



40. Animal Mother Story January 11, 1951, Little Atlin

A bunch of people camp there on Lewes Lake.

Lots. I don't know how many.

From there the man went hunting.

His name was Tudech'ade (Duck Cap).

He hunted to Carcross from Lewes Lake, alone.

He went up the mountain, up Grey Mountain, Takaadí T'ooch' (rock/ loose/ black).

He went up on the top. And when he went up, he was hunting sheep.

When he goes on top of the mountain, he sees a string way on top of the mountain.

And one string was on West Arm Mountain.

And another string was from the end to the middle of the lake.

From *t'aJigula*, there's a string to the middle of the lake.

And [another] to *Kaa L'aa Shaayi* (nipple/mountain).

And there's one from Carcross mountain, from Goat Mountain. I don't know how they call it in Indian.

There were four strings there.

Way in the middle of the lake a skin was put there.

It looks small from the top of the mountain.

Well pretty soon from the other side a sheep comes out and walks on the string.

And he dances in the middle of the skin.

It looks to Tudech'ade like he dances. And when he has danced, he goes ashore.

That Game Mother is on the other shore.

They call her *Tsisk'w Tláa* (moose/mother) in Tlingit [language].

When the sheep that danced comes ashore, he goes to the mother.

"Come on, son," and she takes out his teeth. "Don't be mean to your friends!

Don't be mean to your friends! Your brothers!

You stay on the mountains."

So she let him go.

Next caribou dances in the middle of the lake.

He goes ashore, and he goes to Mother.

And she takes his teeth out.

"Don't be mean to your friends!"

And she told him, "Stay in the timber."

She tells the sheep, "All right, keep your horn; don't loose your horn."

But caribou she tells, "You are going to have new horns every year."

Everything came out there.

Wolf came the last.

Next [after caribou] comes the bull moose.

He walks on the string.

And when he is way in the middle, he breaks through.

He can't dance.

It's a caribou skin he breaks through.

And the moose makes a song. That moose song says,

"What have you got for me?

That I go through?

It's too small for me,

Not strong for me!"

Then Animal Mother put a strong moose skin up for him, and he couldn't go through.

Tudech'ade sees that. He sees that game dance.

Well, the moose dances on the moose skin.

And he jumps way high, and he goes ashore.

"Come on son," and she takes his teeth out. "Don't be mean to your friends.

Stay in the timber. And you are going to lose your horns."

And she turns him loose.

The bear—the bear comes now and dances.

He has got a song. I don't know it. The old people, they know every song.

The bear comes ashore.

"Well son, come here. I am going to take your teeth."

"No, Mama, somebody might want to kill me. I want to fight back!"

"No son, come here!"

"No, Mama, I want to keep my teeth in case somebody tries to kill me!"

She lets him go. That's why bear is mean.

Rabbit comes, and he dances just like a feather.

And his mother gives him a song:

"Just like a feather.

He jumps way up and down."

Rabbit dances and comes ashore.

She takes out his teeth.

"Your brothers are going to eat you, and don't you be mean to them!"

Last comes the Wolf and dances.

The north wind blows his tail on his face.

He dances way up. And she gives him a song.

"The point,

Where you are high from a long point,

Water drops."¹⁵

At the point where the water dropped, Animal Mother gave the song to the wolf.

So he danced good.

And that woman, Animal Mother, was supposed to be Dakl'aweidi.

And Tudech'ade, he was Dakl'aweidi too.

He sees that game way on the top.

He sleeps two nights, and it's really two months.¹⁶

He thinks that he is gone only two nights.

The people miss him. They think that something has killed him.

Nobody stays at Lewes Lake. They all move to Tagish when they think Tudech'ade, is gone.

Everything dances.

And when everything is through dancing, she takes the rope out.

And it is just as if Tudech'ade is gone.

Everything dances.

And when everything is through dancing, she takes the rope out.

And it is just as if Tudech'ade wakes up.

And he thinks he'll go home to Lewes Lake.

Nobody is there. Nobody is at Carcross.

So he went to Tagish.

And the whole bunch was there.

Already they had potlatched for him.

They had missed him for two months.

So Tudech'ade, came back.

His young wife was already married. A young boy had married his wife.

He gets his wife back again.

He's a Dakl'aweidi man.

That Game Mother, she pulled in the strings.

She tells the sheep and the goat, "You be on the mountain," and so on.

She tells the wolf, "Don't bother your friends."

He is mean, but he doesn't kill anything.

She is tired, and she is going to leave there.

I don't know where she went.

That's all.

The youngest [animal] is wolf.

"You are going to be my side—the youngest."

And the rest [of the animals are older (?)]

That's why nobody claims them [as clan crest animals], the caribou and all.

But that's why Dakl'aweidi claim the Wolf [crest].

41. The Dakl'aweidi Migrations down the Stikine

Patsy did not tell the second Dakl'aweidi clan story—about that clan's migrations down the Stikine River and overland—until the following July, 1951.¹⁷ Accompanied by Angela Sidney and three of her grandchildren, I had paid a call on Patsy, his wife, and their two grandchildren in their house at Carcross. The children played outside while Patsy told the story at my request, consulting in Tlingit with Angela, who helped him with some of his translations into English. In the meantime his wife Edith looked at photographs of Tagish and Inland Tlingit that I had taken during the previous winter. In August 1951, Patsy recorded the songs from this story on my wire recorder, and added one or two details to the story, as indicated by parentheses. This story substantiates his clan's claims to Thunderbird as a crest. His version of the migration should be compared with the Yanyeidi story told by Mrs. Nyman of Atlin.¹⁸ In some respects it also fits well with Dixon John's account of the K'etlèmbet quarrel and migration (no. 35).

41. The Dakl'aweidi Migration Down the Stikine River

July 30, 1951 and August 22, 1951, Carcross

Suppose we belong to the Tahltan Tagish Indians (sic).

So we had trouble, just ourselves. So the Dakl'aweidi split.

The trouble was over a woman—like two bull moose and one cow.

Both we split out.

Some go down river, Telegraph River, the Stikine.

But there's a glacier there about half way.

And [after they] cross two mountains they go underneath.

Two old men on a raft—no boat that time—go down the river.

They don't know the glacier is there.

They stop the raft at the back of the glacier.

The two old men sing,

“We cannot go further now;

We can only go that far.”

Then they let the two old men go under first on the raft, before the rest of the bunch.

They don't know how high the glacier is.

There are about two miles of water underneath it, I know.