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Moonlight Over Chaco

Lois Nelson Kuipers

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Moonlight Over Chaco

By Lois Nelson Kuipers

A mellowing glow is softly shed
From the high moon riding overhead.
A clearly revealing radiance falls
On an ancient people's crumbling walls.
Echo calls eerily pierce the night
From towering cliffs of canyon height.
Pottery shards of broken clay
Tell of a dim, forgotten day
When busy matrons with skillful art
Patiently shaped and designed each part;
Workers busily wove and spun;
Shy, brown maidens were wooed and won;
Naked children played in the sun,
Whooping loud in hilarious fun;
Braves fared forth to the hunt, and to fight;
War-drum and chant broke the calm of night;
In the old sacred plaza's spacious square
The populace gathered to witness there
Frenzied dancers with nimble feet
Follow the tom-tom's rhythmic beat;
A fervent priest in a rounded room,
By flickering fires and surrounding gloom,
Cast a potent and magical spell,
But the kiva guards his secret well.
A fitful breeze whispers, sighs, and is gone,
And under the cliff the ruin sleeps on.