



# **Being in being: The collected works of Skaay of the Qquuna Qiighawaay (Masterworks of the classical Haida mythtellers)**

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**Skaay** of the Qquuna Qiighawaay was born in the Haida village of Qquuna about 1827. Crippled by an injury in middle age, he devoted himself to the art of telling stories. He could neither read nor write, and it is purely a matter of luck that his work survives. But so great were his talents that he remains the most important figure in all of Haida literature. In October 1900, **Skaay** dictated three works to a visiting linguist, John Swanron. Each of them a masterpiece of its kind. One is the legend of **Skaay's** own lineage. The second, "Raven Travelling," is the longest and most complex version of the story of the Raven ever recorded on the Northwest Coast. The third is "The Qquuna Cycle," the largest and most complex literary work in any Native Canadian language. It is a poem of epic length and one of the true masterpieces of North American literature. Bringhurst's translation of these works is the first to present them as the literary classics that they are. His introduction sets the works in context, and his notes supply the background information needed to move freely in **Skaay's** rich and vivid world.

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