

THE YUMAN HERITAGE

tu-Chai-pai: pai pai myth

When the moon had grown very little, all the Indian people were running races to keep up with the moon. At the end, the rabbit and the frog agreed to run a race together. The people watched and laughed loudly at the frog, because he had the shape of a man but wore no clothes. Frog became very angry at the Maker, Tu-Chai-Pai, and said "Because you did not make me well, you shall have to pay for my disgrace."

Now Tu-Chai-Pai had gone away to a very high place and fell asleep. Frog was down in a deep place shaking his fists in defiance of the Maker. Suddenly the Sun appeared, and the maker came with it. He had a long stick pointed at both ends, which he held over his head. He reached down with it around the deep place and touched the back of the frog, where it left a long white mark.

By this time Frog had become so angry that he thought of a wrong deed to commit. He decided to spit poison into the water where Tu-Chai-Pai would drink. Thoughts of this evil deed by now had magically entered the Maker's heart, who said to himself, "I shall die." Some boys then came and told the Maker what the frog had done.

Tu-Chai-Pai told them, "I shall die with the Moon. Watch the Moon and when it becomes very small, then I will die." The boys watched and watched as the Moon grew smaller, and in six large stars, the Maker finished his life. At that time, since all of the things on this Earth were the children of Tu-Chai-Pai, they too will die, sometime when the Moon seems right, according to the Maker of long, long ago.

