

# HOW THE MILKY WAY GOT INTO THE SKY

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 the Milky Way Got into the Sky

Level III Book 11

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A long time before our grandfathers were born,  
all the animals of the forest and prairie  
and all the birds of the air  
held a big council meeting.

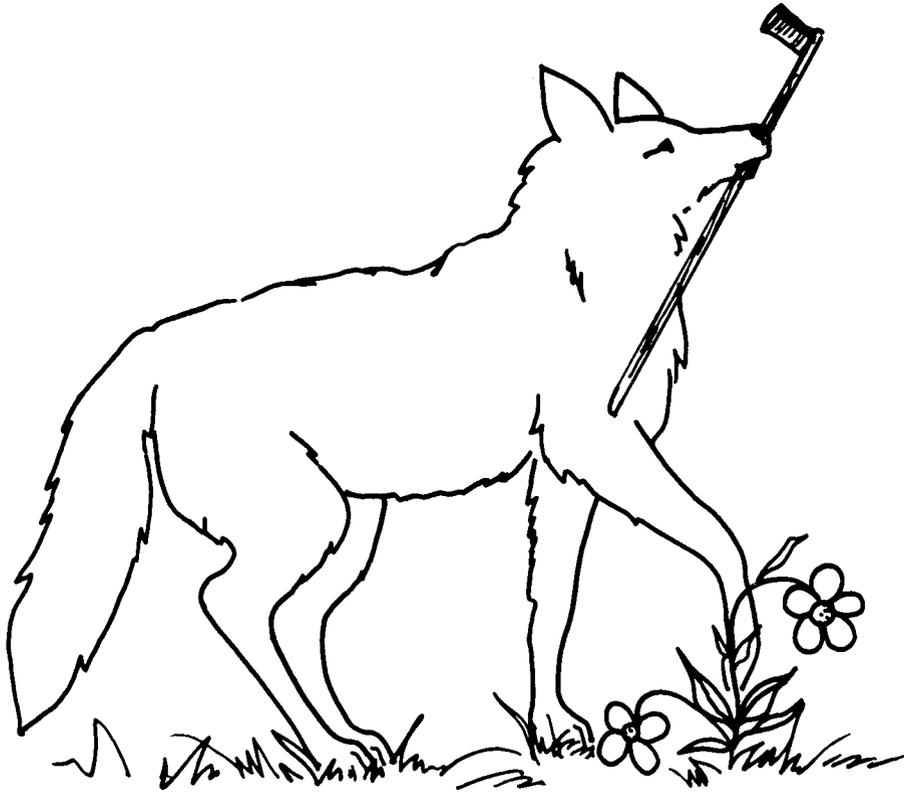
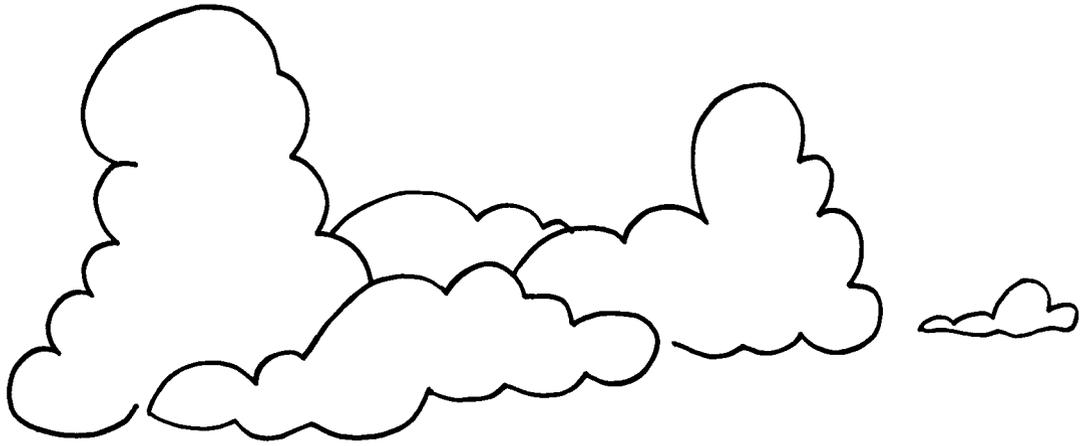
They built a big fire and made the flames  
go as high as the trees.

All the animals seated themselves in a circle  
around the fire.

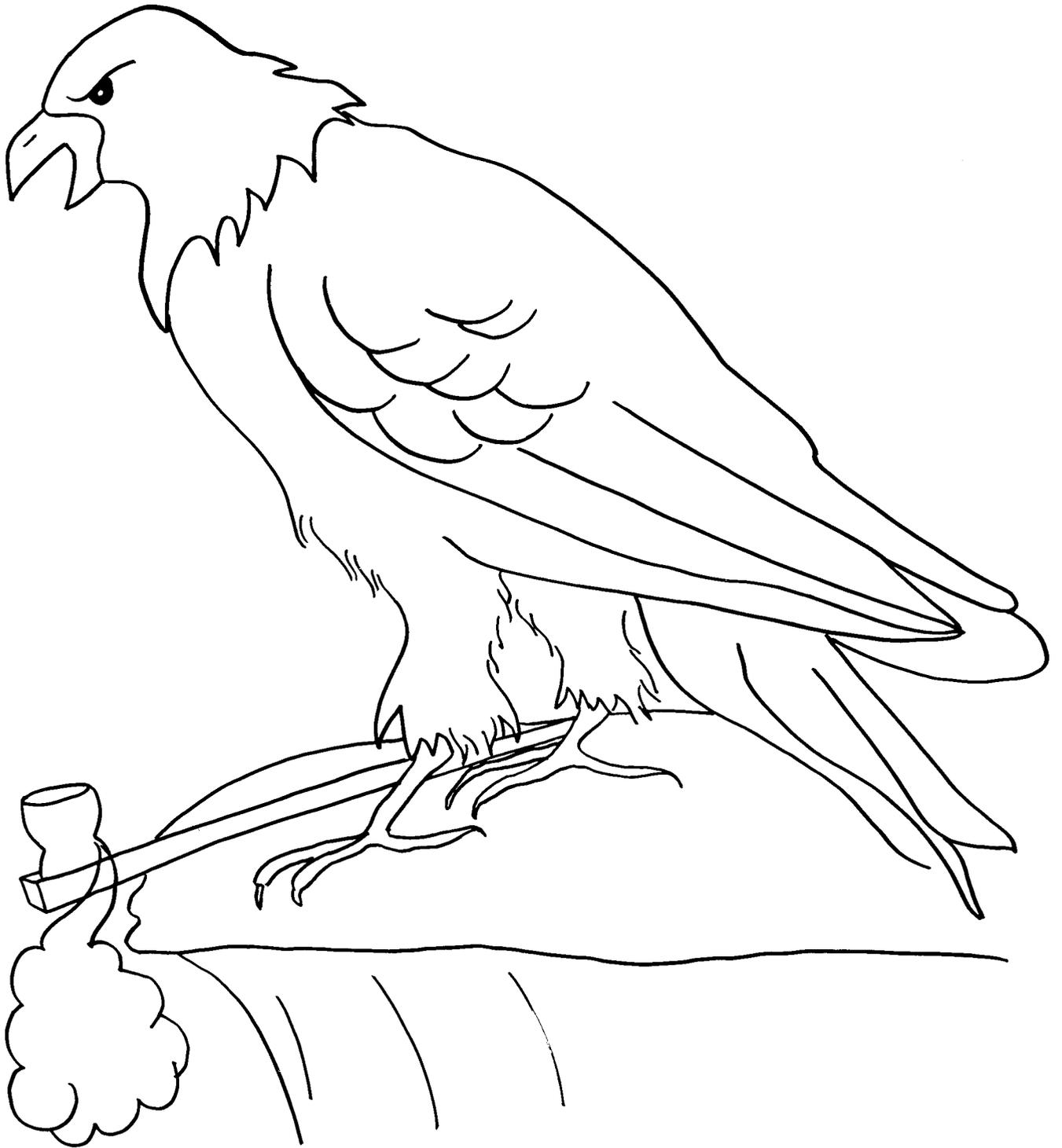
They started talking about who could make  
the greatest speed when traveling.



Puffing on his long pipe, Fox stood up and said,  
    “I can run so swiftly that every bush and wildflower  
    bow down as I pass.  
They think I am their ruler, the wind.  
I can travel so fast that the wind goes to rest  
    in his lodge behind the heavens.”



After puffing on his pipe, Eagle stood up to speak.  
“I can travel swiftly too.  
I can go so fast that I keep the wind under my wings  
as I beat a pathway across the sky.  
He cannot escape me.  
I am the wind.”  
Soon all the animals and birds began to talk at once.  
They talked loudly.  
The air was shaking with their voices.  
No one heard what the others were saying.





Finally, the big fire began to die.  
Everyone was worn out from talking too much.  
But Wild Horse and Buffalo began the argument  
all over again.

“My hooves are the greatest and can make  
the grass blades tremble,” said Buffalo.



“My hooves are even faster,” said Wild Horse.

“When I run, my mane is more beautiful than yours. It waves like prairie grass in the wind.”

“When I run,” said Buffalo, “I travel so fast no one can see my mane in the wind.”

Chief Bear said, "The two of you shall run a race."  
The race took place the next night,  
    when all the world was asleep.  
The moon shone brightly to make light.  
Every tree was excited.  
All the birds of the air stood about to witness the race,  
    and they were excited.

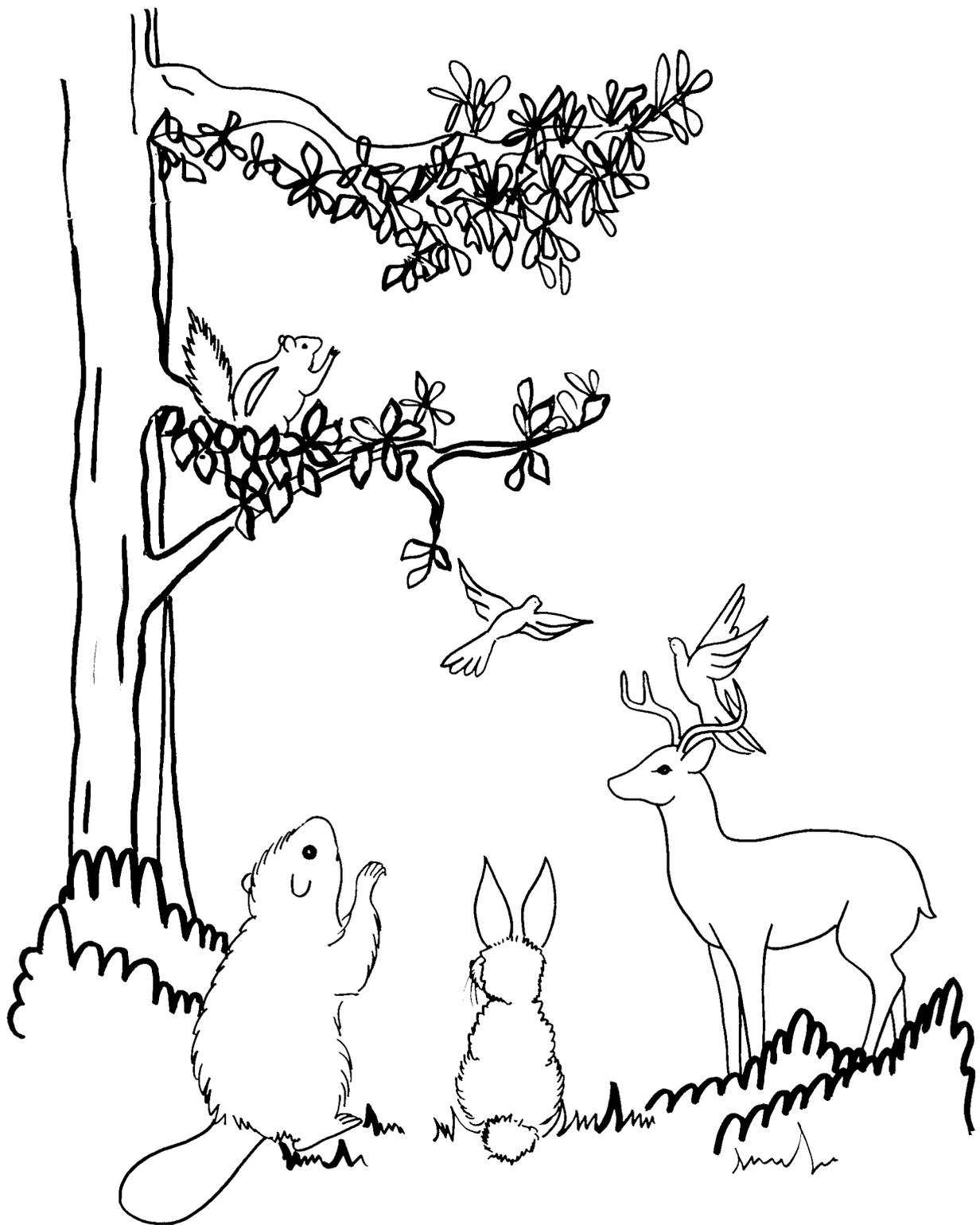


The race was on!  
At first, Buffalo took the lead.  
He lowered his head and made snorting noises  
    like a thousand bullfrogs.  
He blinded Wild Horse with his dust.





By midnight, Wild Horse was gaining on Buffalo.  
The little horse galloped closer and closer.  
His pretty mane and tail looked like wings.  
All the animals and birds cheered them on.  
They said they would cheer whoever won.  
The racers were neck and neck  
as the dust rose higher and higher.

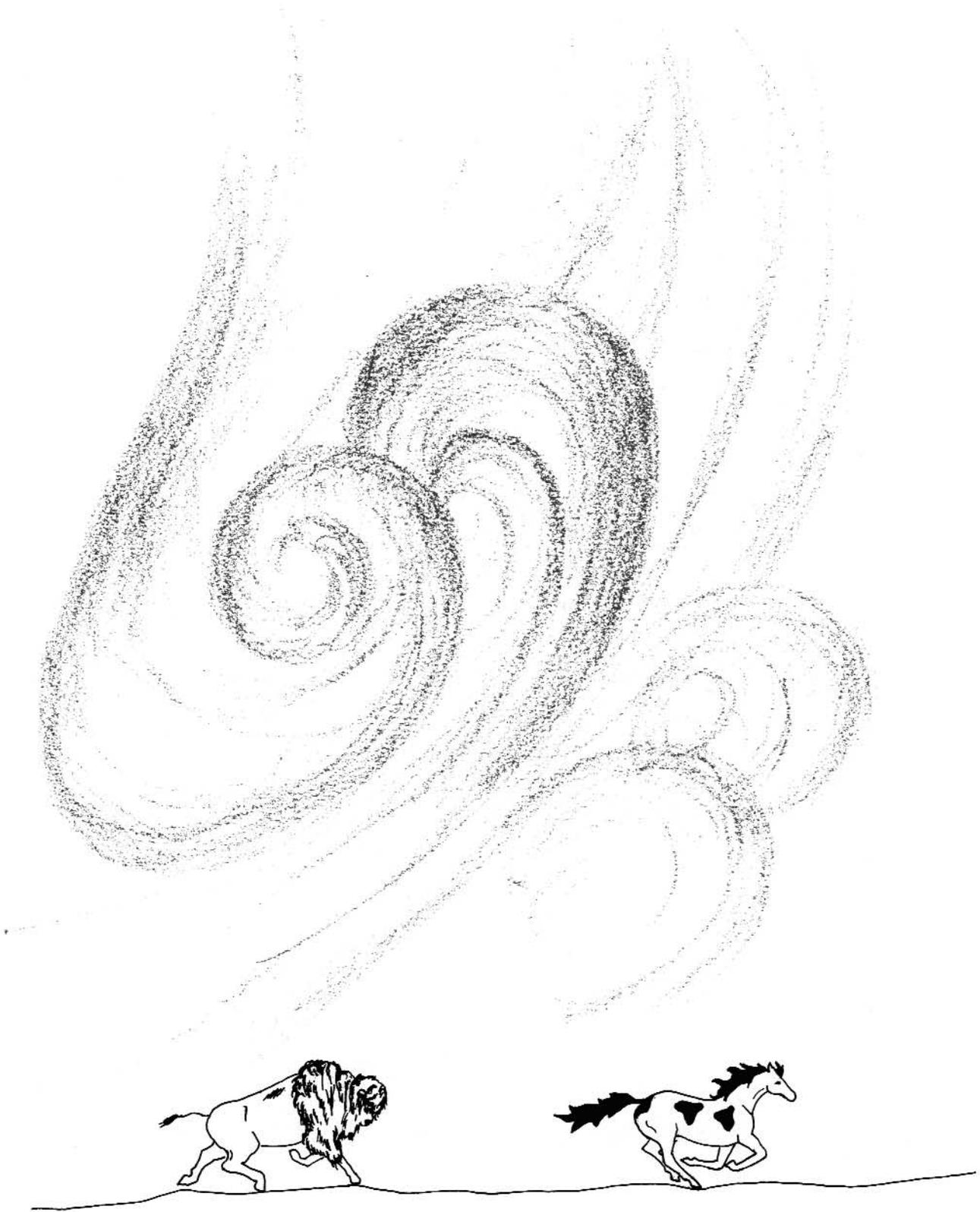


At last Wild Horse was ahead of Buffalo.

The finish line was just ahead.

With his last breath, Wild Horse leaped over the finish line  
and won the race!





The smoke-like dust the racers stirred up  
went into the sky and remained there.  
Today the people call it the Milky Way.

Booklets available in the Level III 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 and II sequences.

- 1 *Story of the Seasons*  
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