

This is the story of a wallaby that ate so much food that he made his owners angry. There were four men who made a canoe and when they had finished tying it, and it was ready they said to his mother and father, "Tomorrow at 4 o'clock let us go visiting." So they went, leaving the wallaby behind, and they were still on the way when day broke. That wallaby watched them go, sadly. "O, sorry, they've left me behind." So he took his stringbag, his lime-pot, he stood up, he ran after them until he caught up with them.

There was a broken tree leaning over and blocking an estuary, so he climbed out onto it, and sat there. The people came paddling along, and nearly left him, but he swung down and landed right in the middle of the platform. Two boys from one place and two boys from another were splashing about in the water, and they said, "Who told you to come?" His mother and father said, "Sorry, your little brother was very very sad. Let him come with us."

As they were going along, there was a man, sitting with his wife, he had gone down to sharpen his axe, and was sitting on top of a stone. When he heard their voices he looked around, then he saw them and said, "Where are you going?" They answered, "We are going towards the east (sunrise)." He said, "O, it would be good for you to come here." They said, "All right." "Why are you going?" "We are just going to the east to get goods and pigs." "O - I have those things. Stay here with me." They said, "All right. We'll stay." So they went in, and he caught two pigs, and carried many different kinds of food for a feast, and brought them to his wife, and together they cooked them quickly, and gave them to the people. It was evening when they ate the food, and then they went to sleep.

But the wallaby did not want to eat any food, and he sat eating nothing and doing nothing until evening. So during the night, after they had gone to sleep, the spirit man said to his wife, "Now, let's go and look at them." When they came, all the people were fast asleep, and only the wallaby was awake. The Wallaby was sitting inside, and the spirit man tried to open the door. While he was doing so it rattled, and the wallaby, who was inside chewing betelnut, heard it. He rattled his limestick. The wife of the spirit man put out her hand to check him, saying, "Stay still while we listen." Then they lifted up the door so they could go in, and the wallaby hit his lime pot twice. His wife said to him, "Let's get out of here. There's a man awake in there." They went away for the rest of the night and came again when day broke. In just the same way they opened the door again to go up, but the wallaby said again, "E-he! E!" They came away again, and the man said to his wife, "We haven't given them enough food; that is why that man stays awake." In the morning, he said to them, "Stay here, I'm going to get food." While he was away, the wallaby went round inspecting the whole house, and he didn't miss a thing.

Along came some other people, and at once the man invited them in and fed them. Then at night they went to sleep. Straight away, he went and gouged out their eyes. He gouged out their eyes, and put them into a small cooking pot made of clay, and then when the wallaby's family came, he wanted to do the same to them too. But the wallaby prevented him. He wanted to gouge out their eyes while they slept, but the wallaby saved them.

When the next day came, he and his wife went together to the garden. The wallaby thought to himself, "What was that man working so hard at in the night? I'm going to the house to find out." So he went over, but he couldn't get into the house for all the people whose eyes had been gouged

out. Husbands and wives and children lay there together, waving their hands about and touching each other's bodies. "Who are you?" "Only me." "O, what has happened?" They said, "We have no idea what we've done."

Then the spirit man (wagaber) went away, and brought back plenty of food, and said to his wife, "O, now we will give them lots of food." She agreed, he speared many pigs, made piles and piles of food - coconuts, sugar-cane, bananas. He killed the pigs and cut them up, coconut on it all. Then he brought it and put it in front of them, and told them to eat. They ate, and ate and ate, till they could eat no more and their bodies were so heavy that they ached. It was evening, and although their bodies were so heavy they went in and lay down. (obscure bit here about wallaby.)

When day broke, he said to them, "Right, now this is the third time." He said to his wife, we will go in and we will give them very big food indeed to make them sleep well, and then tonight we shall see." So when day broke, they went to their garden, and carried back enormous quantities of food, they cut up pigs, singed the hair off them, carved them, then he and his wife cooked food, squeezed coconut milk over it, and about 5 o'clock he gave them more and more food, so that their stomachs ached. It was late in the afternoon, and with very heavy bodies they climbed into the house and lay down. The poor wallaby had not wanted to eat food. The man had completed his trick, and he went and looked at the people, then he gouged out their eyes. "O," said the wallaby, "Now I understand it all. I know now what he was trying to do when he wanted to open the door." That wallaby stood up and said, "E-he."

So in the morning, the man and his wife and their four children went down and killed that spirit man and his wife. Then the wallaby found the eyes of all the people who were under the house, and put them back, except for one man, and he could find only his left eye. So he could see only on his left side, and did not know what was on his other side. So there was one man with only one eye. Then the people stood up and came out of the house, and the wallaby said, "That man gouged your eyes out before I came, and if it had not been for me, he would have gouged out the eyes of my father and mother, and those of my brothers. But I came and saved them. So the people went and took all the goods belonging to the man, and set fire to his house and that food and those whose eyes had been gouged out came and pulled the canoe into the water. The wallaby and his father and mother went home. They slept and next morning the wallaby told them the story. He said, "Mother it is no good for us to be here together or later we would die. It is from me that you now have life, but that is finished. I will go into the grassland, and you will stay here with your children." And when he had said that he finished.