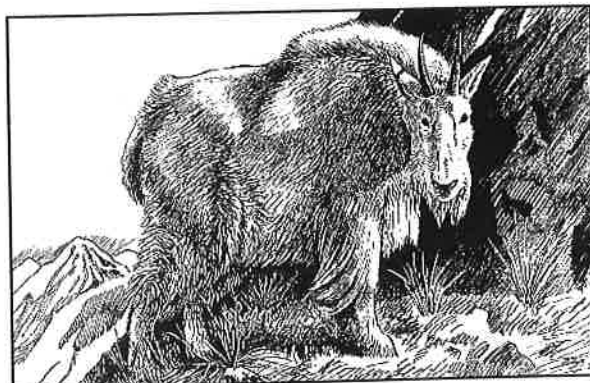


The Headdress of the Mountain Goats



Based on "The Headdress of the Mountain Goats," an *adaawx* told by Johsua Ts'ibaasa, Kitkatla recorded by William Beynon in 1916 and on "The Feast of the Mountain Goats" in *Tsimshian Myths* (Boas, 1916).

Characters:

Storyteller 1	Hunter	Prince	Mt. Goat Chief
Storyteller 2	Child 1	Chief	Kid
Storyteller 3	Child 2	Woman 1	Messenger
Storyteller 4	Child 3	Woman 2	

Storyteller 1: Long long ago our ancestors lived far up the Skeena River in a huge town.

Storyteller 2: It was very flat where they lived. They called it Prairie Town.

Storyteller 3: It's name was Temlaxham.

Storyteller 4: The hunters of Temlaxham were very good.

Hunter: We were experts at hunting mountain goats. Every fall and every spring we went up into the mountains and killed many mountain goats at a time.

Storyteller 1: But these hunters had forgotten about respecting the animals.

Storyteller 2: All they took was the rich belt of kidney fat which they cut away from the animal.

Hunter: Mountain goat kidney fat is the best part. Yum!

Storyteller 3: But they left the meat that could be used for food.

Storyteller 4: They left the bones that could be made into tools.

Storyteller 1: They left the soft wool that could be woven into fine blankets.

Storyteller 2: They left them all to rot and decay high up on the mountain.

Mt. Goat Chief: The mountain goats were very upset. The people did not even burn the bones or the meat.

Hunter: One spring the hunters brought home a little mountain goat kid for the children to play with.

Child 1: Hey! Let's throw it in the river to see what it does.

Kid: The kid tried to swim ashore.

Child 2: It's coming back. Throw it in again!

Child 3: Ha ha, look at it. It looks so funny when it swims!

Storyteller 3: The children kept throwing the poor little goat back into the water.

Kid: Brrrr. I'm so cold and wet.

Child 1: Aww, it's cold. Put it by the fire to warm up.

Child 2: Let's push it into the fire. That will warm it up.

Kid: Ow! I'm burning. My hair is burning.

Child 3: Throw it back in the water. That'll put the fire out!

- Storyteller 4: The children laughed and laughed as they watched the kid struggle.
- Storyteller 1: Now, a young prince of Temlaxham heard the children laughing and came down to see what they were doing.
- Storyteller 2: When he saw how they were mistreating the mountain goat, he became very angry.
- Prince: Stop that! You mean children, you're hurting the poor mountain goat. Give it to me.
- Storyteller 3: The young prince took the kid and rubbed its hair, wiping off the water with his hands.
- Prince: Come, I will take you away from the village and take you back to the mountain.
- Storyteller 4: He carried the little kid over the flat trail until they reached the bottom of a high mountain. Then he let it go.
- Prince: Go, my brother. Go home where you belong, and do not forget me.
- Kid: The mountain goat kid looked back at the Prince, then ran off into the forest to join his family on the mountain.
- Storyteller 1: Time passed, and the people of the town forgot all about what the children had done to the kid.
- Storyteller 2: One day in the fall, a young man came into the village and entered the house of the head chief.
- Messenger: Sm'oygit. You and all your men are invited to a feast given by a great chief up in the hills.
- Chief: Yes, we will go.

- Messenger: When the time comes, someone will come down for you, to guide you all to his house.
- Chief: We will be ready.
- Storyteller 3: Everybody got ready for the big feast. Some composed new songs to sing at the feast.
- Storyteller 4: When the day for the feast arrived, four young men came to the village and spoke to the chief.
- Messenger: Tomorrow we will go up into the hills and enter the house of the chief and go to the feast.
- Storyteller 1: So early the next morning the people all followed these young men who led them up into the mountains.
- Storyteller 2: Finally they came to a large village where they rested.
- Prince: One of the guests was the young prince who had saved the life of the mountain goat kid.
- Storyteller 3: The prince was sitting with his family, when a young man came up and spoke to him.
- Kid: Brother, when you go into the house, do not sit at the side of the house with your people. Sit at the end of the house, where I will be sitting. I have not forgotten you.
- Prince: The prince didn't know who the young man was, or what he meant.
- Storyteller 4: The people looked around and saw that all the houses were made of rock built into the mountains.
- Storyteller 1: The strangers who lived here seemed to move around very quickly and lightly.

- Storyteller 2: Before the guests entered the feast house, the people all came out dancing to welcome the visitors.
- Storyteller 3: The people were given dried meat to eat.
- Chief: Hmm. It tastes like mountain goat meat.
- Storyteller 4: Then the dancers entered wearing mountain goat heads for headdresses.
- Hunter: They look very real, don't they!
- Woman 1: Yes, and look at their feet. They are just like real mountain goat hooves!
- Woman 2: And they move just like real mountain goats.
- Storyteller 1: The dancers now sang a song.
- Mt. Goat Chief: We sing a song of sorrow, how some of our tribe have been hurt and crippled and killed. We are going to get even with the people that hurt them. That is what we sing about.
- Storyteller 2: Suddenly the people of Temlaxham looked at each other.
- Hunter: Our hosts aren't acting like mountain goats, they ARE mountain goats!
- Storyteller 3: And then the people knew they would be destroyed.
- Storyteller 4: They looked towards the door where they had come in.
- Hunter: The door is gone!
- Chief: It's a solid wall in the mountain. We cannot get out.
- Storyteller 1: The leader of the mountain goats was a big man with a larger headdress and larger feet than the other dancers.

- Storyteller 2: He flew past the guests, and ran and jumped over the fire. Then he shouted to the people.
- Mt. Goat Chief: The moment has come when we shall show you people what we are going to do.
- Storyteller 3: They sang another song, and the dancers kept jumping from one end of the house to the other.
- Prince: The young prince was taken care of by the young man who had called him brother.
- Kid: When the big dancer says, "I will kick the mountain," you hold on to me very tight and I will save you. Your people are all to be destroyed. Nothing can save them.
- Storyteller 4: The big dancer jumped and ran.
- Mt. Goat Chief: I will kick the mountain.
- Storyteller 1: So he did, and the whole side of the mountain fell away.
- All: Ahhhhhhhhhhh..... Help..... (fade out as they fall down the cliff).
- Storyteller 2: All the guests fell, tumbling down to the bottom of the mountain.
- Storyteller 3: The only one who didn't fall was the young prince. He held on tightly to his friend.
- Prince: When the prince looked, he saw that he was holding on to a mountain goat kid.
- Mt. Goat Chief: All the people in the house were now changed to mountain goats.
- Kid: Now, you follow me and do whatever I tell you, and you shall be saved.

- Storyteller 4: They stood on the edge of a great cliff, where the people and the mountain had fallen.
- Kid: The mountain goats have killed your people because they had abused them and made them suffer. Because you saved my life once, I will save yours.
- Storyteller 1: Then he led the way for the prince to follow.
- Storyteller 2: When they came to places where the prince could not go, the kid would take him on its back.
- Storyteller 3: They travelled for several days. Then they came to a very swift river running into the Skeena.
- Prince: I don't know how to get across!
- Kid: I will take off my skin and give it to you. You will be able to jump across, and my hooves will stop you from slipping on the rocks. After you get over, you will throw it back to me.
- Storyteller 4: The prince took the kid's skin and changed into a mountain goat and jumped across the river with ease.
- Storyteller 1: When he got over, he threw back the skin to the kid. He put it on and leaped across the river beside the prince.
- Kid: When we get to that hill, I will leave you, as you will then be near your village, which is close by.
- Storyteller 2: They came to the hill, and the kid spoke once more to the prince.
- Kid: You know the power of the mountain goats. You must not kill any more than you want for food, and you must burn the bones and meat. Finally, you will make a crest of the mountain goat headdress. You and your family will always wear it.

- Storyteller 3: The kid turned away and went up into the hills.
- Storyteller 4: The young prince went on until he found his village.
- Storyteller 1 He thought he had been away only a few days, but actually he found out that he had been away....
- Prince Ten years!
- Storyteller 2: Only a few old people were left in his village, those who had not been able to travel to the feast.
- Storyteller 3: He, the only survivor, told them what happened.
- Prince And we must remember to only hunt what we need and to make sure we burn the bones and whatever we don't use. To remember this, we will always display the mountain goat crest at our feasts.
- Storyteller 4: After a time, some of the Temlaxham people left the place where their families were ruined. They travelled down to Skeena River and made new homes on the coast. And they always passed on the story of the Mountain Goats of Temlaxham down through the generations.