

## CHANGER AND DOG SALMON

This is a story about a character his name is Dukʷibeł. And Dukʷibeł means changer, means transformer. All the tribes of the Western Washington Region tell stories about a transformer or a changer who came into the world and made it the way it is today. He has many names: Dukʷibeł is one, Snoqual is another, Xal another, Labateyah another. But all the tribes tell of his being who came into the world and made it the way it is today. The story is very long, but the gist of the beginning is that he was born of an earth mother who is carried into the sky world and married a star. She had a baby called Star Baby. She brought the baby back to the earth to be with her people. While still an infant, he was stolen from his family, from his people, from his mother by the Dog Salmon people. He was kidnapped and taken far away. No one knows where he was taken. All the people, all the animals, all the birds looked for him. And finally, Blue Jay was able to find the young man, across the mountains, across the sky world. He found the young man and explained "You need to come back with me. You do not belong here with the Dog Salmon people." And the young man agreed. He said "I knew that I did not belong here. They have beautiful shiny skin and I just have this plain brown skin." And so, he was to return with Blue Jay, but before he left, he made his first transformation. He said to the Dog Salmon people, "I should punish you for what you did. You took me from my mother when I was a baby. You took me from my people. You kidnapped me. I should punish you. But you raised me with love, and you raised me with kindness. So, I shall not punish you. I shall put you in the water and you shall be food for the people to come. So that is his first act, putting the salmon in the river, food for the people to come. But he saw something was wrong. In those days before he changed everything, the water and the river ran two directions at once. Upstream and downstream. And this confused the Dog Salmon people as they swam in the water. Some of them would not complete their trip to the ocean. Others would not complete their trip back home to the mountains. So, he said, from now on the water shall only move in one direction, from down the mountains. It should only run in one direction, downstream. So, this is the first act of the transformer, to put the salmon in the water and to make their journey easier. And that is all.