The Origin of The Pleiades

(Euahlayi Nation – New South Wales)



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A long time ago, in the Dreaming, there lived seven sisters. They were known across the land for their beauty, their laughter, and their songs. Wherever they went, the sound of their voices filled the air like music, and the earth itself seemed brighter for their presence.

The sisters did everything together. At dawn, they walked to gather roots and berries. At midday, they sang by the creek as they pounded seeds into flour. At sunset, they danced in a circle, stamping their feet and waving their arms as the fire crackled nearby. At night, they lay close together and watched the stars.

They were never apart. “We are strongest when we are together,” the eldest said. And the others nodded.

The unwelcome hunter

But there was a man who saw the sisters and longed to have them for himself. He was a great hunter, tall and strong. He watched them from the shadows of the trees, his eyes following their every move.

“I will take one for my wife,” he muttered. “I will chase them until they are mine.”

The sisters saw him watching, and they grew afraid. “We must not be caught,” said the eldest. “We must keep together.”

The next day, as they went to gather roots, the man appeared. He carried a spear and strode towards them. “Stay close!” cried the eldest.

The sisters ran, their feet light on the grass, their arms full of food. The hunter chased them, his steps heavy behind. But the sisters were swift, and together they escaped.



The endless chase

Day after day, the hunter tried again. If the sisters sang by the water, he came from the trees. If they danced at sunset, he crept from the rocks. If they gathered food, he followed their tracks.

Always the sisters fled. Always the eldest called, “Stay close! Keep together!”

Their laughter grew softer, their songs quieter. At night they whispered, “What shall we do? He will not leave us.” The youngest sister trembled. “I am afraid.”

The eldest held her hand. “We will not be taken. We are many, and we are strong when we are together.”

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The spirits' gift

The spirits watched. They saw the sisters' fear and their strength. They heard their songs, still brave though soft with worry.

"These sisters must be safe," said the spirits. "They belong together, and their songs belong to the world."

So one evening, as the sun sank and the hunter drew near once more, the spirits reached down. A soft wind lifted the sisters' hair. A golden glow surrounded them.

"What is happening?" gasped the youngest.
"Hold my hand!" cried the eldest.

Together, the sisters rose from the earth. Higher and higher they floated, their feet leaving the grass, their arms outstretched. The hunter leapt and shouted, but he could not reach them. His spear fell to the ground, useless.

Up and up the sisters went, until they glittered in the darkening sky. Their voices rang out like bells, and their laughter shimmered like silver.



The stars above

That night, when the people looked up, they saw a new cluster of stars shining brightly. Seven together, close and beautiful, never apart.

"Look!" cried the children. "The sisters are safe. They shine above us."

And so they became the Pleiades, the Seven Sisters. From then on, they travelled the sky each night, rising and setting with the seasons, a reminder of their strength and their bond.