



Grandfather and Grandson and an Eagle Woman

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Native AmericanNorth American

Easy
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A GRANDFATHER and grandson lived far away from any village. All the people of their nation had been carried off. The grandfather was very careful of his grandson for he was the only comfort he had.

One day the boy ran into the cabin, and said, “Grandfather, I heard something out in the woods crying, ‘kidjidi! kidjidi!’”

“Oh,” said the grandfather, “that was a chickadee, that is the first game hunters kill.”

The boy went out with his bow and arrows and after many attempts he killed a chickadee. When he took it home the old man danced with joy, singing as he danced, “My grandson will be a great hunter! My grandson will be a great hunter!”

Another day the boy ran in crying, “O Grandfather, I’ve seen something with four legs, and a tail with four black stripes around it!

“That was a coon,” said the grandfather. “That is the second game hunters kill.”

The boy killed a coon, and the old man danced and sang, “Oh, my grandson will be a great hunter! Oh, my grandson will be a great hunter!”

The next day the boy ran in crying, “O, Grandfather, I’ve seen a strange thing walking on two legs. Red skin hangs from its head, and it makes a great noise.”

“That was a turkey,” said the grandfather. “That is the third game a hunter kills.”

The boy went to the woods and when he saw a flock of turkeys, he ran till he caught one of them. Again the old man danced and sang, “My grandson will be a great hunter.”

The boy went out another day and saw a long creature with thin legs and something, like the branches of a tree, on its head. He was frightened; he ran home and told his grandfather what he had seen. The old man said, “That is the fourth and largest game; that was a deer. When a man can kill a deer he is a good hunter.”

The next day the boy killed a deer.

The old man didn’t dance or sing this time; it was a solemn occasion. He taught the boy how to dress the deer and stretch the skin, then he said, “You are a young man now. You needn’t run in to tell me what you have seen, kill anything that comes along. A man that can kill a deer can kill all kinds of game. When hunting you can go in any direction except the North, wicked women live in the North; women who have killed many of our people.”

The young man went toward the South, but he kept thinking about the women who had killed his relatives and at last he turned and went North. After a time he came to a tree that was covered with scratches, like the scratches made by a coon’s nails. He said in his mind, “It must be that there are a great many coons in this tree.”

He threw off his blanket, took a stick and his bow and arrows and climbed up till he came to a hole in the tree; he looked into the hole and, seeing a number of coons, poked his stick down, killed two or three of them, pulled them up and threw them to the ground. As he did this he looked down and he saw, near the foot of the tree, a

beautiful young woman.

As soon as he saw her, she called out, "Come down, I want to talk to you."

He paid no attention to the woman, but kept on killing coons. She called again and again. At last he went to the other side of the tree, turned himself into a red-headed woodpecker and went up the tree pecking the bark.

When he got to the top he shot an arrow off toward home. The arrow whizzed through the air, making a noise like a woodpecker.

The woman, thinking that the boy was in the arrow, hurried after it.

The young man took his own form, slipped down from the tree, put on his clothes, gathered up the coons and went home. The grandfather was glad to get the coons, but when he knew where his grandson had been he was angry. "You must not go there again," said he. "If you do, great harm will come to us."

The next day the young man started off toward the South, but when out of sight he turned and went North. He went beyond the first tree and came to a second tree covered with scratches. He climbed the tree and killed a number of coons, then he looked down and saw, sitting on a log, near the foot of the tree, the same young woman. As soon as he saw her, she began to urge him to come down. She talked with enticing words. He knew that he ought not to go, but the feeling came into his heart that he wanted to. He went half way and stopped. Again the woman urged. At last he went to the ground and sat down on the end of the log—the woman was sitting in the middle.

"Why do you sit so far away?" asked she, "A young man and a young woman sit near each other when they talk."

He drew a little nearer, then she urged him to come up close to her. At last he sat by her side. She told him stories and talked till he fell asleep then she put him in a skin bag, took the bag on her shoulders and hurried off through the air.

After a long time, the woman came to the ground, took the young man out of the bag, roused him, and asked, "Do you know this place?"

"Yes, my grandfather used to fish here."

“I don’t believe it,” said the woman, “Point out something you remember.”

“There are the poles we put up; and there is the old kettle we cooked in.” He willed that she should see those things; he bewitched her eyes.

Again she told him stories till she put him to sleep. A second time she carried him far away. When she came to the ground and opened the bag, the young man found that he was on the shelf of a high cliff. On narrow places near him were other men, some alive, some half eaten up. “Oh,” thought he, “my grandfather was right, there are bad women in the North.” He called to the man nearest him and asked how he came there.

“A woman brought me here; other women brought these other men to where they are; many men have been eaten up; you and I will be eaten when they come to us.”

The young man thought how he might escape. All at once he remembered that, on a time, a great spider had appeared to him in a dream, and had promised to help him when in trouble, and he cried, “O Spider, help me now!”

Right away an enormous spider was there on the top of the cliff and it began weaving threads for a rope. When the rope was long enough the spider let it down and the young man climbed up on it. Then he let the rope down and drew up the men on the cliff one after another. All the men went home except the young man. He set out for the home of the woman who had deceived him.

He found the woman living in an old house with her mother and he said to her, “I have come to marry you.”

The woman said, “I have a very bad mother, I’m afraid that she will kill you; she sent me to deceive you and carry you to the cliff.”

“I’ll try to save myself,” said the young man.

The old woman slept at the end of the house. In the night she began to groan and roll around on the ground.

The young woman said, “Strike my mother on the head with the corn pounder.”

He struck her, and asked, "What is the matter, Mother-in-law?"

"I dreamed that my son-in-law killed the white beaver in the lake and made a feast for the DAGWANOEnYENTS."

"Go to sleep now," said the son-in-law, "I'll do that to-morrow."

The next morning he went to the lake and killed the beaver with a single arrow, but as soon as he lifted it out of the water the lake rose up and pursued him with fury. The young man knew the water was so poisonous that flesh that it touched instantly dropped from the bones, so he ran for his life. He reached the house and threw the beaver down. That minute the water disappeared.

The old woman was raging, she said, "Oh, my poor son, my poor son! I thought that my son-in-law's bones would be in the lake."

The beaver was dressed and cooked. The man invited the DAGWANOEnYENTS and the GÁSYONDETHAS to come to the feast. They came; the house was full of horrid heads with long hair. When the dinner was eaten to the last morsel, the heads began to smack their lips. "A splendid feast!" said they. "A grand dinner the old woman's son has made us! How sweet his flesh was!"

The old woman was furious; she seized a club and drove the guests away.

The next night the old woman rolled around the house and down to the fire, crying, "Agi! Agi!"

"Oh," said the wife. "This time my mother will dream that you and she must go to the sweat house, you first and then she. Now strike her with the corn pounder."

He struck her and she called out, "I dreamed that my son-in-law went to the sweat house and then I went."

"Go to sleep, Mother-in-law, I'll attend to that to-morrow."

In the morning the sweat house was heated. As soon as the young man went in, the old woman danced around outside and sang "Let there be heat to kill him! Let there be heat to kill him!"

When she thought he was dead she went in, but she found him comfortable and happy. Now it was her turn to

sweat. The son-in-law closed the sweat house, then he danced and sang “Let it become flint, first at a red and then at a white heat.”

Right away the house was flint and red hot.

The old woman was burned up.

“Now,” said the young man to his wife, “You brought me most of the journey on your back, you know the way; take me to my home.”

She put him on her back, carried him over the fields and the woods, past the fishing grounds where he had said that his grandfather used to fish, past the trees scratched by the coons, and at last brought him to his grandfather’s house, and they lived there happily.

The women in this story were eagles.

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