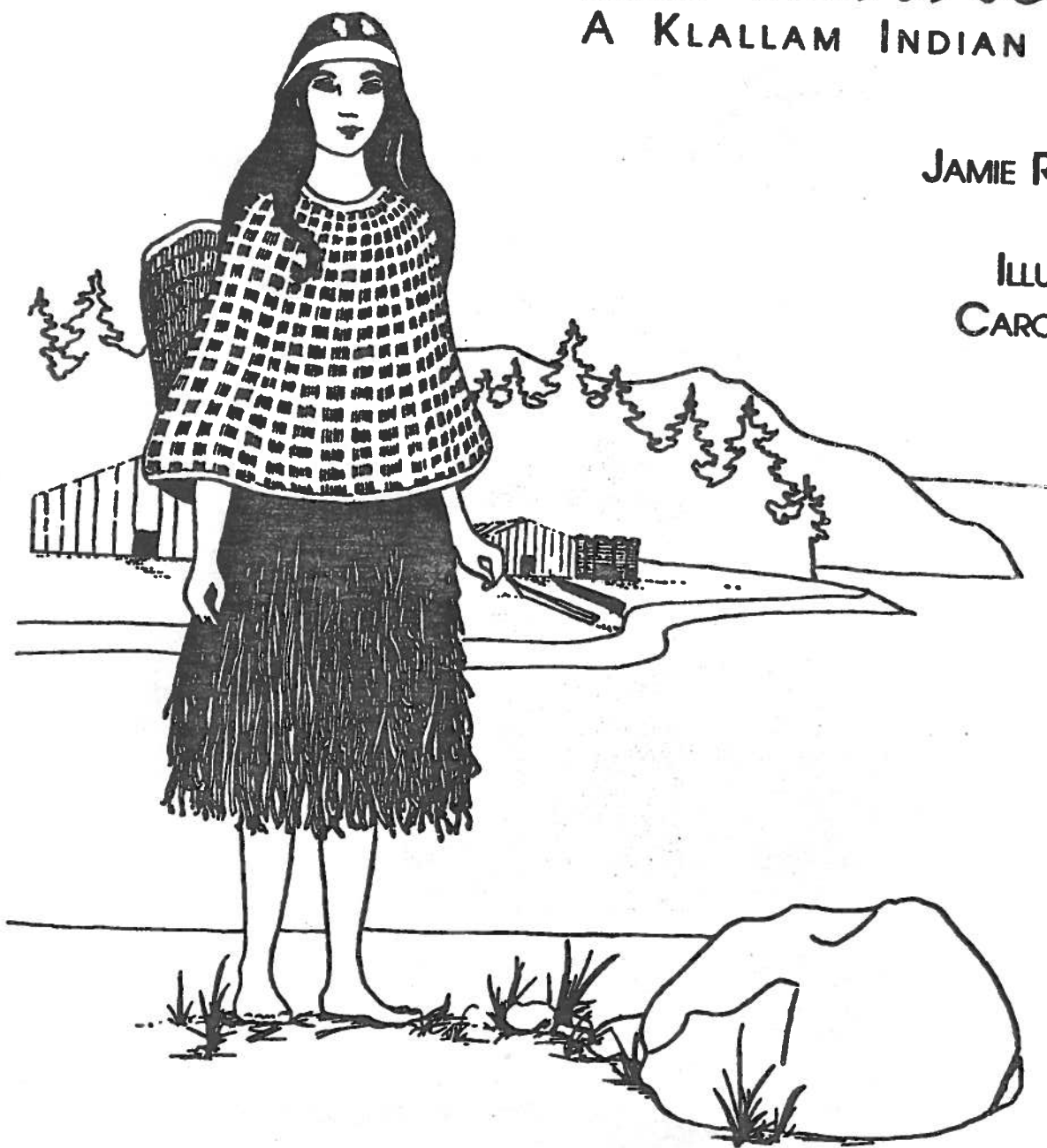


Nahkeeta

A KLALLAM INDIAN LEGEND

RETOLD BY
JAMIE R. VALADEZ

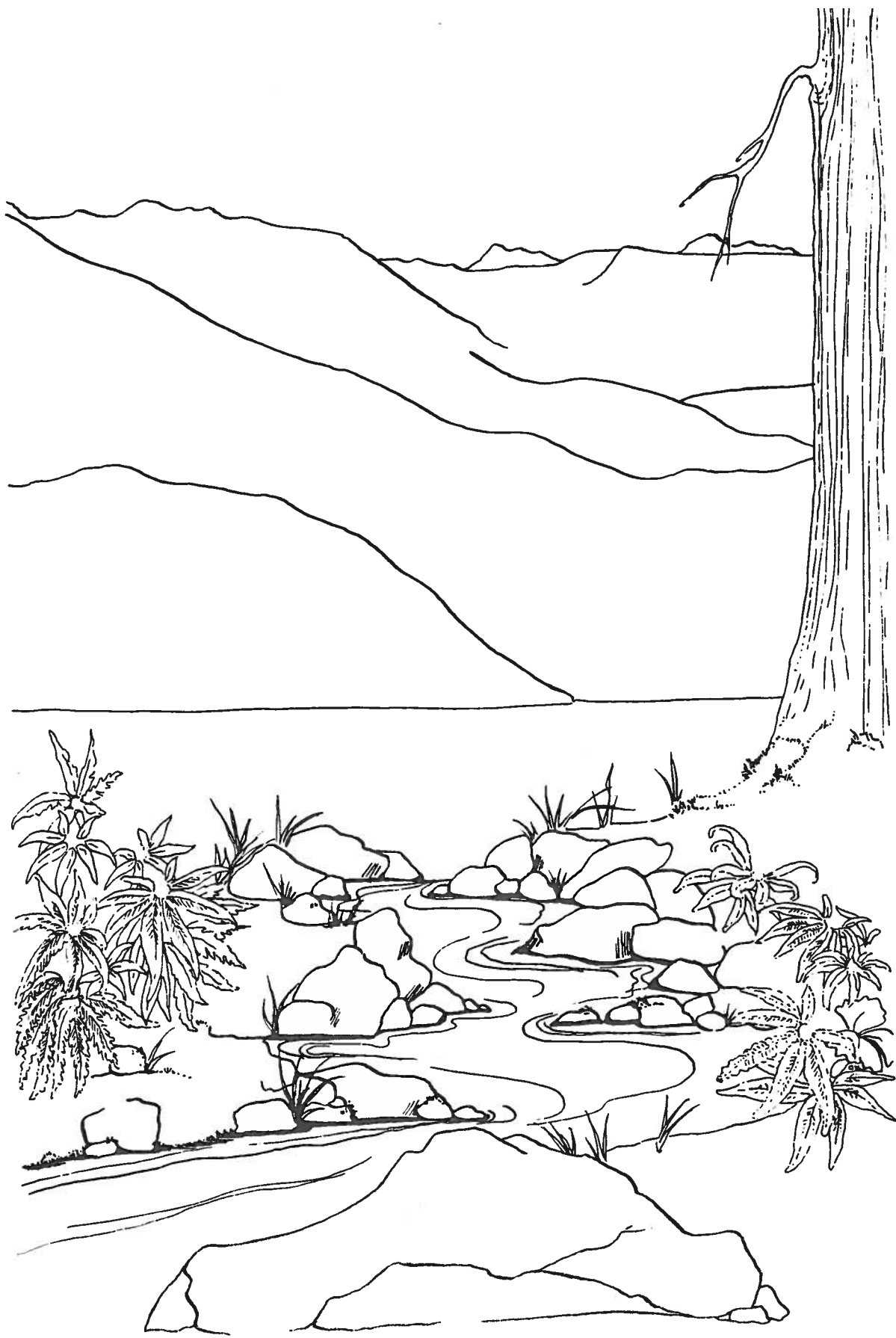
ILLUSTRATED BY
CAROLE KAHLER



A COLORING BOOK



Many years have passed since Nahkeeta, a beautiful maiden, lived in the northern foothills of what are now known as the Olympic Mountains.



Nahkeeta was a gentle girl, greatly loved by her people. She was as pretty and as graceful as the maidenhair ferns which grew in the forest. Her voice was as cheerful and musical as the little stream which flowed from under the waterfall not far from her home



Her people were Klallam Indians. They got most of their food from the salt water and rivers. In the summer, after the salmon had been dried and stored for winter use, the women gathered berries near the edge of the forest.



In the autumn, they went to openings in the forest to gather currants and roots and tiger lily bulbs. They almost never went back into the deep woods.



One autumn day, Nahkeeta was gathering berries with her mother and sisters. She wandered back into the woods, enjoying the carpets of ferns, the moss-wrapped logs and the moss-draped trees, and the yellow-green light that shimmered through the forest.



After awhile she realized that she had wandered too far. When she turned around to go back, she found that she was lost.



She called to her mother and sisters, but she knew that her voice was lost in the bigness and tallness of the forest. She tried to retrace her steps. Slowly the yellow-green sunlight of the forest faded.



Darkness came. Nahkeeta struggled on, often climbing over fallen logs and getting tangled with the vines and ferns and small trees that grew from the old moss-covered trunks.

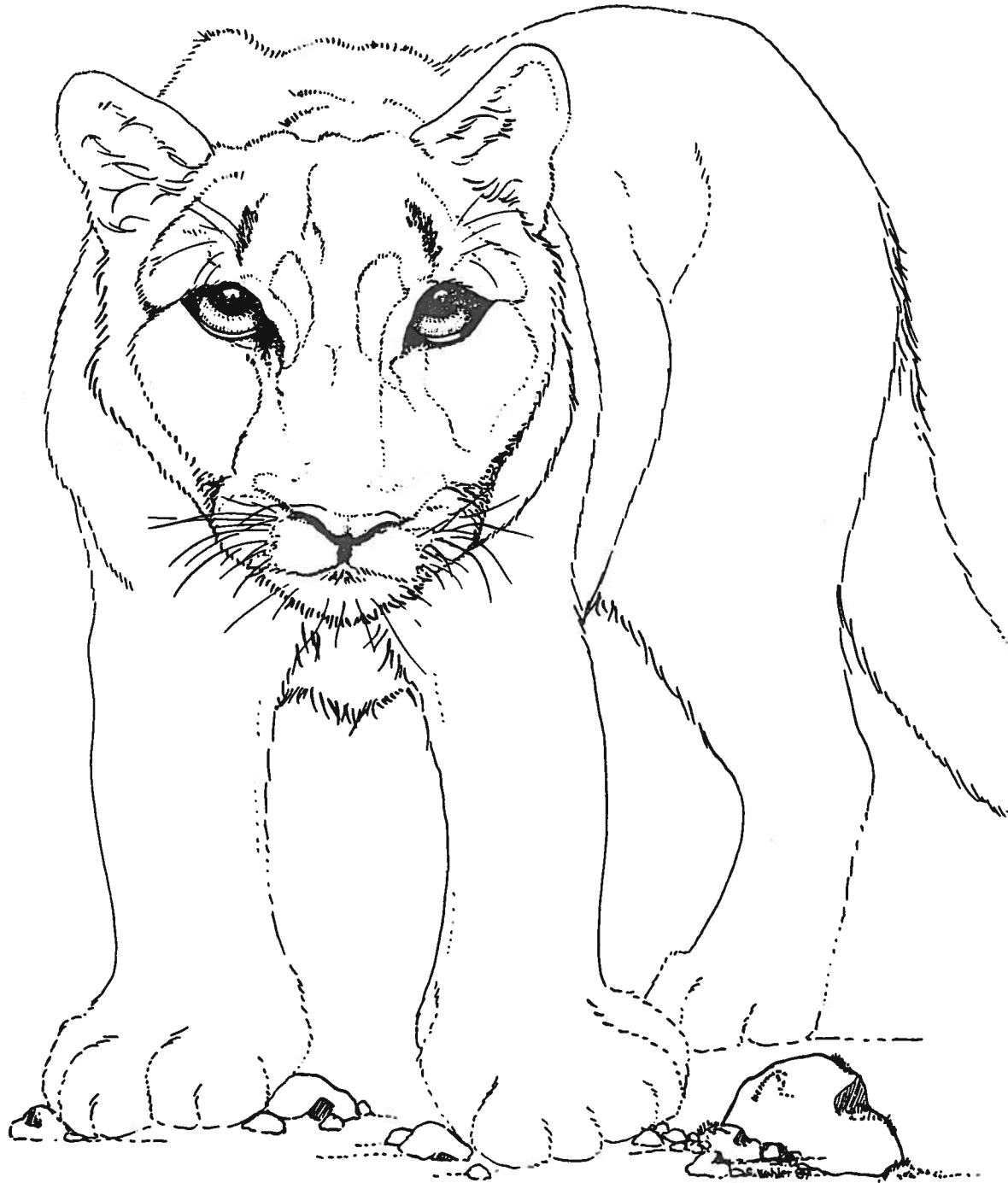


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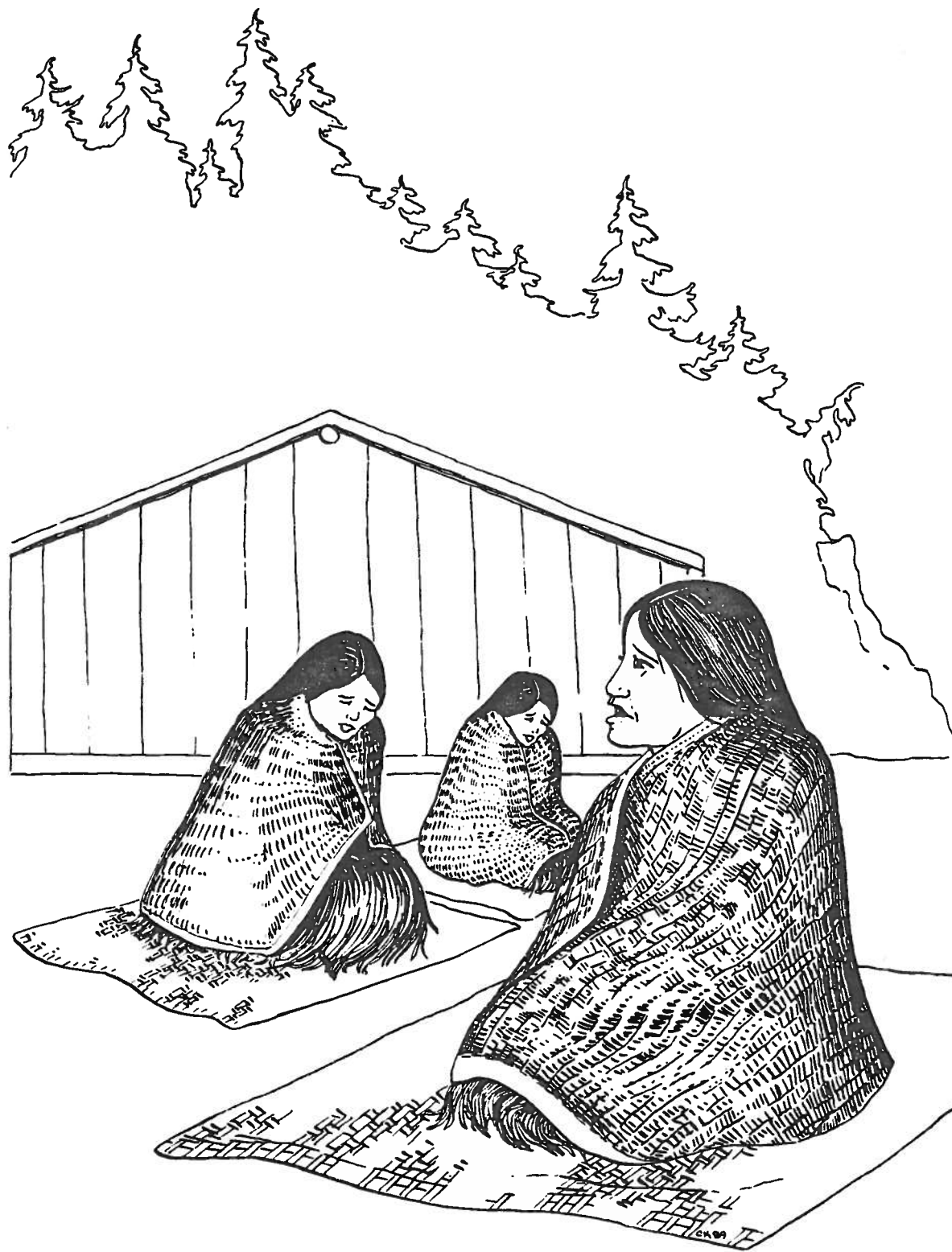
At last, too weary and frightened to go farther, she dropped down on the moss beside a log and fell asleep.



The next morning her people searched for her. "Nahkeeta!", they called, "Nahkeeta!", over and over. There was no answer but the song of the wind in the treetops and the murmur of the mountain streams.



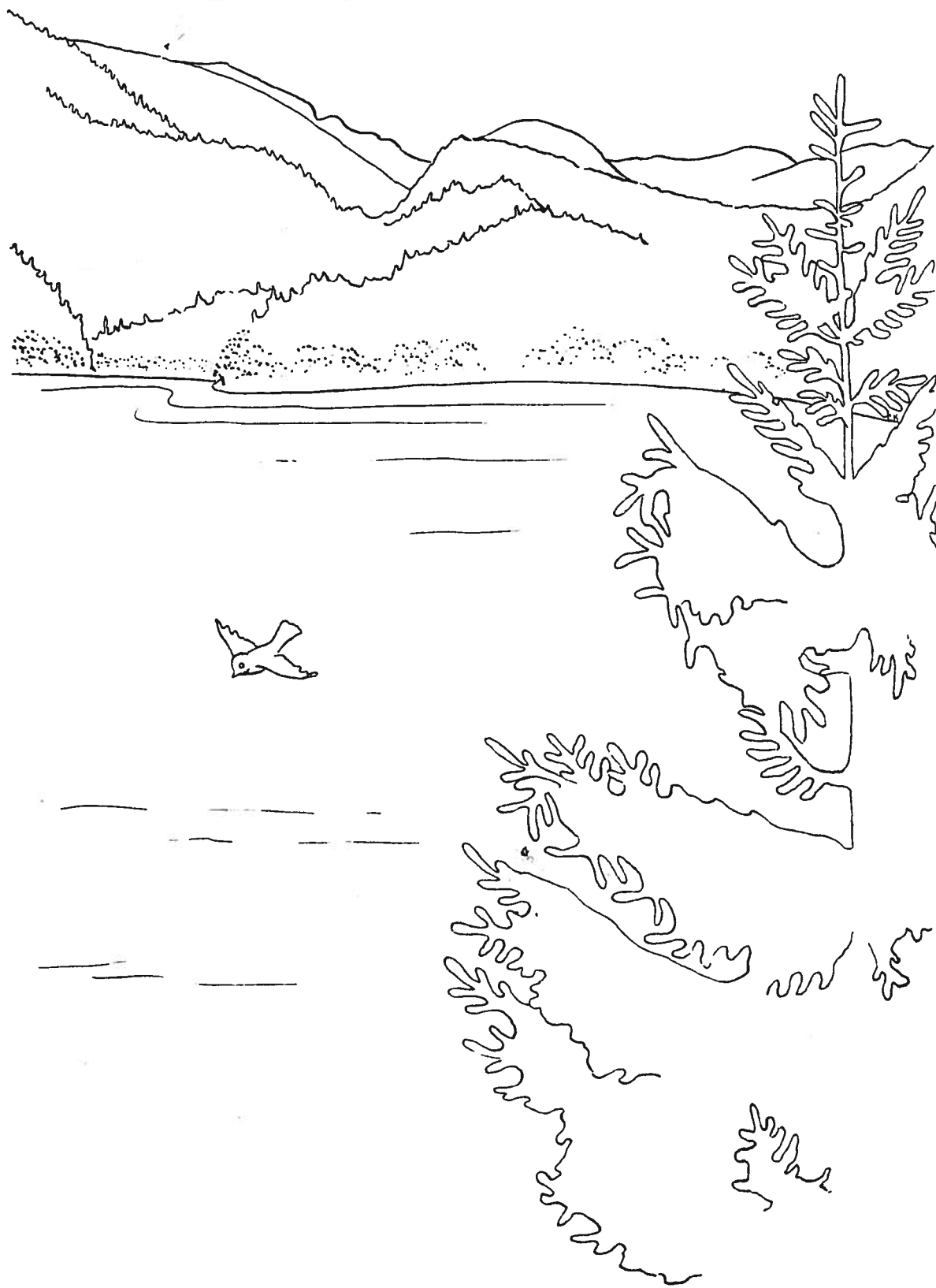
For three days her people looked for her. On the fourth day someone stumbled over a moss-covered log, beside it, in a pool of blood lay Nahkeeta's body. Some wild animal had killed her.



Grief filled the hearts of Nahkeeta's people as they buried her body in a beautiful valley in the forest. For days, mournful chants and the sad wailing of women filled the air.



Now *The Changer* was witnessing this sad event. His heart was touched by the emotion shown by the people. One morning when the people arose, they were surprised to see a beautiful little lake, its' blue-green waters surrounded by white-barked alders. The lake covered the place where Nahkeeta was buried.



The Indians called the little lake *Nahkeeta*. They say that every autumn the birds hover over the lake and call for her, "Nahkeeta, Nahkeeta". The only answer was a ripple over the water.



Today the lake is known as Lake Sutherland, because the first explorer to discover it was John Sutherland. Nahkeeta has been forgotten, except by a few old grandmothers of her tribe.

This book is dedicated to my Uncle Richard Mike,
who carved a coastal Salish canoe for the 1889 - 1989
Washington State Centennial "Paddle To Seattle" event.
The canoe was named *Nahkeeta*, in honor of this legend.
May we always keep alive the legends and
the art of carving of the Klallam People.

Jamie R. Valadez