

# Mama's Little One



by  
**Kristina Heath**

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written and illustrated  
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Second Edition  
Muh-he-con-neew Press  
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This book is dedicated to my children,  
Hunter and Jasmine,  
and to the youth of the Mohican Nation.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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To Dorothy Davids and Ruth Gudinas of Full Circle, for your help and for believing in me. Thanks, too, for introducing me to the Woodland Writers, who circled me with their good wishes and support.

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Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to the Mohican community, with a special thanks to my family, for your love, support, and all your help. This would not have happened without you!

Wake up, Little One!





It is a new day.

Your Noh is going hunting today and you  
will go with him.



Why do I have to go, Guka?

Because if you do not learn to hunt,  
you will not have food to eat







or anything  
to put on.

Ok?

Yes, Little One.

Instead of having a  
can't get the stick.

Of course not. All the  
Would you want to be

No, Great.

Then you'll be a

Oh, Great.





Guka?

Yes, Little One?

Instead of hunting with Noh,  
can I go take Noquiish's rabbit?

Of course not, Little One!  
Would you want someone to steal from you?

No, Guka.

Then you must never steal.

OK, Guka.



Guka?

Yes, Little One.



When we return, can I go play with my friends?

Okaka?

Yes, Little One.

Yes, you can.

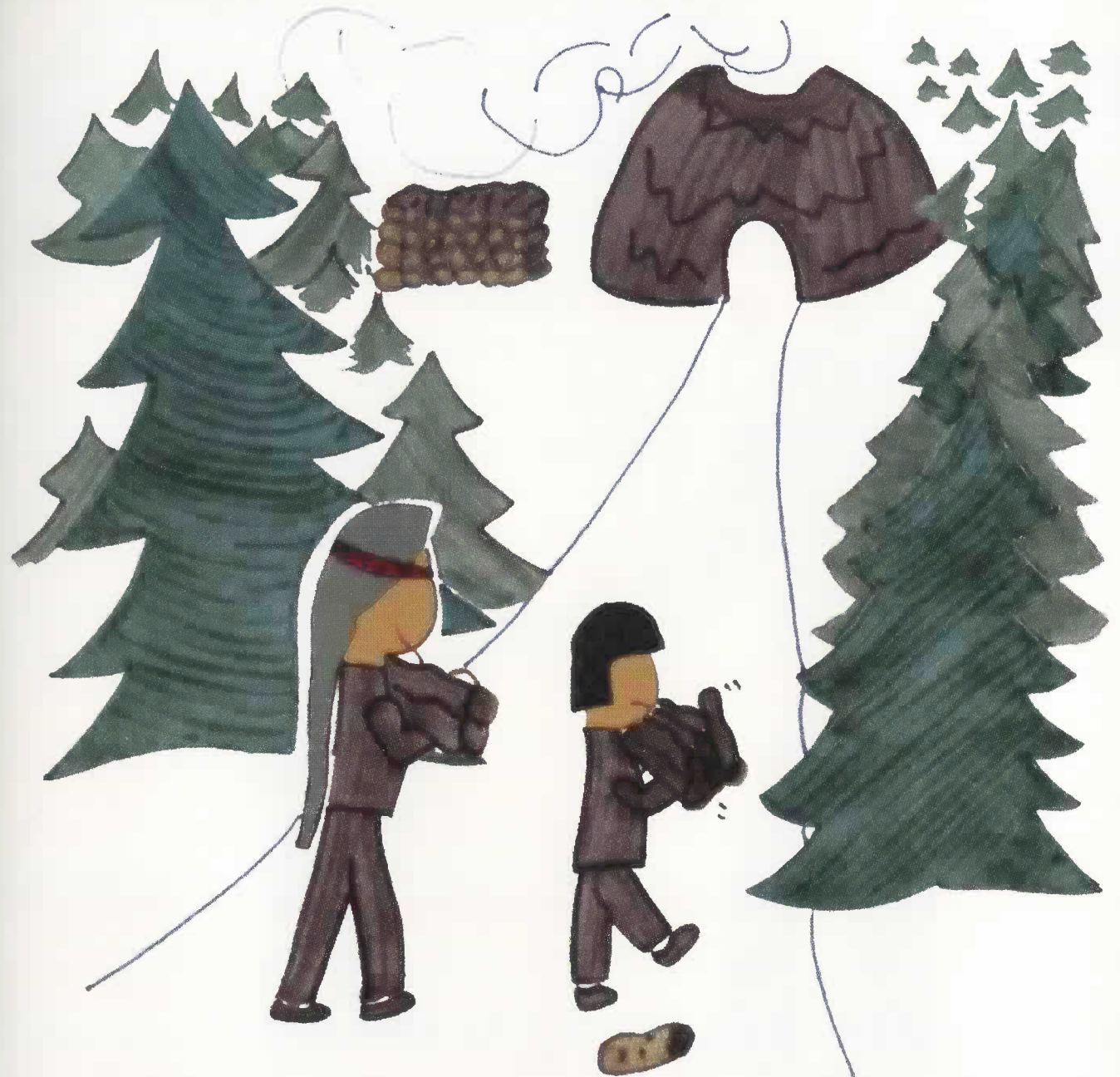
But first you will help Mah ose  
carry wood to his wigwam.

play with my friends?

Why do I have to help Mah ose, Guka?

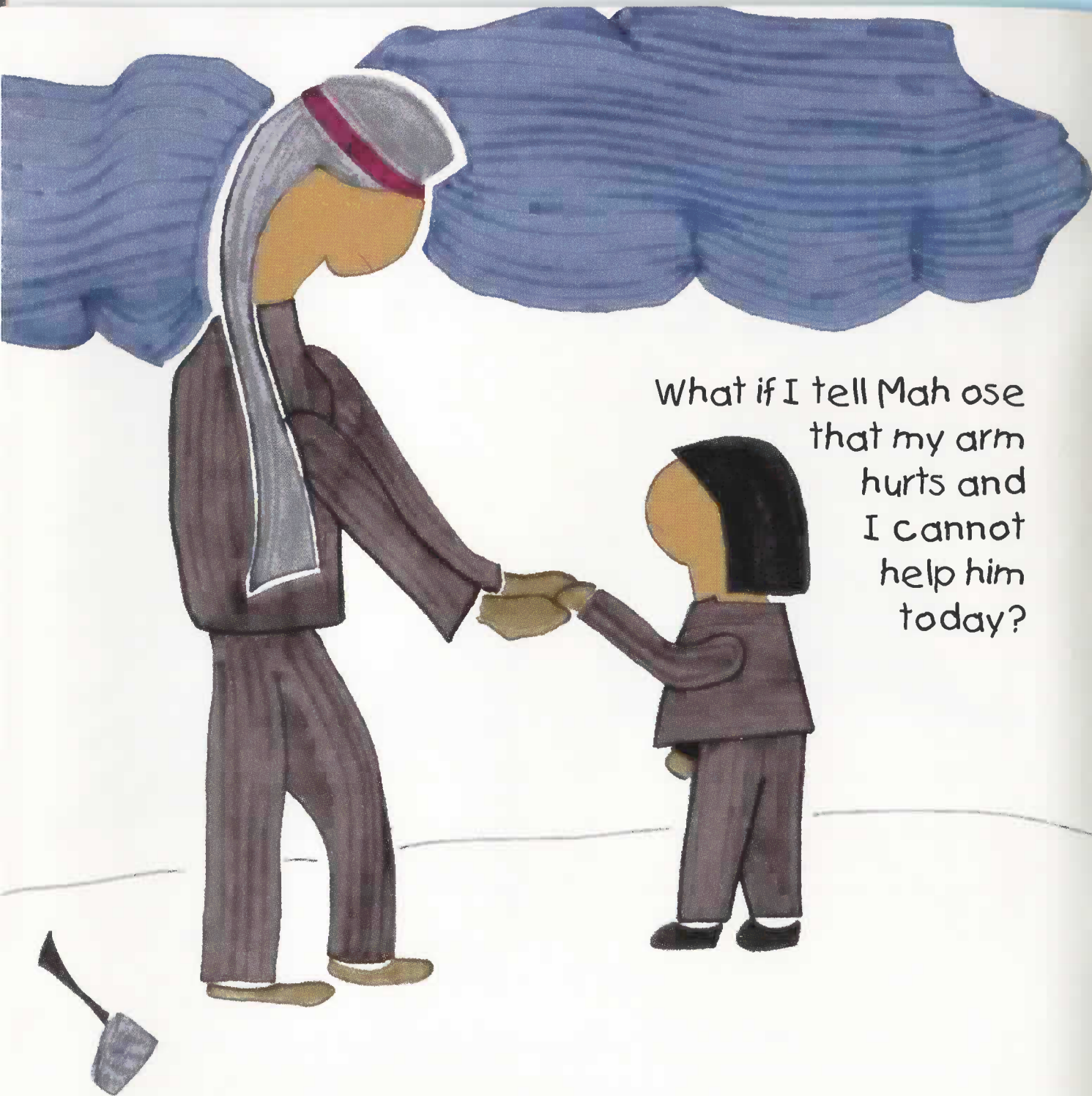
Mah ose is old  
and not as strong as he used to be.  
One day you will be old, too.  
You will want a young boy to help you.





So, Little One, you must always help others.





What if I tell Mah ose  
that my arm  
hurts and  
I cannot  
help him  
today?

Then you would be  
not glad to tell me  
you and I are  
you do not know

So, Little Girl

Oh, Girl

Then you would not be telling the truth. If you do not always tell the truth, people will not believe you and think that you are lying, even when you do speak the truth.

So, Little One, you must always tell the truth.

OK, Guka.

Guka?

Yes, Little One.

Why must I do so many things today?

Because if you wake up early each morning  
and work hard, you will have food  
so you can grow big and strong.  
You will also have clothes  
to keep you nice and warm.

So Little One, you must always work hard.

Then I can go play when I'm done?

Yes, you can.

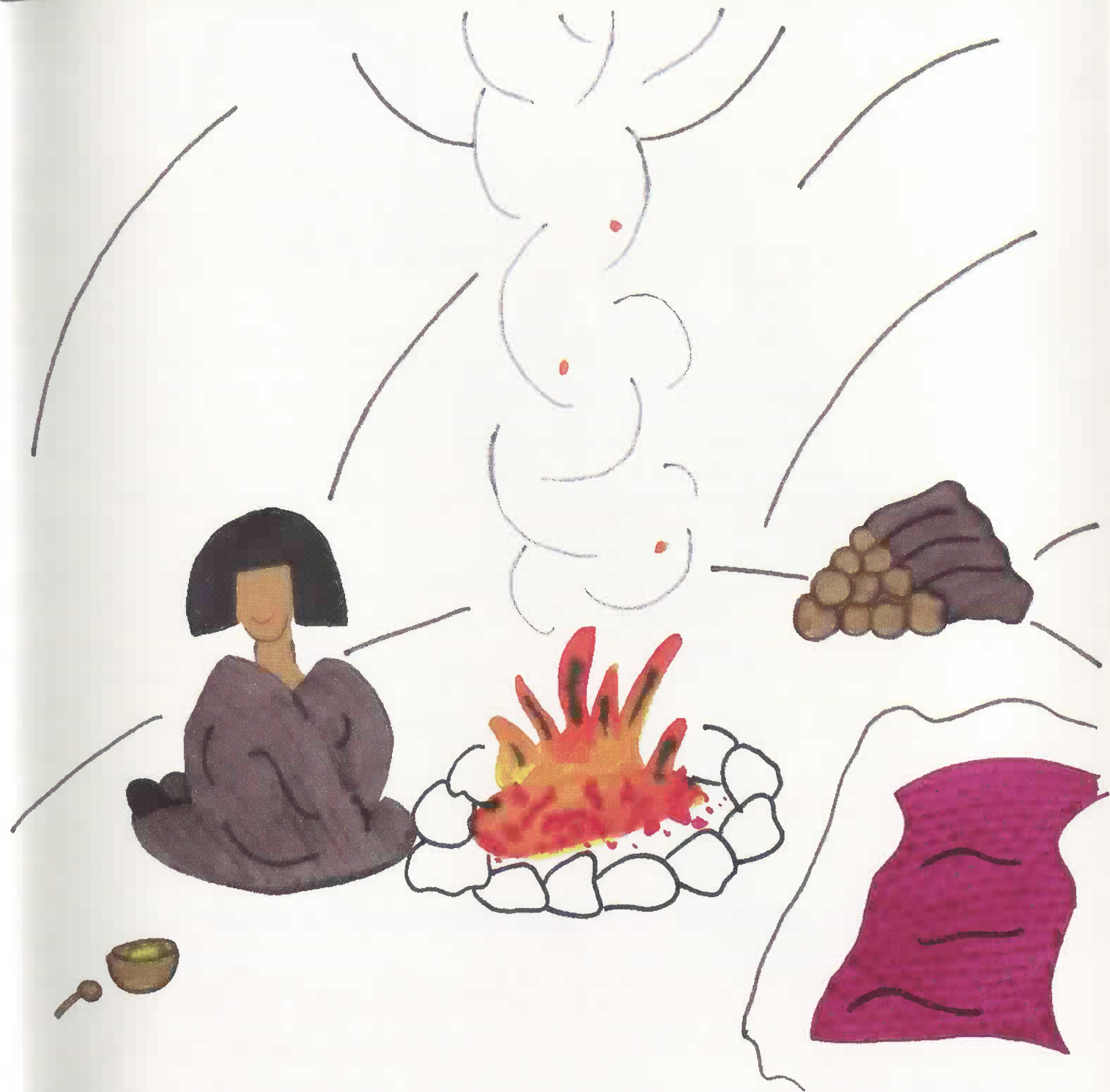
Guka?

Yes, Little One.

What things today?

Each morning  
I have food  
I am strong.  
I have a shelter  
I am warm.  
I always work hard.  
I am done?

Yes, yes, yes.







Now listen, Little One.

If you are in a dark place  
you will be safe  
For there will be no one  
will hear you

You mean it's so dark

Yes that's right

Little One, you can see  
with your eyes  
Be bold in the dark  
You will be safe

Can you see the light?

Yes, I can see

If you see anybody today who needs help,  
you must help them.  
For there will come a time when you, too,  
will need help.

You mean if I helped them, then they would help me?

Yes that's right.

Little One, remember that you must not fight  
with any of your friends today.

Be kind to them all.

You will please the Great, Good Spirit in this way.

Can you do this Little One?

Yes, I think so.

Now get dressed and go join your Noh.



He will be pleased to see  
that you are up so early.

I think that I will enjoy this day, Guka.

You will, Little One.

By showing love, compassion, and kindness  
to all people,  
you will enjoy many, many days.



I love you, Guka.  
And I love you, Little One.

I love you, Guka.  
I love you, Little One.



## AUTHOR'S AFTERWORD

This book was originally prepared as a term project for an undergraduate course on Mohican history taught by Professor David Wrone of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point in the fall of 1995.

The story was adapted from a history of the Muh-he-ka-ne-ok by Hendrick Aupaumut, a Mohican historian and diplomat of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is found in STOCKBRIDGE, PAST AND PRESENT by Electa F. Jones (Samuel Bowles and Co., 1854, pp. 18-30) as well as in Alanson Skinner's "Notes on Mahikan Ethnology" in the BULLETIN OF THE PUBLIC MUSEUM OF THE CITY OF MILWAUKEE, Vol. 2, No. 3 (January 20, 1925) pp. 103-105.

In his narrative, Aupaumut tells about a Mohican tradition handed down for many generations. The head of each family -- man or woman -- would wake the children each morning and teach them the ways in which to please the Great, Good Spirit. This was done until the children were grown.

As I read Aupaumut's words, I thought: This would be a good idea for a children's book. I could write one about a Mohican mother and child as my historical project for class.

For example, Aupaumut has the parent saying:

My little children, if you see an aged man or woman on your way doing something, you must have pity on them, and instantly help them. By so doing you will make their hearts glad, and they will speak well of you. ... You must always listen to the instruction of the aged, then you will be wise.

So, in response to Little One's request to play with his friends, Guka tells him:

Yes, you can. But first you will help Mah ose carry wood to his wigwam. Mah ose is old and not as strong as he used to be. One day you will be old, too. You will want a young boy to help you. So, Little One, you must always help others.

I created this book for my children and for all the children of the Mohican Nation as a resource that can be used not only to teach them traditional Mohican values but also to renew a lost custom among our people. What better place to begin than with our little ones?

Kristina Heath

May, 1998

## MOHICAN WORD MEANINGS

Noh -- Father (sounds like the word NO  
with an abrupt ending)

Guka -- Mother, Mama (rhymes with BOOK uh)

Noquiish -- Uncle (sounds like no KEESH)

Mah ose -- Grandfather (rhymes with the TOAST)

## ABOUT THE STORYTELLER

Kristina Heath (Mohican/Menominee) was born in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1971. Her family moved to the Mohican Indian Reservation when she was three months old, and she has lived there ever since.

Kristina is currently a student at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. She works at the Mohican North Star Casino and the Mohican Family Center, and is raising her two children, Hunter and Jasmine (Mohican/Menominee/Ho-Chunk), ages four and three.



She is a member of the Woodland Writers, a group of Native writers of children's books.

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