



· I Y A H O K S H I ·

Iya Hokshi is the son of a Lakota Indian woman who accidentally swallowed a pebble, and instead of flesh his body is made of stone. He was raised by his mother, who cared for him and taught him to be brave and kind, and the older he grew, the stronger he became.



When he became an adult, his mother told him that she had four brothers, but that they had disappeared shortly before Iya Hokshi was born, and that a shaman had told her that they were imprisoned by a monster that only “the stone” can defeat. So Iya Hokshi decided to rescue them, and before leaving, his mother called a big party to gather help. At this party, the guests presented Iya Hokshi with various magical objects that would help him in his quest and victory.

After much travelling, he came to a deserted valley where there was only a rock, a tree and a small brown hill with smoke rising from it. As he approached he saw that a bear was bringing captured Indians, which he carried up to a snake (the tree), which bit and paralysed them, so that the rock could crush them by turning over them. And he realised that the hill was actually a huge tepee made of crushed bodies. There began the great battle, in which Iya Hokshi destroyed them all, then faced the monster Iya, the mythical Lakota spirit of destruction that can only be defeated by living stone.

Iya Hokshi had to draw on all the magical items he had received and thus managed to defeat Iya. However, the monster managed to snatch one of these items, an invisibility cloak, which saved his life.



Iya Hokshi is a **LAKOTA** creature

Current population: 115.000



The Lakota are one of the main tribes of the Sioux family of Native Americans, and have lived for thousands of years near the Great Lakes, where in addition to fishing, hunting and gathering, they also farmed. Conflicts with other tribes, however, pushed them to the Great Plains around the 17th century, where they adopted a nomadic lifestyle based on bison hunting. The history of the Lakota is recorded

in their “Winter Counts”, pictorial calendars begun in 900 AD.

In their nomadic life, the Lakota quickly adopted the use of horses, taught by the Cheyenne, and adapted their culture to this new environment, which allowed them to dominate an immense expanse of territory, following the buffalo migrations. They lived in the famous tepees, lightweight dwellings made of long poles and buffalo hides, in small groups, called bands, made up of an extended family. This period was so prosperous that the Lakota were the only native tribe to gain population in the 19th century, despite wars with American settlers. They were divided into bands of democratic and assemblage organisation, disregarding private property, grouped into tribes which, together, formed a “teton”, and were coordinated by the so-called “Council of Seven Fires”. The Lakota are famous for the bravery of their warriors, who fought the US Army with great efficiency (they, along with other neighbouring tribes, defeated Colonel Custer), and for their custom of scalping during battles.

Lakota culture corresponds to their way of life in the wilderness, with a worldview in which all things and living things have a spirit of their own and a sacred purpose. Harmony with nature is the basis of their way of life, valuing individual and collective responsibility and generosity towards others. They believe in a Great Spirit, Wakan Tanka, creator of the whole universe and of the original mythical beings, including Iya.

The colonisation of the West by Westerners in the 19th century was, however, an unstoppable movement to which the Lakota people succumbed. By the end of the century they had been confined to

various reservations, their territory tiny compared to the vast plains they dominated, and their bison population decimated. Their way of life crumbled and they found it difficult to fit into the new situation, where they became strangers in their own land, under the tutelage of the USA. Alcoholism ravaged this proud people, who were forced to subsist on the charity of the “paleface”.

Today there are 317 Indian reservations in the USA, of which the Lakota and other Sioux tribes occupy most of those in the states of North Dakota, South Dakota, Montana, and several smaller ones in the Canadian provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan.

Despite the difficulties, the Lakota retain their institutions and are, in a sense, independent of the federal government. In 2007, an independent Lakota Republic was even proclaimed, although it is not recognised by the US or the international community.

