Sahtaki and I

By James Willard Schultz

Poem by Ann Bewley

I

An Indian maid, so we are told
With youth and beauty rare
Was courted by two chieftains bold
Black Otter and by Spotted Bear.
Spotted Bear was much in favor
And soon he took his queen.
Black Otter, rival did not waver
But vanished from the scene.
He swore revenge on Spotted Bear
Some one would surely pay
But just how, or when or where
Would wait until the day.
Spotted Bear had an only son
Apsi, strong like father
Black Otter had an only one
Sahtaki, an Indian daughter.
Black Otter made a lodge of skin
A place for his daughter to play
And she would ask young Apsi in,
Well almost everyday.

II

Time went by, the years had sped,
The children now were grown
And Aspi to Sahtaki said,
"I'll take you for my own".
"Oh no", Black Otter said with glee
As Apsi went away,
"This revenge is sweet to me
I swore I'd make him pay".
Aspi brought him horses, gold,
And says "I'll buy my bride."
Black Otter's looks and voice were cold,
"No, your father took my pride".
So Apsi went away to war
To get horses for his wife,
'Twas sad when he returned for
Sahtaki was Three Bulls' for life.
Again young Apsi went away
To get horses so he could buy
Because he had Three Bulls to pay
If he wanted Sahtaki.

III

One day he fell, his leg was broke
He could no longer ride
To his surprise when he awoke
Sahtaki sat there by his side
They were so happy, just these two
That Three Bulls came and said,
"Go and take her with you
Take her free, I won't be paid."
And so the two with hearts so true,
Unlucky at the start,
Went to their lodge of deer skin new
Where they never more would part.