

THE WOGGAL AND THE MISCHIEVOUS BOYS

19

In Nyitting times there was a big camp at Doweringup of men, women and children. The men and women went out hunting meat and root foods every day, and if they were going far they would leave the children behind with some demmangur to look after them.

One day some little boys were left at the kala (fire, home) and their parents had all gone out food-gathering. One of the boys said, "Let us catch some mice and pretend they are yonggar and kill them and cook them and cut them up and divide them as our fathers cut up the big yonggar." The other boys were quite willing, so they all went hunting for mice, pretending they were looking for the kangaroo, and they mimicked their fathers' motions and also those of the yonggar as it ran or stopped, or threw its little one out of its pouch. Finally they speared some little mice and brought them home, carrying them on their shoulders as their fathers carried the yonggar.

Their demman yog (grandmother) said, "Don't mock your food," but the boys only laughed at her and they skinned the mice and cooked them and then divided them, giving a dowel to this one, goong (back) to that one, and reenda (tail) to another, until all the meat had been divided just as if it had been kangaroo, for every relative must have a certain portion of a kangaroo, the entrails, the choice parts, always being given to demman (grandparents). So the boys made very merry over their game, and after they had eaten they pretended they were very full up, and swelled their stomachs out and then lay down to sleep.

By and by the mother mice, who had been away food-gathering, returned to their camp, but where were their koolongur? They called and cried but no children answered them, then they looked about and saw the boys' jinna (foot tracks). They tracked and tracked, crying and calling all the time until finally they reached the spot where the boys had cooked their mice and there they saw the bones of their little children, and they knew then what the boys had done, that they had pretended the mice were kangaroos, and had killed and skinned and cut them up and eaten

them. When they saw only the bones, they cried and cried again, but with anger as well as sorrow, and the oldest mother mouse said, "Let us go to the janga yonggar garup (the spirit kangaroo's cave or hole, and tell him how those boys have mocked him. They must be punished for killing and eating our children and yonggar will be boogur with them for breaking the law and mocking their food."

So they all went to the janga yonggar, and when they reached the garup they stood in a circle and cried and called out, and told him what the boys had done, that they had not only killed their children, but had made a mockery of the janga yonggar by pretending the mice were yonggar.

The janga yonggar was boogur, and he strode up and down, biting his beard and spitting it out, and thinking all the time what he should do to punish those naughty boys. But the boys' fathers were yonggar borungur, that is, they were "brothers", or as we should call it, totem kin of the yonggar, so he could not punish the boys himself, for they were also yonggar borungur and yonggar was their chief daaj (meat food), but they must be punished for making a mock of him, or else the food laws would all be broken in time, and everyone would mock his borungur and daaj. Presently he said to the mother mice, "I will not touch the boys because they are my koolongur, but come with me to the woggulerup and we will tell him what the boys have done, and get him to punish them." The janga yonggar and the mother mice then went off together to Woggulerup where the janga woggul (spirit carpet snake) sat down.

Janga yonggar told Woggal of the boys' fault and the mother mice cried and cried as they sat down and listened to the yonggar telling Woggal of their children's fate. "Now," said Yonggar, "you must punish these yungar koolong for if they are not punished they will always mock me. They are my koolongur and I will not hurt them, but you can do so."

Woggal became very angry too and said, "Let us go to the boys' kala and I certainly will stop them from mocking you and breaking their food law." So the Woggal and the Yonggar, still accompanied by the mother mice, went to the boys' camp, and though there were

others at the camp besides the naughty boys, Woggal went up near the camp, and lifting all the ground where all the maias and jungar and jog and koolongur and dwerda were, he turned it upside down, and turned the whole place into a lake, which the white people now call Lake Bannishee, but which was called Dowingerup when it was the camping ground of the boys and their parents. Then the janga jonggar and Woggal and the mother mice, all turned homewards together, the Woggal and Jonggar "singing themselves" as they went along. The song they sung was as follows :

Dowingerup gaa! Dowingerup gaa'.
Woggalella baggineri Kaan-gana gaa,
Kaanganup woggalella baggineri gaa,
Dowingerup gaa!

They sang their own names and their boojur (ground) and of what they had done to the lawbreakers.

The flood that the Woggal made covered all the country and all the jungar were drowned except two gobbelguttuk yogga (pregnant women) and a moolyert (boy who had had his nose pierced) who was babbin or koobong ("mate") for the yogga. All the other jungar that tried to get away from the flood, Woggal caught and ate.

Ngwogginjung, a Koombenup jungar and his two wives Yooardagur and Yerbindan and a moolyert named Ngoolil were travelling up from the South. They had camped at Dowingerup for the night and next morning had started for their camp north of Dowingerup. Ngwogginjung forgot his gij (spears) and sent his two yogga back for them, but when they reached the place where their camp had been, they saw only a big lake and on a boornadem (log of wood) floating on the lake they saw two gobbelguttuk and a moolyert. They ran quickly back to their kord and told him what they had seen, and then all returned to the lake, but there were no yogga and no log, only on the edge of the lake were two balga (blackboy trees) - yog kootagur - which had been the gobbelguttuk yog they had first seen.

Now when jungar go to Dowingerup Lake they may look in the water and they will see the shadows of the trees and the place where the koolongur made sport with the karnding (bush mice).