How The Sun Was Made

(Kaurna Nation – Adelaide Plains, South Australia)

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Long ago, in the Dreaming, the world was very different from the one we know today. There was no sun. The sky was filled only with the faint light of the stars and the pale glow of the moon.

By night, the people could see enough to walk slowly, but shadows clung to the trees, and the earth was often cold. By day, it was no brighter. The world seemed grey, the plants grew weak, and the people shivered as they hunted and gathered food.

“Why is there no warmth for us?” the children asked. “Why must we live in darkness?”

The Elders had no answer. It was simply the way the world was. But among the people were two sisters — clever, strong, and kind-hearted. They saw how the children struggled to keep warm, how the mothers wrapped them tightly in skins, how the men and women grew tired from searching for food without light. The sisters felt sorrow in their hearts.



“This cannot be how the world is meant to be,” said the elder sister.

“There must be a way to bring light,” agreed the younger.
So together, they began to dream of a new idea.

Gathering the fire

The sisters knew of fire, for the people kept small flames at night. But it was not enough. A campfire gave light to a circle of ground and warmth to a cluster of people. What the world needed was a fire so big, so bright, that it could chase away the endless darkness.

“Let us make a great fire,” said the elder sister. “One that no wind can blow out.”
“Yes,” said the younger, “and we will lift it high above, so it shines over everyone.”
So they set to work.

From the trees they stripped long sheets of bark, smooth and curling. From the ground they gathered dry twigs and branches. They searched for the driest wood, the kind that crackled and flared easily. Piece by piece they carried it back, building a pile so large it rose taller than both of them.

Other people watched curiously. “Why do you gather so much wood?” asked Wombat.

“To make a fire greater than any fire before,” replied the elder sister.

“But what good is such a fire?” asked Kangaroo, flicking his tail.

“You will see,” the younger sister said. “Be patient.”

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Lighting the blaze

At last, when their pile of wood was high, the sisters struck their fire-sticks together. Sparks flew, smoke curled, and a flame caught at the edge of the bark. Slowly, the fire grew. It crackled and roared, flames leaping high, glowing brighter than any campfire ever had. The light spread across the plain, chasing away the shadows. The people gasped, holding out their hands to the warmth.
But the sisters were not finished.

“This fire must not remain here on the ground,” said the elder. “It must belong to everyone, everywhere.”
“Yes,” said the younger, “for only then will the cold and darkness end.”
So they spoke words of power, words taught to them in dreams, and the great fire lifted. Higher and higher it rose, glowing red and gold, until at last it blazed in the sky.

The world was flooded with light. The trees shone green, the rivers sparkled silver, and the people laughed with joy, seeing each other’s faces clearly for the first time in full brightness.

The gift of the Sun

From that day, the fire in the sky became the Sun. It travelled across the heavens each day, warming the earth, helping the plants to grow, giving light so the people could hunt and gather with ease.



At night, when the Sun sank below the horizon, the people remembered the sisters’ gift. They kept smaller fires in their camps to carry them through until morning, when the great Sun rose again.
The animals, too, rejoiced. Lizards basked in the warmth on rocks, birds spread their wings wide in the golden air, and kangaroos fed on grasses made strong by the Sun’s power.

A warning remembered

But the sisters gave a warning.
“Fire is a gift,” said the elder. “It brings light and warmth, and it gives life.”
“But fire can also destroy,” added the younger. “If you are careless, it will burn the very land that feeds you.”
So the people learned to respect the Sun and the fire they kept in their hearths. They taught their children how to carry fire carefully from one camp to another, and how to never leave flames untended.
Each sunrise reminded them of the sisters’ wisdom.

The lesson of the Sun

And so, the Kaurna people tell the story of how the Sun was made. Two sisters, seeing the struggles of their people, chose not to keep their idea secret but to share it with everyone. They gathered, they worked, and they gave the greatest gift: warmth and light for the whole world.
Today, when the first rays of dawn stretch across the Adelaide Plains, painting the sky with gold and crimson, people remember. The Sun is not just a ball of fire in the sky — it is the living memory of two sisters’ kindness, courage, and wisdom. It is a reminder that when we see others in need, we too can share what we have and make life brighter for everyone.