

# 200,000B.C.:

# THE STORYTELLER

BY: Tom Ball

[tomball33@yahoo.com](mailto:tomball33@yahoo.com)

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## CHAPTER 1: THE TRIBE'S MYTHOLOGY

Let me tell you the tale of my people. We lived in what you know as the French Riviera in winter and in the Alps in summer. In this year our tribe had 52 warriors and 102 women and almost 300 children. That was in my 40<sup>th</sup> summer. We were a race of hunter-gatherers. And we had free love amongst us and called ourselves, "The Love People." But actually, we were quite violent and lived for war and the hunts. Our last war was five years ago where we defeated and killed the males of a much smaller tribe and took their women and children. This last war acquired slightly dark-skinned women into our tribe of whites. We all agreed these women were a good addition to our tribe as some of them were very clever.

But the Shamaness, Magic Tongue, was in charge of religion. And she knew all the stories of the Gods. The chief God was the Goddess of Love. The offspring of her and the Sun God, made humans and gave people the desire to breed. And the Goddess of Love tried to temper the God of War and make peace amongst the Gods. And the Shamaness hypnotized us not to fight other tribes unless absolutely necessary. We had a couple of artists in our tribe over the years and they carved images of the Gods in wood, and we put the statues in the Temples of the Gods in the high mountains. In summer the Shamaness, Magic Tongue, would spend time dwelling in these cave temples and the people would offer food to the Gods and Goddess. We believed the caves were an entryway to Hell, where we were all going after death. And the carvers were now working on carving Demi-Gods who also had their own caves. Magic Tongue, she would pray to the Goddess for the health of our tribe. It was one of our myths that the Gods had programmed us (through the Shaman's hypnotism) to build shrines for the Gods. And every summer season which we had always spent in the mountains, we visited and now our carvers were doing lesser

deities. And all of the temples were in cliff faces in caves and could only be reached by dangling a rope from above, so no other tribe disturbed our holy places. But it was said that the tribe's first Shamaness had died while being lowered to the caves as the rope broke. It was an infamous tragedy in the tribe's history. Every year the top 20 wisest tribespeople, by election, were lowered by rope to the caves in the cliff facings of their choosing. The mouths of the caves were 25 in number, and we used 12, one for each of the 12 deities. Some of the caves formed a network of caves, which were full of effigies and totems and the ashes of former Shamanesses and Chiefs. But sometimes birds such as eagles nested in our temples, and we had to fight them off. We also worshipped the God of Birds and Flying. The Bird God was said to be a dragon who was known to sweep down on humans and take them to his lair and devour them.

Our oral history was mythological. And our goal in life was to try and be perfect just like the Deities. But some of us pointed out that the Gods weren't perfect. Anyway, our mission was to sow their seeds and populate Earth and live a life worthy of the Gods.

Our history said that we were part of a great diaspora of peoples from the bosom of the Gods well over a century ago.

The Shamaness, Magic Tongue, said, "The Gods wanted everyone to have sex with as many people as possible for good children." And she believed it was good to love everyone. No other tribe we met had free love, though many were polygamists. We typically didn't know who the father was. And we all tried to love everyone else of the opposite sex. The Sun God was said to have once shared light with the Moon Goddess, and it was still lighting up the night sky. And the

Sun God loved all the Goddesses, and had children with them who were lesser, obscure Gods, who would one day grow to replace the elder Gods.

And I, Cool Ring, was the chief bard of the peoples' history which went back through several generations. The beginnings of our tribe were rooted in myths, but there had been some great chiefs and Shamanesses and bards (the latter similar to me) and warriors. Like the former chief who had said, "Our tribe would grow and grow and replace all others eventually." He proposed "A tribe of thousands." And said, "We must avoid warfare in order to grow." And the former Shamaness who was my mother, was known to have said, "Every disease can be cured one day." But that was before the coming of the smallpox 4 years ago. And she said, "We should trade far and wide." And the Shamaness before that, she was known to have said, "Magic mushrooms were the food of the Gods." And she had said, "Life is largely illusory." And the Shamaness before that was said to have spoken about, "How easy and good, this life was!" And she had said, "Animals have a spirit and to eat them is to capture their essence." And people would have dreams of the animals they had killed or almost killed. The Shamanesses would interpret our dreams.

Another of our stories was about a Chief in the distant past, Magnus Ludos who had said, "The key to raising the youth, was to make learning fun." And he said, "The people need not be serious. Life is just a dream." And Magnus Ludos said, "Everyone should have a totem animal." "A totem animal was one in which your spirit most resembled. So, we did, and my animal was a rare sabre-toothed tiger. Many people just called me, "Tiger." The Shamaness was a mammoth, and the chief was a cave bear. Most were just humble animals. And one day I was confronted by

a sabre tooth tiger and I filled him full of arrows and killed him. After that I wore his tusks when I went on the hunt. We all wore a ring of our totem animal of wood.

And we had some wood carvings of our previous important people. Like three Shamanesses before and five chiefs before and outstanding artists and bards and took them with us as we migrated with the seasons. And of course, we had carvings of the 12 Gods in the cliff temples. We had two master wood workers and they together had 7 protégés working for them. Some other tribes were amazed by our statues. Some neighboring tribes referred to us as “the Statuesque People.” We had some words in common with many of our dozens of known neighbors, especially simple words. And ever year we sent a warrior to 10 of our neighboring tribes to learn their language for 2 months a year. Many wars were caused by miscommunication, and it was the Shamanesses idea to learn others’ languages. And also learn their ways. And we traded statues of the Gods to other tribes along with other things.

And we closely studied the heavens. We believed each star was a God or Demi-God, but we only worshipped 12 Gods/Goddesses and 12 Demi-Gods. However, we knew there were others. We figured the brightest stars were Gods who were farther away than the Sun or the Moon. And some, like the Goddess of Luck were invisible to our mortal eyes, but often could be seen while we were on magic mushrooms. Magic mushrooms were the food of the Gods. And when one became an adult at age 14, one would take the shrooms for the first time and would “see things” pertaining to their future and at the same time, they were hypnotized by the Shamaness, who programmed them with post-hypnotic suggestion, and they were duly named. Some said,

“Fourteen was too young,” but they were fully developed at age 14 and the tribe needed hunters/warriors and newborn children.

My favorite Deity was the Moon Goddess, and she was on my totem necklace. Wearing a Deity necklace brought mostly good luck from your Deity. But often the Gods were displeased with you and didn't bring good luck. Quite the opposite in fact. But I wondered why the Gods were so cruel and inattentive to our needs. If they were our creators, why didn't they take better care of us? Magic Tongue said, “We are mere mortals, and it is not our place to question the Gods. As you know in the whole history of the tribe, everyone has worshipped the divine Gods!”

Anyway, the Goddess of the Moon who was a crazy God who wanted all the people to act like mad people. And the Moon God was full of mad behavior and antics. Like stealing the Goddess of Love's emerald cup and giving the people a sense of humor. Don't be too serious was the message of this God. And party on, was her message. I partied every night. And at the end of my night, I would visit with one of the women.

And on the solstices and equinoxes we did no work and partied all day. These were days of the Gods. People would drink the alcohol I had made. Alcohol was produced by a variety of grains which were fermented, and we kept it in animal stomach pouches and mostly large wooden boxes 3 yards by 3 yards, with the wood planks glued together with clay... It was very strong liquor and had to be drunk with water and dried berries. But most of us drank alcohol every day...

And I told the people, “The message from our ancestors is ‘Tomorrow you may die, so live for the day.’” Most of our people didn’t live long after 40, if that. War and disease and aging and fatalities while trying to give birth all took their toll on us.

We prayed to the Gods especially during childbirth and war. With regard to childbirth the infant mortality rate was 10% and the mother died 2% of the time. So, there were some orphans who were taken in by other mothers. Big Chicken, a matron of 50, did most of the childbirths. Big Chicken said, “Whilst some have 12 or more kids, others die at their first birth.”

The Demi-Gods were cloud giants who gave power to warriors and the giantesses made women strong. If a woman had no kids by age 35, she was cast out as demon spawn who were a waste of food resources and semen. Once cast out they typically wouldn’t live long, and people shunned them as witches. It was the tribal custom. Women who were in their 30s and childless were frantic and panicking, loving for much of the day. As of this time, 15 had been banished in the last two decades.

But I also wore a totem necklace of the Love Goddess who I also kind of respected. I believed strongly in free love, and I always had had a lot of lovers. But I wondered if it all wasn’t up to the God of Luck. Or perhaps even there were no Gods...But all of our great ancestors had believed in the Gods, and everyone in the tribe prayed to one God or another. And other tribes were the same.

Another of our myths was about the Goddess of Love who would possess females and make them very attractive/charming to men. Some men claimed ordinary women drove them wild with



desire. And many women prayed to the Goddess. The Love Goddess was said to demand children from women.

Also, central to our belief system was the story of the Goddess of Luck who was kicked out of the Gods Temple in Hell for believing in luck. And this God, named Chronos had numerous children with mortal women, and many of the children became some of the various tribes in the World today... But we were not so lucky, with all our disease and warfare. And many of our tribe believed in this God and worshipped him. Chronos demanded people throw the six-sided bone die before all action. The die's sides indicated north, south, east and west and also yes and no. Most often they would try to roll a yes to their wishes. Some argued the way some threw the dice were cheating by throwing the dice in the same way with the same face up...

And some worshipped all 12 of our Deities and the 12 Demi-Gods. The Chief was a follower of the God of the Sun and so were many of the other men. But many also wanted to worship the God of War, but Magic Tongue hypnotized them to desist. The God of War was to be invoked only when absolutely necessary. So far in the last century or so the tribe had gone to war 8 times and still the tribe survived. There had also been some skirmishes with other tribes over hunting grounds. It had been five years since the last war which was relatively mild.

Before hunting, hunters burnt small wooden effigies they had created of various animals to get power over them. Everyone could create an effigy. They could be quite simple and carved in a half-an-hour. I didn't believe in effigies; they didn't seem to work. But Magic Tongue had no

problem with it, so the burning of effigies continued. She said, "If you were confused about what action to take, one might as well simply worship the Goddess of Luck with a throw of the bone die."

Another myth was the story of the ram and the lambs in which the ram butts the male lambs, and they fall to their death in order to have no challenger to his harem of ewes. The result of course was the herd went extinct. And we all felt it was a seminal story. We all lived above all for our children and hoped they could make our tribe stronger and more populous and spread out throughout the land and maybe even go to sea.

Another seminal story was a fable about the turtle and the mammoth. The turtle was good in swimming but clumsy on land. The mammoth was powerful on land but barely able to swim. And attracted and was devoured by sharks, while cooling off on a hot summer's day. The moral of the story was everyone has their own unique skills, and everyone is a valuable part of our tribe.

Also in our mythology was the story of a Devil spirit who tried to set fire to our camp. It was a surprise night-time attack, just the one Devil came out of the dark and tried to burn down their tents in the dark. We had had this great fire some years ago and it burnt our entire camp, but the Chief alerted the people and, in some cases, pulled them to safety, he was awake late into the night., and that's the reason he was able to alert everyone. After setting fire to our camp the Devil disappeared, but not before the Chief saw his Devilish visage. Some of us stopped praying to the Goddess of Death. And after the fire, winter was coming. So, it was our custom now to

have a few people sit out by the central fire at night, drinking, to ward off arsonists. Fortunately, we killed a lot of animals that Fall and made good hide tents for the winter. But some said we were cursed by the Goddess of Death. And the carvers asked the chief about this Devil and made a statue to him. The Devil was believed to dwell with the Death Goddess in Hell.

And we believed in the afterlife. We believed our souls would be sucked up to Hell once we died. And though some people said the Gods had come from distant Worlds to Earth and we were their divine offspring, nevertheless life was cruel and most believed our souls went to Hell after death. So, few wanted to die. The Goddess of Death was worshipped by many in our tribe. But some said the meaning of life is to die gloriously. The Goddess of Death lived deep below the Earth in a maze of caves and the dead spirits wandered lonely in the caves where nothing, but dead souls lived. And they were said to fight unending battles with one another and had no rest or succor. To appease the Goddess of Death we burnt the bodies of our dead enemies in her honor. We all felt she was greedy for souls in Hell to manipulate and control. And we believed animals had souls too and would also wander in Hell.

The forest was full of dangerous animals and evil spirits. Like the evil witches who appeared comely but lured men into their house and enslaved them for eternity.

And there was the story of the ghost robbers. The robbers were rogue warriors who had been cast out by various tribes and died and became ghosts. They attacked tribe members by getting in

their heads. And killed them and devoured their soul. And every day before starting out on a hunt, we all prayed to our individual Gods for good luck and safety. I prayed with the others, but I felt perhaps there were no Gods. I hadn't seen any except when on magic mushrooms. And I didn't believe the smallpox we'd had four years previously was caused by a God. But most said the God of Plague was responsible. If it was true this God existed, he was certainly very cruel. And I wondered what he might have to gain by striking us with disease.

And then there was the God of War. Many men prayed to this God, especially before the hunt and also if there was to be a battle while out hunting or in war. The War God demanded warriors cut their arms and bleed on the central fire before starting the hunts, in the camp, and the Shamaness saw no reason to change it.

And many of us also believed in the Goddess of Plenty. This Deity made the land and sea prosper with animals/sea creatures and humans. And we prayed to her for good hunts/fishing. And she gained more and more souls to worship her. The Goddess of Plenty was said to have stolen the Sun God's power for the sake of the people. The Sun God was said to have set fires to burn large tracts of land as revenge. And we had a forest fire that year, as it was a drought.

We also told a tale of green-skinned men who had died out due to lack of food to the north of us. Apparently, they all died in a prolonged snowstorm, in which they all got a feverish chill. It was a lesson for us. And it seemed that people came in all colors.

And our hunters and scouts discovered numerous ruins of cities made of stone and brick and we thought these cities were previously inhabited by the Gods before they went to “Space.” We avoided the ruins as places of “evil.” And they were overgrown with vegetation. But there were ruins everywhere. Many prayed to the God of the Past.

And so on. The Shamaness told endless stories of the Gods and I told stories of humans. Many of my stories though, I made myself. I was truly the storyteller.

## CHAPTER TWO: SUMMER OF MY 40<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

Although, I was the Bard and keeper of the clan's history which went back over 100 years, I didn't particularly care for the Chief. To me he was too violent and not as clever as me. But I had to admit he had a handsome beard and a great physique, and he kept morale high. He was chief for life according to our culture. And the chief had dumb tastes in women, generally speaking, whereas I loved the clever ones, like the Shamaness and a few others.

The Shamaness was my true love. As a lover she was beautiful, unscarred by smallpox as was I, more or less. My scars were mostly hidden by my beard. But her complexion was perfect. And I figured she had hypnotised me to love her even more. And she loved the tribe and everyone in it and took an interest in everyone's health. The Shamaness made sure that everyone had a number of lovers for the sake of their sanity. Sometimes people of the tribe went mad after a mental or physical injury and had to be re-hypnotized. The Shamaness hypnotised everyone to do her bidding. She wanted different things from different people. For example, she wanted loving from me, art for others, hunting and gathering skills and matched up kindred spirits. The Shamaness alone worshipped the Goddess of Hypnosis.

And that summer we were in the Alps, and I had some recurring dreams. One such dream was I was led by a foreign woman into some caves and then she left me to die. By way of interpretation, Magic Tongue said, "You liked exotic women too much. And they would cause your death one day!"

And I dreamed while out hunting I had met a maiden in the forest. She was orange skinned and I loved her., but feared she was a witch. So, when she beckoned me to follow her, I ran away. Magic Tongue said, “That’s the first I’ve heard of the orange-skinned people. It’s a sign from the Heavens that new, good-looking people are moving into the area.” I said, “I felt the witch was in my head reading my thoughts.” Magic Tongue said, “Who knows what kind of spirits lurk in the forest of the Gods!”

And Magic Tongue herself was browner and more exotic looking than most of us, and this was one reason I liked her. She had wide eyes and a very large bust. She was my favorite love and I guess she had hypnotized me to love her more.

Another recurring dream was a dream in which I was near the top of a tall mountain where I was hunting goats and I lost my footing and fell and broke both of my legs. I was far away from the tribe and kept yelling, “Help!” But nobody heard me, and I was dying... Magic Tongue said, “It was a prophecy that no one should hunt alone. To hunt alone and cast common sense to the wind was asking for trouble, especially while hunting in the mountains, and your poor eyesight.”

One of my lovers, Dirt Bitching, said to me once, “That she wanted to fly like a bird and go to heaven. She had made wings but couldn’t get off the ground, so then she went to a high cliff and soared and glided and crashed into the sea, but the waves washed her ashore. She was conscious of the fact that the Shamaness had hypnotised her, but she kept it to herself as she was hypnotised to do so.” And she was the one who said, “Let’s start a fire across the river to the east from our coastal settlement and catch all the fleeing animals.” And we did so. And we feasted for

months, drying the meat for the winter. (But then the following spring wildlife was rare to the east of the river, so we hunted in the north and west and stepped up our sea fishing). And Dirt Bitching said, "I worshipped the Sun God," and she said, "Some years seem hotter than others. I fully expect a really hot year, one of these years and there will be forest fires everywhere." And Dirt Bitching said, "Let's not go to the mountains this summer. I prefer the heat of the South coast. We can fish more and so not worry about food or encroaching on other tribes' hunting territory." I said, "But the people prefer meat to fish!" She said, "Better to eat fish, than die!" I said, "Well the entire adult tribe will have to vote on it. Maybe it will happen!" But in a close vote of all the males and females it was decided we would continue to go to the mountains for the summer.

And Dirt Bitching said on another occasion, "I wanted the Shamaness to teach me how to draw and paint. She said, "I want to paint memorable scenes from the tribe's history like the people scarred by smallpox or the battle of 14 years ago or porn or hunting mammoth and so on. I said, "I doubt the Shamaness will teach you, painting is her prerogative. But surprisingly Magic Tongue agreed, and Dirt Bitching improved quickly. She painted on crude deer leather skin using mostly red ochre, but also yellow ochre and even her blood. We put the paintings on the inside of our tents. It seemed everyone wanted a painting of hers. And the Shamaness started painting on crude wooden "canvasses." Everyone wanted a painting of hers too. And Dirt Bitching helped women put on red ochre make up.

And Dirt Bitching said, "Tell me a story, Bard!" So, I told her, "Once there was a woman who painted pictures. But then one day she painted a beautiful painting of a bull. And she



changed into a bull and her human body fell and quickly shriveled up. And she enjoyed the freedom of being a bull and mated with many females.” Dirt Bitching said, “Who knows what magic the Gods can perform?!”

And one day while out hunting we discovered as usual extensive ruins now overgrown with vegetation. The ruins went on and on. We had found over the last several years hundreds of ruined cities. And it made us want to build a giant tribe and build a giant city. They were holy places, and we didn’t want to disturb the spirits of the dead nor the Gods themselves.

Another woman I loved was a very young woman of 16, Forest Moss, who interested me when she said, “She thought a woman should be chief and avoid conflict with our neighbors. Men were too war-like.” And she said, “And we could offer our neighbors statues, flint, alcohol and red ochre for peace. And also, wooden chimes that you invented.” I said, “We have translators who identify clever women, and we trade for them. Usually, I can trade one ordinary pretty girl for one who is clever. I have acquired 8 women this way this year and it is good for peace.

The alcohol needed to be sent by boat upriver to the mountains or along the coast. And Forest Moss, she added, “We had plenty of all kinds of things to ship by boat.” And Forest Moss said, “I too loved the Goddess of the Moon.” This Goddess was said to have taken the virginity of the God of Death. And he was forever beholden to her. Forest Moss loved me well and said she owed me a favor. She had no children, so I took her hunting with me, she was my eyes. She said she really wanted me to impregnate her and had sex with no other man. Finally after a couple of

months she was pregnant and it was a rare case of us knowing the father. But I was loving other women at the time...

And Forest Moss said, "You Cool Ring, are the light of my life." I said, "I will never forget you and always find time for you!" She said, "I wish I could have you all to myself!" I said, "We men are busy loving all the women." And Forest Moss had been acquired when we won the war five years ago. But she said, "She was happier here. Her previous tribe was polygamist, and she hadn't wanted to be married off to someone she didn't like when she turned 16.

And she told me, "Bard, tell me a story!" So, I told her, "Once a woman fell totally in love with a man and lost herself. She no longer lived for herself. But as the man's love for her faded, she faded away too. And finally, one night she went out into the cold and froze to death." She said, "I'm over my head with you for sure, but I still live for my own pleasure."

Another woman was Hearing Genius, she had this name because she had an ear for the flute, even while still young. While I loved her, she would sing love songs. She said, "I like your voice. And she asked me to sing along with her while we were loving. People in the neighboring tents, they would tell her to be quiet. But she was so proud of her voice. And the harder I loved her, the louder she sang. And she said, "She wanted to master playing two flutes at once for a harmonious melody" I said, "You are truly a genius!" And she wanted "A story." I told her, "Once there was a girl who sang beautifully wherever she went. But then one day a sabretoothed tiger heard her song and devoured her." She said, "You mean I have to be careful about my singing?" I said, "Sometimes it's better to not draw attention to ourselves." She said, "Once

there was a man who fell under the spell of a woman's music, but so did others and he was jealous and finally killed himself."

The Chief's favorite past time was playing with bone dice for alcohol. Most people in the tribe were crazy about alcohol. I used selected grains and fermented it in wooden boxes that were sealed with clay. It was my job to make the liquor, and everyone was grateful to me for it. But the Chief was our strongest warrior and totally fearless. That's why he was Chief.

Of course, we made plenty of alcohol in the mountains, collecting grains from the grasslands of the foothills and we reused the same boxes. And we brought some boxes with us on boats, some empty, others full. I didn't go a day without drinking.

Many others played dice to see who would love who and who would hunt where. Some people would do nothing without a dice roll. Such was their belief in luck. And of course, many of them worshipped the Goddess of luck.

The Chief's favorite woman was bitchy and ill-tempered. But she was our Queen. But most people figured the Shamaness was our true Queen. But the Shamaness made no secret of it: she liked the Chief but, believed him to be macho and arrogant and not so clever in war. However most believed in the chief and thought he was clever and had good judgement.

The Queen was very bossy and told all the other women who they should love. Most ignored her, but then she had the habit of flying into a rage. Almost everyone tried to avoid her, but out

of respect for the chief were polite with her. But many women complained to the Chief, so finally he dumped her. And she left the tribe to go live in the wilderness. Nobody missed her except for one dumb follower who liked her and went to visit her in the wild.

Basically, the Chief's war plan was to pick on smaller tribes, whose men scattered in the face of our 52 men as we left the women behind. And if a tribe had more warriors than us then we would make peace with gifts of statues, chimes (which I had invented), flint, red ochre unpopular women and alcohol for peace, hemp to make cannabis and rope and also clever women. Most of our neighbors didn't like alcohol. But the Shamaness kept hypnotising the Chief to be peaceful and that seemed to work. And nearly everyone in the tribe agreed we had too many women as it was and many didn't want foreigners being forced to join our tribe. The Shamaness walked a fine line with the Chief, keeping him prepared for war just in case we were attacked.

I loved some other new women. One of them, Brutal Reality, said she'd seen the Goddess of Death while on magic mushrooms. The Goddess told her she would come for her soon. So, she was very frightened. I told her, "It's just an illusory World on magic mushrooms. Alcohol is a much better drug and favored by the Gods. So, I got her drunk for the first time in her life and we loved the night away. And I told her, "Once there was a girl who was frightened by the Gods, but in the end, she decided to forget about the Gods and lived happily ever after." She told me, "But how can one live without the immortal Gods? I said, "I have tried praying to the Gods and it yields no fruit." She said but surely you are blessed by the God of Luck to be in your forties and still happy. I said, "I nearly died of smallpox and my vision is fading. Why should I have

survived smallpox whilst other God-fearing people died out?” She said, “You are favored by the Goddess of Luck!”

A woman who'd come to us in the war six years ago, named Wolf Teeth, aged 30. I was growing to love. She said, “I want a dog, just like I had in my former tribe.” I said, “I'll try and capture a puppy for you!” And she said, “I want to love you more often. I told her, “Once there was a beautiful woman who was greedy for love and always gave her lovers a hickey with her large canine teeth to mark her territory as it were. But then one day she decided she was a Goddess, and insisted her lovers worship her and do her bidding. But no one can play God.” She said, “I'm not trying to play God, I just want you to love me more.”

One of the older women, was still vaguely attractive. But didn't get much love, but she didn't mind. Her name was Strong Wind. She told the young females to love all they can. I told her, “Once there was a woman who thought she'd seen it all, but one day a green-skinned man seized her and brought her back to his far away encampment.” She said, “Some men like older women as they are wise.” I said, “Life is full of surprises.” She died that year.

Our language was known as “French” and we all thought it was a beautiful language and neighboring tribes spoke other languages that were also beautiful.

Around this time, I had a recurring dream of turning green. In the dream everyone shunned me, and I was cast out from the tribe to live miserably in the wilderness. Magic Tongue said, “You have to be careful with your drinking. No one knows the long-term effects of alcohol, you

might even turn green!” I said, “I have too many good friends to ever be cast out. I think turning green is an alien spirit inside you, taking over your body and mind.”

And one time I dreamt I was in one of the many ruins chasing a deer and I turned green like the Gods, I guessed. Magic Tongue said, the “Gods must come in many colors, just like people.”

I talked with the Chief often about our ever-changing neighbor tribes. We sent scouts to view their encampments at dusk and the scouts then set up camp for the night nearby. For each tribe we had meeting points scheduled for the 5-day period before the solstices and equinoxes. On these days we mostly brought alcohol, unpopular women and flint to trade for clever women, cannabis and peace. But most of our neighbors didn’t like the alcohol so we just traded them flint for peace and exchanged women. We had a translator for all of our 10 nearby tribes. And we had plenty of flint to trade, from two sites in our hunting territory. We had agreed with our neighbors on hunting grounds using crude maps we drew in the sand. My friend Pig Eye had the best sense of direction of all of us in the tribe and drew up maps favorable to us. Many of our tribe members liked the cannabis. I figured it was a harmless drug that made me laugh. I laughed more than I ever had after taking the marijuana.

But when we traded for women. It was I who decided who we would take. I trusted the interpreters’ opinions, on who were the cleverest women. with the women offered using our interpreter warrior and chose the clever ones who weren’t so pretty. I told the tribe, “Cleverness trumps everything. And I told them, “We were building a Super tribe.” Some complained however that we had too many “foreigners.”

One new woman we'd acquired was Alien Grotto. She learned our language in a month. And she said, "She shared our tribe's vision for a united alliance of all tribes in the known World." And she said, "I dreamed of peace and no more selling and buying of women." I told her, "Most of our men prefer clever women. We are making a tribe of Superhumans!" Alien Grotto said, "If there is peace, people will be free to act cleverly!" And I told her, "Once there was a girl who wanted peace, but all she got was war and her lover died. She was disconsolate but then she was captured by a cleverer tribe and found true loves and happiness." She said, "That's right about my lover. But I am not sure this tribe is really clever. They seem like a bunch of crazy drunkards to me. And your 'clever' women are simply mad women."

And on one occasion, the Chief said, "Tell me a story!" So, I told him, "Once there was a man who loved all the women he could. But then he fell in love with one of them. And she drove him crazy and so finally he went to live in the wilderness as a hermit." The Chief said, "I know the Shamaness has been in my head with hypnosis, and I love her deeply, and she drives me crazy but, I am not so crazy that I can't perform my Chiefly duties. And I had traded away a few of the Chief's dumb lovers and so there was tension between us. I knew he was really mad but didn't dare challenge me as I was cleverer and more popular than him."

And one night sitting around the fire, Hot Hand, one of our two carvers said, "I am excited about loving the new adult women." I said, "They are easy energetic lovers." The Chief said, "Such women make one feel young."

And another night Hot Hand asked me “To tell him as story.” I said, “Once there was a carver who was inspired by alcohol to make an ugly visage of the God of Luck. And he had a lot of good luck!” Hot Hand said, “Most people have bad luck, sooner or later and I try to carve the Gods to make them as beautiful as possible. Superhuman even. We need to strive to be like the Gods...”

And my teeth were rotten and bothering me, so I drank even more these days. Most people were in the same boat. Few had good teeth. Many said cannabis helped them.

Another night by the central firepit, the Shamaness asked me, “What kind of man do you want to be?” I replied, “I want to be cleverer and more useful to the tribe.” So, she hypnotized me again and I felt my mind was clearer, vaguely remembering the hypnosis. And I seemed to make decisions quicker and more easily. And new ideas occurred to me like making wood chimes for music. And a big rudder for our boats (which we rowed with paddles). And trading with distant neighbors down the coast hundreds of miles.

Another night, my friend, Pig Eye and I were talking. Pig Eye said, “We need to draw up an accurate map of our surrounding area for our hunters to use. And track animal spoor in areas for the daily hunt. It will help people from getting lost. So, we wrote down what we knew in the sand and then asked other hunters to add to it. We all memorized it. But the key features were the Rhone River and mountains to the East and West and the coast to the South, nearby. The land was mostly covered in forest. But there were grasslands for mammoths and cattle, especially in the foothills.



## CHAPTER 3: FALL OF MY 41<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

Then Fall came and we were back on the South coast in the Riviera. It was heavy carrying all our belongings in portages and it took us more than two weeks to get there.

One night by the fire, Pig Eye said, "Let's invite nearby tribes to join in our Ball Game." The game involved teams of 20, throwing or running with the small ball and trying to get control of it in the other team's end zone. If you did so you scored one point. The field was large, 200 yards by 100 yards plus the end zones of 20 yards by 20 yards. Every time we played people got injured, sometimes even breaking bones. We had our playing field on a sand bar in the river. I told him, "It was a good idea."

So, we invited the 10 tribes we knew of and they in turn invited 5 more and 10 came. We played hard and I broke my finger and several of our tribe had broken arms. We finished second after playing 10 games with an 8-2 record. All the tribes agreed it was good to get together and play and we should do it every year. And after the games were over, we held a great potluck feast with plenty of alcohol, but most of the other tribes said it was, "Devil's brew." But two tribes loved it. But many new romances were formed even though we couldn't communicate with the other tribes, except one translator we had for 7 of the tribes. And we added translators to the other 3, giving us the ability to communicate with 13 tribes now. And we had a lot of words in common, with the others. But it was all exotica.

The 10 tribes who were visiting all told of ruins in their area and they said, “The great people who lived there must have destroyed themselves, so they were places of evil, to be avoided.”

Hearing Genius would play the double flute and a number of people would play the drums and I would play the wooden chimes I had invented. And the girls would dance every night by the fire, in the early evening. I said to Hearing Genius one time, “That now you have mastered all the songs, you must now make new ones!” She said, “I was enhancing old songs with the double flute and sure one day I will make whole new songs. I plan on making a song for every adult in the tribe.” And I always stayed awake, drinking long after the dancers had gone to bed. I told her, “Once there was a girl who made sweet music for her tribe, but she attracted a dead soul into her head. And the dead soul drove her completely mad.” She replied, “Do you really think I can wake the dead?” I said, “Let’s go to one of the nearby ruins and take magic mushrooms and play music and see what we can see.” So, we did, and we saw visions of air cars and tall buildings and we both felt they were the future and the past. I said, “We seem to live in a dark age.”

Another time, Hearing Genius said to me around the fire, that, “You make me feel warm inside. And you sing so well.” And we sang along with one another whilst loving. I was kind of getting used to “singing love.” And another night she said, “Let’s you and I escape to the wilderness for a few weeks and get to know one another better. And we can sing our heads off.” So, we told the people, “We were going on an extended reconnaissance mission and put up a tent and loved the hell out of one another. I said, “Hearing Genius, you are just as clever as the Shamaness. Maybe you are the cleverest woman in the whole World.” She said, “But the World

seems large and full of strange peoples. New people keep appearing from the Southwest coast and the Southeast coast. There seems to be no limit. Every year there are new ones.”

And on another occasion by the fire, Hearing Genius, told the Chief, “I wanted to pick the most promising musical youths to train in singing with me.” The Chief said, “Children are not much use anyway, good to employ them in training, just like we teach the male children to fight.” She said, “I want a full choir of voices, harmoniously singing together.” The Chief replied, “Go for it!” And I said, “I know of a good cliff where the songs will echo and be sublime.” She said, “Let’s try it.”

Another night at the fire, Big Brain, the other wood carver said, “I could carve statues of other tribes’ leaders and trade them for exotic women.” I said, “Brilliant!” Pig Eye said, “Most Leaders are vain and many women too. You could also make statues of prominent women in other tribes.” I said, “We should try and acquire clever women who don’t fit in with their own tribe, but they will fit right in with our free love, free thinking lifestyle.”

On another occasion by the fire, Hot Hand said, “I was experimenting with flint hand axes for Battle. They are sharper than our normal hand axes but are more fragile. Still in war, bows and arrows are limited to distance fighting when it gets to be at close quarters better to have a sharp axe.” I said, “Such axes would be good for throwing short distances as well and one could have many axes on a sash on your chest.”

Then one night one of the young men Damned Soul said to me, "I want to dig down in the ground and see if I can make it to Hell." I told him, "Under the soil was just rock and what do you want to go to Hell for anyway?" He said, "He was curious if the legends were true about life after death." I said, "Live your life to the full and worry about Hell if indeed you get there, when you get there." For me personally, I didn't believe humans or animals had a soul. And death was final. Still, I could lead a life for posterity by inventing alcohol and composing fables and stories about life (I'll talk about the fables later). But I told Damned Soul, "Once there was a man so eager to visit the afterlife that he killed himself by drowning. But there was no afterlife, and it was such a shame for him." He said, "Of course there is an afterlife, you are just trying to scare me." I said, "What do people do without a body? Just drift aimlessly?" He said, "I am sure the dead souls will live in paradise." And I said, "You've just been brainwashed by Magic Tongue." He said, "I don't know anything about that."

The Chief was violent too and wanted to lead our now 68 warriors to attack other tribes and take their women. But the women complained we had enough women and needed more men. We now had 118 women

And one time, I was round the fire with the Shamaness. She said, "I am excited to love the newly adult men in the ceremony tomorrow. I said, "And I am looking forward to loving the new women."

During the ceremony almost everyone got in on the action and when the virgins were loved by ten lovers each and we all got drunk and had a feast of dried mammoth.

I sampled a few of the new women. I liked Kissing Frenzy, who said “Tell me a story!” So I responded, “Once there was a woman who liked to kiss every man. But then one day she got carried away and kissed a toad and this caused her to change into a tree that was conscious but couldn’t move or speak.” She asked, “What is the meaning of the story?” I said, “It’s a dangerous world and you have to be careful who you kiss. Some men, they can be violent and full of nasty surprises and so, you need to use discretion before loving them.”

When we acquired new women and children, we then educated the captured in our language and cultural ways. We now had a culture that was different than others we encountered in that it was free love. I loved nearly all 118 of the women. I thought all love was good, but 3 of the women were scarred from the smallpox, but the vast majority of survivors of the smallpox days had good faces and nearly all still had good bodies. Nearly all women in the tribe were still attractive, and few were old.

Another night I was talking with Fat Tooth, the Shamanesses’ protégé. She was saying, “It’s hard to know who loves who and who is just in it for sex.” I said, “I figure if you have sex with someone it means you like them a lot and those who keep coming back to the same lover are in love.” She said, “I think it is more complicated than that. Sometimes you have a crush on someone and can think of nothing else.” I replied, “I often feel that way about the Shamaness. So I guess I am in love.” And Fat Tooth asked me to “Tell her a story?” So, I told her, “Once there was a medicine woman who controlled the whole tribe with hypnosis. But she died suddenly one day without a successor and so the hypnosis wore off, and the men became violent again and

made war with other tribes and captured their women and children. It was an era of violence.” She said, “But, I am Magic Tongues successor and know everything she knows.” I replied, “What if invaders come and kill you both as they might not like female Shamans. Then all your hard work will be for nothing.” And then I loved Fat Tooth again; she was very attractive.

When one wanted to visit a woman in her tent, one would have to check if there was a white flag covering the entryway; if there was, it meant that she had a lover that night. Some women were in high demand, and one had to get there early, but there were far more women than men so a man could always find love. Of course, if the woman you were visiting didn’t want you, you had to go on to the next.

And I was the secret preferred lover of the Shamaness. She wanted to maintain an aura of mystery about her and kept men guessing. And she loved some men who were depressed to cheer them up. When I loved her, it was frantic and crazy. She was really lively and was the best lover I’d ever encountered. And I also loved two of her daughters who were still in their teens, and they were wild too. I’d been loving her for years and felt maybe the daughters were mine. But she loved so many it was impossible to tell.

And one night I had a dream I was loving a girl and her mother stabbed me to death. Magic Tongue said, “Not everyone in the tribe likes you. Some worry you are corrupting the youth with alcohol and don’t like the fact that you doubt the immortal Gods exist.” It was true I had to admit, some people thought my booze was the “Devil’s brew” and turned people into madmen.

And some blamed me for the smallpox saying I had angered the Gods and my stories they said were evil!

We of course had the ability to make fire and associated it with the Sun God. One time some years ago a fire set by a Devil had burnt all our tents to cinders. So, we had to be careful. But sometimes our hunting parties went on a trip as long as a week, so they made fires at the twilight of dusk so no others could spot their smoke. And they could walk 20 miles in a day. However, in our main camp there was usually a big fire burning, even when it was pouring rain. When it rained, we put up a leather roof 15' above the firepit which had peaked roof. And the firepit was where we gathered to sing songs at night and the Shamaness would recite tales of the Gods and we would all chant with her together.

There were all sorts of interesting women in the tribe. Another was Blooming Tulip. She said, "Many men consider me to just be a pretty thing. But actually, I am very clever. For example, I can do math in my head that few others in the tribe can do. And I am very good at tracking animals, I think I'm the best." I'd heard she was a good tracker, and she was certainly very pretty. And it was good love. And I said to her, "What number of people have died young in the last century?" She said, "Hundreds and hundreds died before 25. The smallpox alone killed about 95 people, or they committed suicide due to scarring after getting the disease." And I told Blooming Tulip, "Once there was a woman who thought she could calculate anything, and she used her calculations to bet on peoples' behavior. She bet her supply of red ochre for the liver of animals the tribe had killed." The Shamaness had told us 'The liver was the best part.' Anyway, she continued to bet and finally lost it all as all gamblers do in the end." But hunters gambled too

on what they would catch, and some liked the liver, others other parts of animals. She said, “Life is a gamble and if you lose everything you can always start all over again. But some bet their freedom and if they lost became a love slave to the winner. According to tribal law a sex slave had to love their master whenever their master wanted for a period of one year. Sometimes love slaves were captured in war. But after a year also won their freedom. I gambled on my own hunting prowess and killed a deer. The girl I gambled with just caught a rabbit in the allotted time. So she became my sex slave for a year. Her name was Breezy Day. And I used her in threesomes loving along with other girls. And she was not allowed to love other men and so was always horny. Most of my lovers who I had a one-night stand with, didn’t mind a menage a trois.

Then there was a man called Bywar. He liked men and was gay. Mostly he loved young men who were bisexual, but it was secret. Love. I knew all about him but didn’t understand his sexual proclivities. Most of our tribespeople didn’t believe it was possible to be gay. But, in my opinion, at least it was something different. I was all for variety in this life, I felt it colored our World. I wasn’t interested in Bywar, but he could really play the flute. And some of the youth, were intensely interested in his flute playing and tried to learn from him. But most agreed Hearing Genius was better. We had some different types of flutes with different numbers of holes, that Hearing Genius had made and some were made from bone, others wood. And the drums were different sizes. I liked to play the drums whilst singing. One time by the fire, Hearing Genius told Hot Hand and Big Brain, “To help me to make better flutes. Hot Hand said, “We need to experiment a bit with new flutes. We’ll provide you an array of wooden flutes and you can tell us how we can tweak them to improve.” “Yes,” said Big Brain.



And Bywar had a female friend who said, "I like women." But I loved her, and it was tender and nice. This woman's name was Cultural Suicide. And she was big breasted and very attractive, unscarred by smallpox, as indeed were the vast majority of surviving tribal members. Cultural Suicide said, "All our true Deities were in fact female. And the Love Goddess had created everything. Men were just chattels, who mostly were selfish and only interested in comfort for their mind. Women controlled the youth and their education and the Shamaness, Magic Tongue, controlled all the adult men." I told Cultural Suicide that, "The Shamaness tries to improve men, but basically boys will be boys." And it was Cultural Suicide who really got me into menage a trois sex with Breezy Day.

And Cultural Suicide said, "Tell me a story, O bard!" So, I told her, "Once there was a woman who wanted to love everyone, men and women. But the Goddess of Love was offended and cursed her so that she could never fall in love. But the woman told everyone, 'She didn't care about love which didn't exist anyway, only sex.' And she was perfectly satisfied." She said, "But I will never stop looking for female lovers regardless of what the Gods say!" And some people were scandalized.

Then one night there were a number of shooting stars in the heavens. The Shamaness said, "It was an omen that the immortal Gods were dying, and we needed to offer them meat sacrifices to keep them healthy." I said, "That is preposterous. Offering burnt food to the Gods will never solve anything." She said, "But it is a free World in which you are free to believe anything you wish. And I knew she could hypnotize me to believe in the Gods. But maybe she liked to hear different opinions".

Another night by the fire, Hearing Genius was saying. “It is a shame if a woman or warrior was struck blind (like from smallpox, four years previously), by the Gods, they would typically kill themselves, by drinking the hemlock, being just a burden on society. A few others who were badly scarred lived alone as witches or rogue robbers in the wilderness. Or just kept to a small group of scarred people. Mothers scared children about these lone ‘Devils.’” And she said, “You Cool Ring don’t see well, but you are still of use to the tribe.”

Another time around the fire I was telling the Shamaness, Magic Tongue, “Maybe we can trade for new herbs and medicines that grow elsewhere!” She told me, “We could always use more medicines. We should convince the youth that trade can be a win-win situation.” I asked, “Do you think there is a plant that could make us live longer?” She said, “By eating herbs and vegetables we can prolong life, I feel. Some of the tribes we have met over the years looked young, others old, but I really don’t know about that.” And I said, “Maybe you and I will never die?” She answered, saying, “Who knows perhaps we will join the Gods one day, you and I?” But I knew that deep down she didn’t believe in the Gods, just like me. And I said let me tell you a story. “Once there was a woman who hypnotized all the men to love her. But one young man was insanely jealous of her other lovers that he finally throttled his beloved, killing her.” Magic tongue said, “You don’t think I know what I am doing?” I said, “You are playing with fire, as I told you before!”

Another occasion by the fire saw me talking with my friend, Pig Eye. He was saying, “He liked women who were full-figured, whereas most of the youth preferred slim mates.” I said, “Women with a bit of meat on them are healthy and sexier and can better stand the cold winters.”

Then one time I was around the fire with my friend, the carver, Hot Hand. He was saying, “Most tribes are monogamous, but this seems senseless to me. Free love is the way to go!” I replied, “Yes, I can’t see the use of loving only one. Free love is good for variety’s sake, and it is also good for fertility.” He said, “Sometimes twins are born that don’t look at all like one another and must be different fathers.” I told him, “But men die in wars more than women die in childbirth, so most tribes have many more women than men and so most are actually polygamists according to our translators.”

Another night I was round the fire with Hearing Genius and she said, “Women mostly have children so can’t go hunting but can gather along with their kids. Those who do not have children hope that others do. But gathering is not safe. So, I suggest all women be trained how to kill a man in using the bow and have a warrior to watch over us while we gather.” I said that’s a good idea. Just last year one of our women went missing, who knew what had happened to her?” “And,” I said, “Best to gather in large groups. I am sure our women will fight ferociously to protect their children.”

Another occasion saw me talking with Dirt Bitching. She said, “Our outhouses attract too many flies. Let’s move them farther back from the settlement and cover over the days droppings

with soil every evening.” I said, “It’s a good idea and if people really need to go, they can pee behind their tent where no one walks.”

And one night I had a dream I was captured by another tribe. They tied me up and made clear they wanted me to show them how to make alcohol. So, I showed them and then they cut off my head. Magic Tongue said, “Few people outside our tribe know how to make alcohol. Maybe you should show other tribes and ensure that alcohol lasts into posterity, long after you are gone.

We got water from the Rhone River and drank the water straight from the source. And the Shamaness said, “It was better to drink from a nearby spring, as animals and fish peed in the water.” We had animal stomach bags for carrying water and I made my alcohol near the spring. And some people still had gastric problems, we weren’t sure why?

There were all sorts of ruins along the river, all had been mostly flattened and burnt out and overgrown and were largely rubble. We continued to avoid these places, for the most part.

And we ate from hollowed out bowls and carved the meat with a sharp flint knife. When the knife dulled, we simply retouched the blade. And we had a spit for roasting the meat and mixed the herbs in hollowed out wooden bowls too.

And I also liked Porpoise Diver. She had learned how to swim and offered to teach some others to swim. But most people, including me, were afraid of sharks and being swept away by the river current/ocean tide. And she was very classy and pretty. She also asked me, “To tell me

a story!” So, I said, “Once there was a girl who swam like a dolphin and she would catch fish with her spear, but the blood of the fish attracted sharks who devoured her. Just like that.” She said, “I know it is dangerous, but it is also a thrill.” I said, “Life is full of thrills, why not live on to experience them!”

## CHAPTER FOUR: WINTER OF MY 41<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

And then there was Venus Star to keep me warm for winter. She told me, “Venus was one of the few stars that moved noticeably in the night sky. And she said, “I am sure it’s the Love Goddess moving so she can better view the Earth with her powerful eyes.” I answered saying, “Who knows who will end up loving who as we add new adults to our tribe.” And she said, “I want to be a thinker just like you!” I responded, “It’s hard to predict how the youth will turn out. But you seem to be off to a good start.” And she asked, “For a story.” So, I told her, “Once there was a girl who studied the heavens and enjoyed the nighttime sky. But as she reached her teens her eyesight became poor, and she wondered why the Gods would deny her the stars?” She said, “My mother had poor eyesight as you know. I don’t understand the immortal Gods.” And I said, “My mother had raised me to question everything regarding our culture and the Gods.” And she said, “Leave your mark on posterity.”

And another occasion I was loving Hearing Genius again and she said, “Bard, tell me another story.” So, I told her, “Once there was a musical genius who wrote folk songs for the people which they treasured. But then one day war came to the land, and she was captured as a spoil of war. Her new tribe forbid her to play or sing and she was miserable. So, she ran away into the wilderness and lived in a tree where she would play music and gather what plants and insects she could to survive. Finally, a Chief of another tribe, foreign to her, heard her dulcet sounds and brought her back to live as his Queen.” Hearing Genius said, “So I should never give up my music?” I said, “Exactly.”

Then one night I had a dream of war. In the dream all of the men were killed except me. And I lived like a King with all the women fighting over me. Magic Tongue said, “It is a very real possibility. We have too many women in the tribe and the men don’t go to war with the women as they should. Probably if it happened the women would kill you and go to join another tribe. It is a ridiculous fantasy!”

Then one day a party of 20 women gathering was attacked by 4 warriors from another tribe. They tried to capture the women and tie them up, but the women defended themselves with bows and arrows. In the end 3 women were killed including Venus Star and the foreign warriors were all killed. I was so sorry to hear of Venus Star’s demise. And I cursed the Love Goddess. And we were down to 115 women.

For many men, the most important part of our culture was the hunts. We typically hunted in small groups looking for deer or bulls. Mammoths were the biggest prize but required a large group of hunters and we had to hit them in the eye with arrows. Due to my poor eyesight, I was not so useful in the hunts. When alone we stayed away from the mammoths and avoided sabre-tooth tigers and cave bears. Before the hunts we danced and sang fighting songs and swore we’d bring back game. We used bows and arrows. But one of my arrow tips was made of an emerald and I killed a lot of small game with it. Ten of our people had poor eyesight and most of them were drunk most of the time. If food was scarce or we were attacked, they were prepared to fight at close quarters. But as long as we were on the coast of the flood plain, there was abundant seafood for all. At least for those who fished.

We all wore deer leather clothes and shoes; some girls wore leather miniskirts in summer. Most women were topless. And we all wore a totem wooden ring that was carved by our wood carvers in the image of our totem animal and a necklace totem of our favorite Deity. And we painted our faces with red ochre. And sometimes it was purely decorative, but at war time it indicated how many you'd killed. And every night women put on their red ochre to indicate how many children they'd had and for aesthetically pleasing make up.

On occasion we met a traveler, on their own, this happened three times in recent memory. These travelling barbarians of whom I'd met two, both liked my alcohol and said it was the best. Apparently, most tribes didn't have liquor they explained once they had learnt a little of our language. They said our language was similar to a people who lived in the Pyrenees. I told two different ones who came 5 years apart that, "We had a long-lost sister tribe who had headed West and it must be them. This sister tribe had a charismatic leader who led them westward and broke from our tribe about 65 years ago, and so before my time..." It was comforting to know that in case our tribe went extinct, there were others with our language and culture. But I didn't want our tribe to break up again as there were other large tribes scattered on the coast. The travelers told us there were ruins everywhere along the coast and at one time there must have been millions of God-like dwellers living there.

And we decided to launch an expedition to see if we could find our sister tribe to the West. We met several other tribes who were friendly and new to us, and we asked them if they knew of anyone who spoke our language. And one of their women had been captured in war and said, "I



was from that tribe. But her tribe's men were wiped out by another tribe and then she was traded to this tribe. The current tribe she was in treated her kindly and she had a monogamous husband. But the tribe that had wiped them out painted themselves in yellow ochre and were to be feared. We lived in constant fear of these Yellow People. And we feared we would all end in ruins like the ruined cities of the Gods that were everywhere.

Then one day I was out in the boat farther from shore than usual and I thought I saw a flying car. I figured it was aliens and wondered when they'd come and meet us and wondered if they were hostile. I told everyone in the tribe. And Magic Tongue said, "It was indeed the God of Aliens giving us a sign that things were going to change." I told her, "We seem to live in a World of Change. What with our neighbors constantly changing or even going extinct!" I wondered why few others saw air cars, maybe they just kept it to themselves, lest others think they were crazy.

That night I said to the Shamaness, Magic Tongue, "A few of our hunters have seen green-skinned men just like in our legend. I wonder what Gods or what fate would create such people." She said, "Who knows the ways of the immortal Gods!" And Hearing Genius remarked, "I wonder if the green men have music?" I said all the tribes we've met in my time, dozens and dozens all have music." Hearing Genius said, "It is a gift of the Gods." But I said, "Now we have shared your wooden chimes with others and have brightened peoples' day with music.

But we were still a mobile people. Our camp was tents of hide with wooden supports central fire and fire inside the tents with a hole on top for smoke to escape. Wooden slanted piece above

the fire hole deflected precipitation. We moved with the seasons. In the mountains in summer and the coast in winter. Our encampments were very conducive to transporting them when we moved. Some of the people wanted to remain on the Riviera for the summer, but most of us said it was too hot and too many other tribes lived there during summer months. As summer began, we moved our camp to the mountains. We didn't have many belongings and traveled light except for our statues of great people in the tribe's history and moved alcohol by boat including to the foothills in summer.

I was a strong believer in the power of dreams. So too, the Shamaness, and others. The Shamaness told me, "I had a dream of a purple-skinned people who were all extremely skilled at loving. And I wondered if we would meet such people. And I had a recurring nightmare in which we were all enslaved by a very big tribe of black-skinned people." I told her, "We have heard rumors of black-skinned peoples far to the Southwest." And I told her, "I had had a dream in which I was chief and led our people to strange new lands of pink sky and orange trees." She said, "Who knows maybe you will be chief some day." I said, "The land of pink sky was inhabited with thousands of Demi-Gods. And I loved a few of them. In the dream I spent all day loving these few Demi-Gods." She said, "You are greedy for love. But I think it is a possible fantasy." And I told her, "I had dreams of making thousands of boxes of liquor and hosting a party for all tribes far and wide." She said, "It's a good vision." And she said, "I dreamt of an orgy in which hundreds of people from different tribes had sex at one time." I said, "It sounds kinky."

And I told the Shamaness, “One of my friends, Digging Tater, had a dream in which he met the Sun God who had a golden aura about him, and the Sun God told him, ‘We must worship him and no other Deity.’” The Shamaness said, “Many people have told me in my long life that one God is better than another. But in my life, I conclude that all the Gods are good.” And the Shamaness and I talked about omens, we were very superstitious and believed strongly in luck. Every good thing was good luck for us, and the opposite was true of bad luck. The Shamaness had the wood carvers make good God totems for the people to bring them luck, typically it was a leather necklace, with the totem carved out of bone. Everyone had at least one totem necklace and at least one Deity they believed in. My friend Digging Tater had sharp eyes and was our best hunter. He had a lot of women who really loved him. Many of them were quite ordinary but he spoiled them by bringing them flowers and honey and loving them as if they were very important. Tater said, “My philosophy was, to be kind to all people. And not be uncharitable.” I told him, “My philosophy was to question everything and wonder about the nature of things!”

One day there was a flock of geese who flew over head. The Shamaness told us, “It was an omen which suggested that we hunt in the north where they were flying to.” I said, “Perhaps, it indicates that there is trouble on the coast nearby.” And everyone seemed to have an opinion. Hearing Genius said, “The geese are my totem animal, and their flight indicates, I will have good luck this year.” and the Chief said, “It’s a sign that war is coming.” The Shamaness said, “I am the one who interprets omens. The rest of you should shut up and keep your views to yourself!”

Another night with the Shamaness had her asking me “For a story.” So, I told her, “Once there was a genius woman who thought she could control everyone through hypnosis. But then

one day another woman stole the secret by observing and listening to her and then proceeded to cross-hypnotise all the men to love her instead of the Shamaness. And many went totally insane and finally both women were killed.” Magic Tongue said, “So, I should be careful in picking my successor? I already have one, she is Fat Tooth.” I said, “You have too much power!” She said, “Despite the hypnosis we had a war 6 years ago, which I tried to prevent. But after a few of our warriors were killed I couldn’t stop it. My power is limited.”

## CHAPTER 5: SPRING/SUMMER OF MY 41<sup>ST</sup> YEAR

One of my best friends was the wood carver, Big Brain. Big Brain was training a number of the youth to carve in wood and bone. He was a self-taught man. Prior to his coming (he was 45), we had no one as skilled as him and our statues of the Gods were crude and no totem rings of animals and no carvings of the Gods necklaces. And they made some to use and trade with to other peoples. I asked Big Brain what his dream was and he said, "I dreamed of building a very large boat and sailing the sea, looking for new lands." But I reminded him we had a story, "That out at sea the storms were powerful and would sink any boat." He said, "It's just a story, no one has ever tried it I figure. They just go up the coast and are afraid to get lost in the deep sea They are chickenshit."

And Big Brain told me, "I loved the Shamaness too." And he had given me a carved life-sized statue of her naked, and said, "I hope future generations remember her." And he said, "I hope that my protégés will learn about love from her." And he and I often got drunk together. When I got drunk, I often talked about the "Devil God" who few talked about. But I figured we were all going to Hell when we died. And the more I lived the more evil I saw. The Devil is in all of us," I said. And he said to me on one occasion that, "I enjoyed breaking the hearts of young innocent girls." I replied, "Life is cruel and there is no room for innocents. People need to be realistic." On another occasion, I told him, "We are so violent, our tribe!" He said, "Nature is violent and the strong survive." And he and I had invented alcohol together, but it was my discovery of fermented plants stored for winter in a soup. He made the wooden boxes with clay caulking, which was a stroke of genius, and added herbs and I put in the select grains for a dynamite

liquor. And recently we had made apple moonshine from a few wild apple trees. Everyone said it was the best, but we mostly kept it for ourselves. And we one day noticed sapling apple trees growing in the garbage pit. We would cover our garbage with soil, but it attracted many squirrels, raccoons etc. which we shot and ate. But this gave us the idea that seeds could be planted for many plants. So we grew a lot of apple trees.

Big Brain and I often went hunting together, his eyesight was much better than mine. We found many wild animals kept their distance from us, but we could get them with our bows. Personally, I liked rabbit stew and wild chicken. Some called me the “chicken man” for my love of chicken. But I preferred to be called, “Tiger.”

And Big Brain and I often stayed up late at the central fire pit, long after others had gone to bed, drinking heavily. We asked the Shamaness for relief from hangovers and she used willow trees to make aspirin which helped.

Sometimes Big Brain and I would go hunting while we drank. Whilst drunk we didn't catch much but we loved being drunk. He said, “Life is all about comfort for your mind.”

One day, Big Brain said to me, “Without alcohol you and I wouldn't have survived.” I told him, “It was kind of a lucky accidental discovery. But most other tribes in our region figured, “It was the devil's brew or a distasteful concoction that was too strong.” I told him, “Our beverages keep on improving and make me happier and happier.”

And one night we'd smoked a lot of weed and Big Brain kept telling me about his dreams of the Love Goddess. In the dreams, the Goddess said, "I am all women and when you love them, you love me." And she said, "When you are loving a woman who is scarred by smallpox, dream of me and I will be with you." So, he loved the three surviving women who were badly disfigured by the smallpox and figured he was doing the Love Goddess a favor." I said, "Somebody needs to love them!"

And one day Big Brain asked, "For a story." I told him, "Once there was a carver who figured he was divinely inspired, but then one day he stopped carving statues of the Gods and stopped believing in the Gods. But nothing happened when he did so." He said, "I know you question the Gods, but the Gods created us, and we should praise them for the miracle of life."

And one of my good friends was Pig Eye. Pig eye was very fat but was a good hunter. On one occasion, Pig Eye told me "That I am so fat I could survive a whole winter without eating." But I said, "It's unattractive to women." He answered me saying, "There was plenty of love to go around." Another time Pig Eye said to me, "One day I was out hunting a few days back and came upon two nymphs bathing in a pool of water and he had loved both of them. And it was passionate and good." I said, "You never know who you are going to meet while out hunting. I fully expect one day to meet Alien Gods from the Stars." And another time Pig Eye told me, "I had a dream I was in a 3 yards X 3 yards box of alcohol and the Gods kept pouring more in and he tried to drink his way out of it but ultimately drowned." I said, "I interpret the dream to mean you can't drink too much. But ask the Shamaness to interpret it for you!" So, he did, and Magic Tongue told him, "You will die soon of alcoholism. Best to live for the day!" And so, he drank

even more and was right up there with me and Big Brain. But we were all happy drinkers. Recently there were some tribes people who drank and turned temporarily into zombies or bad-tempered drunks. I reflected that alcohol was not good for everyone.

One day several years ago Pig Eye had saved me from a sabre-toothed tiger. It was my totem, and I was entranced, that time, but when the tiger attacked us, Pig Eye filled it full of arrows and I just had minor wounds from the cat's claws. So, I owed him a favor. But I still wore the tusks of a tiger I had killed on an earlier occasion.

Pig Eye loved wild boar and was skilled in tracking them and sometimes there were abundant sows so he would shoot one or two. And he prized piglets above all. Those of us who could see well, were good at tracking animals in the forest. I would often go hunting with a sharp-eyed boy or a friend, like Pig Eye or Big Brain or even a woman like Hearing Genius. But usually, we hunted in groups of five or more for safety's sake.

On another occasion I was loving Dirt Bitching. She wanted a story. I told her "Once there was a woman who thought she could fly, but she crashed and broke her neck and died." She said, "Flying was something I had to try, I wanted to go to the Moon. And I wasn't seriously hurt." I said, "This story will never die." She said, "Tell me another story." So, I told her, "Once there was a clever girl who thought she would make a good Shamaness. But her ideas were strange and bizarre. And other people thought she was crazy. But one man stood up for her and tried to make the people see the light. However, finally a mob gathered and lynched her as an evil witch and lynched her male supporter too." She said, "I always thought that the tribe of Magic Tongue



behaved wisely and cleverly.” I said, “Just don’t push the people too far and try and explain your actions and ideas.”

Big Brain, Pig Eye and me, were all bosom buddies and enjoyed sharing dreams with one another. For example, one time, Pig Eye told us, “I’d seen a naked dancing male Shaman with a boar’s head who covered himself in pig’s blood as he cut the throat of a piglet.” I said, “Most tribes have male Shamans, but they too like to dance and chant.” Big Brain opined, “Magic Tongue should train a male Shaman as well as a female Shamaness. We can all use more magic and wisdom.”

On another occasion, Big Brain told us, “I had dreamed of our Shamaness. She was in my head talking to me, telling me to not take chances on the hunt. I was too important to die.” But he said, “I am ready to die at any time. I think both Heaven and Hell would be good and full of animal spirits who can talk in our language in our heads.” I said, “But most people think we are all going to Hell after death, and I wonder if I believe it.” Pig Eye said, “When in a group I often seem to be hearing dulcet voices talking about me, but no one is speaking.” I said, “I hear voices when I take magic mushrooms. They say we must hunt sabre-toothed tigers to extinction. And they say I should question Magic Tongue. Magic Tongue thinks it is the Gods speaking.” Big Brain said, “When I do mushrooms with Magic Tongue she always gets in my head with hypnosis.

And one day, Big Brain asked me for a story. I told him, “Once there was a carver who flattered the Gods with beautiful wooden sculptures. But then one day he was cornered by 3

rogue warriors, and he prayed out loud to the Gods to help him prevail, but he was filled with arrows and as he was dying his attackers cut off body parts and ate them.” He said, “I know you question the Gods, but you are not clever enough to understand their ways. None of us are.”

And another time, Pig Eye was saying, he had dreamt of “Living alone as a hermit.” I said, “To be cut off from your fellow human was one of the worst things that can happen.” Big Brain said, “As we all know the Shamaness goes on retreats every now and then deep in the caves. Maybe it is good to get away from it all and spend some time alone with your thoughts.” I said, “I feel the Shamaness is always in my head advising me and counselling me. It must be the result of the hypnosis. She is so powerful!” Pig Eye said, “When in danger I can hear the voice of Magic Tongue, counselling me. Big Brain said, “I am the same!”

Another time, Pig Eye asked me to tell him a story. I said, “Once there was a hedonist who enjoyed all life’s pleasures to the full. But then one day he went too far and was totally drunk, and a sabre-toothed tiger attacked and killed him.” He said, “Drunkenness will probably kill us all; recently I’ve had a pain in my guts and that can’t be good. People weren’t designed to be drunk all the time!”

And Pig Eye had another dream, this one a nightmare, about “Being eaten alive by cockroaches and died and then maggots were coming out of my eyes.” I said, “I tried eating cockroaches once and the taste was horrible and bitter. We are proud humans who don’t stoop to eat insects.” And Big Brain added, “It is best to burn dead bodies and offer them to the Death

Goddess before the insects can devour them. Even our dead enemies should be accorded such respect.

And I'll never forget Big Brain telling us his dream of a perfect World in which, "We had traded for clever women who were not valued by other tribes and our children were Super geniuses. Better to have the women fight in battles also." I told him, "As you both know I am chief trade negotiator and want clever women even if they are somewhat plain looking. Pig Eye said, "Yes, our tribe has been going against established practices for some years now! Why not?" I said, "We are the Love People who love existence above all. We need to do what we can to survive." Big Brain said, "Maybe we should call ourselves, the 'Creative People' instead of the Love People."

Another time, Pig Eye was telling us of his daydream of, "Joining all the local tribes in one and conquering the whole world." We knew the World was flat and existed at least 300 miles in any direction. I asked him, "Why?" Big Brain said, "If we conquered the World, we would be no better off than now. We already live in a perfect society despite smallpox and occasional war, but maybe our population is already too big, and war and disease are nature's way. The Earth Goddesses' way. Certainly, we have plenty of clever tribespeople."

Then there was the time Big Brain said to the Chief, "If you die, who do you want to succeed you?" The Chief said, "It was bad luck for him to name a successor. Let the tribe decide!" I asked him, "How do you feel about the Shamaness taking full control?" He said, "She already has full control. I am under her spell like everyone else!"

Another night, we were sitting around the central fire, and the Chief said, “The coast is getting too crowded. We need to scare away some of the tribes.” I said, “But most of the tribes on the coast fish and the sea is full of never-ending food. There’s plenty of room for all.” Big Brain said, “War is coming, it’s just a matter of time.” I said, “What about the ruins along the coast? To support a large population, they must have had some magical way to feed their populations. Or perhaps they didn’t need to eat at all?”

That week I loved Hearing Genius again. And I loved all my lovers that season. Hearing Genius was pregnant. And she asked, “For a story for her unborn child?” I said “Once there was a set of twins who had a clever mother. But the girl grew up to be a loose, foolish woman and the boy turned into a gay man.” She said, “You mean you can’t control your offspring?” I said, “As they say the Goddess of Luck is the most powerful God of human beings or if there is no Goddess of Luck, some are lucky and some are not; it’s random.”

Another night around the fire, Pig Eye said to me, “I’ve been trying to teach some of the young women to hunt, but I find myself wanting sex with their tempting bodies and can think of nothing else.” I said, “I am almost 42. And my sex drive has declined noticeably, but I know what you mean, it’s hard to hunt with women.”

Indeed, many of our people were fat like Pig Eye, but I liked women who had some meat on them. It was an indicator that we had plenty to eat. I didn’t overeat, but I drank a lot, and this

gave me a belly. There had been episodes in recent memory of famine in the tribe in which the fat people survived much better than the slim ones.

Above all I feared a drought that would reduce the needed grains for alcohol. I simply could not live without it. But marijuana helped me too to laugh and

During those days, I loved a number of women. I was loving Dirt Bitching again. I told her about, "My dreams of air cars." And she said, "I knew we could fly one day! And she said, "Maybe I should continue my project of building wings. Last time I did it, everyone laughed at me." I said, "To me the dream means there are more advanced civilizations out there." And she asked me, "To tell her a story!" I told her, "Once there was a girl who flew to the Moon, but one of her wings broke and she couldn't get back home. But she met orange-skinned people there and had fun, everyday, all day long." She said, "The Moon looks close, but I can't see any settlement there!" I said, "Who knows? On magic mushrooms I saw smoke and fire on the moon. And the most beautiful 'Moon Girl' drifted down to Earth from the Moon, it was just a 20-minute flight for her and she invited me to the Moon, but I was afraid to go!"

And another day I loved young Forest Moss again. She was saying, "There hasn't been a big war in my short adult life, maybe we'll never go to war again! And I wouldn't want to lose any of my lovers to war." I said, "I have lived through one war in which 20% of our warriors were killed, 17 years ago but we won. And we had won some skirmishes since then, including a minor war several years ago. War is inevitable during times of drought as people compete for scarce meat and gathering territory like areas of herds of mammoth and bulls, honeybee nests, flint

sources, red ochre sources and such.” And she said, O Bard, “Tell me another story.” I said, “Once there was a woman who hoped for peace, but when the tribe’s encampment was attacked, she stayed in her tent, refusing to fight. So, then she was captured by the invading tribe and turned into a sex slave.” She said, “But is there hope for peace?” I said, “No way.”

And then Hearing Genius again and she was saying, “Tell me a story.” I said, “Once there was a girl who thought she was clever, but her rival stole the heart of her true love. And she was morose and pined for her lost love. Finally, she killed herself by drinking hemlock. She asked, “What does it mean?” I responded, saying, “Don’t wear your heart on your sleeve. And remember new lovers are being added every year.” She said, “I only want you!”

And then Kissing Frenzy for an encore. She also said, “Tell me a story!” So, I told her, “Once there was a woman who traded her kisses for alcohol, and she had sex with everyone who wanted it but didn’t really love anyone. Finally, she was traded for a few large boulders of flint to another tribe.” She asked, “What does it mean?” I said, “You need close friends and lovers who love and support you, without love you are lost in our tribe.”

And one night I had a dream, I was a God, and all the people were praying to me. Magic Tongue said, by way of interpretation, “You try and play God all the time with your stories that presumably have been given to you by the Gods. And deep down you think you are better than the Gods!” I said, “What would you rather hear, me or the silent Gods?” Magic Tongue said, “Sometimes I hear the voices of Gods in my head telling me to keep the tribe peaceful and if

there was another war I would be killed.” I said, “But what if we are attacked? She said, “I am worried. Some tribes are bigger than us.”

And I was loving Hearing Genius again and again that year, she was saying, on one occasion, “You have the best male voice in the tribe. Why don’t you and I sing some songs as a duet with others playing the flute and drum. She said there are some notes you can’t play on a flute.” So, we did it and everyone marvelled at our songs. I sang as deep as I could, and she sang as high as she could. And I played my chimes.

Another time Hearing Genius was saying, “What can I do to make you love me more?” I said, “You are very clever, why don’t you sit up with my friends and I around the fire more often and give your input into the ideas we discuss.”

And one night, Hearing Genius asked me, “For another story.” This time I told her, “Once there had been a woman who thought she was the cleverest woman in the tribe. But she fell in love with an Adonis with a mediocre mind. She controlled him and was proud. But her clever friends avoided her and so she had no friends.” She said, “You think I could be so foolish?” I said, “But the Chief is one of your regular lovers!” She said, “But you have loved some pretty girls who weren’t very clever!” I said, “But I only love them once or twice. The clever ones I keep coming back to.” And I said, I use Breezy day for menage a trois, with the ordinary minded girls. She said, “But you must respect our Chief, he is important.” I said, “You’ll see he’ll get us caught up in another war.”

And one day, I killed a chicken, and as it died, I heard it talking to me. It said, "Absorb my life force and don't forget about me!" I asked Magic Tongue for an interpretation, she said, "Even chickens have a soul and probably a plane in Hell is for dead birds." I said, "You scare me with your tales of Hell. Do you really believe dead souls exist and just wander around the depths of the Earth? What would be the point?" She said, "I believe all souls are reincarnated as a different person or animal after coming to Hell. And so, it is not really so bad." That was one of the better interpretations of Hell that I'd heard.

And I was hearing voices in my head too, and imagined I heard, people talking about me, but it was all in my head. Magic Tongue explained, "It was the voices of the Gods." And I asked her, "Did you do this to me?" She said, "Certainly not!" But I wasn't sure if I believed her. The voices were making me even more crazy than I was before. Some called me "Crazy Tiger."



## CHAPTER 6: FALL/WINTER OF MY 42<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

In that year a four of our young hunters, while out gathering, were killed by being impaled on a spear dug into the ground in the standing position. They were mostly eaten. And there were flies all around them and maggots were coming out of their ears and mouths. But we didn't know who'd done it. Some said, "They were killed by one of us." But most of us thought it was a rogue member(s) of a local tribe. It was hard to see our tribe members though, killed in such a painful way. Anyway, we burned the bodies. And offered the bodies to the God of the Dead. Cremation was our custom, and we all figured we were destined for Hell after life. Hell was a place of suffering and temptation and was thought to be hot. We figured our souls went to the underground and were tortured with temptations that could not be. But we started to hunt always in groups of at least five after that, previously we had sometimes gone out in groups of 1 or 2 close to home. And one day we came upon two rogue warriors with our group of five and they shot arrows at us and tried to run, but we caught up with them and killed them. We figured if they were kicked out of their tribe, they must be evil and they wore no tribal markings. We wore red ochre markings identifying us as the Love People. And the killings stopped.

And some of our hunters who had travelled 300 miles in any one direction from the main coastal settlement reported a "Glittering steel fence with barbed wire, which seemed to go on forever and was on a foundation of concrete deep down in the soil. And there were ruins everywhere!" The Shamaness believed their story and said, "The God of Aliens had built the fence." Personally, after these reports, I began to worship the God of Aliens. According to the Shamaness, "The Alien God wanted to imprison humans in a cage and were watching us from

the stars in the Heavens. Each star was an alien God we figured and the brighter they were the more powerful they were.” But, due to my poor eyesight, I couldn’t see the stars, but since my youth I had prayed to the north star. Which was the God of Direction. We could guide ourselves at night if necessary. And there were a lot of landmarks especially along the Rhone River. Like big trees and big curves in the river. And waterfalls.

And that winter, as the Solstice approached, our tribe had a drunken orgy in which nearly all the adults participated. It was ecstatic and we all agreed to have an orgy on the Solstices each year. And we exchanged women with other tribes during the Solstice. Again, I was chief negotiator and got clever, plain looking girls for pretty but foolish girls. We had translators now for all 14 of the nearby tribes.

And that winter, I dreamed of a bear-headed shaman from another tribe. I had seen him before. In the dream he mesmerized a mammoth and the mammoth sat down before him and he pierced the behemoths eye and killed him. After this dream, I asked Magic Tongue, “What she thought?” She said, “That Shaman was from another tribe and badly affected by smallpox and even when he loved a girl, he wore the bear head and bear fur.

And I cursed the God of Vision. He’d given me great dreams, but poor eyesight and I burned effigies of this God hoping to placate him and not make my vision any worse. But it had no effect, and I was frustrated.

But the smallpox had totally blinded 40 people. And most of them committed suicide by drinking hemlock. And 30 more were so badly scarred they also drank the hemlock. There were still two of the blind ones left, they were charity cases. One of them was a woman who had given birth to two children and needed help with the chores of everyday living. The other, a man, was a good singer and liked to drink, privately. And there were 5 who were badly scarred, 2 men and 3 women. They kept to themselves pretty much.

One day in that winter, I dreamed of a wandering yeti. He was giant sized and chased me, so I ran up a tree and then killed him with my arrows. There were all sorts of yeti sightings and Magic Tongue told me, "The dream indicated there were other humanoid creatures around who are cunning and clever, and we might have to go to war with them.

This winter we had moved our camp into the river delta on the coast and there were abundant animals, especially birds. I figured the flocks of birds were foolish to congregate in large numbers, it made them easier to see and firing randomly into a flock often picked off a lot of birds. We all had special multi-head arrows that we would fire into a crowd of birds. Sometimes we could kill two birds with one arrow.

And in that year brought our number of warriors to 84. And there were now 133 women. With our growing numbers we knew we had to fight with some of our neighbors for hunting territory or else split up, but to split up would mean the group who split had to fight for new hunting territory. It was safer to stay together.

And I was still having many menage a trois with Breezy Day, my sex slave. Typically, it was with pretty girls who were not so clever and was pure sex. That year that she was my slave I loved 10 other women, one at a time along with Breezy Day. I got my kicks from these women. But it was pure sex, and they didn't have much in the way of cleverness to say.

One night we were sitting around the fire and one of the new warriors asked the Chief, "What did war feel like?" We had not yet brought them in our scouting parties, but now did so. And we enhanced their being taught how to fight in war. The Chief said, "There have just been one minor war and a few skirmishes since he had been chief for the last 10 years. But 15 years ago, we went to war and lost 20% of our warriors. And seven years ago, we had picked on a small, weak tribe and only lost 6 men. And we had some skirmishes in which no one was killed." But I reflected war is an intense sensation in which all your senses are in overdrive, and it is frantic and crazy.

People here in our tribe, still lost their virginity at age 14. Everyone wanted to be an adult. And there was a provocative dance by the virgins before they engaged in loving for the first time. And some people said they were too young and refused to love them unless they were 18 or 21. But the life expectancy of our people was like 35 after surviving the first year. So, we had no time to waste.

Another night by the fire, Dirt Bitching was saying, "I loved young men of 14 or 15, they had so much sexual power." I said, "And young women have a high sex drive too." And she said, "Of course one of the tribes we have recently encountered had monogamy and didn't lose their

virginity until 18. Such a waste. Such a shame.” “Yes,” I said, “We all feel our customs are the best.”

Another night Big Brain was saying, “I think, the new warriors make us the strongest tribe in the region, at least for now. All tribes nearby had been set upon by the smallpox. But it didn’t seem to affect animals.” I said, “But we should make greater effort to form alliances in case of a hostile invader.”

And I was loving a new adult, named Butterfly Escape. She was young and played coy, and I loved her deeply. She said, “Tell me a story!” I said, “Once in the forest lived a butterfly who frivolously flew from plant to plant. But one day a fox pounced on her and devoured her.” She said, “You mean, I am too frivolous?” I replied, “Love is a serious game!” And Butterfly Escape told me, “Once there was a man who thought he knew everything, but one day a fox went for his jugular, and he died.” I said, “I have never been outfoxed by any person, but I have been fooled by animals many times.”

Butterfly Escape was a natural blond. And she said, “Many men go crazy about blondes.” I said, “I have known women who tried to color their hair red. Many men like red heads as well.” And she said, “Tell me another story!” So, I told her, “Once there was a great lover, who everyone wanted to love, but she only loved only a few, ordinary young men. But when it was time to vote which woman would best be traded to another tribe, she found few allies, and the leaders of the tribe figured she was dispensable.” And I added, “She was so vain, she took her

life after being traded.” She said, “That’s not a very nice story.” I said, “You should be more selective in choosing mates!” She said, “Well I am loving you, that’s a start!”

And then I was with Dirt Bitching again. This time, she was saying, “Why don’t you add hops to your booze for flavor.” I said, “I am always open to changing the recipe.” And she asked me to “Tell her another story!” I told her, “Once there was a woman, who thought she could get any man to love her. But there was one man who spurned her love. And she had mental problems related to the love denied to her.” She said, “You mean, no one has a perfect life?” I responded, “Exactly.” And she said, “But I’ve never been spurned so far. I am quite selective in choosing lovers.”

Another time I was with Magic Tongue. This time she told me, “Why don’t you put garlic in your booze?” I said, “It’s too harsh as it is!” “But” I added, “You could make a health mix for everyone to take every day. There are plenty of herbs that are good for us.” She said, “Yes we could start giving it out for breakfast everyday.” And I said to her, “Once there was a woman who wanted to change everything and made the people take her medicines. But one day everyone was poisoned by mistake and died. Except for the medicine woman, who wandered around all by herself.” She said, “You really don’t think I know what I am doing?” I said, “People are not an experiment for you to try new medicines on.” She said, “But we can cure some illnesses and it is all due to experimentation!”

## CHAPTER 7: SPRING/SUMMER OF MY 42<sup>ND</sup> YEAR

But one day we realized we had a sexual disease spreading fast in our tribe. Sores appeared on people's genitals, and they had burning urination for a few days. Some said, "We had to change our culture. We had to rethink thoughts of orgies or free love." Some said, "We must become monogamous." But others said, "It was too late almost everyone was infected." So finally, we decided to continue with free love. We were not forced to become monogamous. Of course, I was the lover of the shaman, but we were both infected. It was a cruel twist of fate. It was one of the worst things that had happened to our tribe but, we still hoped to acquire women by attacking other tribes. And now most babies born had the disease. I was one of the first to say, "We were doomed as a tribe." But many people said, "It wasn't so bad and didn't kill us, or disfigure or blind us like the smallpox." And many thought it was no big deal. But many babies were miscarriages or born prematurely and many didn't survive. And many women no longer got pregnant. More so than in the past. I was really worried about the future.

And that year we heard wolves howling nearby and so continued to hunt in parties of five plus. On one particular occasion our Chief being was chased by wolves while out gathering wood nearby our camp and he found safety in a tree. But then we tracked the wolves and it came to a violent altercation with the wolves fighting to protect their young. We slaughtered most of them and a handful ran away. And we took the pups and raised them in our camp and so became dogs. The dogs would howl if intruders came in the night. After this happening, we had no more trouble with wolves. But bears sometimes came into our camp at night, but we hit them with fire arrows and killed them.

I took a personal interest in one of the dogs and it was my companion throughout the day and of course the dogs helped in the hunt. My dog understood 12 phrases. Sometimes my dog and I would both get drunk and cuddle together. I mixed alcohol with gravy to get the dog drunk. I bred my dog with others, and they had pups who were very friendly on the whole but could suddenly bite a human for no reason in which case they were put down. The dogs bred large litters and soon we would have dozens of grown-up dogs. It was fashionable to own one. But I figured my dog was the cleverest and friendliest of all the dogs. And I gave a puppy to my lover, Wolf's Teeth who had asked for one. Wolf's Teeth was very grateful and loved me hard. And I told her once there was a girl who had a dog. And she grew to love the dog more than any man." She said, "Dogs are reliable companions and don't break your heart."

During the episode with the wolves the Shamaness healed our wounds and set broken bones. Just like she did after battles. The Chief had broken his arm for instance.

The Shamaness told everyone she dreamed of a world of peace, and she dreamed of a world of a really large tribe of thousands of people. She wanted to join together with other tribes peacefully. And all would speak the same language. And she dreamed of me loving her exclusively. I have to admit I didn't like it when she slept with others. Even now that she was infected.

But we were all worried about all kinds of disease striking the tribe, six years ago smallpox had killed over 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the tribe and disfigured and/or blinded many survivors, most of whom



killed themselves. Total 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the tribe. However, we still figured we were the largest tribe in the floodplain/coastal area.

Then one day a tribe we'd had skirmishes with a tribe of other white people who attacked our encampment. But our 84 warriors fighting with bows and arrows, defeated the attackers, losing only three men. That gave us 81. Then we went to their encampment and seized their women. They have left only two adolescent boys who were killed, and we captured and tied up 30 women, others escaped, and we knew they would be lost and alone in the wilderness. The children were anointed full members of our tribe, however. We at first well-treated these captured women. And tried to set them up with warriors who didn't have the sex disease. Two of the women had come to us on their own tribe before the invaders attacked. And everyone feasted on roast pigs, and everyone got drunk, to celebrate the victory. Our tribe was getting big and other peoples encroached on our hunting territory. We kept debating with the chief, many wanting to split the tribe in two, but ultimately rejected that notion, as no one wanted to be one to leave our tribe. So, we prepared for war, filling our quivers with arrows. And in the meantime, we had to go on longer and longer hunting trips all around France. And we relied on the seafood to fatten us up during winter.

But the newcomer women, didn't like us and didn't want to learn our language and kept running away, so finally it turned out we used them as slave women, during the day their tent was guarded by children and any man could come and have his way with them. Their tents were all on a river island and they didn't know how to swim. We didn't even bother to teach them the language, once we decided they were slaves. But one, Mira, she waited for a chance, stole a boat

at night and crossed the river and ran off into the wilderness, at night which was tantamount to suicide. She disappeared. And we didn't bother trying to find her. Some of our number said, "We were no longer the Love People, but are the Cruel People. Many of these slave women killed themselves by strangulating themselves with a rope. But we didn't care about them. I didn't love hardly any of them. But they were certainly exotic looking, though white like us. And their children were taken away from them and raised by a full member of our tribe.

We resolved to trade the slave women to other tribes in exchange for red ochre and flint and the new drug, blue lotus. Blue lotus gave one a tranquilized feeling of euphoria, and increased libido, but it made people lazy, so I only dispensed the drug on special days. And it wasn't long before we traded these slave women away. In several trades. Two slave women for every clever woman. But we kept two of these new women. So, we now had 150 women

And I carried on with my loving. I liked the newly adult Echo Waters. She was like a breath of fresh air. She wanted, "A story." So, I told her, "Once there was a pure girl who was cruelly raped by a man from another tribe. And after that she couldn't make love with any man. She was ruined for life." She said, "Do you really think I am so fragile?" I said, "All pure people are fragile." But Echo Waters had a bubbly personality and made me feel exuberant. I told her "I will love you for years and years."

Another new woman was Kraken Brood. She was an explosive woman who was truly wild beyond belief, and she had red hair. There were only a handful of redheads in the tribe, but she was a wild beautiful thing beyond comparison. I loved her for a week straight and then finally

parted with her temporarily. But not before telling her a story. I said, "Once there was a girl who was totally wild, but then one day she fell under the spell of a Sadist who whipped her and had her on a leash. She didn't care what anybody thought of her, she was enjoying herself." She said, "Do you really think I am going too far?" I said, "I am non-judgmental."

Albino people and the good-looking dark-skinned people who spoke different languages inhabited the mountains, and we didn't trade with them. And had an uneasy peace with them. But that next summer when we visited the mountains, we came upon burnt camps for both these peoples. And their charred skeletons were strewn all over the place. So, we decided to stay on the coast that summer and were very worried. We wondered if our camp was to be next. And we scared our children with stories of the "Fire People," who killed and burned whole settlements and taking the children away with them to be slaves. This story was meant to make sure our youth wouldn't comply if we too, were defeated by the Fire People." We agreed if attacked and defeated, the survivors would regroup at a certain bend in the river and try and carry on.

The Shamaness, Magic Tongue, said all must pray to the Gods and thank them for our tribe and keep the Sun shining and the love flowing. Despite all the bad luck of the past few years, most of our tribe, worshipped the Sun and the tribe had until recently visited our cave temple to her in the mountains in the summer. That was until we gave up going to the mountains in this summer. The new temple of the Gods featured a large, rounded stone in a firepit, with a statue of the Sun God in front, now in our Pantheon temple near the coast. Now that we were permanently on the coast, we built the Pantheon, a wooden temple dedicated to all the Gods. And we brought all our statues of the Gods and Demi-Gods to the Pantheon. The Pantheon was large and

accommodated the entire tribe and it was here that we decided to hold many of our parties instead of outside around the central fire pit. But before the hunt everyday the warriors would cut their arms and bleed a little on the Sun God's fire.

We wanted to be closer to the sea and its abundant sea life. And many of the tribe started to worship the Goddess of Plenty.

We didn't know how to swim, though we had observed other tribes frolicking in the water, but the Shamaness told us it was too dangerous and told tales of sharks. But one day in that year two women were washed away in the swollen river delta where we lived. With one trying to save the other. And presumed dead. And we had to relocate our tents in higher ground. Bu the Pantheon was on a hilltop. Anyway, it was all a big blow to the tribe. But we had boats, dug out canoes and older boats. And it was a rainy winter, and the wildlife was abundant. It was easy living but, it was hot. And we all fattened up for winter. On the coast we had nets made of leather and we caught a lot of large fish, and also, we trailed blood on the water which attracted sharks who we harpooned and there were dolphins and whales to harpoon. There were many peoples living on the coast, we figured, but we mostly kept to our hunting territory. Some of us just wanted to eat seafood and therefore not clash with other tribes over hunting grounds. But we all liked meat.

We were great rope makers, using hemp and used the rope on harpoons and to tie up enemies of war and slaves. And we learned from another tribe that hemp could be used to produce

cannabis. We all had tried it, and some said, “They liked it better than alcohol.” But my friends and I preferred alcohol.

We hadn’t fought any large battles recently and so didn’t have any enemies to tie up, just the episode with the slave women. But many people said our population was getting too large and we were hunting in other tribe’s territory. War was inevitable. We practiced with arrows that were just duds and didn’t pierce the skin in mock battles. And some of us had dull headed spears with atlatls that other tribes used for hunting large game and in war.

Some of us preferred raw meat to cooked, but these people didn’t seem to live as long and had gastric problems. And finally, the Shamaness told us to “Thoroughly cook our meat.” The Shamaness always did an autopsy on those that died and was forever seeking plants and herbs which would make the tribe healthier. She taught us not to eat too much fat as it clogged the heart and recommended medicines for a healthy digestion and more energy, like ginseng tea.

And one day I heard the voices in my head even louder. They were telling me to kill the Shamaness. I was very confused. But I kept it to myself. And it seemed like Magic Tongue would look at me in an odd way, these days. And with each day they grew stronger. But finally, I told Magic Tongue all about it. And Magic Tongue hypnotized me again and after that the voices stopped. I wondered about it.

And of course, we gathered honey using smoke. I hated gathering honey as one would typically get stung a few times, and we delegated the task to the children. A little pain was good for them. We all liked honey and would trade flint for it with one of the nearby tribes.

And we ate a lot of root vegetables and herbs to go with our meat. But one winter we had no meat for several days and everyone was weak and sick. That winter I traded many boxes of liquor for deer meat and bird meat to one of the few other tribes that liked alcohol on the coast, to help the tribe get through the difficult time. And more and more female deer and caribou were being killed by other hunters or wolves and each year it became harder to find food. But mammoths fed us for weeks but were hard to kill and kicked and threw us with their tusks into the air and trampled us, resulting in broken bones. However, it had been years since a mammoth had killed one of our warriors. And the Shamaness could heal most wounds. However, ultimately, our fishing boats were what saved us. There was plenty of seafood to go around and in addition to the boats, we had ropes tied to a bone hook in which the youth could fish for more food for us. We all thought we were good fishermen.

Then one day some brown-skinned men from a distant tribe, appeared at the camp. They were not hostile and wanted to trade women for flint. We had a stockpile of flint and so got two more clever women. And we had a wild party, feasting on wild boars and chickens and drinking. They drew a map in the sand indicating their original place to the West of us, beyond the Pyrenes mountains and they were keen on traveling and meeting new people.

One of the women we had just traded for was headstrong and stubborn. I could see why her tribe didn't want her. But I taught her our language and loved her, and she was quite an accomplished lover, her name was Cloud Dancer. I wondered what kind of woman she would turn out to be once she fully learned our language.

Men and women of our tribe, both painted their faces with red ochre. The paintings had meaning. A woman marked her number of children on her forehead and men marked the number of lovers they had. But in war time we wore ochre to indicate how many men we had killed, most of us hadn't killed any. But I had killed three in skirmishes, and 6 in the war of 16 years ago. But most women mostly just used the face painting to enhance their lips and eyebrows.

And I spent weeks loving Butterfly Escape and Echo Waters. Butterfly Escape told me, "I was enjoying life. And you are a big part of it!" And she wanted, "Another story." I said, "Once there was a girl that tried to love everyone and make everyone happy. But she was exhausted from all the loving and died." She said, "I've heard of people falling down dead, suddenly. I guess you don't approve of my loose morals?" I said, "Sex is really good, but not all day and all night."

And Echo Waters was telling me, she was here to love me until I was exhausted. I told her "Once there was a woman who took love to the limit and everyone wanted a piece of her, but she only loved one man. And many said, 'It was a pity.' But the one man she loved was the best man and he made her completely happy." She said, "I have sex with a number of men, but you are the one I love. If I could have you all to myself, I would!"

And Kraken Brood also exhausted me again. She was saying, “My sexy leather bra and panties turned men on.” She had invented the bra. And she would hum gently as one loved her!

Until recently the Shamaness had in summer, gone to the cave walls deep in the mountains on a retreat to paint deer and mammoths and bulls in a ritual in which she would assume the soul of the animals and have animal mesmerism on the dogs to make them tame. She would fast and sometimes be gone for weeks, but she always emerged from the caves eventually. The caves were generally considered to be the entryway to Hell. Lately Magic Tongue had brought her protégé, Fat Tooth with her to the Pantheon instead of the caves, and they took magic mushrooms, and both believed they had been transported down into the center of the Earth and meditated about the tribe’s future. At least that is what they told us. I was turned on by both Fat Tooth and Magic Tongue and loved them often for years.

The Shamaness knew how to hypnotize the tribe’s members. She hypnotised the chief to cherish her above all things and hypnotized the whole tribe to follow her dictates, which included having total faith in the chief. There was one murder that year in which a woman stabbed her lover to death. But she had good reason, he was cruel, and this woman was fertile having had 10 children. So, the shaman hypnotized her to not kill anyone else. And she hypnotized the hunters to be fearless in the face of attacks by wolves sabre-toothed tigers or bears. And she hypnotized the women to be kind and loving. And one day they met a wandering hunter from another tribe, and she hypnotized him to forget we existed and to be peaceful. But the chief was angry that we hadn’t made this hunter one of us. So as always, she hypnotised the chief to love her more. As



mentioned, the Chief had poor taste in women, but he loved the Shamaness. And Magic Tongue hypnotized me to keep improving the liquor; it was too harsh and bad tasting for her. I felt a mad desire as a result to desperately try and improve my alcohol.

And one old woman of 58 died that summer and another woman disappeared. And still another died in childbirth. Giving us 147 women.

## CHAPTER 8: FALL/WINTER OF MY 43<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

Winters were cool on the flood plain but not too cold and there was plenty of game to be hunted. The shaman told us, "We all live in the best possible World. It was perfect!" But I could see with the ravages of the smallpox and now the sex disease that our very existence was very fragile, and one never knew when war would break out.

And one day while out hunting we came across a skeleton tied to a tree. Many of us thought it was an omen telling us that war was coming. But the Shamaness said, "There are many evil spirits and rogue warriors in the wilderness. It seemed as if the corpse had been tortured and left to die." And she said, "Let's not wander even a few hundred yards from our encampment. No more hunting or gathering alone. Groups of 10 are best. I make it a tribal law."

And I was deeply in love with the Shamaness and could sometimes think of nothing else. But I had a good work ethic and gathered a lot of select grains for my alcohol and kept in shape by cutting a lot of wood with my stone axe and went hunting most days until dusk, despite my poor eyesight. I told her, "I loved her," and she said, "Of course."

And one night in her tent, Magic Tongue said to me, "Are you sleeping? I mumbled, "Yes." And she said, "Don't wake up!" And then she was telling me all sorts of things about the Devil and Hell and how I had to pray to the Love Goddess for succor. There are powers in this World that are greater than us and we have to placate them." But on this occasion, I remembered her

mesmerism and afterwards thought she really does believe in the Gods. Am I the only disbeliever? But I knew almost anything we could possibly think of could happen.

Another time I was loving Kraken Brood and she asked, "For another story?" I told her once there was a woman who was so attractive, all the male Gods wanted to love her. But she chose the Goddess of Luck. And soon her luck turned bad, and she got smallpox and died." She asked, "What does it mean?" I said, "Don't trust the Gods!" She said "But that's heresy, isn't it? I said, "I am the one who decides what the Gods do or don't do, despite what the Shamaness says but they are all just stories."

As I said, my name was Cool Ring, and I wore 2 bone necklaces with a carving of the Moon God and Love Goddess on it. And one ring with a carving of a sabre-toothed tiger. We believed in the two wood carvers of our tribe were divinely inspired to capture the image of the Deities. And I made sure they had plenty of alcohol to inspire them. And they carved and preserved carvings of great people of the tribe's history as well.

Hot Hand was the other one of our two tribe members who was good at wood working, the other was Big Brain. Hot Hand was certainly a friend of mine too, and he was known for building temples in the mountain caves previously and was the chief architect of the pantheon. And I had him carve a life size statue of the Shamaness, which I kept in my tent. Everyone had their own tent and typically one would visit with a lover at night. But most women had children living with them in the tent... So, it was the men who would visit the women.

And Hot Hand constructed wooden boxes sealed with clay for alcohol production and was always making totems for the youth. Hot Hand was unabashedly in love with Fat Tooth, the Shamaness' heir apparent. I could see that Fat Tooth had the devil in her and she was very pretty and enjoyed breaking hearts. Some said, "She was an evil witch." I loved Fat Tooth on many occasions, and I remembered her hypnotising me, but couldn't remember what she hypnotised me to do. But I would kneel before her and beg for her love. The Shamaness said, "I am jealous!" I said, "I had plenty of love for her too." But I had been cross hypnotized by the two of them so was torn apart in my mind. I was certainly having mental problems. But I didn't tell anyone I was having mental problems lest they think I was weak.

One night around the fire, I said to Hot Hand, "Where do you see our tribe in 20 years? Perhaps I'll still be alive then." He answered me, saying, "If our women fight, we will be a much stronger tribe than any of our neighbors. But we have only half-heartedly taught them to fight thus far. Let's you and I teach the women in earnest with the Chief giving us his blessing." But of course, many of our women refused to fight and said, "They wanted peace and love." And he said, "It will not be easy to convince most of them." I said, "It's not our tradition for females to fight, I know, but our tribe has gone against tradition before and how would they like it if all the males were killed, and they were all enslaved." But all the females were hunters of small game, and all said, "They would defend their children to the death. After all many conquering tribes killed all the children."

Another night, Hot Hand said to Big Brain, "We are running out of people to carve!" Big Brain said, "We can make more statues of the Gods and trade them to other tribes." I said, "No

other tribe can carve nearly as good as us.” But Big Brain said, “One day our statues will rot away and be forgotten.” Hot Hand said, “But our tribe takes good care of the statues and there’s no reason they won’t last forever.” I said, “But one day the Gods will be forgotten and ignored, and people will advance civilization and our statues will be meaningless.”

On another occasion by the fire drinking, Hot Hand said, “Who will help me build a large boat that we can row into deep waters and see new lands which must exist in every direction?” I said, “Why risk your life when everything you need is here?” He opined, “Who knows what beautiful, advanced people live elsewhere? It is human nature to explore new territory.” I said, “If our tribe gets ravaged again by smallpox, perhaps I’ll join you, but I don’t think many others will join you.”

Another time around the fire, Big Brain asked, “Who is the better carver, me or Hot Hand?” I said, “You both have a synergy about you, you challenge and inspire one another to be better!” Pig Eye opined, “We need more love in this tribe, not more carvings!” I said, “But we all get plenty of love, more than we can handle!” Pig Eye said, “I want to trade alcohol for more women who are exotic looking to increase our pleasure! We just need to try harder to convince our neighboring tribes to know the value of alcohol.” I said, “But our boxes are so heavy and difficult to move. We just need bigger boats like Hot Hand wants.”

Sometimes I liked loving older women. Some were surprisingly good in bed and many were grateful that I took an interest in them. One of them, Dark Body, I could see was unambitious, but very clever. Her skin was a bit brown, and I told her, “To study with the Shamaness and learn

to be useful. We can always use another medicine woman.” She said, “I look after my four children, that’s enough. I want my children to do great things for the tribe however.” I thought she was an exotic woman, and I really enjoyed loving her. And she said, “Promise me, you won’t forget me whatever happens!” And I agreed.

Another woman I loved was nicknamed “Smallpox Victim #2.” She had her great beauty ruined by the smallpox. So, when I loved her, I had her wear a doe mask. But she still had a great body and I enjoyed loving her. I figured I could love any woman and prided myself on that fact.

But when a woman turned 50, she was near death and old. But we had one old woman, Virgin Splendor who had lost her virginity, notably at age 14, like the others, but lived on until 65, surviving smallpox, when she died of old age. Before she died many young women consulted her “About men.” But most women who wanted love advice went to the Shamaness. But before the old woman died, she told me a story. She said, “Once there was a man who claimed there were no Gods, but he had incredibly good luck and lived to be 70, finally he had to admit that the Gods had created him well and treated him well.” I said, “Old woman, I don’t believe in the God of Luck or any other God. If I get good luck, as I’ve had, all well and good. If not, it is just my fate.” And she died a few days later. At her wake, many people made drunken speeches, and we took blue lotus and burned the body and offered it to the Death Goddess. That made 146 women.

Another, clever woman was Broken Thumb. She had broken her thumb whilst a youth, playing in our Olympics, in the ball game sport. We held the Olympics every six years. The Olympics were scheduled to be held this summer. Broken Thumb, told me, “I want to be your

number one woman and want to spend the nights drinking with you by the fire. I want to talk about the tribe's fables with you!" I said, "The Shamaness is my true love, but I will always find times for you." After all she was one of the prettiest, cleverest women in the tribe. And she wanted, "A story." So, I said, "One time, "There was a girl who liked fables, but one day she changed into a rabbit and was eaten by a wolf." She said, "You mean I am no better than a rabbit?" I said, "The moral of the story is fables can be dangerous." She said, "That's not a very good story! Tell me another!" So, I said, "One time, there was a girl who liked fables and she made one, the story of the owl and the sabre-toothed tiger. In which the tiger is proud and strong and tells the owl I am king of the jungle. But one night the owl swooped down and pecked the tiger's eyes out. And the owl said, 'Whose King of the jungle now?'" Broken Thumb asked, "What does it mean?" I said, "It means sometimes wisdom of young girls is better than the strong and powerful. And the owls are your totem animal, right?"

And another woman was the newly adult, New Kid, who was known to love any man. I loved her and she said, "I am part of a new generation of women who want to hunt and fight like men." And she said, "A number of her young friends felt the same." So, I agreed to train all those who wanted to use a bow and arrows in the heat of battle. It kind of caught on and many of our women could see the use in it. In total we had 100 women trained to kill men in archery. But most of the women wanted to defend the camp and the children and hope our warriors could prevail in war time. Of course, in war, sometimes the victors accepted the women and children of the losers into their tribe, but often they killed them off. And New Kid wanted, "A story." So, I told her, "Once there was a girl who loved all the men in her tribe but was very wary of strangers. And she wanted to kill off other tribes. But finally, there was a war, and she was hit in

the chest by a spear and promptly died.” She said, “That’s not a very nice story. I fancy myself to be a pacifist!” I replied, “But you are learning to fight!” She said, “I’m just being practical.” And she said, “Let me tell you a tale! Once there was a man who thought he knew everything. But finally, he was blinded by the Gods, and became less and less wise.” I said, “If the Gods wanted to blind me, totally, they’d have done so already.”

And another new woman I loved was, Burnt Entrance. She had a wild, wicked mind and was very unpredictable. She too wanted, “A story.” I said, “Once there was a woman for whom the winds blew wildly. And the year she became Priestess of Winds, there were tornadoes everywhere and a great hurricane struck our coast. She stood out in the hurricane relishing the power of the storm, but then was suddenly hit by a fallen tree and died.” She asked, “So you think I am playing with fire?” I said, “Essentially.”

So, the Olympics came for our tribe only, and had events like sexual endurance, weightlifting, wrestling, fishing competitions, our ball game, a cooking contest, a liquor making contest, a story telling contest, and general athletics like running and long jump and high jump and discus throw and so on. I had been an adult for five Olympics and every Games I won the story contest and the liquor making contest. The games were coming up this summer and I had new alcohol with new spices in it and I told a story: “Once there was a man who hunted rabbits almost exclusively. He would hop and dance before the hunt and would wear a bunny mask with big ears. But one day a King rabbit said to him, I’m in your head with hypnotism and will drive you insane. No more killing rabbits.” People said “The story was about trying to mimic an animal and try to drive them extinct which was not OK with the Gods. The voices in the man’s head



were a God speaking. The God of Animals. Only Gods could read your mind (and of course the Shamness could too with hypnosis). We were humans and we were special. Better to act like a human.” Anyway, this controversial story won me the prize. But many people said, “They believed in the God of Animals.

And I wanted to love the girl who won the prize for sexual endurance, her name was Energy Eagle... She was only 17 but looked very mature. And so, I loved her, and it was fantastic. She already had the sex disease, but was unscarred by smallpox as was I, more or less. And I was full of respect for the man, Big Dancer, who won for weightlifting. He was a good warrior and hunter. And for the ball game our elders in the tribe played against the young and I participated, but we, the elders lost. And the three-day Olympics ended with a big party. And everyone seemed to be boisterous and pleased. As for the God of Animals we appeased him by eating mostly seafood which was seemingly limitless and not driving any land species extinct. The party went on for two days and almost everyone was gloriously drunk.

Then I loved another ordinary woman who was named Crystal Spell. She was very pretty, and she was a good lover; I hadn't had a chance to love her before. She was in demand. But now I made her one of my regulars. She said, “I had thus far only loved teenage men and valued your love experience.” And she said, “You found my erogenous zones.” And I told her, “Once there was a girl who was pretty and believed fervently in the Gods. But one day she got sick and died a few days later. Just like that.” She said, “Like everyone else I am living each day as if it was my last. I have no control over what the immortal Gods do.”

And then one day the heir apparent to the Shamaness Fat Tooth bestowed her love on me as usual and she had hypnotized me to grovel before her and beg for her love. But it seemed like good love, and I kept coming back for more. Friends said, "It wasn't manly to grovel." But I told them, "The witch, Fat Tooth had cast a spell on me."

But the Shamaness told me, "I didn't want me to love others!" And I reluctantly agreed. After all she had me hypnotized. Anyway, she was the best female lover in the tribe. So I told my lovers, I was taking a break from loving them, saying Magic Tongue had cast a spell on me not to love others for the time being. One of them, Hearing Genius was exceptionally upset and threatened to kill herself. And others said, "I will kill the Shamaness." So finally Magic tongue backed down and allowed me to continue loving others.

And I, Cool Ring, wanted to learn from the Shamaness how to hypnotize people, but she only taught her heir, Fat Tooth. Fat Tooth was a very clever young woman of 26, and the shaman was now 39 and couldn't expect to live much longer. But the Shamaness used self-hypnotism on herself to stay in good health. And did the same for everyone else. But still there always seemed to be some people, especially those of 50+ who had various diseases which she tried to cure with her medicines. And she couldn't find a cure for the sex disease, nor smallpox. Hypnosis was no cure.

The Shamaness had five daughters and two sons. I helped her to educate her children, her sons in particular. Her offspring were all very bright and inquisitive and of course she'd hypnotized them too. Apparently, she wanted them to be peaceful and kind and charitable to the

less fortunate and to have many offspring. Her eldest daughter was named, Esoteric Dancer, she was 18 and Magic Tongue told me to love her, just once. So, I did, and it was passionate love, just like with her mother. And she, Esoteric Dancer, said, "I figure I am the cleverest person in the tribe, and should be Chief. I said, "Of course our Chief is Chief for life, but he is already in his forties, and you've got my vote. It would be breaking with tradition to have a female as Chief, but it fits in with your mother's dream of a much larger tribe which is peaceful and prosperous."

One of the sons of the Shamaness, had been blinded by the smallpox. His name was Hanging Charm. I kind of took him under my wing and drank with him sometimes. He was 16 and he had loved the three women who were deeply scarred by the smallpox and there were 2 more women who were blind. I had mild scarring under my beard.

To be badly scarred forced the victims to keep a low profile. Lest they disgust others. They wouldn't sit by the central fire and kept to themselves.

On one occasion, Hanging Charm said, "His mother had hypnotized him to stay alive and he was trying his best." He drank all night long with his lovers. It was like a tribe within a tribe, but many other people thought they were freaks.

One youth Blue Star told me, "Smallpox had made our tribe a freak show and I want to cast out the deeply scarred people." I said, "In our tribe, everyone looks after one another, no matter what!" He said, "Otherwise, I want to take a group of the unscarred north as a new tribe." And he

got 2 men and 3 women to accompany him. We were of course sorry to see them go. However, in my opinion the six of them were all amongst our most foolish people. But they said, "Our tribe is too big anyway." That gave us 81 men and 144 women.

Then I was back with Hearing Genius. She said, "Something has to be done with that witch, Magic Tongue. Don't let her hypnotize you anymore and I won't let her either. But I said, "Sometimes she even hypnotizes me while I am sleeping." Hearing Genius said, "Then don't sleep with her." I said, "I love all my women."

And I remember well saying to Magic Tongue, "You needed to hypnotize people to respect my alcohol distribution so that a mob wouldn't develop and hang me." She said, "I'd already done so. Don't worry I've got your back."

And another time I told her, "Not to cross-hypnotize me anymore. You are driving me crazy, you and Fat Tooth!"

And this year we had new adult males and females. That gave us 92 warriors and 161 women. As usual everyone was excited about the coming-of-age ceremony.

## CHAPTER 9: SPRING/SUMMER OF MY 43<sup>RD</sup> YEAR

But then one day, things came to a head and Fat Tooth killed the Shamaness by slitting her throat, over an argument about hypnotism. We didn't know what specifically the argument was about. And we didn't do anything about it as we needed a Shamaness in the tribe and Fat Tooth was heir apparent. But the old Shamaness was my true love, and I was so sorry she was gone. Fat Tooth told me not to worry about life, she would take care of it. But it seemed like life was falling apart for our tribe. I remembered being hypnotised by Fat Tooth, just before she killed Magic Tongue, I seemed to have a stronger liking for her recently...

We talked about the killing round the fire. Big Brain said, "Perhaps it was time for a new Shamaness anyway." Hot Hand replied, "I believe Fat Tooth knows everything the former Shamaness knew." I said, "It is a tragedy. Our tribe has been through so much heartache." The Chief said, "I too feel sorry that she is gone. She was the best Shamaness the tribe ever had." So, we all got drunk and tried to put it past us. And I said, "We need her to train some successors to safeguard the future." And everyone agreed with me. Pig Eye opined that, "Maybe important men of the tribe should be present when the new Shamaness hypnotizes people. It's too much power." Hearing Genius said, "We are well rid of that witch, Magic Tongue!"

And around the fire, another night, Big Brain said to me, perhaps the new Shamaness can teach us how to hypnotize others. I said, "Both Fat Tooth and Magic Tongue cross-hypnotized me and I don't recommend such behaviour. The two of them nearly drove me totally insane. Just

like Bad Bone, who we all knew was completely insane, and attacked people that weren't there and so on. Until we finally killed him."

Our new Shamaness told us all that we had to shave our entire bodies, with flint razors. Most thought it was kinky, so it came to pass. The Shamaness said, "It was cleaner and would rid us of lice." And the new Shamaness wanted us to worship a statue of her, rather than the disc-like stone of the Sun God. And now, we all had to grovel before the new Shamaness, but she had hypnotised us to do it, so we did.

But the spring passed without much incident; gradually the tribe returned to normal after the tragic killing of our former Shamaness. We all gained weight, and many gained a lot of muscle. And I had "surreal" dreams of flying goats and giant worms and hordes of insects. Fat Tooth told me "The Gods sent you dreams of imagination, and imagination was the future. If we could dream it, it could happen."

And that summer I loved Fat Tooth many times, but she wanted to love a variety of men, which was fine by me. I loved a lot of the tribe's women that summer.

One of my favorite lovers was Ochre Lips who was very pretty and only 15. I figured she was the most beautiful woman in the tribe, now that Magic Tongue was gone. And I loved her intensely. For weeks and weeks, I loved her. And when she declared she was pregnant I figured the child was mine. She said, "I was sure glad that Magic Tongue had met her demise." And she wanted "Another story." So, I told her, "One time there was a girl who fought for her man. And

finally, she slit the throat of her rival!” She said, “You mean I helped kill Magic Tongue?” I said, “All of my lovers including Fat Tooth killed Magic Tongue.”

And later, that summer I also loved, Eagle Claw. She was a tomboy and enjoyed mock war games and playing sports like our ball game, which was usually just men playing. I felt she was a kindred spirit and felt close to her. As we had relatively few males, we were always training women to act like men, and they participated in the hunts.

And that summer I loved Bare Face who used a lot of ochre make up to cover up her very mild scars from smallpox. And I loved her, too. We had a source of red ochre about 5 days walk away inland and East from our settlement on the coast and we traded arrows and a couple unpopular women for more of the substance. Fat Tooth said, “We shouldn’t simply trade away unpopular women, but these women only caused problems for our tribe.”

And another summer loving woman was Slim Cow. She had a lot of children, 7 of them, and the kids, kind of got in the way of our lovemaking. Her youngest child was now 6 months old. And she squirted breast milk all over when I grabbed her breasts. But Slim Cow was very experienced in the art of love, so I loved her again and again. And I told her, “Once there was a woman who was very fertile, and so every man wanted to love her hoping to impregnate her. In the end she had 25 children, many of them twins and most were clever like her. She figured she had done the tribe a real favor by creating so many clever children. But then one year, the plague struck and killed 14 of them. She was full of profound sadness.” She said, “The Gods give, and the Gods take away.” Her youngest child was two now, but she still gave breast milk to other

women's children, especially in the case of our tribeswoman, Mad Cat, who had recently had triplets." I loved Mad Cat too, and she screamed like a banshee.

Mad Cat was a pretty blonde who of course had recently been forced to shave her hair. She said it was a shame as many men went crazy for blondes. I told her, "Once there was a wild woman who asked men, 'If they were feeling crazy tonight?' She quickly found out that there were only 3 men in the tribe crazy enough for her. So, she tried to influence the youthful men in the tribe to make them crazy. And she had some success. One of the youths asked her if she wanted him to take her to another tribe to live. And she said, 'I'm not that crazy!'" She said, "So, you understand my position?" I said, "Indeed I do," and I was crazy enough to love her.

And one day we saw a large group of large whales offshore. We all thought it was an omen that there would be a lot of sea life to be caught this year. Fat Tooth said, "It is good luck. And whales are my totem animal, so the Gods approve of me." Some of us deliberated whether it was true. Some tribes people were still mad at Fat Tooth for killing Magic Tongue. Some figured, the whales were ominous that Fat Tooth would die soon. We were all under her spell and afraid to insist she train a successor...

And I loved, Turquoise Dream. She told me, "She recently had been dreaming of carving a rare turquoise stone into her totem animal, the Giant Sloth." She wasn't very skilled at carving, so she got Big Brain to help her. And she also said, "She had recently dreamed of being in a tree full of giant sloths and she was one of them." She had asked Fat Tooth, "What it meant?" and Fat Tooth told her, "Do things slowly like your totem animal. Fools rush in!" And so Turquoise



Dream, she told me to “Love her slowly and gently.” So, I did. And I told her, “Once there was a girl whose totem was a Giant Sloth. So, mimicking the totem animal she moved slowly and spent most of her time in bed, often with a lover. But ultimately people of the tribe told her ‘She was lazy,’ but she said, ‘I have no children to occupy my time, though I am trying to conceive.’ Finally, she had a child, but it was retarded, and tribal law required that such a baby be killed. Her heart was filled with horror, and she seldom got out of bed. And this is how she lived her life. Damned by her totem.” She said, “Perhaps it is not the best totem, but there is something to be said for being lazy.”

And that summer, I kept dreaming of loving women covered in honey. Fat Tooth told me, “You respect women and liked those who were sweet-tempered and nice. If I had some honey, I would also cover my body with it. But it would attract ants.”

And another I loved was Sweet Dream. She told me, “I’d always had sweet dreams. But recently I had had a lot of nightmares. I kept dreaming of our tribe being attacked by marauders from far away and I was fighting too. And in the end, I was captured and enslaved as I ran out of arrows.” And she said, “Fat Tooth was under the impression, I, Sweet Dream would fight to the death if there was war.” I said, “Won’t you fight for your men?” She replied, “I’d certainly fight to protect my children!” She had come to us from another tribe and her loyalty was always in question. But she said, “I have nothing to hide!”

And that summer, Big Brain and I kept taking a pack of young 14-16-year-old men out on hunting trips. We taught them to track and hunt various animals, using the dogs to help. However

sometimes the dogs were disadvantageous with their barking which spooked deer and caribou and made them run away. But for hunting mammoth or bulls or small animals too, the dogs worked out well. But we spent most of our hunts at sea where there was abundant sea life and a sure thing as far as food went. Some of our neighbors referred to us as the “Fishing People.” Some of our neighbors only hunted meat and didn’t like fish. But we had a lot of tasty spices to go with the sea creatures we caught. I personally loved roast dolphin.

As for the young women, Fat Tooth trained them to cook, cut wood and taught them her love secrets. And many young women had kids, so Fat Tooth helped in their education, teaching them math and how to carve wood and how to knap flint and how to gather and use a bow and arrows and hunt small game like squirrels and birds.

And I kept hearing what a good lover young Killer Fish was. All the women he loved sang his praises and I was jealous. It turned out he was very well endowed and very sensitive to women’s needs. Many women wanted him to be the next Chief. If the current Chief died, every adult (14+) had one vote. I said “Killer Fish may be a great lover, but he is not such a good hunter and lacks charisma among males. He was not a man’s man. So, he would probably never be Chief.

And there were rumors our neighbors to the far north had a new disease that was deadly. And so, we decided not to trade with any neighboring tribes for the time being. There were meeting spots five nights before the Solstices and Equinoxes where we met to trade. But didn’t go this year.

One night late that summer, we were sitting round the fire and Pig Eye said, "I told my lover to talk to me while I slept to guide me in my dreams." I said, "The Shamaness, Magic Tongue, did that to me many times. The last time she did it, I dreamed of a people surrounded in an aura of light and they told me to come to them. Seek us and you'll find us," they said. I asked her, "What the dream meant?" And she said, "Explore the barriers/frontiers of this World."

Another night that summer, around the fire, the Chief said, "Imagine people living without fire!" I said, "It is said, 'There is a debauched settlement of Yeti who dwell in the Pyrenes Mountains and have no tools or fire and are mostly scavengers.'" The Chief said, "At least they have fur to keep them warm." I asked him, "Would you love a Yeti?" He said, "I'd loved some women scarred badly by smallpox, so I guess I could, but I wouldn't enjoy it."

On another occasion, Pig Eye said, we should all go Southwest down the coast where it is warmer. He said, we know for a fact the South is warmer and the north is colder, and our tribe is said to have come originally from the South. I said, one of these days we'll send an expedition, maybe in Springtime.

And I loved another new adult, Smiling Grace. She liked to laugh and knew all the tribe's jokes. Her face was a bit odd, and she often smiled. But it was good loving. Afterwards, she said, "Don't you think this life is a joke?" I said, "If the Gods exist, I am sure that they are laughing at us and our pitiful struggles." And I said, "You are far wiser than your age, my dear!" She said, "The only God that made any sense was the Goddess of Luck and she was kicked out of the Palace of the Gods." "Yes," I said, "Our tribe is due for some good luck." And I told her, "Once

there was a girl who thought life was a joke. But then she had a child, and this gave her meaning in life. But unfortunately, the child died in her first year. And so, the woman cursed the God of Luck and didn't believe in the Gods anymore." She countered, "Once there was a woman who was lucky and was much loved and had numerous children. And she prayed to the God of Luck!" And she added, "Once there was a man who thought he knew everything, but behind his back called him 'a blind old fool.'" I said, "No one in the tribe thinks I am a fool!" She said, "You are so proud!"

And now Cloud Dancer had picked up the language and turned out to be a woman who fell in love with me. And I told her, "Once there was a stubborn woman who wanted only one man in her tribe, but she was rebuffed. But she kept trying and finally was traded to another tribe. Finally, she had met a man who she could love, and other women tried to be like her!" She said, "Luck favors the survivors, the bold and uncompromising!"

## CHAPTER 10: FALL/WINTER OF MY 44<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

And this winter season brought a new people who appeared on the coast, the “Sea People” in our hunting grounds. So, we met with them. They were brown-skinned and traded us obsidian and dug out canoes and unpopular women, hemp for rope and for cannabis, in exchange for chimes and new flutes, foolish women, flint and red ochre. We spoke different languages, but they had an old woman who used to belong to a branch of our tribe who acted as interpreter. And one of our warriors had studied their language. And their culture was polygamous. And we felt confident we could get along well with these new people in the future.

And this winter season brought another tribe, this one a large, hostile, brown-skinned new tribe who encroached on our hunting territory and our hunters had some skirmishes with them. Two of our men were killed. And our drumbeats were for war. We wore our battle ochre which indicated how many people we had killed if any. Many of our surviving males hadn't killed even one man. I had killed nine. But on the battlefield, we realized we were outnumbered two or three to one. So, we all scattered and ran away. Our opponents seized our camp and our women and children and took them all back to their camp. So, we gathered together at the meeting point and decided to look for help from our friends the other brown-skinned people, who we had traded with, effectively tripling our numbers and this time attacked in the night our enemies in their encampment. We won the battle, but when the smoke cleared there were only three of our tribesmen surviving, including me and four males of our allies.

We were all injured. I had an arrow in my ear and a spear wound in my leg. But I completely recovered. So did the others. And we had lost our Chief. And we decided to join our allies, the Sea People in their camp permanently. Their Chief had lost an arm but was still alive. And he became Chief of our merged tribes by election with every adult voting. Fat Tooth became Shamaness to both tribes, the other tribe had had a male Shaman who died in the battle. Their tribe had had smallpox and the sex disease also. And we worried about another wave of intruders. Everyday at dusk we would search the skies for signs of smoke from campfires of others. We needed to live without war for 10 years until most of our children were fully grown. And most of them had sex disease. Our brown-skinned allies, "The Sea People" agreed to learn our language and we learned theirs. And it would take a year for everyone to be conversationally bilingual. Big Brain and Pig Eye my best friends had died in the war, and I found myself just hanging around women, loving them and talking with them about life and the Gods. Fat Tooth would sometimes sit up with me late into the night. She kept telling me that the Gods were malign, and the merged tribe was doomed. I felt the same but didn't tell that to the youth.

So, after the battle, our two merged tribes had just 7 men left and our merger with the Sea People brought us 201 women for a total 361 and 500 more children and we took the defeated people, the "Angry Peoples" 302 women and 420 children. Giving us now 661 women plus over 1,000 children so we had a huge problem.

We decided to ask to join neighboring tribes and there was one tribe of 75 men and 50 women who agreed to let us join them, we had a translator who knew their language and they were an old trading partner, they were the "Radical People" and were known for taking life to

extremes. We told the women there would be many more new men introduced in the next few years. So now we were three tribes in one. But we decided to call ourselves, the “Love People,” the name of our old tribe as we had so many women, that free love was essential. And we all together, men and women, with each one vote, voted the Sea People’s Chief to become the Chief of the newly merged three tribes. The Radical People’s chief was ill and so didn’t run for election. And our Love People’s Shamaness, Fat Tooth, became the merged tribes medicine woman. And the Radical People’s male Shaman became our medicine man. His name was Crazy Eyes, and he was totally crazy. Alcohol made him even crazier, and he would dance erratically wearing a deer mask and would grab girls at random and love them in public. And he played the flute discordantly and had crazy eyes and he would make mad pronouncements like “I have cured all disease!” And “All my lovers must wear a doe head!” And “We have no enemies, and the future will be peaceful.” Also, “Everyone must bow to me whenever they meet me!” And he hypnotised all the people of the merged tribes to worship him. And many people who Fat Tooth had hypnotized were hence cross-hypnotized and this drove many people crazy.

But the “Angry People” who we had defeated, had 300 women and the majority didn’t like us and so we resolved to trade them away along with the poisoned minds of their 420 children. We had a hard time getting rid of them all, we had to travel some distance by boat and had an interpreter, for both the Wild Ones tribe and the Red People’s tribe and gave most of the captured women to them but acquired many nice dugout canoes and blue lotus and opium and cannabis and enough red ochre to last us for years and plenty of obsidian and 15 very clever women in return. Most tribes didn’t prize clever women. The opium and blue lotus made the people not want to hunt or gather and just enjoy the moment. I tried these drugs but resolved to

stick with booze. But I reflected there were all sorts of drugs to take, now. As I mentioned previously some of us took cannabis and we were also able to trade for it with our nearby neighbors.

But that fall, 43 adolescent boys became men, which helped. But there were also 44 newly adult women. But many of our women complained they needed more men or wanted to be traded to neighboring tribes. So, we traded away 300 of 302 of the Angry Peoples women and 40 from our tribe/the Sea People and the Angry peoples 420 children plus 40 problem children. We traded far down the Southeast and Southwest coasts and used middlemen and finally got rid of them all.

I tried my best to love 3 women a day. We now had 125 warriors. And 383 women and 900 children. And we figured every year we would have 30 new warriors and 30 new women every year in the near future. And we were looking to trade still more women

And we moved our tents and statues to the camp of the Radical People in their new camp to the southwest and moved our supply of booze by boat along the coast. The boxes had loopholes for carrying sticks, so ten men could carry together a box of liquor. And we knew that we had to trade some more women and children, our tribe was just too big. So, we kept the prettiest and the ones who seemed the cleverest and traded 40 more to neighboring tribes, but kept their children, in exchange for obsidian and more opium and blue lotus and got back 5 women who seemed to be very clever. None of my favorite lovers were traded away. And I was chief negotiator in the



trades. That brought us to a total of 340 women and I vowed to get rid of more while acquiring clever ones. And we built another Pantheon in the Radical Peoples' camp.

There were so many new women to love, but I often visited a witch who had been cast out for not being fertile. Her name was Golden Hair, and she was blond, but of course her hair was not shaved, as an outcast. I thought she was very exotic looking. And I started an affair with her that lasted months. I would typically see her twice a week and the rest of my time I was servicing the new women. And I infected her, but she was just glad to have someone who cared about her. And I spent weeks at a time loving her, but I didn't tell anyone else in the tribe where I'd been. Some suspected I was seeing a witch but, most believed me when I said I was out meditating on the tribe's future. I told them I worried about our fate. The witch had the same sabre-toothed tiger totem as me. She had a high sex drive and still hoped to have a child. And she was truly a Tiger in bed. And the witch went gathering herself and had tasty vegetarian dishes which I really liked. Sometimes I brought her a large deer stomach pouch of moonshine and we got drunk together. She was really good at mixing drinks with herbs and fruit. But I couldn't knock her up. But Fat Tooth knew what I was up to and said, "We have all these beautiful women in the tribe, and you choose an outcast?" I said, "Don't judge me!"

But we still relatively prospered, and my hair grew white that winter and I no longer had as much energy. But everyday I got drunk and wasn't much use. I had a good singing voice though and would sing our songs to the accompaniment of my chimes, and the drum and flute every night. We all knew the words to the songs by heart. And the girls would dance to the music.

Many girls said they lived for dancing, and it was the highlight of their day... But there were few men to dance with. Some women wanted to be traded to other tribes who had more men. And we remaining males were hard-pressed to love all of the women. Every woman was good loving though a few bore the scars of smallpox. We had acquired 4 more women who had smallpox sores and they pretty much kept to themselves.

And we had few men in the tribe, so women went out in the hunt, joining the men.

My favorite song went, "We men are all hunters and women hunt for love. And we drink liquor because we are chosen by the Gods to live on this Earth. Let there be peace and love." And another one went, "The Moon Goddess was the mystery Goddess. She brings us life in the night. To know her is to know the essence of women. She is a strange enigma!" But I only half-believed such songs.

And one night I was totally hammered loving Burnt Entrance again. She wanted, "Another story." So, I told her, "Once there was a girl who had an amazing mind and was like a hurricane in bed. And she suggested we make peace with local tribes (mostly we were on good terms with most of them), by exchanging women. We could trade the pretty but problematic and foolish ones for clever ordinary looking ones. But many women were against her. So, she followed my policy. But it was a dangerous policy. And finally, one put a knife in her and she died." She said, "So you think I shouldn't mess with the status quo?" I said, "There's a price to be paid for change." And she said, "Once there was a man who knew everything but, he cursed many people with his stories. In the end a woman stabbed him to death." I said, "Touche."

And I was getting pretty good at making alcohol using only select grains. But many said it was still too harsh and so mixed it with water and berries. But nearly everyone in our new tribe drank my alcohol. We could hardly make enough deer stomach carafes and wooden boxes for the alcohol. I had a wooden cup I always used as did most of us. But as time passed, we had some new neighbors who were friendly and invited them to partake of our alcohol and dancing and singing in their own languages. And we swapped mates with them. All our new neighbors were now all experiencing a population surge. And five years after the great battle we would have almost 200 new warriors. The youth didn't want wars, and said that after the great battle, there was plenty of seafood and game for the survivors.

And I had my favorite love mates still, who were all infected with the sex disease. I was now 44 summers old and looked wise and distinguished people told me, though I didn't know what I looked like. That is until one of our carvers did a life size carving of me in exchange for more booze rations, enough for 3 men. And I figured it was flattering but I truly looked wise. But as time passed, I ended the rationing by producing more and left people free to drink as much as they wanted... And the new tribe we had joined was one who liked alcohol. And it was difficult to make enough. But blue lotus was now preferred by most. It was hard to trade for enough.

And I liked the former Radical People's woman, Strange Face. She had quickly picked up the language. And she was pretty in an unusual way. She told me, "I had scaled many mountains just for the hell of it. And I had never turned down a man's love except when she was with another." And she had two 4- year-old twin sons who were hellions. And she asked me to tell her, "A

story?" I said, "Once there was a great beauty who only appealed to highly intelligent men and all the intelligent men were killed in battle so, she was traded to another tribe for merely some red ochre." She said, "No one has ever painted a picture of my face, so I don't know what I look like!" I said, "I assure you; you are a rare beauty." And we took blue lotus together and it was euphoric. I said, "Sometimes life is so good, other times not."

And Strange Face introduced me to another Radical People woman who was her friend, and had quickly learned the language also, named Pleasant Experience. Pleasant Experience was a woman who took a lot of magic mushrooms and so was kind of surfing whenever I met her. She said, "I am so pleased to have met the inventor of alcohol. I couldn't live without it." And she said, "You must be possessed by an alien from the skies to invent alcohol and chimes." I said, "I am under Fat Tooth's spell and the spell of Crazy Eyes. And do their bidding now." She said, "I don't particularly care for Fat Tooth and prefer Crazy Eyes." I said, "They are both control freaks and completely mad." And I told her, "Once there was an affable woman who tried her best to please men. But people took advantage of her generosity and mistreated her. And men fought over her. Finally, she was traded to another tribe for some pretty stones." She said, "Women are chattels, I know. But it is hard to change our culture."

Also, there were now 3 youthful wood carvers; our two former carvers, Big Brain and Hot Hand, had died in the great battle, and these youth carved images of the Gods, 10' tall and traded them to our neighbors. One of the youthful carvers, Gold Duster, 25 had survived the battle. He was training two other men of 14 how to carve and they had been proteges of the two master

carvers. And like my proteges he learned all our stories by heart, and we had 1000's of them (I'll talk more about this later). And he had 3 promising new young women carvers.

One of the new carvers, Stone Picture, through a translator, said, "Big Brain and Hot Hand were unparalleled in their carving ability, but we are trying to improve." The older one of the carvers, Gold Duster said, "I think, as an artist, one doesn't peak until age 30, if you live that long." I said, "Yes old age brings wisdom, but I think Magic Tongue had not reached her peak when she died at 36." The third carver, Bone Emblem, age 14 said, "Life is not fair and we are all just pawns of the Gods." I told, Stone Picture, aged 14, that, "You should continue to work in stone. Such works would truly last forever." He said, "But it is slow work." And Gold Duster said, "I look to the Shamaness to prolong life and make such lasting works fulfilling. With the right medicines perhaps we can live forever, like the immortal Gods." I replied, "The tribe's history only goes back a little over a century. Before that maybe we were Gods." Bone Emblem replied, "We humans are all fallible and mortal, I am sure of that." Stone Picture answered, saying, I'd like to make carvings in living trees, now that we are settled in this camp. Carve totem animals into the living tree. Bone Emblem said, I'd like to build more boats using wood and caulked with clay in order to get more seafood. The dugout canoes are good boats, but large boats are necessary for whaling. I said, "What will we do if we encounter another tribe fishing?" Bone Emblem said, "We'll bring our bows and arrows, in case they are hostile." But I said, "I never heard of a sea battle." And the three young female carvers were all in their early 20's and were all shy around me and Gold Duster and the Chief and the two Shamans

On another occasion talking with a translator with the carvers, and Stone Picture, said, "I am in love with Fat Tooth!" I said, "Aren't we all?" Bone Emblem said, "The Shamaness gets more loving than anybody!" Gold Duster said, "Sometimes I visit several women in a night. Fat Tooth isn't the only woman to get lots of love." One of the young female carvers, Serendipity Drive said, "It's good to be a man in this tribe." I said, "But men die younger than women on the whole and surely it is better to be alive than dead." And another new carver, Blow Hole remarked, "It is a dream for everyone to live in a house!" I said, "That's the plan."

There were five tribes we came into contact that year, and none were hostile, and we traded with them. Three of the tribes were white the other two were brown skinned. We traded 45 more women, flint and red ochre, wooden chimes and statues in exchange for large tracts of hunting grounds, blue lotus, opium, cannabis and obsidian and 10 clever women We were careful to have all our warriors present at the trading, not wanting to appear weak and vulnerable. We kept the alcohol mostly to ourselves now and only one of our neighbors partook of it. They preferred blue lotus, opium and cannabis. And most other tribes thought we were crazy. But the new people of our merged tribes learned to enjoy liquor. That left us with 344 women.

And the carvers were all experts at knapping flint. There was a flint outcrop in our territory, and we sometimes traded to the south for obsidian. And we had sharpening rough stones for sharpening our hand axes. And our arrows were small for birds and wide for bigger animals. And we had tools for sewing, tooth picking, net making and so on. We used flint to make fire as well and everyone in the merged tribe could knap flint. Some were better than others. I was nearsighted so I could knap flint, but I was not very useful hunting.

That summer while out hunting I got separated from the hunting party during a fight with a mammoth and was lost in the north and it took me weeks to get back to familiar territory. I went westward then eastward and finally found our river, the Rhone and simply followed it to the coast. Everyone in the merged tribes said they were glad I hadn't perished. They valued my songs, and everyone agreed I was the "Liquor Master.". And I had taught all the youth to sing our songs, and some played the flute, others the drum, or chimes, some were outstanding soloists.

And we all learned the songs of our new tribe mates. For example, they had a song that went, "The Gods seem cruel but are fair and everyone gets their just desserts in the end." And another song went, "The wind is wild in a storm, sailors had best stay on land when the wind picked up." And another, "We have found the magical liquor makers and we are so lucky to have joined them." Many said, "We are all optimistic about the future." But it was hard to be optimistic after what we'd been through. But above all the tribe loved my fable collection, some of which I'd composed myself.

And some of the youth threw six-sided bone dice in order to get more alcohol. I had really made our people into drunkards. But I had no regrets. "Let the people be happy," I argued. And I stepped up production of my liquor.

And children previously needed to be at least 14 summers old, an adult, to partake of the liquor. But now even young children were getting drunk often. Many of our people complained I

was turning the new generation into useless drunkards. But I said, "Alcohol gives us hope, in these dark days for the tribe. And it is a gift of the Gods." In fact, it was one of the only good things we had amongst all our sorrows, other than sex and eating. And of course, many liked to indulge in blue lotus and opium.

And I had a dream of a new people who were free of all diseases and set up a new tribe. But they were peace lovers and not able to defend themselves and lived as vegetarians. But all the women ended up as sex slaves, and the men were executed by a larger tribe. Fat Tooth told me "That peace was just an impossible dream and we needed to be violent to survive." And I had another dream of loving the Love Goddess. It was truly sublime and in the dream the Goddess told me "To bring back free love." So, when I awoke, I continued loving women in earnest, who had the sex disease. And why not? Maybe the new Shamaness would find a cure. She was certainly trying. New herbal medicines were tried, but so far nothing worked.

And I had another dream in which I was surrounded by sabre-toothed tigers, who devoured me. Fat Tooth said, "It's an omen. You must defeat a strong challenge!"

We decided to keep only 2 of the Angry Peoples' women and their kids. I loved both of them, this one, she was named Mad Duck, and had quickly learned our language and said to me, "I am tired of men and their wars." I said, "It's worse for men, they die." And she said, "But I like the free love of your tribe. In my previous life I was the 4<sup>th</sup> wife of an unscrupulous man who maltreated me. And now I am free. I said, "Once there was a woman who had a tough life, but then her fate was altered, and she became a Queen. As Queen she ruled justly and was known



for her probity. But then the ugly hand of fate struck her down in a smallpox outbreak and she was blinded and deeply scarred and drank the hemlock.” She said, “You make me want to love the Goddess of Luck even more. But I survived the last smallpox pandemic and maybe will survive the next one too. And you sir, are my lucky charm!” I loved her and it was smooth and swift.

And that summer, I loved a woman from the “Radical People,” the new adult of 19, Brown Bear, her hair was brown but shaved. She told me, “I had a dream of being in a bear’s den and picking up one of the baby bears and bringing back to live with her. But the baby bear bit me seriously and I bled to death.” I said, “I have trained a wolf to be tame, maybe the same could be done with a bear. But it would be dangerous. I feel it’s a sign that you mustn’t go exploring where wild animals live.” She said, “Fat Tooth told me the bear represented life and my life was to be short.” I said, “Who knows what luck will bring to you!” And I loved her on and off for weeks and she made me feel rejuvenated.

And also, that winter, I loved the Sea Peoples’ new tribeswoman, 18, Devil Mayhem. She was unpredictable and crazy. She said, “Love me for weeks.” So, I did. But I had to love other women too, with the dearth of men. And she asked, “What’s the worst thing that could happen to you and I?” I said, “The smallpox could return, and we could die a horrible death!” She said, “My body is very strong, I don’t think I would get it!” I said, “Continue living life to the fullest.” And I loved her numerous times. She was a wild thing in bed and spoke of all sorts of crazy things like make love in the sea and kill all our neighbors and play mad music on the chimes. I’d never seen any woman so wild and crazy. And I told her, “Once there was a devilish woman,

who raised hell in her tribe. She wanted everyone to be crazy like her and get drunk every night. But then one night while dancing wildly she fell into the central fire pit and subsequently died of her injuries. She said, "Bard are you cursing me?" I said, "There are limits for everyone."

In yet another dream I was older and was exploring a cave and encountered a cave bear. The bear scratched my eyes out and spoke our language saying, "Your whole tribe is blind to Reality. And you are all doomed. I took this dream as being prophetic, and my vision was getting very poor. I was worried I'd go blind and felt cursed by the Gods, or if there were no Gods, I was cursed by fate. If the Gods existed and loved us, that would be good. But our tribe was plagued by bad luck. So, I decided to not believe in the Gods and instead worshipped Fat Tooth.

Fat Tooth told us of her dream, "In which the old people were all killed off by a new disease and we lost our new Chief and you, our bard." After smallpox years ago, everyone believed this dream was a prophecy. And Fat Tooth told us to live for the day and not to think about the future.

Our new Chief meanwhile had a number of good dreams. Like a dream in which he led all the people into battle including the women who had been trained for war in the dream. I told him, "It is a good idea to keep training the women more to fight. And so, we continued to do so.

Another of the Chief's dreams was a dream of everlasting seafood on the coast, which would allow for numerous tribes to exist. Far more than existed previously and there would be no need

for war, not for centuries. I told him his dream was right on, but humankind loved war and fighting.

I kind of liked our new Chief. I thought he was wise. But he had lost an arm in the battle and couldn't use the bow and arrows. So, he carried a spear instead. Fat Tooth had done well to amputate and sew up his shoulder. And he was upbeat about the future. One time he told me, "I believed that after death we would all go to Heaven not Hell as most people said. And one day while on magic mushrooms together in another ruin and we saw some dead spirits and they appeared content. Fat Tooth liked magic mushrooms too and told us, "The shrooms bring us closer to the Gods!" And the Chief said the previous day some moths had been flying around him and that he had taken shrooms and saw a giant moth of light which he was sure was an alien species. Fat Tooth told him, "It was a scary prophecy, she could imagine a horde of moths of light overrunning all in its path." We all believed that anything could happen in the course of our lives. Maybe we had too much imagination if that was possible.

One time I was chatting with the chief about a dream I'd had of him dying and I became Chief. He said, "If anything happens to me, you will have to succeed me. None of our other clever men are old enough. But of course, I don't think your dream will become Reality."

I loved Fat Tooth on many occasions. She was a good lover, but not as good as the previous Shamaness, Magic Tongue. But I kind of felt that Fat Tooth should die for killing Magic Tongue and I felt guilty loving Fat Tooth. But I could feel Magic Tongue's aura around me and felt if she was still alive, she'd approve of me loving Fat Tooth. Fat Tooth hadn't been training a successor

though, wanting to be indispensable to the tribe. Fat Tooth had no children, just a few miscarriages and was now 28 summers old. She worried one day she'd be cast out. We still had kept this custom and banished 2 women that year for infertility at age 35. But the number of miscarriages had doubled in the previous year, probably due to the sex disease or smallpox. And one woman died in childbirth.

## CHAPTER 11: SPRING/SUMMER OF MY 44<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

And I had three men, who were my new protégés, who were all from the Radical People, who could carry a tune and knew all the fables and mythology of all three of the merged tribes, but mostly I trained them how to make liquor and the boxes and what grains to select and what herbs. As spring came my proteges and everyone else in the tribe was now trilingual

And around this time, I visited another witch, her name was Blue Thinker who'd been cast out due to infertility. She was also attractive with very large breasts. She said, "Maybe if I could have a child now, the tribe will welcome me back." And she was really horny and desperate. Sure enough, I got her pregnant and convinced Big Chicken, the mid-wife, to let her back into the tribe and So the Shamaness officially welcomed her back. They didn't ask who the father was! And many believed she had been impregnated by the Gods. And we put an end to the casting out of childless women and welcomed back Golden Hair and one other as well. And wouldn't you know it, Golden Hair got pregnant, and we were all so happy for her. But it was a miscarriage, and so we were all sad.

And sitting around the fire one night. With my 3 protégés, we talked about the differences between our tribe the Love People and the new tribes we had merged with had called themselves, respectively the People of the Sea and the Radical People. We were now all known collectively as simply as the "Love People." All three of my protégés were from the Radical People's tribe. They were Lucky Charm and Maximum Carnage. The other was Big Hunk. None had fought at

the great battle, being from the Radical People and were men in their late 20s or early 30s. Big Hunk knew more fables and stories than the other two.

Lucky Charm said, “The Sea People who we’d merged with were basically polygamists rather than having free love. And he thought free love was a better idea, but men didn’t care so much about the children as they didn’t know who the father was.” And the radical people had had a dearth of women and couldn’t believe their good luck joining with us and all our women.

And Maximum Carnage said, “The Sea Peoples of course taught us to dive for seafood and could hold our breath for 60 seconds.” And he added, the Sea People had inferior boats to ours, as they didn’t use clay for caulking. But other tribes invented the dug-out canoe. Big Potato said, “The Sea People weren’t hit as hard by smallpox, but in their legends, they had the same disease a few times. Maybe they were almost immune now. I said, “The children that have been born in the last year of mixed loving seem healthier and stronger, maybe due to the babies taking the strongest features of each ethnic group.” Lucky Charm opined, “Maybe the babies are getting stronger now that smallpox is gone?” I said, “Fat Tooth let’s me keep my beard as it hides the mild scarring I suffered from the disease. And I almost died. And maybe this is the reason my eyesight is failing.”

Another night I was around the fire with the three wood carvers. Bone Emblem was telling us, “That he tried to make his statues flattering, making the carved people look more beautiful/handsome. They were perfect forms.” Gold Duster said, “Of course our statues of the Gods are perfect, but I prefer to carve living people realistically.” Stone Picture answered him

saying, "I like to carve people as they think they look like from looking in the water for their image." I said, "You are all good. And the former carver, Big Brain carved a nice image of me which is in the Shamanesses' tent. You've all seen it I imagine, in your love sessions with Fat Tooth." Gold Duster opined, "I want to carve your rough image and glue it to every box of liquor we export." I said, "Of course I am very flattered, but its not necessary." Gold Duster replied, "I want your image to be familiar to all tribes in the whole World." I said, "Who knows how big the World is?" Gold Duster said, "I want to make sure you are never forgot for your gift of alcohol!"

Then I was sitting one night with the three carvers, my 3 protégés and the Chief. We were the males of the intelligentsia of the tribe. The Radical People's Chief died after a long illness in the spring. The Chief was saying, "We fought well in the recent huge battle, but had we only 3 or 4 less men, both our tribes would have been wiped out. All you young men would have been enslaved or killed. But as it is we lost most of our thinkers in the battle." I said due to my poor eyesight I had a hard time identifying the enemy. But my vision was just good enough to allow me to take out my victims. Young Bone Emblem said, "As you all know we are training the women to fight. With their numbers we'll never lose again." Big Hunk, said, "I want to love our women warriors! And encourage them to fight with us." I said, "The youth have never heard of women fighters. It is a brand-new thing!" But Lucky Charm said, "Training the women to fight was your idea, originally, Cool Ring. It is brilliant! I wonder what other obvious things our new tribe is missing." And that night we took the euphoric blue lotus and then loved one of our favorite women...

And our women told us how glad they were that they hadn't been enslaved, but some wished to run away from our tribe of few men. Three women ran away from our newly merged tribes. Perhaps they found rogue warriors to mate with and start a tribe of their own and perhaps they went to a neighboring tribe. One just had to follow the coast to meet other peoples.

Another night I sat with Fat Tooth, Golden Hair, Brown Bear, Devil Mayhem, Hearing Genius, Broken Thumb, Sweet Dream, Slim Cow, Chestnut Mix, Ochre Lips, Bare Face, Eagle Claw and others who formed the female intelligentsia. Golden Hair was saying, "We are lucky we have men such as you, Cool Ring, who has helped liberate women in the new free love scenario and giving the women the vote." I said, "It works well for the men, too!" Fat Tooth said, "Variety is the spice of life!" Broken Thumb said, "I think the Shamaness should be Chief, and we should try anything to avoid war. And if smallpox comes again, everyone should isolate in their tents and stay away from others. Fat Tooth said, "The smallpox affected all people except hermits, so maybe you are right, Broken Thumb." Sweet Dream said, "We must aim for a better society and if we grow in numbers at the current rate, we shall soon be invulnerable." Slim Cow said, "And our people are plump and healthy. We live in paradise." Eagle Claw said, "We live in Paradise, but we all grow old and when a woman is 50, she can no longer have children and is not so useful to the tribe." Bare Face opined, "But older women are still desirable to some men." Fat Tooth said, "It is a gift of the Gods to be desirable." Hearing Genius said, "One day there was a woman who said, 'Love doesn't matter.' But then finally one day she fell in love for real and realized she should have spent her entire life looking for true love." I said, "Once there was a clever woman who only did easy things. But she finally realized that all great things require hard work." Brown Bear said, "I think we are the "Crazy People." And I said, "Everyone has been



driven mad by cross-hypnosis. Crazy Eyes and Fat Tooth are both vying for control of the People.” Ochre Lips said, “The people all have mental problems but, the Radical People tribe had recently discovered opium through trading to the Southeast and we rationed it among the people. And also blue lotus which made one euphoric and tranquil at the same time and also increased one’s sex drive.” I preferred to stick to booze, but many of the young people wanted to take blue lotus or opium. We traded a few women more, recently, to get these drugs and many people in the newly merged tribes were concerned about that. Hearing Genius said, “I liked the fact that you, Cool Ring, are trying to improve the tribes’ women, but you traded away a lot of good women.” Brown Bear added, “We all love you, for some of us, you are like a God to us.”

And this summer, we again didn’t go to the mountains and just moved up and down the coast. We now knew of 3 tribes to the Southwest and 3 tribes to the Southeast and 2 tribes to the north. The one to the north we had disputes with over hunting grounds (We had translators for all 8). But, rather than fight, we just fished more. We got along fairly well with the rest of them and had mapped out hunting territories in the sand, so it gave our tribe a chance to recover from the great battle.

Another occasion I was talking with Flint Prince, a survivor from the People of the Sea tribe and now a member of our Love People. He made good tools, and one day he said to me, “I had a dream of people lined up for liquor as far as the eye could see.” I said, “It could happen. If my liquor could be less harsh.” And Flint Prince said, “And in the dream I was last in line. I said, “You are one of the few elders we have left. We all respect you for surviving to 40.” And I asked him, “What have you learned in all your years?” He said, “To be aggressive and take what you

want. That means women, warring, hunting, alcohol, opium, blue lotus and magic mushrooms.” I asked him, “What is your favorite dream?” He said, “I kept dreaming of a young woman whom I really liked who had got the Shamaness to hypnotize me to love her. But I was her willing slave anyway.”

And another time I was talking with Power Player. He was from our Love People tribe and had survived the battle. He opined, “All I can think of is sickness and death. My true love is sick and can’t leave her bed. She’s in a lot of pain. And I think when she dies, I will die too.” I told him, “There will be other loves and hopefully your love will enjoy Hell.” He said, “According to our religion, Hell is an evil place.” I didn’t know what to tell him, so I changed the subject to this year’s massive production of alcohol to drown one’s sorrows. He said, “Yes, I want to drown my sorrows.”

And two women in their 50s died that summer, of consumption which had killed a number of people in our tribe and others. I reflected that life was short, you had to be ready to die anytime. We traded more women away and got 15 back. We now had 313 women.

And another survivor from our tribe was battle-hardened, Brain Stew. He was telling me, “How glad he was to have survived the battle.” And he said, “Now he had his pick of women and was so busy loving he didn’t have much time for the hunts. He was 24 years old and many of us thought he had saved us with his battle prowess, for example he’d killed the opposing chief and the medicine man and others. He was very strong and helped lift the crates of alcohol to the

boats. I asked him, "What have you learned in this life?" He responded, "Keep one's body in good shape by lifting weights and jogging. And never deny a girl love!"

## CHAPTER 12: THE FABLES AND MYTHOLOGY OF THE NEWLY MERGED TRIBES

The new tribes we had merged with had their own mythology such as a the “Radical People’s” generous, kind God of War, who blessed the tribe with the ability to defeat their enemies and support their allies. This is probably why they joined us after the great battle in the first place. They also believed in a new God, the God of Storms. And they said storms were becoming stronger and stronger. And the World was coming to an end. Most of the tribal elders believed the tribe was unlikely to survive much longer and this God had a nicely built wooden temple which housed a carving of the God who looked stern and ferocious, carved by their carver who died about the time of the great battle. Another new God of theirs was the Goddess of Fire. The Goddess had given humans the gift of fire and had to be placated by burning the dead. After the great battle there were hundreds of bodies burned at this God’s temple, though some of the youth ate the charred remains. Some said they should burn the bodies for the Goddess of Death, the old God. But the newcomers to our tribe insisted we pray their Goddess. And before the war, they had built temples on the coast near us, and we moved there as it was better hunting and we made a pilgrimage to our mountain temples and brought the statues of the Gods back to our new location and built a new Pantheon. A temple to all the Gods.

And our People had another new Goddess for the Pantheon, which was the Goddess of Art and Sculpture. Promising youths were trained to paint pictures on wooden slabs and trained in sculpture of the Gods. Many tribespeople said the art was like magic and we all held the artists in

high esteem. Fat Tooth that year went alone on a pilgrimage to visit the caves high in the mountains which could only be reached by letting a rope down from the top of a cliff. The caves were still believed to be a gateway to Hell. And when she returned, she said, "I had painted bulls, deer and mammoths which gave us magic power over the beasts. To draw them was to possess them, possess their souls. And I had communed with the dead in Hell. They said, 'Hell is a terrible place to be.'" I said, "It was a foolish risk to go all alone."

And another new Goddess was of the Sea People and was the Goddess of Sea Hunting. The Sea People had dugout canoes and dove down into the water and collected lobsters, crabs, clams, shrimp and so on which was new to us. And they also ate mostly fish and had a great ritual before setting out in the water. There was a legend about two of their men and two of their women set out to sea exploring and never came back. The sea was a vast mystery. And some of them wanted to explore down the coast but our numbers were too small for such a dangerous expedition. And there were legends of sea monsters and sharks which ripped apart boats. One day while combing the coast we encountered a dead giant squid, and this scared us and another day one of our divers lost a hand to a shark. So, after that, divers carried a spear in case of sea monsters. But it was really all up to the Gods anyways, I figured. More and more I believed that we were doomed by the Gods and wouldn't survive another 10 years, even as a merged tribe. I stopped praying at the Pantheon and encouraged the youth to do the same. Many hated me for that, but I told them "If the Gods just want to destroy us, why should we pray to them?" However, others pointed out, "That the merged tribe was growing in numbers."

And the Sea People had a myth about our new Chief God, the Sun God who abducted promising youth for his palace in Hell. Certainly, in the last decade about a dozen of our warriors vanished without a trace.

And another story of the Sea People was about a sly hunter who left steaks at the bottom of trees and sat in the trees waiting for animals to come and eat the meat whereupon he would fill them full of arrows. Typically, their tribe didn't eat predators, but it was a good way to kill some off. And so, the tribe did it very often.

And the Sea People had a new fable about the Pig and the Liquor. The pig told everyone he was going to get drunk and be happy. But while he was passed out the vultures pecked out his eyes and then ripped out his liver. The moral of the story was don't announce when you are weak and vulnerable.

And another new fable of mine was the story of the Wolf and the Man. Said the wolf, "I am wild and free!" Said the man, "You will be my slave. I will put food out for you, and you will become addicted to free food, and I will put a leash on you." So, the man did so and the wolf was getting old and drank the man's liquor and became friendly and domesticated. The moral of the story was everyone is slave to someone else.

And our new tribe mates were well-versed in fables. Their children all knew them all.

Another fable of the Sea People was the story of the Chicken and the Fox. One day a fox said to a chicken, I'm going to eat you one day. The chicken said my hearing is good and I have wings, you'll never catch me. But after that conversation, the chicken was more wary and had a couple of close escapes from the fox. The moral was don't announce your intentions to your enemy.

Another of my fables, was the tale of the Crows and the Snake. The crow said to the snake, I am going to eat you for dinner one day. But one day the crow landed on the snake and the snake used super energy to twist and bite the crow. But the snake tried to swallow the dead crow and it was too big, so the snake died. The moral was in battle there are often no victors.

And I had the story of the ant and the cricket. The cricket said to the ant, I brighten the world with my sound. The ant said I help clean up dead animals, I am just as useful as you are. The moral was we all play our role in the divine script.

Then there was the Radical People's fable about the pig and the dog. Said the pig, "I am free to wander the Earth whereas you have to obey your master." Said the dog, "My master feeds me well and shelters me from the winter cold. Freedom is useless if you are miserable." The moral is the price of freedom is often very high.

Then there was the fable of the Demi-God and the human. Said the Demi-God I am immortal and powerful whereas you are a puny human. Said the human, but you and I both have to bow to

the Gods, perhaps you more so than me. The moral was no matter how powerful you think you are, there is always someone more powerful than you. That was one of mine.

Also, our tribe had the fable of the Mouse and the Eagle. The eagle terrorized the mouse and almost caught her several times but, she said in my short life, "I have given birth to hundreds of mice and am really quite successful." "Yes, said the eagle, "It's good eating for me." The moral was there are many ways to measure success. That was an old fable.

Another fable the Radical People had was the story of the fire and the stones. The fire said to the stones, "I live to devour fuel." Said the stones, "But your life is short whereas we stones have been around for centuries and centuries." The moral was sometimes it is better to have a less exciting, but more prolonged life.

And I composed, the fable of the bear and the male peacock. Said the bear, "It is best not to show off lest you be an easy target for predators." Said the peacock, "I brighten the World with my beauty." The moral was some creatures will do anything for sex.

Also, the Sea People had the fable of the goose and the pig. Said the pig, "You geese have to fly great distances in Spring and Fall which must be excruciating. But I just remain around here and there is always plenty of food. Said the goose, "But you nearly starve when the snow flies whereas I feast wherever I go." And the moral was you can have anything you want in life if you are willing to pay the price.



Another fable I made was the story of the drunken dog and the sober dog. Said the drunken dog, "I am happy. Happier than you!" Said the sober dog, "When drunk one tends to make mistakes. It only takes one mistake to lose your life. Better to be sober and live on." Said the drunken dog, "Long live freedom for your mind!" The moral of the story was drinking is good but dangerous.

And another of the Radical People fables they had, was the story of the three owls. Said the first, "To be wise is the most important thing in life." Said the second, "To have sharp eyes is most important." Said the third, "Giving birth to young owls is the true meaning of life." The moral was to each his/her own.

Still another fable was Fat Tooth's story of the cave bear and the hawk. Said the cave bear, "I like living in high mountains where my family and I are safe from predators." Said the hawk, "But you are not safe from me. I'll pick your eyes out and you'll fall to your death." The moral was in this World no one is safe.

And another fable of mine was the tale of the ants and the men. Said the ants, "We have billions of ants in the same area as one of your tribes. We are far more successful than you!" Said the men, "But you ants are all idiots and single-minded. Whereas we humans can think and dream." The moral was humans all think they are above other creatures, but we are all very small.

Another of our old fables was the tale of the fox and the grasshopper. Said the fox, “You are an insignificant creature who is beneath my attention.” Said the grasshopper, “When the time is right, we grasshoppers in the millions devour everything in our path. We are truly powerful.” The moral was every creature believes they are important.

Then there was the Sea People’s tale of the deer and the reindeer. Said the deer, “Unlike you I am free to wander where I please, whereas you must follow the herd. Said the reindeer, “There is safety in numbers. And I will likely live longer than you!” Said the deer, “At least I’ll die free!” The moral was different strokes for different folks.

Another of my fables, was the tale of the crows and the robins. Said one of the crows, “Don’t you get tired of eating worms all the time?” Said the robin, “Worms are fresh meat and tasty whereas you eat a lot of rotten carcasses that taste foul.” The moral of the story was every creature follows its instincts.

And I had a fable was the story of the Giant Sloth and the Fox. Said the fox, “I am going to climb this tree and eat you!” And he did. The moral was some animals are destined to go extinct.

Another fable of the Sea People, they had was the story of the Rat and the Honey. The rat said, “I am going to knock down your nest and feast upon your honey but after he did so the bees stung him to death. And so, they were all losers. The moral was some deeds of rats and humans don’t end well.

And another of Sea Peoples' fable was the story of the Giant Beaver and the Snake. Said the snake, "I am going to gobble up your young." Said the beaver, "I am going to kill you instead. The end result was the snake killed the beaver with its poison and ate the beaver's offspring. The moral of the story was nature was cruel.

And I had a fable about the Pig and the Oranges in which a pig would feast upon fallen oranges. But the oranges said to the pig, "Please don't eat us and let us grow into more trees and then you can partake of an abundant harvest. But the pig said, "Your seeds end up in my poop and what more could you want?" The moral was to live for the day.

Another fable of mine was the story of the Sabre-Toothed Tiger and the Mammoth. The tiger said "I am going to nip your bum until you stumble and fall and then you are a goner. The mammoth said, "I'll kick your teeth in if you try it." But the tiger followed the mammoth and finally the mammoth sought to enter the sea to get rid of the tiger, but the tiger followed and bit the mammoth on the rear and finally after traveling for a few more miles, the mammoth dropped down from loss of blood. The moral of the story was to never get tired of pursuing your prey as all animals and men have moments of weakness.

Then there was Magic Tongue's fable about the Trees and the Wind. The trees said, "Blow your hardest and send my leaves far and wide." Said the wind one day, "I'll blow a fire your way and you will die!" Said the trees, "Why pick on us?" Said the wind, "I am in control of this World, not you." And the moral was you can't fight nature. And our merged tribes also worshipped the Goddess of the Wind.

Also, the Angry People's fable, about the angry man and the bulls. The angry man said, we will make a feast of you, bull. The bull replied, "I'll cause the herd to stampede, and we'll trample you to death. But the angry man filled him full of arrows. Bu then the heard stampeded blindly and ran over the angry man. The moral is the lucky survive.

And we were often composing new fables, whilst sitting around the fire, drinking. We wanted to make sure the tales weren't lost and taught the youth to memorize them. We had thousands of them. A fable for every occasion.

## CHAPTER 13 FALL/WINTER OF MY 45<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

As Fall came, I was feeling old and didn't have the same sex ability I'd had in my youth. But I still had strong desire and I ate garlic which made me more potent. Fat Tooth insisted "You take it!" And she made me ginseng tea for generalized energy. And we traded for cannabis through middlemen and got it from quite a distance. We put it in a bowl and smoked it and it made good rope. Many of our hunters and gatherers were drunk and stoned when out hunting/fishing. And I occasionally took the blue lotus which also improved my libido.

But finally, that year I demanded Fat Tooth, "Train at least two proteges for the sake of the future," and she began to do so. She said, "I had hoped to train my own offspring for the job!" But of course, she was childless. The medicine man, Crazy Eyes had three protégés, so most were not worried.

And I had many of the women and youth gathering select grasses for my alcohol. And every summer I would make hundreds and hundreds of 3 yards X 3 yards wooden boxes sealed with clay, of strong liquor for the people. One of our neighboring tribes traded us beautiful rubies and 5 clever women in exchange for 10 foolish women who were unpopular in our tribe, and peace. We made the rubies into lovely totems and jewellery. They weren't interested in alcohol. And we had another group of neighbors to the north who frowned on alcohol, saying we were "Crazy Men." And our distant neighbors to the south and east didn't like it either. I figured it was a shame.

And we had with the new warriors and new women in that year. We now had about 155 warriors, about 345 women and 1,030 children. We still had too many females and some of us said, "We needed a good war in which the women participate!" And we decided to trade more unpopular women with their children to other tribes. Most tribes were looking to grow. And there were many in our tribe who wanted to trade for opium and blue lotus. But our birthrate was dropping due probably to the sex disease or due to the aftereffects of smallpox.

And I loved some girls that had recently become women that fall. They warmed me up. And I was loving, Ochre Lips again from the Radical People and once she said to me, "I just wanted to make love all day and all night!" I told her that "You make me feel youthful." I told Ochre Lips, "Once there was a woman who every man wanted to kiss and love, but she found it impossible to choose between her many suitors. She could see the good points of all of them. She was too young to know, she reflected. Finally, she resolved to pick lovers with a throw of the bone die. And if the die came up, 'Yes' then she loved the man in question. Many women were envious of her. But she took it into her head to love one man, she really liked. But he wasn't interested. And her heart was broken. But then finally she picked a man who was right for her, and she loved him often, but then one day he fell down dead." She said, "I heard most of your stories were dark, but this story gives me hope!"

And another young woman, Dark Lamb, 16, from the Sea People, asked me, "What is the secret to loving?" I told her that, "It was all in the energy of the thing. If you were turned on, whether naturally or through drinking, it was good love!" I got her drunk and loved her several times, and she and I were quite a number for a few weeks. And I told her, "Once there was a girl

who knew what she wanted: true love. And she had an open mind, so she tried out all sorts of men. But finally, she realized true love was an illusion. This realization set her free and so she enjoyed sex and was happy.” She said, “That sounds wise.” But I told her, “It was my duty to love as many women as possible to keep everyone satisfied, so I wouldn’t have much time for you in the future.” She said, “I am so sorry to hear that!” But she took it quite well.

And another woman, from the Radical People, Chestnut Mix, 25, was a brunette, and I saw her quite often. Most of the tribal women were black-haired. But of course, she had to shave her hair upon becoming an adult according to Fat Tooth’s wishes. Still, she was sexy and gave me good love. She said, “She felt blessed by the Gods, being so pretty. And Fat Tooth had drawn her portrait on leather, so she knew she was beautiful. And true to her name, she cooked roast chestnuts for the tribe. She asked me, “What will become of our tribe?” I said, “Maybe our fate is to die out, maybe our fate is to prosper and grow. Who knows?” She asked, “But surely the Gods will look after us?” I said, “I have prayed to the Gods and the Gods don’t listen. If the Gods exist, they don’t care about us! And I don’t believe they exist!” And I told her, “Once there was a woman who assumed she would be lucky as her previous life had been. But then one day while out gathering in a group, she was surprised by a sabre-toothed tiger and devoured. No chance to say good-bye to her friends and lovers.” She said, “All I can do is live for the day and hope my good luck continues.”

And I spent a lot of time drinking with my three protégés. We liked to play the game Othello whilst drinking. One time, one of my protégés, Lucky Charm, from the “Radical People,” age 28, said, “I figured our tribe was the cleverest in existence, what with our alcohol and wood carvings

and our free love and advanced mythology.” I said, “I couldn’t imagine living monogamously and as there are many more women than men in the tribe, it is great to be a man these days.” Lucky Charm replied, “Life is good.” I replied, saying, “Life goes up and down, more down than up. You are still young and haven’t known the pain of existence.”

Another of my protégés, also from the Radical People, Maximum Carnage, aged 29 said, on one occasion, “I believe the stars should be brighter. If they were truly Gods, they would be brighter. I said, “No one really knows what the stars are for. If they were Gods, you’d think they’d move with purpose, instead of the same thing every night.” Maximum Carnage said, “I believe in the Sun God and the Moon Goddess, they give us light for our daily ‘shows.’” And he added, “I don’t think most of the Gods we worship exist. Like the Love Goddess, where is she and what form does she take. I am very confused.” I said, “Maybe we will be the first tribe to not believe in the Gods, one day.”

Another protégé, Big Hunk, aged 31 also from the “Radical People” said, on one occasion, “Our two merged tribes, the Love People and the Sea People were nearly wiped out in the recent battle. And the secret of making liquor would have been lost as would our wood carvers’ brilliant work.” I replied, “In my time, I have seen four tribes’ camps being wiped out. Presumably with no or few survivors.” He said, “We have to love as many women as we can to create more children.” We knew that some women were very fertile, others not so much.

And one night around the fire, I was sitting with my three protégés, the three wood carvers and the Chief. Gold Duster said, “Let’s seek out and kill the Yeti who dwell in the Pyrenes



mountains. They are freaks and an embarrassment.” Maximum Carnage said, “We have some freaks in our tribe too!” I said, “They were scarred through no fault of their own. Let’s not banish them!” Bone Emblem added, “I’ve loved one of the scarred women in the dark, it is not so bad!” Stone Picture said, “In any case beauty doesn’t last long.” Big Hunk said, “Let’s forget the freaks and love the beauty that is at hand. We have so many beautiful girls in the tribe only 3 of them scarred. I don’t think anyone has loved all the women, except possibly Killer Fish, the former stud prince, who is now dead from the battle. I said, “I’ve tried to love them all, but there are more than 30 new adult women every year. It’s hard to keep up. Sometimes I have a pain in my chest trying to love the youths.” The Chief said, “Some of our members have died from a pain in the chest. You’d best be careful.” Lucky Charm opined, “We all do our best and hope that the Gods favor us!” I said, “What proof do we have that the Gods exist?” Lucky Charm said, “There had to be creators. No one can doubt that.” I said, “But the tribe has had a lot of bad luck and so if there are Gods, they must not like us. We are not favored by the Gods.” Lucky Charm said, “But isn’t it great to be alive?!” The Chief said, “Anyway we all have to deal with everyday living and hope for good luck. All of us here, around the fire, have been lucky.”

Another night by the fire, Bone Emblem said, “I am full of excitement for my upcoming life, and I hope to live as long as you, Cool Ring!” I said, “But, my life has just been largely a drunken dream, I feel I haven’t made a difference for posterity’s sake!” Stone Emblem replied, “But, you invented alcohol and that will certainly be lasting.” The Chief said, “Future tribes may forget your name, but alcohol will last forever.” I said, “But, if our tribe is wiped out all our lore and alcohol will be forgotten. There are always new tribes growing and potentially wiping us out!”

On another occasion by the fire, Fat Tooth remarked, "I've been researching garlic use in women and those who take it seem to live longer. Some are turned off by the bad odor, but it stimulates the mind and makes one feel good." The Chief said, "Are we to be the Smelly Breath people then?" She said, "Some medicines have side effects, but the important thing is to stay alive and healthy and who cares what others say?" I said, "Before one makes love one can sweeten one's breath with mint and other herbs."

Then one night Chestnut Mix again and she and I were talking round the fire. She was saying, "In summer we should wear no clothes!" I said, "It's a good idea. Naked women turn me on! But some think we look better in clothes." She said, "I will get some of my female friends to start going around naked and I am sure no one will complain. After all we are the Free Love people."

Then there was the memorable event of the annual ball game. This year the competition was special, between the three merged tribes. I was not too old to play. This year our part of the tribe won, both games led by Gold Duster and the new adults. Only a few broken bones resulted. And we had a big drunken feast afterwards. I was drunker even more than usual and I was saying to Fat Tooth, "Let me impregnate you right now!" And I said, "The Devil himself told me of a dream in which you will have twins by me." She said, "I've loved you many times and loved many others and am still not pregnant. I said, "But the Devil assured me..." She asked, "What does the Devil look like to you?" I answered her, "He looks just like me with a big grin on his face..."

And I used the carvers to help me build a shrine in honor of Magic Tongue. They already had a carving of her that I had kept in my tent. So, they just built a temple of wood and put the statue inside it. And since we were no longer going to the mountains for the summer, and the large encampment was permanent, we started to build wooden homes for the people. That summer we built 20 and vowed to build many more in the following summer. Fat Tooth said, "I hope you can do the same for me." I said you are still young and haven't proved yourself to be a genius yet!" But she was obviously jealous and asked for "Another story." So, I told her, "Once there was a woman who knew all the tribe's myths but didn't believe the Gods were benign. And so, she started composing dark tales of the Gods, like saying, 'The Goddess of Luck had cursed the tribe for its free loving ways.' And 'the Love Goddess cursed us for warring with neighbors' and, 'The Sun God cursed us for eating seafood instead of meat' and so on. But finally, the Goddess of Luck appeared to her in a vision in the caves and she had a heart attack and died all alone." Fat Tooth said, "We are all truly cursed by the Gods for our different ways."

The homes we built were more comfortable and not vulnerable to flooding or strong winds. And we were no longer a mobile people. Most of us were happy with us remaining stationary. We all knew our territory very well and it extended 100 miles to the southwest and southeast along the coast and 150 miles inland. But some of us didn't like eating so much seafood/fish. And our neighboring tribes frequently trespassed on our land especially on the coast. But we really wanted peace.

## CHAPTER 14 SPRING/SUMMER OF MY 45<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

Also, that Fall, I was talking with the new Chief. He was saying, “In four more years we will have more than 120 new warriors as they come of age. The tribe is about to make a big come back.” I said, “Next time we are threatened by another tribe let’s buy them out with women, flint, red ochre and alcohol in exchange for peace.” The Chief said, “Communication breakdowns are common. And most tribes are very violent.” I said, “But we’ve maintained peace with our nearest neighbors for some time now.” He said, “But tribes move around and who knows who next year’s neighbors will be.” I replied saying, “Many of the youth are gung-ho about fighting, they don’t understand what it is like to die! I lost a lot of lifelong friends in our recent battle and also eighteen years ago in our previous major war.” And the Chief said, “Our tribe will grow to be the biggest in the Earth that we know and with alliances with other tribes we will be invulnerable.” I said, “But fate might transpire otherwise. Let’s not get ahead of ourselves!”

Another time I was talking with the Chief, and he was saying, “Let’s build more boats and ply our way up and down the coasts.” I said, “Best to just send a small group and not leave our camp vulnerable. The boats could be loaded with trade goods, and we could suss out if the coastal peoples are friendly. And in case of disaster, we shouldn’t send either one of us. One of my protégés can lead the expedition.” So, we agreed to send an expedition South in the Springtime.

And one time the Chief was asking Fat Tooth, “How can we make the tribe better?” She said, “We should return to our roots as the Love Tribe.” He said, “But you are violent, you killed the previous Shamaness!” She said, “I want the people to forget the past and live for peace and

love!" I said, "If we become totally peaceful, we will likely be wiped out." The Chief said, "I thought you, Cool Ring, were all for peace too!" I said, "Yes, but we need to continually train everyone to fight including the women, to be ready for anything."

And one day as winter approached, I was talking with Chestnut Mix. She said, "I'm starting to think the Gods don't exist, but we need the Gods in order to handle the people and keep them humble, as Fat Tooth believes." I said, "We should try to eliminate religion slowly and emphasize that life is short, and people need to get their fun while they can! And rely on themselves not on luck or some God's wishes." And Fat Tooth had said to us, "If we get rid of the Gods our culture will fall apart and people will be lost." I said, "Let's phase them out slowly!" And I told her, "Once there was a girl who wanted to change her tribe by outlawing the worship of the immortal Gods. But the people were outraged by her notion and called her, 'Devil.' And they hung her from a tree and then she died. And they left her corpse hanging from the rope and gradually insects and maggots and birds ate the body." She said, "I kind of like to think that the younger generation doesn't want Gods and wars, but just want peace and to count on their own abilities, not those of a God."

And then I was with Ochre Lips again. It was late Fall and she kept me warm. She said, "You do well for an old man!" I said, "I'm trying my best to spread the love that I have." She said, "I feel like I am going to live forever!" I said, "It seems possible. Who knows? But it seems impossible to avoid aging. If you lived to be a 100, you'd probably be covered in wrinkles and bent out of shape." And I told her, "I have dreams of your lips floating in the sky and kissing every part of me!" And I told her, "Once there was a woman, who wanted to be immortal. But as

she hit 80, she was withered and bent over, and she was blind and deaf and really had no quality of life.” She said, “I believe the blue lotus can make us immortal!” I said, “Who knows?”

Another time I was with Golden Hair. She asked me, “Do you really think getting old makes you wiser?” I replied, “Getting old makes you conservative and unhealthy. But I am getting better at making booze. What do you think?” She said, “I just think getting old for a woman; it means becoming unattractive and this makes you foolish, not wiser.” And she wanted, “A story.” So, I told her “One day the Shamaness died, and she who had been an outcast and a witch tried to get elected Shamaness. But she was attacked by an angry mob of women who stabbed her and tore her to pieces.” She said, “Do you really feel our women are so closed-minded?” I said, “There are a lot of women who hate me for distributing alcohol to the youth. And I have been careless. But most of these haters are afraid to come out actively against me as I am the tribe’s storyteller/bard. And they are also afraid I’ll trade them away!”

Another time I was talking to Eagle Claw. She was saying, she had the best eyesight in the tribe and would make a good scout. Scouts had the sharpest vision in our merged tribes and were sent in groups of five to spy on our neighbors and if they came upon an animal, they’d hunt it. And she had no children yet. I said, “Why not? Let’s make you chief scout for all the most dangerous missions!” And the men all agreed it was a good idea.

And then another time with Eagle Claw. This time she was saying, “I want to elope with you in one of the boats and see if we can’t find a more advanced civilization!” I responded, saying, “If they are truly more advanced, they’ll find us!” She countered, “Maybe they wouldn’t care

about primitive areas!" I said, "I am tempted to run off with you, but I'd rather just drink and love the women here in the little time I have left." I told her, "Once there was a girl who wanted to be a Goddess. She had plenty of imagination and was always looking to improve on her life. But then one day in her wanderings she met a man of another tribe who grabbed her and took her back to his people. And he had children stand guard outside his tent to make sure she didn't run away during the daytime. And to run away at night would be tantamount to suicide. Finally, she killed herself out of boredom." She said, "So if I try and explore the World in a boat, I am doomed?" I said, "It is likely."

And then I was together again with young Turquoise Dream, she said, "These days I am feeling like the tribe is on a roll. We have so many children coming of age and we have a youthful, strong tribe on the whole." I told her, "Yes, all these youthful women keep me alive and now we have plenty of brave new hunters/warriors." And she said, "Tell me another story!" I said, "One time there was a girl who combed the riverbank looking for turquoise and other gems. One day she found a ruby which a carver tried to cut, but it broke into six tiny pieces. Still the carver embedded them in a ring dedicated to her totem animal the giant sloth. "She also had a turquoise totem ring with a robin's face carved in wood, with its turquoise eggs, which she had been given in her youth. She said, "My totem animal the giant sloth is very humble, and so too my totem the robins but we have hunted and killed many robins and ate their eggs, and giant sloths too.

Another night with Golden Hair, "She was saying she had been against body shaving but now her beautiful blonde hair was turning white and anyway no one had fleas/lice anymore. I said,

“And it looks kinky.” The merged tribes all thought so too and followed our custom. And she asked, “What dreams have you been having lately?” I said, “I dream of you often. Typically, we are in Hell together, sharing thoughts on mere mortals.” She said, “I don’t want to go to Hell, but I doubt we’ll live much longer.” And she accompanied me in long walks in the wilderness. Which were forbidden by Fat Tooth in groups of less than five. And we talked about the vicissitudes of life. And I told her a story about, “A girl found herself in Hell. But she quickly found out there was no sex in Hell, and nobody cared what she looked like. They were just aimless souls warring and fighting endlessly.” She said, “I figure Hell will be a good place where female devils tempt men to love them in soul love, and they can know each other’s thoughts...”

Then I was spending a few evenings partly with Sweet Dream. She said, “Recently I have been dreaming of brown-skinned men who were strong lovers.” I said, “By nature we love the exotic erotica. After all we are the Love People. She told me, “I want to love all the brown-skinned men we have from the Radical People tribe we’d merged with.” She said, “White men are boring!” I said, “But you are white! She said, “Of course I still like you however.” I said, “I feel we are at the center of our World here.” She said, “I’d heard stories of orange-skinned men and green-skinned men and even black skinned men, and I wonder what it would be like to love them.”

Another time I was out in a boat with Porpoise Diver, she was saying, “Sometimes in a boat, I feel seasick. I said, “Me too. Best not to go out in rough waters.” And she asked, “What do you think of all the shellfish we’ve been catching after being taught by our merged tribe, the “Sea People?” I said, “It’s great. Keep diving. But don’t draw blood lest you alert a shark.” She said,



“I’m not afraid.” And as usual she asked me, “To tell me a story.” So, I told her, “Once there was a sexy girl who was not afraid of anything. But then one day she met a green-skinned man who raped her and put her on a leash to show his friends. Curiosity killed the cat.” She said, “That’s not a very nice story. Tell me another!” So, I told her, “Once there was a man who was not content with his tribe, so he left, but without love he was miserable. So he went back to his tribe, but they didn’t forgive him for leaving and cast him out. Curiosity killed the cat.”

My romance with Golden Hair was heating up. She said, “You saved me from banishment. And I owe you a big favor. I said, “Give me all your love, that’s enough.” And she said, “I killed a rabbit today and will make you some rabbit stew. I said, “It’s good that women are hunting now. We have many mouths to feed.” And she said, “I have recently been dreaming of rabbits and they are my totem animal. In the dream the rabbits always try and keep their distance from me, but I get them with my arrows.” I said, “It sounds like a typical dream.” She said, “But after, I killed some rabbits they got into her head hopping and jumping and finally drove me to suicide.”

Generally speaking, women now hunted birds and small game while out gathering, and those with few children put them with another woman while they hunted with the men for big game. Almost every day we sent out about 12 hunting parties and 15 boats for fishing. Of course, that left our camp vulnerable, but if malign peoples moved into our hunting area, we’d know about it as we knew our territory well.

Then I was with Slim Cow. She now had new twins to add to her bevy of children. She said, "I am educating the children to be peace-loving pacifists who live on fish and vegetables. It is hard to gather enough vegetables to feed them, so we basically live on fish and seafood." I asked, "Why?" She said, "It's bad to kill sentient animals who are just like us except they don't use tools." I said, "I think you are foolish, Slim Cow."

Then I was with Dark Body again. She said her slightly brown skin made her popular with our merged tribes' men and our original tribe too. She said, "Young men in the tribe are so open-minded." I told her, "All lust is good, and you make me horny!" And she said, "I'd like another bedtime story. So, I told her, "Once there was a beautiful girl who didn't realize how pretty she was, having never seen her own face. People told her she was very pretty, but really, she had no idea until she won the annual beauty contest of the Love People. And the carvers chiseled her features into wood. She was so pleased, but she wondered if they were just flattering her and laughing behind her back. And she worried she wasn't all that attractive to men." She said, "I'll get the Shamaness to paint my face on wood!"

Then I was talking again with Hearing Genius. She had just had triplets and was having trouble coping. I said, "If you can teach your children to be half as good at playing the flute as you are, that would really be something." She said, "I hope one of them can one day be our Shamaness." I said, "But many men want a male Shaman. They don't want to be controlled by a female, as they are partly at present. She said, "But in the history of our tribe, the Shamanesses couldn't prevent war from breaking out. There seems to have been at least one large battle during the term of all six of our Shamanesses. We are supposed to be the Love People, but we are not."

Then I was with Mad Cat again and as always, she screamed like a banshee as usual while loving. And she said, “Hey tell me a story!” So, I told her, “One day there was a passionate woman that went too far and got two men to fight a duel over her. But both died of their wounds. And she was banished from the tribe!” She asked, “What does it mean?” I said, “There are limits on passion.”

Then I was loving Crystal Spell again. She also asked for, A story,” so I told her, “Once there was a pure girl who nevertheless liked loving all men she came across. And she insisted her heart was pure. But then one day she was sold into slavery and subject to the worst behaviors possible for a woman to experience.” She asked, “What does it mean?” I told her, “The meaning is if you love all men, you are no longer pure.”

Then I was around the fire with the carvers. Bone Emblem was saying, “I don’t want to spend time hunting. I want to dedicate myself to carving. “Gold Duster said, “We can trade our carvings of other Chiefs and Shamans for clever women, and drugs, so it would be useful. Let the women hunt.” Stone Picture said, “I think hunting is a thrill and you never know what humans you will meet while out hunting.” I said, “Recently hunting parties have gone further afield on three day/night hunting parties and with the women hunting too, romance bloomed.” And we added 10 more youthful men to be woodworkers and used them in building houses. The carvers never went hunting now. I still went hunting, despite my poor eyesight. But I was totally fearless.

And Bone Emblem was saying he wanted, “A story.” I said, “Once there was a carver, one of only 20 in the whole world. He sought to flatter his subjects, but he was still young and still improving at age 16. He made a flattering portrait of the Goddess of Love and suddenly the spirit of the Goddess possessed him, and he ran about kissing and fondling all the girls. Some said, ‘he was on magic mushrooms at the time.’ But some of the women objected and said, ‘He had insulted them’” He said, “I truly believe in the Love Goddess.”

And Gold Duster also wanted, “A tale.” So, I told him, “Once there was a lover of beauty, who couldn’t create in carvings the faces he wanted to create. But he loved what he thought were the great beauties of the tribe. But then one day he turned into a squash, the vegetable. And the Gods had a good laugh at his expense.” He said, “When it comes to magic spirits, I know nothing.”

And of course, Stone picture wanted, “A story, also.” I told him, “Once there lived an artist who practiced painting on caves. He liked to paint bulls above all. But then one day while shooting arrows at a bull another charged him and smashed his drawing arm. And he lost the limb. But then he learned to draw with his left hand on wooden log ends. His paintings were everywhere. Finally, he got really good, but just as he peaked, he was trampled to death by a bull.” He said, “Are you cursing me, bard?” I replied, “It’s just a story!”

Another night I was with my 3 protégés. Big Hunk said, “Sometimes I wonder if we need to remember the stories of the Gods? Perhaps we could just learn all the fables.” Maximum Culture added, “I believe fervently in the Gods. And I think the Goddess of Luck Is the most important

God. I roll the die before most actions.” Lucky Charm said, “I believe the Sun God trumps all Gods. Without the Sun we wouldn’t exist.” I said, “It is not for us mere humans to know the ways of the Universe. There must have been creators of this World, and life can be sublime, but I don’t think the Gods care about us. Worshipping them doesn’t seem to be any good. And most people die a cruel death. That is why we think Hell is cruel.” Big Hunk said, “Better to tell the people fables, rather than stories of the Gods and I figure I know about 2,000 fables.” Maximum Culture said, “We should try and make more fables.” Lucky Charm said, “I think I am one of the best fable inventors.” I added, “Stories of the Gods can be entertaining though. As you all know I know hundreds and hundreds of stories of the Gods. And you are all still young and your storytelling days are ahead of you!”

And one night my 3 proteges all asked for, “A story.” So, I told Big Hunk, “Once there was a man who doubted the Gods and said he could make better stories than the Gods. And proceeded, over the years to do so. And some people said, ‘He was a living God.’ But then a jealous tribesman, killed him in a duel over a woman. So, he was not an immortal God after all.”

And I told Lucky Charm, “Once there was a man who thought he was blessed by the Gods, and he knew all their stories and told the stories in a charming way. And he made some stories of his own. But then one day he was struck down by the Plague and died and so was not charmed in the end.” Lucky Charm said, “But better to be blessed by the Gods and lose their blessing than to have never been lucky at all.”

And finally for Maximum Carnage, I told him, “Once there was a sea diver who found a pearl in an oyster he had caught. He set the pearl in a ring he had carved and gave it to his true love. But his love thought it was ugly and rebuffed him. He looked to the stars for the answer and imagined the Gods were telling him to never fall in love again. But he soon forgot the episode and loved others. He tossed the ring into the sea.

And that summer Brown Bear died while giving birth. I felt so bad about it and took opium.

## CHAPTER 15: FALL/WINTER OF MY 46<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

And my dog was a good companion, I fed him the offal of the hunt and he was grateful. I liked to get him drunk with alcohol in his gravy around the fire and he would run around crazy... And we had now had several generations of dogs in just a few years. They mostly made for great companions in this lonely World. And helped us greatly in the hunts. Many other tribes used dogs as well.

And on one occasion I was talking again with Brain Stew. Most women said, "He was the best lover in the tribe now that Killer Fish had died in the battle." I asked, "What's your secret?" He said, "You just need to ask women what they want and then give it to them. I think women are very logical creatures." I said, "But some women like to be surprised, I find." He said, "I try my best to give them anything I can, and I get back as much love as I put in.

And we had had two wakes that week. One was for Power Player's lover after a long illness. Another was a woman who had lost her leg due to infection and the infection spread throughout her body and she died. Both women were very pretty, and I reflected it was just more bad luck for the tribe. Flint Prince, a battle survivor from our tribe said, "This life is precarious. You never knew when you'd die."

And Flint Prince offered me a nice knife for a story. So, I told him, "Once there was a survivor who lived to a great age and died finally of old age. At his wake, everyone said nice

things about him but, he was soon forgotten. He said, "Few people are remembered by posterity and anyway it is better to just live your life to the full and have no regrets."

And Brain Stew wanted, "A story." So, I told him, "Once there was a man who thought he had it made, but then a mammoth kicked him in his private parts, and he lost his member. After that he was morose and drunken, and no one could cheer him up." Brain Stew said, "One has to guard one's private parts more so than even your head."

And we had new males and new females. Giving us now 184 warriors and 340 women. The tribe was really going places. And all tribes in the area were growing. And we introduced 5 more young men of 14-16 to be protégés of Gold Duster, our master carver/woodworker. There was so much building and carving to do. He now had 17 carvers learning from him. And soon everyone would have a house!

But as winter fell upon us that year, I had a premonition in dreams that we would experience a new disease. And I was starting to feel old and continued to drink heavily. I asked Fat Tooth about these dreams, and she said, "There's no point worrying about the future. We'll deal with the future as best we can!"

And there were reports of birds not flying south for the winter. Fat Tooth said, "It was an omen indicating a year of plenty for the tribe." I said, "The birds are probably confused by that hot summer we just had!"



And I was spending more and more time with Fat Tooth. I asked her, "About her name." And she said, "In my youth I didn't like sweets, but rather fatty meats." And she said, "I never liked my name, but Magic Tongue didn't at first see me as her successor. I was a late bloomer!" I said, "Yes our custom of making people adults at just 14 is difficult for some. They are still kids. But I was quite precocious myself, though at first I was very shy with women."

And I had a strange dream of tall buildings and air cars and wondered what it could possibly mean. Fat Tooth told me, "It was the aliens who were coming to our camp any day now." And she said, "We need to prepare a feast for them." But they didn't appear. But I kept dreaming of them. Now the new fashion was the men's beards were shaved and men and women grew their hair long. But they let me keep my beard. And there were all kinds of strange noises in the dreams, and they were in my head talking to me in our language saying that we had to survive no matter what it took! Fat Tooth said, "It was a good sign that they were concerned with the health of the tribe."

And another night with Porpoise Diver; she was saying, "I have a nice necklace of shark's teeth, what do you think?" I said, "It makes you look mean, somehow." And she asked, "Are you going to tell me a story tonight?" I said, "Once there was a woman who was 'Queen of the Seas.' She amazed everyone. But then one day while out in a boat an alien air car beamed her up and ran off with her. They took her to a place in the sun, which was unbearably hot, and loved her in unusual ways. They were the People of the Sun." She asked, "Do you mean, I will be abducted if

I take a boat out too far?" I said, "Who knows what lies beyond?" And I told her about my dream of aliens and air cars.

Then another occasion I was loving Dirt Bitching. I told her about my dream of aliens. She said, "Who knows what lies beyond our known World? Maybe aliens want us to find them, and we could live in a more civilized way! A cleaner, more comfortable life with better alcohol and new drugs."

Then I shared my dream with Hearing Genius. She asked, "Did you hear any music from the air car.?" I replied, "Probably they would have new musical instruments and better music!" She said, "I can't imagine!" And she said, "Let me tell you a story. Once there was a man who dreamed of a better World, but in the end, he was separated from Reality and could not help his tribe. And he one day went out into the cold and never returned." I said, "I drink a lot and am out of it most of the time. Perhaps I will die soon. And I have pain in my head, my chest and my guts..."

And one day as winter set in, I spoke with the Chief. He was saying, "We have a lot of dried meat this year for the winter and are catching a lot of fish in the boats. We have plenty of alcohol. And no new tribes are in the area, and all is well." I said, "I have had some bad dreams recently about our camp being overrun by invaders and the smallpox came again." The Chief said, "Don't worry, be calm and content. And I recommend you take the blue lotus which will relax you and make you feel euphoric!"

I found myself having dreams of Magic Tongue and she told me in the dream, the tribe's survival is at stake, and I had to join the Chief and inspire the people. But I ignored these dreams and got all the youth hooked on alcohol. I couldn't imagine living without alcohol. And one day one of the youths had a dream of a new God, the God of Alcohol. And they asked Fat Tooth, "How they should worship this God?" Fat Tooth told them, "This God merely requires one to partake in alcohol and be joyful and glad!" I told the youth, "Yes, that's right!" And whenever I slept with Fat Tooth, I had dreams of me dying and going to Hell. These recent dreams found that Hell was an evil place where animal men ruled and cursed me for killing animals. I asked Fat Tooth, "If I should become a vegetarian?" She said, "No, it is our birth right to eat meat and absorb energy from the animals." And I figured I would die soon and worried about the tribe. One night I went to the large local ruins and took magic mushrooms just by myself. And I saw people of unearthly beauty and they were in my head saying, "Follow our ways. Build a civilization." And I wondered why we had been so wary of the varying ruins and why hadn't we dug down below the surface or investigated the ruins more thoroughly?

And we were on the floodplain for winter as always, we had been here for the past few summers as well. But then one day we had a great snowstorm on the floodplain and many of our people got a chill and got sick. One by one they died. We called it, "The Plague." And it seemed to affect everyone except me and a few others. It was a deadly disease and it killed off everyone one by one, people turned black and blue and died, and the survivors killed themselves. It had taken just two weeks to kill them all. Finally, I was all alone, just me and my dog. So, I got completely drunk for a few days. And one night I just faded away out in the cold. And that was the end of us. Just the dog howling for his master.



# ADDENDUM

“Cut” said the director, Ahab. And he asked his assistants, “If it truly was a convincing film of the period 200,000 years ago?” They said, “It had potential!” It was up to the audience now, to pronounce final judgement in this new type of reality TV. Many people had followed the ups and downs of the tribe who were all hypnotised to forget their civilized past and thought they were truly living in 200,000 B.C. Some said, “The reality show actors were treated cruelly and ultimately nearly everyone died,” But many felt that “It was instructive for homo superior to look back on our roots! And they hadn’t died in vain.” And they said, “The tribe’s bard and his love the Shamaness had a vision of peace and free love that was noble. But ultimately fate was and is, cruel.” And many people had watched the show which had taken 20 years to set up with hypnosis, the price of the land, time to grow forests and stock them with game, some of which was extinct and so on. All prior to the beginning of Cool Ring’s narrative. And had cost zillions... They put a fence around basically Southern France and demolished millions of homes and buildings in Southern France had been abandoned and “returned to nature.” They did such a good job of returning the land to nature that the various tribes didn’t discover metals as expected. And in the growing of apple trees for liquor had stumbled upon the roots of agriculture but didn’t see it for what it was. The Southern French people went to deep Space back in 2320 A.D. Of course, it was now 2401 A.D. But the show made zillions. And some wanted an offshoot of the story. But the director had said his piece. He was also the head writer, who hypnotized many people to play their role in the script. He had told everyone it was dangerous before he hypnotized them. But they were all entranced by their roles. And the story went on for almost 10

years. Most of the action was the everyday life of the people and viewers could get into their heads passively with Mind Reading Technology and experience true life in the settlement. But the big events have been chronicled here for the general viewers, from the brain of “Tiger” Cool Ring. The years previous to 10 years ago were all illusory and everyone was brainwashed to believe that the tribe had existed for over 100 years. And there were plenty of people who wanted to participate gladly and subjected themselves to extensive hypnosis. And the hypnosis was so good, that no one appeared to remember their past life in the late 24<sup>th</sup> century. But the action was centered on Cool Ring’s tribe. The director opined that the Plague was perhaps too strong, but he was getting tired of the show and wanted to move on. All the neighboring tribes were eliminated too by the Plague. Some even remarked, “It was murder to bring the Plague.” But it was all swept under the carpet and people looked forward to the director’s next hit.

After the demise of the central tribe, the movie company wanted to redevelop the land for a story in which humans co-existed with dinosaurs and hypnotize new actors, which was kind of dangerous but not undoable. Many new actors signed up to be a tribe member in the setting of 70 million years ago, thinking it would be an exciting experience. They would just have primitive tools but would have fire. So, it wasn’t historically accurate, like the Cool Ring tribe, but the movie company glossed that over. People each paid hundreds of thousands of dollars to view the upcoming series which looked like it would make hundreds of zillions. Meanwhile many galaxies had been colonized and people lived in various Utopias in Space. Earth was largely abandoned, but Paris was still a significant city in France but, they were forbidden from going South. A few times air cars flew over the set and were spotted by the primitive peoples, but this

was forbidden, and the transgressors were punished. Anyway, the director thought it was good to give the people, “hints.”