

# ONE THAT GOT AWAY

(Flathead)



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# ONE THAT GOT AWAY

Told by  
Peter Beaverhead  
(Flathead)

This is a story about a band of Kalispell Indians who lived a long time ago. They had two campsites when they were hunting. The campsites were near enemy territory.

One man in camp was named "One Who Sits In Front." He had a younger brother "One Not Yet A Man" who was thirteen or fourteen years old. One Who Sits In Front told his little brother, "Tomorrow at dawn let's get on our horses and ride around. We'll look around for something to eat, maybe for the enemy, or maybe for something else."

Early the next morning they left camp. As they were riding along, One Who Sits In Front told his little brother, "You must be alert and look around carefully. It will benefit us if we see the enemy first before they attack us." One Not Yet A Man rode along silently, looking around for the enemy."

Soon they were far from camp. As they were riding through the trees, they suddenly had a feeling that something was behind them. One Who Sits In Front looked back. Sure enough, not far behind, was the enemy preparing to attack them. One Who Sits In Front and his little brother were outnumbered.

"Now we are in for it! The enemy has caught up to us!" One Who Sits In Front told his brother.

Knowing that his horse was the slowest of the two, One Who Sits In Front told his brother to ride back to the camp. "Ride real fast!" he said. "Maybe you'll make it! Don't worry about me. Go now and run away!" One Not Yet A Man held onto his horse and let him run on his own. Running at full speed, it was as if he were flying.

The enemy shot at One Who Sits In Front and wounded his horse. The horse fell and they immediately surrounded him. When the enemy surrounded him, they didn't shoot him. They just kept circling. One Who Sits In Front tried to fight back by charging rider after rider, trying to pull them off their horses, but he tired quickly. His mouth was dry and he was thirsty. "It won't be long now and they will kill me," he thought to himself. The enemy warriors held a gun at One Who Sits In Front's throat so he was helpless. Thinking it was all over for himself, One Who Sits In Front thought of his little brother. "It will be good that he has made it back to camp safely."

One Not Yet A Man rode hard and fast until he got back to the camp. "My

brother has been killed,” he told his people. They asked him if he was watching when the enemy killed his brother. “No,” he said, “but they had just surrounded him when I last looked. He was on foot because they had shot his horse, so I assume that they have killed my brother.”

They gave One Not Yet A Man a fresh horse. Then all the men mounted their horses and started out. They rode fast until they came to where One Not Yet A Man had last seen his brother.

They saw a man on a white horse approaching them. They recognized him as One Who Sits in Front. One Not Yet A Man and his people greeted him, thankful that he hadn't been killed. One Who Sits In Front related this story to his people.

“When the enemy surrounded me, they shot my horse. After circling me, they all sat around in a big circle. As I sat there terrified, I heard someone yelling behind the circle of men. When this person got closer, I saw that he was on a white horse. He came galloping up to where the enemy sat. They cleared a passage for him and he rode into the circle.

“When this man got close to me, he got off his horse. The rest of the men just sat there talking and laughing. They were laughing at me in the center, looking pitiful. The man walked over to me. ‘Look at the sun. Look at it good because when you're through looking at it, I will kill you. That is why my people are just sitting here waiting. They are waiting for me. I am the one who is to kill you. You Kalispell Indians are mean people.’ Some relatives of this man with the white horse had been killed by Kalispell Indians. He wanted revenge.

“Carrying a gun in his hand, he walked up to me. He was leading his horse on a very long rope. He charged.

“‘Well, this is it. I am going to be killed,’ I thought.

“The man shot at me but missed. I jumped up, aimed and shot the man. The man fell. He was wounded badly. The white horse ran straight toward me.

“I grabbed the rope, jumped on and we took off running. The rest of the men started shooting. I shot at them with a pistol, wounding several.

“I rode right through the enemy line. They pursued me for a little way. Then they stopped, fearful that the Kalispell's camp might be close by. They knew that the young boy who had been with me had probably told our people about being attacked.

‘We had better run away,’ they said. They turned and left. “I then headed back for camp, meeting my little brother and you.”

“The two brothers were very glad to see each other. One Who Sits In Front told how brave his little brother had been in running for help to fight the enemy. His people then gave One Not Yet A Man a new name. They named him “Telq stem,” “One That Got Away.”