

yuw'i'na'qws tthu hwthuthiqut¹
Ruler of the forest
nutsim' yuhw 'a'lu 'ushus shtii'l'a'lus tthu sxayukw'us
(or) *Why Raccoon wears a mask*

- 1 'u kw'un'a-a-a wulh hith ni' tthu tsiitmuhw 'u tthu hwthuthiqut.
A long time ago, Owl was there in the forest.
- 2 ha' ni' snet 'i' nilh ni' hwiil'asmut tthu hwthuthiqut.
It was night and he was watching over the forest.
- 3 'i' 'i' ts'u wulh tsitsulh thu lhqel'ts' 'i' ni' wil' tthu qi'xune'tun 'u tthu
hwthuthiqut tumuhw.
And the moon was high in the sky and it cast a shadow on the forest floor.
- 4 suw' niis shts'unets ni' u tthu xpey'ulhp, lhuplhupxnuhw tthu'w'nilh.
And he was sitting in a cedar tree, blinking.
- 5 hwun' xut'u 'i' wulh lumnuhwus tthu ni' yukwayxthut.
Suddenly, he saw something moving.
- 6 sis nem' 'uw' lhakw' yuhwsiweem'qun 'ul' kwus nem' lhakw' tun'ni' 'u tthu
xpey'ulhp.
And he flew quietly, flying from the cedar tree.
- 7 hwun' xut'u 'i' ni' wulh kwunnuhwus tthu sxwul'xwal'qw', tsq'ix 'i' tthu p'uq'
shtl'upi'snuts.
Suddenly, he grabbed the striped thing, a black and white tail.
- 8 'i' nilh sxuyukw'us.
It was Raccoon.
- 9 m'i se'tus tthu'w'nilh tsiimuhw
Owl lifted him up.

¹From Margaret Roome's collection of Cowichan stories, rendered into Hul'q'umi'num' and then retranslated into English by Ruby Peter and Donna Gerds, October 2012 & July 2013. [VERSION FROM February 11, 2014]

- 10 tl'lim' 'uw' yuhwt'it'iyuq'us tthu sxuyukw'us.
Raccoon was very angry.
- 11 "kwe'tham'sh! kwe'tham'sh! 'uwu nuwees yuw'i'na'qws tthu hwthuthiqut.
"Let me go! Let me go! You are not the ruler of the forest.
- 12 'i' 'uw' 'i kwthu thuhiws tsakw si'em' 'utl' nuwu."
There is a bird greater than you!"
- 13 tl'lim' nuw' tth'uykw'thut tthuw'unilh tsiitmuhw sus 'uw' kwe'tus tthu
sxayukw'us.
Owl was so surprised that he dropped Raccoon.
- 14 "skw'ey ts'twa' kws stu'es?
"That couldn't be true, could it?"
- 15 nu stli' kw'unus tul'nuhw 'uw' thu'itus, la'us 'uw' niin' tse' 'uw' s-hwuhwi' 'ul'
'u tthu skweyul."
I want to find out if this is true, even if I have to stay up all day."
- 16 suw' t'a'thut 'itut kwus wulh net 'i' hwi' skw'ey kws tth'up'nuhws, nilh kws
yaths 'uw' s-hwuhwi' 'ul' 'u kws snet-s.
*He tried to sleep that night, but his eyes wouldn't close, because he always
was awake at night.*
- 17 ni' tus 'u tthu qul'et kweyul, 'i' hwi' nilh yuhwqi'xun'aa'lus 'u tthu
sum'shathut.
The next day, the sun was shining brightly.
- 18 ni' hay 'ul' shxulha'qws tthuw'nilh tsiitmuhw.
Owl got a headache from it.
- 19 suw' lhakw' nem' 'u tthu hwthuthiqut ni' 'u tthu sta'luw', quw'utsun' sta'luw'.
He flew to the trees by the river, the Cowichan River.
- 20 'i' ni' tthu smuqw'a' lhxilush luq'shin lhew'q'lhne'num' 'u kw' stseelhtun.
And there was Heron standing on one foot fishing for salmon.

- 21 suw' pte'mutus tthuw'nilh tsiimuhw, "nuwe 'u yuw'i'na'qw 'u tthu hwthuthiqut?"
And Owl asked, "Are you the ruler of the forest?"
- 22 "shh!" thut smuqw'a' hwteel'qi'num', sus nem' kwun'um 'u tthu shnetulhquns.
"Shh!" said Heron rudely, and he went to catch his breakfast.
- 23 suw' huye' tha'ithut lhakw' tthuw'nilh tsiitmuhw.
So Owl flew on.
- 24 tl'im' 'uw' 'ulh kw'ey'.
He was really hungry.
- 25 sht'eewun', "ha' tsun lhuyxt kw' stseelhtun, 'i' xwum tsun 'i' yuqwinus."
He thought, "If I eat some salmon, I might get heartburn."
- 26 sis nem' 'uw' lhakw' xwte' 'u tl' kwa'mutsun xatsa'.
So he flew over toward Quamichan Lake.
- 27 'i' wulh lumnuhwus tthu hay 'ul' 'i'yathut s-hwuw'qun, p'up'ekw ni' 'u tthu qa'.
And he saw graceful Swan, floating on the water.
- 28 suw' pte'mutus, "nuwe 'u yuw'i'na'qw 'u tthu hwthuthiqut?"
And he asked, "Are you the ruler of the forest?"
- 29 'uwu niis hwtulqun tthu s-huw'qun.
But Swan didn't answer.
- 30 'i' ni' 'uw' hwmutqwusum' 'uw' tthu tl'uqtulhnulh ni' 'u tthu xatsa'.
He ducked his long neck under the water.
- 31 ni' hwi' 'uw'kw'ulhnulhstum kwus xi'xlhe'mutus, 'i' wulh slhtsiws tthuw'nilh tsiitmuhw.
It made Owl feel he had run out of breath, and he was tired.
- 32 tl'im' 'uw' stl'i's kws tul'nuhws sus nem' 'uw' xwte' 'u tl' tl'ulpalus.
But he really wanted to find out, so he went on toward Cowichan Bay.

- 33 tus 'i' wulh lumnuhwus tthu hay 'ul' thuthiw's kws lhalhukw',
Soon he saw a big powerful bird flying,
- 34 'i' ni' sel'ts' 'i' ni' swi'wil' kwus tl'ulqtul'exun'.
hovering with his wings spread out.
- 35 'i' nilh p'e' tth'ixwth'uxw.
And it was Osprey,
- 36 'i' wulh lumnuhwus tthu tl'itl'up ni' 'u tthu qa'.
and he had spotted something down below in the water.
- 37 nilh tthu sxun'us ni' yuw'en' kwus nem' wulh nuqum,
He dived down feet first,
- 38 nuqemutus tthu p'uwi' ni' lumnuhwus.
diving for the flounder that he had seen.
- 39 s'ulhtuns tse'.
It would be his dinner.
- 40 sus 'uw' ximutus tthu p'uwi' ni' 'u tthu tl'itl'up.
And he grabbed the flounder that was down deep.
- 41 sus nem' 'uw' se'tus nem' huye'st-hwus t'ukw'st-hwus tthu s'ulhtuns tse',
He lifted it up and made off with it, taking his dinner home.
- 42 nemust-hwus 'u tthu shts'ustutsus lelum's.
taking it back to his home made of branches.
- 43 'i' nihw ts'u yutsukwul'ul'qum' tthu tsiitmuhw,
Owl must have been following along,
- 44 shts'unets ni' 'u tthu ts'sey'ulhp.
and sat on a douglas-fir tree.
- 45 suw' temutum' 'utl' tsiitmuhw tthu tth'ihwth'uhw,
And Owl shouted over to Osprey,

- 46 "nuwe 'u yuw'i'na'qw 'u tthu hwthuthiqut?"
"Are you the ruler of the forest?"
- 47 hwun' xut'u, ni-i-i 'u tthu tsitsulh.
Suddenly, there was something up above.
- 48 m'i yulhalhukw' tthu thi-i-i yuxwule, nem' yul'ew' 'utl' tsiitmuhw.
And the big Eagle came flying, passing by Owl.
- 49 hay' 'ul' tuw' yo-o-o kwus yuya'yuluqw 'ul' ni' 'u tthu skweyul.
He was gracefully soaring across the sky.
- 50 suw' lumnum 'utl' yuxwule' tthu shun'tse' 'utl' tth'ihwtth'uhw,
Eagle had spotted what Osprey had caught,
- 51 sus 'uw' shitums stli's sus nem' 'uw' numnusus 'i' ximutus.
and he wanted it, so he swooped down and grabbed it.
- 52 suw' tul'num 'utl' tsiimuhw, "e'ut p'e' tthuw' thu'it yuw'i'na'qw 'u tthu
 hwthuthiqut.
So Owl realized, "Here is the ruler of the forest."
- 53 hay 'ul' xisul'alus tthu yuxwule' kwus wulh lemutum tthuw'nilh tsiimuhw.
Eagle looked at Owl with fierce eyes.
- 54 Suw' thut-s, "i ch 'a'lu tsukwstamut 'un'sh 'i 'i 'u tun'a?
And he said, "What are you doing here?"
- 55 nem' tsun tse' qw'umqw'umuwwsthamu 'u tthun' stl'ulq'een'.
I will pluck out your feathers!"
- 56 wulh si'si' tthuw'nilh tsiitmuhw.
Owl was afraid.
- 57 tl'lim 'uw' skw'ey kws tslems kwus hwqi'xun'a'lus 'u tthu sum'shathut.
He could not see because the sun was shining in his eyes.
- 58 'i' tl'lim' tl'e' 'uw' xulha'qw 'i' kwus wulh hwuw'hwuw'luq 'i' mutl'el kwus
 kw'ekwi'.
His head really hurt and he was almost fainting with hunger.

- 59 sus nem' 'uw' t'akw' nem' 'u kwthuw' swe's thqet-s 'i' wulh nilh 'ul' sus 'uw' nuqw.
He flew home to his tree and fell right to sleep.
- 60 tus kwus wulh net 'i' hwi' skw'ey kws 'itut-s tthu yuxwule'.
That night Eagle could not sleep.
- 61 xatsthut-s, "sht'eewun' tsun kws 'eenthus 'uw' yuw'i'na'qw 'u tun'a hwthuthiqut."
He was thinking to himself, "I thought I was the ruler of the forest."
- 62 'uy' kwunus nem' nets'uw't-hwum 'utl' tsiitmuhw."
It would be good for me to pay a visit to Owl."
- 63 suw' huye' lhakw.
And so off he flew.
- 64 tus 'i' 'uw' ni' tthu'nilh tsiitmuhw ni' 'u tthu xpey'ulhp,
He got to where Owl was in the cedar tree,
- 65 tth'up'tthu'up'nuhw 'i' 'uw' yuhwsuweem'qun 'ul' kwsus qwal.
blinking his eyes and hooting softly.
- 66 "i' ch 'a'lu nutsim' 'un'sh 'i' tetsul, 'a yuxwule'?"
"What are you doing here, Eagle?"
- 67 'een'thu yuw'i'na'qw 'u tthu hwthuthiqut 'ukws snet-s."
I am the ruler of the forest by night."
- 68 "hee, 'uw' thu'it 'i' hay tthu 'een'thu tthu yuw'i'na'qw 'u kw sus skweyul.
"Yes, it's true that I am the ruler of the forest by day.
- 69 'i' hay tthu nuwu yuw'i'na'qw 'u kwsus snet.
But you are the ruler of the forest by night.
- 70 'o-o-o nilh pe' 'i'elh kwthu skwati sxayukw'us 'i' mi'mulut'stal'hw."
That crazy Raccoon really fooled us."

- 71 hwyunumus tthey' yuse'lu stsuy'tsi'elh thuhiws, tsiitmuhw 'i' yuxwule'.
The two great birds, Owl and Eagle, smiled at each other.
- 72 nilh 'uw tun'ni' 'u tthu stsi'elh shqwaluwun, tul'nuhwus 'eelhtun kwsus
mi'muluts'tum' 'utl' sxayukw'us.
*They were great in their wisdom, realizing they were being tricked by
Raccoon.*
- 73 ni' kwu'elh tun'ni' 'u kwthey' 'i' t-hwyath 'ul' 'uw' shtiil'a'lus tthuw'nilh
sxayukw'us.
From that time on Raccoon wore a mask.
- 74 nilh 'ul' kwsus hay 'ul' xi'xe' kwsus t'a'thut kws 'iye'qt-s tthu shtuhim's tthu 'i
'u tun'a 'u tthuw' mukw' tumuhw.
He was ashamed about trying to change the nature of things.
- 75 ni' nexun 'u kwthey'.
That's the end of that (story).