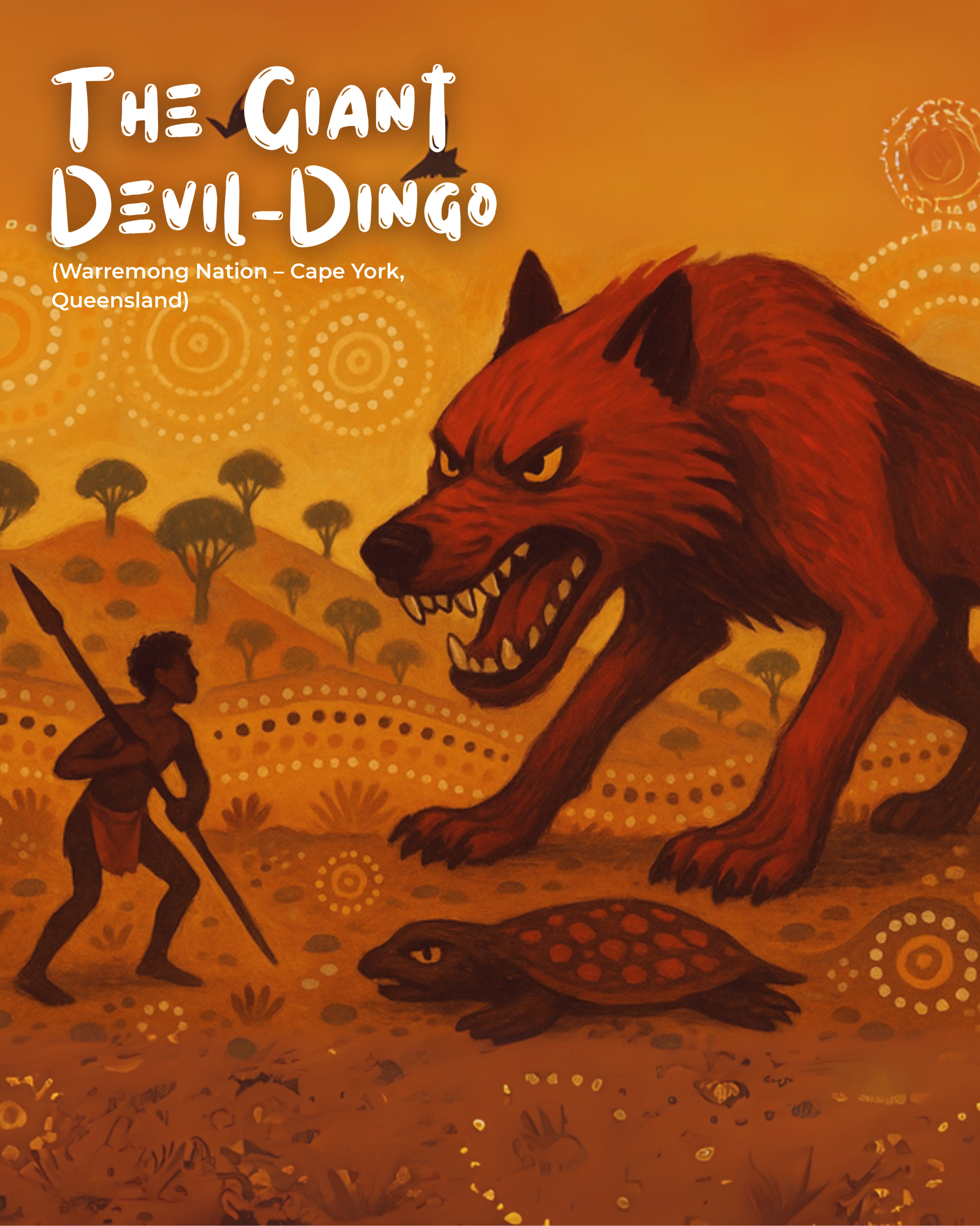
The Giant Devil-Dingo

(Warremong Nation – Cape York, Queensland)



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A long time ago, in the Dreaming, there lived a great Devil-Dingo. He was larger than any dingo you could imagine, with eyes that glowed like fire and teeth sharp as spears. His growl rumbled across the plains, and his shadow fell long over the land.

The Devil-Dingo roamed wherever he wished. When the people saw his tracks in the sand, they whispered in fear. “He is near. We must stay close to our camp. No one is safe when he prowls.”

The children huddled near their mothers, and the hunters looked anxiously at the horizon. No spear could stop the Devil-Dingo, and no one dared to face him alone.

The Rainbow Bird’s concern

At last, the Elders called a gathering. The fires were lit, and all the people came together.

“We cannot live in fear forever,” one Elder said. “We must find a way to stop the Devil-Dingo.”

“But how?” asked a hunter. “He is too strong.”

The Elders looked to the spirit-beings for guidance. That night they sang and painted themselves with ochre, asking for help. The spirits answered.

“You must stand together,” they said. “The Devil-Dingo cannot be faced by one alone. Only by many, with courage, will you defeat him.”



The great hunt

At dawn, the hunters set out. Spears in hand, they followed the Devil-Dingo’s tracks across the sand. The women and children waited, singing songs of strength to give courage to the hunters.

The sun rose high when at last they heard the growl. The Devil-Dingo stood before them, his fur bristling, his eyes glowing. He bared his teeth and snarled.

For a moment the hunters trembled, but then they remembered the spirits’ words: Stand together.
“Now!” cried the leader. “Do not fear. We are many!”

With a great shout, they circled the Devil-Dingo. Spears flew, dust rose, and the ground shook with the pounding of feet. The Devil-Dingo snapped and leapt, but he could not escape the circle.

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The Devil-Dingo falls

The hunters drove him towards a pit they had dug, lined with sharp stakes. The Devil-Dingo stumbled, fell, and at last lay still. His growl faded into silence, and the land grew calm again.

The people stood together, their hearts pounding. Slowly, they lowered their spears. The danger had passed.

The gift of the dingo

But the story did not end there. From the body of the Devil-Dingo came smaller dingoes — not fierce and wild like him, but gentle enough to live among the people.

They followed the hunters back to camp, wagging their tails and lying by the fires. The children laughed and stroked their fur.

“These are gifts,” the Elders said. “They will guard our camps, help us hunt, and keep us company. They are kin, born from danger but made into friends.”

From that day, the people kept dingoes close. Some roamed free, but others stayed by the camps, watchful and loyal.

