

Iroquois Creation Story

Long before the world was created, there was an island floating in the sky where Sky people lived. Everything was perfect. No one ever died or was sad. But one Sky Woman told her husband she was going to have twins. Her husband flew into a rage. In the centre of the island there was a tree which gave light to the entire island, since the sun hadn't been created yet. He tore up this tree creating a hole in the middle of the island. The woman curiously peered down the hole. At that moment, her husband pushed her in and she fell into the waters below.

The earth was completely covered in water, but animals had already existed on earth. Animals, like sea animals. Far below the floating island, birds saw the sky woman fall, and just before she reached the water, they caught her on their backs and brought her to the other animals. Determined to help the woman, they dove into the waters to get mud from the bottom of the seas. The animals kept trying, but failed to bring up the mud. Finally, little toad tried. When he reappeared, his mouth was full of mud. The animals took it and spread it on the back of big turtle. The mud began to grow, and grow, and grow until it became the size of North America. Then the woman stepped out onto the land. She sprinkled dust in the air and created the stars. Then she created the moon and the sun.

She then gave birth to twin sons. She named one Sapling. He was kind and gentle, and so sweet. She named the other Flint, who became mean and cold-hearted. The two began to fill the Earth with their creations. Sapling gave everything good and Flint gave everything bad, and destroyed all of Sapling's work. They eventually decided to fight to see who would get to fill the Earth with their creations. Finally, Flint, the bad one, was beaten.

The Iroquois people had a great respect for animals. This was mirrored in the Creation Myth by the role the animals play. Without the animals help, Sky Woman may have sunk to the bottom of the sea and Earth might not have been created.