

In the Okanagon myth Coyote conquers Cold:

With the help of his three pieces of dung, one of which is equivalent to the heat of the sun, Coyote enters the Cold people's house, burns it and melts the ice; Cold and his wife die; Cold's daughter escapes; there shall be cold once in a while (MAFLS 11:74).

In the allied myth of the *Upper Chehalis* Northeast Wind represents the Cold and Southwest Wind the Heat:

Southwest Wind, who has his home in the ocean, makes war upon Northeast Wind in the sky; Southwest Wind's party returns home without fatalities. In a second fight Southwest Wind fails to overpower the seven Northeast Wind brothers with boiling water; thereupon his grandmother makes a water-sprinkler for him; five of the Northeast Wind brothers are killed. Southwest Wind melts snow and frost so they no longer freeze people to death (MAFLS 27:75).

Detailed instances of a struggle between the winds, which follow an outline similar to those laid out above, may be found among the *Tsimshian*, *Tlingit*, *Haida*, *Thompson*, *Shuswap* and *Lillooet* (ARBAE 31:732).

35. Rabbit and Jack Rabbit

Jack Rabbit worries about Rabbit, his relative and friend

Rabbit takes pitch to Jack Rabbit

Jack Rabbit takes bitterroot, canas and dried salmon roe to Rabbit

They meet on Tekoa Mountain

They leave their unnecessary gifts there

Rabbit and Jack Rabbit were relative-friends (cp. p.). Rabbit lived in the mountains around here (near De Smet) and Jack Rabbit lived on the prairie of the Big Bend country. In winter when it cleared after a snow Jack Rabbit would look toward the mountains. The trees were so heavy with snow that the branches interlocked. Jack Rabbit worried, "I think Rabbit must be dead. I wonder what he eats."

Rabbit looked toward the prairie. He thought, "Poor Jack Rabbit! I wonder if he has a fire in this cold weather. I'll go see." He made as large a pack as he could carry of pitch shavings and started off with it toward Jack Rabbit's. Then Jack Rabbit thought, "I think I'll take my relative-friend some bitterroot, canas and dried salmon roe," and he started off with them.

Rabbit came up the north side of Tekoa Mountain. As he came up he

sat down at the edge of the woods. He thought, "I wonder where Jack Rabbit lives. I don't know exactly."

Jack Rabbit came over the prairie and up the south side of the mountain. As he went over the top he saw Rabbit sitting there, "Why, here he is!" He stood up. Jack Rabbit looked up and saw him standing there. They walked toward each other and shook hands.

"You're still alive, my relative-friend!" said one. "And you're still alive, my relative-friend," said the other, "I was just coming to look for you." "Why," said Jack Rabbit, "I was coming to look for you too. I was worried about you. I thought you might be hungry."

"No," said Rabbit, "I am not hungry. I find a tree under which there is green grass and I eat that. It's you I worry about. I thought you might get cold so I brought these pitch shavings for you to start a fire." "No, I'm not cold. You worry for no reason. When it snows and drifts I find a dry spot under the sage brush. That's where I stay."

"Then I'll throw away the pitch." So saying Rabbit untied his pack and dumped it out. Jack Rabbit said, "I'll dump what I brought to feed you."

He dumped it out and each went his way. That is why all the trees on Tekoa Mountain have pitch on them. That is why bitterroot and canas are found there.¹

The only parallel found for this myth, the *Nes Percé* story of Cotton-tail Boy and Snowshoe Rabbit is identical with it in all but minor details.

Cottontail Boy worries about his friend Snowshoe Rabbit in the cold; Snowshoe Rabbit worries about his friend, Cottontail Boy, in warm regions; they meet, each anxious to inquire about the other's health; they part to meet again some time (CUGA 25:3).

36. Dog Goes for Fire

Wolf asks Dog to steal a spark of fire

Dog, forgetting Wolf, stays with people

People had a fire. Wolf had no fire. Wolf and Dog were friends. Wolf said to Dog, "Go steal a spark from the people."

Dog went to the people. They fed him and he forgot to steal the spark. That's all.

The short Coeur d'Alene story is typical of the variants of this myth

¹ These plants are now extinct, but were found on Tekoa Mountain until recently.

which occur in other bodies of mythology in a consistently brief form. The *Cowits*, *Humphlip*, *Quileute* and *Quinault* have the story.

Wolf and Coyote send Dog for fire; Dog stays with the people who feed him; consequently Wolf and Coyote always fight Dog (*Cowits* MAFIS 27:191).

The four Wolves give their younger brother, Dog, scraps to eat; Dog, left at home to tend the fire, neglects it; he is sent to the people for fire and stays with them; dogs can escape Wolves only by urinating in their eyes (*Humphlip* MAFIS 27:307).

In the *Quileute* and *Quinault* versions it is within a longer myth in which the Earth People wage war upon the Sky People that the motivation for Dog's errand for fire is found. Earth People find themselves in need of fire in the cold upper regions:

In the *Quileute* myth Snowbird is sent to a house for fire and fails to return; Dog is dispatched, is fed by the Sky People and stays with them; Rabbit succeeds in bringing his fellow-warriors fire (CUTCA 12:81).

In the *Quinault* myth Robin and Dog are so comfortable with the Sky People that each forgets to return with a firebrand; Dog is fed camas (MAM 4:109).

A *Kathlamet* myth, a composite of various elements of the preceding versions, is noted below for its comparative interest.

Beaver successfully obtains fire from the Sky People by a ruse; the Earth People then dispatch Skunk, Robin, Mouse and Rat to seek an entrance to the Sky People's house; Robin warns himself at a fire belonging to two old women and remains with them; when he returns home some time later his belly is burnt red from the blaze (BBAE 26:68).

D. TALES WITH HISTORICAL ELEMENTS

37. *Turtle's War Party* (*Mock Plea*)

Turtle assembles Water People for a war party

Watersnake refuses to take part

The party turns back; Turtle advances alone

Turtle kills a Nez Percé chief

Turtle is discovered with chief's scalp

Turtle mocks death by pounding with a rock and burning; he pleads against being drowned

Thrown into water, Turtle returns home and holds scalp dance

Turtle had a house at Chatcolet. One day he said, "Come to my place, all of you who belong in the water."

The turtles, fishes and all the water animals came. At night Turtle took a blanket and sang: "*Mi . . . ah . . . a . n.*" All the people took hold of the blanket and began hitting it with a stick as they sang. Snake however was too proud and haughty to take part. He merely walked some distance away with his striped blanket pulled up to his nose and looked on. In the morning Turtle said, "I'm going on a raid to the Nez Percé country."

All the Water People started off with him. They had not gone far when night came on. Turtle clubbed the blanket and sang. The next morning they went on but on the second day had gone only as far as Plummer. The second night they sang and drummed again. In the morning the chief, a big salmon, said, "We'll turn back. You know we belong in the water. My children (people) are dry."

Then Turtle said, "You can go to Spokane for all I care! I started and I am going to reach my goal. I won't turn back."

The fish all turned back. Turtle went on alone. Before night he came to Fort Lapwe, a place in the Nez Percé country at the foot of a very steep hill. On the top of the hill he sat down. He saw the people on the other side of Snake River. He waited until dark. Then he went down to the water where he crawled because it was his element. The people however did not walk but moved like fish. Turtle crawled up to the shore. There he saw many houses. He went in among the tents. There he discovered the chief's house because many people were going in and out to smoke.

After they had all come out, Turtle crawled in and hid in the space between the main house poles and the door.¹ He listened until the chief snored, "*xu xu.*"

Turtle took his knife and cut off the chief's head at the throat. He never moved or made a sound. Then Turtle took hold of his hair and cut his scalp off entirely. He pulled up the blanket over the chief and went off with the scalp under his arm. Then Turtle went to sleep. In the morning the people began to pass the chief's house on the way to the sweat-house.

His wife said, "He is still asleep." She cooked, but when the food was ready she was too kind to waken him. When the sun was very high the people came back from sweating and said, "Where is the chief?" The woman said, "He is still sleeping." "Why is that? It is too long to sleep." "My breakfast is already cold."

He still did not stir or make a sound. Then the wife thought, "I'll look at him." She turned back the blanket, "Why, he's dead!"

¹This was the place where things were often stored.