

"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.

The girl ran home. Grizzly ran straight toward the boy who poked his eye out. As Grizzly was dying he called to the girl, "Is this the one you mean?" Grizzly had sandals of wood. The boy sat and wondered where his sister had gone. He went to find her. He found tracks which showed she was running. He thought, "If I ever get to the house I'll punch her eye out too. She's absolutely no good."

He came to the house and went in. She was not there. He went into the neighbor's houses but she was not there. He sat down and cried. At night he went to the sweathouse and stayed. In the morning Magpie suddenly came to the door. He punched out her eye, skinned her and hung the skin by the door to dry. He did this to ten magpies. He ate the meat. The skins he sewed together and made himself a blanket. He was glad and danced.

A monster who had two daughters said to the youngest, "Go, get him for our food." The boy got hungry. He thought, "It's true there are many fish in the river. I'll fish and get some." He fished. He got many fish but all were abnormal; some were halves, some quarters, all were queer. Once again he pulled the line. It resisted; a woman came up. She sat there with the hook in her mouth. The boy was frightened and ran. He ran fast and came to a row of houses. He ran into the last one. His mother's father, Fox, lived there. He told Fox, "I had a bite, it was a woman. She was sitting there when I ran back." Fox said, "Your luck has changed. You will have bad luck." He called the people to go with him to see the woman. When they came up to her old man Fox said to her, "You are enjoying yourself. You are coveting a person (to eat)."

Then he broke off the hook. The grandfather told the boy, "You will stay here always." The boy and Water Monster Woman had a child. He grew large and fat. Then the woman thought, "Even if they are fat they are no more than just enough for my father and mother to eat." She pretended she was angry. She lay there and would not talk. The boy said to his grandfather, "She's angry. I wonder why she won't talk." He answered, "She has gathered enough people to eat, that's why."

He said to the woman, "Well, we'll all go with you to your family." She was pleased. She got up and cooked. When they had finished eating they started. The woman took the child. Fox's daughter grabbed him away from his mother. The canoe was launched. In front sat the water monster child, next was Fox's daughter, then the boy and Fox.

Just as they were starting into the Water Monster Boy looked back at the others. Fox was told, "He is looking back" (this sounds mean). "Hurry!" he said. They dived, the canoe with all its occupants, just as they were. Four times it dived. Then they came safely to a house. My! they were surprised and frightened. Everything was ice from the river

to the house. It was very slippery. Water Monster Boy ran up the beach and into the house. The others were wondering how to get up when Fox's daughter sprinkled the ice with red paint. Then they could walk. They went into the house.

"Give me the child," said one of the women. "No, let me take it," said its grandmother. The mother said, "No, no!"

The monster's father said they would eat. Pitch was lighted and put on the fire but, since the wood was from trees belonging to the poplar family it was wet, so it was dark. For a while the father waited. Then he thought, "They're dead. Our guests are full."

He opened the door, went out and brought light in. The Foxes were sitting there eating. In the afternoon about sunset the father proposed to go fishing with torches. Fox's daughter was sent for pitch. She brought in four bundles. Fox went out and hired four bushes, one whose branches were tangled, one with braided branches, the serviceberry and the thornberry, to act as his harpoonbearers (*sic!*).

Fox and the boy went in the canoe. Fox's daughter stayed home with the little one. They speared fish. All were abnormal; they were only halves or quarters. Suddenly in the midst of them was Water Monster Woman, the daughter of Water Monster. She said to them, "Don't spear me, I might drag you down." "We're not looking for such as you."

They cursed her, then speared her. They were all engulfed in a whirlpool. Fox's daughter called out, "You smart talker, you Fox!" The serviceberry bush broke, the braided one held them up, when it gave out the thornberry bush helped, just the torch and the harpoon were in sight. It broke and Fox thought, "We're done for! If we are not saved we die." The tangled bush came to the rescue.

A monster came to the top of the water. Monster Woman was crying, she was ordered to stop. "Soon they will bring him back, then we will kill them all. Keep still and do not look at them."

They cut off the hands and feet and took them ashore in the canoe. When they got to the shore Fox's daughter was sitting in the canoe. Fox said to the boy, "Go, throw their hands and feet in." He threw them in. Then he ordered the people, "Take them, eat your dirty filth, you horrid things."

The old Monster became angry. The others became tired following them. Only the daughter followed. Then they came to the shore. They turned the canoe over. They looked around. Soon Water Monster's daughter came to the surface. Fox said, "Go back home or we might kill you too."

That's the end of the trail.

A number of close parallels may be found for the isolated elements of the Coeur d'Alene myth and, in a *Kutenai* and a *Nez Percé* story at least, the combination of these elements resembles the Coeur d'Alene whole in the visit to the under-water country:

Fox and Coyote win Salmon's sister in gambling with Salmon; the Salmon Woman becomes Coyote's son's wife; Fox accompanies Coyote, Coyote's son, Salmon Woman and their child on a visit to the salmon country; the woman tries twice to drown them but they are saved in a bladder belonging to Fox; Fox throws tobacco on the shore so they can ascend; the salmon people try to kill the guests by manuring and smoking them; Coyote dodges two people striking at him with hammers; Fox kills Salmon; when Fox throws Salmon's head overboard to the pursuers, his party escapes (*Kutenai* BBAE 59:153).

Young Coyote defeats Sea Monster Boy at hoop spearing and wins his sister for a wife; Fox accompanies Young Coyote, Sea Monster Woman, their baby and Old Coyote downstream; Sea Monster Woman tries to drown her companions but they are saved in a pipe belonging to Fox; Young Coyote spears Sea Monster and his brother-in-law; he throws his spear at Sea Monster Woman; a flood pursues the party, until they throw Sea Monster Woman's baby into the water to her (*Nez Percé* CUCA 25:48).

In an episode of the *Bella Coola* Raven cycle Raven fishes up a large fish which turns into a woman; Raven marries her with the promise not to look at another woman; he catches much salmon; he looks after a pretty girl; his wife leaves with all the salmon (IS 246).

A sea story of the *Bella Bella* tells of difficulties encountered under the water, comparable to those in the Coeur d'Alene myth:

Four men in a boat anchor on the roof of Komokoa's house; Komokoa fetches them down; they are warned by Mouse Woman not to eat the food served them; they paint their boat with a magic potion so that the sea-monster will not swallow it; all the fish enter the house filling it up with water which the snapping-door monster sucks in; the four men throw poison in the water and escape; they are carried up to the water's surface by three whales (IS 238).

The eye-gouging episode of the Coeur d'Alene myth is widely distributed in diverse myths of other tribes, numbering the *Tlingit*, *Tsimshian*, *Kwakiutl*, *Haida* and *Coast Salish*—*Upper Chehalis*, *Shokomish* and *Cowlitz*:

A man sees a woman floating with two children on the lake; he takes one child home with him; the child plucks out people's eyes; a woman kills the boy and becomes the creature, the sight of whom makes people wealthy [the child disappears at daylight; only one sick woman and her child survive] (*Tlingit* BBAE 39:292, 174; ARBAE 31:948).

The son of a prince and a woman of the lake pluck out people's eyes; the prince returns the child to the lake woman and receives from her gambling-sticks which bring him much wealth; the lake woman gives the princess a garment of wealth, the sight of which makes people wealthy; the lake woman becomes part-fish, part-woman (*Tsimshian* ARBAE 31:156).

A woman marries a water spirit; the child from this union kills people and plucks out and roasts their eyes; the boy's uncle kills him; his ashes turn into mosquitoes and small flies (*Kwakiutl* IS 164).

Half Rock Being (a man in the corner of the house) sees Raven in the skin of a child of the heavenly chief's daughter knead and eat something; the following morning the inhabitants of four towns have each lost an eye; Raven, the eye-gouger, is put into his cradle and dropped into the water [Raven is thrown down to earth] (*Haida* BBAE 29:111, 143; ARBAE 31:948).

In an *Upper Chehalis* myth the daughter of the girl whom the One-Legged Man carried off pulls out a child's eye at each of four places and is sent downstream in a bucket in each case; the fifth time a giant takes her for his wife (MAFLS 27:121). In a *Shokomish* version the daughter of the girl taken home by the Sharp-tailed Man scratches people's eyes out and is paddled out to sea by the Crows in their canoe; the girl, deserted on an island, helps the slave, Coon, dig roots and marries Coon's master (MAFLS 27:371). In a *Cowlitz* myth Samlic's wife is carried away by a dangerous being, a cloud; she has a daughter by him who five times tears out a child's eye and eats it; the fifth time the girl rises as a small cloud (MAFLS 27:196).

In each of these versions, with the exception of the incident taken from the *Haida* Raven cycle, the eye-gouging child is the offspring of an unusual, mythical parent, in the majority of cases one associated with the water.

28. Little Mosquito

The youngest of five mosquitoes receives warning of enemy's presence and hides in sweat-house

Little Mosquito's four brothers are burned to death by Geese

Little Mosquito deserted

Little Mosquito refuses blood mixed with camas

Geese feed Little Mosquito blood

Little Mosquito flies against pine needles and bursts

Mosquitoes are no longer to be man-eaters

There lived long ago a family of four mosquitoes.¹ The oldest ones always went hunting but the youngest stayed home. They never ate any

¹This happened at Coeur d'Alene where the trail is dense with undergrowth and full of mosquitoes.