

Small Ankle knew many stories but he could not figure out which of these stories came in first but the old men thought this one was probably one of the first ones.

They told that there was a large village and he thought how could they build large lodges like that. There were 12 holy men and they knew things ahead and could tell things far in advance. These men had the name mira-gu-ci but I do not know the meaning of the last part gu-ci and they did not know then what it meant. These twelve men were supposed to live together and painted themselves with red paint and were never allowed to use white or black. At that time they use a stick for the game. At this time a man came to the village, rather fat, short, and broad and not a very good looking man, he would paint himself and when he played, he always won the game. They always bet anything they could get ahold of and he got everything they had. Then he played with another and at first his opponent would win and then he would begin winning and take all the other had.

He cleaned the other man out of all his property. The man who lost went out and cut arrow sticks of juneberries and while he was cutting, he took the bark off to 10 and left it on 10. As soon as he came back with the sticks, the other said, "I see that you have something now to bid on" and the other said that it was so. The winter told him he could put them but the loser was ashamed to put them in for they were not completed but the fat man volunteered to put in fine eagle tails against them. All this time in the village there was an old woman with black CURLY hair, had plenty of food and buffalo skulls on top of the lodge. again there were two young orphans and not quite old enough to help themselves. They became hungry and decided to go into the lodge where the Old Woman was. She asked them to come in and sit down for she was sorry for them. She gave them some dry meat food and said, "Poor fellows, maybe this is the last time you are going to eat." When she mentioned this they did not pay attention and they went out again after eating and stayed around the village a while and then said, "We know where to eat" and went to her lodge. She said, "Poor fellows, this is the last time they will eat." They ate and went out. Becoming hungry, they went to her lodge again and she said, "Poo fellows, they will not eat much longer." They came out the third time and talked among themselves. "It is funny what she says. There may be something wrong. We should go over and report it to the 12 holy men" and went to see the men and told them what she had said. The 12 men got thinking it over and said, "There is going to be something happen and I think our village is going to be all destroyed" The 12 men asked of the two men what the woman said and they assured that it was. They said again, "If you want us to find out we will. You better stay here and we will go over and find out what she meant." They sent one of their number to bring to Old Woman to come over, that they wanted to see her" and she said, "What do they want to see me for? I am an old woman and living here alone. I do not see what you want to talk to me about."

She went over to the lodge and the 12 men asked "We want to know what was the meaning when the two young men were at your lodge and you told them that they were not going to live much longer" She said, "Yes, I do know something; that man who came and always won the game. He is the Sun trying to kill of this village. He wants to send for some people from the south there are twelve different villages down there and he is going to have them come here and destroy the village. He is trying to win from you so that he can kill you all off. I know that he is playing with one fellow and is giving him a chance to win the game and that man is betting the arrows with the barks off and if he wins that game, he gets half of the village; then if he wins the arrows with the barks on, he will get the rest of the village. You people better be careful but it does not make any difference to me. At the same time the Moon is trying to save your lives but the Sun said, "If I kill them you will get your share of them" but the Moon does not seem to say

anything. That Sun is always after men and is after me and for that reason I have been trying to help you. He will be trying to kill you off soon but I will do the best I can to save you. There is only one chance to save our people here. You should pick out four good men and have them put up the ceremony of walking with the women and if they refuse the village will be destroyed, but if any of them agree, that is the only way you can save your people. Of course when you ask the four men they will not know what it is and will not know how to do it but you say to them ‘The Old Woman knows how to do it and will help you out.’”

The 12 men picked out the four men and told them that they should put up the ceremony of taking the women out but the four men each refused saying, “I do not know what it is.” Still the holy men begged of them and said that they and the old woman would help them out and the last one said, “I will try since you will help me and since you say that the Sun is going to destroy our village” The Old Woman was there too and she said, “You have done wisely for it is the only way you can save the people and we will win the game. That man who has the arrows you should have him here with the sticks for he has already won the first ten sticks but tell him not to bet the other 10 so keep him here and do not let him out at any time for should he go out, he will gamble again and lose and then there is no chance to save the village.” She taught the young man giving the ceremony and that he should say, “I am giving the ceremony for the Sun and for all the different gods all over the world and I will give a big feast, call you my gods, and I will let you take my women out You people should put up a big place of brush for the ceremony and the door to the south and maybe the Sun won’t come right away but that is the time that I will have a chance to get him in for I will be at the side of the door and it may be that it will take us a little more than four days but when he steps in I will seize him by the ankle and say, ‘I want you, my grandfather’ and then we will win the game. (to the 12 men) you must hurry, have announcements right away that the lodge of brush be set up for those people are coming over from their villages to destroy our village. Have enough dry sticks and have three places for the fires and when you build the fire have them as bright as possible for it should show all over the world. When the lights are bright, the old men will began to take out the women and the Sun from the outside will be watching it. Be sure to have plenty of roasted corn and corn foods of many sorts. When you have plenty, the gods will come from all directions and though you cannot see them, they will be there eating too. And when you wish to have the women walk with your gods, the gods will not be seen but they will be going out just the same. Another way I can help you is that I will have the Moon to help by having him ask the Sun to come down to the feast that he will have a daughter in law and I think he will go to the Sun and beg him to come in. “When you are ready, have the older men go in and the younger men standing around inside and all have a good time and not worrying about anything. When you come in there distribute the food which shows that you are feeding the holy spirits that are coming from all directions.”

They prepared for the ceremony and when night came they took the food out to the lodge and they were eating and walking with their daughter in laws and the young men were outside talking and singing away. All that time the Moon was trying to fool the Sun by saying “Our son has promised us a big feast and we should be there” but the Sun held back and would not go right away. The first night the Sun did not come and the ceremony was done at the end of the night. The old woman said, “The ceremony should last for four nights. Try it again tonight and tell the young men to come and laugh and talk; then too, there were many gods there even though you did not see them and they ate and walked with their daughter in laws and all of the gods said the had a good time.”

They tried it a second time. At that time the Sun and Moon were coming towards the village where the ceremony was taking place. She said, "All the different spirit gods were here and had a good time eating and walking with their daughter in laws. I know it for I heard them telling it."

The third night the old Woman met the Moon and said, "You should tell the Sun that his lover might go out with someone and that the Sun should be there or it would surely happen." This time the Moon and Sun were closer to the ceremonial lodge. She said to the people "This is going to be the last and everyone should do the best for if we fail to get the Sun in this time, we will surely lose the village.

She noticed that the Sun and Moon had come so she went by the door and stayed there. After a while he stepped in and she said, "I am your granddaughter, why didn't you come right away; you are the greatest god." The Sun did not think he was. She said, "We better go outside." She went a little ways and undressed and said, "Come, you are my granddaughter" and Sun said, "No, you are my granddaughter already" but she urged him and he was intimate with her. When he finished he wanted to get up at once but she seized him at once and said, "You are the greatest god and I will not let you go unless you make us a big promise that you will give us those twelve villages down there." but the Sun did not say anything at once and she repeated it again, "I want those 12 village, why don't you say something for you are my grandfather and have had advantage of me." About that time Sun said, "I will promise you those villages but I hate to see you kill those villages for my son is there but you are my granddaughter." As soon as he made the promise they got up. He said "I have my son in one of those village but since I have made the promise, now I will give you him along with the other people and I will have to eat my own son."

Sun went back to his villages and she went to her own people and said, "It may be tomorrow or the next day that you will kill them for the Sun has promised them to me." Next day she said, "I will help you again for there will be so many people come to attack the village. She painted all the buffalo skulls red and put their faces towards the south and said, "I have already done my part and I do not think any of you will be killed but you will kill all the enemy. While painting the skulls she sang a holy song. This story lost out it seems but they started the buffalo dance instead of this. This old woman was the BUFFALO WOMAN and always had plenty of food to eat