

In the far northwest. On the east shore of an island known as Shaking Whale. On the far south and west of great chain of great islands, within the great temperate rainforests filled with Cedar, Spruce, Hemlocks and few other kinds: there lived a village of Kayéil' Kushtaka known as Laax Aan.

Laax Aan was a peaceful place, with it's lodges of logs and herald poles of cedar; it's people wanted little contact with the outside world, due to violence between them and the local humans, the Kígáat. A few clans of Kígáat accepted their being there, but they were few. One of those clans was in the village of Noow Gei, located right on the mainland coast two whole islands away and between there was an island with a village of Kayéil's known as Kechna on the south end and Kígáat on the north end. These Kígáat were constantly trouble for both Shaking Whale's and the nearby island's Kayéil' Kushtaka.

But they were not weighing as much on anyone's minds as much as they used to, not ever since their first raid on their village, except for Dleit Kageet, the young shaman in training in the Village, who mostly had to do healing for those who were injured in occasional skirmishes. Dleit was probably the one in the village who wanted peace between the two tribes the most, due to a friend he had in Noow Gei. Everyone he knew wanted peace, but he and his old mentor, Éil Siteen, seemed to want it most. Dleit's main pastime when he was not training with Éil was traveling about with his older brother, X'aan Ch'aak, and girlfriend, Kanat'á Ts'itskw, who was his mentor's granddaughter.

X'aan was a warrior. He had abnormally dark fur and was outgoing but reckless, often being called cliff racer for this reason. He had been taking to the example of his father, Gugaan Kóon, one of the finest-if not the finest-warriors the tribe had. He was most well known for killing the Kígáat Warchief from the first raid. Gugaan lost almost all his family, and almost lost his later to be wife, A'wáadís, to the same raid, even she lost her only brother. When his two sons were born he swore nothing terrible would happen to them, but that had not stopped him from training both his sons, and Kanat'á, who he considers a daughter, in the arts of combat.

Ah, Kanat'á. Kanat'á was a fine huntress, just a season younger than

her mate Dleit, and had always been enthusiastic of her occupation. She had a bit of a tendency to hold a grudge, but was friendly, and had been going with Dleit and his brother on their adventures since they started. X'aan usually planned them and went for physical training reasons, Dleit went for spiritual sides of things, and Kanat'a liked to scout about, but they all liked to be with each other and have each other's reasons with their own.

But the three of them were going to be in far more of an adventure than they had ever imagined they would be in. One that would determine life or death in the north. One that began with a dream.

It was the very beginning of the fishing season in early summer; the seas were calm, the sun had risen enough to make the first ravens calling stop, and most people in the village were awake. Except for Dleit, who had slept in because of how tired he was from last nights practicing for this year's good luck blessings, who was having a rather visionary dream that worried him.

The dream started with a young Kígáat man, who had long, black hair and wore deerskin clothing with a few bead designs on it, foraging outside of his village. After being there a little while he heard a horrific screeching howl. After taking his dagger from his belt, he walked toward the hill he heard the sound come over. When he got to the top and looked down the hill he saw a trio of monsters that weren't like anything the man or the dreamer had seen before. The creatures looked almost human except they had rotted, pale flesh, oversized, tooth filled snouts, long sharp claws that hung on long, branch like arms, and antlers atop their large heads. It did not take them long to catch his scent, but he managed to kill one that charged straight forward without any others and swung wildly, with a hit on the head. But the man quickly turned his attention to warning his tribe of the danger when he saw an entire hoard coming from the now burning forest behind the monsters, so he ran straight back to his unaware people.

By this point the dream switched perspectives to show a Loon, an Eagle and a Raven flying in from over the sea to the village. By the time

they got there, the people there had all been killed. The birds then went to find the monsters, and it was at that point that Dleit started to wake up.

He awoke slowly- as he was still tired from last night's preparations, and awoke to the sound of his brother and father sparring outside their lodge, a few people working a bit outside and birds of all kinds calling from within the forests.

Their lodge home was about as long as a mature tree is tall and had an entrance facing the sea. It had a Cedar split log frame, with split log planks lining the side and on the top the roof was made of slick waterproof bark. Dleit's entire extended family lived in the lodge in sections, each with a fire circle, separated by the family's storage pieces. Each member of the family lived in the same section as his extension. Along the inner sides of the lodge there were beds lining the entire length of the lodge, and on the entrance there were herald poles representing the family's kinship along with the family's clan animal, which in Dleit's case was the Raven. Each lodge faced the sea even when they were not in view due to other homes and there were 9 lodges in the village.

Dleit quickly took off the pelts that covered him in his sleep and got out of his bed-which was on the far south and east corner of the lodge, still shaken slightly by the dream, and went to get his clothes and staff. The staff was one that Kanat'á made and gave to him during a Potlatch party years before on the eve of his fifteenth birthday. It was carved from a single cedar core with a Raven on top. The clothes were mostly made of wolf skins with several animal designs on them. They covered just his waist and a bit on his shoulders. There was also a large necklace with a stone amulet depicting a mother Sea Otter holding her pup in her arms. He received this piece from a shaman who was traveling from the northwest of them. It was carved in a more simple and graceful style than what his people used.

As he put the waist piece on, X'aan was outright thrown in through the door like a leaf in a hard wind, face first onto the floor.

"Morning." Dleit said when his brother got on his hands, "Dad

dragging you by your tail again”

“Oh, shut up”. Said the brother, now standing and cracking his back, “I could do the same to you and you know I can”.

“But I can spiritually stun you”. Said the other. The two of them laughed at each other’s all too lacking humor.

It was just then that Gugaan walked in with a pick in his left hand and a stone headed club in his right, the pick belonging to X’aan. “Alright son,” he said in his deep, gruff voice while walking in, “a bit more of gentle grip on the axe and some skipping when my tail comes near your feet.” he then handed the axe to X’aan.

“Morning, son.” he said to Dleit.

“And to you father.” said the son, now fully dressed, “Is mother back from Ketchna yet? She was supposed to be back this morning, right?”

“No.” The father said.

“She’s been gone for seven days,” Dleit said, “I know we have clan members over there but I’m starting to miss her”.

X’aan then sniffed the air. “Something else troubling you little brother?” he said.

“Yeah uh... just a dream I had last night.” Dleit said.

“What happened in it?” said the father.

“Well...” Dleit said.

His brother quickly cut in; “Why so hesitant?”.

“Let him gather his thoughts!” Said Gugaan.

“Sorry!”

“It was more of a vision really.” Dleit said before describing his dream

“I’ve lived long enough to tell a dream from a vision, and that’s obviously a vision.” said Gugaan afterward, “But we all have work to do and we both know who can figure out what it means quickly”.

With that Dleit went to right behind their home to the Wolf clan’s home and the village was indeed busy: people making late check ups on the equipment such as the harpoons and gaffhooks, and sharpening them when necessary.

When Dleit got to the Wolf Clan's home he found empty except for elderly Éil, who was sitting by the fire with his eyes calmly shut. He had slightly greying fur and even a few teeth missing from his many long years. He was all alone, Dleit thought, but little did he know that within the roof frames was a loving trickster waiting to pounce. Upon his fifth step in, she leaped from her perch right on top of him, arms wrapping around his waist. It was Kanat'á of course, wanting to play a trick on this special day. Dleit, belly down on the floor, was flipped onto his back to see a smirking face with beige fur, the arms belonging to that face grasped on his shoulders, and the longer fur behind the ears hanging on a braid.

"Hey there." Dleit said, and they both quickly kissed before she finally got off him. "So... how did you know I was coming over?", he asked when he got up.

"I've been with you this long, I should know.", She said " That and grandfather said so." She said, Dleit then turned around to see Éil, eyes open, smiling at him.

"Come here." he said, and Dleit and Kanat'á sat down right next to him.

"You knew I was coming?" Dleit said.

"Yes." The Mentor said in a bit of a glum tone, "Kanat'a had a similar dream; tell him about it Granddaughter."

"A Raven and a Loon on an island had an Eagle friend that needed new feathers," Kanat'á said, "so they went to ask eagle spirit in his sky domain if he had more. But when they got to over the mainland they noticed a village burned to the ground, it's inhabitants dead. The birds then went over to the east to find what did it."

"Wait." Dleit said, "In my dream there were these... monsters that came and attacked the village."

"Monsters?", Kanat'a said.

"Yes." Dleit said, "I don't know where they came from."

"Do you know what the birds most likely represent?" Éil said.

"Hmm... Loon, Raven, Eagle... Loon... Raven, Eagle- they're us! I'm the loon, Kanat'a is the Raven, and X'aan is the Eagle; it's all in our

names!”

“What do you think that means for X’aan.” Éil said.

“A bird’s feathers mean everything to them, they allow them to fly and attract mates.” Dleit said, “but they grow ba-wait. Why did they have to ask a great spirit for new ones? No, no it couldn’t have been that bad.”

“I think there was something from the dream I didn’t remember.”

Kanat’a said “But there was something that happened to the eagle to make him lose them, but it happened so fast, I couldn’t get a full glimpse.” It was then that the people by the shore started calling in loud clicking squeaks, signalling all was ready.

“Alright Dleit, I hope you remember everything we went over last night.” Éil said, “Let’s get going, both of you.” And so they went off, all three of them knowing there was far more bad things that were to be revealed.