

Jean Jacobson

Woodstock, NB

Woodstock First Nation

16 years old

Spirit Walker

The night was warm, with few clouds in the sky, and the glow of the moon illuminated the surrounding landscape. Tranquility filled the mood of the valley, as small waves from the lake gently slapped against the rocky shore. I sat peacefully at the top of a grassy green hill, overlooking the scenery. The many blades of grass translate the peaceful dance of the wind, as it boldly caresses the green needles. Deep warnings of an Owl taint the tranquil flow of the surrounding bliss. I scanned the vista in search for the animal. I noticed the pure white Owl in a thick border of trees that outline the opposite shore of the small lake. The Owl let out another screeching warning, as it dove off the branch that held it. Faint echoing whispers now filled my head, as I quickly rose to my feet. The strong flaps of the Owl's wings were in sync with the repetitive pumps of my heart. The whispers grew louder, as if they were warning me of something... Panic pulsed through my body, at every beat of the Owl's wings. One last screech filled the night, before a strong gust of wind consumed the white smoke that had before been the pursuing Owl.

The shock of the dream had forced me out of my sleep. My heart was pounding, and sweat ran down my forehead. I sat up, and slipped on my moccasins, pulled aside the fur that covered the hole to the outside, and stepped out. The morning was crisp, decorated with the beautiful song of morning birds. I stretched my arms to the sky, and took in a deep breath of fresh air. I walked down a path that followed a small stream through the woods, in the direction of Clan-Mother's hut. As I continued down the path, I contemplated the meaning of my dream, but nothing came to mind. Smoke emerged from the wigwam, giving the sign that Clan Mother was awake. I approached the hut, but before I could warn Clan Mother of my arrival, she welcomed me in with a wave of her hand, stuck out from the flap of the door.

"Aluhk, my child, Pihce ntehqi-nimeal(Its been along time)." says Clan Mother, in a soft welcoming tone.

"My apologies, Clan Mother, my thoughts have been wandering these days.. I've come to you for help, and knowledge."

She reaches for my hand, and holds it between hers.

"Be still, silent, and stay calm, Kwis. I'll explain myself...in time." she said. The frail, elder then closed her eyes, gently inhaling a breath of air. Seconds pass before a tremor shook through her body, slamming into the earth beneath her feet. The small fire in the middle of the room quickly diminished from the shock of the tremor. A frightened gasp escaped my lips -- Hastily I pulled myself together and remained silent. Suddenly, faint, echoing whispers filled my head, as they did in my dream. Clan Mother is lost in a strong medication, as if her soul is completely absent from her body. The white smoke of the fire is the only movement in the room, as it gracefully dances towards the ceiling.

A few moments pass before the whispers stop, and a slight breeze fills the room. It caresses the soft, wrinkled skin of Clan Mother, and she re-opened her eyes. The expression on her face was deep, as if she was lost in a concentrated stare.

"What was that! Is something wrong, are you alright, Clan Mother!?"

"Nothings wrong, my dear. Stay calm and listen to what I am about to tell you." she said.

"Do you know what's bothering me?"

"Your future holds a great responsibility Aluhk.."

Fright and confusion had now fully consumed the calm, contentment of my emotions.

"Yes, one day, we are all burdened with great responsibility. But yours... Will be greater than all of us."

"I don't understand."

"There hasn't been another of your kind for a very long time."

"Please! Tell me what you mean!" I begged.

"From the day you were born, you have witnessed visions in your sleep, and signs of spirits while you are awake. Your relationship with nature is strong, and sometimes, you hear untraceable whispers. These whispers you are hearing, are the spirits calling for you, as they see you as a link to our world. What I did here, just now was something that only few can do... I

opened the link to the spirit world. This link is called Keinuk, And from it, I can learn about your past, your future, and your purpose on this earth. The spirit world holds the information, and answers to all forms of life. And today, Aluhk, is a great day in the history of our people's existence."

As Clan Mother continued to explain the reasons for my visions, and spiritual encounters, she explained that every two-thousand years, the Creator would chose someone to continue the journey of Spirit Walker. Clan Mother rose to her feet and handed me a long wooden stave, with two eagle feathers that hung from strips of leather, at the top of the stick. Carvings ran down the whole length of the stave, and ended with its roots wrapped around a purple Ametrine.

"Take this, Aluhk... The will of Mother Earth courses through it, as the will of our Creator courses through you."

"Where am I suppose to go? How will I get there? This is happening so suddenly, I'm not ready for this!"

"The path will be known, when it is time... For now, follow in the direction of your senses, and stay true to your decisions. Let nature be your defense."

When I took the stave from Clan Mother's hands, a slight glowing aura emerged from the Ametrine, and a feeling of completeness overcame the confusion, and I filled with anticipation of the upcoming journey.

"You must leave at once, there is no time for goodbyes. The people will know of your importance, and honor will be in the hearts of all of us... Now hurry, Kwis, the Great Spirits await your arrival." Clan Mother urged, as she hugged me goodbye.

My Legs began to grow tired, after hours of walking. The sun was starting to set, behind the mountains in the distance, and a slight chill was beginning to replace the warm air that had lavished me the whole day. I began to gather dried sticks, and twigs, to start a small fire for warmth. The night quickly consumed the light of the sky, and signaled the calls of the nocturnal life to commence. The night wasn't as lonely as I thought; Nature was my company.

The glow of the fire was mesmerizing, as if the flame was dancing to the melody of life and the rhythm of nature. The beat of my heart was one with the breaths of Mother Earth. I could feel the presence of the spirits all around me. I sat in a deep meditation, captivated by my surroundings. I reached for the stave that Clan Mother had given me, and held it in my lap. With

my eyes closed, I rubbed my fingers across the carvings in the wood, and suddenly, the same whispers from before filled my thoughts. Just then a swift tremor shot from my head, down my body, and into the ground beneath me... Just as it did with Clan Mother. I opened my eyes, and everything in sight was transformed into a black and white realm of spirits. The trees, plants and everything around me still looked as they did before, but colorless, and constituent to the white smoke of my fire. A majestic white Hare leaped out from behind the trunk of a large tree, and looked into my eyes, as if it had something to tell me. I respectfully rose to my feet, and as I did, the Hare altered its direction, and disappeared back into the woods.

"This way..." echoed through the forest. Contentedly, I followed the animal, over a fallen tree that spanned across the running river, up a hill and through a small meadow. Behind each hop of the hare trailed a thin smoke that echoed the presence of the Animal. The Hare eventually came to a stop, near the top of a grassy green hill. The many blades of grass translated the peaceful dance of the wind, as it caressed the needles. The mood of the valley was tranquil, as waves from a small lake gently slapped against the rocky shore. Standing at the shore, was a man dressed in a deer hide regalia, with two eagle feathers standing up from his hair. By his side stood a large white bear, that contently waited on guard.

"Welcome, Aluhk..." The man said.

Author's Statement

The spark of my idea came from a story I heard when I was a child, about the creator asking a man to come dance in the sky with him, and the people would see him as the northern lights. Ever since then, I've always had an interest in the spiritual belief of the creator, and wanted to come up with my own story that I could put my imagination to use.

I spent weeks planning, and going over and re reading my story... and I couldn't of done with without the encouragement of my mother.