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CHEBUS CHEPAY

(Goddess of the Olympics)

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Perhaps there are many Indian legends dealing with the Olympic Mountains. Among the most beautiful is one concerning Chebus Chepay, an Indian Goddess whom the Indians of the Olympic region worshiped. A most beautiful creature she was, whom all the young braves sought for their own, facing the many dangers of the forest in their vain search for her.

The mighty Olympics rise from a mystical sea and lift their snow-crowned peaks high into the blue heavens. A long uneven range, graceful and mighty, sometimes overwhelming in their beauty against a radiant sunset of purple and gold.

It is pleasant to think of the green forests where the tall hemlock and spruce lift their mighty arms to the blue sky, whispering and singing softly to themselves; where foxtails and rhododendrons grow in profusion. To recall a summer hour in a fragrant woods, beside a swirling mountain stream, with mossy banks and growing pine, majestic firs and cedar, is something for which to live.

Some mornings begin with a misty fog, but soon the sun disperses the fog, leaving the atmosphere so clear that the Olympics lie bare and white close down to their base, the deep crevasses outlined in shaded gray. On another morning the mountains may loom clear and near, then grow faint and distant, or entirely fade from view in a cloudy haze as the day advances.

Such was the picturesque location of Aa-huh-ah, which in the Quinault tongue means "nothing," and it was absolutely nothing that he did. An outcast from some unknown spot.

Aa-huh-ah was seeking comfort in body, mind and spirit. He fished, hunted and minded his own business. Yet he was always down-hearted and discontented and always bore a look as if he anticipated dreadful things—the look of those that are hunted and trampled upon.

It was the custom of the young Indian braves to venture deep into the dark forests of the vast Olympics in search for Chebus Chepay, Goddess of the Olympics, for their own. A number of braves, after a long and fruitless search, returned body sore and gaunt,

while others came not back at all, but were caught in the padded paws of the fierce mountain lion or cougar.

Because of the ridicule heaped upon poor Aa-huh-ah, he sought Chebus Chepay secretly. One day while wandering deep in the heart of the forest, and after being without food for many days, a great shadow fell upon Aa-huh-ah and phantom words of love were whispered to him. And because no one in his life had ever said a kind word to him, these love words went straight to his heart. There was a wonderful change for Aa-huh-ah!

The next day he went again to seek Chebus Chepay, and again the great shadow fell upon him and the spirit of love broke her blossoms all about the youth. A third time Aa-huh-ah went to seek his love, but now the shadow did not fall upon him. He wondered greatly and he fasted for many days. The crescent that hung low in the sky changed to a full, round, silver moon. Yes, many moons passed while Aa-huh-ah continued to seek his love.

One evening as a new crescent arose to dimly light the heavens, Aa-huh-ah was wearily trudging through the deep forest, hoping and praying for Chebus Chepay. Suddenly there appeared in front of him a short, bronzed and muscular old man.

"Who are you?" asked Aa-huh-ah.

"I am Chimellela," answered the old man. "I know whom you seek and I know that you have sorrowed much. I never appear before a man until his eyes have been washed with tears. Accordingly I speak: Come now with me, for Chebus Chepay, Goddess of the Olympics, is waiting for you."

Aa-huh-ah was led to the throne of Chebus Chepay by Chimellela. There the shadows fell over him again, and out of the purple-red dusk Chebus Chepay, Goddess of the Olympics, appeared. She took his face between her hands and caressed him, and immediately Aa-huh-ah became a changed man. Something was born in him that made him stronger, spiritually, than other men, for Chebus Chepay loved him! When the shadow rolled away Aa-huh-ah stood alone!

The journey back to his lodge was troublesome. So many things hindered his progress! Canyons and Salahlberry brush. Even along the shortest way Aa-huh-ah had to descend a steep cliff, at the base of which the mighty Pacific played with the hard white

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