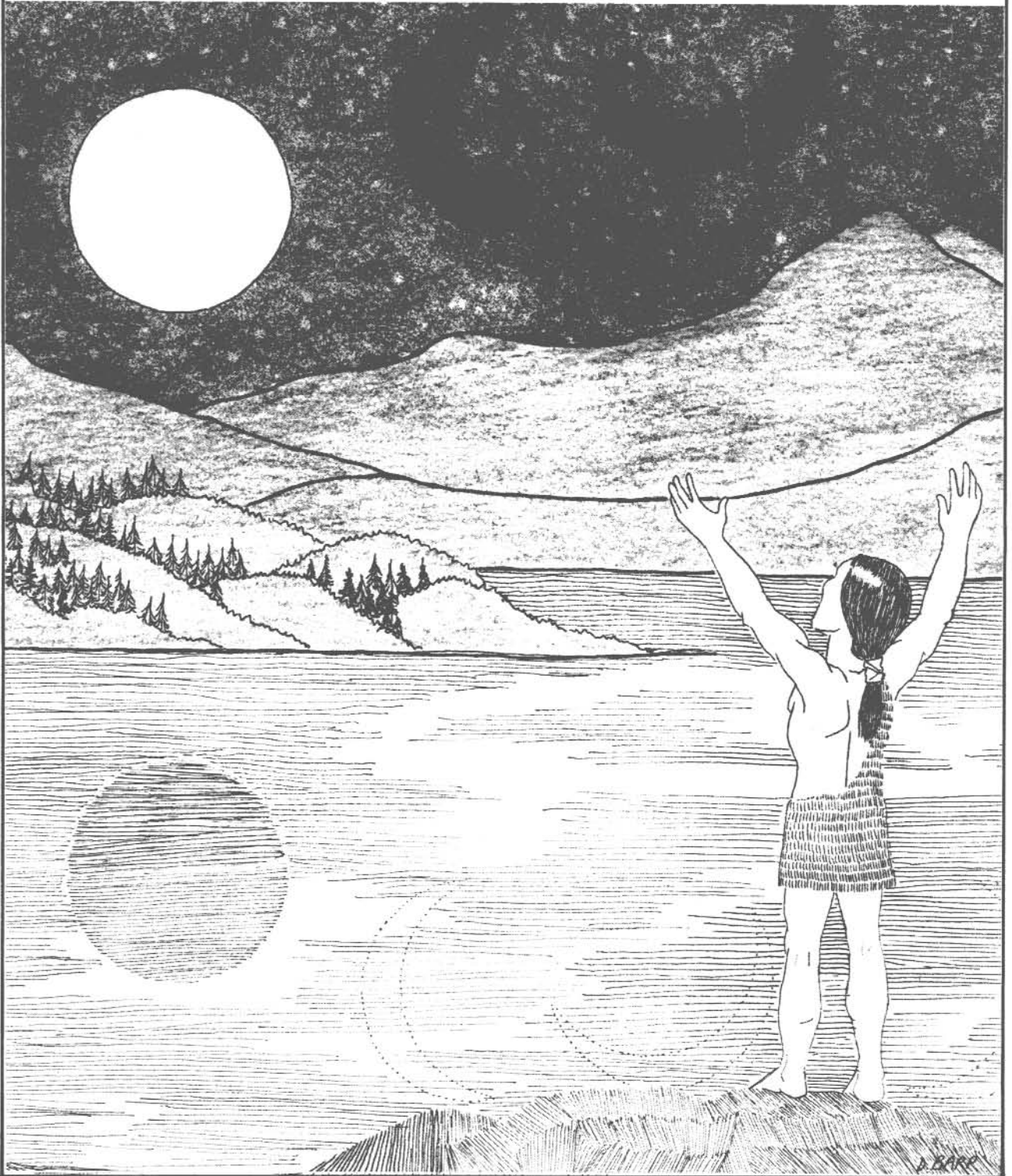


# MOON

(Muckleshoot)



Developed by the Muckleshoot Curriculum Committee

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The preparation of this story, *Moon*, was aided by Eva Jerry, Ollie Wilbur, Elizabeth Bargala and Debra Barr, all residents of Muckleshoot Indian Reservation; and Patricia Noel, employee of the Auburn School District.

*Moon* was adapted from *Moon, The Transformer*, told to Arthur Ballard and published by the University of Washington Publications in Anthropology, Vol. 3, 1929. Arthur Ballard grew up in Auburn. After high school, he attended the University of Washington and became an anthropologist who spent his lifetime among the Muckleshoot Indians and collected artifacts and recorded history. The story was originally told by Snoqualmie Charlie who resided on the Muckleshoot Reservation and was related to a large membership of the tribe. The typed version of *Moon* was verified by Ollie Wilbur.

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# MOON

(Muckleshoot)

Two sisters, their father and their grandparents lived by the river. The sisters went to dig fern roots on the prairie. When night came clear and starry, they remained on the prairie because they were tired and didn't want to travel the long distance to their home. They lay down. As they lay there, the younger sister looked up and saw the stars looking down. She wished the shining white star was her husband and the shining red star was her elder sister's husband.

The elder sister told her younger sister to stop wishing, for she suspected what would happen if she kept talking about the stars. The younger sister would not stop. After awhile the two sisters went to sleep. When they awoke in the morning, they were in the Sky Country, lying beside star men. The sisters did not know where they were. There was no wind. There was only calm.

The younger sister learned that her husband, the one shining white, was an old man. But the one shining red was a young man in the prime of life. All around them were many people. These were star people, relatives of their husbands.

Life in the Sky Country was the same as on Earth. The star women had to go out and dig fern roots and the star men would hunt game. The two sisters said, "Let us go and dig fern roots too."

## *The first day*

They brought many fern roots home. They prepared their store, cooked it, and the people ate it. Fern roots were delicious and tasted like bananas when fixed in a special way, cooked over the campfire.

## *The second day*

The two sisters dug many fern roots and brought them home. They prepared their store, and cooked it. The people ate it, as they had done on the first day.

## *The third day*

The sisters went out to dig. Their husbands warned them, "When you find the roots with your digging sticks, do not follow those that go straight down. Dig only the roots that spread out."

Time passed. The elder sister became pregnant. The younger sister grieved when she found out. She would sit near the fire where the smoke would blow in her face in order that the people might not know that the tears were from weeping. She grieved because she had an old man for a husband.

Every day the sisters would go out and dig fern roots. While out, they asked

each other, "Why is it that our husbands tell us not to follow the roots that go straight down?" After they had talked of this, they said, "We shall try it."

A long time passed. A boy-child was born to the elder sister. After the child was born, the sisters did not go out to dig. They waited until the child grew strong. After the baby became strong, they said, "let us go out and dig more fern roots. They went out and took the baby along. When their husbands went to hunt game each day, the women went with the child to dig.

They said, "We shall follow the roots down and see how far they go." They dug. They followed the roots down till they reached the 'earth's sky'. When they dug through, the wind came up through the hole. The women finally knew where they were. They knew this was the Sky Country.

Because the wind came up, the hunters knew that something was wrong. They came running to the spot where the women were digging and asked, "What is wrong?"

But the women had plugged the hole through which the wind had been blowing and answered, "Nothing is wrong." The men went back to the hunt. After this happened, the women did not feel right. They soon went home.

The next day they went to dig fern roots and gather cedar boughs. In the morning they gathered boughs and laid them at the place where the hole in the sky had been. In the afternoon they gathered fern roots, but only a few.

The next day the two sisters went out to dig as before. In the morning they gathered cedar boughs and again laid them near the secret spot. In the afternoon they dug a few fern roots, just as on the first day. The third and the fourth days they went out and did the same.

The hunters became suspicious. The husband of the elder sister asked her, "What is the reason you do not gather enough fern roots?"

The wife replied, "The baby cries, and I have to dig alone while my sister looks after the baby."

The fifth day they went out. Instead of cutting, the sisters twisted the branches into rope. This work took them all day and they dug even fewer roots than on the previous days. For the next four days they twisted rope. They brought home very few roots.

They continued to twist rope to make a rope ladder. The tenth day they went out. Instead of making the ladder, they dug the hole and passed the ladder down through it, hoping it would reach the earth. They shook the ladder and found it was not long enough. They drew it back again.

The next day the two sisters gathered more cedar limbs — all this unknown to their husbands. Each day they would bring back only a few roots. For several days they continued to twist more rope to make the ladder longer.

On the fourteenth day they went immediately to the hole in the sky. They hung the ladder and found that it reached to earth. The younger sister stepped through the hole onto the ladder. The elder sister handed the baby to the younger sister, and following her, closed the hole in the sky and caused a forest to grow where the prairie had been, so the hunters, searching, might not be able to find them. Then,

when all was ready, the two sisters with the baby descended the ladder to earth, their original home.

When the two sisters had been taken up into the sky, their parents did not know where they had gone and had been grieving for them all the time. All the while, they had been gathering the various Bird People who were the best doctors to be found. The people continued to dance and sing. Bluejay, Squirrel and others tried with their spirit power to find the sisters. None could find them because their spirit helpers were not strong enough.

Most of the doctors had given up the task and had gone home. Few were left, dancing and singing, when the women reached the ground. But the news quickly spread. The two sisters had come from the sky. As the people gathered, the two sisters made the ladder into a swing and caused it to swing back and forth. The sisters' father told the people to have fun, to enjoy themselves, and swing on the ladder his daughters had made. The people celebrated the homecoming by sporting on the swing.

From Footprint to Camping Place, a half day's journey, they swing. At Footprint one would spring and at Camping Place he would alight. The latter place is north of the river, and from there one can see the bay. The white people call it Mount Si. Footprint is south of the river. It is called Rattlesnake Mountain by the white people.

Mount Si has bitterroots growing there now. People came from as far away as Yakima to celebrate the homecoming of the two sisters. They brought bitterroots with them for lunch. Some of the roots were planted and started to grow there.

Now, while the sisters were enjoying themselves with the people swinging, their blind old Grandmother Toad was caring for the baby "Moon." She was swinging the baby on the swing, putting him to sleep. He was tied to the babyboard. After a time, while Grandmother Toad was singing, the baby ceased crying and became quite. The grandmother began to sing, "This feels like rotten wood instead of a baby."

Old Grandmother Toad did not know that Dog Salmon had come and had stolen the baby. He had unwrapped him from the cradleboard and put in a stick of rotten wood in place of the baby.

While swinging on the sky ladder the mother of Moon passed by and heard the old lady singing, "This feels like rotten wood instead of a baby." She came over to the place and found it was indeed rotten wood instead of a baby. The people found out the baby was gone but no one knew who had taken him.

Again all the people gathered the greatest doctors who could be summoned. "Which one will guess who has taken him?" they wondered.

While the two sisters were weeping for the baby, they took the diaper woven of cedar bark, dipped it in river water and wrung it out. Five times they did so. The fifth time there was a cry that sounded like a baby. The cry was from a big sturdy child, a boy, who had been transformed from the cedar bark diaper and had come to console the people for their sorrow in losing the other baby (Moon). This boy was Sun, the brother of Moon.

The doctors all gathered. They danced and sang. Bluejay revealed who had taken the baby and where he was.

Yellowhammer was the first bird to go in search of the baby. Yellowhammer came to a place where the earth was separating and striking together. The baby was on the side of this place. When Yellowhammer came to this place, he could not go through. He was not quick enough. Yellowhammer came back and said, "The baby is where we thought but beyond, in a difficult place."

Then Woodpecker went, but he could not get through and came back. Raven was the third to undertake the journey. He went half way to the place but became hungry and came back without ever having reached his goal. He said, "The baby is over there but I could do nothing."

Then Osprey set out. He went only as far as the open-and-shut place and came back.

Finally, Bluejay set out. He was the one who knew where the baby was. When Bluejay started, he did not go straight, but sailed up and down, singing. Bluejay reached the difficult place and sat and watched to see how fast it was going up and down. He thought he could go through the place safely. He decided he would try. When he tried to pass through, the earth caught his head and made it flat. That's why his head is that way now. Once through he sang for gladness, "Kai, Kai, Kai." (Kai means "bringing news".)

After this, Bluejay flew to the place where the baby had been taken. The baby was young Moon, now a grown man, with a boy of his own. Bluejay passed. The man picked up some flakings and threw them in Bluejay's eye, saying, "Why are you flying here? I do not feel right. I feel sadness every day."

Bluejay replied to Moon, "Child, I came here for you." Then the young man turned about and cleansed the eyes of Bluejay. "I came for you," Bluejay continued. "Your mother, your aunt and all your people are mourning for you."

Young Moon replied, "I shall not go at once. After a time I shall go but not with you, Bluejay."

"I'm afraid of that place," said Bluejay. "I'm afraid to go back." But Moon gave him a staff, sharp on both ends, and told him to pry the place apart and get through without hurting himself further. When Bluejay returned, he did as Moon had instructed him to do and got through the dangerous place safely. He arrived home, flying as before, singing and exulting, "Kai, kai, Kai, kai."

The people thought, "Bluejay has the baby now."

When he got home he told the mother and aunt, "Moon will come after a time, but slowly. He is a big man now, full grown and has a boy of his own."

The people at the place where Moon lived were Dog Salmon. They were the ones who had taken him to their home. There, Moon had taken a wife from among the Dog Salmon people. After Bluejay had come, Moon wondered, "What shall I do with these people I'm staying with?" He was also concerned about what he should do with his boy when he left. He pondered the matter until he concluded, "I shall leave my boy here." He made ready to leave. The people were making merry. Moon bid them good-bye.

Moon turned about, caressed his boy and said "Son, I am going to leave you now." But when Moon started to go, his boy called "Father!" A second time Moon caressed the boy and started away. He went a little farther this time before the boy called, "Father!" Moon went back to him. Moon cut a lock of hair from the right side of his son's head and left his son holding the lock of hair in his right hand.

Moon started up the river. He drove the Dog Salmon ahead of him saying, "The new generation is coming now, and you shall be food for the people, oh, Dog Salmon." Thus, Moon began his working of changing things upon the earth.

Moon had first said, "Dog Salmon, go downstream." Afterwards, Moon wondered if he had made a mistake and said, "Dog Salmon, go upstream." If Moon had not changed his mind, the dog salmon would have run upstream all the time and would never go down to the bay as they do now. Dog Salmon were thick along the river. People used to walk across the river on their backs, they were so thick. Seagulls used to eat out their eyes. That's why some of the fish have no eyes.

Moon came to a group of people who were fighting. "What are you doing?" he asked.

"Fighting," they said.

"Why?" he asked them. "You must not fight each other." Then he transformed them into birds or stones.

At the next place, Moon came to a multitude of little slaves who would scatter out and then come back. "What are you doing?" he asked, and turned them into sandpipers.

At the next place Moon found people fishing. "What are you doing?" he asked.

"We are fishing to get food," they said.

"Very well," said Moon and turned them into sawbill ducks.

At the fourth place Moon found people in a swamp looking for food. "What are you doing?" he asked.

"We are working, trying to get food," they said. Moon gathered them together and let them go. They became mallard ducks.

At the fifth place Moon came upon a people gathered upon a sandy beach.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"This is our land, our abiding place," they said.

Moon took them up and put them back as clams. Moon said, "You shall be good food for the people."

Moon came next to people arguing about the length of day and night. One said, "We shall have daylight every year."

The other said, "We shall have daylight every day." The latter was Ant, and even as she was talking, she was drawing her belt tighter, so that now she has a tiny waist. The other one who thought that a day should last a year was Bear. So he now sleeps every winter but is out in summer.

At the next place Moon came upon Deer making spear points of bone and singing, "This is what I am making to kill Moon." While he was still singing, Deer looked up and saw Moon standing there before him. "Making a weapon to kill Moon," said Deer.

“What?” said Moon. “Let me see it.” Deer gave it to Moon. Moon placed the spear point upon the wrist of Deer and turned him into a deer (as we now know him), saying, “You shall be something good to eat.”

Moon next came to Mink. “What are you doing?” Moon asked. “Are you strong?” He turned Mink into stone. As soon as Moon left him, Mink recovered himself and gave a cry, as he does now. Returning, Moon said, “I shall make something out of you.” He took Mink to a lake and turned him into a stick leaning out of the water. Moon left him again.

Mink rose and again cried, “You could not turn me into anything.”

Moon went back again and studied a long time, asking himself, “What shall I do with Mink to get the better of him?” Then he took Mink, sliced him up into small pieces and threw him in all directions. He had turned him into a small animal, which is how mink are now. Mink would have overcome Moon if Moon had not cut him up.

Moon went on and came to a place where four women were fighting, pulling each other’s hair. They were preparing themselves to deal with Moon when he would come to change them. Moon came and stood looking at them. They did not know him to be the Changer. Moon asked, “What are you doing?”

The four women said, “We are practicing so we may know how to contend with Changer when he comes.

Moon cast them into the mud, saying, “You shall grow and be something good to eat.” Then the women became what they are now. They are maidenhair fern, skunk cabbage, wild artichoke and sand rush.

Afterwards, Moon came to a man who was working, making a lake. That man was Beaver. Moon asked, “What are working on?”

Beaver said, “I am making this so the water will come and soak up the little trees, so that I shall be able to eat the bark.” Moon summoned the man and turned him into a beaver.

Moon said, “You shall be good food for the people to eat. Stay in the lake the rest of your life.”

Later, Moon found a man dragging a great many salmon. That man was Land-otter. Moon asked, “How do you catch salmon?”

“Oh, I catch them after my own fashion,” said Land-otter.

Moon called the man to him, saying, “You shall catch salmon as you have been catching them before.” At that moment Land-otter seized the salmon in his teeth, catching them in his own fashion.

By this time Moon had become very hungry. He went along and came to a place where Cat was roasting a salmon by the fire. While the salmon was roasting Cat turned it over and all at once became sleepy. He thought, “I shall sleep while the salmon is roasting.” It was Moon who had made him sleepy.

When Cat had fallen asleep, Moon came and took the roast salmon. He ate nearly all of it. Then he took a portion of the salmon, went to Cat and rubbed a little on his teeth, cheeks and forehead. The marks now show as stripes on his face. When Cat awoke, he looked over to where the salmon had been, not knowing he

had been asleep, and wondered what had become of his salmon. He felt about and felt his teeth. "I must have eaten it," he said, he was not sure.

He became thirsty and went down to the river for a drink. Each time he stooped down for a drink he saw his image in the water and threw himself back, frightened, not knowing he had been turned into a wildcat while asleep. He soon became wild and ran away.

Moon came to five brothers playing. Their game was to sing, "Fire, fire." Then fire would start and spread all about, threatening everything with destruction. Moon asked the brothers, "What are you doing?"

"Just playing," they answered.

"Sing that song," said Moon.

"No," they said, "it would not be good for you. If we should, harm might come to you." But they sang, as Moon wanted, and when the five sang, "Fire, fire," flames of fire spread all about and caught every object on fire. The rocks became hot, the water boiled and the world was on fire. Moon was frightened and did not know which way to go.

Finally, he heard a voice shouting, "This way, my grandson." It was the voice of Trail. Fire can go over but does not burn Trail. Moon hastened to the safekeeping of Trail who saved his life. The escape of Moon was narrow, for his wolfskin quiver, hanging from his back, was singed a little. Then Moon said to the five brothers, "You shall be set in separate places so that, if fire starts, it may be put out." Now, fire is not so violent. A fire such as the five brothers could start would destroy the world.

Moon went on and came to a river. He saw an old man on the other side, sitting in front of his house. Echo was the man's name. Moon called Echo, "Bring the canoe across."

Echo teased Moon by repeating the same words, "Bring the canoe across. Bring the canoe across."

Again Moon called, "Bring the canoe across." Again Echo mocked him. A third time Moon called to the man, and a third time the man mockingly repeated the words. Then Moon swam the river.

As soon as the old man saw Moon coming, his belly became swollen with fear, and he crept with difficulty into the house. As Moon drew near and entered the house, he asked the old man, "Why did you not bring the canoe across for me?" and Echo repeated the same words. Both became angry. Moon asked, "Which way did your relatives go?"

"Which way did your relatives go?" answered Echo. Five times Moon asked the question and five times Echo replied. Moon thought Echo had relatives, but he had none at all. Only his entrails, hanging from a rack in baskets about the walls, were his relatives. Becoming angry, Moon cried out "I'll kill you."

"I'll kill you," answered Echo. Five times Moon spoke, and five times Echo repeated Moon's words.

They fought. Echo almost overpowered Moon. The creatures in the baskets wound themselves all around Moon and bound him so he could scarcely move.

Then a bird appeared and told Moon to tip over the baskets. Moon tipped over the baskets, five of them, and then he changed Echo to echo as we know it now. Moon wished good fortune to the bird who had helped him and went on his way.

Moon journeyed far. He came to a place where he heard someone pounding. It was Blue Heron, using his head for a hammer. As Blue Heron pounded he sang a song, "Pounding, pounding with the side of my head."

The stones, sticks and trees were alive, so Blue Heron could not use them. If he took up a stick, the stick struck him. If he picked up a stone, the stone pelted him. He was compelled to use his head to hammer with. Moon came close to Blue Heron. Moon asked, "What are you doing?"

Blue Heron said, "Grandchild, I am trying my best to work. The salmon in the river I cannot catch. If I try to make a fishing spear from a stick, the stick will just whip me, and as for the stones, they will pelt me."

Moon said, "Pick up stones." Blue Heron picked up the stones. They pelted him all over and he cried out. Moon took the stones and struck them together, then gave them to Blue Heron. The Moon said to Stone, "Hereafter you shall be just a stone. People will cast you into the stream to scare salmon. You shall not be harmful to anyone."

Moon asked Blue Heron, "Why do you not gather those poles for fishing spears and use them?"

Blue Heron said, "No, they will whip me." Blue Heron gathered poles. They whipped him and he cried out.

Moon took a pole, broke it in two and struck the pieces together. He gave the pieces to Blue Heron and said to Pole, "Hereafter people will use you to spear salmon. You cannot of yourself give harm to anyone." Then Moon addressed Blue Heron, "Come here and I shall make you over in a better form." Moon took Blue Heron by his bill and it became long. "Go out now and fish," said Moon. Blue Heron waded out in the water and found that he was perfected. He could spear salmon with his bill. Then said Moon, "From now on there shall be a generation of beings and they shall be blue herons." And so it is to this day.

Moon came to the place which is now known as Snoqualmie Falls, near that place where he was stolen as a child. It was then that a fish weir made of wood closed so the salmon could not go up the stream. Most of the people who owned the trap lived on the prairie above. Moon turned the fish weir into a waterfall. Moon addressed the waterfall thus: "You, Waterfall, shall be a lofty cataract. Birds flying over you will fall and people shall gather them up and eat them. Deer coming down the stream will perish and the people shall have them for food."

After making Snoqualmie Falls, Moon passed on to the prairie, the home of his mother. All the grown people were digging roots. Entering a house, Moon saw a small boy. The boy went to a shelf whereon stood a basket full of dried salmon. The boy reached for a piece of dried salmon. (Now, in the old days it was not permitted for a boy to eat unless his parents were at home.) All the fish came to life. Basket and all rolled into the river. Moon appearing, asked, "What is wrong?"

The boy answered, "I went for dried salmon in the basket. It escaped me and rolled into the river."

Moon thought to himself, "It is best to have fish above the falls." Moon attempted to turn the dried fish into living salmon, but they crumbled into pieces. There are no fish above the falls.

After his failure Moon said, "As for the people of the new generation, if a man sees a female dog salmon leap from the water above the falls, his wife or daughter will die. If a woman sees a male dog salmon leap from the water above the falls, her husband or son will die. If a person sees a salmon, male or female, leap from the water, above the falls some relative will die." And thus it is that misfortune is in store for anyone who sees the dog salmon above the falls.

The people came back from digging roots. Moon's mother, aunt and all his relatives had gone. Moon said, "I have come back. I will make you over and perfect you." Moon gathered people from everywhere to display their powers and to see who should act as the sun by day and who should act as the moon by night. Moon and his younger brother Sun were holding back to see who of the people would attempt to give light.

Yellowhammer thought he should be the one to give light by day. Yellowhammer traveled during the day as sun. He gave very little light. He did not do well. He did not satisfy the people.

Raven tried out as moon. He went up at night. It became so dark that no one could see. He threw a shadow upon the earth.

Coyote tried as moon. He went up in the air slowly, looking about. He was a failure. He only looked around at the people.

Woodpecker, the elder brother of Yellowhammer, tried out as sun. He gave no sunshine. He was a failure and gave up.

Then hummingbird tried out as sun. He gave some light, but he traveled too fast, and the day was too short.

By this time the two brothers, Moon and Sun, come to be looked upon as leaders. Sun said to Moon, "You had best be the sun and travel in the daytime." As soon as he rose in the morning, everything became hot. The water boiled and fire started everywhere. The people were not satisfied.

At a meeting the next day the people said, "It is too hot. If Moon travels every day he will destroy everything."

Moon said to Sun, "I think you will be suitable. You will satisfy the people better if you travel in the daytime." Sun then gave it a try. He gave good bright sunshine and everything was pleasing. He satisfied the people.

At this time Sun said to Moon, "You had better try traveling at night and see how it will be." Moon made his trial by night. He rose early in the evening, and as he shined he gave a cool frosty light, and the people were well satisfied.

Thus, when Sun gave light by day and Moon gave light by night, all were satisfied. Now, once or twice a year Moon and Sun meet. When they meet, there is an eclipse.

The world changed. The people changed to birds and animals of all kinds. Grandmother Toad can now be seen in the moon at night.

After Moon had returned home, and before the trial to see who should give

light, Moon had said, "The swing will be there forever, and if the people wish to go up to the sky, they can get whatever they want."

But Rat gnawed the rope and swing fell to the ground, so the people could not climb. At the close of the trial the swing fell and Rat fell with it. Moon then said, "The people shall have a swing to have fun upon, but it will no longer be so high." Moon pronounced a curse upon Rat saying, "You shall be nothing but a rat. You will gnaw and steal what people want and destroy whatever is good."

The name of the place that the sisters used when starting upon the swing is Footprint. The footprints are on the hill yet, four of them which the people made in starting themselves upon the swing. The other place Camping Place is named for a person living at that time. Camping Place was a chief of a people in the mountains, and Moon made him a mountain. His two wives were Snail and Chipmunk. Snail kicked Chipmunk and she fell. She is a little mountain off by herself. The people all sitting around, looking, were at that time turned to stone. They are all there yet on the mountain. The stones are like people, breaking all the time. When a stone breaks off, it is a sign of ill-luck and predicts the death of a chief.

After Moon had changed everything, and before he entered upon his work of giving light, he created the various people. He created all the rivers as they are now. He made the White, the Green, the Cedar, the Puyallup and the other rivers. He placed a man and wife upon river. He placed another couple upon another river. Each couple became a group of people on each river. Each group of people had a name, Muckleshoot, Puyallup, Yakima and others.

Moon said, "Fish shall run up these rivers. They shall belong to each group of people on their own river. The people shall make their own living from the fish, deer and other wild game." These couples increased until many people were on these rivers. This is why the Indians have multiplied. It is all the work of Moon and no one else but Moon.