

Learning from Folklore

PART 3

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p. 202. The Puyallup

The Puyallup historically occupied western Washington. Today, their reservation is located near Tacoma. Their language is in the Salishan linguistic stock. The Puyallup have a close relationship with other tribes in the area and share traditional names for bigfoot. These includes *Steta'l* (“**Spirit Spear**”) and *Tsiatko* (**Wild Indians**), shared with the Nisqually, and *Seatco* (Stick Indian), shared with the Yakama and Klickitat.

The Demons in Spirit Lake

Source: *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest*, by Ella Clark, 1953. Berkeley: University of California Press, pp. 63-64.

The lake at the foot of the beautiful mountain *Loo-wit* was the home of many **evil spirits**. **They were the spirits of people from different tribes, who had been cast out because of their wickedness.** Banding themselves together, these **demons** called **themselves** *Seatco*, and gave themselves up to wrongdoing.

The *Seatco* were **neither men nor animals**. They could **imitate the call of any bird, the sound of the wind in the trees, the cries of wild beasts**. They could **make these sounds seem to be near or seem to be far away**. So they were often **able to trick the Indians**. A few times, Indians fought them. But whenever one of the *Seatco* was killed, the others **took twelve lives from whatever band dared to fight against them**.

In Spirit Lake, other Indians said, lived a **demon** so huge that **its hand could stretch across the entire lake**. If a fisherman dared to go out from shore, **the demon's hand would reach out, seize his canoe, and drag fisherman and canoe to the bottom of the lake**.

In the lake also was a strange fish with a head like a bear. One Indian had seen it, in the long-ago time. He had gone to the mountain with a friend. The demons who lived in the lake ate the friend, but he himself escaped, running in terror from the demons and from the fish with the head of a bear. After that, no Indian of his tribe would go near Spirit Lake.

In the snow on the mountaintop above the lake, other Indians used to say, **a race of man-stealing giants** lived. **At night** the giants would come to the lodges **when people were asleep**, put the people **under their skins**, and take them to the mountaintop **without waking them**. When the people awoke in the morning, they would be entirely lost, not knowing in what direction their home was. Frequently the giants **came in the night and stole all the salmon**. If people were awake they knew the giants were near when they **smelled their strong, unpleasant odor**. Sometimes people would hear three **whistles**, and soon **stones would begin to hit their lodges**. Then they knew that the giants were coming again.

The name "Wild Indians" is indicative of the "demons" human status. That they were "neither men nor animals" I interpret as they were neither ordinary men nor ordinary animals. If these beings really "called themselves Seatko", this means they could speak and had a language. The term "demon" used in this story means that

demonology is the right and legitimate discipline, among others, in the study of the multidisciplinary subject of hominology. "Spirit Spear" is an interesting term, and along with other usages of the word "spirit" here indicates to me the "supernatural" (paranormal) abilities of these beings. "They were the spirits of people from different tribes, who had been cast out because of their wickedness" " is a frequent mythological explanation of these beings' origin. "... including the beliefs that demons arise from dead people who were not buried or buried the wrong way"(Bigfoot Research: The Russian Vision, 2007, p.28)."A demon so huge that its hand could stretch across the entire lake" implies that a fisherman was not safe from an underwater attack by a demon anywhere in the lake. Richard Bernheimer wrote of "the wild men and women who inhabit not the woods, but the water." "The creature in question is an ogre who dispatches people by pulling them under the surface of the water. Significantly the pond is located in the midst of a wild wood..."(Richard Bernheimer, Wild Men in the Middle Ages,1970, pp.39,40). "Two of the reports involve the sasquatch either disappearing under water or appearing from it, and the Indians I spoke to said that the creatures could not only swim a long way under water but could do so at tremendous speed"(John Green, Sasquatch, 1978, p.430). "Semi-aquatic hominoid creatures are part and parcel of Russian folklore and demonology"(In the Footsteps of the Russian Snowman", 1996, p.172). That's what Lady X calls "patterning": "As I've found in studying these individuals, as well as in this and related subjects, patterning is a most, if not **the** most, valuable learning tool."All in all, it's one more story tightly packed with educational information.

The Demons in Spirit Lake

Source: *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest*, by Ella Clark, 1953. Berkeley: University of California Press.

A **Seatco** is **in the form of an Indian but larger, quick and stealthy**. He inhabits the dark recesses of the woods, where his campfires are often seen; he sleeps by day but sallies forth at dusk for 'a night of it'. He robs traps, breaks canoes, steals food and other portable property; he waylays the belated traveler, and it is said to kill all those whose bodies are found dead. To his wicked and malicious cunning is credited all the unfortunate and malicious acts which cannot otherwise be explained. He steals children and **brings them up as slaves in his dark retreats**; he is a constant menace to the disobedient child, and is an object of fear and terror to all. *That "his campfires are often seen" in "the dark recesses of the woods" is most important and significant. Coincides with information received by John Burns from the Indians and rejected as legendary by John Green. That kidnapped humans are said to be used as slaves is also noteworthy.*

p. 203. The Tsiatko

Source: *Indian Legends of the Pacific Northwest*, by Ella Clark, 1953. Berkeley: University of California Press.

In my grandfather's time, his people captured a tsiatko boy and raised it. The child slept all day, then went out nights when everyone else was asleep. In the morning they would see where he had piled up wood or caught fish or brought in a deer. Finally, they told him he could go back to his people. He was gone many years and then came back once. He brought his tsiatko band with him and the Indians could hear them whistle all around. He said he came just for a visit to see them. Then he went away for good. *One of the many cases of young homins captured and raised by humans. The boy's behavior, typical of sasquatch and different from human, is emphasized. Not surprisingly, being in captivity, he was able to learn to speak. The Tsiatko and Seatco*

Source: *Legends Beyond Psychology*, by Henry James Franzoni III and Kyle Mizokami.

A race of tall Indians, called "wild" or "stick" Indians, was said to wander through the forests. In

general conversation they were referred to as tsiatko although another term, *steta'l*, from *ta'l*, *spear*, could also be applied to them.

The *tsiatko* lived by hunting and fishing. Their homes were hollowed out **like the sleeping places of animals and could not be distinguished as human habitations. It was largely because of this lack of any houses or villages that they were characterized as “wild.”** They wandered freely through the wooded country, their activities being mainly confined to **the hours of darkness.** As has been said, they were **abnormally tall, always well over six feet.** Their language was **a sort of a whistle** and even when people could not see them they often heard this whistle in the distance. They had **no canoes** nor did they ever travel by water.

The giants **played pranks** on the village Indians, **stealing the fish from their nets at night, going off with their half-cured supplies under cover of darkness, etc.** Sometimes pranks on the persons of individual men, **such as removing their clothes and tying their legs apart,** were made possible by a sort of hypnotic helplessness engendered by the sound of the giants' whistle.

The giant were dangerous to men if the latter interfered with them or caused hurt to one of their members. Under these conditions their hatred was implacable and they always tracked the culprit down until they finally killed him with a shot from their bows. Occasionally also, they **stole children or adolescents and carried them off to act as wives or as slaves.** For this reason children were mortally afraid of going about alone at night and the tsiatko threat was used in child discipline. During the summer camping trips when mat houses with loose sides were used for shelter, **children always slept in the center surrounded by their elders for fear that the tsiatko would lift the mats and spirit them away. Men avoided conflicts with the giants and women retained the fear of them throughout their lives.** Thus, one informant, a woman approaching seventy, broke her habit of rising before dawn and going to an outhouse at some distance from her home because she heard the whistle of a giant one morning. *Mention of "their bows" is amazing, seeming of out of synch, although a quiver has been mentioned earlier. Can't reject it out of hand, and can't accept as certainty until more information is available.* p. 205. The Spokane

The Spokane remain residents of their traditional homelands in Washington State. Their language is part of the Salishan. The Spokane word for bigfoot is *Sc'wen'ey'ti*, meaning **“Tall Burnt Hair.”**

Scweneyti

Source: *They Walked Among Us—Scweneyti and the Stick Indians of the Colvilles*, by Ed Fusch, 2002, pp. 11-13.

Scweneyti (Chwah-knee-tee) is a **“tall, hairy, smells like burnt hair.”** He is about **nine feet tall and possesses a very strong stench. He never hurts human, but does like to play tricks on people, like throwing rocks at them.** He loves to **tease horses and dogs.** One day a family heard strange indistinguishable sounds coming from a draw far up in the mountains. The sounds, **as of a man crying,** drew nearer and echoed and resounded throughout the mountains until they were very close. The dogs were barking hard and suddenly were thrown the flap of the te-pee. The daughter, the braves and smartest, went outside and said, **“Why are you terrifying us this way? We're already afraid! We know who you are. We know you are Cen. That this is your punishment for the sin you committed, and here on this earth there will be no end to your wanderings, roaming about. Then here you are, here terrifying us, scaring us. It is God's will that you be this way. Go! Turn yourself around and walk away! Get away! Back away from us!” Suddenly all was quiet.** After a little while they heard *Scweneyti's* voice again, but further away. **He had left them, no longer bothering them and terrifying them.** *Very interesting religious belief*

and explanation of the hair being's predicament. Wonder if it's indigenous or formed under the influence of Christianity. If the former, then detailed knowledge of the belief is desirable.

Fish and the *Scweneyti*

Source: *They Walked Among Us—Scweneyti and the Stick Indians of the Colvilles*, by Ed Fusch, 2002, p. 15.

Fish was known to be a **favorite food** in *Scweneyti*'s diet, especially when cooked. With their racks full, the Indians would cook the heads and parts they did not want and **leave them out for *Scweneyti***, who would not disturb their fish or camp nor **torment their horses or dogs**.

p. 206. *Scweneyti* is Captured and Bound

Source: *They Walked Among Us—Scweneyti and the Stick Indians of the Colvilles*, by Ed Fusch, 2002, p. 20.

While camped at Keller, Washington during the salmon harvesting season, Grandmother, two of her sisters, and her brothers wives found *Scweneyti* **sleeping along a creek**. These three sisters and two other women, knowing that **when *Scweneyti* sleeps, he sleeps very soundly (he sleeps during the day)**, drove stakes into the ground all around him, then laced their braided Indian ropes crossed all over him, tying him very securely to the stakes. As he began to awaken they all **sat on him**, hoping to keep him down. He appeared to pay no attention to them and **rose effortlessly, breaking the ropes**. The women fell off as he arose and walked away. They had to **destroy their clothes because of the stench from their contact with *Scweneyti***. *Guess the story is made up and sounds so impressive and plausible because of vivid and true-to-life details.* p.207. The Wenatchee

The Wenatchee lived along the Wenatchee River in Washington. Their traditional language is in the Salishan family. The Wenatchee word for a bigfoot-like creature is *Choanito*, meaning “**night people**.”

Choanito

Source: *They Walked Among Us—Scweneyti and the Stick Indians of the Colvilles*, by Ed Fusch, 2002, p. 37.

In the fall of the year, October, a group of male members of the tribe were on a hunting trip near Wenatchee Lake. One of the men became **separated from the rest** of the party and **was captured** by *Choanito*. He was taken **to a cave** far up in the Rocky Mountains and **held captive by a family of *Choanitos* throughout the winter until spring**. **The odor in the cave was terrible**. They would not take him out hunting with them but made him remain in camp near the cave with the women. They were like **a different tribe of Indians**. **In the spring they returned him to the place where they had captured him**. Upon returning to his camp he was immediately recognized by the children who couldn't believe that he was back as he had been gone for so long. They thought that he had been killed. He said that he **had been well treated by *Choanito***. *One more realistic abduction story, strengthening even more already available patterning.*

Choanito and Camas Root

Source: *They Walked Among Us—Scweneyti and the Stick Indians of the Colvilles*, by Ed Fusch, 2002, p. 38.

A woman had dug camas roots which they [native women] placed on the roof of their home, located near Nespelem Creek, where animals could not get at them. During the night she heard *Choanito* on the roof. In the morning the camas roots were gone and *Choanito* had put her puppy up on the roof. *Choanito* is still very active in the area. At night **lights can be seen moving along the base of a nearby mountain as a pack of them travel along**, and many have been reported on Keller Butte. **People are always warned to be out of the mountains before dark.** "*Zakirov said that, though such encounters are very rare, Forest Service rules prohibit their employees from spending the night alone in the mountains for fear of these wildmen*"(*In the Footsteps of the Russian Snowman*, 1996, p.118). p.208. The Yakama

In prehistoric times, the Yakama inhabited parts of the Columbia Plateau (Idaho, Oregon, and Washington). They now occupy a reservation in south central Washington. In their traditional Penutian language, the Yakama words for a bigfoot-like creature are *Seat ka* and *Ste ye mah* ("**Spirit Hidden by Woods**"). Because they were also closely related to other tribes, they shared additional names with the Klickitat (*Qah lin me* and *Qui yihahs* [**"The Hairy brothers"**]); the Puyallup (*Seatco* [**Stick Indian**]), and the Shasta (*Tah tah kle' ah* [**"Owl Woman Monster"**]).

Stick-shower

Source: *Ghost Voices—Yakima Indian Myths, Legends, Humor, and Hunting Stories*, by Donald M. Hines, 1992. Issaquah: Great Eagle Publishing, Inc., pp. 52-53.

The *Ste-ye-hah' mah* or **Stick-shower** are a **mysterious and dangerous people whose general habitat is the lofty forest regions of the Cascade Mountains**. They haunt the **tangled timber-falls, which serve them as domiciles, or lodges**. They are as large as the ordinary Indian; their language is to **mimic notes of birds and animals**. **Nocturnal in habit, they sleep or remain in seclusion during the day and consequently are seen only on very rare occasions**. Under the cover of darkness, they perform **the acts which have fastened upon them the odious appellation 'stick-shower'**. It is then that **they thrust sticks through any opening of the tepee or hunter's lodge, or shower sticks upon the belated traveler**. The Indian who is delayed or lost from the trail is very apt to receive their attention. He may **hear a signal, perhaps a whistle, ahead of him. Should he follow the sound, it will be repeated for a time. Then he will hear it in the opposite direction, along the path he has just passed. If he turns back, it will only be to detect the mysterious noises elsewhere, leading to utter confusion and bewilderment**. When the traveler is crazed with dread, or overcome by exhaustion and sleep; it is then that the Stick-shower scores a victory. Regaining his head, or awakening from slumber, the wanderer is more than likely to find himself **stripped of all clothing**, perhaps bound and trussed with thongs. He is fortunate to escape with his life.

Impressive and informative.

Wild Stick-showers

Source: *Ghost Voices—Yakima Indian Myths, Legends, Humor, and Hunting Stories*, by Donald M. Hines, 1992. Issaquah: Great Eagle Publishing, Inc., p. 54.

The wild Stick-showers live in the mountains, in **lodges underground**. Doors to lodges are heavy,

snow and earth. You cannot find them. They have no fire in these lodges. But they dry meat, dry salmon by fire somewhere in the woods where they hide. They dress in bearskins tied up the front with strings. Head of bearskin covers head of Stick-shower, keeps off rain and snow. That bearskin dress is warm, is dry and warm for coldest winter.

The Stick-shower is tall, is slender. He is good runner. He has medicine which gives him swiftness and strength. (Some Indians claim he has medicine that renders him invisible.) **They go long distance in one night.** Maybe they hunt over on the *n-Che'-wana* (Columbia River) near Dalles early in the night. Next morning, they are over here in Yakama country, all up Yakama River. Stick-showers are **good hunters. Nothing can get away from them; nothing can escape them.**

When you hunt on Goat Rocks, you have to watch. You have to watch close all the time. You are on a rock; maybe you cannot see around that rock, cannot see on either side. The Stick-shower pushes you off that rock. You fall down, fall far down to death. Some [Indians] get killed that way. **To hunt where Stick-shower is, four or five of us go together.** Three hunt, walking not far apart. One is here, one down below. One is higher up the mountain. We watch ahead, watch on each side. Fourth is behind. He watches back over the trail. Stick-shower might be following us. Must always watch for the bad Stick-shower. "No fire in these lodges" but "fire somewhere in the woods where they hide"... a pattern seems to be forming. "They dress in bearskins tied up the front with strings" -- fact or fiction???

p.210. Whistling **Ste-ye-hah' mah**

Source: *Ghost Voices—Yakima Indian Myths, Legends, Humor, and Hunting Stories*, by Donald M. Hines, 1992. Issaquah: Great Eagle Publishing, Inc., p. 55.

An Indian, whose house stood by the side of a lagoon beyond which stretched a deep forest, lay on his bed at an open window one evening. He heard a whistling out in the timber. He answered it, supposing that it was someone lost. In turn, he was answered from the trees and at closer range. This was kept up for some time, the voice in the woods often taking **the cadence of a bird song or other forest sounds.** The Indian began to feel **“queer” and “out of his head”**. Surmising that he was being “fooled with” by the Stick Indians, he closed the window and remained in the house. "... *taking the cadence of a bird song or other forest sounds*" - - one more example of sasquatch sound imitative ability. *It's no exaggeration to say that chimpanzees and gorillas cannot speak because they cannot imitate sounds, while humans can and therefore speak. Sound imitative ability was evolved before the origin of speech and must have provided its indispensable basis. Sound mimicking ability in sasquatches is often reported, so they are well equipped with this basis for speech.* The *Ste-ye-hah'*

Source: *Ghost Voices—Yakima Indian Myths, Legends, Humor, and Hunting Stories*, by Donald M. Hines, 1992. Issaquah: Great Eagle Publishing, Inc., pp. 57-59.

It is the delight of the *Ste-ye-hah'* to carry away captive children who may become lost or separated from their people. Many snows ago two little ones, a brother and a sister, were missing from a hunter-village in the mountains. The parents and friends instituted a wide search and found their trail. Small footprints showed between the imprints of adult tracks, and at various places the children had left bits of their skin clothing along the path. It was readily seen that they had been carried off captive. But by whom? No hostile tribesmen were in that region. The alarmed and fearful people continued their quest and soon came upon undisputable proof that the dreaded *Ste-ye-hah'* had possession of the little ones. Recovery was hopeless, and at a point where the trail disappeared entirely, the pursuit was abandoned.

Long afterwards, perhaps twenty snows, the parents of the lost children were camped in the mountains gathering huckleberries. One night while sitting in their lodge, **a stick was thrust through a small crevice in the wall.** The old man immediately called out, "You need not come around here bothering me, *Ste-ye-hah'*! I know you! You took my two children, *Hom-chin-nah* and *Whol-te-noo*. We are all alone since you took our children. Go away!"

The *Ste-ye-hah'* withdrew from the side of the tepee. He was the lost boy. When he **could not remember his native tongue**, he **recognized his own name** spoken by the old Indian, his father. He lingered about the lodge, all night, fearing to enter. As daylight appeared, he went back to his **people** and **told** his sister what he had seen and heard, that their own parents were in the lone lodge at the berry patch. The next night he returned to the lodge, but did not enter nor let his presence be known. The third night he came again with his sister and entered the lodge. He made the old people to understand that they were their lost children, *Hom-chin-nah* and *Whol-te-noo*. It was the bow and arrows of the old man hanging on the lodge pole that had deterred him from entering the previous evenings. **The children came often to see their parents, bringing them salmon in abundance. There has never been any salmon in that part of the Cascades, but the Ste-ye-hah' mah had this fish in quantity.**

The old people went away with their children, who had married and had families of their own. Later, when Indians visited this place, only the empty lodge was to be seen. The parents stayed with the *Ste-ye-hah' mah* for one snow, then returned to the berry patch and rejoined their tribe. Ever since that time, when any of the Indians are in the mountains and hear **the Chief of the Ste-ye-hah' mah hooting like an owl**, calling to his **people**, they know the **mysterious beings** are abroad, **bent on mischief**. They listen. Presently they hear a cry like **some bird, or the chattering of a chipmunk** near their lodge. It is then that the startled inmates call out, "You need not come bothering around here! **I am a relative of *Hoom-chin-nah* and *Whol-te-noo*! This invariably secures that particular lodge from further molestation by the mysterious *Ste-ye-hah*. They will not knowingly annoy the relatives of the two children whom they once captured** and who resided with them so many years as **members of their tribe**. *This nice story is probably legendary, but doubtless based on the realities of homin-human interactions. "... a stick was thrust through a small crevice in the wall" -- a stick again... Sasquatch befriends, Lady X and Lady Y, repeatedly found little sticks placed in different arrangements near their houses, as they believe, by sasquatches. The Ladies think these stick arrangements are signs with certain undeciphered meanings. This reminded me of an episode I witnessed in the Caucasus in 1964 during my first expedition there. A young Kabardian named Pate, from the village of Sarmakovo, gave me an account of his two quite realistic and credible sightings, "and then added that a friend of his was cohabiting with an almasty. 'How come?' -- 'Yes, she visits him three times a year. He has four children by her.' 'Where are they?' -- 'They stay with her in the wild.' 'How is he dating her?' -- 'By means of little sticks.'(?). 'So she doesn't speak?' -- 'She can say one word in Kabardian.' 'Which?' -- 'Give!'"(Bigfoot Research: The Russian Vision, 2007, p.19).Sheer fantasy? Maybe, but what do we do with the emerging little sticks pattern on both sides of the Atlantic? The Capture*

Source: *Ghost Voices—Yakima Indian Myths, Legends, Humor, and Hunting Stories*, by Donald M. Hines, 1992. Issaquah: Great Eagle Publishing, Inc., p. 60.

Two *Ste-ye-hah'* captured a Yakama man and carried him **on their shoulders** to their home. One of the captors wanted to take him **to his sister**, but the other wanted to kill him. At last **the friendly Ste-ye-hah'** slipped the man away and **told him** to escape to his own land. He **said to him**, "Hurry away! There is a tall tree on the ridge where you will be overtaken by the darkness. **Sleep on the top branches of this tree. The Ste-ye-hah' cannot climb the tree after you!** The Indian did as instructed, and the pursuing *Ste-ye-hah'* came to the tree early after sundown and **were under it all night**. The Indian could hear his enemies constantly, but when the dawn came they left, and the

man came from his perch and made the rest of his way home before another nightfall. *True or not, this story touches upon the important topic of tree climbing ability in sasquatch. They are primates, and yet cannot climb trees, while even humans can?... In Eurasia we have many reports of homins climbing trees. Slavic rusalkas (they are females) like to swing on tree branches and jump from trees growing on river banks into the water. Perhaps the question regarding sasquatches is clarified by the following: "The bigfoot young were more apt to climb trees and play in them. I never saw Fox in a tree except on the lower branches of an old oak tree once. Sheba could climb one in a minute if she was after a bird. Yes, she would catch and eat birds and steal their eggs out of the nest if she could get to them. If the nest was too high for her to reach safely in the tree because of her weight, she would send one of the young bigfoot up to get the eggs. They climb really well but use their hands and arms to hoist themselves up like people do. One time Blackie broke the eggs he went after before he got down out of the tree and Sheba scolded him for it, or at least that looked like what she was doing. She was shaking her fist at him"(Janice Carter, in "50 Years with Bigfoot" by Mary A. Green & Janice Carter Coy, 2002, p.146). So it must have been the difference in weight between a human and the Stick-showers that saved the life of that Yakama man.*

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(To be continued in part 4)

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