

The Legend of Tsoiotsi Tsogalii

Written by John Isley for Summer Camp 1996

As the sunlight begins to fade the council ring grows silent as an Indian walks slowly down the steps. In the distance is the sound of a flute playing a somber tune. The story begins . . .



Long ago, when the beast roamed forest freely, and the winged creatures ruled the sky, there lived three great tribes. These three nations were headed by even greater chieftains.

The first, a peaceful nation, searched their meager surroundings to provide for their many mouths. Living off the earth, they hurt no one, yet feared no one. They fished and hunted. They often sowed seeds to help nourish their tribe. They took only their needs from the earth's bosom. Cheerfulness kept them content.

The second swarmed the mountains, building a village for refuge. Holding on to the ideals that ruled their nation since time began, they lived independent of the other tribes. Through many moons unflinching, they held fast to their pledges, serving all.

The third was a nation of unity, like arrows in a quiver, seeking out those who were worthy to join their honored nation. Living a life of cheerfulness, their needs were fulfilled by the spirits of the land. The brotherhood they lived by sustained their purpose.

These three tribes separate and content, sprouted and grew expanding far and wide. Soon their boundaries began to overlap. They began to disagree and dispute. The elders old and wise knew nothing of resolution.

Each independent of the other, the chieftains asked the great spirits for an omen, a revelation to help guide them. At equal times around the nations, there appeared three great spirits in the formation of hawks. Red feathers they wore upon their tails. The great chieftains saw these apparitions and followed the three creatures that guided them each. These birds of prey led them together and at once merged into a single being and vanished.

The chieftains agreed the apparitions had a purpose and decided to resolve their conflict. They agreed to interweave their tribes, making the three into one great nation. Binding each to every other, they held fast to their own pledges, yet embraced the ideals of the others. They called themselves Tsoiotsi Tsogalii, meaning that We Three Are Friends.

This nation became part of an even larger Order, who also believed in these same ideals of Brotherhood, Cheerfulness, and Service. This great nation called themselves Wimachtendienk, Wingolauchsik, Witahemui, meaning in the language of the Lenni Lenape "Brotherhood of Cheerful Service". This great order thrived in prosperity with its jocund heart contented.