

A Battle Between Frost and Whirlwind

[Told by Peter White]

Characters

DAGWANOE ⁿ YENT GOWA	Whirlwind or Cyclone
GÉNO ⁿ SKWA	Frost and Cold
HADIQSADO ⁿ GÉNO ⁿ SKWA GANYUDAI,	The Grave of Frost, or the so-called Stone Coats

DAGWANOEⁿYENT (Whirlwind), an old woman, the oldest of all her people, lived in the forest with her two grandchildren, a boy and a girl.

One day when the grandmother was out digging roots a GÉNOⁿSKWA (Frost and Great Cold) woman came to the cabin, picked up the little girl and, after speaking kindly, telling her she was a nice little thing, swallowed her.

Then she began to talk to the boy. Sitting down by him, she said, "Get on to my back and I will carry you to where your grandmother is digging roots."

The boy did as GÉNOⁿSKWA told him to, but he was frightened, and he clung to her so tightly that he became fastened to her back, and couldn't get off, though he tried hard.

GÉNOⁿSKWA started off, but in a different direction from where the boy's grandmother was. When the boy told her she was going the wrong way, she said, "No, I am not, we will soon come to where she is at work."

The woman went far into the forest and the boy began to cry for his grandmother. He cried so hard and loud that GÉNOⁿSKWA told him to get off of her back. She didn't like to hear him cry, and she thought it was best to eat him at once.

He couldn't get off and she couldn't put her hands around to pull him off, nor turn her head to bite him.

When the boy saw that she couldn't harm him if he stayed where he was, he clung all the tighter and stopped trying to get away.

When the grandmother came home and found that the boy and girl were not in the cabin, she was frightened and began to search for them. After a while she came upon the tracks of the GÉNOⁿSKWA woman and then she knew who had stolen the children and she followed the tracks, thinking she would soon overtake the thief.

The woman was tired of the boy and tried in every way to free herself of him. She rubbed him against hickory trees and against rocks. He said, "Oh, I like that, rub harder." She stopped then and traveled on.

The grandmother followed in the form of a Whirlwind. GÉNOⁿSKWA said to the boy, "Your grandmother is coming. She will kill us both. Get off of my back."

The boy kept still, didn't answer. The woman looked around for a hiding place and found one in a deep ravine. She dug a hole, went into it and covered herself with the earth that slipped down from above. When she heard Whirlwind coming nearer and nearer she asked the boy, "Can you hear your grandmother coming?"

He didn't answer.

When Whirlwind rushed over the place where the woman lay, the boy shouted to her. She heard him and, changing her course, came straight to where they were. When she asked

the boy if he was there, the woman told him to keep still, but he called out, "I am here!"

Whirlwind blew the earth from the hiding place and shouted, "DAGWANOEⁿYENT, get off of GÉNOⁿSKWA's back!" That instant the boy slipped off and went among the rocks. The old woman hurled stones at the GÉNOⁿSKWA, tore off her clothes and killed her. Then she took her grandson and started for home.

On the way, she said to him, "Never let yourself be treated in that manner again. Never let anyone abuse you. You can conquer everybody if you use your power, for you are of the Whirlwind family."

The old woman stayed at home for a time, caring for her grandson.

Meanwhile some of the GÉNOⁿSKWA woman's people found her trail and followed it till they came to where her body was. They asked who had killed her and her spirit answered, "Whirlwind killed me." Right away the GÉNOⁿSKWA men decided to kill old woman Whirlwind.

Whirlwind, out on one of her journeys, discovered their plans. She went home and said to her grandson, "We must get your sister out of GÉNOⁿSKWA 's stomach, she is sitting there and crying for me."

They set out and when they reached the place where the body lay, the old grandmother built a fire and began to burn tobacco, saying, "This is what we like! This is what we like!" She burned half a pouchful and pushed the smoke toward the body, repeating, "This is what we like." Then she called, "My grandchild, come out of GÉNOⁿSKWA's body!"

When the girl didn't come, the old woman said to her grandson, "We must have people come and help us. We have many relatives, uncles, aunts, and cousins, we will call them." Then she called each relative by name, and one after another they came. They built a fire at GÉNOⁿSKWA's head, and burned tobacco, as

they walked around the fire each threw in tobacco, saying, "Ne vonoes, ne vonoes" (This is what we like).

When the last one had thrown in tobacco, the girl, panting for breath, came out and asked, "How long have I been here?" She was very weak. They gave her tobacco smoke and she inhaled it till she gained strength, then all Whirlwinds went home.

When the old woman and her grandchildren had been at home some time, a GÉNOⁿSKWA woman came to the cabin, she talked pleasantly, found out there were only three persons there and left thinking it would be a small task to kill them.

After the woman had gone, Whirlwind said to her grandchildren, "We are in trouble now. A great number of those people will come against us. They have assembled somewhere nearby. When the struggle begins I don't know that we will be able to come home again." She went out and called, "DAGWANOEⁿYENT GOWA! DAGWANOEⁿYENT GOWA!"

The girl asked, "Grandmother, what are you doing?"

"I am calling our relatives," answered the old woman,

The Whirlwinds came, one by one, when all were there the old woman said, "Each one of you must have a big round stone to strike with."

They had just picked up the stones when the GÉNOⁿSKWAs began to come; there were thousands and thousands of them.

The Whirlwinds were frightened when they saw how strong the enemy was. The old woman said, "We must separate and fight singly. Keep the stones in your hands, be firm and have faith that you will kill one man with each blow you strike."

The Whirlwinds went in different directions; the GÉNOⁿSKWAs chased them.

The Whirlwinds struck whenever they had the chance and kept retreating, they went up a high mountain, fighting as they went. The old woman said, "When we all reach the top we will go down a short distance on the other side. When the GÉNOⁿSKWAs come to the top we will strike them on the east and on the west, some of us will get behind them and drive them over the mountain and into the deep ravine on the other side, they will die there for a river runs through the ravine and they cannot cross it.

The GÉNOⁿSKWAs came to the top of the mountain and seeing nothing of the Whirlwinds, thought they had escaped. They stood and listened. Soon they heard wind on each side of them. The sound grew louder and louder and right away the DAGWANOⁿEⁿYENTs struck them on both sides and, uniting in the rear, struck them from behind. So fierce was the attack and power of the Whirlwinds that they tore out all the trees by their roots, swept the earth from the top of the mountain and hurled trees and earth into the ravine and river below. The GÉNOⁿSKWAs were piled up like rocks in the river and along the banks.

The Whirlwinds were dancing and rejoicing on the top of the mountain when the old woman said, "We have hurled our enemies into the ravine, now we will finish them. Half of you go along the ridges east of the river and the other half go along the western ridges and blow all the trees and rocks and earth into the ravine."

They went, and when they came together again they had stripped the mountain spurs naked and filled up the ravine. The river had no outlet; it became a great lake and ever after was called, "The grave of the GÉNOⁿSKWAs."