

A man called horse



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This act had earned him a promotion to Second Lieutenant and job as a scout for land and enemies in the Frontier of America. For the first few weeks of his new post on the Great Plains, Second Lieutenant John Dunbar was quite lonely, with only his new horse Cisco, the horse he had ridden on the day of his promotion, to keep him company.

Soon, a wolf with two white feet started to visit every day, and John developed an attachment to the wolf, eventually naming him Twosocks. Around this time, Kicking Bird of the nearby Sioux tribe came to investigate the fort, and John ran toward him screaming, buck naked. This was the start of the great friendship between the Sioux and John Dunbar, otherwise known as Dances with Wolves. When Kicking Bird returned to John's post, he brought a friend, and had a mind to trade to start a truce. Although communication was slow, both sides of the language barrier were obviously trying to stay patient and work through the obstacles.

Over time, communication began to speed up, and Kicking Bird along with John started to understand each other on a mental level. During these important scenes it becomes clear as to what the movie was conveying: Even over the barriers of race, society and language, friendship and family will always jump over the walls and flourish. The Sioux tribes of Indians were a nomadic people, moving from place to place to follow the herds of buffalo, which were their main source of food, sport, and clothing. Even being nomads, they were very protective of their land, and if any non-Sioux stepped across their borders, the enemy was sure to die.

The carriage man that drove John Dunbar out to the military post was killed while eating lunch; however, this was not the case with John. After being

startled by the white-man, Kicking Bird went back to the Sioux camp and told the council, " He may be a special man or even a god. I ask that Chief Ten Bears give us permission to talk with him. " Somehow, Kicking Bird was able to look past the prejudice he had against the color of John Dunbar's skin, and see the potential that he held. From then on, Kicking Bird and the very unhappy Wind In His Hair visited John Dunbar to trade and communicate, even if they could not speak.

Eventually, John decided to make a surprise visit to the Sioux camp, and stumbled across an injured white woman, who was dressed like a Sioux, spoke their language, and even backed away as fast as she could, even when she was a white woman herself. John picked her up and carried her to the Sioux camp, where he dropped her off. It was very apparent that he was not welcome, and Wind In His Hair stood at the front of the angry mob, screaming at John telling him that he was not welcome. It was obvious that not all the Sioux had accepted him as Kicking Bird had.

The Sioux saw the color of John Dunbar's skin as a threat, because of all the previous white-men that had come and tried to take without asking, such as the conquistadors of Spain, the Texans, and even the Mexicans; however this was a small gap for John to leap over to get closer to the Sioux. Another reason that Second Lieutenant John Dunbar had difficulty in befriending the Sioux was because of their social system. It was not like the American way of doing things where a strong man stays on top until it was time to elect a new leader.

For the Sioux, the political leaders were often the elders, and behind them, the Holy Men and the warriors. All were easily replaced, especially in the

warriors. If a new warrior struck first coup on a big target, then he had bragging rights over the camp until something new happened. This was not the case with John. He was rarely given a chance to prove his worth or to try and make friends with someone other than Kicking Bird and his family. Although, this changed quickly one day, when John had been awoken by a stampede of buffalo in the middle of the night after which he ran toward the camp shouting " Tatanka! or buffalo, to alert the tribe that their food source has returned. The Sioux were grateful and allowed Dunbar to take part in the hunt. After many successful kills on the buffalo, one of the younger boys fell and was being charged by a buffalo. The only man suitable for saving him was John and, after two missed shots from his rifle, the third shot hit the buffalo in a weak point, dropping it in one shot, and saving the boy. As far as any man in the hunting party was concerned, John had struck first coup, and had bragging rights for the remainder of the night.

Even after John had been accepted, he did not believe himself worthy enough to sleep in the camp. The fact that the Sioux people would even accept him into their camp is proof enough that they had accepted them into their social lives. Perhaps the greatest barrier to peace and friendship in the world is language. If one cannot communicate, one cannot succeed in making trade or peace treaties. Luckily, Kicking Bird and John Dunbar were patient men, and they tried their hardest to teach and act and communicate as best as they could.

Throughout the movie, John was in the dust most of the time, until he had been welcomed into the camp, where he met Stands With Fist, the white woman he had saved, who knew English. She tried to translate everything

that was being said and also started teaching John the language of the Sioux, Lakota. Learning was difficult for John as he had never uttered a word outside of English. At first, the only word that he knew was tatanka, and that was a word hardly spoken; despite his failure to understand, John was invited to council meetings, where he could listen and try to understand.

He played games, danced, and spoke English to the Sioux, hoping to get some recognition. One day, in the midst of danger, John's mind clicked it all together, and he spoke flawlessly to the elders about the approaching Pawnee tribe. John was the hero of the battle, showing the Sioux the power of guns, and the Pawnee stood no chance. Nor should they have, because they fought completely out of hate, and not for any political reason other than the fact that Sioux were not Pawnee. Once communication became easier, Kicking Bird asked John about the approaching white men. Questions like, " How many are coming? Yet John did not disclose too much information because he thought he would lose the trust of his new friends. When John got kidnapped, the Sioux were aware of the dangers that white men held, but still they went to rescue him. This solidified John's reason to leave the tribe. Without him, the Sioux could be safer, and he and his new wife, Stands With Fist, could spread the news of the amazing Native Americans. As he left, Wind In His Hair, the one who did not like the idea of John being an ally in the first place, rode his horse onto the hillside and shouted, " Do you see that I am your friend?

Can you see that you will always be my friend? " Through all he had been through in trying to befriend the Sioux, this was a moment of great sadness for John, to know that the most stubborn man he had ever met was calling

him friend. It was all John could do to not turn around and stay with the Sioux. John Dunbar had managed to overcome the prejudice of, become a leader to, and learn the language of the Sioux, as well as marry his love, Stands With Fist. He saved a boy, and then the whole tribe, and introduced new technology to a primitive kind of people.

His best friends, Kicking Bird and Wind In His Hair, had become two of the most important people in his life. Like his literary counterpart named Horse in "A Man Called Horse," John had overcome all the barriers that kept him from living happily, and in doing so, he found family where he least expected one. And like Horse, who truly became a Crow in his story, in the end of *Dances with Wolves*, Second Lieutenant John Dunbar had become more than he expected—he became a Sioux.