

Why the Sun and Moon Live in the Sky

an African Pourquoi Tale

Many years ago, the sun and water were great friends, and they both lived on the earth together. The sun very often used to visit the water, but the water never returned the visits.

At last the sun asked the water why he never visited. The water replied that the sun's house was not big enough, and that if he came with all his people, he would drive the sun out of his home.

The water then said, "If you want me to visit you, you will have to build a very large house. But I warn you that it will have to be very large, as my people are numerous and take up a lot of room".

The sun promised to build a very large house, and soon afterwards, he returned home to his wife, the moon, who greeted him with a broad smile.

The sun told the moon what he had promised the water, and the next day, they began building a large house to entertain the water and all his people.

When it was completed, the sun asked the water to come and visit him.

When the water arrived, one of his people called out to the sun, and asked him whether it would be safe for the water to enter, and the sun answered, "Yes, tell my friend to come in."

The water began to flow in, followed by the fish and all the other water animals.

Very soon, the water was knee-deep in the house, so he asked the sun if it was still safe, and the sun again said, "Yes," so more of them came in.

When the water was at the level of a man's head, the water said to the sun, "Do you want more of my people to come?"

Not knowing any better, the sun and the moon both said, "Yes,". More and more of the water's people came in, until the sun and the moon had to sit on top of the roof.

The water once again asked the sun if it was still okay to keep coming in. The sun and moon answered yes, so more and more of the water's people came in.

The water soon overflowed the top of the roof, and the sun and the moon were forced to go up into the sky.

...and they have been there ever since.