

The Journey
by Bill Tallbull

There was a big encampment. There some young men were living with those people. They were friends. One day they said to one another, "Friend, let's see, let's go over there and look around those mountains. We might find out something and we will just go look around," they said to each other.

At that time those who went on a journey used to go on foot. The horse had not arrived yet then.

So they got prepared. There were two young men. One day they left. They looked around as they went along just to see different country or to see something new. They just went for that. They went together wherever they went. They were friends. They both packed their moccasins on their backs. "We might be gone quite awhile," they thought, "or we might be hunting for our food," they said to each other. So off they went on their journey.

They looked around as they went along. They knew the lay of the land. They would look back. "We will come back this way when we return," they thought.

Everything went well as they went along. After so many nights there was a flat area.

They were thirsty. They saw a pond of water. That's where they went. "Let's rest here awhile by the river," they said to each other.

And then that night one of them woke up. He looked, he looked into the water. There beavers had built a dam. The water was deep there. He saw, like, a light. The light was in motion. He woke up his friend. "Look over there, my friend! What is that over there?" he said. "Hey, someone must exist here. Let's go here downstream. Maybe he already knows about us, whoever it is. Let's go downstream also. So in the morning we'll look over," they said to each other.

They headed off downstream. They bedded down somewhere there. Then in the morning they wondered what it was. They discussed it, what they had seen, like, a light had appeared in motion. It was shining. "Let's go look over," they said. They went to look over. There were ripples on the water. They came to that dam. It was very deep there. That is where a water monster existed. He had already sensed their presence. The water was rippling.

"Hey, friend, come on and leave, don't go any closer! The water is riled up," they said. They backed away (from the water's edge).

They suddenly saw someone. They looked back. They suddenly saw an old man. He was a spry old man. He was jumping around here and there. "I've been stalking this one for a long time. I'm going to try to catch him when he swims up close," he (the old man) said.

The water monster had been there for a long time. And this old man had power. He came from somewhere. He was just laughing and giggling. He knew that he was swimming ashore. He ran that way. He dove in. He caught him (the monster). The water was just boiling. He would (appear and) disappear. The young men were looking at him from a distance. He would appear on top of the water. He had a strong hold on him. That monster was trying to jerk away (from him). He almost cut his neck off. The water got all bloody. Then finally the water calmed down. The old man swam into view. He was still full of laughter. "I have killed him," he said. The old man was running back and forth. "I have killed him. I have been stalking him for a long time.

He asked one of the young men to take a message. "Go over there along where those blue sand rocks are, where it is blue. When you get over there say, 'Grandmother, my grandfather has killed the one he has been stalking. He is calling for you, 'Come and bring the dogs,' he said,' teller her" he told him. So the young man left.

He came there to where the mountains were. "Grandmother," he said, "my grandfather is calling for you. He has killed the one that he has been stalking. You are to bring the dogs," he said.

The old woman appeared. She had white hair. The old lady was very happy. "Oh my, my son has come. Let me call for my dogs," she said. She called her dogs, they were huge dogs. They had blue fur. She then left. She got there. The old man had already cut him (the monster) up. He loaded up the dogs. They left with their packs, they started off together. They started back home. (The young men) accompanied (them) there to the mountain. "Come along, come along, I'll feed you. We eat this, this kind, but you don't eat it. I'll feed you a different kind of meat," she told them.

They arrived at the mountains where they lived. They lived there. The old people were very happy when they brought home the game. The old lady cooked for them first. They ate meat. They were happy. The dogs sat in a row as they were being cooked for also. That's the way they ate.

And so they rested there. And the old people told them, "You have done a good thing. You did well for us. "Have a good trip," they were told by them.

So after changing their moccasins, they started off again. They left again on their journey. "Let's go over here," they said.

It gradually got hotter as they went along. The ground became barren. There were hardly any trees. It was a big flat area. "Hey, let's see, friend, it really gets hot there during

the day. Let's travel at night when it is cool. We will sit in the shade during the day. We will rest during the day. Over there where the cloud seems to appear, let's try to go over there. Let's go see what the country is like there," they said to each other. It was very hot as they were going. At night they would travel. In the day they would rest in the shade. Rivers were a long ways apart. They would carry water jugs (pericardium sacs).

Just when they were about to turn around and return, they came to a big ravine. They looked over. It was in the evening. "Hey, the water is all gone, my friend. See if you can see perhaps somewhere a stream of water. Or maybe we might see a spring somewhere, there will be green grass there," they said.

They looked over. "Hey, friend, there's a stream way down there. Let's go down there," they said. They climbed down. It must have been very deep. It took them a very long time to climb down. It was already nighttime. They came upon it, it was a stream of water. It was a very small stream. They drank.

"Well, my friend, let's spend the night here somewhere. We will look around in the morning," they said. "We will follow this ravine. Maybe there may be some people living there. We'll find out about them," they said to each other.

In the morning they looked around. They went down to the river to drink again. There were tracks of animals who came to water. "Hey, this must be good," they said. "There's tracks of all kinds of animals leading to the water. But there seems to be no human tracks, maybe there's no one living in this area," they said.

They followed the ravine downstream. Gradually the cliffs got higher there. They would look up. Then they sort of heard someone in the evening. "Shh, friend, listen. I hear someone," said one of the young men. They would stand there and listen. "Hey, it's just the wind whistling through the rocks. The wind must blow this way, it must blow up through the valley," said the young men.

They started off again. It was very calm and quiet, like they sort of thought it was odd as they were going along. They would stand and listen. "There were no tracks of any person.

Then in the evening they came around the bend of the valley. They saw a big encampment. There were very many lodges. "Oh my, look, it's a big encampment! Let's just sit here. It's almost getting dark. In the morning we'll take a good look," they said. "There's a big encampment here, there are really a lot of lodges," they said to each other. So they spent the night there on the rocky cliff. They crawled in there and spent the night.

They got up very early the next morning. They looked over. There was no smoke at all. "Let's see, let's go up a little closer," they said to each other. They got closer to the camp. They looked all over. They saw no one at all. Everything was empty. "How come?! Where could they have all gone?!" they said. "I don't even hear anyone. There's no one

there. Let's see, let's go up the valley. There might be their tracks. Maybe they went somewhere," they said.

But what they did not know was that some giant people existed there. They were very tall. Powerful people (the giants) lived there. They did not know this. When they got closer, there was no one there at all. "Hey, come along! It doesn't look good. Let's go around (the camp)," they said.

They went around. They kept following the valley. They would turn around and look back thinking in hopes of seeing someone. They looked back. They kept on. They went on again for so many days.

They again came upon another big encampment. They again found out about it. "No one was seen. "No one is walking in sight. Look! Let's go find out why it is like this. Let's go find out, find out about someone. Maybe we'll find out something there," they said. "There are no tracks of anyone anywhere."

They came to it, they came quietly. "Hey, friend, I just don't see anyone. It's empty. Let's just stay here," they said. They stayed there. Then in the morning, "Let me go look around," said one of them. He went around. His friend sat outside and watched him.

Then after a while someone was coming from the east. He looked different. He was very tall, whoever it was. Then (that person) already sensed them. He stopped and stood there. He must have seen them.