

T'i'tulum' Wuxus  
The Singing Frogs

'utl' Suli'xwi'ye  
by Valerie Bob

(Hul'q'umi'num' translation by Delores Louie, edited by Donna Gerds.)

kw'un'a wulh hith kwustst hwun' 'uhwiin' 'i' kwthunu shuyulh 'i' ni' tst  
hi'wa'lum' ni' u kwthu tumuhws kwthunu menulh.

A long time ago when we were children and my brother used to play at the  
property of my late father.

hay 'ul' thi tumuhw 'i' qux kws na'nuts'tul' tthu stth'oom, 'apulsulhp, 'i'  
stsi'yu.

His land was a very big and there were all kinds of berries, apple trees, and  
strawberries.

mukw' tum'kw'e'lus 'i' nilh ni' shhwunum'tst.

Every summer this is where we went.

suw' xut'us lhunu tenulh, "uwu tseep nanuhw 'uw' hith."

So my mother said, "Don't be too long playing out there."

ni' tst tus 'u kwthu spulhxun,

We arrived at the field,

'i' ni' kwthu xwi'lum' sq'eq'up' ni' 'u tthu 'apulsulhp.

where the rope swing was tied around the apple tree.

sutst uw' kw'i' 'u kwthu hay 'ul' tsitsulh 'u kwthey' thqet.

We climbed to the highest part of that tree.

'i' ni' tst lumnuhw tthu hay 'ul' 'i'uy'mut skwi'kwthe'.

And we could see the most beautiful little islands.

'i' wulh temutalum 'u lhunu tenulh 'uw' m'iit ta'kw' wulh yuhwoon'nut.  
Then my late mother hollered for us to come home, as it was getting dark.

yuxwan'chunum' tst 'i' kwthunu shuyulhulh wulh yut'at'uhw.  
My brother and I were running downhill.

'i' ni' tsun hekw' 'u lhunu kapou,  
And then I remembered my coat,

huy'thust lhunu tenulh, "ni' tsun mel'q 'u lhunu kapou!"  
I was telling my mother, "I forgot my coat!"

"aaasha! nem' hwu'alum'! kwunut lhun' kapou! 'aw'thut! wulh yuhwoon'nut."  
"For heaven's sake! Go back and get your coat! Hurry! It's getting dark."

'uwu tsun niin' kwunnuhw.  
But I didn't find it.

wulh nan 'uw' lhets nusuw' si'si'.  
It was very dark already and I got scared.

ni' tsun hwun' yu'i'mush, nusuw' ts'elhum'ut tthu wuxus t'it'ulum'.  
As I was walking I could hear the frogs singing.

hay 'ul' 'i'uy'mut thu st'ilums.  
It was the most beautiful singing.

susuw' hwu'iyus tthunu shqwaluwun.  
I became happy.

nusuw' 'uwu niin' hwusii'si'.  
I wasn't afraid anymore.

aaah, ni' tsun wulh ts'elhum'ut tthu welhts'um' st'e 'uw' niis xixunum' ni' u  
tthu shishuts'.

Then I heard something making a noise, growling, in the bushes.

hay 'ul' xwumxwum tthunu tth'ele' kw'unus ni' sii'si'.

My heart started pounding really fast, I was so afraid.

nus nuw' hekw' kwuthu sqwals kwthunu menuh,

Then I remembered the words of my late dad,

“uwu ch tum'temuhw 'i' sii'si' 'u tthu snet.

“Don't be afraid of the dark.

tl'uw' st'e tthu wuxus, tthu st'ilums, tl'uw' 'un' ts'uw'tun st'e 'ukw' lisas.”

The frogs and their beautiful songs are like the angels.”

tl'e' tsun wulh hwu'uy'eenwus nus 'uw' teem “e-e-ey!”

I got brave again and then I yelled out “e-e-ey!”

st'e 'uw' niis wulaam' tthu wuxus.

It's like the frogs were an echo.

nus nuw' thuy 'i' thut 'i' ni' tsun tl'e' wulh ts'elhum'ut tthu st'e'uw' niis  
xixunum'.

I walked on and then I stopped, afraid, and I could hear the growling again.

nus nuw' hwu'un'nehw hwiyeem', sus tl'uw' hwusts'ets'uhw tthu wuxus.

When I stopped and listened, the frogs also stopped singing.

nusuw' 'u'yeenwus.

So I became brave again.

nus suw' yuthathi'yuthut yu'i'mush.

So I continued on walking.

tahw 'uw' ni' 'u kwthey' 'i' ni' kwunutum' thunu qwuqw'ten.  
Right at that moment, someone grabbed my shoulder.

hay tsun 'ul' si'si' nus nuw' kwetsum suw' qwals, "unthu! 'i ch 'a'lu  
tstamut?"

In fear I screamed and then my brother said, "It's me! What's wrong?"

"aaah, nuwu 'a'lu, shuyulh! i' tsun ts'i'ts'elhum'ut kwthu st'e 'uw' niis  
xixunum' 'i' nilh yuhw kwthun' sqwumey'!"

"Aaah, it's just you (older) brother! And that growling  
I heard must have been your dog!"

sutst 'uw' yukwun'atul' kwthunu shuyulh, 'i' tthu sqwumey's yut'at'u'kw'.  
So my brother and I and his dog went home together.

tahw 'uw' ni' 'u kwthey' 'uw' tl'e' wulh t'ilum tthu wuxus.  
Suddenly the frogs started to sing again.

ni' tst hulun'amut 'i' pte'muthelum 'u lhunu tenulh,  
When I got home my mom asked me,

"nii ch 'uw' kwunnuhw lhun' kapou, 'u mun'u?"  
"Did you find your coat, daughter?"

"hay 'ul' tthu'it kwthey' snuw'uyulhs kwthunu menulh—  
"No, but I remembered the teachings of my father were true—

"uwu ch tum'temuhw 'i' sii'si' 'u tthu snet.  
'Don't be afraid of the dark.

tl'uw' st'e tthu wuxus, tthu st'ilums, tl'uw' 'un' ts'uw'tun st'e 'ukw' lisas.'  
The frogs and their beautiful songs are like the angels.'"

ni' tsun kw'uelh 'u'yeenwusnamut."  
And so I managed to be brave."

ni' hay. hay tseep q'a'.

The end. Thank you everyone.