

Abenaki - Azban the Raccoon

Raccoon and the Waterfall

"Wowigit ndatlokangan wa AAzban. Here camps my story of Azban.

One day, Azban the Raccoon was walking around. There were many things which Zaban could have done back at his own lodge. However, those were boring things, everyday things, things which he was supposed to do. Azban would much rather do things he wasn't supposed to do, especially on a fine day like this one. His long fingers were just itching to get into something. As always, Azban was looking for trouble.

As he walked along through the woods, he heard the chirping of baby birds from the trees above him.

"Little birds," he called up, "Come down and play with your Uncle Azban. I will teach you some new games."

The mother birds, though, looked out of their nests with suspicion. They would not let the little birds go and play with Azban.

"Be careful," they said to their young ones. "Azban is a nest-robber. You cannot trust him."

"Silly birds," Azban said to himself. "Don't they know I just like to play with baby birds and birds' eggs. It isn't my fault if playing makes me hungry some times."

He looked up at the trees and smiled, but he could see that he would have no luck there today. The birds were being too watchful.

"Don't worry, little birds," Azban called back over his shoulder, "I will be back another day."

Azban walked and walked. Soon he was in a valley which led through the hills. Then he cocked his head and listened. He could hear something. It sounded like many people shouting.

"Now, what is that?" Azban said. "I shall have to go and see."

He began to follow the sound, which seemed to be coming from the end of the valley. The closer he came, the louder the sound became. Finally, pushing his way through some brush, Azban found himself on the edge of a cliff, looking down at the Winooski river where it roared and roared. It made a sound like the voices of many people all shouting together.

"Ah-hunh," said Azban, speaking to the waterfall. "So you think you can shout loudly, do you?"

The waterfall did not answer him. It just kept pouring down, splashing on the rocks below.

"Do you think you can outshout me?" said Azban. "I am Azban, the great one, you know."

But the waterfall did not answer him.

"Do you think you can ignore me?" Azban said. "Listen, I shall outshout you!"

Then Azban shouted. "Yiiiiii!" but his little voice was nowhere near as loud as the waterfall.

"Hmm," Azban said, "I see that I shall have to shout louder."

He took a deep breath and shouted even more loudly. "YIIII!" But his little voice was still drowned out by the roar of the waterfall."

"I shall have to get closer," Azban said. He climbed down closer to the edge of the falls, took a very deep breath and shouted again. "YIIIIIIIIIIII!" But his little voice was still lost in the sound of the falls.

"Hmm," Azban said, "I shall have to lean out further." Then he took a very very deep breath. He filled his lungs with as much air as he could and shouted. "YIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIIII!" He shouted so loud and so long that he became dizzy and lost his balance. Down he fell, into the water. Before he could rescue himself, he was swept over the falls."(Abenaki – Azban).