

THE RAINMAKER

Anonymous

It is very hot and everyone is asleep. The Rainmaker, a strangely garbed figure, wakes and stands. He is holding in his hand a bunch of dried twigs. He looks at the sky and sniffs the air. There is no wind. The ground is hot and dry under his feet as he mounts his hill, a mound in the centre of the village. From the top he gazes round at the sleeping people.

He pauses for a moment and again looks at the sky. He then moves and wakes the sleepers one by one by shaking the dry twigs. They wake gradually and when they are all sitting they begin, conducted by the Rainmaker, to make strange rain and water sounds. This chorus fades to silence and rattles quietly take over. Some of the villagers begin to move and when everyone is wheeling and twisting to the rhythm, the Rainmaker leaps to his hill and signals for stillness and silence. The villagers then begin a low moaning which increases in speed and volume until everyone is stamping the ground and yelling for rain.

Once more the Rainmaker signals for silence. A moment later comes the sound of distant thunder. Everyone looks to the hills. It thunders again, nearer this time. The Rainmaker leaps into the air and leads the villagers in a wild, frantic dance. When dark clouds cover the sky the dance slows to a standstill. The Rainmaker cries out to the clouds. The villagers echo his cry. It begins to rain. There is an immense sense of relief. Someone laughs; the laugh is infectious, as everyone enjoys the rain.