

**MYTHS AND LEGENDS  
OF CALIFORNIA AND  
THE OLD SOUTHWEST**

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Myths and Legends of California and the Old Southwest by Katharine Berry Judson

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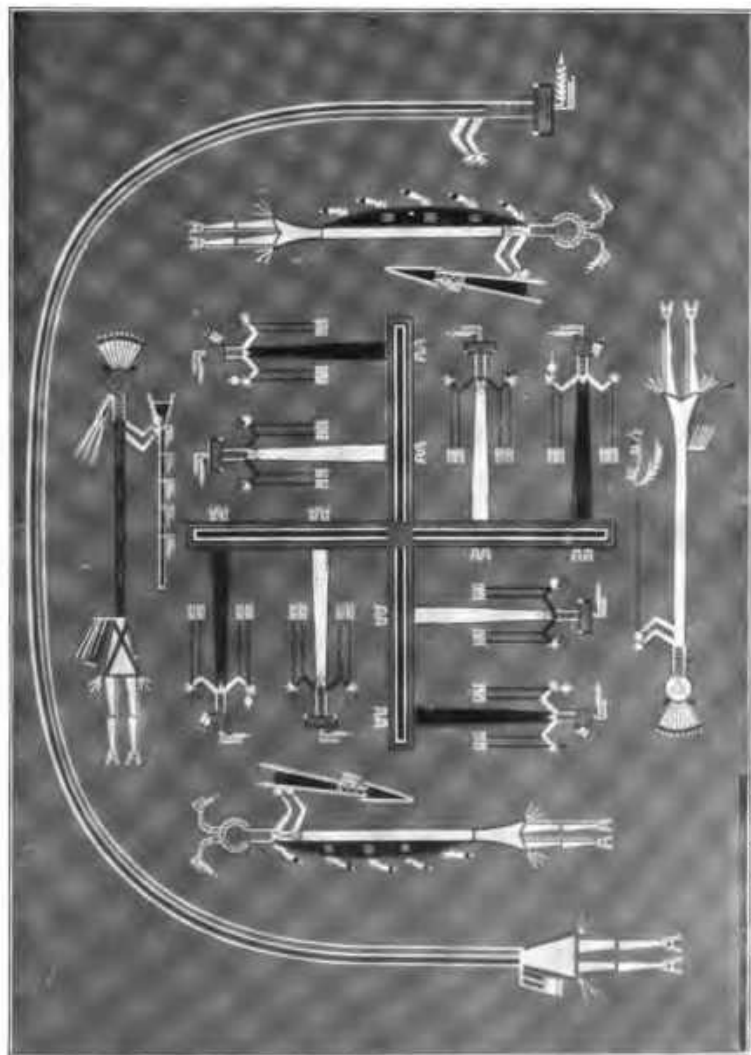
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**ZUNI SAND PAINTING OF "THE SONG HUNTER"**

See Explanation p. 137

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OF  
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OLD SOUTHWEST

COMPILED AND EDITED BY  
KATHARINE BERRY JUDSON  
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OF THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST," AND "MONTANA."

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## PREFACE

**I**N the beginning of the New-making, the ancient fathers lived successively in four caves in the Four-fold-containing-earth. The first was of sooty blackness, black as a chimney at night time; the second, dark as the night in the stormy season; the third, like a valley in starlight; the fourth, with a light like the dawning. Then they came up in the night-shine into the World of Knowing and Seeing.

So runs the Zuni myth, and it typifies well the mental development, insight, and beauty of speech of the Indian tribes along the Pacific Coast, from those of Alaska in the far-away Northland, with half of life spent in actual darkness and more than half in the struggle for existence against the cold and the storms loosed by fatal curiosity from the bear's bag of bitter, icy winds, to the exquisite imagery of the Zunis and other desert tribes, on their sunny plains in the Southland.

It was in the night-shine of this southern land, with its clear, dry air and brilliant stars, that the Indians,

## PREFACE

looking up at the heavens above them, told the story of the bag of stars — of Utset, the First Mother, who gave to the scarab beetle, when the floods came, the bag of Star People, sending him first into the world above. It was a long climb to the world above and the tired little fellow, once safe, sat down by the sack. After a while he cut a tiny hole in the bag, just to see what was in it, but the Star People flew out and filled the heavens everywhere. Yet he saved a few stars by grasping the neck of the sack, and sat there, frightened and sad, when Utset, the First Mother, asked what he had done with the beautiful Star People.

The Sky-father himself, in those early years of the New-making, spread out his hand with the palm downward, and into all the wrinkles of his hand set the semblance of shining yellow corn-grains, gleaming like sparks of fire in the dark of the early World-dawn. "See," said Sky-father to Earth-mother, "our children shall be guided by these when the Sun-father is not near and thy mountain terraces are as darkness itself. Then shall our children be guided by light." So Sky-father created the stars. Then he said, "And even as these grains gleam upward from the water, so shall seed grain like them spring up from the earth when touched by water, to nourish our children." And he created the golden Seed-stuff of the corn.

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It is around the beautiful Corn Maidens that perhaps the most delicate of all imagery clings, Maidens offended when the dancers sought their presence all too freely, no longer holding them so precious as in the olden time, so that, in white garments, they became invisible in the thickening white mists. Then sadly and noiselessly they stole in amongst the people and laid their corn wands down amongst the trays, and laid their white broidered garments thereon, as mothers lay soft kilting over their babes. Even as the mists became they, and with the mists drifting, fled away, to the far south Summer-land.

Then began the search for the Corn Maidens, found at last only by Paiyatuma, the god of dawn, from whose flute came wonderful music, as of liquid voices in caverns, or the echo of women's laughter in water vases, heard only by men of nights as they wandered up and down the river trail.

When he paused to rest on his journey, playing on his painted flute, butterflies and birds sought him, and he sent them before to seek the Maidens, even before they could hear the music of his song-sound. And the Maidens filled their colored trays with seed-corn from their fields, and over all spread broidered mantles, broidered with the bright colors and the creature signs of the Summer-land, and thus following