

CALL IT HOME

THE STORY OF CREATION

Many years ago, **Wee-sa-Kay-Jac**, called on the great **Thunderbird** to go and warn all the people and birds and animals that they were in great danger. They must prepare for a great flood.

The great Thunderbird flew over the land. The waters were slowly rising. He warned the people and they built a great raft. When the floodwaters came, they were safe.

Wee-sa-Kay-Jac knew that he must rebuild the land. He called on the beaver and told him he needed some mud to work with. The beaver tried to swim to the bottom. He came up **exhausted**, without any earth. Wee-sa-Kay-Jac asked the otter to help. The otter dove as deeply as he could but he failed too.

Then the tiny muskrat volunteered. He said, "I am not as strong as the beaver or the otter, but I would like to help." Wee-sa-Kay-Jac reminded him that the beaver and the otter nearly died when they tried to reach the bottom. The little muskrat said, "No matter what happens, be sure to **examine** my paws when I return." The little muskrat disappeared under the water. The other animals waited for a long time. They became very worried. Finally, his **drowned** little body floated to the surface.

Wee-sa-Kay-Jac opened his paws and found a small lump of mud. He called to the great turtle and put the mud on his shell. He **kneaded** it with his hands. The mud grew until it was an island big enough for the animals, birds and people. Wee-sa-Kay-Jac used the trees from the raft to make the forest. The sunshine returned and the world was warm again. And that is why North America is sometimes called Turtle Island.

Wee-sa-Kay-Jac – a spirit being who takes the shape of a human

Thunderbird – an important spirit in the shape of a bird. He had the power to create storms. His wings sounded like thunder. People ask the Thunderbird for help in times of great need.

raft – a floating platform made of logs

exhausted – very tired

volunteer – offer to help

examine – look at

drowned – died in the water

knead – to mix with your hands, like bread dough