

*Thousand Lakes Wilderness, California  
August 2003*

## **ONE DAY IN THE WOODS**

### **Fisherman**

One day in the woods I came across a man sobbing, leaning on a rock by the side of a stream. His fishing rod lay half in, half out of the water. I wondered if he had lost a fish of a size or kind that would make a prize. No, he said, he had lost his wife. She disappeared upstream a week ago in a boating accident. He was hoping to catch her before she passed through the rapids. He had also lost a fish.

### **Homeless**

One day in the woods I came across another man sobbing. I wondered if he had lost his way or something of great value. He was an Indian, he said, a Yahí, and he had lost his tribe. He had gone to the mission at San Diego for several years and his tribe used to live where he was now standing. No one answered when he called out. No one could help him find his way again. I began to understand what he meant by his 'way'. He was glad I seemed to care about him but he continued sobbing. He had also lost his wallet.

### **Lonely Woman**

One day in the woods I came across a woman sobbing. I wondered if someone had hurt her. Yes, she said, but not in the way I might think. She was married to the moon and he disappeared completely last night. I knew that she had lost her mind. But I saw her again the following week and she was happy to have her husband back. I began to understand her 'way' and was no longer threatened by her strangeness.