

# Pté / Thathánka

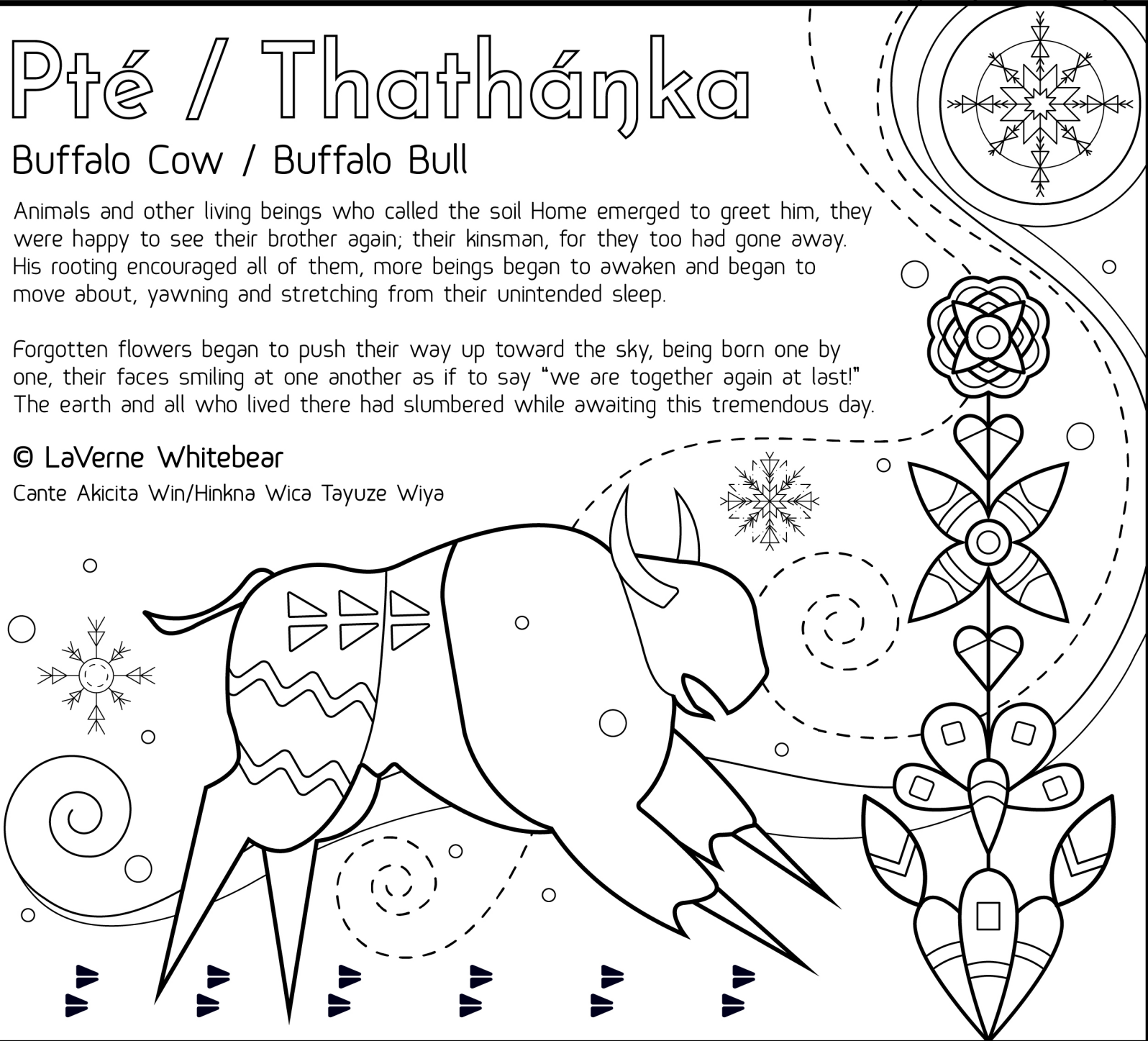
## Buffalo Cow / Buffalo Bull

Animals and other living beings who called the soil Home emerged to greet him, they were happy to see their brother again; their kinsman, for they too had gone away. His rooting encouraged all of them, more beings began to awaken and began to move about, yawning and stretching from their unintended sleep.

Forgotten flowers began to push their way up toward the sky, being born one by one, their faces smiling at one another as if to say "we are together again at last!" The earth and all who lived there had slumbered while awaiting this tremendous day.

© LaVerne Whitebear

Cante Akicita Win/Hinkna Wica Tayuze Wiya



The buffalo are known as **Pté Oyáte**, the Buffalo Nation. Just as Dakota women are the backbone of Dakota society, the Buffalo Nation is also matriarchal. Buffalo herds are led by strong, experienced older females who guide, protect, and care for the herd. Buffalo cows and buffalo bulls each have important roles, they keep the herd strong and balanced.

For thousands of years, buffalo herds nourished the native prairies. Their movement helped grasses grow, their hooves shaped the land, and their presence supported many other plants and animals. The buffalo nation also show great endurance and strength, standing their ground against the icy breath of **Wazíya the Winter Wind**, facing storms instead of turning away. From the buffalo, we learn resilience, patience, and how to survive winter together.

The buffalo provided Dakota people with food, clothing, tools, shelter, and teachings. Every part of the buffalo was respected and used with care. **Pté Oyate** are more than animals. They are relatives, teachers, and protectors, connected to Dakota life, land and kinship.