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**THE UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY**

**FIRST NATIONS EDUCATION:  
SHARING OF KNOWLEDGE**

by

**Dale Francis Auger**

**A THESIS**

**SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE  
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

**DIVISION OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

**CALGARY, ALBERTA**

**MAY 1999**

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## ABSTRACT

In the traditional ways of the First Nations of Canada, including my people, the Sakaw Cree, observation and direct experience were the primary processes of education. The senses— hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, feeling—were the “pencils and paper” of the people of the First Nations.. The Land and the Beings who walked on, swam in and flew over the Land were their “textbooks”. Their libraries were the Elders and the stories, songs and ceremonies they carried with them.

To give honour and acknowledgement to the traditional educational systems of the First Nations within Canada, my thesis provided an opportunity for my dissertation committee to experience the crossing of knowledge and the sharing of knowledge among Beings through two events. Firstly, my thesis committee, as well as the audiences who attended one of four evenings of my sixth annual theatre production, “Mamawi”, in July, 1998, shared in First Nations knowledge through song, dance and drama. They were provided with the means to connect human-to-Land, human-to-FourLegged, human-to-human, and human-to-Spirit. The “Mamawi” cast and crew also engaged in a process of traditional First Nations education through their experiences during the four days of “rehearsal” prior to the actual “performances”. They lived in tipis for seven days and experienced the sweat lodge, through which they were assisted by the traditional “teachers” of the Spirit World.

The second event, or sharing of knowledge, experienced by my thesis committee several months after “Mamawi” was participation in a sweatlodge ceremony, a ceremony which I have earned the right to conduct. Through this experience, my committee members were placed in a position to connect in both the physical and spiritual sense with the Land and the Beings at the sweatlodge site.

The video tape is a record of “Mamawi”. It also contains footage of comments by my thesis committee members regarding their experiences of “Mamawi”, the sweatlodge ceremony, and the premise of this thesis, the sharing of knowledge. My original script of “Mamawi” has been included in an appendix as a written record of that event.

## PREFACE

In the days of long ago, First Nations came together periodically in large gatherings not only for social reasons, but also for the sharing of knowledge; these inter-national gatherings were ceremonies. The people of one nation would share with those of another what was their understanding of the world they inhabited: the Land they walked on, the Beings they shared the Land with, the medicines they gathered from the Trees and Plants, the foods they were nourished by. The songs and dances that would be shared were deeper forms of communication; they were the “encyclopedias” holding the knowledge of how a people came to “walk” in the many worlds they inhabited both physically and spiritually. The gatherings allowed all these elements to exist in one setting at one time. This is how knowledge was shared between generations and among First Nations. This thesis is my way of sharing knowledge of a First Nations educational system.

## COMMENTARY ON METHODOLOGY

Doctoral dissertations in the field of education are usually in written form, with five chapters organized as an introduction, a chapter on methodology, the body of the thesis, and a conclusion. The body of the thesis is based on a doctoral candidate's research findings. A dissertation committee reads and evaluates the written product of the candidate's efforts. The committee members award the Ph.D. to the candidate if they agree that the candidate has successfully demonstrated his or her "learning" as evidenced in the completed dissertation and by the questions orally directed to the candidate at the "defense" of the thesis.

This process was not a suitable methodology for the purpose of this thesis as stated in my thesis proposal approved by my doctoral committee. In that proposal, the thesis statement read, "The primary question addressed in the thesis will be: What is the direct experience component of traditional First Nations education?" There are two aspects to this question: direct experience and traditional First Nations education.

In order to address the direct experience component it was mandatory to provide direct experience events for my doctoral committee. These events were my theatre production, "Mamawi", occurring in July, 1998, and a sweatlodge ceremony, which took place in October, 1998. It is important to comprehend that it was my committee members' direct experience that was the focus of this thesis, not my own direct experience. My role was to provide the opportunities for my committee members to directly experience what was and is traditional First Nations education. What is it that was intended for my committee to experience directly?

The Sakaw Cree philosophy of education is grounded in the sharing of knowledge. "Mamawi" and the sweatlodge ceremony were not merely my sharing of

my knowledge of sweatlodge ceremonies and ways of my people from long ago as performed in “Mamawi”. Knowledge was shared in many forms in those events: through use of all the physical senses—seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching—my committee could experience the connecting of human-to-Land, human-to-Four-Legged and Winged-Ones, human-to-human, and human-to-Spirit. It is in making these connections, physical and spiritual connections, that my committee could come to directly experience traditional First Nations education. “Mamawi” and the sweatlodge ceremony were the coming together of the physical and spiritual worlds.

How can we know if my committee directly experienced the sharing of knowledge in these two events? The video serves that purpose. Only the committee members themselves can ultimately know what connections they personally made in the learning environments I provided to them. But we can have a sense of what they shared in by recording them talking about their learning experience and by showing them immersed in the two learning events. For the viewer who is also directly experiencing the viewing of the tape, footage of “Mamawi” and the sweatlodge site are included to give a sense of the nature of the events experienced by my committee.

Written text was not part of traditional First Nations’ educational systems. I have included minimal written text in this thesis because the premise of this thesis was my committee members’ direct experience, which can best be evidenced on video. The script of “Mamawi” appears as an appendix to my thesis only to tie together the video footage of the excerpts from “Mamawi”.

Why is it important that the methodology of this thesis be validated? The connecting of the physical and spiritual worlds exists today among First Nations peoples as it did before the arrival of the Europeans to North America. It is part of our everyday reality. This connecting of knowledge through direct experience in multiple dimensions



is, to us, a way of expanding knowledge personally and as a human society. We do not need western society to evaluate the Truth of our traditional way of education. It would, however, be meaningful to us to have our form and process of knowledge acquisition and expansion, our “methodology”, be accepted by the western academic community as a genuine exchange, or sharing of knowledge. What has always appeared to us to be one-directional learning—our learning the western ways—will indeed transform into Multi-dimensional Learning. Our people will be given strength to come forth to participate in the sharing of knowledge among all Beings.

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# Mamawi Production Ltd.

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\* Director : Dale Auger  
\* Stage Manager : Grace Auger

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## CAST

### SCENE #1

DOORKEEPER : Ferlyn Brass  
HE WALKS BACKWARDS : Terry Big Charles  
DANCING HAWK : Sohkes Auger  
WINGED ONE SHE DANCES : Maria Formolo

### SCENE #2

LITTLE BEAR WOMAN : Neepin Auger  
TWO STARS : Isabel Dion  
MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN : Sekwan Auger  
: Andrea Smith  
: Cara Bigplume  
HE TURNS THE SUN : Dallas Arcand  
STRIKES TWICE : Travis Dugas  
MISTAKEN CHIEF : Bruce Mistakenchief  
GRASSY WATER : Toby Provost  
: Nathan Provost  
BIG MEDICINE : Wylie Eaglespeaker

### SCENE #3

DANCING HAWK : Sohkes Auger  
GOOD WORDS MEDICINE : Dale Auger  
HE TAKES CARE OF ME :  
LITTLE BEAR WOMAN : Neepin Auger  
BIG MEDICINE : Wylie Eaglespeaker  
MEDICINE HELPER :

**Four Buffalo Dancers**

STRIKES TWICE : Travis Dugas  
: Bruce Mistakenchief  
: Toby Provost  
: Nathan Provost

**Four Berry Dancers**

TWO STARS : Isabel Dion  
MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN : Sekwan Auger  
: Andrea Yellowhorn  
: Cara Bigplume

HE WALKS BACKWARDS : Terry Big Charles  
HE PRAIRIE CHICKEN : Trevor Prairiechicken  
GRASSY WATER : Toby Provost

**SCENE #4**

GOOD WORDS MEDICINE : Dale Auger  
HE PRAIRIE CHICKEN : Trevor Prairiechicken  
LITTLE BEAR WOMAN : Neepin Auger  
BIG MEDICINE : Wylie Eaglespeaker  
**4 Buffalo Dancers** : Bruce Mistakenchief  
: Travis Dugas  
: Toby Provost  
: Nathan Provost

**4 Berry Dancers** : Sekwan Auger  
: Isabel Dion  
: Cara Bigplume  
: Andrea Yellowhorn

**Two Warriors (HALF FACES)** : Clayton Wahasatnow  
: Jason Manygreyhorses

**SCENE #5**

GOOD WORDS : Dale Auger  
HE WALKS BACKWARDS : Terry Big Charles  
BIG MEDICINE : Wylie Eaglespeaker  
WINGED ONE SHE DANCES : Maria Formolo  
STRIKES TWICE : Travis Dugas  
GRASSY WATER : Toby Provost

## **SOUNDTRACK INTRO**

The **PEOPLE OF THE LITTLE MOUNTAINS** are known throughout the land. These **PEOPLE OF THE LITTLE MOUNTAINS** are known for their loyalty, their honor to the land. The Old Ones used to say that the White Buffalo once talked to their Medicine People. They are powerful. The Old Ones told of how their power could transfer them from a time of present to the far future. They had the power to spirit travel. There was much talk of two stones - a red one, and a white one.

## **END OF SOUNDTRACK INTRODUCTION**

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### **SCENE # 1**

Out of the teepee comes an older man, **DOORKEEPER**, who walks directly to the fire. He picks up a stone and takes it into the sweat lodge - he is by himself. After **DOORKEEPER** puts the stone in the sweatlodge, he walks to the teepee where **HE WALKS BACKWARDS** is, and puts his head in through the doorway to tell **HE WALKS BACKWARDS** that the sweatlodge is ready.

Out of the teepee walks a young man **HE WALKS BACKWARDS**, dressed in a Buffalo robe. He is walking **backwards**. He walks to the front of the sweat lodge, takes his robe off, turns right around counterclockwise, and backs into the sweatlodge.

**DOORKEEPER** closes the door to the sweatlodge. He takes his seat in front of the door of the sweatlodge.

Beside the sweatlodge there is little willow home where **WINGED ONE SHE DANCES** lives. **WINGED ONE SHE DANCES** is a human spirit . No one really knows where she came from, but the old ones had felt her power to dance. They brought her into the camp; she became part of it. She didn't want to live inside the teepee; she wanted her own little home. A little willow home was made for her because she wanted to be private; she was human, but yet she was of the bird spirit and she needed to be close to the land, and needed to be close to the leaves. She was always there when there was dancing. She loved the flute and children.

Out from the back you can hear from behind the teepees a small faint flute. Out of nowhere comes running a strong looking little boy, DANCING HAWK, with a flute.

He's casually blowing the flute. He run-walks, stops and looks at WINGED ONE SHE DANCES' home.

**\*\*DANCING HAWK\*\***(looks at her door)  
**Winged One She Dances!** (runs to door and yells)  
**Winged One She Dances, get up!**

Then one more time he leans over to the door and calls to her again with no response from WINGED ONE SHE DANCES.

**\*\*DANCING HAWK\*\***  
**I said, Winged One She Dances - get up! (HE PAUSES)**  
**I know how to get her!**

He walks to the door and blows the flute - he slowly walks backward and blows the flute, luring her from the willow shelter in a taunting manner, knowing well that one of her greatest weaknesses is the sound of the flute.

Suddenly from the doorway, out peaks the head of WINGED ONE SHE DANCES. At that point he knows that he has her attention, so he begins to play the flute. She very aggressively literally jumps out from her home and begins to very softly dance to the sound of the flute that this young man is playing. There is no spoken word. It is communication through dance and spirit.

DANCING HAWK plays the flute and WINGED ONE SHE DANCES, dances. All of a sudden, DANCING HAWK quits playing, knowing that that frustrates WINGED ONE SHE DANCES. He knows she wants more sound of the flute, and he's pulling back. So he plays more, and again she gets deep into the dance. Again he stops. Again she gets frustrated.

At this point, Dancing Hawk says:

**\*\*DANCING HAWK\*\***  
**If you want me to play some more, I want that special red stone.**

**\*\*WINGED ONE SHE DANCES\*\***

**You can't have that special stone. That's my special stone!  
I was asked to keep it. And how come you know about it? I was  
asked to keep it - it has great power. And besides, I was told you're  
too young yet.**

**\*\*DANCING HAWK\*\***

**Well then, I'm not playing anymore!**

DANCING HAWK starts to walk away.

WINGED ONE SHE DANCES follows him, frustrated and feeling like she's been fooled or betrayed. But she accepts that she won't give up the stone. She's asking him things like -

**\*\*WINGED ONE SHE DANCES\*\***

**Just one little tune! Please.....**

**\*\*DANCING HAWK\*\* (FIRMLY)**

**No!**

DANCING HAWK walks away taunting her with little gestures of flute sound. At one point he even turns to her, and blows one last loud time, and then runs away, leaving WINGED ONE SHE DANCES standing there alone. WINGED ONE SHE DANCES GOES BACK INTO HER HOME.

END OF SCENE #1

## SCENE #2

From out of the Moon Teepee comes MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN , TWO STARS, LITTLE BEAR WOMAN and the two other women's dancers. The first are three of the chief's youngest daughters. They are all very pretty girls, get along well, but have a little edge of competition amongst themselves when it comes to the attention of young warriors. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN struggles a bit to fit in, because the other two sisters are older. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN is moving toward young womanhood.

They're joking and laughing about something, walking together to center stage. They come to a stop. They hold hands in a circle and dance round in a circle with their heads back, letting the wind catch their hair. Eventually TWO STARS falls down laughing and the other girls help her up.

TWO STARS begins to sing. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN circles in front as TWO STARS dances. When the singing begins, WINGED ONE SHE DANCES comes out of her home and quickly approaches the dancers from the side. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN notices WINGED ONE and stops dancing. TWO STARS and MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN stop their dance and song.

**\*\*WINGED ONE SHE DANCES\*\***  
**Can I dance with you?**

**\*\*LITTLE BEAR WOMAN\*\*** (IN A QUICK AND  
CONDESCENDING VOICE)  
**Oh, Winged One, you always dance so differently.**

**\*\*WINGED ONE SHE DANCES\*\***  
**Well I can dance any kind of dance, you know. I carry the spirit of many different kinds of beings. I have many, many different kinds of dances! If someone here would sing us a song - I'll show you.**

**\*\*TWO STARS \*\***  
**I'll sing for you, if MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN can dance with you. You'll dance with her, won't you, MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN?**

**\*\*MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN\*\***  
**Sure!**



**\*\*LITTLE BEAR WOMAN\*\***

**But what about me - I was dancing!**

**\*\*MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN\*\***

**LITTLE BEAR WOMAN, you'll get your turn.**

TWO STARS stays standing and begins to sing. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN stands between the other two women dancers - they are comforting her. WINGED ONE SHE DANCES begins to dance to the song, alone. While dancing, she gives the gesture of welcoming MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN. Together, WINGED ONE and MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN create a magical dance. They become as one in their dance.

After dancing for a bit, off to the right, on top of the hill, LITTLE BEAR WOMAN notices a young warrior carrying something. He is watching them. He's a strong young warrior named HE TURNS THE SUN. He has been given the gift to work with the Sun Spirit and the many worlds. His gift was given to him by the creator, because he can twirl the worlds on his arms. He is a hoop dancer. He can create visions with the circular willow hoops. He is the son of the chief of the neighboring village.

HE TURNS THE SUN sits, and admires these beautiful young women. His interest in the older two daughters, TWO STARS and MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN, has left him in a hypnotic state as he watches them.

This annoys LITTLE BEAR WOMAN. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN is pointing to him. She walks in his direction, takes a handful of grass, throws the grass towards him, gesturing for him to not watch, to go away. As the other women notice LITTLE BEAR WOMAN moving and picking up the grass, they quit the song and dance. ALL THE YOUNG WOMEN'S attention is focused on this young warrior HE TURNS THE SUN. He stands and says something to them.

**\*\*HE TURNS THE SUN\*\***

**I am HE TURNS THE SUN! I had a dream of this place (RUNS DOWN THE HILL TO THE FIRST PLATEAU) (He's pulling their leg). I had a dream of this blade of grass that I'm standing on. I have seen you all in my dream. So beautiful you are! You are so beautiful that...that..... the flowers get blinded by your beauty. (He's charming them.) I was sent here. In my dream I was told to come here, but I don't know if I'm strong enough to be in the presence of your beauty!**

**YOUNG WOMEN** are rolling their eyes.

**\*\*MOCKINGBIRD\*\* (IN A SARCASTIC VOICE)**

**In these dreams of yours, could it be that you have turned the sun way too often, that maybe your dreams are just a little too blurred ?**

**\*\*LITTLE BEAR WOMAN\*\***

**Ya, and maybe you oughta just take your dreams and get outta here.**

**\*\*HE TURNS THE SUN\*\***

**Before I was born, I felt the power of my spirit, the sun, speak to me. She said to me - You are powerful. (RUNS UP HILL AGAIN)**

**You will tell all the beings of my great power - So let me show you of my great power. I too have the dance. I will dance for you the spirit of the sun, the spirit of the eagle who flies closest to the sun and the spirit of the buffalo who walks this great land.**

**HE TURNS THE SUN** picks up his hoops and without drum or voice, he begins to dance, softly at first with the hoops as he twirls the hoops around his arms, then his legs.

At this point, the **YOUNG WOMEN** become very impressed and turn to watch his dance on the hill - all with full attention.

Once **HE TURNS THE SUN** has done all the Beings representations with the hoops, he does not stop - he's still dancing - when off on the next hill appear **FOUR WARRIORS** on horseback, with shields and lances. While he is still dancing, they are on top of the ridge off, in the distance standing still on the horses.

**MISTAKEN CHIEF, STRIKES TWICE, CREE RIDER and GRASSY WATER**

The **FOUR WARRIORS** start to walk along the ridge towards **HE TURNS THE SUN** - who has finished dancing. **(THE WARRIORS WILL MAKE A LOUD SOUND OR CRY)**

All attention is now towards these young warriors. At this point, they walk up close to **HE TURNS THE SUN**, still sitting on their horses. Because he's a young warrior, **HE TURNS THE SUN** marvels at their power, and respects them. He wishes to be like them. But clearly the older warriors on horseback are annoyed that he'd be trying to charm these young women in their absence.

The 2<sup>ND</sup> warrior MISTAKEN CHIEF, looks down at HE TURNS THE SUN and speaks.

**\*\*MISTAKEN CHIEF \*\* (2ND Warrior)  
Shouldn't you be rolling your sticks on your way home?**

The warriors continue on riding.

HE TURNS THE SUN is intimidated by the warriors, and gets right out of their way, backing down the hill as they walk past him on horseback.

MISTAKEN CHIEF begins a song, with a rattle. The horses are walking, circling the camp, as the warriors riding them sing a victory song. They've just come from a raid, and they're returning to tell their people of how powerful they were, and how they made the enemy run in their presence. (Paint Faces Black)

When the WARRIORS are singing, ALL THE PEOPLE in the teepees come out and watch them circle the camp. The warriors on horseback come into the camp and stop. The last one to come out of the teepee is the chief, BIG MEDICINE, accompanied by his wife SHE SITS BESIDE ME.

OPTION #1

THE WARRIORS dismount from their horses together, STAGE RIGHT. They do a victory dance.

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\*  
So have you run their sacred dogs into the ground?**

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE \*\*  
They will not be back. We have taught them that we, the People of the Little Mountains, will not be driven to fear. We have chased them to where their sacred dogs' tails were between their legs.**

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\*  
Tell us how it was when their tails were between their legs and they ran with fear, that they should not mess with the People of the Little Mountains!**

This is clearly an opportunity for STRIKES TWICE to talk about his greatness. Still on his horse, STRIKES TWICE takes his right leg and very smoothly swings it over the horse, and stands at the ready to tell the people of their greatness.

STRIKES TWICE has his staff, and dances for a short, short period, then suddenly turns towards the audience, pointing his staff and shouts:

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE \*\*(SHOUTING)  
In the eyes of their sacred dogs we saw lightening bolts of fear.**

He turns and dances a little more. Then he gestures to his riders to get off their horses. The WARRIORS dismount, and move to the side, walking their horses. A young warrior comes to get their horses. STRIKES TWICE is standing with his staff, and tells a story....

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE\*\*  
But you know what they want - these people of the HALF FACES, who paint their faces half? They'll never get it. We will never allow them to come near enough to get it. They're not going to get it, because I personally put it in a safe place.**

**\*\*GRASSY WATER\*\*  
You see, there were two stones that the powerful stone spirit, the spirit who works with the White Buffalo, had given to the people of this land. These two stones carry with them the power to travel to other worlds - to the past and to the future. These are powerful traveling stones. I have seen their power, I have witnessed their power personally. One stone walks with the All Beings Medicine Bundle that GOOD WORDS is bringing. But what GOOD WORDS doesn't realize is that there were two stones - and that we have the second stone.**

Right in between where STRIKES TWICE and GRASSY WATER is telling the story, from out of the sweat lodge, the door swings open startling everyone.....unexpected.

Out jumps a warrior of a man; a young warrior named HE WALKS BACKWARDS. He runs backwards to STRIKES TWICE AND GRASSY WATER AND MISTAKENCHIEF shouting:

**\*\*HE WALKS BACKWARDS\*\* (SHOUTING)**

**I am not He Walks Backwards, I do not greet you.**

**(pointing to the sweatlodge) In the Sweatlodge, Traveling I have not been, Searching I have not been, I don't know where it is, but, I feel it's distance.**

**I was not told In the sweatlodge, that they would not come together and that I will never search to walk forward.**

HE WALKS BACKWARDS walks backwards, back towards the sweat lodge. He stops and turns and quickly drops to his knees in front of the warriors and throws grass and dirt at them gives some sort of wail. As he walks backwards, he claps his hands together saying:

**\*\*HE WALKS BACKWARDS\*\***

**They need never to come together, they need never to come together.**

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE\*\* (speaking to BIG MEDICINE)**

**Boy, is he traveling!**

**Like I was saying, there were two stones, and we have the second. A while back, when we traveled on one of our hunting journeys, we came upon a Great White Buffalo. We were about to take his life, when the Great White Buffalo turned to us and said, 'You two legged kind, don't take my life, because the Creator put me on this earth to bring unity to the people. That is my purpose.**

GRASSY WATER who is standing beside STRIKES TWICE, completes the story.

**\*\*GRASSY WATER\*\***

**Because we agreed to spare the life of the White Buffalo, that is when it happened. The White Buffalo passed us the powerful red travel stone. We did not tell anyone, but the White Buffalo said there were two stones, a red one and a white one. That the white one could speak to all people, and carry with it the power to journey into any world, past or future. But that stone was limited in its power without the other, which is the red. BIG MEDICINE, your the father of the People of the Little Mountains, our leader, we hold that stone in a sacred spot. Only two other people know where this stone is, the first one being the person who carries it and protects it, the second being a**

**young powerful leader to be, who will one day be the protector of that stone. (TOBY to change this to suit his own dialogue)**

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\***

**Well, where is this great journey stone?**

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE\*\***

**I can only tell you when the other stone is present, because they must come together. When the other stone that is in GOOD WORDS' bundle is here, I can make it known.**

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\***

**Well, if there were only two people knowing about the stone, like you say, then how come the HALF FACES know of the journey stone?**

**\*\*GRASSY WATER\*\***

**Because, in the earlier time, the HALF FACES had the powers of the journey stones, and they abused the powers. That is why it was turned over to the White Buffalo. It is the White Buffalo who'll chose who will carry it next.**

**END OF SCENE TWO**

### **SCENE #3**

From the right of the teepees, DANCING HAWK comes running, blowing his flute in excitement, yelling:

**\*\*DANCING HAWK\*\* (YELLING)**

**He's coming, he's coming! The medicine bundle is here! GOOD WORDS is coming!**

GOOD WORDS MEDICINE was sent for by BIG MEDICINE to come and give rebirth to the People of the Little Mountains. GOOD WORDS MEDICINE is a powerful medicine man. He works with many, many spirits and has been given the right to carry, for all peoples, the 'All Beings Medicine Bundle'. Many people fear GOOD WORDS MEDICINE, but respect him, for he is the one who has been given the right to travel to any village, any tribe. He is welcomed by all Nations.

GOOD WORDS MEDICINE can be a humorous character; he even looks a bit funny . He looks awkward; he wears four feathers on his head, tilted just to the left, and rides a small big eared sacred dog. No one knows where he obtained this sacred little being. Many people say that he borrowed it from one of the many worlds where he has traveled.....that's how powerful he was.

GOOD WORDS MEDICINE was called on by BIG MEDICINE to come and renew the spirits and the thanksgiving to all beings who help the people survive. Now he has arrived.

GOOD WORDS comes up the trail riding his big eared sacred dog (donkey), accompanied by a young male apprentice, HE TAKES CARE OF ME.

HE TAKES CARE OF ME walks in front of the donkey, leading it. GOOD WORDS has a travois pulled behind the donkey, with a medicine bundle attached to the travois and he carries a little willow stick that he uses to hurry along the sacred dog. It looks humorous; GOOD WORDS' feet are a few inches off the ground.

THE PEOPLE all rush to that corner of the camp, excited about his arrival. They line up on each side of the trail creating a human border along the trail. GOOD WORDS walks down the middle.

**\*\*MEN\*\*  
WAR CRY!**

**\*\*WOMEN\*\*  
SHRILL!**

GOOD WORDS walks directly to BIG MEDICINE on his sacred dog, lifts up his small stick with willows on it, to address BIG MEDICINE.

**\*\*GOOD WORDS\*\* (IN LOUD BOOMING VOICE)  
You called .....the GOOD WORDS!**

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\*  
Yes, we've called you, GOOD WORDS MEDICINE. You are good on your word by coming. We've been waiting for you. We are honored to have you come to the People of the Little Mountains. We are honored that you bring the All Beings Medicine Bundle.**

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\* (CALLS TO ALL THE PEOPLE)  
Come, Come, let us all gather. It is time to honor the opening of the Sacred Medicine Bundle. ( He gestures to the women). Bring him some water and some food, as we prepare.**

At this time, ALL THE PEOPLE are scurrying around, setting up a half circle with the Medicine Bundle in the middle. Once everyone is sitting in a half circle, facing the audience, all the attention is focused on GOOD WORDS MEDICINE.

GOOD WORDS MEDICINE begins to eat some of the food and drink the water, as he stands. As he is eating, he begins to tell a story on the history of the bundle and his duties as the carrier of the medicine bundle.

**\*\*GOOD WORDS MEDICINE\*\*  
I traveled many moons to be here today. I have crossed many rivers, come through many camps, to be here. I have seen much. It is always nice to be back here. I see that you all like the looks of my powerful sacred dog! I have brought that powerful big-eared dog from one of my journeys to another world. I borrowed him from another people in another world, where they called him Yankee Doodle Dandy. And you warriors - do not admire him too much. I can not part with him! I can not give him to you. He is just for me.**

Good words Medicine does a storytelling dance as he talks:



**\*\*GOOD WORDS MEDICINE\*\***

**I have been pulled here. Why I have been pulled here I don't know, but this Medicine Bundle has pulled me here. Many of you do not know, but this bundle carries with it much power, that can make any being travel in any world. In all my travels, I feel still that there is something missing. That Great White Buffalo did not tell me everything! There is something missing.**

**Anyway, that is not why I am here. I am here to bring you unity. I am here to bring you the power to journey in the dance, to give honor to all the beings. So let us be on with it!**

At this point the many MEDICINE HELPERS have put the medicine bundle in the center. They are blessing it, and proceed to open it. WOMEN are sitting on the left, MEN on the right.

GOOD WORDS and BIG MEDICINE are sitting with backrests behind them, obviously in a place of honor. Before anything is to start, BIG MEDICINE gestures to one of his helpers to get his offering.

Out from behind the teepee, the MEDICINE HELPER (CROWCHILD) brings a mare with a young colt.

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\*(SAYS TO GOOD WORDS)**

**GOOD WORDS, we are grateful that you have come, and we know that you carry with you the spirit and power of many beings. We the People of the Little Mountains offer you this gift as an offering - two of the finest of our young sacred dogs .**

GOOD WORDS is obviously delighted. He stand up in excitement, and walks towards the youngest sacred dog, places his hand over its back, touches its legs, and shows signs that he is prepared to give all of himself to the people.

**\*\*GOOD WORDS MEDICINE\*\***

**Oh, I accept this powerful, powerful gift. You are so kind to me. But I can't take it right now! Keep it for me till I return for it when the leaves change.**

MEDICINE HELPER (CROWCHILD) escorts the young horse and mare off to the side and ties them.

### **END OF SCENE #3**

### **SCENE # 4**

GOOD WORDS MEDICINE, obviously excited, begins the ceremony of the All People's Bundle. He stands in front of the bundle. He reaches down into the bundle and pulls out a white stone and holds it up and says:

#### **\*\*GOOD WORDS MEDICINE\*\***

**Before we honor the spirits of all the beings, I must first acknowledge the power of this sacred white journey stone, so that the way will be clear to travel to the worlds of each of these beings.**

He says a little prayer, and turns to the four directions with the stone in hand, then he puts it in front of the bundle. Then he reaches down again, and brings up a Buffalo Rattle, the item representative of the first of the honored dances, which will be the Buffalo Honor Dance. At this point, when GOOD WORDS picks up the Buffalo Rattle, HE PRAIRIE CHICKEN, the lead drummer, starts to beat the drums softly when GOOD WORDS is talking about the stone. He is accompanied by another drummer.

#### **\*\*GOOD WORDS MEDICINE\*\***

**Our greatest provider, the buffalo, the four-legged kind that nourishes us, clothes us, protects us, will be honored first.**

As the drum is playing, GOOD WORDS gently tosses the Rattle directly in front of where GRASSY WATER is sitting. GOOD WORDS then walks to sit down in his honored spot. GRASSY WATER picks up the rattle and speaks of Buffalo. Then proceeds to honor the dance.

The drums are still playing softly.

**IN BETWEEN EACH DANCE, HE TAKES CARE OF ME AND LITTLE BEAR WOMAN ROTATE IN GETTING THE SACRED ITEM FROM THE MEDICINE BUNDLE AND RETURN IT TO THE BUNDLE AFTER THE DANCE.**

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### **#1 - MEN'S FIRST DANCE - BUFFALO DANCE**

GRASSY WATER walks to the front, sings a small song, begins to dance, and is joined by three other dancers in the Buffalo Dance. At the end of the dance, the warriors dance back to where they were sitting. GRASSY WATER dances the Buffalo Rattle back to the Medicine Bundle.

(Tripod #1 - One head dress and three Buffalo hides)

### **#2 WOMAN'S FIRST DANCE - BERRY DANCE**

MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN interprets the Berry Dance. LITTLE BEAR WOMAN , the representative for the women, walks to the bundle and picks up the bowl of berries. She takes it to MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN. Four women dancers do a Berry Dance.

MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN gives the bowl back to LITTLE BEAR WOMAN who brings it back to the bundle. MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN leads this dance; the dancers walk in a line onto center stage behind MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN; part of dance is in circle with backs towards center of circle, then move forward to front of stage together. (Props - Saskatoon bushes to be placed on set , one bowl and three saskatoon branches)

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### **#3 MEN'S SECOND DANCE - WILLOW DANCE**

HE TAKES CARE OF ME gives the willow to MISTAKEN CHIEF. Tripod #2 will have one decorated willow stick and three branched willow sticks(four to five feet long). Dancers are Travis, Toby, and Nathan. MISTAKEN CHIEF talks of crossing of knowledge speech. The men dancers run in quickly for this dance - do the 4 directions. MISTAKEN CHIEF puts his willow stick back but the other three dancers take theirs with them.

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### **#4 WOMEN'S SECOND DANCE - SAGE DANCE**

Tripod #3 4 Sage Crowns and 8 wrist bands & 4 clumps of burning sage. 1 Big clump of Sage should come from the bundle.

Purification and connection for the women. MOCKINGBIRD WOMAN interprets this dance and leads the other dancers in.

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At the end of the women's second dance, the dance is interrupted by the sound of two warriors on horseback; they are the HALF FACES who were chased away earlier with their sacred dog's tails between their legs. They have returned to taunt the warriors again. This disturbs the whole village, leaving everyone rising to their feet, rising to the challenge. The People of the Little Mountain's warriors mount their horses, again preparing to give chase. (They jump up and run to their horses.)

**\*\*\*\*\*HORSE BATTLE\*\*\*\*\***

When the battle is complete, the riders come back victorious as they have run the HALF FACES out of sight. They jump off their horses, standing there at attention.

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE\*\***

**We must not let the HALF FACED PEOPLE disturb our ceremony.  
We must continue. We will deal with them later.**

BIG MEDICINE and ALL THE PEOPLE take their seats in the half circle.

HE TAKES CARE OF ME gets the next item from the Medicine Bundle to signal the start of the next dance.

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**#5 MEN'S THIRD & FINAL DANCE - DANCE OF THE WARRIOR**

Props 4 Shields & 6 War Clubs

**END OF SCENE #4**

## SCENE #5

After the dances are all over, GOOD WORDS stands in front to start talking again.

**\*\*GOOD WORDS\*\***

**We have honored the Medicine Bundle well.  
We have all.....**

All of a sudden, HE WALKS BACKWARDS leaps backward out of the sweatlodge, catching GOOD WORDS by surprise.

**\*\*HE WALKS BACKWARDS \*\* (EXCLAIMS WHILE  
RAISING HIS HANDS, WALKING BACKWARDS)  
I lost it, I lost it!**

He's telling everyone he wants to dance by exclaiming:

**Don't let me dance, don't let me dance! I don't need to dance!  
I don't need to dance! I hate to dance. GOOD WORDS, don't  
make me dance!**

**\*\*BIG MEDICINE \*\***

**He wants to dance.**

**\*\*GOOD WORDS\*\***

**So you want to dance, do you? Dance for us  
then, HE WALKS BACKWARDS."**

The drums start to play and HE WALKS BACKWARDS begins to dance. His dance is humorous. All the people start to laugh at him when he dances. The harder they laugh, the harder he dances.

Half way through the dance, WINGED ONE SHE DANCES very aggressively runs back to her willow home and retrieves the red stone. WINGED ONE SHE DANCES, with the red stone in hand, mocks the steps of HE WALKS BACKWARDS. Together they dance humorously. Everyone laughs.

Then for some strange reason, HE WALKS BACKWARDS begins to dance forward, looking very excited and surprised. He dances even harder in a forward motion.

This surprises WINGED ONE SHE DANCES. She too then starts to dance forward.

Suddenly the drums stop.

HE WALKS BACKWARD stops, stunned. He holds his hand open, and takes two steps forward. He touches his legs, then dances, like he's discovering. He dances again very swiftly forward and stops. He says:

**\*\*HE WALKS BACKWARD\*\***

**They're here, they're together! I'm healed. I can go forward now.  
The power is here!**

He runs and jumps excitedly, up and over the hill and out of sight - running the entire way. (He'll appear later in script in distance running, jumping, saying "They're here, they're together.")

At this point, GOOD WORDS still is unsure, and begins to talk.....

**\*\*GOOD WORDS\*\***

**There is power here! What is it that he is talking about? What is it  
about the two stones coming together that he talks about?**

GOOD WORDS reaches over to grab his white stone.

STRIKES TWICE starts to get up, saying:

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE\*\***

**WINGED ONE, bring me the stone.**

STRIKES TWICE walks toward GOOD WORDS with the stone, saying:

**\*\*STRIKES TWICE \*\***

**So you too have met the White Buffalo. Did he not tell you that  
there were two stones.**

**\*\*GOOD WORDS\*\***

**Yes, I have talked to the White Buffalo, but I did not know that there was a second stone.**

**\*\*GRASSY WATER \*\***

**Yes, there are two stones - a red one and a white one. The White Buffalo did say that when they are tied together, with the hair of the Sacred Buffalo, that powerful journeys could begin.**

GRASSY WATER and GOOD WORDS bring the stones together and proceed to tie them together.

**\*\*GOOD WORDS\*\***

**The stones are together, we are all one people, now it is complete.**

Good words picks up the rattle and sings the song we are all one people, as he sings, HE TURNS THE SUN comes running with his hoops and starts to do his dance. In a half moon fashion all cast comes around and dances to the beat.

HE TURNS THE SUN holds up the World.

GOOD WORDS turns to audience with stone, BIG MEDICINE holding half of it, holding stone up in air together.

All of cast stand slowly - cast stands in long line beside GOOD WORDS and BIG MEDICINE.

**\*\*GOOD WORDS & BIG MEDICINE\*\***

**Now we have the power to bring all worlds together. Now all people can unite!**

ALL CAST BOWS.

DALE steps forward and says:

**\*\*DALE\*\***

**THANK YOU FOR COMING TO MAMAWI.**

ALL CAST BACKS UP.

**\*\*DALE\*\***

**I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE OUR CAST. DON'T GO ON A JOURNEY YET, BECAUSE WE'RE GOING TO DO A BIG ROUND MAMAWI DANCE TOGETHER.**

**TWO CAST MEMBERS EACH WILL DO A GO HOME DANCE TOGETHER AS THEY ARE INTRODUCED - THROUGHOUT ALL THE CAST MEMBERS.**

**BIG MAMAWI GO HOME CIRCLE DANCE FOR ALL THE AUDIENCE.**

**THE END**