

Weaver Spider's Web

Coyote was starving and freezing, and here it was only mid-winter. He'd forgotten to gather firewood and food. He'd planned on stinging a very powerful song to make the winter a mild one, easy to live with, but he'd forgotten to sing the song.

The reason he'd forgotten was that he was fascinated by Weaver Spider who'd moved into the entrance of Coyote's roundhouse and, there, had begun to weave the most intricate web imaginable.

Now Weaver Spider knew that Coyote was watching him, and he really showed off. He'd work on a tiny section of web, turning it into miniature landscapes with mountains and plants and creatures running all around. And Coyote just sat there on his butt watching the work in progress and making up little stories to go with each picture.

Yes, Coyote thought, this is very important to watch: I am learning many things in my head.

Weaver Spider was of course doing all this so that Coyote would starve and die. He wanted Coyote's house so he could get married and raise a family. And so he kept weaving to hypnotize Coyote, stopping only to eat an occasional bug. Whenever a bug got stuck in his web, he would sing, "Tee-vee-vee-vee," a song which put the bug to sleep and, so, ready to eat.

"Cousin, you're looking very skinny and sick. And it's sure cold in here!" Said Grey Fox when he stopped by one day. Coyote agreed, but insisted that watching Weaver Spider was very important. "I am becoming much smarter," he said.

Grey Fox watched the weaving, but being a practical person, it didn't much move him. Instead he became suspicious of the spider, that he was up to no good.

Grey Fox felt pity for Coyote and went home to get food and his axe for firewood.

Coyote ate the pinenuts and deer jerky while Grey Fox cut firewood. Then Grey Fox built a warming fire and suggested that maybe Coyote wanted to borrow the axe.

But Coyote just sat there, eating up all the food and saying, "Yes, I am becoming much smarter."

Grey Fox got fed-up with this nonsense. He sang a sleep song and a dream song, and soon Coyote was snoring away.

"Now," Grey Fox said to Weaver Spider, "I know you're up to no good. I want you to pack up and leave right now; if you don't, I'm going to have you for a snack." Weaver Spider got scared and quickly left.

Grey Fox tore away the spider's web and woke Coyote up. Coyote looked at the clear sky where the web had been and saw how beautiful it all was. This new clarity, he assured his cousin, had been brought about from watching the spider. And again he said, "Yes, I am much smarter now."

Grey Fox was angry with Coyote. "I'm going to make you twice as smart!" he said. "I'm going to give you a wife, then you can have children to pass your great wisdom on to." And Grey Fox picked up his axe and cut Coyote in half, from head to ass. Then he sang a song and brought the halves alive. The better half turned out to be Coyote Woman.

"Now you are twice as smart," said Grey Fox. And Coyote Woman looked all around, then turned to Coyote. "Why don't you go catch some mice for dinner? And while you're out there, cut some firewood, too."

And Coyote went out to do her bidding. After he'd gone, she turned to me and sort of looked me over before saying, "I suppose you think you'll be winning over women with your cute stories, huh? Well, let me tell you, you got a long way to go yet!"

(From Elderberry Flute Song, Contemporary Coyote Stories by Arontawenrate Peter Blue Cloud. Available at Akwesasne Notes/Indian Time office at Racquette Point.)

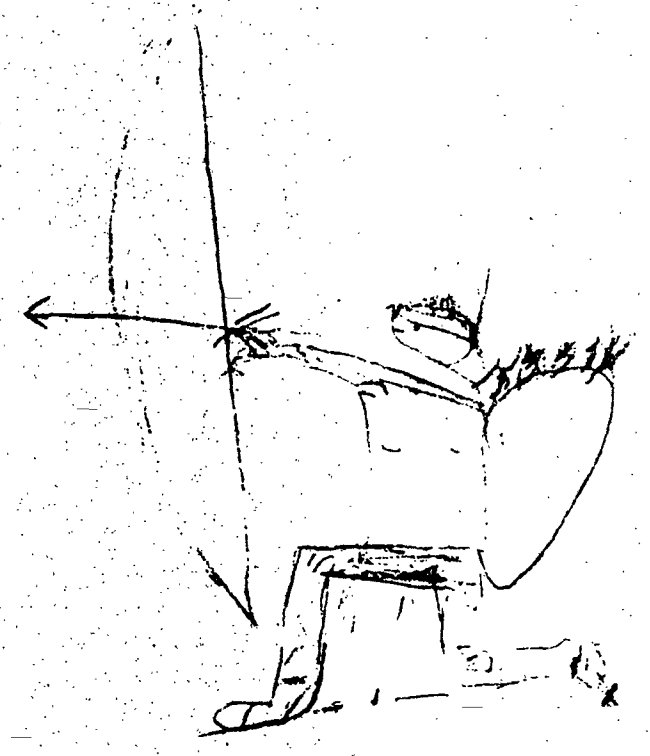
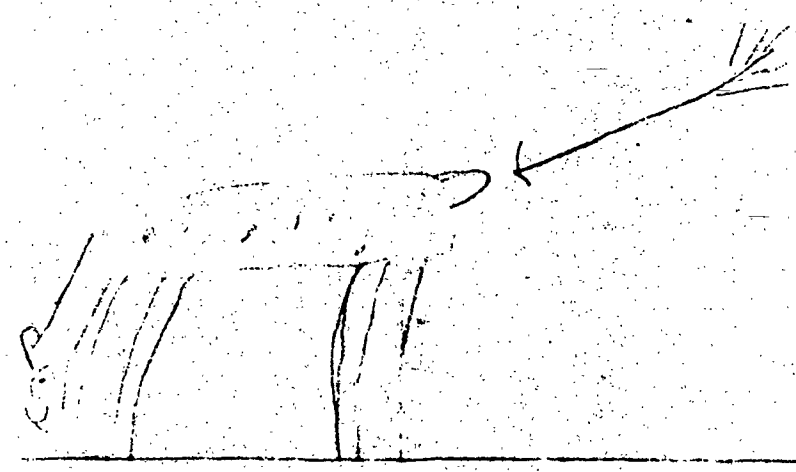


By Ryan Bero

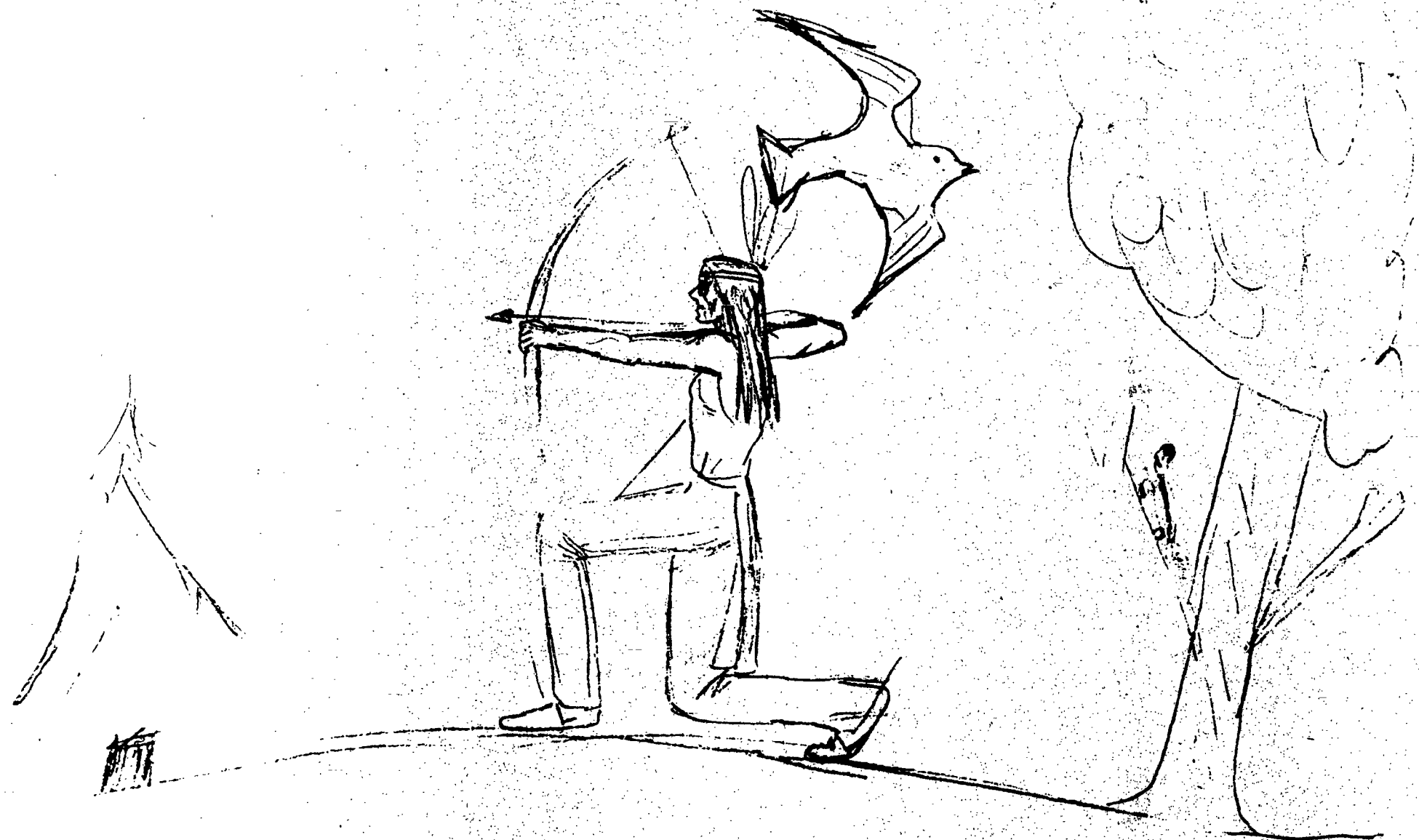


By Peter Montour

Draw A Picture for the back page of I. T. in black ink for all to share of your favorite winter sport or play and send it to the Indian Time Office. It can be any size, but no larger than 7 1/2" X 10".



By Drew Bero



RAIN

By Derek Rousseau