Sharing our story

Sheila Conway and Jessie Roberts, storytellers

‘My sister, Jessie Roberts, and I are the storytellers for The Devil-Devil from Warlok. Our dad, aunty and grandmother all passed this story onto us. We’ve known it all our lives—since the time when we used to walk everywhere. Every afternoon around the fire, our father would say, “Come and sit down and I’ll tell you a story so you can carry it on”.

‘We’ve got to carry on the stories and not lose our culture. It’s like history. It’s important to tell all the kids so they can know the story; so they know which story goes for which Country. People know where they come from if they know their story, otherwise they could be just wandering around, not knowing anything.
‘We put this story in the book so the younger kids won’t lose their history, they can keep it all the time. We share the story with all kids so they can understand what we’re teaching to Aboriginal children. We like sharing the story.’
At a Dreaming Place called Warlok, lived the old lady Ngarla-Yudjudjangarrumbangarrumba (Yood-yood-jah-nga-rrumba-nga-rrumba)—a devil-devil.

On a hill, with limestone rocks around it and a tree on top, Ngarla-Yudjudja cooked flying fox and hid out with her daughters. ‘Yudjudjangarrumbangarrumba yudjudjangarrumbangarrumba kulweruweru’ she sang. And, as she danced, the dust whirled high around her.
At a nearby camp, two young boys saw the dust rising from the hill. They said to each other, ‘Let’s go and see what’s up there!’ So they put on their armbands, bracelets and bangles and set off. When they got close, the whirly-whirly drew them towards Ngarla-Yudjudja’s camp.

*whirly-whirly* — a whirlwind