

DOCUMENT NAME/INFORMANT: SCRAPING WHITE
BLACKFOOT WOMAN KIDNAPPED
BY CROW INDIANS
INFORMANT'S ADDRESS: BLOOD RESERVE
CARDSTON, ALBERTA
INTERVIEW LOCATION: BLOOD RESERVE
CARDSTON, ALBERTA
TRIBE/NATION: BLOOD
LANGUAGE: BLACKFOOT
DATE OF INTERVIEW: OCTOBER 12, 1970
INTERVIEWER: RUFUS GOODSTRIKER
INTERPRETER: DAVE MELTING TALLOW
TRANSCRIBER: JOANNE GREENWOOD
SOURCE: PROVINCIAL MUSEUM AND ARCHIVES
OF ALBERTA
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RESTRICTIONS: NONE

HIGHLIGHTS:

- Stories of how the spirits intervene to help kidnapped persons escape.

Okay, time went on. A man went out hunting with his wife. The woman rode a lively mare. Away they went. The man got his kill on a hill. He disappeared over a ridge and had his second kill. The man told his wife, "Be on the lookout. It's just like as if we crowded. Then try save yourself. Your mount is a fast runner; I can stay around." He started to butcher his kill. Suddenly his steed poked up its head looking in a certain direction. He jumped on his horse and as he came up on a ridge and looked, his wife was surrounded. The man rode off, avoiding the enemy. He had a boy. He got to the camps. "An incident happened and I couldn't do anything," the man said. Time went on and by this time he had found out that his son was lonely. A man told him in a chief sitting, "Go to that woman. Her supernatural being from the dead speaks plainly like us. The woman's name is Chasing Westward. She is the mother of Half Way Design (tipi), so try and approach her. The supernatural being from the dead speaks plainly like us." The man rigged up the bay mare to a travois. He loaded the travois with blankets. "Help me, Chasing Westward. Help me, Chasing Westward. I come to your assistance and your supernatural being from the dead." The boy was the only child of the man. The man told her, "My son is getting lean from loneliness. Here is a horse with a travois and these are your clothes and some dry goods." The woman told the man, "Yes, come over when the sun sets in the west. Make some pemmican and come over

with it." The pemmican was ready by sunset. It wasn't so big; it was small. The woman told the man, "Put the pemmican in a small dish and put it behind the pillow." The woman burned incense.

Suddenly a voice was heard. It said, "Yes, yes, Chasing Westward, I think that there's something exciting that has happened." She (Chasing Westward) told the spirit, "Yes, but eat first. That man brought some pemmican for you to eat." After the spirit had eaten it said, "Okay, there is the dish. I am through." "Okay, I got a swell mare that I got from him. That man supplied me with all these dry goods. I put them in an open place for you to see. I got those from that man. That little boy is his son. His wife was captured by the Crow Indians. If you can bring her back somehow, we will not tell you what to do, it's entirely up to you." The supernatural being said, "I fear that our enemy may kill me. Okay, is there anything that will make the woman believe me?" The man told the spirit, "My wife just strung those beadlace of my son." The spirit said, "Okay, give me those. Put them behind the pillow and what is her name?" That is one thing that I (Scraping White) forgot. "So don't get impatient about me," the spirit said.

The spirit took off and spent his time amongst the Crows. Finally he (spirit) spotted the woman; there she is. He stayed close to her. The woman took her pail and she went to the river. The river was not far from the camps. The woman took a pail of water and she started back. After a little ways she put the pail of water down, to rest. The woman looked to the north, and the spirit called her by name. The woman looked all around. The spirit told her, "You will not see me. I come for you. Look in front of you." There was the necklace of beads. The woman picked up the necklace. She said, "This is why I am always thinking of my son, the reason why I am looking to the northern horizon. I am thinking, I wish I could fly so that I can see my son again." The spirit told the woman, "Go home and pack some food and tell me when to start, I come for you. The woman was with an old woman. She started to prepare some food to pack along.

After so many days the husband started to slick himself up. Her husband told her, "There is going to be a dance. The dance will come to conclusion in the morning." He told her (Blackfoot Woman), "You will not go because you don't know the dance. You will sleep; I will go with her." The woman must've just been poking herself for being so glad to have the chance to escape. The woman told the spirit, "We will start tonight. My husband is going to a dance. He will come home in the morning. I will be staying home with an old woman." The woman took her moccasins off and made her bed. As soon as she knew that her husband was gone she started to pack. She pack some of her husband's belongings and his saddlebags. The old woman fell asleep; the spirit must have put her to sleep. When it

was late enough she led her horse away from the camps. "Okay," the spirit told her, "I will be giving you orders. You will see me like a shadow. I will tell you go fast and go slow. It's a long ways from home."

The spirit told her, "Now, get on your horse," and she started her horse on the run, on and on. "Okay, slow down," the spirit told her, and she runs her horse again. "There is a mountain with a forest. We will camp there." So they kept on and on. They saw the mountain and went up to it and they camped. The spirit told her, "Water your horse and go to sleep; I will be on the alert." The woman pulled her covers over herself and went to sleep. She woke up at half (noon) of the next day. She got up, washed her face and she ate. The spirit told her, "Field glasses will reach us but they won't see us." When darkness came the spirit told her, "Okay, we will start again." The woman sees the ghost like a shadow. She'd go fast and she'd slow down again. On and on she went as there were a lot of mountains in the U.S. She stops in the mountains. She is on her way. When darkness came the ghost told her, "We will camp here."

The next day the spirit told her, "You will wait for your husband in that bush on the hillside. It is not good for me to go into camps with you." The woman told the ghost, "Now go and notify the man." The ghost did as he was told. "Okay, she is here," the ghost said. As the people of the past always have some pemmican available, "Okay, here, eat this. You must be starving." "Yes you are right," the ghost said. He speaks plainly like us. The ghost told the man, "My, the Crow Indians almost dragged me out. Go and get your wife in that bush on the hillside. She is there. There is a swell horse for you and some dry goods. Go, do so. It's not fair for me to into the camps with her." So he went and he led the horse home and he had enough dry goods, so he brought her home.

Time went on. Two bachelors didn't come back; they went on the warpath to the Crow Indians. The chiefs said, "What about that woman? She brought that woman back." So they gave her the same as before, a horse with a travois and some dry goods. "Okay, yes, come in the evening." When evening came they went to her, "Okay, here's something for him to eat." She was singing. She has seen the horse; it was a swell mare. "Okay, I am through eating, what is it?" "Yes, those men, they can't find their sons. They haven't come back yet. Now they are worried if they are killed or not." "Yes, I did not hear anything about them. Where did they start off from?" "Yes, about two campsites away." "How were your homes?" "Yes. They were together and our smudge altars are scraped in the same way." "I will go there first. Nothing has happened to them. Their tracks out from the tipi are still showing. Okay, I will go and find out about them but I am not bringing them back, I will just find out about them."

Away he went. The two boys were taken by two men that were friends. One of the boys said, "I will make plans with my

friend, just the way you said, that we still have fathers and mothers." "Your parents and his parents are worried if you are both killed. I will tell that man to move camp to Elk River tomorrow and from there I will take both of you home. We will all go in two or three nights and then go home. I will tell him now." The boy went to his friend. He told his friend, "My father said this, that's why I came in." He will discuss this with him, he sat there and then he went home. When it was morning his father told him, "Get the horses and we will go." The other man said, "You're right. We will move camp to Elk River and we will all go in two or three nights and from there you two boys will go home." He was just listening to him. "Now let us get in bed; we are going to move." He took a mirror and put it under the pillow. When everyone was snoring he took it and bound it up and he packed it on his back and he started running

on and on. So he got back okay. "Chasing Westward, I am back." "He is here," she said. There was some pemmican, of course. He told one of the men, "Get something from behind the pillow." Then one of the men reached behind the pillow. He cut the thong, said, "My friend, this is my son's mirror." When the boy woke up he told his father, "My mirror is gone." His father told him, "Just as you are about to go home, someone has to come and steal something from you." Here it was taken to a far-off place. So they moved camp. They reached their destination and they gave them some supplies and their fathers bid them farewell. Their fathers gave them horses and they started off on their way home. So they got home and told their stories.

One of the boys' father told him, "You must have lost your mirror over there." "Yes," said the boy, "the night before we moved camp. It was gone in the morning." His father told him, "Is this your mirror?" His father told him, "That old woman has already told us the story." That is all. That is how this story is told. Her name is Chasing Westward.

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