Outside the hut, the rain was beginning to fall. Inside, the old Arawak sat with his grandchildren.

“Ah! Said the old man, Rainstorm is weeping.”

“Who is Rainstorm?” asked the boy. “Why is Rainstorm weeping?” asked the girls.

This is the story that the old man told…

Long, long ago, before men lived on the earth, there was a great land among the clouds called Skyland.

No one had ever seen the earth.

People lived in Skyland just as they live on the earth today. The men and boys hunted and fished. The women and girls cooked and washed.

After a great hunt, there would be a great feast.

Then the Great Hunter would sing:

*Ya-ho! Ya-ho!*

*Ya-ho! Ho-ho!*

And all the mothers of girls and boys would join and sing:

*Ya-ho! Ho-ho!*

One day, the Great Hunter was out hunting when he saw the biggest bird he had ever seen. It was sitting on the edge of a cloud talking to the sun.

The Great Hunter crept close to listen.

“Good morning, Brother Sun,” said the bird. “Is all well with you?”

“Yes,” said the sun, “but all is not well with you! I see the Great Hunter hiding near you!”

Before the bird could escape, the Great Hunter fitted an arrow to his bow and shot the bird.

The Great Hunter saw where it fell and rushed to pick it up.

But when he reached the place, all he could see was a deep hole.

“Ah!” he said, “the bird has fallen down that deep hole.”

He knelt at the edge and looked down, but the hole was so deep and dark that he could see nothing.

Then he lowered himself over the side and climbed down.

Down, down, down. It was deeper than he thought, but at last he saw some light below him.

As he went on, the light grew larger and brighter, until at last he came to the end of the deep, deep hole and found himself in Earthland!

The Great Hunter looked round him in wonder. He walked through the long green grass. He splashed in the cool rivers. He hunted and he fished. Then he took as much food as he could, went back to the hole, and climbed up, up, till he came again to Skyland.

“Where have you been?” asked his wife. “Where did you find all that food?” asked his son. “Is there any more meat there?” asked his sister.

But the Hunter was too tired to talk. All he said was “Ah!” Then he got in his hammock and fell asleep.
Later, the Hunter woke up. He told the men and women in Skyland all about the big bird that he shot, about the deep dark blue hole, how he went down the hole, and how he came to Earthland. Then he said “When the moon is full, we will all go down the deep hole and we will hunt in Earthland.”

At last the time came when the moon was full. The men and boys took their bows and arrows, the women and girls took their baskets, and they all went to the deep hole. It looked very dark and very deep, but they all said to the Great Hunter “We are brave. We will come with you.”

Then the Great Hunter laughed. He said: “Earthland is a good place. In Earthland there are many turtles, O my sons! In Earthland there is much corn, O my sisters! In Earthland there are rabbits and coneys, O my brothers!”

Only the old women and the old men stayed behind. How happy they were in Earthland! The girls looked for guavas and plums. The boys splashed in the water and looked for turtles. The women looked for corn. The men hunted for rabbits and coneys.

Only one woman was sad. Her name was Rainstorm. She sat on the grass and she kicked up the earth with her toes. She said, “Earthland is dirty. I see the dust and I see mud. I will go back for my brooms and I will make Earthland clean.”

So Rainstorm ran back to the hole, and climbed back to Skyland to find her brooms. She took some cloths to wipe away the dust from Earthland and some brooms to sweep away the mud. She had big cloths and little cloths, soft brooms and hard brooms. Then she ran back to the hole.

Rainstorm began to go down the hole as fast as she could but she went too fast. One big broom stuck across the hole. Rainstorm tried to go past the big broom but she was too fat. So she got stuck too.

Try as she would, Rainstorm could not move. She could not go up. She could not go down. She began to cry. The old men and the old women in Skyland heard her and said: “that is Rainstorm. She has stuck in the hole. We must pull her up.” The men and women of Earthland heard her and said, “That is Rainstorm. She has stuck in the hole. We must pull her down.”

So the people in Skyland ran to the hole and tried to pull Rainstorm up. At the same time the people in Earthland ran to the hole and tried to pull her down. They all pulled as hard as they could. Rainstorm stuck harder than ever.

At last they had to leave her. And there she is still. The people in Skyland cannot come down, and the people in Earthland cannot go back, because Rainstorm cannot go up, and she cannot come down, so she weeps.

“now you know who Rainstorm is and why she weeps”, said the old Arawak.”Thank you for the story”, said the children. “When Rainstorm stops weeping we will go out and play.”