From the online library at www.worldwisdom.com

THE NOOTKA - Part III

MYTHOLOGY

ORIGIN OF THE WOLF DANCE[1]

At Kátsnim't[2] lived a young chief, Yanámhum. There was another man who was constantly washing ceremonially in the woods, and Yanámhum determined to do likewise. So every morning and every evening for two years he washed himself; and gradually he increased the length of the hemlock sprigs which he used in rubbing his body, until they became branches as long as the stretch of his arms. As he washed, he looked at the rising or the setting sun.

One morning while he was drawing a long branch across his naked back, it was suddenly grasped from behind and held. He looked about and saw a Wolf holding the branch between his teeth, and a little way off sat another Wolf on his haunches, watching with his head on one side. When Yanámhum turned, the Wolf released the bough and trotted away into the woods with his mate. Then the young man laid it on the pile of used branches and went home, very happy because he was about to get that for which he had been striving.

On the next day the same thing occurred, and on the following day at sunrise he did not use the hemlock, but merely rubbed himself with water. Then he lay down in the water, waiting to see what the Wolves wished to do with him. Very soon they came out of the woods, and quickly the man closed his eyes, pretending to be dead. One of the Wolves squatted on his haunches, while the other went about the edge of the water, sniffing at every spot Yanámhum had touched. Then he began to sniff at the man, and nipped his arm. He seized the arm and began to drag him out to the bank; but suddenly he dropped the body, and both Wolves ran into the woods.

Then Yanámhum was vexed, and said to himself, "Now I will really wash hard!" He rubbed his body violently with hemlock, and

1 The Kyuquot version.

2 The former home of a Kyuquot sept, a few miles north of Blind entrance, Kyuquot sound.

remained all day beside the stream, and at sunset he rubbed again with hemlock. Then he went home. Thus also he did on the three following days, and the next morning he lay down in the water, and again the two Wolves came. This time one of them bit him and then dragged him out of the stream. He seized the man by the back of the neck, swung him up on his back, and ran through the woods, followed by his mate. They came out on the beach and trotted on for some distance to Sacháakuhl [half-way between Blind entrance and Milksepe inlet].

As the Wolves trotted along the beach, Yanámhum became curious to know where he was, and he opened his eyes a very little. The Wolf staggered and almost fell. He turned his head and said hurriedly: "Remain dead! Do not open your eyes yet!" So Yanámhum quickly closed his eyes and breathed lightly. But again he grew curious, and the same things happened. After a while they came to a small creek, and the Wolf as he crossed threw the man off into the water, where he lay facing the bank they had just left. He opened his eyes and saw that he was a long distance from the place where he had been washing. On the other bank sat the Wolves, wet with sweat and with red tongues hanging out. When they had rested, one of them dragged the man out, swung him up on his back, and trotted away.

Now the Wolves turned into a trail through the woods, and after a time entered the mouth of a great cave. For a long time they passed under the ground, and then at the back of the cave they came to a small hole lined with sharp points of rock. The man was thrown to the ground, and the Wolves crept through. Then one of them took him by the neck to drag him through; but at the hips he stuck fast. Still they tugged and pulled, and with a great effort they drew him through; but his hips and legs were terribly torn by the sharp rocks. They were now in the open.

After a time Yanámhum heard the sound of many voices, and he thought they were at the end of their journey. The voices became more distinct, and he heard the people saying to one another, "Here is the person we have been hunting." This was the Wolf village, where the Wolves, removing their fur coats, lived in the form of human beings. The man was thrown down roughly outside the door of a house, and the two Wolves went in. Some young men came out, dragged the man inside, and laid him on some new mats. Still he kept his eyes shut.

"Do not let him lie too long," said a voice. A plank was laid on

the floor with one end raised, and under the lower end was placed a wooden dish to catch the blood. For they were going to cut him up and eat him. One of the Wolves with a knife kneeled beside Yanámhum. "Why," he said, "this animal has fine fur!" For the animal people regarded humans as animals with fur. He placed the point of the knife on the body. Then suddenly Yanámhum grasped the knife, tore it away from the Wolf, and leaped up. Instantly all the Wolf people dashed for their skins and tried to scramble into them. For the animal people were ashamed to be seen without their skins, and had no power without them. There they stood in the sight of Yanámhum, some with only one arm covered, others with the skin coats hanging down their backs.

For an instant there was silence. Then the chief spoke to his people quietly: "We had better give these coats to him and get back our knife." So all the Wolves' coats were piled in the middle of the room, and the chief begged, "Will you give us our knife?" But the man refused to give it up, and the chief said: "All these things you see in this house shall be yours. If you wish to get sea-otters, you can do so easily. If you wish to hunt seals, you can get many of them. If you wish to hunt whales, you can kill them." But even for these Yanámhum was unwilling to give up the knife. He kept his eyes fixed on an object hanging on the wall, wrapped in balsam boughs.

Then the Wolf chief said: "Give us our knife and you shall have our comb. Then if you have any friend or any sister or daughter who wishes long hair, you have only to draw this comb out to whatever length you choose, and the hair will be of that length." Still Yanámhum kept the knife tightly clasped under his folded arms. "Well then," said the chief at last, "give us our knife and take this *kísta*." He showed a handful of water. "If you have any friend who is dead, you have only to sprinkle this water on his eyes and face and he will be alive again." But Yanámhum was not satisfied, and kept looking at the object wrapped in balsam branches.

Then the Wolf chief pondered. At length he turned to his people: "We had better give him what he is looking at, and get our knife." So one of the Wolves took the bundle down from the wall and revealed a stone club as long as a man's forearm. "For our knife," said the chief, "you shall have *mukwánhl.* If you are hunting sea-otters or seals, or anything else, show this, and when the animal sees *mukwánhl,* it will die. If you have enemies, show this *mukwánhl,* and when they look

upon it they will fall dead." Gladly Yanámhum gave up the knife and took the stone club.

Now the family of Yanámhum became anxious about him, and when he was not found by those sent to look for him at the place where he had been washing, the people began to mourn him as dead. Then his parents, because this was their only child, moved away from the other people to be alone at Chéktlis,[3] while they mourned.

After a year they set out to return to the village. The woman sat in the bow crying, while the man paddled in the stern. As they went, they became aware of the howling of a great number of Wolves on a high mountain, and mingled with the howling was a faint sound like a human voice singing. But so far away was it that they could not be sure it was not a crow, and the man stopped paddling to listen. A lull in the howling made the singing voice plainer, and he urged the woman: "Stop crying and listen! It is not a crow; it is singing!"

The woman ceased her crying, and the singing was plainly heard. Said the man: "You see it is a man's voice! I think it is perhaps our son! Quick, take your paddle; we must get home quickly!" So the woman took up her paddle and they hastened homeward.

On a point of land ahead of them they saw a Wolf, and when they came closer they beheld a great many, hundreds of them. In the midst of them stood a man, their son! He was naked, but around his wrists, ankles, waist, and head were circlets of balsam sprigs. Then they paddled harder than ever in order to apprise the people of what was coming to them.

When they reached the village the man hurriedly told the people what he had seen, and advised them to prepare their spears for a fight with the Wolves and ropes with which to capture his son. It was not long before Wolves of all colors and sizes appeared on the beach, which was some distance from the hill on which stood the village. A scout was sent to see if this really was Yanámhum, and when he was near the Wolves the man called out to him: "Do not catch me too quickly. You must come down to the beach four times, and then you can catch me. Let some one who knows how to use the harpoon spear me in the arm. Then there will be no trouble."

3 A seat of the Chaicclesaht, on an island at the mouth of Ououkinsh inlet.

When this was reported to the people, they embarked in canoes tied side by side, because they were afraid of the Wolves. But some of the old people remained in the village. When for the fourth time the Wolves appeared on the beach, the people in the canoes approached them, and a man with a harpoon got out while those in the canoes held the end of the harpoon rope. He threw the weapon and struck Yanámhum in the arm, and the men in the canoes dragged him out to them.

As soon as Yanámhum was struck, the Wolves dashed away to the village and began to tear down the houses and the hill itself. The falling timbers crushed some of the old people, but others quickly made fires of their old clothing, and the human odor drove off the Wolves before they had quite demolished the hill.

Now when other tribes heard about these things, many of them doubted, and from every direction they came to see for themselves. When Yanámhum knew that they were coming, he made a wooden club in the likeness of *mukwánhl*, which he kept in its wrapping. Then one day the beach was black with large canoes, and Yanámhum let it be known that he would dance twice on the housetop with the wooden club, but the third time he would dance with *mukwánhl* itself, and those who continued to doubt would pay for their unbelief. So while the visitors sat in their canoes, he danced on the roof, holding the wooden club above his head. Then dropping the wooden club he raised the stone one and tore off the wrappings. Immediately the people fell dead, and the canoes were overturned.

Now Yanámhum covered his weapon and went to the beach. He dragged out of the water the bodies of those who had not scoffed at him and brought out his *kísta* [the life-giving water]. Those on whose faces he sprinkled it sat up as if awaking from a long sleep; but all the unbelievers he left dead in the water.

Then Yanámhum announced that he would give away presents, and all the people came to his house. The Wolves had told him how to make pipe whistles and tongue whistles and bullroarers, and he made a number of these and showed the members of his family how to use them. At the potlatch, while the people were in the house, his relatives stood outside blowing the whistles and whirling the bullroarers, and the people were amazed and frightened. This was the beginning of the first *tlúqan*.

Now the chiefs of the other five villages of the Kyuquot became

very jealous of Yanámhum and, determined to find out his secrets, they sent men who crept into the house one night, killed him, opened his box, and took out the whistles and bullroarers one by one. But they could not understand these things, and thinking them worthless threw them away. But *mukwánhl* they could not find, because it was kept secreted in the woods in the crotch of a great cedar.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE BEAR[4]

Once there lived at the mouth of Ówas ["small stream"] a man whose name was Yáqaahtowa. And a little way up the stream he made a salmon-trap. And after he had finished the trap, using split cedar-sticks and round hemlock saplings for posts, and split spruce-roots and split cedar-bark for rope, he went home; and early in the morning he went to see the trap. And when he came to it he found that the two long, round baskets were broken, and he could see that salmon had been taken out of them by the bears. For he saw salmon-scales on the broken pieces, and there were bear-tracks on the sand.

And this made him angry, and he said, "Oh, that raw salmon eater, Bear, why cannot he go and make a salmon-trap of his own, as mine is made, instead of breaking up mine!" This he said as he mended his trap and tied it together, and after it was done, then he went home. Early in the morning he visited his trap, and found it all broken into pieces, and he said again, "Oh, that raw salmon eater has been here again, and stolen all my salmon, to eat them raw!" And he began to take all the pieces and bind them together; and having finished, he went home.

Very early the next morning he found his trap again broken, and he said: "Oh, that raw salmon eater has been here again, the thief! If I had come a little earlier this morning I would have caught him breaking my salmon-trap, then I would have had a fight with him!" Just then he heard a man speaking behind him, who said to him in a gruff voice: "Yáqaahtowa, I have heard everything you have said against me these last three mornings, every time you come to see this trap of yours. For you call me a raw salmon eater." And when the fisherman looked

4 This Clayoquot myth was recorded by a native, and, except grammatically, is practically unaltered.

around and saw a man carrying a basket on his back, he said: "Yes, if I went and broke up your salmon-trap, if you have one, you would kill me. But I do not think you have one, for you do not seem to know how to take the salmon out without breaking the trap. I have a sliding door at the back end of the two long baskets to take out the salmon, and after I have taken them all out, I close the slide."

"Well," said the Bear, "now since you have been talking so much against me, I will take you home with me." And he went up to Yáqaahtowa and took hold of his right shoulder, and threw him into the basket roughly. In it were two dog-salmon.

As the Bear was going over a mountain, Yáqaahtowa thought to himself, "I will try to get out of this basket, then I will run away!" But as he tried to move, he found that there was something in the basket holding him down, so he gave it up, and he was carried over the mountain; and when the Bear came down on the other side, he walked on fine level ground for a long distance, then they came to a village beside a lake. And the Bear went into his house and set down the basket, and he told Yáqaahtowa to come out of it; and as soon as the man came out, then the Bear man said to him, "Now, my friend, you have to make yourself as one of us, and make yourself at home with my people, for I did not bring you here to hurt you, but only to show you that we do not eat raw salmon." And the Bear told his wife to clean and roast the two salmon, and he ordered the man to watch her carefully. While she was doing this, Yáqaahtowa heard a Bear woman crying this song:

A1a, la, alala! My husband is dead, for the dry fall of the year has killed him! My husband long ago, that trap has killed my husband! Humans have trapped my husband! *Aa, la, alala!*

And he heard another woman singing to her baby:

Halelawaya, e e e! Look at my child, *halelawaye, e!* Has a moving face that looks like an otter's face, *halelawaye, e e e!*

And now the woman put the salmon in the roasting-tongs, and let them stand beside the fire, and just before she turned them, the Bear man told Yáqaahtowa to sit close to the fire and warm his naked belly, and to keep his legs well apart. And the man did so, and while he was sitting thus, the Bear came and took one of the steaming salmon and threw it flat against the belly of Yáqaahtowa, and said, "Now, you, my friend Yáqaahtowa, you will know hereafter that we cook our food,

the salmon, on a hot fire before we eat it!" The man's belly was all blistered, but the Bear told him not to feel badly about it, for he said, "I will use something that will heal the burned place quickly." And he went out and soon returned with some small leaves, which he chewed up and spit out on his right hand, and then bidding the man lie down on his back, he rubbed this on the burned belly. And while he rubbed, the burn was healed, and he told the man to sit up, and they both ate the roasted salmon.

After they had finished eating, the Bear said to Yáqaahtowa, "We will go to the stream at the head of this lake to have a wash with devil'sclub for good luck, so that the trappers of your people will never catch me in their traps." And he put on his inferior skin blanket [the summer fur], and they both went to the small stream at the head of the lake. And when they came to a deep pool, then the Bear man said, "This is the pool we wash in." He took off his blanket and laid it on the ground, and told Yáqaahtowa to get some of the devil's-club shoots. And Yáqaahtowa broke off some of the shoots and gave them to the Bear ma-n, who sat down in the water, and afterward rubbed his body with the devil's-club. And after he had used four pieces, until the blood came out of his skin, he put down the devil's-club and said, "Now I will show you how long I can stay under water." He dived, and stayed down for a long time, and when he came up he said, "Did I stay down a long time?" And the man said, "No." So the Bear dived again and stayed down longer. And so it went, and the fourth time Yáqaahtowa thought he would never come up again; but at last he appeared, and came out of the water, and he said, "Now we will sing, so that there will be no rain and we shall have fine weather, in order that the streams may remain very low." He began to sing:

Go across this stream, please let the stream get low, and do not let it rain, so that I shall have a fine day to catch fish!

And after he had finished singing, he said, "My friend, we will have no rain now for a few days; then the streams will get so low that we can catch some salmon. And now we will sing another song to the proud clouds." And he sang:

Half good, half white! For you are the same as the eagle, who is half white.

And after he had finished singing, he put on his blanket. And they went home. This he did every morning, washing and singing, as long

as Yáqaahtowa stayed in the Bear village; for he stayed there twenty-three days. And on the twenty-second day Yáqaahtowa was making up his mind to run away to his people the next morning. So he was called by the Bear to go to the lake, and the Bear took his good blanket [the winter fur], and they both went to the deep pool. The Bear laid his blanket on the ground and told Yáqaahtowa to get the devil's-club. And after he had used all the pieces by rubbing on his body, he said, "Now I will dive." And the man said: "You do not stay at all long under the water. I think I could stay down a great deal longer than you do."

"Well," said the Bear, "after I have dived four times, then I want to see you stay down longer than I will at the fourth time; for I will stay down so long that you will think I am never coming up again." Then he dived, and Yáqaahtowa began to make up his

mind to run away at his fourth dive; for he always stayed down much longer that time. "I will steal his good blanket," said the man to himself. While he was thinking about this the Bear came up and asked, "Did I stay under long enough?" And the man said, "No, I can beat that very easily."

"But wait until I go down the fourth time, for you have never seen me really try to stay down long. And now I will try, to show you what I can do." So said the Bear.

So as soon as he took the fourth dive, the man picked up the bear-skin and ran. And he reached the foot of the mountain and ran up the side, and when he came running down the other side he heard the Bear man calling out, "Yáqaahtowa, stop running, or I will kill you for stealing my winter blanket!" But the man kept on toward a river that he had seen from the mountaintop, and when he reached it, the Bear was close behind him. He ran down the river a little way, and saw an empty canoe, and a man's voice said, "Yáqaahtowa, jump into the canoe, and your life will be saved!" Immediately he leaped into the canoe and pushed out into the deepest water.

And the Bear man saw that he was beaten, and he said, "Now you have stolen my best blanket, my winter blanket, to leave my body naked in the coming winter; yet I hope I shall stand the cold and live to kill you the first time I see you!"

But Yáqaahtowa laughed at him, for he was safe in the canoe. And when he arrived home he told his wife all about his adventure, and he taught the people the Bear songs. He wore his bear-skin blanket in the

feasts given by his people, and from that time all the head chiefs used bearskins.

And now one day in the autumn Yáqaahtowa said to himself, "My people have caught many bears in their traps, and I think that my enemy is killed by this time, and that it is safe to put my salmon-trap in the stream." So he went to the stream, and after he had built the trap he went home. Early the next morning he took his wife and went to see the trap. They found it full of fish, and he said to his wife: "I know that some of our people have killed the bear that used to break this trap and steal all the salmon, and now we will get all the fish. Now the thief is dead, and I am glad that he has been trapped and killed!"

Then he heard a deep, gruff voice behind him: "Oh, my friend Yáqaahtowa! So you give me a chance to see you once more! And I will kill you now, as I promised you for stealing my blanket!"

And the Bear took hold of his two arms and pulled them off one at a time, and also the legs and the head, and he ripped open the belly of Yáqaahtowa.

A YOUTH OBTAINS WHALING POWER[5]

There was a little boy, the chief's son, who every morning went to swim in salt water, and before going in and after coming out he would rub his hands with sand. He became a young man and married, and his father told him to go whaling. But though he tried to get a whale, he could not, and the others could not go ahead of him and kill a whale, because he was the chief. After a while he saw something black just under the water, and said to his steersman, "Turn that way!" When he was close to the object, he speared it, and the others — there were sixty canoes-hurried up, thinking he had speared a whale. But when they arrived they saw that it was merely a rock. They all turned back home, and at the beach the young chief left everything in his canoe and went to his house.

In the morning the chief saw his son lying with his wife. This no whaler did before the end of the whaling season. The young man did not get up, and late in the morning the chief took a vessel of urine and

5 A Clayoquot myth.

threw it on him. Still he did not rise, but remained in bed all day, because he had speared an island, and was ashamed. He told his wife then that he was going away, and at night he woke his two slave boys, and the three got into the canoe. That night they reached Bear river, and he sent the slaves home, bidding them set out to find him after twenty days. He was going to travel over the islands near the village to wash ceremonially, he said, in order to find help, for he was ashamed that he had not been able to kill a whale. He warned them not to reveal to anybody what he had told them.

For eight days the young man travelled about, washing morning and evening, and never eating. At night he would stop and try to see a *chí'ha,* but he could not. On the eleventh day he saw a wolf. He waited for it to give him power, but it did not see him. From midday until nightfall he remained there, watching the wolf, but it did nothing. In the morning it was not to be seen, and the man started home. He made a deadfall, and on the following morning he found in it a black bear. This showed him that he had done well in washing, and that the spirits favored him. On the twenty-fifth day he came out of the woods, and he began to cry because he had not seen a *chí'ha,* and had obtained no supernatural power.

While he sat there in the moonlight waiting for his slaves, he heard sounds like a woman in childbirth. He looked down on the beach and saw that they came from behind a large stone. He knew it was a *chí'ha.* He went down, and behind the stone he saw a baby in a cradle. At a short distance was the mother, making the sounds that soothe a baby to sleep. The young man took the baby and ran away, and she came after, begging him: "Give me my baby! In the cradle are four charms good for whaling, and you shall have them!" He removed the child from the board and threw it behind him without looking at the woman, lest he die from seeing her. In the cradle he found the four charms.

Now he felt happy. He waited four days for his slaves, who came crying because they had already looked thrice for him, and now they thought he must be dead. He called to them before they saw him and sent them back, to return in five days. For one who had seen a spirit had to be careful about coming in the presence of people too soon, lest those who looked on him should die. He told them to inform his father and his wife that he was living and had found power for killing whales. Five days later they returned, and in the evening he started home with

them; and sea creatures swam up to the canoe.

They reached the village at night, and the next day he prepared to go whaling. Many whales were in sight. He placed his charms outside the house, took six men in his canoe, and ordered all other canoes to remain ashore. A little way from the shore he speared a whale, and the people hurried out to tow it in. Then he invited all the people to his house and distributed whale meat among them, and told them he had taken the name Yátsma [*yátsuq*, walking]. During that summer he killed ten whales, and he became a good hunter of all sea animals.

THE SUPERNATURAL EXPERIENCES OF YAHLUA[6]

Tsáhwasip ["harpooner"] received his name because he was a whaler. He became so successful that whales lay on the beach unused, and so the people began to call him Yáhlua, because there was too much meat.

Among all the tribes he went looking for the best women, because it depended much upon the wife as to how great success a whaler would have. She must be virtuous and, at certain seasons, chaste. The last woman he married was of the Ahousaht, daughter of the chief Ápatsintl. And because she was so ugly, she was called Píshpatkum. Her father was a whaler, and when she married Yáhlua she continued to observe the ceremonial practices he had taught her.

After a few months she became pregnant; but when the infant was born, it was not a real child: its face was human, but the body was the body of a wolf and its crying was a wolf's crying. Yáhlua took it to his room where he had the secret things of his whaling. He wrapped it in reddened cedar-bark, and kept it in the room four days, until it stopped crying like a wolf cub. When it began to cry like a human child, Yáhlua brought it out from the secret room.

Now this child was a supernatural person, and helped his father to kill many whales, ten in one year. Therefore Yáhlua was a great man, and very often would not let himself be seen in four days. The people began to share their fish and game with him, and he received a part of everything they took.

6 A myth of the Mooachaht.

When Yáhlua died, his son, a young man, took his place and his names, and his mother remained with him, instead of returning to her people. But it was not long before she married To'wík ["man-killer"], chief of the Tlasmaásut[ha], and her son accompanied her to their village Ías for the summer.

One evening it seemed that he was unhappy, and his mother therefore called in some young people for his entertainment; but he would not be cheered. When she chided him, and asked why he was unhappy, he would not answer. She scolded him, and he went out.

It was raining and blowing. He was angry with his mother. A short distance from the village at a place called Ôktlá he remained sitting all night. Toward morning he saw something far out at sea. It seemed to be on fire, and approaching. When it was close he saw ten canoes towing a whale. The paddlers were *chí'ha* [spirits]. The leader was chanting: "*A… …! Yúshuqemí! Yúshuqemí! Hakummí!*" He was telling the whale to come faster. Then he called again, asking the last canoe if it was tied to the left side of the whale's mouth with bat-skin. The young man was faint with fright. He saw that instead of a real whale they were towing a very' *small one, not more than the length of his hand. This was susushítlik.* But bravely he went down to meet the *chí'ha* and shouted: *"Haí*[ha]! Haí[ha]! Haí[ha]! Haí[ha]*!*" Then the *chí'ha* became foam, as they always do when this cry is uttered four times, and the young man absorbed it in a piece of moss, that it might be his *chi'haíhl* [a fetish obtained from the *chí'ha*]. He went into the woods, tore off a bit of the moss, and held it while he prayed: "Do not harm me! You must be my good *chí'ha* and make me a great man!" He put the bit of moss into a hollow tree, and tore off another piece and prayed. Thus he continued to do, and it was four days before all the moss was hidden in the tree.

Now the people began to search for Yáhlua, thinking that he was dead; for they did not know that he was not a real man. But at the end of the fourth day he returned, and soon after went to his father's village to prepare the implements for whaling.

At the beginning of spring he killed his first whale. Then he made *tlúgwana,* in which he exhibited two *tuhtú'tsh,* or *títska* [thunderbirds], and announced that these birds during the coming winter would kill several whales, which would drift ashore. He himself, he said, would go to *ósumich* [wash ceremonially] for whales to drift ashore.

So Yáhlua prayed to Háhlupiháwihl ["above chief" — the Sun]: "Look down upon me! Give me that whale!" Next he prayed to Háhlsusháwihl [*híhlsuís,* the narrow strip of sand believed to border the sea where the sky at the south meets the water], and then to Háyaáháwihl ["mountain chief"], and to Háhlasuísháwihl ["under-water chief"], asking for help in getting whales to drift ashore. All this he did in the woods, and he rubbed his body with hemlock branches and with thistles.

That winter five whales drifted ashore, and in the spring Yáhlua killed many whales, and grew more and more successful. When he was well grown he began to think of marrying. So he went to the Kyuquot and brought back a wife. She was Kwakiutl on her mother's side. She bore a son, and then another.

Then Yáhlua moved to Tasis for the dog-salmon fishing, and because he was not yet satisfied with the number of whales he was killing, he washed and prayed. This time he saw *hahayinyúk* [*a* kind of octopus in the creek], and he cried out at once: *"Hai^{ha}! Hai^{ha}! Hai^{ha}! Hai^{ha}!*" Then the *chí'ha* died, and Yáhlua carried away its head.

Now Yáhlua moved to Cooptee, and the first night there he went to a lake on the top of a mountain. He began to bathe, and soon he heard something like the hooting of an owl. He moved toward it and found *qáqayanakínish,* who was saying: "*Hi! Hi!* If any one finds me, I will make him so that he can kill two hundred men, because I am the *qáqayanakínish* spirit!"

As he approached the spirit, Yáhlua became faint. Four times he almost succumbed; but he took his red cedar-bark and struck with it at the *chí'ha,* repeating "*Hai^{ha}!*" four times, and each time striking with the bark. Then the spirit died. It was a double-headed wolf, having one head at each end, with an eagle's head in the middle. He cut off the eagle's head and concealed it.

Now if any one sees *qáqayanakínish* he must go through the woods and grasp every tree he comes to, begging that he may not die from having seen the *chí'ha*. So for ten days Yáhlua went through the woods doing this. When he came out he found that his wife was dead from his having seen the spirit. Thinking himself free from the influence of the *chí'ha,* he went into the house, but at sight of him five persons fell dead. So he went back into the forest and remained four days, begging of the trees that no harm might come to him; and he re-

turned in the night, so that none might see him. But when he entered a house, two persons fell dead. Once more he went into the woods and clasped the trees four days more, and then came back into a third house; but still one man was killed. All this time Yáhlua had not eaten, and now he thought he would die of hunger. Nevertheless he returned to the woods for another period of four days, and at the end of that time nobody was harmed by the sight of him. Thereafter Yáhlua saw many other spirits, and thus he became a great man.

He took another wife, a woman of the Haíyanuwashtakumhl'ut^{ha}, whose mother was of the Clayoquot. His two sons died, and a son was born of this second wife. Then Yáhlua went into the woods to find out what it is that makes one sleep. All the other *chí'ha he* had seen. After walking for ten days he fell asleep at Tlútlupákannís, a rock near the lake at Yuquot, and there the people found him and took him for dead. But when the medicine-men began to work with him he awoke, and knew that it is not a spirit that causes sleep.

After many years Yáhlua, an old man, was sitting beside the fire, when some one took him by the shoulder and said, "Come with me, Yáhlua." Without looking up, he asked, "What is it you wish?" And the answer was, "They are waiting for you, those who are getting ready for the dance." So Yáhlua went with him, and was led into a cave near Yuquot. He drew aside the mat door-hanging and went in, and was surprised to see a large number of people. These were the *chí'ha* called *tahkétl*. Some one was calling, "Come this way, Yáhlua!" And he walked to the man who called. They wore belted blankets about their loins, ready to go out, and they said they were going to dance. When Yáhlua perceived that these were not human beings, he went out, and passing a large box-drum near the door he kicked it and said, "What is this?" He went on, and felt the earth shake. For these spirits were those who cause earthquakes by means of their drum. So Yáhlua now was an earthquake man. All the time as he was walking home the earth was shaken, and the people were frightened. Everybody was praying and painting the face, not knowing that Yáhlua had caused the shaking. When he sat, the quaking stopped.

In the evening he went away from the village to rid himself of this power by bathing, but he could not do so. Whenever he walked, the earth trembled. When the people found that he was the cause of the earthquakes, they locked him in a house to prevent him from walking.

But still the movement of his feet caused the quaking; and so it was until he died.

One night Yáhlua sat on the point of the island praying, and a man came and took him by the shoulder and said, "Come with me, Yáhlua." The man led him through the woods to a mountain and into a house, which was full of crows. As he passed through the front door and on to the back door, they dropped their excrement on him. These were evil *chi'ha*. About the middle of the house they began to peck at him and to pull his blanket, and soon he was covered with dung and his blanket torn to shreds. But he passed through and returned home, and just as he entered the house he died from the effects of the crows' biting. His head was bare of hair, and his bear-skin robe had been torn from his body. His son was the first Maquinna.

THE WHALER WHO KILLED HIS BROTHER[7]

At Ozette two brothers undertook whaling, although their father had not been a whaler. The elder was unsuccessful, but the younger killed several whales the first season. Thereafter he was always lucky, while his brother always failed. The elder often asked how he got his power, but the young whaler told nothing.

The younger brother often lay all day with his back to the fire, and he slept there at night. He seldom ate, and then only a little. The way he obtained his power was this: He dreamed of forty ghosts, and then cleared a place in the woods back of the village. Around it was a thick jungle of crabtrees, which he made impenetrable by interweaving trees and brush he had cut down, leaving only a narrow entrance. In the clearing he arranged some brush and small poles in the form of a canoe and four whales in a row. The whales were so large that he could place two corpses under them. Around the edge of the clearing he placed boards so as to make a shelf about two feet from the ground, and on it, bound to upright stakes, he stood forty dead bodies. Each held a stick in its right hand, and he arranged a rope so that by pulling it he caused all of them to strike with their batons the board on which

7 The use of corpses in ceremonial preparation for whaling is accurately described in this Makah tradition.

they stood. Another line raised the left arms of the corpses at the will of the whaler. In the brush canoe he had a full crew of seven dead men, and by means of ropes he made them paddle when he gave the order. In visiting this place the whaler always rested four times after leaving the burial ground, and on reaching the clearing he walked around it four times inside the line of corpses.

One day a son of the elder brother died, and the body was placed in a hole and covered with stones. On the fourth night the younger brother left the house. The other heard him, and softly followed him to the new grave, and silently watched him remove the stones, take out the body, and fill the hole with stones. With the body on his back, and walking in the fashion of whalers at such times, the young man went along the beach and then turned into the woods. The elder brother cautiously followed, pausing when the other rested. Whenever the whaler stopped he screeched like an owl, and prayed, "May I be given a chance to spear a whale, and may the people say it was I that did it!" When finally they reached the clearing it was dawn.

The whaler threw the body beside the first whale, and made the dead men strike the boards with their sticks. Then he stood the new body beside a stake and lashed it there. He slowly got into the canoe, took up a harpoon, and hurled it at the first brush whale. At that instant his brother sprang through the hedge. The whaler fell unconscious, and the elder leaped upon him. When the whaler opened his eyes, he begged: "Spare my life, and I will show you how to do everything! I will let you use all this, and tell you the best places to wash!"

"Why did you not let me have this when I asked you?" demanded the elder man. "The people have been laughing at me long enough! I asked you this many years ago, but you told me nothing. Now I can take everything you have. If you had told me, this would never have happened. And you took my dead son so soon after I buried him! Though you are my brother, I cannot spare your life!" He stabbed him, but did not kill him. Still the whaler pleaded: "Let me go! Whatever I have shall be yours! If you kill me, you will have no good from these things, because you will not know how to use them. If you try to use them by yourself, you will die soon!" But the elder brother stabbed him to death. Then he lashed the warm body to the other side of the stake that supported his own son. It was now broad daylight, and the man went home and told his wife all.

Four or five days later he returned to the clearing. He pulled on the rope, and the sticks struck the boards. Then he prayed as he had heard his brother do. He got into the brush canoe, threw the harpoon at the first whale, and said: "I have forty dead men for my power! May I spear a whale, and may the people say it was I that speared it!" He heard a sound from his dead brother, then the words: "You ought to be ashamed! You are not doing it the right way!" Then he went home feeling very ill, and that night he died.

WHY WOLVES DO NOT EAT THE STOMACH OF A DEER[8]

When the animals were people, Deer and his little son were fishing, and the boy fell asleep. Some Wolf people passed in a canoe, and Deer derided them, speaking so low that they did not hear him. Another canoe passed, and again he said: "Are you going home, you raw-eaters?" They asked what he had said, and he answered, "I just spoke about your having such a fine day to move." But they had heard his insult, and they dragged him out of his canoe into theirs, leaving the little boy asleep in the canoe. So he became a slave to the chief of the Wolves.

The wife of the chief one day ordered him to sharpen two knives for her. He went to the beach, and as he rubbed the shell knives on the stone, he sang: "Knife, knife, knife, knife, knife! I am making sharp a knife for the woman Wolf chief! *Qitl, qitl, qitl, qitl!*"[9]

He decided to hide one of the knives and say that it was broken; so he placed it at the corner of the house, and took the other to the Wolf woman, saying, "I broke one." She asked where he had thrown it, and he answered, "It was broken in small pieces that could not be put together, and I threw them into the water." That night the chief said to Deer, "Come and tell me a story that will make me sleep." So Deer sat beside him as he lay on the floor leaning his head against the bed, and began to tell a story; and soon the chief and all the others fell asleep.

8 Related by a Clayoquot.

9 *Chíma, chíma, chíma, chíma, chíma! Úatops chíma chehl háwihloq qaiyátseh! Qitl, qitl, qitl, qitl* [representing the sound of rubbing the knife on the stone] *!*

Then Deer slipped out and recovered the knife, cut off the chief's head and placed it on the prow of a canoe, and paddled for home, singing a boasting song about the Wolf chief's head.

When the chief's wife awoke, she gave him a push and said, "Come to bed!" There was no response, and she perceived that the floor was wet. When she looked more closely and saw that his head was gone, she began to wail, and the people rushed in.

It was soon discovered that Deer was missing. Living in that village was Aúpuwaïk ["wren"], who could see everything, no matter how far away. He saw where Deer was, and called on Crane to bring out his box and release a fog. So Crane opened his box, and fog covered the water so thickly that Deer could not see his way, and, becoming confused, returned to the Wolf village, thinking he was on his way home. Now the Wolves, with teeth sharpened in anticipation, were waiting on the beach. Deer stepped ashore, and then saw the Wolves. He leaped into a tree, and the Wolves, unable to follow him,[10] began to gnaw off the roots; but when the tree fell, Deer leaped into another. So it went, until the Wolves, exhausted, assembled to discuss what they should do. Nobody knew what was best, and they sent for Wren. As he came in, Elk sneered, "Such a little man, and we always have to wait for him!" Wren sat down beside him and said: "Well, why do not you think, and make up your mind about this, you big man? Such a big-nosed thing!"

"I will crush you with my arm if you do not keep silence," threatened Elk.

"Try it, and I will go into your nose!" answered Wren. But Elk would not give up the quarrel, and suddenly Wren darted into his nostril, and the big man began to sneeze. When he was almost dead, Wren came out, and they were at peace with each other. Then Wren taught them a song about the arms and legs of Deer falling down from the tree, and they were to sing it while dancing around the tree. Lying there was a fallen tree with one end raised above the ground, and in passing under it they forgot the song and had to go back to Wren. Four times this happened before they knew the song, and then they sang

10 The author of the fable gives Deer the human's ability to climb, but inconsistently denies it to the Wolves.

it four times, going about the tree four times. One of Deer's legs fell down, and the Wolves leaped upon it and devoured it. Thus successively were brought down and devoured the other leg, the two arms, and the body of Deer. But the stomach was not eaten, for Deer had begged them not to eat it. That is why wolves never eat the stomach of a deer.

"The Nootka - Part III"
From
The North American Indian: Volume 11
by Edwards S. Curtis
All Rights Reserved. For Personal Usage Only
www.worldwisdom.com