

HOW COTTONTAIL LOST HIS FINGERS

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

How Cottontail Lost His Fingers

Level I Book 15

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How Cottontail
Lost His Fingers

When Cottontail was small, he was a very naughty boy.
He would not do as he was told.
One day as Cottontail was looking for clover,
he wandered away from the camp.



Cottontail's grandfather, Old Coyote, had warned him
not to go out of the camp.
Cottontail, as usual, did not mind,
and his beautiful, long tail
was bit off by a monster!



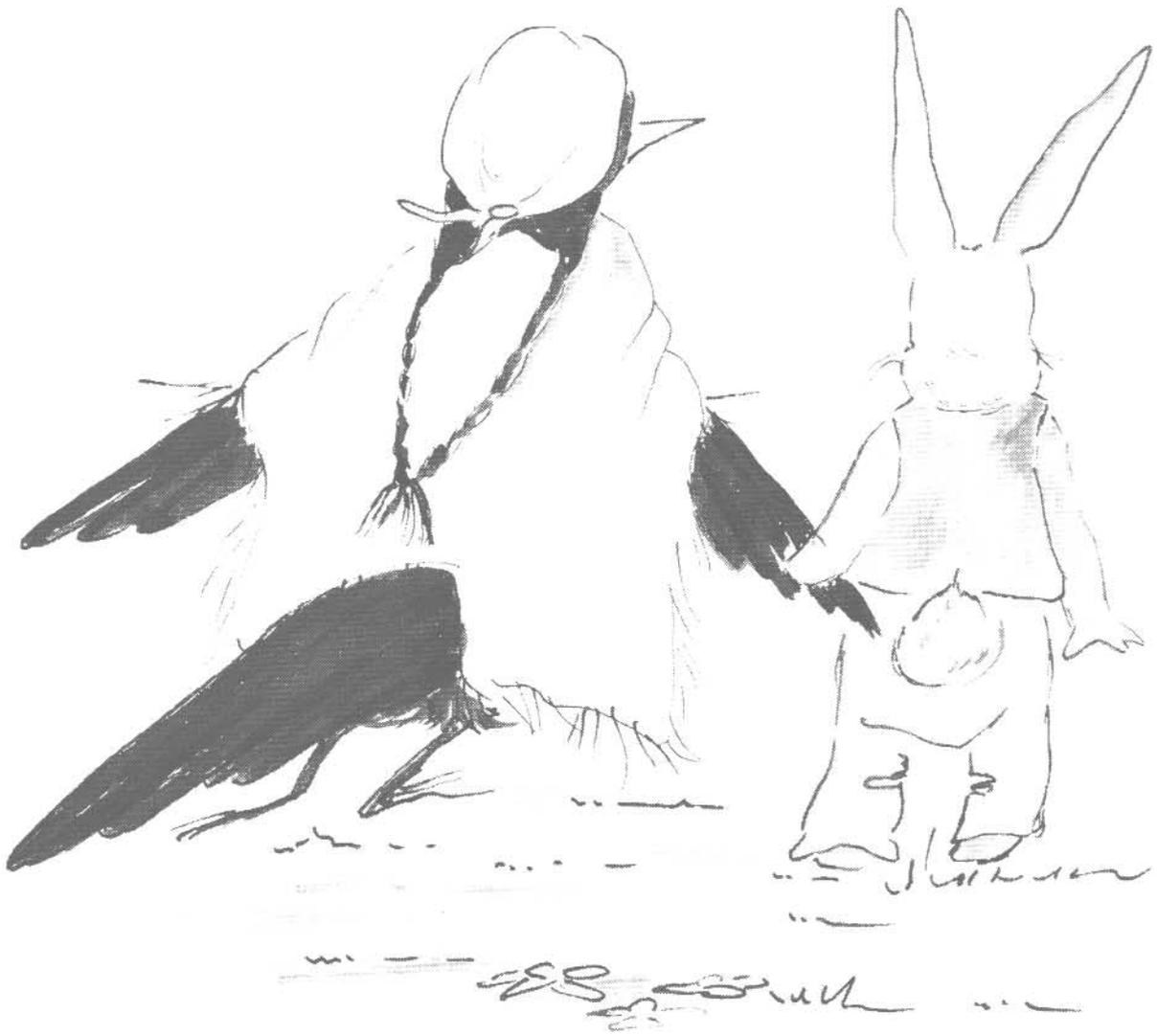
Cottontail learned his lesson.

From that day on he did what his grandfather told him.

But Cottontail had one more lesson to learn.



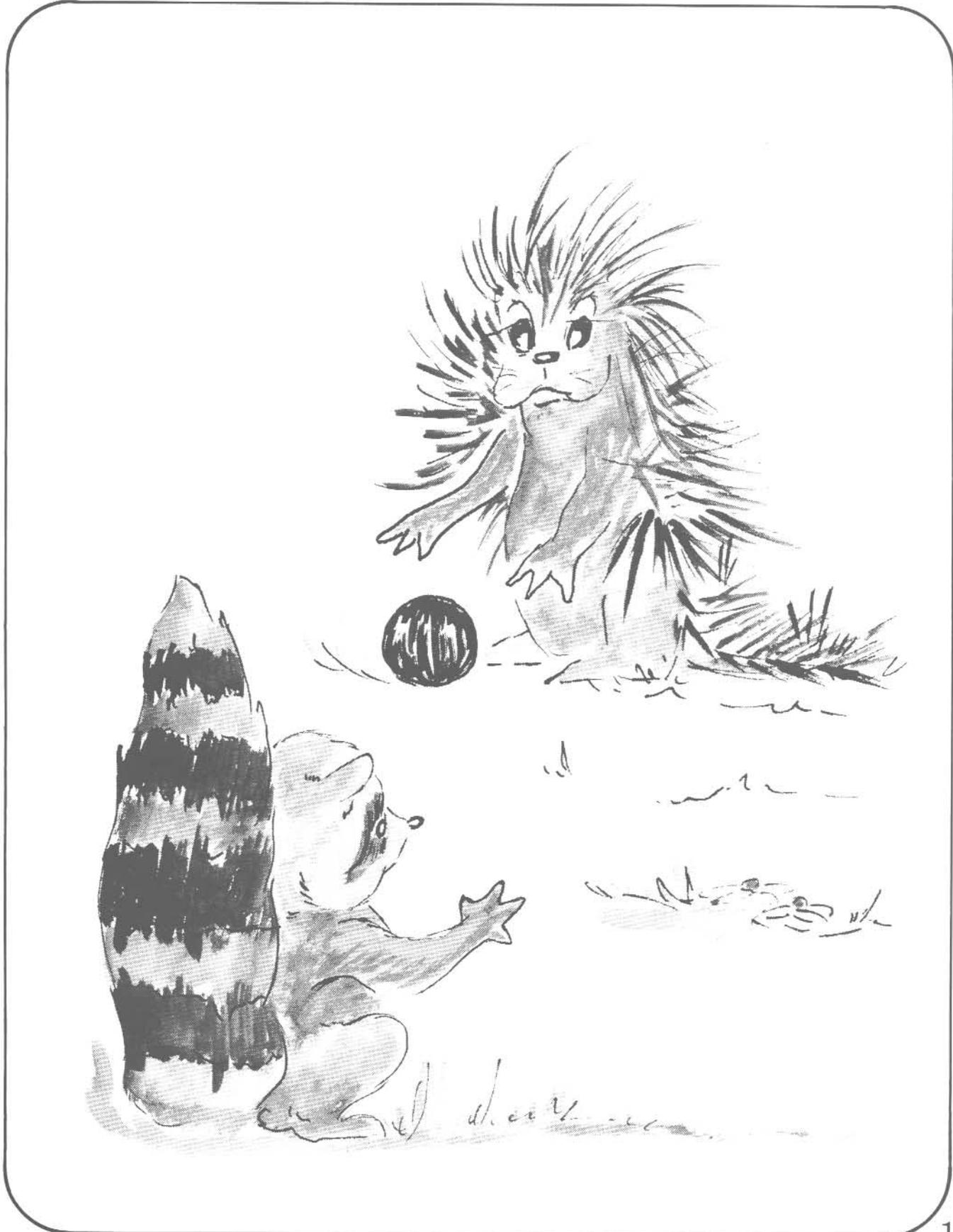
One day Cottontail's grandmother, Old Raven,
took him to a gathering in a big village
beside the Columbia River.



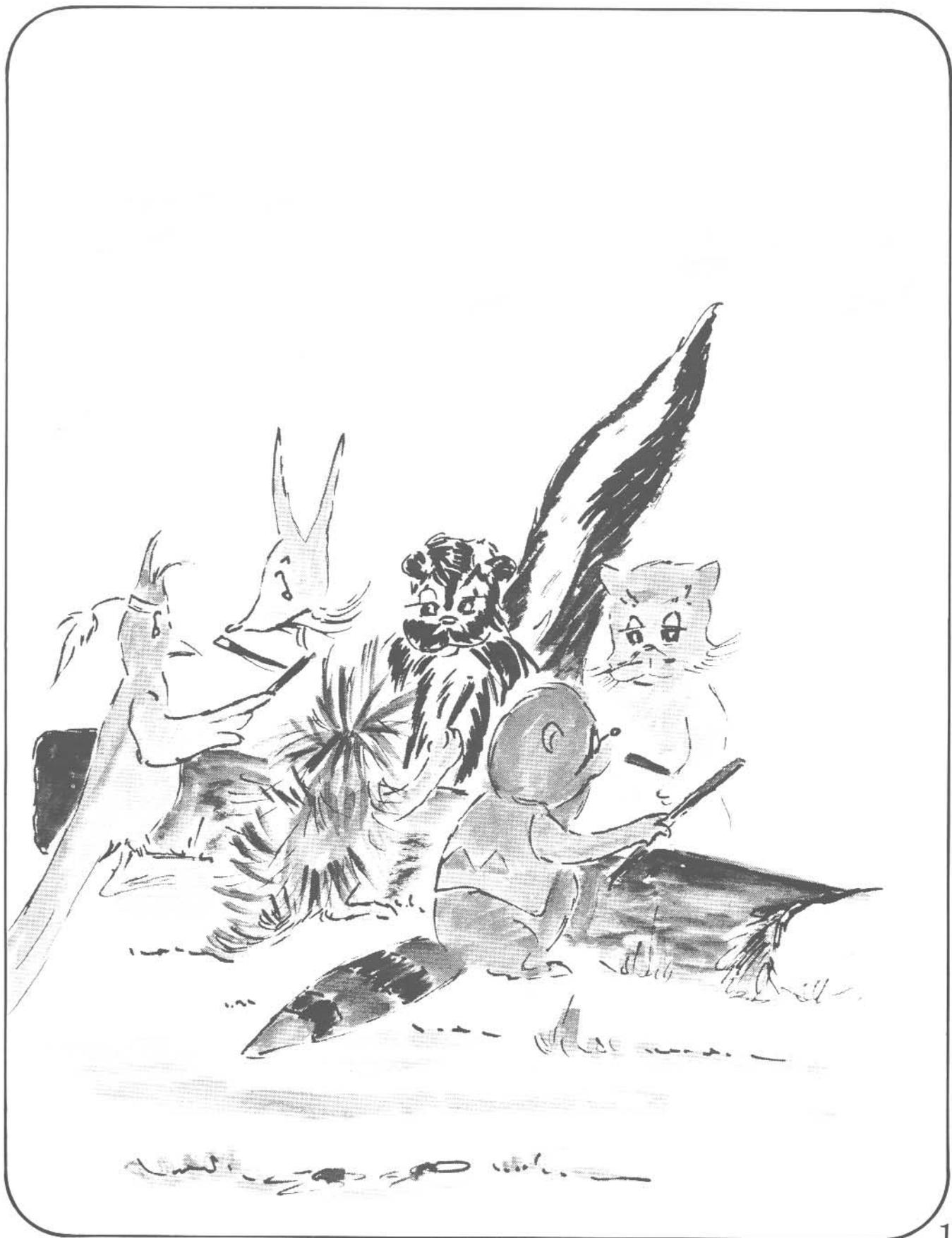
Cottontail went hunting with the hunters.
He went fishing with the fishermen.
They killed many deer.
They caught many salmon.
All the animal people had a big feast.



The animal people played many different games.
They played hunting games and ball games.
They played many running games.
But their favorite game of all was the stick game.



The stick game is a guessing game.
The players choose sides and form teams.
Each team takes a turn guessing
 where the two sets of guessing bones are hidden.
Cottontail and his friends liked to play this game.
But Cottontail always cheated.



Some of the animals at the gathering decided
to play the stick game.

First, they chose sides.

Chipmunk, Skunk, Porcupine and Beaver
sat on one side of the log.

Raccoon, Robin, Cottontail and Squirrel
sat on the other side of the log.
Every time Porcupine would guess,
Cottontail would cheat.
He would switch the bones when Porcupine
was not looking.



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Porcupine decided to teach Cottontail a lesson.
Whenever it was time for his side to hide the bone,
 Porcupine would sing his thunder gambling song.
As Porcupine sang his song,
 big streaks of lightning would strike from the sky.



The game went on.
The bones went to Cottontail's side.
Porcupine, watching Cottontail very closely,
 guessed correctly.
By switching the bones, Cottontail cheated again.



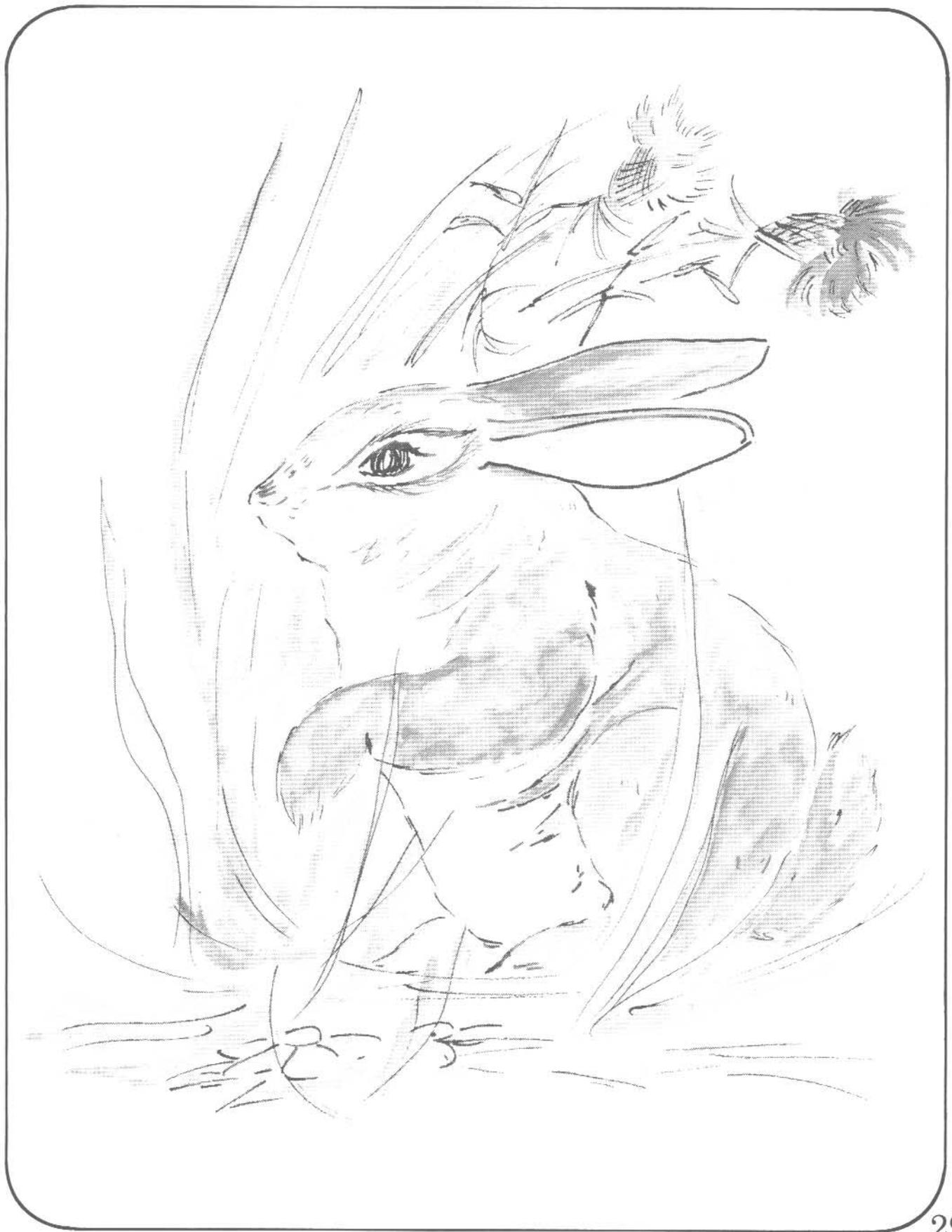
But Porcupine's thunder song worked!
As Cottontail started to open his hands,
the lightning flashed out of the sky
and burned off his fingers!



And so it was, Cottontail learned another lesson.
It is not fun to play with people who cheat.



That is why, to this day, the cottontail rabbit
has paws instead of fingers.





VERBENA GREENE

Verbena Greene, a member of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Oregon, is the mother of eight children. She attended Warm Springs Boarding School until the 11th grade and later earned her G.E.D. She has served as Local Coordinator for the Warm Springs Curriculum Development Committee and was the Tribal Education Program Liaison for more than seven years. She presently is serving as Culture Resource Person for the Tribes, providing classroom cultural instruction (legends, values, songs, etc.) on a consultant basis to schools and community colleges. She enjoys working with young people and is pleased that students are now forming culture clubs and holding powwows in the school environment.



CAROL ALLISON

Carol Allison has been closely associated with the Warm Springs Tribes for 16 years. She works in several different media, including water colors, cloth painting (shawls, skirts), and cartooning. In addition to writing and illustrating children's books, she has worked with Warm Springs committees writing down tribal history and culture.

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

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