

## The White Deer

Once upon a time when I was four years old my grandmother would always tell me one of her stories before bed. One night she told me a frightening story about the ghost wolves and how whoever met them never came back....

Eight years later I was walking through the woods, looking at the gorgeous snow laden trees, and while doing that I lost track of the time and stayed out too late. It was starting to get dark when I heard something. At first I just thought it was the wind playing tricks on me, but then I remembered the story my grandmother had told me when I was four years old. I immediately started running and after I had only gotten a few yards a misty voice spoke out the words, "Stop!"

I slowly turned to face the voice and there were the ghost wolves. The biggest one, their leader, stepped out in front and said, "...we will not kill you if you bring us the white deer with one blue eye and one red eye. And, if you can't do this within 6 months, we will KILL you. All we can tell you is that she'll be somewhere between the two forests." And then the leader, and his pack tramped away through the trees.

The next morning I started searching. I was very scared for the white deer, whoever she was, because who knows what the ghost wolves would do to her. That night I thought about the day and how little I had accomplished. I built a fire and fell asleep.

I woke up sprawled on the ground with the fire still blazing. I got up off the ground and threw snow on the fire to put it out. I looked around to see if anything that had been there the previous night had been taken. All was well, and so I set off.

As I walked through the snow I would stop every few yards to see if there were any signs of a deer that had passed by. I walked and walked and then I noticed some deer tracks. I let all my other thoughts leave me and I ran after the deer tracks. I turned a corner and then saw the deer tracks go behind a tree. I followed them with my eyes and saw a regular old stag. He looked at me, and then dashed away. And all of my thoughts came back to me and I was filled with dread once more.

I walked on through the beautiful trees and I found more deer tracks. This time I found a pile of hay where the deer should have been. I took a piece of hay and walked on. Then I found more deer tracks and this time I found a pile of wood where the deer should have been. I took a small piece of wood and walked on. I took the silver and gold bands that my grandmother had given me to take care of out of my bag. I looked at them for a minute and then I put them back in my bag.

As I walked I saw more deer tracks. I followed them and this time where the deer should have been was a pile of rocks. I took one of the rocks and walked on. I looked up at the sun. It was high in the sky, but plunging fast. I needed to find a place to sleep for soon it would be dark. The sunset was so beautiful. The orange glow in the sky and the sun reflecting off the snow was just amazing to watch.

That night I dreamt that the rock, the piece of hay, and the piece of wood turned into a snow white deer. And when she turned to me her eyes were flaming red. I woke with a start. The hay, the wood and the rock were all still there, but standing next to them was a snow white deer with red eyes. But this deer was different from the deer in my dream. This deer had half of a broken star marking on her forehead. Then the deer spoke to me and said, "I see you are looking for something. What is that thing that you are looking for?"

"Well, I am looking for a white deer with one red eye and one blue eye," I said.

"Oh, in that case I could try and help you. Would it help if I brought you to the place where my sister lives? She looks like me except she has blue eyes."

"Yes, please bring me to her," I said.

So we set off. She and I ran side-by-side, neck-in-neck. We ran and ran, for days and days, weeks and weeks, months and months, until she told me one day to stop. We were in the V of four mountains. The red eyed deer said, "my sister lives in a secret cave somewhere around here. So, have I served you well?"

"Yes! But I still need your help", I said.

"I'll be happy to help," she said. Then she said, "I think I know where her cave is. Come with me." She led me to one of the many rock walls, and she knocked on the wall with her hoof. The wall

started to shift, and then I started to get nauseated. And as the wall moved more, the nausea grew. And then the wall created an opening. A snow white deer with two blue eyes stood there with the other half of the star on her forehead.

I said, "Oh my gosh! If I can do something for you, then you can become one deer with one blue eye and one red eye. But there is something I have to tell you. I have to bring you to the ghost wolves."

Then they said together, "...we were made to serve people, so if you have to serve us, for us to serve you, then go ahead."

So I took my pure gold band and my pure silver band out of my bag, and then both the deer bowed their heads and I placed the gold band on the red eyed deer's head, and the silver band on the blue eyed deer's head. Then the miracle happened. The red eyed deer, and the blue eyed deer became one gorgeous doe! She stood before me with one red eye and one blue eye, a perfect star on her forehead, and a beautiful gold and silver crown on her head.

And then the deer spoke to me, with the same words, but two different voices. She said, "I know the way to the ghost wolves. Will you ride on my back?"

"Yes, of course," I said, and leapt upon her back, and off she went. We were there in an instant, on the last day I could spare, for tomorrow the six months would be up. The wolves had already started the hunt.

When I rode into where they were, the deer stopped next to them. And then I said, "I have given you what you wanted, in the time you said I had to do it." Then all of the wolves, the lead wolf leading, they bowed. And as they did the strangest thing happened. The ghost wolves changed. They changed into real wolves, real live grey wolves, but magic wolves!

Then the deer said, "You may stand, and we will run with you and your pack every day until we die. I know you will never die, but this girl will, someday. And when she does, we shall praise her every day. Because if she wasn't here, you would be dead still." And then we all ran off into the snow covered forest together.

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