# The Weeoonibeens and the Piggiebillah

Two Weeoombeen brothers went out hunting. One brother was much younger than the other and smaller, so when they sighted an emu, the elder one said to the younger: "You stay quietly here and do not make a noise, or Piggiebillah, whose camp we passed just now, will hear you and steal the emu if I kill it. He is so strong. I'll go on and try to kill the emu with this stone." The little Weeoombeen watched his big brother sneak up to the emu, crawling along, almost flat, on the ground. He saw him get quite close to the emu, then spring up quickly and throw the stone with such an accurate aim as to kill the bird on the spot. The little brother was so rejoiced that he forgot his brother's caution, and he called aloud in his joy. The big Weeoombeen looked round and gave him a warning sign, but too late, Piggiebillah had heard the cry and was hastening towards them. Quickly big Weeoombeen left the emu and joined his little brother.Piggiebillah, when he came up, said: "What have you found?""Nothing," said the big Weeoombeen, "nothing but some mistletoe berries.""It must have been something more than that, or your little brother would not have called out so loudly."Little Weeoombeen was so afraid that Piggiebillah would find their emu and take it, that he said: "I hit a little bird with a stone, and I was glad I could throw so straight.""It was no cry for the killing of a little bird or for the finding of mistletoe berries that I heard. It was for something much more than either, or you would not have called out so joyfully. If you do not tell me at once I will kill you both."The Weeoombeen brothers were frightened, for Piggiebillah was a great fighter and very strong, so when they saw he was really angry, they showed him the dead emu."Just what I want for my supper," he said, and so saying, dragged it away to his own camp. The Weeoombeens followed him and even helped him to make a fire to cook the emu, hoping by so doing to get a share given to them. But Piggiebillah would not give them any; he said he must have it all for himself.Angry and disappointed, the Weeoombeens marched straight off and told some black fellows who lived near, that Piggiebillah had a fine fat emu just cooked for supper.Up jumped the black fellows, seized their spears, bade the Weeoombeens quickly lead them to Piggiebillah's camp, promising them for so doing a share of the emu.When they were within range of spear shot, the black fellows formed a circle, took aim, and threw their spears at Piggiebillah. As the spears fell thick on him, sticking out all over him, Piggiebillah cried aloud: "Bingehlah, Bingeblah. You can have it, you can have it." But the black fellows did not desist until Piggiebillah was too wounded even to cry out; then they left him a mass of spears and turned to look for the emu. But to their surprise they found it not. Then for the first time they missed the Weeoombeens.Looking round they saw their tracks going to where the emu had evidently been; then they saw that they had dragged the emu to their nyunnoo, which was a humpy made of grass.When the Weeoombeens saw the black fellows coming, they caught hold of the emu and dragged it to a big hole they knew of, with a big stone at its entrance, which stone only they knew the secret of moving. They moved the stone, got the emu and themselves into the hole, and the stone in place again before the black fellows reached the place.The black fellows tried to move the stone, but could not. Yet they knew that the Weeoombeens must have done so, for they had tracked them right up to it, and they could hear the sound of their voices on the other side of it. They saw there was a crevice on either side of the stone, between it and the ground. Through these crevices they, drove in their spears, thinking they must surely kill the brothers. But the Weeoombeens too had seen these crevices and had anticipated the spears, so they had placed the dead emu before them to act as a shield. And into its body were driven the spears of the black fellows extended for the Weeoombeens.Having driven the spears well in, the black fellows went off to get help to move the stone, but when they had gone a little way they heard the Weeoombeens laughing. Back they came and speared again, and again started for help, only as they left to hear once more the laughter of the brothers.The Weeoombeens finding their laughter only brought back the black fellows to a fresh attack, determined to keep quiet, which, after the next spearing, they did.Quite sure, when they heard their spear shots followed by neither conversation nor laughter, that they had killed the Weeoombeens at last, the black fellows hurried away to bring back the strength and cunning of the camp, to remove the stone.The Weeoombeens hurriedly discussed what plan they had better adopt to elude the black fellows, for well they knew that should they ever meet any of them again they would be killed without mercy. And as they talked they satisfied their hunger by eating some of the emu flesh.After a while the black fellows returned, and soon was the stone removed from the entrance. Some of them crept into the hole, where, to their surprise, they found only the remains of the emu and no trace of the Weeoombeens. As those who had gone in first crept out and told of the disappearance of the Weeoombeens, others, incredulous of such a story, crept in to find it confirmed. They searched round for tracks; seeing that their spears were all in the emu it seemed to them probable the Weeoombeens had escaped alive, but if so, whither they had gone their tracks would show. But search as they would no tracks could they find. All they could see were two little birds which sat on a bush near the hole, watching the black fellows all the time. The little birds flew round the hole sometimes, but never away, always returning to their bush and seeming to be discussing the whole affair; but what they said the black fellows could not understand. But as time went on and no sign was ever found of the Weeoombeens, the black fellows became sure that the brothers had turned into the little white-throated birds which had sat on the bush by the hole, so, they supposed, to escape their vengeance. And ever afterwards the little white-throats were called Weeoombeens. And the memory of Piggiebillah is perpetuated by a sort of porcupine ant-eater, which bears his name, and whose skin is covered closely with miniature spears sticking all over it.

## http://www.fairytales247.com/catalog/australian-folktales/skazka-the-weeoonibeens-and-the-piggiebillah-395/