

# Two Fathers

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## *Shining Bear*

### **The First**

As I rais'd father onto the death-rack, I looked;  
One in him I knew — the one who did always his duty;  
One I knew not — the one who hid his secret dreams.

As I lay sojourner-son down onto his rug, I look;  
One in him I know — the faithful son who does his duty;  
One I know not — the son who lives with secret dreams.

O my son, I would not live with yet another stranger!  
Tell your dreams; and if I do not understand  
I yet will honor them as coming from a stream that's clean.

And dare I tell you mine? If that piece of me I give,  
I tremble thinking of your seeing my young inside  
where smokes keep power songs afresh, and puzzle pictures  
live.

## The Second

Father-friend: I see regretted memories now mist your eyes  
when speak you of the grandfather you set upon the rack;  
your voiceless voice says that he told you no dream-sharing  
talk.

Have his secrets and yours been born into my blood?  
Is that the pow'r commands me walk a separate path,  
that bids me cross the path you'd have me tread?

My heart beats with but pure purpose; no defiance  
rings my ears when I say "This is how I must walk  
as Manitou does guide." I say, although I dread.

I claim not wisdom to be call'd an elder of the tribe;  
but I must trust that medicine that deep inside compels  
my feet to walk the dream path — yours and his now mine.