

# Learning from Harry Moses

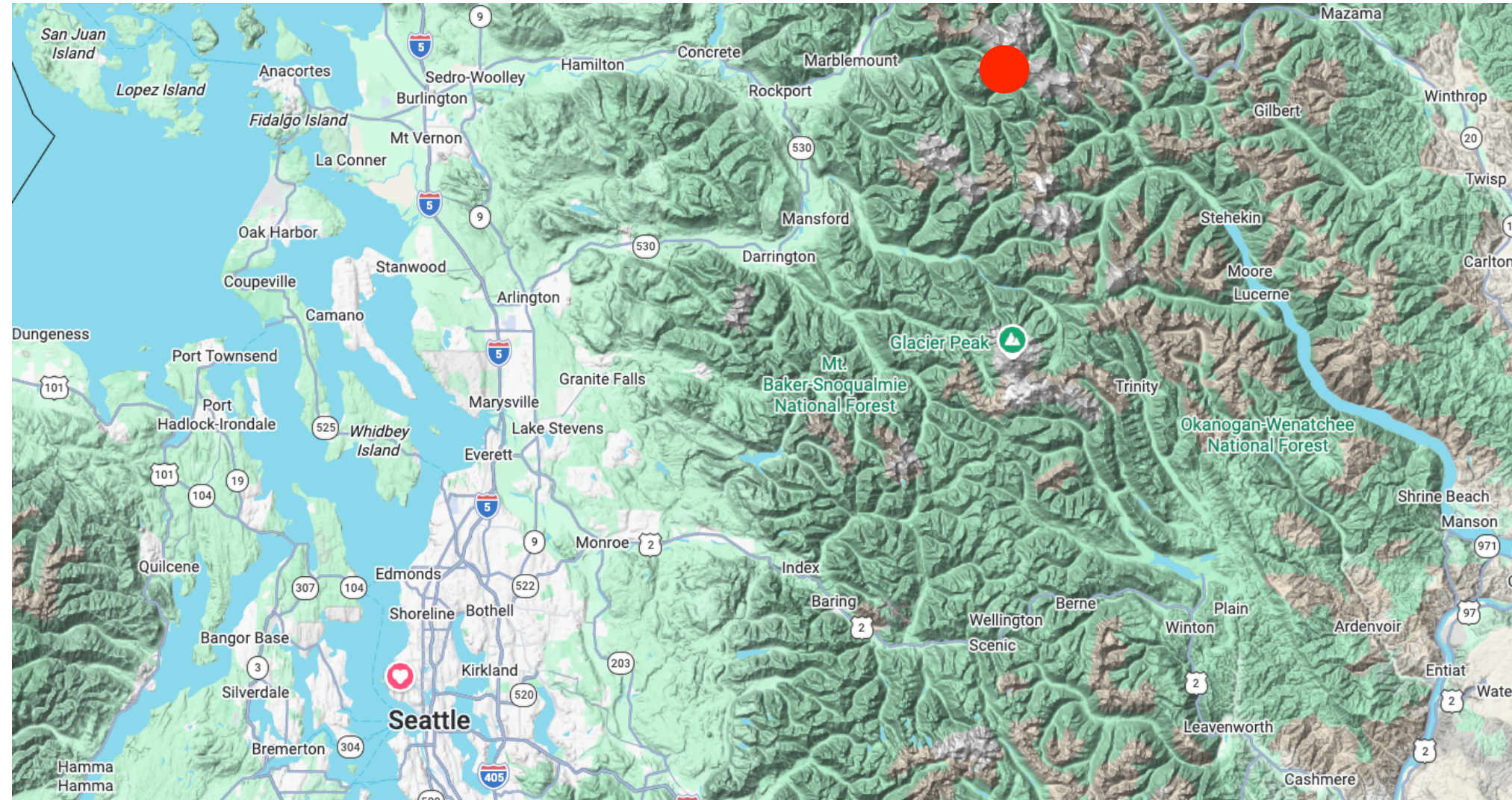
How Daylight Was Stolen



Harry and Jessie Moses,  
Picture from Annebelle Ashe-  
Dallaire

Copied from Tulalip  
Lushootseed [web site](#)

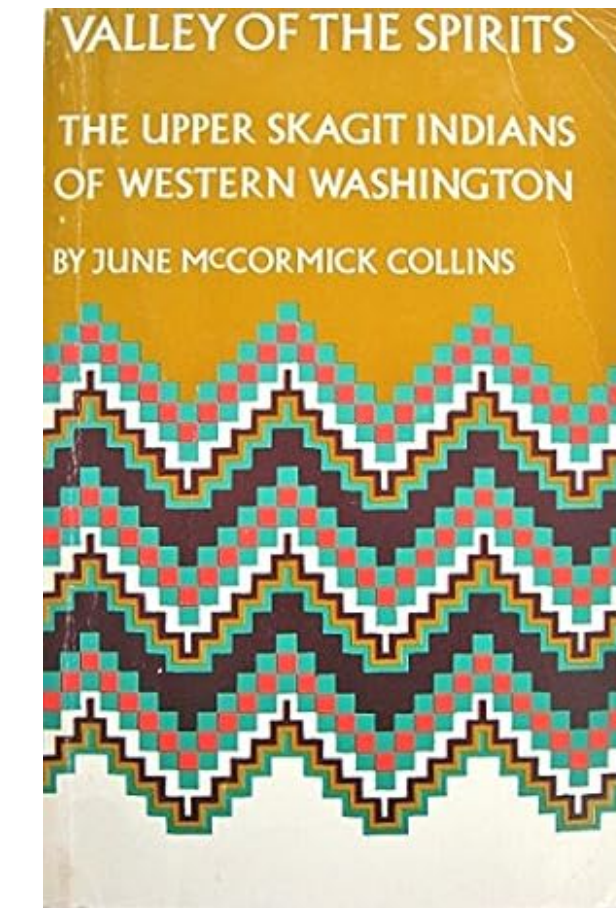
Harry & Jessie Moses raised eight children on (or near) the Cascade tributary of the Skagit River above Marblemount.



# Upper Skagit at mid-century

From June Cannon's book and comments by Sally Snyder

- Shamans, guardian spirit dancing, potlatches all going strong
- In 1940s all adult Skagit Indians were fluent first language speakers
- Snyder: they "Identified both as Indians and as successful members of the predominantly White community"

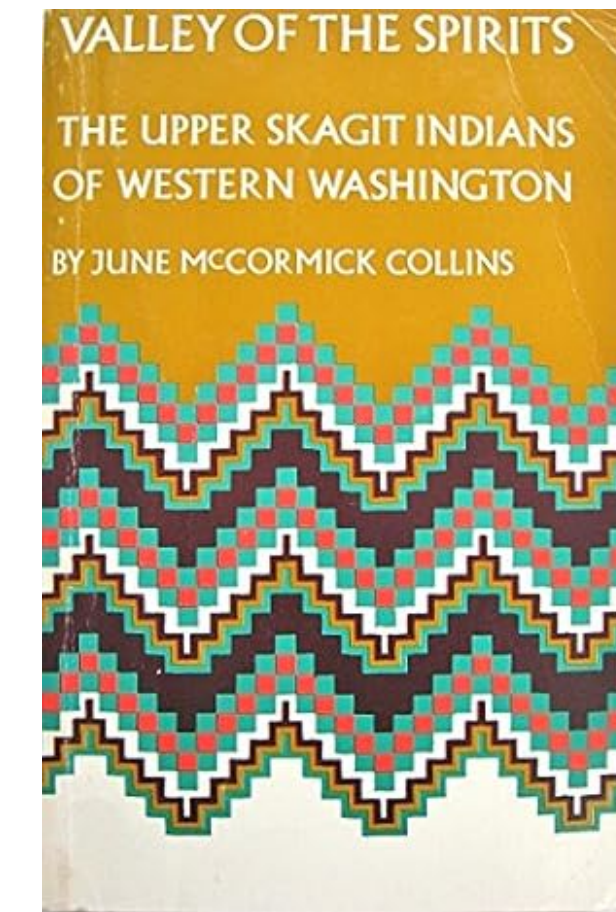


## Slaving and Raiding before 1850

- "saltwater peoples were said to have many more slaves"
- "Fear(ful) of the blood feud, they stressed peace and friendly relations ... no well-developed war complex."

# Harry Moses Biographical Details

Gleaned from June Cannon's 1942 field work, summarized in Valley of the Spirits (1974)



- Born 1878 at Marblemount
- Father Charley Moses from Entitat, near Lake Chelan, born 1853, spiritual and political leader
- Mother of Sauk-Suiattle heritage
- As a boy and young man, he learned fish weir construction from his step-father
- Made 3 round trips by foot and snowshoe, 112 miles across the mountains
- Active in the Indian Shaker Church
- Strong orientation to the Plateau Culture
- Known for his skill in carpentry and storytelling, his sense of humor
- He and his wife Jessie raised eight children
- "Daylight" recorded by Leon Metcalf November 1st, 1952
- Died in Sedro-Wooley 1955

# Perspectives on the Story

- A version of the widespread Pacific Northwest "stealing daylight" story
- Tricksters Mink and Raven are the focus.
- Mink is clever and cunning, Raven less so

## From Thom Hess's Introduction to Vi's "Haboo"

- A syəyəhub of the Myth Age, before the world was transformed, where there were no humans as we know them. All of the beings of this age shimmered among humanoid, animal, and spirit forms; but they always had the same emotions and sensibilities as humans.
- Beings had some of the characteristics of the modern species with the same names. Raven, when a man, could fly and he was an unbridled glutton, an apt parallel to the scavenging habits of the present birds.
- These characters, each with human and animal traits, provide the raconteur with great flexibility. He can draw upon one or the other of these attributes as plot, imagination, and sense of humor require.
- Supernatural power, a potency neutral in and of itself, is a third attribute of the Myth Age beings. By means of this power, they performed feats that no creature, human or otherwise, could do today.
- Most syəyəhub are fairly light and humorous, reflecting the foibles of human nature and serving to teach appropriate behavior.

## My Motivation

- I studied Lushootseed for a year with my then 6-year old son. Zeke was one of our teachers.
- Delighted when I encountered Harry Moses telling this story, along Vi & Thom's analysis.
- When Vi learned of my interest, she loaned me a copy of the 1952 audio. I wrote some software to help me explore Harry Moses's voice, coordinated with Vi and Thom's transcription, analysis and translation
- From early on I saw [parallels](#) between structures in biology and in Lushootseed, and between the Harry Moses story and the biochemistry of photosynthesis.
- In showing some of this, I may look just like hapless Raven - Mink's sidekick in this story, a bit of a know-it-all who accomplishes little.
- The next slide shows how software can illuminate the elegant structure of photosynthesis and of this Upper Skagit syeyehub.



# Living in the Dark

1      ʔal kʷi tu, ʔal kʷi tuhaʔkʷ gʷəl xʷiʔ gʷətusləʃil.

In the distant past, there was no daylight.

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2      tiʔəʔ swatixʷtəd gʷəl tasbəsad ʔal kʷi tuhaʔkʷ.

The land, it was dark in the distant past.

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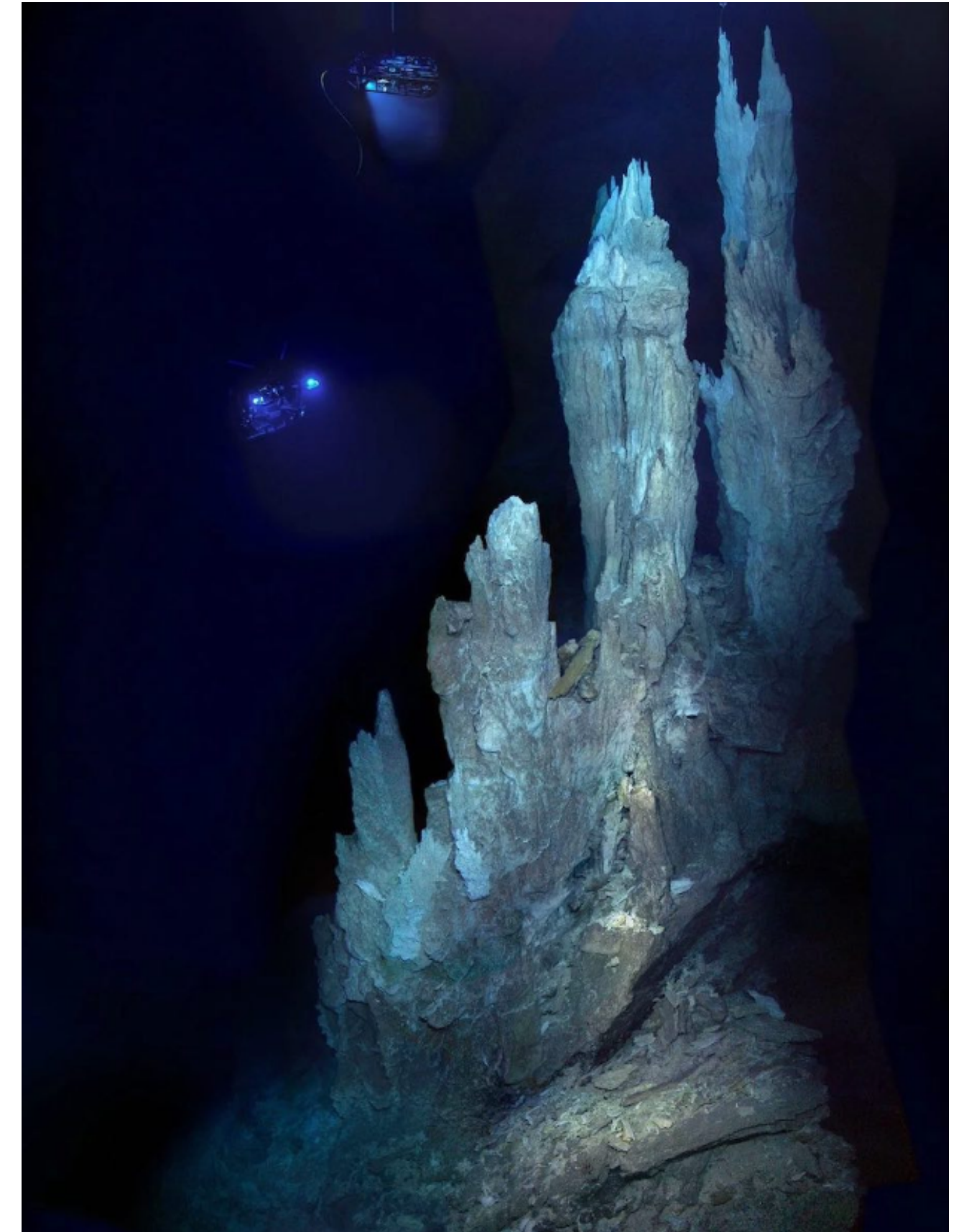
3      tudxʷadhadəxʷ tiʔəʔ ʔaciltalbixʷ. ʔəsčaləxʷ kʷi gʷədəxʷkʷədixʷ čəl kʷi sləʃil.

The people talked it over. "How can we get it?"

---

4      ʔaʔ kʷi sləʃil ʔal kʷi ǫxʷulḡwədixʷ gʷəl ʔəsčal kʷi gʷədəxʷkʷədixʷ čəl.

Daylight is up there in the upriver country but how can we manage to get it?



## Mink and Raven Volunteer & Prepare

5    **tuhuyucutəx<sup>w</sup>   tiʔəʔ   səsalɪʔ   ləg<sup>w</sup>ləg<sup>w</sup>əb**

These two youths prepared themselves.

---

6    **tuʔag<sup>w</sup>acutəx<sup>w</sup>**

They bathed.

---

7    **tuhuyucut   həlg<sup>w</sup>əʔ   dx<sup>w</sup>ʔal   sx<sup>w</sup>əx<sup>w</sup>aʔx<sup>w</sup>əʔs   g<sup>w</sup>əsutəlawils   əlg<sup>w</sup>əʔ**

They prepared themselves in order to be swift as they run.

---

Excitement builds as Mink and Raven jump over three then four canoes. Two audience members join in.

13    **ləlix<sup>w</sup>alg<sup>w</sup>ilil   tiʔəʔ   tasxək<sup>w</sup>tx<sup>w</sup>   həlg<sup>w</sup>əʔ   ʔələyʔ   dəx<sup>w</sup>əsax<sup>w</sup>əbabacs   əlg<sup>w</sup>əʔ   (həbuʔ)**  
It came to where they had three canoes overturned which they were jumping.

---

14    **ʔaləx<sup>w</sup>   k<sup>w</sup>i   čəl   tubuusalg<sup>w</sup>ilil   k<sup>w</sup>i   tuasxək<sup>w</sup>   ʔələyʔ**  
When it became four canoes and they jumped over these four, then it was there.’

---

15    **g<sup>w</sup>əl   tusax<sup>w</sup>əbabacəd   tiʔəʔ   buusalg<sup>w</sup>il   ʔələyʔ**  
They jumped over these four.

---

16    **g<sup>w</sup>əl   tu   (həbuʔ)   ʔa   g<sup>w</sup>əl   tudx<sup>w</sup>cutəb   həlg<sup>w</sup>a   ʔu<sup>w</sup>   x<sup>w</sup>iʔəx<sup>w</sup>   k<sup>w</sup>i   ʔahəx<sup>w</sup>   g<sup>w</sup>əčaldubuł**  
Oh, they thought, Oh there is nothing can catch us.

---

## Mink's charade

31 **kayit čəd luləluluŋ lasqʷəlubus**  
I will pretend to be old and grey.

---

32 **lasxʷal lasckusəd luhədʔiwbəd**  
Feebly, using a cane I will go in.

---

## Mink Declines siʔab's offer

47    **g<sup>w</sup>əl   tucutəb   luʔal   tudiʔ   ʔalq<sup>w</sup>   k<sup>w</sup>i   ladsəstədʒil   ladsɫag<sup>w</sup>id**  
And said to him: “There at the back you will lie down, you will have your mat.”

---

48    **tucutəx<sup>w</sup>.   x<sup>w</sup>iʔ,   ʔušišədʒal   čəd   ʔal   ti   ɫaχ**  
(Little Mink) spoke, “No, I need to go outside a bit during the night.”

---

49    **ʔub   ləqalucid   k<sup>w</sup>i   ludsʔaʔ**  
“It is better that I be by the door.”

---

## The Chase

68 **dił tuspək<sup>w</sup>ibids tiʔəʔ sləʃil g<sup>w</sup>əl tusax<sup>w</sup>əbtx<sup>w</sup>**

He snatched the daylight and ran off with it.

72 **ləsax<sup>w</sup>əbabac ʔə tiʔəʔ q<sup>w</sup>laʔy dx<sup>w</sup>ʔal tiʔil slčis tiʔəʔ ʔaʔyəds qaʔqs**

He jumped over the logs until he arrived at his friend, Raven.

73 **g<sup>w</sup>əl tuʔiʃ<sup>w</sup>yid ʔə tiʔəʔ sləʃil**

And he threw him the daylight.

74 **k<sup>w</sup>ədatəb ʔə qaʔqs. tudiʔ liłšəq tiʔil ləčəlčəlp ʔə qaʔqs**

It was taken by Raven. Way up high Raven was twisting and turning.

75 **q<sup>w</sup>aʔ! q<sup>w</sup>aʔ! x<sup>w</sup>iʔ k<sup>w</sup>i g<sup>w</sup>at g<sup>w</sup>uk<sup>w</sup>ədx<sup>w</sup> yəʃi huy x<sup>w</sup>əx<sup>w</sup>aʔx<sup>w</sup>əʔ**

“Caw! Caw! There was no one who could catch him because he is swift.

84 **stiqayuʔ, swəwaʔ tučalad**

It was Wolf and Cougar who chased him.

## Escaped and heading home

86

**dxʷʔal tʷslčils əlgʷəʔ dxʷʔal tiʔəʔ ǵilbids əlgʷəʔ gʷəl tuǵilagʷil gʷəl tuʔulul**

When they got to their canoe, they got in and set off.

88

**cutəxʷ ʔə tiʔəʔ bibščəb ʔaʔ tiʔil dsqəlalitut ʔulaʔ čəd gʷəl ʔuqʷšab tiʔəʔ swatixʷtəd**

Little Mink said, “I have a spirit power that I'll locate and the land will be foggy.”

89

**tuqʷšabičəxʷ əlgʷəʔ gʷəl tuχʷilχʷiləxʷ tiʔəʔ ʔaciɬtalbixʷ tuləčalad həlgʷəʔ**

The fog covered them and the people who chased them got lost.

90

**gʷəl tuʔuχʷəxʷ tutukʷtxʷəxʷ tiʔəʔ sləχil**

And they went. They took this daylight home.

## Raven tries to take over

- 96     **g<sup>w</sup>əl qawqs k<sup>w</sup>i d<sup>z</sup>ix<sup>w</sup> tuk<sup>w</sup>ədad tiʔəʔ sləx̌il cədił k<sup>w</sup>i tuwačbid**  
And Raven took the daylight first. The one who watched it was he.
- 
- 97     **daʔx<sup>w</sup> ʔuləlaχ̌il g<sup>w</sup>əl bələχ̌il**  
No sooner it would become night than it became light again.
- 101     **ʔabyitəb bibščəb g<sup>w</sup>əl haʔk<sup>w</sup> tiʔił ʔuləlaχ̌ils g<sup>w</sup>əl ʔusləxi·l ʔə k<sup>w</sup>i taʔtəbac huy**  
It was given to Little Mink and for a long time it would be night and grow light slowly because
- 
- 102     **ʔəsaydx<sup>w</sup> tašəlyaciʔbid tiʔił suhuyuds**  
he knew how it is done with the hands.
- 
- 103     **g<sup>w</sup>əl qawqs g<sup>w</sup>əl x̌wul ʔał**  
But Raven, he was too fast.

Single words [are] like tiny imagist poems\*

Four key words from  
the first half of the story

buusalg<sup>w</sup>il

ləx̣iličəx<sup>w</sup>

ləq̣aɬucid

tuspək<sup>w</sup>ibids

\*Edward Sapir, 1921, describing the Algonquin language, agglutinative and polysynthetic like Lushootseed

# buusalg<sup>w</sup>iɬ

- **buus** four [LD 42]
- **al** [LD 27] (phonological function only?) (lexical linking element)
- **g<sup>w</sup>iɬ** canoe, waterway; curved side; narrow passageway [LD 103] (lexical suffix)

15

|                        |                                  |              |                              |               |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>g<sup>w</sup>əl</b> | <b>tusax<sup>w</sup>əbabacəd</b> | <b>tiʔəʔ</b> | <b>buusalg<sup>w</sup>iɬ</b> | <b>ʔələyʔ</b> |
| g <sup>w</sup> əl      | tu=sax <sup>w</sup> əb•abac–d    | tiʔəʔ        | buus•al•g <sup>w</sup> iɬ    | ʔələyʔ        |
| SCONJ                  | PAST=jump•body–ICS               | PROX         | four•CNN•canoe               | canoe         |

They jumped over these four.

---

# ləx̌iličəx<sup>w</sup>

- ləx̌ be bright, light [LD 137]
- il becoming, becoming more so. reach or achieve a state or position. [LD 116]
- ič cover(ing), surface; on top of, over; series of items on a string, cord; spine [LD 114] (lexical suffix)
- əx<sup>w</sup> now, at the particular time [LD 30]

21

**ləx̌iličəx<sup>w</sup> əlg<sup>w</sup>ə?**

ləx̌–il•ič=əx<sup>w</sup>

əlg<sup>w</sup>ə?

light–**INCH**•covering=now

**PL**

Light enveloped them.

## ləq̥aɫucid

- **ləq̥aɫ** be in correct place, be on target, be near [LD 136]
- **ucid** body of water (to be crossed); river, mouth, language; doorway; opening in general; eat [LD 243] (lexical suffix)

49

ʔub ləq̥aɫucid kʷi ɫudsʔaʔ

ʔub ləq̥aɫ•ucid

kʷi ɫu=d=s=ʔaʔ

well be.in.right.place•mouth

REM IRR=1SG.PO=NM=be.there

“It is better that I be by the door.”

## *dxʷləšucid*

- **dxʷ-x-ucid**: form for "language"
- **ləš**: an archaic word for the Puget Sound region, may be related to the word "Salish" [LD vii]

# tuspək<sup>w</sup>ibids

- **tu** past time, especially the remote past [LD 228]
- **s** nominalizing prefix, productively added to some verb stems to create nouns [LD 199]
- **pk<sup>w</sup>(u) pq<sup>w</sup> pəq<sup>w</sup>(u) pək<sup>w</sup>** break off a piece (leaving a larger portion) [LD 163]
- **ib** idiosyncratic passive marking suffix [Beck grammar, page 66]
- **bid** transitive (middle applicative + internal causative [Beck email])
- **s** 3PO, third person possessive

"snatch" aka "his breaking off a piece, leaving most untouched"

68

|                                               |                                 |              |               |                        |                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| <b>dił</b>                                    | <b>tuspək<sup>w</sup>ibids</b>  | <b>tiʔəʔ</b> | <b>sləʃil</b> | <b>g<sup>w</sup>əl</b> | <b>tusax<sup>w</sup>əbtx<sup>w</sup></b> |
| dił                                           | tu=s=pək <sup>w</sup> ib–bi–d=s | tiʔəʔ        | sləʃil        | g <sup>w</sup> əl      | tu=sax <sup>w</sup> əb–tx <sup>w</sup>   |
| LOC                                           | PAST=NM=snatch–MAP–ICS=3PO      | PROX         | daylight      | CONJ                   | PAST=jump–ECS                            |
| He snatched the daylight and ran off with it. |                                 |              |               |                        |                                          |

# Word Cloud - explore verb roots and how they are inflected

▶ 8:17 / 8:18

Harry Moses - How Daylight Was Stolen

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Visible Tiers: All/NoneWord Cloud

☒ lushootseed☒ soundsLike☒ morphemes☒ morphemeGloss☒ english☒ html

1

**ʔal kʷi tu, ʔal kʷi tuhaʔkʷ gʷəl xʷiʔ gʷətusləʃil.**

ʔal kʷi tu= ʔal kʷi tu=haʔkʷ gʷəl xʷiʔ gʷə=tu=s-ləʃ-il

at REM PAST at REM PAST=long.time SCONJ NEG SBJ=PAST=daylight

*al kwee too, al kwee too hawk, gwul kwee gwuh.too.sluh.khail*

In the distant past, there was no daylight.

2

**tiʔəʔ swatixʷtəd gʷəl tasbəsad ʔal kʷi tuhaʔkʷ.**

tiʔəʔ swatixʷtəd gʷəl tu=ʔas-bəsad Ø ʔal kʷi tu-haʔkʷ

PROX land SCONJ PAST=STAT-dark 3SUB at REM PAST=long.time

*tiah swaw.tay.uff.tud gwul taws.buh.sawd al kwee too.hawk*

The land, it was dark in the distant past.

3

**tudxʷadhadəxʷ tiʔəʔ ʔaciɬalbixʷ. ʔəsčaləxʷ kʷi gʷədəxʷkʷədəxʷ čəl kʷi sləʃil.**

tu=dxʷ-had-had=əxʷ tiʔəʔ ʔaciɬalbixʷ ʔəs-čal=əxʷ kʷi gʷə=dəxʷ

PAST=CTD-DSTR-discuss=now PROX people STAT-how=now REM SBJ=ADNM



18

tu=g<sup>w</sup>aʔx<sup>w</sup> ʔuχ<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ tuʔululəx<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ bibščəb ʔi tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ ʔi tiʔəʔ qawqs

tu=g<sup>w</sup>aʔx<sup>w</sup> ʔuχ<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ tu=ʔululəx<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ bi-bəščəb ʔi tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ ʔi tiʔəʔ qawqs

PAST=walk go PROX here PAST=travel.by.water=now PROX here ATTN=mink CONJ PROX here CONJ PROX raven

Now they set out. Now Little Mink and Raven set out by canoe.

27

ɬudx<sup>w</sup>ʔiwədəx<sup>w</sup> əlg<sup>w</sup>əʔ ša g<sup>w</sup>atəx<sup>w</sup> ʔə dibəl k<sup>w</sup>i ɬuʔuχ<sup>w</sup>tx<sup>w</sup> k<sup>w</sup>i sləχil

ɬu=dx<sup>w</sup>-ʔiwədəx<sup>w</sup> əlg<sup>w</sup>əʔ ša g<sup>w</sup>atəx<sup>w</sup> ʔə dibəl k<sup>w</sup>i ɬu=ʔuχ<sup>w</sup>-tx<sup>w</sup> k<sup>w</sup>i sləχil

IRR=CTD-decide=now PL INTJ who=now PR we REM IRR=go-ECS REM daylight

They will decide. “Which of us will take the light?

28

g<sup>w</sup>əsduk<sup>w</sup> g<sup>w</sup>əbək<sup>w</sup>aʔi g<sup>w</sup>əʔuχ<sup>w</sup> yəχi čəl g<sup>w</sup>əhaydub ɬəʔuχ<sup>w</sup>c čəl tiʔəʔ sləχil

g<sup>w</sup>ə=s=duk<sup>w</sup> g<sup>w</sup>ə=bək<sup>w</sup>=aʔi g<sup>w</sup>ə=ʔuχ<sup>w</sup> yəχi čəl g<sup>w</sup>ə=hay-dx<sup>w</sup>-b ɬə=ʔuχ<sup>w</sup>-c čəl tiʔəʔ sləχil

SBJ=NM=anormal SBJ=ALL=1PL.SBRD SBJ=go because 1PL.SUB SBJ=known-DC-PASS PROG=go-ALTV 1PL.SUB PROX daylight

It would be bad if we both were to go, because we would be known to be going after this light.

38

tutələwiləx<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ tuʔuχ<sup>w</sup>əx<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ bibščəb g<sup>w</sup>əl tułčil dx<sup>w</sup>ʔal tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ siʔab ʔabsləχil

tu=tələwiləx<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ tu=ʔuχ<sup>w</sup>əx<sup>w</sup> tiʔəʔ bi-bəščəb g<sup>w</sup>əl tu=łčil dx<sup>w</sup>-ʔal tiʔəʔ diʔəʔ siʔab ʔas-bəs-sləχil

PAST=run=now PROX PAST=go=now PROX ATTN=mink SCONJ PAST=arrive CNTRPT-at PROX here noble STAT-PROP-daylight

(Little Mink) ran. Little Mink went and he came to the nobleman who had daylight.

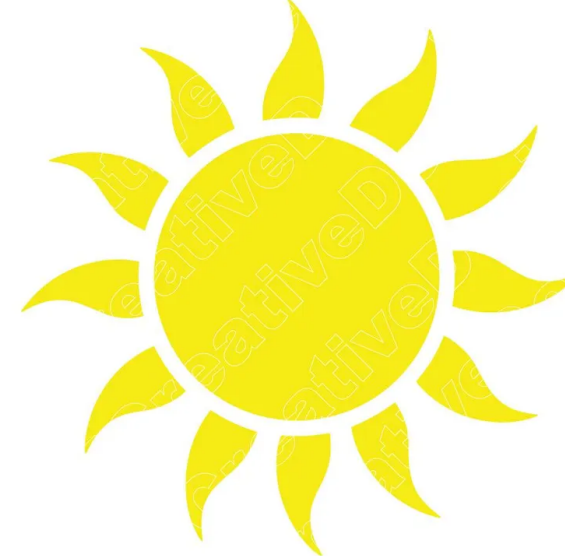
66

ʔal bəʔuɬaχ g<sup>w</sup>əl bəʔuχ<sup>w</sup>cəb ʔə bibščəb

ʔal bə=ʔu=ɬaχ g<sup>w</sup>əl bə=ʔuχ<sup>w</sup>-c-b ʔə bi-bəščəb

at ADD=HAB=dark SCONJ ADD=go-ALTV-PASS PR ATTN=mink

When it would again be night, Little Mink went after it again.



Molecular Version













## How Plants Peel off some daylight

<https://pshannon.net/daylightViz/>

