

The Lone Pine Tree

The Indian Reading Series

and The Lodge Journey



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**

The Lodge Journey

The Lone Pine Tree

Level V Book 5

Developed by the Blackfeet Indians

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The Lodge Journey



Many years ago a Blackfoot Indian chief died. He was laid to rest in a lodge some distance from the encampment for a period on four days and four nights. Then the Indian camp would move on to another area.



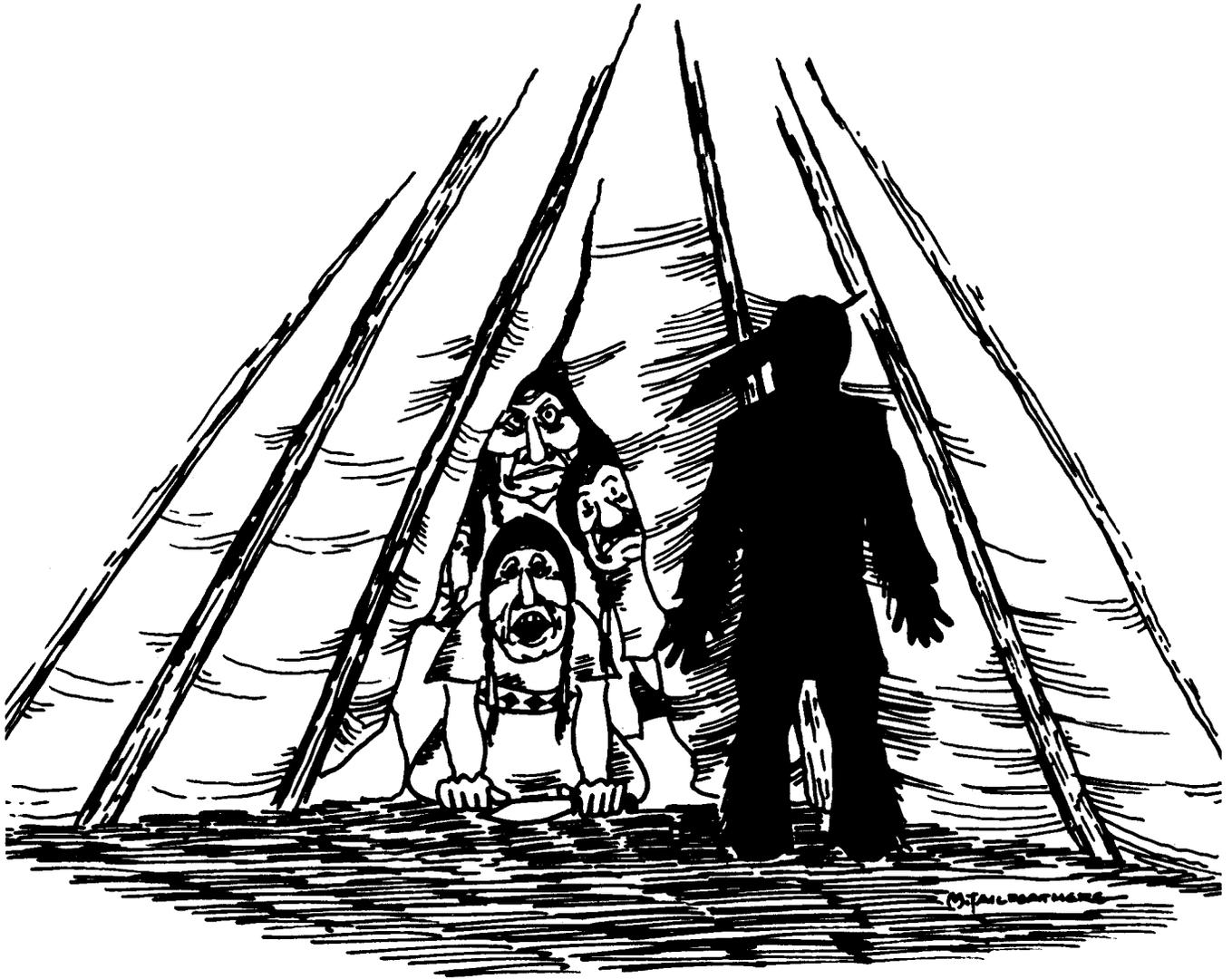
Some old ladies of the camp decided to go to the chief's burial lodge and cut some of the fine hide from the lodge for moccasins and leggings. They sharpened their knives and slowly proceeded toward the burial lodge. It took them a long time to reach the burial lodge. They traveled very slowly due to their age. They were sneaking because they knew they were not supposed to bother a dead person's possessions. It is believed that the person's spirit will come and reclaim their possessions during the night.



It was customary to sing and dance toward the lodge four times. They sang the appropriate song and danced toward the lodge for the first time. One of the old ladies pierced the lodge with her sharp knife. Then they backed away singing, "We are going to get some hides for our leggings and moccasins." They rested awhile. Each time they danced close to the lodge one of the old ladies would cut the hole bigger. They danced back singing.



It was beginning to get dark. One of the grandsons happened to ride by and saw the old ladies preparing to take some of the hide from the lodge. He was a child who delighted in teasing his old grandmother. A plan formed in his head. Quickly, he tied his horse and crept into the burial lodge. He laid down by the body of the dead chief and waited for the old ladies to finish dancing and singing.



Finally, the old ladies danced toward the lodge in a sneaky way. They were all a little afraid. They became brave and ripped the hole down to the bottom of the lodge. They all rushed to look in. They were stunned and shocked as they saw a ghost standing inside the lodge.



The old ladies were so frightened by this strange sight that they turned at the same time and tried to run away. As they turned, they ran into each other and knocked one another down.



The group was crawling, grabbing onto each other, pushing, yelling, and attempting to regain their balance in order to get away from the ghost. They forgot about being old and sneaky.



Eventually, the old ladies reached a thick bunch of bushes. They hurried in as fast as possible talking to each other in breathless and supposed soft voices. They were still frightened and hoped no one saw them. The group hurried on and finally stopped to listen and regain their breath.



After the ladies had rested awhile they looked up and saw another dead body buried in a tree just above them. The hands were hanging down as if reaching for them. Again they began grabbing, yelling, falling over each other, and running as fast as they could through the bushes.



The old ladies came to a bunch of magpies that were making a lot of noise. In fact these birds seemed to be laughing at them as they ran away. The ladies didn't stop. The group continued stumbling on, trying to get away from the burial grounds.

At last the old ladies reached the main camp. There, they learned it was the grandson who was in the lodge and not a ghost. They decided to go back again. This time not only did they do short dances but also sang very short songs. As the old ladies crept and opened the rip in the lodge a big black crow flew out. They were so frightened that they just fell down and started to cry and pray for help.





After nothing came to harm them, they jumped up, gathered their hides for moccasins and leggings and quickly started for their lodges.



That night, as they tried to sleep, their legs began to hurt and cramp up. They thought it was the chief bothering them and wanting his hides back. So the old ladies decided to take the hides back to the burial lodge. As they arrived they began to pray to the dead chief for protection. "Please don't bother us any more. We love you and respect you. We are returning your hides."



When they opened the door to place the hides inside, they came face to face with some big black eyes. They thought it was the chief. They soon discovered it was a porcupine who was inside the lodge. They dropped the hides and ran away as fast as they could go.



The old ladies never bothered to go back to the burial lodge to get hides for moccasins and leggings again. They were content to use what they had in camp.

The Lone Pine Tree

Napi is a legendary figure of the Blackfoot Indian culture. He can do anything and anything can happen to him. There are a great number of stories about him that have been passed from generation to generation. He can change into different types of figures and have many different kinds of personalities.

In this particular story, *The Lone Pine Tree*, we attempted to display the humorous part of Napi along with a moral. Our people have a good sense of humor and are excellent story tellers. Many of these stories are still told in our Blackfoot language. We give many thanks to people like Joseph Old Chief, one of our elders, who has helped us a great deal.

**Napi: a=aw — as in saw
i=ee — as in see**

Many years ago there were two Indian encampments. These encampments had many lodges. They were close together and very unusual. In one camp there were just men and in the other camp there were just women. They often looked toward each other's camp. It seemed very lonely at times and they often had difficulty in the daily tasks they had to do. When the men tried to cut dried meat they would cut their fingers and thumbs. They couldn't cut big pieces of meat. When they would hang it up they would build a fire too large and scorch the meat. This and other daily tasks around the lodges were just too much for the men to handle.

On the other hand, the women were having difficulty in their encampment. When they would go buffalo hunting their prancing horses would get scared of their dresses and buck them off. Many times they ended up walking to camp with tired, sore and blistered feet. The women had a hard time lifting the heavy meat onto the back of their horses.



Many other incidents happened that softened their hearts toward the men. One day Napi told the men, "I am getting very tired of doing all this work around the camp. I know you are getting tired of it too. I will go over to the women's camp. They are living very good. I want to talk to them."

Napi was wearing a fur cap made of coyote paws. He groomed himself all up.

Napi went to the head woman of the woman's camp and started telling her how hard a time the men were having. He said, "These men are really having a hard time. I want to ask if the men and women can live together in one camp."

The head woman thought for awhile. "The women are getting tired of getting wood and trying to hunt to get meat for their camp. Yes, we agree, but first you must go and tell the men to sit up there on the edge of the hill. We will get ready and go over there to each pick a man that we want for a husband." Napi went back to the men's camp. The head woman told the women to get ready. They were going to pick a husband.



“I will pick first since I am the head woman.”

Dressed in her work clothes, she looked awful. She thought to herself, “I will pick Napi.” “I am not going to get dressed up,” she told the women. “That way whoever I pick will not be my husband just because I am pretty.”

The men lined up on the edge of the hill. Old Napi was right in line. Medicine Horse told the head woman, “Napi is the Chief. You should pick him, Eagle Woman, since you are the head woman.”

Eagle Woman walked over to Napi and picked him. Napi started twisting his hands. Napi said, “I do not want you for my wife because you look funny.” “That is fine.” said Eagle Woman. She walked away and went back to camp.



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Eagle Woman told the other women about the incident. She also informed them of the way Napi was dressed and told the women not to pick him. Eagle Woman then proceeded to get all dressed up. She looked very beautiful when she returned to where the men were. Napi did not know she was the same woman. He kept jumping in front of her wherever she went, but she wouldn't select him.



Eagle Woman walked over to Medicine Horse and asked, "Will you be my husband?" "Yes." said Medicine Horse.

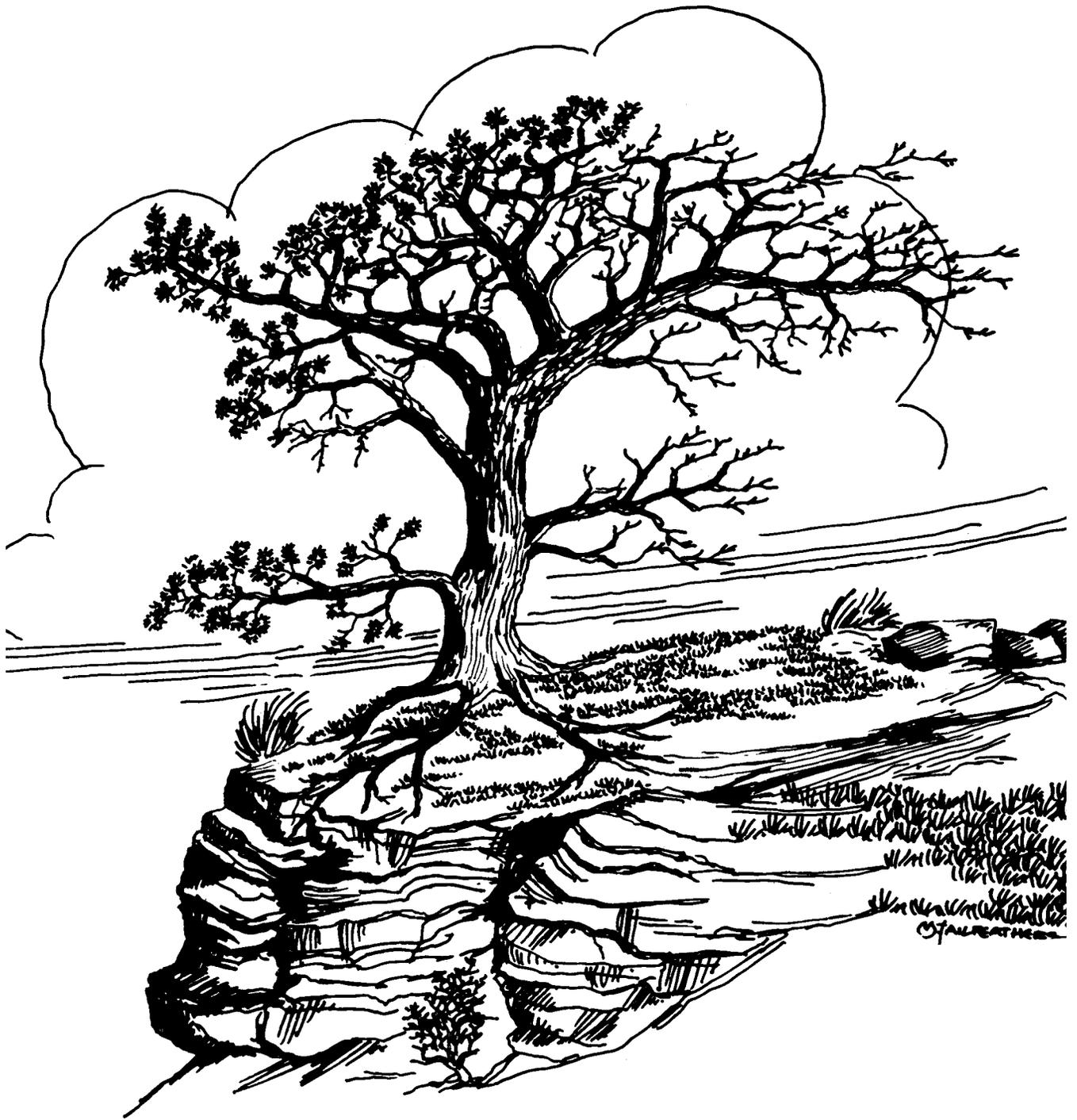
One by one the other men were chosen but no one chose Napi for being so rude and only looking for beauty.

Napi became so angry because no one would choose him for a husband that he ran over to the edge of the hill stomping his feet, kicking, and throwing his arms up in the air. He was full of rage.



He finally turned into a pine tree. The tree still stands by itself on the edge of the hill. Now, as you travel you can still see Napi standing there all by himself looking very lonely.

Remember, you can't always judge a person by their outward appearance. The qualities of kindness and warmth toward others are very important. They keep one from becoming lonely.



Booklets available in the Level IV 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, II and III sequences.

1. *Warm Springs Animal Stories*
The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
Reservation of Oregon
2. *Snail Women at Sq³a'le*
The Suquamish Tribe of the Port Madison
Reservation
3. *Blue Jay – Star Child/Basket Woman*
Muckleshoot Tribe
4. *Assiniboine Woman Making Grease*
Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Peck Reservation
5. *Coyote*
The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
Reservation of Oregon
6. *How the Summer Season Came*
Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Belknap
Reservation
7. *Little Weasel's Dream*
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation
8. *Fort Hall Stories*
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall
Reservation
9. *The Bear Tepee*
Northern Cheyenne Tribe
10. *Sioux Stories and Legends*
Sioux Tribe of the Fort Peck Reservation
11. *Kootenai Stories*
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation
12. *Chief Mountain's Medicine*
Gros Ventre Tribe from the Fort Belknap
Reservation
13. *Coyote the Trickster*
Burns Paiute Reservation
14. *Running Free*
Shoalwater Bay
15. *Salish Coyote Stories*
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation
16. *Coyote and the Cowboys*
Shoshone-Bannock Tribes of the Fort Hall
Reservation
17. *Napi's Journey*
Blackfeet Tribe
18. *Warm Springs Stories*
The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
Reservation of Oregon
19. *Tepee Making*
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead
Reservation
20. *Baskets and Canoes*
Skokomish Tribe
21. *Warrior People*
Blackfeet Tribe



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