



Being in Being : The Collected Works of a Master Haida Mythteller (Skaay of the Qquuna

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Skaay of the Qquuna Qiighawaay may have been one of the greatest Native storytellers of all time. Born in the Haida village of Qquuna about 1827 and crippled by an injury in middle age, he devoted himself to the art of telling stories. As the Haidas' older way of life changed dramatically under the onslaught of smallpox epidemics and contact with the outside world, Skaay became the undisputed master storyteller among them. When the young American linguist John Swanton arrived in the fall of 1900 to record Haida myths, poems, and oral histories, Skaay dictated to him some of his best stories.

Included in this volume are three of Skaay's masterpieces, recorded originally by John Swanton and edited and translated by Robert Bringhurst: "The Qquuna Cycle" is the longest extant work of Haida poetry and one of the great monuments of Native American literature; "Raven Travelling" is the most complex trickster story ever recorded on the Northwest Coast; and "The Qquuna Qiighawaay" is the brief and poignant story of Skaay's maternal lineage.



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