

## THE FORBIDDEN ARROW AND THE QUILT OF MEN'S EYES.

Related by Edward Cornplanter (Great Night) and recorded as translated by William Bluesky, Ganosho.

Now (it seems), there were twin brothers one named Younger and the other Driven. The brothers were accustomed to play about two hills. Driven would go up one hill and jump to the summit of the other. Younger would stay in the valley between and amuse himself by shooting arrows at him as he jumped. Now, as Driven jumped, Younger sang a song:

"Ha-do-wi, Ha-do-wi, Ha-do-wi,  
O-ne-di-no-o-ha-ga-gon Ha-do-wi!"

Now their grandmother always forbade them to use a certain arrow. This arrow belonged to their father who used it. They played day after day in this manner. After some time, they began to discuss among themselves why it was that their grandmother had forbidden them to use the arrow. Then they decided, notwithstanding, to use the arrow. So, Driven ascended the hill and made ready to jump. Then Younger fixed his arrow ready to shoot. Then Driven jumped and Younger shot the arrow. Now an arrow never before had struck Driven as he jumped but this forbidden arrow pierced his body and carried him in a northward direction. Now as he flew with the arrow the arrow sang, "Gwent-gwe-o, gwent-gwe-o, gwent-gwe-o!" because it was feathered with the feathers of a wild duck. When Younger saw what calamity his arrow had wrought, he gave a scream of alarm and started off in the direction of the arrow. He ran a long distance and after some time found the body of his brother transfixed to the earth with the arrow. He was not dead so he lifted him up and placed him on his back. Then Driven directed him to follow a northward road.

"There is a house a certain distance away," said Driven, "where a number of women are gathered dancing. We must pass this house but we must not look upon them. Oh brother, cast not your eyes upon one of them!"

Now as they passed along, they heard the women singing. They heard the echo of the songs and the sound of dancing. Soon they came near the house and the women saw them and called out inviting them to look up and see them. "Oh, what have you on your back? Look up and behold us!" Now Younger did not look up nor did he make reply for he knew that the women were witches and that one glance of their eyes would be fatal to him. So when he passed by he kept his eyes directed to the ground and stooped over. So then they were safe.

Now again the brother spoke and said, "There is yet one more danger and it is the last. It may be fatal. A company of women is making a quilt of young men's eyes. They gouge out the eyes of young men and sew them into a blanket (quilt). Now the eyes live and wink as in life for the skin of the eyelids are with the eyes. Now we must pass through their lodge and if we can do so without looking at the awful quilt, we will be safe then."

Now the lodge was a long one and when the two brothers entered the women saw them and said, "Bend not so low. Look up and see the beautiful quilt we are making. It is beautiful. What is it

that you have upon your back? Look up!" Younger gave no heed to the words of the women but continued through the room. They were about to emerge from the door at the back when one woman held the quilt before the eyes of Younger. She held it where he saw it. Then Younger saw no more. He was blind and he had no eyes in his eye sockets; they had jumped out and into the quilt. Driven leaped from his back and jumped out of the door. He did not know where Driven went.

Now Younger could not see, so he crept on his hands and knees. He crept a long ways and after a time he came to a place where corn was planted. There he halted for he thought that some one would surely notice him when they came to examine the corn. So, he lay down there, and there he lay day after day. After a long time, he heard the sound of a woman's voice singing. And soon the woman saw him and was surprised to find a man in the field. She ran home to her sister and told her that a man was in the field and that he had no eyes in his eye sockets. He was a human being, blind and alive. His eye sockets were hollow. Then the older sister said, "We must not leave a human being in distress. We must take him into our house and nurse him to health. He will be a companion for us. We are alone." So, they went and found him and brought him to their house. They cleansed him and fed him on bear's oil, for he had not eaten for a long time. Afterwards he was given stronger food. They gave him nourishment until he was stronger. After a time, he grew strong and then they asked him how he came to be in such bad a condition. So, he related how it happened.

"I was passing through a house," he said, "and there were women within making a quilt of young men's eyes. They put the quilt under my face and I saw and then I became blind. My brother was on my back for an arrow was through him. He disappeared. I know not where my brother is. So did the accident happen."

Now Younger recovered his strength and then the older sister said, "You must marry my younger sister and live here as our companion." He consented and married the younger sister.

Now it appeared that after a certain time his wife gave birth to twins, boys. The older one they named Hanonni-da, meaning, he is a thistle, and the younger one they called Ho-da-da-o meaning, he cries. At the time of their birth the older sister called out their names and tossed them into the adjoining room. Then she told the husband that he was the father of twins and he gave thanks. Now the children seemed to be wizards. They did not suckle but played alone together in the room. No one talked to them but they talked. After a time, they asked for a net ball that they might play lacrosse. So, a net, a net-club and ball were brought to them. Then they played lacrosse in the room. Then they went out doors and played and again they went into the ground under the house and played. After a time, they asked for bows and arrows. Then they went away for long periods of time, no one knew where. After a time, the older sister brought them into the living room and said, "It is time for you to see your father." So they said, "We will see our father." Then the father felt over them for the first time and touched them. They climbed over his lap and played with him. After a time, they began to laugh at him and the Last said, "How can he be my father since he has no eyes? I believe that he is not my father." Then he asked his father, "Where are your eyes?" Then the father answered him, "In a certain place there are women making a quilt from young men's eyes. Once I had to pass through their house and I would not look upon the quilt, but they forced it under my face and that was the last that I saw.

My brother was on my back and he jumped. Now I know not where my brother is. He has gone from me." The Last replied, "Father, we will go there and get back your eyes." But the older folk said, "Do not try, the women are horrible witches and we would lose you. We forbid you to go. So do not go." So, the boys went out and played together.

The two sisters went out after a time to get provisions and the father was left alone with the boys. He heard them talking together. It was strange and he did not understand them. "Hang on, hang on," they were saying. "Hang on and after a time we will reach where father is and he will help us." So they talked and pulled and called out each other's names. Now it happened that they took their father by the hand and placed upon him the body of a human being. They had pulled it up through the ground. Now the body of the man they had, had an arrow in his chest. Also, he had no eyes in his eye-sockets and he was nearly dead. The man was the father's brother. Then the children said, "We will go and borrow some eyes for you that you may look upon each other." So they went into the forest and when they had found a fawn they asked if she would give her consent if they should ask for her eyes to put in their father's eye sockets. The fawn consented when she heard their story and gave them her eyes. So they gave her moss to eat while they were gone. They went home with the fawn's eyes and placed them in the father's eye sockets. Then he saw how his children looked and he was glad. So, moreover, they saw how he appeared when he had eyes in his eye-sockets. And they said, "Father, how long your eyelashes are!" for the fawn's eyelashes were long. Now also the father saw his brother and was glad that it was he. Then said the boys, "We are now going in search of both of your eyes and you will have a joyous time." Then they took the eyes of the fawn and carried them back to her and thanked her for their use.

Now they went on their journey to the place where their father had told them the house of the women quilting was. After a time, they found it. Now, on their way, they had been discussing their plans. They decided to hide at the spring. Last was to transform himself into a duck and Thistle-like was to wait in hiding. They reached the spring and the younger brother changed himself into a duck and swam upon the surface of the spring. The older brother hid himself. Now after a time, the youngest sister from the house came down to the spring for water and saw a duck swimming in the spring. She tried to catch him but the duck dodged whenever she tried to grasp him. Then, as she jumped over the spring, the duck entered her body. Then she went home and the old woman of the house said, "Daughter you look as if you would soon have a child. It must be by the Creator for no man has passed this way. After a short time, the daughter gave birth to a boy and the mother said, "It must be the gift of the Creator for no man has passed by." Now the child would cry and would only be pacified when some valuable object was shown to him. But soon again he would cry, and they would show him another treasure. Now he began to cry very hard and nothing would pacify him, not even all their valued treasures. So the old woman said, perhaps the quilt of human eyes would please him, so the quilt was brought and he ceased crying and played with the quilt. Then the women all went out to work in the field. Now when they were gone, he took the quilt and folded it and ran out of the house. The women discovered him and pursued him with hammers. They closed about him endeavoring to strike him but he dodged and they struck each other and killed each other, all but one, and he killed her. Then he went and found his brother.

Now they returned home and greeted their father. They asked him what kind of eyes he had had and the father answered, "Oh they were peculiar eyes. They had a reddish cast." Now the Last

found the eyes and took them off the quilt and placed them back in his father's eye sockets. And when the father had his own eyes he said, "There are the eyes of my brother." So, the boys took them from the quilt and placed them in their uncle's eye sockets. And they saw each other and were very glad. Then the younger twin said, "We must now go and find the bones of the dead and restore them their eyes." So, they went and found the graves of the dead and gathered together all their skeletons -- half as many as there were eyes. And a voice from the pile spoke and said, "We are under the cover of a white bear." The boys found a white bear and skinned it and built a lodge like a sweat-lodge and covered it over with the skin of the white bear. In the lodge, they placed the bones of the dead men. In a short time, the wigwam began to quiver and then the younger brother ran to an elm tree and began to kick it and it fell over and as it was falling, he cried, "The tree is falling upon you. Flee for your lives."

Now as they heard his warning the skeletons arose and ran out of the wigwam and into the woods. Now the eyes had been placed upon the skulls and the people had time to select their own, but Last was too hasty in kicking over the tree and they had little time to find their own bones. Thus, when they came together in the woods they found themselves in a mixed condition. Some had legs too short, some had long arms and short legs -- their limbs, ribs, feet and finer bones were mismated. Then Last was sorry he had been so hasty. So, he asked them all where they lived and some knew but some did not. He told all that knew to go to their homes and he told all that did not to come home with him. Now they went home with him but the house was too small to contain all. Then Last paced out the dimensions of a large house and his footprints outlining it were on the ground. Then he commanded a house to spring up and it did and was large enough to hold all the men and they lived there. Now these were cripples and deformed people and from them sprang the deformed and ugly people of today. Now the uncle recovered his health and the older sister married him so there were two couples in the house. So, everything came out well and everyone was happy. So, the legend ends.

NOTE -- The legend of the magic arrow and the quilt of eyes is a typical Seneca transformation myth. Its characteristic elements are, the orenda of twins, the magic arrow which they were forbidden to use, the transfixing of one party with an arrow and the tests of magic. The conception of the quilt of young men's eyes appears in other stories, as also does that of borrowing eyes from animals to assist persons who had lost their eyeballs. The theme of the magical twins who grew to immediate maturity and played under the ground is also one employed elsewhere. The idea of conception through entering into a female to be born of her, also in a more or less frequent episode. As in other legends, the hero who acquires great orenda ends his career by restoring the bones of the magically slain and hastening their resurrection to such an extent that they appear with mismated limbs, thereby being the first monsters and cripples.

This legend was related in the Seneca tongue by Edward Cornplanter, and translated by William Bluesky, whose language forms the bulk of the version here presented. Certain corrections were made after reading the recorded account to Cornplanter.