



The Secret of Dreaming

Australian Aboriginal Peoples

Once there was nothing. Nothing... but the Spirit-of-all-Life. For a long time, the Spirit-of-all-Life dwelt in the nothing. Then, in the mind of the Spirit-of-Life ... a Dreaming began.

In the empty darkness there was a Dreaming of Fire, and the colors of Fire illuminated the darkness within the mind of the Spirit-of-Life

Then came a Dreaming of Wind, and the fire snapped and snarled fed by the blowing of Wind, in the mind of the Spirit-of-Life.

Then came a Dreaming of Rain, and with it a great struggle.

For a long time, the battle of Fire-Wind-Rain raged in the Dreaming.

And the Great Spirit liked the Dream, so the Dreaming continued.

Eventually, the battle waned between Fire, Wind and Rain.

The calm that followed brought a Dreaming of Earth and Sky, and of Land and Sea.

For a long time this Dreaming continued.

The Great Spirit began to grow tired from the long Dreaming, but knew the Dream was not finished, and wanted the Dream to continue.

So Life was sent into the Dream to make it real, and for Creator Spirits to continue the Dreaming.

So the Spirit-of-all-Life sent the Secret of Dreaming into the world...

And the Secret of Dreaming entered into the Spirit of Barramundi, who is the Fish.

And Barramundi descended to the deep, still waters, relaxed in the calm ... and began to Dream

The Dream took Barramundi to waves and wet sand.

But Barramundi did not understand the Dream, and wanted to Dream only of the deep, still waters.

So Barramundi passed the Secret of Dreaming to the Spirit of the Currikee, who is the Turtle.

Currikee paddled out of the waves, settled onto the wet sand ... and began to Dream.

Currikee Dreamed the smoothness of pebbles, and the warmth of the sun.

But Currikee did not understand the Dream, and wanted to Dream only of the waves and wet sand.

So Currikee guided the Secret of Dreaming to the Spirit of Bogai, who is the Lizard.

Bogai climbed onto a bed of pebbles, felt the sun's heat upon his back ... and began to Dream.

The Dreaming flew Bogai through the clear sky by the lift of the wind.

But Bogai did not understand the Dream and wanted to Dream only of the smooth pebbles and sunshine.

So Bogai ushered the Secret of Dreaming onto the Spirit of Bunjil, who is the Eagle.

Bunjil harnessed the wind under her wings, soared into the cloudless sky ... and began to Dream.

Bunjil Dreamed of tall trees and the blanket of night sky.

But Bunjil did not understand the Dream and wanted to Dream only of the wind and open sky.

So Bunjil released the Secret of Dreaming onto the Spirit of Coonerang, who is the Possum.

Coonerang scampered into the tallest tree, lost herself in the twinkling of stars, ... and began to Dream.

The Dream sang Coonerang the rustle of yellow grass and wide plains.

But Coonerang did not understand the Dream, and wanted to Dream only of great trees and the blackness of night.

So Coonerang allowed the Secret of Dreaming to pass onto the Spirit of Gangurru, which is the Kangaroo.

Gangurru leapt high above the yellow grass, contemplated the wide plain ... and began to Dream.

The Dreaming tickled the ears of Gangurru with music and song and laughter.

But Gangurru did not understand the Dream, and wanted to Dream only of the broad plains and swaying grass.

So Gangurru handed the Secret of Dreaming to the Spirit of Humanity.

And Man and Woman walked across the land and saw all the works of Creation, given life by the Dreaming of the mind of the Spirit-of-all-Life.

Woman and Man heard the chorus of birdsong at dawn, saw the red sun eat the horizon at dusk, ... and began to Dream.

They Dreamed of joining in the music of dawnbirds, of dancing with the head-bobbing Emu, and of sinking into ochre with the sunset.

They Dreamed also of the laughter of Children.

And Man and Woman understood the Dream.

So They continued to Dream, and Dreamed again all the Dreams that had come before.

They Dreamed of the deep, tranquil water, of the waves and damp sand, of the rocks and sunbeams, of the clear sky and breeze, of the trees and the night sky, and of the plains of yellow grass.

And Woman and Man learned through the Dreaming, that all creatures were their spirit cousins, ... and that they must protect the Dreaming of all life.

And They Dreamed of their Child, who They knew would soon arrive.

And They Dreamed of how they would teach these Secrets of Dreaming to this child who was not yet born.

Then the Great-Spirit-of-Life knew at last that the Secret of Dreaming was safe.

Being tired from the Dreaming of Creation, the Spirit-of-all-Life entered the Land to rest and recover.

That is why now, when the spirits of all creatures become tired, they join the Spirit-of-Life in the Land.

This is why the Land is Sacred, and Man and Woman must be its Caretakers, just as They protect the Secret of Dreaming. □

Adapted by Rowan Walking Wolf (2009).

Anticopyright.

Comments

The Dreaming or Dreamtime is for the Australian Aboriginal peoples a sacred world beyond time and space in which the Totemic Spiritual Beings created the world. The Dreamtime seems akin to the *Alam al-Mithal* of the Sufi mystics –equivalent to the *mundus imaginalis* of the medieval philosophers–; that is, an infinite cycle, parallel to material reality that, however, is more real than the supposedly objective reality of the senses. This is also said about the Sufi *Alam al-Mithal*. From the Dreamtime emerge the foundations of Aboriginal society, their symbology, behaviours and laws; in short, their worldview.

Australian Aborigines have the belief that every person has existence in some way in the Dreamtime and that that part of the person existed there long before her birth on Earth and it will continue existing long after her death.

Sources

Walking Wolf, R. (2009). The Secret of Dreaming. Retrieved from:
<https://yggdrasil.distro.files.wordpress.com/2011/10/the-secret-of-dreaming-web-reading.pdf>.

Associated text of the Earth Charter

Preamble: Earth, Our Home.- The protection of Earth's vitality, diversity, and beauty is a sacred trust.

Other passages that this story illustrates

Preamble: The Challenges Ahead.- The choice is ours: form a global partnership to care for Earth and one another or risk the destruction of ourselves and the diversity of life.

Principle 2: Care for the community of life with understanding, compassion, and love.

