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Amelia F. Harris, Journalist.
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Interview with
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LEGEND OF THE RED ROSE, QUEEN OF THE FLOWERS.

Many moons past the greatest hunter received this honored name, "The King of the Winds of Heaven", when he returned home in triumph from the land of the "White Rabbit" bearing with him the sacred memory belt. This treasure belonged to Shac-chi-homa, who was in the possession of the "White Bear". The hunter's people shouted loudly "All honor to the greatest of hunters for bravery and the recovery of the sacred belt wrought in Wampun. We shall call him 'King of the Winds of Heaven'".

In many moons of ages past this King of Winds strolled gently over the prairie at evening, bending low the grasses, whispering softly to leaves and white lilies, There he spied pretty "Red Rose", the daughter of Mis-sopokannah, meaning grandmother, Talupa Homa.

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He wooed Red Rose with songs of sweetness and soft caresses. Often the mother had spoken words of warning to pretty Red Rose, "Listen not to the King of the Winds nor what he tells you. Do not linger long upon the meadow hidden among the white lilies lest the King find and harm you." Red Rose heeded not these words of wisdom. The call of the flute, the love songs and caresses won little Red Rose's heart and in her great hour of need she was crushed beneath the feet of the King of the Winds and with a broken heart beauty and life faded away. In departing she gave life to a son of wonder, the Red Deer Slayer, Issa Homa. Issa Homa obtained from the Red Deer the "Magic Stone," the poison destroyer. This stone was considered of great value to life-saving and the only cure for the bite of the great "Coral Snakes."

The Red Deer slayer revenged the death of his beautiful mother, the Red Rose of the Prairies, daughter of Missopokannah (Grandmother) Talupa Homa. The Red Deer slayer, Issa Homa, grew strong and straight from childhood into manhood. Skilled in all the arts of hunters,

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much he questioned his grandmother of his father and thus learned the guarded secret about the beauty of his mother, the Red Rose of the Prairie and of the falseness of his father. Hot within him became his heart. then he said "I will go to see my father, 'The King of the Winds,' the Hol obi Chitto (Big story teller), and see how he fares.

At the portals of Sunset Issa Homa dressed for travel, garbed in deer skin, shirt and leggings, richly trimmed in quills and ampum; on his stately head his white eagle feathers; in his quiver oaken arrows trimmed in Jasper winged with feathers. Issa Homa started on the long journey to the Kingdom of the West Wind, home of his father, Holobi Chitto, the Story-teller, who for his bravery in recovering the sacred belt of "Shac-chi-Homa Nation" was given ruling powers over the four winds of Heaven; now banished to the Kingdom of the West winds and called Holobi Chitto. Sepokani (grandmother) cautioned Issa Homa about the passage to the West Wind being guarded by the Great Santa Thomas (Coral Snakes) in the river

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journeying to the Kingdom of the West, home of his father: that he would recognize this river by the coral tinge of the waters. This was the river of the great Coral Snakes (the Pentahomas). She warned that they were more poisonous than the forked tongue, "The rattler." This snake story did not stop Issa Homa. His heart was hot within him. He was not like the Argonauts of old going in search of the "golden fleece." He was going to see the once King of the four winds, his father, and to avenge his mother, pretty Red Rose, Queen of the Flowers, whose heart had been crushed and trampled by the footsteps of the King. Not giving heed to the words of wisdom from his Sapokani

(grandmother) Talupa Homa who pleaded with him not to go near the Holobi Chitto "He will destroy you- for he wears a shirt of magic and around his waist is the sacred memory belt of Shec-chi-homa Nation; beware, my son, beware, and remember only one spot about him is soft and that is on top of his head, (For this incompetency he lost his kingdom). Strike the "soft spot" to

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kill," warned Sapokani Telupe Homa.

Issa Homer dressed in his deer skin, shirt and leggings, adorned his head with white eagle feathers, put on his magic mittens and magic moccasins and safely in his pocket was the stone of magic, the poison destroyer. Placing his white canoe on the great Father of waters (the Mississippi) he sailed south for two moons; carefully he stowed his bow of ash strung with sinews of the deer and his long straight arrows with poisoned tips - away beyond the water splash. Just at the sun's going out of sight, he came to where he saw the coral water flowing into the Mississippi; Sa-pok-anj warned him that this was his only passage to the King's domain. He sped on this stream away to the west until he came to the Coral Snakes, who were guarding the passage. The noise of the canoe caused the Coral Snakes to raise their heads high from the waters, showing their fiery crests, hissing and shooting their forked tongues out, spraying deadly fumes. Issa Homa

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warned, "Let me pass on my journey, ye evil ones; if ye value your life, disappear from my sight." But the snakes drew nearer. Issa drew his bow and with quick aim, fast flew the deadly arrows. Soon the Coral Snakes lay dead, their blood tinging the waters to a coral color. Then Issa guided his canoe into the portals of the home of his father. Viewing the palatial wigwam he sped an arrow from his bow which pierced the roof, announcing his arrival.

The two monarchs slowly eyed each other- Issa said "I am from Shac-chi-homa Nation. I have come a long way- not to wrestle with you for a blessing but to avenge the death of one who gave me life, the Red Rose of the Prairies. I am her son." Filled with joy, the King replied: "I recognize you. In your face returns to me days departed." He saw his youth rise up before him in the face of Issa Homa. "Welcome, my son, forgive the deeds of the past and accept my kingdom. Age is lonely and I want youth." But Issa cried out, "Holobi Chitto" (liar) "cursed be

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your kingdom, you deceiving story-telling maker of broken promises. Cursed be unto you and your kingdom of the West winds," and he called upon the Gods with the forked tongues to execute vengeance in the name of little Red Rose. "Crush his bones until dust rises from them and blows away to some far off space without the gates of Heaven. "

Then began the battle of brawn and brains, for Holobi Chitto was not ready to die. He knew he must work fast before the God of the forked tongue arrived. Rocks thick and fast flew, falling like hailstorms. Holobi Chitto rushed to the door of his wigwam, bruised and bleeding. Issa Homa leaned against a great redwood tree.

Suddenly there came a sound from the top of the tree-top. Glancing up he saw the Love bird of the Choctaws and softly he heard the voice of Sapokani his grandmother--words of advice and warning, "Issa Homa, remember the soft spot. If you wish to kill, King of the Winds has a soft spot in the top of his

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head. There aim your arrows. Then the soft voice ceased.

The King of the West Winds braced up then, reaching down for his arrow. Issa Homa immediately took aim with his poisoned arrow, which quickly flew and pierced the soft spot. The King of the Winds gave a mighty groan and his great body trembled like the leaves of the aspen. He fell stricken unto death.

Issa Homa rushed to him quickly, tore off his shirt of Magic Wampum and the sacred memory belt. This treasure belonged to the tribe of Shac-chi-homa, which was in the possession of the White Bear. Entering the wigwam, he hastily gathered valuable robes and furs and beautiful beads. Issa Homa took all he could carry to his canoe and sped rapidly away.

Then the God with the forked tongue appeared with a mighty rushing of wings and scorched the body of Holobi Chitto until his bones rose in dust and blew it away into space without the gates of Heaven, as Issa Homa had called upon him to do.

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Issa Homa returned to the home of his people, the Shac-chi-homa Nation, the tallest and bravest of all Indians. The clan named him Chief Okla Falayah (The-tall Indian). He returned the magic to white Bear but he divided the other trophies among his people. He and his grandmother kept the magic shirt.

That night Sapokani (Grandmother) found securely concealed in the pockets of the valued magic shirts the "Seeds of Memorial" (she called them). Quickly they went to the grave of pretty Red Rose and there planted the seeds. They returned home well pleased with the success of Issa Homa.

The next morning they arose early and hastened to the grave of Red Rose, and to their surprise there stood the pretty tree of mourning, its beautiful branches bending to the earth and concealing the grave. As if in commemoration of her sad death, the weeping Willow grew. Perched on the upper-most branch was the Love bird of the Choctaws.

Sapokani said "All is well."