

"Come, I'm thirsty!" He brought the water. She drank. This happened several times. Then the mother said to her son, "I want to talk to you. Go fast through this timber. I feel as if I were going to die. We'll separate now. It was good to see you again." He said, "All right!" "You will be Helldiver, I will be Robin. You like the water too well to live with me."

She cut up dentalia and threw them over him. The rest she threw on herself. That is why robin has white streaks. Helldiver has streaks also. She said, "When the wind blows, you will fly. You will make the sound 'yaxa yaxa'.<sup>1</sup> As for me, I will be a ghost. I will sit on a tree near the houses of people and make my sound there when people have a death. Since you like water you will live in water. As for me I will live in the brush. Good day."

That is the end of the road.

The *Kutenai* interweave the two stories of The Girls Who Stole Dentalia and the Story of Lynx (tale 9) into one myth:

Young Buck orders his relatives to throw the soft part of rib bones into the water; his sisters, Fawn and Young Doe, disobey and take the bones which have turned into dentalia out of the water; Buck takes all the people down a hole and deserts his sisters; he refuses to let them come down to him; the girls cross a river on stilts and enter Water Ousel's tipi; Fawn swallows the blood Water Ousel gives them to eat; she misses a step while following in her sister's tracks and gives birth to a fawn; Young Doe sends her back to Water Ousel; Fawn holds Water Ousel under water to punish him; Young Doe approaches a settlement; Rabbit waylays her on the trail and, when addressed as husband, takes her to his grandmother, Frog, who hides her; Lynx secretly impregnates her, she has a baby, the three are deserted, Lynx kills many deer and the starving people return to them; Lynx's child is lent around among the people; Toad and Owl stretch out their hands for the child and kidnap it; Young Doe follows them, takes back her boy and flees up a tree with him with the kidnappers in pursuit; she calls her dog, Grizzly Bear, who bites Toad and Owl and eats their dog, a mouse; Doe reaches home with her child; she and Lynx have another son and the two boys become the sun and the moon (Dyer).

A *Thompson* myth similarly opens with an introduction resembling that of the Coeur d'Alene story, but the adventures of the girls deserted for their violation of a taboo proceed along different lines to culminate once again, as in the *Kutenai* myth, in a direct parallel to the Coeur d'Alene Lynx story.

A man instructs his two sisters not to visit his bathing place; the girls disobey and discover the dentalia which have come from needles from their brother's sponge;

<sup>1</sup> When people hear helldiver they say wind is going to blow.

they take the dentalia; their brother leaves them and goes to the lower world; the girls are unable to descend, for they break the taboo and open their eyes; their brother sends them to their aunt's home, the younger girl breaks the taboo and stops off at Coyote's house, where she eats and becomes pregnant; she is deserted by her older sister; Elk, the older girl's aunt, overtakes her in a race with young men and hides her from them; Lynx spits down upon the girl and impregnates her (MAM 12:213).

In a briefer *Thompson* version the brother takes pity upon his deserted sisters who are unable to descend to him in the lower world and returns to live with them (MAM 12:373).

A third *Thompson* variant leaves no basis for comparison with the Coeur d'Alene model, except in breaking the taboo and desertion:

An older sister, annoyed by many suitors, sets out with her younger sister for her grandmother's house; Coyote makes it so cold, the younger girl insists on entering his house four times to warm herself; Coyote impregnates her; her sister leaves her behind; the elder girl's grandmother hides her granddaughter from the men who are racing for her; Lynx impregnates the girl (MAFLS 6:36).

The element of drowning an enemy while he is crossing the water in pursuit of his prey has a wide distribution. A typical example from *Thompson* mythology in which, as in the Coeur d'Alene model, a belt is the medium for the crossing, is recorded below.

A youth, fleeing with the daughter of a man of magic power, throws his belt down and crosses the lake upon it; the girl's parents follow in pursuit; the girl gives the belt a twist and her parents are thrown into the water; they turn into ducks (MAM 12:291). In a variant, the boy draws in the belt so that the girl's father is unable to cross (MAM 12:383).

Beyond the story of the theft of Young Doe's child in the *Kutenai* myth outlined above, no further duplications of the Coeur d'Alene kidnapping episode were found in the myth bodies under consideration in this study. The account of the theft of a baby by Lion and Crane as told in an Upper Chehalis myth takes a different turn. After the boy has escaped with Crane's assistance from his captor, Lion, he arrives in heaven; here he obtains a wife and becomes the father of twins born stuck together; he eventually returns to earth to his mother and brother. Bluejay separates the twins who die (MAFLS 27:83).

## 25. Thunder

Thunder kidnaps hunter's wife  
Hunter looks for wife  
Four men give him needles

He climbs cliff with aid of needles, Chipmunk, Gray Squirrel, Squirrel and feathers  
 Finds wife in Thunder's home  
 Woman hides husband  
 Thunder sleeps  
 Woman escapes with husband, taking Thunder's shirts  
 Thunder helpless without shirts

There was a man who would go away in the daytime. In the evening he would come back. His wife was visited by Thunder when he was gone. One day he said, "I'm coming for you." He took her. In the evening the husband came back. His wife was gone. He sat down and thought, "I wonder where she went."

After I don't know how many days he thought, "I'll go look for my wife." He went. Far he went. He came to a house and went in. He was said to, "Ah! Are you looking for your wife?" "Yes!" "You poor thing! You'll never see her again. Thunder took her." "All right! I'm going to search for her."

The owner of the house gave him four small needles. "Go in that direction," he directed. He went. He came to a house and went in. "Are you looking for your wife?" he was asked. "Yes." "You are to be pitied, you'll never see her again." "All right! I am looking for her."

This one also gave him four needles. He told the man, "My older brother will point it out to you." He went on, far he went. He came to a house and the same conversation was held. He was given four needles.

A fourth time it happened. "Thunder has your wife. You'll never catch him," he was warned. "They gave you those things for nothing. Go on. Not far from here you'll see a cliff. There use the needles. If it wastes away do not leave it. The cliff is high. If you could climb to the top you might see your wife, but you will never get there." "All right! I'll go."

He saw the cliff. He took out a needle and stuck it into the rock. He took out another and stuck it in, and thus with a third and a fourth. Then they were all used and he saw no woman. Now there was nothing against the rock.<sup>1</sup>

Soon Chipmunk hopped into sight, *patatsatatsatatsat*, up the cliff she leaped. "Please help me get to my goal," begged the man. "Take me to the top. Have pity on me. My fingernails are all worn down to the flesh." She said, "Hold on to my tail." He held on to her tail. She leaped up, *patatsatatsatatsat*. They had not gone far when she complained of her fingernails. The man took out a needle. Then Chipmunk ran away.

<sup>1</sup> The needles must have made a magic ladder.

Soon he saw something against the rock. It was Squirrel leaping along. "Take pity on me. See how my fingernails are worn down." "Take hold of my tail." He took her tail. She leaped among the rocks. She had not gone far when she said, "My fingernails are worn close." He took out a needle and begged piteously. This time Squirrel came leaping, *na! na!*, and told him to hold her tail. Thus they climbed until she was worn out. He took out a needle and hung back. Soon feathers came. He said to them, "Help me!" "Long ago you should have asked me. Take hold of me."

He took hold. They were blown to the rock and touched it, then they were blown away again. Four times they blew out and back.<sup>1</sup> Then they were at the top. The feathers said, "Go! The rest you can climb alone. The one who is there is not a person. He will kill you. You will see all the trees broken from lightning. That is because he goes hunting and when he returns at night and comes into the house lightning hits the trees. The woman is there. He takes her by the arms and throws her aside and says, 'Your husband is on earth.' Then he digs and digs in vain. At last he will be quiet. All right then. Go! You may see your wife."

He went, he went far. He saw splintered trees, rocks broken in two and at last a house. He went in and saw his wife sitting there. "You are dead. No longer are you a person." She said, "Sit down. Eat well. If you die it will be good. It is easy to know when he is coming. The food is ready for him." He finished eating.

The woman said, "We'll make a hole under the bed. You sit in the hole. If he says, 'It is not true there is no one in the hole,' and throws me aside and digs, just keep still. After his excitement he will quiet down. Then I'll cook. We'll eat. Then he'll talk nicely. He'll laugh and tell me stories. At night we'll sleep. I'll tell stories, I'll talk and laugh until he is asleep. I'll tickle him to prove he is fast asleep. Then I'll dig you out. You come out and we'll go away."

Just as Thunder was going to sleep the woman tickled him. But he was snoring *xu xu xu*. She jumped up and dug out her husband. She said to him, "When he goes to bed he hangs up his shirt." All the old shirts were hanging on the wall. The woman took all of them, old and new, along. She threw the old ones away, saying, "They are all torn."

They ran to the edge of the cliff. The woman put on the good shirt. (Interpolation by informant, "I don't know, I think her husband hung on her belt.") They flew. They went to the earth. She took off the shirt, told it, "Be torn in pieces," and threw it away. They went to their house.

<sup>1</sup> The feathers were so light they were blown in so they touched the cliff, then out again.

Meanwhile Thunder slept. He woke. The woman was gone. He got up and saw the hole. He said, "There's no place I don't know. You are going to die." He went to get his shirt. It was gone. The old ones were gone as well as the new one. He flopped down. He cried.

The end of the trail.

In the numerous myths of neighboring tribes concerned with the kidnapping of a man's wife, including the Thunder Bird stories, there is no development of plot corresponding to that of the Coeur d'Alene myth, where Thunder is the kidnapper.

An isolated example of the ascent by means of feathers, placed in a different setting, may be noted among the *Chilcotin*, two examples of sky people's helplessness when deprived of their clothes are found in *Kathlamet* and *Quinault* mythology:

A boy wishes to reach the sky in order to get wives from the sun; the boy has his sister blow on a pile of duck feathers, which thereupon carry him aloft (the boy obtains the sun's two daughters for wives; however he forgets to thank an old woman helper in the sky so his wives are taken away from him again) (*Chilcotin* MAM 4:24).

The Earth people attack the Southwest Winds in the sky; the Sky Women are unable to flee, for they cannot put on their coats; the coat-strings have been cut; the Earth People kill the Sky Women (*Kathlamet* BBAE 26:70).

The Earth People attack the Sky People in order to recover Raven's daughter who had wished for a star husband and awakened in the sky; the Sky Women cannot fasten on their clothes, in which to run away, for the girdles and fastenings have been cut; they are obliged to stay (the Earth People retreat down the arrow chain with the girl; it breaks; they are left hanging in the sky as stars) (*Quinault* MAM 4:109).

#### 26. Waterbird Contests for Woman (Gift Test)

Waterbird is insulted by girl  
 Girl gives him ring and handkerchief and sets date for his return  
 Waterbird forgets date  
 Waterbird hurries to girl's house and becomes dish-washer  
 Girl tests suitors by handkerchief and ring  
 Waterbird becomes girl's husband  
 Waterbird does all the work  
 Four rattlesnakes steal girl  
 Four Thunders burst Snakes' rock and destroy Snakes  
 Girl restored to Waterbird

Waterbird lived with his mother. One morning he went along the river looking for salmon. Suddenly he was said to, "The chief is looking for

a rotten salmon." A woman on the other side of the river said it. Waterbird was very much ashamed. The next day the same thing happened. He thought, "I'll go get her." He went and found she was very pretty. She gave him a ring and a handkerchief, both of which were very unusual and expensive. He took them and put them in his pocket with the corner of the handkerchief showing. She set a day when he was to return to her.

He forgot all about what she told him. After about two weeks or more his mother said to him, "They are having a celebration. I think they must have taken your girl." Then he remembered what the girl had told him and was so excited he nearly cried. He got ready and walked all night. He came to her house. The people were showing their things. The chief said, "Tomorrow absolutely all of you come!" The next day all got ready. Waterbird said nothing. He had become a kitchen boy and was washing dishes for the cook. The people all showed their handkerchiefs and rings but none was the right one. Then the cook said, "I have a dishwasher who stayed home." The people talked over the matter. "Go call him!" they said. "Tell him to bring his handkerchief and ring."

After that they all displayed their goods, but the girl's handkerchief was not among them. Then Waterbird stood up. My! he was handsome. Strange he looked, not at all like the dishwasher. No one recognized him. He took out the handkerchief and gave it to the woman. "This is mine," she said, "You may go now. This is the one I will take for my partner."

Waterbird took the woman home to his mother. In about two weeks he got tired because he had to do all the work. The girl did nothing. He cooked, fetched wood and did everything. One day he said to her, "Go bring in the wood. It is already tied up ready to pack."

He went out. When he came in again to look for her she was gone. Four rattlesnakes had taken her away. He went into the house, lay down, covered his head with a blanket and mourned four days. Then he said to his mother, "Go get bark from a pine tree and tie up four bundles of pine bark."

She brought back the four parcels of pinebark. Then he got up, washed his face, took his little coat, went out and waved it giving a warwhoop. Four times he waved it. Thunder spoke *warara* in the sky and four Thunders came down. They were his mother's brothers. "Why did you call us?" "I want you to eat," he said and gave each a parcel of pine bark.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Thunders must like pine bark because Lightning peels off the bark at a certain season of the year. Lightning and Thunder are the same.