The Pukwudgie

Posted by TressesOfNephthys - 05 Nov 2011 22:15

Now this one I'm very interested in since I only live about 40 minutes from the Freetown State Forest and I used to live with it practically in my backyard (it literally was my uncle's backyard).

The pukwudgie is a creature of Wampanoag legend.

FROM WIKIPEDIA:

A Pukwudgie is a 2-or-3-foot-tall (0.61 or 0.91 m) troll-like being from the Wampanoag folklore. Pukwudgies' features resemble those of a human, but with enlarged noses, fingers and ears. Their skin is described as being a smooth grey, and at times has been known to glow.

In Native American lore, Pukwudgies have the following traits and abilities:

to appear and disappear at will

to transform into a walking porcupine (it looks like a porcupine from the back, and the front is half-troll, half-human and walks upright)

to attack people and lure them to their deaths

they are able to use magic

they have poison arrows

they can create fire at will

Pukwudgies control Tei-Pai-Wankas which are believed to be the souls of Native Americans they have killed.

Native Americans believed that Pukwudgies were best left alone. When you see a Pukwudgie you are not supposed to mess with them, or they will repay you by playing nasty tricks on you, or following you and causing trouble. They were once friendly to humans, but then turned against them. They are known to kidnap people, push them off of cliffs, attack their victims with short knives and spears, and to use sand to blind their victims.

Origin in legend

"Legends of the Pukwudgie began in connection to Maushop, a creation giant believed by the Wampanoag to have created most of Cape Cod. He was beloved by the people, and the Pukwudgies were jealous of the affection the Natives had for him. They tried to help the Wampanoag, but their efforts always backfired until they eventually decided to torment them instead. They became mischievous and aggravated the Natives until they asked Granny Squanit, Maushop's wife, for help. Maushop collected as many as he could. He shook them until they were confused and tossed them around New England. Some died, but others landed, regained their minds and made their way back to Massachusetts.

Satisfied he had done his job and pleased his wife, Maushop went away for a while. In his absence, the Pukwudgies had returned. They again changed their relationship with the Wampanoags. They were no longer a nuisance, but began kidnapping children, burning villages and forcing the Wampanoag deep into the woods and killing them. Squanit again stepped in, but Maushop, being very lazy, sent his five sons to fix the problem. The Pukwudgies lured them into deep grass and shot them dead with magic arrows. Enraged, Squanit and Maushop attacked as many as they could find and crushed them, but many escaped and scattered throughout New England again. The Pukwudgies regrouped and tricked Maushop into the water and shot him with their arrows. Some legends say they killed him while others claim he became discouraged and depressed about the death of his sons, but Maushop disappears from the Wampanoags' mythology."

Recent history

Pukwudgie encounters have been reported in the Freetown-Fall River State Forest in Massachusetts, which includes the 227-acre (0.92 km2) Watuppa Reservation, which belongs to the Wampanoag Nation. Several unexplained suicides at a ledge in the state forest have been linked by some to the Pukwudgie lore of pushing people off cliffs.

Mounds State Park in Anderson, Indiana is a hotspot for Pukwudgie activity.

Round Rock's Hairy Man Festival is based on a human boy who grew into a wild hermit. After his death, he vengefully haunted Hairy Man Road. Some locals claim that he summoned a troll using old Nordic Runes to help him; it is that Troll who resides on Hairy Man Road, still there after the hermit's death. He causes accidents and misfortune to those who dare travel Hairy Man Road by bicycle at night.

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