

The Face Changer

Narrators 1-6	Mother
Girl	Face changer (Spirit Woman)
Boy	Good Maiden
Suitors 1-3	Bear
	Villagers

Narrator 1: “The Face Changer¹” is a story told by the Coast Salish people, a tribe in the Northwest.

Narrator 2: This tale is told by a number of different tribes, with many variations, probably because its message is universal.

(Children with masks act out the following narration. Or puppets can be used.)

Narrator 3: Once there was a young girl who was beautiful, but because she was beautiful, she rejected all suitors.

Suitor 1: Will you marry me?

Girl: You ????

Suitor 2: You’re beautiful.

Girl: I know.

Suitor 3: Fair maiden, I cannot live without you.

Girl: Oh, dear. Sorry! (He falls over.)

Narrator 4: One young man was in love with her but she laughed at him.

Boy: I love you!

Girl : Ha ha ha!!!

Boy : Tell me what I must do to win your love?

Girl : If you will rub your skin often with cedar twigs, I will love you.

Narrator 5: He did this, although the twigs were harsh and cut his skin.

When he returned, she just laughed at his cuts.

Girl : Ha ha ha! Go and rub your face with cedar branches, and *then* I will love you.

Narrator 6: The harsh branches scarred his face even more. The beautiful maiden laughed at his ugliness and would have nothing to do with him.

Narrator 1: The boy was very sad, for his face was scarred.

¹ Myth and Meaning, p.101, McDougal , Littel & Co., Illinois, 1976.

Mother: Do not be sad, my son. There is a spirit woman in the forest who has the power to change faces. Go and find her.

Narrator 2: (Spirit Woman's hut appears.) After much traveling, the youth found the Face Changer's hut.

Narrator 3: Her walls were covered with every face imaginable. The boy chose one that made him look very handsome.

Narrator 4: On his way home, a good maiden saved him from being attacked by a bear. (Boy walks on, Bear follows close behind.)

Bear: Grrrrrrr.....

Good Maiden: Watch out!!!

Boy: What's wrong?

Bear: GRrrrr!!!!!!

Good Maiden: Shame on you, Bear Brother! (Bear stops.) This boy has not harmed you. (Bear slinks away.)

Boy: How did you *do* that?

Narrator 5: Eventually, the two were married and lived happily together.

Narrator 6: But when the beautiful girl saw how handsome he had become, she was jealous. She wanted to be even more beautiful. So she set out to find the spirit.

Girl: (At Spirit woman's hut.) Spirit Woman!!! I demand a new face!

Spirit's voice: Close your eyes. This face will reflect your character more truly.

Narrator 1: The Face Changer took off the girl's beautiful face, and replaced it with an ugly one.

Girl: (with ugly face) Now I am more beautiful than ever!

Narrator 2: It was not until she returned to her village and everyone laughed at her that she realized what the Spirit Woman had done.

Villagers: Ha ha ha!!!!

Girl: What??? Why are you laughing? (realizes) My face!!! (runs off.)

Narrator 3: No young man ever suffered again in pursuit of her love.

Narrators: The End!

Note: 4 masks or puppets are needed for Boy, as he becomes scarred, and then receives a new face. 2 masks or puppets are needed for Girl.