

The Scattered Stars

Why are the stars
scattered all through the sky?
Sky Bear says it happened long ago,
when the people came
from the underworld.
Our Mother, the Mother
of All the People,
gave one little girl named *Ko-tci-man-yo*
a bag made of white cotton
for her to carry.
Do not open this bag, Our Mother said.
But as they walked for many days,
Ko-tci-man-yo felt that bag grow heavy.

One night, when they stopped,
Ko-tci-man-yo climbed up to a hill
where no one could see her,
and then she untied the many knots
to take just one small look inside.
But when she loosened the last knot,
the bag popped open
and bright things began to escape
to the sky.

Ko-tci-man-yo quickly closed that bag,
but only a few of the stars remained
to be placed in the patterns in the sky.
All the others scattered.
They are still that way
because of her curiosity.

Cochiti Pueblo Southwest