

ALINGA, THE LIZARD MAN, AND HIS BOOMERANG

(This is legend of how Uluru, the aboriginal sacred rock was formed.)

AT THE BEGINNING OF TIME, Alinga, the Lizard Man, was a great and powerful warrior. Alinga was known and respected throughout the land for his exceptional skill in boomerang throwing.

Such a giant was Alinga and so powerful was his special boomerang, that when he threw it, the boomerang took weeks to come back, sometimes even months.

Alinga was a very patient man. Whenever the boomerang disappeared out of sight, he waited for it. He knew it would return soon.

One day Alinga took his great boomerang and threw it as far as he could. It disappeared for weeks. The weeks turned into months, the months into years... and the boomerang did not return.

Alinga loved his boomerang. Finally, he couldn't wait for its return, so he decided to go and search for it.

He walked across the desert, up the Northern Territory, but he did not find his boomerang. He turned south.

After many moons, Alinga finally found his boomerang.

It was stuck in the ground. After many sandstorms the giant weapon was turned into the enormous rock, right in the centre of Australia, which the Aboriginal people now call Uluru.

Anxious to return to his people, he left the boomerang there, stuck in the rock, and started his long journey back to his tribe.

Today you can see Uluru, the enormous rock, as it was formed in the desert, back at the beginning of time, in the Dreamtime.

HOW THE BIRDS GOT THEIR COLORS

WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG, a beautiful arch appeared in the sky. This arch, which was the rainbow, seemed to take color from all around. There were all the reds, the blues, greens, yellows, and purples. It continued growing and growing, right before your eyes.

Slowly, the rainbow began to vibrate as it grew larger and larger. Then, finally, it exploded! The rainbow became a million pieces that floated in the air as they slowly descended to the ground.

As the million colorful pieces of the rainbow fell, the pieces changed into all the birds we know today.

Some of the birds, like the crow, didn't like the feeling of falling, and they screamed out in horror, like this: "Aaahhhhh! Aaahhhhh! Aaahhhhh!"

Other birds thought it was the funniest feeling they ever had and started to laugh, "Haaaaaa! Haaaaaa! Haaaaaa!", just like the Kookaburra.

Still others thought it was the most beautiful feeling of all, so they spread their wings wide, opened their throats, and started to sing the most beautiful songs you could ever hear.

That is how the birds got their colors and their voices, because of that rainbow, way back in the Dreamtime.

THE STORY OF THE DIDGERIDOO

(This is the story of what the non-native people call Didgeridoo
and the Aboriginal people call Yidiki.)

LONG AGO IN THE DREAMING, a man called Yidiki, who was a brave warrior, was coming home from the hunt when he saw, lying on the ground at his feet, a hollow branch. A storm had blown it down from a tree. The branch's larger end was crawling with lots of tiny white termites. Termites are white ants that live in the branches of trees.

Now, curious, Yidiki picked up the hollow branch and blew through the smaller end to send the termites out. The branch made a strange and powerful sound.

His interest grew. Quickly, he made a fire and burned out the rest of the termite nest inside the branch. This made the branch completely hollow.

He then went to a place where there were wild bees and he took some wax from their hive. He molded the wax and shaped the smaller end of the branch to fit his mouth.

Yidiki found that, by practicing breathing in through his nose and out through his mouth at the same time, he could make rhythms, as well as many bird sounds and other animal sounds.

He was very excited, so he took this discovery back to his tribe. When they heard Yidiki play this new instrument, they were delighted by the sounds it made.

They painted themselves and danced to the rhythm of the hollow branch. In time it became very popular and was used for sacred ceremonies and also for healing people who were ill.

During his lifetime, Yidiki the warrior taught many other young men how to play the hollow log.

If you listen to this natural instrument, the sounds will reach and open your heart and lift your spirits, as they have done for the Aboriginal people since the beginning of time.

WAYAMBAH, THE TURTLE

(This is the story of how turtles came to be.)

A LONG TIME AGO, Wayambah the Warrior was returning from hunting when he saw a beautiful young woman from a another tribe picking waterlilies from the lagoon. Her name was Bilbil.

Wayambah crept quietly behind the woman and grabbed her. Bilbil was so afraid.

“I won’t hurt you!”, Wayambah told her. “I just want to take you back to my tribe. You will be my wife and I will look after you”.

When Wayambah’s tribe saw him bringing home a woman from another tribe, they asked him if her tribe gave her to him.

“No. I have stolen her”, he replied.

The elders were very angry, and one said to him: “You have been very foolish! We had chosen a wife for you. We don’t want to fight with her people!”

“What you have done will start a tribal fight!”, said another. “We must punish you before her tribesmen come”.

So they began to throw their clubs at him. The clubs were thrown at him straight and fast.

Wayambah had two big shields to protect himself from the clubs. He held one on his front and one on his back to protect his body. He began to back away from everybody, but he didn’t see he was so close to the water. Holding tight to both the shields, he stepped back, and back, and back... into the water.

The angry tribe arrived just as Wayambah disappeared under the water. Everyone waited to see him come up. They waited a long time, but he was never seen again.

Time passed.

One day, while the tribesmen were fishing, they saw something they had never seen before. Together with the fish in the stone traps, there was a creature that had a shell on its back and carried a shell in front of its body.

The people stared in amazement. "That is Wayambah!", they said. "He never returned to the land again!".

Wayambah still lives in the water and carries the two shields today. That is how the turtle came to be, back when the world was young, back in the Dreamtime.

HOW THE KANGAROO GOT ITS POUCH

WHEN THE WORLD WAS YOUNG, the gentle Kangaroo Mother, like all mothers, was always looking after Joey, her young baby. Young Joey was like most children. As soon as his mother turned her back, he disappeared and Joey's mother had to look for him.

One day, as the gentle Kangaroo Mother was in the plains feeding and looking after young Joey, a weak, old wombat came. He said: "I am weak and old. I am blind. I haven't got a friend in the whole, wide world and I haven't eaten, or had anything to drink, in days!".

"Ooh!", said the gentle Kangaroo Mother. "Why don't you cheer up? It could be worse!".

"What?", said the weak, old wombat. "Didn't you hear me? I am weak and I am old. I haven't a friend in the whole, wide world. I haven't eaten or had anything to drink in days!".

"Alright", said the gentle Kangaroo Mother. "I'll be your friend and take you to some nice, cool water. Hold my tail!".

When they got to the water, the weak, old wombat drank... and drank... and drank. He was very, very thirsty.

When he finished, the Kangaroo Mother said: "Hold my tail again and I'll take you to some nice green grass!".

They got to the grass, and the old wombat munched away.

Suddenly, the gentle Kangaroo Mother stood up. She remembered her Joey and returned to the plains where she had left him. Sure enough, her young Joey had disappeared!

The desperate Kangaroo Mother had to search everywhere for her Joey. She searched all over the plains, up and down the hills and around the bushes. She went in and out of the caves and she asked the other animals if they had seen her Joey, but nobody had.

She was about to panic when she finally found him, safe and asleep, under an old tree. The Kangaroo Mother woke her baby up. Then together they went to where she had left the weak, old wombat. They had to go very slowly. In those days, kangaroos did not have pouches and young Joeys could not jump as far or as fast as their mothers could.

It took them a long time to cross the plains, but when they got there, the weak, old wombat was nowhere. He had completely disappeared.

They searched everywhere for him, but they could not find him. In the end, the gentle Kangaroo Mother said: “The wombat must have gone home!”.

However, the Kangaroo Mother didn’t know that the weak, old wombat was not a wombat after all. He was Biamee, the Creator Spirit, who came down to Earth to find the gentlest creature here.

Biamee found her, of course, through the gentle Kangaroo Mother’s kindness to him. Biamee gave her a bag in reward. The Kangaroo Mother tied it around her waist. Then, Biamee, the Creator Spirit, turned it magically into a pouch.

Young Joey now had a pouch where he could peak out and see the rest of the world. Or he could hide really quickly in the safety of his mother and fall asleep in his mother’s warm pouch.

When the Kangaroo Mother thought about her pouch she said: “This really isn’t fair! I am the only kangaroo with a pouch. What about my cousins and relatives? What about the wallabys, and the rat kangaroos?”.

Biamee agreed with the Kangaroo Mother and, because she thought of others, Biamee allowed pouches to grow on all the gentle marsupial mothers throughout the whole world.

So, because of that gentle Kangaroo Mother’s kindness, all the kangaroos received pouches, way back when the world was young.