

The Son-in-Law

Told by James Thompson
To W. W. Newcomb

There once was a woman who intensely disliked her son-in-law. This worried the son-in-law and finally he decided to do something about it. He went down to the pond from which his mother-in-law was accustomed to draw water. He tied all the lily pads together so that he could make them vibrate by pulling on a string. Then he hid himself in some bushes that were nearby.

Soon his mother-in-law came down to draw water. He vibrated the lily pads and disguised his voice saying: "Your son-in-law is going to die, your son-in-law is going to die."

She, of course, thought the lily pads were speaking to her. She started back to the wigwam, but her son-in-law took a short cut and beat her back. He was sitting within when the tearful woman arrived.

She started being very nice to him, she combed and brushed his clothes and softened his buckskin clothes, and was ice to him afterwards because she thought he was going to die.

This is a short version of the story and a very similar story was told in its full length by Martha Ellis of Anadarko. It can be seen and heard here:

<https://www.talk-lenape.org/stories?id=84#2460>