

THE SPARROWHAWK AND PIGEON

A DRALYINYA LEGEND (BALLADONIA)

VII 2a  
[7]

Mer mer (sparrowhawk) and Kargain (pigeon) were husband and wife and banju (turkey) and winoin (anteater) were also husband and wife. Banju and winoin kept the fire to themselves and would not give any of it away, so the mulba (men) could not cook their meat food as they had no fire.

Winoin used to make a big fire and Kargain and Mer mer asked her to give them some, but she always refused.

They continued to ask her so she thought she would make a hole into the sea and cover the fire. She dug and dug (baiamu) a hole beside the fire (which was burning at both ends and was very big) and as she dug she looked out now and then to see if Kargain and Mer mer were coming. They went up into the sky to find out where the Winoin's fire was and they saw the big fire and also saw Winoin digging and scraping the hole beside it.

They flew very high so that they should not cast any shadow (nguan) and when Winoin had dug half way through the hole, she came out of it and looked round, but could not see Mer mer or Kargain, so she went in again and scratched deeper and deeper. Kargain and Mer mer flew down nearer and nearer (yamar dinu) but Winoin had dug so deep down that she could not see them. She wanted to put the fire quite out. Mer mer got close up to her and he had his kaji (spear) with him, and when he reached her back (the rest of the body being in the hole), he drove his kaja into her and speared her and killed her. Then Kargain brought her kangula (stick) which was very long, and she lifted the fire with it and threw it all about, so that all the mulba could get the fire.

Mer mer cut banju in half (barda) with her kundi (club) and said to him, "You go and walk along plains (dobarn) now and you won't have any more fire." Now the mulba have all the fire and Banju must always walk about the dobarn. The sandhills (do) near Dralyinya are the big heaps that Winoin

scraped out of the hole.

The Kargain song now sung by the Dralyinya natives is as follows :-

Kargain gulainba nam bal nam bal  
ilambala gīn gīn ilambala gīn gīn

Kargain gulainba nam bal nam bal  
ilambala gīn gīn ilambala gīn gīn

(Kargain flying higher and going so high that she casts no shadow.)

Kargain is fire master and when the smoke rises from fires she can always be seen in the buya (smoke). There are no kargain wuk (totems), the kargain being fire master.

In the district north of Balladonia there are great stretches of treeless plains, and these are said to be the plains where Banju was sent by Mer mer as there is no wood on the plains with which a fire could be made, and so the Banju (turkey) can make no fire.