-Alone had a good Dream Walk. After that, he was known as Cloud Dancer and he became the best dancer in Meadow-Near-the-Creek. Some said he was the best dancer in all the villages. But Cloud Dancer was too modest to say such a thing about himself.

— 4 —

Deer-Crossing-Meadow's mother, She-Walks-Far, was a patient woman of many skills. These skills she learned from her mother and from her aunt, Turtle Woman, who was a healer and a seer and a greatly respected village elder. She-Walks-Far wanted to teach her daughter these skills. But Deer-Crossing-Meadow was bored with the endless daily and seasonal chores required of her family and the other villagers. She was bored with tending corn. She was bored with grinding corn. She was bored with baking bread. She was bored with preserving deer meat. But she didn't mind washing clothes in South Running Creek with the other village girls because they talked and laughed and took their own time doing this chore.

Sometimes, she could steal a few minutes from her washing to talk with Falling Rocks. For the last three summers, he had camped alone by the creek where the Meadow People grew their corn. He was responsible for preventing deer and raccoons and other animals from eating the villagers' corn. Sometimes in the dark of the night, she could hear his voice as he shouted and chased off hungry animals. Falling Rocks was also fifteen summers old and, Deer-Crossing-Meadow thought, the bravest and most handsome boy in all the villages. More important, he was shyly sweet on her.

She-Walks-Far would sometimes call Deer-Crossing-Meadow out of a daydream to remind her of chores to be done. She knew all about Falling Rocks and her daughter's interest in him. After all, the two had played together as young children and their families were very close. But now that Deer-Crossing-Meadow was approaching an age where she could take a husband, She-Walks-Far kept a closer watch on her daughter. Any match would have to be approved not only by Cloud Dancer but also by Many Scars, Deer-Crossing-Meadow's grandfather.

— 5 —

She-Walks-Far remembered what it was like to be in love and how she, as a maiden, waited and hoped for Cloud Dancer to ask for her to be his wife. Her heart beat more quickly in his presence, especially when he led village dances at night by firelight. He often pretended not to notice She-Walks-Far when he danced but he secretly tried to do his best dancing just to impress her.

She was sixteen summers when Cloud Dancer finally asked Many Scars for She-Walks-Far to be his wife. Many Scars told the young man he would think it over. Then he asked his daughter how she felt in her heart about this one called Cloud Dancer. He already knew the answer but asking her was Many Scars way to show respect and to let his daughter choose her own path. Of course, he approved and blessed their marriage.

In the spring of the second year of their marriage, She-Walks-Far had her first and only child, her daughter, Deer-Crossing-Meadow. Her labor had been hard and lasted all night. In the morning at sunrise, She-Walks-Far was still in labor and, drenched in sweat, she stood in the doorway to get some comfort from a cooling breeze. As she looked out at the early morning, she saw a doe and her fawn crossing the meadow. It was at that moment her own baby started to come out. That is how Deer-Crossing-Meadow got her name.

— 6 —

Sometimes in the evenings, village elders would sit by a fire and tell stories, each in her or his own way, or they would teach about the ways of the Meadow People. The little children were usually well asleep for the night but the older ones were invited to sit with the adults and listen to what was said. Two Deer, the father of the boy called Runs-Too-Fast-to-Catch, would give pointers on hunting. After all, he was the best hunter in this and all the other villages. Chases-Coyote-and-Gets-Bitten would tell humorous stories and all the youngsters would laugh until their sides hurt. Even though the adults had heard most of his stories many times before, they too would laugh, mainly because of his enthusiastic ways of acting out his tales.

Many Scars did not talk often but when he did all agreed it was worth listening. The boys and young men heard stories about Many Scars' hunting skills and his bravery in battles when he was a young man. Sometimes a boy might be bold enough to ask Many Scars to tell about his days as a warrior. But all Many Scars would say is, "No man, no living thing is my enemy! Go do your chores!"

— 7 —

One summer night when many of the Meadow People were gathered by a large fire down near the creek, Many Scars stood up, turned toward the north and gestured with his hand. Here is what he said.

"Each of the four winds has its power. The power of the North Wind is the power of the mind, of thinking. When the North Wind is your friend, you think clearly. You are cool in times of trouble. Your mind is like a sharp knife cutting through to the important things to know. But if the North Wind is not your friend, you are fooled by the many words of others and by their schemes to trick you. Your mind is cold and slow. It wanders, as if you are going from village to village in search of something you cannot remember."

He picked up a stick and, turning to his right, he drew a curved line in the sand until he was facing east.

"The power of the East Wind is the power of leading. When the East Wind is your friend, you lead people without being puffed up like a toad. Instead, you lead with humility. Your ways are respectful of others and people live together peacefully, with ease. But if the East Wind is not your friend, you are filled with your own importance and have no vision to give others. People will not trust you but instead will laugh at you behind your back and make fun of your bloated pride. Or maybe they will fear and hate you."

Then turning to his right again, he drew a curved line in the sand until he was facing south.

"The power of the South Wind is the power of passion. When the South Wind is your friend, you have great enthusiasm to go on hunts or to fight in battle or to follow the path of your Dream Walk. Each day when you rise, you have the strength to do what your path calls for you to do. But if the South Wind is not your friend, you forget your purpose and your vision. Your thoughts become clouded and heated with anger. Sometimes you hunger for revenge and desire to harm others. The voice of the Grandfather Spirit in your heart cannot be heard because of all of the noise in your head!"

Turning to his right again, he drew a curved line in the sand until he was facing west.

"The power of the West Wind is the power of freedom. When the West Wind is your friend, you move easily through life, without worry. You follow the path of your Dream Walk without wobbling. You *dance* your path. You are not tripped by careless thoughts or by false trail markings

to lead you astray. Your heart sings and your thoughts soar. But if the West Wind is not your friend, you lose sight of your path. Your heart is empty and troubled. Your freedom is not freedom at all but aimless wandering. You say, ‘I am free!’ but you are a prisoner of your own thoughts.”

Turning once again to his right, he drew a curved line in the sand until he was facing north again and had completed drawing a circle in the sand around him. Then, chanting softly, he did a simple graceful dance around the circle, gently touching children on their heads as he danced by them.

Here is what Many Scars said when he stopped dancing.

“To make friends of the four winds and to use their power, you must go alone into the hills and fast and stay for three nights, drinking nothing but water. The morning after the third night, you go to the place called Hands Lifted Up and ask the Grandfather Spirit to comfort you and quiet your thoughts. When you are quiet, you listen to your heart. It will teach you how to use the power of the winds.”

The villagers listened to the old man and nodded their heads in agreement. But almost no one ever did what he said to do. They were all too busy with daily chores and other things.

All except for Falling Rocks.

— 8 —

Falling Rocks was proud to be the one who watched over the villagers’ corn. He was very serious about his responsibility. Which is why when Deer-Crossing-Meadow stole away from her washing chore to look for Falling Rocks she was surprised and confused to find Runs-Too-Fast-to-Catch at his camp. Runs-Too-Fast-to-Catch was also surprised by his visitor. When he jumped up to greet her he fell backwards over a log. As he recovered himself and brushed off dirt he explained Falling Rocks would not return for several days and that he, Runs-Too-Fast-to-Catch, had been chosen as a replacement. When he tried to tell her how proud he was to have been chosen even though he was only eleven summers, Deer-Crossing-Meadow impatiently interrupted and demanded to know where Falling Rocks was. Flustered by her intense interest, he looked down at the ground and mumbled something about Many Scars and some special place where Falling Rocks had gone. Deer-Crossing-Meadow turned to go before Runs-Too-Fast-to-Catch finished talking. He watched her hurry off and shook his head. Clearly there was something here he didn’t yet understand.

— 9 —

Falling Rocks was called Always-Ready-to-Eat when he was little but something happened when he was seven summers that gave him a new name. His parents and some other villagers were building a rock wall enclosure about halfway up to beginning of their cliff homes. There was a large old shade tree that covered most of the area being enclosed. The new enclosure was for the smaller children to play in, the little ones too small to let roam in the meadow or near the creek

without someone to watch over them. Always-Ready-to-Eat's little sister, Smiles-at-Blossoms, was one of the children who would play in this safe area.

Always-Ready-to-Eat was lending an enthusiastic helping hand. Too enthusiastic. As he struggled to lift a large rock to the top of the wall nearest the downward side of the enclosure, it slipped from his grasp and began tumbling down the slope. Not only did his rock roll down toward the creek, several other rocks followed as he leaned against the wall trying to catch his rock. Then as he struggled to stand upright, he fell on another unfinished section of wall and sent it tumbling. All in all, an hour of work had been lost. His parents were generally cheerful and forgiving about his well meaning effort to help but they decided that night to change his name to Falling Rocks.

Sometimes Falling Rocks wished he had different name but none had come to him during his Dream Walk in his twelfth summer. In fact, his Dream Walk had been a disappointment. All he saw in his dream was wind blowing through trees by South Running Creek, blowing first one way and then another. Many Scars tried to cheer him up at the time by telling him not everyone finds their path early in life. Some find it later. He knew the old man meant well but his words didn't help much.

So, in his fifteenth summer, his name remained Falling Rocks.

— 10 —

When Falling Rocks approached Many Scars about making friends with the four winds, the old man listened carefully. He knew Falling Rocks to be sincere and thoughtful, as well as dutiful and enthusiastic. But Many Scars did not know if the young man was ready to find his path or if he was just trying to impress some of the Meadow People. Deer-Crossing-Meadow came to mind.

But Falling Rocks persisted.

He addressed Many Scars the way young people did when they spoke to respected elders. "Grandfather, my Dream Walk was, uh, *worthless!* Just the wind blowing every which way through the trees! I got no new and powerful name! I am still called by the *accident* of many summers ago when I was *young!*" He paused for a breath, "I am ready to make friends of the four winds. Maybe I will get a new name. Help me, Grandfather, *please!*"

Many Scars smiled softly at the idea that Falling Rocks no longer thought of himself as young. But he was impressed with his sincerity. The old man thought about how Falling Rocks did a good service preventing the deer and other animals from eating the villagers' corn. As he thought about this matter, he turned a stick he held in his hand over and over many times. He consulted his heart and sat quietly. After what seemed like a whole growing season to Falling Rocks, Many Scars spoke.

"I will help you but you should know this will not be easy."

The young man nodded eagerly that he understood.

“Very well,” Many Scars continued by drawing in the dirt with the stick, “here is the path we use to climb the bluffs to get to the mesa. About halfway up, there is another very old path leading north to a small cave hidden among the trees.”

“But, Grandfather, I have climbed the path to the mesa many times and there is no” Many Scars patiently looked at his drawing in the dirt without saying anything. The young man realized he should be listening, not talking, so he fell silent.

“You will see the beginning of the path underneath the tree killed by a summer storm. The climb to the cave is not long but it can be hard, especially since you will be going there at night.”

“But, Grandfather, why must I climb at night? How will I see this other path,” again his talking was stopped by the silence of the old man. Falling Rocks would at last be quiet and listen.

Many Scars then patiently explained how to make the climb to the cave and that Falling Rocks must take at least two bags of water with him. Three would be better, the old man said. He also told the young man not to come down to the place called Hands Lifted Up until the morning after the third night in the cave. He said he would be waiting there for Falling Rocks on that morning.

“Grandfather, when will I go?” the young man asked eagerly.

“Tonight,” the old man replied. “I will tell your father.”

— 11 —

She-Walks-Far decided to take her daydreaming daughter to Turtle Woman. Turtle Woman was a village elder and the aunt of She-Walks-Far. She was also a healer who knew all of the herbs and roots and plant medicine of the area, as well as some other more unusual ways to heal the various ailments of the Meadow People. She was well respected in all the villages but also feared by some people because of her powerful insight. Turtle Woman seemed to know everything going on in the villages without being told.

Deer-Crossing-Meadow dearly loved her mother’s aunt. No matter how silly or how long Deer-Crossing-Meadow chattered, Turtle Woman never scolded her. The old one would listen patiently and prepare a drink made from plant leaves and dried berries. When the two finished sipping their drinks and talking, Deer-Crossing-Meadow always felt better, quieter and calmer.

So, Deer-Crossing-Meadow was pleased to be seeing Turtle Woman but wondered why her mother had suggested the visit. Actually, her mother had insisted on the visit. But chief among her many thoughts Deer-Crossing-Meadow wondered about Falling Rocks and his absence from the village and why his father, Tall Man, would not tell her where his son was.

After the three of them had something to eat, She-Walks-Far told Turtle Woman, “It is time for us to help our little sister”

Deer-Crossing-Meadow caught her breath! Her mother never called her “little sister” unless she was in some kind of trouble or there were important family matters to discuss. What could be the purpose of this visit?

“Yes,” Turtle Woman nodded, “I know about this matter of the young man, Falling Rocks.” She chuckled.

Deer-Crossing-Meadow was surprised and then embarrassed at the mention of his name. She could not look up from a piece of leftover bread in front of her. She wanted to run home but she didn’t.

Turtle Woman said, “Soon he will be asking Cloud Dancer for Deer-Crossing-Meadow to be his wife,” she paused. “Many Scars will have to be consulted.”

She-Walks-Far nodded.

They sat in silence for a few minutes when finally Deer-Crossing-Meadow blurted, “Why are you *saying* these things! Falling Rocks has said *nothing* about marriage! No one will even tell me where he *is!*” Her eyes became moist.

Turtle Woman put her arms around the young woman and hugged her. “Tonight we will tell you all about his absence and much, much more. Tonight your mother and I will tell you things a *wife* needs to know!”

The three of them talked late into the night.

— 12 —

Falling Rocks was surprised he had never noticed the overgrown path leading to the north away from the trail that goes up the bluffs to the mesa. But he could see it clearly by the light of the full moon. There under the tree killed by lightning was the start of the path Many Scars told him to follow to the cave. The old man was right, the climb was rough. The rocks were sharp. The stones on the path were loose, so his feet sometimes slipped. Finally, the trail seemed to disappear but there was no cave in sight—just heavy brush. Could Many Scars be wrong? Maybe the old man didn’t remember it right! But when he pulled aside some of the undergrowth he saw the cave opening and his sleeping place for the next three nights.

He carefully climbed into the opening and found the cave to be small and shallow. It was also free of snakes and other creatures, to his relief. There was an overhanging rock that not only helped to hide the cave but also would protect from any rainstorms. He was tired and the summer night was warm so he decided not to build a fire. But by the moonlight he could see some charred rocks at the mouth of the cave. Someone before him had built a fire. He wondered if it had been Many Scars.

After storing his bags of water and his leather pouch, he unrolled his blanket and stretched out to sleep. But he didn’t go to sleep, even though the night was very quiet. Instead, he thought about

Deer-Crossing-Meadow and about his disappointing Dream Walk and about chasing deer away from the villagers' corn and about whether Runs-Too-Fast-to-Catch would do a good job while he was gone—and, eventually, his thoughts turned to food. These would not be his last thoughts about food.

— 13 —

Falling Rocks waked as the sun was rising. His stomach rumbled. He drank some water but knew it would not satisfy his hunger. He tried to think about something other than food. He looked around the cave in the daylight and found some loose rocks. He sat on a small boulder by the mouth of the cave and threw rocks down into the bushes and trees below. A few birds flew up and away and something in the underbrush scurried down the steep slope.

Many Scars had told him to just sit quietly and see what came to his mind and heart. He tried that for a while but soon grew bored. All he could think about was Deer-Crossing-Meadow and food, the food his family would be eating before they started their daily chores. The piles of food at marriages and other village celebrations. The food he carried in his leather pouch when he went hunting or fishing. A rabbit roasting over a camp fire.

But thinking about Deer-Crossing-Meadow helped him forget about food, at least for a little while. Soon, he thought, he would talk with Cloud Dancer about her being his wife. Falling Rocks didn't have much to offer, a pony and some things he had gotten in trade from people at Many Fires and other nearby villages over the past three summers. But, after all, She-Walks-Far and Cloud Dancer were not much older than he and Deer-Crossing-Meadow when they . . . he wondered what kind of meal had started Deer-Crossing-Meadow's day. Even a little piece of bread and a chew of dried meat would be a feast for him right now

This was not going to be as easy as he first thought.

— 14 —

Deer-Crossing-Meadow was thoughtful as she went about her daily chores. Her mother and Turtle Woman had told her many things the night before. She now knew Falling Rocks was “making friends of the four winds” and following her grandfather's guidance. Perhaps he too would become a holy man like Many Scars! She would have never thought such a thing before last night. But Turtle Woman and her mother had helped her see other sides of this young man. Sides of him she hadn't noticed before.

They also had spent time teaching her important things a young woman needed to know. Clearly, both of them approved of her choice of Falling Rocks and would help her make the change from maiden to wife. She shook her head in quiet surprise at how quickly her thinking had changed. She was somehow different and much older than yesterday. Some of what the two women told her the night before would require time to understand. But, for some reason, this morning she felt very patient. And very excited at the same time.

— 15 —

By the end of his first day in the cave, Falling Rocks was very hungry indeed. He continued to drink water—he still had plenty—but he had considered chewing on his leather pouch to ease his hunger. Earlier that morning he thought he saw some berries on a bush along the same ledge as the cave. He was certain he had seen some berries. But the ledge was too narrow and tapered off to nothing just before it got to the berry bush so it couldn't be reached. The bush seemed to grow out of the side of the cliff. Later when he carefully studied it again from the mouth of the cave, the bush seemed to have changed. It no longer looked like a berry bush. The berries had disappeared. Were there berries? Had birds eaten them? Had his mind tricked him?

He was glad when nightfall came. He stretched out on his blanket and fell into an uneasy sleep. He dreamed.

A blue coyote sat in the moonlight at the mouth of the cave. Falling Rocks looked at it without fear. It seemed to be waiting for something. “What do you want?” he asked the animal. It did not reply at first but then said, “The real question is what do *you* want!”

“I want to make friends of the four winds and to use their power! My Dream Walk was *no good!* I want to know my path and I want a new name!”

The coyote asked, “What did you see in your Dream Walk?”

“*Nothing!* All I saw was the wind blowing through the trees by South Running Creek, first one way and then another,” he said, feeling his disappointment all over again.

The blue coyote stood up, turned to leave, but looked back and asked, “From which direction did the winds blow?”

Falling Rocks thought for a moment and then said, “From four directions . . . they blew from all four directions!” When he looked again the coyote was gone.

He woke with a start! He quickly sat up and looked at the empty mouth of the cave. He went to the cave opening but there was no coyote in sight, blue or otherwise. He stood quietly in the moonlight for a few minutes and then returned to his blanket. *All four directions*, he thought.

— 16 —

Some of the Meadow People gathered by an evening fire to talk about Falling Rocks. Many Scars was there but said nothing at first.

Chases-Coyote-and-Gets-Bitten and Two Deer were wondering out loud if the young man was just showing off, trying to impress someone. They looked toward She-Walks-Far and Cloud Dancer who were sitting off to the side with their daughter but neither parent said anything.

Turtle Woman spoke up, “Many Scars, it is time to let the rest of us in on your secret.”

Many Scars, chuckled, “It is no *secret* I am growing *old*! For a long time I have been waiting for someone to teach. Perhaps Falling Rocks is the one I have been waiting for. We will know soon enough.”

There were murmurs of surprise from some of the others and Chases-Coyote-and-Gets-Bitten said, “He may be good at chasing deer from our corn and at trading with the other villages but he would do better to learn how to hunt like Two Deer. He does not look like much of a choice to me!” Some of the others chuckled in agreement.

Many Scars looked long and carefully at Chases-Coyote-and-Gets-Bitten and then quietly but firmly said, “We shall see soon enough if he is the one the Grandfather Spirit has sent to me.”

Everyone was silent after that and slowly they drifted off to their homes.

— 17 —

By the third night of his stay in the cave, Falling Rocks did not feel or at least did not notice his hunger. He drank the remainder of his water and then lay very quietly on his blanket. He decided he had just dreamed the blue coyote. He decided his Dream Walk had not been a failure but he was not yet clear about what it meant. He decided he didn’t need a new name but would accept one if it was given to him. He decided to ask Cloud Dancer for Deer-Crossing-Meadow to be his wife. He couldn’t explain his new feeling of calm and quiet but he decided he liked it.

He slept.

“Are you ready to go to the place called Hands Lifted Up?” the blue coyote asked.

Falling Rocks looked at him and answered, “I think so Where do you come from?”

“Do you understand your Dream Walk and the four winds?” the animal continued.

“I will ask Many Scars about all this tomorrow morning but I think my path is to learn from him, to follow his ways. Who are *you*? Where do you come from?”

“I am your friend and I will go with you on your path. You will see. Now rest.” The blue coyote vanished.

Falling Rocks woke immediately but didn’t bother to look at the cave opening. He knew nothing was there.

— 18 —

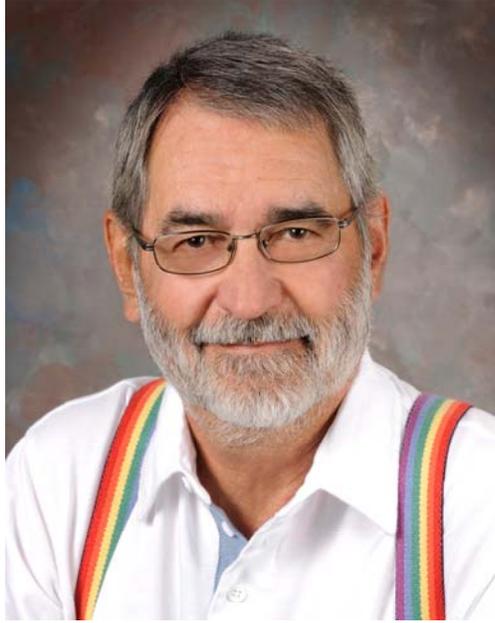
Many Scars was waiting at the place called Hands Lifted Up when Falling Rocks arrived early in the morning. They both sat quietly in the peaceful surroundings, warming themselves by a small fire the old man had made. Many Scars handed the young man some bread and berries. Falling Rocks ate the food slowly without saying anything.

They would eventually talk about the his time in the cave but first Many Scars lifted up his hands and said, “Thank you, Grandfather, for comforting our hearts. Thank you, Grandfather, for teaching us. Thank you, Grandfather, for showing us our paths.”

The two talked quietly for a long time that morning. They talked about dreams and dreaming, about the blue coyote, about whether there really were berries on the bush by the cave, and much more. There would be many more talks.

And there would be a marriage celebration.

The End.



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