

# CAI CAI VILU AND TEN TEN VILU

## THE ORIGINS OF CHILOE

In the beginning, the two most powerful spirits of the world were “The Pillanes”, *Peripillán* and *Antu*. Each of them had a son, but their sons were not so good. For that reason, Peripillán and Antu punished them by turning them into giant snakes. Peripillán’s son became *Cai Cai Vilú* (or *Coi Coi Vilú*, from ‘*Coí*’ = water, and ‘*Vilú*’ = snake), and Antu’s son became *Ten Ten Vilú* (or *Tren Tren Vilú*, from ‘*Ten*’ = earth, and ‘*Vilú*’ = snake). The Pillanes sent Cai Cai to be master of the sea and to take care of life in the ocean and they sent Ten Ten to be master of the Earth, fire and volcanoes, and to help human beings. Everybody knew that the two snakes were adversaries.

15 One day, Cai Cai woke up from his sleep and found out that human beings were very ungrateful for all the things that the sea gave them. This made him extremely angry so, using his fish tail, he hit the water with great force causing a cataclysm, tsunamis and a deluge. The water began to flood all the land in order to punish humans and take them to the bottom of the sea. Everybody was scared and tried to escape from the flood.

When Ten Ten saw all the desperate animals and humans who were calling for his help, he decided to help them. He remembered that his father told him to protect all living forms.

Thus Ten Ten helped all the inhabitants of his land to escape by taking them on his back and bringing them to the top of the hills. Some people, however, could not escape and stayed in the water. Ten Ten turned them into birds so they could escape by flying away.

Cai Cai was still angry, so he commanded the sea to keep rising in order to drown the land and the animals on earth. As the level of the water kept going up and up, Ten Ten ordered the hills to grow bigger and bigger in order to counteract Cai Cai's power and to provide humans with refuge.



30           But this only made Cai Cai angrier and he started to  
attack Ten Ten in a titanic fight that lasted for a long time.  
Finally, the two giant snakes got tired, which meant that Ten  
Ten had a partial victory over Cai Cai because the land was  
not completely covered with water. However, the sea did not go  
35 back to its previous level. This is how the islands of Chiloé  
were born and the two snakes gave birth to an archipelago of  
incredible beauty.

          In the end, Cai Cai retired and left *Millalobo* and other  
beings in charge of the ocean. The human beings who did not  
make it to the hills became fish and marine mammals.