

Coyote and the Mean Mountain Sheep

The Indian Reading Series



THE INDIAN READING SERIES: Stories and Legends of the Northwest is a collection of authentic material cooperatively developed by Indian people from twelve reservations. Development activities are guided by a Policy Board which represents the Indian community of the Pacific Northwest. The Pacific Northwest Indian Reading and Language Development Program Policy Board members are:

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THE INDIAN READING SERIES:
Stories and Legends of the Northwest

Coyote and the Mean Mountain Sheep

Level III Book 20

Developed by the Salish (Flathead) Cultural Committee
of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

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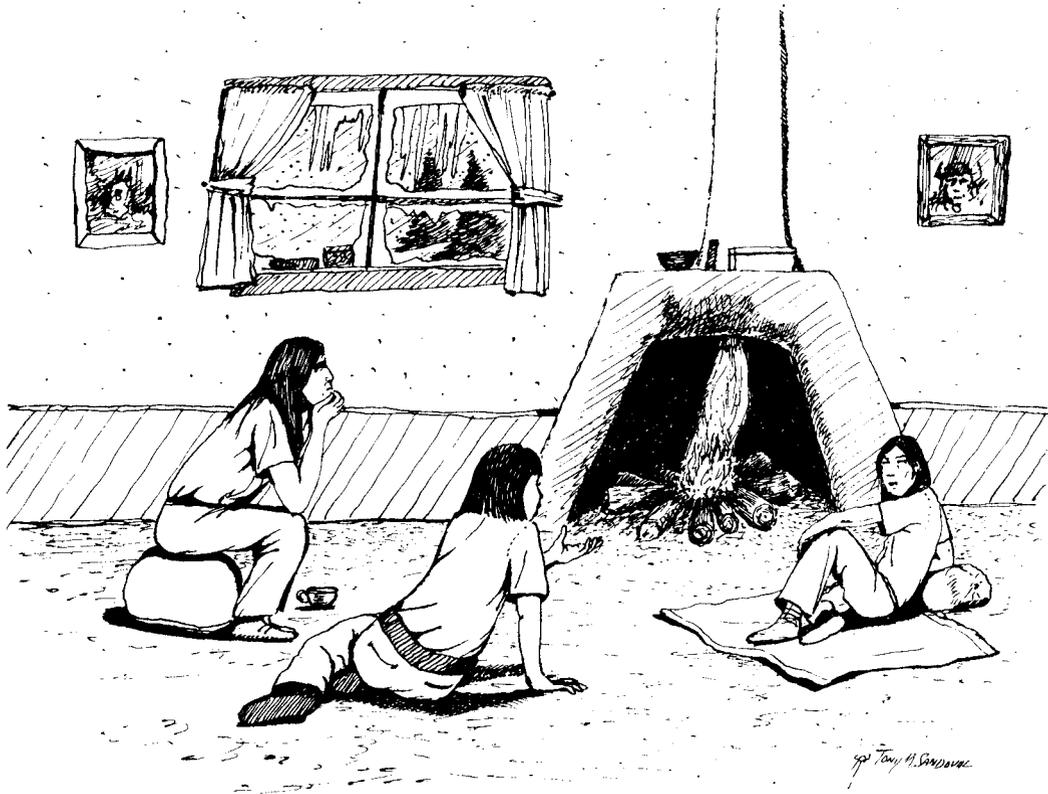
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It was said by the elders of the Salish Tribe that the Coyote stories are to be told only in the winter months. The Snake would get you if you should tell these stories any other time of the year.



It's snowing.

The wind is blowing.

It's cold outside, but the fire makes us warm.

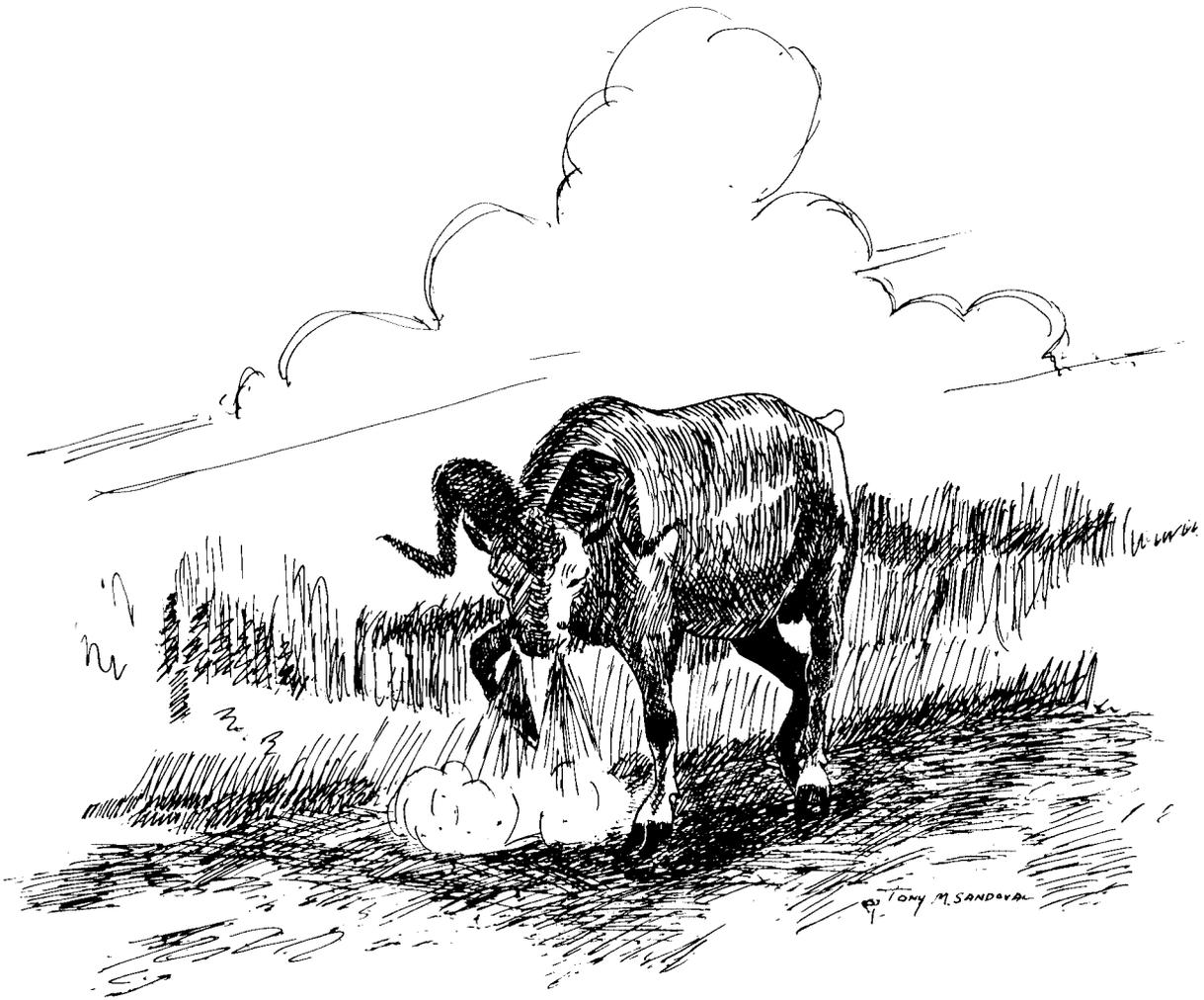


Our YaYa will tell us about Coyote.
YaYa will tell us about the old place
where she lived a long, long time ago.



“There was a big mountain down by the old place,”
she said.

“Something terrible lived by this mountain.
It was an old, mean mountain sheep
with big, sharp horns and big, ugly eyes.”



“This old mountain sheep was so mean
he wouldn’t let anyone go by his mountain.
He would stomp the ground with his terrible hoofs.
He would puff and snort with his terrible nose.
He would fight and hit with his terrible horns.”



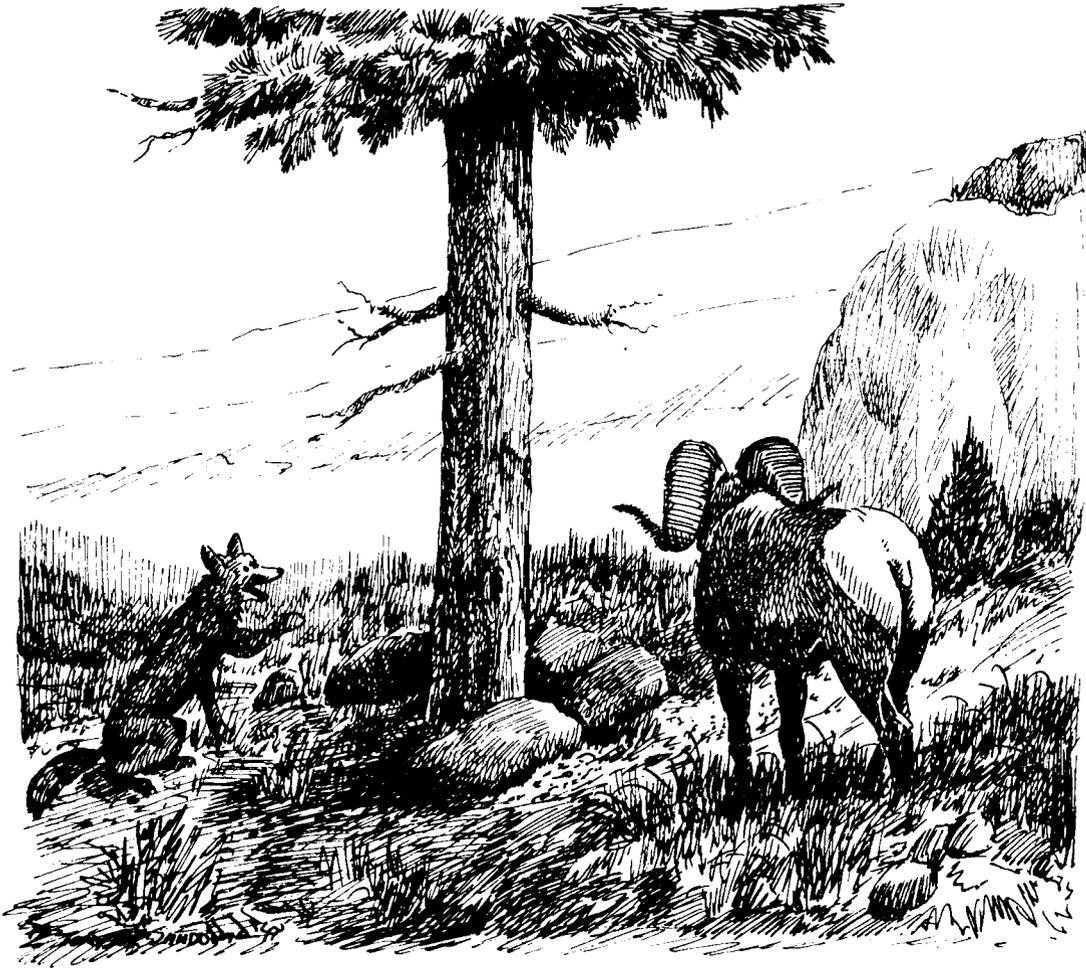
“One day Coyote was going by the mountain.
He had walked a long way.
He was tired and hungry.
The warm sun made him sleepy.
He wasn’t watching carefully.”



“Suddenly, Coyote heard a terrible snorting.
Big clouds of dust came from the terrible pawing.
The old, mean mountain sheep shouted to Coyote,
‘Now I’m going to fight you!
Now I’m going to kill you!
I’m going to kill you with my big, sharp horns!’ ”



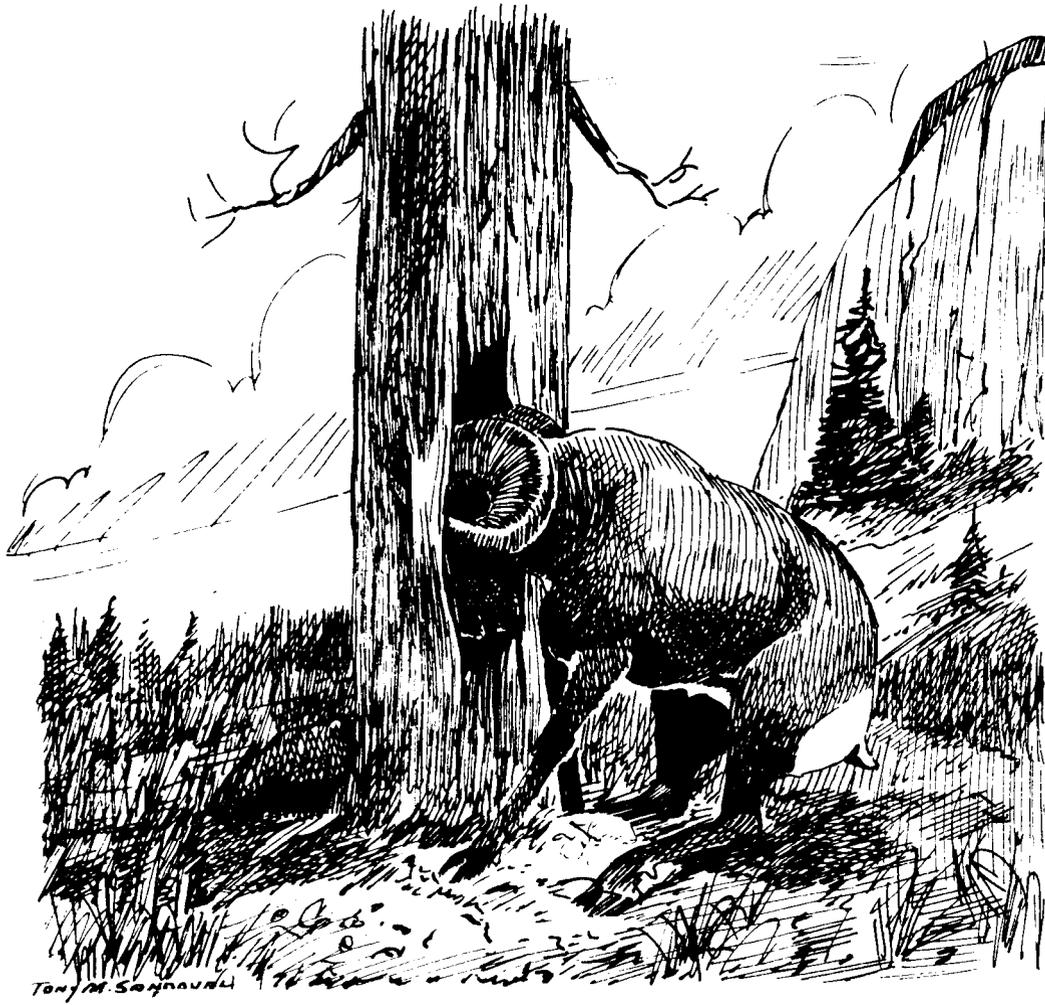
“Coyote could not get by the old, mean mountain sheep.
Coyote looked all around.
There were the bones of many animals
the mountain sheep had killed.
Coyote wanted to get rid
of the mean, old mountain sheep.
Then, all the animals and people could go by safely.”



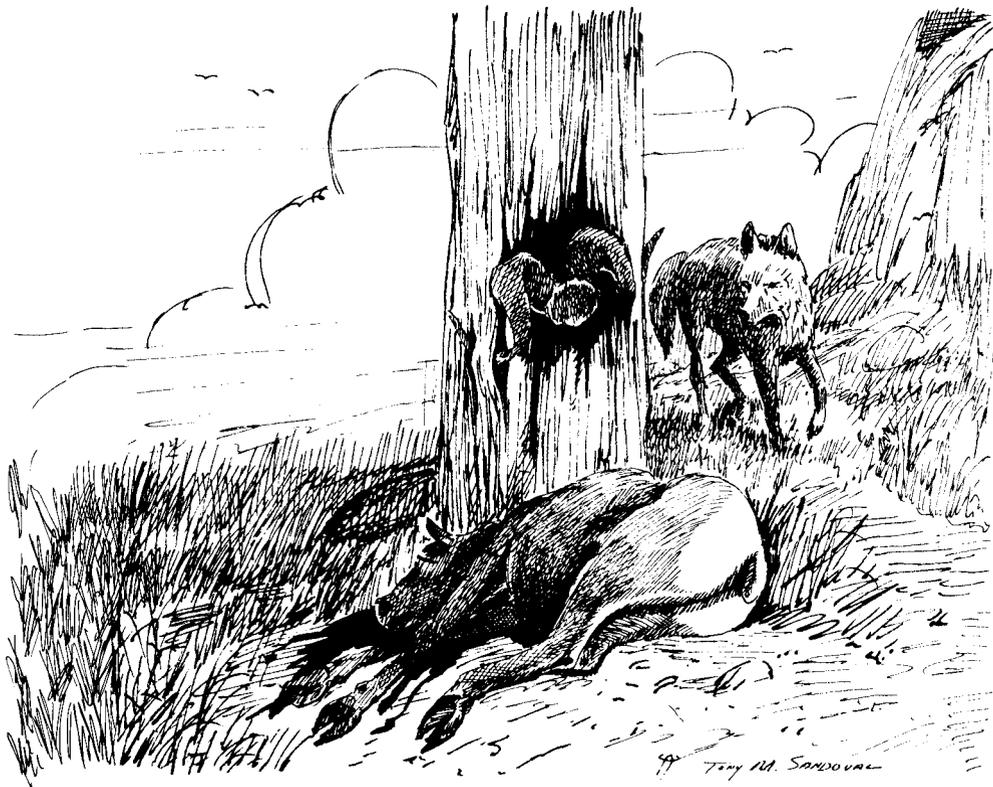
“The mountain sheep was very strong.
But Coyote was full of tricks.
‘Show me how strong you are,’ Coyote said.
‘Can you knock down this big pine tree?’ ”



“The mountain sheep wanted to scare Coyote. He wanted to show Coyote how strong he was. He pawed the ground with his terrible hoofs. He ran as fast as he could and hit the pine tree with his terrible horns.”



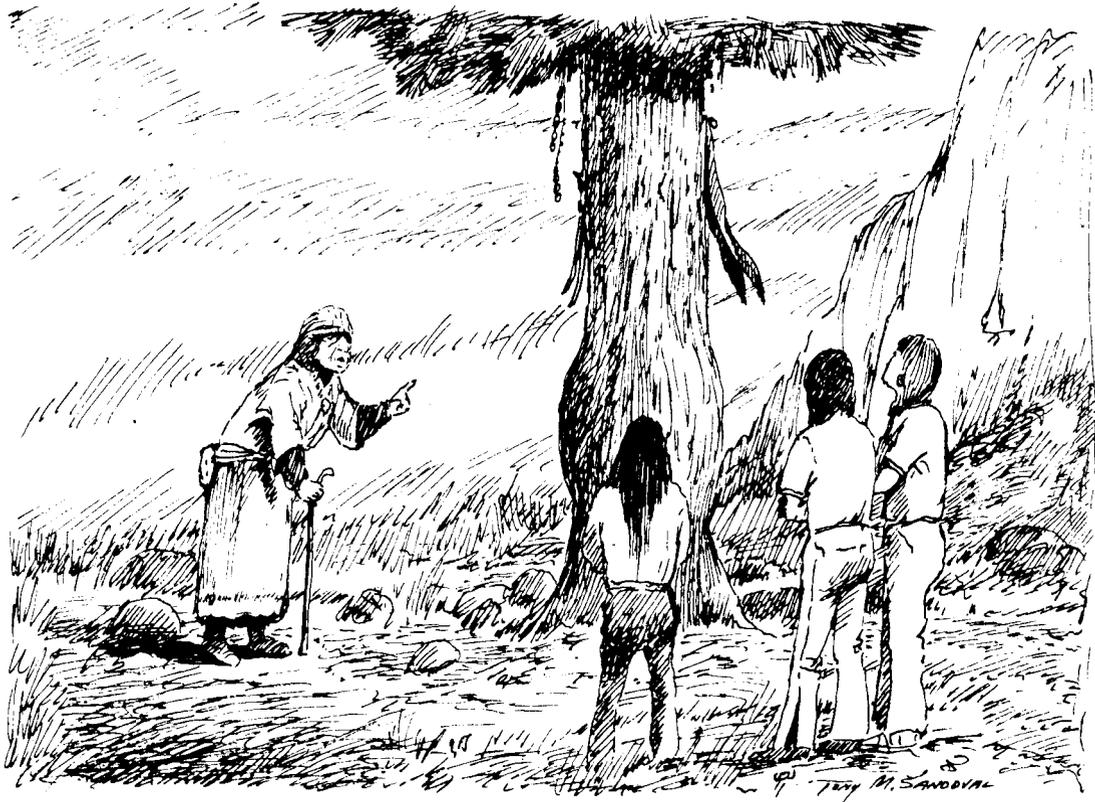
“That big pine tree did not fall down.
The big pine tree did not bend over.
The very sharp horns went right through
the big pine tree.
That old, mean mountain sheep
was stuck in the pine tree.
He snorted and pulled,
but he could not get loose.”



“Coyote took out his flint knife
and killed that old, mean mountain sheep.
He cut away the head and left the sharp horns
in the tree.
From then on, all the animals and people
could go by safely.
Coyote left the horns in the tree
for people to see when they went by.
He said that after that day, the big pine tree
would be a Medicine Tree for the people.”



YaYa also said that when she was a little girl,
the people would hang necklaces or beads
or little things on the tree.
Then they would pray for good things.
The Man Who Sits On Top would always hear.



Maybe when the snow is gone from the mountain,
YaYa will take us with her to the old place.
We will help her dig roots.
We will hang a scarf on the Medicine Tree.
We will pray for good things.
The Man Who Sits On Top will always hear.

Booklets available in the Level III sequence are listed below. Numbers refer to the planned sequence of use in the *Teacher's Manual*. Materials developed by these tribes and others in the Northwest are included in the Levels I and II sequences.

- | | |
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| 1 <i>Story of the Seasons</i>
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| 10 <i>Coyote and Trout</i>
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