

# COYOTE AND THE PEBBLES

STORY BY DAYTON EDMONDS ART BY MICAH FARRITOR

WHEN THE MOTHER EARTH WAS  
EXTREMELY YOUNG, THINGS  
WERE NOT AS THEY ARE NOW.

WHAT IS IT  
THAT YOU NEED?

JUST AS THINGS ARE NOT NOW  
AS THEY WILL BE, FOR GROWTH  
AND CHANGE ARE CONSTANT.

ONE NIGHT, THE NIGHT CREATURES GATHERED AND CALLED  
TO THE GREAT MYSTERY, THE MYSTERY THAT DWELLS  
WITHIN US AND AROUND US.

GREAT MYSTERY,  
WILL YOU COUNCIL  
WITH US?



WE NEED MORE LIGHT.



FROG IS RIGHT. THE DAY CREATURES HAVE THE SUN...

FOX THEN CHANGES INTO A WOMAN...

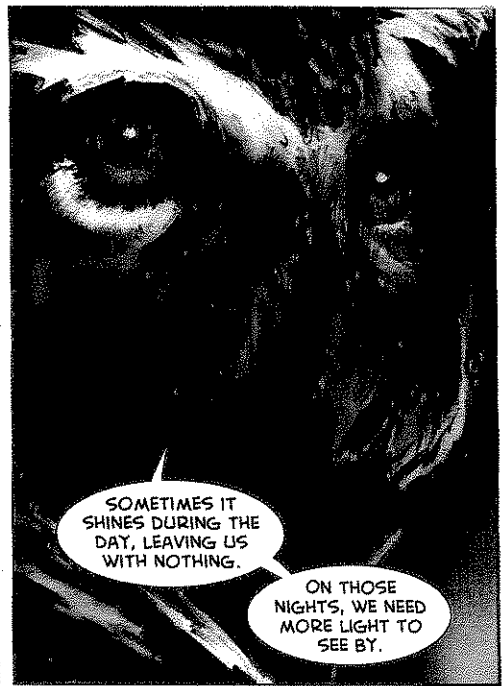


...AND WHEN THE SUN IS OUT, ONE CAN SEE FOREVER.

EVEN ON A CLOUDY DAY, ONE CAN SEE A LONG WAY.

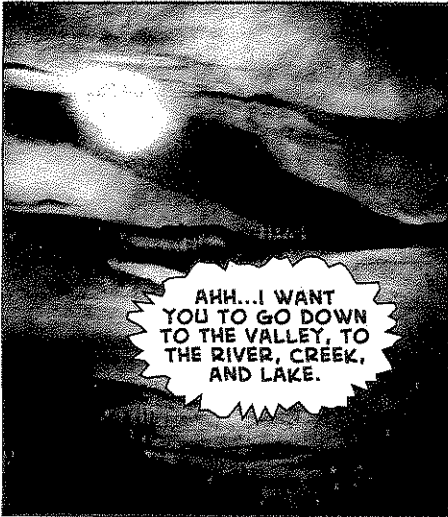


WE HAVE ONLY THE MOON.

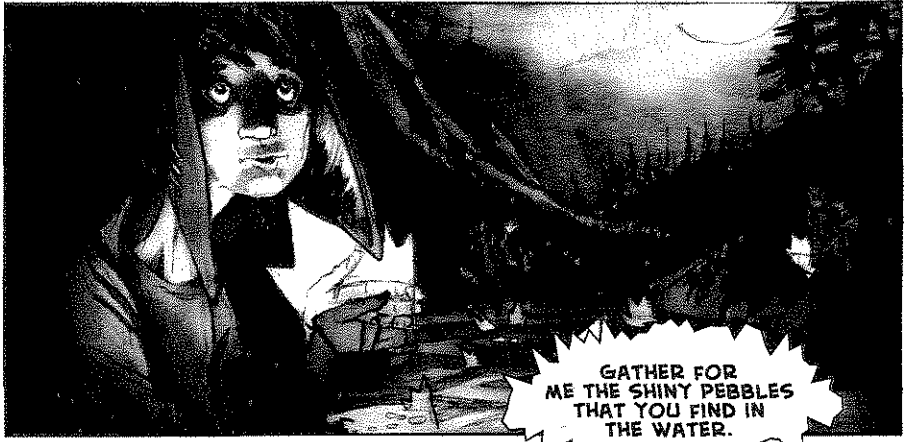


SOMETIMES IT SHINES DURING THE DAY, LEAVING US WITH NOTHING.

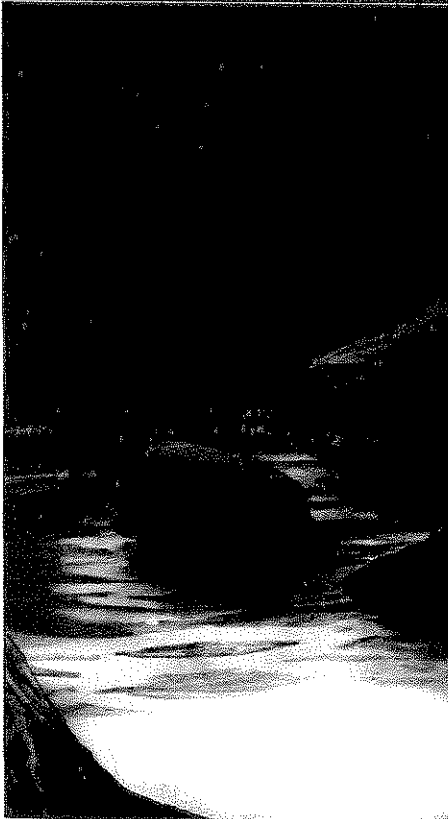
ON THOSE NIGHTS, WE NEED MORE LIGHT TO SEE BY.



AHH...I WANT YOU TO GO DOWN TO THE VALLEY, TO THE RIVER, CREEK, AND LAKE.

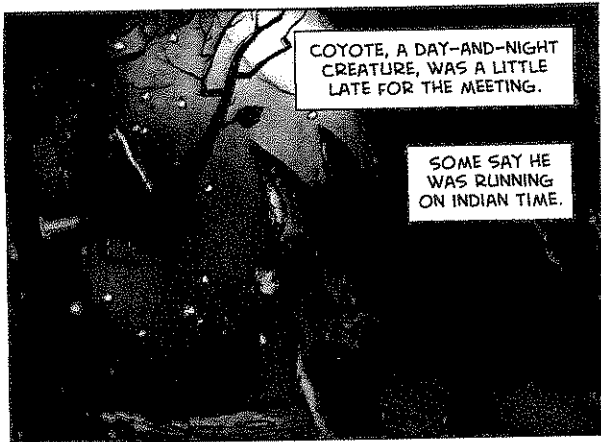


GATHER FOR ME THE SHINY PEBBLES THAT YOU FIND IN THE WATER.



I WANT YOU TO TAKE THESE PEBBLES UP THE MOUNTAIN AND DRAW A PORTRAIT OF YOURSELF IN THE SKY, AS HIGH AS YOU CAN REACH.





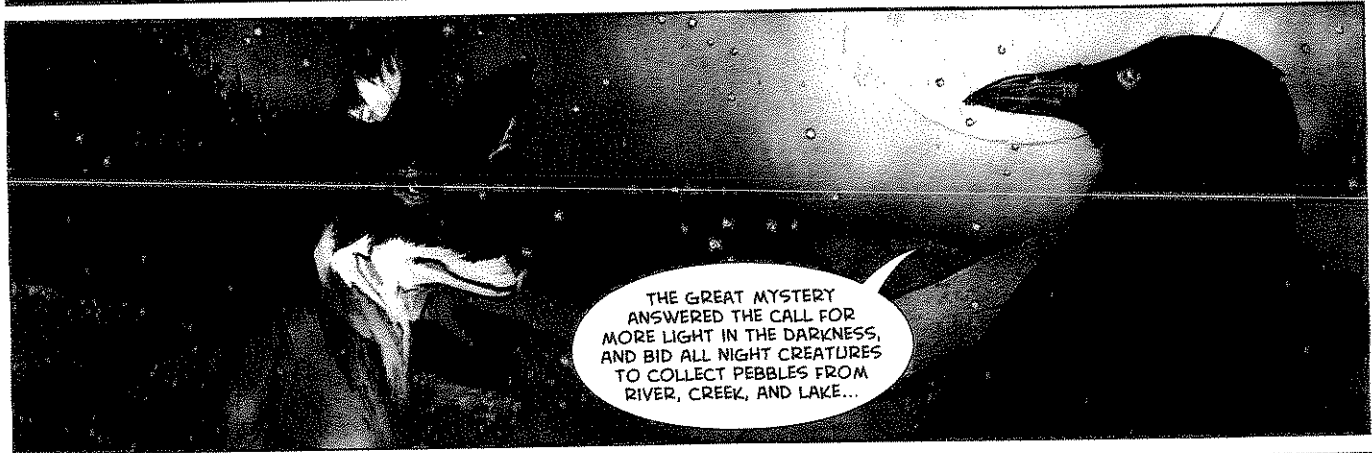
COYOTE, A DAY-AND-NIGHT CREATURE, WAS A LITTLE LATE FOR THE MEETING.

SOME SAY HE WAS RUNNING ON INDIAN TIME.



WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

WAKE UP TO THIS, OLD MAN! THEY'VE STARTED WITHOUT YOU!



THE GREAT MYSTERY ANSWERED THE CALL FOR MORE LIGHT IN THE DARKNESS, AND BID ALL NIGHT CREATURES TO COLLECT PEBBLES FROM RIVER, CREEK, AND LAKE...



COYOTE TURNS TO HIS HUMAN FORM...

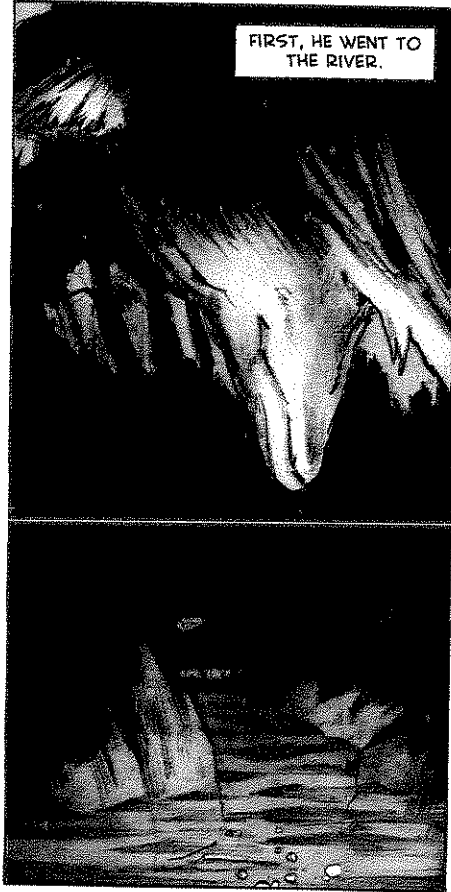
...AND TOLD THEM, "BRING THEM BACK TO THE MOUNTAIN, AND PAINT A PICTURE OF YOURSELF IN THE SKY."

LOOK AT THESE SELFISH ONES!

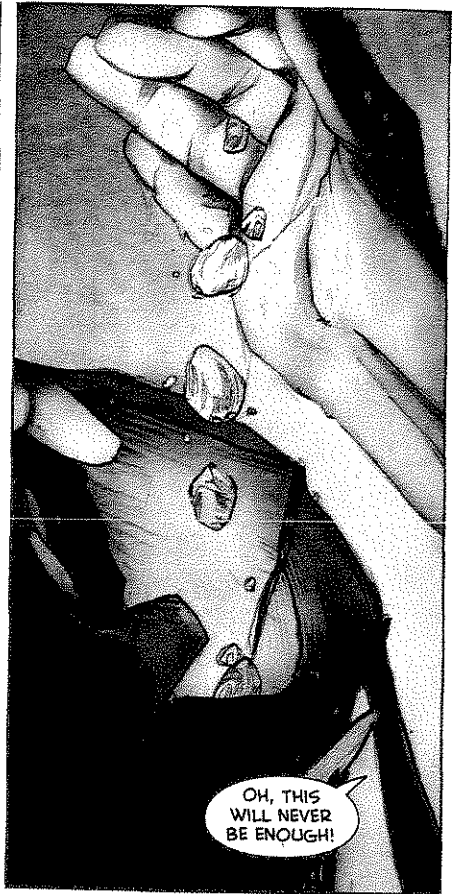




COYOTE DESCENDED INTO THE VALLEY.



FIRST, HE WENT TO THE RIVER.



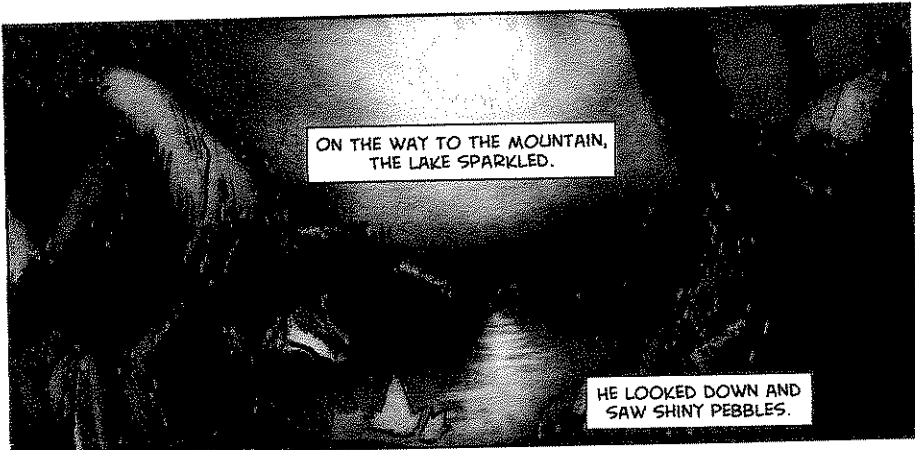
OH, THIS WILL NEVER BE ENOUGH!



HE TURNED BACK TO HIS ANIMAL FORM...



...AND THEN RAN TO THE CREEK.

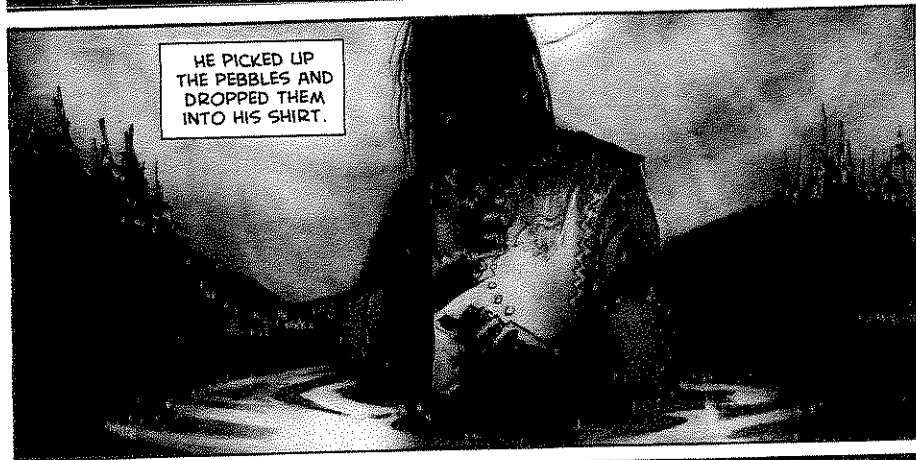


ON THE WAY TO THE MOUNTAIN,  
THE LAKE SPARKLED.

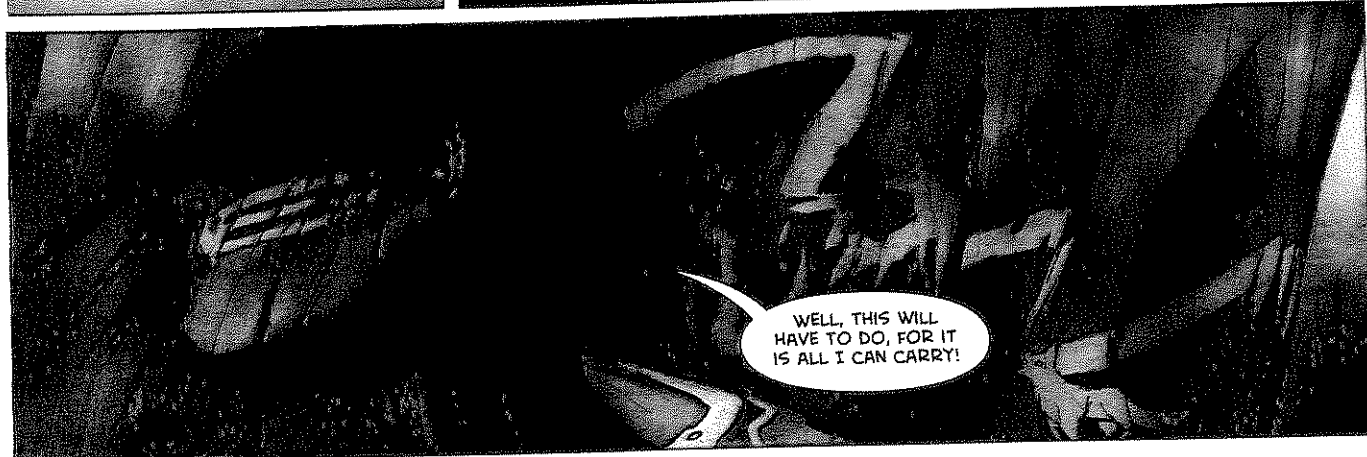
HE LOOKED DOWN AND  
SAW SHINY PEBBLES.



HUM, THIS WILL  
NEVER DO! NOT  
ENOUGH YET!



HE PICKED UP  
THE PEBBLES AND  
DROPPED THEM  
INTO HIS SHIRT.



WELL, THIS WILL  
HAVE TO DO, FOR IT  
IS ALL I CAN CARRY!



BUT WHEN HE REACHED  
THE MOUNTAIN TOP....

LOOK AT  
THIS!

THEY ARE TAKING  
UP ALL THE SPACE,  
ONLY THINKING  
OF THEMSELVES!



DOES NO  
ONE REALIZE I  
HAVE NOT  
STARTED?



SO SELFISH!  
RAVEN, DON'T  
THEY KNOW THEY  
ARE TAKING UP ALL  
THE SPACE AND  
LEAVING ME  
NONE?



SELFISH,  
INDEED!





COYOTE LOOKED AND RAN TO THE LEFT, THEN TO THE RIGHT...

...LEFT AGAIN, THEN RIGHT, FASTER AND FASTER, LOOKING FOR A PLACE TO DRAW HIS PORTRAIT.

UGH!

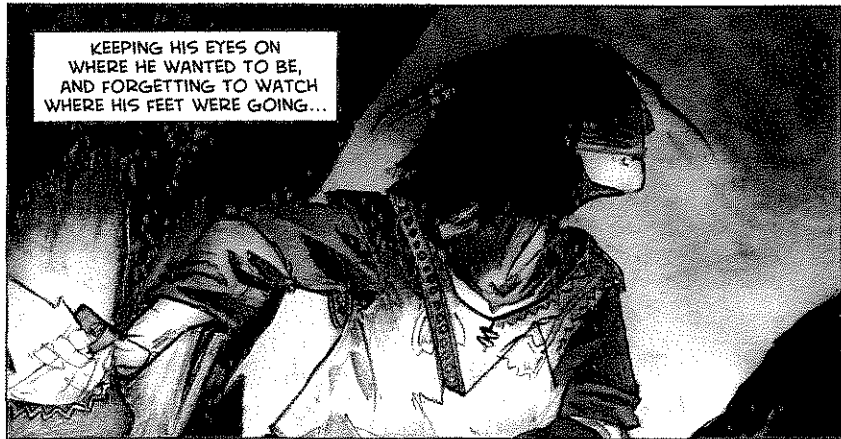


I'LL TRY ANOTHER SPOT. THERE MUST BE SOME EMPTY SKY SOMEWHERE!

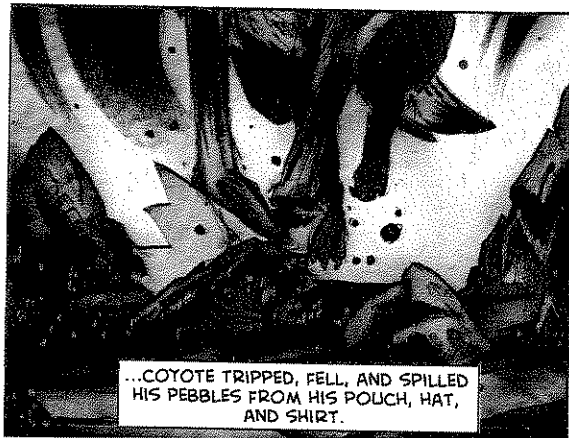
EACH SPACE GREW SMALLER AND SMALLER, UNTIL THERE WAS ONLY ONE SIZEABLE SPACE LEFT.



PERFECT!



KEEPING HIS EYES ON WHERE HE WANTED TO BE, AND FORGETTING TO WATCH WHERE HIS FEET WERE GOING...



...COYOTE TRIPPED, FELL, AND SPILLED HIS PEBBLES FROM HIS POUCH, HAT, AND SHIRT.



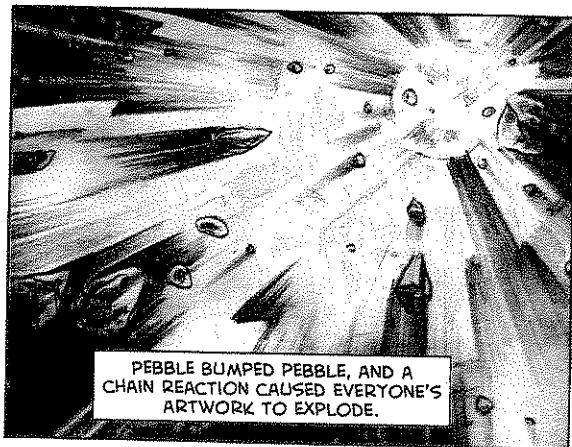
OH, NO!



THE PEBBLES SPRANG AROUND, HIGHER AND HIGHER, HERE AND THERE, BUMPING INTO EACH OTHER, UNTIL THEY WERE BUMPING INTO EVERYONE ELSE'S DRAWINGS.



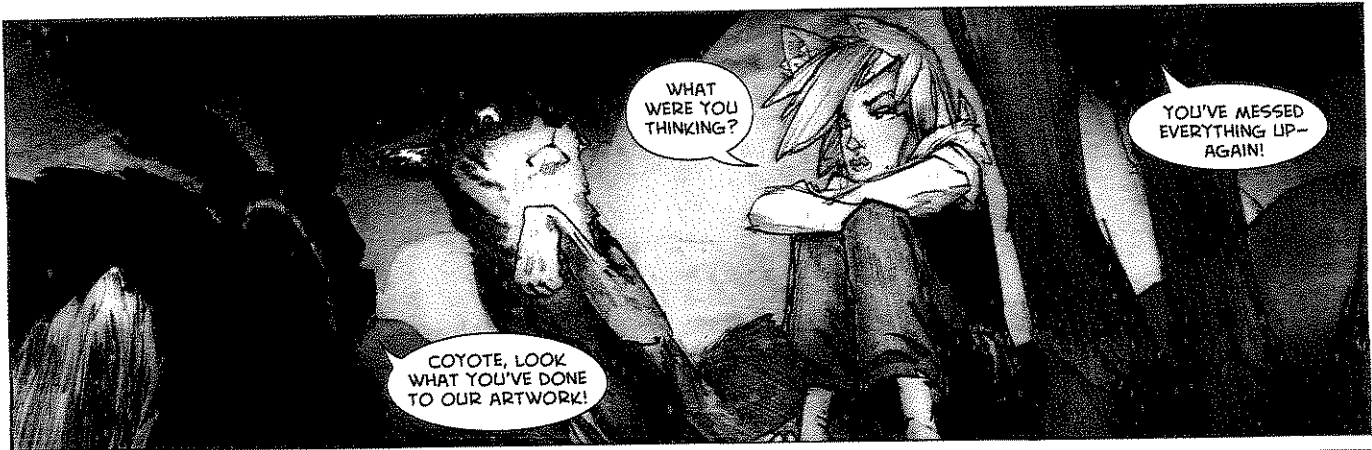
NO, NO, NO...

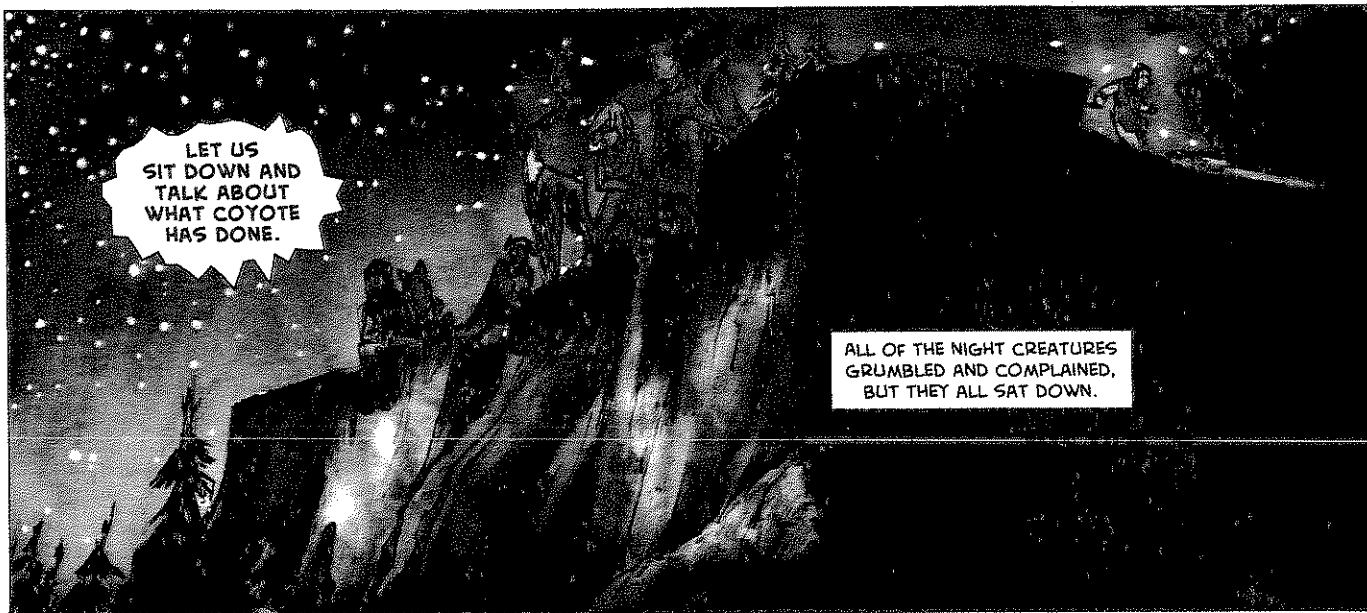


PEBBLE BUMPED PEBBLE, AND A CHAIN REACTION CAUSED EVERYONE'S ARTWORK TO EXPLODE.



THE NIGHT CREATURES COULD ONLY WATCH AS THEIR PORTRAITS WERE DESTROYED.





LET US  
SIT DOWN AND  
TALK ABOUT  
WHAT COYOTE  
HAS DONE.

ALL OF THE NIGHT CREATURES  
GRUMBLED AND COMPLAINED,  
BUT THEY ALL SAT DOWN.



COYOTE WAS ASHAMED OF WHAT  
HAPPENED, AND HE HAD SLIPPED AWAY  
BEFORE THE GREAT SPIRIT COUNCILED  
AGAIN WITH THE NIGHT CREATURES.

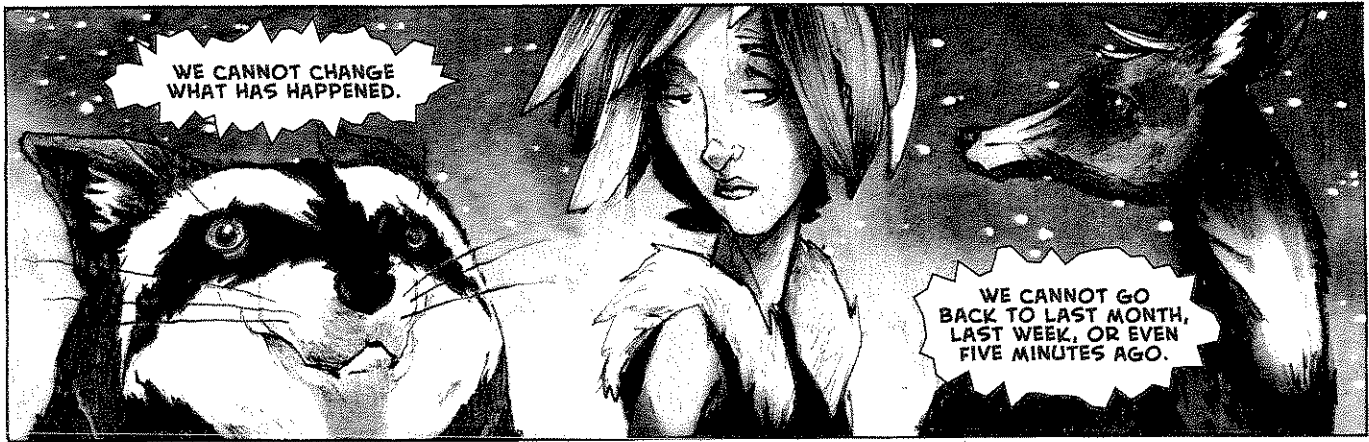


THE ORDER  
OF CREATION IS  
ALREADY IN  
PLACE.

BECAUSE  
THE ORDER OF  
CREATION IS  
ALREADY  
HAPPENING.

WE  
DON'T  
UNDER-  
STAND.

WHAT?! WE  
HAVE TO ACCEPT  
WHAT COYOTE HAS  
DONE? WHY?



WE CANNOT CHANGE  
WHAT HAS HAPPENED.

WE CANNOT GO  
BACK TO LAST MONTH,  
LAST WEEK, OR EVEN  
FIVE MINUTES AGO.



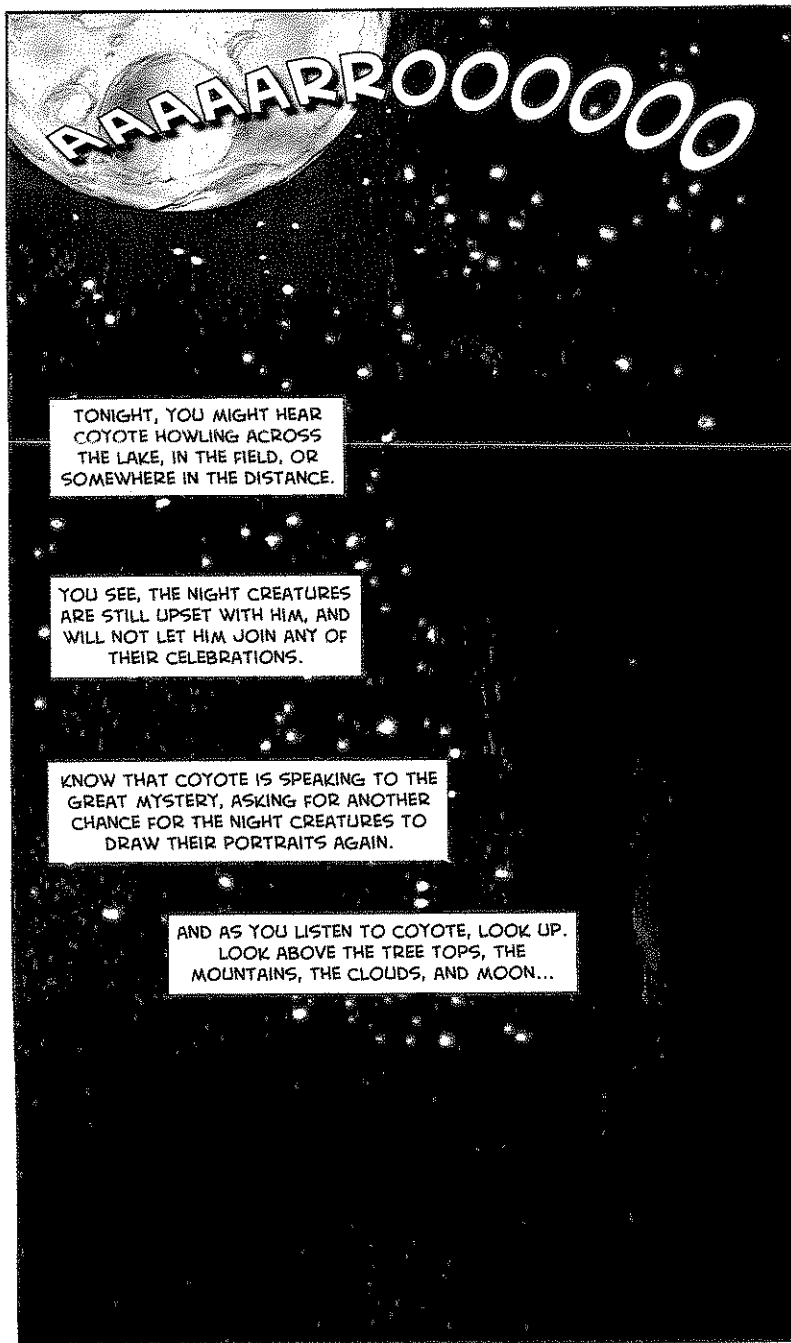
HEALING CAN  
HAPPEN. BY LOOKING  
AT YESTERDAY AND ITS  
CONSEQUENCES, ONE  
CAN CHANGE  
TOMORROW.

BUT  
WHAT OF  
OUR RUINED  
PORTRAITS?



YOU DID  
NOT ASK TO DRAW  
PORTRAITS. YOU ASKED  
ONLY FOR MORE LIGHT,  
AND YOU HAVE IT.

WE WILL  
ACCEPT COYOTE'S  
ACTIONS, BUT WE ARE  
STILL ANGRY  
WITH HIM.



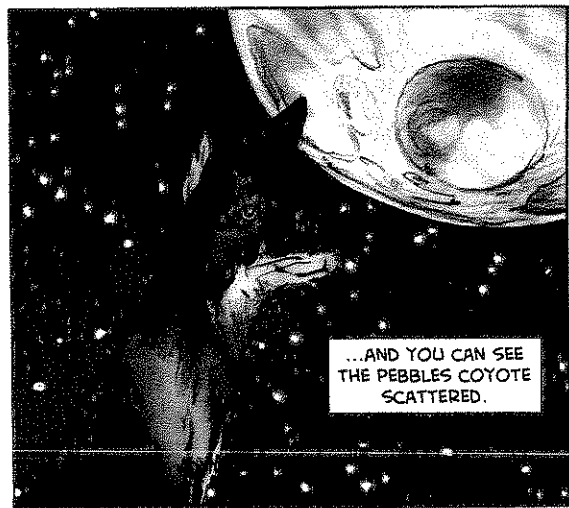
AAAAARROOOOOO

TONIGHT, YOU MIGHT HEAR COYOTE HOWLING ACROSS THE LAKE, IN THE FIELD, OR SOMEWHERE IN THE DISTANCE.

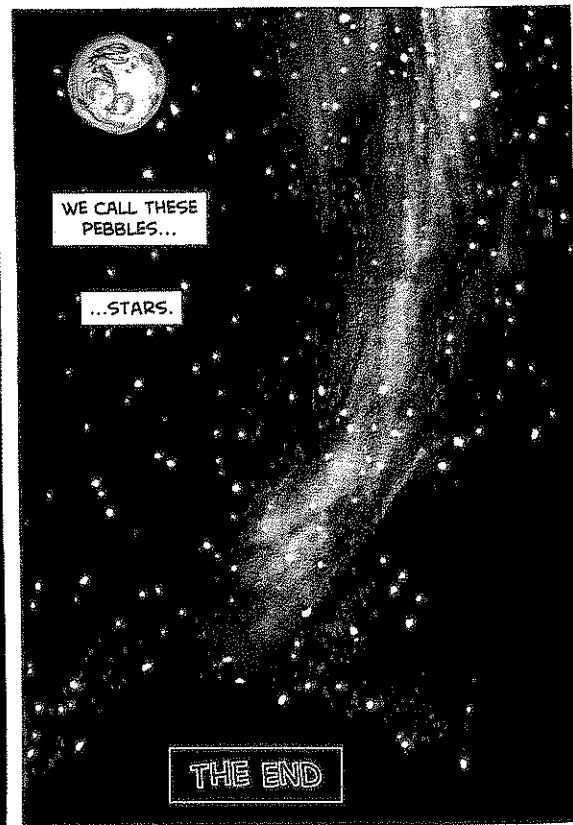
YOU SEE, THE NIGHT CREATURES ARE STILL UPSET WITH HIM, AND WILL NOT LET HIM JOIN ANY OF THEIR CELEBRATIONS.

KNOW THAT COYOTE IS SPEAKING TO THE GREAT MYSTERY, ASKING FOR ANOTHER CHANCE FOR THE NIGHT CREATURES TO DRAW THEIR PORTRAITS AGAIN.

AND AS YOU LISTEN TO COYOTE, LOOK UP. LOOK ABOVE THE TREE TOPS, THE MOUNTAINS, THE CLOUDS, AND MOON...



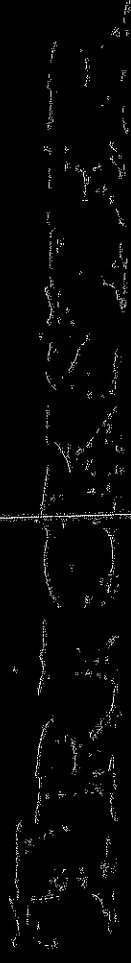
...AND YOU CAN SEE THE PEBBLES COYOTE SCATTERED.



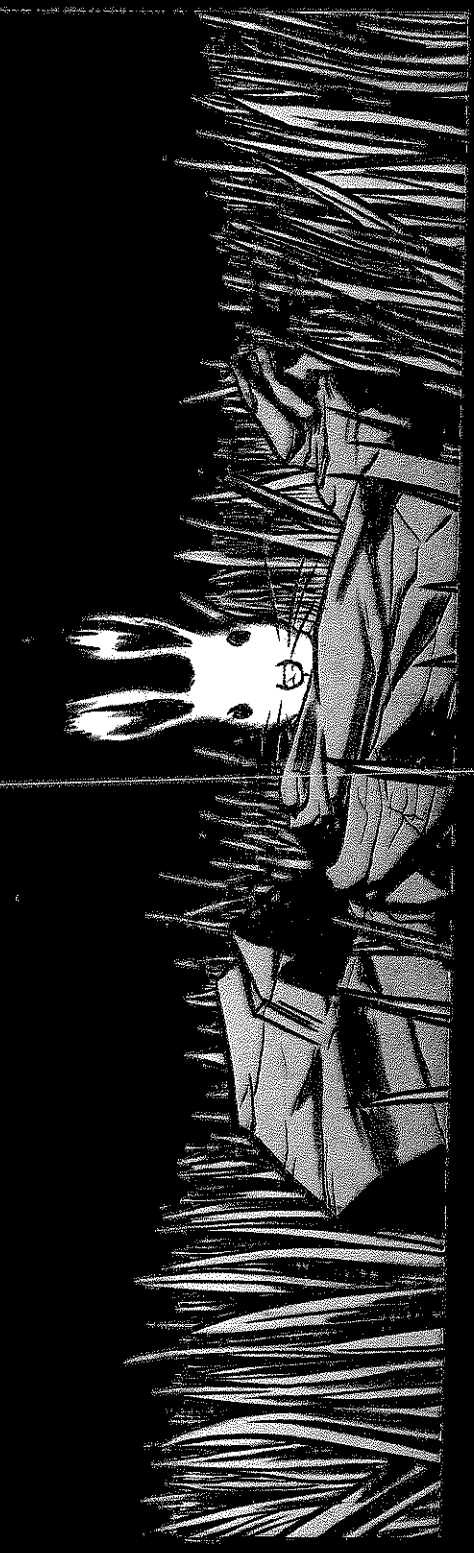
WE CALL THESE PEBBLES...

...STARS.

THE END



NATIVE AMERICAN TALES  
A GRAPHIC COLLECTION



Trickster: Native American Tales  
A Graphic Collection  
Matt Dembicki, Editor Golden, CO: Fulcrum Books, 2010

# FROM THE EDITOR

I WAS CASUALLY THUMBING THROUGH BOOKS AT OUR LOCAL LIBRARY WHEN I CAME ACROSS *AMERICAN INDIAN TRICKSTER TALES* BY ALFONSO ORTIZ AND RICHARD ERDOES. I WAS FAMILIAR WITH THE TYPICAL EUROPEAN MYTHS AND TALES AND A FEW ASIAN ONES, BUT I HAD NEVER READ A NATIVE AMERICAN TRICKSTER TALE.

MY INTEREST WAS PIQUED. GLANCING THROUGH THE BOOK, I SAW THAT IT HAD A WONDERFUL RANGE OF STORIES AND WAS PEPPERED WITH POWERFUL NATIVE AMERICAN-STYLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF COYOTES, RABBITS, SHAPE-SHIFTERS, AND OTHER CRITTERS AND BEINGS. THE STORIES WERE SERIOUS, FUNNY, MISCHIEVOUS, NAUGHTY, ALLEGORICAL. I WAS HOOKED; I COULDN'T PUT THE BOOK DOWN. WHEN I FINISHED, I REALIZED HOW LITTLE I KNEW ABOUT NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE. HERE I AM—AN AMERICAN—AND, PROBABLY LIKE MOST OF US, I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT THE CULTURE OF THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED HERE FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS PRIOR TO EUROPEAN SETTLEMENT AND WESTERN EXPANSION. WHEN I TRAVEL ABROAD, I OFTEN THINK ABOUT THE PEOPLE WHO LIVED IN THAT PLACE HUNDREDS AND THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO. I THINK ABOUT THE RULING ROYALTY, THE MARCHING ARMIES, AND THE PEOPLE WHO TILLED THE SOIL. BUT, FOR SOME REASON, I'D NEVER THOUGHT THAT WAY WHEN I STOOD ON AMERICAN SOIL.

AS A COMIC BOOK CREATOR AND SOMEONE WHO APPRECIATES NATURE, I MULLED OVER THE APPEAL OF PRODUCING NATIVE AMERICAN TRICKSTER STORIES IN

A SEQUENTIAL FORMAT. A LITTLE RESEARCH REVEALED THAT SUCH A BOOK DIDN'T EXIST. FOR THIS BOOK, I WANTED THE STORIES TO BE AUTHENTIC, MEANING THEY WOULD HAVE TO BE WRITTEN BY NATIVE AMERICAN STORYTELLERS. FINDING WILLING STORYTELLERS WASN'T THAT EASY; AFTER ALL, THERE'S SOME HEAVY HISTORICAL BAGGAGE BETWEEN NATIVE AMERICANS AND WHITES, AND SEVERAL PEOPLE I APPROACHED ABOUT THE PROJECT WERE UNSURE OF MY INTENTIONS.

EVENTUALLY I GAINED THE SUPPORT OF FEW KEY PEOPLE, WHO IN TURN HELPED ME FIND OTHER PARTICIPANTS, AND PRETTY SOON THE BALL WAS ROLLING. TO ENSURE A PROPER FIT BETWEEN THE WRITTEN STORIES AND THE ILLUSTRATIONS, THE STORYTELLERS EACH SELECTED AN ARTIST FROM A POOL OF CONTRIBUTING TALENTS TO RENDER THEIR STORIES. ADDITIONALLY, THE STORYTELLERS APPROVED THE STORYBOARDS IN TERMS OF EDITING, TEXT WAS CHANGED ONLY WHEN PANEL SPACE WAS AN ISSUE AND ONLY WITH THE APPROVAL OF THE STORYTELLER. THE POINT WASN'T TO WESTERNIZE THE STORIES FOR GENERAL CONSUMPTION, BUT RATHER TO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXPERIENCE AUTHENTIC NATIVE AMERICAN STORIES, EVEN IF SOMETIMES MEANT CLASHING WITH WESTERN VERNACULAR.

I HOPE THIS BOOK SERVES AS A BRIDGE FOR READERS TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE ORIGINAL PEOPLE OF THIS LAND AND TO FOSTER A GREATER APPRECIATION AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG ALL INHABITANTS.

—MATT DEMBICKI