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First-woman and First-man.

Told by Wang Jian-guo.

There used to be a story which told how, at that time when sky and earth came into being, there lived two ancestors, a woman and a man, called First-woman and First-man.

At early-rising time, First-woman and First-man were babies, very pretty indeed. They did cry while still on the bed, but it was only, "wu-ngga! wu-ngga!" that was all. By breakfast time they were growing steadily, playing with stones and earth and bits of bamboo, agreeing together, the best of friends. Between breakfast and lunch, they matured into a truly beautiful young woman and handsome young man. From lunch time to mid-afternoon they grew steadily older, so that by sunset and twilight, they had become aged, their hair completely white.

Then, their hair completely white, they would rest their heads upon their knees and go off to sleep. They slept all night, and by early rising the following day, they were tiny children again lying on the bed. By breakfast time the children were growing steadily, and by lunch time they were a fine young woman and a fine young man. Unfortunately, by mid-afternoon they were steadily growing old, and by evening they were aged with their hair completely white. Why was it that they grew old so fast?

A day came when Sky-man came down to see. First-woman and First-man were at play in the road. Sky-man fell in love with the couple and said, "What are you two doing?" First-woman and First-man replied, "We are having a very good game, but why is it that we two grow up so fast, and grow old so fast? Would it, or would it not be possible for us two to remain as beautiful and as handsome as we are at noon? Would that we did not have to grow old!" Sky-man said, "All right, but you two will have so many children that you will fill the earth and sky completely! However, from now onward, I grant you long life so that you will never grow old". So saying Sky-man went away up into the sky.

The two grew truly beautiful and handsome. They lived and lived, engendering a race which so filled the earth that the whole earth was insufficient to support them. Thus it was ordained that the people should change into stars to go and live in the sky above, for, gathered together, they filled the earth completely. Accordingly those two led them away to live in the sky. First-woman became the sun, shining brightly upon the earth, and First-man became the moon, which shone at night. So all the descendants, in the sky and on the earth, have been able to see clearly through a thousand ages and ten-thousand years.