

Creation of Marymere Falls



This story is about a young girl who lived at cáłmæt, Lake Crescent. In the longhouse resided her most of her family. Not just her mom, dad, brother and sister, but her cousins, aunties, uncles, grandma and grandpa.

Each member of the family had work to do. Everyone would get up before sunrise and start their daily chore, but not this girl. She would lay by the fire and sleep the whole day away if she could. Her dress was always dirty and her hair was always tangled. The girl wouldn't even get up to wash her hands or her face.



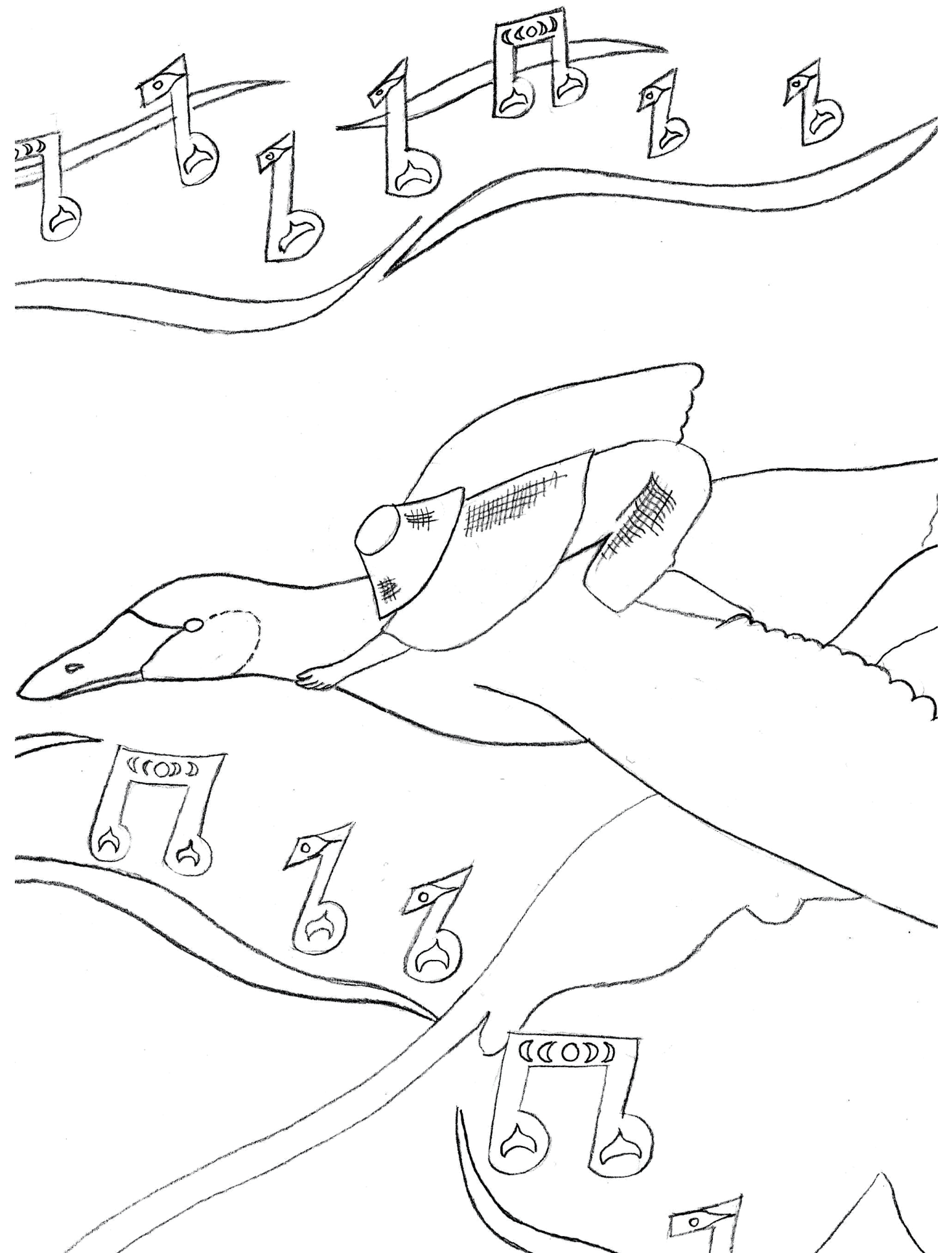
The mother was getting tired of this, she said “c̣c̣ăt ċi! Wake up! Why don’t you get up and do something?” One day the mother noticed her daughter still sleeping beside the fire, “still asleep scáx^wcx^w, Lazy Bones?” The girl was upset because all the girls had pretty names but she was called ʔəscáx^wcx^w, lazy bones. While the family was outside doing their chores, she decided to run away.



Then the girl told her grandma what happened to her, how the swans took her to a special place in the mountains where all these beautiful little lakes were and taught her all the traditional ways of living. Her grandma couldn't stop looking at her, for she looked so different and even more beautiful. Her grandma brought her back home and they began to prepare for a potlatch to celebrate the return of her granddaughter. At the potlatch she sang the song that was gifted to her by the swans. Her grandma named her táwəsna, star, because she was as pretty, ʔaʔáʔit, as the stars that shone in the sky,



She ran deep in to the woods and she climbed up on a steep ledge. She climbed and climbed until she was so exhausted that she could go no further, then she dropped down on the tall ledge and sobbed. She felt so bad and her heart was so sad that she cried and cried. The Marymere waterfall that you see are her tears from long ago. As she lay there crying, she heard a voice asking her, "Why are you crying? What happened?". She opened her eyes and was surprised to see a flock of beautiful white swans.



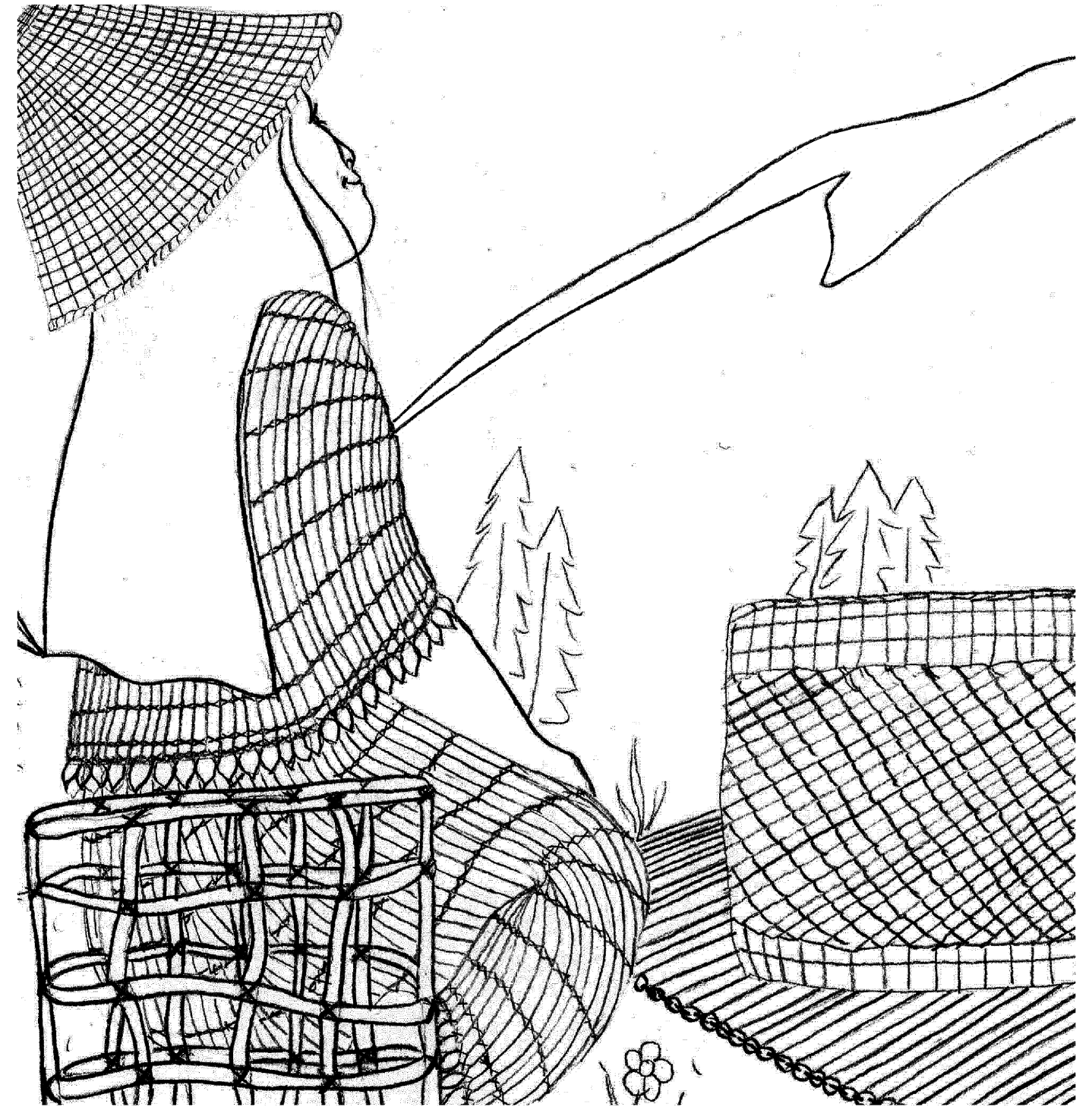
Winter was quickly approaching and the swans needed to bring the girl back to her family. She climbed on the back of a of the swans, closed her eyes and held on tight. As they flew down towards the lake the swans sang their beautiful song. Before their departure, the swans gifted her the song they've been singing together. The young girl thanked the swans for taking her in and encouraging her to learn new things.

As the girl walked towards the lake she saw her grandma, so she went up to her. At first, her grandma didn't recognize her, but then she realized it was her long lost granddaughter. They gave each other a long and tight hug. Boy have they missed each other.



She tried to answer between her tears, “Nobody loves me, they say I don’t know how to do anything. My tán, mother, calls me scáx^wcx^w, Lazybones.”

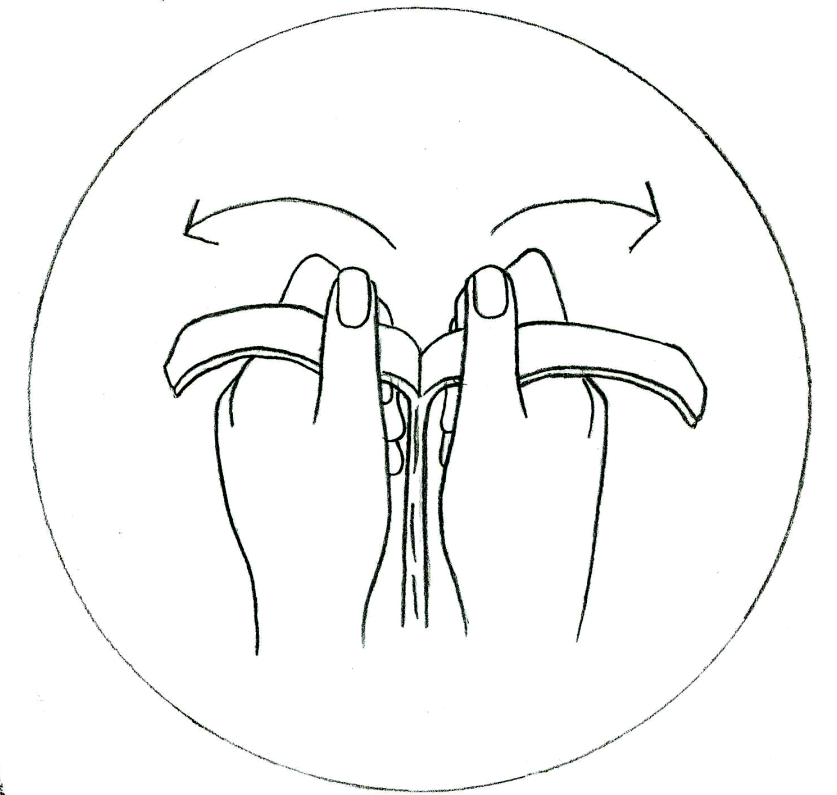
The swans said, “oh that’s too bad. Why don’t you come with us and we will show you all need to know.” One of the swans told her to get on his back and close her eyes and hold on tight around his neck, so she did. As the swans were flying above the mountain top they sung the most beautiful song.



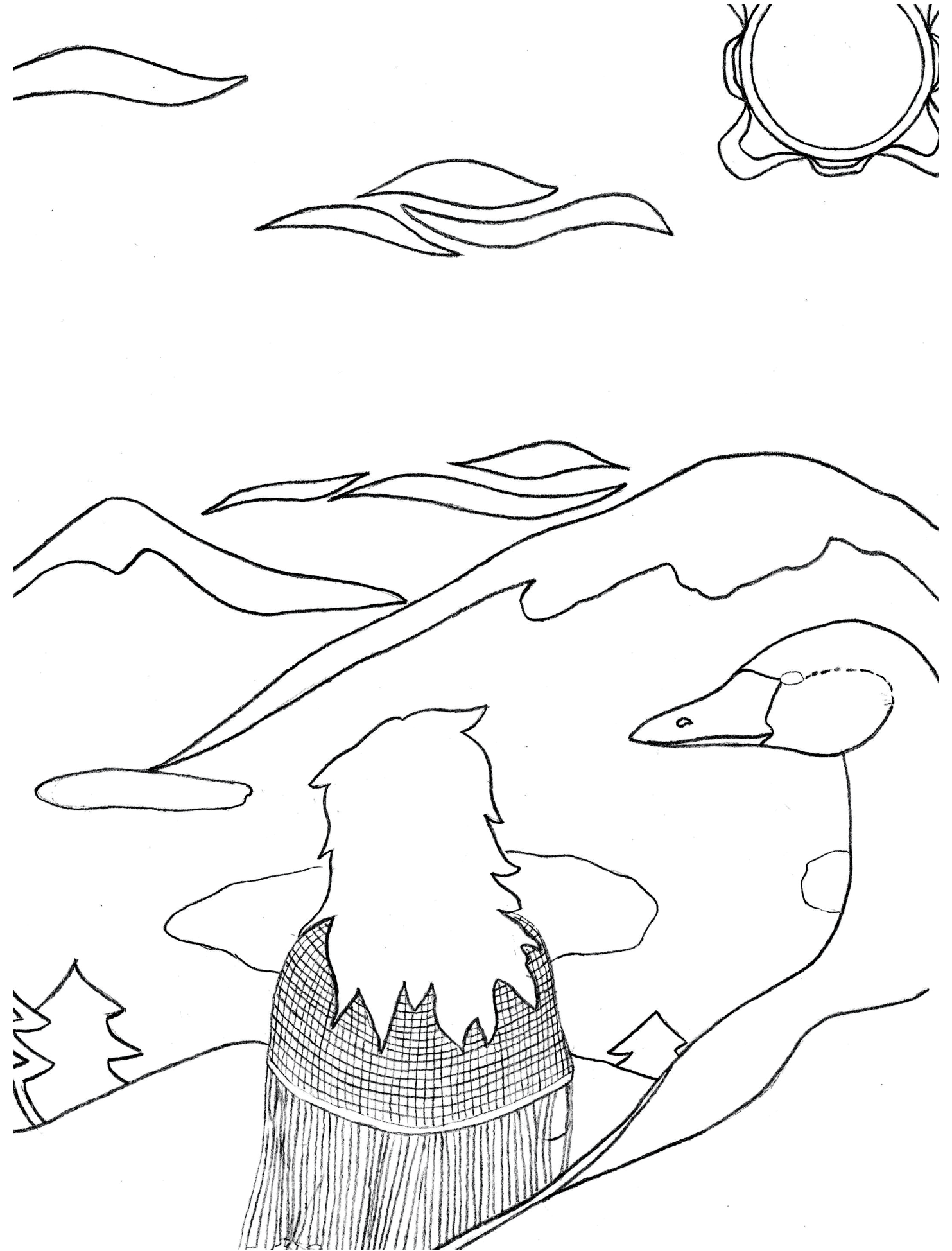
Back at the village her grandma sat by the lake mourning the loss of her granddaughter. The grandma thought the girl was dead because she had been missing for so long. Traditionally, cutting your hair when there is a death in the immediate family is an outward symbol of the deep sadness and a physical reminder of the loss. Her grandmother cut off her hair to mourn the loss of her granddaughter.



When they arrived to their destination, one of the swans said, "Now we are here, you can open your eyes." She opened her eyes and saw that she was up on the top of the Olympic Mountains. There were small little lakes everywhere you looked. The water was pristine, crystal clear, you could see every pebble and stick on the bottom of each lake. One of the swans said, "Choose a lake for you to bathe yourself." And so she did, then another swan brought her some Indian perfume to rub on her arms, face, and hair.



“You should also know how to weave a cedar bark hat,” said the swan. They showed the girl how to pull the bark from the tree, separate the wet inner cedar bark from the dry and dusty outer bark. When that was done, they taught her to cut the bark into strips and weave the strips of cedar bark into a hat. After she completed weaving, she mashed some alder berries then rubbed the pulp into the hat to make it waterproof. Next, they showed her how to make cattail mats, baskets of bark and bear grass. Again, the swans said, “You should learn food is good to eat and how and when to gather food.”



They gave her a comb made from elk horn to comb her long black hair. Then a swans said, “Now we will show you how to make a cedar dress.” First they showed her how to strip cedar bark from the tree. How to separate the inner bark from the outer bark, then cut into strips and pound the strips until they got soft and pliable. Soon, they taught her how to weave the cedar and helped her make a dress trimmed with colorful mallard feathers.

