

Re Sku7pecen re Stseptékwlls (The Story of Porcupine)

This stseptékwll was told to James Teit by Secwepemc storyteller Sexwélecken in 1900, unfortunately only rendered in English as re-told by Teit in his own prose. The Skeetchestn elders re-translated the story into Secwepemctsin.

Kukwstsésemc to Daniel Calhoun, Leona Calhoun, Amy Slater, Christine Simon, Garlene Dodson, Doris Gage, Marianne Ignace, Ron Ignace, Julienne Ignace

Cw7it te qelmúcw tsyem-ekwe ne nekúlecw te tmicw.

A large number of people lived together in one place, so they say.

Re speqmíc ri7 re kúkwpi7s-ekwe.

Swan was their chief, they say.

Ne kekéw te tecwllúlecw, te nekwésqt-ekwe me7 re scwesét-kt, te tekenu7s re skwelkwélt, tsyemes-ekwe te ticwell te qelmucw te sts7émet.stem te Tsí7emc.

In another far away place, one day's journey away, beyond the snowy mountains lived another group of people, they were called the Deer People.

Yi7éne te tmescéen lu7 re tsi7, re teniye, re selcwéyecen, re sxwetéy, re yigelécken ell re s7i7llcw.

These people included deer, moose, caribou, mountain goat, mountain sheep and some others.

Re tcetś-ekwe lu7 re kúkwpi7s.

They say that their chief was Elk.

Ye-ekwe yiri7 k scmentwécws te tsqwétsten te m-sq7es.

For a long time they had been enemies.

Kwemtús re skelcmentwécws, tri7 yem wel re kwekwiyúsem re s7elkwstsíllens

They were interfering in each other's business all the time, that's why they had a hard time putting away food.

Tecticwell re stkwenm7íple7s, ell re tsutsúwet.s.

They each had a different kind of government and different ways of doing things.

Nekúsem relralt re sw7ecs, kemell nekusem ta7 tri7 k sle7s, tri7 yem wel kwemtús re skwekwiyusems.

What one group did well the other group did poorly, that is why all of them they always suffered.

Re spipyuy7e titéypens re tmescéen ell re tmescéen titéypens re spipyuy7e tri7 wel qwenqwént re xwexwéytes.

The birds were acting like four-legged animals, and the four-legged animals acted like birds, that is why they were all pitiful.

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Re speqmíc qwenmíns es texwentés tkenhé7e re lele7stw7écws, es ta7es cuýtsem re skélcmentwécws.

Swan wanted to fix how they could be good to each other, so that they wouldnt interfere in one another's affairs any more.

Re speqmíc necwentés es pálpelt.s re tsqwétsten, trí7 yem wel w7ec re yewsentwécwes.

The swan believed that the people were stubborn that is why they were troublesome and were being a nuisance to one another.

Neku7 te sitqt te m-ístkmes, le gattes re swucwt ne skwelkwélt, m-melkwilcmens re kwséltktens re speqmic.

One day in winter when the snow was deep in the mountains, Swan gathered his people together.

Neri7 m-lexéyect.s stemi re sptínesems, m-yews re sullimt.s swéti7 me7 nes es tsxlitens re tcets, swéti7 trí7 re sxilems me7 éyentem cw7it te sxíxlem.

And he told them what he had thought, and then asked who would go to invite Elk to come, and whoever would do that would be paid lots of dentalium.

Tsúntem te skélép, "Re ntsétswe7 me7 néns-ken." M-yews re sllecwentés re s7ícenst.s te stemstítemt.s, tskerneiy te silltsu7úwi, ell xwexwéyt re sxixlems ell re mémles.

Coyote said, "I will go." Then he put on his fancy clothes, his embroidered moccasins, all his dentalia and his necklaces.

Le estklucwes m-qwetséts re skélép, kémell ta7ks qwenens es kwétems ne xgatt te swucwt. Trí7 yem m-tentyénmens re c7istkten wel tskwtek re skékw7es le xqilltes re kwséltktens.

Coyote left at sundown, but he did not want to walk in the deep snow. That's why he kept circling the underground house until sunrise when his relatives woke up.

M-séwentem te speqmic, "kénem me7e ta7 ke7 sqwetséts ey?"

Swan asked him, "How come you have not left yet?"

M-éytsentem te skélép, "m-etsxmimen tucw ens cwiwselc, trí7 wel ta7 ey ken sqwetséts te sqeltus. E r7ales me7 qwetséts-wen.

Coyote answered, "I was practicing running, that's why I haven't left for the mountains yet. I will leave tonight.

M-r7ales tspíqwstem le qwetsétses te kwséltktens wel re m-legúp.

In the evening the relatives watched him until he was out of sight.

Ta7 k sq7es m-xpqnwénses k sgatt7uys re swucwt, cwelpilc m-tspelqilcwes, m-tsilcwes ne kwellkémts re xnicw ne ckemqíns re c7istkten .

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It was not long until he found the snow too deep, so he turned around and went back, and he lay down under the ladder on the roof of the underground house.

Le xqilltes re qelmucw m-wiktem te xexe7 re s7itcs re skélép, m-xúqleqsés. M-séwentmes te speqmic, “kénem mé7e ta7 ke7 sqwetséts ey?”

When the people woke up they saw that coyote was fast asleep and snoring. Swan asked him, “why didn’t you leave yet?”

M-tsúntem te skélép, “m-etsxmímen ens cwiwselc, trí7 yem wel cetsétsus-ken.” E r7áleses me7 qwetséts-wen.

Coyote told him, “I was practicing running, and that’s why I got tired. I will leave tonight.

Re speqmic m-séwens re kwseltkens sweti7 me7 exték es qwetséts.s. Xwexwéyt re stsetsut, yiri7 re sku7pecen tikwemtus re sku7wétemens ne skwelkwelt, ne gaft te swucwt, trí7 yem me7 exték es qwetséts.s.

Swan asked his relatives who would be the fittest one to go. They all said that the porcupine always walked in the snowy mountains in the deep snow, that’s why he would be the fittest one.

Ítri7 yem m-twinélesmentem re sku7pecen es qwetséts.

Thus, they depended on Porcupine to go.

Íqwentés re silltsú7uwís ne sitest wel re m-cwénwen, m-yews re syexs te qwets.

He sewed his moccasins

Le-tsekulecwes re tmicw m-qwetsétses.

He left at the break of dawn.

M-wiktmes te skélép m-tulímentem, tsuntmes, “yumell re ntsétswe7 ta7 ks xenwéwen ens qwetséts, tkenhé7e me7 xillt.s yi7ene te qwenqwént, te kenkint, te ctsetsscécen te kwséltkten-kt es t7eks ne gaft te swucwt?

When Coyote saw him, he laughed at him and said, “If even I could not make it, how can this pitiful, slow and shortlegged relative of ours make through the deep snow?”

E r7áleses m-kitsc re sku7pecen re tcetś re tsitcws, xexé7 re stleś, stsmuxmux-ekwe te scúyent ell te swucwt.

In the evening, Porcupine arrived at Elks house, he was very exhausted and covered in ice and snow.

Le qw7étses re skú7pecen, m-kectés re tcetś te stéltsnems re speqmic es tsxlitens re tcetś met re kwséltkens. M-yews re sulltimcwes te stiteñc ell te téqceñ es íqwentés re silltsú7uwís.

After Porcupine had warmed himself, he gave Elk the message from Swan and asked for sinew and an awl to sew his moccasins.

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Le-wi7es re steltsnemís, m-tsuntem te tcetís, “Pexyéwt me7 tégwentp-kucw re ntsétswe7 met ren kwseseltkten ne tmicw-emp.”

When he was finished delivered, Elk told him, “tomorrow me and my people will visit you in your country.

M-pelqílç re sku7pecen ne tmicws, m-lexéyéct.ses re speqmic stemi lu7 re stéltsnemís re tcetís.

Porcupine returned to his country, and then he told Swan what Elks message was.

Le yigapes re tcetís met re kwséltktens m-tsecwmintem, m-yews re smetém.s.

When Elk and his relatives arrived they were warmly greeted and feasted.

Le wi7es re s7illens m-xitelç well re speqmic met re kwséltktens ne sxetéqs re tcetís.

After they finished eating, Swan and his relatives knelt before Elk.

Re speqmic m-tslexemcit.s xwexwéyt re stem re stslexméms, ell m-lexéyéct.s tkenhe7e m-tsetseclementwécwes, Tri7 yem m-kectéses re tcetís xwexwéyt re texpçenwéllens ell re m-tkwenm7íplemenses.

Swan shared his wisdom with them and told them how they could fix one another. This is how he gave Elk all his knowledge and his advice.

M-yews re tcetís met re kwseltktens m-xitelç ne sxetéqs re speqmic ell re tcetís m-kectés xwexwéyt re spinesems ell re tkwenm7ípe7s.

yiri7 re sxepçenwellentwécws ell tqwews p7ecws re sle7s re sxenwéllens es tssets.s es yucwmentwecws.

Then Elk and his relatives knelt before Swan and Elk shared all his thoughts and his advice. And this is how they learned from one another, and they were able to look after one another.

M-yews re p7ecws re sle7s re sw7ecs, m-le7stwécw wel me7 yews, m-ta7es cuýtsem re stsníqentwécws.

Then they lived much better, they were good to one another from then on, and they stopped fighting.

Yiri7 re tkwenm7íplementwecwes wel me7 tekweníte7.

These are the laws they gave to one another.

Re skú7pecen m-kwenwénses te cwesqlewí te sxixlem. M-yews re skucwsentem te skelép.

And Porcupine became rich with dentalia and was much envied by Coyote.

Yiri7 re stsecwtéps!

This is the end.