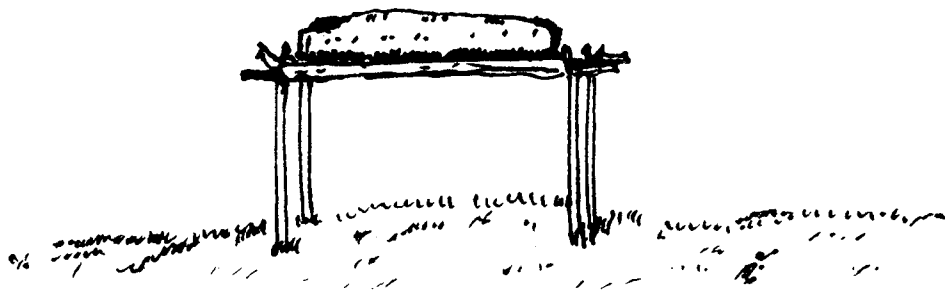


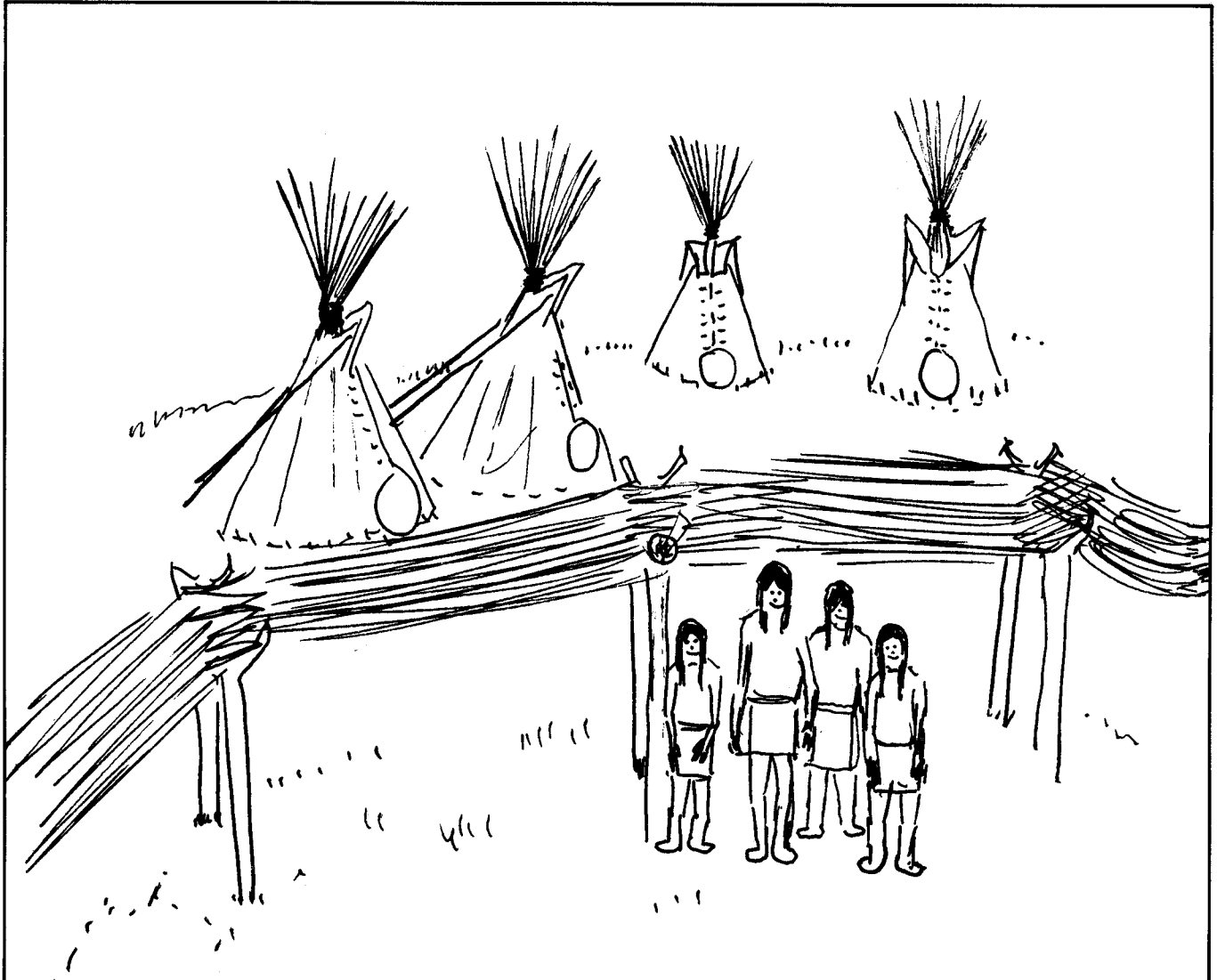
# True Story of A Ghost



A ghost is a spirit of someone who has died and is earth bound. This story is about a ghost that chased four teenage boys. It happened long ago, even before the White Man came.

The Plains Indians buried their dead by placing the body on a scaffold. It was customary to bury the person with their most valuable possessions.

A man had died and he was buried in the traditional way of the Plains Indians. At the same time the burial was taking place, there was a celebration going on about eight miles away.



At the celebration there were four teenage boys. The oldest boy was about sixteen and his three friends were younger.

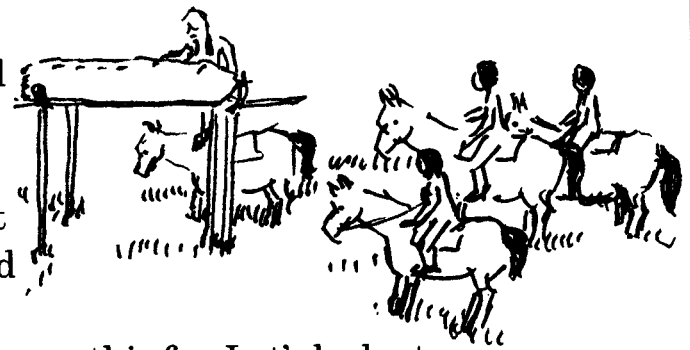
Although they were all having a good time at the celebration the oldest boy wanted to leave and ride out to the burial grounds. The boy was curious about the dead man and what kind of belongings he was buried with. He really didn't want to go alone but he knew his friends would never agree to go there with him. It was a scary place and a long ride to get home before dark.

He decided to make up a story about going hunting. He knew his friends would leave the celebration for that. They all liked to hunt and he knew they would be anxious to go along.

The boys left the celebration and rode their horses toward the burial grounds. The oldest boy did not tell them where they were going. He just told them they would hunt something good in a secret place. So the boys rode along and did not ask any questions. They took their time and only made their horses walk.

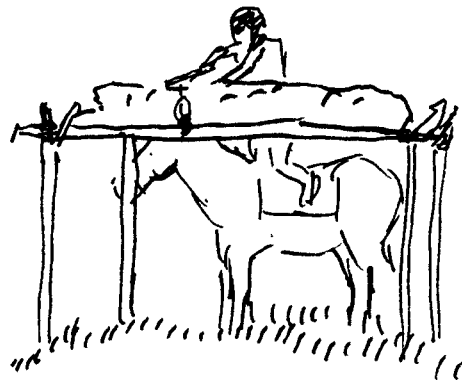


Soon they arrived at the burial grounds. The boys were surprised their friend had tricked them into going there. The younger boys didn't like being there. They became scared and wanted to leave.



The oldest boy said, "We have come this far. Let's look at the dead man and see what kind of valuables he has." The younger boys protested, "We better leave now or it will be dark before we get home and we will all be in trouble!"

The oldest boy paid no attention and began to climb up onto the scaffold where the dead man was lying. He was surprised to see all the valuable belongings the dead man had. He decided to take them for himself and his friends. He then gave each of his friends some of the dead man's things.



The boys were scared and didn't want to keep them. The oldest boy said, "The man is dead and has no use for them. Go ahead and keep them." The older boy was about to climb down when he saw the dead man's Sun Dance Whistle around his neck. He decided to keep it for himself and put it around his own neck.

The younger boys were scared and anxious to leave. They were already on their horses and called to the older boy to hurry up.

The older boy climbed down, got on his horse, and they all started back to the celebration.



They had only rode a short distance when one of the boys felt very nervous and uneasy. He felt like someone was watching them. He nervously looked back toward the burial ground and was terrified at what he saw. The dead man was climbing down off the scaffold. He shouted to the others, "Look! Look!" When the other boys looked back they too saw the dead man climbing down from the scaffold. They were all shaking and scared and wanted to get away as fast as they could. The dead man was heading straight for them.



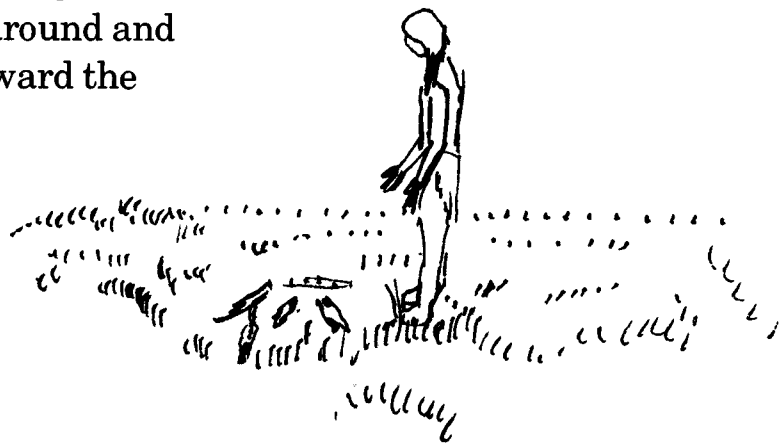
The boys made their horses go faster but it didn't help. No matter how fast they went the dead man was getting closer. They couldn't get away. They ran their horses hard but it was no use. The dead man was gaining.

One of the boys yelled, "He wants his things. Give them back!" The boys began throwing his belongings onto the ground.

When the dead man arrived at the spot where the boys had thrown his things he just stopped and looked at them. He started after them again even faster. He was getting closer and closer. The older boy realized he still had his Sun Dance Whistle around his neck. He threw it down so hard it broke into many pieces.

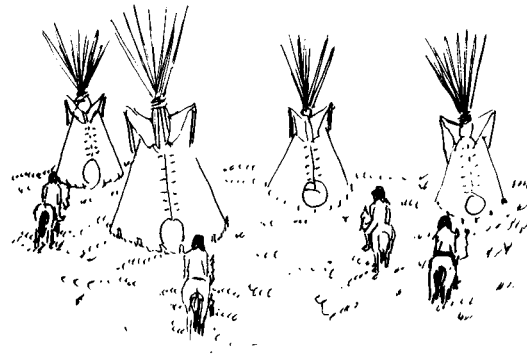


When the dead man got to the spot where the oldest boy threw his whistle he stopped and picked up all the pieces. He stood there for a moment staring at all the pieces. He turned around and slowly walked back toward the burial ground.

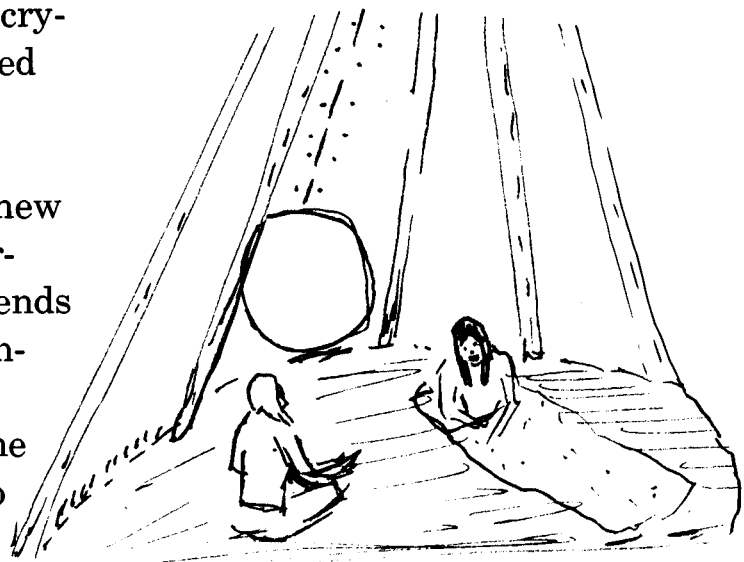


The boys were exhausted and so were their horses. Their hearts were still pounding but they felt safe and could continue back to the celebration at a slower pace.

It had been a long and frightening day for all the boys. Since it was getting late they decided to go straight home. When the boys arrived at home they went their separate ways to their own tepees and went to bed.



During the night the oldest boy woke up. He heard strange sounds. It sounded like people crying and praying. He was so tired he fell back to sleep. He didn't wake up again until morning. When he saw his parents he knew something was wrong. His parents told him, "One of your friends died during the night." He wondered if it had something to do with taking the things from the dead man that didn't belong to them.



The following night he heard the sounds again. People were crying and praying. In the morning his parents told him, "Another one of your friends has died during the night." The boy was very scared now that two of his friends were dead.

On the third night it happened again. Sounds of people crying and praying in the night, and the news in the morning that another friend had died. The boy was scared because he knew he would be next. He knew the dead man's spirit was getting even with them for taking his things.

Tonight would be his night to die. As the boy got ready for bed he prepared himself for his own death. He put on his good buckskin clothes and his best moccasins. He didn't think anything or anyone could help him now.

He thought of painting his face red to keep away the bad spirits but it seemed too late for even that. He didn't want to die and decided to use the red paint anyway. It was worth a try. As he was putting the paint on he had many thoughts. He felt he was to blame for his friends deaths. How wrong he had been to take things that didn't belong to him. He was sad and sorry for what he had done.

When the sun rose next morning the boy's father shook him to wake him up. When the boy woke up his father said, "Why are you wearing your good buckskin clothes and your best moccasins?" The boy was surprised to be alive but he was very glad. He told his father about the day he and his three friends left the celebration to visit the burial ground. "I tricked my friends into going with me. When we got there we took many of the dead man's belongings," he said. He told his father how the dead man had chased them. It didn't matter how fast the boys made their horses run, the dead man continued to follow them. The boy described how his friends had thrown the dead man's belongings onto the ground but he still followed them. The boy said, "I finally realized the Sun Dance Whistle I had taken from him was still around my neck. I threw it to the ground and then the dead man finally stopped chasing us."

The boy's father told him the reason he didn't die was because he painted his face red. "The dead man's spirit had come for you but when he saw the red paint he knew you were sorry and had learned about feelings and respect for others. The dead man let you live so you could tell the story to others," said the boy's father.



The young man learned a valuable lesson. This story has been told many times to remind everyone that they must always respect the people who have died as well as to respect their possessions.