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HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

Moon mask

Native Americans



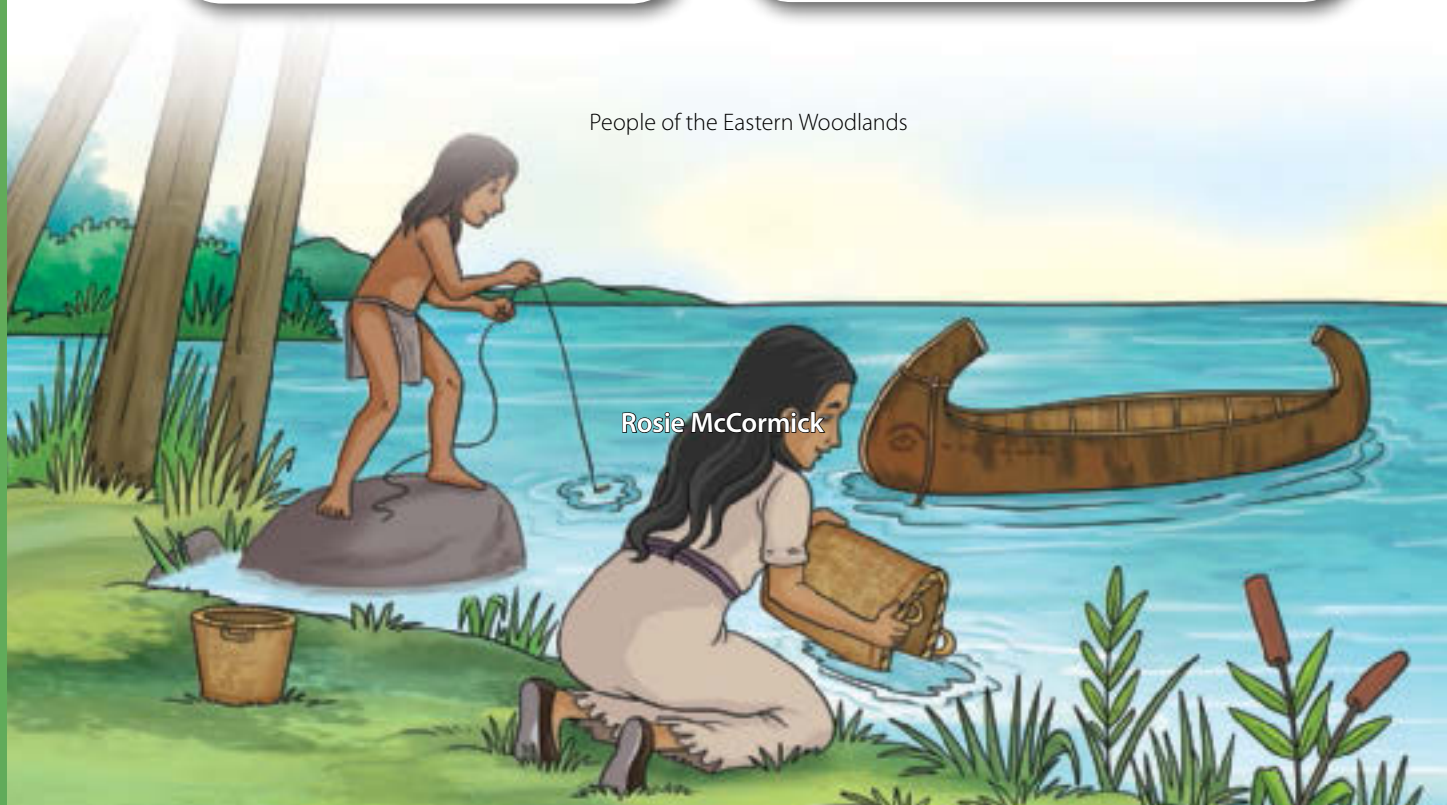
The Ancestral Pueblo of the Southwest



Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest



People of the Eastern Woodlands



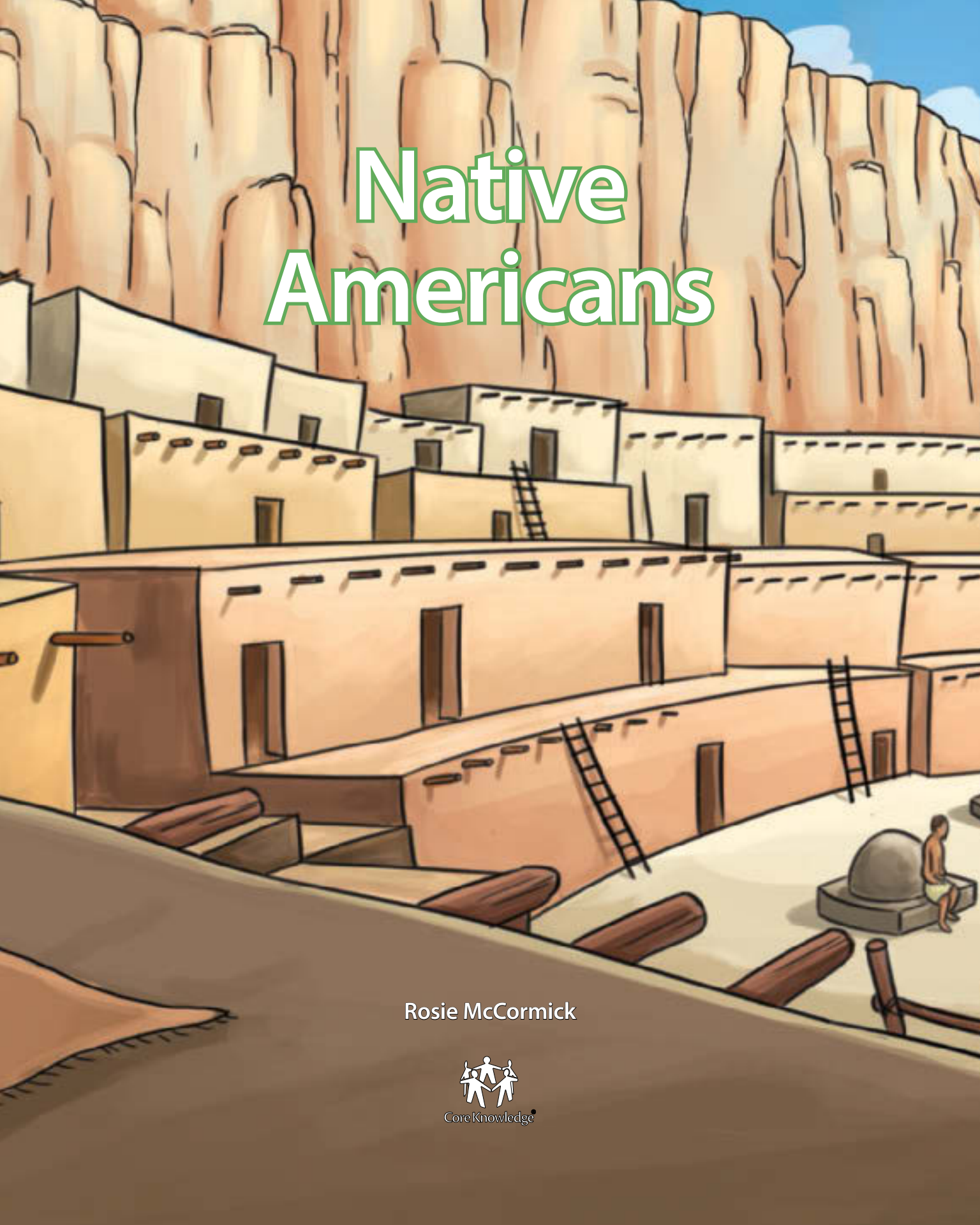
Rosie McCormick

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Native Americans



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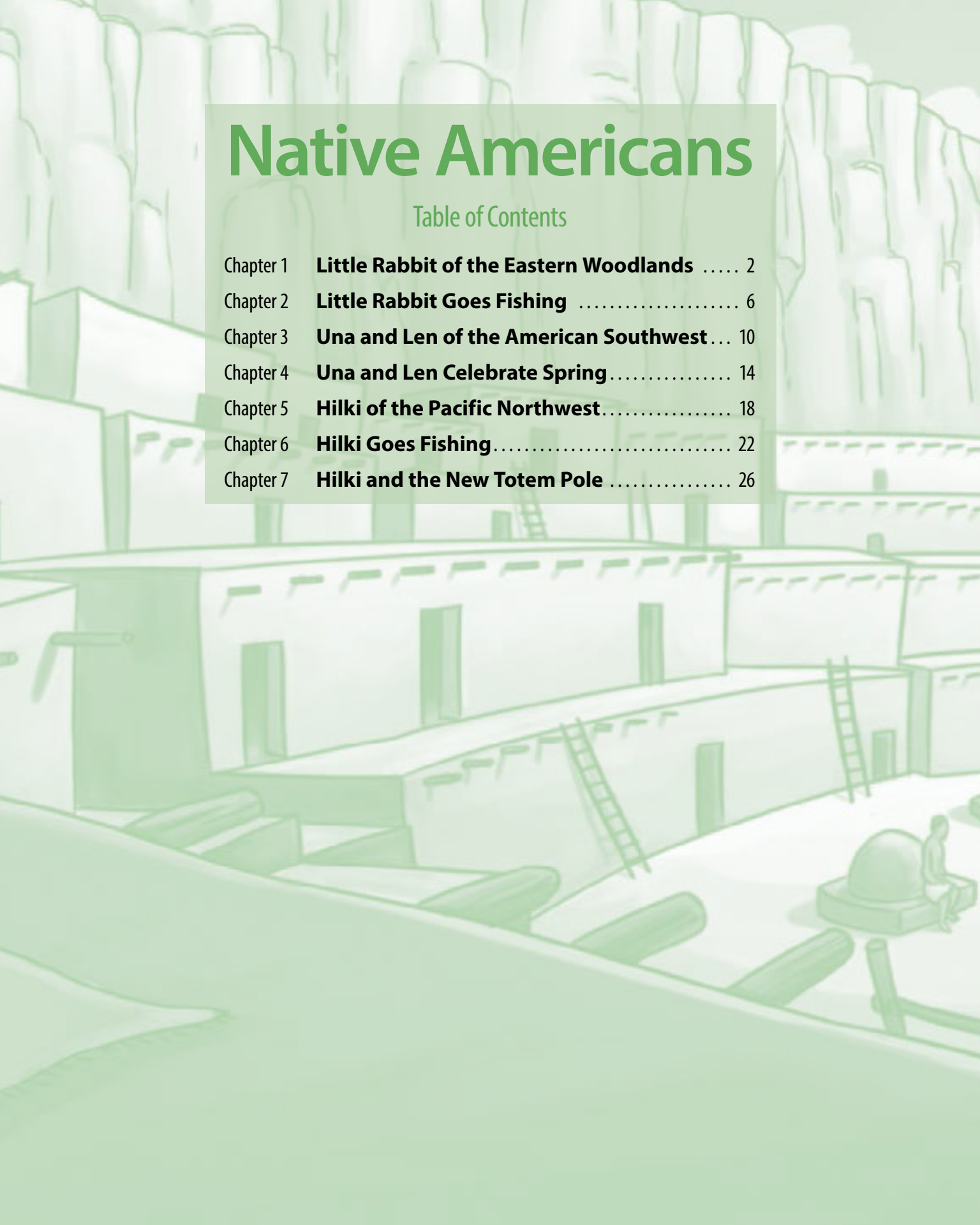
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Native Americans

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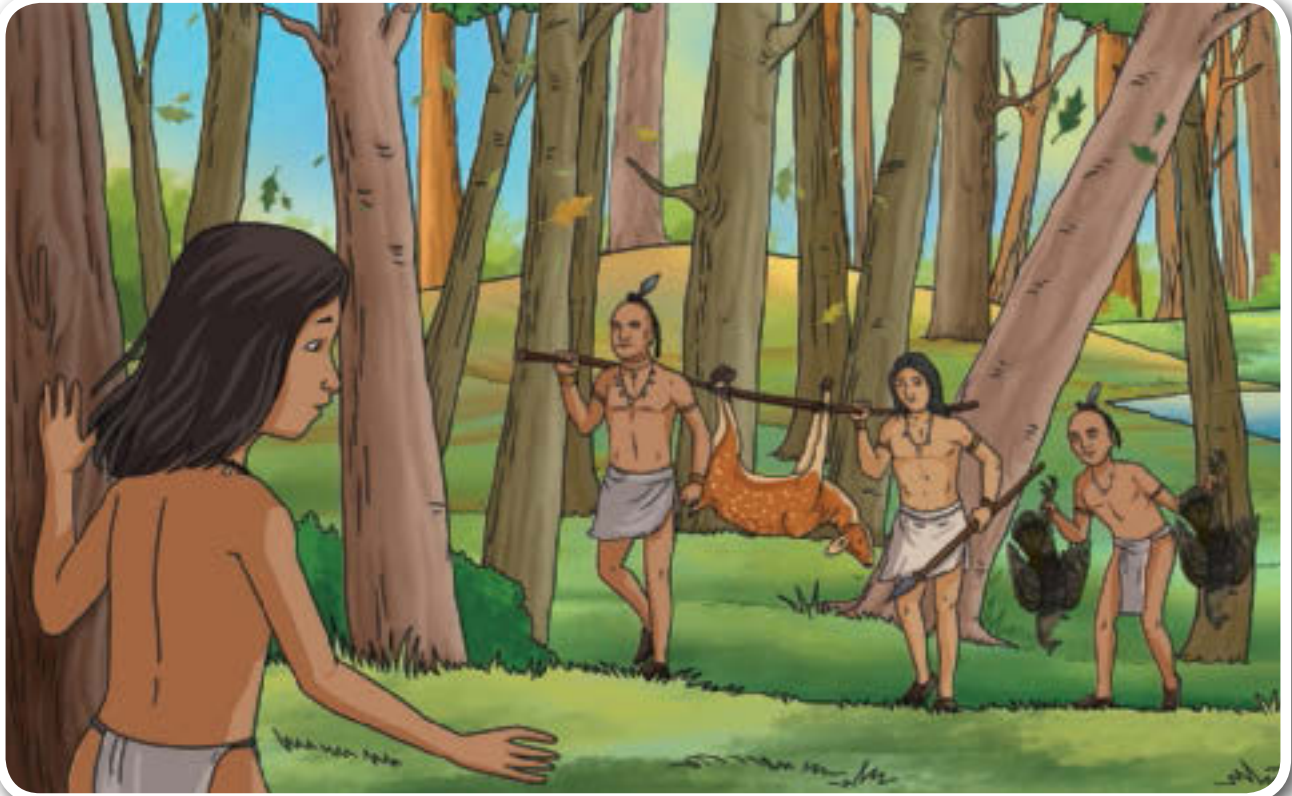
Little Rabbit of the Eastern Woodlands

One sunny day, Little Rabbit was chopping wood outside his family's longhouse. His father, his uncle, and his brother had gone hunting. Little Rabbit wasn't old enough to go with them. He was always sad when he was left behind.

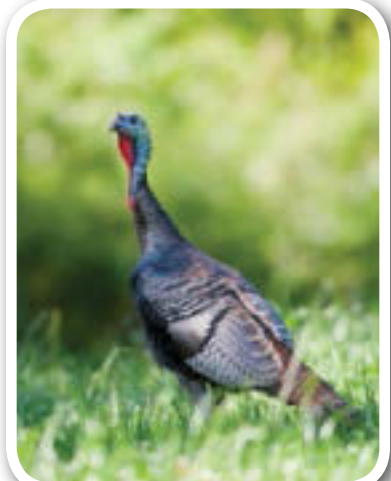


A longhouse was made out of wood. Often, many families lived in one longhouse.

Sometime later, Little Rabbit heard the sound of voices. Little Rabbit looked deep into the woodland and saw his brother, his father, and his uncle returning from the hunt. His father and uncle were carrying a white-tailed deer, while his brother held a turkey in each hand.



Native Americans used the meat from the animals they hunted for food. They used animal furs to make blankets. They used the skins to make clothes and shoes.



Little Rabbit smiled as they walked toward him. His father patted his head, and his brother showed him the turkeys. Little Rabbit knew that hunting was important to his family.



"Can I go with you next time?" asked Little Rabbit.

"Brother," said Little Rabbit's older brother, "your arrow never hits its target!"

Little Rabbit's father touched his shoulder. "Soon you will be ready to hunt!" he said softly. "When you are, we will have a feast. Just as we give thanks for nature's gifts, we will celebrate you."



Little Rabbit Goes Fishing

Early the next day, Little Rabbit went to the river with his mother. He may not have been allowed to hunt, but he knew how to fish with a line and a hook made from deer bone. The river water was icy cold. His mother began to fill a large basket with water for drinking and cooking.



Native Americans sometimes fished with a line and hook. Something tasty for the fish to eat was attached to the hook.



Little Rabbit began to fish. On the river's edge was a canoe that the family used for traveling up and down the river. Two paddles lay inside the canoe. Little Rabbit's father and uncle had made the canoe themselves. Little Rabbit loved paddling with his brother upriver to fish with nets.



When Little Rabbit's mother was ready to leave, she turned to him and called out his name.

"Little Rabbit," she said, "it is time to go back."

Just as his mother spoke, Little Rabbit hooked a large trout fish. Little Rabbit smiled to himself.

"I am coming!" he replied.



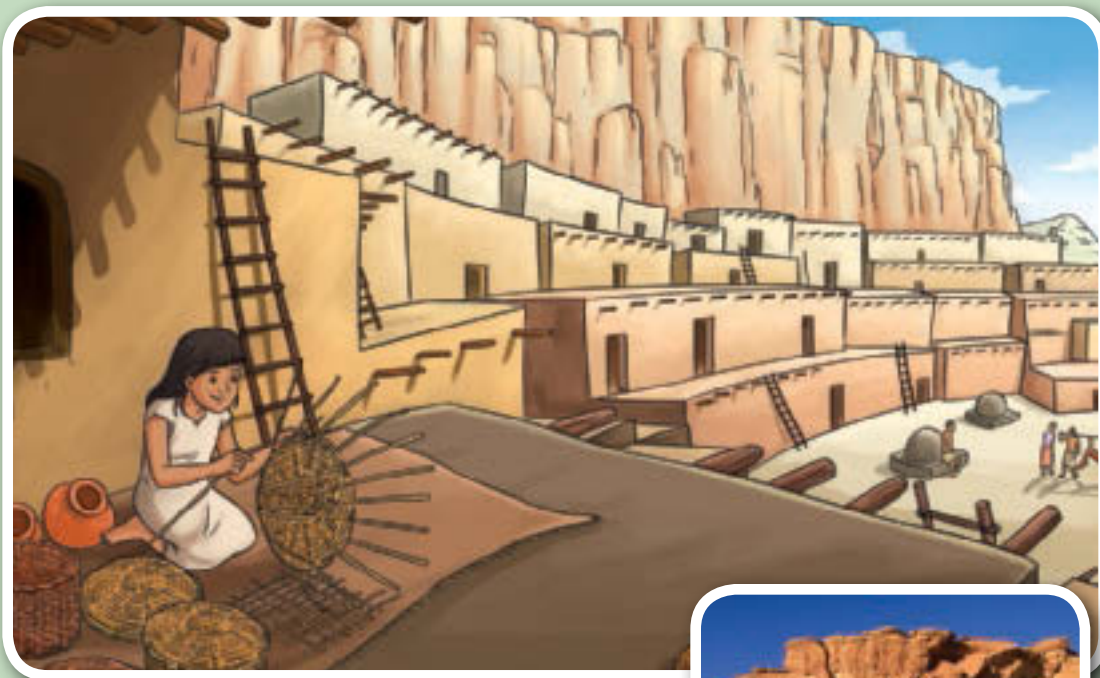
Brook trout live in fresh water in the eastern United States. They can grow to be almost three feet long.

Little Rabbit walked happily beside his mother back through the woodland. Along the way, he picked nuts and berries and placed them in a basket his mother had made from leaves and twigs. Little Rabbit couldn't wait to show his brother the large fish he had caught.

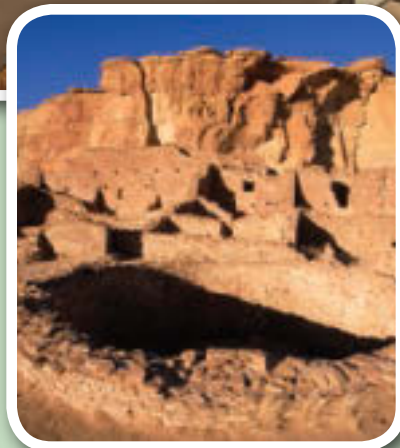


Una and Len of the American Southwest

Long, long ago in a place now called New Mexico, there lived Native American people who were part of a group called the Ancestral Pueblo. The Ancestral Pueblo built homes there that were a little like apartment buildings. There were many different rooms for different families, including community rooms called kivas. Most of the rooms were part of the same building. In one of these buildings lived a girl named Una.



For hundreds of years, the Ancestral Pueblo lived in Chaco Canyon, in northern New Mexico. Today, you can visit what was once their home.

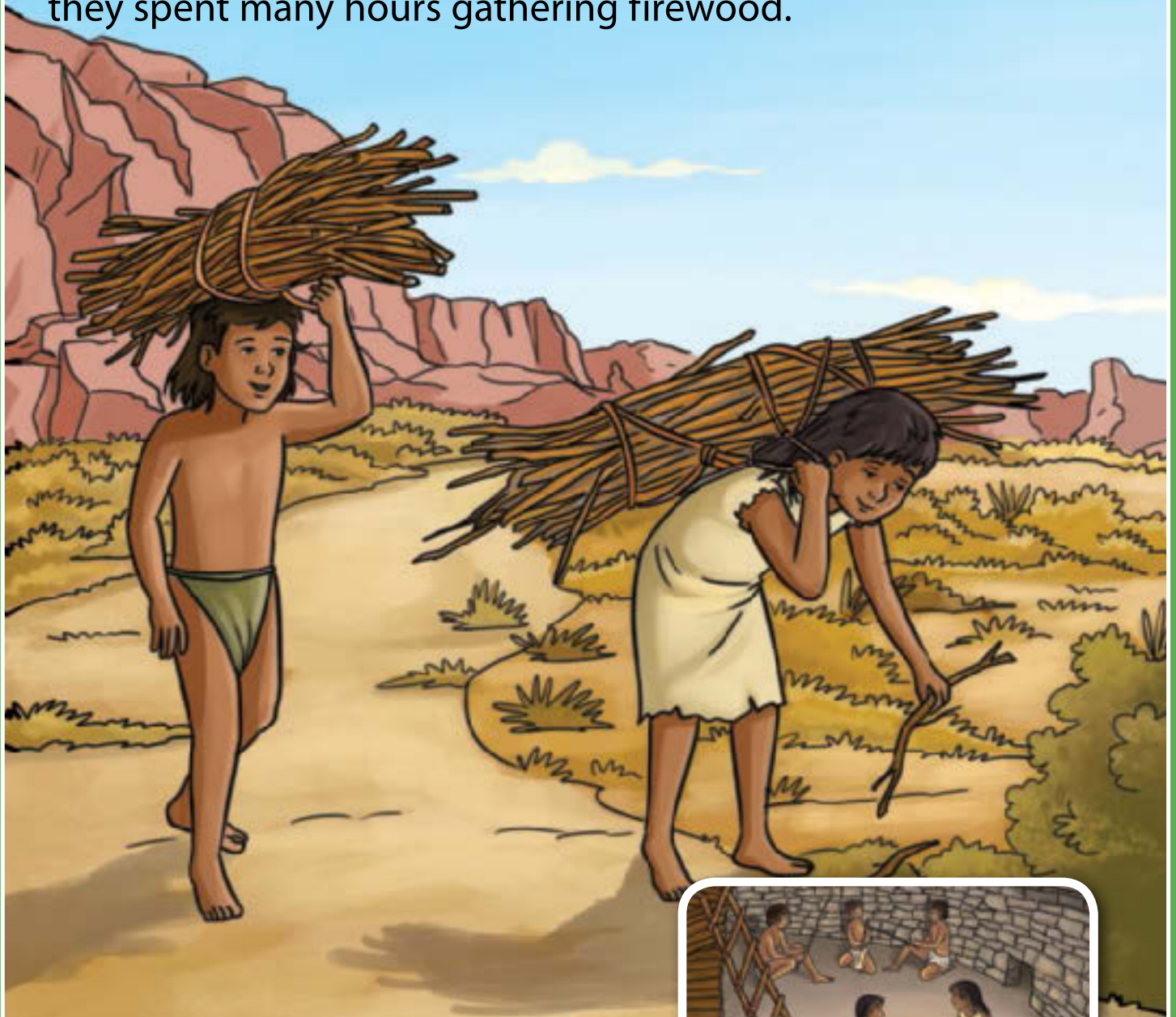


Una loved to go from floor to floor visiting her friends, climbing up and down the wooden ladders as fast as she could.

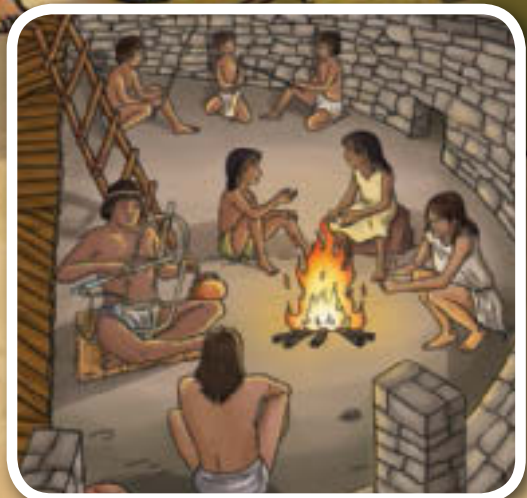


In the wintertime, Una and her cousin Len would sit and lean against the stone walls that were warmed by the sun. There they would tell each other stories.

On winter nights when it was very cold, Una and Len sat near the great fires that were built in their homes. During the day, they spent many hours gathering firewood.



The firewood was only used on the coldest nights.



When winter was over and spring began, Una and Len raced each other across the land that was beginning to turn green. This was a sign that it would soon be time to plant corn. Corn was the most important crop for the Ancestral Pueblo. They ate corn every day, and they stored it for the winter months, and for the times when the rain did not come and nothing grew in the dry earth.



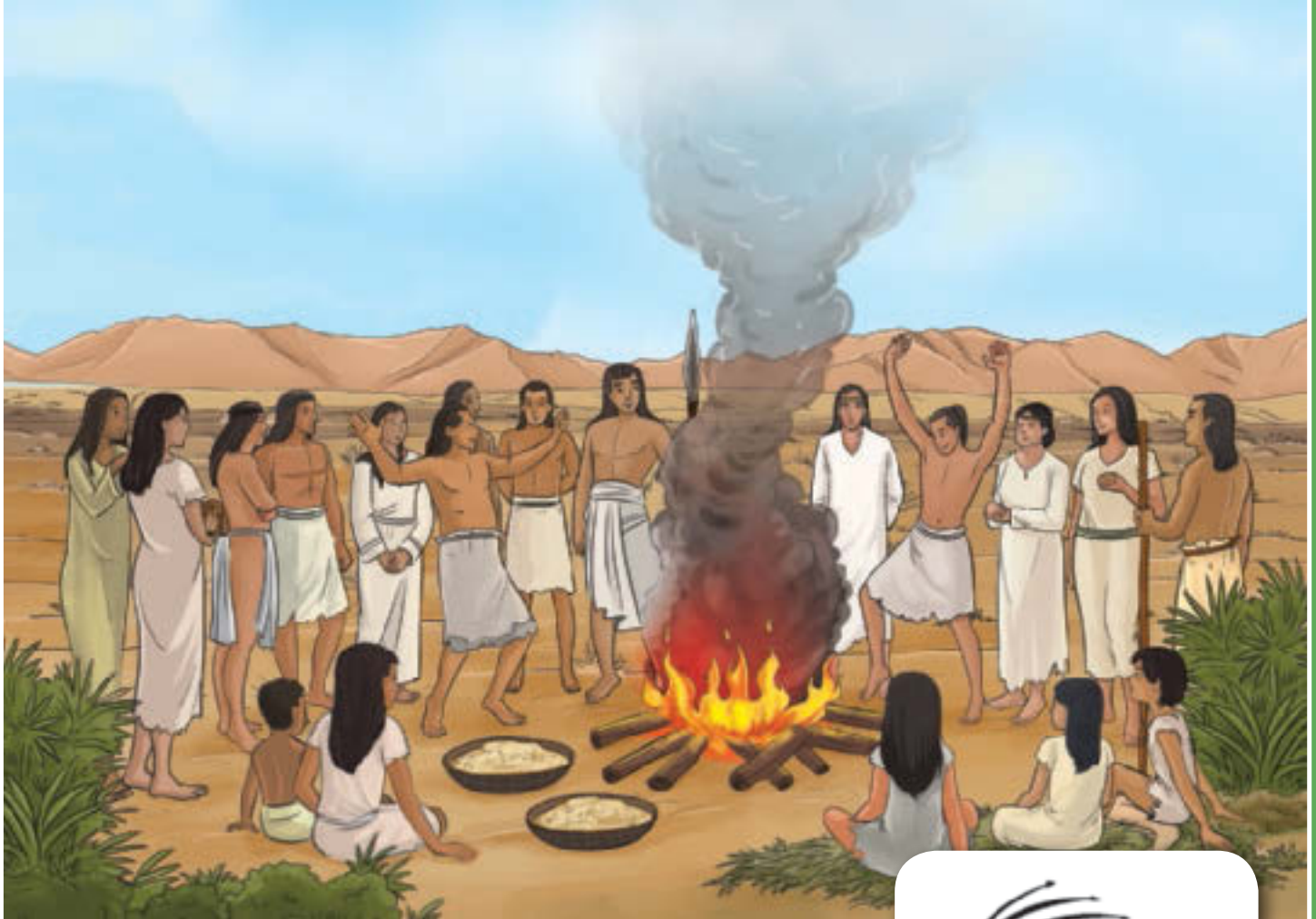
Una and Len Celebrate Spring

In early spring, Una had less time to play with Len. She had to work with her mother and sisters to get the soil ready to plant the corn seeds. Una helped dig up the soil and make long rows for the corn.

Near the rows filled with corn seeds, they also planted squash and bean seeds.



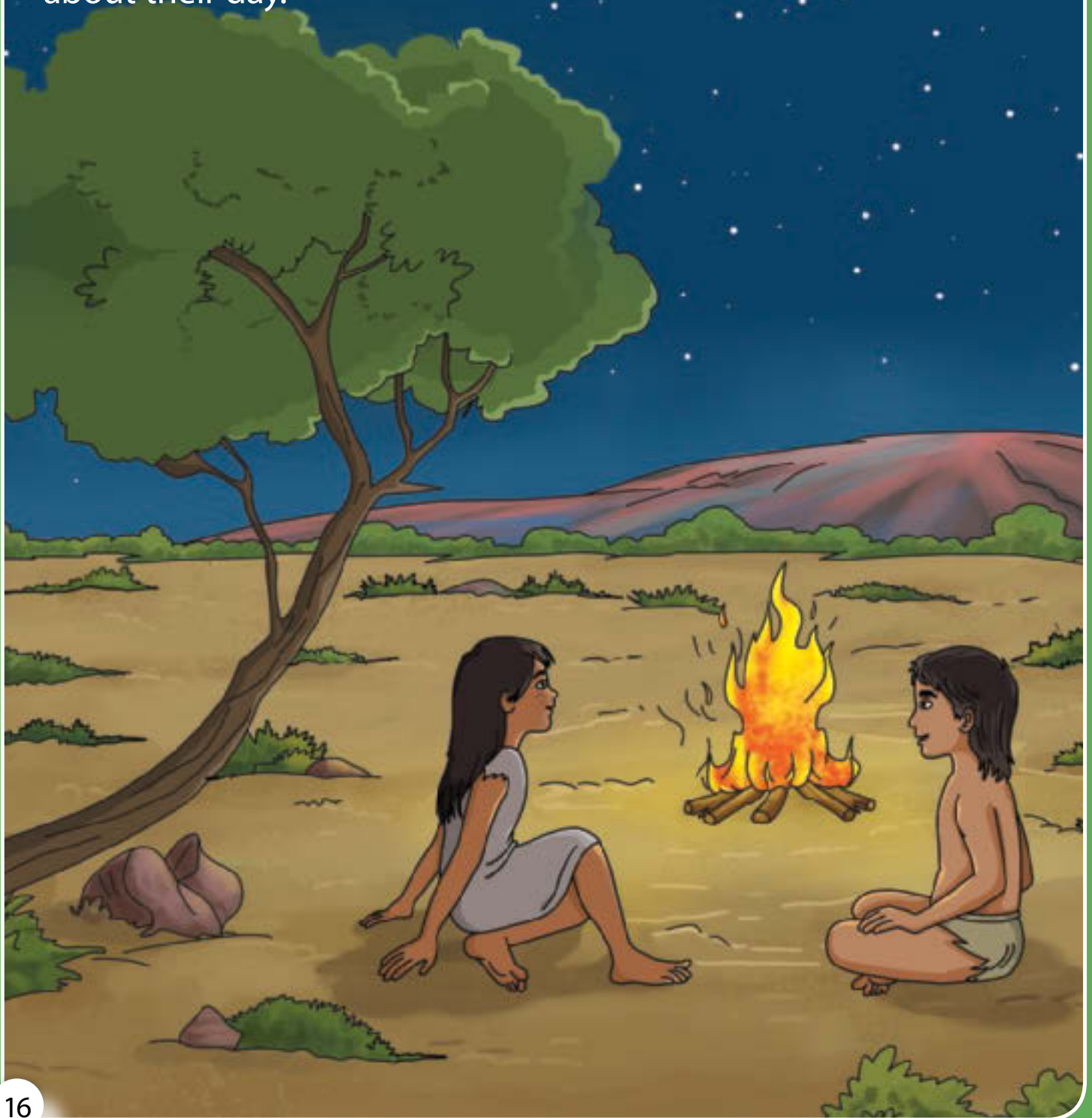
After planting, the Ancestral Pueblo celebrated and thanked Kokopelli, the rain god, for his help. The Ancestral Pueblo believed that Kokopelli played a magic flute, which brought rain to the fields.



Len had once told Una that when the wind blew through the canyons in springtime, it was really the sound of Kokopelli's flute. Now, each spring, Una listened for the sound of the flute.



While the crops grew, Una and the other girls watched the fields and chased birds and small animals from the fields. Len went off to hunt with the other boys. But in the evenings, Una and Len sat beneath the clear, starry sky and told each other about their day.



When the crops were finally ready to be harvested, everyone helped in the fields. The crops were gathered and stored. Some of the crops were stored in beautiful baskets made from plants, such as yucca, that the women and girls made. The rest were placed in large storerooms. After the harvest, there was a big feast. Then Una and Len ate until their tummies ached.

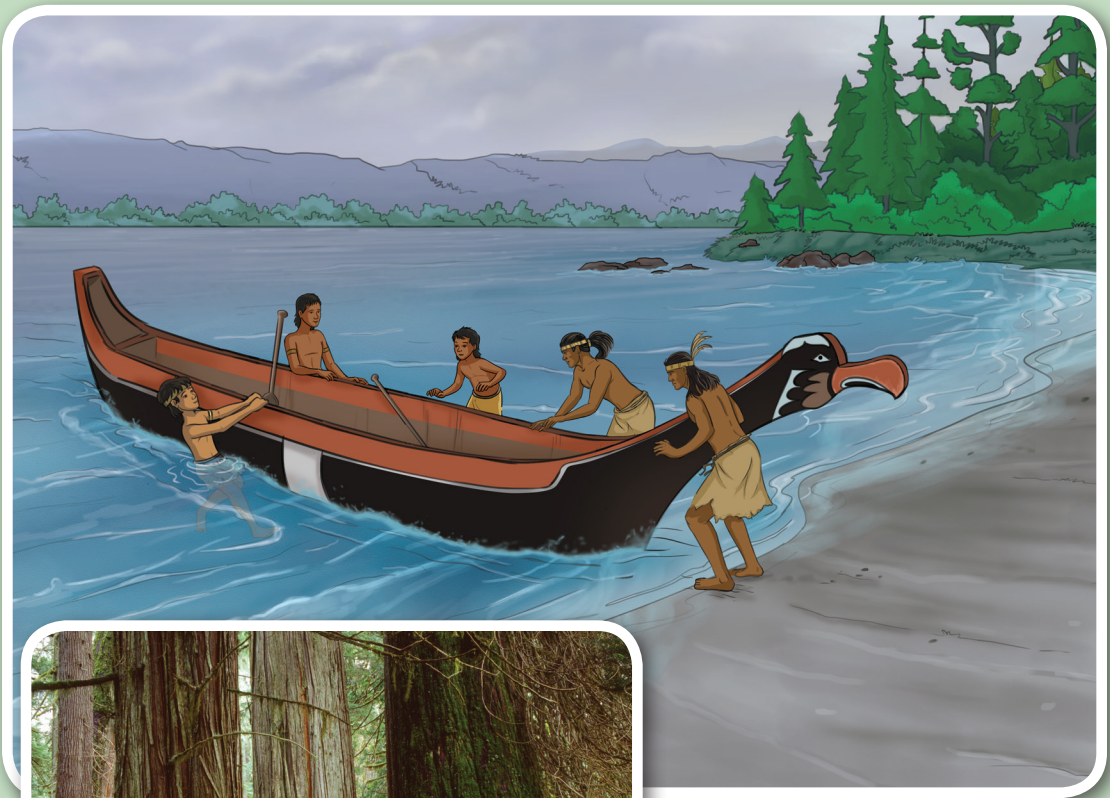


Corn, squash, and beans were important foods for the Ancestral Pueblo. These crops are sometimes called, “the three sisters.”



Hilki of the Pacific Northwest

Hilki ran to the beach. His father, uncle, and brothers were pushing their new canoe into the ocean water. Hilki waded into the water and grabbed onto the side of the canoe. The men had spent many days using their hatchets to turn the tall trunk of a cedar tree into a beautiful canoe. Now it was ready.



Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest often made canoes from red cedar trees.

Hilki pushed and pulled the canoe as hard as he could. The cold water splashed around his waist. Before long, the water was up to his chest.

"Jump into the canoe, Hilki!" said his father loudly. "Or soon you will be under the water!"



Hilki rolled into the canoe headfirst. Moments later, his brothers jumped in beside him. Hilki loved this canoe because his father had carved the head of a raven on the front. Ravens were a sign of good luck. He hoped the raven would help his family catch a lot of fish.



Ravens are smart birds. They can copy the sounds humans make.



"Who's ready to fish?" asked Hilki's father as he, too, jumped into the canoe. Hilki's uncle had stayed behind to hunt.

"I am!" replied Hilki loudly. "May I use a spear?" he asked hopefully.

Hilki's father nodded his reply. Hilki smiled and reached for a spear. This would be his first time spearfishing.



Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest used different kinds of stone spearheads.

Hilki Goes Fishing

Hilki's brothers paddled hard, moving the canoe farther out into the ocean. Then they changed direction, and the fishermen headed north.



Sometime later, they stopped to fish. Hilki slowly raised his spear.

“Keep still and be patient!” Hilki’s father said.

Hilki did as his father asked. He stood up and stared at the calm, blue water. A large king salmon came into view.

Hilki gulped and moved his spear quickly. But the salmon was faster than Hilki. Hilki fell forward toward the water. Just in time, his father saved him.



"It takes time to learn how to spear a fish," said Hilki's father.
"Be patient."

Hilki nodded his head. But he felt sad.

"Come, Hilki. Let's use the net!" said Hilki's father. Hilki helped his father throw the net into the water. Before long, they had caught many large king salmon.



Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest stored king salmon to eat in the wintertime.

Just before sunset, the fishermen returned to their village. Hilki's mother came to help with the fish. They would prepare a tasty meal of fresh salmon that night. Then they would all sit and talk about their day. The rest of the salmon would be smoked and stored. Hilki hoped his brothers would not tell that he had almost gone swimming with the fish.



Hilki and the New Totem Pole

Several days later, as the sun was rising in the morning sky, Hilki rolled up his sleeping mat and stepped outside. As he walked through his village, he passed by many totem poles.



Totem poles tell stories about Native American history in the Pacific Northwest.

That day, the village was planning a gathering called a potlatch. This potlatch was being held to show the new totem pole that Hilki's Uncle Mahwa had made. The women of the village would cook a wonderful feast. Many gifts, such as blankets and food, would be given by the chief to the people who gathered.



Hilki found his uncle looking at the new totem pole.

"Is it almost finished?" Hilki asked.

"We need to paint it," said Mahwa. "Would you like to help me?"

Hilki's uncle did not wait for a reply. He simply gave Hilki two wooden bowls, each filled with a paint mixture of oil, berries, and plants.

Animal shapes had been carved into the totem pole. There were birds, frogs, and a bear. An eagle's head was at the very top.



For the rest of the day, everyone in the village got ready for the potlatch. Hilki knew there would be lots of food, dancing, gift giving, and storytelling. Some people would wear specially carved face masks as they danced. Hilki was excited.



This is a carved and painted wooden mask of the moon. To some Native Americans, the moon is the protector of Earth.

Finally, as the sun began to set, the people of the village gathered around the great fire. Suddenly, the sound of music could be heard in the still evening air.



Hilki sat next to his mother, and together they watched the raising of the totem pole as the flickering flames burned brightly.



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