

One time an old Mandan made a pit to catch wild animals in. early one morning he went to see his pit wishing that he would have something in it for he was getting old and unable to travel far to hunt. When near the pit he saw all the sticks pointing up in the air and knew that he had caught something in it. When still nearer he saw large horns sticking out and looking down he saw he had caught a large blacktail deer. The animal was fat for it was the fall of the year. He was very happy, pulled out his bow and an arrow to shoot the animal. Just when he was ready to shoot the deer spoke to him saying, "Don't shoot me," talking like a Mandan.

He took his arrow down. But he saw the animal was fat so raised his arrow again. Again the deer spoke saying, "If you do not kill me, I will give you power to be a lucky man among your people; whenever you go out you will kill the enemy and bring in their horses. I will give you the right to have a dance society among your people and that society will last forever. If you kill and eat me, the benefits will only be for a short time."

The man did not believe all this and was going to shoot him. The deer spoke a third time, "I made a promise and everything I said will come true." The man took down his arrow. The Deer said, "Take me out of here; I don't feel well in here. I feel as though all my body were asleep." The old Mandan said, "Alright I will take you out." He found an ash stick with the point hardened in fire and began breaking down the banks of the pit so that the deer could get out with the aid of a lariat around the animal's body.

The old Mandan said, "I will fix you up" so he took sage and making motions, drawing out all the pains. The Deer said, "After you get back, make a society of the girls of the ages 16-18. (A Mandan woman was the last of the society, named Mink) After he took the deer out, the Deer said, "I will sing a song for you and you can sing it when on the warpath or hunt and then you will be lucky. That big hill over is my home." (Hill is called Blacktai Deer Home even today; it is a hill about three miles from the Mo. and about 12 miles below the Heart River on the west side) After the old Mandan came back to the village he told the people everything the Deer said. He organized the society and everything the Deer promised him came true. (I think he is mistaken, that it was a man's society in which one of the members was a young girl just as is the case with the Bull Society)