

The Yopitlaag Funzy

or The last Map of Root Man Charlie

The mystery of seasonal change. The old people said that the earth had sat in one place too long and needed to change position so that it would not get stiff. In Yopitlaag no one cared whether this explanation was right or wrong. The old people smiled when they said it. The younger people laughed when they heard it. Everyone liked it. There was no one who didn't believe it.

Now it was that the colder seasons were coming to Yopitlaag, the village of the little people with wings. And so along with food gathering, food preparation, clothes making, lodge repair, wood gathering, and food storage, the tribe of five hundred little people had needed to move their lodges from the woods through a long narrow passageway to the protection and warmth of a cave inside the mountain.

Dancing Bird stood in front of her lodge and looked around. The hardest part was over. All of the villages one hundred and fifty lodges were raised and covered, and she could see that most people had already finished arranging the insides of their lodge. Many people sat content on their front porches. At the tribal center lodge, where special needs were reported, she saw no one, not even a young runner awaiting an assignment. The work is over, but it is still light outside... he has let them go, she thought. She looked for him. She saw him walking slowly from the far side of the circle of lodges, down a path towards the tribal center, looking intently at his notebook. She felt something in her heart, and thought: he needs play now....

"I see a young woman that would like to give something to a young man."

Dancing Bird turned around. There on the front porch of the lodge in a rocking chair sat the village spirit healer,

Dried Up Creek. He was an old man with a young heart. She smiled. He saw in that moment that Dancing Bird was in love with Clear Water, the young man who was the tribal center manager. He saw that her thoughts were making her more beautiful. And Clear Water was in love with Dancing Bird. A tear came to Dried Up Creek's eyes. "Kuan." He said. "Answer a need." Dancing Bird then flew down to the tribal center. In her excitement she did not look back, and so she did not see the group of musicians called The Grateful Dead begin to set up their speakers and instruments on top of the spirit healer's lodge. They connected the electric cords running from the speakers-amplifiers to the lodgepoles of the spirit healer's lodge, and then began playing "Good Lovin'."

When Dancing Bird reached the tribal center lodge, she walked to the front and leaned shyly on a lodgepole at the entrance. There inside was Clear Water, with his back to her, looking at some small notecards on the bulletin board. Dancing Bird made no noise, and just looked.

The thoughts that came to her were thoughts about the spirit of the place, the tribal center lodge. The tribal center lodge was there because the little people of Yopitlaag had a way of life that everyone agreed on. Everyone grew up learning this way of life, which was to "give what you can, keep what you need." And here at the tribal center lodge, a place to discover if something you had to give was something someone else needed. All kinds of needs were posted on the bulletin board, needs for material goods and needs for personal care. Also, any surplus of material goods or energy for personal care was posted on the bulletin board. The manager of the tribal center then tried to connect existing resources with existing needs. In this way

the little people of Yopitlaag encouraged the love spirit in each person in the village, and each person's love together grew a beautiful Yopitlaag.

They lived this way because it worked. And it worked because few people ever forgot that the love spirit was a gift from God. And God's gift, something people could not create, but never lose.

During the week of the moving village, Clear Water helped many of the villagers of Yopitlaag find what they needed. Now, Dancing Bird, the apprentice spirit healer, will she be able to know what Clear Water needs, and will she have it to give?

Meanwhile, Clear Water was looking at the notecards that remained on the bulletin boards. Hmmm, he thought, none of the clothes makers can help Bright Star make socks for her younger brother until Thursday... Snow Tracks, Howling Wolf, and Clear Sky need to see the chiropractor, but he's over at Summer Stream's getting a massage-- and "will be unavailable the rest of the day" ... all right... and wood gathering, always wood gathering. Where are those runners? We still have some daylight left-- Gliding Hawk! Gliding uh...." Clear Water turned and saw Dancing Bird.

"Hi..." said Clear Water. "Did you uh... are you all finished helping set up your lodge?"

"Yes."

"Oh. Well,uh... have you seen Gliding Hawk? I feel like I need to keep busy today at least until dark... uh, are you doing anything now? Could you fly outside and see if Gliding Hawk and the rest of the runners are out there? I heard them talking about the wind being up today or something...." Clear Water suddenly stopped talking. Dancing Bird had not hardly moved, but stood looking at something... at him... and he felt that she knew something he needed to know... but then there was

Little Butterfly at the door.

"Is Gliding Hawk around?" she asked.

Clear Water said, "I think he's outside."

"Well, can someone go out the passageway with me? My mother says the wind is up today, and one person by themselves could get hurt by a sudden updraft."

"I'll go with you," said Dancing Bird. "And do you want me to ask the runners to bring some wood in?" she asked, looking at Clear Water.

"Well, no," said Clear Water, "no... they can play now."

So Dancing Bird and Little Butterfly flew over to the passageway that went to the outside, and carefully flew out. There were no gusts of wind on their trip out.

When they got outside they found that the weather was warm and clear. There were still many leaves on the trees. They stood quietly for a moment, and Dancing Bird heard no sounds that signaled little people were nearby.

Dancing Bird decided to look first at the wood gathering area, just to see how it looked. When her and Little Butterfly got there, they found one person, Clear Water's mother, Leafmaker.

"Ah, girls," she said, as she stacked wood, "and have you come out to ride the leaves?"

"But there is no wind," said Dancing Bird.

"The wind is coming," said Leafmaker. "In fifteen minutes it comes. Pick a leaf, any leaf..." She continued to stack wood.

"Don't you want to ride the leaves this year? asked Little Butterfly.

"My heart rides the leaves every day," said Leafmaker, smiling. "You ride them then you know what I mean."

Dancing Bird smiled. "Are Clear Water's runners around somewhere? Little Butterfly is looking for her brother."

"They are quiet, up in the trees, hiding in leaves. I don't think you'll find them, but when the wind blows, you will hear them."

"Does Clear Water know about leaf riding?" asked Dancing Bird.

"All know," said Leafmaker, "but some forget."

Then Dancing Bird and Little Butterfly left Leafmaker. Dancing Bird was thinking about "Kuan," and knew that she had found something to give to Clear Water.

Dancing Bird and Little Butterfly flew back through the passageway to the village and went back to the tribal center lodge.

"The wind has a surprise for you," she told Clear Water, "but you have to hurry. Please come outside with us, now."

Clear Water stepped outside the tribal center lodge and looked around. The village showed no signs of unrest. All was calm. "Still Water!" he yelled. A young boy appeared at the entrance of a lodge not far away. "Can you manage the tribal center for a little while?"

Clear Water had decided to go outside and see the "surprise" that the wind had for him. He left Still Water to manage the tribal center. Now Dancing Bird, Clear Water, and Little Butterfly were outside waiting quietly for the wind.

"Can you give me a hint?" asked Clear Water.

"My hint is that you shouldn't need a hint," Dancing Bird answered.

From a distance, Leafmaker saw the three of them standing under a tall tree, which still had all its leaves. And then she felt a light breeze. Leafmaker saw clouds coming over the mountains on the northwest horizon. I will go now, she thought, before the wind makes the passageway dangerous. And so she flew unnoticed to the passageway, and went in to go back to the village.

Soon the breeze began to get a little stronger. The clouds were still in the distance, but the sun was covered over now and the sky had darkened. Clear Water was looking around, with a look of confused anticipation on his face. "The wind is up...." he said out loud. Then his face brightened. "Let's go! Now! Quick! Up the tree! Pick a leaf! This is the day of the best rides! I can feel it!" They all flew and climbed carefully up the windward side of the tree. Dancing Bird picked out a leaf for her and Little Butterfly, and with Little Butterfly in front they both stuck their legs through the brittle leafy part and held on to the thin stem. Clear Water picked out a leaf for himself and did the same. By now the leaves were fluttering and flapping in the wind. "Hold on!" cried Dancing Bird. Then suddenly, leaves blew everywhere, as a great gust of wind pulled thousands of leaves off all at once. The wind and the leaves and the yelling and screaming of many young child hearts on a leaf ride all blended together into an experience of total self abandonment and an acceptance of the path of Nature as the leaves floated, rushed, spun around, and rose high in the air, and then flipped over and over, fluttered, and fell, each on its own path... all answering finally but ever so gently to the mysterious force of gravity.

Clear Water sat on the mountain top with a large robe of bear skin wrapped around him. Dark clouds had covered the late afternoon sky, now fog and mist blew over the mountain top, until Clear Water could see nothing but fog and mist. He waited for the rain, but the rain did not come. He was alone.

Then Clear Water heard someone nearby, tuning an acoustic guitar. He turned, and saw a musician, someone named Son House, sitting on a rock. Son House finished tuning his guitar, and then began to play "Evening Sun."

Clear Water's mother was dead. A month had now passed since she was found in the passageway to the inside of the mountain. A strong gust of wind had whistled through some cracks in the mountain and caused a sudden updraft in the passageway. Even the worst updrafts in the past had only caused minor scraps and cuts to little people traveling alone, but this time the wind had lifted Leafmaker and blown her into the rock ceiling, breaking one of her wings. She then fell from the top of the passageway to the ground, and died from the fall.

Not long after Leafmaker was found, four of the strongest in the village picked her up and flew outside. A sudden storm had come and gone. A light breeze now fluttered the leaves still remaining on the trees, and the water on the leaves sparkled and glittered from the light of the red setting sun. The four strong villagers carried Leafmaker off into the distance. Somewhere in the nearby wilderness there was a place where those villagers finally chose to leave what had once been a little person named Leafmaker. There they laid her, in plain sight, ever so gently giving her body to the mysterious ways of Nature. When they returned, they told no one where they had been.

A month had now passed since then. But Clear Water had trouble remembering. Three days after Leafmaker died, Dried Up Creek's wife Old Crow visited the lodge where Clear Water stayed with his grandparents, his father, and his sister. Old Crow had decided to deliver the tribes sayings of comfort. She spoke two sayings of comfort to the lodge where Leafmaker had lived:

God's Love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us.

When our bodies are used to share God's Love with others, it is not our bodies that are real and alive, but it is the Spirit that has passed through us from God to another of God's children that is important, real, and alive.

Then she had left. Then Old Crow had taken over Clear Water's



job as manager of the tribal center. Then the fog and the mist.

At first, many people came looking for Clear Water to try and cheer him up, but now... none. Even Dried Up Creek, the spirit healer, and his apprentice, Dancing Bird, stayed away now. And so Clear Water sat alone in the fog and mist, where he chose to sit, the spirit of his child heart everywhere but in the world he chose to see.

The little people of Yopitlaag had a way of life: "give what you can, keep what you need." They lived that way because it brought them happiness. And when the little people were happy, they were content. Surely though, each person's happiness had a path of its own, and these paths rose and fell through the course of their lives; but as long as they never forgot that the love spirit was a gift from God, and something they could not lose, they thought of their life as a leaf ride, and their body as a leaf. And they let Nature take its course.

But sometimes Nature's course was hard, and the tribe's belief in their way of life rose and fell as if it too was on a leaf ride. During those times, there were some people who lost their belief that the love spirit was a gift from God, and who attempted to create a different way of life... no longer willing to let Nature take its course, these people attempted to create a way that Nature could not affect....

During those times, people whose belief in the tribe's way had been shaken or shattered often sought out the spirit healer's lodge. The spirit healer, one who's belief was never shaken. But there were some things a spirit healer could do, and some things a spirit healer could not do. Still, when a person's belief in the tribe's way had been shattered, and when it seemed that there was nothing left that the tribe had to give to that person, there was a special tradition, a "last path," that any person could choose. An ancient tradition, one that had been

handed down from generation to generation ever since anyone could remember. The crystal ball quest.

Dried Up Creek was sitting in his rocking chair on the front porch of the spirit healer's lodge, thinking....

The crystal ball quest... everyone in the tribe knows the ancient tradition of the crystal ball quest. Except for one part. Only the spirit healer knows the question that a person who chooses the quest will be asked to answer, and only the spirit healer knows the correct answer. Surely, the same question is used everytime, but no one knows that but the spirit healer. Because those who have been on the quest, and answered the question correctly, do not reveal the question, or the answer. The ancient tradition of the crystal ball quest can strengthen a person's belief in the tribe's way of life beyond the point where it can be shaken or shattered, and those who have answered the question correctly know that this is so. So they do not reveal anything.

But... sometimes it works and sometimes it doesn't. And when it doesn't work... if the person who chooses the crystal ball quest has not answered the question correctly in a month's time, he is asked to leave the tribe.

The people know what the crystal ball quest can do. They know the strength it can bring. And they know the risk one must take. The spirit of the quest....

The ancient tradition of the crystal ball quest, one that had been handed down from generation to generation ever since anyone could remember. The "lost path," a path anyone could choose. And the spirit healer could not refuse them. The spirit of the quest... in the hands of the spirit healer. The tribe's way: "give what you can, keep what you need."

Dried Up Creek was sitting in his rocking chair on the front porch of the spirit healer's lodge, just looking. Then he saw

Clear Water come out of his lodge and begin walking towards the path that led to the spirit healer's lodge. Then Dried Up Creek knew. Nature has taken its course, he thought. Clear Water will ask the spirit healer for a crystal ball. He chooses the crystal ball quest.

As Clear Water walked the path up to Dried Up Creek's lodge, the spirit healer thought over what was about to happen. According to tribal tradition, everyone will know that Clear Water has chosen the crystal ball quest, but only the spirit healer and Clear Water, the person who chooses the "last path," will know the question that the spirit healer will name for Clear Water to answer. For the quest to end, Clear Water must correctly answer the question he is given to answer. When a person thinks he knows the answer to his question, he speaks of it only to the spirit healer. Only the spirit healer will say if the question has been answered correctly or not. The person has two weeks to answer the question correctly or he will be asked to give up relationships with special loved ones. If he has not answered the question correctly after a months time, he will be asked to leave the tribe.

As many as twenty five people had chosen the crystal ball quest while Dried Up Creek had been the tribe's spirit healer. Twenty five people in fifty years. Twenty had answered the question he gave to them correctly. When a person answers the question correctly, the spirit healer informs the tribe, and all participate in a ceremony called the Dance of a Child's Heart Playing. Everyone in the tribe loves the Dance of a Child's Heart Playing. But everyone also remembers that five who choose the crystal ball quest are asked to leave the tribe-- and they never returned. So no one chooses the crystal ball quest to make the Dance of a Child's Heart Playing happen.

Now, as Clear Water approached the lodge, Dried Up Creek

decided something. This is the time for Dancing Bird to learn the spirit of the crystal ball quest. Under no other circumstances will the meaning of the quest to the person who quests, to the tribe, and to her be more clear than during Clear Water's quest. She will see the quest from the point of view of a spirit healer for the tribe, and a special loved one of the person who chooses to quest. And so she will see what a spirit healer can do, and what a spirit healer cannot do.

Dried Up Creek went inside his lodge. Old Crow was not there, she was at the tribal center lodge. But Dancing Bird was there. She was sitting at the table near the fireplace, finishing the surface of a crystal ball. There were three other crystal balls on the table.

"He's coming now," said Dried Up Creek. "Pick one, and put the others away."

"But none of these are really round...."

"They don't have to be. Listen. I am going to tell you now all you need to know to send someone on a crystal ball quest. You know the traditon. But I've never told you how to decide on the question for each person. I will tell you now. The question is the same for every person. The question is: Where are you going?"

Dancing Bird giggled. "Are you serious?" she asked.

"Yes. And the answer, always the same. The answer: I do not know where I am going, but I know the way. No substitutes. They will get it exactly or they won't even be close. You got that?"

"Yes, but...."

"But what?"

"Can I hint?"

"You decide. Okay, here he comes. Did you pick out one of those things for him... tell him I said you are the principal spirit healer from now on...."

Clear Water knocked on the door of the lodge. Dried Up Creek gently pushed Dancing Bird towards the door. She finally

went and opened it.

"Hi," she said.

"Hi," said Clear Water. "I came to see the spirit healer."

"Dried Up Creek says I am the principal spirit healer from now on."

"Oh?" He looked inside. Dried Up Creek was sitting at the table near the fireplace. There was a small fire flickering in the fireplace. He looked at Dried Up Creek. "Uh...."

Dried Up Creek nodded his head. "What she says is true. Dancing Bird, please, invite Clear Water in."

Clear Water and Dancing Bird joined Dried Up Creek at the table near the fireplace.

Dancing Bird looked at Clear Water. "Are you doing allright today?"

Clear Water looked at Dried Up Creek, then at the fire. "I am confused... I do not know what I need... I am thinking about choosing the crystal ball quest."

Dancing Bird paused only momentarily, then asked softly, "Is there anything the 'last path' will give you that you don't already have?"

"I don't know what I have anymore."

A long moment of silence.

Then Dancing Bird said, "We have talked about this before, but I must remind you that the person who chooses the crystal ball quest must answer the question correctly within two weeks or he will be asked to give up his relationships with special loved ones. And if he doesn't answer the question correctly within a month he will be asked to leave the tribe. And I know you also know that this is the year of the great returning comet. The only time that any other living things can see the little people of Yopitlaag is when the great returning comet is within the orbit of the earth. The comet will be within the orbit of the earth from January 1st, 1986 to March 21st, 1986. If you do not answer the question correctly, you will be asked to leave the tribe on December 25th, 1985. It's possible you will be out in the world when you can be seen."

Clear Water looked at her. "I understand... still, I cannot see any other way...."

Dancing Bird saw his pain, and knew that, as always, Nature will take its course. Each person different, all must follow the invisible road in their own way.

She got up from the table and went to the fireplace. Kneeling down, she felt around in the ash box and found the crystal ball she had put there. She returned to the table, sat down, and brushed off the crystal ball on her shirt sleeves. Then she set it on the table.

Clear Water looked at it. They all looked at it. The crystal ball was not really round, nor was the table really flat. And so the crystal ball rolled a little one way, and then a little another way, and then settled back to where it had been and stopped.

Clear Water looked at Dried Up Creek. Dried Up Creek looked at Dancing Bird. Dancing Bird looked at Clear Water. Then Dried Up Creek burst out laughing. The two younger people were silent. Dried Up Creek saw this but could not contain himself. Finally, his laughter subsided a little, and he calmed himself.

"Excuse me," he said, "I am still a child. I am easily entertained."

They all looked at the crystal ball again. Then Clear Water reached out and picked it up. "I must take the last path!"

"Then," Dancing Bird said, "here is the question you must answer. When you have an answer to try come to me and tell me. I will say if it is correct or not. Do not ever in your life tell anyone what question I have asked you to answer. Never. Understood?"

"Yes."

"Then the question I give you to answer is this: Where are you going?"

All the people in the village of Yopitlaag soon learned that Clear Water had chosen the crystal ball quest, the "last path." So it wasn't long before unusual and peculiar happenings began to take place at Clear Water's lodge. People began lining up at Clear Water's door; some carrying clothes, some carrying tools, some carrying food. Clear Water had seen this before, when other people had done the crystal ball quest, but he wanted nothing to do with it now. So he flew away from his lodge, and away from the village, and again headed to the mountain top outside. How could he figure out "Where he was going?" with all that confusion going on?

But there was no confusion in the minds of the people. It was well known among the people that they had a role to play whenever someone chose the crystal ball quest. The people, of course, did not know the question Clear Water needed to answer, but they did not need to know. They only needed to know that their role was to exaggerate the Yopitlaag way of life in the life of the person on the "last path." And the Yopitlaag way of life: "give what you can, keep what you need." And so some people brought great gifts to Clear Water, gifts of material goods or energy for personal care. And others, those who were in need of material goods or energy for personal care, were instructed to stall their needs for a week if they could, and then no longer seek anyone else but Clear Water for their needs.

Dancing Bird watched from the spirit healer's lodge as people of the tribe began bringing clothing, tools, and food to Clear Water's lodge. Surely, he will discover that he does not know where he is going, she thought. But this activity will insure that he remembers what he does know: the way. Surely, she thought, there is nothing to worry about.

After two days of staying away from the village, Clear Water returned. What he saw when he returned was what he had seen many times before when other people quested, but now that it was he who quested the whole thing seemed incredibly ridiculous and irrational... and embarrassing. Where the lodge he lived in used to be, there was now five lodges. After he flew over, landed, and looked around, he discovered to his dismay that he was now the owner of five lodges, completely furnished with furniture and the comforts of home, including clothes and tools for making clothes, and toys and games. Each lodge had a storage shed next to it filled with dried meat, tools for harvesting meat and hides, stored roots, herbs for cooking, tea, or medicine, and dried flowers. In three of the lodges there were two grandparents, a young woman, and two children. In the fourth lodge, there was a medicine man, a spirit healer, a chiropractor, and a masseuse, complete with hot tub. All were there to attend to Clear Water's needs. In the fifth lodge, were Clear Water's grandparents, his father, and his sister. They were at the table having dinner when Clear Water arrived. Clear Water entered the lodge. No one spoke. His sister Rainbow giggled.

Clear Water asked, "Is everyone all right?"

All heads nodded silently.

Then his grandfather, Hawk Feather, asked, "Are you going to keep the masseuse with the hot tub?" Clear Water's grandmother kicked his leg under the table.

Clear Water answered, "I do not understand the question I have been given for my crystal ball quest, and I feel a need to go looking for a vision. I am going to live in another part of the mountain for a little while. Rainbow, will you give all this away for me?"

"Don't you want to?" she asked.



"No."

"Okay then, but can I choose to keep something?"

"Keep what you need," said Clear Water. And then he left.

Clear Water stayed away from the village for two weeks. While he was away, he had wondered if other questors had received such a hard question... surely this is a question I cannot answer, he thought. Then he remembered the two people he had known who had never answered their question correctly. My question could also be an easy one, he said to himself smiling, and I just have not discovered the way to look at it.

During those two weeks he also thought about his life with the tribe, and what had happened during the twenty six years he had been in Yopitlaag. So many happy memories came to him that he lost track of time. He even saw Jay McShann appear at the other end of the small cave he was in, and heard him play "All My Life" on a grand piano.

But he did not see a vision to help him with his quest. And the crystal ball was no help either. Certainly it did not show him where he was going; when he looked into it all he saw was an upside down and curved view of where he was. But finally Clear Water felt he wanted to rejoin the tribe. And see the people that he loved. For however much he felt the loss of his mother, and all that she had meant to him, he knew that there was much love in Yopitlaag, and he would be happy again.

But now when he returned, a new phase of the quest greeted him. His lodge was closed off to him. There was a note on the door of what had been his home: "Your bed and clothes have been moved. On the other side of the village circle a temporary lodge has been set up for you." Clear Water began to feel a little uneasy. He thought for a minute, and then flew to the spirit healer's lodge. He knocked on the door. Dancing Bird answered the door. She did not speak. Clear Water began to panic.

"I don't know the answer to the quest," he said to her, "but can I just talk to you for a few minutes?"

"No," she said. "And Dried Up Creek cannot see you either. No one who you have ever loved with your whole heart can see you now." And then she shut the door.

What?! Is it possible they would do this to me? This must be a joke! Clear Water then flew around the village at random, startled half out of his mind by the thoughts running through his head. He tried to find someone to talk to, but everyone acted as if they could not see him, and they ignored him even when he grabbed them and pleaded with them to let him give up the quest.

From the window of the spirit healer's lodge, Dancing Bird watched. She began to think that the crystal ball quest was a horrible tradition dreamed up by old people who had gone crazy. But then she remembered Kuan, and she became calm. She thought about the spirit of the quest....

The crystal ball quest is for the tribe, she thought, and for the person who quests. The people remember the way by exaggerating it. They remember special loved ones when they see one who loses them. And when a person who quests answers the question correctly, then the Dance of a Child's Heart Playing. And in the Dance, the most important thing. During the Dance everyone remembers that the way, special loved ones, and the tribe are all fires lit by God's gift of the spirit. What spirit? The spirit of love, the spirit of a child's heart playing. So the quest, something important to the tribe in many ways.

But what about the person who quests? All the time looking at the crystal ball to see if it will tell him where he is going; he is shown that when he looks to know where he is going what he sees is an upside down and curved view of where he is. Receiving gifts and being asked to give gifts; he is shown the way. Giving up relationships with special loved ones; a strong reminder to "give what he can, keep what he needs." But... if Clear

Water leaves, how does this benefit the tribe, or Clear Water, or me?

... the spirit of the quest. And now Dancing Bird knew. No longer an apprentice now, she was the principal spirit healer of the tribe. The ancient tradition of the crystal ball quest, now in her hands. The tribe's way of life: "give what you can, keep what you need." Dried Up Creek's words: "You decide."

Dancing Bird began to cry. O, God, help me... I do not understand....

Clear Water had chosen the "last path." He had chosen the crystal ball quest. And on this day a month had passed, and if he did not have a sudden flash of inspiration, he would have no answer to the quest, and at midnight they would ask him to leave.

He sat in his temporary lodge, trying to think. All my life I have known that the people of Yopitlaag give what they can, and keep what they need. And now they will ask me to give what I cannot, and keep nothing. All my life I know where to go next, and what to do next, but now I don't know where I am going or what I am going to do. How can I answer the question "where am I going" then, if I don't know where I'm going? And then there is the Dance of the Child's Heart Playing. Surely I can see myself receiving the torch, and lighting the fire, and what is the fire if not the tribal center lodge, our way of life? Surely that is our way, but now when I need help, the tribal center is closed to me. What way is that? And yet it is the way I know, and I don't want to leave it. How can I leave a path I know, and follow a path I don't know, and know where it is that I am going? I believe I knew more about where I was going when I wasn't trying to figure it out... but maybe I think too much, and the answer will come to me if I just let Nature take its course. After all, "The fates lead those who will; those who won't it drags." Maybe leaving

the village is my fate... and if it is, then why struggle? I have lived a good life. I am not afraid to die....

In this way, Clear Water resolved to meet his fate. What else was there to do then, he thought, but rest up for what lies ahead?

All was quiet in the village of

All was quiet in the village of Yopitlaag. The time was midnight, and Clear Water had not thought of an answer to the question he had been given; "Where am I going?" Clear Water's way, he will find out where he was going by going there. So he was prepared to say goodbye and leave, but would anyone even say goodbye to him? He picked up the crystal ball that was lying on his small desk, and put it in his pocket. He put his knife with the long blade in its sheath around his waist. He pulled on his winter snowpants, and tied on his winter coat, so that it wrapped tightly around him but did not obstruct the movement of his wings. He checked his coat pockets to make sure he had his mittens. He put on his fur lined boots. And he put on his coonskin hat. Then he tucked the bearskin robe his grandfather had given him under his arm, blew out the candle in his temporary lodge, and left, to fly over to the lodge of the spirit healer.

When he got there the door was open and Dried Up Creek, Old Crow, and Dancing Bird were sitting at the table near the fireplace. There was a small fire flickering in the fireplace. Clear Water stood in the doorway. He looked at Dancing Bird. He was trying to remember Dancing Bird's face, as if this was going to be the last time he would see her. She was beautiful.

As he stood watching, she pushed her chair back, and stood up. In her hands she had a small cup. She reached for the pitcher on the table and poured some water into the cup. Then

she walked over to the doorway. She held the cup in her hands near her heart. Then she extended the cup to him. He took it. "What is this?" he asked. "Clear Water," she said. He drank the water. He gave her back the cup. She went back to the table and put the cup on the table, and then sat down. He said goodbye, and then walked slowly to the passageway to the outside. He turned around once, and saw Chuck Berry and some other musicians on the roof of the spirit healer's lodge. They were setting up their speakers and instruments. They hooked up the speakers amplifiers to the lodge poles of the spirit healer's lodge, and then began playing "Johnny B. Goode."