

From White Buffalo

Published by Samuel French.

ABBY, 18
JOHN, 22

A Miracle birth has occurred at ABBY's (18) home in southern Wisconsin. JOHN, (22) a Lakota Sioux man has been acting as their night watchman, but has deeply ambivalent feelings about the event.

A loud crashing noise breaks the silence. JOHN jumps up, grabs his flashlight, and shines his light around, revealing ABBY, more than a little bit drunk, climbing over the fence.)

JOHN
Abby!
(She stops)

ABBY
Whoah!

JOHN
What are you doing?

ABBY
I was just gonna... I was gonna...

JOHN
This isn't a good idea. Come on out of there.

ABBY
I just wanted to watch her sleep in the dark.

JOHN
Her mother is liable to get angry with you.

ABBY
I know.

JOHN
Abby.

ABBY
Okay.

(She climbs back over the fence clumsily, knocking off some of the artwork.)

Whoops.

(She tries to put it back on.)

JOHN

Here.

(He takes it from her and affixes it to the fence. ABBY totters a little uneasily.)

ABBY

I figured you'd be in bed by now.

JOHN

Are you all right?

ABBY

I'm fine.

(She sits on the ground.)

What time is it?

JOHN

I don't know. Three.

ABBY

Jesus.

(ABBY rolls onto her back.)

JOHN

Abby. Abby.

ABBY

I can't lie on my back?

JOHN

There's uh... horse shit next to you.

ABBY

Oh!

(she moves)

ABBY

This is what I like. No moon. Just stars. Isn't there going to be a meteor shower?

JOHN

You're drunk.

ABBY

I'm rich, John.

JOHN

You're drunk.

ABBY

Drunk and rich. Two million dollars. Right in my pocket. Right in my goddamn greedy little pocket. Isn't that just great?

JOHN

Your mother is going to sell?

ABBY

The bitch.

JOHN

Abby.

ABBY

She's talking about college—and she's talking opportunity, and she's talking about the future... blah blah blah... and I just feel like hell. And I wanted to spend one last night with... I was gonna say God...

(she laughs a little bit)

I mean, the White Buffalo Woman, right? One more night with Hope. I feel kinda bad that I named her that, cause now it's like, 'we're selling hope' and that's this big symbolic thing, you know? Like, are we destroying all the hope in our lives because we're, you know, grabbing the money?

JOHN

I don't think so.

ABBY

And all I can think about being out here... is... look at this... look what this brought into my life—all this... all this new stuff, and this beauty, and this like... all this amazing art and these people from all over the world came here to my back yard to see a miracle... isn't that awesome? I mean, we had this life before that was grey and dull and ruined, and all this magic just exploded into it...

(Short pause. ABBY is crying.)

And it's gonna leave us. We're gonna kick it out the door. For what? For money? How much is this worth? How much is it worth to come home and see the fence and the see the people and see the miracle—all this joy in people's eyes to be at your house, you know, to be in your yard where you grew up, I mean, *wow*—who gets a chance to experience that? Nobody in the whole world except me.

(She sits up, crying. JOHN comes closer to her.)

Nobody in the whole world except me. I'm the only one. Why can't we... keep that...?

JOHN

It's all right.

ABBY

It seems like we're searching for something, and then... when we find it, when it appears it isn't... it isn't what?

JOHN

Maybe this isn't what we're looking for?

ABBY

But it is.

JOHN

You know this is a myth. If someone's willing to give you a ton of money for it, take it.

ABBY

How can you say that?

JOHN

Because...

ABBY

This is a miracle.

JOHN

Why?

ABBY

Because I believe in it. Why is everyone making that sound so stupid? I mean, if you don't care—

JOHN

I do care—

ABBY

Why are you still here then if it's just a myth? Why not just go home back to Chicago and go on like nothing happened?

JOHN

Abby.

ABBY

Seriously, what are you still doing here?

JOHN

I was in the area.

ABBY

Oh come on! You've stayed three weeks! You've stayed longer than any single person who's been here. You're been watching the buffalo day and night—you're full of shit.

JOHN

Because...

ABBY

Why stay? Why stay if it doesn't mean anything?

JOHN

I don't—I didn't say it didn't mean anything. I just said—I don't know. I guess I was just hoping I would see my Mom.

(short pause)

Figured she'd make the trip by now.

ABBY

Why don't you just go home?

(JOHN shakes his head.)

Okay.

(Pause)

JOHN

Maybe I'm just curious to see what will happen here.

ABBY

You mean if we'll sell?

JOHN

I don't know. Maybe. You ought to go to bed.

ABBY

What time is it?

JOHN

Three fifteen.

ABBY

Screw it. It's early.

(ABBY heads over to the bench. Pause.)

When the birds start chirping, that's when you know you've been up too long.

(She leans back)

Hey look, a shooting star.

(short pause)

So are you gonna sit out here all night?

JOHN

What else am I gonna do?

(She smiles at him, then beckons for him to come over.)

ABBY

You want some company?

(JOHN heads over and sits down.)

JOHN

Sure.

(ABBY leans back and looks at the sky.)

ABBY

There's always shooting stars in August. Just think, though. All that is is a tiny piece of rock burning up when it hits the atmosphere—like a bullet from space—and people used to think you could wish on them.

JOHN

Huh.

ABBY

White people at any rate. It's that 'greed-is-my-cultural-heritage' kind of thing. Always wanting something. Never happy with what they've got.

JOHN

And now you're happy?

ABBY

I've been happy since this happened. And it's a real long time since I could say something like that.

JOHN

That's good.

ABBY

Do the Sioux have any stories about shooting stars?

JOHN

Sure.

ABBY

Tell me one.

JOHN

All right, well... my grandfathers believed that shooting stars were balls of ice and rock traveling at extreme speeds throughout the solar system, usually in elliptical orbits around the Sun, which we called, great grandfather of helium fusion, because our myths said that at temperatures reaching one million degrees, hydrogen gas would—

ABBY

Shut up!

(ABBY punches playfully at him.)

JOHN

Why are you trying to destroy my heritage? We were very advanced.

ABBY

Is being a dick part of your cultural heritage?

JOHN

No I think that's the white man's heritage.

ABBY

Ouch.

JOHN

The truth hurts, doesn't it, paleface?

ABBY

Hey. What did I do to you?

JOHN

I don't know—you're probably responsible for naming a football team or something.

ABBY

Yeah, I'm sorry about that. That's all my fault. Next team I name is gonna be the Fighting Whites. Our mascot will be like a big foam-headed Soccer Mom that runs around and sues school boards to get books banned. It'll be great. And then she'll drive this giant plush SUV onto the field and run over immigrants.

(she laughs.)

I'm glad you stuck around. Who else am I going to rant drunkenly to at three o'clock in the morning?

JOHN

There's always the buffalo. You know, there is um...

ABBY

What?

JOHN

There is another reason I stuck around.

ABBY

What's that?

(Pause. He puts his hand on hers. She leans in and kisses him