

After this strange man had spoken and told the people what was happening, he walked down the beach and jumped into the sea. The people saw a huge loon (Kawl) floating about. It emitted its call, then dove down, and never more was it seen.

This is a narrative of the Gitzarhlæhl tribe of the Tsimssyan.

### DZARADILAW AND HIS COPPER CANOE

*(Recorded by William Beynon in 1953.)*

Kse'om<sup>1</sup>, in Tsimssyan, is known as the house of Dzaradilaw. This supernatural being with the copper canoe rescued the woman captured by the Grizzly Bear, after she had escaped. Here is the narrative about it.

Rhpeesunt came from the Gitsees village of Kiyæks. She was the daughter of the chief. Along with her companions, she set off to gather berries on the opposite side of the river. When they were travelling up to the berry grounds, the princess Rhpeesunt stepped into bear excrements and was so humiliated that she grew very angry. All day long she kept harping on this and cussing the bear responsible. The other women with her went on picking berries and soon filled their berry baskets. As the princess was the last to fill hers, she lagged along behind the others.

In the early evening they headed for the canoes to return to their homes. Rhpeesunt had not gone far when her basket strap broke, and all her berries spilt on the ground. She stopped to pick them up, while her companions kept on going toward the canoes. She started off again on the trail, but she had not gone far when the strap broke once more. It was now getting dark, and she was away behind the others. Then she met a young man, who spoke to her, "Let me help you; let me pack your berries, princess!" Rhpeesunt, thinking that this young man was sent to meet her, followed him. She did not notice that they had taken another trail.

Soon they came to a strange village up on the mountainside. The young man, who was very handsome, led her to a large house. "Wait here, until I see my father," he said. The young man stepped into the house, and she overheard a very loud voice inquiring, "Did you get what you went for, my son?" "Yes, she stands outside," replied the young man. "Bring her in! Do not let my daughter-in-law stand outside. Bring her here to me!" The young man went out and led the princess into his father's house, saying, "Rhpeesunt is now with us."

The young man now took the princess in and sat her by the chief, a very large man. She noticed that there were many people in the house, some wearing bear robes. Many aged people were assembled in the house. When she sat down, she felt some one pinch her leg. Looking, she saw a little old

<sup>1</sup>Kse: waters of; 'om, sand or mud, or sandy or muddy waters. Its present name is Blind Slough. Its name for a group of Iceland settlers is Osland.

woman, who said, "I am Mouse Woman, have you any fat or wool to give me? The Bear chief and his Bear people have captured you, because you insulted them so much to-day after you had stepped into their excrements. They also feel angry at the way your brothers are hunting the Bear. They feel indignant at you. If you have any mountain goat kidney fat or wool, give them to me. Do you see all these old women? They have been taken by the Bear people and kept here, because they did not have any fat or wool. So they became slaves." Rhpeesunt gave the little Mouse Woman a ball of mountain goat fat, which all women of high rank carry with them for cosmetic. Also she took off her wool earrings and gave them to the Mouse Woman. This woman then said to her, "When you go out to relieve yourself, dig a hole to hide your excrement. Break off a piece of your copper bracelet, and put it where you sat. This will make them think that the copper is your excrement."

That night she went outside to relieve herself, and before she sat, she dug a hole into which she relieved herself. When she had finished, she covered it up and left a piece of copper there. Several young folk who had come to watch her went to where she had sat to examine her excrement. Finding the piece of copper, they exclaimed in astonishment, "She has every right to ridicule our filthy excrements. Look at hers; it is copper."

Rhpeesunt was now part of the Bear's household. It now came time for the women to gather firewood. So she went out with the others and gathered very dry wood. As soon as the wood was put on the fire, it almost extinguished it. The Bear chief said, "Who took in this wood?" The Mouse Woman spoke to the princess saying, "This is your fault. You must gather wet wood. That is the kind of wood Bears use."

The princess was now determined to escape. Every day she would go farther for her wood. Returning, she would retire to rest. Always there was a young Bear who followed her about. She began to be friendly with him, just as he grew very attached to her. He would approach her and hold her in his arms.

One morning very early, the princess and her escort went away into the woods to gather firewood, and they did not expect to return before night. When she reached the spot where she was to try to escape, she took a club and hit her escort on the head. Then she ran away, heading down the river. She knew that the Bear people would pursue her. She ran on down and soon heard the panting of the Bears behind her. As soon as they came close to catching her, she took one of her copper bracelets and threw it behind her. Immediately a mountain rose between her and the pursuing Bears. She kept on travelling very fast, but in a short while, the Bears were able to overtake her and were again gaining on her. Then she took off the other copper bracelet and threw it behind her. Behold, another high mountain rose between her and the pursuing Bears. She was now able to reach the shores of

the Oxtall River. At Semgaotz<sup>1</sup> she stood still and saw a man some distance from the shore in a very bright shining canoe. She knew that the pursuing Bears would soon be on to her. So she called out to this man, "Come, Dzaradilaw! Rescue me, and my father will give you many boxes." The man paid her no heed, and she could hear the Bears coming in the distance. "Come, Dzaradilaw! Rescue me! My father will give you many slaves and boxes." The man paid no heed to her. Hearing the near-approach of the Bears, she then called out desperately, "Come, Dzaradilaw! Rescue me, and I will marry you." Immediately Dzaradilaw took his supernatural club and struck his copper canoe, which quickly came to where the princess stood. She jumped into the canoe, and at once the man Dzaradilaw struck the canoe with his club. It moved away some distance from the shore. The Bears had now arrived, and the leader jumped into the water to swim after the canoe. Dzaradilaw took his supernatural club, which was a live being with a head at each end (*larah'ways*), and threw it at the Bear. The club attacked the Bear and killed it. Then Dzaradilaw went to his home at Kse'om with his wife and took her into his house. There she saw that there were two partitions. Dzaradilaw told her, "You must never look into that chamber, no matter what strange noises you hear." Every day, her husband landed with many seals. Some he would put into the forbidden chamber, and some Rhpeesunt prepared and dried. As soon as her husband would go away, she would hear queer noises, as of grinding bones, from the forbidden chamber. As she could not restrain herself, she looked into the chamber. Here she saw a monster Wolverine Woman who was in the act of chewing the bones of the seals that were scattered about. As soon as the Wolverine Woman saw Rhpeesunt, she fell back dead, having choked in her anger at being seen.

When her husband returned from his hunt, he was angry and said to his wife, "We must move from here, as this will bring upon me the anger of the Wolverine people. So they moved to Metlakatla. And then the traditions of Gam'asnærhl begin (Recorded elsewhere).

### THE WOMAN WHO MARRIED THE SEA BEAR

(Recorded by William Beynon in 1954 from John Tate, Port Simpson.)

There is a saying among the people that applies to the young woman before she gives her consent to marry the man who courts her: "Examine the palms of his hands. If he is industrious, his palms will be rough. If he is lazy, his palms will be smooth. The origin of this saying follows:

There was a chief of the Gisparhlots who had an only daughter. They lived at Metlakatla Pass. This woman was reputed among all the Tsimshyan and foreign tribes for her beauty. Soon the princes and chiefs began to come

<sup>1</sup>Large Labret, so called because of its high formation. Its geographical name now is Balmoral.