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# Indian Nature Myths



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DARROW  
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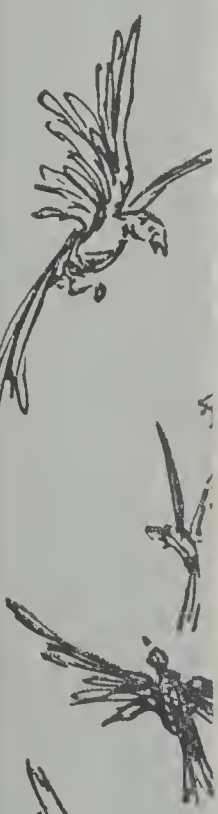


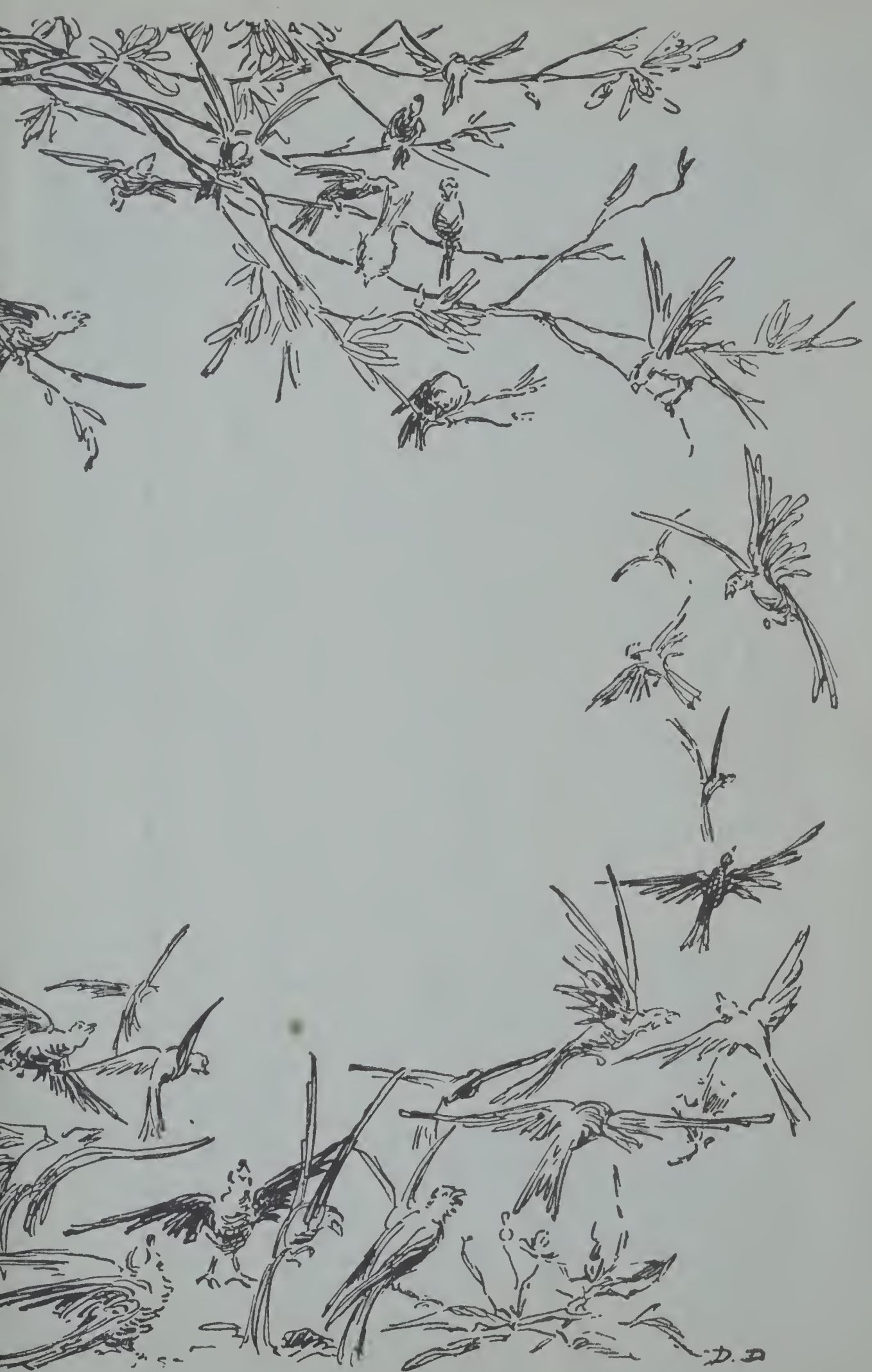
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Books by  
**Julia Darrow Cowles**

THE ROBINSON CRUSOE READER

STORIES TO TELL

GOING TO SCHOOL IN ANIMAL  
LAND

ONCE UPON A TIME STORIES

INDIAN NATURE MYTHS

Published by  
**A. Flanagan Company**



DOROTHY TULIN

"THE THUNDER MAIDEN FASTENED HIS PURPLE WINGS TO HIS SHOULDERS AND BADE HIM GOOD-BYE"

# INDIAN NATURE MYTHS

BY  
JULIA DARROW COWLES

With Illustrations by  
Dorothy Dulin

1922  
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## PREFACE

The stories of this book have been chosen for the purpose of showing how the early Red Men accounted for the phenomena of nature—the presence of the birds, the moaning of the wind, the whispering of the leaves. The nature myths of the North American Indian are full of poetry, and occasionally of a rich humor. In retelling the stories for children the author has sought to retain the original spirit of the tales, and through them to give to the reader a better understanding of the inner life and thought of the primitive Red Man at his best. The tales have been gathered from many sources, and are representative of many tribes.

It is well known that the same tale in varying form is told among many different tribes, just as the folk tales have been carried in early times from one nation to another and are variously accredited. It is not always possible to determine the original source.

Before reading or telling the Indian Nature

Myths to the children, it is best to explain that just as they love to wonder and imagine about the new and strange sights and sounds of the world, so the early races of men, the children of time, loved to wonder and imagine. And so these stories of nature grew out of their imaginings; and some of the stories are so beautiful, and some of them are so odd, that men have repeated them from one generation to another, ever since,—for even when they no longer believed them to be true, they loved them.

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# INDIAN NATURE MYTHS

## HOW THE SEASONS CAME TO BE

(Ojibwa)

**T**HERE was once a little Indian boy who wanted above everything else to become a mighty hunter.

His father, whose name was Ojeeg, the Fisher, was the mightiest hunter of his tribe, and Omeme wanted to be like his father.

Often he went out into the forest with the little bow and arrows which his father had made for him, to hunt the small creatures of the woods. But it was too cold for him to stay long; for in those days there were no seasons, only cold and snow day after day, moon following moon.

So little Omeme often came back to the lodge with fingers stiff and numb. As he shivered and held his fingers over the fire of the lodge, he cried, "There is nothing for Omeme to shoot. The birds fly up to the sun for warmth. The

little creatures hide in the forest: they hide far down beneath the snow blanket. It is cold. Omeme can get no game.”

One day Omeme met a squirrel in the forest, and the squirrel said, “Do not shoot me, Omeme. I will tell you a great secret.”

Then Omeme said, “I will not shoot you. Tell me your secret.”

And the squirrel said, “Away up in the Sky Land it is always warm. There is no frost, no snow. If we could have some of the warmth of the Sky Land, we should not always be cold. There would be good hunting for Omeme. There would be plenty for us all to eat.”

“But the Sky Land is far away,” said Omeme.

“Yes,” replied the squirrel, “but Ojeeg is mighty. Could he not go to the Sky Land and bring away some of its warmth?”

“My father is mighty,” answered Omeme. “I will ask him.”

He ran home, for he had grown cold while listening to the squirrel’s secret.

Ojeeg was in the lodge.

“Oh, my father,” exclaimed Omeme, “all we little creatures are so cold! The squirrel tells me there is warmth in the Sky Land. Could you





DOROTHY DULIN

"OMEME SAID, 'I WILL NOT SHOOT YOU. TELL ME YOUR SECRET' "

not go there and bring some of its warmth to the earth?"

Ojeeg was silent for a long, long time. He loved Omeme dearly. He was sorry that Omeme was cold. But the journey to the Sky Land was long. It was full of dangers.

At length Ojeeg said, "The earth *is* cold. I will hold a council with my neighbors."

So Ojeeg, the Fisher, called together his neighbors, the Otter, the Beaver, the Badger, the Lynx, and the Wolverine. Long and earnestly they considered the matter, and at length they decided to undertake the journey to the Sky Land.

Upon a given day they started. It was a great adventure, and Ojeeg felt sure that he would never return to his lodge, and never again would he see the little Omeme.

For a long, long distance they traveled and at last, tired and spent with hunger, they reached the top of a very high mountain. So high it was that the sky seemed almost to rest upon it.

There they found meat and a fire, as though some traveler had left them. So they rested and were refreshed.

Then Ojeeg said to the Otter, "Now we will

try to gain entrance to the Sky Land. It is just above us. Jump, and see if you cannot break through, and we will follow.”

The Otter tried, but he could not jump high enough, and he fell, and slid all the way down to the foot of the mountain. So he gave up and returned to his home.

Then Ojeeg said to the Beaver, “Jump, and see if you cannot do better than the Otter.” The Beaver jumped; but neither could he jump high enough, and he too fell, and slid all the way down to the bottom of the mountain. So the Beaver gave up, and returned to his home.

Then Ojeeg said to the Badger, “Jump. Let us see if you cannot do better than the Otter and the Beaver.”

The Badger jumped; but neither could he jump high enough, and back he slid to the bottom of the mountain. So the Badger gave up, and returned to his home.

Then Ojeeg said to the Lynx, “Surely you are stronger than the Otter, and the Beaver, and the Badger, and you can jump farther. Try, and see if you cannot break through into the Sky Land, and we will follow.”

The Lynx jumped; but neither could he break

through the Sky, though he made a deep scratch upon it with one of his sharp claws; and back he slid to the bottom of the mountain. So the Lynx gave up, and returned to his home.

Then said Ojeeg to the Wolverine, "You are stronger and more agile than the others. Jump, and see if you cannot break through, and I will follow you. Do your best. You must not fail me."

The Wolverine prepared for a mighty jump. He sprang upward, and touched the Sky just where the Lynx's claw had scratched it. He broke it, and sprang through the opening.

After him sprang Ojeeg, and now they two were in the Sky Land.

It was a beautiful country. There was no snow. The winds blew softly; the air was balmy; and all about them were flowers, and grass, and singing birds.

Ojeeg stamped hard with his foot, and a great hole was made where he stamped. Down through the hole rushed the singing birds, and the warm air of the Sky Land.

Down went Spring, and after Spring went Summer, and after Summer went Autumn. But just as Autumn disappeared, Ojeeg heard a great

noise and shouting, for the people of the Sky Land were coming. He knew that they would punish him for his daring.

The Wolverine slipped through the hole and followed Autumn; but before Ojeeg could follow, the Sky people came, and the hole was closed.

Ojeeg ran, but the arrows of the Sky people were swift, and overtook him.

So Ojeeg gave up his life, but he had sent warmth to all the creatures of the earth, and since that time his people have had the four seasons, instead of one unbroken season of bitter cold and snow.

The little Omeme was proud of the mighty deed of his father. He was cold no more: and he grew up to be a mighty hunter, as his father the great Ojeeg had been before him.

And when the Indians look up at the stars and see the constellation of the fish, they say, "That is Ojeeg, the Fisher, who gave the summer to his people."

## BIRTH OF THE ARBUTUS

(Ojibwa)

**L**ONG years ago, when only the red men lived among the hills and valleys of the land, an old, old man sat shivering over the low fire of his tepee. The old man was Peboan. He was chief of the winter spirits.

The outside world was covered with snow. The branches of the trees bent low with its weight. The sides of the tepee were heavy with snow. All the tracks of the bear and the rabbit were hidden.

The old man shivered, and bent over his fire. He was clothed in furs, and furs covered the floor of the tepee. But they could not keep out the chill winds, for the fire was low. There was no more wood to replenish it. Snow covered all the fallen branches, and the chief was old and feeble.

Peboan had been a mighty hunter. He had killed the moose and the bear. The skins of many deer were about him. But now his hair

was white as the icy fringes of the frozen brook.

He blew upon the coals of his fire and they glowed, bright as the eyes of a startled deer in the forest. But the glow faded. The old man shivered.

There was no food in the tepee. The bear and the rabbit were hidden in the forest. Their tracks were covered with snow. Peboan could not hunt them.

Then, upon his knees, he cried to the Great Spirit for help. He cried for help, that Peboan, chief of the winter spirits, might not suffer want and cold.

As he sank once more upon his furs, he felt a warmth in the tepee. He looked up.

In the doorway stood a youth, whose red cheeks and sparkling eyes told of health and strength. A wreath of sweet grass was bound about his curling locks, and in his hands he held a cluster of flowers. Light and quick was his step as he entered the lodge of Peboan.

He smiled upon Peboan, and the old man felt a warmth enveloping him.

“Enter, my son,” he said, “and welcome. I have no refreshment to offer. But come to my fire, and tell me who you are.”

Then the youth said, "The Great Spirit has sent me to Peboan. I am Seegwun, the Spring. But tell me of yourself, Peboan."

Then Peboan cried, "I am the great winter spirit. When I come to the Earth, all the Earth's children tremble. I breathe upon them, and they cry out. The trees drop their leaves. The birds fly away. The forest children creep into their holes."

"Ah," cried the youth, "when I come to the Earth, the Earth's children laugh and clap their hands. I breathe upon them and they dance with joy. The trees put forth their leaves. The birds come back. The forest children awake."

Peboan continued, "When I come to the Earth, I shake my locks and snow falls from the clouds. The streams grow hard and still. The wind sings dirges through the naked trees."

"When I come to the Earth," laughed Seegwun, "I shake my ringlets and warm showers fall from the clouds. The grass awakes. The flowers bloom. Soft breezes blow. The streams are glad, and sing as they dance along."

"Peboan," said the youth, "the Great Spirit has sent me to the Earth, and you must go."

Seegwun smiled, and the tepee grew warm.





DOROTHY DULIN  
C.R.

“THE ARBUTUS!” CRIED THE CHILDREN

Peboan became silent. His head drooped lower and lower.

The sun shone forth, and the snow melted beneath its rays.

Then Spring waved his hands over the sleeping Peboan, and he sank upon the ground. Smaller and smaller he grew. His clothing seemed turned to furry leaves, and covered the floor of the tepee.

The youth smiled, for Peboan was gone.

Softly he lifted the furry leaves, and beneath each cluster he placed blossoms of white and pink. He breathed upon them with his fragrant breath, and they became sweet. Their spicy odor filled all the tepee.

Then the youth laughed gladly, and went his way.

The sun shone, and the children of the little Indian village ran from their homes, and danced and sang in its warmth. A bird was caroling in the tree top, and they stopped to listen. The stream shook off its icy covering and went singing down its course. The children followed it.

They came to the spot where the tepee of Peboan had stood. And lo! all the ground was covered with fragrant flowers.

“The arbutus!” cried the children. “The arbutus!”

They picked the beautiful, fragrant blossoms, and joyously carried them home. And when the old people of the village saw them, they knew that the Spirit of the Spring had returned to fill the earth with joy and gladness.

## THE MAIDEN WITH GOLDEN HAIR

(Chippewa)

**L**EELINAU stood in the door of the lodge, holding in her hand a bunch of dandelions which had gone to seed. She blew upon them softly, and the white-winged seeds went floating into the air.

“Shawondasee’s breath was mightier than thine,” said a voice behind her. She turned to see her grandmother smiling upon her as she worked upon a deer-skin moccasin.

Leelinau sat down. “Tell me of Shawondasee,” she said coaxingly. So the grandmother told her the story of the South Wind and the Dandelion:

Shawondasee lived far away in the South Land where it was always warm and bright. His father, Kabeyun, the father of the winds, had given him this part of the earth in which to dwell. The soft, warm winds of the South were given him.

But Shawondasee was not strong, and quick,

and eager, like his brothers who governed the North Wind, and the West Wind. He was fat, and lazy, and sluggish. He liked to take life easily, and moved slowly, when he moved at all.

Sometimes, because he was so fat and heavy, he sighed deeply, and then his warm breath would travel far across the land to the North, and the people would cry, "What a balmy day! How soft and warm the air is!"

One day, as Shawondasee looked far away toward the North, he saw upon the prairie a beautiful maiden. Her body was tall and slender. She wore a gown of green, and her hair was a wonderful yellow, like burnished gold.

Shawondasee looked long upon her, for never had he seen a maiden like her before. The Indian maidens had hair of deepest black, like the glossy feathers of the crow, and their skins were dark.

"She is fair and beautiful," sighed Shawondasee. "I should woo her, if she were not so far away."

He stirred a little, and sighed, and the air grew warm, and a soft breeze blew. The beautiful maiden on the prairie swayed in the breeze, and her green robe fluttered.

“She is very beautiful,” cried Shawondasee. “I will send her a kiss.” So with his softest breath he sent a kiss to the maiden of the yellow hair, and again she bowed and swayed.

Still Shawondasee did not leave his home in the South Land to visit the maiden. He sent soft breezes to blow upon her, and the breezes carried sighs and kisses to her; but Shawondasee himself remained at home. Day after day he wished that he might win the maiden with the golden hair. Day after day he looked toward the North where she stood and waited for his coming.

Then one morning there was a change. As Shawondasee looked out upon the prairie he saw that the beautiful golden hair of the maiden he loved had turned to snowy white. For once he was startled. “What have I done?” he cried. “I have put off going to her, and now I have lost her. Her golden beauty has changed to a beauty which is not of this earth. It is now too late!”

Shawondasee heaved a mighty sigh as he spoke—a sigh that stirred all the winds of the South Land—and behold! the air was filled with the silvery white locks of the Dandelion maiden.



"DAY AFTER DAY . . . SHE STOOD AND WAITED  
FOR HIS COMING"

Far and wide they floated, and wherever one fell, there a new flower sprang up, and it was called the Dandelion.

The old grandmother had finished her story and her moccasin at the same time.

“And so Shawondasee never married the Dandelion maiden?” questioned Leelinau.

“No,” answered the grandmother. “He was far too fat and lazy to win a maiden of spirit. But then,” she added, “it was no great loss to either. No Indian of good sense would wed a maiden with yellow hair.”



## ORIGIN OF THE VIOLET

(Iroquois)

**T**HREE wonderful deeds had the Indian youth performed: three deeds for which the older men of the tribe gave him honor.

First of all he had gone forth with his bow and arrow and, taking true aim with a strong and steady hand, had pierced the heart of the great heron flying overhead: the great heron that was the enemy of his people. Often had the bird caught the children of the tribe and carried them away to devour them. And now the young brave, who was little more than a lad, had slain the great heron.

On the second occasion he had gone forth alone, and sought out the cave of the witches. And from the cave he had brought away the roots which alone would cure his people of the great sickness which we call the plague. The journey was long and difficult, and food was scarce, but only the witches knew the secret of the roots.

When the young brave returned with the medicine and the people were made well, the old men of the tribe gave him honor, and the women of the tribe blessed him.

On the third occasion the young warrior led a band of his fellows in combat with a tribe of their enemies, and overthrew them. Those who were not killed fled in confusion. And again he was honored by all his tribe.

But now the young warrior's mind was troubled, and favor and honor no longer satisfied his heart. Among the tribe of the enemy that he had conquered, he had seen a maiden who had won his love.

Unknown to her, and hidden, he had watched as she moved about the wigwam of her father. He had followed the fleeing enemy, and had come silently to the outskirts of their village, and there he discovered the maiden who alone had stirred his heart.

“I must have her for my very own! She shall be the light of my wigwam!” he cried.

So he stayed in the forest near the village of the enemy, and there he sang all the songs that the Indian lover sings, and always they were in praise of the graceful maiden whom he loved.

So sweet and tender were the words, and so rich the music, that the birds of the forest learned to sing them after him. And so often were they repeated that even the roving animals knew the words, and wondered of whom the strange warrior sang.

One day the Indian maiden, enticed by the freshness of the woods and the caroling of the birds, wandered away to the forest alone. Unknown to her, a young Indian of her own tribe, who long had loved her, followed at a distance.

When she reached the forest she listened happily to the singing birds, and she thought she heard, too, a strong, clear voice that was different from the voice of the birds.

Farther into the woods she went, when suddenly a young brave sprang toward her, clasped her in his arms, and ran swiftly away, bearing her with him.

The maiden, looking into his face, saw that it was strong, and fearless, and loving; and with his voice he reassured her, promising that he would do her no harm. And the maiden's heart went out to him, as his had done to her.

The unseen lover of her own tribe saw what had happened and, recognizing the young brave

who had stolen the maiden from him as the one who had defeated his people, was afraid. He ran back to the village to tell the men, and to get help for the pursuit.

“And you came back!” cried the men of the village in a voice of scorn. “You did not save the maiden you claim to love! Stay here at home with the women while we ride forth and overtake them!”

So the men mounted their ponies and rode away; and toward evening they came in sight of the brave young warrior, and the maiden of their tribe.

But as they drew nearer they saw that the maiden had braided the long tresses of her hair and had bound them about the neck of the young warrior who bore her in his arms. And this was the sign to them that she loved him, and wished to go with him and become his wife.

Then the Indians of her own tribe were doubly angry, and drawing their bows they shot both the young warrior and the maiden through the heart, and returned to their own village.

And where the two fell, there sprang from the earth a new flower, the purple violet, which speaks of courage and of love.

## THE BEGINNING OF BIRDS

(Blackfeet)

**I**N very early times, the Red Children believe, there were no birds. And this is the way they account for their beginning:

All summer the trees had been full of leaves, shaking, whispering, dancing, as the winds blew upon them. "I wish I might fly," said one little leaf. "I would go sailing straight up into the heavens. But the tree holds me tightly; I cannot get away."

"If the tree should let you go, you would only fall to the ground and die," said a bigger leaf. "It is better to be content as you are."

So the leaves fluttered and danced and whispered one to another, day after day.

One morning the wind was cold, and the leaves had to dance fast to keep warm. Then the old tree said, "It is the breath of Po-poon-o-ki. He lives in the ice lodge of the far North. He will soon visit us, with his war paints. I must hold you tightly, little leaves, as long as

I can." But the little leaves did not understand what the tree meant.

Then, one still night, Po-poon-o-ki came. He went from tree to tree, and over each one he splashed his war paints, till the leaves were no longer green, but dashed with red, and brown, and yellow, and crimson.

"How beautiful the trees are!" cried the Indian children the next morning. "See their bright colors."

For a few days the leaves danced and whispered, laughing over their beautiful hues. Then Po-poon-o-ki came back, and with his swift, cold breath, he blew against the trees, and the little leaves were tossed and torn from the friendly branches. They did not fly up into the heavens, but frightened and sobbing they dropped to the earth.

"We shall die!" they cried. "We shall die!"

Then a strange thing happened. The guardian spirit of the tree whispered, "No, little leaves, you shall not die. You shall be changed into living forms. I will give you breath and life." And instantly there arose from the earth where the leaves had dropped, a great flock of winged birds, red, and brown, and yellow, and crimson,



"THERE AROSE A GREAT FLOCK OF WINGED BIRDS"

all the beautiful colors that Po-poon-o-ki had given the leaves. Then they flew away to the South Land, where winter's breath could not reach them.

But in the spring, when Ni-poon-o-ki, the spirit of summer, came stealing up from the South, and Po-poon-o-ki went back to his ice lodge in the far North, then the birds came back, too. There were new leaves on the trees, but the birds flew straight to the branches which had been their home, and there, safely sheltered by the new leaves, they built their nests.

And after awhile, when there were eggs in all the home nests, the hearts of the birds became so full of joy that they could no longer be silent. Their throats swelled, and opening wide their little mouths, they filled all the air with bursts of happy song.



## WHY THE WIND WAILS

(Algonquin)

WHEN the pale moon looks down from the sky, and when the wind cries mournfully around the wigwam, this is the story that the old man of the tribe tells to the Indian children:

Many, many moons ago the great chief of our tribe had a very beautiful daughter.

“She shall marry a great warrior,” said the Chief, “and a mighty hunter. Then she will be well cared for, and I shall be happy.”

So the great Chief kept watch of the young men of the tribe, to see which one would prove worthy of his daughter.

One day, as the Chief sat in the door of his lodge, there came a sudden rushing sound, and a young man stood before him. It was the Wind, who had made himself visible that he might talk with the Chief.

When he had saluted, he said, “Great Chief, I love your daughter. May I carry her away to my lodge, and make her my wife?”

The Chief looked at the Wind, and he answered, "No. My daughter is not for such as you. You are no warrior. You are no hunter. You love to play pranks. You cannot marry my daughter."

So the Wind went away sorrowing, for he loved the Indian maiden.

The next day the maiden came to her father and said, "Father, I love the Wind better than any young warrior of our tribe. May I go to his lodge, and be his wife?"

The Chief looked at his daughter and said, "No. The Wind is no mate for you. He is no warrior. He is no hunter. He loves only to play pranks. You cannot marry him."

The maiden went away sorrowing, for she loved the Wind.

The next day when the maiden went out to gather sweet marsh grass for her basket weaving, she heard a sudden rushing sound above her head. She looked up, and as she looked the Wind swept down and carried her in his arms far away to his lodge.

There they lived happily together, for the maiden became his wife. But the great Chief was full of wrath. He hunted through all the

land for the lodge of the Wind, but he could not find it for many moons. Still he would not give up the search, for his heart was hot with wrath.

One day the Wind heard a great crashing sound among the trees near his lodge, and his heart stood still.

“It is your father,” he cried, and he hid the Chief’s daughter in a thicket, while he made himself invisible, that he might stay close beside her.

The great Chief looked inside the lodge of the Wind, but he found it empty. Then he went through the brush, striking to right and left with his heavy club, and calling, “My daughter: my daughter!”

And when the Wind’s wife heard her father’s voice, she answered, “Oh, my father, strike not! We are here.”

But before her words could reach him, the Chief swung his great club once more, and it fell upon the head of the invisible Wind, who, without a sound, dropped unconscious upon the ground. And because he was invisible, neither the Chief nor his daughter knew what had happened.

Then the Chief took his daughter in his arms and hastened back to his tribe. But each day she grew more and more sorrowful, and longed for her husband, the Wind.

For many hours the Wind lay unconscious beside his lodge. When he awakened, the Chief and his daughter had gone. Sorrowfully he set out in search of his wife. He traveled to her father's tribe, and there at last he found her. But she was in a canoe with her father, far out upon the lake.

Then the Wind cried, "Come to me, my loved one," and his voice swept out over the water.

The Chief said, "The winds are blowing," but his daughter knew her husband's voice. She could not see him, for he was still invisible, but she lifted herself up in the canoe and stretched out her hands toward the shore. As she did so a breeze stirred the water, and the canoe overturned.

The Chief's daughter threw up her arms, and the Wind tried to catch her in his embrace, but he was too late. The Great Spirit bore her far up into the sky, and there he gave her a home where she would live forever in the lodge of the moon.



DOROTHY DULIN.

"THE WIND TRIED TO CATCH HER IN HIS EMBRACE"

The great Chief was drowned in the waters of the lake.

Night after night his daughter looks down upon the earth, hoping for a sight of her lost lover. But though the Wind still roams about the earth in search of his bride, he has never, since the Chief's blow fell upon his head, had the power to become visible to men.

And now you will understand why the voice of the Wind is so mournful as it wails about the wigwam; and why the Moon Maiden's pale face is always turned downward toward the earth.

## STORY OF THE HUMMING BIRD

(Shoshonee)

“**S**EE!” said the Indian grandfather, as he sat in the opening of his tepee. “See the little Fire Bird! How swiftly it darts! Now it drinks honey from the flowers. How fast its wings move!”

A little Indian boy stood quietly at his grandfather’s side. “I see the fire on its throat,” he said softly, and then, as the bird darted away, he begged, “Tell me the story of the little Fire Bird, grandfather. I like the story.”

Then the grandfather told this tale, which his grandfather had told to him:

Long, long ago the Indian people lived in a country where it was cold, and the snow fell for many, many days. The falling snow covered the tracks of the forest children, so the hunters could find little meat. Many times the Indian children cried to the Great Spirit for warmth, and for better hunting.

Far to the west of the Indian village there

was a high mountain; and often the people watched the red sun as he sank from sight beyond the mountain, and all the sky was filled with brightness.

One night a little child went running about the tepees calling, "Come, come; see the sun! See the sun!"

The people looked toward the west. All the sky was bright; and they said, "The sun is touching the mountain top."

But the brightness did not fade away as they watched. Instead, while darkness fell all about the village, the red fire burned brighter and brighter at the top of the mountain. The people cried, "The sun is resting. He does not move. He does not sink behind the mountain!" Then they were frightened, for they knew not what to think.

All night they watched, and still the bright light shone above the mountain top. It flashed, and threw fiery darts far into the heavens; and the Indians said, "The sun is angry. Perhaps he will destroy the earth's children."

Then their wonder grew as far away in the east a light began to glow. It grew brighter and brighter,—and then the sun arose on the eastern



horizon! The people knew then that the light upon the mountain was not the light of the sun.

“There is *fire* in the mountain,” they cried, “and fire is warm. It is beckoning to us with its hands. Let us move nearer to the fire mountain. It will not be so cold there.”

So the people of the village marched westward toward the mountain. The bright light had gone, but a cloud of smoke hung above it.

For several days they journeyed, and at last they reached the foot of the mountain, and there they camped.

Then two of their bravest warriors climbed up the mountain, until they came to its very top, and there they looked down into a great opening, shaped like a mammoth bowl, and it was full of fire! Then they hastened down and told the people.

The people rejoiced, and said, “The fire in the mountain will keep us warm. It will be good to live here.” And they made them a new village at the foot of the mountain.

For many moons the people dwelt there, hunting and fishing, making their beads and moccasins. Then one day a strange noise was heard. It was as though the mountain coughed—a

great, hoarse, rumbling cough, like that of some huge giant.

The people stood still and listened! There was another sound like the first, but heavier, more convulsive.

Then a great flash of fire shot up from the mountain top, and fell again. Then another, and another, and each time the fire leaped higher.

“Let us run!” cried the people. “Let us run!” Even as they spoke there was a great burst of fire and smoke, and huge stones were thrown high in the air, and a stream came pouring down the side of the mountain—a stream that looked like liquid fire.

Then the Indians ran, indeed, and there was no time to save anything but their own lives!

Many streams followed the first one, coming like fiery serpents down the mountain side, and above were heavy smoke clouds, shot with bursting rocks.

Far away the Indian people ran, crying, “The Fire Spirit is angry! What have we done that he should destroy our homes?”

At last they stopped, and turned to look back at the fire mountain. The flames were gone: only a cloud of smoke hung about. But the

fiery streams had burned all that was in their way; and rocks and ashes had buried what the fire streams had not destroyed.

Then the people prayed to the Great Spirit, and as the Great Spirit looked down upon the mountain and saw what destruction had been wrought, he said, "Your flames shall be put out; your fires shall be quenched." And even as the Great Spirit spoke, the fires grew ashen in color, and the flames trembled and sank away.

But in the center of the great bowl of the mountain, where the fires had been, one little flame hung quivering. The Great Spirit saw it, and he said, "Little flame, you alone shall stay. But I will give to you a new form. You shall have wings, and live among the earth's people, and drink the honey of its flowers. Little flame, you shall carry the color of the fire upon your throat. You shall be known as the Humming Bird, and every child will love you."

## THE GIFT OF INDIAN CORN

(Chippewa)

**I**N the far back days, before the white men lived upon this side of the earth, a young Indian lad stood at the door of his father's tepee and gazed out over the far-waving prairie grass.

He was thinking of the morrow when he would begin his fast; for this was the custom among the Indians. When a youth reached a given age he went away by himself, and for seven days he ate no food, but spent the time in prayer to the Great Spirit that his part in life might be made clear to him, and that it might prove a worthy one.

Now Wunzh, who stood in the tepee door, was an unusually thoughtful lad, for his father had so taught him; and he was filled with high and with grave thoughts as he looked across the waving grass.

Beyond his sight, in a thicket, he knew that his father and younger brother were clearing

the ground and raising the little tepee wherein he would spend the days of his fasting.

Wunzh knew full well what his prayer to the Great Spirit would be, but how would it be answered? He thought of this long and often.

As he had run about the prairie or made his way through the forests when a little lad, he had wondered how it was that the grass and the trees sprang up out of the dark earth. He had wondered why some of the flowers smelled sweet while others were offensive; why some of the roots were good for healing, while others caused sickness or even death, though all came from the same soil. But to none of these questions could he find an answer.

Wunzh's father was poor, and so were many other Indians; and some of them were ill, or very old. But in order to live they must hunt or fish, for game and fish were their only food. And so life was hard for many of the Indians.

Since Wunzh was thoughtful and had considered all these things, he knew full well what his prayer to the Great Spirit would be.

On the following day he left the tepee of his father and went to the little clearing in the thicket, where he would fast for seven days.

And there he prayed that in some way which the Great Spirit would show him, he might bring a great blessing to his people and make their lives less hard. He knew full well that most of his comrades prayed that they might become great warriors, or that they should be mighty men of the chase. But Wunzh prayed not for these.

For four days he fasted and prayed, and each day he grew weaker from lack of food, but his faith and his courage grew stronger.

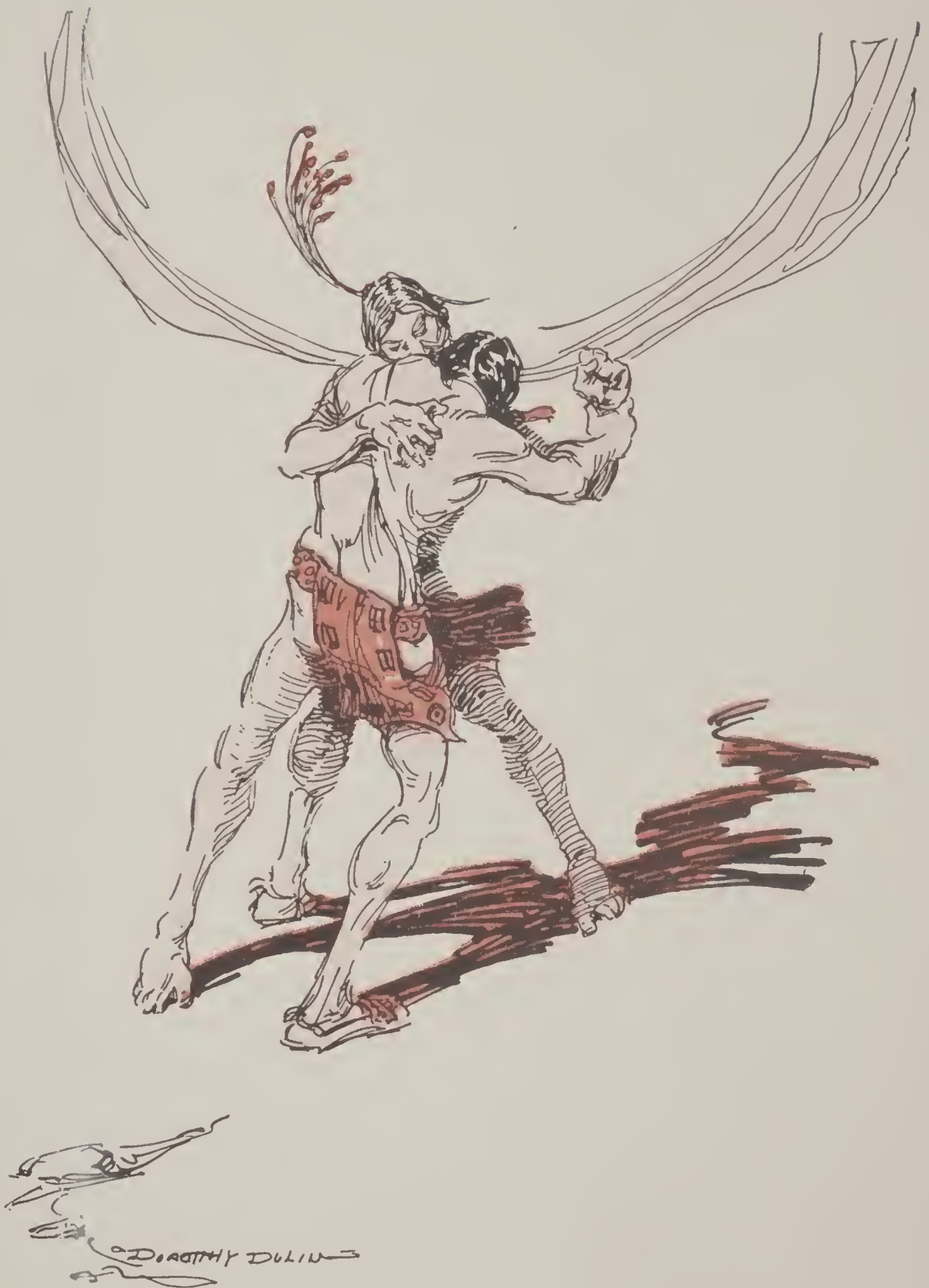
On the fifth day, as he lay upon his bed of skins, there appeared outside the door of his tepee a strong, bright youth, clad all in shimmering greens and golden yellows, and wearing upon his head a plume of waving green.

“Come,” cried the youth, “let us wrestle, and see who shall overcome.”

Then Wunzh sprang from his bed, for though his body was weak, his spirit was strong, and he grappled with the youth and they wrestled together.

At length the youth said, “That will do for to-day. You have wrestled well, though neither of us has overcome. I will return to-morrow.”

And no sooner had he finished speaking than



"HE GRAPPLED WITH THE YOUTH AND THEY  
WRESTLED TOGETHER"

he vanished from the sight of Wunzh who dropped exhausted upon his bed.

The next day, at exactly the same hour, the youth came again, and so suddenly that it seemed to Wunzh he must have dropped from the sky.

Wunzh had less strength in his body than on the previous day, but he felt sure the stranger had been sent by the Great Spirit, and so he grappled with him again and wrestled well.

But as Wunzh's strength was nearly gone, the young man said once more, "That will do for to-day. To-morrow I will return. 'Tis the last day of your fast. Be ready."

Again the stranger disappeared, and Wunzh, trembling with weakness of body, prayed the Great Spirit that he might yet overcome. And as he prayed he fell asleep.

Then, as Wunzh slept, he dreamed. And it seemed to him that he again wrestled with the strange youth, and he overcame and threw him to the ground. And a voice spoke to him and said: "Strip off the clothing of the youth and wear it for your own. Bury his body, and protect the spot where he is buried. Make the earth soft and mellow; keep it clear of weeds; and



water it day by day. Do all this, and your prayer to the Great Spirit shall be answered.”

Wunzh slept long, but when he wakened he remembered his dream and the words that had been spoken.

That morning his father came to the tepee to offer food, but Wunzh said, “Let me alone until the evening.” So his father went away.

At the same hour, on this day, the stranger once more appeared outside the door of the tepee, and once more Wunzh went forth to wrestle. He was weaker than before, but his dream had given him such courage that he grasped the strange youth and with a supreme effort threw him prostrate upon the earth.

“I have overcome,” cried Wunzh, for the youth lay dead at his feet.

Then Wunzh stripped off his clothing as he had been told in his dream, and he dressed himself in the garments of green and yellow, and he placed the plume of green upon his head.

Then, kneeling, he tenderly buried the body of the youth, and his tears fell as he did so, for he said, “He was my friend.”

When Wunzh returned to the tepee of his father he was received with great rejoicing, and

given food. His new clothing was looked upon in wonder, but he did not tell its story.

Day by day he went to the little spot of ground where his own little tepee had been, and he kept the earth soft and moist and free from weeds.

And after many days had gone by, green plumes came up through the earth; and they grew, and became sturdy stalks.

And still they grew, and after many days and weeks the broad green leaves held ears of juicy grain.

Day by day the ears grew full and the grain ripened; the green plumes at their ends turned to yellow, and then to brown, and the ground was covered with the many stalks.

Then Wunzh said to his father, "Come with me. I have something to show you." And his father went with him, and he showed him the clearing where his tepee had stood. And it was all a field of green and yellow, like the clothing which Wunzh had worn, when he came from his fast.

Then he told his father of the stranger's visit, and of his dream, and of his overcoming the youth.

“And now, my father,” he added, “the Great Spirit has answered my prayer. From this time on life will be less hard for the Indian, for he shall have other food than game and fish. The Great Spirit has caused this grain to grow, and it is good for man to eat. Taste it, my father, and see.”

And this is the story the Red Men tell of the gift of the maize, or Indian corn.

## THE STARS THAT DANCE

(Iroquois)

**M**ANY years ago in the Indian country a company of eleven young men went out from the village of their fathers. They were going to prepare themselves for the war dances, and for battle with their foes.

Away into the forest they went, but before they left the lodges of their people, their leader said, "You, our parents, must prepare food, that we may have strength for the trial that is before us."

Then they went away, singing the war songs of their nation, while their leader beat upon the water drum to give them courage and endurance.

On they marched until they came to the part of the forest where they were to begin their training, and there they stopped and prepared a rude lodge for shelter.

Many days they stayed, practising the light step of the hunter which falls as softly as a

falling leaf, or dancing the war dance to the beating of the drum.

But at length they grew weary and faint, for day after day had passed, and no food had been sent them from the lodges of their fathers.

Then their leader sent one of their number back to the village, and he told the people that the young men were faint and weary, and in need of food. Yet the people sent them no food, and the young man went back, weak, and empty-handed.

Once more the young men began their dancing, for their hearts were full of courage, and Indian youths are strong to endure. Then, once more, they sent to the people asking for food, but still no food was given them.

Then a third time they sent, and yet in vain.

That night, as the youths slept, quite exhausted, in their lodge, their leader was awakened by the sound of singing. Slow, and soft, and alluring were the voices; and they seemed far above the earth.

The leader wakened his companions, and together they listened. Then, one by one, the young men arose, and new strength seemed to come into their limbs, and new courage into

their hearts, and dancing, they followed the sound of the singing. On and on they went, and then they seemed to be lifted from off the earth, but still they danced as higher and higher they arose. Now they were past the tree tops, now they were above the mountain tops, and now high up among the clouds. And still they danced the war dance of their nation, faster and faster, as the music led them on.

The Night Wind saw them. "They follow the song of the Sky Witches," he cried in alarm, and he hastened to overtake them and turn them back. But they paid no heed to the Night Wind, for the song of the Sky Witches had charmed them, and they followed on dancing.

The people of their village caught sight of them as they passed far over their heads, and they ran from their lodges and called to them. "Come back! Come back!" they cried. "Look down upon us, and the spell will be broken. Heed not the song of the Sky Witches!"

But still the young men followed on,—all but one, their leader, who, hearing the voice of his mother, turned his head and looked back. The spell of the Sky Witches was broken, and down, down he sped to the earth.

## THE WHITE HAWK

(Shawnee)

**W**AUPEE was an Indian youth, and a mighty hunter. The meaning of his name was White Hawk. He was tall, and strong as the great oaks of the forest. He was fleet of foot, and keen of sight. When he drew his bow, his arrow went swiftly to the mark.

The Chief of the tribe said, "White Hawk will provide well for the maiden he chooses as his wife. He has the flesh of every animal for food. He has the skin of every animal for his lodge and for his clothing."

But Waupee lived alone in his lodge. He loved the chase, but as yet he cared for no maiden.

One day, as he followed a deer through the forest, he went far away from his lodge; far away from his usual hunting ground. Beyond the forest he saw an open space where the grass grew green, and yellow blossoms studded it like stars in the sky.

Waupee passed swiftly through the forest until he came to the open space, and there, as he looked about, he discovered a curious thing. It was a circle, where the grass bent down as though many feet had passed lightly over it. He wondered what dancing feet could have made this circle in the grass. And he wondered still more when he looked all about and could find no trace of a footstep outside it.

“How did they come? How did they go?” questioned Waupee in amazement. “I must know more of this.”

So he hid himself among the trees in the edge of the forest and waited.

He had hunted long: the drowsy insects droned about him, and at length Waupee fell asleep. Soon he was aroused by the sound of tinkling music. It was like the ringing of a silver bell.

He started up and listened. It seemed to come from the sky. He looked up; then he stood still and waited.

Directly over the circle upon the prairie grass there was descending something—Waupee knew not what. It was like a boat, but its colors were like the colors of a sea shell, changing from silver to green, to pink, and to blue.



The wonderful boat came to rest in the center of the circle, and out of it stepped twelve maidens, more beautiful than any Waupee had seen before.

Taking hold of hands, they danced lightly round and round, while the silver bells kept time to their steps. Their eyes were bright as the stars, and a star rested upon the breast of each maiden. But though all were beautiful, Waupee was attracted by one alone, and she was the youngest.

“I must have this maiden for my own!” cried Waupee. He ran from the shelter of the trees and would have clasped her in his arms, but he was too late.

The startled maidens sprang into their boat, which lifted instantly and carried them away.

Waupee watched until they disappeared among the clouds. Then slowly he returned to his lodge, but he could think only of the beautiful maiden with eyes like stars, and he determined to use all his powers to win her.

The next day, at the same hour, he was again at the edge of the forest, but this time he had changed to the form of the white hawk, whose name he bore.

“I will wait until they dance,” he said to himself, “and then I will fly to the maiden of my choice. I will change to my own form and clasp her in my arms.”

So Waupee waited, and as before he heard music like the tinkling of silver bells, and the boat with its changing silvery colors floated down within the circle.

Out stepped the twelve maidens and began their dance.

Waupee was too eager to wait, and he flew at once from the tree. But the moment the maidens heard the sound of his wings, they sprang into their boat and were carried swiftly back to the sky.

Waupee, resuming his form as a man, sat down in the forest, and drew his blanket over his head, as the Indians do when they mourn. He feared that the maidens would nevermore return.

But after a time his courage and hope came back, and he determined that he would not give up until he had captured the maiden who had won his heart.

On the third day he was again at the edge of the forest, and there he noticed the half-decayed

stump of a tree. In and out, about the stump, a dozen field mice were playing.

“Now you must help me, little brothers,” said Waupee. He lifted the stump and set it down near the magic circle in the field. The little field mice continued to play about it as before. Waupee changed himself into the form of a field mouse, and began running about with the others.

He soon heard the tinkling music, and looking up saw once more the silvery boat floating down from the sky.

When it touched the earth the star maidens sprang out and began their dance. But one of them saw the old stump.

“That was not there before!” she cried, and running from the circle she looked closely at it.

“Let us return!” said the youngest maiden, but the others replied, “But look! Here are field mice running about. Let us chase them!”

The little mice ran in all directions, and the maidens ran after them, laughing, and threatening them with their silver wands.

And the one that the youngest maiden chased ran far from the others. Then, just as the maiden reached him, and would have struck him

with her wand, the little field mouse changed suddenly to the form of a man,—and it was Waupee.

He caught the maiden in his arms, and he told her how she had won his heart by her loveliness, and begged her to stay with him.

The other maidens, frightened at the sight of Waupee, sprang into their boat, and it rose and bore them away.

Then the youngest maiden wept, but Waupee comforted her, for he was strong and brave, and a mighty hunter. And her heart was won, and she went with him to the village.

So Waupee was wedded to the Star Maiden, and she was the loveliest maiden in all the tribe.

The next year Waupee and his bride were made still happier by the coming of a baby boy, and the White Hawk was the proudest father in all the tribe.

But after many moons had passed, the Star Maiden grew lonely for her father, and for the scenes of her star home in the sky. And so, one day, she took her little son by the hand and led him to the magic circle in the grass of the prairie. In the center of the circle she placed

a boat which she had woven from the grass and rushes of the meadow, and she and her little son stepped into it.

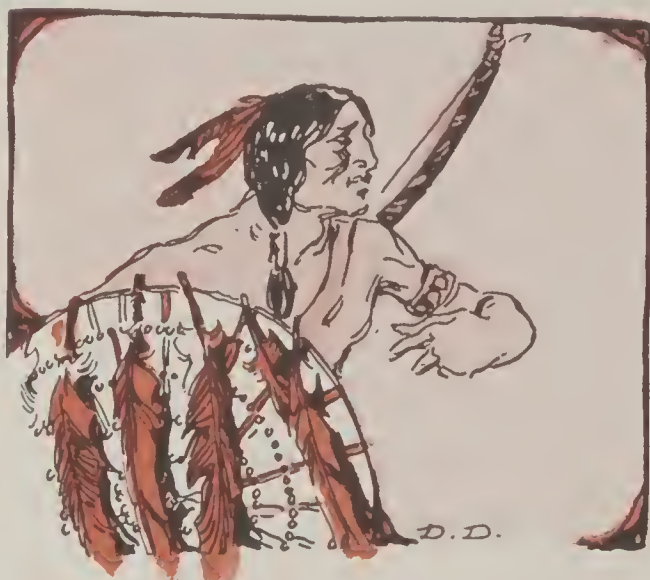
Then she sang the song of the silvery bells which had been always in her heart, and the boat of woven rushes began to rise.

Up and up it went until it carried the Star

Maiden and her son far away to the Sky Land.

Waupee, far away at the chase, heard the strains of the magic song and ran to the spot, but he was too late. He saw the boat with its occupants disappear among the clouds, and then he sat down upon the prairie, covered his head with his blanket, and mourned. And no one in all the tribe could comfort him.

The Star Maiden and her son were welcomed by her father, and for some time they were happy. Then the boy began to long for his father, the White Hawk, who was so strong and brave. And his mother, too, secretly longed for



"WAUPEE HEARD THE STRAINS  
OF THE MAGIC SONG"

Waupee and the home he had made for her.

One day her father, who had noticed, said to her, "Go, my daughter, back to the Earth country. Tell your husband that I want him to visit me in the land of stars, and bring him here to dwell with you and your son. But before he comes have him shoot one of every kind of bird and beast, and bring a specimen of each to our Sky Land.

So the Star Maiden gladly took her son and stepped into her boat. Then singing the magic song which was always in her heart, they were carried back to Earth.

Waupee's heart leaped up like a deer when he heard the music of the song, and running to the magic circle he clasped his wife and his son in his strong, loving arms.

The Star Maiden gave him the message from her father, and though Waupee loved the forests and the prairies, he prepared to go to the Sky Land. He hunted day after day, and from each bird or animal that he shot he cut a wing, or a foot, or a tail, to carry with him. At last he was ready, and with the Star Maiden and their son, he stepped into the magic boat and was carried far up to the land of stars.

All the people of that far-off country gathered to greet him, and to welcome the return of the Star Maiden and her boy. Her father took the great bundle of strange objects that Waupee had brought, and he said to his people: "Come, I will let you choose! Those of you who wish to stay in the Star Land may remain as you are. The others may select one object from this strange bundle, and according to your choice, so shall you be in the future."

Many of the people crowded forward, and one took the tail of a deer, and immediately he was changed into a deer, and bounded away to the Earth country. Another took the claw of a bear, and at once he became a bear, and shuffled off to find his way to the Earth. And so it was with the choice of every one. Some became birds and flew away.

"Come," said Waupee, to the Star Maiden, "let me choose the wing of the White Hawk, and do you the same, and our son. Then we may visit both the Earth and the Sky, and be always together."

So they chose. And so they have lived, ever since.

## HOW MOSQUITOES CAME TO BE

(Iroquois)

**I**N the long-ago time, the Red Men tell us that their fathers were greatly troubled by the visits of an enormous bird called Mosquito. No one knew whence it came, or where it went. But always it brought terror and destruction.

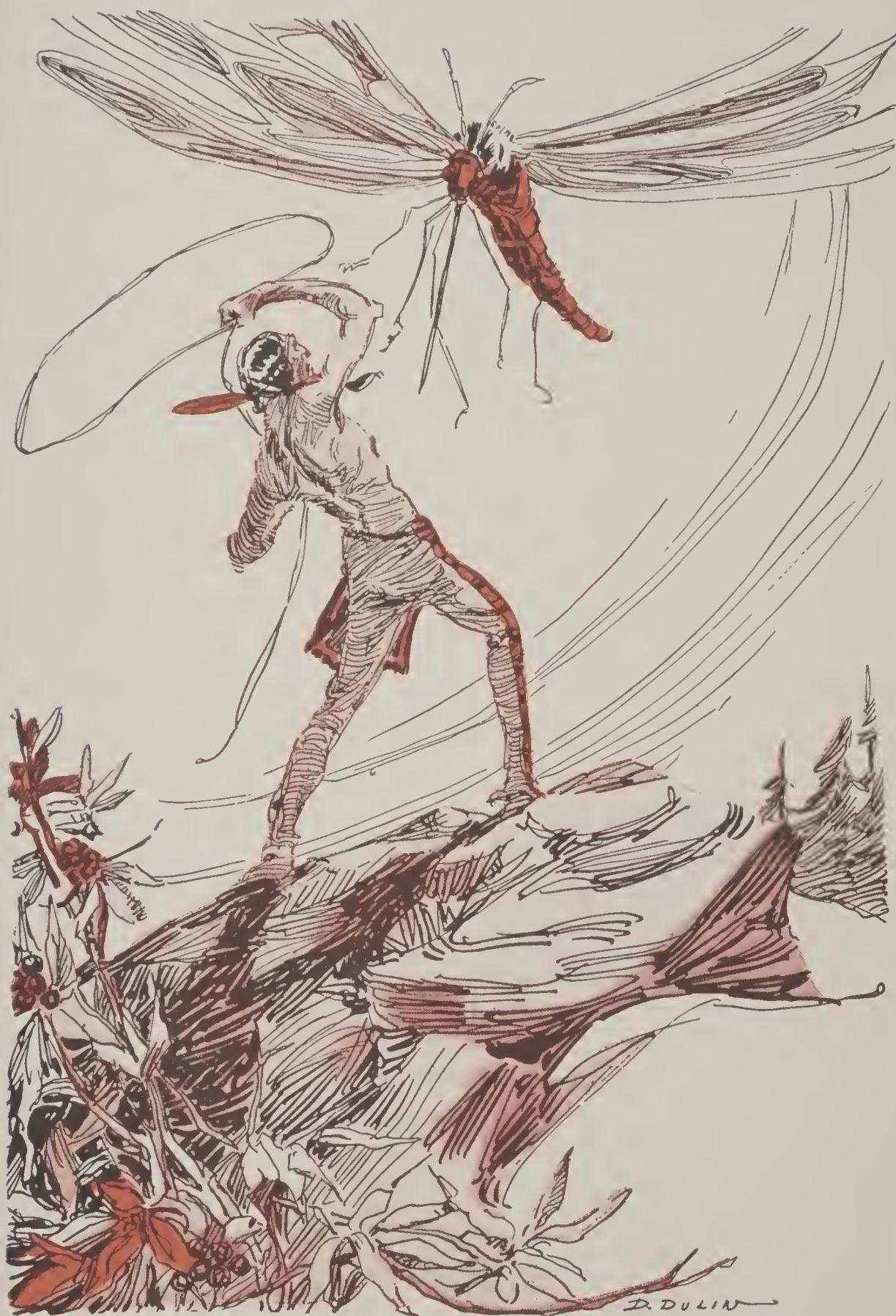
Sometimes it would fly over the growing corn and with the great force of its wings beat it all to the earth. Sometimes it would swoop down and strike a child playing beside the lodge. Again it would come swiftly and throw a man or a woman of the tribe to the earth, and leave them bleeding and torn.

At length its visits became so frequent that the people were afraid to leave their lodges, and so a great council was called, to see what could be done to get rid of the monster.

At this council one of the young braves said, "I will go out and try to snare the bird. I will offer my life to save my people."

The young man cut strong bands of rawhide.





"WITH A TERRIBLE CRY THE GREAT MOSQUITO FLEW DOWN  
WITH HIS ENORMOUS WINGS OUTSTRETCHED"

He said, "I will try to throw one of these bands about the great bird, and snare him before he ends my life. Then you must come and kill him."

So the young brave started out, and when he reached a bare place on the mountain side he sat down on the ground and sang his death-song while he waited.

Presently, with a terrible cry, the great Mosquito flew down with his enormous wings outstretched, and just as he buried his talons in the young warrior's flesh, the brave youth sprang erect, threw one of the rawhide thongs about the foot of the bird and bound him to the rock.

The men of the tribe who had watched the conflict ran to the mountain side and let fly their arrows. Soon the great Mosquito lay dead upon the rocks.

There was great rejoicing in the village. The news was spread by runners, so that braves both young and old came from neighboring tribes to see the body of the monstrous bird.

"The body should be burned," counseled one of the old men of the tribe; but so proud were they of the young warrior who had given his

life to free the Red Men of this great foe, and so eager were they to show the huge size of the monster, that they gave no heed to his advice.

One day they noticed that small stinging flies began to buzz about. Nothing like them had ever been seen before. Their number increased, and then the people noticed that they came from the body of the great bird. And the insects bit and stung them.

“It is a new plague,” said the Indians. “We should have given heed to the counsel of the old man of the tribe, and burned the body, for we know that all evil things are cleansed by fire.”

And so the little stinging insects were called mosquitoes, and to this day they are a trouble and an annoyance to mankind.

## HOW BIRDS AND FAIRIES CAME TO BE

(Algonquin)

**O**NCE—oh, a very long time ago—there were no birds and no fairies upon the earth. Now I will tell you a story of their beginning, as the Indian grandmothers tell it to the Red children.

Ten beautiful sisters lived in the lodge of their father, and no maidens in all the tribe were so good to look upon as they.

Young warriors came and sought them in marriage, and one by one the sisters went away to the lodges of their husbands, until only one was left in the lodge of her father.

This one was Oweénee, the youngest of all, and the most beautiful. Many warriors had sought her favor, but she was not easily won. Her sisters mocked her, but she cared not for that. “I shall know when the right suitor comes,” she said to her own heart, and went about her duties in her father’s lodge.

One day an old man came to the lodge door

and talked with the youngest sister, and though he seemed old and bent with years, her heart told her, "He is the one for whom you have waited." And so, when he asked her to go to his lodge and be his wife, she consented.

Her sisters mocked her more than before, but they and their husbands went with Oweenee and the old man along the path.

The married sisters led the way, and the old man, whose name was Osseo, and the youngest sister, Oweenee, walked behind, and the girl was kind and thoughtful, and watched the steps of Osseo with care.

But what was her surprise, as they were about to pass a hollow log, to see him suddenly dart into its open end and almost immediately come from the farther end—not old and bent, but the youngest, the strongest, and the most active of all the warriors in the company. Then he took the hand of the youngest sister, and together they led the way to his lodge.

The eyes of the youngest sister were bright with happiness, but the older sisters were dumb with astonishment.

When they entered the lodge of Osseo, they found a feast prepared. The food was plain,

and the dishes were of wood. The lodge, too, seemed shabby and poor. But while they ate, the lodge began gently to rise from the ground. Up and up it went, and its shabby sides began to gleam like silver. The food became the richest and choicest, and the dishes became like shells of radiant colors.

Up and up the lodge continued to go, until at last it reached the Sky Land, and stopped before the doorway of the Evening Star.

The Evening Star greeted them and spoke to Osseo. Then the sisters and their husbands, who had scoffed at Oweenee, knew that the old man whom she had married was no other than Osseo, the Son of the Evening Star.

And Evening Star said, "You and your beautiful bride are welcome to my lodge, but these others who have scoffed at her and at you may not come inside. They may stay at the lodge door."

Then the lodge of Osseo became a wonderful silver cage, and the sisters and their husbands were changed into singing birds, with plumage of brightest colors, blue, and red, and orange, and scarlet. And they flew about in their silver cage, and sang to Osseo and his bride.

Now Osseo grew stronger and more manly day by day, and his bride grew sweeter and lovelier to look upon. After many moons had come and gone there came to Osseo and his wife a little son. As the boy grew he seemed brighter than the starlight, and Osseo and Oweenee loved him dearly; but his grandfather, the Evening Star, loved him best of all.

One day Evening Star said to Osseo, "You must be careful not to let the light beams from the small Star that dwells near by fall upon the cage of singing birds, or upon yourself, or your wife, or your son. The Star is an evil spirit, and the light beams are his enchanted arrows. They change the form of all those upon whom they fall."

So Osseo promised to be careful. But after many moons had passed, he forgot about the light beams of the Star neighbor.

He made a bow and arrows for his little son, who loved to play at shooting. Then one day the boy said, "I want to shoot some living thing. How shall I learn to be a hunter if I have no game to shoot?"

"I will open the silver cage," said Osseo, "and you may shoot at the flying birds."

Then the little boy was pleased, and he drew his bow, and Osseo opened the door of the cage.

Out flew the birds, glad to stretch their wings, and the boy sped his arrow after them. But swifter than his arrow was the light beam of the little Star, and it fell upon the birds and the boy.

Immediately they became enchanted. The birds flew swiftly down to earth and lighted upon an island in the midst of a green sea, and the little boy, the grandson of Evening Star, floated softly down after them.

Then Osseo was full of sorrow, and he said to his father, "Oh, father! let us go also, my wife and I, that we may not be separated from our son."

So Evening Star permitted Osseo and Owee-nee to enter the silver cage, and silver wings were given it, and it flew down to the island in the midst of the green sea.

And then the enchantment of the little Star changed all of them to Fairies, and joining hands they danced and sang in the starlight, while the Evening Star looked down upon them from his far-away home in the sky.



WHY THE ASPEN LEAVES ARE  
NEVER STILL

(Blackfeet)

“WHY are the leaves on the aspen tree never still, Grandmother?” asked one of the Indian children of the old basket weaver. “I have watched them so many times, and they always talk together.”

“You are right, my daughter. When there is no breath in the heavens, the aspen leaves still talk.”

“Is there a story about the aspen tree, grandmother?” asked the little girl. “Will you tell it to me, if there is?”

“Yes daughter,” replied the old woman, “there is a story about the aspen tree which it is good that you should hear.”

Taking her basket upon her knees and continuing her weaving, the grandmother told her story:

“Many, many moons ago there was a young

warrior who was lonely in his father's lodge, and he said to himself, 'I will seek a maiden to wed, and make ready a lodge of my own.'

"So he watched the maidens of the village, and he found two sisters who seemed so modest, and kind, and good, that he knew not which of them to choose.

"When he went to their father's lodge, he was kindly treated by both. They gave him words of welcome, they smiled upon him, and they prepared food and set it before him. Both could weave fine baskets for the lodge, and make rich embroidery of quills.

"Many times the young brave went to the lodge, but he could not tell which maiden would make the better wife. And at last he said to himself, 'I will try magic. I will get the medicine man to help me.'

"So he visited the lodge of the Medicine Man, and after a time there came away from the Medicine Man's lodge an old man, bent, and leaning upon a stick. He walked feebly, and his garments were ragged. His hair was white, and his chin quivered with age.

"The old man went to the lodge of the two maidens and begged a bit of food. The younger



"THE OLDER SISTER LOOKED ON WITH SCORN"

sister asked him to come inside the lodge and rest. Then she prepared some nourishing food and gave to him, and while he ate it she noticed that his feet were barely covered with pieces of skins tied about the ankle. She hastened to finish the moccasins that she was embroidering, and gave them to him, so that his feet should not be bruised with walking.

“The older sister looked on with scorn, and made unkind remarks. She asked her sister why she should spend time upon a forlorn old man who could never repay her. She laughed at his ragged garments and at his quivering chin and feeble knees. Then in a sharp voice she bade him begone before her lover should come from the hunt.

“The old man went away, after thanking the younger sister for her kindness.

“A short time later, the young warrior came to the door of the lodge, bearing upon his shoulders a deer which he had shot. Both sisters smiled at him and bade him enter. He passed the older sister without a glance, and laid the deer at the feet of the younger.

“As they looked down at the deer, both sisters discovered that the young man had upon

his feet the moccasins that the younger sister had just given to the strange old man.

“‘I seek a maiden to be the light of my lodge,’ he said, ‘and by magic I have found that one. I was the old man who came hither for shelter and comfort, and so I learned how to escape a sharp tongue and bitter words.

“‘But the Medicine Man’s charm has not yet finished its work,’ he added. ‘I do not want another to suffer the fate I have so narrowly escaped.’

“He took the younger sister by the hand and led her from the lodge. The older sister followed, and as she stepped outside, her feet became rooted to the ground, and she was turned into an aspen tree.

“The younger sister became the light of the young warrior’s lodge; but the aspen tree, like the older sister, while beautiful to look upon, has since that day had a whispering and unruly tongue.”

## WHY THE BABY SAYS "GOO"

(Algonquin)

**M**ANY, many moons ago there lived among the Red people a warrior who was greatly respected and admired by all his tribe.

When an enemy came to attack them, this warrior was always the first to resist. His arm was strong, and his arrows went true and straight to the mark. He had gone alone on many a daring hunt, and had contended with the fiercest beasts of the forest and slain them. But greatest of all, he had fought alone with mighty giants, and overcome them, so that his tribe was rid of their evil magic. It was no wonder that the people thought him great.

But then, as so often follows, the warrior became puffed up with thoughts of his own courage and power, and he was filled with pride, and boastings.

"There is no one, among men or beasts," he said, "who does not fear me. All men obey me. They tremble at the sound of my voice."

Now there was in the tribe of this warrior an old grandmother to whom age had given great wisdom. And she thought within her heart, "Our warrior is becoming puffed up. He thinks too well of himself. It would be good for him to be humbled." So among the women she said, "There is one whom I know, who is greater than the mighty warrior. *He* would not tremble at his voice, nor obey his word."

This saying was repeated to the men of the tribe, and in time it came to the ears of the great warrior himself. Immediately he went to the lodge of the grandmother.

"What is this, that I hear?" he enquired. "Show me who it is that will not obey my voice! Tell me his name!"

"His name is Wasis," replied the grandmother, "and he sits inside my lodge."

The warrior threw back the hanging of deer skin covering the entrance of the lodge, and strode within. There, upon the ground, sucking a piece of maple sugar, sat Wasis, the baby. The warrior looked at him in surprise. He knew nothing about babies, having been too busy all his life with battles and adventures to pay any attention to the little people of the

tribe. But here was just a tiny fellow. It would be no trouble to get him to obey!

So without any ado, the warrior said, "Ho, baby, come here to me!"

The baby looked at him, but did not move. He repeated his command. The baby stopped sucking his maple sugar long enough to say "Goo, goo," but he did not move.

Then the warrior said, "I will show him that I am to be feared, and then he will obey me." So he began a war dance, and uttered fierce war cries, and Wasis opened his mouth and sent forth such piercing yells and shrieks, that the warrior stopped in amazement. And when he had stopped the baby began sucking his maple sugar again.

"Ho, baby, come here to me!" he repeated once more, but at that the baby again opened his mouth and cried so lustily that the great warrior covered his ears and ran from the lodge. "It is worse than the war cries of the Frost Giants!" he exclaimed.

"Did he obey you?" asked the grandmother.

"No," said the warrior. "He is a little fellow, but he is mightier than I."

"Yes," answered the grandmother, "Wasis,





"WASIS SENT FORTH SUCH PIERCING YELLS AND SHRIEKS,  
THAT THE WARRIOR STOPPED IN AMAZEMENT"

the baby, conquers us all, and no one can resist him.”

And the baby, left alone in the lodge with his maple sugar, stopped now and then to say, “Goo, goo!” For had he not conquered the mighty warrior, the great brave of the tribe?

## WHY THE SQUIRREL COUGHS

(Algonquin)

A GREAT trickster was Manabozho. He loved to play jokes upon his friends of the forest.

One day he invited them all to a feast in his wigwam. And every one came, from the woodpecker and the tiny mouse, to the great moose with branching horns.

It was a time of scarcity of food, and all were glad to be asked to a banquet.

But the meat that Manabozho had ready for his guests, he had prepared by magic—though of that no one knew except himself.

When all had assembled, Manabozho gave to each a portion of meat. The woodpecker was the first to taste of his, and as he took the delicious looking morsel in his mouth, it turned to ashes on his tongue, so that he was choked and began to cough. But the meat looked so good, and he was so hungry that he tasted again, and again it turned to ashes and choked him.

Every guest had the same experience. The little mouse, the otter, the badger, the fox, the wolf, and even the moose tasted his portion and it turned to ashes on his tongue.

In vain the guests tried to be courteous and to stifle their coughing, but it grew worse and worse as first one and then another ate of the meat.

At length there was such a deafening noise in the wigwam, caused by the chorus of coughing and strangling from so many throats great and small, that Manabozho picked up a club in pretended anger. Threatening them with it, he drove them out of doors, where he changed them all to squirrels.

And that, the Indians tell us, is the reason that the squirrel coughs.

## WHY THE FROGS CROAK

(Algonquin)

“**M** O-O-O-O-RE, mo-o-o-o-re!” croaked a big frog in the marshes. “ ’Tis enough, ’tis enough, ’tis enough!” answered a smaller frog.

But the big frog called again, “Mo-o-o-o-re, mo-o-o-o-re!” And again the smaller frog answered, “ ’Tis enough! ’Tis enough!”

“What is it the frogs are quarreling about, grandmother?” asked a little Indian girl, and the grandmother replied, “About the water, I suppose.”

“Why do they quarrel about the water? Is it a story, grandmother?”

“Yes,” said the grandmother, “it is a story. Listen and I will tell it to you!”

“In the long-time-ago all the waters of the land were tied up. The Indian people grew thirsty, and more thirsty. Their fields were drying up. The flowers withered. The people said, ‘We shall die!’

“Then there came to one of the villages the giant, Rabbit, and he said, ‘What is this I hear about the waters being tied up?’

“The Chief answered, ‘For many days there has been no water. The streams are empty. No little rivers come down the mountain side. Our corn is drying up. Our people’s throats are parched.’

“The giant, Rabbit, said, ‘I will go into the mountains and see who has tied up the water.’ Then he strode away, taking such great steps that he was out of sight in a moment.

“Up the mountain went the giant, and when he came to the top he found a tribe of men there, and they had tied up the water so that it stood in great pools which had grown green and slimy, because it was no longer fresh.

“‘What are you doing with the water?’ asked the Rabbit, and his voice rolled down the mountain like thunder. ‘Do you not know that the tribes below you are dying for want of it?’

“The Chief of the strange tribe came out to answer the Rabbit. He was fat and ugly, and his back was covered with green slime from the pool.

“‘We need the water for ourselves. It was



DOROTHY DUNIN

"HE WAS FAT AND UGLY, AND HIS BACK WAS COVERED  
WITH GREEN SLIME FROM THE POOL"

running away down the mountain, so we stopped it,' said the Chief.

“Rabbit reached out and caught the Chief by the back of his neck and shook him. The giant's grasp was strong, and the Chief's eyes bulged from his head, and he swelled up till he was puffed out all over, from trying to get his breath.

“‘So shall you look, you and all your tribe, hereafter,’ said Rabbit, holding him off and looking at him. Then he threw him into the green pool, and all his tribe with him.

“After that Rabbit untied the water, and all the little streams began to flow down the mountain. Our people, at the foot of the mountain, saw them coming, and they gave thanks to the Great Spirit, because he had helped the giant, Rabbit, to give them water again, that they might live.

“The tribe at the top of the mountain became frogs, as you see them now, and they have traveled to many parts of the land; but wherever they go they keep on quarreling about the water, as you have heard them this day.”



# THE ROCK OF THE MEASURING WORM

EL CAPITÁN, IN THE YOSEMITE

(California Tribes)

TWO small Indian boys were seated before the tepee fashioning bows and arrows.

“Mine is not good!” exclaimed one of the boys, throwing aside the stick with which he had been working. “Besides, I am tired of sitting still. Let us go for a swim in the river.”

Away they dashed, running swiftly, as the Indian child is taught to run. Into the water they jumped, swimming, diving, splashing, and stopping now and then for a water battle.

At length they had had enough of the water, so out upon the bank they came.

“Let us climb upon this rock to dry ourselves. Its top is flat, and the sun is warm upon it.”

So they climbed upon the flat rock, and in a few moments both boys were fast asleep. Then a strange thing began to occur. The rock slowly and gradually commenced to stretch itself up,

up, up, higher, and higher, and higher. And the boys continued to sleep.

Taller, and taller grew the rock, carrying the boys upward on its flat surface until at last their faces were bathed by the clouds that floated in the sky. And still they slept.

For many moons they slept; for a whole snow.

In the meantime the people of their village missed them and began to search. They searched by the river, and in the forest, but no one could find the missing boys. There was great sorrow in the village.

None of the people knew of the great rock. Only the animals knew.

Then one day the animals came together, and they said, "What is to be done? The people are sorrowing because of the boys that are lost. Can we not return them to their friends?"

So the animals decided to try to get the boys off the great rock.

"You are littlest," said the lion to the mouse, "you try first."

So the mouse made ready and sprang as high as she could up the side of the rock. Just a hand-breadth she jumped, and fell back into the valley.

So the rat tried next, and he made a mighty effort, and jumped two hand-breadths, and then he too fell back into the valley.

After that every sort of animal jumped in turn, the otter, and the badger, the fox, and the wolf, and the bear, and though each one jumped as high as he could, he jumped only against the side of the rock, and went tumbling back into the valley.

Last of all came the lion. With a mighty roar he sprang—but it was of no use: he too struck the side of the great rock and fell back with the others.

They were about to give up and go back to their homes in the river and in the forest, when a tiny measuring-worm came creeping over the grass. “By your leave,” she said quite humbly, addressing the lion, “I should like to try and see what I can do.”

“Ho-ho,” laughed all the animals together. “Ho-ho!”

But without waiting for their consent, the measuring-worm made her way slowly to the foot of the great rock, and then, little by little, little by little, she drew herself up, up, up the side of the mighty rock.

Up, and up, and up she went, until she was lost to sight of the animals waiting below.

At last she reached the top, and drew herself over the edge. And there lay the two boys, still sleeping.

Then the measuring-worm took the two boys, and started back. She climbed with them down the side of the rock, little by little, down, and down, and down.

At last she came within sight of the waiting animals.

Down, and down still she climbed until she was in their midst.

So mighty was the noise made by the assembled animals that it wakened the sleeping boys, and brought the men and women of the village to the foot of the great rock.

And so the boys were restored to their people.

But the great rock with its almost perpendicular sides stands to-day, lofty and imposing.

## HOW THE FLYING SQUIRREL GOT HIS WINGS

(Iroquois)

**L**ONG ago, in the Indian country, Nuk-da-go was chief of the squirrel tribe. One day he was passing through the woods to see how all the little squirrels were faring, and how they prospered in laying up their store of nuts for the winter.

Now when Nuk-da-go went about the woods he often made himself invisible, for by this means he heard and saw many things which would not have been said or done if the woods people had known that he was near.

On this day Nuk-da-go chanced to pass by the home of a little squirrel, Jo-nis-gy-ont, who had worked very hard all the autumn laying up nuts for his winter's food.

Little Jo-nis-gy-ont lived all alone in a hollow tree close beside a great pine. On one side, near the edge of a bit of marsh, lived Brother

Frog, and on the other side, under some rocks near the pine, lived Brother Woodchuck.

Now for some days Jo-nis-gy-ont had been noticing that his stock of nuts, instead of growing bigger, was growing smaller, though he worked hard every day.

The big hickory-nut tree, from which he carried his stores, was a half-hour's journey away from the hollow tree. To be sure, there were acorns and cone seeds much nearer home, but, as every one knows, the hickory nut is the sweetest nut of the woods.

But of late, when Jo-nis-gy-ont returned from one of his long trips with his cheeks bulging with hickory nuts, he would find *fewer* nuts in his storehouse in the hollow tree than he had left there when he started away. Little Jo-nis-gy-ont had his own ideas, but he thought it best to be frank and friendly.

One evening, as he and Brother Frog and Brother Woodchuck were sitting at the doors of their houses, little Brother Squirrel said, "Neighbors, I have found that there is a thief about. My store of nuts is being robbed." Then he looked hard at Brother Frog and Brother Woodchuck—for in those days, you



“LITTLE JO-NIS-GY-ONT HAD HIS OWN IDEAS”

must know, the frog tribe and the woodchuck tribe were also eaters of nuts.

Brother Frog tried to look very much surprised as he said, “Who would be so mean as to steal from little Jo-nis-gy-ont’s store of hickory nuts? Such a thing would be a shame!” Then he managed to squeeze two big tears from his eyes and let them roll slowly down his fat cheeks.

And Brother Woodchuck said, “Surely no one in the forest would steal from you, little Brother Squirrel! There must be some mistake. Should

I see any robber taking your store of nuts, it would go hard with him!"

But little Jo-nis-gy-ont had his own ideas still,—and so did Nuk-da-go, chief of the squirrel tribe, who was listening, unseen.

That night Nuk-da-go came back to the forest to look into the matter. He found little Jo-nis-gy-ont fast asleep; and down beside the rocks, where Brother Woodchuck had his home, he could see the dirt flying fast. Brother Woodchuck was digging for dear life. Nuk-da-go watched, and as soon as the hole was big enough, Brother Woodchuck began filling it with hickory nuts. Then he ran to the hollow tree, and in a few minutes was back with more nuts, which he dropped into the hole and covered carefully from sight.

Then Nuk-da-go went over to the edge of the marsh, where there was a stirring in the thick moss. Nuk-da-go watched. Soon he saw Brother Frog carefully lifting the moss, while he pushed under it a quantity of hickory nuts. Then Brother Frog hopped away in the direction of the hollow tree, and soon he was back, with his cheeks bulging. Then he dropped more hickory nuts, which he pushed carefully under the moss.



“The hickory-nut tree is a half-hour’s journey away,” said the wise Nuk-da-go. “I will look into this matter further.”

The next day Nuk-da-go went about among all the forest people and told them that little Jo-nis-gy-ont’s store of nuts was being robbed. “Shall we call a council?” he asked. “Shall we bring all the forest people together to find out who is the robber?”

And all the forest people said, “Yes, yes.”

That night the council was held, and all the forest people came except Brother Frog and Brother Woodchuck, who begged to be excused.

“No one can be excused from the council,” declared Nuk-da-go, who had been appointed Chief. “Jo-nis-gy-ont, as you are their nearest neighbor, I appoint you to go and bring them.”

Jo-nis-gy-ont hastened back, but when he told his errand, Brother Frog jumped far out into the marsh and pretended not to hear, and Brother Woodchuck slipped into his home under the rocks, out of sight.

But Nuk-da-go would be obeyed, so he went after them himself, and, being Chief of the Council and Chief of the tribe, Brother Frog and Brother Woodchuck had to come out when

he called them, and they followed him along to the council, looking very meek and very mean indeed.

Then Nuk-da-go stood up before all the woods people and told them why he had called them together, and what he had seen. And when he had finished telling them about little Jo-nis-gy-ont's store of nuts, and about the nuts that were under the rocks, and under the moss, the woods people looked at Brother Frog and Brother Woodchuck and they said, "We will go and look into this, too."

So all the company of woods people went to the hollow tree near the pine and looked at Jo-nis-gy-ont's poor little pile of nuts. Then they went and uncovered the nuts by the rock, and the nuts that were tucked beneath the moss. Then they looked at Brother Woodchuck and Brother Frog, and asked, "What have you to say?"

But Brother Woodchuck and Brother Frog hadn't a word to say! They just looked mean, and ashamed.

Then the woods people decided that Nuk-da-go should be the judge. So he told Brother Frog to sit before him, and he said, "I pro-

nounce you guilty of stealing your neighbor's nuts, and you must be punished. You are fat and lazy. Your food flies past your door, and you have only to put out your tongue and catch it. Your little neighbor has to travel far for his food. You sleep all winter and have no need to store supplies. Jo-nis-gy-ont stays awake, and must eat. So your crime is doubly bad, and this shall be your punishment: Hereafter you shall not be able to eat nuts, for you shall lose all your teeth. Go to your home now, and steal no more."

Brother Frog hopped away, very sad and very much ashamed, and with the first hop every one of his teeth dropped out,—and the frog tribe have had no teeth from that day to this.

Then Nuk-da-go turned to Brother Woodchuck, and said, "You, too, are found guilty of stealing your neighbor's nuts, and you shall be punished. Like Brother Frog, you are fat and lazy. You sleep through the winter and need no food, while Jo-nis-gy-ont must work hard for his. Go home. You shall not lose your teeth—for Brother Woodchuck was holding his paws tightly over his mouth and quaking with

fear—but from this day on you and your tribe shall live upon leaves and grain and the growing things of the fields and forests, but no more shall you enjoy the taste of flesh, or the sweet meat of nuts.”

Sad and ashamed, Brother Woodchuck turned away when Nuk-da-go finished speaking, for this was a hard punishment indeed.

Then Nuk-da-go turned to little Brother Squirrel and said, “Jo-nis-gy-ont, you should have been more watchful of your store of nuts, and not have slept so soundly when robbers were about. But the woods people are sorry for you, and so I shall give you something that will help you to go quickly from tree to tree, and to hasten home in time of danger.”

Then Nuk-da-go spread a web of skin from the fore legs to the back legs of Jo-nis-gy-ont, to form wings when he leaped, so that he could jump swiftly and far.

From that day to this the tribe of Jo-nis-gy-ont has had wings, and this is the Indians' account of the first flying squirrel.

## WHY BROTHER BEAR WEARS A STUMPY TAIL

(Ojibwa)

**I**N TIMES long past Brother Bear was a famous fisherman. He had a large stock of patience, and great good nature. He was never in a hurry.

But Brother Bear was honest as he was slow, and always ready to believe what others told him, and so he was often imposed upon by the slyer animals—Brother Fox, for instance.

One day as Brother Fox was walking beside a stream, he saw a group of plump little animals slip into the water and disappear from sight.

“Young otters, I do believe!” cried Brother Fox, smacking his lips. “What a meal they would make!” Then he sat down beside the stream and began to think. He did want those otters so badly! He could not think of anything else that would taste half so good. But how to get them! That was the question.

Presently, while he was thinking, along came Brother Bear shuffling down the path with a load of nuts and honey.

“Good morning, Brother Bear,” said Brother Fox. “I see you have a load of excellent food—excellent for you, I mean. My tribe never eats nuts or honey. But perhaps you would not mind adding a bit of tender meat to your load.”

“Meat? No, indeed,” replied Brother Bear. “But where am I to find it?”

“Why,” said Brother Fox with his craftiest smile, “there are some young otters in this stream. I just saw them slip into the water. It seems to me that they would make very good eating for you and your family.”

Brother Bear smacked his lips. “But how am I to get them?” he asked.

“I am no fisherman, as you well know,” said Brother Fox, “but you are a famous fisherman. Why can you not fish for them?”

Brother Bear thought for a moment. “But I have no bait,” he said.

“That is true,” replied Brother Fox, “but I will tell you what to do. Just go out upon that log that lies near the shore and drop your fine

long tail into the water. I feel sure the otters will think your tail good bait, and when one comes to nibble it, you can jerk up your tail and just whip the otter over to the shore. I will guard your game for you until you finish fishing."

"Very good," agreed Brother Bear, "I will try that."

So Brother Bear laid down his load of nuts and honey, made his way to the log, and climbed upon it. Then he let his fine long tail drop down into the water—for this was in times long past, you must remember, when the tails of the bears were long—and then he closed his eyes and sat very still.

Presently he felt a nibble at his tail, and he whipped it up, as Brother Fox had told him. Sure enough, a fine young otter went flying across to the bank where Brother Fox lay waiting behind a bush.

"That was pretty well done!" thought Brother Bear, as he dropped his tail into the water again and waited. Presently he felt another nibble, and another otter went flying across to the bank. And soon it was followed by a fish, and then by another fish.

“What a fine dinner I shall take home to my family,” thought Brother Bear to himself, as he began trying to count the number of times his tail had been nibbled, and he had sent something flying across for Brother Fox to guard.

While he was trying to count, North Wind came along and saw him sitting there with his eyes closed, and his tail hanging down in the water.

“I shall have to play a trick on Brother Bear, I do believe!” chuckled North Wind to himself, and he sent a cold breath over the water, so that it became quite still. Then he sent another breath, and a cold, shining crust formed all across its top. After that he sent another breath, and another, and the cold, shining crust grew thicker and thicker.

Presently Brother Bear stopped trying to count and opened his eyes. “Brother Fox,” he called, “there seems to be no more game in the river. I have not felt a nibble for a long time.”

But Brother Fox was just finishing a nice bone, and he called back earnestly, “Oh, be patient, Brother Bear! I am sure you will catch more game if you wait a little longer.”

So Brother Bear closed his eyes again and





"NORTH WIND SAW HIM SITTING THERE WITH HIS EYES  
CLOSED AND HIS TAIL HANGING DOWN IN THE WATER"

sat still for several minutes. Then he called, "Brother Fox, I am sure there is no more game in the river. I am coming ashore now."

There was no answer from Brother Fox, so Brother Bear moved a little on the log, but it was a very little, for his tail felt heavy as lead. "Why," he exclaimed, "I must have an enormous fish now, my tail is so heavy!" And with that he gave a great jump, intending to carry the game with him to shore, when, snap! his tail broke right off short, for it was frozen fast in the ice. And that was the trick that North Wind had played.

Brother Bear felt terribly at losing his tail, it had been such a beautiful, long one! But at last he comforted himself by thinking, "Well, at any rate, I have a wonderful feast to carry home to the family: nuts, and honey, and fish, and game." So he licked his lips, in spite of the loss of his tail.

But when Brother Bear reached the shore, he could not find Brother Fox anywhere! And neither could he find the fish, nor the tender young otters. Instead, he found a heap of fresh bones back of the bush where Brother Fox had been lying. And then he knew that

Brother Fox had played a bad trick upon him, too.

He gathered up his load of nuts and honey and went sadly home. And from that day to this Brother Bear has refused to do any more fishing, and has worn a stumpy tail.

## THE THUNDER PEOPLE

(Passamaquoddy)

ONCE upon a time a young Indian warrior was hunting with his bow and arrows. He followed far after a fleet deer, until he found himself standing upon a great rock, high above the plains.

The clouds were gathering thickly. The sky was black with clouds. The Indian youth was far away from his lodge.

Again he saw the deer, and he drew his bow. But as he did so the deer was changed into the form of a maiden, standing against the rock.

The youth dropped his bow in wonder. He looked at the maiden. In the distance he heard the voice of the thunder.

“Who are you?” he asked in amazement.

And the maiden answered, “I am the sister of the Thunder Men. Will you come with me and visit our home?” The youth consented, and the maiden struck the great rock against which she had stood.

There was a flash, like a flash of lightning, and the rock opened and made a passage for them.

The maiden led the way, and the youth followed; and when they had passed through the rock, they came into a strange country—to the home of the Thunder Maiden. The floors and walls were of clouds, and the clouds were of every shade, from silver gray to the deepest purple black. They were soft to walk upon, and smooth as the smoothest velvet. And their changing shades were more wonderful than any artist could paint.

The maiden's robes were of trailing silver, and her hair was black as midnight.

She led the youth to her father, who sat upon a throne formed from the deepest purple clouds. His hair and beard were white like the mists that float across the sky. But his robe was black, with here and there a dash of brilliant gold.

“Welcome, my son,” said the old man. “Have you come to dwell among us?”

The youth looked at the beautiful maiden, and he answered, “Yes, my father.”

So he became one of the Thunder People.

After a time the brothers of the maiden returned home. And when they saw the youth and knew that he had come to dwell among them, they proposed a game of ball.

Now their balls were big and black, and very heavy; and they did not throw them, but rolled them back and forth across the clouds. And the noise was very great.

When the father of the Thunder Men saw that the youth was strong, and could roll the ball well, he said, "You shall go with my sons to-morrow. You shall see greater sport than this."

In the morning, when the Thunder Men put on their great purple wings, the maiden brought forth another pair and fastened them upon the shoulders of the youth. Then they all flew away to the south. They carried bows, and their arrows were of gold.

Their wings made a mighty roaring and crashing as they flew, and the people on the earth said, "Listen, how the thunder roars and crashes!"

Then they shot their golden arrows from their bows, and the earth people cried, "See, how the lightning flashes across the sky!" And

some of the earth people ran and hid, for they were afraid.

But the old man of the thunder world had said to his sons: "Shoot your arrows only at the great bird of the south, which is our enemy. Destroy not the people of the earth. And fly not too low. Touch not the trees, for they are our friends."

So they flew about for a time, taking care where they sent their arrows. And when they had grown tired of their sport, they flew back to their home in the clouds and took off their great purple wings.

For many moons the youth enjoyed the company of the Thunder Maiden, and took part in the sports of her brothers. But at last there took possession of him a great longing to visit again his brothers and sisters of the earth. He longed to chase the deer in the forest, to follow his chief in battle, to smell the fire of his lodge.

He told his longing to the old man of the Thunder World, and the old man said he should have his way. So for the last time the Thunder Maiden fastened his purple wings to his shoulders, handed him the golden arrows, and bade

him good-bye. Then away he flew with the Thunder Men.

Closer and closer to the earth they went, and the people covered their ears to keep out the crash and roar of the thunder; and they covered their eyes to keep out the sight of the dazzling, flashing lightning.

“Oh, what a storm!” cried the earth people, as they looked toward a hill outside their village where the noise seemed most deafening, and the glare seemed most blinding.

And there, on the hill, the Thunder Men left their Indian brother; then, with many a rumble and flash, they flew away back to their home in the clouds.

When the people looked again, the storm had lifted, and a warrior was seen descending from the hill to the village. They recognized him as the youth who had been lost for many, many moons.

As they sat together around the fire of the lodge, the youth told them the tale that I have told you, of the Thunder People who dwell in the purple clouds.



## KEEPERS OF THE WINDS

(Algonquin)

**M**UDJEKEEWIS, father of the four winds of heaven, had three sons. Their names were Wabun, Kabibonokka, and Shawondasee. Mudjekeewis said to the chiefs of his people, "You have named me Kabeyun, the West Wind, and have given to me all the four winds of the heavens. I will appoint my three sons to be keepers of the north wind, the east wind, and the south wind."

So to Kabibonokka he gave the north wind, to Wabun he gave the east wind, and to Shawondasee he gave the south wind.

Wabun was a hunter. He liked to rise early and to leap upon the mountains in pursuit of the wild deer. He liked to shoot with his bow and arrows. He was glad that the east wind had been given to him, for he loved to watch the heavens in the early morning when the sun shot its first rays across the mountain tops where he hunted. He said to Mudjekeewis,

“I am most grateful, my father, that the east wind has been given into my keeping. When I hunt in the early morning I will shoot away the clouds of darkness with my silver arrows; I will chase away the shadows.”

So Wabun cared for the east wind, and each morning he painted the sky with wonderful colors. He sent his silver arrows down to the earth to waken the people, and to light up the lakes and meadows.

At last Wabun grew lonely in his home in the eastern sky, and he began to watch day by day for a beautiful maiden who walked upon the prairie gathering grasses for her baskets. And Wabun wooed her with his soft breezes, and with sweet flowers, and with the songs of birds. And when he had won her heart he changed her into a beautiful star, which he set in his home in the heavens.

Kabibonokka, the second son, was very different from Wabun. He was cold and cruel, and he was glad that the north wind had been given to him. When he sent his winds across the earth the leaves upon the trees turned to crimson and gold, and were very lovely, but they whirled and twisted in the wind and said



"WABUN WOODED HER WITH HIS SOFT BREEZES . . .  
AND THE SONGS OF BIRDS"

to each other, "Our days will soon be at an end. We shall soon turn dry and brown and fall to the earth. Kabibonokka laughs when we put on our beautiful colors."

Then Kabibonokka sent icy blasts, and the waters of the lakes froze, and the snows fell, and the winds came through the door of the tepee, and life became hard for the people. And Kabibonokka laughed, and his laugh was like the whistling of the wind through the bare tree tops. The fish were deep beneath the frozen waters; the snow covered the tracks of the animals of the forest. Food was scarce, and hard to obtain.

Only the bravest of the Indians could fish and hunt when the north wind blew its coldest. Shingebis was one of these, and he never lacked for fish or fuel.

"I will get the best of Shingebis," said Kabibonokka, and so one morning he went to Shingebis' tepee. And Shingebis asked him to eat with him, and he gave him a meal of fish. And Kabibonokka ate greedily. But the warmth of Shingebis' tepee was too great for him, and he had to go away. As he left he tried to put out the tepee fire, but Shingebis blew upon it

and it burned more brightly, so that Kabibonokka had to hasten. In revenge he froze the waters more deeply, but Shingebis only laughed, for no weather was too cold for him to find fish for his dinner.

But the Indians did not love Kabibonokka, for he was cold and cruel.

Shawondasee was not like either of his brothers. He was fat and lazy. He loved to lie upon green banks under shady trees. He loved the sweet flowers, and the warmth of the South Land. He was far too lazy to send strong winds such as came from the North Land. His breezes were soft and traveled slowly, and they were sweet with the perfume of southern groves and meadows.

Shawondasee, like his brother Wabun, saw a beautiful maiden that he loved. Do you remember the story? Her hair was of golden yellow, and she nodded and swayed in the breeze. Her home was in the meadows, and Shawondasee looked for her day by day, and wafted sweet odors and fair flowers to her, and he won her love, even as Wabun won the love of the prairie maiden. But he was too sluggish to go himself to win her, and to bring her to his home in the

South Land. Instead he said to himself each morning, "To-day I will go and seek the golden-haired maiden, and bring her to my home," but each day he was too indolent.

The days went by, and at last the golden hair of the maiden turned silvery white, and when Shawondasee saw this he heaved a great sigh, so great a sigh that it reached even to the maiden, and lo, all the silver white of her hair was scattered over the meadow!

So Shawondasee still lives alone in the South Land, and sends gentle sighing breezes to the meadows of the North.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.  
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide  
Treatment Date: March 2010

**Preservation Technologies**

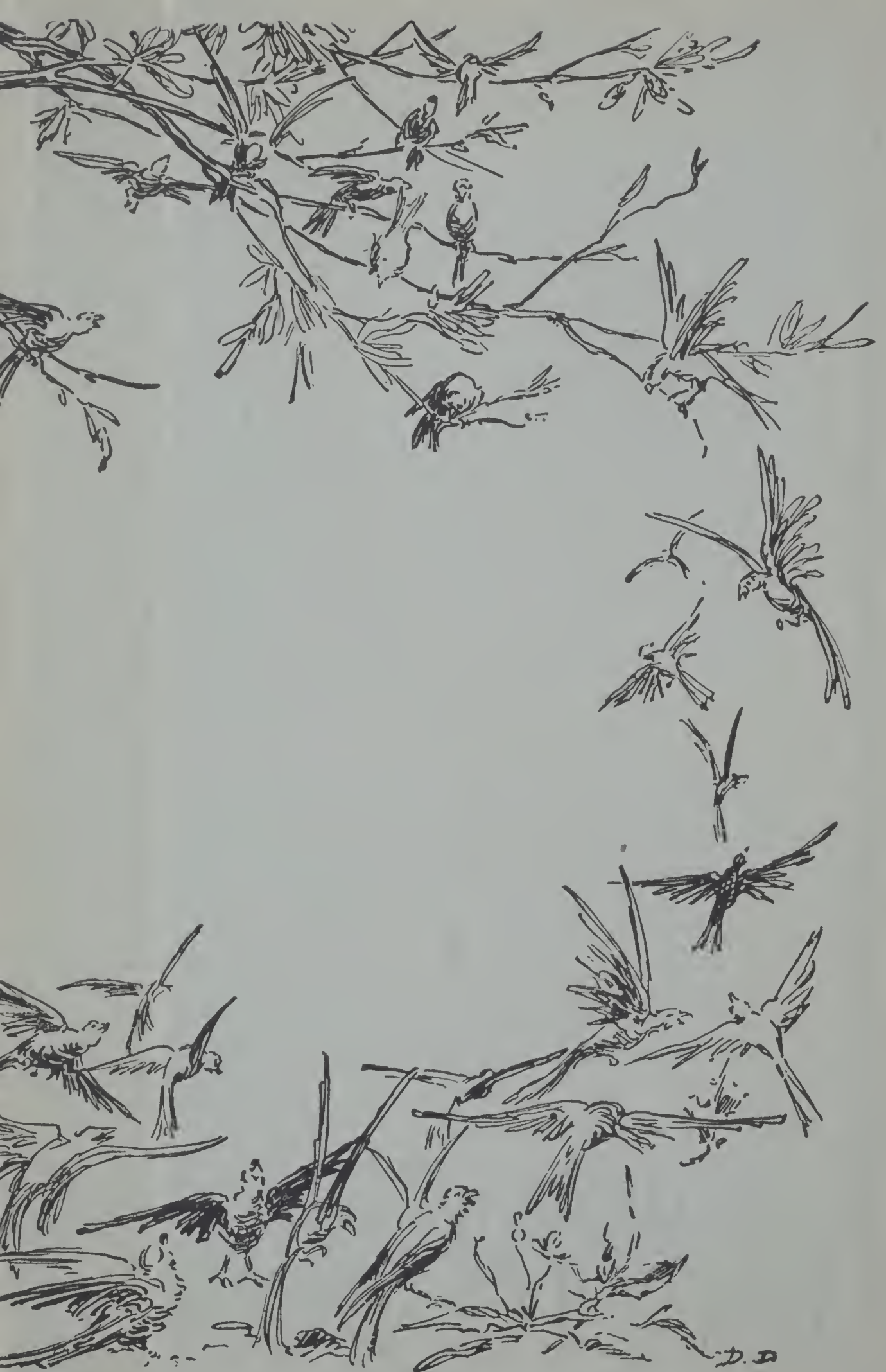
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