The Navajo Origin Legend

(DINE CREATION)

Late in the autumn the people heard the distant sound of a great voice calling from the east. They listened and waited, and soon heard the voice nearer and louder than before.

Once more they listened and heard it louder still, very near. A moment later four mysterious beings appeared. These were White Body, Blue Body, Yellow Body and Black Body.

The gods told the people that they would come back in twelve days. On the morning of the Twelfth Day the people washed themselves well. Then the women dried their skin with yellow cornmeal, the men with white cornmeal. Soon they heard the distant call, shouted four times, of the approaching gods. When the gods appeared, Blue Body and Black Body each carried sacred buckskin. White Body carried two ears of corn one yellow and one white.

The gods laid one buckskin on the ground with the head to the west, and on this they placed the two ears of corn with their tips to the east. Over the corn they spread the other buckskin with its head to the east. Under the white ear they put the feather of a white eagle; under the yellow ear the feather of a yellow eagle. Then they told the people to stand back and allow the wind to enter. Between the skins the white wind blew from the east and the yellow wind from the west. While the wind was blowing, eight gods called the Mirage People came and walked around the objects on the ground four times. As they walked, the eagle feathers, whose tips stuck out from the buckskins, were seen to move. When the Mirage People finished their walk, the upper buckskin was lifted. The ears of corn had disappeared; a man and a woman lay in their place.

The white ear of corn had become the man, the yellow ear had become a woman: First Man and First Woman. It was the wind that gave them life, and it is the wind that comes out of our mounts now that gives us life. When this ceases to blow, we die.