

Water for the Earth

A long, long time ago there was no water anywhere—no creeks, no lakes. The only drinking water people had was water that dripped from roots.

Now Raven was very thirsty. He knew a place at Bull Harbour where there was water. So he went to the house of the lady who had collected the water from dripping roots. He carried a stick in his hand and asked, "May I come in and get a little fire with this stick so I can cook my breakfast?"

"Yes, come in," said the lady.

When he was inside, Raven looked around and saw the bowl of water in a corner. "My mouth is awfully dry," he stated. "Do you think I could have a sip of your water?"

"Yes, but don't take too much," replied the lady.

Raven went to the corner and started drinking from the rock bowl. He was gulping it down as fast as he could when the lady cried, "What are you doing? I need that water for myself."

Raven stopped drinking and walked over to the fire. He bent down, pretending to get fire on his stick and quickly put some ashes in his mouth. Then he turned to the lady and said, "Look at my tongue—my mouth is still very dry. Can I have just one more sip of your water?"

The lady peered at his dry-looking mouth. "Okay," she agreed, "but just take a little." She got her cooking pot and busied herself at the fire.

Raven started drinking again from the rock bowl as fast as he could. By the time the lady saw what he was doing the water was all gone. She grabbed the stick that Raven had left by the fire and went after him with it. He escaped out the door and flew away.

As Raven flew over the parched land, water dripped from his beak—a drop here and a drop there. Where one drop fell, a creek or lake appeared. Two drops fell at once as he passed over the lower mainland and formed the mighty Fraser River. Where three drops fell, the Columbia River started to flow.