

the ground. He looked around, there was the water. He reached across the spring and supported himself, then drank. Right there Coyote was lying near the sun's heart. His power said, "Grab it!" He pulled it, bit it. One power handed him the little knife and said, "Cut it!" He cut it. Then Sun fell down and died. It became dark. Then all the Indians said, "Now Coyote has murdered someone."

Coyote went off. He went far, far. He stumbled over Sun. He felt around. "This is the one I killed." Every time he stepped he stumbled over the body it was so dark. Again he asked his powers what to do. They said, "Put down that thing you are holding in your hand." He put it down. It became light, it became light.

Similar myths are found in the mythology of the *Shuswap*, *Thompson*, *Wishram*, *Kutenai* and *Coast Salish*:

The *Shuswap* and *Thompson* versions correspond closely with the Coeur d'Alene story up to the point where Coyote escapes from the antelope with the disk, which is described as a "glittering ball." Here Coyote turns into an elk, uses fragments of the ball as armor and kills many people, until Meadowlark intervenes; Coyote avenged makes his escape (MAM 4:642; MAFLS 6:32; MAM 4:313).

In the *Wishram* myth Antelope's two sons succeed in stealing the people's shiny ball, while Coyote's four sons and one daughter are killed; Coyote with the aid of his two faeces catches the Antelope and transforms them into antelope (PAES 2:67).

In the *Kutenai* version Young Coyote is captured while stealing the people's hoop, but his companion, Young Fox, rolls it home safely; Old Coyote and Fox in turn free Young Coyote. Subsequently Coyote and Young Fox lose the hoop in gambling with Salmon; Fox and Young Coyote win it back (BBAE 59:143 and cp. this work, tale 12).

In an *Upper Chehalis* myth Stehe'n's grandchild escapes with the people's shining hoop and shares it with his grandfather; the five Fox children are killed (MAFLS 27:70). In the *Skokomish* version Stuhe'n's grandson is victorious (MAFLS 27:369); in the *Wynoochee* Stahe'n's grandchild wins from Coyote's four sons (MAFLS 27:345); and in the case of the *Cowlitz* Coyote Boy obtains the shining hoop although Coyote's five sons are killed; Coyote takes the hoop up to the sky as the sun (MAFLS 27:230, 231). The *Cowlitz* version is the first instance of the identification of the stolen shining object as the sun, the Coeur d'Alene interpretation.

A parallel to the Coeur d'Alene episode of Coyote's contest at the spring with a power of light is found in myths of *Sahaptin* and *Nez Percé* origin which have a different motivation:

Moon's son kills people for his father to eat; Coyote kills Moon's son while he is drinking at the spring and places Moon in the sky (MAFLS 11:173-4).

4. Coyote Steals his Daughter-in-law

Coyote's son has two wives, Black Swan and Tern; Coyote covets Tern
Coyote with help of powers gets his son into the sky
Coyote marries Tern
Coyote's son encounters spiders
Coyote's son kills father of his Beaver wives, revives him
Coyote's son becomes homesick for Black Swan and his child
Spider Women provide box for his return to earth
Coyote's son finds Black Swan far from camp and hides in her pack
Coyote's son kills all the people except Black Swan and her child

Coyote had a house. He had a son who had two wives. One was Tern, the other was Black Swan.¹ The latter had a baby. Tern had none. Everyone liked Swan, no one liked Tern. Coyote thought, "I'll be the one to fall in love with Tern. Black Swan is really black and ugly. I must find some way to do away with my son, then I can have Tern for myself."

He went off and consulted his powers. "What can I do so that my son will die?" "Take him up to the sky," said one power. "I will be something good to climb up on," said the second. The third said, "On the tip of that tree I will be an eagle's nest in which there are two desirable small eagles." The fourth said, "Keep arching your brows so he ascends." "All right," said Coyote and went back home. He said to his son, "I see two eagles have a nest in the top of the pine tree. It would be nice to climb up for them." He answered, "Yes, I'll go in the morning." Coyote said, "All right, in the morning we'll go for them."

They went. They saw the young eagles were just about large enough to fly. The boy climbed up. He looked down and saw his father lying on his back and raising his eyebrows. "Why are you doing that?" he asked. "I am afraid you might fall. I don't mean to do it but I can't help it I am so worried."

He really did it because it made his son rise higher each time. The son rose higher and higher and finally went right into the sky. Coyote got up and went back into his son's house. He said to Black Swan, "Go far away. Your husband left because of you." Thus he sent her away.

He said to his children, "Your older brother has gone up. You will never see him again." Then he took Tern for his own wife.

The son found the sky just like the earth. He saw an elk and shot it. He butchered it and dried the meat. At night when he was trying to sleep he heard people talking. He understood one to say, "You must have seen that person. You defecate on people so you can eat." The

¹The Coeur d'Alene say that long ago black swans were numerous in their country.

other answered, "You must have seen an elk. I suppose you would defecate on him so you can eat." The older of the two brothers ate game, the younger ate people. (They may have killed them by defecating on them.)

Each one of these people had a cane on which was tied a bone of each individual he had killed. One cane had elk bones, the other had human bones. Then he heard them fight with canes. One was poking the other into the ground with a cane. Coyote's son arrived there. The older was a spiderlike animal with very long legs who said to Coyote's son, "My younger brother, gave me that elk over there. I will protect you. Go take everything that is good. He will covet it. When I get there we will fight. Just as I catch hold you must say, 'Chop my leg off, my daughter's child.' Take a stick and put it by your leg. Then I will say to you, 'Chop my leg!' Then run around as if it hurt. I will say it again and this time we will really chop his leg."

So the spider ran and ate the meat. His companion was jealous of him. Coyote's son went off. He stood under a tree. It was raining hard. He put his quiver under his blanket to keep it dry. He heard women laughing, "hä hä hä, Beaver's older sister is going down creek, hä hä hä, Beaver's younger sister is going up creek."¹ He heard "p'atcetcetce," the sound of beaver being clubbed with a stick. They said, "Oh! He is wet, our husband."

They came straight toward Coyote's son and stood on the opposite side of the tree. Then they said, "Go! You are wet. Let's go now." There were four women beavers and each was carrying two beavers. Coyote's son went with them. They came to a house and all went in. The women were beavers and they all ate beaver.

The next day Coyote's son went hunting. He shot a deer and went on looking for another. He shot the second but when he had butchered it and returned for the first it was gone. There was nothing but blood sprinkled over the ground. He came back to the house, "Ah! He killed a deer, our husband. Ah! Ah!"

The beaver woman were glad to have the deer. He said, "I killed two but when I came back for the first it was gone." They said nothing but smiled.

The next day he went again. After he had shot the first deer he hid to watch it. Soon Long Legs came. He could see that Long Legs' body was small and round. He cut up the deer and ate it. Coyote's son shot him and he died. He shot a second deer and took it home. The women were very quiet, it looked as if they had been crying. They would not cook the deer so he cooked it himself. He took off his moccasins. He

¹ A common Coeur d'Alene saying which indicates that something important is about to happen.

offered them something to eat. Just one ate with him. The rest turned their backs. He said, "I killed that long-legged fellow, the one with the small head."

Then the women burst out crying, "It was our father you killed," they said. "Why didn't you tell me? I told you something ate my kill. You didn't say a word. Why didn't you say, 'It is our father?' Stop crying now. He will live again."

He put on his moccasins, dressed himself and went out. He found Long Legs all sprawled out. He stepped over him. Slowly he got up. "Hä hä, my son-in-law," he said. "When I said something had eaten my kill your children did not tell me it was you." "Hä, didn't you know I saved you that time you killed the elk. You were just going to be eaten by Spider's brother but I saved you. Now I am going. Follow me."

They went hunting. They killed many deer. When they came home the women were happy again. This time they cooked. "You should have told me that was your father. I would not have killed him," said Coyote's son again.

The next day when he went hunting he killed two deer but left one for his father-in-law. Although he had children with the beaver women he began to be homesick for Black Swan and her child. He lay down and covered himself with his blanket. The children came to play in his lap. "Don't do that," said the women, "there's a hole in his moccasin near the big toe.¹ Your father is homesick for Black Swan."

He got up and went out. He wondered what to do to get back to Black Swan again. He went far. He came to a house where he heard someone talking, "Ludidi, ludidi!" He went in. An old woman sat on each side of the fire. They were feeling around on the floor and arguing, "Ludidi, it is mine." "Ludidi, no, it started on my side."

They were talking about a stalk of hemp grass which grew underground from the side of one to the other. Coyote's son said, "You are my father's mothers. Show me how to get back." They remained silent. He said, "I'll pay you all my clothes." They did not even look at him. They kept on spinning. He said, "I'll give each of you a sack of meat." They paid no attention. "I'll give you hemp." Then they said, "You are our grandson." "I have been trying to talk to you a long time." "You talk as if we wore clothes. This rope stuff is what interests us." He said to them, "Is it all in one piece? There is just one measure for each of you."

They took a box and put him in it. It had a lid. They directed him, "Four times you will stop before you get to earth. When you get to land

¹ An unkind expression signifying jealousy because a man is longing for another woman.

you will hear grass blowing. Then get out. Every time you stop before that roll around, then the box will start again. Every time it falls, close the lid again."

The box started to fall. It stopped. He rolled from side to side and it fell again.¹ Four times this happened. Then it reached the earth. Coyote's son heard grass blowing. He opened the box. There was the earth. He got out, put the lid on the box, pulled the spider rope and it went up again. He walked away. "There's where our house used to be. It's gone now."

He saw traces of his father's camp. Near it he made a little fire. He saw the people when they moved from there. His wife was carrying the house of reeds, and the baby sat on top of it. When he came near the baby looked back and said, "bä bä." It was baby talk for "papa." His mother said, "Long ago your father went to the sky." Nevertheless it kept on. Then she looked back and saw her husband. She said to him, "It is pitiful the way we are treated. Your father sent me away. He took Tern for his wife. He made me camp far away." Her husband said, "I am going to kill him."

She said, "Every time I come close to the camp he says, 'Go far!' Perhaps you saw how far my fire was from the people's camp." He said, "Carry me with your pack. When you get to his house set the house mats and me along with them against the wall of his house." "No, they will kill me." "Don't be afraid. Put me down and untie the pack quickly."

She obeyed him. When they came close the people told her to go far away. She kept coming closer. She put him down and untied the pack. Coyote said, "What do you mean by following us? Didn't we leave because of you?"

Slowly his son got up. Coyote saw him. Then he began to cry, "This is the way we take pity on your wife."

The son took a stick and clubbed Coyote, Tern, his brothers and his mother. His mother said, "It isn't my fault. I didn't want to treat her like that."

However he was merciless and he allowed only Black Swan and his child to live. The three lived there.

That is the end of the road.

This myth has a wide distribution. Each of the variants listed below, with the exception of those of the *Thompson* (MAFLS 6:21; MAM 12:205, 296; IS 17), lacks the account of the young man's adventures in the sky; in the majority of cases he is marooned on a high rock until

¹ There is no indication of a taboo in this story. It is merely the way the spiders move, as Julia says, "Like an elevator," making four regular stops.

help comes to him. Otherwise the myths are identical with that of the Coeur d'Alene except for minor variations.

Southern Puget Sound. Coyote's son's wives are two faithful mourning doves and two spawn of male salmon; Coyote's son takes back his wives; Coyote, shamed by his son, drifts downstream (UWPA 3:147).

Southern Puget Sound. Coyote's son's wives are two faithful ring doves and two sawbill ducks; Coyote's powers, who assist him in getting his son marooned, are identified as his sisters in his stomach, in the form of berries; when caught in the river, Coyote floats downstream, his two stolen wives become sawbill ducks (UWPA 3:145).

Sahaptin. Coyote's son's two wives are faithful Beetle and Duck; Coyote's son meets obstacles five times in his descent in a spoon lowered on ropes by the sky people; Duck becomes a duck; Old Coyote is shamed by his son (MAFLS 11:135, 137, 138).

Nez Percé. Young Coyote's wives are faithful Black Cricket and White Swan; upon Young Coyote's return White Swan dives into the water to remain wild forever; Young Coyote becomes hunting chief again; he separates Coyote from home by five valleys; Coyote drifts downstream (CUCA 25:376).

Wasco. Eagle has four wives, two of whom are faithful to him; Old Thunder splits the rock on which Eagle is marooned; Eagle revenges himself on Old Coyote, who drifts down to the ocean (PAES 2:264).

Chilcotin. An old man is jealous of a young man's two wives (MAM 4:29).

Shuswap. Coyote's son (or nephew) has two (one) wives; Bush-tailed Rat and Mouse (Spider Woman and Mouse Woman) by singing reduce the size of the rock on which young Coyote is marooned; Coyote's son and his younger wife part company with his father (MAM 4:622, 737).

Columbia River. Coyote's powers are identified as four small objects he carries under his arm; Coyote's son causes a flood in which his faithless, fair-skinned wife becomes a swan; Coyote floats downstream (Idaho Farmer, Aug. 7, 1930).

Cowlitz. Coyote's son has four wives, two with white legs whom Coyote covets; Coyote's son causes a flood in which his two faithless wives become mice; Coyote floats downstream (MAFLS 27:243).

Thompson. Coyote's son has two wives, Loon and Mallard Duck; in the sky Coyote's son is attacked by baskets, mats, awls, combs, and birchbark vessels, each of which he reduces to harmless servants of man (cp. tale 1 of this work); he transforms two blind women (partridges) who insult him into a foolhen and a ruffed grouse; back on earth he collects all the deer for his faithful wife and himself while the other people starve; Raven's children are discovered quarreling over the fat which Raven obtained from him and the people return (cp. tale 9), they are restored to plenty; Coyote, tricked by his son, is carried downstream.

The action continues into the tale of the Salmon Release (see tale 8) in the versions from *Southern Puget Sound*, *Nez Percé*, *Wasco*, *Columbia River* and *Cowlitz*. In the *Nlakyapanmq* variant Coyote, adopted as a slave by four women, releases fog and wasps (IS 7).

The element of the individual's homesickness for the earth while he is in the sky country and his return home (accompanied by his sky relatives), usually through the medium of the spider's rope, common to the above myths, finds analogies in the following otherwise unrelated stories:

Wasco. The boy who married Sun's daughter (PAES 2:306).

Lower Fraser River. The children of Sun's daughter who wish to visit their great-grandparents (IS 40).

Kwakiutl. The wife of Food Giver (MAM 5:52).

Tlingit. A man and his wife carried off to the sky (BBAE 39:251).

Chilcotin. Two sisters flee to the sky to escape from their husband, Skunk (they are lowered in a basket by an old sky woman) (MAM 4:29).

In a *Thompson* myth Spider's thread is too weak to help a man down from the upper world to the world below to visit his brother and Crow advises the man in a dream to jump through a hole, roll over upon hitting an obstacle, and jump again, which the man is obliged to do four times before opening his eyes in the lower world (MAFLS 6:78).

An analogue to the sky encounters of Coyote's son is found in a *Kathlamet* story:

A boy in the sky meets a man-eater, Evening Star whose house is filled with human bones and eyes, and a mountain goat hunter, Morning Star with whom he stays as son-in-law until he becomes homesick and is lowered to earth with his family (BBAE 26:13).

In an *Upper Chehalis* myth a young man, who has escaped up a tree from his captor, Lion, climbs up to the sky, encounters Evening who kills deer and men for food, is rescued by Dawn's daughters and, accompanied by his family, is lowered to earth by Spider (MAFLS 27:83).

In *Nez Percé* mythology a man, offended by his brother, climbs a tree in pursuit of a pheasant; while his bear stands below winking, the tree grows ever taller, until the climber disappears into the sky (CUCA 25:163; cp. also *Sahaptin* MAFLS 11:158).

A *Sampoil* myth opens with the Coeur d'Alene setting though the story is developed along different lines:

A younger brother, who covets his elder brother's wife, sends his older brother for eagle feathers and maroons him on a cliff; the older brother fastens eagles to himself which carry him to safety; he leaves his wife with his brother and goes to his uncle (JAFL 46:148).

A list of myths of the Coyote-Coyote's son cycle, extending over a wider territory than has been covered by this study, may be found in MAFLS 11:120, footnote 1.

5. *Little Beaver*

Grizzly Bear with the help of false Coyote kills Coyote's four sons
Coyote adopts Little Beaver
Little Beaver is trained for revenge
Little Beaver kills Grizzly
Coyote's powers help him kill Grizzly's family
Coyote disguised as pestle seduces Grizzly's daughter

Coyote had a house. He had four children. The oldest went to visit Grizzly Bear who lived on a hill nearby. There was a Coyote who had turned against his own tribe and had made himself an ally of Grizzly Bear near whom he lived. Every time he saw someone coming he cried, "Go under the hill, not across the top." If they did so Grizzly could easily come out and capture them. He would then run out and claw and bite the visitor to death.

When the son of the true Coyote came to visit Grizzly gave him something so hard to eat that it made all his teeth come out. As he went home he followed the traitor's advice and went under the hill. Then Grizzly killed him. The same thing happened to Coyote's other three sons.

For a long time he mourned. Suddenly he stopped and went to the river where he sat down on the shore. In the water he saw a little beaver. He said to him, "Come over and stay with me because I am lonesome. Then I can see you around my place. Go ask your mother." Little Beaver paid no attention. Coyote said, "Do you hear?" but he did not answer.

Then he disappeared. Coyote started to cry and kept it up a long time. Then he went back to his house and lay down. Someone came in. It was Little Beaver's mother. Coyote was covered up with his blanket. She asked him, "Are you asleep?" "No." "You wanted my little one to come to live with you. I came over to talk over the matter with you."