



Brothertown Oral Traditions

Chahnameed Squeezes the Stone

A long time ago there was a man who lived on an island far from shore. His name was Chahnameed, and he was a terrible glutton. There once was a man who thought that he knew more tricks than Chahnameed and he told him so. Chahnameed said "Can you squeeze water out of a stone? I'll show you that I can."



Image: Plimoth Patauzet Museum

Chahnameed took a wet and soggy piece of cheese into his hand and climbed up a tree. The cheese looked just like a white piece of stone. When he got to the top of the tree, he reached out with his hand, holding the piece of cheese and squeezed it. Water dripped out and fell on the ground and all the people thought that he could squeeze water out of a stone. Chahnameed came down out of the tree and dared the other man to do the same.

So, the other man picked up a stone and climbed up the tree. When he got top the top, he held the stone out and squeezed and squeezed. No water came out of the stone. He squeezed harder and harder until he cut his hand on the sharp edges of the stone and cut his hand. He had to admit his defeat even though Chahnameed had tricked him and all the other people.

(Adapted from William S. Simmons, 1986, Spirit of the New England Tribes: Indian History and Folklore, 1620-1984. Hanover NH: University Press of New England.)

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