



# Coyote and the Sky: How the Sun, Moon, and Stars Began

By Emmett Garcia

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**Coyote and the Sky: How the Sun, Moon, and Stars Began** By Emmett Garcia

According to Santa Ana Pueblo legend, the animals' spirit Leader created the sun, moon, and stars by using woven yucca mats and hot coals. He selected certain animals to climb from their homes in the Third World up to the Fourth World. The Squirrel, the Rabbit, and the Badger were all allowed to go. The Coyote, however, was forbidden to accompany them because he was always causing trouble and stealing food from the others.

Regardless of what he was told, Coyote refused to stay in the Third World. He found a hiding place and waited for a chance to follow the animals to the Fourth World. When the other animals discovered Coyote, they summoned the Leader to the Fourth World to deal with him. Coyote's punishment is a lesson in what happens to animals, or people, when they refuse to obey instructions.

Writing for the younger reader, Emmett "Shkeme" Garcia, a member of the Santa Ana tribe, shares his Pueblo's story of the beginnings of the stars and constellations. Victoria Pringle's illustrations provide visual elements that enhance the action of the story.

Ages 6 and up.

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### Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 6 Up—In this spare and staid retelling of a Tamaya Pueblo creation myth, the storyteller explains how the sun, moon, and stars first appeared: "A long time ago, the Animal People decided to make a journey up into our world, the Fourth World. Back then, where we lived in the underworld was called Shipap, or the Third World." When they arrive at journey's end, a humorous illustration displays just eyes amidst blackness and the animals cry, "There is no light in the Fourth World! What should we do?" Subsequently, Squirrel and Rabbit return to the Third World three times to gather warm coals that enable them to bring light to the sky; familiar trickster Coyote arrives just in time to grab the third batch of coals and toss it carelessly into the night sky to create the stars and constellations. References to two different worlds may confuse some children and the text is stiff, contrasting sharply with the more lively dialogue and playful interaction found in another Pueblo tale, Valerie S. Carey's *Quail Song* (Putnam, 1990). The animal figures in the illustrations are static in the style of petrography and are unlikely to engage children who are accustomed to more animated art. Teachers may want to use this story in their multicultural curriculum, although many will find its documentation inadequate. Libraries with large folklore collections might want to purchase it; smaller libraries will want to wait for a picture-book version that is better suited for children.—*Kirsten Cutler, Sonoma County Library, CA*

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From the Inside Flap

The Santa Ana Pueblo creation legend including how Coyote tricked the other animals to join them in our world and how he was punished.

About the Author

Emmett "Shkeme" Garcia is co-owner of Emergence Productions, a cultural exchange program for American Indian youth, and the lead singer of Native Roots.

Victoria Pringle is a graduate of The Little Red School House, New York, and attends Bennington College, Vermont.

### Users Review

**From reader reviews:**

**Carolyn Livingston:**

Have you spare time for just a day? What do you do when you have more or little spare time? Yes, you can choose the suitable activity with regard to spend your time. Any person spent their particular spare time to take a wander, shopping, or went to the Mall. How about open or read a book allowed Coyote and the Sky: How the Sun, Moon, and Stars Began? Maybe it is being best activity for you. You recognize beside you can spend your time along with your favorite's book, you can better than before. Do you agree with its opinion or you have some other opinion?

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