



Whirlwind and Panther

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Native AmericanNorth American

Easy
3 min read

Once, in a Seneca village, a party of men was preparing to go on a hunting expedition. In that village was a young man whom people thought was foolish, not strong of mind. He knew that hunters were getting ready for an expedition and he went to one and another and asked to go with them, but no one would let him go.

After the hunters started a young woman took pity on the young man, went to him, and said, “Let us marry and go hunting.” He was willing. They started off together and after going some distance camped in the forest. The man couldn’t find any big game, but he killed squirrels and small game. He made traps to catch deer and put them down where he thought deer would come.

One morning, when the young man went to look at his traps, he heard some one crying; the sound came nearer and nearer. Soon he saw a woman and two little boys. The woman was crying.

As she came up she said to the young man, “Help me, or we will be killed. One of my little boys stole a feather and pulled it to bits and we are going to be killed for it. I want you to shoot the hawk on that tree over there and when the person comes whose feather my little boy took, throw the hawk at him and call out, ‘Here is your feather!’”

The man killed the hawk and no sooner had he done so than he heard a terrible roar and noise, and trees began to fall. A man came and stood on a close-by tree. This man had enormous eyes and long hair, and that was all there was of him—just a great head without a body. The young man threw the hawk at him, and said, “Here is

your feather.” The Head caught it, said, “Thank you,” and was satisfied.

The woman was a panther and the children were her cubs, but to the young man she appeared to be a real woman. She told him that she lived among the rocks and that the Head (Whirlwind) was her neighbor. While he was away from home, her little boy went to his cabin, found his feathers and spoiled one of them. When Whirlwind came home he was angry and chased her.

She told the young man that she knew he was poor, that no man would hunt with him, and she said, “Hereafter I will help you and you will get more game than any of the hunters, I do this because you saved me and my boys.”

After that the young man killed more game than any other hunter in the village.

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