

This story goes back to Hidatsa village at the mouth of Knife River.

There was a Grey Old Man with his wife Red Corn Woman living in this village; they had a daughter, White Corn Woman. There was a certain young man rather poor, but a very good hunter so he lived from place to place and always brought meat home whenever out hunting. He would kill deer and many other animals. He decided to try to marry this girl so one evening he came home with much meat and he took some liver, kidneys, ribs, and a ham and gave it to the woman he was staying with and said, "You take this over to those old people and tell them I had them; also tell them that I wish to marry their daughter. If I marry their daughter, I will take care of the old folks and be good to them. They are both getting old and cannot travel and if they let me marry their daughter, we will stay here and I will hunt and bring meat home to them. I will work for them, haul wood, water, and do everything for them because they are getting old and feeble."

The woman took the meat and the raw things to eat and gave them to the old couple and expressed the young man's desire to marry the daughter. The old man was well pleased and he told his old wife that it would be a nice thing to have a son-in-law who would do everything. They gave their consent for him to marry their daughter. The other woman went back to her lodge and told the young man that everything was settled.

The young married the girl and he did as he said he would. By that time the people had moved up west and the old people and their daughter and son-in-law did not go. They stayed in their village. Being that it was fall, it was not long until the river froze over. The young man and his wife went across the river opposite the village and put up two lodges with poles, the doors facing each other. They cut grass for bedding and took it into one of the wood lodges and made a bed for the old people and they made one bed in their own. They made roads and packed everything over and moved the old people across and set them up in their new home.

The young man and his wife moved into their lodge. He hunted all winter and killed much game, buffalo, deer, and elk. They had plenty of meat all winter long. The old man was very happy because he had a good son-in-law. Towards spring the game became scarce; there was a hard crust on the snow and when the young man went out to hunt deer he would break through the snow and the game would hear him and run off.

Then spring came and it was thawing. The old man said, "I think some of those men who went out hunting should be coming home now." The young man said, to his wife, "Don't feed them any more, there is only a little dry meat left; don't cook any of it and don't you give any of it to your father or mother. He came to a very different you man. He would go out and hunt and come back with nothing and the old people were beginning to starve. They had water to drink; that was all they had."

The old man said, "I'll go over to the bank and listen; this time of the year one can hear a long ways. Some of the people may be sending out runners to take corn back to the main camp."

The daughter had said to her husband, "What do you to my going back to the village and bringing some corn back to the old folks?"

He said, "No. don't you go; let those old people go hungry."

The old man left the camp and started for the village. On the way he stopped on the river bank to rest. He was leaning against the bank and lifted his head to look around and saw a buffalo standing nearby. He did not dare move for he thought his son-in-law had wounded the animal. He thought, "If I scare that buffalo away, my son-in-law might come and kill me" for the young man had already had told his wife that if she fed the old people, he would kill her. Soon the buffalo turned around and went back west. The old man stood up and went to where the

buffalo had stood. There he saw a large drop of blood on the grass so he pulled some grass and took the blood and laid it on the grass and covered it with more grass and put it under his arm so he could carry it back to the camp.

When he reached camp he told his wife to boil some water; I have brought some blood and we could make soup with it and boiling water. The old woman heated the water and he took the robe away and said, "Here it is; here is the blood" and when she took it, it was a baby boy with curly hair and large muscled arms and legs. The old woman said, "Why, it is a baby instead of being blood."

The baby boy said to the old man, "You name me; give me a name and then you raise me and let me grow. You make me grow four times" so the old man took the child and said, "I give you a name. you name shall be Blood Man" The old woman said, "Hurry; make him grow" and the old man took the child up and said, "I wish you were that big" and the child was the size of a child about 5 years old; He said "I wish you was that big" and he was about 9 years old, the third time about 16 years old and the last time he was a young man. When the old man got through, he was a young man, husky, muscular, and the boy said, "Now for your sake I came to help you and save you from starvation. The magpie came to where we were and said some poor people were starving so they picked me to come to you and save you. Get busy now and make some arrows and name the kind of arrows you want" so the old man got some chokecherry limbs and said that was the kind. He told the man to lay them under the bed and as soon as he had laid them there the boy said, "Now, take them out"

The old man pulled the arrows out form under the bed and the boy said, "Get a stick and name the kind of bow you wish" and the old man said, "I wish to have an elk horn bow" so there was one. The young man said, "Make me a hoop and work it with rawhide and have a hole in the center. You throw that hoop across the room and name the kind of buffalo you wish to eat"

The old man said, "I wish to have the fattest kind of buffalo and" and the boy stepped back towards the entrance with the bow and arrows. He told the old man to throw the hoop and the boy shot at it and when he hit the heart, there was a fat buffalo lying there. The old man and the boy skinned the buffalo and they had raw things to eat and the boy told him to be careful for the old man had not eaten for several days. "Don't eat so much of it" but they were so hungry that they ate much. They began to cook the meat and the old woman saved all the pieces and it being so fat, she fixed it up; they ate so much that towards morning they had pains in their stomachs. The old man and woman were groaning from the meat in their stomachs. By that time the old man's son-in-law had their fires going. She cooked some of the dried meat and gave to her husband and said, "You eat that alone." While that was cooking, the daughter and her husband went out and they heard the old people groaning. The son-in-law said, "Why don't you try to save yourselves? What are you groaning about?" He made fun of them and his wife was crying. He did not know that she was crying and she did not let him know she was crying for she was afraid of him.

By that time the young man told his wife to heat some water and take down one of the dried meats and cook it. He said, "You can eat half and I will eat half" for she thought, "If the old people starve, I can starve too." The young man had his morning meal and went out hunting. When he went out, the girl made up her mind that she would go in where her father and mother were. She went in and was so surprised to see so much meat there. They gave her a piece of liver and a kidney to eat raw and then the boy said, "My sister, there was a magpie went by where we lived and said that there was an old man and woman in need of help very badly and the magpie said, 'These old people have a son-in-law who refused to give them any help.' Then the buffaloes got together and decided to come and help the old people out. Your husband is threatening to kill you and to kill your people by starvation. The buffaloes have sent me to be with your old people and I am going to be with them all the time. I came here to kill your husband."

She said, "That will be alright because he has promised that he would kill us and see that my father and mother are also dead."

Blood Man said, "I will go this way and I will make and elk come along and your husband will follow that elk and the elk will come up to me and I will shoot it and kill it and I will skin the elk and while I am doing that he will come along and claim it. There will be a dispute over the elk and I am going to kill him then."

The girl said, "That will be alright.

The Blood Man went out he came to an opening and while he stood there he saw an elk coming towards him. Blood Man hid himself behind the tree and when the elk came near he shot at it and killed it. He saw an arrow in the elk's leg and first he took the elk's teeth and then he set to skinning the animal. Just about that time the other man came along.

He said, "This my elk," and the Blood Man said, "It may be yours but I saw it coming here and killed and now it is mine." "Where are all the teeth?" and Blood Man said, "I have all the teeth with me."

The young man claimed the teeth and mentioned taking the elk meat away from Blood Man. Blood Man became angry and the other was angry too. The boy picked his arrows and the two fought. He shot once and Blood Man jumped to the side and returned an arrow and killed the young man. When Blood Man finished skinning, he piled the meat up and returned to the camp.

He said, "I have killed the elk. The meat is over there; let's go over there and get it. I have killed your husband" and they were glad that he had been put out of the way.

The old man said, "My son-in-law was poor; he did not have any manners because he did not have any relatives to talk to him and give him advice and for that reason, he did not know anything. It is a good thing that he has been put out of the way."

They went out and brought the meat back to the camp. Now there was plenty to eat. They stayed for some time in the winter camp and then when it was nearly spring, they moved back to the village. Blood Man hunted all the time and killed much game. In the meantime, Blood Man brought the buffalo to the village. He said, "We will have all the meat we want. They are near at hand now" and some of these holy women came to him and said, "You must, when one person wants to do a thing, you cannot do it alone so we will come and help you and the spirits will come and help you also. They will carry the meat and pile it up on the corn scaffolds so he had better tell your wife and old people to take wood in the lodge and split it up and pile your logs in a row; go to the river and haul ice out and pile it on the logs so it will be free of the dirt."

Blood Man and his wife busied themselves hauling poles and laying them on the ground. When they had finished they went to the river and hauled ice and had enough in the lodge to last

for four or five days. They brought wood in. Blood Man said to his wife, "Fasten the door and keep the father and mother-in-law in the lodge for four days. When they hear voice outside, they must not look to see who they are."

When the time came, the buffalo were killed and the meat brought in by the mysterious women and tied on the corn scaffolds. When the four days were up, they opened the door and went out there on the corn scaffolds they found meat in abundance covering the scaffolds from top to bottom. On their own corn scaffold hung a white buffalo robe. That was taken down and made into a robe for the young woman. The old man was busy going around from scaffold to scaffold driving the birds away. Another mysterious old woman helped look after the meat. She was busy too. The old man said, "It is about time for someone to be coming back to the village. If the hunting party is hard up for meat and run out of provisions, they should send some of the runners back to uncover some of the cache holes. They will take corn back with them."

Soon some of the runners came to the village and they were invited by the old man to have a meal. They set out buffalo meat for them; they loaded each runner with dry meat, and then they sent them back to the hunting camp to tell them to hurry back home as soon as possible because their corn scaffolds were loaded down with buffalo meat. The runners returned and met the hunting party and delivered their dry meat to the people and they said to the people, "Your corn scaffolds are heavily loaded with buffalo meat and hides."

The younger men and women hurried and were camping near the mouth of the Little Missouri. Those who were young travelled fast and the young men ran across the country until they reached the village; those who came home first went into their lodges and attended to the meat and then returned to meet the other party. Soon the main party arrived home and saw their corn scaffolds loaded with meat and everyone was happy.

When the rest of the people reached the village, there were still many buffalo near the village so the men went out and killed great numbers of them. From that time on there was not end to the buffalo because buffalo Blood Man was buffalo himself so the people did not suffer for food. Nearly all the old people were happy and praised Blood Man for the good he was doing for the people. Blood Man stayed with these people for several years and he had become full grown.

He was old enough to marry. He said, "We want to have a little medicine doings so when you people go out hunting buffalo you will see an old buffalo bull, so old that the body will be small and the head large. When you kill that one, get the hide and bring it home."

They killed the animal and took the hide to the village. He took it and fixed it up. Before planting time in the spring someone who does not belong to the village is always asked to wear this buffalo robe and dance. When they dance they take the evergreen to put on the back, wrists, and ankles, and then this person dances around. He represents the Old Age and the dance is called 'Imitating the Buffalo.' Blood Man was the man to get this up but he got someone to do the dancing. Nearly all are asked to make pemmican. They take the pemmican over and give it to the dancers. This Blood Man calls the one dancing imitating the buffalo his father and Blood Man's wife stands when the man dances and moves as he moves. Of course, all the old men would cry and praise Blood Man during the ceremonies. When a young man goes to the dancer Imitating the Buffalo and gives him a robe or anything that is considered valuable, this young man is given a bowl of pemmican and he takes it and looking around at his girl sweetheart and if she is there he takes it over and gives it to her. Everyone would see that and if she takes it from him, that shows that she is in favor of him and would marry him in time. When a couple it

married, they will be prosperous and have a long happy life together because this buffalo had lived long in this world. That was the ceremony that Blood Man taught.

Some of the people said, "Blood Man, you did right when you killed that young man for he was at fault; you will remember that when Spring Boy and Lodge Boy how they saved their boy, Unknown Man, the buffalo was the one who took the Unknown Man far to the north where the evil spirits were. Spring Boy and Lodge Boy killed the evil spirits but they spared the buffalo's life because the buffalo promised that he would come when the people ran out of provisions. The buffalo said at that time to Spring Boy and Lodge Boy, 'If a human being promises me anything, and does not do it, I will destroy that person. That is why this young man made such big promises and he did not live up to it. You came and destroyed him. This was understood by everyone."

Blood Man lived there with the people and raised a family and never went back to his people but lived all the time with the Hidatsa village. They had this ceremony at Like Fish Hook village; a man named Dog Bear gave the ceremony and his wife's name was Bug Woman. She stood up beside the dancer and singer. He was the last one to give it and Bears Arm saw it. Dr. Hall objected to the ceremony and stopped it. Blood Man grew old and died in the village.