



Chapter Two - by Kay Hively

Deer Foot ran as fast as he could. The swiftest boy in his tribe, he usually ran at full speed only when he raced the other boys or when he was on an errand. But now he was running fast to see the Americans. He and his uncle had been fishing far up river when a messenger brought news that the strangers had arrived in Deer Foot's village.

For several days, scouts had reported that strange men were coming in boats with big guns. Deer Foot had seen trappers and traders before, but they only had dugouts or canoes, and their rifles were like what his father had. He wanted to see the big boats and big guns.

It was late when Deer Foot made it back to his village. Resting on the river bank were three wooden boats. Deer Foot could see a large shiny gun on one of the boats.

Many white men and one black man were walking around on shore. Some of the men had colorful uniforms and big broad hats with ribbons. Most of the men had on white shirts and trousers. Deer Foot had never seen anything so exciting.

Village elders were talking with men from the boats. Deer Foot thought the talk seemed friendly.

Soon the elders left and the men from the boat set up a camp on shore.

In their tepee that night, Deer Foot listened as his father, Bear Paw, talked about the boat men. He said they were explorers who wanted to be friends with all the tribes. He said there would be a great council on a high bluff near the village. The elders and some of the strangers would meet there the next day to smoke the peace pipe.

Then Bear Paw told his son that because he could run so fast, he had been chosen to be the council messenger. Bear Paw said that meant that Deer Foot had great responsibility. He would have to be ready to carry any message, to any place, as quickly as he could.

The next morning the Americans came to the village.

"Here they come," Bear Paw said.

Deer Foot knew it was time to go to the council bluff and he was ready. Thus it was that Deer Foot became the youngest member of the first Indian council Captains Lewis and Clark held in the Louisiana Territory. It was an honor he remembered all his life.

When the meetings ended on Council Bluffs, the strangers gave him a medal and invited him to visit their boat. While Deer Foot watched, the strangers fired a shot from the big gun to salute the first Indians they had met on their journey.

That night Deer Foot stepped out of his father's tepee. Looking into the sky, he gave thanks that he had been born to run so fast.



Classroom Extensions Things to Think About and Do -

- Deer Foot had a talent for running. What is a talent? Name three talents that you have? Name three talents that you do not have. How do you make a talent even better?
- On their journey, Lewis and Clark presented medals to many Indians. One was the Jefferson Peace Medal. Find a picture of this medal, then design your own peace medal. Discuss with your classmates who might deserve a peace medal.

Next Week: Chapter Three - To Catch a Prairie Dog

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