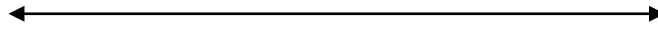


*Excerpt from—*  
**Call Willie**



Bert Bohannon sat in his car and waited. He puffed on a cigarette, leaned back in the seat, and stared at the Missouri River flowing below the bluff where he was parked. His bones ached with tiredness and his eyes were bloodshot, but he was waiting, waiting to see what would happen.

The boy had been lost in the river for a week now. When the search for him began, people with boats flocked in from all directions to help. The little town of Greenwood, South Dakota, had gone virtually without sleep for the past seven days.

It wasn't that the town had lost a star on their little baseball team, or an altar boy for the church—they had lost a neighbor's son, and in a town of 200, this was obviously everybody's concern.

IF ANYONE KNEW what happened, Bohannon did. But right now, he wasn't too sure. Last Monday night, Jimmy Frederick and four Indian boys took a boat out on the river. They went across to check some set-lines. While on the other side, wind and choppy water loosened the boat from its moorings and it started drifting away.

Sixteen-year-old Jimmy, an exceptional swimmer, jumped into the river fully clothed and started after the boat. The last his companions saw of him, he was still swimming after the fleeting craft.

That was October 10, 1955, a week ago, Bert thought. After Jimmy disappeared, the four remaining boys started a fire. When Bert saw the flickering blaze across the wind-whipped river, he thought little of it, got into his car, and drove to Fort Randall

Dam where he crossed the Missouri. He then followed the stream along the other bank to pick up the stranded youths. Jimmy Frederick was gone.

Bert twisted on the car seat and craned his neck to look out the back window to see if anyone was coming down the gravel road. Nothing. He settled back in the seat again.

The search started the morning after the boy disappeared. Light airplanes buzzed the river to see if he had washed ashore somewhere and weathered the night. They were looking for a live boy. More than twenty boats—ranging from cruisers to small motor-boats—plied the wide river, their crews straining to see some trace of the youth.

As the week wore on, the crews started looking for a body. They dragged the snag-laden river with grappling hooks and turned up nothing. By the end of the week, searchers started dynamiting in hopes of jarring the body loose from the bottom of the Missouri. The boy disappeared Monday night; by Saturday, nearly everyone was ready to quit looking.

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Then someone got the wild idea. No one was certain who made the suggestion, but the idea spread like fire in a ripe wheat field. Old Willie Eagle Hawk had a reputation for doing wondrous things--he could talk to snakes, predict the future, make horses dance, and he reputedly had found lost bodies. He could surely find the boy.

When the idea got out, Jimmy's mother didn't know what to do. She felt it was against her Catholic religion to have a "witch doctor" of a pagan cult join the search for her lost son.

"If it will do any good, it will be all right," Father Benno assured her when she went to him with her problem.

Bert wasn't so sure it would do any good. But he was sitting here, waiting. Waiting to see what would happen. In fact, the whole town was waiting for Robert White Shield, Indian Police, to return with the medicine man. They loitered about, waiting. Meanwhile, White Shield and two other Indians had traveled most of the night to bring Willie Eagle Hawk to Greenwood. The Frederick parents had been asked to go along, but they weren't up to the trip.

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When White Shield and his party arrived at the medicine man's home on the Lower Brule Reservation, he had packed his small bundle of gear and was waiting for them.

"I knew you were coming, so I got ready," he greeted. How could he have known? No one had told the old man they were coming, but he knew.

The old man clambered into the car and they started back to Greenwood. It was daylight when they returned.

Willie Eagle Hawk stepped out of the car and the people of Greenwood saw him for the first time. He was 75 years old, tall, and straight. His shabby clothes were tattered and dirty. His long, dark hair was secured in two braids that fell over his shoulders like heavy ropes.

Bohannon later described him: "He was tall and skinny—he had arms that dangled down and he looked a mile high."

*The story continues with a description of Medicine Man's ceremonial calling up ancestors to help him find the missing lad...*

