

# Looking Back

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and laughed at the battle and bloodshed, for he had been victor in every encounter, and he could well afford to leave the strife for a brief week and feast in his daughters' honor, nor permit any mere enemy to come between him and the traditions of his race and household. So he turned insultingly deaf ears to their war cries; he ignored with arrogant indifference their paddle dips that encroached within his own coast waters, and he prepared, as a great Tyee should, to royally entertain his tribesmen in honor of his daughters.

"But seven suns before the great feast, these two maidens came before him, hand clasped in hand.

"Oh! Our father," they said, "may we speak?"

"Speak, my daughters, my girls with the eyes of April, the hearts of June" (early spring and early summer would be the more accurate Indian phrasing).

"Some day, Oh, our father, we may mother a man-child, who may grow to be just such a powerful Tyee as you are, and for this honor that may some day be ours we have come to crave a favor of you - you, Oh! Our father."

"It is your privilege at this celebration to receive any favor your hearts may wish," he replied graciously, placing his fingers beneath their girlish chins. "The favor is yours before you ask it, my daughters."

"Will you, for our sakes, invite the great northern hostile tribe - the tribe you war upon - to this, our feast?" they asked fearlessly.

"To a peaceful feast, a feast in the honor of women?" he exclaimed incredulously.

"So we would desire it," they answered.

"And so shall it be," he declared. "I can deny you nothing this day, and some time you may bear sons to bless this peace you have asked, and to bless their mother's sire for granting it." Then he turned to all the young men of the tribe and commanded, "build fires at sunset on all the coast headlands - fires of welcome. Man your canoes and face the north, greet the enemy, and tell them that I, the Tyee of the Capilanos, ask - no, command that they join me for a great feast in honor of my two daughters." And when the northern tribes got this invitation they flocked down the coast to this feast of a Great Peace. They brought their women and their children; they brought game and fish, gold and white stone beads, baskets and carved ladles, and wonderful woven blankets to lay at the feet of their now-acknowledged ruler, the great Tyee. And he, in turn, gave such a potlatch that nothing but tradition can vie with it. There were long, glad days of joyousness, long pleasurable nights of dancing, and campfires, and vast quantities of food. The war canoes were emptied of their deadly weapons and filled with the daily catch of salmon. The hostile war songs ceased, and in their place were heard the soft shuffle of dancing feet, the singing voices of women, the play-games of the chil-

dren of two powerful tribes which had been until now ancient enemies, for a great and lasting brotherhood was sealed between them - their war songs ended forever.

"Then the Sagalie Tyee smiled on His Indian children: "I will make these young-eyed maidens immortal," He said. In the cup of His hands He lifted the Chief's two daughters and set them forever in a high place, for they had borne two offspring - Peace and Brotherhood - each of which is now a great Tyee ruling this land.

"And on the mountain crest the Chief's daughters can be seen wrapped in the suns, the snows, the stars of all seasons, for they have stood in this high place for thousands of years, and will

stand for thousands of years to come, guarding the peace of the Pacific Coast and the quiet of the Capilano Canyon."

This is the Indian legend of "The Lions of Vancouver" as I had it from one who will tell me no more the traditions of his people.

*This legend was taken from E. Pauline Johnson book "Legends of Vancouver". It appeared in 1911.*

