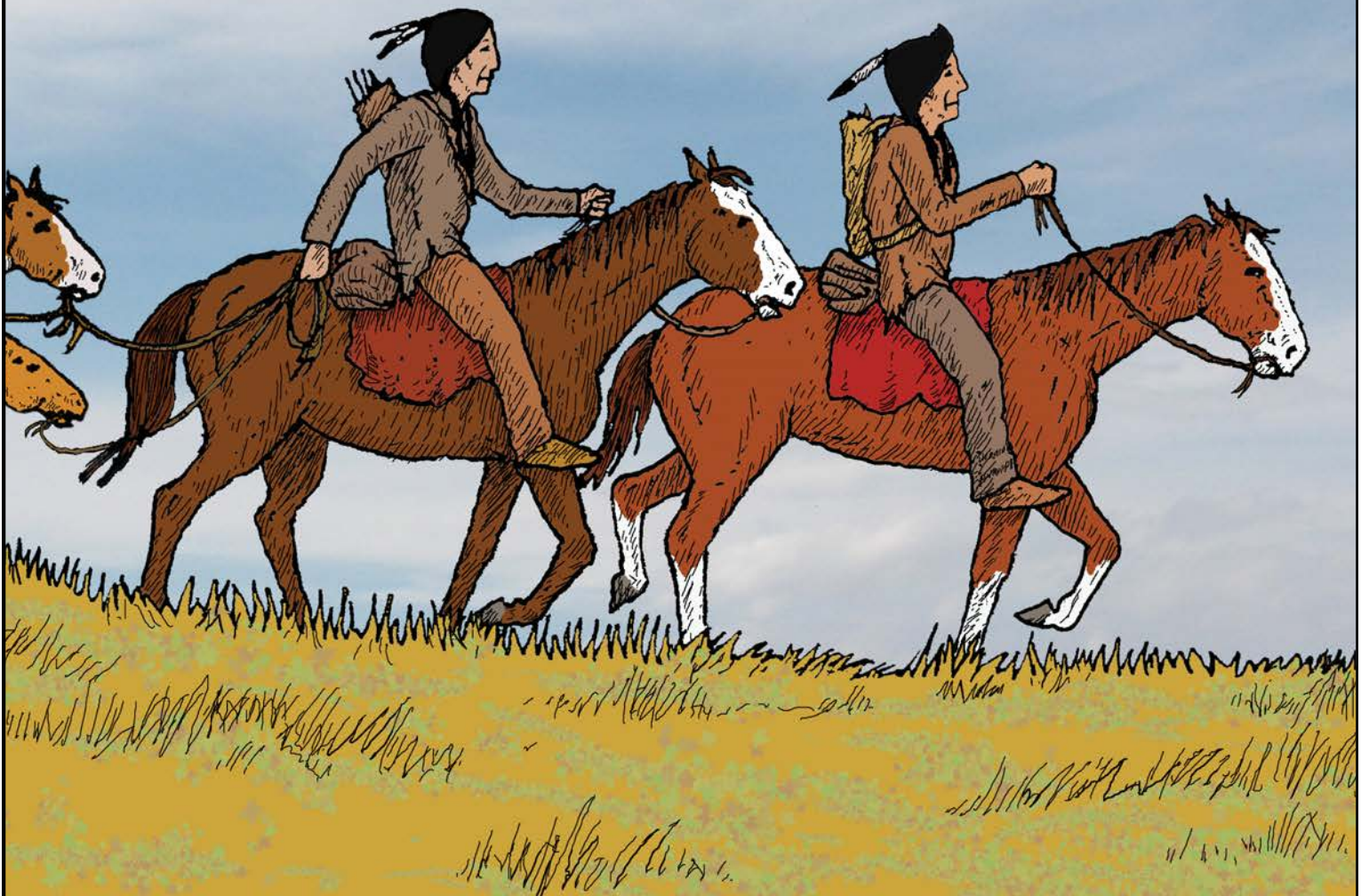




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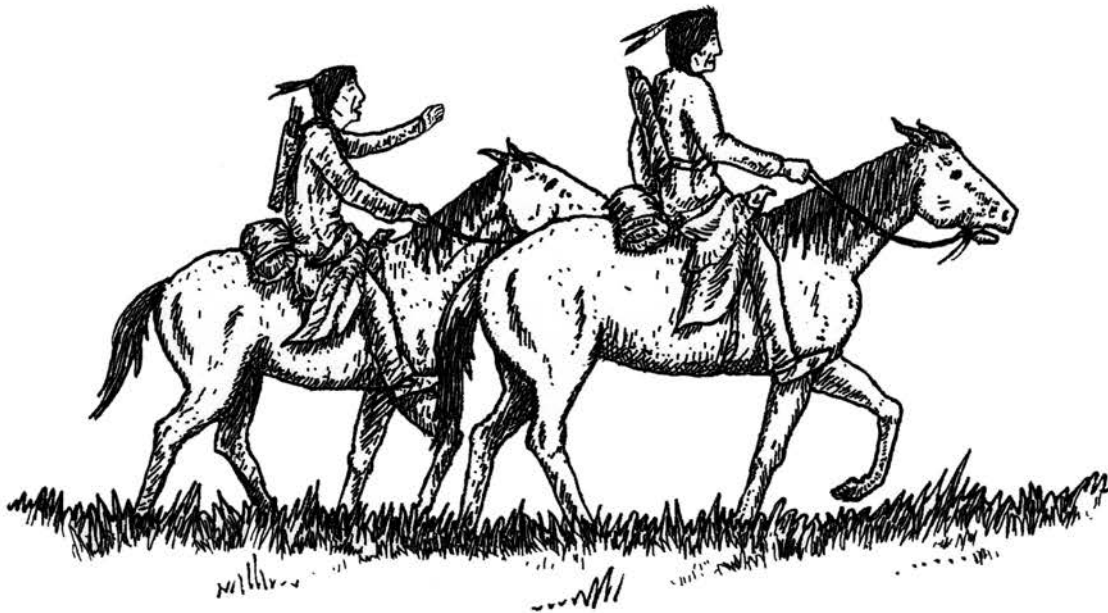
BRAVES

A JOURNEY INTO A NEW WAY OF LIFE



BRAVES

A JOURNEY INTO A NEW WAY OF LIFE



FOR OUR CHILDREN

*"OUR HISTORY AND STORIES ARE BEST TOLD FROM A FIRST NATIONS PERSPECTIVE. SO IT IS THAT, THIS STORY WAS WRITTEN AND TOLD BY THE BLOOD/BLACKFOOT. IT IS FOR THE GREATER GOOD THAT WE TELL OUR OWN STORIES, THEREBY INSTILLING TRUTH AND INSIGHT IN WHAT IS SAID AND WRITTEN".

STORY CONCEPT BY
KAINAI GOVERNMENT AGREEMENT COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

*WRITTEN, RESEARCHED AND ILLUSTRATED BY
WILLIAM SINGER III (API'SOOMAAHKA)

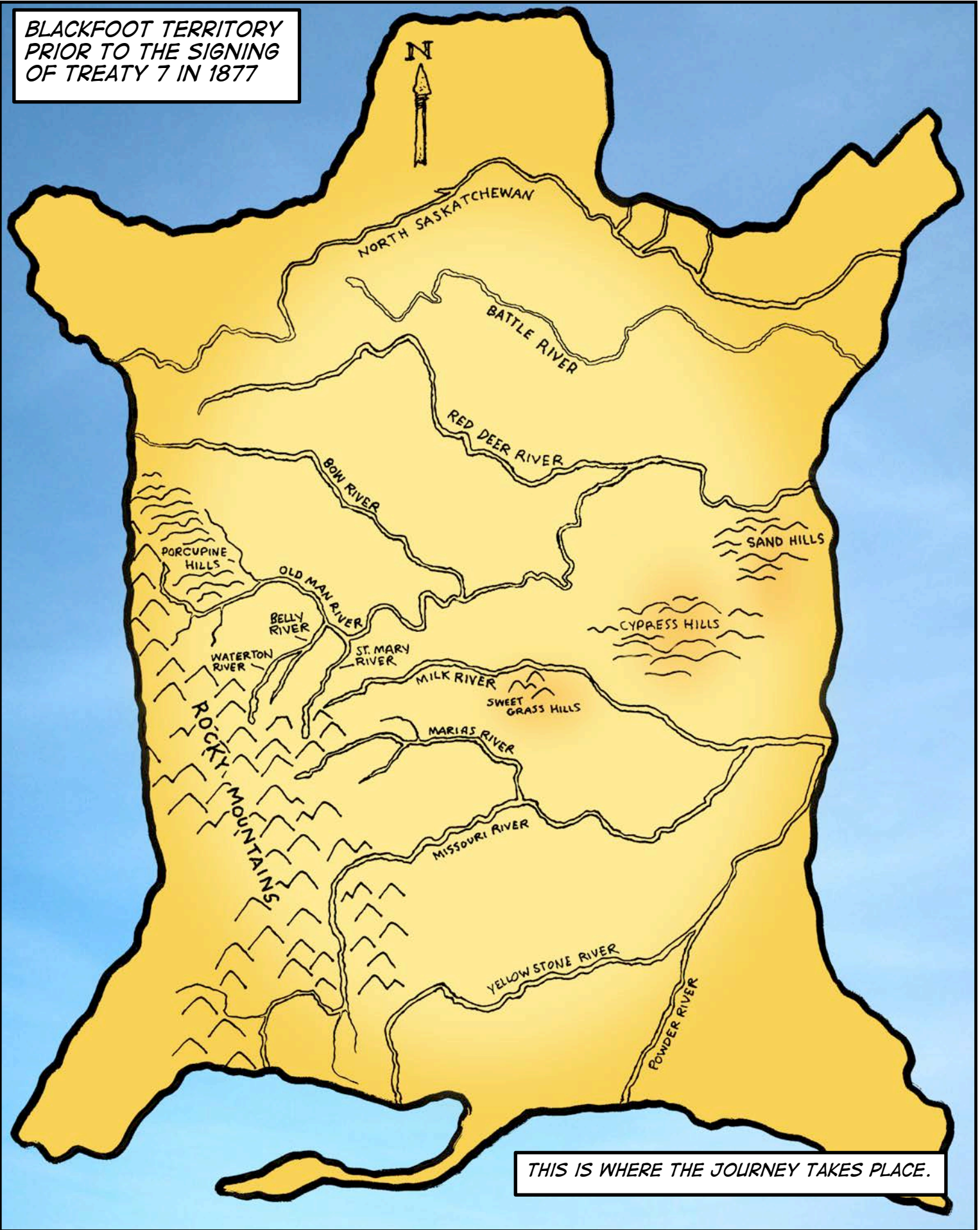
ADDITIONAL RESEARCH ASSISTANCE: ANNABEL CROP EARED WOLF
AND PETER WEASEL HEAD

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Book Printed In Canada

BLACKFOOT TERRITORY
PRIOR TO THE SIGNING
OF TREATY 7 IN 1877



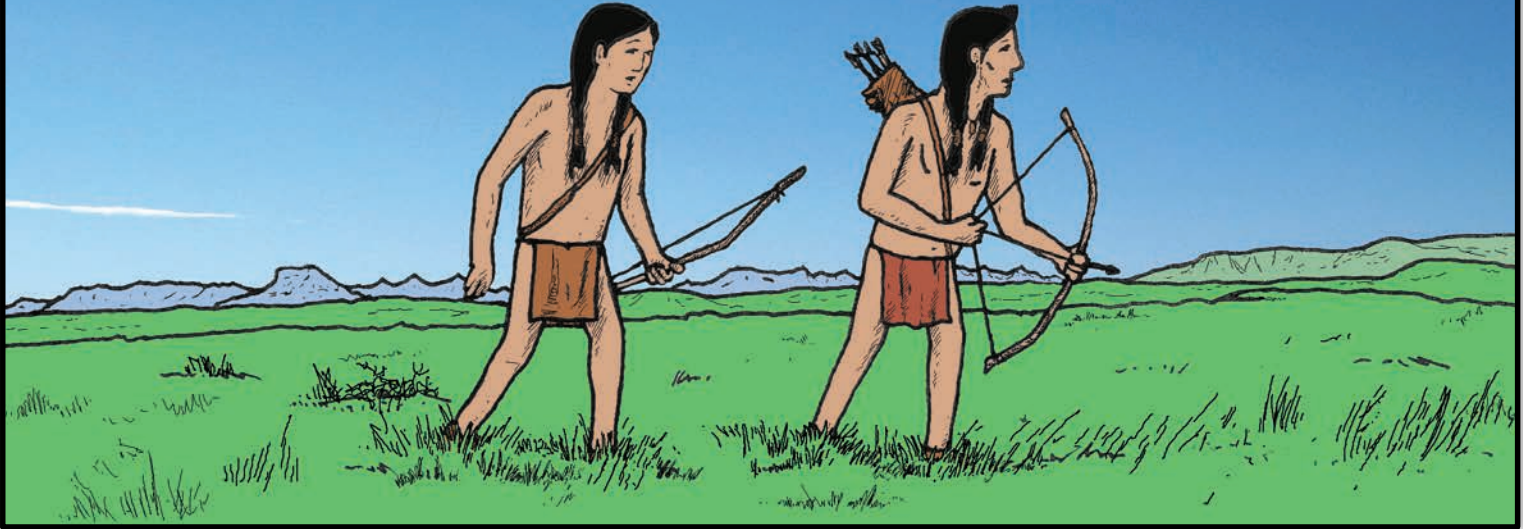
THIS IS WHERE THE JOURNEY TAKES PLACE.

IN THE 1860'S THE BLACKFOOT WERE SCATTERED OVER THEIR TRADITIONAL TERRITORY. SEVERAL BANDS RESIDED IN THE CENTRAL PART OF THIS AREA OF WHICH WERE THE "APAI'TSI'TAPII" (WEASEL PEOPLE). THIS WAS THE TRADITIONAL TERM ASSOCIATED WITH THE KAINAI (MANY CHIEFS)

OF THE FOUR DIVISIONS OF THE BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY, THE LARGEST WAS THE KAINAI AND WERE FORMALLY KNOWN AS THE BLOOD TRIBE.



WE BEGIN THIS STORY OF TWO YOUNG BLOODS KSISK-TAKI (BEAVER) AND HIS FRIEND PI'KSSII (BIRD) OUT HUNTING.



KSISK-STAKI WITH THE TWO BRAIDS HAIRSTYLE..

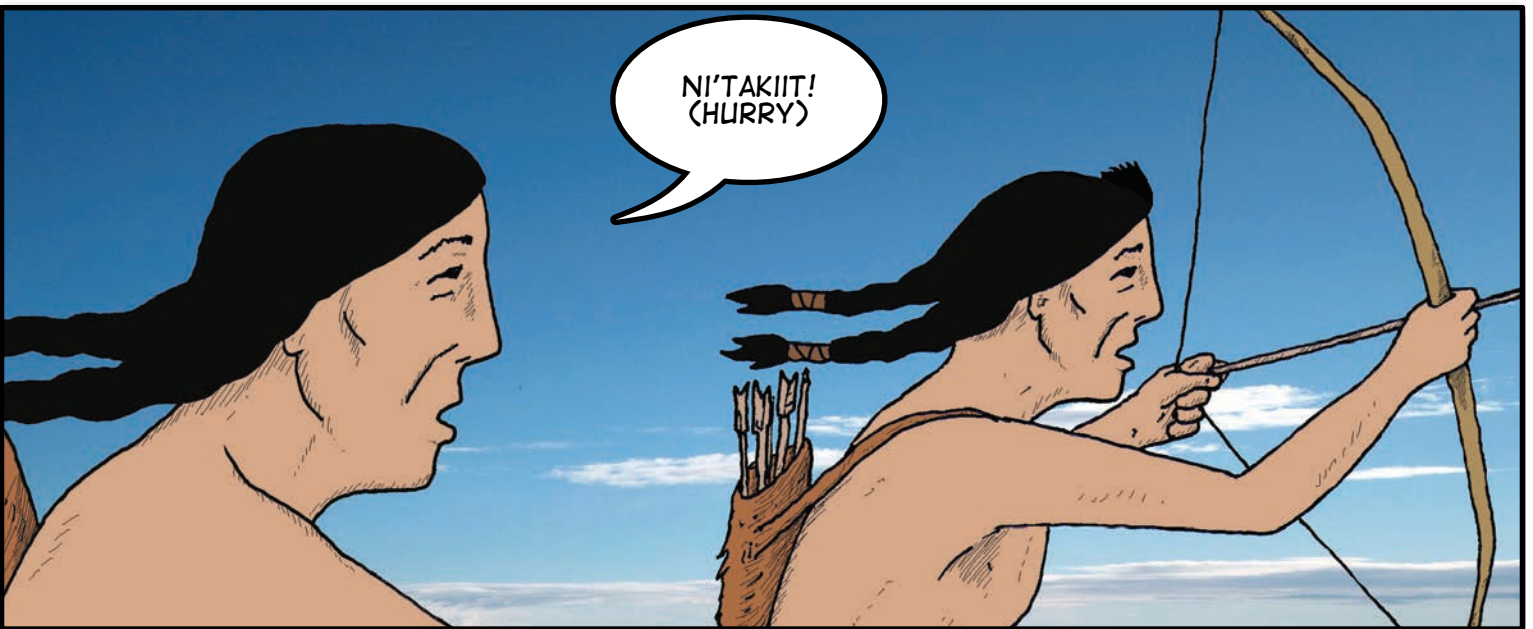
WHAT ARE WE HUNTING?

AND PI'KSSII WITH THE FORETOP HAIR STYLE.

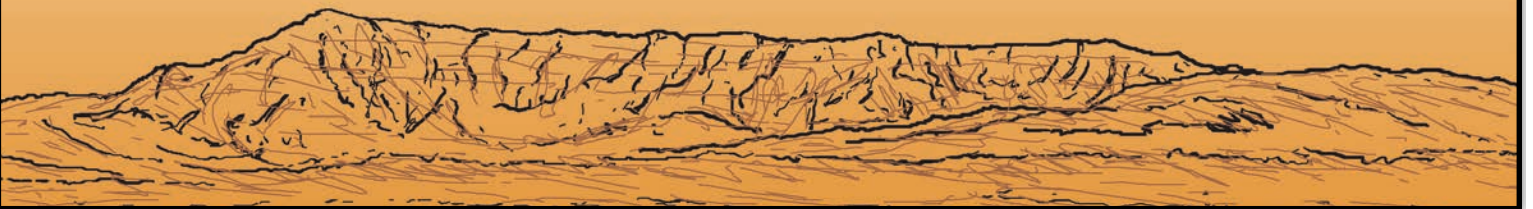
PRAIRIE CHICKENS?



THE BOYS SEE A KITOKII (PRAIRIE CHICKEN) AND BEGIN THE CHASE.



YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE TRIBE ARE ALWAYS BEING TAUGHT VARIOUS SKILLS THAT THEY NEED TO KNOW. HUNTING SMALL GAME WAS A PAST TIME THAT YOUNGSTERS WOULD PURSUE AND EVENTUALLY PERFECT. OLDER BRAVES IN THE CAMP WOULD TEACH THE YOUNGER GENERATION THE KNOWLEDGE THAT WILL SHAPE THEIR FUTURE AND THUS KEEPING OUR CULTURE STRONG. THIS IS WHAT IS MEANT BY "NIITSITAPIA'PII". (NATIVE WAY OF LIFE)



A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER, IN A BLOOD CAMP...



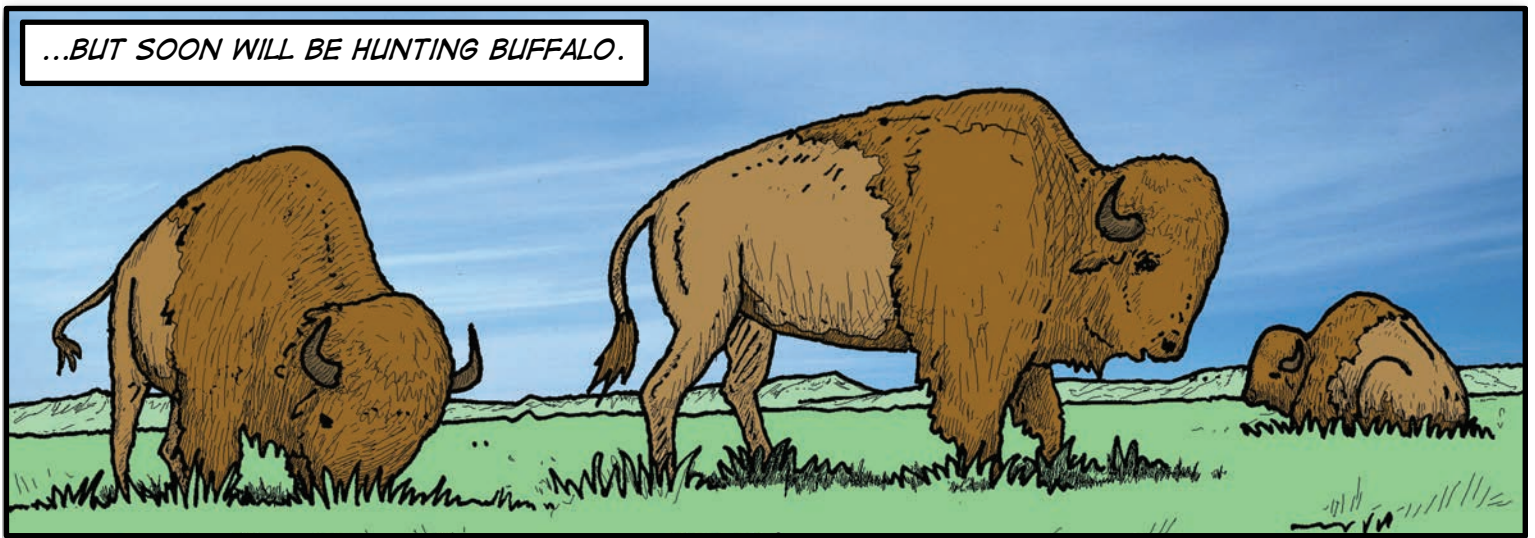
...KSISK-TAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE LISTENING TO ONE OF THEIR GRANDFATHERS, OMAHKAI-STOW (RAVEN) TELLING STORIES AND TEACHING THEM REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE.



OMAHKAI-STOW TELLS THE BOYS
THAT SOON THEY WILL NOT WANT TO
HUNT SMALL GAME...

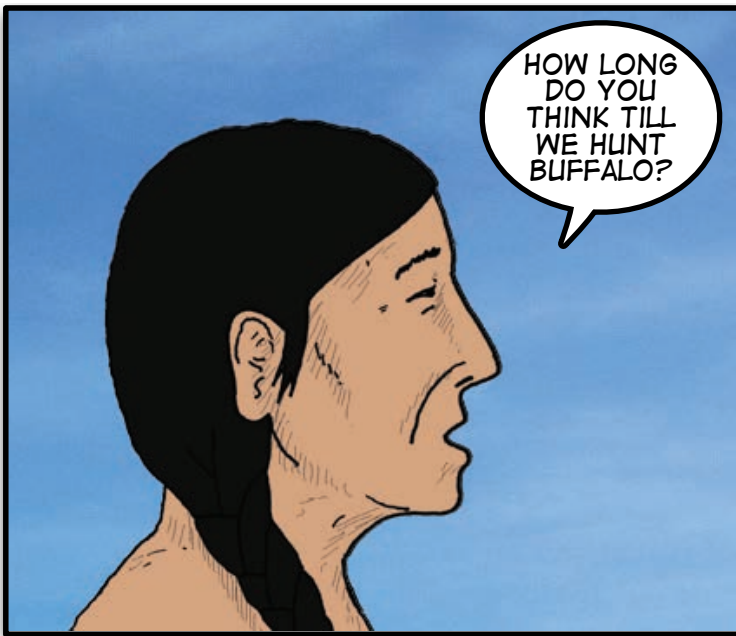


...BUT SOON WILL BE HUNTING BUFFALO.

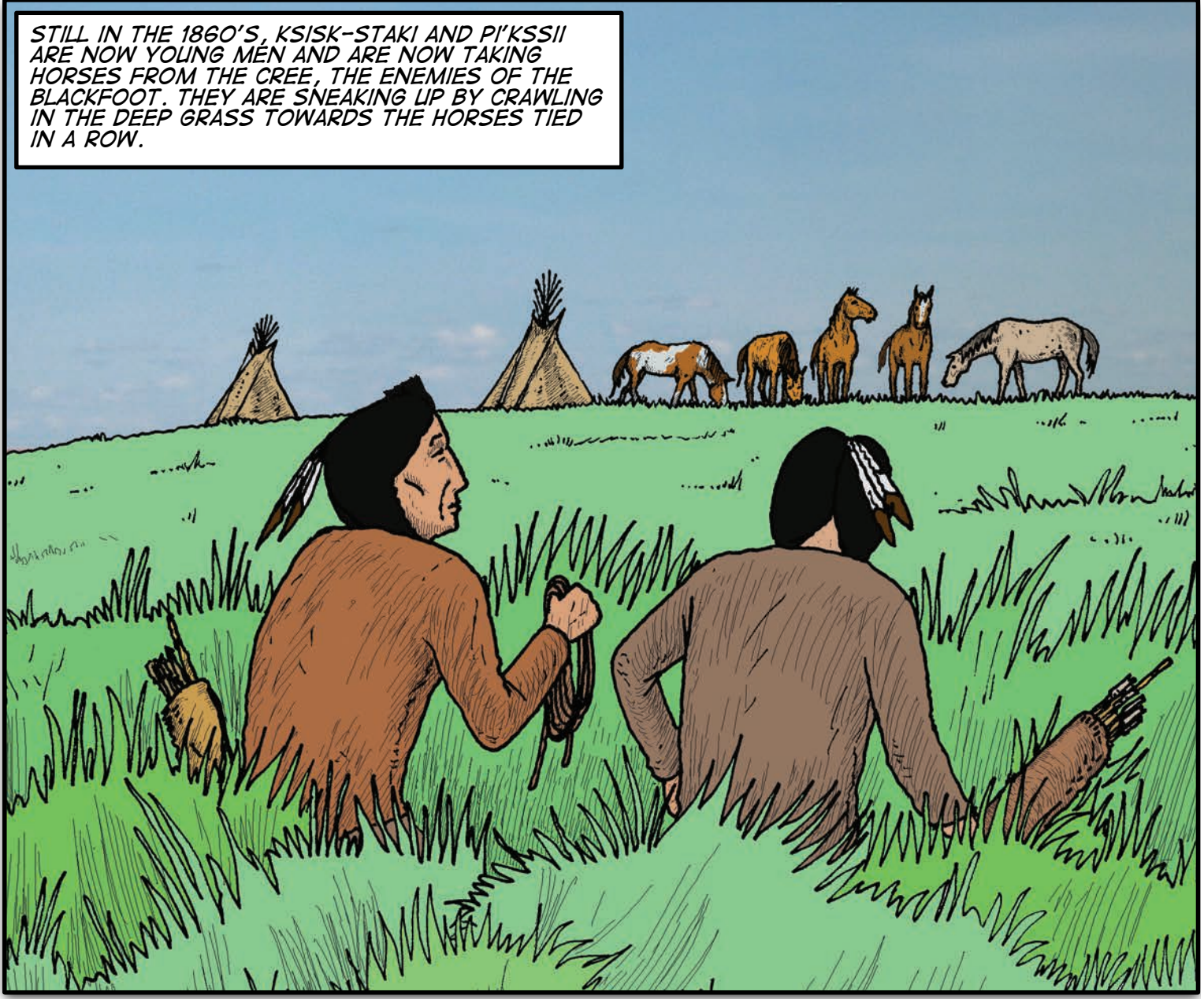


SOMETIME LATER, THE BOYS ARE MAKING ARROWHEADS.





STILL IN THE 1860'S, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE NOW YOUNG MEN AND ARE NOW TAKING HORSES FROM THE CREE, THE ENEMIES OF THE BLACKFOOT. THEY ARE SNEAKING UP BY CRAWLING IN THE DEEP GRASS TOWARDS THE HORSES TIED IN A ROW.



THE YOUNG BRAVES KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE LEADING TWO HORSES EACH AWAY, HAVING BEING SUCCESSFUL IN THEIR RAID.

SEE, I TOLD YOU IT WAS EASY TO TAKE THESE HORSES

YEAH, YOU WERE RIGHT



I'M GONNA GIVE MY HORSE TO MY LITTLE BROTHER



NIISTO, NINNA (ME, MY FATHER)



IT IS NOW THE 1870'S, THE TWO YOUNG BRAVES, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE TEACHING THEIR YOUNGER BROTHERS VARIOUS GAMES AND HUNTING SKILLS.

THESE BOYS WILL BE GREAT HUNTERS...

AAH, AFTER THIS THEY WILL WANT TO COME ALONG ON THE NEXT HUNT!

KO NI'TAKIIT!
(HURRY!)



IN THE BLACKFOOT CULTURE, WE ARE ALL BOUND BY KNOWLEDGE OF OUR LANGUAGE, HISTORY AND WAY OF LIFE. WE ALL HAVE A DUTY TO TEACH OUR YOUNGER GENERATION OUR TRADITIONAL WAYS WHICH LEADS TO THE LONGEVITY AND SURVIVAL OF THE PEOPLE. IN BLACKFOOT TERMINOLOGY IT IS KNOWN AS "KIMMAPIYIIPITSSINI" (KINDNESS AND GENEROSITY)

MEANWHILE, THROUGH ALL THE CHANGING SEASONS, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII HAVE MATURED AND THEIR PARENTS HAVE SELECTED PARTNERS FOR THEM.



NOW IN 1875, THE BRAVES, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII BOTH HAVE WIVES AND ARE LOOKING FORWARD TO RAISING FAMILIES.

I AM GOING TO BE A FATHER SOON

AHH, SOOKAPI (YES, IT IS GOOD), YOU SHOULD BE PROUD



I'M GONNA HAVE TO GET A BIGGER LODGE!



I WILL HELP YOU GET WHAT YOU NEED



NOW IN 1875, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII HAVE WIVES AND HAVE GROWN INTO FINE YOUNG WARRIORS. NOW THEY MUST USE ALL THEIR SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE THAT WAS ACQUIRED THROUGHOUT THEIR TIME TO PUT INTO PRACTICE. RAISING AND CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN WAS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE, BECAUSE THEY ARE OUR FUTURE. THE CONTINUATION OF TEACHING OUR CHILDREN LIFELONG LEARNING DID NOT END HERE. IT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING...

IT IS NOW 1877 AND THE BLOOD TRIBE IS AT BLACKFOOT CROSSING ENTERING INTO TREATY 7

THEY SAY, IF WE AGREE, IT WILL BE OUR ONLY WAY TO SURVIVE

TSSS, HUNYA.. (HUH, REALLY?)



"AT THE SIGNING OF THE TREATY AT BLACKFOOT CROSSING, RED CROW PULLED OUT THE GRASS AND GAVE IT TO THE WHITE OFFICIALS AND INFORMED THEM THAT THEY WILL SHARE THE GRASS OF THE EARTH WITH THEM. THEN HE TOOK SOME DIRT FROM THE EARTH AND INFORMED THEM THAT THEY COULD NOT SHARE THIS PART OF THE EARTH AND WHAT WAS UNDERNEATH IT, BECAUSE IT WAS PUT THERE BY THE CREATOR FOR THE INDIANS' BENEFIT AND USE." ¹

THE BLOOD LEADERS HAD CONSISTENTLY DESCRIBED THEIR RESERVE BETWEEN TWO RIVERS AND WENT AS FAR BACK TO THE MOUNTAINS. IN SEPTEMBER 1880, RED CROW SELECTED THE NEW AREA IN EXCHANGE FOR THE INTEREST IN THE JOINT RESERVE AS IT WAS DESCRIBED IN THE 1877 TREATY. THE RESERVE FOR THE BLOODS WAS TO BE LOCATED BETWEEN THE ST. MARY'S RIVER AND THE BELLY RIVER IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA. BUT THROUGH ORAL TRADITION, THE ORIGINAL RIVER ON THE WESTERN BOUNDARY WAS THE KOOTENAY RIVER (LATER RENAMED THE WATERTON RIVER) WHICH CONVERGED INTO THE BELLY RIVER.

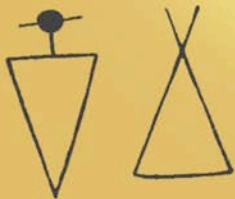
ACCORDING TO THE BLOODS, THE TREATY WAS UNDERSTOOD AS AN AGREEMENT TO SHARE THE LAND AND NOT A SURRENDER. ACCORDING TO THE ELDERS, THE BLOODS AT THE TIME OF THE TREATY UNDERSTOOD THAT BOTH SIDES AGREED TO BE ON A FRIENDLY BASIS "TO HELP OUT" AND "AGREE TO SHARE THE LAND IF THE WHITEMAN SHARED HIS WAY OF LIFE".²

THERE WAS NEVER ANY DISCUSSION OF SURRENDER. DURING THIS PERIOD OF TIME, THE INTERPRETERS "DID A BAD JOB OF MAKING THE BLOODS UNDERSTAND THE TERMS"³ AND THE FULL EXTENT OF THE TREATY.

AT NO TIME DID RED CROW WANT TO "GIVE UP THE LAND FOR NOTHING"⁴ AND WHILE MOST ACCOUNTS DEPICT THAT THE BLOODS WERE WANTING TO SIGN, THIS WAS NOT THE CASE.

RED CROW WANTED ANY ENCROACHMENT ON INDIAN LAND STOPPED AND TO HAVE THE BUFFALO PROTECTED.

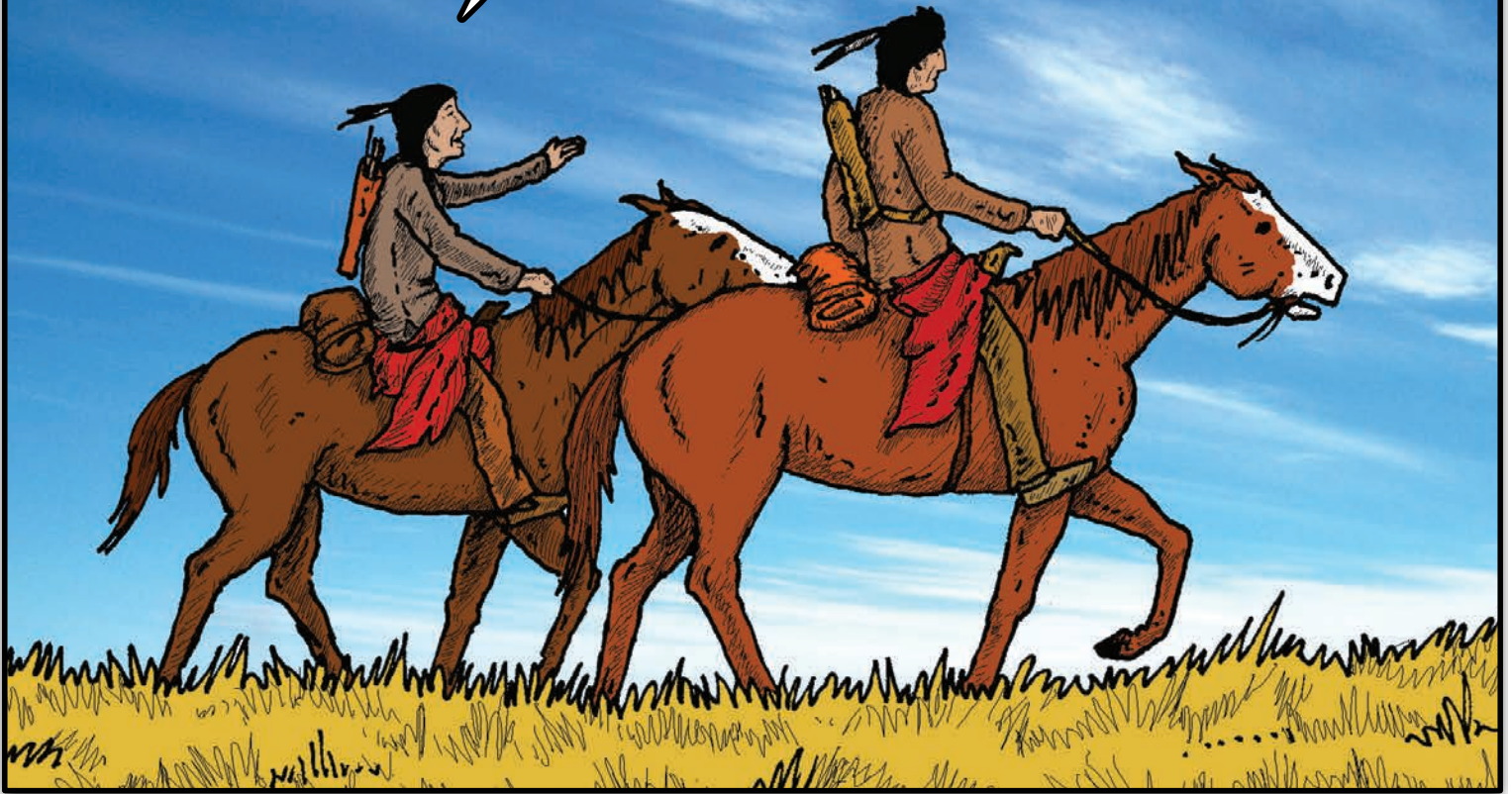
THE TREATY 7 PEOPLE DID NOT MISUNDERSTAND WHAT WAS SAID TO THEM AT THE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. THEY WERE TOLD THAT THIS WAS A PEACE TREATY AND THAT THEY WOULD BE TAKEN CARE OF...IT IS CLEAR THAT THE TREATY 7 PEOPLE WERE NOT TOLD THE WHOLE TRUTH. MOST OF THE PROMISES MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT WERE NOT HONoured.



AFTER ENTERING INTO TREATY 7, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE RIDING BACK TO THE BLOOD CAMP.

WE ARE SUPPOSED TO GET A RESERVE TO LIVE ON?

WELL, I HOPE RED CROW SELECTS AN AREA WHERE WE CAN BE NEAR CHIEF MOUNTAIN AND THE BELLY BUTTES



THE RESERVE FOR THE BLOODS WAS TO BE LOCATED BETWEEN THE ST. MARY'S RIVER AND THE BELLY RIVER IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA.

AT THE TREATY, THE CROWN AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS PROMISED "TO CARE OF US FOR ALL TIME"⁵ AND CREATED RESERVES BASED ON FIVE PERSONS PER SQUARE MILE, AS WELL AS OTHER BENEFITS.

AMONG THESE WERE THE "RIGHT TO PURSUE THEIR VOCATIONS OF HUNTING, WHICH WAS SUBJECT TO SUCH REGULATIONS AS MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT"; TO PAY ANNUAL TREATY OF \$5 TO EACH PERSON, \$15 TO MINOR CHIEFS AND \$25 TO HEAD CHIEFS; TO RECEIVE A BONUS OF AMMUNITION; A UNIFORM EVERY THREE YEARS FOR CHIEFS; A WINCHESTER RIFLE, FLAG AND TO PROVIDE CERTAIN FARMING TOOLS AND CATTLE.

A COUPLE OF YEARS LATER, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII MEET AT THE RATION HOUSE, GETTING THEIR RATIONS OF FOOD FROM THE INDIAN AGENT.

OKI, TSA NIITA'PIIWA? (HELLO, HOW IS EVERYTHING?)

AHH, IKSSOKA'PIIWA (EVERYTHING IS WELL) I HAVE BEEN THINKING OF TAKING UP FARMING

ONE OF MANY NEW ENDEAVORS THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA WOULD DO TO "PROTECT THE REDMEN", WAS TO INTRODUCE A NEW WAY OF LIFE TO THE BLOODS. IT WAS ALSO NOTED THAT, BEING UNDER THE GUARDIANSHIP OF PARLIAMENT, THE "INDIANS" WOULD BE ASSISTED INTO ASSIMILATION AND THEREBY TURNED INTO "FARMERS AND RANCHERS".

A FEW DAYS LATER, PI'KSSII IS SHOWING KSISK-STAKI THE CORRAL HE IS BUILDING AND WHERE HE WILL BE FARMING.



ACCORDING TO AN INDIAN DEPARTMENT REPORT: "THE BLOOD INDIANS DURING THE SEASON OF 1916, BY THEIR OWN EFFORTS AND WITHOUT ANY FINANCIAL AID FROM THE GOVERNMENT OF CANADA, PRODUCED 65,150 BUSHELS OF WHEAT ON 2,600 ACRES AND 26,980 BUSHELS OF OATS ON 768 ACRES. THEY GREW APPROXIMATELY 7,150 BUSHELS OF TABLE VEGETABLES, HARVESTED 7,600 TONS OF HAY AND GREEN FODDER AND PREPARED 2,320 ACRES OF SUMMER-FALLOW AND NEW BREAKING FOR THE NEXT YEARS CROP".

IT IS ALSO WORTH NOTING AT THIS SAME PERIOD, THAT THIS WAS ALSO THE LARGEST YIELD OF GRAIN ON ANY RESERVE IN CANADA AND THE BLOOD INDIANS MAINTAINED THAT SAME STANDING IN 1917 FOR WHEAT AND INCREASED THEIR HAY CROP TO 10,000 TONS. THE VALUE OF THE BLOOD INDIAN BEEF PRODUCTION IN 1917 WAS \$60,000, BEING THE LARGEST OF ANY INDIAN RESERVE IN CANADA.



A FEW YEARS LATER, THE WARRIORS MEET AT THE SUN DANCE.

PI'KSSII, WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT LEARNING ALL OF THESE NEW WAYS?

I REALLY DON'T LIKE ALL THESE NEW THINGS WE ARE LEARNING. WE CAN'T LEAVE THIS RESERVE WITHOUT A PERMIT, THE GOVERNMENT IS TRYING TO PUT AN END TO OUR SUNDANCE AND TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, THEY ARE NOT LIVING UP TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF THE TREATY. I HAD TO BRING MY SON TO BOARDING SCHOOL. KSISK-STAKI, I BET THE MISSIONARIES WILL PROBABLY COME FOR YOUR SON TOO.



DURING THIS TIME, MANY NATIVE CHILDREN WERE EITHER STOLEN OR TAKEN FROM THEIR FAMILIES AND FORCED INTO INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS LOCALLY OR TO A DIFFERENT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SOMEWHERE ELSE IN CANADA. THIS WAS A PRACTICE TO ASSIMILATE ALL "INDIAN CHILDREN" INTO THE WHITEMAN'S WORLD AND TO PUT INTO THE PRACTICE OF "REMOVING THE INDIAN OUT OF THE CHILD". THE MAJORITY OF THE CHILDREN WERE TAKEN AWAY FOR UP TO TEN OR TWELVE MONTHS OF THE YEAR AND MANY NEVER RETURNED HOME. THIS CAME AT A TIME WHEN THE BLOODS WERE ADJUSTING TO LIFE ON THE RESERVE AND ENDURING THE TRANSITION INTO A NEW WAY OF LIFE. IN THE MEANTIME, THEIR CHILDREN WERE BEING STRIPPED OF THEIR IDENTITY WITH A FOREIGN BELIEF KNOWN AS CHRISTIANITY. THIS WAS IN ESSENCE TO INSTILL FEAR AND THUS REMOVE THE IDENTITY, HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE CHILDREN THAT WOULD BE A DETRIMENT TO THE "INDIAN CHILDS" EVOLVEMENT INTO A NEW WAY OF LIFE.

THE WARRIORS MEET ABOUT A YEAR LATER AND EACH HAS A SON WITH HIM.

I HAD TO SEND MY SON JOHN TO BOARDING SCHOOL BUT I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO THINK

AHH, ME TOO. I CAN'T KEEP MY SON AT HOME, THE MISSIONARIES ALWAYS COME BACK AND GET HIM

OKI, NIISTO NITANNIKKO, (HELLO, MY NAME IS..) TOM



MANY CHILDREN GAINED NEW KNOWLEDGE OF READING, WRITING, CARPENTRY AND VARIOUS METHODS OF FARMING AND RANCHING. THIS CHANGE, THE GROWING SIGNS OF THE DETRIMENTAL LOSS OF LANGUAGE, ORAL HISTORY, IDENTITY, TRADITIONAL AND SPIRITUAL CEREMONIES WERE BECOMING EVIDENT. TODAY, DESPITE ALL THE TRAGEDIES, MISFORTUNES AND SUFFERING, THE BLOODS ARE REGAINING THEIR FOOTHOLD IN RECLAIMING WHAT WAS LOST AND RETAINING THAT KNOWLEDGE TO SURVIVE AND TO MAKE A VIABLE FUTURE FOR OUR CHILDREN'S CHILDREN. IN PRAYERS, THE ELDERS WOULD SAY; "MISAMIPAITAPIISINI KII, KAAMOTAANI" (LONG LIFE AND SURVIVAL)



A SHORT TIME LATER,
KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSI
ARE OUT RIDING WITH
THEIR SONS.

I AM THINKING
OF TAKING UP
CATTLE
RANCHING

AHH, SOOKAPI
(GOOD), I'LL GO
WITH YOU TO SEE
THE INDIAN AGENT



KSISK-STAKI RETURNS FROM THE INDIAN
AGENT WITH A PIECE OF PAPER IN HIS
HAND...

WE ARE ABOUT TO
BECOME CATTLE
RANCHERS ONCE
WE SELL OUR
HORSES

WELL, WE HAVE
OUR CORRAL ALL
READY



YEARS LATER, THE TWO WARRIORS, KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE NOW IN THEIR LATE 40'S, MEET AGAIN ON THE RESERVE WHILE HERDING CATTLE.

IT SEEMS WITH THE TREATY, WE HAVE LOST ALL OUR INDEPENDENCE

AHH, AND I DON'T LIKE BEING TOLD HOW TO LEAD OUR LIVES AND WHAT TO DO



IN CHIEF COMMISSIONER LAIRDS' REPORT TO THE GOVERNMENT ON SEPTEMBER 17, 1877, IN REFERRING TO A PRELIMINARY MEETING WITH THE BLACKFOOT, IT STATES THAT: "A RESERVE OF LAND WILL BE SET APART FOR YOURSELVES AND YOUR CATTLE UPON WHICH NONE OTHERS WILL BE PERMITTED TO ENCROACH".



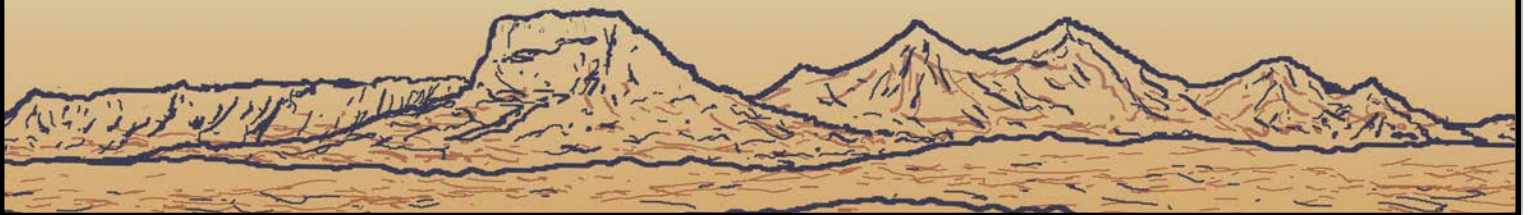
MANY YEARS HAVE GONE BY AND KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII ARE NOW ELDERS AND GRANDFATHERS. THEY MEET AT A STORE ON THE RESERVE.

I DON'T LIKE IT THAT THE GOVERNMENT TOOK AWAY MY GRAND DAUGHTER AND I CAN'T SEE HER

IT MAKES ME ANGRY THAT THIS IS HAPPENING. THE GOVERNMENT IS TAKING AWAY ALL OUR CHILDREN



IT WILL NOT ALWAYS BE THIS WAY. ONE DAY THE TRIBE WILL GATHER STRENGTH AND WILL BE LOOKING AFTER THE BLOOD CHILDREN AGAIN AND WITH THE GUIDANCE FROM THE ELDERS, WE WILL SUCCEED.



KSISK-STAKI AND PI'KSSII HAVE SEEN MANY CHANGES FROM THE TIME BEFORE THE TREATY WAS SIGNED AND THE EFFECTS THEREOF. BOTH MEN ARE SITTING ON TOP OF THE BELLY BUTTES TELLING STORIES AND CONTEMPLATING THE FUTURE AND THE LONGEVITY OF THE TRIBE...

"IKSSTOKOOHKIITSIIWA ANNOHKA
KII ISSKOOHTSIKA"
(THE PRESENT IS VERY DIFFERENT
FROM THE PAST)

IN ORDER FOR US TO SURVIVE IN
THIS NEW WAY OF LIFE, WE NEED TO
REMEMBER
"KIISTONNOONA NIITSITAPIIYIO'PI"
(WE, ARE THE REAL PEOPLE)



WELL OVER A HUNDRED YEARS HAS SINCE PASSED AND THE TRIBE HAS REACHED A POINT IN TIME WHERE REGAINING CONTROL OF OUR OWN AFFAIRS IS VITAL TO THE CONTINUED GROWTH OF THE BLOOD RESERVE. THIS WILL GIVE THE TRIBE AN OPPORTUNITY TO GOVERN THEMSELVES IN THEIR OWN TERMS AND THEREBY: "GIVING OUR CHILDREN A FUTURE THEY CAN LOOK FORWARD TO AND TO CARRY ON OUR TRADITIONS IN THIS NEW WAY OF LIFE". IN THE WORDS OF OUR ELDERS;
"MOKAKIT KII AIYIKA'KIMAAAT,
AIYIKA'PO'TAKIT, KII AISSPOMMOOSI MATAPIIKSI"
(BE WISE AND PERSERVERE, WORK HARD AND HELP ONE ANOTHER)



THIS IS THE BLOOD RESERVE AFTER ENTERING INTO TREATY 7. THE BLACKFOOT WERE ONCE THE CARETAKERS OF A VAST TERRITORY, NOW THE BLOOD TRIBE CONTINUE TO BE THE MAIN TRIBE OF THE GREAT BLACKFOOT CONFEDERACY.



Stamiksoosaka - Bull Backfat
1842



Piinaakoyimm
Seen From Afar
1843



Sootaina - Rainy Chief
1860



Mi'kaii'stoos - Red Crow
1871



Makoyoopisstooki - Crop Eared Wolf
1900

INDIAN RESERVES ARE WHAT IS LEFT OF THAT GREAT ERA...

OUR CHILDREN, OUR RESPONSIBILITY, OUR FAMILIES, OUR FUTURE



**FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THIS PUBLICATION AND THE
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**THIS STORY WAS DEVELOPED USING REQUIRED KNOWLEDGE AND THE TEACHINGS OF THE ELDERS.
PORTIONS OF THE INFORMATION WITHIN THIS COMIC BOOK WAS ACQUIRED AND ADAPTED
THROUGH THE DOCUMENT "OUR BETRAYED WARDS" BY R.N. WILSON
(INDIAN AGENT FROM 1898 TO 1911 FOR THE BLOOD AND PEIGAN INDIANS)
& "THE TRUE SPIRIT AND INTENT OF TREATY 7" WITH WALTER HILDEBRANDT, SARAH CARTER
AND DOROTHY FIRST RIDER, MCGILL-QUEENS UNIVERSITY PRESS 1996.**

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