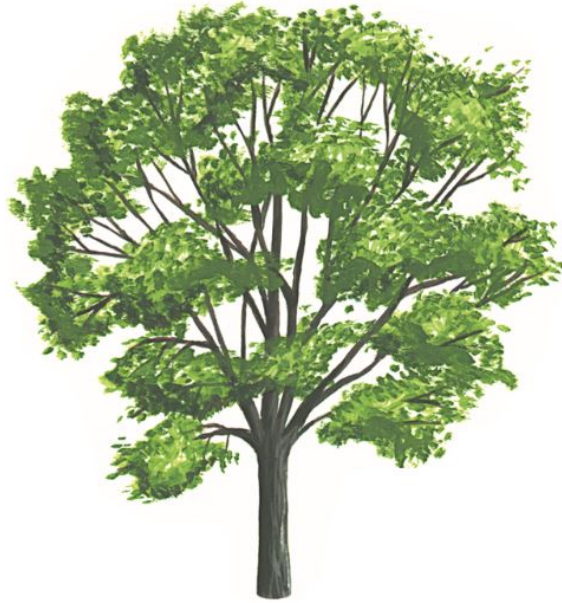


The Star in the Cottonwood Tree



A long time ago, when everything was still new, up in the sky, were many stars. Amongst them was this little star, who was very interested and curious about everything. This little star traveled across the sky, and would stop and examine so many things. One day this little star came down to earth. It traveled all around the earth looking at all the animals, all the birds, all the plants, and everything that was alive.

One day it came near this village. There was a sound coming from this village that was so beautiful and so wonderful, that the little star could not believe it. It stayed close to this village. It had never heard anything so beautiful in all the heavens and all the places it had visited around the earth. So, it stayed close to this village. It listened, and listened, and couldn't get enough of hearing that beautiful sound. One day it got to thinking, "I am a star, and I am supposed to be up in the sky with the other stars. I had better go back." So it went back up into the sky with the other stars.

But it began to think about the beautiful sound it had heard coming from that village, and thought "I would like to go back and hear it some more." Then the little star began to feel very lonesome and sad. So, when the other stars were talking about different things, the little star asked them if it could go back and live near that village so it could hear that beautiful sound. The stars said "No. You are a star and you belong up here in the sky."

So, the little star said nothing. It tried to be involved in all the things that stars do, such as shining up in the sky, and moving here and there. But it got so lonely it went back to the other stars again and said, "I am so lonesome and I feel so bad. I want go and stay near that village forever to hear that sound."

The other stars said, “You cannot do that because those are people. They have things that they must do to stay alive. They have work to do. They have to gather food. They have to build their houses. They have to look after their children. They have to make their clothes. And they have to live. And if you move close to them, shining around, they will all be looking at you. You will disturb their lives. And they will not get along, so you can’t do that.”

So, the little star thought and thought. And finally, it asked the other stars, “If I can find a way to be close to that village without them seeing me, can I stay there?” And the other stars said “Yes. If you can find a way to stay there without disturbing the people, then you can go.”

So, the little star went close to that village and looked around and saw a cottonwood tree growing close to the village. The star said, “I will stay inside that tree, where I can hear that beautiful sound that comes from that village.”

That sound was the sound of the people. The women, the men, the children, laughing, and saying good words to each other. Today the star is still in that cottonwood tree, hoping hear those beautiful sounds.



*** Transcribed with minor clarifications from the audio story, “The Star in the Cottonwood Tree,” as presented in the CD, “My Relatives Say” featuring Mary Louise Defender Wilson.*

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Mary Louise Defender Wilson, also known as Gourd Woman, is a Dakota elder and traditionalist born into a family of storytellers on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation in North Dakota.