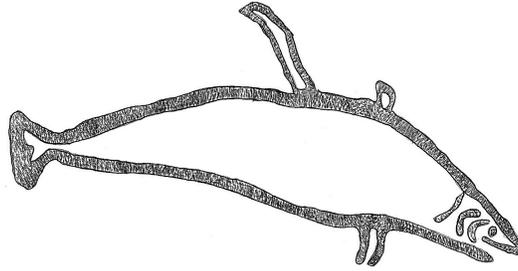


Educational Tools for Teachers & Parents



All Night Salmon Leap the Falls • A Story by Thomas Doty

Key Cultural Concepts

All Night Salmon Leap the Falls is set along the Rogue River in the Takelma homeland of southwest Oregon.

Passageway into Mythtime — In a magical walk through the night woods, Doty, Coyote and Lampman enter Mythtime, a Takelma time of ceremony and myth. Time travel is common in native stories and nighttime often provides the passageway that makes it possible. Mythtime is ever-present in the hearts and imaginations of the Takelmas, tightly woven into day-to-day life, and made vivid in dramatic performances of stories that last all night during the winter storytelling season. Ceremonies are perceived to be myths acted out and so they also happen in Mythtime. “Each step is a step out of time and into the depths of nighttime as it has always been.” (Page 5).

Taking Care of Each Other — Traditionally, Takelma homes are multi-generational. Everyone is cared for. This concept of caretaking extends to all People: Animal People, Tree People, Rock People.... A long time ago at Ti'lomikh Falls, Salmon People agreed to provide Human People with food. In turn, they would ensure that the salmon species endured. This agreement is renewed and honored yearly at the Sacred Salmon Ceremony. As Lampman begins to tell the story of Salmon Boy, he says, “The stories— even the tragic ones — teach us to remember all of our relations and to care for them ... and what can happen if we forget.” (Page 8).

Old and New Native Stories — Takelma storytelling is both an ancient and a living art. Myths are kept alive by telling them. Then, as they are created, new stories are added to the mythology. This has been happening for centuries. At the old house, Doty and Coyote find a box of Lampman’s writing. Later, at the Sacred Salmon Ceremony, Lampman not only tells the native myth of Salmon Boy, he also shares snatches of his own stories and poems. *All Night Salmon Leap the Falls* is itself a new native story added to the Takelma basket of folklore. “As the old storyteller stands up and starts to walk away from the story chair, he turns and says, ‘Does anyone else want to share a story?’” (Page 8).

Two of Everyone and Everything — In Takelma culture, there are two directions, upriver and downriver. The center of the universe is the two Table Rocks, once giant dragonflies. In *All Night Salmon Leap the Falls*, dualities abound: Morning Star and Evening Star, two chairs in the old house, two voices in the room, two story chairs at Ti'lomikh, Elder Dragonfly and Younger Dragonfly, Human People and Salmon People, old stories and new stories.... Dualities — in their sameness and their opposition — provide stability and balance. “The old man describes how Elder Dragonfly, one of the culture-bringing brothers, pinned the two stars to their present places in the sky and made the salmon free to all the people.” (Page 7).

Writing Prompts & Discussion Questions

These prompts and questions address important ideas in *All Night Salmon Leap the Falls*.

1. Lampman says to Doty and Coyote, “If we pay attention, we’ll be different people by the time this story ends.” What does Lampman mean?
2. How does the Sacred Salmon Ceremony help the salmon?
3. If you were asked to share a story at the Sacred Salmon Ceremony, what story would you share?
4. Why are salmon sometimes called Salmon People?
5. Doty, Coyote and Lampman experience the Sacred Salmon Ceremony as it was done a long time ago. If the ceremony was done today, how might it be different? How might it be the same?