

# **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.

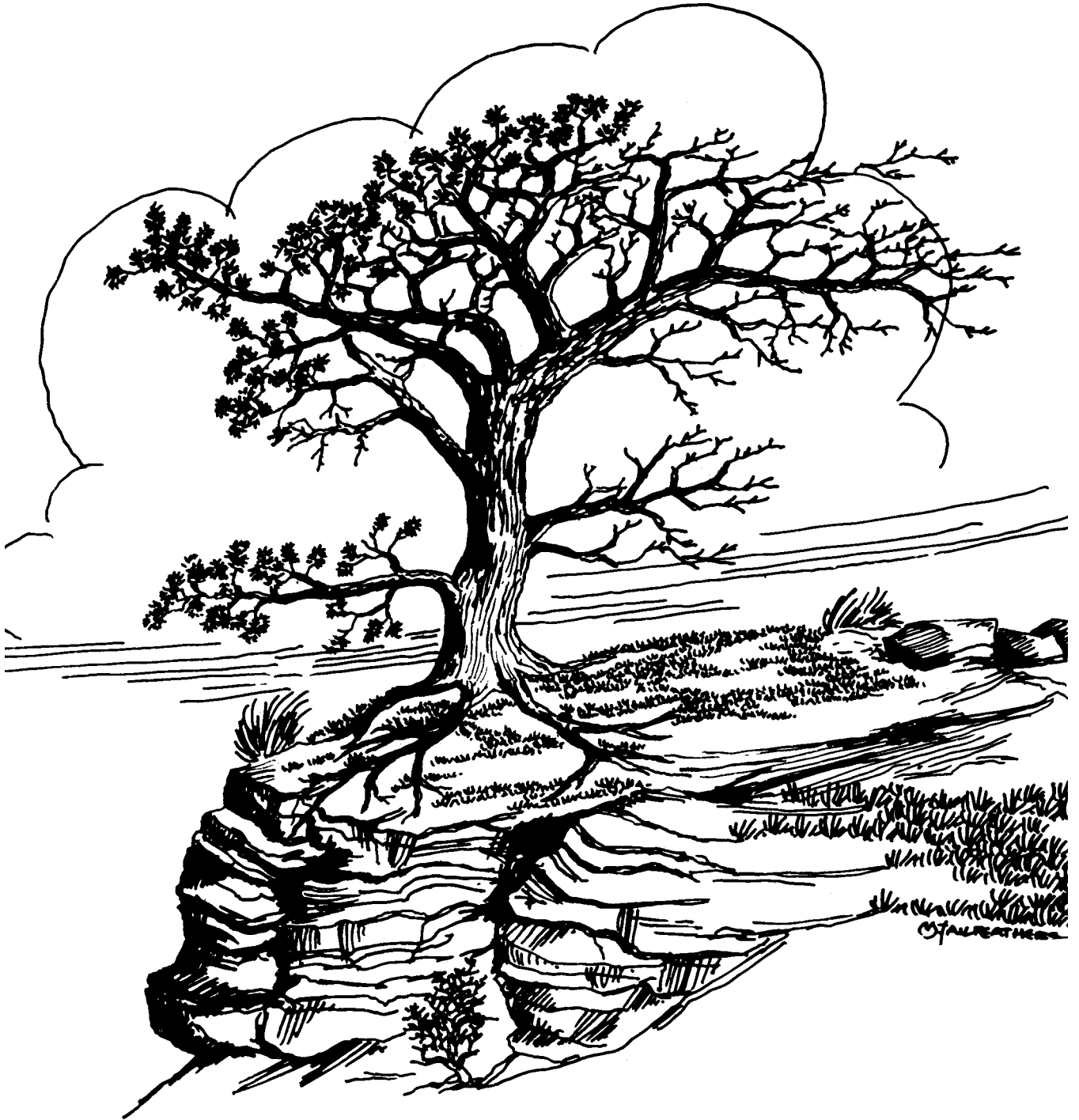
One by one the other men were chosen but no one chose Napi for being so rude and only looking for beauty.

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 Sq<sup>3</sup>a'le*  
The Suquamish Tribe of the Port Madison  
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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  
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6. *How the Summer Season Came*  
Assiniboine Tribe of the Fort Belknap  
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7. *Little Weasel's Dream*  
Salish and Kootenai Tribes of the Flathead  
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9. *The Bear Tepee*  
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10. *Sioux Stories and Legends*  
Sioux Tribe of the Fort Peck Reservation
11. *Kootenai Stories*  
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12. *Chief Mountain's Medicine*  
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13. *Coyote the Trickster*  
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14. *Running Free*  
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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  
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19. *Tepee Making*  
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20. *Baskets and Canoes*  
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21. *Warrior People*  
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