

of bright light spread out, and everything turned bright. The people now were able to see everything and were able to catch oolichans. As they heard the Raven cawing, they knew who it was who had helped them. The Raven called out, "Do not forget always to feed the ravens wherever you see them." 'Iyayhl, the Raven, then flew away to another part of the world.¹

HOW LIGHT ORIGINATED

(Recorded by William Beynon in 1953, from Mrs. M. Young, whose Haida name is Sqæ'wall—a chief's name. She belongs to Old Kassan, Prince of Wales Island, Alaska.) (A second version recorded the following year of "How Light Originated.")

Among the Kassan Haida, the most important supernatural being was 'Iyayhl, the Raven. When the world remained in darkness and the people were starving, unable to go round to hunt or search for food, it was the Raven who set out to the country of the Chief of the Sky. This was at the head of the Nass River. From this direction came a very dull light. It was as much as the Chief of the Sky would let out to the people of the world. This the Raven saw. So he made up his mind to fly and get the ball of light which the Chief of the Sky had in his possession and kept hidden away.

'Iyayhl, the Raven, started off and flew until he came to a very narrow gorge, not wide enough for him to fly through. So he sat on a tree, not knowing what to do. While he was there, he observed the narrow gorge as it widened and stayed thus; then it closed up again. This repeated itself. As soon as it opened, he attempted to fly through the narrow gorge. He succeeded and was just able to get through when the gorge snapped closed. The Raven kept on flying until he came to a large and beautiful lake. At the edge of the lake stood a magnificent house, which was very bright. The Raven realized that this was the place he was looking for, and he landed on a tall tree near the house and close to the water-hole. It was at this water-hole that everybody would come to draw water. So here Raven waited, trying to plan how to get into the great chief's house.

While he was planning, a beautiful young woman came out of the house to draw water. At once the Raven by his supernatural powers turned himself into a spruce needle. The young woman, the chief's daughter, was very thirsty. Taking her drinking vessel she dipped up some water. A spruce needle floated on the water, which she kept blowing away, but the needle stayed and drifted to her mouth. Finally, being so thirsty, she drank the water with the spruce needle. Not long after, she became pregnant and shortly afterwards gave birth to a handsome boy.

¹ Among the Tsimshyan this supernatural being is called Thraymsem; among the Haida, 'Iyayhl.

The great Chief of the Sky was very happy now that he had a grandson. Every day he would take his grandson and stretch the body of the boy, so that in a short while the child was crawling and walking about and playing. The child, who was Raven, searched the house to see where the great Chief of the Sky hid the ball containing the daylight. It was called Mæ. He found that the ball was hidden in a box above the corner where the great Chief slept. Now that he knew it, the boy would crawl about and begin to cry. He could not be pacified. Every day this happened. The great Chief grew worried, as he was afraid his grandson would cry himself to death. He called in the wise men, but none could tell what caused the child to cry. All that the child could say was "Mæ, Mæ!" One old wise man said, "It seems he wants to play with Mæ. If you gave it to him, perhaps he would be pacified. He cannot injure the ball by playing with it." So the chief brought down the box which contained the ball and gave it to his grandson, who stopped crying as soon as he held it in his hands. After playing with it for a while, he left it and was quiet. The ball was at once returned to the box and put away. Every day the child came in, and as soon as it began to cry, the chief had the light ball brought down, and the child was pacified after playing with it for a while. But he seemed to grow tired of it and would leave it after a while. "See," said the chief, "all the child wanted was to play with the light ball."

The child at first was watched closely when he played with the light ball. After many days, the people relaxed their watch, and soon nobody paid much attention to it. And this is what the Raven, who was the chief's grandson, wanted. He would roll the ball around, and when he tired of it, he would leave it, and one of the chief's slaves would put it away. The Raven was awaiting the opportunity of rolling the ball out of the house and then of escaping with it. One morning when all the others were feasting at the upper end of the grandfather's house, the child was playing in the front half of it. Nobody heeded him as he rolled the ball and then crawled after it. Finally he pushed the ball out of the doorway and followed it. Nobody noticed him do this, as all were busy with the feast.

As soon as the child got the ball of light outside, he changed himself into the Raven and flew away with it. After he had flown for many days, he grew very hungry. When he arrived at the Nass River, he saw many people fishing for oolichans in the semi-darkness. These were ghost people, who could get around in the darkness. 'Iyayhl (Raven) called out, "Give me some oolichans! I am hungry." The ghost people laughed at him, saying, "Come, fish for your own oolichans, we are not your slaves"—"I am very hungry. If you do not give me oolichans, I will burst the light ball. Then you shall all vanish."—"Listen to him!" they replied, "He is always lying. Come and fish your own oolichans."

The Raven was angered. Perched on a high spruce tree, he again called out to the ghost people, "You shall all perish when I burst the light ball." Disbelieving the Raven, they called back, "You expect to frighten us, but we know you as a liar. You have no light ball." When he saw that they were not going to give him any oolichans, the Raven burst open the daylight ball. Everything became bright, and the ghost people disappeared. Thus Raven brought daylight into a dark world, as well as doing away with the ghost tribe. This is why 'Iyayhl to the Haida people is a very important being.

THE BALL OF LIGHT¹

(Recorded by William Beynon, among the Tsimsyan, in 1953.) (A third version of the same myth of Creation.)

At one time the world remained in semi-darkness, there being no sun, and the days were much the same as the nights—just as when dusk comes before nightfall. The people had a great deal of hardship in travelling about to gather food. Near this place stood a large village whose chief had a very bright son. The youth would always go away, travelling about in his little canoe, sometimes with his companions, sometimes alone, trying to get game birds with his bow and arrows. One day he went out, and his companions followed in another canoe. The young hunter stood up in his canoe to shoot at a duck on the water, and his canoe capsized. The young prince sank into the water, never to rise to the surface.

The prince's companions returned very sadly, telling the parents what had happened. There was great mourning in the village, and every day the chief and his wife would come to this point, where they mourned the loss of their son. They did this for a long time, staying until they were both exhausted. Then they would return to their village.

One morning, they set out to do as they always did, and as they came to the point, the chief's slave, who always accompanied them, saw in the semi-darkness what appeared to be two children playing on a thick kelp patch some distance from the shore. So he said "My master, look at the kelp patch. There seem to be two small children playing on it."—"Go and bring them to me here! This may be our son who has pitied us and is returning to us, bringing with him a brother." The slave went to the kelp-covered reef, and behold there were two small children playing and romping on the kelp! The slave took them aboard. They were both boys, and he brought them to his master. "Chief, cease your weeping! Your son has been returned to you, and he has brought a brother with him." The chief and his wife were very happy. They

¹The place where, according to Tsimsyan narratives, Thraymsem and his brother Laræbulæ originated, is Welkselarhlarh. *Wel*: where; *kse*: out; *larhlarh*: fell, plural, meaning "where born."