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Reader’s Note

The legends in this book were identified by Elders from all four Tłı̨chǫ communities through a project spearheaded by the Tłı̨chǫ Community Services Agency Education Department. The stories were originally told and recorded in Tłı̨chǫ. These stories and legends were then transcribed into English as seen in the Tłı̨chǫ History Resource. The English transcriptions were then translated back into written Tłı̨chǫ by participants in the Interpreter/Translator course held over the winter of 2017 as they practiced their translating skills.

This is important to note because many of the nuances of storytelling can be lost when stories are translated even once. The body language, facial expressions and tones used by the original storyteller are of course lost in the written versions. It must also be noted that when stories told by Elders are translated into English, some of the meanings of specific words, terms or phrases cannot be translated directly due to the differences between the two languages. As a reader of these stories, please keep in mind that there are differences in dialect and also differing accounts of a legend/story. The stories read here may be the versions you have been told or they may be different versions. There may be a few differences in comparison to the stories you are familiar with. The stories in this book have been translated and transcribed by students practicing these important skills and they have done their best. However, there is no substitute for talking to the Elders of your community and listening to the wealth of knowledge they have ready to share with you. TALK TO YOUR ELDERS! Record them and practice your own Tłı̨chǫ writing skills by writing out what you hear from your recording.
How to Use This Book

This book is intended to be used as a learning resource. Stories are presented side by side in both English and Tłı̨chǫ Yatı for easy comparison. An audio CD has also been provided so that beginning readers can hear how the Tłı̨chǫ words sound. Remember that practice makes perfect, whether you are learning to read or write in Tłı̨chǫ.

More advanced readers, translators and transcribers should ask themselves the questions:

▲ How would I translate the Elders stories (oral from the CD) into English?

▲ What would my transcriptions look like if I took the Elder’s oral story and wrote it out in Tłı̨chǫ?

▲ Which old Tłı̨chǫ words did I have trouble understanding from the Elder’s story? Who can help me with the definition of these words? How do I spell them in Tłı̨chǫ?

▲ How would I translate the Elder’s oral story to a friend that doesn’t understand Tłı̨chǫ?
Acknowledgements

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Creation Story –
When Muskrat Made the Earth

Dzǫ Dè Whehts

Told by Michel L. Rabesca, May 15, 2016
Dṳ Mḥshè Louis Rabesca wegodì hqt’e, Tǫdoo Zaà 15, 2016
Creation Story – When Muskrat Made the Earth

Told by Michel L. Rabesca, May 15, 2016

Long, long ago it rained for 40 days and 40 nights. The world was flooded by water and God told Noah to make a boat, so he did. He told Noah to put all types of animals, male and female, in the boat, so he did. The animals lined up two by two to get in the boat.

Noah didn’t know how the earth was going to be recreated so they all sat in the boat. But God knew the earth was to be recreated one day. He asked Noah to do the work. Noah was desperate to see earth.

He kept looking for land. There was no sign of land. He looked all over and only saw water, lots of water. Noah decided to let all different kinds of big and small water mammals into the big water. He hoped that the animals would find a piece of dirt or mud.

Animals that breathe couldn’t go very deep in the water. It was too difficult for them. Different animals tried, but nothing showed up, so he asked Muskrat (Dzǫ).

Noah said to Muskrat, “Can you try?” Muskrat didn’t want to break his word and let Noah down, so he went into the water. He was gone, gone, gone for a long time. Finally he barely surfaced up out of the water, gasping for air.

The muskrat has very small paws, very small. Both of his paws are very small and there was a small chunk of dirt in the palm of his paw, sitting in his paw. He came to the surface with that bit of dirt.
T’akwe whaà, dënëq dzech eyt’s’q dënëq toò ts’q cho aët’j. Dë nëk’e datüwi t’à Nóhts’ño Noah elà yëhdi eyt’à hëyjìlá. Tich’aàddì hazaq hàzàaa, wezhì eyt’s’q wets’ë elà yìï gíwa yëhdi t’à Noah hëyjìlá. Tich’aàddì nàke elehghëhk’eë elexè giadèe t’à hani elà yìï gùìde.

Noah dàni dë nagòhìl anade ha yek’eezò-le t’à hazaq’elà yìï geëhk’wë. Hanikò Nóhts’ìlè dzech k’e dë nagòhìl anade ha yek’eezò. Noah dë weghàlaàda yëhdi. Noah sì dë eżì ha nìwò.


Noah Džò ts’ò hadì “wenjìdzà-aà dìì-le nì?” Džò deyatiì näyëzhi ha nìwò-le xè Noah ìlè wèhës’ìì ha-le nìwò t’à tetlìa. Whàa ts’ò wëhììle, weile, weile. Whàa hoòwò t’àxòqì tekàìzà, jkaa t’à naëjì while.

Džò wekè sìi nechà-lea ne, ììaa ts’ò welatl’a nechà niìle hanikò zeht’ë nechà-lea welatl’a wheqò nòqì, yìxè tehòèhtì ìlè.
Noah was very happy. He put the dirt to float on the water.

That is why nowadays, when we see a pond in the spring time, we can see huge pushups on the pond. Even though he has small, tiny paws, Muskrat can make those pushups (his house). This is because long, long ago he dove down and found the earth for Noah. That is how Muskrat lives on earth.

Muskrat brought out the dirt and floated it on the water. It floated and it got bigger and bigger and bigger. Then Noah let the animals that could fly out of the boat, now that he knew there was land. They continued for days.

He kept doing this until he came to Ptarmigan. He said “Can you try?” So Ptarmigan flew out. It was gone for quite a while and finally Ptarmigan came back. It had a small stick between its beak. Ptarmigan knew there was land and Noah also knew there was land.

Today, in spite of being small, Ptarmigan still has to fly all the way to the barrenlands to eat willows, even frozen willows. That is how they survive. It is very far, but they go there and feed. They live on the barrenlands, travelling a long distance in the summer and travelling back in the winter. We think they are small, but they travel far. They have worked for us on this land.

So the land got bigger and bigger because of what Muskrat did, until it became the earth that we live on today.

This is the story of how Muskrat created the earth and I’m thankful for telling you the story.

The End
Noah sii wînà. Ŭehtł’è tì ka daeleë ayîlå.


Dzǫ ŭehtł’è tekàachi t’à tîka daele ayîlå. Daele t’à denahk’e nechà ajà. Eyît’à Noah tìch’aadìi yat’a k’èdè ha dìi-le sìi elà ts’òq hègeede agǫ́́lå dè gǫ̂́hì yek’èezò adzàa t’a. Sighàatlò dzęę ts’ò hagét’ì.


Dzǫ ayîi dòqlàa ts’òhòg dè denahk’e nechà adzá, dì dzęę ñdè wek’e nàts’èdëe whelì.

Dìi godì sìi dzǫ dàani dè wehtśì wegodìi hôt’e, Masi eyîi godì t’à naxì xe gôhdo.
Grebe (Nòhtà) and the Tea Dance
Nòhtà Eyìts’ǫ Tadòwheʔaa T’à Dagowo

Told by Nick Black, 1998
Grebe (Nǫ̀htà) and the Tea Dance

*Told by Nick Black, 1998*

A long time ago, the people and animals met to change places. All the different people and animals from all different places came together. They were all gathered together except for Grebe (Nǫ̀htà). He was missing because he was far far away.

Of all the animals and people, he was the one who was farthest away. They waited for Nǫ̀htà for a long time, but he never arrived, so they said, “We will do our feasting and dancing and celebrating, and if he comes, then it’s going to be ok.” That is when they had their first dance.

*Illustration by Jennifer Zoe*
Nòhtà Eyıts’ò Tadòwheząa T’à Dagowo

*Told by Nick Black, 1998*


Nòhtà da whaà nagiaźi hànìkò węgoòht’j-le, gots’ò niità-le. Nòdea tıts’aàdìi eyıts’ò döne elet’sò hagedì, “Nàṣḥ hołłe, dagowo xè dzédeé edets’eetsì ḫa, jǫ niità niỳde wexè dzédeé hołłe ḫa.”

*Illustration by Jennifer Zoe*
They danced and danced all through the day and night. Finally, the dance was almost over because they were tired out. That is when Nǫ̀htà arrived. They told him they waited a long time for him, but started to celebrate without him.

“Sing us one of your songs for the dances.” He said, yes, and he started to sing the song he had made. He made them wish the dance would never end, but somehow it ended.

As Nǫ̀htà sang his song he started to dance. He was very tired and sleepy after travelling so far. When everyone started to dance to his song he yawned and fell asleep behind them. While he was sleeping they all danced on his feet with his song. That’s the reason Nǫ̀htà has flat webbed feet today.

So that is how people know about dances. It all started with Grebe’s (Nǫ̀htà’s) song and dance.

The old timers used to sing that song at their dances and it sounded like this:

“Hii ya ye nilii - ya ye nilii
Seke goli Seke golii gha.”

So, as time passed, people heard about dances through stories like this.

“Dagowo zį t’a gogha nej,” giïhdì. Nòhta, “Hęquences” gohdi. Gogha shį xàr̥qo t’à döne hazoq’ dagojwho. Döne hazoq’ dagowo nahòht’e ha gįjwqo-le. Nòhta gogha edezhįj ejį xè daitłə hanikə niwà gots’ò niitłə t’à sī nènįtsq dàq dagowo goni be nàyįhxA.

Wheį wetsqo weziį t’à toghàa wekè k’e dagoawo. Dııdzęę ts’ò Nòhta wekè mt’qą lani wēgaa’ti.

Nòhta weziį t’à tadōwhezaa t’à dagowo xėhóqwọwo hóêt’e. Dııdzęę ts’ò whaehdqo Nòhta weziį t’à dagogehwho hóêt’e.
Peace Between the Tribes
Nakenahòdlįį

Illustrations by B. Abraham

Collected and translated by Virginia Football
Peace Between the Tribes

Collected and translated by Virginia Football

Many years ago there lived two Indian chiefs, Edzo and Akaitcho. Akaitcho was the leader of the Chipewyans.

Edzo was chief of the Dogribs. Edzo thought that Akaitcho disliked him and this bothered him very much.
Nakenahòdlų

Collected and translated by Virginia Football

Dakwe whaâ kw’ahtideè nàke gòìlè. Edzo eyits’ò Ekècho.

Ekècho Tetsòqt’jj gha k’àowo ìlè, eyits’ò Edzo Tḥchò gha k’àowo ìlè. Edzo, Ekècho yenéljì-le nìwo eyıt’à sìi wegha nezìjì-le.
One day Edzo and his three brothers moved to an Island in Raspberry Lake. Edzo knew that Akaitcho’s camp was not far away.

Edzo decided it was time to see Akaitcho and find out why he felt as he did. So, he thought of a plan. While his brothers finished setting up camp, Edzo and his wife paddled their canoe to another island.
Edzo eyıts’ọ wechi tai Gots’ökati k’e di nechaa whezọ ts’ọ tāgeèze. Tetsqot’ji ginjihaa goqwa-le nåqha yek’eezọ.

Edzo, Ekëcho weehzji ha niwọ, dānighọ gonaqj-le yegọza ha niwọ. Eyi’t’ā ayii dāle ha yenwhehdi. Wechinłla nåhbaa någehe-t’i Edzo edets’èkeè xè di eyi-le ts’ọ geèze.
On the island, Edzo built a hiding place for his wife.

Before leaving her he said, “If I am not back in three days you’ll know that I’ve been killed. If I don’t return, I want you to go back to your people.”
Eyı dì k’e edets’èkeè googho yì achievements.

Yets’qò naetla kwe edets’èke ts’ò hadì, “Tai dzę t’à jò nowhihtła-le ndè elasigwo t’à hqt’e wek’èjzò ha. Jò noehtla-le ndè nèot’ì gits’ò nawjt’e noq,” yèhdì.
Then, in the twilight of evening, Edzo set off by himself for Akaitcho’s camp. Finally, he saw the teepees of the Chipewyans. Carefully, Edzo paddled closer and closer to the camp.

When he was very near, he silently went ashore and crept even closer. He noticed some children getting water from the lake.
Xèhts’ò nàʔhxe ekò Edzo ededì whatsqò Ekècho gminiḅàa nàwheza ts’ò dèze. Whaà-le-t’i Tetsqòt’ì gminiḅàa wègoèht’ì. Ts’èhwhìa gots’ò naat’ò, gminiḅàa nàwheza ts’ò nìwà-lea nìhze.

Ị hà tāhtìa, gots’ò nìwà-lea niitìa. Chekoa tì ghọgele nọ̀.

T’hcho Whaèhdoò Godì Elexè Whela – Enìht’è Ilè
Quickly, Edzo ran among the children. Since it was so dark they did not see him right away. However, all of a sudden, one of the children saw Edzo and screamed, “There’s a stranger with us!” Immediately they all ran for home. Edzo ran alongside them until he arrived at a tent, which he thought was his sister’s.

Edzo’s sister had married K’âtehwhi, a Chipewyan Indian. When he entered the tent he saw his sister sitting alone. “Brother, what are you doing here?” she asked. “I’ve come to see Akaitcho,” replied Edzo.

“It’s too dangerous to talk like this so hide under these skins and we can talk quietly,” whispered the sister. When he was well hidden under the skins, Edzo told his sister that he wanted to meet K’åtehwhi at midnight on the south path. “I’ll whistle three times to let him know where I am,” explained Edzo.

Then he silently left the tent and crept to his hiding place on the south path.
Wedè hadi, “Jò lëts’ò gots’ede ha hoegi, ts’ò tl’a nàdịzi de ịjịa lëts’ò godiide ha dii-le,” wedè yèhdi.

Eyit’a mọchịtl’a wedè ọwọ yek’e nɛịawa.
K’àtehwhì returned home shortly afterwards and his wife explained Edzo’s message to him.

When the camp was asleep, K’àtehwhì walked cautiously down the south path. He kept walking until he heard a whistle. Then he heard another and, finally, the last whistle was a long one. He walked towards the sound and soon found Edzo waiting for him. Edzo told K’àtehwhì that he wanted to see Akaitcho.

“Why?” asked the brother-in-law. “Ever since I can remember, Akaitcho has disliked me. So I would like to find out what his reasons are,” replied Edzo. Then Edzo explained his plan.
Edzo ededè ts’ò hadì, “To tanì ekîyeè k’e K’àtehwhi sazì ts’ônèe etò nràà k’e sets’àwetła wèì. Wegha taà eehsi ha, eyìì ghàà edîj whìhdaa sîì yek’èezó ha.”


“Tomorrow evening, tell Akaitcho that he should send some hunters out duck hunting. When they are in the canoes and Akaitcho has returned to his tent, tell the hunters that there are visitors on one of the islands across from here. Then I shall carry out my plan.”

The next evening K’åtehwhi suggested a hunting trip and Akaitcho agreed to it. When the chief returned to his tent K’åtehwhi told the hunters to watch for visitors on one of the islands across the lake.

Meanwhile, Edzo and his brothers built a campfire and waited patiently for the Chipewyans to arrive.
Edzo dâni Ekècho ezj ha sii edeye ts’ọ hadi, “Sacho xèhts’ọ Ekècho di hawjìdì, dọ wòhdaa det’ọ ha någezè ha dii-le, wjìdì.


Finally, they saw the canoes coming towards them. The hunters also saw Edzo and his brothers. Quickly, one of them returned to the Chipewyan camp yelling, “There are Dogribs hiding on that island across from here!”

Every man in the camp grabbed his bow and arrows and set off by canoe across the lake. K’âtehwhi went as well.

Tetsqo’tįį hazoŋį tį yets’ō k’įį negįwa, inoŋo dia ts’įį geɛe. K’atehwhi ededį sì goxè adzà. Whaà-le-t’įį Tetsqo’tįį dia k’e dáŋjįde.
Soon, the Chipewyans reached the island and went ashore. Akaitcho told his men to surround the Dogribs.

Meanwhile, Edzo and his brothers sat quietly eating.

Edzo edechì goxè ts’èhwhì wheda, shëtì.
“So, here you are enjoying your meal!” cried Akaitcho. As he said this he threw a knife at Edzo, which just missed him. Still, Edzo ate silently. Akaitcho talked and talked, but Edzo did not answer him.

However, after awhile, Edzo turned and faced Akaitcho saying, “Akaitcho, why are you talking like this? I have come to find out why you dislike me! I picture you as the starving animal who hides part of his kill and returns to finish it off when he is hungry again! So, I have come to help you finish this task!”

When Edzo said this the Chipewyans backed up a little, watching the forest for more Dogribs. Akaitcho and Edzo started to argue. Both men were very angry and were almost ready to fight.

K’àtehwhì knew that if the men fought there would certainly be a war, so he said, “You are both right. Neither of you is wrong. It would be better for our people if you stop arguing.”

Edzo knew that K’àtehwhì was right. In a loud voice he said, “This has been an interesting argument and no one has lost. So, I say that for the good of our people and our country there will be no more killing between our tribes.” Akaitcho and the Chipewyans agreed to this. K’àtehwhì yelled, “Everyone will live happily now!”
Edzo hadì t’à Tetsǫǫ̀t’į̂ dègeèhyeh lagedzà, dechìnì ts’ò k’égeet’į̂, Tłıchǫ ha k’égeet’į̂. Ekècho eyıts’ò Edzo elets’ò nàyahgehtì. Si elets’ò giìch’e t’à k’ìhdxò eletakwìgììde t’e.

K’ìtehwhì hànìwọ, eletakwìgììde nìdè elets’eɡò ha nìwọ t’à hagòhdì, “Nàke aah’t’eè ehkw’ì goahde hot’e. Èlekè kò ekò-le xàyaìhti nìle. Elets’ò ts’èhwìjì goahde nìdè göët’ì gixo ts’èhwìjì hòrọ ha hot’e,” gòhdì.

After peace had been made, Edzo paddled in the darkness to pick up his wife, who was still hiding.

Then they and Edzo’s three brothers moved with Akaitcho and his tribe to Gooseberry Lake. There they set up a camp. When the camp was ready everyone enjoyed a feast of dried meat and pemmican. Both tribes were happy that they would now live in peace.
Nake nahödlį tl’axoŋ Edzo to edets’èvee ts’o naëht’e. Wets’èvee ḥlaa dí k’e aida łyè.

Yamozha and the Giant Eagles
Yamozha eyıts’ǫ Godę̀ę Det’ǫcho

As told by Phillip Dryneck
Yamozha and the Giant Eagles

As told by Phillip Dryneck

A long time ago, in Yamozha’s time, there were animals and people. Then the animals started killing and eating people. That’s the reason why Yamozha started helping the people.

When Yamozha started his travels, he approached the giant eagle. In the giant eagles’ nest there were two baby eagles; one male and one female.

Yamozha asked the two young ones, “Who comes flying back to the nest first, your mother or your father?” The young ones said, “When there is hail falling from the sky that means our father is coming back. When there are rain drops falling, that means our mother is flying back.”

Yamozha asked them, “What food do you eat?” They answered, “Our parents bring back people that are bundled up. They put those in the nest and we eat people.”

While Yamozha was sitting in the nest with them he could see the bones of all the people that they had eaten lying around the nest.

He told them, “I’m going to make fish swimming in the water.” So, he created a little swampy lake for the fish that he had created. There was a little jackfish swimming in the water. Yamozha said, “Do you see the fish in the water?”
**Yamozha eyıts’ǫ Godèë Det’ǫcho**

*As told by Phillip Dryneck*


Yamozha wek’èehoewo këhojìwho ekò godèë det’ǫcho ts’ò adzá. Godèë det’ǫcho gut’oh yìi det’ǫcho bebia nàke wheke nọ. Ɂlè wezhìì eyıts’ǫ Ɂlè dets’è.

Yamozha det’ǫcho bebia nàke ts’ò hادي, “Amìi dákwelòò Ɂt’oh ts’ò nọqt’a ha, naxìmq hani-le dë naxtì?” Dìì hagedì “Yat’a ts’ò Ɂli hodàet’ì ndìdè gotà dawelòò nọqt’a ha. Ekò ts’ò hodàet’ì ndìdè gomò dákwelòò nọqt’a ha.”


Yamozha gogà et’oh yìi wheda ekò dọ ghọ sègiaze gots’ø ekw’òò et’oh yìi k’èagòt’òo yàzì.

Dìì hagôhdì, “Łì tèe k’embe zahłe ha.” Eyıt’à tl’o tìa whehtsì. Ṣìhdìa nechà-lèa tèe k’ezò whehtsì, Yamozha hادي, “Łì tèe k’embe waïda ni?”
The young male eagle said, “Yes.” Yamozha told him to fly down and catch the jackfish. So, the little eagle went down, caught the jackfish, brought it back to the nest and killed it.

Yamozha took some meat from the jackfish and gave it to the little male eagle and told him to eat it. He gave some to the female eagle, too. He asked the male, “Do you like it? Is it tasty for you?” The young eagle said, “Yes, it tastes really good.” He asked the female, “Do you like it?” She said, “No, it doesn’t taste good for me. It smells funny.”

So, right away Yamozha clubbed her on the head and she fell out of the nest.

Yamozha turned to the male eagle and said, “Since you like the taste of fish, from today on, do not eat any more human flesh. Eat things like ducks and fish, like I’ve shown you.”

Later, Yamozha hid by the nest, waiting for the parent eagles to come back. It started to rain and the mother eagle came back. Yamozha clubbed her down. Then it started to hail. Yamozha went back to his hiding place. When the father came to the nest, Yamozha clubbed him, too.

Before Yamozha left he told the young eagle, “Do not eat any more human flesh, but feed on ducks and fish, like I have shown you.” Then Yamozha took the best feathers from the nest with him to put on his new arrows and he went away.

The End
Det’qts’a wewlia “Hęję” yehdi. Yamqża hàdi, “[Įzhì hodà’t’a, ʒ łhdaa dačchi.” Det’qcho nechà-lea ḣzhì hodà’èht’o, ʒ łhdaa daachi, edet’o hà ts’o nayeèchì, elaàyî̴jìwhò.


Ekòet’ìi Yamqža yekwídajhtl’à t’à et’oh ts’ò kàdeèwò.

Yamqža det’qchozìa ts’ò anadzà xè hàdi,
“Łì negha łekò t’à dudzè̴ gots’ò, dònèkwò ghò shèjì ha-le. Det’ò hànì łëwekwò hànì ghò shèjì ha,” yehdì.


Yamqža det’qchots’ò ts’ò hàdi, “Atsì dòkwò nèdè ha-le, hànìkò det’ò eyìts’ò łkwò hànì wet’à jda ha.” Yamqža det’qchot’aà nezìjì sì et’oh ts’ò neyìjìwa, wets’ò k’jì wegòò k’e neyewa gha, eyìtł’axòqò naàhtìa.
The Creation Story
Meeting of the Animals – Part 1
Goxè Kèhoįwo Wegodį – Part 1

Illustration by Sandy Flunkie
Illustration by Sandy Flunkie

Originally told by Francis Tatti
The Creation Story (Meeting of the Animals)
Part One – The First Meeting of the Animals

Originally Told by Francis Tatti

When the world first began, all the animals on earth were people. There was no other form of life. The raven was the only one among them who could fly, because he had made himself a pair of wings. The others were never sure where he went when he flew. Those who couldn’t fly simply lived on the land.

These people chose to become the animal families as we know them today. “We can’t remain on earth like this,” the animals declared. “We must know what our different roles and purposes are to be. Everyone must be brought together to make these decisions.” A meeting was called and everyone came. At the meeting, they would decide what their futures would be like.
Creation Story (Goxè Kèhoìwo Wegodì)
Part One – Akwelòò Tìch’aàdì Elegeèhdì

Originally Told by Francis Tatti

Akwelòò dì nèk’e wexè hò tìch’aàdì hàzòò ðone gììlí ĭlè. Eyìì wenòò asìì edaa góhhì-le ĭlè. Tatsò zò t’aa k’et’a ha dìi-le, edeżìts’òò whehtsì t’à. K’et’a tąąt’e aðìì ts’ò naet’aa siì dò gik’éezò-le. Amìì k’et’a-le siì nàdè k’e nàdè.

Illustration by Vincent Nasken

Eyìì dò tìch’aàdì wèot’ì dàhòt’ìì gììlí ha edegha gijihciì siì dìiìzìì ts’ò wek’èts’eezò hot’e. Tìch’aàdì hagedì, dì nèk’e akiì hats’ìt’e ha dìi. Ayìì nàowòò eyits’ò ayìì laà gots’ò ha siì wek’èts’eezò ha hot’e. Eyìì gha lëgeèhdì ha hòiì ts’ìhrò dò elèwhède. Elegeèhdì hò ñdaà gixè dàgòht’e ha k’e xàyagehtì.
They decided that everyone should obey certain laws. It was also decided that each person should say which animal family they wanted to belong to. For example, those who did not want to be a part of the bird family said they wanted to belong to the animal family, who would live on earth.

Each of the people stated what animal form they would take and what their role would be. One people said that they were going to be the caribou. They said that the people as we know them, the Dene, would, until the end of time, depend on caribou in order to live.

Some people said that they would be the bear family.

The dog people were asked what role they would be playing. The chosen speaker for the dog people told the meeting that they would speak last, at the end of the gathering. At that time they would let people know the role they wished to play.

Once all the other people declared what role they would play, the dog people were again asked by the bird family what role they had chosen. They said, “We will be a people’s dog. Our existence is going to depend on these people called the Dene. They will be the ones who will provide us with food. They will also help us to raise our children. Until the end of time, that is the role we will play. We will work for man.” It is said that this is why, to this day, dogs are fed by man and are unable to hunt food for themselves.

The End
Dọ hazǫ̀ nåowodeè k’èagıt’e ha gògedi. Eyıts’ọ dọ gitą́ată tich’aàdii lèot’i dàhot’i wets’ọ gîlî ha gînwọ sii hagedi. Aki-hò, amì chìa wèot’i gîlî ha gînwọ-le sii ndè k’è nàdèe gèot’i k’éè nágedè ha gînwọ gedì.

Dọne wetą̨ą̀t’e tich’aàdii wèot’i dàhot’i gîlî ha sìi hagedi eyıts’ọ ayìi gîlaà gits’ọ ha sìi hagedi. Dọ ñlè kàzáa ekwọ gîlî ha gedì. Eyìi dọ hàzáa sìi hagedi, ñdaà welọ while ts’ọ dọ ekwọ t’à geeda ha, ekwọ t’àhogeeyeñi ha.

Dọne mòhdàa sah wèot’i gîlî ha gedì.

Tłì wèot’i gîlî sìi ayìi làà hogehtṣì ha gògedi. Amì tłì gha gode elj sìi nọde gogede ha, di. Legëëhdi ghọ nahòt’e kwe gode ha gedì. Ekiyè nìdè ayìi làà hogehtṣì ha gînwọ sìi dọ ts’ọ hagedi ha.

Dọne hazǫ̀ ayìi làà hogehtṣì ha gînwọ sìi hagiđì tl’axọ Tłì wèot’i ayìi làà hogehtṣì ha gògedi t’à chìa wèot’i atși dagogeèhke. Đì hagedi “Dọne gha tłì ts’îlî ha,” gedì. Đì đọne gits’ëdù sìi git’à ts’ëeda ha, dedì gowàgeèdì ha. “Gokçe ts’eëhse t’à gots’ágèdì ha. Welọ while ts’ọ dọ gîgha eghàlats’eda ha, eyìi golaà elj ha,” gedì. Eyıt’à, dündçè ts’ọ đọne tłì wàgeèdì t’à tłì edegeña någezè-le.
Yamozha and the Giant Wolverine
Yamozha eyıts’ǫ Nòghacho

Illustration by A. Downey
A. Downey nhil’èchìi whetsì

Adapted from a story told by Harry Simpson, Gamètı
Gamètı gots’ǫ Harry Simpson goxè goadoo
Yamozha and the Giant Wolverine

Adapted from a story told by Harry Simpson, Gamètì

Long ago, in the days when dangerous giant animals roamed the land, a giant wolverine (Nǫ̀gha) set up pointed stakes at the bottom of a big hill called Hodoòdzoo. When people slid down that hill, the stakes pierced and killed them. The people asked Yamozha to find a way to make Hodoòdzoo safe again.

Yamozha saw the wolverine’s stakes at the bottom of the hill. Quietly, he slid down slowly and stopped before he reached the stakes. Then Yamozha made his nose bleed and spread the blood on his caribou hide shirt. He placed the shirt over the stakes to make it look as though he’d been pierced through the heart. He pretended to be dead.

When the wolverine (Nǫ̀gha) came to the bottom of the hill, he found Yamozha lying still. Nǫ̀gha thought he was dead. He placed Yamozha in his big birch bark basket (k’ıtǫ) and carried him home.

When Nǫ̀gha got home, his family built a fire in their den. Nǫ̀gha asked his wife to get his stone knife. “I have a little moose to cut up,” he said.
Yamozha eyits’ọ Nòghachò
Gamèti gots’ọ Haři Simpson goxè goadoo

Dakwe whaa, ekiyeè dzęè k’e tich’aàdì dè k’e gik’eèhoowo hò gits’ãhoedzì ìlà, Nòghachò shih nechàa Hodqødzo wiye wegozhì dechì goòts’oo ọọ nèyììwa. Dò Hodqødgedzo nìdì dechì goòts’oo gegaaka t’a elaàgede. Hodqødzo k’è hoejìjì-le anagole gha dò Yamozha ts’ọ gogiìde.


Nògha shìì wèzhì niitàtła ekò Yamozha nàadaà-le yaazu. Èlàììgo ne yììììwhò. Yamozha k’itò nechàa yiì yaachi gà dekò ts’ọ nayeèhchi.

With one eye open, Yamozha could see the wolverines were getting ready to cook him.

Nògha’s children saw that Yamozha had one eye open. They told their father, “The little moose is still alive and looking at us!”

Nògha’s didn’t believe them. His wife passed him his big stone knife to cut up Yamozha.

Seeing this, Yamozha quickly reached into the fire and grabbed a burning log. He hit Nògha and his wife on the head and they fell over dead.

Nògha’s children ran outside and climbed up a nearby spruce tree. They begged Yamozha not to kill them. They promised not to eat people anymore. Because of this, Yamozha beat only their feet, making them flat and wide like wolverines’ feet are today.

They began to cry. They cried so much that the mucous from their noses was running down the tree.

“What will you do for me if I do not kill you?” asked Yamozha.

“We will promise not to kill humans ever again and we will gift our mucous to you so that you can use it for medicine and as gum to seal your birch bark containers and canoes to make them watertight,” replied the wolverines.

Yamozha agreed, but before he let them go, he used his ı̀kǫǫ̀ to make them small like wolverines are today.

The End
Yamozha edaà k’èa t’a k’èet’i, Nògha geht’è ha smihogèzà.

Nògha weza Yamozha wedaà k’ea t’a k’et’i geaζi. Detà ts’ò hagedi, “Dedìi nechà-lea łaà godì t’a gog hàeda,” gedì.

Nògha wegha ehkw’iagedì-le.
Wets’èkeè kwebehcho yeg hàèichi, yet’èa Yamozha tàyèehwe gha.

Tàyèehwe ha t’à Yamozha ñwhąį kò dek’òq gots’ò tso dèk’òq niichi. Nògha eyıts’ò wets’èkeè gokwi t’àt’i a t’à yahró nągiıł’ı, elaągïdè.

Nògha weza hàtǫmgeèede, ts’i gòwà-lea nàrza k’e dekegiyide. Yamozha elaągojìhwi-le gedi nádageeti. K’achį dò ts’edè ha-le gha goyati k’ıets’edi ha gedi.

Hagedi t’à Yamozha gık’e zò náıht’i a t’à gıkè ñt’òq xè dekóo ayiįl, eyıts’òqò nògha wekè hani wégàat’i dudzëè ts’ò.

Getse, siį giįts’ẹe t’à giįghò gots’ò dehko ts’i k’e hodåtì.

“Ełaànaxèehwho-le nìdè segha ayií dàahłe-ha,”
Yamozha göhdi.

“K’achį wìizii dò elats’ehde ha-le eyıts’ò godehkoò nàedì aah’t’i ha eyıts’ò dechįdzéèh wet’ à k’ito eyıts’ò k’ielà naahdzéè ha, ti weyii ade ha-le gha,” Nògha hagedi.

Yamozha gòk’èhòqò hanikò nageedè agole kwe edețik’òqò t’à nechà-lea agoqòlà, eyıt’à dudzëè ts’ò Nògha negechà-le höt’e.
The Raven and the Stolen Caribou
Tatsǫ̀ Ekwǫ̀ Dèht’Ɂ

As told by David Chocolate
Long ago, when the earth was still new, it is said that all animals lived like people. They spoke and thought like people and changed into animal forms when they needed to do something special.

Raven, too, was a man and he was the only animal to fly. The other birds and ducks had no wings. When Raven flew he could see things happening far away. This made Raven wise. He could see the bush and the Barrenland all at once. People respected Raven as a king and a prophet.

Although Raven was wise and respected like a king and a prophet, his mind was full of mischief and he loved to trick people. As he flew over the land he looked for mischief to make and tricks to play.

One day Raven flew over a village of animal people. As he circled above the teepees he saw Fox and Bear, Duck and Wolf, Marten and the Elder Woman. The animal people were busy making dry meat, tanning hides, and sewing clothes with all the good things that the caribou gave them. No one in the village was hungry.

“This looks like a good place to live for a while,” Raven thought. “These people have plenty of everything.”
Tatsò Ekwò Dèht’ọ

As told by David Chocolate

Dakwe whaà ġlàà dèe gogòò xè gòqò ekò tich’ààdìì hazqòò
done lani geeda ķlè, ts’edì. Done lani gogede eyıts’q done lani
nànìgedè ķlè. Ts’àhòts’éhtsìì gììwò nìdè tich’ààdìì gììhlè.

Tatsò ededì sì dò ķlè, tich’ààdìì hazqòò gha ededì zò k’et’a ha
dii-le. Chjà eyıts’q det’q geıts’qò while ķlè. Tatsò k’et’a
nìdè niwà dàgot’ì sì yeghàeda, eyı yet’a gòqòqò. Dechìì
eyıts’q hozìì hazqòò ehghà wegha wègaat’ì. Dò gha gòqòqò
t’à k’àowocho lani eyıts’q nakwenàòòqò dòqò giit’ì.

Tatsò gòqòqò t’à k’àowocho eyıts’q nakwenàòòqò dòqò
giit’ì kò wini eghòyaèzáà zò ķlè. Dò k’e ts’àhohtsìì
ghaèwì. Ìdòo dè gote k’et’a nìdè ts’àhohtsìì xè dàñì
dò gho yaezà ha sìi yeka k’èta.

Ìlàà Tatsò ttk’sààdìì-dòqò nàgedèe gote k’et’a. Gììnhbàà godo ets’aèht’ò
làà Nogèe, Sah, Det’q, eyıts’q Diga, Wha eyıts’q Ts’èko ʔòhdaà goazì.
Ttt’sààdìì-dòqò yàgìlìì sìì gìgha lah łoż. Bòqòqò geıtsìì, ewò gehwe, goń’tq
nàgeelì eyıts’q ekwò gots’q t’asìì łoż geıtsìì. Dò wìizìì bò dè wheda-le.

Tatsò hànìwò, “Whaà-lea ts’q jò nàhdè ha hójìì
lani. Ttt’sààdìì-dòqò nezìì nàgedèè xè t’asìì łoż
gıt’s’qì, gìì nàhde ha,” hànìwò.
So, Raven picked a spot not far from the village and built a home for himself. Every day Raven walked to the village to visit the people. He sat in their teepees and told them strange stories of things he had seen when he flew high in the sky.

Each day, Fox and Bear, Wolf and Marten, Duck and the other men headed out through the bush to the Barrenlands for caribou. Each day, they returned with all the meat the village could eat, and more. Each day, Raven walked into the village from the west and acted wise with his strange stories of things he had seen as he flew. And the animal people thought life was very good.

Then, one day, Fox and Bear came home from the hunt without caribou.

“We tramped all day and followed many tracks, but we never saw a caribou,” they said.

“You were unlucky,” said the village people. “Maybe tomorrow the caribou will come.”

The next day, Wolf and Marten came home from the hunt without caribou.

“We tramped all day and followed a few tracks, but we never even saw a lost calf,” they said.

“You were unlucky,” said the village people. “Maybe tomorrow the caribou will come.”

But, the next day, all the hunters came home empty handed.

“We tramped all day and never even saw a track in the mud or snow,” they said.

“You were unlucky,” sighed the village people. “Maybe tomorrow...”
Eyıt’à Tatsǫ̀ tts’aàdı̀ı-dǫǫ̀ gogà nìwà-lea edegha nàdèe k’è göhtsı. Dzęę taàt’eè Tatsǫ̀, tts’aàdìi-dǫǫ̀ gots’ò kótaetla. Gogà nhbàa yìi wheda, goxè godo. Yat’a dagoqowà k’et’a gots’ò eniya łọ ghàıdàa siì t’à goxè godo.


Ilàà, ḱë dżęę k’e Nọgèe eyıts’ò Sah nàgezè kò ekwò giarζ-le t’à bò dę niagımdë.

“Dzęę ghàà ekwòkeè łọ k’è k’ets’adè hanikò ekwò wıızıi ts’àζı-le,” gedı.

Nàgedèe dǫǫ̀ gots’ò hagedì, “Dıì dżęę k’e naxıts’ò hoedı-le, edahxǫ satsǫ ekwò jo naezà ha tahkò,” gedı.

Ek’èdą̀dżęę k’e Dı̀ga eyıts’ò Wha nàgezè gots’ò ekwò dę niagımdë.

“Dzęę ghàà k’ets’adè, ekwòkeè łọ-lea k’è k’ets’adè hanikò ekwòchìnà kòo ts’àζı-le” gedı.


Hanhkò ek’èdą̀dżęę k’achı nàzèedqọ asıi wıızıi niąζı邹qọ-le.

“Dzęę ghàà k’ets’adè, žehtl’è eyıts’ò zah nị asıikeè wıızıi ts’àζı-le,” gedì.

“Naxıts’ò hoedıı-le t’à hıt’e,” nàgedèe dọọ gògedì. “Edahxǫ satsǫ...”
Each day, the hunters went out for caribou. Each day, they tramped farther and farther, only to come home tired and empty handed. The dry meat bags each family had stored in their teepees got emptier and emptier. The animal people got more and more worried.

“Where have the caribou gone?” they asked as they cut the dry meat into smaller and smaller pieces each day. “Soon we will have nothing to eat.”

Each morning, Raven walked into the village from the west and chose a different teepee to visit with his strange stories. Each day, Raven was given a small piece of drymeat like everyone else in the village.

One day, Raven visited the Bear’s teepee.

“When I fly I can see far,” Raven boasted as he was about to reach for the tiny piece of drymeat Bear had cut for him.

Bear asked Raven, “Have you seen any caribou when you fly?”

“Oh no. I have seen no caribou,” Raven said, and he quickly flew away without his piece of dry meat.
Dzęę taät’e e nàzédǫǫ̀ ekwǫ̀ gha nageedę. Dzęę taät’e e denahk’e gǫǫwà k’egedę. Niagidę nìdè sìi nêgìtsö xè whíniagiđę. Gits’ǫ etsjwò wëyìi bògǫǫ̀ while agodaade Bògǫǫ̀ denahk’e while agodaade t’a tuts’a àdìi-dǫ̀ denahk’e nànìgedę agedzà.


K’omoödö taät’e e Tatsǫ̀ dąą̨̨ ı̨ tsǫ̀ôhk’e gots’ıı̨̨ ı̨ naedà. Gots’àtla taät’e e nhbàa eładì ı̨ ts’ıı̨ ı̨ at’ı ı̨ gà emìya godìi t’à goxè godo. Dzęę taät’e e dǫ hazoǫ̀ goxëht’eë bògǫǫ̀ necha-lea gîghàedi.

Ïlàà Tatsǫ̀, Sah wenhbàa ts’ıı̨ ı̨ èhtla.

Tatsǫ̀ xàdahodi hadì, “Yat’a k’eht’a nìdè nìwà ts’ıı̨ ı̨ segha xègàat’ı,” hadìi t’a bògǫǫ̀ necha-lea Sah yegha xàhwhoo ts’ıı̨ ı̨ dadìitsò.

Sah dayeehke, “Kët’a nìdè asìį ekwǫ̀ ne szczególny?” yëhìî.

“Île, ekwǫ̀ wëziìi zëhjëi-le,” hadì. Tatsǫ̀ hadìi ts’ıı̨ ı̨ -t’ıi niht’ı, webògǫǫ̀ aizǫ̀.
The next day, as Raven was visiting Marten’s teepee, Fox and Bear, Wolf and the other hunters stopped by.

“Raven, you are a wise man,” said Wolf. “Tell us. Where have the caribou gone?” Raven dropped the bit of dry meat Marten had given him.

“I wish I could help you, but as you can see,” said Raven, pointing to the bit of meat he had dropped. “I am hungry too. My fate is the same as yours.” And with that Raven flapped his wings and disappeared over the trees.

As the pieces of dry meat got smaller and smaller the village people got more and more worried and frightened.

“We will starve,” said the people, and they became suspicious of each other. One day, while the tiny bits of dry meat were being shared out, an argument broke out in the middle of the village.

“Your piece is bigger than mine!”

“You stole my piece!”

“You put pieces of rotten hide in the bag and hid the meat for yourself!”

The argument got so noisy only Wolf heard Raven flap his wings and fly off with two pieces of meat in his beak. Just before the argument exploded into a brawl, Wolf shouted, “STOP!” “Listen,” Wolf said. “If we fight each other we will die!”

“So what?” said a man. “We are starving anyway.”

“We must think,” said Wolf. “When did the caribou start to disappear?”

The people looked at each other and thought back to the last good caribou hunt. Some counted the days on their fingers. A little boy picked up a black feather and twirled it between his hands.
Ek’èdaidzęę̀ k’e Tatsò, Wha wenihbàa ts’ı̀ ěhtlä. Nögèe eyıts’ı̂ Sah, Dı̀ga eyıts’ı̂ nàzëedoqó, Wha gà goyiaqí̌̌díde.


Bògoqó while adaade t’a tts’aàdii-dòqó denahk’e namìgedè xè geedzį̌̌ agedzà.


“Nį̌̌ senahk’e bògoqó nechàa nets’į̌.”

“Bògoqó seghό néeqį̌,” gedì.

“Ewòht’aà ɂı̌̌ hì̌̌jì̌ etsìwò yì̌ neewa hani bògoqó edegha náhrį̌,” hagedìi t’a elets’į̌̌ nàyagehhti.

Hòtł’ò nàdahooowo t’a Dìgà zò Tatsò weı̌̌ts’ò̌̌ dèekw’ò̌̌ t’ǐ̌ yì̌̌kw’o. Edeèhďà t’a bògoqó náke nį̌̌wa gà naet’o yąqį̌. Tıts’aàdii-dòqó dezò eletawhegedèe gòkwe, Dìgà hıt’soa whezeh, “Hòt’a! Aàhkw’òqó, eletawheèts’ı̌̌de nǐ̌̌dè lààlets’ǐ̌de ha ne,” gòhdì.

“Dàot’e? Bò dę asats’ede ha ne,” dò ḱɛ̀̌̌ hadì.

“Wedaànıts’edè ha hıt’e. Dàht’e ekwò goghó while adzà wedaànìnahdè,” Dı̀gà gòhdì.

Hazǫǫ̀ ełeghàgeeda. Êđe nòde ekwò gha någezée t’a gidaànìnedè. Wòhđàa delakw’òqò t’a đëzh gehtà. Dözhjà t’ah dezqò dë whezǫ neyiyichì, edilà t’a ets’ayeeëra.
“Raven!” said Fox. “The caribou disappeared after Raven came to visit.”

“It must be Raven,” said Marten. “He has played tricks before.”

“Where is Raven?” said Duck.

“He’s gone,” said Wolf. “But next time he visits, someone should check his bag.”

The animal people put their heads together to make a plan.

“Raven always visits from the west,” said Duck.

“He always walks in,” said Marten.

“That’s right,” said Fox. “Raven never flies in. He just flies away.”

“And Raven always walks into the village without his bags,” said Elder Woman. “I know because he passes my teepee first.”

The village people took turns watching the trail from the west. For two days they watched and waited. Suddenly Duck said, “Raven is coming. My spirit is showing him to me through the trees.”

“Get ready,” Wolf whispered. “You know what we must do.”

Raven cawed somewhere down the trail. Soon he walked into the village without his bag and nodded his beak to the villagers. The people quietly pretended to be busy cutting their dry meat into tiny bits. Out of the corners of their eyes they watched to see which teepee Raven would visit. Raven ducked into Fox’s teepee. The villagers winked at each other. They all knew that Fox liked to ask a hundred questions.


“Tatsǫ̀ weladi?” Det’ǫ dagoehke.


Tits’aàdii-dọ̀̀k’i k’ehogezha ha sì gò lexè gogedo.

“Tatsǫ̀ dats’óq dàq’ṣįıgh’ke gots’ǫ gots’óedà zọ ne,” Det’ǫ hadì.

“K’eda zọ t’à goyaetla ne,” Wha hadì.

“Ehkw’i adì ne,” Nǫgèe hadì, “Tatsǫ̀ goyaet’a họọlị le, xàet’a zọ ne,” gòhdì.

“Eyiṭs’ọ Tatsǫ̀ gots’atłla ndè edetehmi dę zọ at’ı ne,” Ts’ėko ọghdaà hadì.

“Senihbaà dakwelọ́ọ xanaadà ts’họ́ wek’éehsọ ne,” hadì.


Tatsǫ̀ etọ k’è yaizeh họt’e. Whaà-le et’i kọta wegoeh’t’i, edetehmi dę at’ı. Edèehdà t’à dọ nàdèe t’s’ọ eyiikwit’ah. Dọ nagedèe gịgha la ọlọ laget’ị bọgoq’ọ necha-lea edegha tágeet’a. Tatsǫ̀ amèe wenihbà goyaetłla ha gịjwọ t’à dọ edenaàht’l’à t’à gịxohdi. Tatsǫ̀ họtsa Nǫgèe wenihbà goyadàehgh’ gịaọ. Dọ elets’ọ sögịjwọ, Nǫgèe t’asịị ọlọ gho daexhke ghàewị gik’eezọ t’à.
As soon as Raven had seated himself beside Fox’s fire the village young people tracked Raven’s footprints down the trail to the west. Not far from the village they found the spot where Raven had landed. A few steps off the trail they found Raven’s bag hanging on a tree. They took down the bag and looked inside. It was full of the most delicious caribou parts, hearts, tongues, kidneys, and livers. The young people emptied Raven’s bag into their own bags and hung it back on the tree.

When they stole back to the village the young people acted as if nothing had happened. Raven was still in Fox’s teepee going on and on with his strange stories of things he had seen as he flew. The villagers looked at the young people with questions in their eyes, but not a word was whispered until sundown when Raven’s tongue got tired at last. He got up from Fox’s fire and flew off into the night.

The villagers crowded around the young people who showed them the caribou parts they found in Raven’s bag.

“So, this is one of Raven’s tricks,” said Wolf. “He knows where the caribou are.”

“Someone must follow Raven,” said Fox.

“But who?” asked Bear. “Who can follow Raven through the sky?”

Wolf looked at each of the village people. He looked at Duck. “Your spirit helped you see Raven come. Can your spirit show you where Raven goes?”

“I will ask my spirit,” said Duck.

Cheko edekò niagjëde ekò t’asanaâowo-le lani k’ehogeëa. Tatsò ılaa Noğeę wenięąa goyi wheda, t’asii k’èt’a godii t’a ılaa döxë godo. Dò nàgedee sii t’asajìiwò t’a cheko ghàgeeda, hanikò sa nàrço ts’ò țiérc ko xàyįįįhtii-le. Nođeą Tatsò gode ghànjìtsq adjà t’a kóehtla gà ninaêòo.

Nàgedee dòt cheko mòqè nèggjëde. Tatsò wetehmi yii ekwò ts’ò asii dàtłò wewii whela sii ghàgeedaà agogijlà.


Noğeę hadi, “Dò ıle Tatsò k’èetla ha sîghà?” göhdi.

“Amèe hadzàa li? Amèe Tatsò k’è yat’a k’et’a li?” Sah yeådi.


“Seeqk’òq dawühke,” Det’ò hadi.
Duck closed his eyes and saw Raven checking his empty bag on the tree. He heard Raven squawk and saw him flap his wings and take off over the tree tops.

“I see Raven flying south,” Duck said.

His eyes were still closed, but he turned his face south to better see Raven in his vision. The villagers looked into the southern sky, but they saw nothing. They saw Duck start to turn around with his eyes still shut.

“Raven has turned around,” Duck said “Now his is flying north. He must be trying to trick me.” Duck faced north, shielding his closed eyes with his hand, as if he was looking into the sun.

“I’m losing him,” he said. “My vision is fading.”

“What can we do?” asked Wolf.

“Rub ash from the fire on my eyes,” said Duck.

Elder woman picked up a handful of ash and rubbed it on Duck’s closed eyes.

“Can you see now?” asked Marten.

“Not yet,” said Duck. “No, wait, I’m starting to see. Yes, I can see Raven now. He is still flying north. No, he’s turning again. Now he’s flying east.”

“The Barrenland are east,” said Fox.

Duck watched Raven fly east for a long way. Duck’s vision began to fade again and Elder Woman rubbed ash on his eye lids. Duck’s vision became strong again.
Det’ǫ dedaà déhts’ò. Tatsǫ̀ ts’ì k’e edetehmi yìì k’eet’ì yaŋi. Tatsǫ̀ hǫtl’ò whezech, hanì et’ì ts’ìte ts’ò nìit’ò.


Det’ǫ ḥlaà déhts’ò hanikò sazì ts’ò ets’aara, denahk’e nezį̀ Tatsǫ̀ wegha wègaaat’ì ha t’à. Tits’aàdii-dqo sazì ts’ò k’egeet’ì hanikò t’asii gigha xègaaat’ì-le. Det’ǫ ḥlaà déhts’ò et’ì ets’aette gighàeda.


Diga hadì, “Ayìi dàts’ele ha neewò?” yèhdì.

“Tł’ąą gots’ò t’èè sedaà k’eéchhi,” Det’ǫ yèhdì.

Ts’eko ʔohdaà t’èè yenawò k’eéhtso.

“Asįį negha xègaaat’ì?” Wha yèhdì.


“K’abatsò nìdè hozìi hòt’e,” Ngèe hadì.

“Raven is still flying east, he’s heading for something large and white.”

“What is it?” asked Wolf.

“It is shaped like a big teepee,” said Duck. “Oh no, I’ve lost him! Raven must have landed near it. I don’t see anywhere around.”

“Are you sure?” asked Wolf.

“I’m sure,” said Duck. “Raven must live in that big white teepee.”

“Come back to camp now,” said Wolf. “Can you see a shorter path to come back so we can follow it quickly tomorrow? We have no food and soon we will starve.”

“With the help of my spirit, I will do my best,” said Duck.

Then he brushed away the ash and opened his eyes. Duck looked tired, like he had travelled a long way.

Early the next morning, before sunrise, Fox and Bear, Wolf and Marten, and the other hunters started on their journey toward the giant white teepee Duck had seen in his vision. Now Duck’s spirit vision showed them a shortcut through the bush. Even so, they tramped all day and the sun was ready to set by the time they reached it.

“It’s as big as a mountain,” whispered the hunters as they tiptoed around the edge of the teepee. “Where ever did Raven find such long poles? Where ever did he find so many hides?”

“Ayì ne?” Dı̀ga yèhdı.


“Hotti żehkw’į aŋdi nį?” Dı̀ga yèhdı.


“Seŋk’ǫŋ sets’àdi t’à hahde ha dii-le,” Det’ǫ hadı.

T’èè edenawò k’e while ayįjìlà gà k’eet’į. Det’ǫ, t’asįį niwà nàḥtla lani nènitsqǫ wègaat’į.

Satsǫ k’omqǫdqǫ et’i i sa xàrà kwe, Nọgèe eyîts’ǫ Sah, Dı̀ga eyîts’ǫ Wha, Det’ǫ eyîts’ǫ Nàzèedqǫ gîlîlî ekọ t’òhbacho degoo Det’ǫ wenazhī wègoëht’įlèe ts’ǫ geède. Det’ǫ weŋk’ǫŋ yets’àdi t’à dechîmì etọ nek’ọa k’è geède. Hanîkò dechîmì dzecghàà k’egìadè. Sa nàdàaarena t’òhbacho nàråa ghọ nègìmì ekọ.

Suddenly, they came upon an opening in the hide wall. It was dark, like the opening to a cave in the side of the mountain. The hunters were cold and tired from their long journey.

“Let’s make a camp here,” said Wolf. “We must decide what to do next.”

“We must use our spirits,” said Duck. “We must use our spirits to scout Raven’s teepee before we go in.”

Duck closed his eyes. The hunters closed their eyes. The spirits took their vision into the giant teepee. The giant teepee was crowded with caribou. The caribou could not escape because the opening was blocked by a small shelter. Inside the shelter they saw Raven beside the fire on a bed of hides, sleeping. Across from him, Raven’s parents slept near the small entrance.

Wolf looked at his cousin, Fox. “I will send you into the teepee. Sneak into the shelter and wag your tail in the fire. Then crawl under Raven’s bed and set fire to the north side of the teepee.”

Fox looked at Wolf. He looked at the hungry animal people. Then he stole into Raven’s shelter and did as he was told. In no time at all Fox came dashing out of the entrance, the tip of his tail flaming like a torch. Raven’s shelter crashed down behind him.

“Get out of the way!” Fox yelled. “Here they come!”
Hotsah sii tl’ohbàa goyagoòzàa k’e ghọ nègịde. Goyï togoòtl’òo, shih goyiagoòzàa lagọh’t’e. Nażedoŋ nìwà nàgede t’a gigha edza xe nègịtsọ.

“Jọ xàgots’ihk’ò,” Diga hadì.

“Gots’ò jk’òọ t’a ats’et’i zo t’a ha hot’e,” Det’ò hadì. “Goyiats’eęd kwe jk’òọ t’a Tatsò węnhbàa goyï k’ets’et’i ha hot’e,” hadì.

Det’ò dedaà déhts’ò eyıts’ò nàzèedọq ededji si ededaà geéhts’ò. Jk’òọ t’a tl’ohbàa nechàa goyï k’egeet’i. Tl’ohbàa nechàa yìi ekwò dàgoòzọ nóq. Tjdà wets’òda koà enènịqo t’a ekwò xàgeedè ha dìi. Eyi koa goyï Tatsò kà gà ewò ekele tèwhela k’e wehị gịazị. Tatsò wetadà tjìdà gochà-lea gà wetà eyıts’ò wemọ gete.

Diga, edeòt’i Ngôgëe ghàìdà, hayèhdi, “Nị tl’ohbàa goyàtłà. Nàdịjìjìjì t’a koà goyàtłà gà netsè kò k’e jnóq aneh’i. Tatsò weèhte tl’a dexaìtłà gà tl’ohbàacho goyï clymp’è ts’onèe kò-jhìtłà.

Noğëe, Diga ghàìdà, eyıts’ò tìts’aàdi-dqóq degeèhdiig goghàeda. Eyi tl’axqóq Tatsò wekoà goyàeheh’i gà ayìn dåqle gihłu sihayjlà. Whaà-le-t’i tjìdà gots’ò Noğëe xàjìehtłà, wechè welq kò dék’ò. Ìdè wechìt’a Tatsò wekoà hodàehtl’i.

“Ets’eçọ aahde! Ekwò ekọ xàtıpogeeđe,” hadì whezëh.
The earth shuddered as the caribou trampled Raven’s shelter as they rushed out. Some of the hunters turned to run, but Wolf, being the bravest of them all, quickly shouted orders.

“Kill enough caribou to last the winter! But no more.”

When the hunt was done and the last caribou had escaped from the giant teepee, the animal people searched the debris from the wrecked shelter, but there was no Raven to be seen.

After this, the women arrived and they set up their teepees. During that evening and all next day the people were busy with the meat.

Then the next evening, just before bedding down, they noticed the camp was very quiet. There was no one cawing on and on with strange stories of things he had seen as he flew through the sky.

“We can’t live without the Raven,” said some of the people.

“What can we do?” asked Wolf.

“Let’s ask Elder Woman,” said Duck.

So, they went to Elder Woman who was still busy cutting caribou meat into long thin strips.

“We can’t live without Raven,” said Wolf. “How can we bring him back?”

Elder Woman thought for a while. “If you feel you can’t live without Raven, you could try this. Go to Raven’s smashed shelter and gather the feathers from among the debris,” she said.
Ekwò, Tatsò weköą tegeède t’à dêè hòtl’ò nàgoeda. Nazèedqò wòhdta t’mogèeǹde hanikò Dìga gonahk’e wedzeè nàtso t’à gots’ò ezeh hadì, "Xoghà wet’à ts’ee da gha ekwò elaahde, hanikò deʔó ekwò elaahde-le.” Gòhdì.

Ekwò elaagjdè t’l’aqqò, eyits’ò ekwò hòt’ò xàèhràa t’l’aqqò tts’aàddi-dq’ó Tatsò weköą wetagqòt’l t’a k’ègeeta, hanikò Tatsò wègòeht’j-le.

Eyi t’l’aqqò ts’èko nèg série, edenîhbàa nàgîkwì. Eyi xèhts’ò eyits’ò satsò dzèq ghaà bò suîgehàj t’à gîgha la lò.

Ek’éddaròò, tts’aàddi-dq’ó geetèe kwe dò nàdèe k’é t’asagòdí-le. Tatsò nìwà gots’ò eniîya godì t’à goxè godo xè yaîeeh lå, esagòdì-le.


“Ayi dâts’ùlìa li?” Dìga gòhèi.

“Ts’èko Ḫòhdaà dawets’înhke,” Det’ò hadì.

Eyi t’à Ts’èko Ḫòhdaà ts’ó geèhrà łąaà bò nedèe tàehwhe k’é eghàlaedà ʝè.


Ts’èko Ḫòhdaà whàà-lea ts’ó yeghò nàñwò t’l’aqqò hadì, “Tatsò wedę ʐaa hdà ha dii t’i ʐaa ǹdè dì wèhådzå. Tatsò wekò gòtaîtł’i ekò wèt gots’ò wechòô hazqò nàahtsì,” gòhèi.
The people scratched through the debris and collected every bit of feather they could find. Even so, they collected barely a handful. Wolf pressed the feathers together into one bundle and gave them to Elder Woman. Elder Woman put the feather bundle inside her clothing and went to bed.

The next morning, when Elder Woman woke up, Raven was sleeping in the bed beside her. The animal people were very happy to see him alive again. Raven became a man again, but his parents never did return. Soon, Raven was cawing on and on with his strange stories of things he had seen as he flew, looking for mischief to make and tricks to play.

However, to make sure Raven would never starve the people again, Wolf gave him a word, “For what you have done to us you will never kill another animal in the future. You will always depend on the waste from the dogs.”

To this day, you never hear of Raven killing anything to feed himself. As for Fox, since the day he set fire to Raven’s bed, the hair on the tip of his tail is black.

Note: Retyped by M. Siemens, May 15, 2017
Edited by V. Mackenzie

The End
Eyıt’à tits’aàdì-dǫ̀ kǫ̀ą någojtl’i u weta gots’ǫ wechoò lö̀-lea golatl’aà làatlǫ ngaŋihtsì. Diga eyi choh elyeèhdi ayiìlìa sì Ts’èko ʔòhdaà ghàyììwa. Ts’èko ʔòhdaà choh edet’àiwa, hani yexè déètì.

K’omoòdǫǫ̀ Ts’èko ʔòhdaà ts’ììwo là Tatsò yegà wheetì nò. Tatsò k’achì eda t’à tits’aàdìi-dǫ̀q ginà. Tatsò k’achì dǫ nahdí hanikò wemq eyıts’ǫ wetà gots’ǫ anagejìa-le. Whaà-le- t’ii Tatsò naizeh hòt’e, eniïya godìi t’à dǫ xe godo. Yat’a k’et’a, dǫ k’e ts’àhotsì ha k’eeta.

Hanikò Tatsò k’achì tits’aàdìi-dǫ̀g gha bò while hohtì ha-le gha Diga yati yeghàrzìq, “Hoila gots’ǫ eghàalànedà k’èxa jò gots’ǫ idàa tits’aàdìi wìzìi elàiìhwì ha-le. Tlı yeghàrèèzììà sìì zòq nedè ha,” yèhdì.

Eyıt’à du dzèc ts’ò Tatsò t’asìì elàiìhwì who ts’édì ghò ts’ìkw’ò while. Nóggè ededì sìi, Tatsò weèhte yek’enììhk’ò gots’ò wetsèléì weghà dezò hòt’e.
Who is Yamozha?
Amìì Yamos ña ne?
Who is Yamozha?

Text from George Blondin/PWNHC website

The word “Yamozha” means “he who travels” or “he travelled around (it)”. “A long time ago, when the world was new, a lot of strange things happened. A lot of people had medicine power; but most of the people had no medicine power. They were normal people, just like you and I, but they were able to hear and see what medicine power could do. Yamozha was perhaps the most powerful medicine power person throughout history. He was able to fly anywhere with the spirits. He was able to go from place to place very quickly. He could talk to any animal or bird, with no problem. He could make himself into an animal if he wanted to.” (Quote by George Blondin)
“Yamozha” ts’edì dè “Wek’e hoowo” hanì-le dè “Dì dè we mò mò wek’e hoowo” ts’edì ats’edì.

Akwee whaà dè gogoò ekò asi ło sidi k’ehòe wo ratulations. Dò lò jk’òò gits’ò ılè Hanìkò dò deòt’è jk’òò gits’ò mile. Ekìi goxèht’e dò lagùt’e hanìkò jk’òò xè dàgot’ì¼ sì geèhk’ò xè gighaeda ha dii-le. Ìnèe whaà gots’ò Yamozha dò haxòò nakhè jk’òò t’à nàtso ılè. Ìnì t’à t’alàà sìì ts’ò jwhàà wek’ehoowo. Tits’aàdìì t’ahoòzìì hanì-le dè yat’a k’èdèè ts’ò gode ha dii-le. Tits’aàdìì nàièle ha nìwò dè haste ha dii-le. Tits’aàdìì dàni k’eho essere ha hanì-le dè ayìì agùt’e edèk’ègeezò-łe.
Yamozha wanted things to be better in the world. Things were not peaceful, and people and animals did not know how to act or who they were. It was Yamozha who told the people and animals where they should live and what they should use.

He made laws for everyone. Yamozha taught the animals the laws and when they should give themselves to the people. Both the people and the animals knew the laws.

Yamozha made the land safe for people to travel.

The End
Yamozha dọ eyıts’o tits’aàdii gots’o góde, adịji någede ha eyıts’o ayii t’à get’i ha si gots’o hadi.

Dọ hazo gha nàowo whèhtsị Yamozha nàowo tits’aàdii ghàgoehọtọ eyıts’o dàht’e dè dọ ghàdegihtè ha. Dọ eyıts’o tits’aàdii ilak’aà nàowo k’ègeezọ ịlẹ.

Yamozha, dọ k’ehohde gha dè xè ts’èwhị hòrọ ayijla.
Woman and the Pups – Version 1
Ts’èko eyıts’ǫ Ts’ą – Version 1

Illustrations by B. Abraham
One day an old woman and her daughter left camp. They wanted to live in a different place.

When they were about to leave, their dog died. The woman and the girl were sad. They left the dog at the camp. They wanted to find a new camp soon.
Ts’èko eyits’o Tłạ

Version One (Modified)

Collected and Translated by Virginia Football

Ilàà, ts’ọkọa eyits’o weti t’aṣiị nageèhde, ladịị gọzọọ ts’ọ tageèdè ha gịwọ.

Tageèhdè ha niik’o ekọ gịlị eləwo t’ạ ts’ọkọa eyits’o weti ts’ọgịghịwọ. Gịlị iđe aida aqịlà. Whaà-le de någedèe wego’o ts’ọ tageèdè ha gịwọ.
The old woman and the girl walked a long way when the girl said that she forgot the moose-hide scraping tool. The old woman let the girl go back and get it.

When the girl got near her old camp she saw a man. She walked closer and closer to him. He was a good looking man. When she was near him he asked, “Where are you going?”

The girl said, “I am going back to my old camp to get my moose-hide scraper. I forgot it.”

The man said, “Come to my camp.” The man was so good looking that the girl said, “Yes.”
Ts’ookoa eyits’o t’eekoa gojwàagoonè négìdë ekò t’eekoa dediwò gha k’edzee nadi-le hadì. Ts’òokoa t’eekoa neyíchì gha ģdè naèhtla ayijlà.


T’eeka hadì “Idè nàts’ììdëe ts’ò nàèhtla zaht’ì, k’edzech dè nahdì t’à.” Dò hadì, “sek’è nàatlà,” yèhdì.

Dò sìi wèdat’ìì t’à t’eeko, “Hèçe” yèhdì. Edìì nàdè sìi ts’ò nàlegeèhtla.
They walked to his camp. They made it feel like home. They needed to eat, so the man went hunting.

The girl cleaned the camp. She picked up bones. Some bones she broke into small pieces and put them in a pot to make grease. She also put bones at the front door of the tent.

At night, when the girl was in bed, she heard footsteps. She listened. Was it a dog eating the bones? She picked up her scraper and tossed it at the dog. The dog went away. She fell asleep.
Edekò agjì’t’e lanì aqìlìà. Sègetì ha giwò t’à doqìhì nàqìhtla. T’eekeaq kòk’è siagòqìlà.


Too t’eekeaq whehi ekò möht’a k’ets’etloò hòt’e, ñeëhek’ò. Ñeëhkw’ò. Tò ekw’òò k’e gozà ał’ ni, nìwò. K’edzee nìichi, tò ts’ò yeëh’ah. Tò yeë nåegè. T’eekeaq naëhtì.
In the morning, the dog was dead on the pile of bones. Where was her husband? She looked here and there, but no husband. There were no footprints and his snowshoes were hanging on the tree. Where was he? She was thinking about her husband when an idea came to her. Could her old dog have been her husband?

She stopped thinking about her husband and started thinking about being a mother. Soon she would be looking after a baby. The girl was alone now. She walked back to her mother’s camp, but was told she smelled like a dog. They didn’t want her, so she walked back to her old camp to live alone. She was sad.

Soon she would be a mother. That day came, but her children were born puppies. There were two boys and one girl. She loved them. She worked hard to take care of them. It wasn’t easy, but she did it.

Every day she would tie her puppies to the tent pole and go to the bush to check her rabbit snares. One day, when she came back, she saw footprints of children in the ashes by the fire pit. What’s going on? Is there something going on with my puppies?

Then she had an idea. She tied a string around each puppy while they were sleeping.

Dzęk t直达’de delg nohbaa whaå ts’ô dagoozâ eyits’ô dechini gaâ xòk k’aehta. Îlë dzêk k’e noqâla ekô kôdek’ôq gâ łoza ni chekoakek’è gôla yaq. Dàgot’i agot’i niwô. Selga gixè t’asagot’i ni?

Eyit’à asi gho nânìwo. Tlâ gete gitsô tl’ë t’à dagetl’ë agôolà.
The next day, the mother went into the bush. When she was gone, one of the puppies said, “Now that mother has gone we can play games.” The puppies then took off their hides and changed into children.

The mother was hiding in the bush and, as the children played, she pulled on the string that was tied to the hides. She got two hides and threw them into the fire. The little girl was too quick and jumped back into her hide. She stayed a dog. The others stayed as boys.
Ek’èdaidzęę gımọ dechımı ts’ö naèhtla. Tḥa ĩlë hadi, “Gomọ naèhtla t’à nágots’eze ha dii-le.” Tḥa edewò yi xàgııde, chekoa gįįįį agedzá.

Gomọ dechımı nådeeęį. Chekoa nágogeze ekò giwò tl’ı t’à wexetł’įį siₖ dets’ö yeht’ı. Tḥawò nake neyiįwa, kwįiyįhde. Ts’ęko t’a si náltla t’à edewò yi naèhtla. Ededį tḥ aįį nawhelį. Tḥa nake t’a dozhia aįį gįįį.
Many years later, the girl’s mother came to visit. The girl said to her mother, “When I was sad you didn’t make me feel happy. When I needed love, you didn’t love me. When I needed help, you didn’t help me. My family can take care of itself.”

The boys grew up to be good hunters. They hunted and fished for food and the mother cleaned the camp. They were a very happy family.

The End
Łʊ xoo k’ehşowọ t’axşọ wemọ t’s’oʃko a deti t’s’áhtla. Ts’eko demọ t’s’ọ hadi, “Segha gots’eèdị ekọ sịnà așinecla-le. Seghọnets’ịtọ dehwho hani kọ seghọnetọ nile. Sets’ats’ụdi dehwho hani kọ sets’âneedi nile. Sëot’ị ede ghà hahogehzi ha dii-le.

The Woman and the Pups – Version 3
Ts’eko eyits’ọ Tḥa – Version 3

Story taken from www.tlicho.ca – “How the People Came to Be”
“Dànì Dǫne Gihölũ” – Godì www.tlicho.ca gots’ọ adlà
A young woman lived with her two brothers. One day a handsome stranger came to their house. The brothers said to the sister, “This handsome man has come for you, so you must marry him.” So, the couple got married.

On their wedding night, the young woman woke to the sound of a dog gnawing on a bone. The woman’s husband was no longer at her side. She jumped up, lit the fire, and searched the tent, but there was no dog in the tent. The woman went back to bed and fell asleep.

Once again, she woke to the sound of a dog gnawing on a bone. The woman called out to one of her brothers. He threw an axe in the direction of the noise. There was a loud cry and then silence. The woman and her brothers quickly lit the fire and found a large black dog lying dead. The woman’s husband did not return.

Eventually, the woman gave birth to six puppies. She loved the puppies and hid them in a sack.

One day, upon coming back to the camp, the woman noticed the footprints of children around the camp. The next day, instead of checking her snares as she usually did, she hid behind a bush close to the tent.

After she left, the six puppies crawled out of the sack and turned into three girls and three boys. The woman ran towards them. Before she could reach them, two of the girls and one of the boys jumped back into the sack.

The other three children grew up strong and healthy and produced many children. We are descended from them and that is why we call ourselves the Tłı̨chǫ.

The End
“Đànì Đône Gishólì” – Godì www.tlcho.ca gots’ọ adlà

T’eko edỳnde nàke goxè nàdè jèlè. Ḥè dzę̀ xàhtọ wèdaat’ì gikọ náḥtla. “Đu xàhtọ wèdaat’ì nghọ niitła t’à wexè honijda ha,” wìnde ededè ts’ọ hagedì. Eyit’a honiget’a. Honiget’aa toò t’eko ts’ìwo tlı ekw’ọò k’e gozà xèekw’ọò hó’t’e. Ts’èko weghọ̀hk’ëe wedọ̀ wègoët’ì-łe. Ts’èko niko, kò nagoëhtla gà nôḥbàa goyìi hazọ̀t’ì k’eeta hanikò goyìi tlı while. T’eko edeèhte ts’ọ naèhtla, naèhtì.


Ḥè dzę̀ nàgedè k’è nòqtla t’à chekoakeè k’è göla nọòt.

Ek’èdaidzęż xòo k’aèhta ħalîlè hanikò nôḥbàa ts’ọ nìwà-lea dechìŋ t’ađeežì. T’asìi nàehtla tl’axọò yiìwò ts’ọ tlıa ek’ètaï hâehžà. Ts’èkoa t’ai eyits’ọ dżòzhia t’ai gehlè.

Ts’èko gots’ọ tòmòehzhah. Gots’ọ niïtla kwe-t’ìi ts’èkoa nàke eyits’ọ dżòzhia jèlè yiìwò yiì nagițko.

Chekoa eyìi-łe t’ai siì nàgetso xè hotìigeedàa geèzọ.

Gits’ihọ chekoa łożyć agôdzà. Gits’rọ̀qọòqọò ats’ìt’e t’à Tlıchò edès’edi hó’t’e.
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