

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.¹

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

"My! Thank you!" they said because they liked it. They laughed. They were glad. When they had finished eating Waterbird said, "I want you to get my wife back for me. The rattlesnakes took her." The eldest Thunder said, "We know it, but it is impossible. They live in a rock." Then Waterbird cried and begged, "Please get her back for me." The youngest Thunder said, "Yes, let's get her for him."

They took Waterbird to the door of the Snake's house. There the girl was, tied with a chain under her arms and fastened to the wall with a lock. The Snakes were warned, "Waterbird is coming after the woman." "No, no, it is not easy to give her up." The father snake said, "Give her back to Waterbird. His uncles are awful."

Snake refused. Then the eldest Thunder rose and talked, *war war*. He struck the rock. Pieces of the rock flew off. The Snakes laughed. The second Thunder rose and spoke *war war*. Parts of the cave door broke off. Again the Snake laughed. The third Thunder went up and spoke. The Snakes' mother and father cried and begged, "Go give her back to Waterbird." Then the youngest Thunder put Waterbird close to the door and threatened, "If you don't give her up you'll die." "No," they refused and laughed mockingly.

Then he went up. He struck everywhere so the rock crumbled. The Snakes were killed. Only the woman was left. Waterbird took her and the Thunders took them all back to his mother's house. They told him, "Now you do not need to watch her any more. Let her go." Waterbird said to her, "Bathe for four days because you smell awful." She did so and then she was his alone.

That is the end.

There are no parallels for this Coeur d'Alene myth with its borrowed European elements in its entirety. Two examples from *Shuswap* mythology, similarly derived from European folklore, are significant for comparative purposes. Each contains the test element as a method of identification.

Alamer rescues two girls from a chief who had stolen them; the girls give Alamer a ring and a silk handkerchief; hostile chiefs set Alamer adrift; Fox helps Alamer ashore; Alamer produces the ring and handkerchief and claims the two girls; the hostile chiefs are killed; Alamer takes one girl for his wife, his helper receives the other (MAM 4:732).

Sna'naz rescues the chief's daughters from Seven Heads, the Cannibal, and cuts out Seven Head's seven tongues; a slave finds Seven Heads dead, takes credit for the victory and claims the hand of the girl; the girl examines her suitors, but fails to identify her rescuer among them; she recognizes an ugly stranger sitting in the

kitchen; the stranger, Sna'naz, produces the seven tongues; Sna'naz becomes the girl's husband (MAM 4:755).

There is however in a *Kutenai* Thunder Bird story a close parallel for the last un-European part of the Coeur d'Alene myth, the theft of the hero's wife by the rattlesnakes. The correspondence to be noted between these two narratives is especially satisfying because of the tendency of the one myth to elucidate the vague points in the other, and vice versa:

A boy, whose father had disappeared, takes for a wife a chief's elder daughter who said she would never marry; he is warned not to have her do outside work; one day the girl fetches water for her husband and disappears; the boy has his grandmother prepare for visitors; he dresses up and paints himself; three spirits similarly decorated arrive; lightning darts from their pipe smoke, each of the three disappears; they await the boy on a mountain top; they help him to open up a large rock; he sees his wife inside surrounded by rattlesnakes; the spirits burst the snakes' rock with their lightning; the boy recovers his wife and becomes her boss; the girl had had the spirit of the rattlesnake and it was that which had told her not to marry (Dyer).

27. Water Monster Woman

A boy pokes out eyes of children
 Boy and his sister deserted
 Boy pokes out eyes of animals
 Sister leaves him
 Boy fishes up abnormal fish, Water Monster Woman who eats people
 His grandfather, Fox, warns him
 Boy and family visit Water Woman's under-water country
 Water Monsters try to kill guests
 Four bushes save visitors from drowning; they return home safely

There were children. They would go far away from the other people and play in the morning. A boy saw them. He would quarrel with them and, for no reason, become angry and poke their eyes with something sharp he had. Then each child had only one eye. His father said to the people, "It is really too bad. You must grieve, you who have children. Let us leave him with no one but his sister."

The boy had not poked out his sister's eyes. The father told the sister to take her brother to be bitten by Grizzly. She went with her brother. The people left. The boy sat down. The girl drove the animals toward him, Grizzly Bear, Black Bear, Wolf and Cougar. The boy poked out their eyes one after another. All the animals were one-eyed, all but Grizzly.