Muskrat and Beaver

Told by Edward Billy of Dog Creek, recorded by A.H. Kuipers, A report on Shuswap with a Squamish Lexical Appendix, 1989, page 70

Edward Stobie Billy April 26, 1896-July 2, 1996
He lived to be 100 years old.

- Born April 26, 1896, Edward, lived most of his life at Dog Creek and Canoe Creek. He worked as a cowboy, rancher, and trapper, working much of the time at the Gang, Empire Valley and B.C. Cattle Company ranches. In summer he ran his own herd of cattle and horses.
- At 18 Edward married his 16-year-old sweetheart Mary Lucy Sampson of Canoe Creek. The couple made their home on Dog Creek Mountain. They had five girls and nine boys, but only three of their children lived to adulthood.
- Edward loved fiddle music and dancing and was always the first one ready to go to a dance and the last one to leave.





Ce7's daughter had been killed, he didn't know who had killed her. He said, "I'll pay whoever brings her back to life."





He had a big knife, this he intended to use as payment. Various people tried to effect a cure, but they were unable to revive her.





Ce7 said, “Bring Muskrat to effect a cure.” Then they brought Muskrat, and he sang, Muskrat danced, “Oh what did I almost say there!” said Muskrat.

Now the dead one stirred, the woman who had been killed. They told him carry on Muskrat, and the dead one stirred. He said, “I will now hold my payment, so that my work will be good.”







He was given a double bladed sharp knife. Then Muskrat held the knife and sang, and at last he said, “I think it was me that killed Ce7 daughter.”



Muskrat ran off downhill to the lake. They pursued him, he dived with a splash into the lake, they couldn’t catch him. Coyote ran over and made a grab for him, he thought he had caught Muskrat.



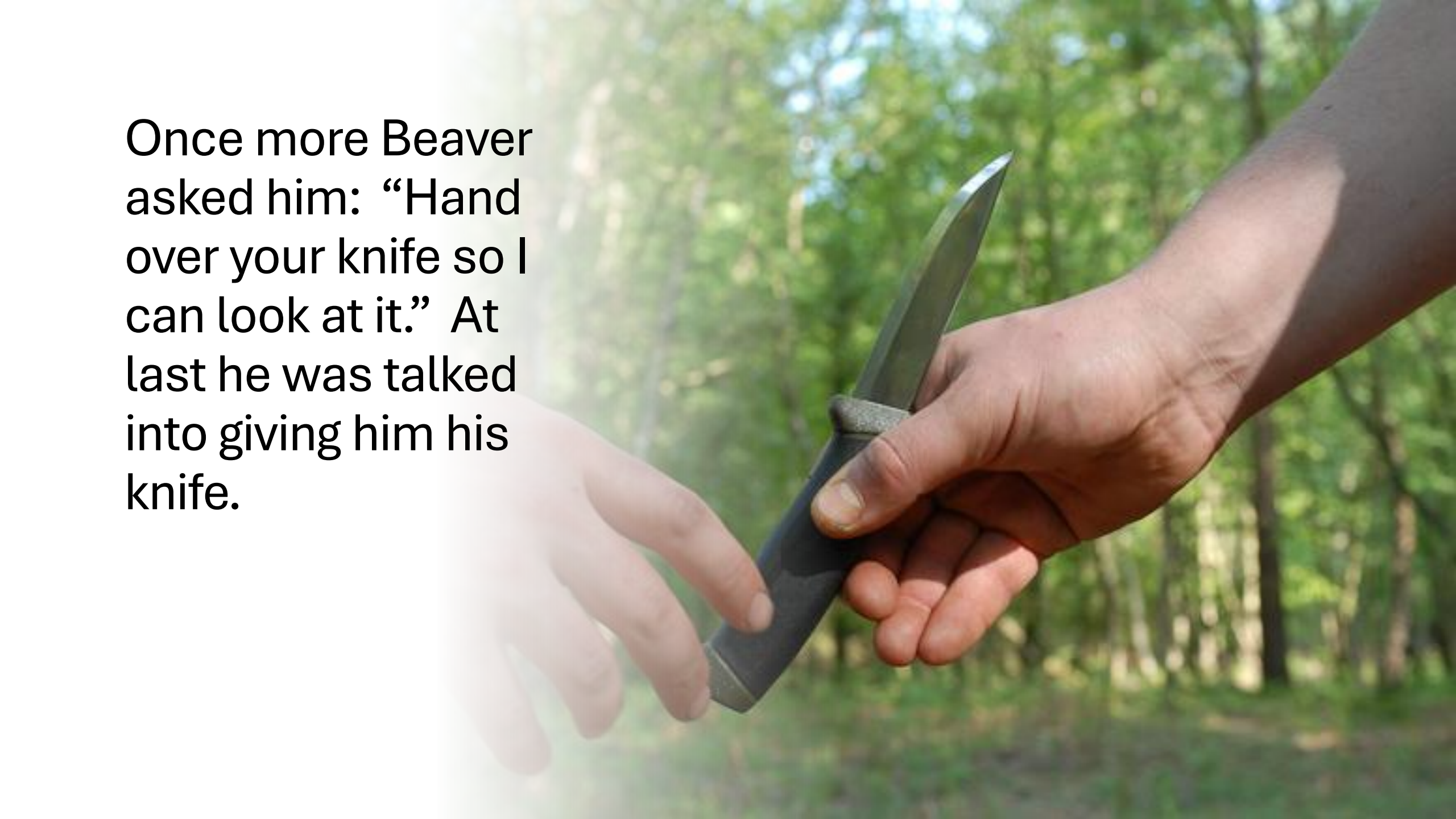
“Here I got him, come here”, they pulled up Coyote’s hand, but all he had got hold of was mud and weeds.



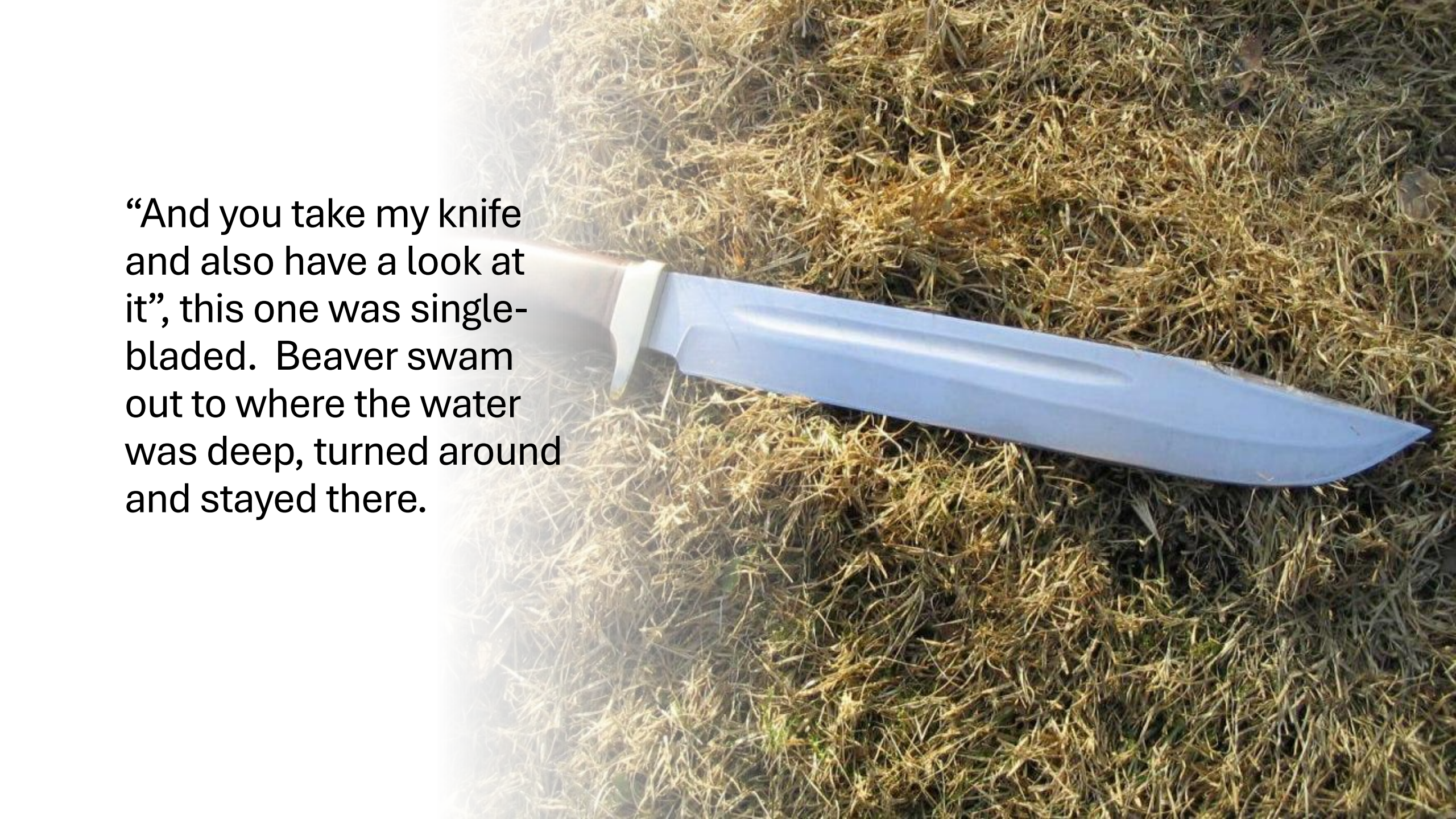
Then Muskrat went along and met his brother Beaver, who had a single-bladed knife. Beaver said to him, “Hand over your knife , so I can have a look at it.” Muskrat said, “No”.



Once more Beaver asked him: “Hand over your knife so I can look at it.” At last he was talked into giving him his knife.



“And you take my knife and also have a look at it”, this one was single-bladed. Beaver swam out to where the water was deep, turned around and stayed there.

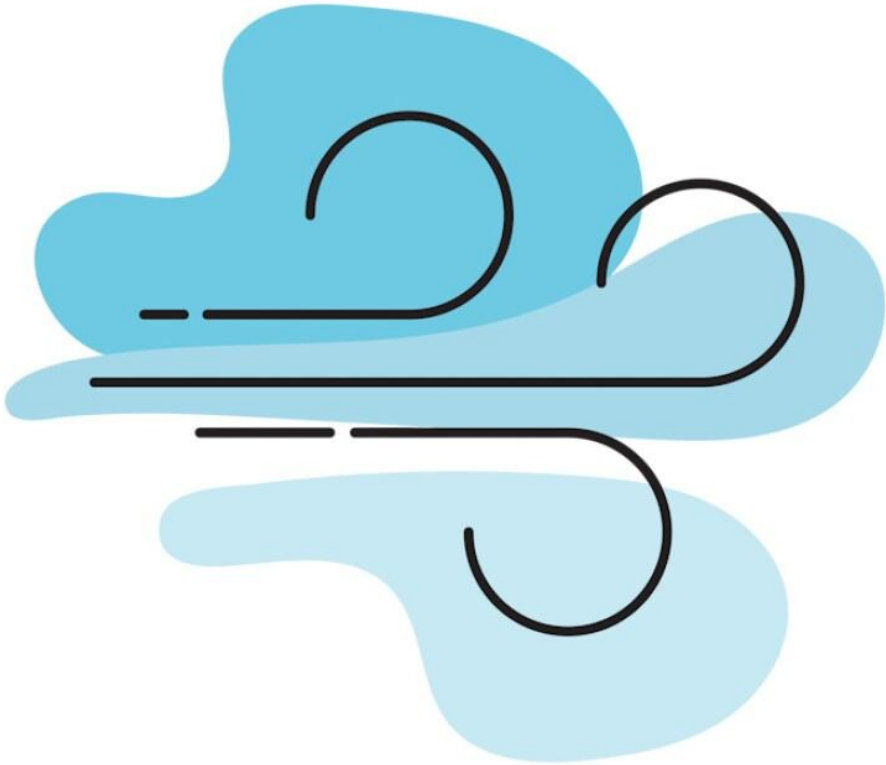


Muskrat said: “Hand over my knife, hand over my knife.” Beaver just kept going farther and farther and got away. He went far out there threw the big knife onto his tail, where it remained stuck.



There, far out in the deep water, he tried it out, he splashed the water with his tail, and then he made off with Muskrat's knife. Muskrat went after him but couldn't catch up with him, Beaver was far out and caused a wind to blow.





Then Muskrat turned back and said, “Oh, now I’ll just have to remain near the shore. That’s why now you see him only near the shore. That’s why he has a singled-bladed tail.









The End