

The Thunderboy Story

Transcribed from an [oral telling](#) by George Squxulenuhw Seymour

OK, 'uy skweyul

Enthu Squxulenuhw, tun 'i cun utl Stz'uminus.

Good day. My name is George Seymour and I'm from the Stz'uminus First Nations and I'd like to share some of this **sxwi'éḿ**, some of the stories that I've heard.

This story, this **sxwi'éḿ** I'm gonna share is from Quwustsun (Cowichan), and my mother has this story, I heard it from my mother, Seraphine, Seymour, nee Seraphine Charlie. And this story I called Thunder Boy because she never told me that, she spoke in **hul'qumiḿum**.

And it's a story about a little boy who lived with these grandparents, and he learned a lot of teachings from his grandparents. And when he got old enough to go walking down woods alone, he would go walk in the forest alone. And he'd be gone all day, and his grandparents began to wonder where he was.

They'd ask the young boy where he'd been?

He's said, "Just walking in the forest."

And they were curious, 'cause he'd be gone all day, no lunch or anything. And... he kept doing this, you know, going out into the forest. Daybreak, and he'd come back late in the day.

And one day he was out in the forest, practicing. Nobody knew that he had power, secret power in his eyes. And he would be practicing with these powers and he'd be splitting the tops of the balsam trees. That's why they're split today.

You'll see, notice this, well balsam trees that are actually split on top. They have a really deformed top on them, a lot of them. And that's what he did.

He was practicing these powers and splitting the top of the balsam trees.

And one day, one of the hunters from the village happened to be out and he was the best hunter. A lot of the animals, or his prey, didn't know he was there when he was hunting because there is a special plant that he'd eat that kind of makes him invisible.

I don't know what particular plant - my mother never said, but anyways...

He watched this young boy practicing his power. So he slipped away quietly, unnoticed, and he went home and he told the boy's grandparents what he was doing.

So when the young boy got home that that day, his grandparents asked him where he was and what he was doing. "I was always just walking in the forest and that's all."

He said, "Well, somebody seen what you're doing. And there's going to be elders that are going to come over here. They're worried on the power that you have."

So he sat down, and he waited, and elders got there, and they were worried that this young boy was very powerful. He had the power that nobody else had, and they realized how powerful it was.



Artwork: Thunderbird and Killer Whale by LESLIE

Some of the elders says, "We're going to have to take him to an island or someplace where he's gonna be alone. Because that's where he could practice these powers."

And the young boy started to speak, he says, "I have been practicing my powers. I know my powers," but they kind of told him to be quiet. He had no say.

So they talked to his grandparents and told them, "We have to bring your 'imuth, your grandson to the island, so he could spend time, so he wouldn't hurt anyone in the village or anyone that was hunting or anything like that."

So they did, they brought him to the island and he had to stay there where he'd practice these powers.

So they said their goodbyes and they actually were bringing him some food, he says, "You don't need to bring me any food. I could cook my own food."

So they kind of left him, and forgot about him.

And it happened to be **qwaíuxw**, chum [salmon] season. The chum fish would be coming up the river and the people waited and waited and waited. And there was no chum coming up the river.

So the elders and the chief sent the Warriors down. They're at both sides of the river, checking on anything and everything that they could see that was wrong, what would stop them, they the salmon from coming up the river. Then they found nothing, but they went right into the bay and they seen the big giant orca, **qullhánumucun**, that was eating all the salmon.

They didn't allow any salmon to go up the river. And the only thing they allowed to go upriver was the... Oh, I can't remember the name of that fish, but anyways... They tried to chase the orca away, a lot of canoes, but the orca would just splash his tail and switch all the canoes

away. He was too big and too powerful for the warriors.

So they went back up and told the chief and the elders. So the elder, said, "What about your grandson We should go see if he can help us."

So they went out to the island. They sent some warriors out, they went along and they finally, asked the young young man, "We need your help, if you could help us. There's a giant **qullhánumucun** at the bay. And he's not let any salmon go up the river. And we need that salmon."

So he says, "Yes, I can help you."

And they sat there and waited and waited and he said, "You don't have to wait for me. I'll be there."

So they left.

And this young man was able to transform into the Thunderbird. And he flew over. Then he went to the Bay. He seen the giant **qullhánumucun**. So he dove down and there is a lot of Thunder and lightning and everything happened. And the Thunder boy was victorious, and he made an agreement with the **qullhánumucun**, the killerwhale, to stay away from that Bay.

"You don't fish. You don't hunt in this bay or near any river. You have to hunt in the ocean."

And that's pretty well the end of the story. And he became, the young boy became the leader because of his power and everything. So that's pretty well the end of the story.

Ni huy.

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