



Chronicles of Diversity

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Plaid Hood *Tall & Strong, Circa 2020*

Lest anyone consider this a fairy tale let us briefly describe the early history of Jodi Sarah Hood. While a story with fictional characters, the basis for this yarn is rooted deeply in the oral myths and traditions of the aboriginal peoples of North America. Therefore, at sometime in the not too distant future a young woman with the skills and attributes of Ms. Hood, may actually traverse the ground of this western land, when people again walk in truth and love for one another and with all of God's creatures.

Jodi Sarah Hood was born in Missoula, Montana, January 15, 1992 at 4:30 in the morning. Her mother Sarah Margaret Hood was the wife of George Wallace Hood, point guard for the University of Montana Grizzlies. It seems that day was painful for both of Jodi's parents, for not only was Sarah suffering the pain of childbirth, George was on

crutches after breaking a bone in his foot in a game with Montana State, Saturday evening January 11th.

As this was his senior year at Montana, George knew his collegiate life as a basketball player was over, but at the same time seeing the birth of his first and only child, the pain of his foot disappeared because of the joy of gazing upon his newborn crying daughter.

Also in attendance at the birth was Margie Lupus, now a smiling grandmother of young Jodi. Margie was a quarter Blackfoot Indian and was quite a basketball player in her own right, long before girls basketball adopted the rules of the boys game.

Sarah and George had met while both playing point guard for the Purple Pride of Polson High School. George was a four year starter and set



school scoring, rebounding, and assist records while on is way to All Montana recognition and McDonald's All American Honorable Mention. George had been recruited by a couple of California colleges as well as some from back east, but decided to stay at home and play for the Griz. While it was difficult, George and Sarah married after their sophomore year and were planning to start a family after George had finished college and had a real job for real money, but life does not always happen as expected. That winter day seeing the birth of his daughter filled him with the joy of his timely blessing, she truly was a gift from God.

After graduating, George got a series of jobs coaching basketball and teaching science in a number of small high schools in Montana, while Sarah taught math and coached the girls teams, sometimes in nearby schools. Young Jodi was playing with a basketball about the time she could walk and had developed a keen sense of the game before she even entered the first grade.

When Jodi was about to enter high school, George was offered the job of coaching the Colville Indians, in Northeast Washington State. Returning to Crimson school colors was rewarding for George and he and Jodi used to joke privately that now she could also get into the role of being an Indian. Even though she stood six feet tall with light brown hair and blue eyes, Jodi's native heritage was undetectable.

As she progressed through high school, Jodi's talents were greatly enhanced. Over her four years at Colville, Jodi averaged 25 points per game, was selected as a Nike All American her junior and senior year and set a Washington State high school record for 3 point shooting percentage and baskets made, while maintaining a 4.0 grade point average. Jodi was recruited by Tennessee, Duke, and Stanford to name a few, but she decided to become a Husky and play for June Daugherty at the University of Washington.

While Seattle was a long way from Colville, Jodi was not concerned, for when the Hoods had moved to Washington state grandma Margie had moved to Seattle and was working as a nurse in the cardiac care unit of the University Hospital just across Montlake from Hec. Ed.

At Jodi's high school graduation, a beaming Margie was sitting front and center. Later, that graduation day Grandma Lupus gave her now tall and strong granddaughter a colorful hand made plaid cape of crimson, gray, purple, and gold over a white background, embroidered with native American symbols and Jodi's basketball achievements. Margie told Jodi that if she would wear the cape to her college games, she would be greatly blessed during the subsequent contest. Faithful to that gift, every time people saw Jodi enter Bank of America Arena wearing her hood they would remark, "Jodi is now in range for her 3 pointer!"

Jodi was elected as a team captain her four years at the UDub, and surpassed Loree Payne's three point record by almost 100 finishing her career with 335. Her junior and senior year she was all Pac 10 and as a senior a second team All American. Both players had their roots in Montana, so everyone talked of the connection between the Big Sky country and three point shooting. Jodi decided to forgo a possible WNBA career and to remain true to the crimson in her colorful cape, she decided to go to graduate school at WSU and be an assistant coach for that still rebuilding women's program.

The year was 2014 when Jodi graduated from the U, and it was also the year that grandma Margie retired from the hospital. The Seattle Supersonics also moved into their new arena that fall, just south of Safeco Field, giving Seattle sports fans state of the art facilities for all their professional sports teams. For her retirement years Margie was planning on moving back east of the mountains to some place in Idaho, because she wanted to continue to see the mountains and the forests, but had grown very tired of all the people and the hassles of the big city, not to mention the rain.

To celebrate their freedom from urban culture, the two women decided to go on a hiking trip deep into the Selway Bitterroot Wilderness. Late their second evening out on the trail just as they were dozing off after watching a magnificent sunset, the two were sharply awoken by the distant howl of a wolf. Shortly thereafter, this howl was answered by another wolf further up to the north. As they lay there in their sleeping bags under the stars, the continuing howling made the women realize that they were surrounded by the wolf pack.

Jodi was afraid, for while her mother had never told her the story of Little Red Riding Hood, in high school English she had to write an essay on the value of myths in giving children proper morals. Little Red Riding Hood was the story selected as an example by the teacher, of a myth with positive influences, showing why children should not talk or associate with strangers, and be afraid of wild animals.

It was that starry night that Margie began to tell Jodi about her native American family history.

In the old days the so called Blackfoot family name was what translates into the English "Wolf Pack." With the arrival of David Thompson and the Hudson's Bay Company, also came the European fear of wolves and the desire to destroy as many of the animals as possible. This became part of the white man's legacy in the west. The excuse was called the desire for pelts, but also this wolf killing helped to sequester these bearded men's fear of wolves.

Margie's great, great, great, grandfather served as guide for many of Thompson's explorations, and one clear starry night, very similar to this night in the Selway, as the howling wolves encircled their camp, grandfather told David the family story and how the Indians did not fear the wolves, but looked upon them as brothers and sisters. He also explained that the wolf community was also the model given to the Blackfoot people by the Great Spirit to framework their tribe and their leadership structure. Grandfather also interpreted that their clan's name really meant Wolf Pack, but grandfather was hesitant to change their native name to the English, Wolf. Thompson, being a map maker and a naturalist, suggested that grandfather change his family name to Lupus, the scientific name for wolf, and most people would think that it came from some French or other European ancestor that married into the clan.

For the remainder of the trip, grandma Lupus continued to pass on her wolf heritage to the very inquisitive Jodi Hood. As Jodi asked questions, Margie illustrated that the way Jodi played basketball was in a deeper way very

similar to the way wolf packs functioned. Before the trip was completed Jodi could see clearly a field where wolf lore and fast breaks could find a synergistic union. That wisdom would take Jodi all the way through post doctoral studies and as WSU's head woman's basketball coach, a visit to the NCAA Final Four at the end of the 2018 season.

As they left the wilderness, the pair stopped in Kooskia for lunch and looking through the local real estate brochures Margie found the place she was looking for in her retirement home. Five acres of prairie ground a few miles from town with a small two bedroom log cabin and a large garden spot with fruit trees and a small creek. Margie made the offer and moved in about a month later.

Life was very prosperous in America between 2014 and the summer of 2018. Though natural stupendous changes seemed to be steadily increasing throughout the world from their noticed beginning in 2005, there really was nothing that affected seriously America's economic growth. But on July 7th 2018, an earthquake of 8.6 magnitude hit the Puget Sound region, basically destroying all of the Seattle Tacoma Metropolitan Area, except for the three Seattle sports facilities that were built to high structural standards, they withstood the great shaking almost untouched. All three served as refugee centers where residents flocked for food, water, and shelter during the weeks after the aftershocks had slowed.

With the economy of the state almost completely extinguished, that fall the Governor closed all the state's colleges and universities to learning and converted them into long term refugee centers. Then just as things were beginning to improve in Washington State, on September 11, 2019, on the eighteenth anniversary of the World Trade Center attack in New York, Islamic terrorists detonated 18 suitcase nuclear devices in major cities across the United States and Canada. This was followed closely by another 15 bombs in Europe and a dozen in Japan and the rest of Asia. The western economic world as all had known it, was utterly destroyed, there was no hope of a good life for at least the foreseeable future.

Because of her love for Grandma Margie, Jodi had purchased a small house in Kooskia with her parent's estate, to serve as a rental, and also so she

could be close to Grandma Margie, in case she would one day have to take care of the aging woman. Jodi's parents had been killed in a car accident in 2016. It just so happened that the house was vacant when Jodi found herself out of a job, and until WAZU was again opened for educational purposes, Jodi decided to move into the house for the interim.

Since gas was extremely scarce, every day Jodi would walk the three miles out into the country to Grandma's house. In the spring of 2020 that Jodi was walking through the wild flower fields on the way to Grandma's house. There in the distance Jodi thought she saw a wolf. Since the locals had begun to call Jodi, "Plaid Hood, Tall and Strong," she mused about the tale of Little Red Riding Hood. As she walked on, she thought she could make out others of the wolf pack hiding in the bushes. But Jodi, Plaid Hood, Tall and Strong, was not afraid, but maybe just a little anxious.

As she neared the bridge that crossed the stream a few yards before Grandma's gate, her path was blocked by the Alpha male of the pack.

"Jodi, my girl, how are things this beautiful day?" the Wolf asked. "My name is Edward, I'm the Alpha male of the greater wolf pack of the Kooskia region. I understand from my intelligence sources that you were raised a Grizzly, then became an Indian, then a Husky, and now you are a Cougar, currently isolated from your life's vocation and stuck here in Kooskia. Girl you've got definite possibilities in this lousy world. I don't call it chaotic, because if you lived in the wild country as long as I and my ancestors have, nothing is chaotic, just ever changing, sometimes those changes are stupendous, but they are always for good, if you can glimpse God's big picture.

Jodi's blue eyes were as big as Delft saucers as she stammered, "I thought that wolves could only howl, I didn't know that wolves could talk?"

Ed answered, "Well, we only howl in public, it is part of our image, you know to appear to be ferocious predators and scare people to leave us alone. When we are in private, we communicate in good old American English just like everyone else, but I know our secret is safe with you. Did

you know that Huskies are the closest domesticated dog to the wolf? That is why the Great Spirit, I believe grandma Margie, calls him Napi, sent you to Seattle to understand the domesticated big city ways. Now you are a Cougar. I understand your team made it to the Final Four, not bad for a wild cat. You know, WSU has never been the same since they got rid of the real live Butch, but that was long before your day. Why don't we go to grandma's house to see what Margie is up to.

As Ed and Jodi entered the yard, grandma Margie rushed out the door and gave Jodi a big hug and Ed a pat on the top of the head.

To which Ed responded, "Sure, she gets a hug, and I get a pat on the head, somethings never change. I'm a big bad wolf, not some Yorkie, or even a Husky, we wolves never get any respect, even from those we love.

Grandma Margie replied, "Oh, Ed you are such a ham, you know I love you and the rest of the pack, we are all family. Humans hug however, and wolves in this world are really not the hugging kind, it is sort of the way God made us all, each with a job to do.

As the hugs and pats continued, Jodi noticed that the yard now contained a pack of about nine wolves.

Ed announced, "This is our baseball team, and I'm the catcher. I run the show on the field." He slowly introduced each member and their position, adding that most of the pitchers were warming up back in the wolf pen behind the well house. "The football team is up on the south Fork of the Flathead having a retreat in the Great Bear Wilderness, learning blocking and tackling techniques from Brutus the head Grizzly. The basketball team is also on a tour down in Arizona and New Mexico teaching those Coyotes the northwest version of run and gun. The civilized world may be crumbling, but the duties and responsibilities in the land that belongs to God is eternal. That includes getting ready for the next sports season. Wolves believe that all animals and people should be active participants in sports not just spectators, because it builds community and team work. The lack of team work, and being aggressive rather than competitive, is why western culture ultimately fell apart.

Grandma Margie said, “Now Ed, enough about sports, I know you could talk about it all day, but please tell Jodi why you decided to reveal your civilized nature today. Then we can all have a good howl.

Ed’s smile disappeared and his brow furrowed as he slowly began, “Well Jodi, as you know the western economic world is collapsing all around. In a few years, people will seriously begin to rebuild a new civilized society, but for now the cities of the world are a real jungle, not a place where any self respecting wolf or human should dare to venture. This part of Idaho is pretty safe, but a few of those savages will make it into the Kooskia. Most of them will be urban transplants arriving from Spokane, but a few stranglers from Seattle and else where might have the stamina to make it to the area. In any case, it is not safe for you to go back to town. Grandma after all bought this place so you could come and stay.

“While you are here we will bring you elk and venison, all the best cuts of meat, and Margie’s garden is just getting going so you should have all the food and family you will need for the next couple of years. I realize that wolves are not human, and it will be a bit lonely without other people around for that time, but this time will pass and we will protect you. This protection will keep away anyone who only understands the ways of that Husky world, for while they think Huskies are cute and fuzzy, they are still a wolf at heart, and those same people are deathly afraid of a real wolf.

“The Great Spirit imbedded the fear of the wolf early in western culture for such a time as this. All it will take is for one of us to let out a howl and they will be swiftly on their way to Kansas. Should any hardcore persons appear, we will play that trick we played on you as you came to grandma’s this morning and they will quickly be on their way to Dodge. Only those who understand the true nature of the wolf pack and the fact that we give humans their space, we will let live in town. But we are not afraid of people, even though they slaughtered us worse than they did the Indians, we too will give to those few an understanding of wolf and God’s grace. This wolf howling thing is really a lot of fun if you are

a wolf, we could do it for hours, just as you used to practice three pointers.

“I see Jodi Hood, Tall and Strong, that you wore today the plaid hood that grandma Margie Lupus made for you back when you were a girl in Colville. The purple, crimson, and gold stand for human royalty, the white background stands for purity and the cleansing covering of a fresh snow. The gray stands for the reality of sin and death in this world. Once this time of tribulation has passed you will find a husband and have a whole pack of kids, to tell the story of how wolves will be friends of lambs, but also how wolves and people have a lot in common in the way we live the lives that the Creator has blessed us with, and the joy of living in His grace.

”What’s cooking for supper Margie, I hope it isn’t fish again, I never liked fish, even the way you smoke it so favorably. It’s days like this I think I could eat a grandma or her granddaughter, but that has never happened in the whole history of the world, it is just a lie to make us wolves pay for some long forgotten roasted lamb. Little Red Riding Hood was just a fairy tale, not even a poor joke.

“Did you know the moon is full tonight? This is truly a great day for all of God’s children, to be followed by a night of musical howling in three part harmony. God’s grace is sure magnificent out here in His glorious creatiom.

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