



IT'S A DOG'S LIFE

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GREAT HOME

I am Talks-With-Birds, the High Speaker of Great Home. I am the Speaker for High Chief Strong-Heart and it falls upon me therefore, to tell you something about the way we live.

Strong-Heart has his burrow right in the middle of our town of Great Home. In his burrow are his own personal chambers and the chambers of his immediate family, called his Tribe. The Lodge is also here and it is in this hallowed hall that the Great Councils take place between Strong-Heart and all the other Tribal Chiefs. Of course, Tribal Speakers also attend the Great Council, so the Lodge is well known to me. We use it for our own Tribal Councils too.

We are the Dawn Eagle Tribe and we are ably led by Strong-Heart and his mate Berry. Then there is myself and the ten other Elders of the Tribe together with our own mates and pups and other adults.

The Elders are Leaf-Paw The Healer (my own mate), Storm and Crow-Face the Sentinels, the Scouts Wander-Free and Lone-Dog and the Braves Many-Scars, Snaggle-Tooth, Stone-Paw and Torn-Ear. The remaining adults have no particular role in our family other than to share food gathering duties, dig new chambers, look after the young pups, clean out our burrows and so on. Some of them are old and just happy that they are still useful to the Tribe and others are yet young and eager to take up more challenging roles when they are ready.

Example of role-play

GM: *Recently some dogs have gone missing including the healer, Sedge. He was last seen yesterday around sunrise, harvesting some plants that grow a short distance from Great Home.*

Nicky: *(playing a Brave called Burrow-Digger) "That's not good, is he our only Healer?"*

GM: *No, fortunately, but he is a very wise dog, who is thought to grow the best crop of Dropseed anywhere. He also brought back a mighty Brave from death once, with a single Bark.*

Nicky: *"Wow, very skilled!"*

GM: *Yes and several Scouts including Moon-Dog and Swiftly-Finds-Stuff wish to go and find him. But they need a strong Brave and they ask you and your twin brother, Dark-Paw (a Sentinel) to go with them.*

Steve: *(Speaking as Dark-Paw) "Sister, I think we must go with them and find what has happened to Sedge".*

Nicky: *"Yes, you are right brother. Moon-Dog, we will go with you and Swiftly-Finds-Stuff if you show us the way".*

(Continued over)

Our Tribal Totem, the Dawn Eagle comes from our legendary hero Flies-With-Eagles. She taught us our Tribal Bark, which has been passed down many generations and many of our traditions come from her time. Like the *Tradition of Feathers*. This is where young adults are first given their official Roles in the Tribe. At this stage, we hold a ceremony whereby they receive their first feather, denoting their new status. Later, additional feathers can be awarded for acts of bravery and so on, as when Flies-With-Birds fought the Eagle to save her pups.

Anyway, I digress. Our lands consist of a number of burrows and chambers connected by tunnels, just beneath the entrance to our homes, we have built a listening post so that our Sentinels can wait and check for sounds before risking their heads by looking out of the entrance hole.





TRIBAL LEGENDS

The Prairie Dog and the Coyote

(Adapted from Native American Folklore)

Long ago it is said that somewhere out there beyond the big prairie, prairie dogs had a town. It is also known that the ancient prairie dogs used to roll big rocks over their burrows at night whilst they were sleeping to keep out the rattler and the ferret as even in those far away days, these were our enemies.

Then one day, those prairie dogs having gathered together were merrymaking and dancing outside their homes. As they were continuing in this way, Coyote arrived among them.

Coyote said, "You are all dancing?"

"Yes", they replied.

"All of you shut your houses tightly. We will dance. All keep coming, all keep coming", said the Coyote. "All of you dancing, holding paws with each other, come with your eyes tightly closed".

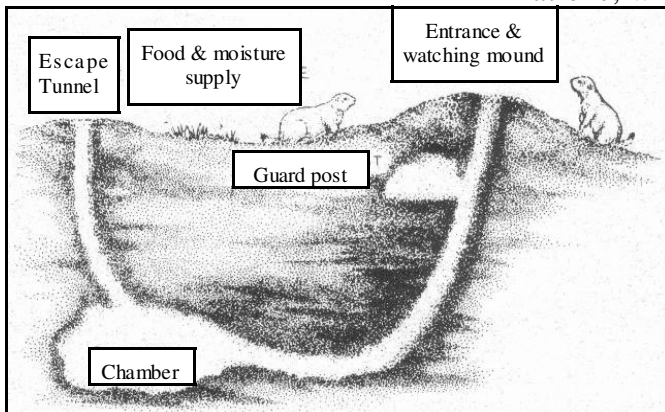
So, the prairie dogs closed up their tunnels with the rocks they used for that purpose and began to dance with Coyote. As they danced, Coyote grinned a wicked grin, showing his sharp teeth. From one end of the long line of dancers, he came biting them. One of the more wary prairie dogs hadn't shut his eyes as tightly as the others, for he was not taken in. He saw that Coyote was biting the dancers.

That one, whose name was Watcher said, "Everyone Run! He is come killing us!"

Those ones who heard Watcher ran to their homes. As they were unable to get into their burrows quickly because they had closed the entrances, Coyote continued biting. The Coyote then piled together all he had bitten and ate a great feast.

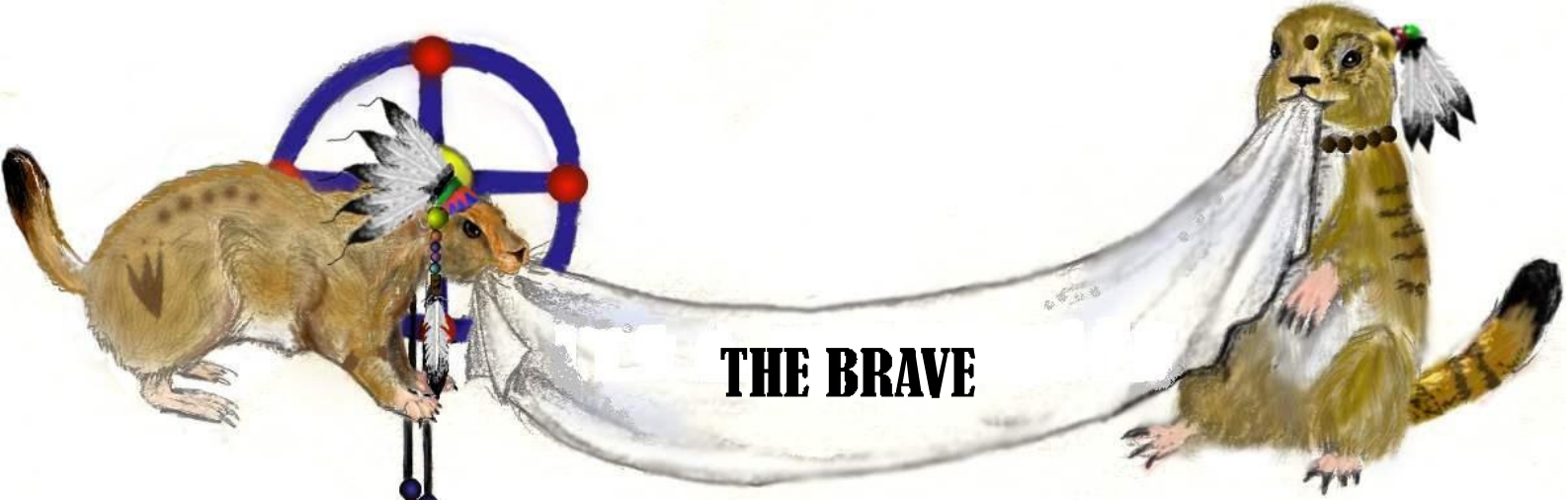
Thunderhoof and Kynos

For a long time Bison ruled the plains. They roamed where they wanted and because of their huge size, were untroubled by coyotes and eagles who hunted smaller prey.



A typical prairie dog burrow





THE BRAVE

Sayings of the Braves

The Brave must be seen

What use if your companions are attacked and you are skulking?

The Brave must be courageous.

What use if you are seen but unable to act?

The Brave must be strong.

What use to act, if you cannot hurt your enemy?

The Brave must lead.

If you do not show boldness, why should others follow?



Unique Ability: Stancing

Unique Bark: Bark of Courage

Second Ability: Tooth & Claw

Many dogs fight. It is a part of their nature, from their early years as pups fighting with their siblings to get the best food. It is the strongest of these that usually go on to become Braves.

However, simply being able to fight is not necessarily the only role of the Brave. Braves are warriors and they do need to be big and tough. They also need to be fearless and aggressive. They need to be aware of how to fend off critters far bigger than themselves. They sometimes need to work as a team in order to do this. Most of all, they need to be able to fend for themselves though.

Braves need to make themselves known. They do not always need to fight. Making your opponent stand down is often the best way to deal with an enemy, especially one that could hurt you badly, even if you can win the fight. Better to scare off three opponents than kill one and be so wounded that you cannot protect your family against the other two.

This is why Stancing is so important to a Brave. Some Braves are not actually that able at fighting, but never get found out because they are more intimidating than their enemies.

Every Tribe must have Braves. They are probably the most numerous of all the Roles, but also lose members the quickest. Whenever one Brave is killed, there is always another pup waiting in the wings for his feather to take up the challenge of defending his Tribe and seeking glory for himself.

Of all the Prairie Tales recounted by Speakers everywhere, it is the tales of Braves that are most called for and the most numerous. If there is a ferret lose in the town, it is always the Braves who are called upon to face it. If a quest is to be undertaken, Braves are always required in the party. If a new Chief is needed, a Brave is likely to be the one to fill it.

The Braves burrows tend to be near the centre of the tribal community, where they can mass together to defend, or receive orders from, the Chief. Their homes tend to be sparse and functional.



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