
SIHA TOOSKIN KNOWS

The Catcher of Dreams



Charlene Bearhead

Wilson Bearhead

Chloe Bluebird Mustooh

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By Charlene Bearhead and Wilson Bearhead
Illustrated by Chloe Bluebird Mustooch

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PRESS 

© 2020, Charlene Bearhead and Wilson Bearhead (text)
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I dedicate Siha Tooskin Knows the Catcher of Dreams to the fulfillment of my dreams: my daughter Seneca. Your strength, beauty, and generosity of spirit inspire me each day as I witness you sharing the gifts that have been given to you by so many wonderful people around you.

—CHARLENE BEARHEAD

We dedicate the Siha Tooskin Knows series to the storytellers who taught us. To those who guided us and shared their knowledge so that we might pass along what we have learned from them to teach children. Their stories are a gentle way of guiding us all along the journey of life.

In that way we tell these stories for our children and grandchildren, and for all children. May they guide you in the way that we have been guided as these stories become part of your story.

—CHARLENE BEARHEAD AND WILSON BEARHEAD



*Watch for this little plant!
It will grow as you read, and if you need a break,
it marks a good spot for a rest.*



Like a flash of lightning Paul Wahasaypa zipped up the sidewalk and onto the lawn. He jumped off of the blue peddle bike that he was riding and began sprinting towards the front door of his house.

As he dashed past the hedge that separated his family's yard from the one next door, Paul's hand shot up into the air and waved to his new neighbour, Mrs. Carter. She was out checking her mailbox when Paul arrived home. Paul's dad always joked that even though the mail carrier came at the same time every day, Mrs. Carter checked her mailbox at least ten times a day so she could see what everyone in the neighbourhood was doing. Today she lingered an extra-long time

at the mailbox as she watched Paul dart across the grass like a starved wolf chasing the last deer on the plains. Mrs. Carter was actually worried and wondered if everything was okay with Paul. She had never seen him racing towards his house like that and she hoped that no one was sick or hurt. For a brief moment she did take a quick glance down the street in case there was actually a starved wolf or coyote chasing Paul. That's when she realized what the emergency was. Paul wasn't



running away from a ravenous grizzly bear and he hadn't seen Shee-ah. Paul was running *towards* his house because he was excited.

As Mrs. Carter scanned the street for clues to solve this great mystery she noticed a light green pickup truck parked in front of Paul's house. Just then she remembered having seen two Elders getting out of that truck when she was out checking her mailbox an hour earlier. They had walked towards the



Wahasaypa home. As she thought back through all of her mailbox checks over the past few months, Mrs. Carter could only recall seeing this truck park on her street once or twice. Now she knew why Paul was in such a rush to get home. His Mitoshin and Mugoshin had come to visit. This must be a very special occasion. Mrs. Carter decided then and there that she would need to check the mailbox a few extra times today, so that she could find out exactly what the big deal was.

“Hi,” panted Paul as he stood in the doorway. He was grinning from ear to ear but really out of breath.

“Mitowjin,” acknowledged Mugoshin as she looked up from her work with a gentle smile. “How are you doing, my boy?”

“Good,” answered Paul. He was still a little out of breath and leaning against the doorway. “Where’s Mitoshin?”

“Oh, he went to get your little brother,” Mugoshin explained. She set her work down in



her lap and reached out to her grandson to motion that she wanted to give him a hug. “Auntie Robin took Danny home with her this morning so she could watch him until we got here.”



By now Paul’s energy had returned. He kicked off his shoes and rushed over to hug his Mugoshin.

“You ran all the way home?” she asked her grandson as she put her hands gently on his cheeks. “You’ve run so fast that you overheated.”

“I rode my bike,” answered Paul. “Mitoshin always tells me that I need to be aware of my surroundings if I’m going to be a good hunter, so I have to practise even when I’m in town. I was scanning the horizon from the top of the hill eight blocks away and I spotted a green speck that was out of place. Mitoshin always reminds me that we have to train our minds to watch for signs of changes in our environment. I had to dig back quite



a ways through my highly-trained mind,” Paul joked. “Of course, I knew in an instant that the green dot that I spotted from the end of the street was your truck, so I rode as fast as I could, zigging and zagging to avoid any possible danger along the way. At one point I’m pretty sure I passed a seagull in mid-flight, I was going so fast. I didn’t know you were coming to visit today, so I had to get here as fast as possible to find out what was happening.”



Glossary

Ade	Dad or father
Ena	Mom or mother
Ena Makoochay	Mother Earth
Mitoshin	Grandfather
Mitowjin	My grandchild
Mugoshin	Grandmother
Shee-ah	Monster
Siha Tooskin	Little Foot (siha is foot; tooskin is little)
Wayasaypa	Bear head

A note on use of the Nakota language in this book series from Wilson Bearhead:

The Nakota dialect used in this series is the Nakota language as taught to Wilson by his grandmother Annie Bearhead and used in Wabamun Lake First Nation. Wilson and Charlene have chosen to spell the Nakota words in this series phonetically as Nakota was never a written language. Any form of written Nakota language that currently exists has been developed in conjunction with linguists who use a Eurocentric construct.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Charlene Bearhead is an educator and Indigenous education advocate. She was the first Education Lead for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and the Education Coordinator for the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. She is a mother and a grandmother who began writing stories to teach her own children as she raised them. Charlene lives near Edmonton, Alberta with her husband Wilson.

Wilson Bearhead, a Nakota Elder and Wabamun Lake First Nation community member in central Alberta (Treaty 6 territory), is the recent recipient of the Canadian Teachers' Federation Indigenous Elder Award. Wilson's grandmother Annie was a powerful, positive influence in his young life, teaching him all of the lessons that gave him the strength, knowledge, and skills to overcome difficult times and embrace the gifts of life.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Chloe Bluebird Mustooch is from the Alexis Nakoda Sioux Nation of central Alberta, and is a recent graduate of the Emily Carr University of Art & Design. She is a seamstress, beadworker, illustrator, painter, and sculptor. She was raised on the reservation, and was immersed in hunting, gathering, and traditional rituals, and has also lived in Santa Fe, New Mexico, an area rich in art and urbanity.

A new baby due any day AND a visit from his grandparents!

Siha Tooskin (Paul) takes his expert bike riding to a whole new level to make sure he doesn't miss a thing. At home, Mugoshin (Grandmother) is creating a very special gift to protect the precious little one. Join Paul as he enjoys delicious bannock, imagines the future of a new baby sister, and listens to Mugoshin's teachings about the catcher of dreams.

SIHA TOOSKIN KNOWS

Siha Tooskin Knows the Gifts of His People
Siha Tooskin Knows the Sacred Eagle Feather
Siha Tooskin Knows the Strength of His Hair
Siha Tooskin Knows the Catcher of Dreams
Siha Tooskin Knows the Nature of Life
Siha Tooskin Knows the Best Medicine
Siha Tooskin Knows the Offering of Tobacco
Siha Tooskin Knows the Love of the Dance

The Siha Tooskin Knows series uses vivid narratives and dazzling illustrations in contemporary settings to share stories about an 11-year-old Nakota boy.

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