

CULTURAL NEWS

The Creation Story - Part 9

Later, Kahnia told his grandmother, "I showed my brother the human beings, deer and bear I made and he said that I didn't make them right. I think I can still make a being that will be different than the first one I tried to make. I'll make them and send them to my brother's island to find their food. I want my animals to feed on my brother's creations. If my brother feels this is unfair, then he and I will have to fight to settle it. You and I will go to my brother's lodge tomorrow."

Grandmother felt sorry for her favorite grandson. She couldn't understand how Thoronhiawakon could be so cruel and make fun of Kahnia's creations. As she thought about their trip she wondered, "How will we cross the river that separates us from your brother's island?" Kahnia said, "Don't worry about it. I'll build a bridge tonight." Grandmother said, "Well, the only way I'll go with you is if you can get the bridge to float."

When the evening came, Kahnia said, "I'm going to work on the bridge and when I finish you should be ready to cross the river. I should have it finished when the daylight comes." Leaving the lodge, Kahnia looked up and prayed, "Oh, black night, you have the power to grant me the strength to complete this task in the span of a night. We will cross the river in the morning."

The night started growing colder until daylight came. Thoronhiawakon was sitting in his lodge thinking, "My brother, Kahnia, has the power to destroy the plants that I have planted. He's causing it to be so cold now. Using the powers of darkness he has made it cool and only when daylight comes will it be warm again. I should assign someone the duty of mak-

ing sure it doesn't become too dark at night. Maybe it's good that my grandmother comes to visit me tomorrow. I will make sure to take care of the night."

The next day, Thoronhiawakon was surprised to see his brother and grandmother coming. As soon as they reached the island, Thoronhiawakon asked them, "How did you get across the water?" The grandmother said, "Your brother built a bridge and we used it to cross the river."

Meanwhile, the sun has risen in the sky bringing warmth to the Earth. Kahnia was in a hurry when the sun rose. He said, "We can't stay too long. We need to cross back over the water soon. If we stay too long, it will be impossible for us to get back to our island."

The grandmother was annoyed with Kahnia's impatience, "It's your brother who will decide how long we stay here. We're the visitors here." Thoronhiawakon said, "I'll prepare some food first and we'll eat. After we finish, let's walk around and look at all the new things that live here."

Then Thoronhiawakon brought out some corn and roasted it. The sweet odor filled the air and oil dripped from the corn. Tempted grandmother asked, "Would it be all right if I took a single grain off the corn and ate it?" Thoronhiawakon said, "No, you have to wait until it's cooked then we'll eat this together. We should share it.¹⁶"

The grandmother was filled with anger, "I'm not asking for such a big thing. Why can't you spare an uncooked piece of food?"

Thoronhiawakon patiently told her that it was not the custom that he followed here on his island. But, the grand-

mother persisted, "After it's cooked can I have a small portion of the food to take home?" Thoronhiawakon was surprised at the way his grandmother was acting and told her, "You can't take any food away from here because the food is to be shared by all. All people have an equal right to the food here on Earth."

The grandmother threw her shoulders back and scolded, "I can't believe how stingy you are with the food!" She turned and went to stand by the fire. Picking up a handful of ashes, she threw them on the roasting corn. As soon as she did so, the sweet odor left and the oil stopped flowing, then she said, "You made these laws to suit human beings and I'm not happy about it."

Sadly Thoronhiawakon looked over his corn, "You've done a terrible thing. You destroyed something that gives comfort to those humans that will live on earth¹⁷."

After the roast corn was cooked, the group sat down and ate the meal. When they had finished eating, Thoronhiawakon said, "Now I want to show you the fruit that is by my lodge."

Reaching the tree, they each took a piece of fruit off the tree and ate it. Again Grandmother asked, "Can I take another one to bring back with me?" Thoronhiawakon said, "I'm sorry, but you must wait for the fruit to ripen. After it ripens, you can have some. You see, when it's not ripe, the animals eat the fruit."

Turning and heading for the lodge, the grandmother left the group. She went inside and grabbed ashes from the fire throwing them onto the tree, covering it in ashes. It immediately turned black all over¹⁸. Grandmother turned to Thoron-

hiawakon and hissed, "You have used your power to please the people who will live on this earth but you have forgotten us, your family. I can find no comfort in these laws. In the future, human beings will call this the sour fruit. They will not be able to make use of it. The game animals won't be able to eat it either."

Thoronhiawakon was really hurt by her actions and warned, "You have put too much effort into trying to hurt your grandchildren. It's not a good idea to let you see what I have planted and the game animals I have made."

Glaring at her grandson she challenged him, "We're going home now. I'll be back in ten days and we'll settle everything. You and I will bet for everything on the Earth¹⁹. If I win, I will control everything. If you win, I will leave you alone and not try to destroy what you are working on." Thoronhiawakon was heartbroken, "If that's the way you want it, I guess I have to agree."

During the time that they were on the island, Kahnia studied the new human beings and marvelled at how strong and fine they were.

Seeing this his brother said, "The Earth is young yet. Its power is growing along with its land mass. Its orenda is growing. All things that are made from the Earth will start out young like the Earth and, in time, they will grow like the Earth and their powers will grow."

Kahnia said, "I understand what you're telling me. I'm tired and I think it is time we left for home." But when they reached the shore of the island there was no bridge to be seen. Grandmother was anxious to leave after her confrontation with Thoronhiawakon, "How are we going to cross the river now that the bridge

is gone?"

Kahnia thought about it and assured her, "I'll make us a canoe. He started working and had it finished in no time. They crossed the river arriving back at their own lodge, their heads spinning from the events of the day. Kahnia said, "Ah, we are home. Now I'm going to make all kinds of animals and I'm not telling my brother about them."

Over the next several days Kahnia ignored everything around him as he worked rapidly creating one animal after another. For each one that he finished he would command it to stand up and walk. The first animal tried to get up but couldn't. Instead, it dragged its body along. The next animal also tried to stand and it too could only drag its body.

He made the bodies as fast as he could. As he finished each one he threw their bodies aside and went on to the next. They were monstrous looking creatures of all shapes and sizes.

Kahnia thought, "I'll just continue to make animals. If I make too many, it doesn't matter, they can go over to my brother's island. I think I'll even have them cause trouble for my brother."

As soon as he had a large population, he instructed them to cross to his brother's island where the food would be abundant. Kahnia told them that they could eat anything that was growing, including the animals and human beings.

Eventually these fierce creatures dove into the water and crossed to Thoronhiawakon's island. These hideous animals climbed onto land and began roaming about.

When Thoronhiawakon became aware of the new creatures he did not want

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