



THE ORIGIN OF MOSQUITOES

One evening Wolverine was roasting a caribou flank when an *atcen* came out of the woods and asked him what he was cooking that smelled so good.

Canny as ever, Wolverine replied: "As you can tell, it's a human being. I just killed it earlier today."

"Mind if I join you?" the *atcen* asked, licking his lips.

"Not at all, friend," said Wolverine. He patted the ground next to him, by the fire.

"But I have one problem," the *atcen* admitted. "I'm very old, and I don't have any teeth left. So I can't eat human beings the way I used to. Now all I can do is suck the blood out of them."

"Well," observed Wolverine, "I happen to have a nice fresh human being cached behind my tent. I'll go get it for you, but while I'm gone, please make sure that the meat I'm roasting doesn't burn."

Wolverine got up and began walking toward his tent, then he quickly turned around and pushed the *atcen* into the fire. As the *atcen* was burning up, his jaws snapped open and shut, and he uttered the following threat to Wolverine:

"You haven't heard the last of this. Not by a long shot. I'm going to come back and cause all sorts of suffering."

At last there was nothing left of the *atcen* but ashes. Suddenly a great gust of wind picked up these ashes and scattered them into the air. Immediately, they turned into mosquitoes, which continue to suck the blood from human beings to this very day.

WOLVERINE CREATES THE WORLD

Long, long ago there were great floods. Almost the entire world was drowned in water. Wolverine was able to keep himself dry only by leaping from stone to stone. If these floods get any worse, he said to himself, they will put an end to my wandering, maybe even put an end to the world, too.

So Wolverine called a meeting of all the animals who made their homes in water. He asked each of them to help him save the world from drowning.

First, he talked to Otter. "Dive down, Otter," he said, "and bring me some ground."

Otter did as he was told, but he didn't come up with any ground. He said he couldn't see anything down there except weeds and a few fish.

Next Wolverine talked to Beaver. He said: "If you bring up some ground, I will find a pretty little wife for you. Maybe build the biggest lodge in the world for you, too."

So Beaver dove down, but he didn't bring up any ground, either. "I can't swim deep enough to reach the bottom," he gasped, "and as for a wife and a big lodge, I'd rather live without them than drown."

Muskrat was Wolverine's last hope. "I might be able to save the world," Muskrat said, "but only if you tie a thong to my leg."

Wolverine tied the thong, and Muskrat jumped into the water. He was gone for quite a long time. I hope he didn't drown, thought Wolverine. He pulled up the rope, and when he did, up came the thong...without Muskrat.

Too bad, said Wolverine to himself. This means only water, water, and more water from now on.

But all of a sudden Muskrat surfaced. His mouth was so full of ground that he wasn't able to talk, so Wolverine put his mouth to Muskrat's ass and blew as hard as he could. Out came the ground from Muskrat's mouth, more and more ground, heaps and heaps of it, seemingly without end.

This ground is the very earth we walk on today.