



## How Dogs Came to Humans

Two Ojibwe men in a canoe had been blown far out from the shore by a great wind. They had gone a long way and were hungry and lost. They had little strength left to paddle, so they drifted before the wind.

At last, their canoe was blown onto a beach and they were glad, but not for long. Looking for the tracks of animals, they saw some enormous footprints that they knew must belong to a giant. They were afraid and hid in the bushes. As they crouched low, a big arrow thudded into the ground close beside them. Then a huge giant came toward them. A caribou hung from his belt, but the man was so big that it looked like a rabbit. He told them that he did not hurt people and that he liked to be friends with little people, who seemed to be helpless to the giant. He asked the two lost Indians to come home with him since they had no food, and their weapons had been lost in the storm on the lake. They were glad to come with him, and they left together.

As they were walking to the giant's home, a Windigo came to the lodge of the giant because he wanted to eat the Ojibwe men. (A windigo is a flesh-eating giant.) The Windigo pretended to be a friend but the giant soon realized that the Windigo was there to eat the men. The Windigo became very angry with the giant when he would not let him have the men, and the giant in turn became angry with the Windigo.

As they were arguing, the Ojibwe men noticed a strange animal which they had never seen before laying on the floor of the giant's house. It looked like a wolf, but the giant called the animal "dog." The giant told the dog that it was his responsibility to kill the evil Windigo spirit. The beast sprang to his feet, shook himself, and started to grow and grow. The more he shook himself, the more he grew and the fiercer he became. He sprang at the Windigo and killed him. Then the dog grew smaller and curled into a sleeping animal once more.

The giant saw that the Indians were very pleased with the dog and said he would give it to them. He told the men that he would command the dog to bring



them home. They had no idea how this could be done. Nevertheless, they thanked the friendly giant for his great gift.

The giant took the men and the dog to the lakeshore and gave the dog another responsibility. At once it began to grow bigger and bigger. The two men climbed on his back. When the water was deep enough, the dog started to swim away from the shore.

After a long time, the men started to recognize part of the land along the shore and soon the dog headed towards their homes. The dog left them close to their lodges and then headed into the forest. When the men told their tribe of their adventure, the people thought that they were speaking falsely. "Show us this mystery animal called dog," they shouted.

A few moons came and went and then one morning, while the tribe slept, the dog returned to the two men. It allowed them to pet it and took food from their hands. When the people woke up they were very surprised to see this new creature and it stayed with the tribe from then on. Dog knew its first responsibility was to help the humans.