Tao gasped. He felt a mixture of dismay and __________. The stranger standing before him was Graybeard, the Cave Painter, the __________ of all the clans. Never did __________ think he would meet such a __________ one.

“I also know you hunt __________ forbidden land,” said Graybeard. The boy but afraid on __________ and shifted from one foot to the __________. “It is forbidden only because __________ and evil spirits,” he said, his __________ cracking. “And you are not __________ and voice afraid __________ demons?”

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“I have heard the wailing __________ and the wild howls, but they __________

people them screams have things are

the cries of the eagle-owl and the __________. If there are other demons, I __________

food believe loons see leader have

never seen one.”

For a moment Tao __________ quiet. Then he swallowed hard and __________,

believe was place winced said never

“The people of my clan are __________. The Slough is full of game, __________

starving understanding animal But Winter With

the wolf dog I bring them __________ food.” Graybeard nodded. “You are not __________

winter much not

__________ of demons, you do not believe __________ evil spirits and, for you, taboos

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winced melt screams

“I __________ sorry,” said Tao “but I do __________ believe these things are bad.

is am cracking never gasped not

The __________, the birds, the trees give us __________ and clothing. Yet our leaders see animals dog evil winter would food
“evil.” Graybeard nodded. Tao was sure he saw a glint of understanding in the man’s eye. “And you know better the old great people and cries than leaders?” said Graybeard. “No,” said Tao. “only know that the Slough is a land of many good things. Here I find food.
Tao gasped. He felt a mixture of dismay and awe. The stranger standing before him was Graybeard, the Cave Painter, the shaman of all the clans. Never did he think he would meet such a one.

“I also know you hunt forbidden land,” said Graybeard. The boy winced and shifted from one foot to the other. “It is forbidden only because of the evil spirits,” he said, his voice cracking. “And you are not afraid of demons?”

“I have heard the wailing and the wild howls, but they have the cries of the eagle-owl and the food. If there are other demons, I have never seen one.”

For a moment Tao was quiet. Then he swallowed hard and said, “The people of my clan are starving. The Slough is full of game. The wolf dog I bring them food.” Graybeard nodded. “You are not afraid of demons, you do not believe evil spirits and, for you, taboos away like the winter snows.”

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