

1934

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### Recommended Citation

Childs Hogner, Dorothy. "Hogan Tales." *New Mexico Quarterly* 4, 2 (1934). <http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/nmq/vol4/iss2/5>

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## Hogan Tales

By DOROTHY CHILDS HOGNER

Note by the Editor:

The following tales are drawn from the vast store of Navajo myths and folk narratives which have interested ethnologist and writer alike. As part of a book of tales collected by Dorothy Hogner, they represent three large spheres of folk-lore among the Navajos—the ethnic myths, the chieftain hero tales, and the animal fables. The three stories printed here appear under general headings corresponding to these divisions, the "Tales of Very, Very Long Ago," the "Big Long Man Stories," and the "Coyote Stories." The editor is pleased to present material of such interest to Southwestern readers and to lovers of folk literature, young and old. The frontispiece of this magazine reproduces one of the illustrations done for the book by Nils Hogner, the author's artist husband, and advisor about the Navajos.

### THE MAKING OF THE SUN AND MOON

**L**ONG, long, ago when the people first came from the Under World, there was no sun in the sky by day and no moon in the sky by night. At dawn the White Light rose in the East and the Yellow Light in the West and when the two lights met in the sky it was day. It was quite dark and gloomy. The Navajos wanted more light.

"I will make more light," said the First Man. From his hogan he brought a great piece of turquoise which he had carried with him from the Under World.

"From this stone I will make the Sun and hang it in the sky by day to make more light," he said. The people gathered around and he chipped the blue turquoise stone until it was flat and round like a coin. Then he painted a face on the surface.

"This," he said, "is the Sun. It will give light by day." While the First Man admired his handiwork, the First Woman went to her hogan and brought out a white shell which she had carried from the Under World. She handed it to First Man.

"This," she said, "will be the Moon. We shall hang it

in the sky by night and it will give a light when the Sun is gone."

First Man chipped it round and flat like the Sun and painted a face on its surface, too.

The next day he called a council of all of the head men and the medicine men. When they were seated, First Man asked:

"Can anyone here make the discs shine?"

"I can," said the Spider Medicine Man. "I will put light into the Sun and the Moon." So saying, he wove five threads, all of different colors around the discs. For twelve nights he sang, making good medicine over them. On the twelfth night the Sun and the Moon shone.

The First Man called another council and asked, "Will anyone carry the Sun across the sky?"

"I will," said Coyote. But no one would vote for Coyote. He was already known as a scamp.

"The Sun would never rise on time if Coyote carried it," said First Man and he asked, "Will anyone here carry the Moon across the sky?"

"I will," said Coyote, but the people refused his offer.

Just then two handsome young people were seen coming over the horizon. They rode on the backs of beautiful animals that the Navajos had never seen before. One of them was a young man and he was seated on the back of a Turquoise Blue Stallion. The other, a young woman, was seated on a beautiful White Mare. The people had never seen a horse before in their lives, neither did they know what to make of the handsome young man and woman.

"Why do you come here? Who are you? Where do you come from?" asked the people.

Neither of the strangers gave a name, but the handsome boy said, "I come to carry the Sun for you each day over the sky."

The beautiful woman said, "I come to carry the Moon each night over the sky."

The people were amazed but pleased. These handsome young people on their strange handsome animals seemed to be just the ones to carry the newly made Sun and Moon.

"Come to my house and start your journey there," said the East Wind, who was also entranced with the strangers.

"Yes," cried the people. "Go with the East Wind and climb up the sky from his home."

Thus it happened that the handsome man and the beautiful woman on their strange animals rode into the East with the East Wind. On the next day the people watched anxiously for the Sun to rise. The white light of dawn came as usual. Then a glorious aurora of color filled the East. Sun rays shot up over the horizon.

"Here comes the Sun," shouted the people and for the first time in the history of the world the great dazzling Sun rode up over the rim of the world. A bright warm light spread over the earth. The people danced and sang for joy.

"The Sun is beautiful and warm," they cried. They watched it climb up, up to the very top of the sky. There, to their dismay, the Sun stopped.

"What is the matter?" cried the people. "Ride on with your Turquoise Blue animal, oh Carrier of the Sun," they shouted up toward the sky. But the disc of the Sun did not move. At last a voice called down "I will stay here until you give me a human life." It was the voice of the Sun Carrier.

"He is a witch," cried First Man. "What shall we do?" The people shouted again at the Sun but it did not move an inch. It stayed glaring down at them from the roof of the sky. That very hour the runner came to say that the wife of a chief was dying. As she drew her last breath the Sun began to move once more and slowly it travelled on down into the west, leaving a trail of color behind it on the horizon. Dusk came and then darkness.

That night the people waited anxiously for the Moon to

rise in the dark night sky. Soon a glow spread over the East.

"Here comes the Moon," cried the people and, for the first time in all history, the copper-colored Moon rose up over the rim of the earth. A weird, soft light flowed over all the land. The people danced and sang for joy.

"The Moon is strange and beautiful," they cried. They watched it climb higher and higher until it, too, reached the roof of the sky. There, to the dismay of the people, it stopped as the Sun had stopped.

"What is the matter?" cried the people. "Ride on, Moon Carrier, on your beautiful white animal." But the disc of the Moon did not move. Finally a voice called down, "I will stay here until you give me a human life."

"She is a witch, too," cried the people.

It happened that an old warrior lay ill and that very hour he died. When he drew his last breath the Moon started moving slowly across the sky, down, down into the west.

From that day to this, people die day and night to satisfy the Sun and the Moon and ever since, the Sun and the Moon have travelled faithfully over the sky without stopping in their paths.

### BIG LONG MAN GOES HUNTING

Big Long Man liked to go hunting every day. His wife scolded him and said, "Why don't you stay home and hoe the corn? Look at the garden. It is full of weeds." This was true. The corn needed hoeing and the land needed water from the irrigation ditch. But Big Long Man went hunting just the same.

"You had better be careful," warned his wife. "If you keep on chasing animals you will turn into one some day." Big Long Man just laughed and rode off on Grey Horse with his bow and quiver slung over his shoulder.

That day the ground was covered with new fallen snow, and soon the hunter came upon the tracks of Lynx Cat. He

tracked the foot prints to Big Tall Pine Tree, and there the tracks stopped. Big Long Man peered up into the thick branches of the tree. The branches were so thick that he could not see Lynx Cat, but there he sat, hiding high up among the thick pine needles.

Big Long Man got off his horse and threw the reins of the bridle on the ground so that the animal would stand under the tree. Then Big Long Man began circling around and around the tree trunk, peering up into the branches.

"Lynx Cat must be up there hiding," said he to himself. "Here are his tracks to the foot of the tree. There are no tracks leading away." He held his bow ready to shoot, a sharp pointed arrow fitted to the string. Round and round the tree trunk he circled. All this time Lynx Cat was sitting in the tree following every move of Big Long Man with his eyes.

Round and round walked Big Long Man, and round and round went Lynx Cat's head, twisting this way and that to keep his eye on the hunter. After a while Lynx Cat got dizzy. He could scarcely see. Big Long Man kept right on walking around in circles on the ground below. Finally Lynx Cat got so dizzy that he could not keep his balance. He toppled over backwards. He tried to catch hold of a branch but he was too dizzy. As luck would have it he landed plunk on the top of Old Grey Horse, who was nodding and hanging his head, sleepily, under the tree. When Grey Horse felt the sharp claws of Lynx Cat dig into his back he did not know what was happening. He gave one squeal and one buck and started in a fast gallop toward the hogan of Big Long Man, with Lynx Cat riding on his back. Try as he would, Lynx Cat could not jump off Grey Horse's back. His feet were tangled in the stirrup straps.

When Grey Horse came in sight of the hogan, the children of Big Long Man were playing in front of the door. The moment they saw Grey Horse coming at such a fast gallop they ran indoors calling to their mother.

"Here comes Father. He must have killed an animal already. He is riding very fast."

"I do wonder what brings him home so early," said Mrs. Big Long Man. She ran to the door as Grey Horse came plunging along with the strange rider clinging to his back. When Mrs. Big Long Man saw Lynx Cat, she gave a scream. Then she began to scold.

"What did I tell you, Big Long Man," she said to Lynx Cat. "I warned you that you would change into an animal if you went hunting every day and neglected your corn patch. Now I have a fine husband. Get along with you and don't come back again until you have your own skin on." So saying, she gave Lynx Cat a cut with a switch. With a yowl Lynx Cat disentangled his feet and leapt from the back of Grey Horse. Away he ran, glad enough that the ride was finished.

Along about sundown, Big Long Man came limping across the valley. His feet were blistered. He was tired and cross.

"Where is my supper?" he shouted as he came in sight of his hogan.

Mrs. Big Long Man was inside the hogan cooking a mutton stew.

"If Big Long Man is still a Lynx Cat," said Mrs. Big Long Man to her children, he will get another cut with this switch for his supper." She picked up a long switch and went to the door of the hogan. There was Big Long Man limping home wearily.

"So, you have turned back into a man," said Mrs. Big Long Man. "Now will you be sensible and hoe your corn? I won't be keeping any Lynx Cats for husbands."

Big Long Man was too tired to heed his wife's scoldings.

"I will hoe my corn tomorrow," he said. "Now please give me my supper."

"See that you do hoe the corn," replied Mrs. Big Long Man. "I don't want Lynx Cats around my hogan."

"What on earth is she talking about?" said Big Long Man to himself. But he was too tired to argue with his wife and he said no more out loud.

### COYOTE AND ROCK LIZARDS

On the way home, Coyote saw a group of Rock Lizards playing a game. Their scaly bodies shone beautifully in the sunlight. Coyote was as curious as ever. He trotted over to the rocks to find out what the Lizards were doing. They were playing on a wide flat rock which dipped steeply into Red Rock Canyon. At the top of the Rock was a pile of round smooth stones. The Lizards took turns riding down hill on these stones. A Lizard would balance on top of a stone ready to ride. He would blow out his cheeks, and hiss, and the other Lizards would give him a shove. The Lizards were clever. They moved their small feet as fast as the stones, letting them spin beneath them. Away they scooted with their tails and heads held high. Not a single Lizard made a misstep. Not one lost his balance and fell off.

It was a thrilling game and Coyote admired it more than any other game he had ever seen. For a time he sat patiently watching. At last he could not sit idle any longer and he begged the Lizards to let him join them in their play.

"No," said the Lizard who was just ready to ride. "Go away." He puffed out his cheeks and hissed and off he went whizzing down the wide flat rock surface.

Coyote asked the next rock slider.

"No," replied the second Lizard just as his cousin had done. "This is a dangerous game. You would get hurt."

"I am the fastest of all the animals," boasted Coyote. "Besides, I can jump farther, too. Do let me play."

"No," replied Lizard. But when Coyote asked the fourth time they placed a stone at the top of the slide and told Coyote to balance himself upon it. Coyote carefully placed his four feet on the small stone. He wrapped his tail close to his body to keep it out of his way.

"Let go. Let me go," he shouted to the Lizards who were balancing him. The other Lizards gave him a gentle shove and away he went with his fur blowing in the breezes. He shifted his feet quickly as the stone revolved and he slid all the way to the bottom without falling. He hurried back up the slide and as soon as he reached the top of the wide rock he said, "That is fun. Let me ride again, Lizards."

"No, no," hissed the Lizards. "Enough. Leave us." But Coyote was not thinking of leaving. He bothered the Lizards until they gave him two more rides. Each time he rolled the stone to the bottom without a mishap. Now if Coyote had only been satisfied with three rides, all would have been well. But he was not satisfied. Not a bit of it. He came up the fourth time and said:

"Let me have just one more turn, cousins." The Lizards were now thoroughly out of patience. They gathered together and whispered in council. In the mean time Coyote was carefully placing his feet on a round stone as before. Two Lizards left the council and came up behind him. Instead of giving him a gentle shove, they pushed with all their strength. He started down the steep slide so fast that he could hardly see. Faster and faster and faster rolled the stone. It spun beneath Coyote's feet until he could no longer keep up with it. Out flew his feet from under his body, and he landed with a skid and a plop at the bottom of Red Rock Canyon. The sliding stone rolled over him, and when the Lizards got to the bottom of the canyon there was nothing left of Coyote but pieces. He was scattered to bits over the Canyon bottom. Here and there were pieces of his arms and legs, of his fur and of his skin. When the Lizards saw what they had done they were frightened.

"We will get in trouble for killing Coyote," said First Lizard. "When Coyote's friends find out about our tricks they will come and kill us."

"True," said all of the Lizards, "but what can we do?"

"Well," said First Lizard. "Coyote does not carry his

vital parts where we do. He carries his vital parts in the tip of his nose and the tip of his tail. If we can find the tip of his nose and the tip of his tail we can put him all together again and he will be as good as ever."

"Good," said the other Lizards. They scurried around and commenced to pick up the pieces of Coyote's body and stick them together again.

"Here is his heart," cried one Lizard. "Here is a tooth," cried another Lizard. "Here is a nail. Here is his right eye. Here is a bit of fur." As each Lizard found a new bit of Coyote's body he fitted it into the right place. At last Coyote was all joined together again, but he lay still on the ground as dead as a stone.

"Why does he not come to life?" cried the Lizards.

"We have not yet found the tip of his nose and the tip of his tail," replied First Lizard. They hunted again and after a while two of the Lizards came scurrying up with the tip of Coyote's tail and the tip of his nose. Carefully they stuck these bits on the ends of Coyote's body. Coyote's body began to heave up and down. He breathed. The Lizards all shouted for joy. But Coyote did not get up from the ground. He just lay there breathing, but not moving another bit.

"We must make a dance around him," directed First Lizard. He gathered sand and began to scatter it over the body of Coyote. The other Lizards joined hands making a circle around the body and they danced while First Lizard made magic medicine with the sand.

Suddenly Coyote's legs began to twitch. He yawned and stretched and stood up. In a moment he was alive and as strong as ever. The first words that he spoke were:

"Let us go to the top of the slide again and play the game of rock sliding. Now that you know how to put me together, you need not be afraid."

The Lizards hissed angrily. "No," they cried. With-

out more talk they scurried to their homes in the Red Rock and did not play the rock sliding game for many days.

Ever since that day the Navajos have used the sand that has touched a Lizard's body to make good medicine for sick people.