

Watít: Waxpushháy ku Asumyáy

Story about Rattle Snake and the Lamprey Eel, written out by Tuxámshish, Virginia Beavert, Fall 2008

Míimi tǵ'ááxxw tun íchna tiichám̐pa isínwixana anakúsh namák na íkuuk sínwixa. Íchi watít anakú Waxpúuya ku Asumyáyin pawachá tiin. Pashwixana ku patkwánatixana anakúsh imk ku ink.

Nay!

1. Iwachá nch'iiii tánawit áanknik pátupa ku kwñak iwisháyñaka Waxpúuya.
There was a huge cave on the south side (of Mt. Adams) and Rattle Snake made his home there.
2. Aw ik'píshishana ku Waxpúuya piná'ik'pik'pshana, pina'iwishúuwashana anwíktay.
The weather was becoming cold and Rattle Snake was weatherizing his home, getting ready for winter.
3. Píñch'a Asumyáy iwisalíshana áxmi Nch'iwánaknik,
At the same time cold Asumyay was hunting away from the Columbia River,
4. Ku itk'ína Pátunan, "Ah, aw nash wíiwínasha íkuuni, láak nash áwiyach'aakta naxsh yukaaśnsnan."
and he looked toward Mt. Adams (and said to himself): "I think I'll go in that direction a ways, perhaps I'll see a buck."
5. Awkú iwínana iksíks wánapa ku páwiyipaatpa túnxkan iwínana.
He walked beside a small river and came to a fork (of the river) where he turned the wrong way.
6. Wíiyyat iwínana ku iwiyáfamayka. "Miin nash awku wínata," ipxwína.
He went far and lost his direction. "I wonder where I should go now?" he thought.

7. Awku ts'áak'a Pátuyaw kwñak iwiyáçh'aaka Waxpúuyanan. "Ay xay, mish nam íchi mísha íçhna?" pá'ina Asúmmnan.
8. Ku iwíinpa, "Ay xay, aw nash paysh wiyátamaykscha kush aw k'asáwi kush anáwisha."
9. "Aw, áw nam wínamta inmíyaw inítyaw ku mash sáypta." pá'ina Asúmmnan.
10. Awku Asúm itkwátana ku iláts'imuyña. Ámchnik awku ipúuya ku k'pis itxánana.
11. Pá'ina Waxpúuyayin; "Chaw nam awku míshkin túxta. Aw nam anwíhta íçhna. Aw nash awku lalíwanxa ilksá."
12. Awku anwíhta Asumyáy Waxpuuyaammípa.
13. Íkw'ák patkwatatát'ashana Asúmmnan Waxpúuyayin.
14. Aw iwíuuxmiya ku Asúm ituxát'ana.

And then when he was nearing Mt. Adams he met Rattle Snake. Rattle Snake greeted him. "Greetings friend, what are you doing here?"

Eel answered: "Greetings friend, I believe I'm lost and I'm cold and hungry."

Rattle Snake said to Asumyay: "You must come to my home and I will feed you."

Asum ate and warmed himself. Outside it began to snow and it became cold.

Waxpuuya told him: "You can't go home now. You must spend the winter here. I get lonesome here all by myself."

And then Eel spent the winter at Waxpuuya's place.

Waxpuuya actually planned to eat Eel.

When spring approached Eel wanted to go home.

15. Pá'ina Waxpúuyayin, "Awma pawilawíixta. Paysh mash ink wiláalakwta kush ink awku txánata Asúm, ku nam paysh imk txánata Waxpúsh."
16. "i," ikúya Asúm Wáxpushnan, anakú páyu ituxát'ashana.
17. Awku pá'isikw'ana tawnáapak'a k'aywátxaw ishchít wánakan Wáxpushin, Ikw'ak pásaptayakshana yanwáy Asúmnan.
18. Awku papawilawíixna.
19. Ának iwachá Asúm anakú chilwít ishchít pá'isikw'ana Waxpúuyayin.
20. Anakú ts'áak'a pawiyanáwiya Nch'iwánayaw Wishxamípa, Asumyáy inúkwshiya chíshnan ku ixtúna ku iwayáwawna Waxpúuyanan ku ixátamalilikika wánayaw pínxush.
21. Íkush iwílalakwa Asumyáy Waxpúuyanan saptayakát'atyaw.
22. Íkush iwá pátiixwat, "Chaw nam ásaptayakta shiin. Shix nam wáta tiin."
- Waxpuuya told him, "Let us have a race. If I beat you then I will become the Eel, and you will become the Rattle Snake."
- Eel agreed with Rattle Snake because he really wanted to go home.
- Rattle Snake showed him what was supposedly the shortest route to the river, that was how he cheated poor Eel.
- So they raced.
- (When the race started) Eel was way back because he was on the bad road that Rattle Snake showed him.
- As they approached the Columbia River at Wishxam, Eel smelled the water, he gathered all his strength, and slipped right past Rattle Snake and plunged into the river first.
- This is how the Eel won the race when Rattle Snake was cheating him.
- The moral of the story is: "Do not cheat anyone, be a good person."

History about Wishxam

Wishxam Village was at Dallesport located on the North side of the Columbia River across from The Dalles, Oregon.

The cliff north of Wishxam is the place Eel and Rattle Snake used as their diving board when they dove into the Columbia River. There were lots of Rattle Snakes there too. They had a huge den covered by a flat smooth stone the size of an average size slide. It was an ideal place to play, because every time you slid down, the Rattle Snakes made a lot of noise.

During fishing season people who were related by blood or through marriage gathered to fish for salmon and to dry eels there. The flat table rock provided an ideal place for eels to stick on the smooth stone to stabilize themselves. You could look down into the river and see sheets of eels waving back and forth fastened on the rocks. They shined like black silk satin material reflecting in the sun.

There was also a large rock with a face. It was called the Widow Rock. They told he children not to play at these two places. They were warned about getting bitten by Rattle Snakes, and the Widow Rock was taboo.