



A PROJECT OF THE DOMINION INSTITUTE

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### **Land of the Natives**

Since the ice age my First Nation People walked on the earth for a very long time, but I'm going to talk about my culture, Cree. This story is about adventure, humor, love, action, and death. It starts in a little village of the Ontario Cree. They have been at peace since the war between the Ojibwas, but that was a long time ago. Now they sit in huts making weapons, canoes, traps, utensils, and weaving fishnets and food baskets.

My story is about a young man who is separated from his family during a hunt and lost in the bush in the dark. His name is Cheveyo, meaning spirit warrior. Antinanco, meaning Eagle of the sun, is his father and the Chief of the village and a great warrior. His mother is Donamo, meaning sight of the sun. She is a wonderful woman and who cares for her family. Donamo is also known to have cures for sicknesses. Cheveyo's eldest brother is strong and wise. That is why he is The War Chief his name is Helushka, meaning Fighter. Cheveyo's sister is the youngest of the family. Her name is Numees meaning, well...Sister! She is almost a woman and will be given great responsibilities.

Now that you have met the family of Cheveyo, it's time to tell his story.

It is a beautiful day. The sun is bright as ever, shining on the village's vegetable crops.

The men fish and the women gather food, make weapons and fishnets for the men. Cheveyo is walking through the forest looking for Adik, meaning Deer. For it was said that deer had been running through there for days. Surely he will be lucky today, with his new strong bow he made and his spear. He hears some rustling in a nearby bush. Out hops a rabbit. Cheveyo places a marker on branch, so he knows that this is the way back to camp. He starts to run after the rabbit. It runs into a nearby hole. Cheveyo stops and climbs a tree. He sits there waiting. He rubs himself with a pine tree branch and bark to cover his scent. Hours have past. Soon it is getting near supper, and he could not go back empty handed. As soon as he starts to climb down from the tree, he sees a pair of the biggest antlers in his life. He knows right away that it is a deer. Sneaking closer and closer, trying hard not to make a sound, he jumps up and takes a shot with his bow and arrow. "Got him" he yells with happiness. But what is this the deer gets back up with the arrow through his throat, then turns to Cheveyo. Cheveyo struggles to get an arrow, trying not to move and startle the deer. Finally he grabs one, then bends the bow ready to shoot, and then SNAP! His bow snaps in two. The deer Glares at Cheveyo and starts to charge. Cheveyo runs far not knowing where he's going, he forgets about the spear that he made. He plants it into the ground. The deer runs straight for the tip of the spear, and

then falls heavily on Cheveyo! Cheveyo is cheering, yet the sun is gone and darkness falls around. He wanders through the night looking for his markers. Finally in the distance he catches a glimpse of a fire, but soon realizes it's not his Village.

Then, out of a hut walks a beautiful young woman he stares for the longest time he talks to her about his village and which way the river flows. She tells him that the river is on the other side of the forest, as she stares at him with big, dark, brown eyes. Cheveyo asks, "What is your name"? She replies, "Niara," meaning Big Eyes. Soon then he introduces himself to her. "I am Cheveyo, son of Antinanco". She is impressed by him. He is strong and brave to be holding a deer in the night. She asks him if he could stay the night. He says yes.

Later the next morning he finds himself in a situation. He can't find his way back home. He offers the beautiful Niara some of his deer. She is happy that a strong man like Cheveyo, stayed the night with her. Soon she gives him a tour of the village. He realizes it is a whole village of Algonquins but they are not enemies, for peace had been restored with them through the ceremonial POW WOW. It is said that agreements, arguments, and peace are settled by the chief from each village, so Cheveyo is introduced all around the village and is shown a new game Snowsnake. It is a game that uses a long strip of bark. Whoever slides the strip farther wins. It can be done on snow or in water. Soon Cheveyo has to leave then the beautiful girl sadden, but Cheveyo ask if she would like to come she jumps into his arms and kisses him and packs her stuff for a long journey. Soon they are on their way walking around the thick forest it is a very long walk and might take a couple of days, through lightning storms and hot weather. They soon find themselves tired and weak they set up camp and call it a day. Morning has come when they pack up their stuff, suddenly out of the bushes appear three black wolves. They stop and stare at Cheveyo and Niara. Then they start running through the thick grass of the plains on the edge of the forest. Cheveyo tells Niara to take one of his Knives and run. Cheveyo is in a great deal of peril. The first one attacks. Cheveyo whips out his knife and thrusts it into the chest of the wolf. Then the second wolf jumps at him. Cheveyo moves quickly and throws his knife at the back of the wolf's head. He turns to face the other one. it is gone he looks at Niara and sees a big black shape running towards her. He runs quickly. The wolf stops, when Cheveyo comes near he pounces on the wolf, wrestling it to the ground. Niara watches in shock. She runs up to the pin down wolf, and plants the knife under the throat.

Then Cheveyo fashions a Travois out of two poles. He packs the dead wolves on his Travois. And drag them back home. His journey is soon over. Niara is so happy that Cheveyo would do this for her. This shows that he loves her very much. Then in the distance, a voice echoing calls his name, "Cheveyo, Cheveyo, Cheveyo." Cheveyo is happy to find his village and glad to have a girl whom he cares about and would die for, or wrestle a black wolf for! Cheveyo introduces his new friend to his village. His father is proud of him. He left here a youth and now he has become a man. Cheveyo marries Niara. They have had two children. He lives happily knowing that the world can be a cruel place with vicious animals waiting to be attack.

With Niara by him, Cheveyo can face anything!

The End