

Yandel'mawa

The Seven Peacekeepers



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A very long time ago, after The People had become many Peoples, wars arose as disputes between neighbours over who belonged to which lands developed into serious battles. The wise knowledgeholders of the various Peoples were very concerned at this disobedience of the laws of This Land, and they met with the Clan of the Lyrebird to discuss what could be done.

From the clan of the Lyrebird they selected a warrior, whose name was Boo'nah, and who was able to use wise words in the languages of all the different Peoples.

They gave this warrior the title of Yandel'bana - the Peacemaker And to help him, they selected seven of their bravest warriors. All the warriors chosen stood very tall and strong, and all were lawmen - men who knew and obeyed the laws.

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These men they called the Yandel'mawa - the Keepers of the Peace.

These men travelled throughout the Lands and where there were disputes between neighbouring Peoples, the Yandel'bana would sit down and listen to the neighbours complaints against each other.

Whilst he listened, the Yandel'mawa would travel throughout the disputed lands and learn from the Peoples of the clans the other truths of the dispute. They would then return to the Peacemaker, and tell him of what they had learned.

The Peacemaker would then call a meeting of the knowledgeholders of the Peoples in dispute, and he would tell them of what his warriors of peace had learned, and after discussion with those knowledgeholders would tell them of his decision, and of the terms of the peace. The Peacemaker and the seven Peacekeepers had many adventures in their travels throughout The Land, and songs were sung, and dances were danced telling of their adventures.

Now, also travelling throughout the Lands were a group of evil spirits, the Wiree, who were able to take the form of men. These Wiree were sorcerers who used their magic to cause arguments and wars because hate to them was like food to The People.

At first, the Wiree laughed at the thought that the Yandel'bana and Yandel'mawa could have any effect on their magic spells. But, because the warriors came from the Wirrimbirra, the Protected Lands, the magic of the sorcerers had no effect on them, and they were able to see the evil spirits as they were, not in their disguise as men.

The Seven Warriors each had their own abilities, Boo'angi was a maker of excellent woomeras, that helped the spears find their targets, and of shields that protected the bearer from magic as well as the enemy's spears.

Mai'andowi knew medicines that protected from evil spirits, Bai'yali knew the secrets of the firemaker, Bourrounj was good at finding food to keep the Yandel'mawa strong, Terri'yergro was best at throwing boomerangs, Kai'yeroo made the best spears, and Mugga'go knew where to find shelter that even sorcerers could not find.

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The Wiree very soon became worried when a time of peace came upon the Lands, and their power began to weaken, until it became difficult for them to retain the shape of men. They decided that they must attack the Peacemaker, and his Keepers of the Peace themselves, and not rely upon the Peoples to kill them.

The Wiree travelled to the Land of Yandel'ora where all Peoples are welcome, and where weapons are forbidden, and there they laid in wait for the return of the warriors of peace.

They knew that the Warriors would put down their weapons once they entered the Yandel'ora, and would not pick them up until they had left.

But, waiting within the Land of Yandel'ora was another powerful sorcerer - the Gorrondj. The Gorrondj was the keeper of the Protected Lands, and immediately the Wiree entered the Yandel'ora the Gorrondj felt the disturbance, and made his way to where the Seven Warriors were placing their weapons in a secret place and were washing the paint from their bodies. He spoke to the Yandel'mawa, then placed a spell over the seven men, turning them into tall trees, but the Yandel'bana he left as a man.

"We must rid these Lands forever of the demons." The Gorrondj told the Yandel'bana. "I need you to light a fire and to sit by it. Make sure there are plenty of sparks to attract the Wiree."

The Yandel'bana did as he was told. From the trunk of the tree that had been Bai'yali, he took some bark, from the tree that had been Boo'angi he took some sap, from Mugga'go he took some leaves, from Mai'andowi he took a branch, from Bourrounj he took the nectar of the flowers, from Kai'yeroo he took the gumnuts, and from Terriyergro he took a root and lit a fire in the middle of the circle made by the seven trees that had once been his companions.

Millions of sparks rose high in the air from the fire.

The Wiree saw the sparks and hurried to where the Yandel'bana was apparently asleep by the fire.

They crept up on him, getting ready to steal his spirit, but first they had to ask him where his companions were camped. One of the Wiree took the form of Boonah's mother and shook Boo'nah's shoulder.

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The Yandel'bana pretended to awaken, and stretched his arms and legs lazily. "My son, you have returned safely, but where are your friends?" The Wiree said, thinking that Boo'nah would see only his mother.

Boo'nah smiled. "They are safe." He said.

At that moment the Gorrond returned the Yandel'mawa to their human forms, and the Wiree found themselves surrounded by warriors who were unaffected by their magic. When the Gorrond appeared before them they panicked and tried to escape by turning themselves into a Williwili. But the Yandel'mawa joined their hands together and moved forward, crowding the demons into the fire where they were rendered harmless.

However, each of the Yandel'mawa carried a mysterious wound. Kai'yeroo was missing a tooth, Bai'yali was missing some skin on his leg, Boo'angi had blood on his arm, Mai'andowi was missing a little finger, Terri'yergro was missing a toe, Bourrounj's eyes were swollen and wet, and some of Mugga'go's hair was gone.

The Seven warriors and Boo'nah were allowed to live with their families in the Land of Yandel'ora for the rest of their lives, and they performed many brave deeds in protecting This Land from evil spirits.

When they eventually died of old age, the Gorrond turned the Yandel'mawa into tall trees, Boo'angi became the Spotted Gum, Bourrounj the Peppermint Gum, Mai'andowi became the smooth barked Gum, Bai'yali the Stringybark, Terri'yergro became the Scaly barked Gum, Kai'yeroo became the Ribbon Gum, Mogargoo became the Ironbark, and Boo'nah he turned into the tall, rough barked Angophora, so that they might guard the Land of Yandel'ora forever.

And when you sit by the fire at night, and you see the sparks twirling upwards, you will remember how the Wiree were caught in the fire, and how the Peace Keepers still protect This Land from evil spirits.

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