

Little Dawn Boy and the Rainbow Trail
A Navaho tale
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Little Dawn Boy dwelt in the Red Rock House by the side of a deep canyon. And there he lived with his father, his mother, his brothers, his sisters and a Medicine Man.

Every morning, when the Sun rose, Little Dawn Boy sat on the edge of the canyon and looked far in the distance at a purple mountain. Behind it stood a high, white cliff like a tower, which had its head in the clouds. Every morning Little Dawn Boy asked the Medicine Man, "Who lives on the top of the white cliff." And Every morning the Medicine Man answered, "Learn the sacred songs, and the 'I' will tell you."

So Little Dawn Boy learned the sacred songs and one day the Medicine Man said: "Now that you know the sacred songs and are old enough, you may visit the Spirit-of-All who lives in the House of Evening Light on top of the white cliff. In the House are four rooms and four doors. The first door is guarded by two bolts of bright Lightning; the second door is watched by two fierce Bears; the third door by two red-headed Serpents; and the fourth door by two angry Rattlesnakes. If a visitor goes there who does not know the sacred songs, Lightning strikes him and the Animal Watchers eat him up. But you know the sacred songs so well that you may go safely to the House of Evening Light and ask for good gifts for your people."

"And how," asked Little Dawn Boy, "shall I reach the top of the white cliff?"

"You must take with you gifts for the Spirit-of-All," replied the Medicine Man, "and you must strew the Pollen of Dawn on your trail. And when you get to the summit of the Purple Mountain sing a sacred song and you will see how to reach the top of the white cliff."

So Little Dawn Boy rose up and painted himself beautifully and decked his head with feathers. He took his bow and arrows and made ready to start. The Medicine Man gave him two bags. In one were gifts of strings of wampum and sky-blue turquoise and in the other the Golden Pollen of Dawn which the Medicine Man had gathered from the Larkspur flowers.

Little Dawn Boy set out on his way with Dew about his feet and Grasshoppers skipping all around him. And as he went, he scattered the golden pollen on his trail. All that day and the second and the third he traveled and early on the morning of the fourth day he climbed to the summit of the Purple Mountain. But Little Dawn Boy was not afraid. He scattered more pollen on his trail, and began to sing his sacred song:

"Oh Little Pollen Boy am I!
From Red Rock House I come!
With Pollen of Dawn on my trail!
With beauty before me,
With beauty behind me,
With beauty below me,
With beauty above me,
With beauty all round me,
Over the Rainbow Trail I go!
Hither I wander, thither I wander,
Over the beautiful trail I go!"

And as he finished the song an arch of shimmering light all rose, violet, blue and every color, delicate as a veil, began to stretch from the summit of the Purple Mountain to the top of the White Cliff. And in a minute Little Dawn Boy saw a bright Rainbow Bridge grow before his eyes. Singing with delight he hastened over the Rainbow Bridge and as he ran a wind spray up and blew a many-colored mist to the top of the cliff. And it blinded the eyes of the Animal Watchers at the four doors of the House of Evening Light. And when Little Dawn Boy reached the house, he went in and the Animal Watchers did not see him.

As he entered he passed over a trail of daylight and sprinkled the golden pollen while he sang his sacred song. Then the Spirit-of-All called out, "Who is this stranger who dares to come here unbidden?" And Little Dawn Boy answered and said, "I bring you beautiful gifts and I trust to find many friends in this house." And he opened the gift-bag and took out the strings of wampum and the sky-blue turquoise.

And when the Spirit-of-All saw these, he was well pleased and looked kindly at Little Dawn Boy and welcomed him to the House of Evening Light. And Little Dawn Boy said: "I come to ask for gifts for my people. Give me, I pray, yellow, white and blue corn, green growing plants, fragrant flowers, black clouds and thunderstorms with lightening also the Soft Spring showers and the Gentle Summer breezes with pale mists and golden Autumn hazes."

And so the Spirit-of-All gave him these gifts. He feasted him with good things to eat and drink and afterwards sent him on his way.

And as the Boy stepped out of the House of Evening Light, he began to sing another song.

"Oh Little Dawn Boy am I!
From the House of Evening Light!
On the Trail of Evening Light!
To Red Rock House I return!
Held fast in my hand are gifts!
With soft rains above me,
With sweet flowers below me,
With white corn behind me,
With green plants before me,
With pale mists all around me,
Over the Rainbow Trail I go!
Hither I wander, thither I wander,
Over the beautiful trail I go!"

And for three days and three nights he traveled, until early on the fourth day just as the Sun rose, he reached the deep canyon and entered Red Rock House. And there he saw his people waiting for him. And joyfully they welcomed him and spread a buckskin for him to sit upon. And he told of all his adventures and gave them the many good gifts that had come from the House of Evening Light.

And ever since that day his people have sung the sacred song of Little Dawn Boy:

"With soft rains above us,
With sweet flowers below us,
With white corn behind us,
With green plants before us,
With pale mists all around us.

Over the Rainbow Trail we go!
Hither we wander, thither we wander,
Over the beautiful trail we go!"

Little Dawn Boy Circle
Compiled by JoAnne Dennee

Now I walk in beauty
Beauty is before me,
Beauty is behind me,
Above and below me. (repeat)

Over the rainbow trail I go - On toes to 8 counts of drumbeat
Hither I wander, thither I wander - Drum and step deeply on hither, wither
Over the beautiful trail I go. - 8 counts on toes to drumbeat

(repeat)

Mother Earth's children rise in the morn
Mother Earth's children gather corn.
Dance to the wind, dance to the rain,
Dance to the Earth who gives us grain.

Mother Earth's children put feathers in their hair
Mother Earth's children string beans to wear.
Dance to the wind, dance to the rain,
Dance to the Earth who gives us grain.

Mother Earth's children walk softly as the deer,
To the hearth with the golden ear.
Dance to the wind, dance to the rain,
Dance to the Earth who gives us grain.

A little fire they will make
Bread of golden corn they'll bake.
Dance to the wind, dance to the rain,
Dance to the Earth who gives us grain.

Bread of golden corn they'll eat
Then Mother Earth's children fall fast asleep.
(humming softly) Dance to the wind, dance to the rain,
Dance to the Earth who gives us grain.

(Repeat 'Over the Rainbow Trail I go
Hither I wander, thither I wander
Over the beautiful trail I go.'" between all songs
and verses, same movements, no drumming.)

My paddle's keen and bright,
Flashing like silver.
Follow the wild goose flight,
Dip, dip and swing.
Dip, dip and swing it back, flashing like silver.
Follow the wild goose flight, dip, dip and swing.

Land of the silver birch,
Home of the beaver.
Wood where the mighty moose,
Wanders at will.
Green lakes and rocky shore,
I will return once more.
Follow the wild goose flight,
Dip, dip and swing.
Dip, dip and swing it back, flashing like silver,
Follow the wild goose flight, dip, dip and swing.

(Repeat verse.)

May we all fly like eagles
Flying so-o high
Circling the Universe
On wings of pure light
o witchi ti ti
Witchi ti o oh

o witchi ti ti
Witchi ti i oh
Witchi ti i oh
Witchi ti i o oh hoh

(Repeat verse.)

Mother Earth to you we're singing,
Listen to our song.
Thanks for golden harvest bringing,
Listen as we sing to you,
Sing to you, sing to you,
Songs of rain and sunshine.

On the trail where we are going
Ever will we sing.
When the winter comes with snowing
Still our hearts will sing to you,
Sing to you, sing to you,
Songs of rain and sunshine.

(Repeat verse.)

The moon on the one hand,

The sun on the other,
The moon is my sister,
The sun is my brother.
The moon on my left,
The sun on my right,
My brother "Good morning",
My sister "Good night".