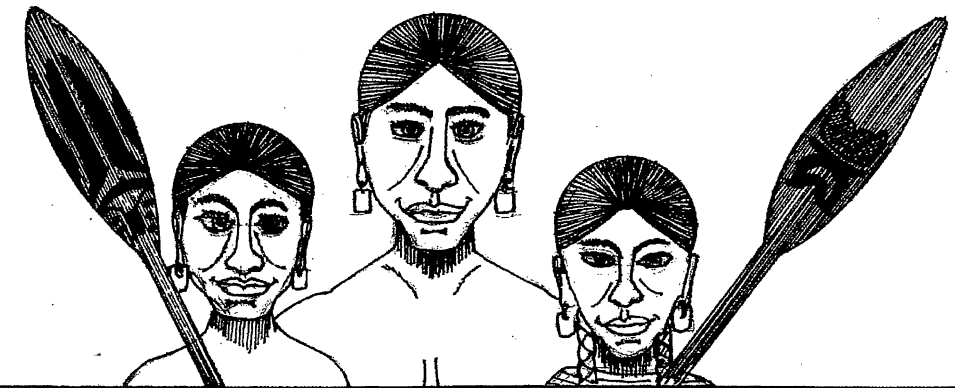


**Herbie & Slim Nellie's
First Journey**

Written by Keith Egawa
Illustrated by Tyrone H. Stewart



TY STEWART

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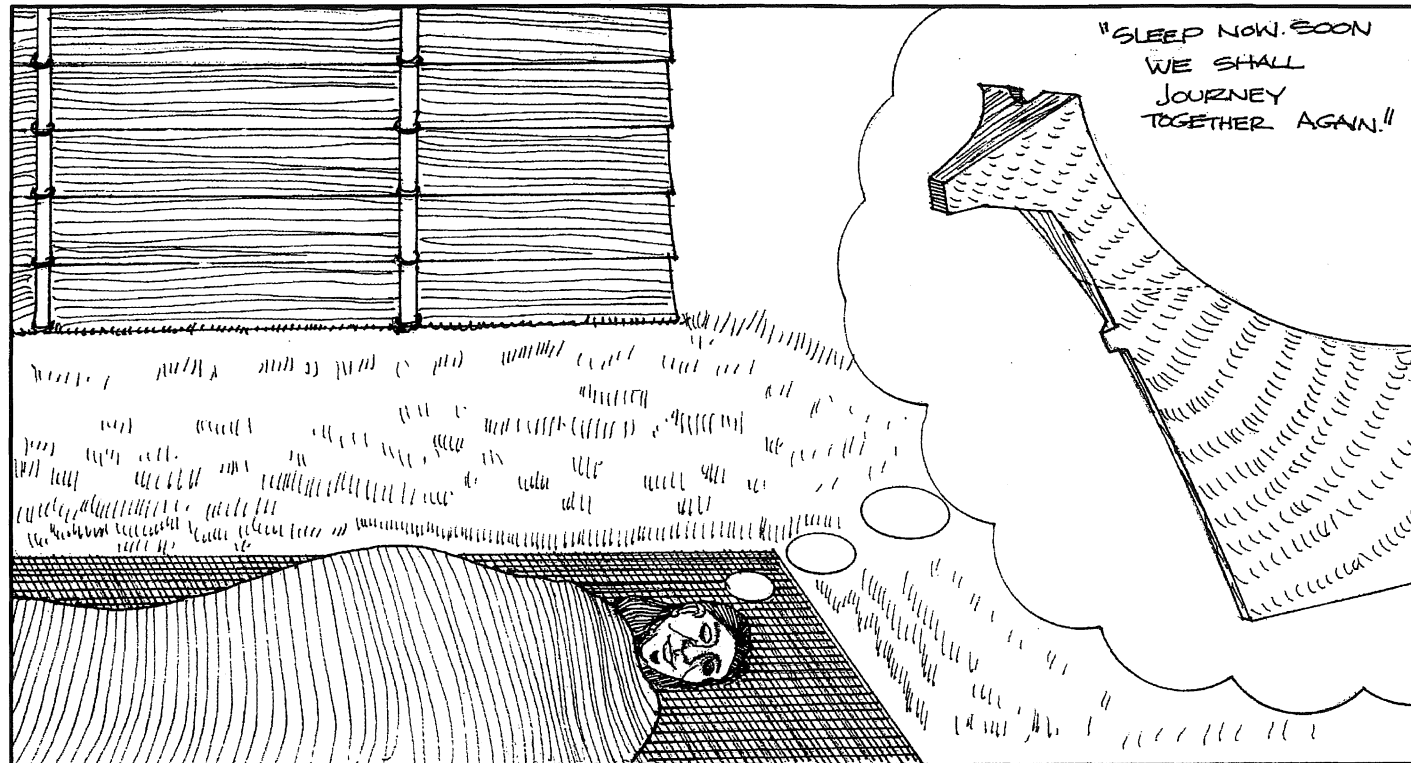
about the author and illustrator

Keith Egawa- Lummi

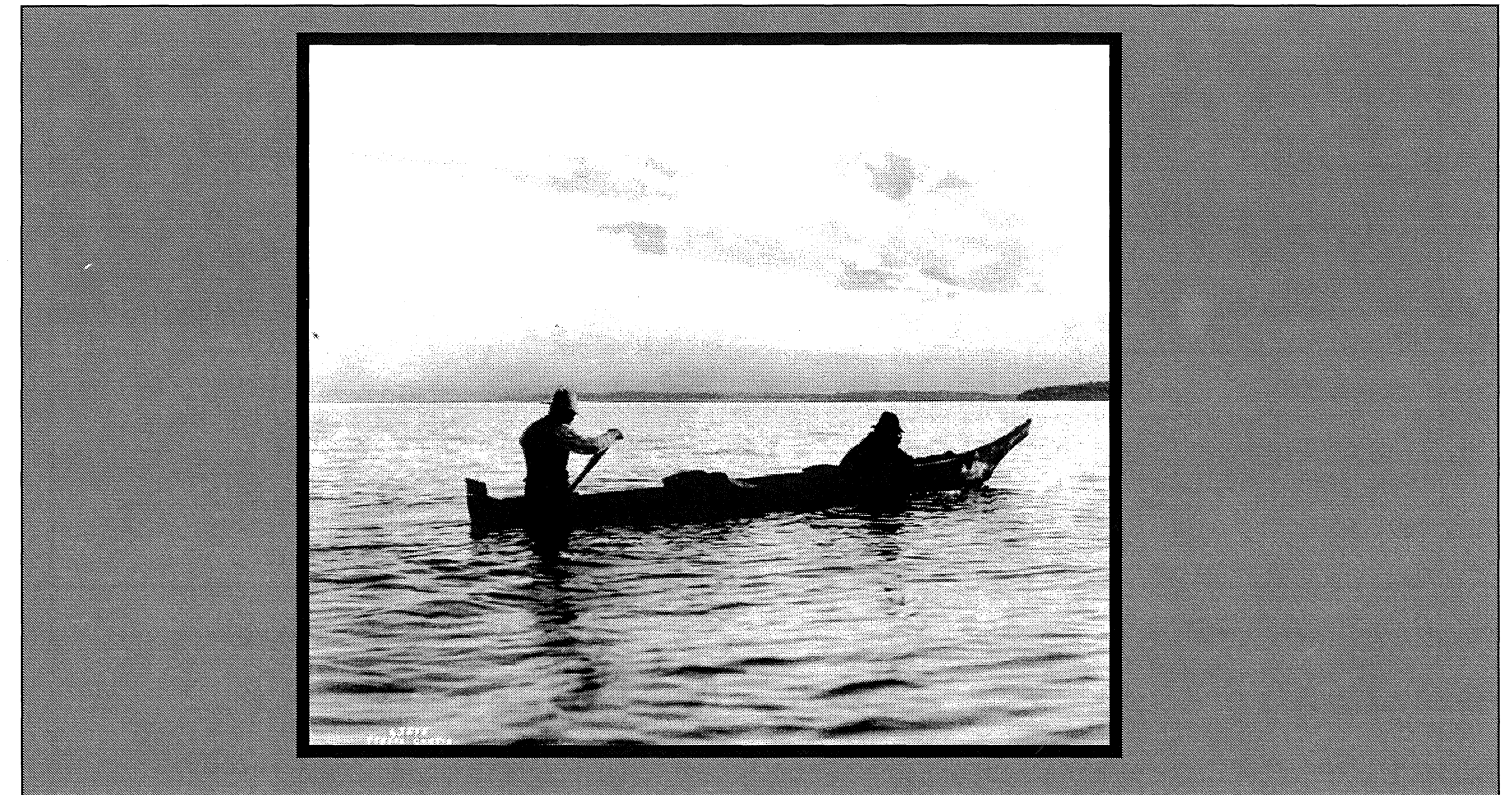
Author of the novel, *Madchild Running*, Keith Egawa is a Seattle native and enrolled member of the Lummi Nation. For eight years, he has served as a social worker for urban Indian youth.

Tyrone Stewart

Mr. Stewart is a former editor/publisher of *American Indian Crafts and Culture Magazine*. He collaborated with Frederick Dockstader and Barton Wright to create essays for *The Year of the Hopi: Paintings and Photographs by Joseph Mora, 1904-06* for the Smithsonian Institution traveling exhibition service. He assisted in the development of the *Study Guide of the Dakota Collection* for the Smithsonian Institute's National Museum of Natural History. Mr. Stewart is an artist, illustrator, writer and award-winning graphic artist and architectural designer. His Canadian roots include the founders of Quebec City and Chippewa-Cree ancestry.

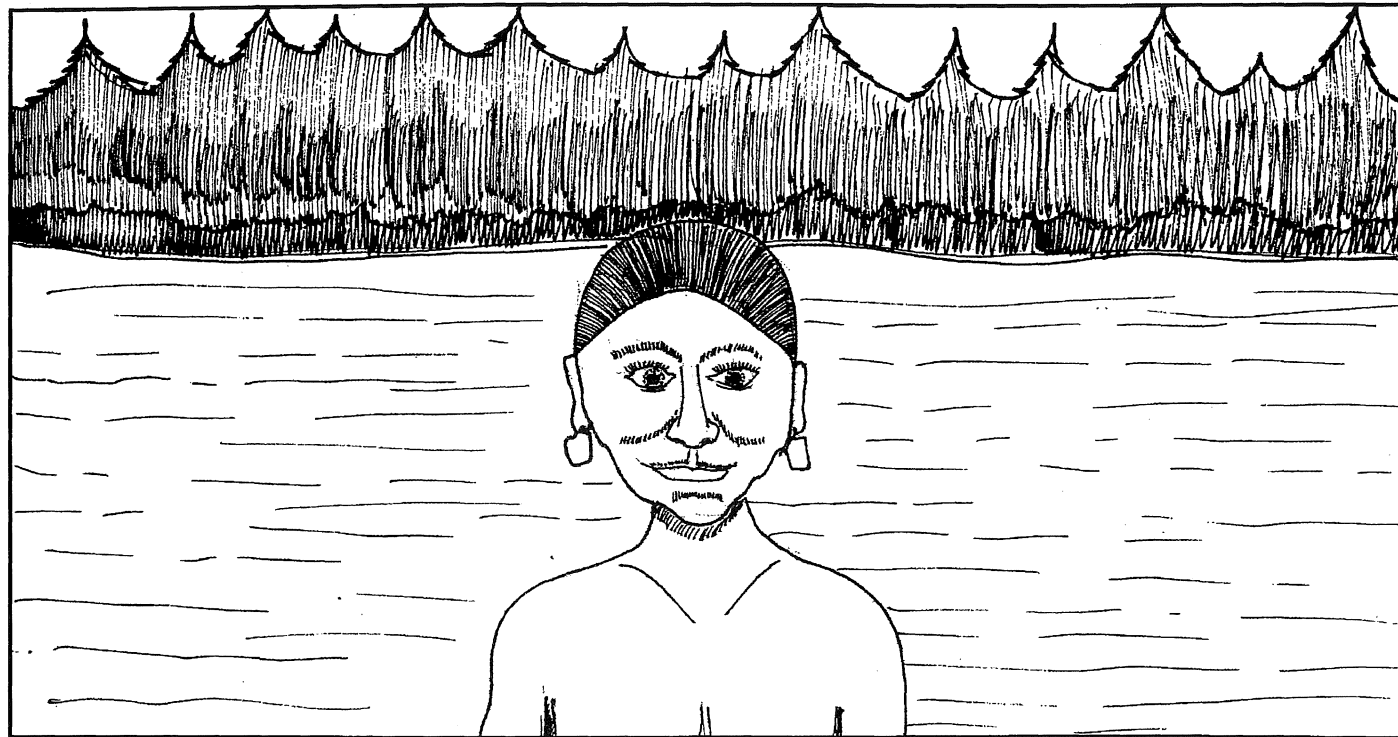


And in his sleep the voice from the spirit of the canoe and the cedar spoke to him, once again. "Do you see how far you have come? You and your cousin were determined and you had good feelings in your hearts. Now you see how far you have come." The voice assured him. "Sleep now. Soon we shall journey together again."

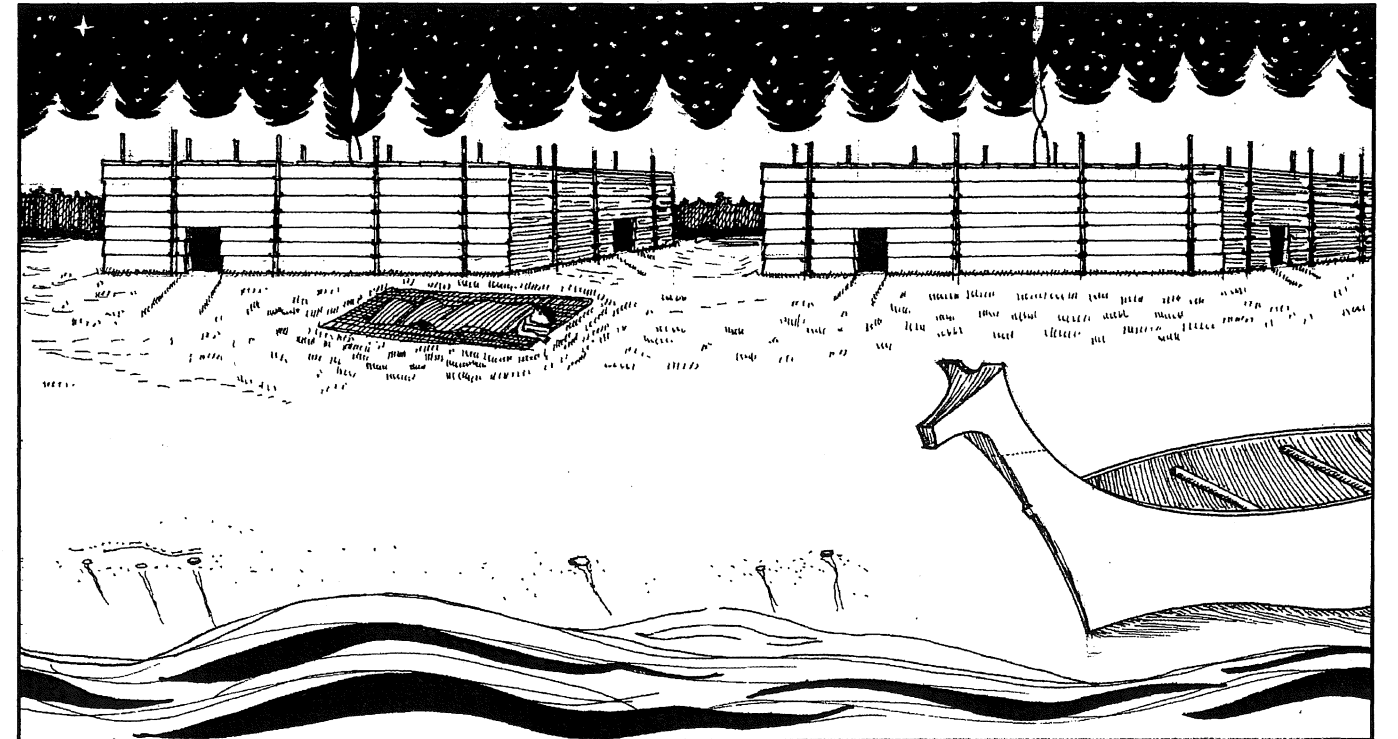


Lummi men troll for salmon from their canoe, near Bellingham, Washington, ca. 1900. The man at rear of the canoe paddles, as the man in front bends over into canoe. The shoreline is visible beyond them.

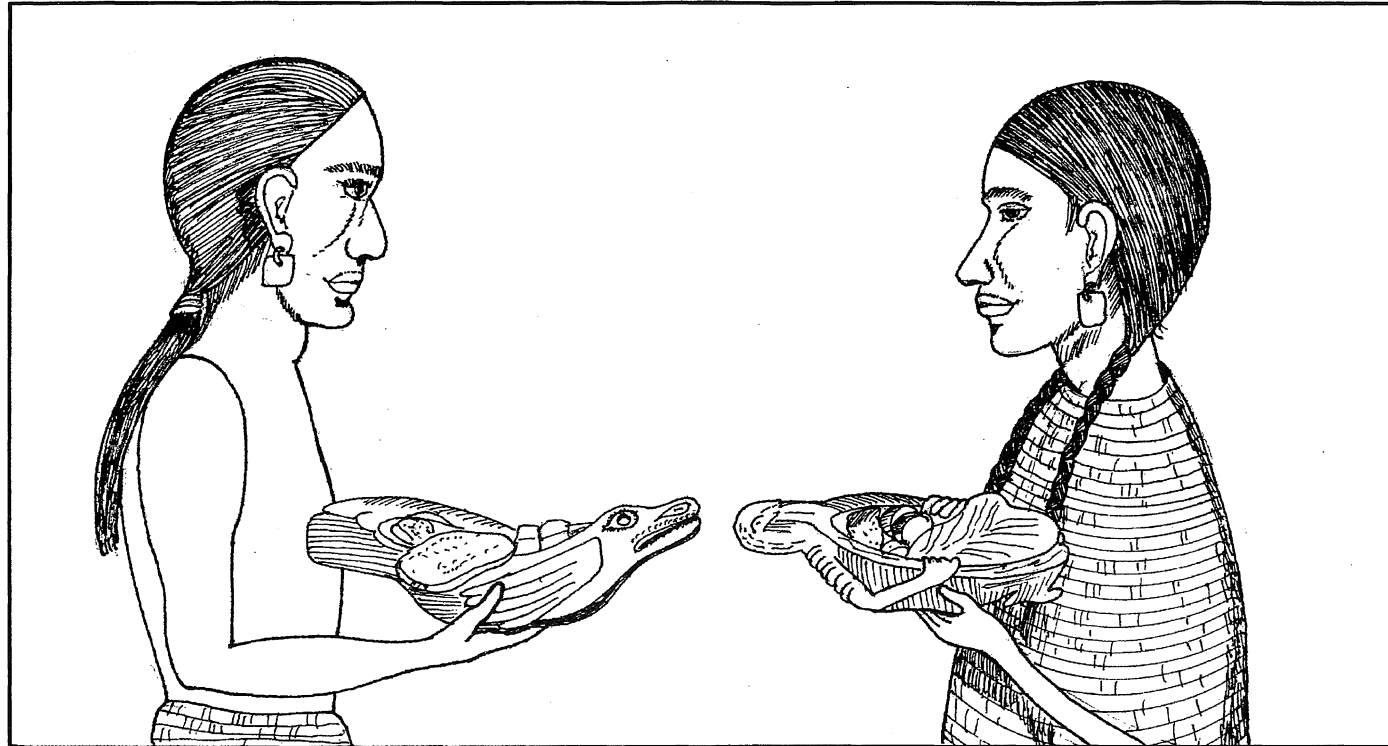
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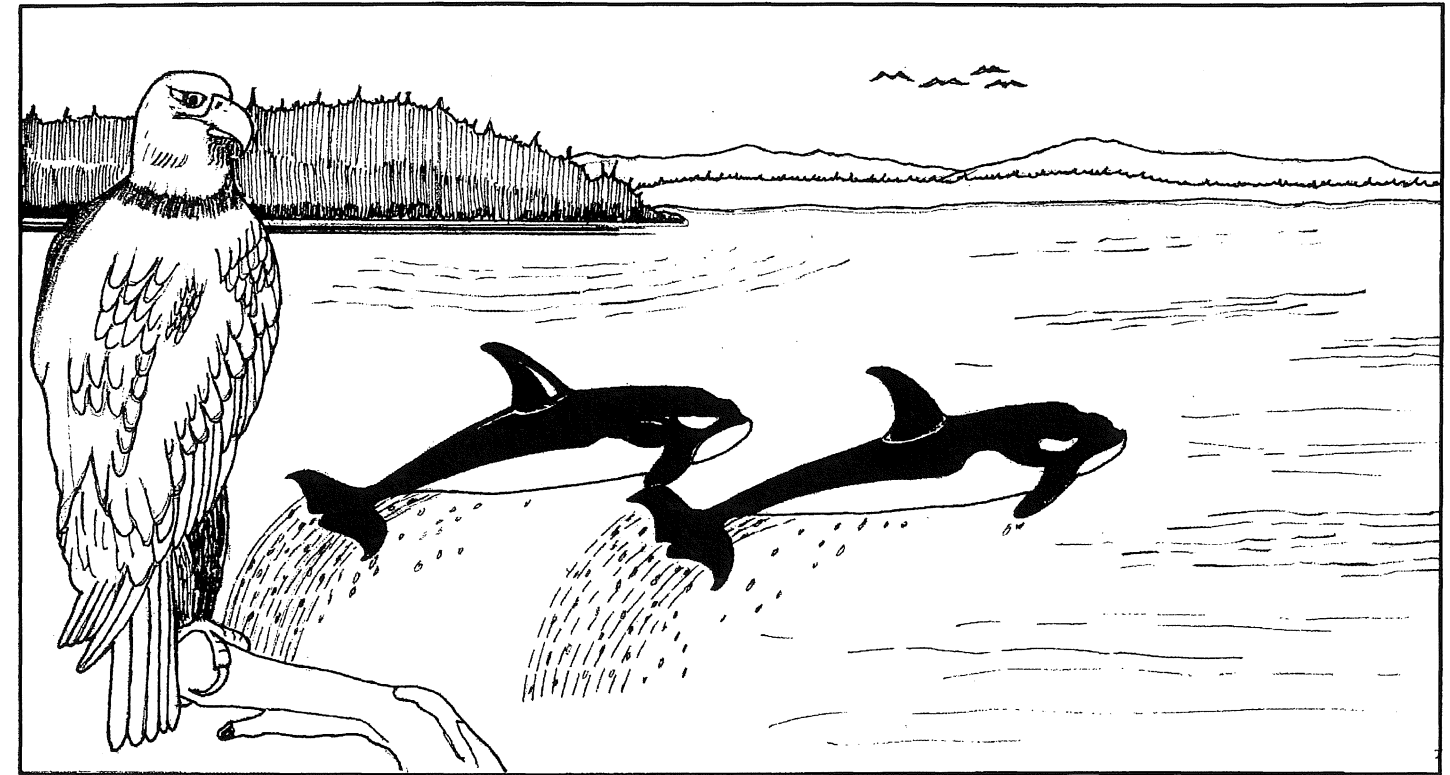
Herbie was a Coast Salish Indian boy of the Lummi Tribe. He lived with his people, in a village at the edge of the great waters of the Puget Sound.



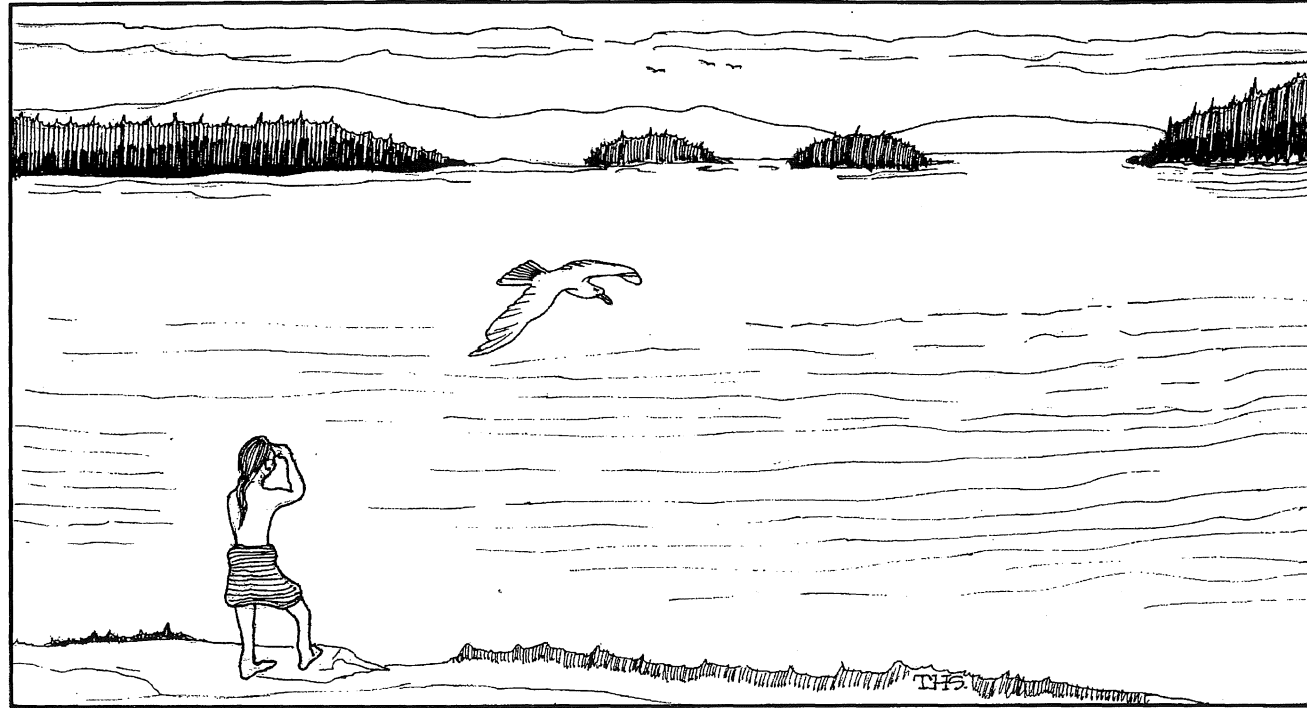
The storm had passed. The sky was inky and full of bright stars. Herbie was curled up on a cedar mat, on the yellow grass by the beach. The canoe sat waiting in the embrace of the sand and seaweed. Gentle water lapped against the shore and the strong cedar hull that pointed out toward the ocean. Herbie slept a restful slumber full of pleasant dreams. Herbie was no longer afraid. Herbie no longer felt alone.



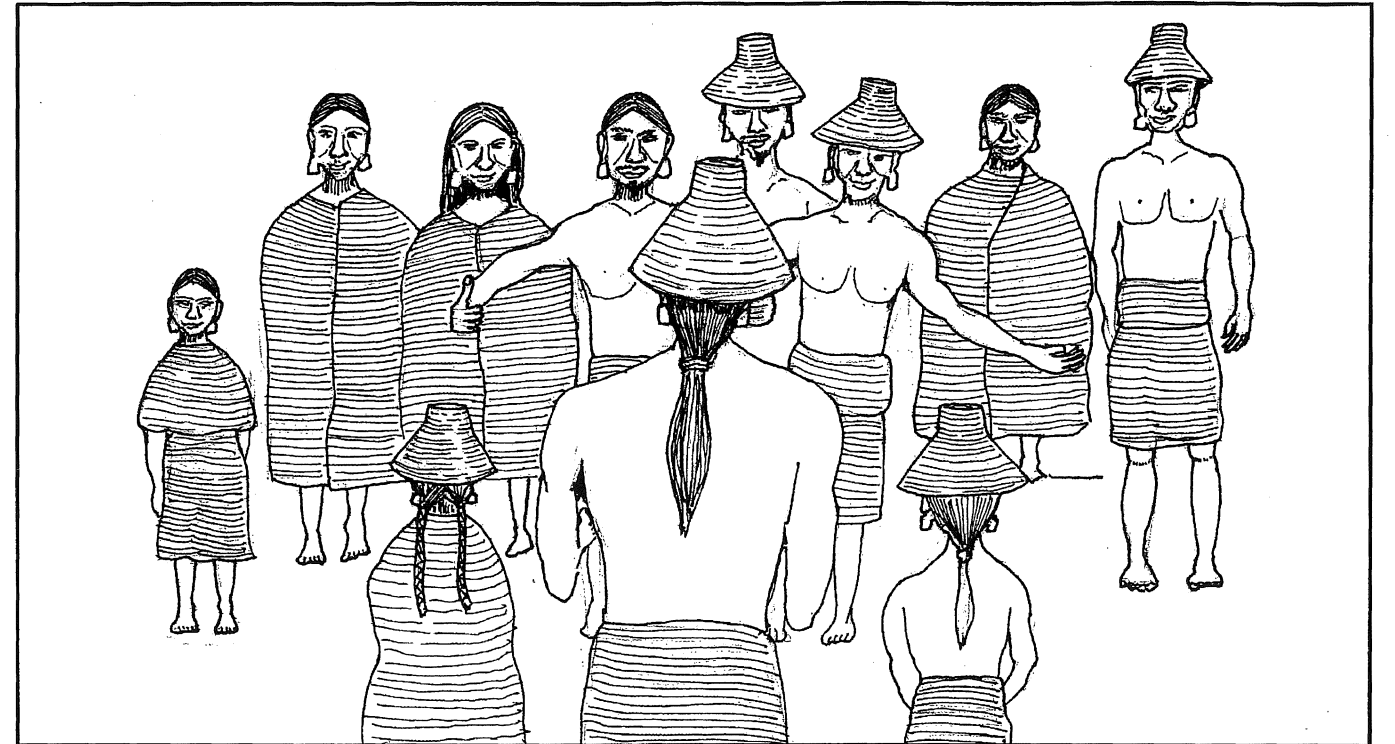
Herbie and Slim Nellie smiled at one another, and filled their plates a second time with more salmon, deer meat, and clams. The visiting went late into the night, and many stories were told by the warm fire in the longhouse. But by then Herbie was asleep outside.



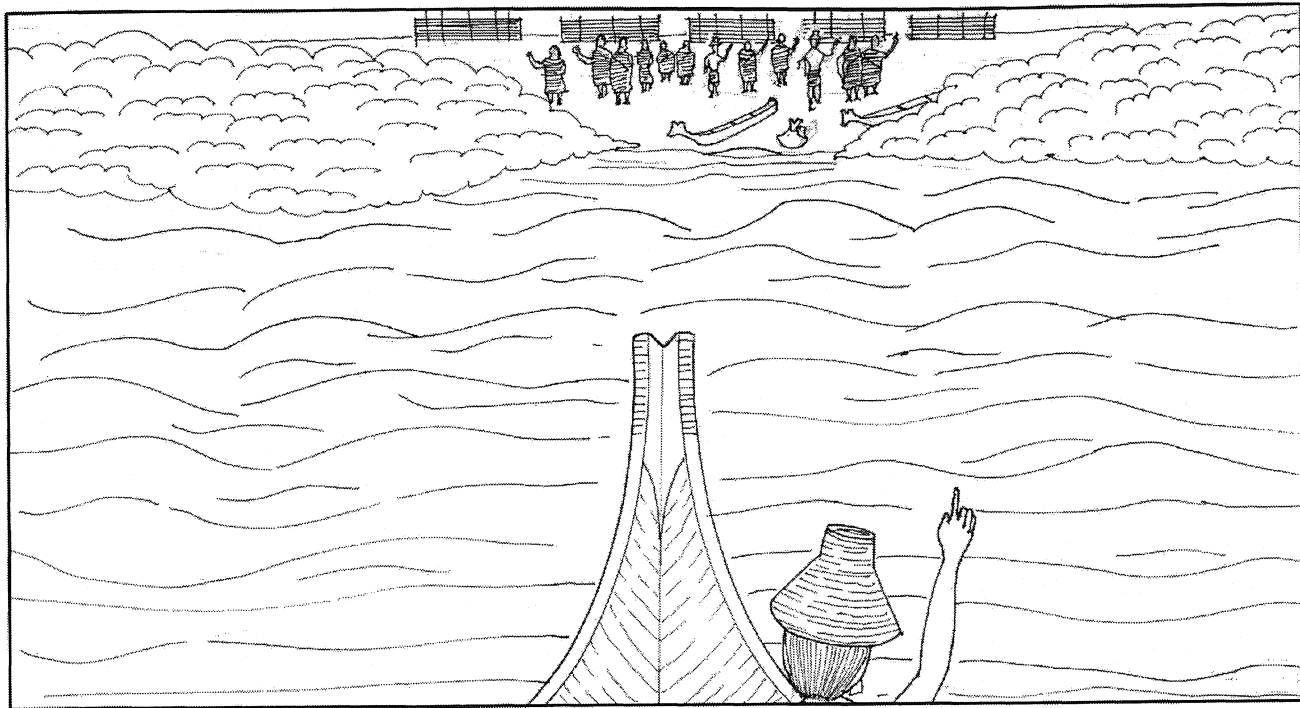
Orcas and salmon moved through the cold and salty currents there. Eagles, blue herons, and seagulls glided through blue skies. Majestic forests of fir and cedar trees covered the hills and mountains.



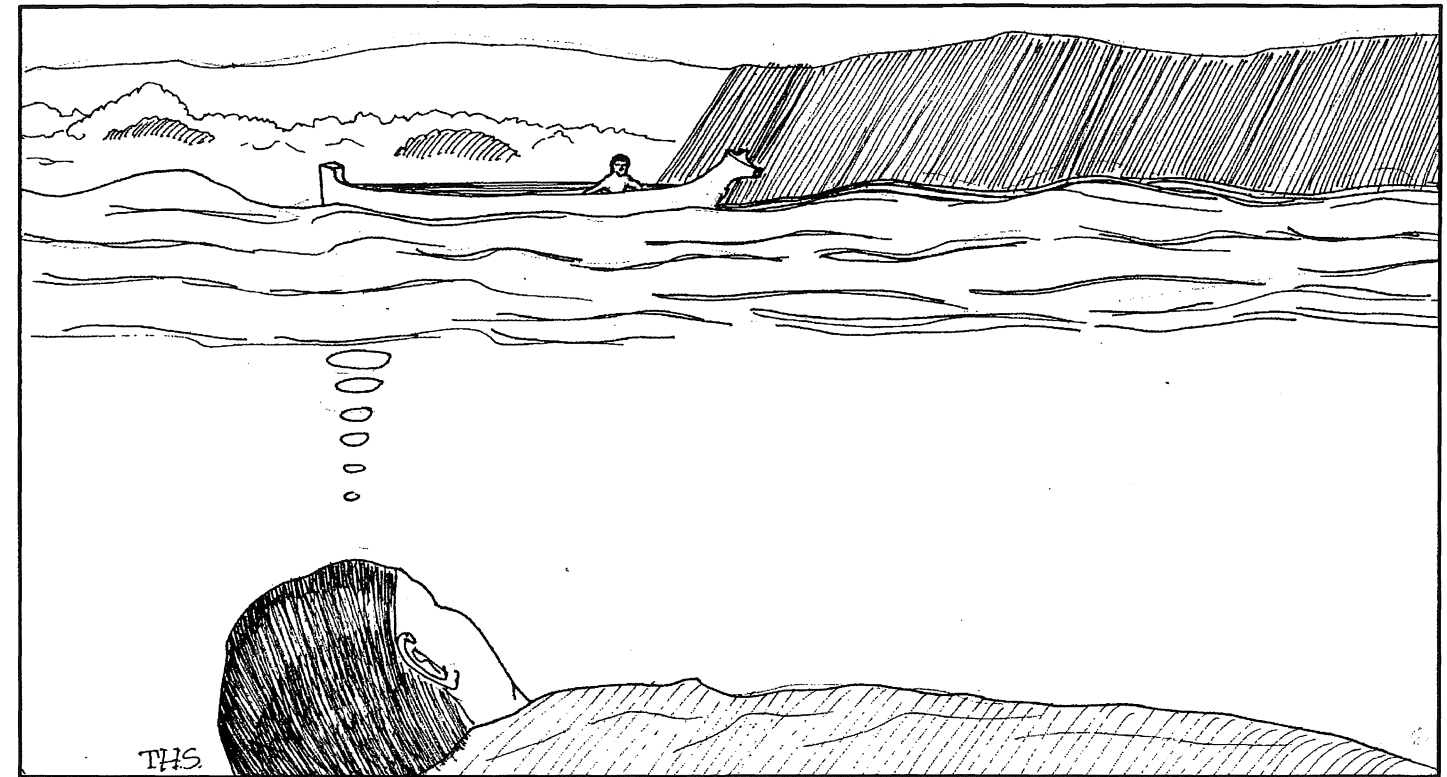
Herbie spent much of his day gazing at his vast surroundings. His eyes focused on distant details. His vision became as keen as a hawk's. Herbie was a small boy. He was perhaps the smallest boy in his village. Herbie was often afraid that he would not be as good at things as the other kids. He was afraid he was not big enough or strong enough. He was afraid that he would not be of value to the people of his village.



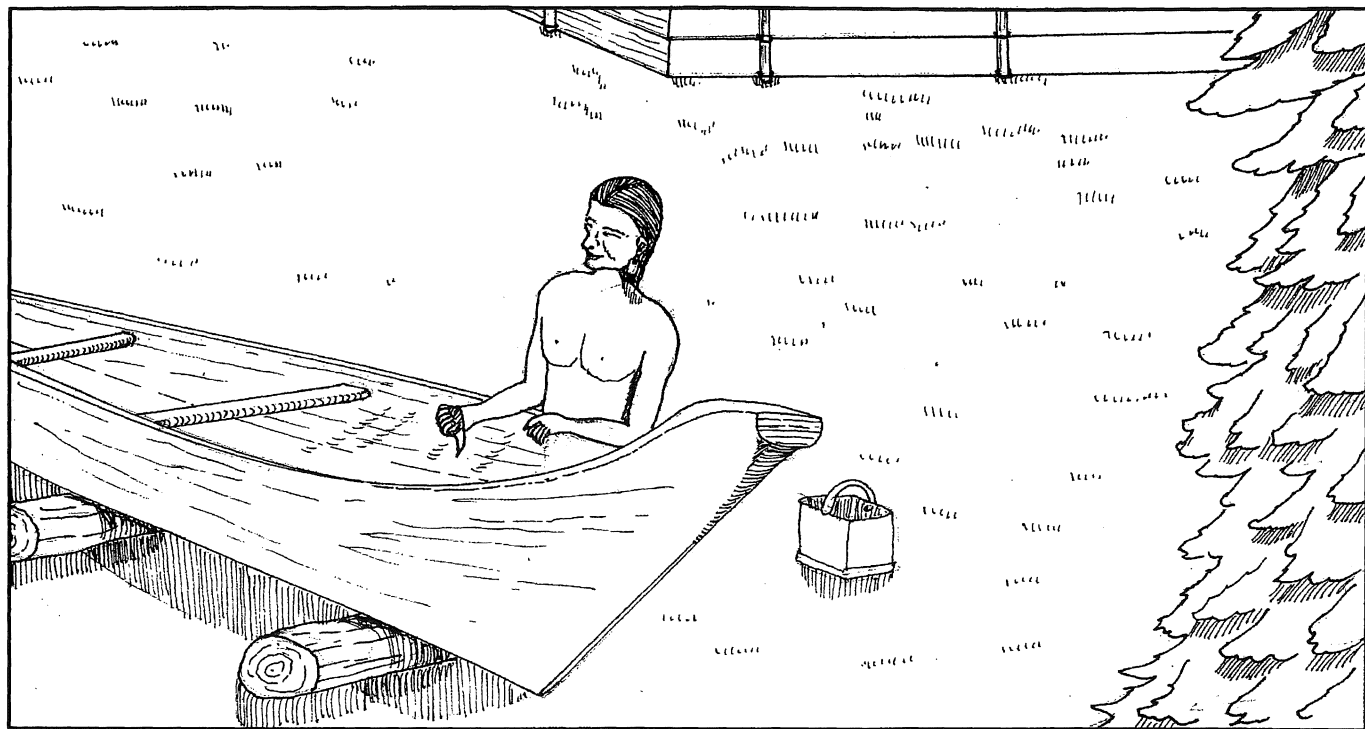
Soon they were on the beach where they were greeted with smiles and hugs. There was a great feast in the village longhouse. Uncle told everyone how the skills of his niece and nephew had brought them safely ashore, and how the three of them made a great team.



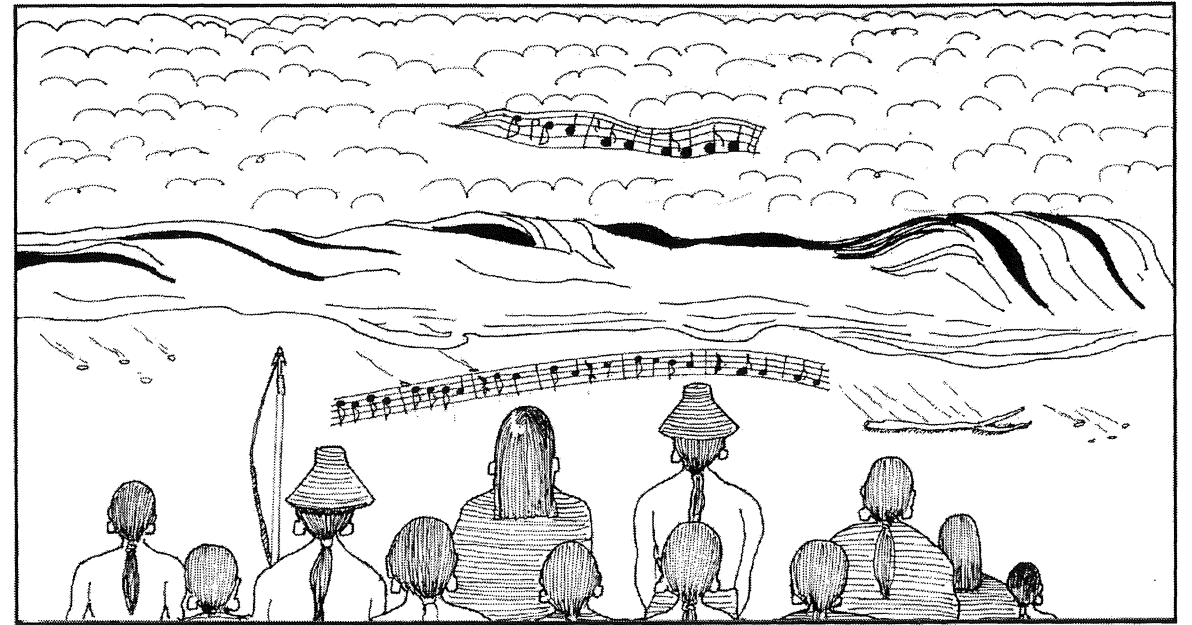
"I hear them!" cried Herbie from the bow of the canoe. "The village is that way!" Nellie continued to sing, and as they neared the shore the voices grew louder. "I can see them now!" cried Herbie. "That way!"



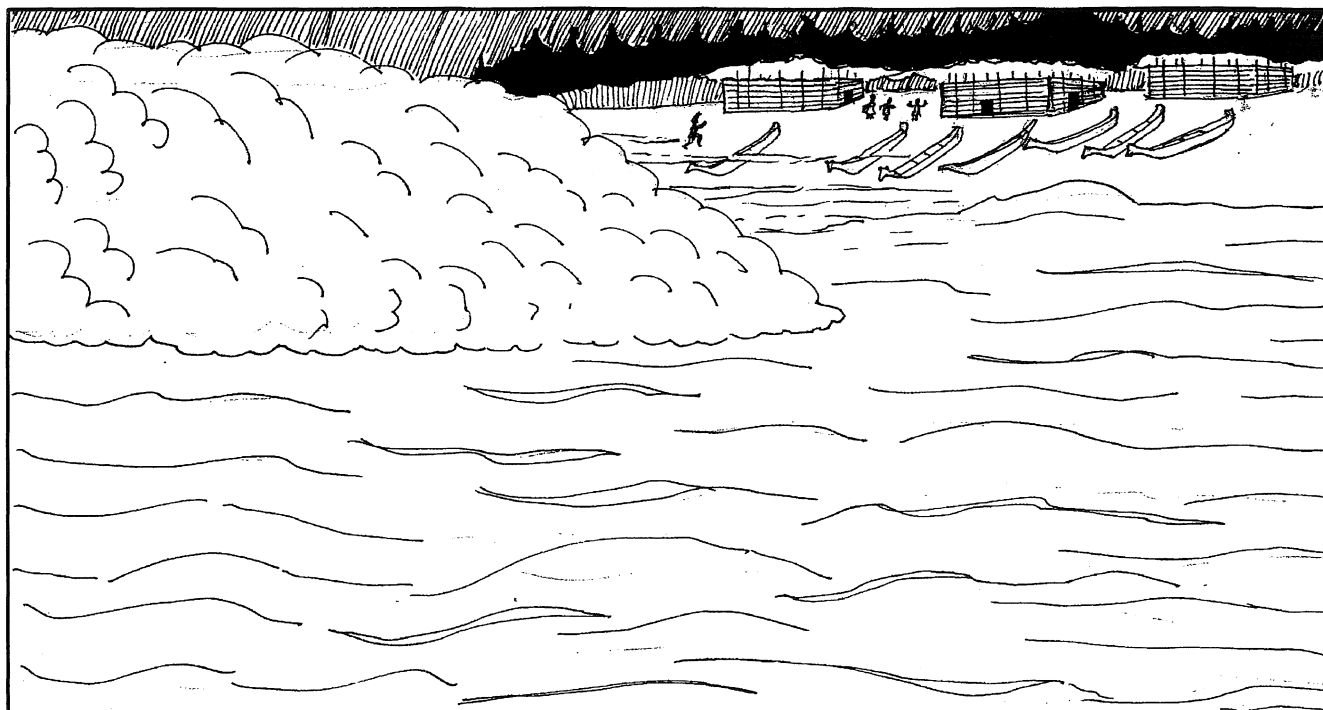
Herbie was troubled by this. He often had dreams of being lost and alone. In these dreams, Herbie was surrounded by dark waters, stormy skies, and angry winds.



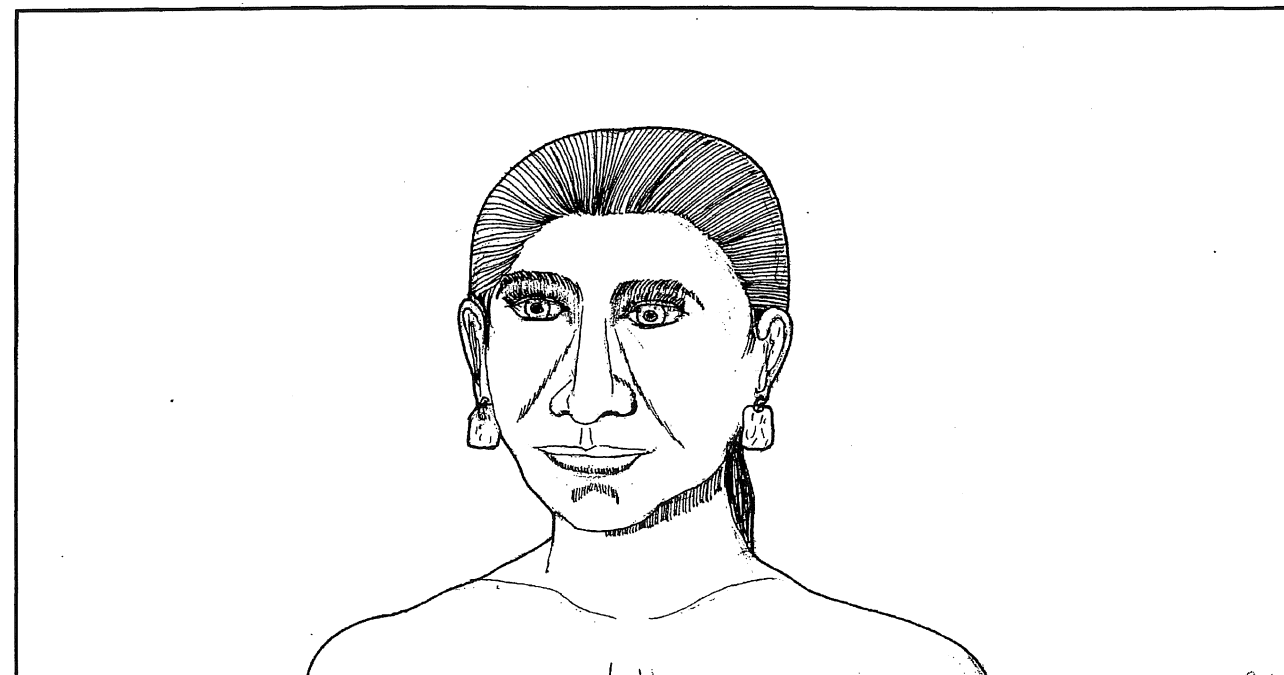
Herbie's uncle knew that Herbie was troubled. He knew that Herbie doubted himself. His uncle was a carver and he had carved a sturdy canoe from a tall cedar.



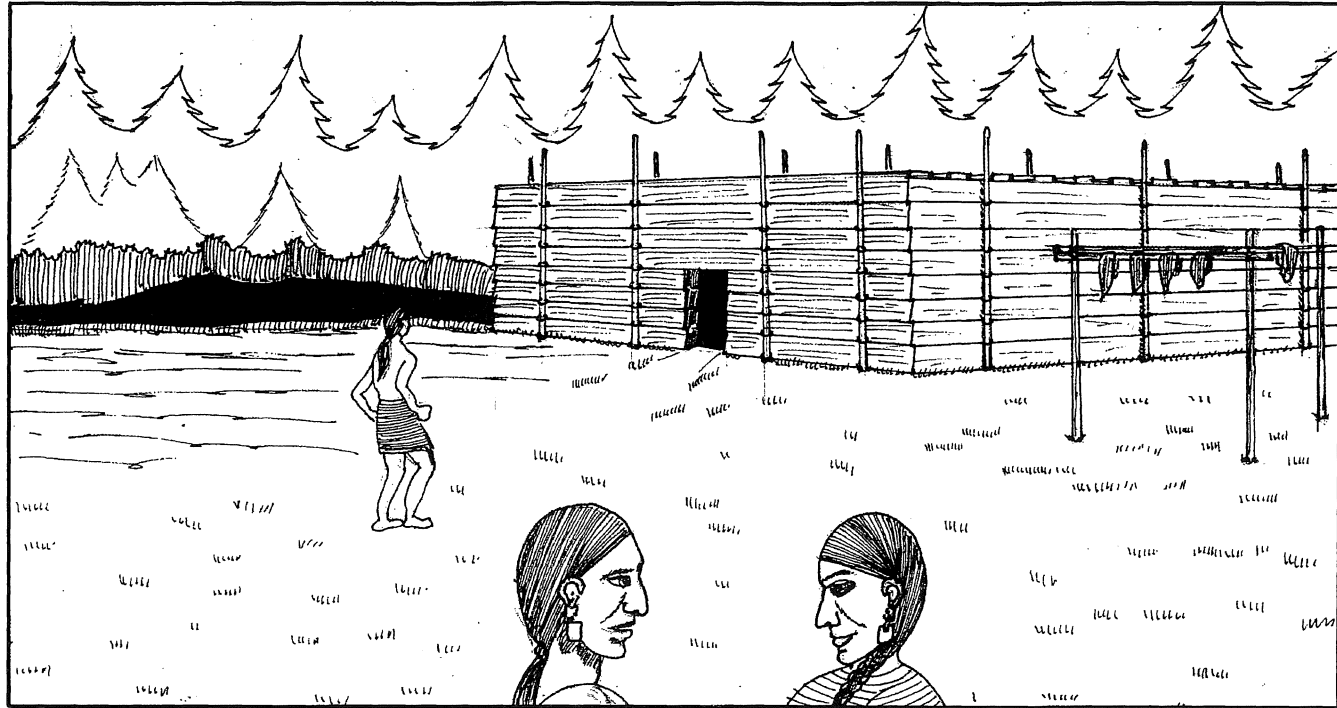
Nellie began singing. Her strong voice rose and cut through the wind and the darkness. By now the people of the village were on the beach watching. From out of the fog came the beautiful music of a young girl's voice. They recognized the song as one belonging to their friends down the coast. More people from the village gathered on the beach and their welcoming song rose up into the sky and out to where the canoe struggled in the waves.



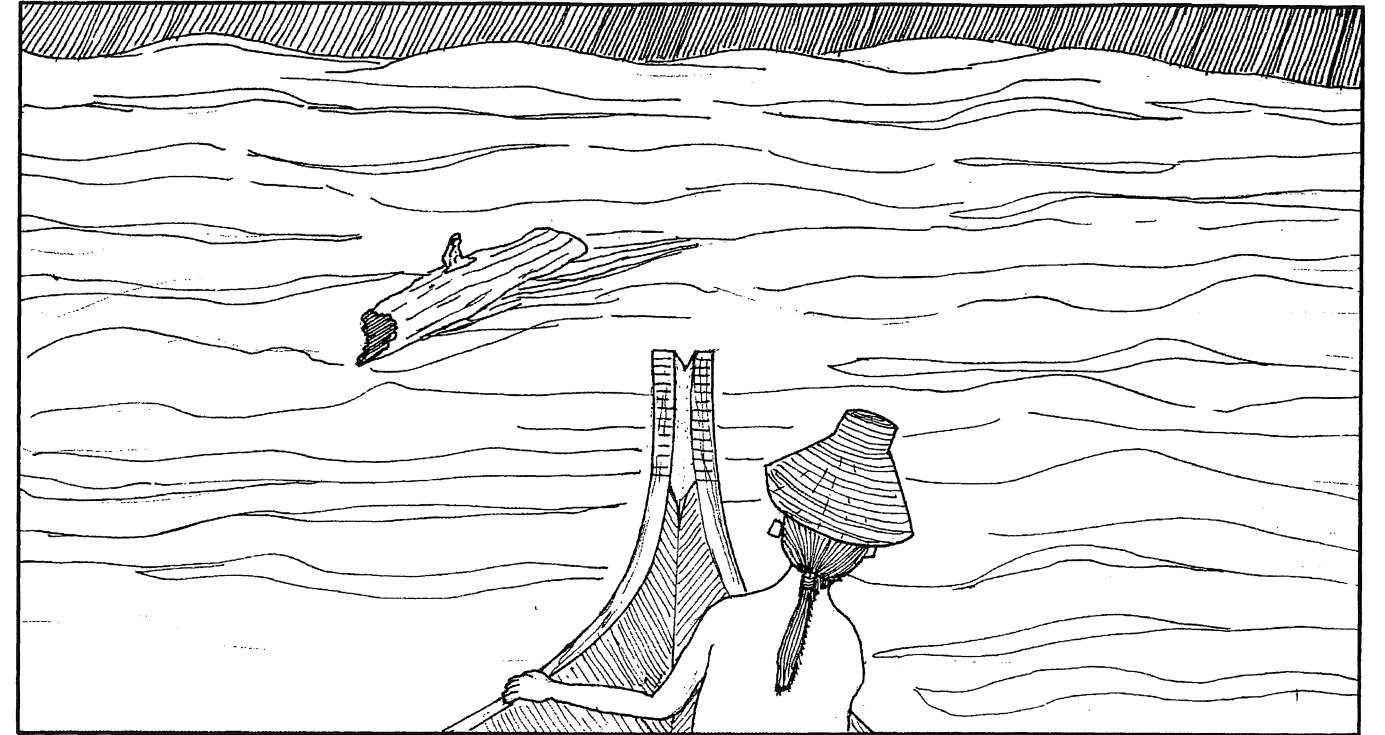
Each time there was danger, Herbie would shout above the wind and the three of them would steer clear. Herbie could see a point of land up ahead and the village where their friends waited. But soon clouds rolled in, heavy rain came down and the sun disappeared. Herbie could no longer see the village. "Sing, Nellie! Uncle cried out. "Sing and they will hear you on the beach. They will answer and we will follow the sound."



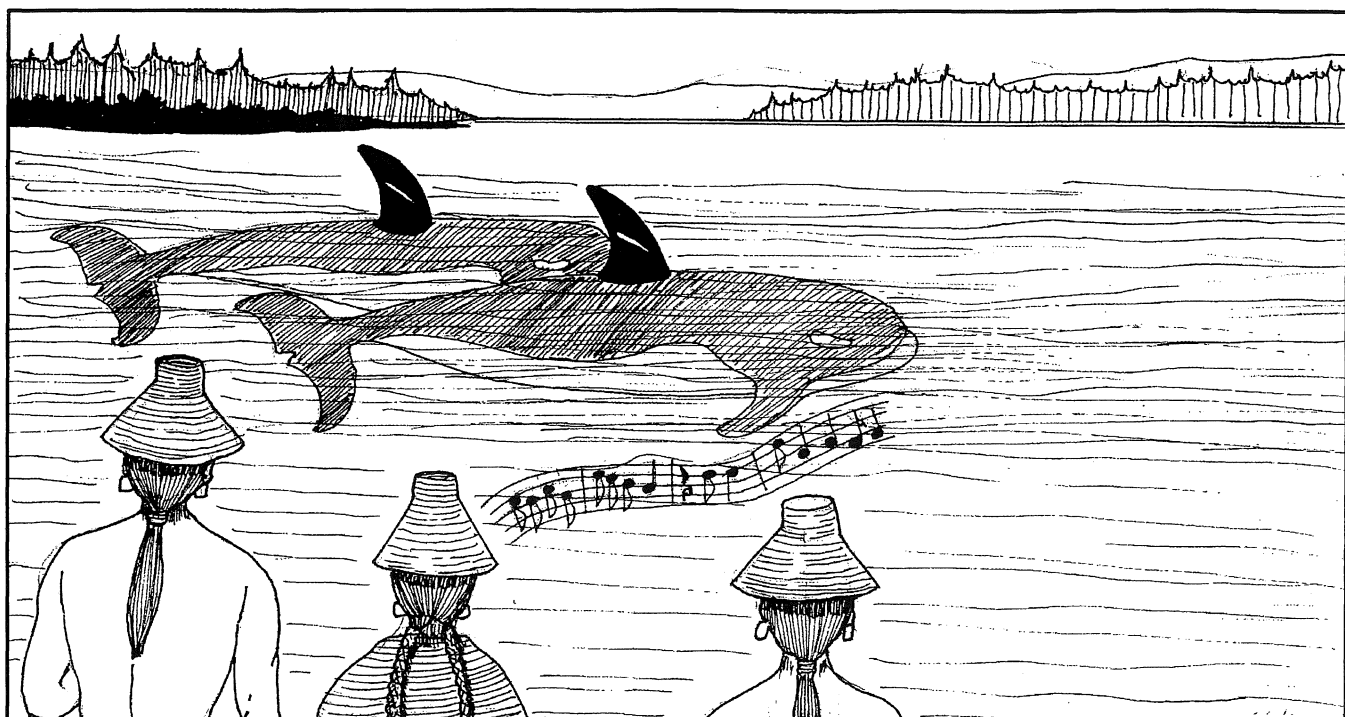
Herbie's uncle was planning to take the canoe up the coast to visit friends in another village. "Hmmm, who shall I take with me?" Herbie's uncle asked as if he were thinking aloud. "I will need two more people to paddle with me through strong currents, winds and riptides. My paddlers must have sharp sight," said Herbie's uncle. "My paddlers must have strong spirit. My paddlers must be determined."



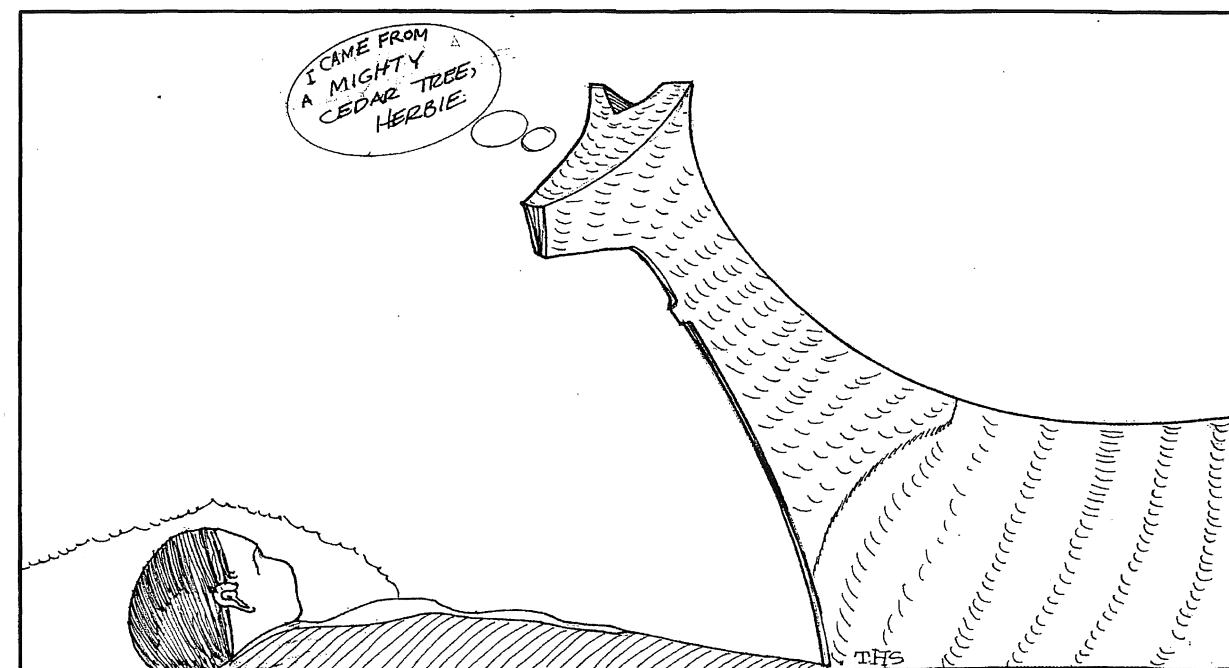
Herbie was playing nearby with his cousin Nellie. Some people nicknamed her Slim Nellie, since her limbs appeared no thicker than marsh reeds and as fragile as a fawn's legs. Herbie and Nellie could hear their uncle, thinking aloud. Nellie and Herbie looked at one another for a moment but said nothing. "Well, I will have to think about it," said Herbie's uncle. And he turned and walked to his lodge.



"Be serious now," said Uncle, "there is a storm up ahead." And it was true. A strong wind blew against them and waves began to form, rocking the canoe. The sky darkened and Uncle could not see the surface of the water up ahead. But Herbie was at the bow and his keen eyes detected logs that floated in front of the canoe, pulled along by the powerful riptides that his uncle had taught him to avoid.



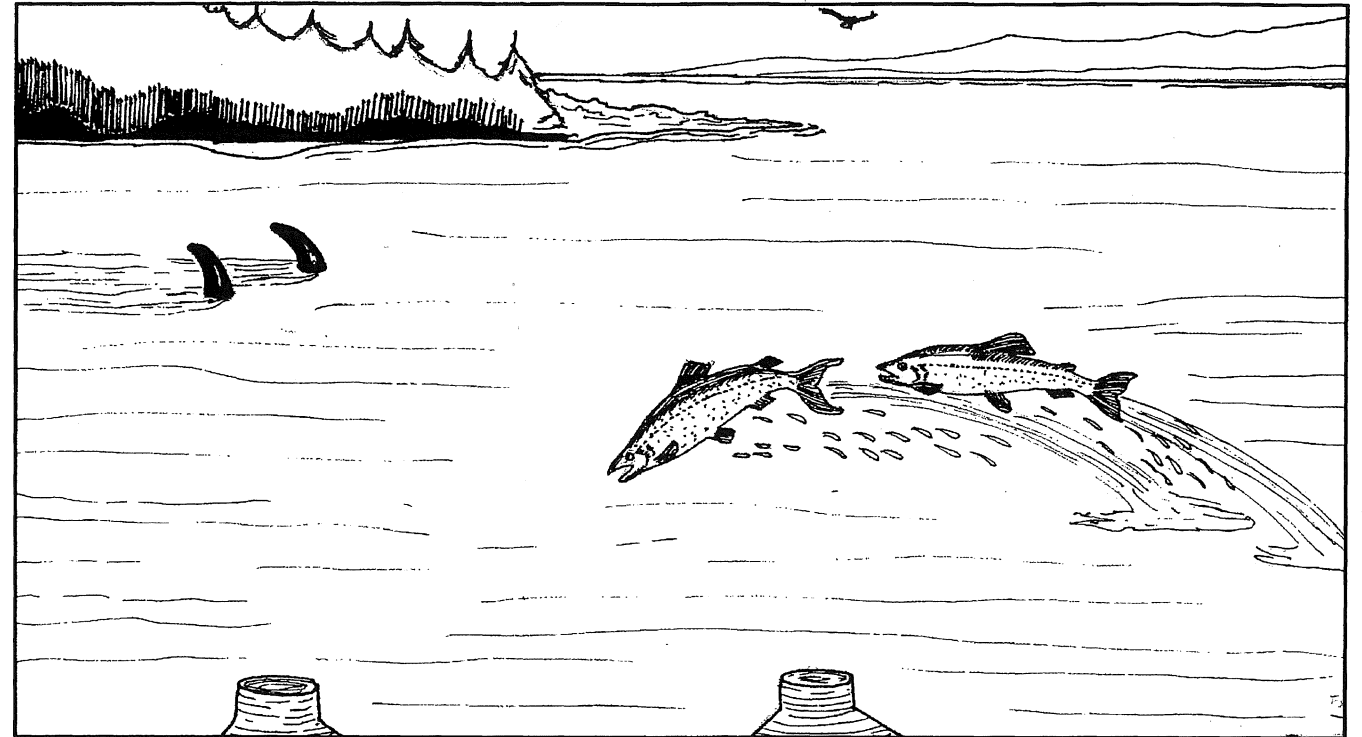
Uncle nodded his head. "The strength of those whales is with you," he said, "for they have chosen to swim alongside your canoe." Nellie knew the killer whale song of her family and she sang it to her giant companions. When Nellie's song was over the orcas disappeared beneath the surface to go their own way. "I am strong!" shouted Herbie. "The orcas swam with my canoe!" "I am stronger!" shouted Nellie, "for the orcas stayed to enjoy my song!"



That night Herbie had a dream. The big cedar canoe was rising and falling gently on the foamy green of the tide while the people slept in their lodges. "I came from a mighty cedar tree," said a voice. "I was made into this beautiful canoe. With me, your people travel to winter camps. With me your people are able to catch fish. With me you are able to move about this great land. I am the spirit of the canoe. I am the spirit of the cedar. You will journey with me. With me you will realize your value."



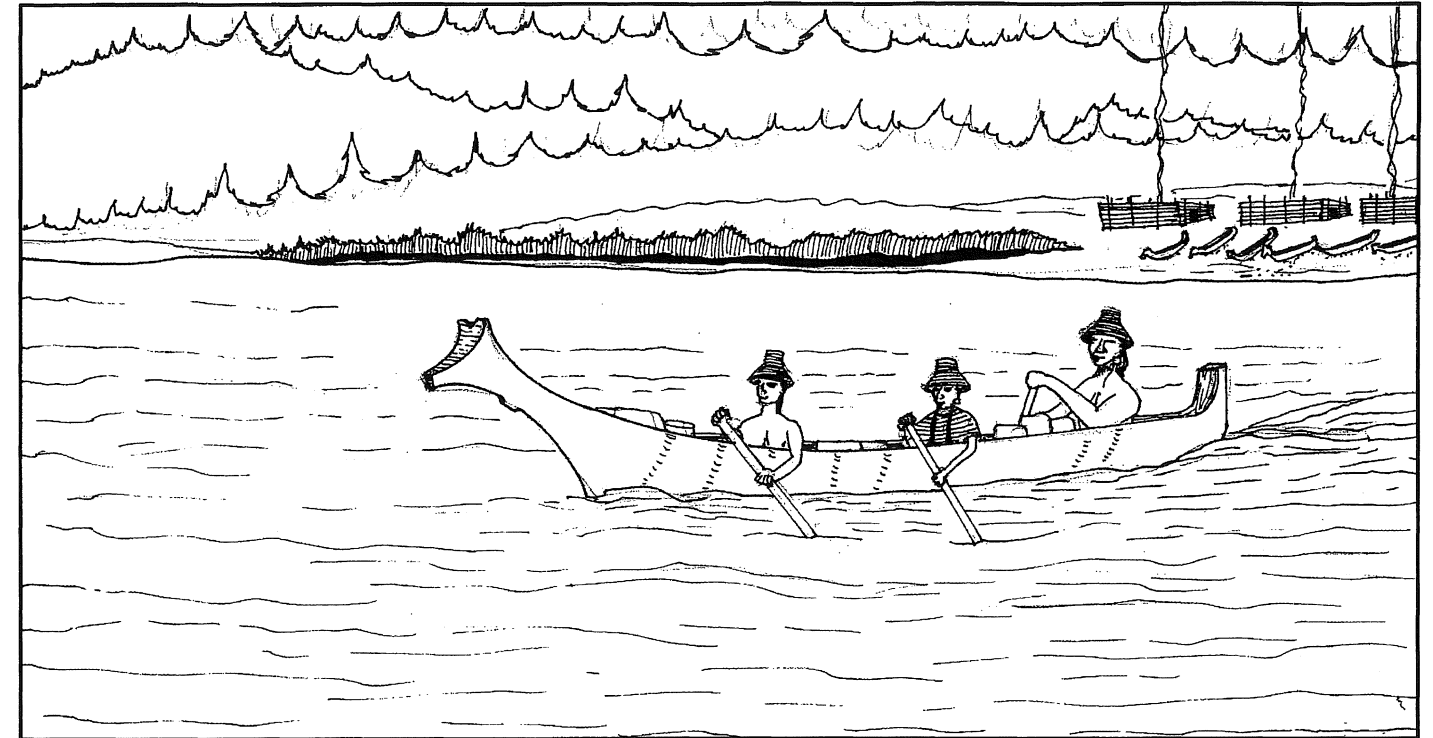
The next morning Herbie went to his uncle's lodge. To Herbie's surprise Slim Nellie was also there, waiting patiently. When Uncle came out of the lodge and saw them standing there, a big smile was on his face. "It looks like I have two volunteers," he laughed. Slim Nellie frowned for, like Herbie, she had some doubt about whether or not she was up to the task. But she too had felt the need to go. Herbie just looked down at his feet.



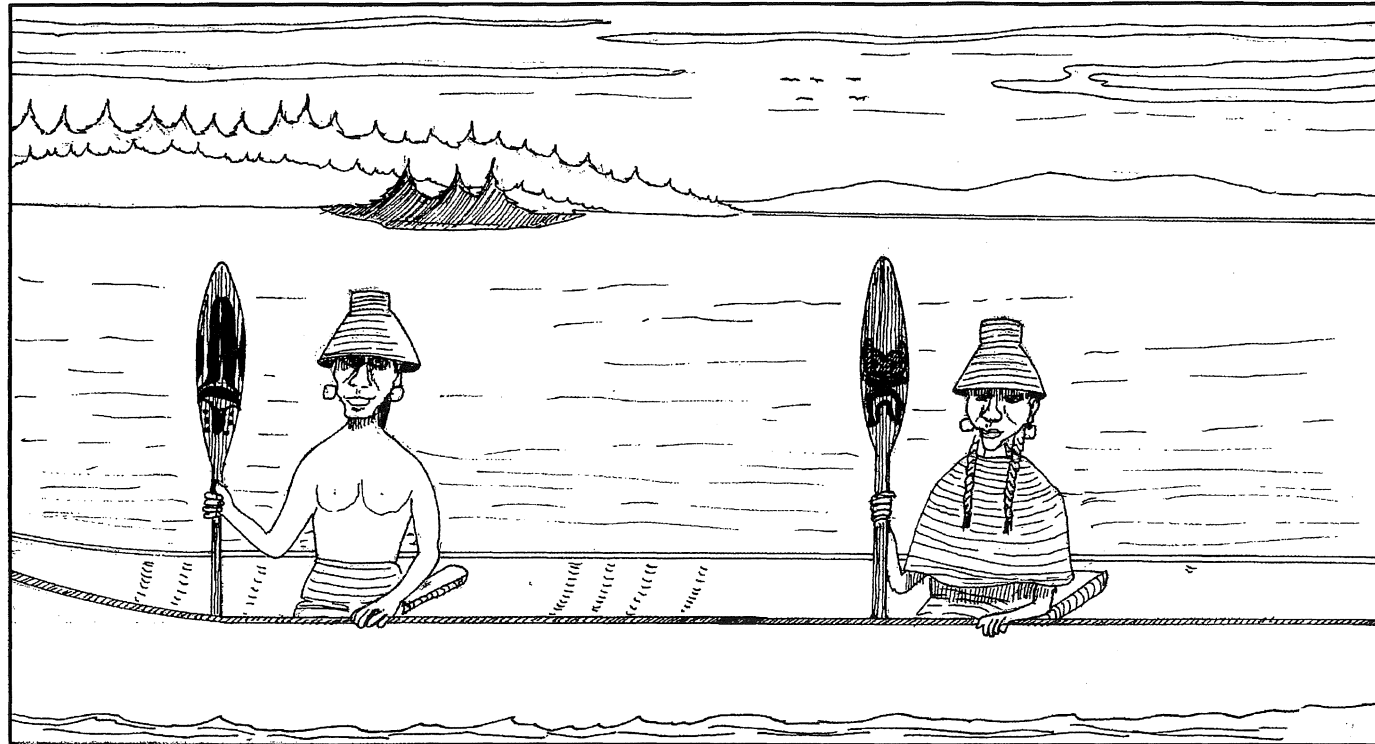
Soon Herbie and Nellie were dry and refreshed. They did feel better after all. They picked up their paddles, happy and laughing. The canoe rode smoothly over sandbars, oyster beds, and slippery kelp. Fish jumped and eagles circled with curiosity. Suddenly a pod of orca whales broke the surface, water glistening on their great dorsal fins.



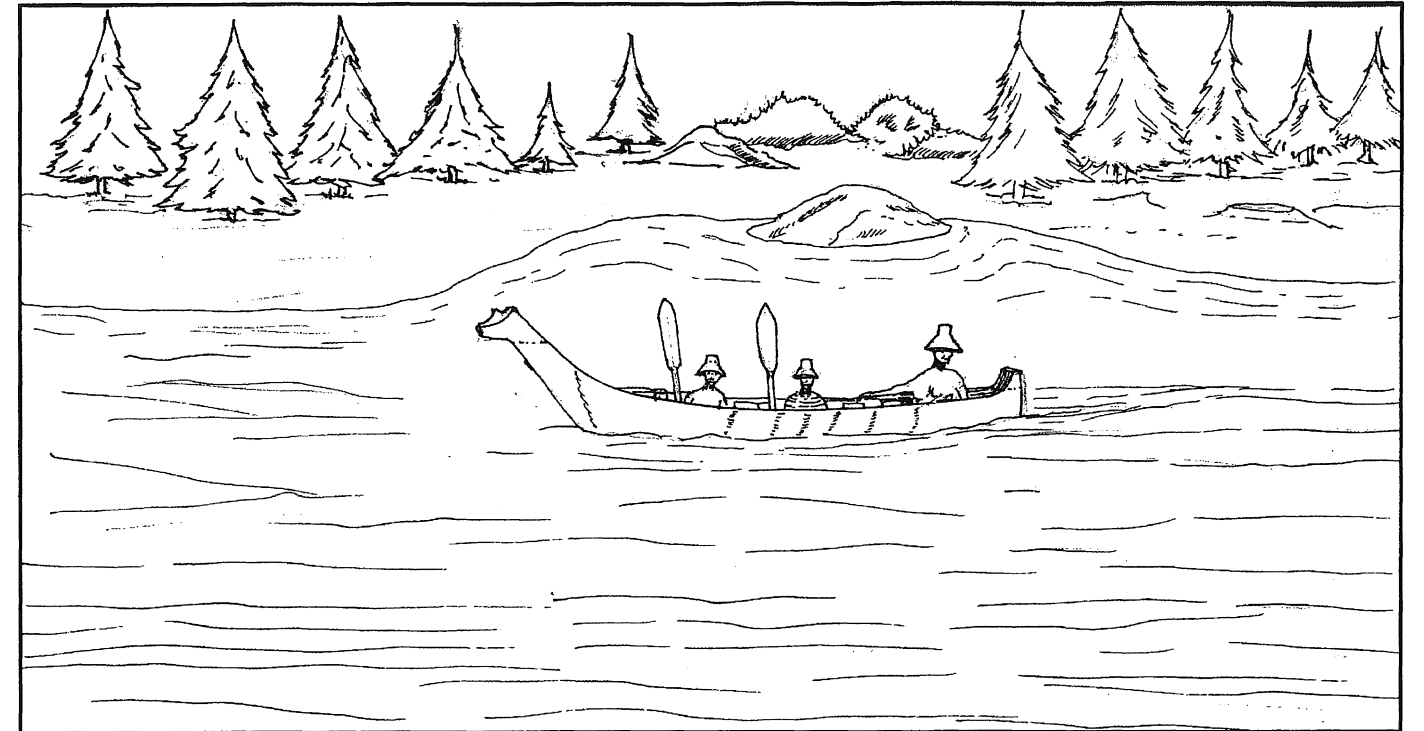
Herbie and Nellie looked down into the dark green water. They could see the rocky bottom just below the still surface. Small fish darted by and a few crabs skittered along the bottom. They were afraid. But the sun was out and the air was warm. Suddenly they smiled at each other and jumped over the side. The icy water took their breath away. But when their uncle helped them back into the canoe, they were warmed by the sun and the blankets they had brought.



Before leaving on their journey, they packed the canoe with dried foods, fresh water, and wool blankets. They also brought a few gifts for the friends they would be visiting. As the smoke from the cooking fires of their village became thin ribbons in the distance, Uncle taught Herbie and Nellie how to hold their paddles, how to steer the canoe, and how to work as a team.



The paddles were painted with red, black, and green designs. Uncle pointed out the riptides and currents that could help them and those to be avoided. He told them that when they were not paddling to hold their paddles upright. "Point them toward the heavens, and it will keep you connected with the water below you and sky above," said Uncle.



A few miles up the coast from their village, Uncle steered the canoe into the inlet of a small island. They stopped by the shore. Uncle knew that his niece and nephew had been doubting themselves. "I want the two of you to jump into this shallow water," he said. "Any bad feelings that you have will be taken away by the currents. Then you will be stronger and we can continue on."