



Wolfkiller: Wisdom From a Nineteenth-Century Navajo Shepherd

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Navajo Shepherd

Compiled by Harvey Leake

Fascinating history and compelling storytelling make *Wolfkiller*, the memoir of a Navajo shepherd man who lived in the Monument Valley region of the Southwest, a page-turning epic. In these stories compiled by Harvey Leake, *Wolfkiller* shares the ancient wisdom of the Navajo elders that was passed to him while a boy growing up near the Utah/Arizona border. *Wolfkiller's* story was recorded and translated by pioneer trader Louisa Wade Wetherill, an unlikely pairing that came together when she moved to this remote area of southern Utah in 1906. Wetherill recognized that *Wolfkiller* was a man of exceptional character, with lessons and wisdom of the Navajo that deserved to be recorded and preserved for the benefit of future generations.

Over the course of many years, *Wolfkiller* told his stories to Wetherill who translated them into English. When the manuscript was completed in 1932, modern society was simply not ready for it. Rejected by publishers, the document languished in the family archives until today, long after *Wolfkiller* and Mrs. Wetherill were gone, it can now be recognized as a unique and profound book that speaks to modern culture's compulsive rush away from nature.

Included are photographs of *Wolfkiller* and the Wetherills, all taken from about 1906 to 1926. More than forty other historical photographs are also included.

"If Mrs. Wetherill could be persuaded to write on the mythology of the Navajos, and also on their present-

day psychology-by which somewhat magniloquent term I mean their present ways and habits of thought-she would render an invaluable service. She not only knows their language; she knows their minds. . . ."

Theodore Roosevelt, after visiting the Wetherill trading post in 1913

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