

The Great Fisher (Odjig)
Gchi Odjig

By Isaac Day
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For centuries, the Northern Ojibway have been telling stories as a way to keep a record of what has happened in the past.

Gchi Mewzhaa, Giiwednong Ojibway tibaadtaanaa'aa tibaadjimowinan wii naagdwendjigaadegen gaa bi'zhiwebag.

This oral history has been preserved by the Elders,

Maanda tibaadjigaadek gaa zhiwebag giibi naagdwendjigaade Gchi Anishinaabek,

one story at a time, often taking the listener deep into the past to collect Great Medicine to use in the future.

bezhig tibaadjimowin apii bebezhig, daapnad e'bizindang nooj biinji gaa zhiwebag wii maanjiwechgaadek Gchi Mashkiki wii aapijigaasgaadek niigaan.

The Elders of the present day, say that right now we are in a story,

Gchi Anishinaabek e'noongo e'zhi-giizhgak, kidok owi nongo gdaa'mi owi tibaadjimowin,

and that future generations will be sitting around a fire telling our current story of how the 'Two Legged' lost their way and tried desperately to destroy the Earth.

miinwaa owi e'niigaanwan owaah bemaadizimgak da madaboo'wag aatyiiying shkodeng tibaadtamowad megwaa tibadjimowin nikeyaa "e'Niizhogaadeyaad gii naachtoonaa'aa wiinwaa nikeyaa miinwaa gijitoonaa'aa chi giyaatin wii binaachtoowad Aki.

They state that we are in desperate times and that we are the Authors of this Story.

E'zhiwebkaak kiinwi gda gchi dwendaazomi miinwaa kiinwi gda aawmi e'aawjik maanda Tibaadjimowin.

Here is such a story that has been preserved in the oral tradition, and was told by Isaac Murdoch on Nov 27, 2015

Maanda e'mi aawang tibaadjimowin gaa naagdwendjigaadek giigdowaad aadiziwinkeng, miinwaa gii tibaadtaan Isaac Murduch niing pii Bashkodin dibik giizis niizhtana ashi niizhwaaswi, mdaaswaak niizhing ashi naanan

at the Native Canadian Friendship Center in Sudbury, Ontario, Canada. It was generously recorded and transcribed by Christi Belcourt.

Niiying Native Canadian Wijkendowin-gamig Nsowaakmak, Ontario, Canada. Gii mino kinoojgaade miinwaa zhibiigaade naa'aa Christi Belcourt.

It is as follows:

E'bi zhi'aawang:

The land has something to give us. It has a voice and we hear it, every time the wind blows.

Aki daa'aan owaah miindagoying. Da'aan giigdown miinwaa gda noondaa'naa, apane noodin boodaajgem'migak.

We hear that voice when we hear that water smashing against those rocks.

Gda noondaa'naa owi niwewin pii noondaming owi niibi daangshkan ni'end bsiniin.

It's telling us something. The voice of the land is great medicine for us. And it's everywhere; it surrounds us.

Gda wiindamaagonaa gegoo. Owi niwewin e'akiing aawan gchi mashkiki kiinwi. Miinwaa akina goji; aataaying kiinwi.

Our people are great philosophers. They understand, and hear the great voice that comes from the land. That voice is still out there. It will still tell us the stories of what happened if we take the time to learn.

Kiinwi bemaadizijik aawag chi e'timaadjigewijik. Wiinwaa nsastaanaa'aa, miinwaa noondaanaa'aa owi gchi giigdown owi e'bizhaam;migak akiing. Owi giigdown eyaabih te oodi. Eyaabih gaa wiindamaagomi tibaadjimowinan gaa bi-zhiwebag giishpin daapnaming e'zhizek wii kendaming.

The stories contain the natural laws by which we human beings need to remember and follow in order to keep everything in balance.

Tibaadjimowinan e'yaanaa'aan e'gimaa'naakinigewinan owih kiinwi bemaadzizjik owah maanminendaming miinwaa naapzokweming weweni wii miigsek akina wii tibising

'Balance' is one of the cornerstones within all Indigenous philosophies.

We know, as our Elders still tell us, there is a great responsibility each generation has to maintaining this balance, and the severe consequences to all of life on the planet when we don't. Here is a story that shares with us about respect and balance

'Tibaabiigsing" aawin bezhig e'ziingaakbsiniin wenji akina Ntamzizjik e'timaadjimowaadgejik. Kiinwi gii kendaanaa, giinwi nda Gchi Anishinaabejik eyaabih gwiinmaagomi, tem'migat gchi naagdwendjigewinan ensa bemaadiziwimgak wii naagdwendmowaad maanda tibaabiigsewin, miinwaa wenji sanagdingin zhiwebzowinan akina bemaadzingak akiing pii gaawiin kiinwi. Maanda tibaadjimowin owah joweyeng kiinwi maanda Ninaajewin miinwaa Tibaabiigsewin

Years ago, the Anishinaabe migrated from east to west, from wabanong, Bboongkaakbah zhaashigowah, Anishinaabek gii mi'nizhaayok Waabanong biinish Epingishmok, nikeyaa Waabanong,

all the way to where we are now. We were following a very sacred path called Wabano Miikaan.

akina nikeyaa e'yaaying noongo. Kiinwi gda naapzokwenaa gchi twaa miikaanhs e'zhinikaadek Wabano Miikaan.

It's the same path that the sun follows, going from east to west. We were instructed many times, by many different beings, to remain on that path.

Aawin naasaap miikaanhs e'naapzokwewang Giizis, zhaamigak Waabanong biinish Epingishmok. Gda wiindamaagomi niibanaching, chi niibana bemaadzingak'kin, wii eyaaying maanda Miikaanhs.

Before the migration something happened that changed everything. Something happened so profound that it almost wiped off the two-legged from the earth.

Zhibwaa maadjikshiniing gegoo gii zhiwebad gaa aanji aansing akina gegoo. Gegoo gii zhiwebad chi gegoo e'kendaagowak mii go gegaa giin gaanaazowaad e'niizhogaadejik maanpii Aki.

You know, we have our wiigwaam doors facing east, and there is a reason for that.
**Akii'kendaan, kiinwi gdaa'naa wiigwaam shkowaandeman e'zhishjigaadenoan
Waabanong.**

It's because the sun rises in the east and when it rises, the light comes into our lodges, giving us life. We believe our children need that light to live and thrive.
**Zaam aawan Giizis bimokse Waabanong miinwaa pii bi'moksed,
Waaskonengaasing biindagemmigad kiinwi gda gamikongnaan, miindagoying
maadiziwin.**

Wabano Miikaan is that sacred path from east to west that the medicine people still speak about.

**Waabanong Miikaan aawan gcji Miikaanhs Waabanong biinish Epingishmok owi
Mashkiki bemaadizijik eyaabih tibaadtaanaa'aa.**

Animals follow this path, and we were instructed to follow the animal trails so we could remain on this path.

**Wesinhyik naapzokowaanaa'aa maanda miikaanhs, miinwaa kiinwi gii
wiindamaagomi wii naapzokwaaming wesiinhyik miikaansan dash wii nni'eyaaying
maanda miikaansing.**

Well, a long time ago the Anishinaabe stopped following this sacred path.

**Adash, chi mewzhaa Anishinaabek gii nookshkaawok naapzokwemowaad maanda
Gchi Miikaanhs.**

They got greedy.

Wiinwaa gii ni'aanoodzowok.

The Anishinaabe wanted to have their lodge another way.

Anishinaabek wii eyaamoowad da gamikongnan wii zhisingin bekaan nikeyaa.

They started to believe that the great medicine that bursts from animal footprints wasn't good enough.

**Wiinwaa gii maajtaayok debwetamowad owi gchi mashkiki gaabi tek wesiinhyik
makwewinan gaawiin gii niishishnoo aapiji.**

They wanted to make their own trails. And so that is what they did. They made their own trails.

Wiinwaa dewendaanaa'aa wii zhitoowad wiinwi da miikaansan. Miinwaa adash gaa zhijigeyaad. Gii zhitoonaa'aa wiinwaa da miikaansan.

They started living life, not like a four-legged, but like a two-legged. Everything went wrong at this point. Not only did they become very greedy, but they began to disrespect everything.

Wiinwaa gii'maajii maadizi'ook bemaadiziwin, gaawiin nikeyaa e'niiwo-gaadejik, dash nikeyaa e'niizho-gaadejik. Akina gegoo giini maanaadsin maanda pii. Gaawiin eta wiinwaa giibi aan'noodizooziyok, dash wiinwaa giibi maajii binaajtoonaa'aa akina gegoo.

They would just walk along and bust branches when they were walking.

Wiinwaa da maseyaad eta nikeyaa miinwaa bookshkaanaa'aa mtigoonsan pii mi'baamsewaad.

They saw flowers and would just step on them for no reason.

Wiinwaa gii waabndaanaa'aa waaskonensan miinwaa gii tikaanaa'aan ni'end niizhaa.

When they ate, they wasted everything. Fat was just thrown out like it was nothing.

Pii gii wiisnowaad, wiinwaa giibi'naajtoonaa'aa akina gegoo. Mide gii paagjigaade dibishko gaa gegoo aawsinoo.

They would let fish rot and the animals were very scared of them.

Wiinwaa gii bigidnaa'aan giigoonh wii binaajshinowad miinwaa akina wesinhyik giik saa'aan gwaandak.

The two-legged also became very mean with each other.

E'niizho-gaadenowad gegoo owah giibi aawyok e'gowaakowadzijik e'wiinawaa.

They started to talk about each other and become violent.

Wiinwaa gii maajtaayok tibaadjimowaad wiinwaa miinwaa giibi zegendaagizoyok.

They became very war-like people, and the animals couldn't stop them.

Wiinwaa giibi aawyok miigaaszojik bemaadizijik, miinwaa wesiinhyik gaawiin gii zhitoosiinaa'aa wii gaabnaa'aad.

But, there was somebody watching all that was happening.

Dash, wiiya gii ginoowaamjige akina gegoo e'nibi' e'zhiwebag.

Something that was bigger than the two legged.

Gegoo nooj e'chaamigak biinish e'niizhogaadenid.

They were being watched from above giizhik, the sky.

Wiinwaa ginoo'waamjigaaswok shpimiing Giizhigoong, iw Giizhigoong.

A spirit was up there, looking down at the two-legged and seeing how they were acting, and how they had forgotten to follow the path the four-legged had showed them.

Mnidoo gii iiyaa oodi, niisaabih ginoowaabmad e'zho'gaadejik miinwaa waabmaan e'ni nokiiyaad, miinwaa aani nendamowaad wii naapzokwemowaad miikaanhs iw e'niwo-gaadejik gaa zhinoomaagaaswad.

This spirit's name is Biboon'nini. (Winter man)He is the old man that lives way up in the universe, in the north.

Maaba mnidoo gii zhinkaasah Biboon'nini. Giin aawih kiiweziinh e'nizid gchi giizhigoong, giowednong.

Biboon'nini saw what was happening and he thought to himself, 'I'm going to destroy the two-legged for how they are acting.'

Biboon'nini gii waabndaan e'zhiwebag miinwaa gii nendam wiin, Niin gan'saak e'niizho-gaadejik zaam eni'zhe'eyaad.

So he began to blow down onto earth with his sacred breath and everything started to freeze.

Dash giini maajtaa boodaajiged niiseying Aki wiin dash da gchi-twaa nesewin miinwaa akina gegoo gii maajii mashkowaakidin.

But, there was a medicine here on earth that was stronger than his breath, and it was the birds.

Zaam dash, gii tem'migad mashkiki maanpii Akinng nooj e'mashkooziim'migak nooj wiin da nesewin, miinwaa dash gii aawok bneshiinhyik.

When the birds sang their sacred songs it pushed his cold breath back.
**Pii bneshiinyik nagam'mowad wiinwaa Gchi-twaa nagam'mowinan gii
skaabwebnaa'naa wiin da gekaak nesewin niyaap.**

There is so much medicine in the bird's songs and pushed back Biboon'nini's breath
with great force.

**Dash gchi niibana mashkiki te bneshiinhyik nagam'mowinan miinwaa wii
gaanjiwebshkimowad niyaap Biboon'nini nesewin owi dash gchi mashkoziwin.**

The old man knew that his power wasn't as strong as those sacred songs the birds
were singing.

**Kiweziinh gii kendaan owi wiin da mashkozoowin gaawiin gii mashkoziigasnoo
biinish ne'end nagam'mowinan bneshiinyik e'nagam'mowad.**

So he thought of an idea.

Dash giimi nendaan gegoo

He thought to himself, 'I'm going to go down to earth and I'm going to collect all
those birds and I'm going to tie them up in a great big bag.

**Gii nendan wiin eta, Niin gaa ni'zhaa niisaying Aki miinwaa Niin ga
maandooshmak akina bneshiinhyik miinwaa ga taakbinaak maamwi biinji gchi
shkimdaang.**

I'll take them up to my wigwam in the stars. And then I'll blow my breath.' So, that
is what he did. He collected all the birds and blew his ice cold breath.

**Ga maajiinak nda wiigwaaming enji naangoonkaak. Miinwaa dash ga
boodaajige.'dash mii owih gaa zhichiged. Gii maanjiwenaan akina bneshiinhyik
miinwaa boodaataan da komii gekaak nesewin.**

The earth became so lonely because the songs were gone. And let me tell you, the
earth froze quick.

**Aki gii maajii boodesah zaam nagam'mowinan giin godaagdoon. Miinwaa ga
wiindamoon, Aki gii mashkowaakowod wewiib.**

That old man blew his sacred breath so hard that everything started to freeze and
perish.

**Owah kiweziinh gii boodaajige wiin da Gchi-twaa nensewin chi giyyatin owi akina
gegoo gii maajii mashkowaakowod miinwaa ni'bagashnad,***

The Anishinabek were already very weak because they had lost their way.
Anishinaabek zhaashigwaa gii mashkoziisiyok zaam gii naachtoonaa'aa wiinwaa owaa nizhaad'aad.

They didn't know what to do and began to be more greedy, hoarding their food and being stingy.

Wiinwaa gaawiin kendaziinaa'aa owaah zhichigeyaad miinwaa gii maajii aanoodzo'ook, zaagtoonaa'aa wiinwaa mijim miinwaa zaagzoo'ook.

But the animals started to gather and have meetings.

Dash wesiinhyik gii maajii maanjiwedok miinwaa eyaanaa'aa naakinigewinkeng.

They started to pray and sing and ask for guidance and help.

Wiinwa maajtaayok wii namaa'aad miinwaa nagam'mok miinwaa kwedeyok zhinoomaagewin miinwaa naadamoowinan.

They were the ones that were putting their tobacco down when we couldn't. And with their petition came great medicine.

Wiinwaa gii aawok ga bigidnaa'aad da semaaman pii kiinwi gayii maamda. Miinwaa wiinwaa da maanenjiigewin gii aawin mashkiki.

At one of these meetings, it was decided that maybe nothing could be done.

Bezbig gii naakinigewaad, gii kidook owi gnabaach gaa gegoo da'aa zhichigesii'ook.

The animals all gave up except for one little animal, the Odjig, the Fisher.

Wesiinhyik akina gii boontaayok gwaandak dash gaawiin bezbig e'gaachiyyid wesiinh, Odjig, owah Odjig.

That little animal said "No, there is a way.

Owah e'gaachiinyid wesiinh gii kida "Kaa, te go owah aawaa'ni zhichigeng.

We have to try to figure this out. We cannot give up.

Kiinwi aabidek kwii gijitoonaa maanda e'aawang. Gaa maamda wii bootaaying.

"Fisher put his tobacco down first and then spoke,

Odjig gii bigidnaan da semaanan ntam miinwaa gii giigda,

"my little son at home told me that there is a way. My child told me that his blanket that he wrapped around him is not working and that he gets his strength and his warmth from the heartbeat of the land, and there is a way."

"nda wiisenhsam endaa'aang gii wiindamak tem'migad go owaa'ni zhichigeng. My binoojiyim gii wiindamak da waabowaan e'aaptiigiingowod gaawiin niishisnoo miinwaa da debnaan da mashkoziwin and e'giizhowaam'migak da adeweyek akiing, miinwaa tem;migad go owaah zhichigeng.

Well of course when it was explained like that, they all knew that the message the little fisher gave was very pure it held great medicine.

Adash aabidek pii gii tibaadjigaadek owi nikeyaa, akina gii kendaanaa'aa wiindamaagewin owah Odjigkoons gaa miigwed gii aawan geget giin jignigaade gchi-twaa mashkiki.

They knew that they had to come up with a way to stop that old man from blowing his breath down on earth.

Wiinwaa gii kendaanaa'aa giibi eyaanaa'aa owaah zhichigeng wiin gaabjigaazod owah kiiweziinh wii booni boodaajgiged niiseying maanpii Akiing.

So they too put their tobacco down.

Dash wiinawaa giib bigidnaa'aan semaa.

And what it was agreed upon was, they were going to climb a high mountain.

Miinwaa aaniish gii giiwek'senjigaadek aawan, wiinwaa wiin wii maandaweyok e'shpaak zhiw.

Once they were up on the mountain they would jump up from star to star and they would go into that old man's wiigwaam, (house)

Goding winwaa gii eyaa'ook zhiwnaang wiinwaa giin bagowaashkinooyok nang biinish nang miinwaa wiinwaa gii biindigeyok kiiweziinh da wiigwaaming.

get those birds, sneak them out and bring them back to earth so that their voice, ga naan'naak geyek bneshiinhyik, giimooj gowah miinwaa biinaa'aan naap Akiing dash e'niweyaad,

their medicine and the life they carry will save the people - both the four-legged, and the two legged.

wiinwaa da mashkiki miinwaa iw bemaadiiwin wiin mibdek wii shaabwiiyaad bemaadizijik - naasaap e'niwo-gaadezhiig, miinwaa e'niizho-gaadejik

They knew they had to go up there and try to negotiate with the old man. That was the plan and it was a good plan.

Wiinwaa gii kendaa'naa'aa wii zhaa'aad oodi miinwaa wii gijitoowaad wii giinoonaa'aad kiiweziinhyin. Owi gaa naakinigaadek miinwaa aawan e'niishin nakinigewin.

Every good plan starts with a sound. It starts from the black.

Akina e'niishin nakinigewin maajtaam'migad geoo newewing. Maajtaam'migad wenji makadewaam'migak.

Once the sound is made, it travels and it seeks the medicine that you are looking for. The animals know this and live by it.

Apii dash niwewin zhichigaadek, mibdem'migad miinwaa dawaamdaan iw mashkiki en'dowaamdinik. Wesiinhyik kendanaa'aa maanda miinwaa shi maadizoyok nikeya owi.

So that is what they did. They sang their songs in order to find the courage and strength that they would need to go on their warrior's quest to save the world.

Dash owi gaa zhichigeyaad. Wiinwaa giin nagam'mok dash wiim kigaadek aakidewin miinwaa mashkoziwin owaa nesowaad wii zhaa'aad wiinwaa da Waadese dowaanjigewin wii zhaabwiitoowad Aki.

Everything was frozen solid.

Eyaabih akina gegoo gii mashkowaakidin.

The old man never pitied the two-legged. He just kept blowing and blowing and blowing.

Owa kiiweziinh gaa wiika gii nagayenmaasiin e'niizho-gaadenowad. Wiin eta gii boodaajige, boodaajige, boodaajige.

Four animals decided to go. The first animal that wanted to go was the Gaak, the Porcupine. A very unlikely hero when you think about it. The porcupine has a strong back. And Porcupine has a strong heart.

Niiwin wesiinyik gii'nendamok wii zhaa'aad. Ntam wesiinh owaa yang wii zhaad aawi Gaak, Gaak daa'aan e'mashkoziim;migak bakwaan. Miinwaa Gaak daa'aan mashkoziim'migak ade.

The second animal that wanted to go was the Nigig, the Otter and is very fierce. He is a warrior and their medicine is strong. There are not too many things that can beat up an otter.

Eko-niishing wesiinh owaa zhaad aawi Nigig, Nigig miinwaa e'gaachiiyid e'mashkoziid. Gii aawi Minisinoo miinwaa e'wiinwaa da mashkiki bokinaang

The other animal that chose to go was the Bizhew, the Lynx. "I can do this," he said "I have strong legs, I can jump high, and I'm quick."

Iw bekaandizid wesiinh gaa daapnaang wii zhaad Bizhew, iw Bizhew. "Ndaa zhichige go maanda," gii kida "Nda aa'nan e'mashkooziimgak kaatdan, nda bagowaashkin chi shpimiing miinwaa nda waaskkesh."

And of course the fourth animal was Odjig, the Great Fisher.

Miinwaa dash eko-niiwing wesiinh gii aawi Odjig, Gchi-twaa Odjig.

Those were the four that were chosen by the great mystery of this land to go up there to save the earth. The two legged began to perish.

Wiinawaa geyek e'niiwo gaadenowaad gii daapinigaaswok owi gchi-maandaawin maanda akiing wii zhaa'aad shpiming wii zhaabwiitoowaad Aki. E'niizho-gaadenowaad gii maajii yaasii'ook.

When they got up the mountain they felt strong.

Apii gii ni'zhaad giji zhewnaang gii zheyaa;ook mashkoziowaad.

They knew everything was done correctly before hand. The tobacco was put down. The songs had been sung.

Wiinawaa gii kendaanaa'aa akina gegoo giizhiitaam'migad weweni zhaazhigowah. Sema gii bigidnigaasah. Nagam'mowinan giin ngamo'ook.

The vision of that young person and heartbeat he talked about was in their minds.

Waamjigewin owah e'shkiniiged miinwaa adewem'migak gaa tibaataang gii te wiinawaa da nendamowining.

They made a plan. They said, "We'll grab Porcupine by his arms and legs and we'll swing and throw him up because he's not a good jumper."

Wiinwaa gii naakinigewok. Gii kidook "Ga dep'pidoonaa Gaak nikaang miinwaa kaadang miinwaa ga biimskowebnaa'naa miinwaa ga paawebnaa'naa zaam gaawiin daa jigowaashkinisii.

So they did that. They threw him up, hard. But when he went spiraling up there, he hit something. It was something that they couldn't see.

Dash wiinwaa gii zhichigeyok owi. Wiinwaa gii bagowebnaa'aan, giiyatin. Dash pii giini shpibiimshkoshing zhe'e, gii miikowaang gegoo. Gii aawan gaa gegoo e'waamdimowad.

There is a great power we can't see but it is there.

Gii te cghi mashkoziwin, kiinawi gda waamdaziinaa dash wiigo tem'migad.

They couldn't go through it.

Wiinwaa gaawiin gii zhaapisiiyok.

Porcupine just bounced right off of it and came shooting back down to earth onto the mountain.

Gaak gii pakweyakshin zhe'e miinwaa gii bipisah niiyaap Aki giji zhiwnaang.

When he landed, he landed on his back feet, and busted them and went rolling down the mountain.

Pii gii booniid, gii boonii shkowaang zidan, miinwaa gii bookbidoonan miinwaa giina tipigiiseh zhiwnaang.

That is why porcupines are like that today.

Owi dash jida Gaakoog enji aayowad nikeyaa owi nongo.

They wobble. When you see them its like their back feet are busted, they are off to the side and are swollen.

Wiinwaa zhi'seyehjiishseyok. Pii waamad'dowaa, dibishko wiinawaa da shkwaang zidan bookshkaanoon, wiinawaa eyaayok zhiweying miinwaa baaksiiyok.

This is to remind us of that time when the two legged became very greedy and wanted to rule the earth.

Maanda dash wii gihmendamiing owi pii gii aawang pii e'niizhgaadewad wii aanodzowaad miinwaa wii gimaakdaageyaad Aki.

The next one that wanted to do the jump was Otter, Nigig. Nigig took that big leap, and hard.

Pii miinwaa bezhig owaa jigowaashkinid aawih Nigig, Nigig. Nigig gii daapnaa'aan chi bagowaaskining, miinwaa giyyatin.

And when Nigig jumped up, he too hit that power and came smashing down to earth.

Miinwaa pii Nigig gii bagowaashkinid, wiin go ge miikwaan owi mashkoziwin miinwaa giibi digoojing niiseying Aki.

And when Nigig hit the earth, it landed on the side of the mountain and it slid all the way down.

Miinwaa pii Nigig gii daangshkang Aki, gii gonoo shiweying zhiwnaang miinwaa gii zhooshbisah akina niiseying.

That is why otters slide around like that today.

Mii owi ji Ngig enji zhooshjyaad owi nikeyaa nongo.

It's to remind us two-legged of what happened when we didn't listen to our mother, the earth.

Owi wii maam'minendamin kiinwi e'niizho-gaadejik gaa zhiwebag pii bzindowaasiying kiinwi Gushi, Aki.

The next animal was Bizhew, the lynx. Bizhew is strong.

Dash miinwaa wesiinh e'aawi Bizhew, Bizhew gii mashkozii.

He's Quick.

Gii wewebtaa.

And he's smart.

Miinwaa gii kendaasa.

He is a warrior.

Gii Minise'owah.

He thought, 'we have to do this.

Gii nendam, aabidek kwii zhichigemi maanda.

We have to get through.
Kiinwi aabidek wii shaapseying.

If we don't get through everything will perish.'
Giishpin kiinwi gaawiin zhaapseyisiying akina ga shkowaaswmi.

So Bizhew jumped.
Dash Bizhew gii bagowaashkine.

Hard.
Gii'eyaatin.

And when Bizhew hit that Giizhik, he too came smashing back down to earth.
Miinwaa pii Bizhew gii miikowang owi Giizhik, wiin go giye giibi bagishing niyaab Akiing.

He hit it harder than the other two because he was desperate.
Gii miikowaan nooj giyatin biinish giyek niizh zaam gii chi bigosendam.

He was desperate for all the life to live that was on earth.
Gii chi bigosendam akina bemaadiziwin akina gaa tek Akiing.

He was desperate to keep the heartbeat alive that we all carry.
Gii chi bigosendam gii naagadendang Adewin wii maadzim'migak akina e'jiganiming.

When Bizhew landed on that mountain, he landed on a sharp rock and he busted his tail off.
Pii Bizhew gii boonid zhewnaang, gii boonii enji giinaak miinwaa gii booksidoon da zowaanik giigijibdek.

That is why Bizhew today has a short tail and why he looks like his face is smashed in.
Mii owi jida Bizhe nongo enji eyang e'kowaak zowaanik miinwaa enji zhinaagozid da dwendgwen gii bagajiishgaadek.

It's to remind us of what happened when the two-legged decided to follow their own path and disrespect everything.

Wii maam'minendaming kiinwi gaa zhiwebag pii e'niizho-gaadenowad gii nendamowaad wii naapzokwemowad wiinwaa da miikaanhs miinawaa gaawiin wii mnaadendiwinzoowad akina gegoo.

The only one that was left up there all alone was Fisher, Odjig.
Owa eta bezhig gaan gangaazah oodi e'aawi Odjig.

He felt lonely and he felt defeated because his friends were gone.
Giin boodesah miinwaa gii zheyaa gii maashigaasah zaam wiin nwiijkenyin gii maajaayok.

He felt like maybe he didn't have the strength to do it because those other three were very strong warriors and he didn't know what to do.
Gii zheyaa dibishko gaawiin gii eyaasin mashkoziwin wii zhichiged zaam giiyek gaanen nswi nooj gii mashkoziyok minisinok miinwaa wiin gaawiin gii kendaziin owaa zhichiged.

All he thought about was his son. And when he thought about his son,
Gaa makwendaang eta wiin gwiisan. Miinwaa gii makwendamaad gwiisan,

he thought about the faith and hope his son carried.
gii nendam owi shkowendamowin miinwaa bigosendamowin gwiisan gaa miwidood.

So he grabbed his tobacco and he laid it down and when he looked up,
Dash gii daapnaan da semaa'yin miinwaa gii bigidnaan miinwaa gii naabih shpiming,

he saw something !
wiin gii waabndaan gegoo !

He saw something that gave him all the hope in the world.
Gii waabndaan gegoo gaa mindagowod akina bigosendamowin maanpii Akiing.

He saw a crack in giizhik where the other animals hit.
Gii waabndaan baaskaak giizhigoong apii owi gaanen wesiinhyik kiszowaad.

He knew that if he kept trying that he could bust his way through
Gii kendaan owi giishpin gii ni'aapijitaad gijitood owi wiin da'aani zhaapisah

and he knew in that moment that he had to do this.
miinwaa gii kendaan owi apii owi giin wii zhichiged maanda.

So he jumped. And he jumped again. And again. Again.
**Dash gii bagowaashkine. Miinawaa gii bagowaashkine miinwaa. Miinawaa
miinwaa, Miinwaa.**

He didn't stop jumping until he finally busted through.
Wiin gaawin gii boontasii biinish wiin ekpii gii zhaapisad.

When he got through, he looked to where that old man lived.
Apii wiin gii zhaapisad, gii naabih nikeyaa owah kiiweziinh ednizid.

There was a great big crane guarding the doorway of the old man's wiigwaam.
Gii eyaa gchi Jiichaak e'kowaamdaang shkowaandem owi kiiweziinh da wiigwaam.

A crane has a voice that can be heard for miles. And they are loud!
**Jiichaak daa'aan niwewin e'noonjigaadek chi waasa. Miinawaa gii
biigowem'migad.**

If you have ever heard the shrilling voice of a crane there is a very good chance
you will turn around and go the other way.

**Giishpin wiika gii noondwod e'shpiniwenmi'gak niwewin jiichaak tem'migak wii
biimshkogaabwiiyin miinawaa wiini zhaaying baneying.**

So Fisher knew he had a big challenge in front of him.
Dash Odjig gii kendaan tem'migak chi maanenj'jigewin niigaan eyaad.

So again he put down his tobacco.
Dash miinwaa gii bigidnaan da semaa'an.

What he thought was, 'I need to go back down to where the trees are.
Gaa nendang gii aawin, 'Niin aabidek niipskaabii niyaap niiseying bijik mtigook.
I need to collect some spruce gum, gowaandak-bigew.
Niin aabidek nii maanjweton gaanan zhingwaak'bigiiw.

And I need to grab spruce gum and sneak back up to where the crane is and shove it in his mouth...

Miinwaa niin aabidek nii daapnaan zhingwaak'bigiiw miinwaa ga ni'bi-giimoodis iiyaad Chiijaak miinwaa ga aanjiwebnaan biinji da dooning.

when I shove that spruce gum in his mouth maybe he won't be able to make that loud noise if I jam it in there far enough.

pii gii gaanjiwebna'maa owi zhingwaak'bigiiw dooning gna'baach gaawiin da'aa zhichigesii owi e'chi biigoweg giishpin gaanjiwebna'maa zhe'e waasa dem'nik.

That was his plan. And that was a good plan.

Mii owi da naakinigewin, Miinwaa gii aawin e'niishinh naakinigewin.

So that is what he did. He crawled down to earth and he started to collect spruce gum.

Mii dash owi gaa zhichiged, Gii ni'moode niiseying Akiing miinwaa gii maajtaa wii maanjiwetood zhingwaak'bigiiw.

"Oh please! I need you!" He said to the tree.

"Aah shke'naa ! Gda menesinen!" Gii na'aan mtigoong.

"I need to take some, I need to do this. I need your help.

"Nda menesin wii daapna'maa gaanen, nda menesin wii zhichigeyaan maanda. Nda menesin gda naadamowin.

Please! I just need a little bit."

Daga ! Bangii eta menesin."

And he collected the spruce gum till he had a nice good handful of it and then went back up through that hole.

Miinwaa gii maanjiwetood zhingwaak'bigiiw biinish gii yang ngod'ninch owi miinwaa gii na biskaabii niiyaap zhe'e enji bigoniiyaak.

Once up, he started to sneak from star to star to star.

Apii dash yaad shpiming, gii maajii gimoodsi nang biinish nang, biinish nang.

Finally, he was getting close to where the crane was.

Ekpii, gii niyaa besha iiyaa Chiijaak iiyaad.

Everything had led up to this very moment. He knew 'this is it.'

Akina gegoo giini zhaama'gak maanpii. Gii kendaan' mii maanda aawang.'

So he put down his tobacco on a star and he charged for the wiigwaam.

Dash gii saam da semaa nangong miinwaa gii ni'zhaa wiigwaaming.

Crane saw him.

Chiijaak gii waabmi'gwan.

And as soon as Crane saw him, he opened up his great big mouth and just as he did fisher rammed the spruce gum down his throat.

Miinwaa go wewiib gii waabmigowod Chiijaak, gii bakdoon'newi da gchi doon miinwaa gaa zhichiged owi Odjig gii biinjiwebnaan zhingwaak'bigiww biinji gowandaagoning.

But, just before it got all the way back,

Dash, jibwaa owi akina gii ni pidek nii'yaap,

Crane made a little gawking noise, "ga!"

Jiichaak gii niwe bangii giibneset niwewin, "ga !"

But that little sound was enough for the old man to start running for his arrows.

Dash owi bangii niwewin gii aawin minik iw kiiweziinh wii maaajtaad da mtigogitaakoon.

The old man's arrows are not like regular arrows. They were magic arrows.

Owah kiiweziinh da mtigogitaakoon gaawiin aawsinon eta mtigogitaakoowinan.

Gii aawin'noon gchi twaagin mtigogitaakoowinan.

They could go to the end of the earth to find their mark no problem.

Da'aa shaamigoon ekoweying Akiing wii bkaan owi e'maabiigkaadek owah dash.

Fisher charged into that wiigwaam, grabbed the birds and sped out.

Odjig gii mookiitaanan biinji owi wiigwaaming, gii depnaan bneshiinyik miinwaa giini gizhiibbisah zhaaggiitan.

Quickly he started running with the birds back to where that hole in giizhik was.

Wewiib gii maajii'miptood o'wiji bneshiinyik niiyaap oodi tek enji bigoniiyaag giizhigoong nikeyaa tek.

He hadn't run very far when he heard it.
Gaawiin waasa gii patoosii apii gii noondang owi.

It was the snap of a bow.
Gii aawan e'niwek mtigowaab.

He knew the arrow was coming behind him
Gii kendaan owi mtigoo biichbisah shkowaang iiyaad.

and all he could think about was getting those birds down through that hole.
miinwaa e'nendang eta aawin wii depnaad giyek bneshiinhyik biinji enji bigoniiyaag.

Now, the size of the hole and the size of the bag of birds was the same.
Na'aa dash, e'kowaag eni bigoniiyaag miinwaa ekowaag shkimad bneshiinhyik naasaap.

He knew if he was going to get those birds down that hole,
Gii kendaan giishpin wii biinaad giyek bneshiinhyik zhe'e enji bigooniyyaag.

he wouldn't be able to go down the hole himself.
gaawiin wii da'aa zhitooziin wii nizhaad zhe'e enji bigoniiyaag wiin.

That made him run harder and faster.
Gii zhe'yaa wii miptood giyyatin miinwaa wii gizhiibtoob.

It made Fisher believe that he could do it.
Owi wii zheyaad Odjig wii debwetang owi da'aa shkitoon.

When Fisher got to the hole,
Pii Odjig gii nidigoshing enj bigoniiyaag.

he grabbed the bag of birds
gii daapnaan owi mashkimad bneshiinhyik.

and put it down into the hole as he just kept traveling over it.
miinwaa gii bigidnaan enji bigoniiyaag epiichi miyaad gijeying tek.

He didn't have time to jump down.
Gaawiin gii zhisessii wiin jigwaashkined.

He kept running, and that's when he got shot with the arrow.
Gii aapijibtoo, miinwaa mii owi pii gii miikaagaazid mtigoon.

He lay there with the arrow stuck in him
Gii giishkine zhe'e biiwan mtigoon baataashninid

and cried with great joy because he did it!
miinwaa gii miwi gchi nendaang zaam gii shkitoon.

He knew that the birds
Gii kendaan bneshiinyik

and the sacred songs that they carried was going to bring great medicine across
the land.
**miinwaa gchi'twaa nagam'mowinan e'midoowaad da biitonaa'aa gchi'twaa
mashkiki akina Akiing.**

He knew there was still hope!
Gii kendaan tek iyaabih bigosendamowin!

He understood then,
Gii nasastaan dash,

that that was part of his journey was to die for the people.
owi aawang gaanen wiin da miyaawin wiin bowad owi ji bemaadizijik.

And that is exactly what he did.
Miinwaa mii dash go owi gaa zhichiged.

Of course the old man was happy he killed Fisher
Dash go owah kiiweziinh gii chi nendaam giin zad Odjig

because that was his greatest enemy at that time.
zaam mii owah da chi maanenjigewodjin owi pii.

Fisher had been greatest one yet to challenge him.

Odjig gii aawi gaa menji e'maanenmigwod.

And the old man knew that all he had to do was just go back down to earth to gather those birds back up in a bag

**Miinwaa owah kiiweziinh gii kendaan aabidek owaah zhichiged eta wii nisaakbiid
Akiing wii maanjiwenaad giyek bneshiinhyik niyaap biinji maskimdaang.**

and put them back in his wiigwaam and blow his sacred breath.

**miinwaa niyaap da zaan da wiigwaaming miinwaa da boodaajge da gchi'twaa
nesewin.**

Just like nothing had happened.

Dibishko gaawiin gegoo wiika gii zhiwebsinoo.

But when Fisher was dying up there, something did happen.

Zaam pii Odjig ni'bowad shpiming oodi, gegoo gii zhiwebad.

When he gave his last breath, "haaaaaaaah",

Pii gii miigwed da shkowaach nesewin, "haaaaaah",

that breath travelled seeking medicine.

owi nesewin gii'mibdem'migad baandowaamndaang mashkiki.

Just like our prayers and life keeps travelling long after we're gone.

**Dibishko kiinwi gda namewin'naa miinwaa maadiziwin ni'aapijibde shkwaa
maajaaying.**

His sacred breath carried a request that traveled exactly to where it needed to go.

**Wiin da gchi'twaa nesewin gii miwedoan kwedewin gaa mibtek miyaa owaah
ni'zhaam'migak.**

There were six spirits that received his sacred petition,

**Gii e'yaawag ngodwaaswi mnidook gaa depnamowad wiin da gchi'twaa
maanenjigewin.**

that was offered through his last breath.

owih gaa miigowem'migak ji da shkowaa nensewin.

Those spirits had also seen everything.

Geyek mnidook gii waamdaanaa'aa akina gegoo.

At first, they didn't intervene with what the old man was trying to do.

Ntam dash, gaawiin gii maan'minensiinaa'aa owah kiiwesiinh e'we zhichiged.

Why would they?

Aanii-dash wiinawaa?

The two legged really destroyed everything.

E'niisho'gaadenowad giibi bnaachtoonaa'aa akina gegoo.

But after seeing the strong courage of Odjig, they pitied the four legged.

Dash shkowaa waamdawad mashkozii aakidewin iw Odjig, gii nagayi'wendamowaan e'niiwo'gaadenowad.

The six spirits came traveling to where that old man's wiigwaam was.

Iw ngodwaaswi mnidook gii bizhaa'wag owah kiiweziinh da wiigwaam tek.

They sat with him and started to talk with him.

Gii wiidbimaa'aan miinwaa gii maajtaawag ginoonaa'aad.

Remember Fisher wanted to do that?

Maam'minendan Odjig gii dwendaan wii zhichiged owi.

He wanted to negotiate and talk with the old man.

Gii dwendaan wii diga'ginoonaad miinwaa wii ginoo'naad owah kiiweziinh.

His breath, his very last breath had really meant something.

Da nesewin, wiin shkowaach da nesewin gii chi aawin gegoo.

Those six spirits that visited the old man in his lodge told him,

Giiyek ngodwaaswi mnidook gaa bowaachigwod owah kiiweziinh da gamikong gii wiindamaagwan.

"We respect what you're trying to do.

"Niinwi nda mnaaden'daanaa e'weh zhichigeyin.

We respect that you are trying to cleanse the earth of the two-legged for what they have done.

**Niinwi mnaaden'daa'naa kiin gda oweh gijiitooon wii biintooyin Aki
e'niisho'gaadenowad wiiniwaa gaa zhichigeyaad.**

But what we have seen is hope.

Dash gaa waamdamaan aawi bigosendamowin.

What we've seen is great medicine being cast around the earth.

Wegnesh gaa waamdamaan gchi mashkiki chigaadek aataaying Aki.

And it means something.

Miinwaa aawin gegoo.

What we would like to see is you blow your breath for half the time.

**Wegnesh kiinwi endwendmin owaah waamdaming gda boodaadaan gda nesewin
aaptaa apane.**

Because we believe what you are doing is true.

Zaam kiinwi gda debwetaa'naa wegnesh e'zhichigeyin debwem'migad.

But we also want to let birds sing these sacred songs for half the time.

**Zaam niinwi da dwendaa'naa bneshiinhyik wiin nagam'mowad nenda gchi'twaa
nagam'mowinan aaptooweying owi pii.**

Because we believe in what they do too."

Zaam nda debwetaa'naa wiinwaa e'zhichigeyaad ge gowah.

Of course at that very instant,

Aabidek dash owi miiyaa pii geskinaa,

that is what became winter and summer as we know it.

owi gaabi shi aawang bboong miinwaa niibing e'zhi kendaming.

In the springtime, when mother earth's water breaks,

Pii minookmig, pii Gushi Aki niibi biigskaaamigak,

those birds sound their sacred songs to the world and bring medicine to
everything.

**Geyek bneshiinhyik niwewin wiinwaa da nagam'mowinan Akiing miinwaa
biitoowaad mashkiki e'akinoongoji.**

You'll also notice a set of stars in the springtime.
Kiin ga kendaan gaanen nang'goonsag pii minookmikaak.

Those six spirits up there said,
Giiyek ngodwaaswi mndook shpming gii kodook.

"to commemorate what Fisher did,
"wii nasastamiik aaniish Odjig gaa zhichiged,

to commemorate his heart,
wii nasastamik da adwewin,

we are going to turn Fisher into stars.
kwii zhiyaa'naa Odjig nang'goonsag.

So they turned Fisher into the Big Dipper.
Dash gii aanjiiyaan Odjig niizhwaaswi emkwaanang nangook.

In the spring time you'll see the Big Dipper upright,
Minookmig pii gaa waabndaan Niizhwaaswi emkwaan zhiweksing,

this represents life.
ni'wiindamaagend bemaadiziwin.

When its upright,
Pii weksing,

the water breaks.
niibi ni'biigsem'migad.

Water comes through the 'sacred hoop,' Bgonegiizhik
Niibi bizhaam'migad 'gchi-twaa waayaabiigjiganing,' Bgonegiizhik

- the hole in giizhik that the four legged made so that life here could flourish.
- enji bigoneyaak giizhigoong owi e'niiwo-gaadezhik gaa zhitoowaad ji
bemaadiziwin maanpii wii maajim'migak.

That sacred water comes and gives us life

Owi gchi-twaa niibi bizhaam'migad miinwaa gda miingo'naa bemaadiziwin

and the sound of life is then cast out into the world through our little ones.
miinwaa niwewin e'bemaadizimigak mii dash jigaadek Akiing biinji kiinwi e'gaachiiyaad.

Then in the fall,
Pii dash digwaagi,

the Big Dipper goes upside down
Niizhwaaswi emkwaan nangoon'sag ni-paajsin.

and blood will run from where it got shot from that arrow.
miinwaa mskwi mijiiw'wan pii gii gidaakogaasad mitigoons.

The blood paints all of our trees red.
Mkswi tis'zowaan akina mtigook mskwa.

Both in the spring and fall,
E'neniizh minookmig miinwaa igwaagig,

the Big Dipper is to remind us of what happened
Niizhwaaswi emkwaan nang'goonsag wiin jimendaming kiinwi gaa zhiwebag.

when the two-legged lost their way.
pii e'niizhogaadenowad gii nishoowad wiinwaa nikeyaa.

When I think about that story,
Pii maam'minendamaa maanda tibaadjimowin,

I think about now and truly believe that in the future,
nda makwendaan noongo miinwaa geget debwetaan owi pii niigaan,

they are going to be talking about what happened right now.
wiinwaa da tibaataanaa'aa gaa zhiwebad megwaa.

And maybe us,
Miinwaa ganaa'baach kiinwi

the two-legged have to be the ones to make that jump
e'niizho-gaadenowad wiinwaa aawag wiinwaa wii bagowaashkinowaad

and reach for the stars.

miinwaa wii zhibiigtaa'aad geyek nang'goonsag.

Maybe it's the two legged that have to take that leap of faith.

Gnabaach e'niizho-gaadenowad wiinwaa wii daapnamowad owi bigosendamowin.

As Two legged, we have to find that trail again.

Ji E'niizhgaade'nowad niinwi aabidek niim kaanaa owi miikaanhs miinawaa.

We have to find that sacred path that goes from east to west.

**Kiinwi aabidek kwiim kaanaa owi gchi'twaa miikaanhs e'pi dem'migak Waabnong
biinish Epingishmok.**

We have to find the great medicine that is bursting out of the foot prints of the
four legged.

**Kiinwi aabidek kwiim kaanaa gchi'twaa mashkiki e'bashjiishkaak zaagiji zidan
makwewinan e'niiwo-gaadenowaad.**

A lot of people will say what does that mean?

Niibana bemaadizijik da kidook wegnesh maanda edming?

To me it means getting back to the land.

Niin dash nasastaan aawang niskaabiiying akiinkaak.

It means learning our language.

Owi nasastaagwod wii kendaming gda niwewin'naa.

It means getting back to the land and building those wiigwaams.

**Owi nasastaagwod wii niskaabiiying akiingkaak miinwaa wii zhigeying nenda
wiigwaaman.**

The story now needs that more than ever.

Tibaadjimowin noongo dewendaagwod nooj geyaabih.

Our story now is depending on that.

Kiinwi tibaadjimowin noongo dewendaan owi.

And so I encourage you to take that leap.

Miinwaa dash niin ndaa dewndamin wii zhigowaashkiniying zhe'e.

I encourage you to take that jump because we are in the story now.

Nda dewendjige kiin wii zhigowashkiniying zaam gdaa'mi tibaadjimowining.

Maybe the work that we do now doesn't seem like it means anything.

Gnabaach owi nokiiwin e'zhichigeying da'aa aawsinoo dibishko e'aawyang edming gegoo.

Maybe what we do now seems like we are not accomplishing anything.

Gnabaach gda'aa kendaa'naa noongo gnabaach gaawin gda giishtoosiinaa gegoo.

But I'll guarantee you,

Dash gda yekwendamin kiin,

if it wasn't for the strong back of Porcupine,

giishpin aawsinook owi mashko bakwan Gaak,

if it wasn't for the strong legs of Bizhew the Lynx,

giishpin aawsinook owi mashkozii kaadinan Bizhew,

and strong heart of Nigig the Otter,

miinwaa mashko-adwewin Nigig,

Fisher never would have made it through.

Odjig kaa wiikaa da'aa zhkitoosiin wii zhaapsed.

Everything that we do now is going to matter in the future.

Akina gegoo e'kendaming noongo zhaamigad e'kwendik go owah niigaan.