

Origin Story - Duane Hollow Horn Bear - OSEU 5

You know, all ethnic groups around the world have an idea or a belief as to where everything comes from? Where did this world come from? Where did the sun come from? Where did the moon, where did the trees come from? Where did I come from? And they have a belief in creation, or evolution, or a combination of the two. But they have some sort of idea where everything came from. Well, as Lakota people, we still talk about our origin story, on where everything came from. We talk about an entity, an entity we refer to as Ea.

Ea was a power, a massive power, very, very powerful, very powerful that nothing else could exist except for Ea. Ea at a point took a part of itself and began to form this orb and squeezing and squeezing tighter and tighter and tighter and tighter and tighter until what oozed out of it looked like it's blue blood, leaving a half-hard, brittle body, and Ea called it Makkah, Earth. Makkah existed in total darkness, questioning Ea, what's my purpose? What's my reason for being here? Why am I here? Is there anything else?

Ea took other parts of itself and created Apewi, the sun, Hawewi, the moon, Wichahpi Oyate, the stars, the galaxies, the universe, and put everything in correlation with itself. And time went on. Time went on. But at one point, Makkah complained, when I faced Apewi, it became very hot, uncomfortable. And so when I turn and I face Hawewi, the moon, it becomes dark, and it gets cold. Could you give me a covering, something to protect myself?

Ea, in counsel with the other entities of itself, told Makkah, if we give you a covering, you must promise to bring forth life and to nourish it. Makkah promised. And so life went on. Life went on for a very long time. But at a point, life became ugly, very corrupt, senseless destruction, killing. Makkah said, this is not the way that life is intended to be upon me. I must cleanse. Let's try to imagine all of these catastrophes happening all at the same time. Earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, hurricanes, hundreds of them, hundreds of tornadoes.

Makkah, this one half landmass, shaking and shaking and shaking, shaking so hard that the one half land mass broke apart, broke apart, separating the peoples into the different continents.

Life went on. But at a point again, eons of time later, life again became very corrupt, very corrupt, because I must cleanse again. Those of you that are keeping the ways of life as intended to be, come deep down inside me, where I may protect you. Again, these catastrophes. And it came in the form of the Ice Age, changing the surface of the world when the ice melted back, leaving lakes, bodies of water everywhere, small lakes, rivers.

In this beautiful area today known as the Black Hills, Hesapa, in the southern Black Hills, we have a trickster in our culture. We call him Iktomi. Iktomi was walking around in the Black Hills. He was wandering around. It was an era of giants, giants, dinosaurs, and bears. Iktomi heard this heavy breathing and took to hiding under the bushes because he thought he was going to be trampled. But he didn't hear the thrashing of trees and shrubs, just a heavy breathing. Now, curiosity always gets the best of Iktomi.

So he came out from hiding, listening to that breathing. He followed it. And he came upon this opening in the ground, peered down into that opening and felt a wind come up and a wind being drawn back in. He looked down into the opening and he saw the subterranean species living deep down in that hole, calling down to them. He said, come up here. Come here. But they were afraid. No, no, no. Go away. Leave us alone. I'm not going to hurt you. I'm not going to hurt you. Come up here. I want to show you something.

One brave young individual says, I'll go see. And this individual came out the very first one to come back to the surface of the world. And we call him Tkhokahe, which means the very first. Came back to the surface of the world. Iktomi says, look at you. Look around you. Look around you. Look how beautiful it is. Feel the warmth of that sun. Isn't that nice? Feel that cool breeze. Here, try some of these chokecherries. Eat some of these plums. Aren't they delicious? Lay down in that soft green grass. That little stream of water. Taste that.

It's wonderful. Why do you want to live deep down in that dark hole when you can come up and you can have all of this? Go get your people. I'm going to go find my friend. We're going to prepare a grand feast for you. Bring your people up here. Tkhokahe says, I will do it. He goes back down into the hole, gathers the people together, and he talks about everything he experienced. How wonderful it was. But an elder is there. An elder says, Tkhokahe, there is danger. You do not know all of the danger that lurks up there. Tkhokahe says, no, I have seen it all.

It's wonderful. We must get ready to go. The elder says he's being very foolish. I must go ahead and make plans for when danger strikes. And so the old man sneaks away from the group, comes out of the opening, and transforms into the Buffalo Nation. Tkhokahe and the rest emerge. And Iktomi is there with his companion, Anugite, the double-faced woman. Very, very beautiful on one side. But she would not let the people see her on this side. She served him. She talked to them. Always on one side.

And at a point after the people had gorged themselves, they ate, they were in the water swimming, they were sleeping in the grass. Sunbathing, you might say. And then Anugita turns, and she shows the ugliness, the hideous side of her, and the people panic. They scream. They run back to the opening. But their bodies had grown, because of all the food they had eaten. All of the air that they breathed in, the water.

Their bodies grew. They couldn't fit back into that opening to go back down. Now Iktomi, Iktomi loves to trick people.

And when he sees them make a mistake, or he sees them hurt themselves, or when they're in misery, he laughs. He laughs. I did it. I did it. They're trapped on the surface. I did it. I got him. He's rolling on the ground laughing. Buffalo Nation comes forward. Buffalo Nation says, we are here for you. All that we are is for you. We are your food. We're your shelter. Your medicine. Your tools. And we became known as the Buffalo People. Following the Buffalo. Relying upon the Buffalo for everything. And the Buffalo Nation has never let us down.

Because as we began to adopt and adapt to living on the surface of the world again, you might say we became a little overbearing. Taken more than we needed. Taken without respect. Taken without giving anything back. The four-legged, the winged ones, they cut off communication with us. They say, you know, it's because of these two-leggeds that the world had to cleanse twice. Maybe this would be a better world without these two-leggeds. We should get rid of them. Yes, let's do it. We can do it.

We can send into these two-leggeds all of these illnesses, all of these diseases, and wipe them out. As they were going to proceed to do so. Underneath them, the plant life. The plant life said, it is not up to them to decide who lives or who dies. For every sickness, every illness, they send into the two-leggeds. We have a root. We have medicine. An herb. And so the balance was kept. And life went on. Life went on for a time again. But again, as two-leggeds, we became overbearing. Again, no respect. No honor. Creations.

What are we going to do about these two-leggeds? Oh, Buffalo Nation! Buffalo Nation! You said you would be responsible for these two-leggeds. Look at the way they are. What are you going to do? Buffalo Nation said, we will take care of it. What are you going to do? You cannot go to them the way you are. They're very destructive. They'll kill you. They'll eat you. They consume everything. What are you going to do? Buffalo Nation said, we will take care of it.

So at a point in time, they sent to us from the Buffalo Nation, the White Buffalo Calf Woman, bringing to us the sacred pipe to remind us that there is to be a spiritual connection of what is on this earth is in the stars. It's in the universe. And what's in the stars is on this earth. And the spiritual connection must be kept. Remember that story. Thank you.