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# **Mystic Visions**

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ISBN: 0312865120 TITLE: Mystic Visions AUTHOR: Bittner, RosanneEXCERPT: Chapter OneEmerging from swirling clouds, the warriors rode out of the sky toward Buffalo Dreamer. Their bodies glimmered a ghostly white. Coup feathers and quilled ornaments decorated their hair. Colorful quills adorned lance covers, quivers, leggings, moccasins, and armbands. Each man wore a bone hairpipe breastplate tied to his otherwise naked chest. Some wore a bearclaw necklace. Their faces were painted black, making the whites of their eyes seem to glow.Buffalo Dreamer watched them, astounded and forward in thundering glory, their long black hair trailed in the wind. Eagles circled above them like sentinels. The hooves of galloping warhorses rumbled like thunder, but even though the riders` mouths were open as though shouting war cries, there was no sound.Buffalo Dreamer tried to run, but she couldn't move. Sod sprayed in all directions as panting steeds charged past her, determination on the faces of the warriors, who stared straight ahead as though unaware of her. Now she could see they were Lakota, but men of another nation rode with them-Shihenna, those the white man called Cheyenne. Suddenly the terrain changed, and Buffalo Dreamer found herself standing on a ridge, looking down at many white men wearing blue coats. More Lakota and Chevenne rode out of the sky, until they numbered in the thousands. The fierce warriors surrounded the men in blue coats, circling, killing, until the white men were pounded into the earth and disappeared in a pool of blood. The warriors rode back into the clouds, carrying scalps and sabers, their eyes gleaming with victory. The clouds swirled around and engulfed them, then fell to the ground and took the form of a white buffalo. The sacred beast stared at Buffalo Dreamer, its eyes bright red. Crimson tears of blood trickled down the white hairs of its face. "It is the beginning of the end," it spoke. "When next I appear to you, I will die. Eat of my heart, and keep my robe with you always, for protection. And beware of the men in blue coats."Buffalo Dreamer awoke wiraid. War shields of buffalo hide hung at the sides of their painted horses, the shields decorated with hand-drawn pictures of personal spirit guides; eagles, horses, wolves, bears, birds, beavers, suns, stars, lightning bolts. As the warriors charged seemed too quiet, and Buffalo Dreamer found it difficult to remove herself from the very real dream she had just experienced. She shivered, for her dreams carried great significance. Though only nineteen summers in age, she was considered a holy woman by the Lakota. In her medicine bag she carried the hairs of her spirit guide, the white buffalo. Among all living Lakota, she alone had seen and touched the sacred beast. She pulled a wolfskin shawl around her naked body and looked at her husband, who slept soundly beside her. Because Rising Eagle was a man of vision and possessed great spiritual power, she knew she must tell him about her dream. She watched him quietly for a moment longer, reluctant to disturb him. In sleep, he appeared just a common man: peaceful, calm. Awake, no man could match him in strength and bravery, in hunting or in raiding. He had even fought the great hump back bear to win her hand in marriage, for her father had demanded the hide of a grizzly as part of her marriage price. Rising Eagle still bore scars on his throat, chest, and back from his struggle with the fearsome beast. Other markings spoke further of Rising Eagle's prowess: a deep scar on his left calf from a battle with Crow warriors; a narrow white scar ran from above his left eye over his nose and across his right cheek, making him appear fierce and intimidating. He had sacrificed his flesh more than once at the annual Sun Dance. And twice Wakan-Tanka's messenger, the Feathered One, had spoken to Rising Eagle in a vision, making Rising Eagle a highly honored man among the Lakota, one whose prayers were heard beyond the

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