

Passages

Reading Level 8



Title: Laughing Boy

Author: Oliver La Farge

Sample From The Book

He was lean, slender, tall, and handsome. Laughing Boy, with a new cheap headband and a borrowed silver belt to make ragged clothes look fine.

At noon, having no money, he begged coffee from a trader at Chinlee and went on, treasuring his hunger because of the feasting to come. Now he began to meet Navajos of all ages, riding to the dance. The young men bunched together – a line of jingling bridles, dark, excited faces, flashing silver, turquoise, velveteen shirts, dirty, ragged overalls, a pair of plaid calico leggings, a pair of turkey-red ones. Some of them were heavy with jewelry; Horse Giver's son wore over four hundred dollars in silver alone; most of them had more than Laughing Boy. They stopped to look at his bow-guard, which he himself had made.

'I am a good jeweler,' he said, elated; 'I make silver run like a song.'

'You should make a song about yourself,' they told him, 'and teach the burros to sing it.'

'Have you had any rain up to T'o Tlakai?'

"No, it is just like last year. It is the devil. The grass is all dried up and the sheep are dying.'

'They had a cloudburst over by T'isya Lani. It washed out a dam.'

'It washed out the missionary's house, they say. His wife ran out in something thin and got wet, they say.'



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