HOW COYOTE WAS THE MOON

Many years ago, there was no moon. Night was very, very dark and it was difficult to see anything. The people complained because they were unable to visit each other or get any work done after the sun went down.

The people called together the creatures of the land and decided they would choose one of the animals to become the moon. Right away fox raised his hand. He was always wanting to help the people. So fox climbed up into the sky.

As night came, fox curled himself into tight ball, laid down, and fluffed out his big, bushy tail in order to make himself into a perfect circle. Foxes' bright red fur reflected the sun's light very well. After several nights the people began to grumble. Fox was so bright, that they were unable to sleep! Everyone was grouchy and tired. Poor fox had tried so hard, but he was asked to come down from the sky.

The people again called together the creatures of the land and decided they should choose crow because he was very dark and would not reflect the sun like fox. So crow climbed up into the sky.

As night came, crow fanned out his beautiful tail feathers, tucked in his head, and spread his wings to make himself into a perfect circle. Crow's shiny, black feathers glistened from the sun's light. After several nights, the people began to grumble. Crow's feathers would not reflect enough light for them to do any work after dark! People were running into trees, animals, and even each other. Poor crow had tried so hard, but he too was asked to come down from the sky.

For a third time the people called together the creatures of the land and decided that they would choose one of the animals to become the moon. Coyote was always trying to help the people out and was always eager to try new things. So he offered to become the moon. He was neither too dark nor too light, and he could curl himself into a circle. He would be a perfect moon. So coyote climbed up into the sky.

Coyote curled himself into a tight ball, tucked his nose under his tail, and fluffed out his fuzzy tail. He was indeed a perfect moon in every way. The people were able to visit each other after dark and work around the camp without running into each other. Everyone was happy. Everyone but Coyote.

Coyote grew tired of always laying in the same position, doing the same job night after night. He began to look around and poke his nose into people's business. Some women were down at the river taking baths and Coyote was spying on them from the sky. When the saw him they began to yell and shake their fists at him. "Curse you, Coyote!", they said.

An old man was sneaking around the meat drying racks to steal something to eat. He was very hungry. Coyote pointed him out to the rest of the people. "Curse you, Coyote!", he said.

Some men were playing a gambling game with marked sticks. Coyote would peek down from the sky and point out which hand had the marked stick. "Curse you, Coyote!", the angry men yelled.

The people came together for an important meeting. "Coyote can not be the

moon!", someone yelled. "He sticks his nose in everyone's business.", yelled another. "It's time for him to go!", grumbled several more. So coyote was forced by the people to come down from the sky. He was replaced by rabbit. Rabbit was nearly the same color and able to make himself into a nice round circle. Rabbit did not have a nose for mischief.

Rabbit still is the moon even today. That is why on nights when the moon is round and close to full, you will see rabbit's nose and whiskers. That is also why, that to this day, coyote howls at the moon.