

Lightning and Earth Mother: A Myth From Clan Tiala

There was a time long ago, before the coming of the Nueguans to the heart of Apacheria, when Lightning roamed the land unhindered.

One day Lightning wished to have his way with Earth Mother. "Come, let me touch you, touch you as of old," he said.

Earth Mother coyly refused him. "First, you must promise to rid the heavens of the Sky Wanderers, so that they can do evil on Earth no more," she replied.

"What are they to me? I have no quarrel with them, no quarrel at all," Lightning countered. "They live among the stars in the clear night sky, while I stroll about the clouds."

"First, they have destroyed nations and peoples beyond count, all to make the land their own," Earth Mother answered. "Second, among themselves they act as if they had no relations."

Spurned, Lightning lost interest and wandered off among the mountains.

As time went on the land, bereft of human children, cried out more and more. These cries wrenched at the heart of Earth Mother. In her compassion and by her own great power, she grew and grew until she became great with child.

The more her belly swelled, the less Earth Mother could allow Lightning's advances, for in his passion he would damage her Great Shining Womb. One cannot see the whole of the Womb, for it lies hidden at the

bottom of the Dam, in the waters of the Gila. Only the Three Eggs—one for each of the Guilds—can be seen. But Lightning would not freely respect her condition; Lightning wanted to possess her without boundary.

Lightning returned to Earth Mother one day, on fire with need. “Let us make love now, make love most strongly,” he said. “I can restrain myself no longer.”

“No!” Earth Mother objected firmly. “First, you will not aid me against my enemies. Second I must bring forth my children, a new people who will bring the Sky Wanderers to justice.” Earth Mother spoke again. “Third, you are too rude. From now on, you may only roam about the top of the Dam. The Three Eggs that live in the Gila are forbidden to you.”

“How will you make me obey?” Lightning retorted.

“I will chain you to the Towers of Steel should you dare to touch me,” Earth Mother warned.

Enraged, Lightning would listen no more. He rose to the height of the highest clouds, raised his crooked arms, and with a shout of thunder, struck at Earth Mother with all his might. That very act proved Earth Mother's threat true. Lightning writhed on the tops of the Three Towers, unable to descend.

“I will tread the Earth once more!” howled Lightning.

“No until my new children are fully born,” answered Earth Mother.