

# **Assiniboine Narratives from Fort Belknap, Montana**

Rose Weasel

Part 2. English Translation

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## Acknowledgments

The narratives by Rose Weasel in this collection were recorded by Douglas R. Parks and Raymond J. DeMallie at Fort Belknap, Montana, from May to July, 1985. They were transcribed by DeMallie from the sound recordings with the assistance of Mrs. Weasel's daughter, Josephine Mechance, at Fort Belknap, in 1985. The narratives were reelicited and the transcriptions revised and glossed in English by Linda A. Cumberland with the assistance of Selena Ditmar and Tom Shawl, both from Fort Belknap, in 2008-2009. Cumberland prepared all the free translations.

This preliminary web edition of Assiniboine texts is intended for the use of linguists and others who want access to Assiniboine language data. A preliminary dictionary is also published on this web site (<http://zia.aisri.indiana.edu/~dictsearch/>, then choose "Assiniboine" and search selecting either "Indian" or "English").

The preservation of these narratives from the last fluent speakers of the Assiniboine language who were knowledgeable from firsthand experience about traditional tribal culture has been made possible by the support of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

## 1. Țktómi and the Ducks

(1) Țktómi was going along somewhere, it is said. (2) As he went towards some woods he seemed to hear something. (3) So he stopped and looked as he listened. (4) It was ducks! (5) “Quack, quack, quack,” they were saying. (6) “Oh, these are ducks. (7) I will trick them.” (8) So he pulled himself back out of sight. (9) Then he gathered a lot of moss and willows and he cut them and peeled them and used them to tie it all up. (10) He packed it on his back and went off beside the lake. (11) “Țktómi, what’s that? Where are you going?” they asked him. (12) “Ah, these (people) from far away invited me, so I’m going there.” (13) “And what’s that you’re taking?” they asked him. (14) “Ah, these are dances I’m carrying. (15) These folks way over there want to dance so they invited me,” he said, they say.

(16) So then he was walking along. (17) But the ducks just kept following him wherever he went. (18) “Come on, Țktómi, hold one [of those dances] for us so we can dance.” (19) “Ah, how will you dance?” (20) “We’ll just dance!” [they said].

(21) So right then Țktómi made a dance hall. (22) So then he put a lot of moss around. (23) He made it so the ducks wouldn’t be able to get out and the door was small. (24) He would put another one over there. (25) Right then [he said], “Come here now, Younger Brothers. (26) I’ve finished now,” he said.

(27) Just then they all came flying in. (28) So then, “Wait, wait!” he said. (29) He felt their breasts. (30) To the ones that were fat he said, “Go on, go inside here.” (31) He told the ones that were skinny, “No, they’ll knock you down. (32) You can’t join in.” (33) If they were fat, “Excellent!” [he said].

(34) He filled up the lodge he had made with them. (35) Then he did it again. (36) Something – maybe an antelope– went by. (37) It occurred to him (Țktómi) to take his bow and shoot it. (38) He quickly took out the stomach lining. (39) He also bent some wood, and he quickly made a little drum. (40) He pulled out the intestine to make the little drum. (41) Then he made a fire and quickly dried it. (42) He tried it out by drumming on it: it went “dook, dook, dook.” (43) So that was the drum.

(44) “Come, Younger Brothers, you’re going to dance. (45) You’ll all dance with your eyes closed,” he said, they say.

(46) Right away he sang. (47)[Singing:] “Big ducks dance with your eyes closed. (48) Big ducks, ducks dance with your eyes closed,” he said, they say. (49) “Boom, boom, boom,” it went. (50) “Whooh! whooh! whooh!” [went the ducks]. (51) “Flap your wings!” he said.

(52) As they were doing it, he wrung their necks and kept throwing them over this way. (53) Ah, he grabbed up the drum, just as before, and kept doing that. (54) All at once a mud hen snuck inside. (55) He squinted with one eye, even though he had told them, “Don’t any of you look!” (56) He saw what Țktómi was doing to them. (57) He was breaking their necks, you know, wringing their necks. (58) “Scram!” he said. (59) “Țktómi is wiping you out!” he said. (60) They ran outside and Țktómi chased them. (61) Ah, they couldn’t fly. (62) Those are the ones called mud hens. (63) Just as he (the mud hen) was going to reach the water, he (Țktómi) kicked him in the lower back. (64) Oh, my! he kicked him in the back and so he dove in with both legs [in the

air?]. (65) They're the ones that always dive because they are ashamed [of their crooked legs].<sup>1</sup>

(66) So then he (Jktómi) came back. (67) "Scram!" [he said to the rest of them]. (68) "None of you *had* to dance. (69) It was just me – I was hungry so I made you dance."

(70) So then he broke up a lot of wood. (71) He piled it up and started a fire. (72) Then he put them all over there and covered them with ashes. (73) He did that and he built a fire on top of them. (74) So then he was sitting over there. (75) He was sharpening a stick. (76) Whenever he wanted, he pulled one out and stabbed it in the breast. (77) If blood still flowed out, he put it back in the fire. (78) He kept doing that.

(79) Well, from sitting by the fire for a long time he eventually got sleepy. (80) So now he pulled them all out. (81) He stabbed them in the middle of the breast. (82) Juice was seeping out of all of them. (83) He put them around the fire pit to cool off.

(84) So he... (Ah, this is bad but I'm going to say it anyway.) (85) He did that and he lay on the ground with his rump sticking up in the air. (86) "My Rump, if anyone comes, you tell me," he said, they say. (87) Now he fell asleep. (88) "Toot!" it went, as he broke wind. (89) So he jumped up quickly and looked around, [but] there was nothing. (90) Some coyotes had smelled [the ducks] and were peeking in from all around.

(91) He said [to his rump], "You're fooling me!" (92) Then he scratched himself up [on his rump]. (93) He lay down again as before. (94) Again, again he broke wind. (95) As before, he jumped up quickly again and looked all around but there was nothing. (96) There was a red fox headed that way, and a wolf and a coyote. (97) All at once, Jktómi lay down again, as before [with his rump in the air]. (98) Oops! then he tipped over onto his side. (99) He was snoring. (100) "Come on, come here, Younger Brothers. (101) Come here! (102) He's asleep." (103) Oh, right then they quickly ate up all these ducks of his. (104) They quickly ate them all up on him. (105) They ate them up on him. (106) Just the little leg bones were left and they stuck them all back in the ashes for him. (107) So he just kept on sleeping.

(108) Oh, he woke up. (109) Just then, "I'm going to eat. (110) I'm going to eat," he said and he got up. (111) He sat down near the fire and he went to pull them out, but it turned out it was only the little leg bones. (112) "Hey! What's going on here?" he said. (113) Another one, too, was only the legs. (114) So then he was going around the fire pulling out just the legs that were sticking out the way they had put them for him. (115) The wolves and coyotes had all run off somewhere.

(116) "You miserable thing, My Rump!"<sup>2</sup> (117) I'll teach you a lesson today!" he said, they

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<sup>1</sup>The mudhen has crooked legs and can't walk well on land. Tom Shawl reports hearing other versions of this tale in which Jktómi causes this "deformity" by jumping on the mud hen's back. The mud hen's unique habit of surfacing in a different location from where it dives is, by this account, because it is ashamed of its crooked legs. Compare this account to Leo Wing's version, in which it is the wood duck that peeks and sounds the alarm. In Mr. Wing's version, Jktomi punishes him by turning his eyes red, explaining why the wood duck has red eyes to this day.

<sup>2</sup>*wałtészjłtjyga* lit. 'something detestable'. This is the closest thing there is to an oath in Assiniboine. Several translations are possible. Mrs. Weasel's daughter, Josephine Mechance, offered, "I'll fix you!" but other possibilities might be "I'll get you for this" or, as here, "you miserable thing." Stronger expletives would not be

say. (118) He pushed the fire together [to make it burn better]. (119) He went to get an oblong stone. (120) He put it in the fire. (121) So he put it in the fire. (122) Oh, this stone got red hot. (123) He did that and then – (back then no one wore pants) – he threw off his breech cloth and he sat on it. (124) Oh, it went \*sizzle, sizzle\*. (125) He burned his own rump.

(126) He did that and he was walking by the woods. (127) He had circled back somehow as he was going along. (128) Somewhere along the line the scab on his rump had fallen off. (129) “He must have been doing something around here recently. (130) My grandfather must have been hunting around here recently,” he said. (131) He was going along the path where his grandfather had gone when there was what seemed to be some dried meat lying there. (132) It was his own rump scab! (133) So then he picked it up. (134) “Ah, my grandfather must have thought I would want something to eat and he left this cooked dried meat here.”

(135) So then he was walking along eating his own rump. (136) Well, there were these little birds, called ‘the ones that make noise in the willows’. (137) So then they kept saying, “Jktómi is eating his own rump fat.” (138) “How am I eating my own rump fat?” he said. (139) He [felt] his own butt hole. (140) “This is nice and soft. (141) This [however] is dried meat,” he said, they say. (142) Well, then he sat down. (143) He examined it closely. (144) Oh! it really was his own, lying over there, so then he was reaching down his throat trying to make himself throw up.

(145) Ah, that’s all I remember. (146) Someone reminded me of it. (147) That’s all I remember.

## 2. Ľžá's (Smart Boy's) Travels

(1) [Ruth:]<sup>3</sup> Are you going to tell, “Smart”?

(2) [Rose:] Yes.

(3) Well, there was this little boy and his mother and father were dead. (4) He was hungry so he went looking for work for which he would be fed. (5) So he saw a camp. (6) He headed for it. (7) He saw a frame house.<sup>4</sup> (8) There he asked, “Is there work I could do for you so you would feed me?” (9) “Yes, do you know how to water horses?” he said. (10) “Yes, I know how to water horses. (11) I know how to water horses,” he said, they say. (12) “Yes, I’ll have you, I’ll have you, I’ll have you work,” he said.

(13) So right then he said, “You will sleep here,” and he made him bed down in the barn. (14) Now the little boy lay down in the same hay that the horses fed from. (15) It was also the horses’ feeding place and all the horses were eating. (16) So that one, the boss, said, “Smart, are you awake?” he asked him. (17) “Yes.” (18) “Now water the horses for me. (19) Look at this. (20) You’ll lead this mule,” he said. (21) “They’ll all see you and follow along.” (22) So then [he said], “When you’re ready to water them kick it four times in the middle of its stomach. (23) That’s the only way to make it drink,” he told him.

(24) So then he was [taking] the donkey to the water, kind of tugging on the halter. (25) Then, oh, he couldn’t reach the middle of its stomach where he was supposed to kick it. (26) So he kept kicking any old way toward the middle of its stomach. (27) When he got back, he (the boss) said to him, “Did it drink a lot?” (28) “Yes, it drank a lot,” so he fed them. (29) When they all sat down to eat, they always feed him.<sup>5</sup> (30) They fed him bread and butter.

(31) So then they made him bed down at night over there the same way as before. (32) He lay in the hay. (33) He kept doing that four [times], he kept doing that for four nights. (34) On the fourth day the donkey said, “We will run away.”<sup>6</sup> (35) Don’t sleep tonight. (36) We’ll take that little dog with us when we go, though. (37) We’ll also take the cat and the chicken—a rooster--along,” he told him. (38) “But the cat will follow along with the dog.” (39) So as he was told, he didn’t sleep. (40) Then it said, “The old saddle down on the end is what they always make me wear whenever they take me somewhere.” (41) It was the donkey that said this.

(42) So then he took it. (43) Now they all went to bed. (44) He saddled up. (45) He also closed the dog in with them. (46) He also closed the cat and rooster in there with them. (47) Right

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<sup>3</sup>Ruth Weasel LaMere, Rose Weasel’s elder daughter. Josephine Weasel Mechance is Mrs. Weasel’s younger daughter.

<sup>4</sup>*wašú’i* literally ‘white man house’, translated here as ‘frame house’.

<sup>5</sup>Mrs. Ditmar says that the sense of the sentence is not that the workers fed Smart, but rather that Smart was fed when the others were fed, i.e., he ate with the workers.

<sup>6</sup>Sentences 34-71 are a brief but fairly faithful retelling of the Grimm Brothers’ story, “The Bremen Town Musicians.” The four animal “musicians” of the Grimm Brothers’ tale do not include a human but here, Ľžá (Smart) is added as a minor participant. When the episode concludes, the scene returns to the barn where Ľžá and the donkey reside and the other three animals play no further role in Ľžá’s adventures.

then [it said], "Come on, we're ready; we'll run away. (48) This one is going to kill you," it told him. (49) "He's going to kill you, that's why he makes you work," it told him.

(50) Right then that one (Smart) mounted up, with the dog and cat following along while he held the rooster. (51) This one (the donkey) [said], "We're going along." (52) "We're going, going, going..." (53) What-do-you-call-its, 'bandits', we'll go to their place," it said, they say. (54) "There's a frame house over there. (55) The bandits are sitting in there," it said, they say.

(56) So then they were going along. (57) Now the donkey stopped short with it's ears moving back and forth. (58) "Here it is," it said. (59) "Come on, let the dog ride on me," he said they say. (60)

It was the dog, and then the cat rode on top of the dog. (61) Also, the rooster rode on top of the cat. (62) It (the donkey) said, "I will bray through the window over there. (63) You should holler while the dog howls. (64) The cat will also meow," it said, they say. (65) "And the rooster will crow," it said, they say.

(66) Oh, the window was standing open so they stood there [at the window]. (67) Oh, then as all of them were sitting inside the donkey brayed, making it's customary sound. (68) The other one was hollering and the dog, too, was barking and howling and the cat was going, "Meeoooooow!" and the rooster, too, [was crowing]. (69) Oh then they [the bandits] all got bunched in the doorway as they all ran off. (70) They had been eating so then th dog, can, and rooster really tucked into it and gobbled it down and then they ran off from there. (71) They kept running far off somewhere until dawn. (72) Eventually, as they kept going, they were taking their time and he was also leading the donkey along that way. (73 ) Now the dog left them.

(74) Then this one (the donkey) [said], "This same boss," it said, "when you go there, ask him, 'What work can you give me that I can do'," it said. (75) "When he says to you, 'Ah, what are you good at?' you must tell him, 'I'm very good at planting flowers.'" (76) That way you will survive," it said. (77) "That one (the boss) is a monster."

(78) So then he got there. (79) "Ah, what did you come here looking for, Smart? (80) What did you come here looking for?" (81) Ah, he said, "I'm hungry so I've come looking for work. (82) Is there anything I could do for you?" he said. (83) "Ah, since you've come here, what are you good at?" he said. (84) "Ah, I'm very good at planting flowers," he said. (85) So then he said, "Yes, I like flowers very much. (86) Could you plant flowers for me on both sides of this path of mine?" he said. (87) "Also plant both sides of this path over here for me in the same way." (88) "Yes, I will plant them."

(89) He told him to take his horse to the barn. (90) [He went] over there and kept crying. (91) So the donkey looked at him and said, "What's wrong, Smart?" (92) "Ah, he told me to plant flowers. (93) How will I do it?" he said. (94) "He said he would kill me," he said. (95) "He said if I don't get them to grow, he'll kill me." (96) "Go to the woods over there and every of seed you see, break them and bring them back." (97) He did that and it [said] "Break them up and scatter them all along both sides of his path, tossing them every which way you can. (98) You will wake him early in the morning," it told him. (99) "Go to bed, but I'll wake you then," it said.

(100) So then the donkey was eating. (101) So early the next morning [it said], "Smart, get



up. (102) It's morning.<sup>7</sup> (103) "Tell the boss, 'Boss, get up and look at this, I planted what you told me to'," it told him. (104) So then he ran over there. (105) "Boss, look at what you told me to plant," he said. (106) He was still in his bed clothes but he slowly came down and said, "Ah, you beat me. (107) We'll have another contest tomorrow. (108) Feed him," he said. (109) "Look at what he planted," he said. (110) So then they went ahead and filled a plate and fed him. (111) They also fed the donkey a pitchfork of hay, feeding his horse [i.e., donkey] along with him.

(112) (I forget what's next.)

(113) [Ruth whispers something to Rose.]

(114) "We will eat," he said. (115) "Ah, we'll eat at noon tomorrow. (116) "At noon we will eat," he said. (117) Right then, in the same way as before, [he said to his workers], "Go! (118) Catch a piglet. (119) Cook it stuffed, with something stuffed in its stomach," he said. (120) In response all the workers were working as fast as if they were on fire.

(121) So then it got to be noon. (122) "Come here, Smart," he said. (123) It was already cooked and its little feet were only about this big. (124) It wasn't very big. (125) They cooked it standing up so it was standing on the table kind of looking up like this, with its mouth open, since it was cooked with its mouth open. (126) They even curled its little tail. (127) That's how they did it. (128) "Come here, Smart," he said. (129) Right then he sat down there. (130) He took a long knife (long ago they had this kind of long knife) and he put the knife down there. (131) "Come on," he said, "Look here, whichever way you cut it, I'll do the same thing to you," he said, they say. (132) "If you cut its neck, I'll cut yours. (133) If you pull its foreleg from the joint, I'll pull your arm from its joint.. (134) If you burst its stomach, I'll put you down here and burst your stomach. (135) That's why however... I want to see how you will cut it," he said.

(136) [Ruth:] 'How you will eat it.'

(137) [Rose and Ruth whisper together]

(138) [Rose:] Yes, "However you're going to eat it, cut it that way," he said. (139) "Alright," he said.

(140) He did [i.e., agreed] and said, "I think I'll go outside," and he went outside. (141) Then the little donkey came over here and he ran towards it. (142) So he was crying. (143) "What's the matter, Smart?" it asked him. (144) "Ah, he cooked a piglet and he said however I cut it, he'll cut me up the same way," he said. (145) "No, he'll never do that to you. (146) I will tell you something," it said, they say. (147) "I will tell you something. (148) He will never do it," it said. (149) "He absolutely won't do that to you. (150) The stomach is stuffed with good things," it said. (151) "Pretend to look at the knife he put down over there. (152) Pretend to be looking at it and then reach into the butt hole and eat what is inside," it told him. (153) "He'll never do that to you."

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<sup>7</sup>*waná ǵpac* literally 'now it's day'

(154) Well, so then he was looking at it. (155) Now, uh, now he saw the little butt hole. (156) He lifted up the little tail and then he was feeling around in the butt hole and eating what he pulled out. (157) "Hurry up and cut it the way you said you would," he said. (158) [The boss said,] "Tomorrow we'll have [another] contest." (159) So then, instead, they cut it up and they all sat down and ate it.

(160) "Tomorrow morning we'll have a horse race, with you riding your horse."<sup>8</sup> (161) Oh, my! just like before, the boy was crying again. (162) "What's wrong?," it said. (163) "Ah, he told me, 'Tomorrow you'll run a race.'" (164) He told me tomorrow he will make us have a horse race," he said. (165) All this time he was crying. (166) "Don't cry," it told him, "you'll survive again. (167) You'll beat him," it said. (168) Now he knew it would help him. (169) It was the donkey speaking this way. (170) So then it was morning and he was getting ready. (171) "Ah, get ready, Smart. (172) Right now we will have a horse race. (173) Look over there, we'll go way over there and back again," he said, they say. (174) Then [the donkey said] "Go on. (175) Gather up a lot of tin cans and punch holes in them and hang some around my neck and hang some more around my ears and tie them to my ears," it said, they say. (176) "Tie some to my tail, too, so I can swing them," it said. (177) "When I run over there they'll clatter," it said, they say.

(178) So then he quickly gathered them from his trash pile and punched holes in them and used something to string them together. (179) He put them around the neck of his horse [i.e., donkey] and he also tied them on. (180) He even put some on its tail so that half of them dragged the ground. (181) Now that way he led him over. (182) "Far off, we'll [go and] come back from far off. (183) We'll stop here, we'll stop here at my gate," he said, they say. (184) "Alright." (185) Right then they went together. (186) So, this donkey was just standing head down with its nose toward the ground as they waited. (187) The little donkey was sleeping, you know. (188) Oh, now surprisingly he (the boss) came wearing a military uniform and making his horse prance, even prancing sideways as he came. (189) "We'll start from here," he said, they say. (190) Then, "I want us to run through this clearing and stop together over there at my place." (191) "Alright, alright," he said. (192) Right away he led it and mounted up. (193) "Why did you tie these things on this way?" he asked, they say. (194) "Ah, this one will go very fast. (195) If I don't put these on it, I'll never stop it," he said, they say. (196) "This horse of mine is extremely fast. (197) Using these things is the only way I can stop it," he said, they say. (198) It was the donkey that told him to say that. (199) "You must tell him that when he asks you," it told him. (200) Now the one who had come to race came carrying a gun, you know.

(201) So now they were standing together. (202) Now whenever the donkey shook itself, it sounded like, \*clatter! clatter!\* (203) Oh, he wasn't even ready but the boss's horse was hard to hold back and was ready to take off so instead he said, "Let's go!" and he, too (the boy) kicked the little donkey on the stomach and it lunged forward. (204) Then it was clattering and the (boss's) horse took off at a dead run with him on its back. (205) Wow, look! It should have stopped there! (206) Instead it ran into the woods with him on its back. (207) Meanwhile this one (the boy) was just pacing along. (208) He did stop there (at the finish line). (209) He was standing there holding the reins. (210) Then, oh, my! the military uniform he was wearing was shredded by the branches. (211) It was all torn up. (212) "Ah, Smart, you beat me. (213) You beat me,

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<sup>8</sup>"horse" here and in s180 are actually references to the donkey.

Smart," he said. (214) Right then [he said], "Tomorrow, tomorrow we'll play one last time. (215) "Alright," he said.

(216) Then it was the last time. (217) "Oh, if you beat me, I, myself, will work for you," he said. (218) "You'll have all my land. (219) You'll have everything, including my horses if you beat me tomorrow. (220) Go [all of you] and gather wood," he said. (221) "Tomorrow we'll have a contest." (222) So all these young men, all his servants, gathered wood that way and piled it all up. (223) They put something with it to light the fire with, for when the time came. (224) "So! We will run through the fire, Smart," he said. (225) "If you make it through, I will work for you. (226) "If I, myself, make it through... if I, myself, make it through, I will kill you," he said, they say.

(227) So again he was over there crying. (228) Ah, it was this one (the donkey): "What's wrong, Smart?" it said to him. (229) "Ah, this one told me this. (230) We will run through fire," he said. (231) "So when they built a fire, they will light it," he said. (232) "I'm to go through it," he said. (233) "Come on, ride me... take one of those what-do-you-call-its. (234) One of those things, uh, take one of those little barrels. (235) Ride me and then make me run every which way climbing all over the hills. (236) Scoop all the lather off and slather yourself with it. (237) Your body won't burn anywhere." (238) The next day he made his little horse lope around all over, all day long. (239) Then the little donkey was in a complete lather. (240) It was just completely covered with it so as it stood there this way he got the bottle and scooped all the lather into it. (241) "Come on, slather yourself up." (242) So then he completely slathered himself everywhere he didn't want to burn, slathering himself everywhere.

(243) Once that was done, [the he boss said], "Come on, Smart, now you will run through it," he said, they say. (244) "You'll run." (245) "No, I won't run, I'll walk," he said. (246) "No, run!" (247) So then, "Come on, now," he said as he ignited it. (248) Oh, then it flamed way up. (249) So then he was walking along and he went through it and came back. (250) "How did you do that without getting burned? (251) Tell me how you did that! (252) I want to do that, too," he said, they say. (253) "Ah, I rode my horse, so riding my horse, I slathered myself up with its sweat," he said. (254) "That's why I wasn't burned. (255) Your own horse is bad for keeping you from burning. (256) Mine is good for that, my horse is," he said.

(257) He (the boss) mounted up again and did the same thing (that Smart had done). [Rose laughs.] (258) He covered himself with the lather and overdid it so it was just sticking all over him like soap suds and he went through (the fire). (259) Oh! he wasn't even to the middle when he was burning, his stomach exploding with a bang like a gunshot as he burned. (260) Smart won. (261) So then everyone, right then everyone there said to him, "You're the boss! (262) You're the boss!" they told him when they heard that he had killed the boss.

(263) He went over to the barn where he was staying. (264) He was thinking long and hard. (265) No one was telling him what to do any more. (266) Then the donkey said this to him. (267) "Go and get an axe," it told him. (268) So then he went out to the woodpile and brought back an axe. (269) "That's it," it said. (270) "What will you do with it?" he said. (271) "I will lie down this way," it said. (272) "I will lie down on the ground." (273) The little donkey lay down on the ground. (274) "Hit me right through here," it said. (275) "Hit me through the soft part of my head," it told him. (276) Oh! he really hated to do it. (277) "Come on, hurry up and do it!" (278) So he took the axe then [and hit] through here but it was still sticking out and he went running out of the barn howling. (279) Well he was just crying and rolling around out there, you know.

(280) When he stopped, he went back. (281) He peeked in. (282) There was a young woman sitting over there on a chair, and she was beautiful. (283) “Come on, let’s make this our home,” she said. (284) “Let’s go inside,” she said to him. (285) So then they went in together, arm in arm. (286) So they were married.<sup>9</sup> (287) They sat down together. (288) Then they sat down across the table from one another and they ate.

(289) This is the end.

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<sup>9</sup>Prior to European influence, if a man and woman stayed together, it meant they were married. One word for ‘spouse’ is *kic’i’ŷ*, literally ‘a stay-with’.

### 3. Cactus Saves the People from Starvation (Starving Child)

(1) There lived a tribe with many people and they were starving. (2) All over camp, all the people were suffering severe starvation. (3) They were still alive but they were all starving.

(4) Well, a young man and his parents were sitting in their lodge. (5) So that one (the young man) went outside. (6) So there was simply nothing to eat. (7) He was standing outside. (8) So he went for a stroll and something happened. (9) So he seemed to hear something like, "Eat me. (10) You will live," it said to him. (11) Thinking to himself, "I wonder what that is?" he looked and there was one of that kind of big yellow cactus.

(12) It was like that: whenever he went over in this direction, "Eat me. (13) You will live," it kept saying. (14) Ah, he saw a big one by moonlight. (15) So then this cactus [said], "Take your knife and cut it." (16) He took it home and stoked up the fire and then put it in there. (17) He put it in and pushed it to the side. (18) He cut the cactus into three pieces, about this big.

(19) He cut three pieces and gave them to his father. (20) That one (the young man) [said]," Father, I was standing over there. (21) Then this thing said to me, 'Eat me, you will live,' so we will cook it. (22) Come on, I believe we will live. (23) Here, eat this," he said. (24) So then he had them eat it. (25) He ate it, too. (26) "Ah, Son, it's delicious. (27) "Come on, Wife, take your knife." (28) So then, "Cut lots of the big cactus for this purpose," he said.

(29) There was cactus all over the hillside. (30) So then they cooked all night. (31) The woman was collecting cactus over there. (32) When she had cooked a lot of it, the man went around the camp calling out, "My son heard something," he called out.. (33) This cactus told him, 'Eat me, you will live', he said. (34) "So he cut it and took it home and we ate it and to our surprise it tasted good! (35) You eat it, too," he said. (36) And then he pushed two or three pieces into all the tents where there were people who were still alive. (37) Some who recently had children died from this<sup>10</sup> [famine]. (38) They had no milk. (39) They couldn't nurse them. (40) So they were all dying because of this.

(41) So then, uh, .... I don't remember how... (42) So all of that stuff, "Oh, come on! it's delicious," he said. (43) So then they were cutting it all night. (44) Those who were still alive had nothing but this cactus to eat. (45) They went all over the hills cutting it and they ate it.

(46) I don't remember ....

(47) [Ruth:] It allowed them to survive.

(48) [Rose:] Yes, it allowed them to survive. (49) Everyone survived. (50) The others had died from this, though. (51) All... (52) Is that the end?

(53) [Ruth:] Is that the end?

(54) [Rose:] I don't remember all of it.

(55) [Ruth:] They all survived because of that. (56) It was because each of them ate it.

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<sup>10</sup>is it the women or the infants who died?

(57) [Rose:] It made everyone survive. (58) It just made everyone survive.

(59) Oh, shut it off.

(60) [Ruth:] That's the end.

#### 4. Cícuwahe

(1) This is about Raised By Grandmother.<sup>11</sup>

(2) So, now that he was kind of growing up, this little boy would go fishing. (3) So where he went fishing, there was a young woman across the sea who kept singing to him. (4) He took the fish he caught off the hook and threw them behind him [but] they kept disappearing. (5) She was hiding his fish from him. (6) She did that and [sang]:

“Cícuwahe, yó, Cícuwahe yó

(7) “*N'má n'mi ko mi šak, péé pee šu wak žék,*

(8) “Cícuwahe, yó, ah, Cícuwahe yó.”

(9) This young woman kept singing from clear across the sea.

(10) So then the next morning he went back without any fish again. (11) So the next morning he was fishing again. (12) Ah, whenever he caught a fish, he would take it off and put it down like that. (13) They disappeared again. (14) Just as before, he heard her singing from over there. (15) It was still about Cícuwahe. (16) They called the boy Cícuwahe.

(17) “Cícuwahe, yó, Cícuwahe yó

(18) “*N'má n'mi ko mi šak, péé pee šu wak žék,*

(19) “Cícuwahe, yó, ah, Cícuwahe yó,” he heard her sing from afar. (20) She kept singing that for four nights.<sup>12</sup>

(21) Ah, then he was looking for his fish and they had all disappeared. (22) She kept stealing them,. (23) She didn't really steal them. (24) She just kept throwing them away somewhere because she wanted this boy. (25) That way, he thought, “Hmm, I wonder how I'll manage to get over there?” (26) He sat there thinking. (27) Now there were a lot of seagulls flying around. (28) He had a little arrow. (29) He shot it as they went flying there. (30) He hit it and took it home with him.

(31) “Grandma, skin and dry this for me and stretch it into a bag,” he told her. (32) “Oh, what is it?” she said over and over. (33) “What are you going to use it for?” she said. (34) “Come on, skin it for me,” he said.

(35) So then she went ahead and made it into a bag to stuff everything into.<sup>13</sup> (36) Back then they had these fireplaces, so he dried the breast on both sides. (37) So he kept feeling it to see

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<sup>11</sup>*Cícuwahe* is the name by which the young woman in this story calls Raised By Grandmother (see s16), although none of my consultants can say what the name means. The young woman is said by Mrs. Weasel's daughter, Ruth LaMere, and niece, Selena Ditmar, to be speaking and singing in Cree, although no translation for her song has been discerned. The song is transcribed phonetically from Mrs. Weasel's performance.

<sup>12</sup>Literally, ‘she said that for four nights.’ The word ‘say’ is frequently used for any vocalization, once the mode of vocalization has been established. In this case, we know the young woman is singing, so the appropriate English translation is ‘she sang,’ or ‘she kept singing,’ as the case may be.

<sup>13</sup>cp ss109-110 where it seems that the ‘bag’ is more like a bird suit that he himself gets into, rather than a bag that he puts his things into – it's the bird suit that allows him to fly across the ocean.

whether it was dry. (38) So he went outside with it without telling his grandmother.

(39) Back there at the fishing hole there were these seagulls, the ones they called “little big men,” you know. (40) They were that kind. (41) He lay inside it (the bird skin) and was trying to fly. (42) He flew like that. (43) So he was flying along.

(44) He was flying in the direction that he had been hearing the voice. (45) There was a branch kind of bent over the water. (46) He kept flying around there and the mud was flattened around it. (47) “Oh, this is the place,” he said and he went there. (48) He hid his things there at the base of the tree. (49) So then it was under this big tree. (50) Ah, he sat hiding under the big tree and now he heard her coming.

(51) “Cicuwahe, yó, Cicuwahe, yó,” she sang as she came. (52) “Oh, this is the one!” (53) “Oh, it feels like someone is looking at me,” she said. (54) So then she stepped over the one that was lying there. (55) When she stepped over him like that, he made her pregnant. (56) Now that he had made her pregnant, she stopped above him and her stomach was getting big. (57) “Oh, my!” she said and she ran back home and arrived there. (58) Her father saw her. (59) She was pregnant. (60) “Ah, Daughter, you always seemed like a good girl. (61) It seems like you don’t care about anything,” he told her.

(62) After a while she had the child, a little boy. (63) So then this one (the boy, Cicuwahe) somehow made himself covered in sores, scabby all over. (64) Whenever the boys played, he went and stood among them.

(65) [Ruth:] It was Cicuwahe that did that.

(66) [Rose:] Yes.

(67) So anyway, this boy, Raised By Grandmother, they knew him. (68) “How did you get over here, Raised By Grandmother?” they asked him. (69) Oh, I just came. (70) I came to play. (71) Having said that, he sat in the sand and they were playing.

(72) Her father told him [the crier] to call them. (73) “All you young men, you will come,” he called out. (74) My daughter had a little boy and if he pees on you, he is your son,” he called out.

(75) Oh, all the young men wanted to win this young woman. (76) They came from all over and went into the tent in a single file. (77) Some of them even held water in their mouths and when they chile was being passed around, they dribbled it on themselves. (78) “Ah, he peed on me,” they would say, but the child hadn’t peed. (79) So then it went clear around camp. (80) They added in the ones just younger than young men. (81) Then they added in the little boys. (82) So this one (Cicuwahe) went in and sat down over there by the door. (83) He made himself small. (84) Raised by Grandmother sat down there. (85) So they passed that child around but he didn’t pee on anyone as they handed him along from one to the other. (86) Just as he (Cicuwahe) reached for him there was something shiny flowing out because he (the baby) peed on him.

(87) “That’s his father!” he said. (88) My daughter is to go back with him. (89) My grandson peed on the one who is his father. (89) So then the young woman went back with him, Cicuwahe, that is.

(91) So then she was staying over there. (92) So then she said, “Father he wants to go back.



(93) I will go with him,” she said. (94) “Alright, Daughter, go ahead and go. (95) Take two horses and ride back to wherever he came from across the sea,” he said. (96) “We’ll go back the way I came here last time,” he told her.

(97) So then they went off somewhere together, away from camp. (98) “When I come back, when I come back, don’t say, ‘Oh, you killed that boy of mine,’” he told her. (99) So then as she sat holding her baby, he went behind a hill and made himself into a young man. (100) Then the young man that he was now said, “I wish I smelled sweet.” (101) He also put on a buckskin outfit and then came back. (102) Oh, then he said, “I told you not to say that about the one you thought was a boy – it’s me! (103) Hurry, we will go back,” he told her.

(104) So then she went back with him. (105) “Now we will go back. (106) I left my grandmother behind when I came. (107) So then they went back to where she always used to sing, “Oh, C'icuwahē”. (108) So then he took his things from the base of the tree. (109) So he took his bird-bag. (110) He climbed into it. (111) “Come on, hold me around the neck,” he said. (112) “Put my son on your back, also,” he said, “so that you won’t drop him. (113) Don’t open your eyes at all. (114) Open your eyes only when I tell you to,” he told her.

(115) So then he was going along. (116) Now the young woman was in plain sight as he was going but she kept her eyes closed. (117) Also she was holding on tight to [the child], as they were tied to him with what must have been buckskin. (118) So then they were just flying along. (119) All at once it seemed he was heading down. (120) He said, “Ay, here it is.”

(121) “I want to ask you something,” he said. (122) “Come on, where did you hide all the fish I caught?” he said. (123) “Look in the coulee over there,” she said. (124) In the meantime all these fish had become bloated (spoiled) over there where the young woman had been throwing them.<sup>14</sup>

(125) “My grandmother lives over this way,” he said. (126) They arrived back over there. (127) “Grandma, I’m back,” he said. (128) “Oh, you’re always fooling me,” she said. (129) She was just poking things around in the fire with a stick. (130) He spoke again, “Hey, Grandma, what are you doing?” (131) I’ve come home,” he said. (132) The she thought, “Hmm, there’s someone who hasn’t spoken for a long time,” she thought.<sup>15</sup> (133) She just kept sitting there, saying nothing. (134) (But) it was, indeed, her grandson. (135) “Grandma, I’ve brought your grandson home with me,” he said.<sup>16</sup> (136) “I brought him back from across the sea,” he said. (137) “Oh, this is your grandchild,” she told her, too, as she give the boy to his grandmother. (138) He put (the baby) on her lap.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>It is logically impossible that the young woman, who was singing to C'icuwahē from across the lake, could have tossed his fish into a coulee on his side of the lake. I asked Mrs. Ditmar about this and she said that when, as children, they asked similar questions of Mrs. Weasel, she would reply, “*Oh'yakakā k'o!*” ‘It’s just a fairy tale!’

<sup>15</sup>She has given her grandson up for dead and doesn’t trust her ears.

<sup>16</sup>“Grandma, I’ve brought your grandson...” Assiniboine kinship terminology does not extend below the level of grandchild, so the son of the old woman’s grandson is also referred to as ‘grandson.’

<sup>17</sup>Literal meaning of the Assiniboine is ‘he caused her to hold him as she sat’, implying ‘lap’.

(139) “Come on, let’s move our camp,” he said. (140) It was an old campsite so they took the tent down and put it up over there. (141) So then this old woman sang, “La, la, la (etc.), singing to the little boy. (142) So when they finished putting up the tent, he took his grandmother into the lodge. (143) Then they sat down in there, too. (144) The little boy was already sitting up on his own. (145) They put him in the middle.

(146) That’s the end.

## 5. Swimming Hawk

(1) There was a tribe in a large camp, it is said. (2) So they were great in number, it is said. (3) So one of them was the chief. (4) He had a boy and a girl. (5) He also had a younger (teenage) girl, three children in all. (6) That being so, they had made a little tent for him inside the lodge. (7) The young man lived in there.

(8) The all at once, it seems every night someone came and lay down with this young man. (9) Whenever that happened, whenever that happened, she lay down hugging his neck. (10) When it happened again, he said, "Morning is coming. (11) You should go back. (12) The old men are waking up," he told her. (13) So then it seemed the woman went outside.

(14) So then the next day passed and at night, it happened again. (15) Once again in the same way someone came in and lay down. (16) She sneaked into her younger brother's bed.<sup>18</sup> (17) All at once, when it happened the fourth time he had a thought. (18) "Ah, my older sister is fat," he thought. (19) (He must have touched her breast somehow.)

(20) Then when daybreak came again, that one (the woman) went outside, it is said. (21) She went outside and now it was day again. (22) It was day so she was just hanging around. (23) It was night again. (24) Then this young man thought this was bad. (25) "Father," he said... (Oh! we haven't reached that part yet.) (26) So now that it was night again, he put this kind of paint in a cup to soak.

(27) Then at night again the young woman sneaked in to sleep with her younger brother again. (28) Again she lay down beside him. (29) "Ah, I wonder who keeps doing this," he said. (30) "I will find out." (31) So then in this way he reached over the one lying there and stuck his fingers in the paint and made a mark on her back between the shoulder blades. (32) He drew a cross mark. (33) Then as it was day, [he said], "Ah, leave! (34) Go home! (35) They might wake up." (36) She left.

(37) So now they were getting up. (38) "Come on, Father, tell all those who are the same age as my older sister to play volleyball," he said. (39) "I want to watch," he said. (40) So right away he went around announcing it. (41) "My son wants to watch! (42) He said for all those who are the same age as my daughter to play a ball game. (43) My son wants to watch." (44) So he went around camp announcing it and then he came home.

(45) Oh, these young women were milling around because they wanted to play ball. (46) Meanwhile he (the father) said, "Come on, Son, they're all having fun playing ball." (47) All the young men were standing [there]. (48) He, too, stood among them. (49) Oh, he recognized his older sister in there just hitting the ball around really fast. (50) Then he pulled back. (51) It was his older sister! (52) He [said] to his little younger sister, "Younger Sister, take the boat to the water for me. (56) I want to go paddling." (57) So then his younger sister took the boat to the water. (58) She put it in the water for him. (59) So he went and got in. (60) So all during the ball game the young woman was looking at all the young men. (61) All the young men stood looking on. (62) But her younger brother was not among them. (63) She quickly stopped playing ball.

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<sup>18</sup>Here and in s18 the references to younger brother and older sister are premature, since he does not yet know who it is who comes to him at night. Much of the storyline from s26-50 hinges on the young man's scheme to find out who the night visitor is.

(64) She went back home.

(65) Then she went over to the place where they got water. (66) Oh, he had already paddled far away, this Swimming Hawk had.<sup>19</sup> (67) “Oh, Swimming Hawk, wait for me. (68) “Alright.” (69) “Oh, wait for me! (70) Come back and get me!” she said. (71) “Alright.” (72) Instead he went on in the same direction. (73) In this way, he went way out into the middle instead. (74) “Swimming Hawk, your people will still be here when you come back,” she said, they say. (75) “Alright.” (76) She [said], “As you go along, go along, a swollen leg will be an omen for you. (77) Again as you go along, go along, a big mosquito will be an omen for you. (78) From there you will go along. (79) As you go along, go along, red hair will be an omen for you. (80) From there as you go along, your many dogs, your many dogs will be an omen for you.<sup>20</sup> (81) From there as you go along, an extreme heat will be an omen for you,” she said. (82) “There are five [omens].” (83) “Alright.” (84) “So then that will be the end of it.” (85) It was the young woman telling this to Swimming Hawk as he left.

(86) Ah, when this young woman didn't see her younger brother [any more] she went crazy. (87) “Come on,” she said [to the children]. (88) Let's play a game over by the cliff. (89) I'll pretend to be a monster,” she said. (90) “Dig in the ground for me,” she said. (91) So then the young men were digging a place into the cliff just the right size for her to get herself into. (92) They dug a space for her about this big, so she could jump in and turn herself around. (93) So it was a perfect fit. (94) She pretended she could barely climb into it. (95) She said, “From now on, I'll be the monster,” she said. (96) She said, “Pretend to shoot at me.” (97) So then this other one painted an arrow red. (98) (Back then there weren't any guns—just arrows.) (99) So this one (the young woman) came lunging and chasing them all around. (100) Whenever it was that way, she turned and ran back and jumped in over there. (101) She looked around then jumped in.<sup>21</sup> (102) Now the older young men [said], “Ah, she's really fast! (103) Look at her!,” he said.

(104) Again she came lunging back from there. (105) She was still lurching around and one little boy who was running around, she grabbed him in the chest with her mouth and jumped in there. (106) “Come on, she did something wrong. (107) Tell the little ones to go home,” he said. (108) “She pulled one of them in there with her mouth,” he said. (109) So then they told all the little ones to go back to the camp.

(110) So then she came lunging again. (111) Oh, she kept snapping at one of them with her mouth. (112) She caught him in her mouth and again she jumped into the hole. (113) “Come on [hurry!], she's a monster! (114) Go home!” he told these little ones. (115) At that time they tried hard to shoot her but they didn't kill her. (116) They used up all their arrows shooting at her but they didn't kill her.

(117) Meanwhile, as the children were running towards home they were saying, “She's a

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<sup>19</sup>Emphasizing an element of a sentence by moving it to the end is a common practice in Assiniboine, but not all instances of it are reflected in the English translation because it has an unnatural feel in English and can detract from an appreciation of the story. The so-called “right displacement” of the subject is retained here to underscore the introduction of the main character's name.

<sup>20</sup>The episode referred to here may not be ‘dogs’ so much as canines in general. The episode begins at s.258, with grandmother herding a host of ‘scary’ animals, many of them canines.

<sup>21</sup>See footnote 5 in the Assiniboine version.

monster!” (118) From over there all the people came with their arrows so they could shoot her. (119) Meanwhile she was eating all the young men, crunching them up in her mouth. (120) Finally those who had come to attack her reached her. (121) She was chewing on them as if she were chewing gum [...inaudible]. (122) Well, she kept eating them and she went around camp that way. (123) She kept going around camp eating them. (124) On and on she kept eating them up. (125) [Arriving at] her own tipi in this way, she spared her mother, her father, and her younger sister. (126) So now she had eaten up all the people. (127) Then as she was leaving, [she sang]:

(128) “C‘icuwahē yo, [C‘icuwahē yo, C‘icuwahē yo.” (129) “C‘icuwahē touched my breast,” they kept hearing her sing as she left.

(130) [Ruth:] Not C‘icuwahē!

(131) [Rose:] (in English) Oh yeah, Swimming Hawk. See? That’s what I told you. That’s why I told you to help me. [Further discussion, undecipherable because mother and daughter are talking at the same time.]

(132) [Rose:] Enough!

(133) The young man went on from there. (134) (The young woman is done with being a monster.) (135) So then this one (the young man) was going along. (136) He must have gotten to the shore and he put the little canoe there. (137) So then he hid the little canoe in the grass.

(138) Then he was going along. (139) He saw a domed lodge that seemed to stand beside the lake. (140) He went there. (141) “Oh, Grandson, Swimming Hawk, what are you looking for?” (142) Ah, this one [said], “I’m going far over there, Grandmother.” (143) “Come on, on, come inside, Grandson, you’ll eat.” (144) She invited him in. (145) “Come on, feed my grandson,” she said. (146) Two old women sat on either side of the fire. (147) So then one of them was searching for something, namely something to feed him in. (148) She poured it out and [said], “Come on, Grandson, eat this. (149) That’s pemmican.” (150) So then the young man knew the pemmican was made of humans. (151) So then he put it under the cover and kept throwing it out.<sup>22</sup> (152) The old women did not see. (153) “Come on, Grandmother, take your plate back.” (154) She was feeling around then, “Oh, feed him this. (155) My grandson ate it up. (156) He’s hungry.” (157) Again the other one served. (158) “Here, Grandson, eat this.” (159) Again that one (the young man) took it and did the same thing again, throwing it out. (160) Then he finished eating. (161) “Here it is, Grandmother. (162) “Take your plate back,” he said.

(163) Ah, now they scratched their legs. (164) Both of them were sliding toward the door. (165) They sat with their legs stretched out and scratched their legs. (166) Ah, their legs became swollen. (167) That one (the young man) [said], “Get out of here, Grandmothers! (168) You made yourselves pitiful,” he told them. (169) He killed both of them. (170) He stepped over them and went outside.

(171) So then he was going along. (172) He was going along beside the lake. (173) All at once he heard something. (174) “Oooo,” he heard it go from afar as it came. (175) “Ah, I wonder what it is,” he thought. (176) This log... no, *rotten* log sat over here. (177) Then he jumped inside

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<sup>22</sup>s151 cover - refers to a robe or blanket that was being used as a ground cover or mat to sit on.

there. (178) Then it was that big mosquito. (179) It was even poking into the rotten log. (180) So this one took his knife and caught its nose. (181) He cut it off. (182) So then he crawled out of there.

(183) He was going along, going along, going along, going along. (184) Oh, he came to a creek. (185) Ah, there was a watering place. (186) It was trampled down where people came and dipped. (187) “Ah, I guess it’s young women. (188) That must be what they are,” he thought. (189) Among the young men was this one, Red Hair. (190) There again he made himself into a woman. (191) He wore a buckskin dress.<sup>23</sup> (192) ‘She’ climbed a hill, *you know*. (193) ‘She’ climbed it and stood there. (194) “Ah, look! (195) Look, Red Hair. (196) There’s a woman standing over there.” (197) “Come on, whoever reaches her first can marry her. (198) Hurry! (199) We’ll run,” he said. (200) “Oh, I wish Red Hair would reach me first,” ‘she’ said. (201) So then the runners came running. (202) Now they came closer [but] only Red Hair came running. (203) Red Hair won. (204) The ground all around was shining red. (205) The hill was all red.

(206) He went back with ‘her’. (207) His mother was a monster, too. (208) Then he took ‘her’ to the lodge in the young men’s camp. (209) Then all at once this one (the mother) threw the door open and threw [something] in. (210) She threw in a piece of rawhide. (211) She said, “tell her to make me some moccasins, Red Hair.” (212) “Oh, you say that whenever I’m going to marry someone. (213) Make them yourself!” he told her. (214) He tossed the rawhide back out. (215) Again she said, “I told you to tell her to make moccasins for me, though,” and she threw the rawhide into the lodge.

(216) That one (Swimming Hawk) again said, “Bring it back, ‘she’ said. (217) “Bring it back, I’ll make them for her.” (218) So then ‘she’ turned around and sat down. (219) ‘She’ cut it with something. (220) As ‘she’ was cutting it, “I wish this would get quilled. (221) I wish this were quilled moccasins,” ‘she’ said. (222) They became quilled all over. (223) “Here, give these back to her,” ‘she’ said. (224) He gave them back to her. (225) Then that one... this... now...

(226) [Ruth:] The old woman... [Ruth and rose talking together; unclear, but includes something like, “what did that old woman say?”]

(227) [Rose:] “Here are your moccasins,” he told her. (228) “Oh, my, Grandson, these are expertly done. (229) It’s clear why you married her. (230) Oh, I’ll be wearing beautiful moccasins,” she said, looking the moccasins over.

(231) He did that and he went back. (232) (I don’t know where he lived. (233) That’s just the way I heard them tell it.) (234) Then that one (Swimming Hawk) said, “I wish he would say this to me.” (235) “I wish he would say to me, ‘Let’s go for a walk’.” (236) Again the same way [as before], “Oh, hey! Let’s go for a walk!” he said. (237) “Let’s go over that way, in the distance,” ‘she’ said. (238) “Let’s go far off over there,” ‘she’ said to him, meaning really far away. (239) “Let’s go way off over there,” [he said].<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>For the remainder of this episode involving Red Hair, the pronouns could become confusing in the English translation because the ‘young woman’ is actually Swimming Hawk in an assumed female form. Throughout this episode, Swimming Hawk will be referred to as ‘she’, with the pronoun written in single quotes. (Note that there is no such confusion in Assiniboine, since the third person pronoun does not mark gender.)

<sup>24</sup>ss234-239: Swimming Hawk is using his power to dictate what the other young man will say.

(240) So then he was going along with 'her'. (241) They climbed a hill. (242) "Ah, let's sit right here and look around." (243) "I wish he would say, 'Look for lice on me.'" (244) Again, "Come on, look for lice on me," he said. (245) So then he put his head down [in 'her' lap]. (246) He put his head down (in 'her' lap) and 'she' looked (for lice) for him. (247) Pretty soon he was going, "\*snore!\*" (248) "Ah! He's asleep!" (249) 'She' nudged him to wake him but he kept going, "\*snore!\*" (250) 'She' took 'her' knife and grabbed the crown of his head. (251) So, uh, 'she' cut off his neck.<sup>25</sup> (252) Well, 'she' raced down holding the hair, running and running.

(253) His mother knew. (254) "Oh, Red Hair, what did I tell you? (255) Swimming Hawk, no matter where you run, do you think you will live?" she said.<sup>26</sup> (256) Oh, she had a shiny knife and sent chasing after them. (257) Then that one (Swimming Hawk) must have gotten away somehow.

(258) Oh, he heard something. (259) "Graaandchildren, Graaandchildren," she said as she came. (260) Right away he ran all the faster. (261) An old woman came into view, carrying a backpack about this big and using a cane. (262) "Graaandchildren, Graaandchildren," she said. (263) There were all kinds of monsters [coming] from over there, two by two. (264) Coyotes, well, all these scary things, were her pets. (265) At the very end were these two, a skunk and a badger, following along. (266) So she just stopped for a moment. (267) "Ah, Grandson, Swimming Hawk, where have you come from?" she said. (268) "Ah, this, Grandmother, I went to get this."<sup>27</sup> (269) "Oh, Grandson!" (270) "Come on, Grandmother, add this [red hair] to your shawl." (271) "Oh, Grandson, you have pleased me with this. (272) Even though I have all these pets of mine, Grandson, I never got anything like this. (273) You will live. (274) You will get back home," she told him. (275) She [said], "As you go along, go along, you will pass my pets on your way home, but they won't chase you. (276) Two of my little pets are at the end. (277) Eat one of them," she said. (278) So then she left, saying as she went, "Graaandchildren, Graaandchildren." (279) She went over a big hill but it still sounded as though she were close by, calling her little dogs.<sup>28</sup>

(280) He reached the end [of the procession of canines], as they became smaller and smaller, and finally the skunk and the badger were together by themselves at the end. (281) "Eat me, eat me, eat me!" they were saying in turn, back and forth. (282) He caught the skunk and killed it and then he skinned it and then he built a fire there. (283) So then he cooked it up. (284) Then he heard her saying from afar, "Grandson, when you eat up my grandchild, wrap those bones. (285) Smack that little thing across the back and tell it, 'Grandmother said she was going in that direction'," she told him. (286) So then she left to go back (287) So when he finished eating, he spread the bones on the hide and the put all the little legs just so. (288) He put it on its stomach

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<sup>25</sup>'to cut off [at] the neck', i.e., behead. Mrs. Weasel hesitates as she says this, apparently sensing that it is not quite what she means, since Swimming Hawk only takes the hair. The error is not as far fetched as it might seem to the modern reader: the plains sign talk gesture for both the Sioux and the Assiniboine is a slicing motion made across the neck with the hand, indicating that both tribes were known for taking whole heads. The Crow and Blackfeet referred to both Sioux and Assiniboine as "head-cutters" or "the ones who cut heads off."

<sup>26</sup>Apparently, Swimming Hawk has returned to male form, although the change back isn't specifically mentioned.

<sup>27</sup>Swimming Hawk is showing her the hank of red hair.

<sup>28</sup>'dogs' as used here, is a general reference to members of the canine family.

and broke a little stick. (189) He hit it: “Leave! (190) Your grandmother went in that direction,” he told it. (291) Ah, then it went following off, holding its tail up.

(292) So then he was coming back. (293) So he was coming back. (294) Then he took his boat. (295) Then he pushed off from shore. (296) Now he took this mosquito nose. (297) Now whenever he hit it, it went, “Chooooo.”<sup>29</sup> (298) When he hit it again, it went, “Chooooo.” (299) The fourth time he hit it that way, he arrive at the [opposite] shore.

(300) Then at their watering place there were the tracks, the tracks of the teenage girl. (301) The girl got down to fill her water bag. (302) So then that one (the young man) was standing there. (303) Now she was coming to fetch water. (304) The water ran through the bladder. (305) She was trying to dip it that way. (306) “Oh, Older Brother, is that you?” she said. (307) “Yes, it’s me.” (308) “My older sister is a monster, Older Brother! (309) She ate up the entire tribe! (310) We alone, our parents and I, survived,” she said. (311) “Ah, I know that, Younger Sister.”

(312) Just then a little rabbit was darting around here beside a rose bush. (313) So he took his arrow and shot it for her. (314) It made it stagger sideways. (315) “Leave, Younger Sister! (316) Cook this for me!” (317) “Oh, but, Older Brother, she will know!” (318) “No, she won’t know; go on! (319) Here is what you will tell her,” he said. (320) This little girl had a horn spoon. (321) “Say, ‘This is how I did it, Older Sister. (322) Look at it!. (323) If you put it this way, the little rabbit will sit up.’ (324) So then tell her, ‘This is how I did it, Older Sister. (325) Look’.” (326) So then [he continued], “If you put it that way and throw this little horn spoon,” he told her, “the sharp end will go through the opening,” he said. (327) He did it and it fell over and he said, “Hurry back. (328) She might be coming now,” he said. (329) So she ran [back] carrying the rabbit and also the water she had dipped.

(330) “Mother, my older brother, my older brother has come back, even though my older sister is terrifying,” she said. (331) “Oh, Daughter, she would have killed him anyway,” she said. (332) Oh, as expected, now they heard hear from afar as she came:

(333) [song:] “Has Swimming Hawk come back? he-yo.

(334) Swimming Hawk touched my breast.”

(335) Oh, now she came here to the door going, “Hmm, hmm, hmm, hmm. (336) So, I smell Swimming Hawk. (337) Tell me! Tell me! (338) Hmm, hmm, hmm,” she said. (339) She stood outside. (340) So then she yanked the door open. (341) She always crawled into the lodge, so she came crawling in. (342) “Where is he?” she said. (343) “And where did he put it, this little rabbit he must have killed for you?” (344) “Oh!,” she said. (345) She grabbed a stick and heated it in the fire and she badly burned her younger sister, her mother, and her father all over their faces with it. (346) Well, it was a sharp stick, a so-called “roasting stick” that she was holding on them.

(347) That one (the younger sister) [said], “It was me, Older Sister, like this, look. (348) I will tell you how I killed it.” (349) So then she put it that way. (350) The other one sat down, uh, sat down over here where she put it. (351) “Look,” she said. (352) She held the tail of the horn top.<sup>30</sup> (353) She held the tail of the horn spoon. (354) She threw it into the little rabbit, over there

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<sup>29</sup>The action creates propulsion from the mosquito’s snout.

<sup>30</sup>s352 ‘horn top’ an error. Mrs. Weasel corrects herself in s 353.



in a ball. (355) She put it into the soft spot on the top of it. (356) So she knocked the little rabbit over. (357) “That’s how I killed it.” (358) “Oh, Younger Sister, cook it for me. (359) I will eat it.” (360) So then she skinned it. (361) She threw it on the fire. (362) “Cook it up nice and brown for me.” (363) She roasted it brown. (364) The monster also took the guts. (365) She sparked up the fire and put the little rabbit guts on there. (366) So then she said, “Come on, Older Sister, it’s cooked now.” (367) “Oh, oh, I’m really going to eat well,” she said. (368) So in a little while she put all the bones over there. (369) She put them in three places. (370) The she also took some tripe. (371) She also broke it apart and divided it in thirds, just like the bones. (373) (Just the bones, [no meat on them].) (374) Then she put the little guts on top of them. (375) “Here, you eat that. (376) And [you] eat, too. (377) You, eat this.”<sup>31</sup> (378) They were afraid of her so they ate all the bones, crunching them up together with the guts.

(379) Ah, she (the younger sister) did that and she went back. (380) She went back through the place where the the young men had been wiped out. (381) So she ran back again to the lake. (382) “Older Brother,” she said, “she burned us again!” she said. (383) Everyone, our parents, she burned all of us,” she said. (384) “She said that it was you who gave me the rabbit.” (385) “Did you do what I told you to do?” he said. (386) Then, “Yes.” (387) Then, “She believed it,” s/he said. (388) “Only she ate it, and we ate the bones,” she said. (389) “‘Eat them up,’ she told us, so we ate all the bones crunching them up,” she said. (390) “Next time she comes, Younger Sister, the next time, she will tell you, ‘Look for lice for me,’” he said. (391) “Right then you must ask her, “Oh, Older Sister, where is your death spot? (392) The people, the people all tried to kill you but they didn’t kill you,’ you must say to her.”

(393) She went back over there. (394) So then she arrived back there and her older sister was already waiting for her. (395) Once again she sang:

(396) [song:] “Did Swimming Hawk come back?  
 (397) Did he, Swimming Hawk?  
 (398) Oh, Swimming Hawk touched my breast.

(399) Again she opened the door. (400) Again she tossed it aside with such force that she tore it off. (401) Ah, ah, ah, ah, it smells like Swimming Hawk. (402) Hmm, hmm, hmm, tell me!” (403) Then she came crawling into the lodge.

(404) “Ah,” that man (their father) said, “Daughter, your younger brother went away a long time ago.” (405) “Don’t hide it from me,” she said, “if he has come back.” (406) No one said anything because they were afraid of her. (407) So just as it was about to happen, [she said], “Come on, look for lice for me. (408) Right then she put her head down. (409) “Come on, Older Sister,” she said, “put your head down here. (410) “Older Sister,” she said, “you wiped out the tribe, though. (411) Even though the tribe ganged up on you, they didn’t kill you,” she said. (412) “Where is your death spot, Older Sister?” she said. (413) She jumped up at that. (414) “Ah, Swimming Hawk told you to ask that, didn’t he?” she said. (415) She grabbed a stick again and burned them. (416) “No, Older Sister, I asked because no one in the tribe is left alive.” (417) “Yes, you want to know. (418) My death spot is in these two. (419) Look,” she said and she hit her little sister in the face with her little fingers. (420) My death spot resides in these two,” she told her. (421) “Oh!” she said.

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<sup>31</sup>ss375-377: The monster sister is giving one pile of bones and guts each to her parents and younger sister.

(422) So once again she (the younger sister) went over there. (423) As soon as she (the older sister) went out of sight, she went in the other direction. (424) She ran over here to the watering place. (425) “Older Brother,” she said. (426) “She burned all of us again,” she said. (427) “Older Brother, she said her death spot is on these two,” she said. (428) “Alright,” he said. (429) “Tell our father to make two little arrows before she comes tomorrow,” he said. (430) “You must tell him to make two little arrows, one of the m blue and the other red,” he said. (431) “Two little arrows,” he said.

(432) So then she left and the other one (the father) cut a cherry bush and made two. (433) So then he also made a little bow string, and he also made one of the two red and the other one blue.

(434) [Ruth:] Her father made them.

(435) [Rose:] Yes, her father made them. (436) So then she ran [over there] again. (437) “Older Brother, he says he’s finished.” (438) [unintelligible, probably a false start] (439) “Younger Sister, tell him to put them over there and smudge both of them,” he said, they say. (440) “Smudge the one lying over here with sweetgrass,” he said. (441) “The other one goes over there in the honor place.<sup>32</sup> (442) You must tell him to put one of the ones he smudged on this side and the other one on this side. (443) So one of the smudged ones is on this side and the other one is here.”<sup>33</sup> (444) So then, “He will put them this way,” he said.

(445) Oh, early the next morning he heard from afar that she was coming. (446) Again she said:

(447) [song:] Has Swimming Hawk come back?

(448) Has Swimming Hawk come back?

(449) Oh, Swimming Hawk touched my breast,” her heard her from afar as she came.

(450) The young man heard his name. (451) Then he told his younger sister, “Younger Sister, how does she always enter the lodge?” he told her. (452) “Older Brother, she always comes in crawling,” she said. (453) “She mutters something and always crawls in.”

(454) So then at that time they were waiting for her. (455) Oh, she was singing and again she threw open the door and just tossed it over there. (456) “Hmmm,” she smelled the sweetgrass right away. (457) “Ah, ha, ha, so he has come back, it seems,” she said. (458) “Why didn’t you tell me that he came back?” she said. (459) So just then [she said], “Hmmm, hmmm.” (460) Her younger brother saw that she was crazy. (461) So from over here he took the first one [saying], “My Arrow, go onto her little finger.” (462) Swimming Hawk shot it off.

(463) [Ruth:] Is it Swimming Hawk?

(464) (It’s Swimming Hawk shooting off the little finger.) (465) Just then she showed, she was showing them together when it fell off. (466) Again, “Go straight to the other little finger, My Arrow,” he told it. (467) Again he shot at it and agai he shot it off. (468) She fell over. (468) “Come on, Father,” he said. (470) “We will drag her outside and throw her away.” (471) They

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<sup>32</sup>The “honor place” in a tipi is the space at the back of the lodge directly opposite the door.

<sup>33</sup>Mrs. Weasel must have been physically indicating the locations as she spoke.

dragged her to the outside like that and threw her away.

(472) “Father, gather some wood,” he said. (473) “We will burn her up. (474) Younger Sister, you haul some water and take some dried meat from all the lodges.

(475) [Ruth:] First tell about the sores she made on them.

(476) [Rose:] Not yet, there’s still... (477) So then he was gathering wood. (478) So then he took the ashes and they brought these white-looking ashes to him. (479) He took this white stuff. (480) He soaked it and then daubed all their faces with it [*inaudible*]. (481) So, they all had sores like this, his father’s face, and his mother’s, and his younger sister’s. (482) So then, “Mother,” he told her, “take down four of the lodges. (483) Put these four in a stack.” (484) Her own lodge was the fifth [layer]. (485) So then she covered these four. (486) (The lodges she was taking down were buckskin back then.) (488) Then this woman she put them all back up.

(489) So then he also put lots of wood over there. (490) They put her on top of it, face down. (491) Meanwhile they lit the fire with flint (they didn’t have matches back then) and it ignited. (492) Oh, then this woman burned like this and they added more and more wood. (493) It really blazed, then, *s-s-s-s*, it was cooling off. (494) All the while, it was going “chooong” [whizzing sounds] in all directions [out of the fire]. (495) “CHOOOOoong,” it went, and things like miniature hide scrapers, miniature arrows, miniature picket stick – well, little versions of all the things they used to have long ago – all these things were popping out, horn tops and horn spoons, too. (496) Then the little girl grabbed one of the things that was pretty. (497) When she did that, oh! it spun faster, that horn top, and spun into her skin. (498) “Older Brother!,” she said. (499) “Ah, I told you, ‘Don’t take it’,” he said, and threw it back into the fire. (500) She did not take them again. (501) So then there were still some popping out here and there. (502) All different kinds of little things were popping out. (503) So just then it was dying down. (504) It went out.

(505) So then They spread something out and they gathered the bone and wrapped them up. (506) “Come on, my relatives, pound them all up to powder,” he said. (507) The four of us will go all through the camp and pour it around,” he said. (508) “I, myself, will go over there where the monster, live; I’ll go over to her dwelling,” he said. (509) So then each of them had some of it over there. (510) He also gave some to his younger sister. (511) He also gave some to his mother and also he gave some to his father. (512) So then they went around all the many tipis in the camp, pouring the [powder] at each door. (513) Wherever there were outdoor fireplaces where the people always sat beside the fire, they also [poured it] there. (514) They also poured it all over the ball ground, you know. (515) They reached every tipi in the camp with the powdered bone.

(516) To then the young man came back. (517) “Come on,” he said. (518) “Mother, did you put the lodge up with great care?” he said. (519) “Yes,” she said. (520) “I put the lodge up very well, Son.” (521) “We can’t come outside for four days,” he said. (522) “It is going to be extremely hot.”

(523) So then they went into the lodge and sat down then. (524) The door was already closed tight so nothing could come in. (525) They sealed the door, closing themselves in. (526) So then they sat inside the lodge. (527) All at once from some where, they heard through the walls, “Híííí” [a moaning sound]. (528) The moaning came from all over. (529) They heard voices from everywhere. (530) All at once there was laughing close by. (531) Jeering, they say, “Look! Look at their tent!” (532) They were going past. (533) So then the tipi cover was scorched all over, shrunken from heat and coming down. (534) He went around looking at it for himself. (535)

Another one was also scorched and the next one was coming down. (536) Another one was coming down, too. (537) But then their own tipi still stood. (538) Finally it wasn't hot any more. (539) They came outside. (540) Oh, the people were there [again] just as they had been when he went away. (541) Again then, he brought them to life again, it is said, by means of intense heat.

(542) This is the end.

## 6. Wašicu Hokšín

(1) Once again, there lived a tribe right here, it is said. (2) There was one, Little White Boy, (I don't know if was really a white boy), who always played cards. (3) So whenever he sat down somewhere, he would play cards.

(4) Well, his father told him not to. (5) "Go out and find a job. (6) You don't even do anything. (7) You do absolutely nothing. (8) Instead, you just sit with your cards all day," he said. (9) "Go away and take these cards with you," he told him.

(10) So then he was going. (11) Way over yonder on a hill he sat down and spread the cards out again for some reason. (12) Even though he was alone over there, he kept playing. (13) Then someone came out of nowhere [but] he didn't even see him. (14) "Ah, White Boy, we will play a game," he said and he sat down. (15) (They used to sit with their legs like this [i.e., crossed].) (16) That one sat down that way. (17) Like this, he said, "If you beat me, you will work for me." (18) Then he told him, "If I beat you, I myself will work for you."<sup>34</sup> (19) Whatever [you ask], I'll do everything for you," he told him. (20) "You will also have some of my powers," he told him.

(21) Now that [person] was fooling him, so meanwhile he played more and more. (22) Oh, he beat the boy. (23) He beat him even though he was only a boy. (24) "I live over this way. (25) I live over toward sunrise. (26) You must come," he told him. (27) "Alright."

(28) He was going. (29) All at once a cat was going by. (30) "Ah, White Boy, I came by to tell you something," he said. (31) "Ah, tell me what it is," he said. (32) "The one you've been playing games with is a monster. (33) He's going to kill you," he said. (34) "There's a lake over this way where his two daughters are," he said. (35) "They always come there to swim," he said, they say. (36) "They come there to swim and the one of them wearing a blue garter is the elder." (37) Then he said, "You must lie down in the cat tails beside the lake and lie there watching them. (38) Try to see the garter," he said. (39) So then, "Wherever she puts her clothes, when she swims to the deep part, you must jump up and throw yourself down on whichever are hers, covering them," he said. (40) "Don't look at them." (41) So then, "She's the one who will help you in some way. (42) When she tells you, 'My father, my father... my father is a monster,' that one will tell you, 'I will help you.' (43) Blue Garter is the one who will tell you this," he said. (44) "He will tell you all kinds of difficult things [to do]. (45) [But] she's a monster [too]."<sup>35</sup> (46) You'll be going along, going along, going along. (47) When you get there, they will feed you," he said. (48) "The old woman will feed you," he said. (49) (The cat is the one speaking.) (50) When they feed you, they will feed you yellow grease," he said. (51) "Tell her, 'No, I don't eat this kind,' and push it aside. (52) When they give you white grease, you must eat it. (53) That's buffalo grease," he said.

(54) So now he lay down among the cat tails. (55) So, as described, two ducks came flying one behind the other. (56) They stopped suddenly as they landed. (57) One of them was stretching its neck. (58) "Oh, someone is watching us, it seems," she said. (59) "Ah, who would be watching us? (60) We've been coming here to swim for a long time. (61) We've been coming here for a long time, so who would look at you now?" she told her. (62) "No, someone is

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<sup>34</sup>s17-18 "If you beat me..." It seems Mrs. Weasel has inverted the stakes. If the man beats the boy, the boy will work for him; if the boy beats the man, the man will work for the boy.

<sup>35</sup>s45 - Mrs. Ditmar explains that the cat is warning the young man that he should be careful of Blue Garter, even though she may help him, because she, too, has powers that can be dangerous.

watching us.” (63) “Oh, just hurry up!” she said.

(64) They sat down a short distance from shore and put all their clothes there. (65) He saw [?through] a clearing. (66) These young women put their [clothes] in two different places. (67) Oh, as she was about to swim, this young woman, the older one, knew he was lying there watching them. (68) “Oh, just hurry up!” she said, “We’ll play,” the younger one said, telling her older sister.

(69) So then they were swimming. (70) When they reached the deep part, the little boy stood and he lay down on Blue Garter’s dress, covering it. (71) So then he lay there not budging. (72) “I told you he was watching,” she said. (73) So then she (the younger sister) put all her own clothes on. (74) She left to go back. (75) Leaving to go back, she left her older sister behind. (76) “Oh, White Boy, give them to me,” she said. (77) “I, too, will go back. (78) My father, the one who called you here, is a monster,” she said. (79) He called you here to kill you,” she said. (80) “That same one is my father,” she said. (81) “The things my father will ask you to do are all very difficult,” she said. (82) “I will help you with all of that,” she said. (83) “He’ll ask you to do four difficult things. (84) I will help you,” she said. (85) Then over there he said, “Alright.”

(86) So then he gave her back all her clothes and she put them on. (87) She left to go back. (88) “Our lodge is over in this direction.” (89) So then he was going in that direction. (90) So he saw the lodge, you know. (91) He reached it. (92) “Come on, come on, Wife, look! (93) I guess this boy I won over, I won over in the wood, has come. (94) We will eat soft bones. (95) Come on, feed him quickly,” he said, they say.

(96) So right away she fed him quickly. (97) Then she was feeding him yellow grease. (98) “I don’t eat this kind,” he said, they say. (99) So instead she fed him white grease and he ate it. (100) “Come on, White Boy, you’ll sleep here,” he said. (101) “You will sleep well,” but meanwhile he was getting the water boiling. (102) That bed could be turned, so they could boil this boy.<sup>36</sup> (103) He did that and [said], “Here, use this as a pillow,” but it was a piece of wood. (104) He put it there. (105) So then the boy used it as a pillow.

(106) So then they played cards on the other side of the house – these young women were playing cards. (107) Well they were just laughing hard. (108) Now they let him join in, too. (109) “Tomorrow, when he tells you [your task], quickly remember me,” she told him when her younger sister had gone outside. (110) Well, early next morning, “White Boy, get up and eat! (111) Right now you will work for me. (112) Look at me. (113) I’m... I’m an old man. (114) I’m weak now. (115) That lake that you came past, I want it over here by the door of my house,” he said. (116) “Alright.”

(117) Oh, he give him a bucket with a hole in it. (118) He also gave him a dipper and it, too, had a hole in it. (119) With them like that, whenever he dipped, it (water) just flowed through it. (120) Oh, just as he was about to cry, he suddenly remembered his sweetheart. (121) “Ah, Blue Garter, where are you? (122) When it was like this you told me I should remember you.” (123) “Oh! You almost forgot me! (124) Close your eyes quickly!” she told him. (125) So then he closed his eyes. (126) “If only this lake were to lie beside my father’s lodge. (127) Go back quickly!” (128) She also sealed up the bucket somehow.

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<sup>36</sup>s102: The impression is of a bed that can be flipped over to cause whoever is in the bed to slide into the pot of boiling water.

(129) So then, he's carrying it back, even though it's too heavy to lift. (130) He reached there and at his door, carrying it, he pretended to fall. (131) "Look, Wife." (132) "Oh, this little one brought it back, after all. (133) He even fell from carrying it, it seems," she said. (134) He had spilled it by their door. (135) He looked at the water. (136) "Ah, with the water this close by, I'll dip it here instead [i.e., more conveniently]."

(137) Again they made him (the boy) lie down on a sand hill. (138) "Feed him, Wife. (139) When he's fat, we'll eat soft bones." (140) They fed him as before. (141) "Come on, White Boy, eat," he said. (142) "Tomorrow you'll work for me again. (143) This sand hill, it would please me for you to put it over here," he said. (144) "Alright."

(145) Oh, again then he gave him a wheelbarrow. (146) Again he gave it to him with a hole in it. (147) He gave him a big shovel and again, he gave it, too, to him with a hole in it. (148) This way, whenever he did it, it all ran through [the shovel]. (149) This too [the wheel barrow], when he poured it in, again it all ran through. (150) "Where are you, Blue Garter?" he said. (151) "You were forgetting me," she said. (152) So this one [said], "Quickly remember me. (153) Try hard," she told him. (154) "There are two more times." (155) So then, again, somehow or other she poured all the sand in and was bringing the wheel barrow back. (156) So he brought it back. (157) Again he reached their door and, as before, he spilled it at the door.

(158) "Come on, look, Wife. (159) Look. (160) You must feed him. (161) When he's fat, we'll eat delicious soft bones." (162) She looked. (163) She [said], "Oh, Husband, this sand hill is sitting here." (164) "Yes, feed him. (165) Feed him – we'll eat soft bones." (166) So then that one [said] "Tomorrow you will work for me. (167) You must go to bed," he said. (168) He used a stick of wood as a pillow. (169) So then again they played cards all night, you know. (170) So then they went to bed.

(171) Early in the morning [he said], "White Boy, get up and eat and work for me. (172) So then he got up (and) worked. (173) Again, that one (the man) gave him a pick-axe, the kind they hold in their hands like this. (174) It was so worn down, oh, it wouldn't make holes at all. (175) Also, the wheel barrow still had a hole. (176) So that's how it was.

(177) Again he was doing it. (178) "Oh, I told you to quickly remember me," she said.

(179) [Josephine:] What was it that...

(180) [Rose:] Granite. (181) He was trying to break up that mountain and bring it back. (182) So then, "If only this mountain were beside the lodge," she said. (183) She did it somehow. (184) Again she sealed it (the wheel barrow) and put all the chips in it. (185) "Hurry and go back! Hurry and go back!" she said. (186) "You've already stayed too long," she said. (187) So then, she walked away quickly.

(188) Again he poured it at the door. (189) "Come on, Wife, look. (190) Look, Wife." (191) "Oh, the mountain is here, it seems," she said. (192) "No one ever did this to you before, it seems," she said. (193) "No, feed him. (194) We will eat his soft bones."

(195) So then at that time again, again they went to bed. (196) Again, again they put that wood neatly there for him again [inaudible]. (197) So then all night he used this piece of wood as a pillow. (198) "I can't get these big logs over here any more," he said. (199) "I'm an old man  
 nd, White Boy. (201) Now all those logs/trees(?) were over here, I could gather wood for myself." (202)

“Alright.”

(203) Again, as before, he gave him an axe that would cut nothing, gave him one that couldn't make a hole. (204) Nonetheless, he walked off with it. (205) Oh, woe! it wouldn't cut at all. (206) “Oh, Blue Garter, where are you?” he said. (207) “Oh, at last, this is the last time, it seems,” she said. (208) So she said, “Come on, hurry!” (209) She broke some up for him. (210) He dragged them back holding them under each arm. (211) Again he dropped them both at the door. (212) “Come on, Wife, look. (213) He's back already. (214) Oh, he even dragged back logs; stop what you're doing and look,” he said. (215) She looked. (216) “Ah, you always say that.” (217) “We will eat soft bones. (218) Feed him.” (219) “Ah, White Boy, I will work for you,” he said. (220) “You will live here,” he said, they say. (221) “Well, something outdoors... I'll do something for you outside,” he said, they say. (222) “But we will stay here with my wife,” he said, they say. (223) “Alright,” he said.

(224) Then he told this young woman over there in the woods. (225) “Ah, at night, my father hangs his pants over there. (226) You must take them. (227) You must also catch that little dog and take it to bed with you,” she told him. (228) She [said], “I'll put my father's pants on when you give them to me,” (229) So then they didn't know that he stole the pants. (230) He also caught the little dog. (231) He put it into his bed. (232) He put the piece of wood there as a pillow. (233) This little dog, he told this little dog, “When they call you ‘White Boy’ you must say, ‘Hooo’,” he told it. (234) So then [he told] the little dog, “Lie motionless. (235) Lie motionless. (236) They will not feed you if you get down,” he said (237) “Tomorrow they will feed you very well,” he said.

(238) So then it was the next night. (239) He took them (the pants) down and took them into the other room. (240) “Here are the pants.” (241) “Did you catch the dog?” she said. (242) “Yes.” (243) Now the dog lay down. (244) “Come on, hold me,” it said. (245) The boy held it around the neck. (246) The woman was wearing the pants. (247) She went outside. (248) They also put in the cards. (249) She made the cards play laughing all night. (250) So at that time the cards played more and more, laughing as they played. (251) Meanwhile, she said, “If only I could step way over there,” whenever she took a step.

(252) [Josephine:] She'll run away.

(253) [Rose:] She ran away with the boy.

(254) Again she went way over there. (255) Again she went way over there. (256) So then all these many steps, a step in these old man's pants was a long way [a mile]. (257) So as it was getting toward dawn, he (the father) thought they had played all day so he opened (the door). (259) Oh, then all the cards threw themselves on the ground [to make themselves look like ordinary cards]. (260) It was these cards that laughed all night.

(261) Over there in White Boy's bed it (the dog) lay. (262) “White Boy, are you asleep?” they said. (263) It was the little dog that said, “Yeees,” it said, they say. (264) So then he took the axe. (265) He cut off the head of the dear little dog. (266) He did that and turned it (the bed) around and it was the dear little dog that went into the boiling water. (Narrator laughs.) (267) So then, the others had run far away by now. (268) So then [he said to] the woman, “Follow their tracks! They even took my pants away from me!” (269) So then the woman wrapped a blanket around her waist and went chasing after them.



(270) So she was going along. (271) “Oh, my mother is coming, it seems! (272) Wait,” she said. (273) “Why?” (274) Then she said, “There’s a big valley, deep, with steep sides (that) I think she will get stuck in.” (275) Again the old woman got stuck. (276) Again they were coming. (277) Again they were coming somehow. (278) Again that way she was getting closer. (279) This woman was kind of like a monster (that is, she had bad ways). (280) Since she had monster ways, she sensed something.

(281) [Josephine:] The old woman...

(282) [Rose:] The old woman, yes.

(282) Then again it was Blue Garter. (283) “Blue Garter, how do you think you will survive?” she was hollering. (284) She was waving a knife that shone as she waved it, you know. (285) So she made a wooded area again. (286) So then again she tried to squeeze through it somehow. (287) So then now there was a big lake far away that they were getting close to. (288) They reached a big lake. (289) So then this young woman broke two sticks. (290) “Let us be these,” she said. (291) “Let us be ducks,” she said. (292) That way, my mother won’t recognize us,” she said. (293) So then the woman said, “Oh, do you think you both will survive?” (294) “You are treating me badly, it seems,” the woman said. (295) So then she waded into the water with all her clothes on, going and going (following them). (296) So again she was showing this knife. (297) Oh, eventually it (the water) reached her head. (298) Then only the knife was showing with the light glinting off it. (299) Eventually the knife, too, disappeared into the water. (300) Alas! the old woman drowned.

(301) So meanwhile, they were going toward the shore. (302) “Come on, White Boy, cut four sticks,” she said. (303) So then he cut four sticks. (304) “Put them down this way, like a cabin.” (305) He put them down this way. (306) Ah, now a cabin stood there. (307) “If only we could live in a cabin if a cabin stood here,” she said. (308) Oh, then a very nice cabin stood there. (309) So then they went in and sat down. (310) Then she couldn’t persuade him to want it. (311) “White Boy, did you think you had gone far away? (312) Your parents live just beyond this hill,” she said. (313) “If you want to go see them, go see them,” she said. (314) “They live close to here over this way..”

(315) Oh, he left and went there. (316) Oh, so then the young woman..., some young men saw this young woman tanning hides alone.

(317) [Ruth:] First she said, “Don’t forget me.”

(318) [Rose:] Oh, that woman went into the water now. (319) “Don’t forget me,” she said.

(320) [Ruth:] Who? That...

(321) [Rose:] This young woman, Blue Garter, to the boy.

(322) [Ruth:] When he left her.

(323) [Rose:] Back there the young men said, “Look. (324) It was never here before,” they told him. (325) Then they went there, they dismounted and went inside. (326) So this young woman was quilling [tanning?]. (327) So they were having perverse thoughts about her as she sat there alone. (328) “Oh, I’m over here tanning hides,” she said. (329) “Put that fire out for me, any

way you like,” she told them. (330) “Come on, let’s put out the fire,” he said. (331) So they went outside. (332) They put out the fire but it just flamed up and burned more. (333) So then she closed the door so they couldn’t come in. (328) She locked it. (334) Oh, so then she said, “If only there would be a downpour and snow and bitter cold.” (335) So again it rained and snowed and became bitterly cold and the young men almost froze and raced for home.

(336) Once they got back there, “We looked and there was a young woman sitting there alone. (337) She was smoking a hide there and they [she] told us to put out the fire. (338) They told us to put out the fire and we almost froze,” he said. (339) “Ah, I’ll go myself and put out the fire.” (340) They went somewhere else. (341) They went there. (342) Again they went in. (343) “Come on,” she said. (344) “I’m smoking hides close by,” she said. (345) “However you think you can put out the fire, put it out.” (346) Ah, then they were running around trying to put out the fire but instead it really flared up and kept burning. (347) Then there was a downpour and it snowed and became bitterly cold. (348) Oh, my! again the young men got soaked and frozen and arrived back home.

(349) So he told him, “A woman lives over this way but she’s a monster,” they said. (350) Then they went to get her and bring her back. (351) Now she almost killed four of those young men. (352) This young woman was going to kill them, so they would kill her. (353) They took her back. (354) “Wait,” she said. (355) “Wait. (356) When a person is going to die they say final words. (357) I have something to tell you,” she said. (358) “Alright, go on. (359) Go on and say whatever it is.” (360) Did a young man come back here?” she said. (361) “Oh, yes, yes, he lives here.” (362) “Tell him about this,” she said. (363) “Bring water and two pieces of rotten wood and throw them in,” she said. (364) “Bring it over,” she said. (365) So then the other one took it there. (366) Then he saw it was his wife. (367) “Put it here,” she said to him. (368) He put it there. (369) “You asked for this, too,” he said, “two pieces of rotten wood.”

(370) [Ruth:] The young man forgot her, then when he saw her, he remembered.

(371) [Rose:] He forgot her! (372) Seeing her now, he remembered. (373) So he threw these two pieces of rotten wood in the water (repeating what she had done). (374) There were two ducks swimming there. (375) “Look,” she said. (376) “You,” she said, “I saved your life. (377) “My father was going to kill you,” she told him. (378) “I’m the one who saved your life, in this way. (379) I made you into a duck and I saved your life,” she told him. (380) “Ah! this woman is my wife. (381) This woman is my wife. (382) Don’t any of you bother her,” he said.

(383) [Ruth:] So now he remembered.

(384) [Rose:] “We will be friends.” (385) Then they were looking at them. (386) They sat down inside..

(387) This is the end.

## 7. Wašicu P'ahá Šíce (Bad Hair White Man)

(1) Oh, again, there lived a big tribe. (2) Well, one man had died. (3) So the one who died was called Bad Hair White Man. (4) So they had buried him over there by hanging him in a tree.<sup>37</sup>

(5) Then, “Come on, let’s live in a different place.”<sup>38</sup> (6) Let’s stay in a different place. (7) Now the old camp site was very deserted. (8) This other one had died. (9) Because of that he had said “Come on!” (10) They camped in a different place. (11) So there were these boys, maybe five of them. (12) After everyone had left, these little boys were looking for some dried meat for themselves. (13) Whenever they found dried meat they would eat it, going around camp like that.

(14) Then all at once someone was standing up on that burial [scaffold]. (15) “Hey, boys, come over here,” he said. (16) Ah, they were all too afraid even to run away, they were so frightened. (17) “That dead guy is standing up!” (they) said. (18) So they went over there. (19) Then that one was trying to get down and he got down. (20) “Hurry up, my children,” he said. (21) “I’m going to go over here. (22) We’ll [all] go,” he said.

(23) So then he went off like that with all the little ones. (24) He went with the ones who had stayed at the old campsite. (25) All at once there was a person, a person trying something out. (26) He had a bow. (27) He was standing there looking up at something in the tree. (28) “Hey, what are you doing?” he said to him then. (29) “Ah, I’m trying to shoot a very small little bird over there,” he said. (30) “I’m called We Are Well.” (31) So it was this one who was speaking and he shot it. (32) It was just about this size [narrator is probably signing]. (33) He shot the bird down with that arrow and it fell over there. (34) “Ah, here I shot the one I was trying to shoot,” he said. (35) “Ah, I will go with you,” he said. (36) “I’m going way over this way,” he said.

(37) So he was going along from there. (38) Again and again and again, he dropped to the ground. (39) He would listen with one ear and then with the other. (41) So this one asked him, “What are you doing?” (42) So this one, “Corn is coming [up] in the fourth earth over there,” he said they say.<sup>39</sup> (43) That one, “Ah, look, look, look! Here it is!” he said, they say. (44) Then one corn stalk came peeking up. (45) Ah, so those corn stalks were about this high. (46) Some were coming up. (47) “Ah, alright,” he said. (48) “I will go with you,” he said.

(49) So he was going along from there. (50) Over there again he was sucking something dry and spitting it out. (51) “Hey there, what are you doing?” he asked him. (52) “Ah, long ago there was a bar here. (53) The earth smells a bit like corn alcohol so I’m sucking on it,” he said. (54) “I’m going over there [so] we’ll all go,” he told him.

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<sup>37</sup>A reference to the most common form of burial, which was to put a scaffold in the branches of a tree.

<sup>38</sup>The speaker in ss5-9 would be the camp crier, announcing the decision of the leaders to move camp.

<sup>39</sup>Tom Shawl’s understanding of the “fourth earth” is that it is the dimension in which the spirits dwell and is the source of spirit visions. The third dimension is where humans go when they die; the second dimension is for evil spirits or the spirits of people who haven’t left earth; the first dimension is the realm of the living. The accompanying belief is that we are spirits first; we forget our spirit-ness when we are put in bodies; everything we invent in life is a memory from our pre-life in the fourth, or spirit, world (which lies below the earth inhabited by the living).

(55) Now he was going along. (56) So the two of them were going along from there together and he was doing something else. (57) He was eating dirt and blowing it out. (58) "What's this you're doing?" he asked him then. (59) "Ah, long ago there was a café here so this tastes like food and that's why I'm eating the soil," he said. (60) "Ah, hurry up! (61) We're going," he said.

(62) They were going along from there. (63) Well, they saw a house. (64) They saw it. (65) So he was going along like that with these children. (66) They reached it. (67) Ah, he already knew that a white man sat inside, this white man...

(68) [Ruth:] Ghost of a white man.

(69) [Rose:] I can't remember how it goes...

(70) [Ruth:] Ghost of a white man.

(71) [Rose:] Oh, that's the one... Bad Hair White Man. (72) I said the wrong name.

(73) So the other one knocked on the door. (74) "Ah, come in," said White Man Ghost. (75) Oh, White Man Ghost, yes, White Man Ghost said, "Come in." (76) "What are you looking for, coming over this way?" he asked him. (77) "I'm headed over this way. (78) I'm going to a game," he said. (79) "Yes," he said. (80) "We'll have a contest right here," he said. (81) "We'll have a game." (82) Ah, we will have a contest tomorrow." (83) Now this one said, "I'm fine now." (84) This one said, "It will be that kind of thing." (85) So then that other one competed with him. (86) Now it was that first one [we spoke of], this Bad Hair White Man is the one [who will compete].

(87) "Ah, we will eat," he said, they say. (88) "Oh, yes, we will eat," the said [\_\_\_\_\_?] (89) They were drinking [alcohol]. (90) So now they were all standing in a line. (91) Oh, then they were all getting in line [around the context area] to look on. (92) He took a lot from the other side, and they rolled some of them and put them there for them. (93) They were these big barrels, you know, that they opened for them. (94) They set them there for them.

(95) So that one said to one of his boys, "Ah, hurry up! (96) Come on, my boy, drink those over there," he said. (97) Then, oh, that's what he did. (98) So then he [drank] this alcohol. (99) He did it [i.e., emptied it] and then he rolled the barrel away with a loud rumbling sound. (100) Then he grabbed the other one and hurled it away, too. (101) "Come on, it's your turn," he told him.

(102) So the other one did it, but he couldn't keep up. (103) He tipped it way up, leaning over backwards. (104) Even so, the other one didn't wait for him and toppled it over. (105) The other one could barely [do it] it seemed. (106) "Boss, should I drink that? (107) It also makes my chest get a bit hot," he said. (108) "Ah, take it and drink it," he said then. (109) Again he drank it.

(110) So then again, just as before, "We will eat tomorrow," he said, they say. (111) "Alright." (112) Again, just as before, he shot a buffalo. (113) This Bad Hair White Man had some mountain lions as pets. (114) The mountain lions were sitting to either side of the door. (115) They were little (like miniatures) and their bellies would puff out when they breathed, you know. (116) He (said), "Go on. (117) Go and bring back that buffalo." (118) Then they jumped

up and their manes were really long, like this.<sup>40</sup> (119) Then they left. (120) Oh, they dragged one buffalo back using their mouths. (121) Well, so then he threw a kettle at him. (122) “Go and fetch some water.” (123) That kettle was big, you know. (124) So this kettle walked to the water. (125) As he dipped the water, his tears flowed and then he came back. (126) “Stand in the fire,” he said, they say. (127) It stood in the fire.<sup>41</sup> (128) “Hurry up and boil!” he said, they say. (129) And then he put all the meat into the kettle. (130) It was boiling hard. (131) [The meat] kept tumbling around, you know. (132) “Come on, put it over here.” (133) Oh, he dumped it all out there again, you know. (134) He dumped it all out there again, you know. (135) So then, “Come on! (136) Come on, you came to eat. (137) Here, here you eat! (138) Come on, eat!. (139) uh... Come on, My Children, eat!” he said. (140) So the children sat down there. (141) They ate, these children (did). (142) “Go, My Children, stand up!” (143) The other one (the man who listened to the earth) sat down there. (144) Oh, then he was just cleaning the bones off with his teeth, back and forth in rows, and tossing them aside. (145) Some of them he just chewed up if they were soft, and he tossed them aside. (146) He ate up everything. (147) So then the other one (said) “Come on, it’s your turn.” (148) They gave another piece to the other one. (149) He sat down there. (150) Ah, then in no time at all he was full. (151) “Ah, that’s all I’ll eat,” he said. (152) Then the other one, his young man, “So, Boss, is it alright if I eat it?” he said, they say. (153) “Yes, eat it,” he told him, they say. (154) So then he ate it. (155) He just gobbled it up again.

(156) The next day, “We will have yet another contest. (157) We will compete once more,” he said. (158) It will be a running contest. (159) There is a stopping place marked in the road. (160) So then the race will be for you to come back from there from that marked spot. (161) You will run from there back to here,” he said.

(162) So the was about to go. (163) They were about to go when he said this, they say. (164) “Prepare two buffalo. (165) Quickly tie their ankles for me. (166) [Otherwise] I won’t ever stop,” he said, they say. (167) So now they went. (168) Oh, my! when each of them had gone half way, they disappeared. (169) Then for some reason they didn’t come back. (170) He dropped to the ground. (171) “Ah, he’s asleep,” he said. (172) [unclear] “Come on!” (173) So then he took his spear. (174) He tossed it into the air. (175) (The runner) for the other one was on his way back. (176) The spear hit the one who was sleeping in the middle of his stomach and woke him up. (177) So it hit him. (178) Oh, He jumped up and then remembered what he was supposed to be doing. (180) So now he was chasing after them and he was gaining on him fast, then, “Get them ready!” (he said).

(181) Now they tied these buffalos that were mentioned earlier. (182) They stood ready. (183) Now there were four ropes tied like this. (184) Then that one was getting closer and now he

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<sup>40</sup>Mrs. Ditmar relates that these lions, when sitting by the door, are very small but when they jump up they return to their full size. She acknowledges that some of the details that would make this clear are not present in this version, but she knows from having heard this story many times that this is the case. Two details in this version suggest the size differential: when the cats are small, their bellies are said to puff way out when they breathe, that is, to an unnatural degree, and when they jump up, their manes become very long, suggesting that the length is appropriate to their restored larger size. As small animals, they are innocent and harmless; as full sized animals they look powerful and menacing, with sleek manes and fur.

<sup>41</sup>The words alone do not convey all that is happening here. Mrs. Weasel was undoubtedly signing some aspects of this episode. Mrs. Ditmar remembers that it is the kettle itself that the ghost is commanding. The kettle walks to the water on its own and then stands itself in the fire when commanded to do so.

stopped. (185) So now the buffalo were tied at the ankles. (186) He broke all of (the ropes) as he came along. (187) The buffalo were jerked (dragged) as he ran past.<sup>42</sup>

(188) “Ah, you beat me,” he said – he said, they say. (189) “Ah, I will give you my lodge. (190) I will give you all my belongings,” he said, they say.

(191) Then (Wašícú P'ahá Šíce) told him, they say, “You will not play this kind of game ever again,” he said, they say. (192) “You won’t do this sort of thing,” he said, they say. (193) “You won’t bring these people here ever again,” he said, they say. (194) “You won’t have any of these games,” he said they say. (195) “The one who did this is a monster,” he said.

(196) So then, “We Are Well, go inside and sit down,” he said, they say. (197) Once he had come, he caught a badger, and (said),” Go on, dig this for us,” he said, they say. (198) It dug. (199) So then it kept digging. (200) “Put it (the dirt) on the floor until it’s full,” he told him. (201) [Until now you have only lived here.(?)] (202) Leave with your children and go back home,” he told him, they say.

(203) Just as before, now these big cats stood there. (204) So they were frightening. (205) They scared him, these big cats did. (206) So then he went outside and locked them in. (207) He thought he could kill them inside there along with his children and pets. (208) [He also frightened his dogs.(?)]

(209) So then he found his hunting hatchet. (210) So he chopped it down. (211) “Come on, My Children, take whatever you want. (212) Hurry!” he said. (213) Then there were all kinds of little bows and digging sticks, too. (214) The children grabbed everything. (215) “Leave quickly! (216) Go through here!” he said (217) He put them into the hole here. (218) So then he, too, went into it. (219) So then they were coming back.

(220) So then the one who was outside (white man ghost) set the house on fire. (221) Then the coals flamed up red, you know. (222) Then it burned. (223) So then these (others) were going along. (224) They were going and going until they emerged way over yonder.

(225) “Hey, Bad Hair White Man, what are you doing? (226) You’ve done something pitiful to yourself. (227) Now that it’s like this, what will you live in?” he said, they say. (228) So now he really tired to put it out, but there was no hope of that.

(229) So then he was going back. (230) They arrived back at the old camp site. (231) “Leave, My Children,” he said. (232) “You live over there. (233) Go back there,” he said. (234) “They will surely recognize you,” he said.

(235) So then they went back. (236) The children were heading back. (237) “The boys who were lost have come back!” he said. (238) The other one climbed back up on the scaffold. (239) He lay back down and was dead again. (240) So then he got back over there and the ones on horseback were chasing them. (241) “We looked all over for you! (242) Where have you

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<sup>42</sup>The buffalos are standing on either side of the road with the ropes at their ankles forming a barrier across the road. The runner has come along the road so fast that he broke the ropes, dragging the buffalo for a little way before the ropes broke.

been?" he said. (243) "Ah, this white man's ghost who was dead took us far away. (244) Look at all these things we brought back," he said. (245) The children had arrived back with all kinds of things. (246) So then those whose children they came and got them.

(247) That's the end. (Rose laughs.)

## 8. Ptéska Wíya (White Buffalo Woman)

(1) Now there was a camp circle in the woods, it is said. (2) Then a teenage boy from there went hunting. (3) Then there was a young woman who was a white buffalo. (4) The white buffalo was his sweetheart so the teenage boy married her. (5) This white buffalo clad herself as a woman. (6) This white buffalo woman clad herself as a human being.<sup>43</sup>

(7) So then this young man lived alone so she pursued her sweetheart there and kept going there. (8) So he married her and then they had a child together, a little boy. (9) Then he went hunting again. (10) Then he came back home. (11) When he got back home, the young woman was quilling something, this White Buffalo Woman was. (12) She was quilling using porcupine quills like that, *you know*. (13) So he was leaning back on one of those wooden backrests they used to have. (14) He was leaning on that thing, kind of propped up on his arms and as he lay there he was looking up through the hole and smiling as he lay there.

(15) Then she looked at her husband. (16) Then she looked over there between the lodge flaps. (17) He was lying there, smiling in that direction. (18) He lay there looking. (19) This one who was not his wife, called Moose Woman, was over there. (20) She peeked in and this young man was lying there smiling at her. (21) Ah, then that one (his wife) looked at him and thought, “I wonder what he’s smiling at?” (22) She looked over at a young woman near the tent. (23) She was the one the man was looking at and smiling.

(24) Oh, she was jealous. (25) Feeling jealous, she said, “He’s lying there flirting, it seems.” (26) So she said, “Hurry up, Son, we’ll go back [to my homeland].” (27) She grabbed the boy and went outside. (28) Now she turned herself back into a cow, a white buffalo. (29) So then he, too, went outside to follow them. (30) (I didn’t hear if he carried a spear when he went – I didn’t hear about that. (31) It was just him.)

(32) So then his wife went. (33) She also made her child into a bovine. (34) So apparently her little son was trotting alongside of her. (35) The woman was also walking beside him, now that she had made her little one into a bovine like herself.

(36) So then she was going along. (37) Then she stopped. (38) “Oh, Son, tell this to your father,” she said. (39) “My homeland is very far away so tell him to go back,” she said. (40) “My homeland is toward the west.” (41) So then he turned and went back. (42) “Father, my mother said for you to go back. (43) My mother said her homeland is way over there in the west, Father.” (44) “No, Son, I’ll keep following you anyway. (45) I love you, Son,” he said. (46) So instead he said, “I will follow you.”

(47) So then whenever the woman lay down, whenever she lay down on a hill, the man, too, lay down. (48) So then she was going along again. (49) Her little child came back. (50) “Oh, your father will die of thirst! (51) Tell him to go back!” she said. (52) So he came back again. (53) “Father, she said for you to go back. (54) You will die of thirst.” (55) “No, Son, it’s alright even if I die of thirst. (56) I’ll keep going as long as I can see you,” he said.

(57) So then he followed along. (58) “Father, watch for me,” he said. (59) “I’ll buck as I

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<sup>43</sup>‘clad herself...’ for the word *jkniža* ‘to dress oneself in a certain way; to bear oneself in a certain manner’. This suggests that she simply masquerades as a human woman, without relinquishing her buffalo nature.



go back to my mother,” he said. (60) “Watch for where I kick up a lot of dust. (61) I’ll make a wallow for you,” he told him.<sup>44</sup> (62) So then he was bucking around. (63) He was running toward where his mother was. (64) [?] then he saw where the dirt had been tossed up and went there. (65) Oh, surprisingly, there was water bubbling up. (66) So then he lay down there and it filled up with water. (67) So then he drank his fill and even splashed water over his head. (68) Then that woman went out of sight again behind a hill.

(69) He followed along as before. (70) He kept following the whole day. (71) Now it was night again. (72) Again, where she lay down with her child, he lay down, too. (73) He sat down a little ways away and he, too, went to sleep. (74) So just before dawn she stood up and her little child stood up, too. (75) Again she told him this, “Oh, Son, tell him to go back. (76) It is still two nights (i.e., days) from there that I’ll be going back. (77) My homeland further away than he realizes. (78) Tell your father to go back.” (79) So, as he had done before, he went back [to his father]. (80) “Father, my mother said it’s still two days away. (81) My mother said her homeland is far away.” (82) “No, Son, that may be the case. (83) Nonetheless, I will follow along,” he said. (84) “I will follow you as long as I can see you, Son. (85) I love you.” (86) He went along as before. (87) “Father, watch for me around midday,” he said.<sup>45</sup>

(88) So then they went on. (89) The he was bucking around again and throwing up dirt over there. (90) Again there was a little wallow over there where his tracks were, with water bubbling up in the little wallow. (91) So he was going along again. (92) Again, he drank the water there. (93) He drank the water and quenched his thirst. (94) So he splashed water over his head and even bathed then. (95) He went on from there again. (96) [indistinct]

(97) So they kept on going as before. (98) Oh, now she was getting closer. (99) Then there were a great many lodges. (100) These were the buffalo, the buffalo lodges. (101) Oh, then they went there. (102) So they kept going. (103) So then he stopped close to a watering place. (104) “Ah, he still cares for his wife and come trailing after his boy,” they said. (105) “I told him to go back but he didn’t go back,” she said. (106) “Come on, we will dance for him,” he said. (107) “We will dance for four days,” that one (the buffalo chief) said again.

(108) So then the buffalo sang first and then the smallest ones danced. (109) Then he went to his father and said, “Father I’ll kick my back leg on the left side like this so you will recognize me. (110) You must grab me,” he said. (111) “If you don’t recognize me, they’ll kill you, Father,” he said. (112) “Alright.” (113) That one [the chief] told him, “Come on, grab whichever one is your son.” (114) So he saw him as he went by and, wrapping his arms around him, he grabbed his [son]. (115) “Ah, he’s right,” he said. (116) “That one is his son. (117) Tomorrow we will dance again.”

(118) So then on the next day the slightly bigger ones [i.e., the next size up from the smallest ones] were gathered. (119) Once again the little ones did their dance. (120) Doing their dance, the calves danced every which way. (121) Then it was as before [so he said], “Father, I’ll

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<sup>44</sup>The literal translation of the Assiniboine sentence is, ‘I’ll make water for you’, by which the little buffalo means he will make a depression in the ground that will collect water for his(human) father to drink.

<sup>45</sup>‘watch for me’ is Mrs. Ditmar’s gloss of *amǫk’inmak’uwa* (lit. ‘follow me by watching’ or more colloquially, ‘keep an eye on me’ or ‘keep an eye out for me’)

hold my tail straight up, no matter what. (122) You must grab me, Father. (123) If you drop me, they will kill you,” he said, they say. (124) “Alright.” (125) He did that as he went along. (126) Ah, he wagged his tail so that he would recognize him, so then he [the chief] said, “Which one is your son?” (127) When he passed by that way, he grabbed him. (128) “Ah, he recognized his boy,” he said. (129) So then they all scattered.

(130) Again, just as before, he said, “We will dance it again.” (131) So now it was the third day. (132) They went the same way as before. (133) So it was that way again, and even though it was daytime he said again, “Now you will dance. (134) Now you will dance. (135) You little buffaloes will dance along with those of the next size up.” (136) So those were the ones this time. (137) They danced again. (138) So then this one [the buffalo son] said, “Father, I’ll wink this eye as I go along (so) you must watch for me. (139) I’ll be winking on this side,” he said.

(140) In the same way again, now again, now again the chief stood up. (141) Then, “Come on, which one is your son?” they said. (142) So now whenever he came from over there, he said of the one who was winking his eye on this side as he came past, “This one is my son.” (143) “He recognized his boy,” he said. (144) So then there was just one more to go. (145) So then they all scattered again.

(146) “Father, try harder. (147) Try hard, Father. (148) You...I mean, *we* will dance just once more—he said we’ll dance just one more time. (149) Father, try to recognize me. (150) Look on this side and I’ll wag my ear just two times,” he said, they say. (151) “When I’m coming from over there, Father, I’ll wag it on this side,” he said then. (152) They danced again in the same way and they sang for them. (153) They danced the so-called buffalo dance – that’s the one they danced, and all of them were dancing. (154) So as he got closer, again, again he wagged his little ear forward and came along this way. (155) “Come on, do you recognize your son?” he asked him. (156) He (the little buffalo) kept doing that as he came that way.

(157) Now he (the father) was going to grab and he grabbed the wrong one. (158) “He grabbed the wrong one! (159) Come on, dance on top of him!” (160) So then even all of the biggest ones were dancing. (161) Oh, no! They knocked him over. (162) They completely trampled him.

(163) Then they were going to take the little boy back with them to where they were staying but he refused. (164) “No, I will die here where my father died,” he said. (165) When they went to get him, somehow he got himself stuck in the mud and he stayed that way. (166) “Come, Son, that was just a human. (167) Come here, Son, let’s go. (168) Son, I love you. (169) Hurry up, let’s go. (170) They’re going to move to a new camp.”

(171) But he said, “Not now.” (172) No matter what he did, this little boy sank deeper and deeper into the thick, muddy bog, it seemed. (173) Then his mother said this, “Oh, leave him, he’s being stubborn,” she said. (174) He was being stubborn anyway, so one could get him unstuck anyway. (175) Oh, It was about to happen and all of the buffalo were leaving, you know. (176) They were going to camp in a new place. (177) They went somewhere else. (178) Staying there like that, he still stood stuck like that.

(179) Then all at once a magpie came hopping along. (180) Ah, then he stopped, “Ah, come on, Son,” he said. (181) It was a magpie that had made himself into a human. (182) It was

younger brother of that man (the little buffalo's father).<sup>46</sup> (183) "Come on," he said. (184) "If you find some of his skin or if you find some bone or if you find some flesh, give it to me, My Son." (185) Then he crawled around in the dirt looking for those things. (186) Then he was kicking the sand into piles as they looked. (187) He found a bone. (188) He also found a bit of flesh. (189) "Father, I found it, a little bone," he said. (190) "And some flesh?" he asked. (191) "Yes, take it." (192) He set it down here for him. (193) So then, somehow or other, somehow he must have done it, must have given him some medicine. (194) His [birth] father stood up. (195) "Ah, I'm tired, Younger Brother," he said. (196) "Come on, we'll go back."

(197) Then he told his son, "Son, come here," he told him. (198) "Go to your mother," he told him. (199) "They aren't camped very far from here. (200) They're camped over here," he told him. (201) "Go there and say this to her," he said. (202) "Say, 'I will wear the soft-soled moccasins that White Buffalo Woman made'," he said. (203) "Say, 'I will wear the hard-soled moccasins that Moose Woman made', and then, Son, come back here."

(204) So then he ran off in that direction. (205) He poked his head in the door. (206) "Mother," he said. (207) "Oh, my son has come back!" (208) "My buffalo father said to say this: (209) Say, 'I will wear the soft moccasins that White Buffalo Woman made,' he said. (210) Say, 'I will wear the hard moccasins that Moose... Moose Woman,... that Moose Woman made,' my father said," and he pulled back out from underneath.

(211) Again he was coming back this way from over there. (212) They kept coming the same way. (213) Now it was the end. (214) They kept coming back and then arrived back here. (215) Some of them got back from where they had gone. (216) Then, "Come on, come on, Older Brother" he said. (217) "She will come," he said, they say. (218) "She will come. (219) White Buffalo Woman will come. (220) She's coming in a jealous rage, Older Brother" he said. (221) "Make some arrows," he said.

(222) So then this other one cut [wood for] arrows like that. (223) Because of this he made plenty of arrows and also some bows. (224) So then the magpie scouted ahead. (225) Well, there were two old buffaloes coming. (226) They kept coming in this direction. (227) They stopped on a hill and lay down on the ground. (228) Then he landed there. (229) "Ah, "Grandfathers, what are you looking for that you came all this way?" he said. (230) Then they looked at this magpie that was hopping all around. (231) "Ah, Grandson, the far side of the his has gone dark."<sup>47</sup> (232) White Buffalo Woman is coming in a jealous rage," he said. (233) So then this one (of the two buffaloes) said, "We came scouting." (234) "Aha, Grandfathers, it's a good thing that you have come

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<sup>46</sup> *Atkúkuna* lit. 'his little father' or 'father at a slight remove'. The first person form is *aténa* 'little father' or 'my father at a slight remove'. This term refers to the brother of one's father, who is also considered a father. In English, both *atkúku* 'his father' and *atkúkuna* 'his little father' are most appropriately translated as 'father' since the cultural relationship of one's *aténa* 'little father' is essentially the same as to one's *até* 'father'. The *aténa* calls his brother's sons 'son'. In the terminology familiar to most people of European descent, an *aténa* or *atkúkuna* is a paternal uncle.

<sup>47</sup> '...gone dark...' One consultant suggests that White Buffalo Woman has stirred up a dense cloud of dust in her rage, which accounts for the darkness the magpie reports.

scouting.” (235) He took the arrows and shot both of them dead.<sup>48</sup>

(236) Then he took this glue called *wípuspa*. (237) He also took some sinew (you know, *tʼakʼán*, ‘sinew’, you know). (238) He took the sinew and he also took that so-called glue. (239) He went back the same way. (240) “Ah, my grandfathers came scouting now,” he said. (241) “I shot both of them dead,” he said. (242) I brought back the tent stake,” he said, they say. (243) So then, “I also brought back some sinew,” he said. (244) So then he stretched it out and used it, that thing, as a bowstring, you know. (245) It was a bow. (246) He also made all these bows. (247) Meanwhile, it was day again and he went again.

(248) Then he was flying around like that again. (249) As he flew round and round, oh, there were two eagles sitting on a hill. (250) Again he landed where they were sitting and kept walking around. (251) “Ah, Grandfathers, what are you looking for that you are sitting this way?” he said. (252) “Ah, Grandson, White Buffalo Woman is coming from afar in a jealous rage, so we came scouting,” he said. (253) “Ah, alright,” he said. (254) “It’s good, Grandfather,” he said. (255) And again he took his arrows and again he shot both of them dead and took all their feathers and broke them and then went back again. (256) Then he arrived back there again. (257) “Ah, these two grandfathers were sitting on a hill. (258) They had come scouting,” he said. (259) “White Buffalo Woman is coming from afar in a jealous rage,” he said. (260) “They’re getting closer,” he said, they say.

(261) Oh, he got something from somewhere (I didn’t hear what it was). (262) “Come on, let’s make an iron house,” he said.<sup>49</sup> (263) “I’ll make it,” he said, “Older Brother. (264) They will not kill us,” he said, they say. (265) So then he chewed something or other up and blew it onto the lodge. (266) So then he coated it with silver. (267) Again, again he did that. (268) Now it was what they used to call an iron/metal lodge. (269) He did it again. (270) He coated it once again. (271) He did it again.

(272) Then a man came trotting towards them. (273) So it was that *Íktómi*.<sup>50</sup> (274) “Ah, Younger Brother, what are you doing?” he said. (275) “Why are you doing this, Younger Brother?” he said. (276) “Ah, there are buffalo coming from afar in a jealous rage, and I don’t plan on their killing us, so I made this iron/metal lodge.” (277) “Ah, wait, Younger Brother, I think I’ve got something too, that I, too, can do it with,” he said. (278) He did it, too. (279) He did it again, coating it with copper.

(280) Now, very soon, she was coming. (281) This one (the magpie) left again. (282) Oh, the buffalo were coming from afar, she herself was in the lead, looking like a snowdrift, you know. (283) The he said, “There are a lot of buffalo coming and she’s in the lead.” (284) Shining white,

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<sup>48</sup>Mrs. Weasel’s daughter, Josephine Mechance, noted that the magpie only shot the buffalo grandfathers after he had received their message. The implication is that he killed the buffalo grandfathers for their sinew.

<sup>49</sup>Mrs. Mechance remembers the metal lodge as referring to a dome, or domed lodge.

<sup>50</sup>*Íktómi* is the primary trickster figure in Assiniboine tales. He is said to be a spider, but always seems to have human form in stories about him. As with most trickster figures in Native American lore, *Íktómi* has been around longer than man or animals and is credited with various aspects of creation. This entitles him to call all creatures on earth “Younger Brother” and obligates everyone else to refer to him as “Older Brother.”

she stood out as she came. (285) He (the magpie) arrived back there. (286) “Ah, Older Brother, they are already here,” he said. (287) Then, “You and I will sit up on top here. (288) You and I will sit up here and we will shoot them from here,” he said. (289) “They won’t be able to kill us after all.”

(290) Iktomi made some more arrows out of willow.<sup>51</sup> (291) He made willow ones for himself. (292) He made also quickly made arrows from the willow. (293) So then he had made everything. (294) Then he added some kind of feathers. (295) It’s Iktomi doing all this.

(296) Oh, now that one [said], “Come on, Older Brother, they’ve arrived now. (297) Oh, they’re coming now,” he said, “come on!” (298) They climbed up. (299) Somehow they went up on the outside. (300) Then they couldn’t be reached. (301) Oh, when they reached there, they [the buffaloes] were butting and butting and butting against it [the lodge]. (302) So that layer of coating that Iktomi had put on came peeling off. (303) They were peeling off the copper.

(304) “Wait, Older Brother, I’ll wipe them out by shooting them,” he said. (305) So then he was shooting that direction when – oh, no – it broke! (306) He his bow broke on him. (307) “Ah, I thought I made it out of hard wood,” he said. (308) So then he stood and kept killing them from up there. (309) The other one, too, as they kept coming, he was killing them.

(310) All at once the camp crier (from the buffalo camp) [said], “Oh, woe! This White Buffalo Woman will get all of you killed. (311) Get back! Get back! (312) There’s no way you can kill them,” he said. (313) So then they all went back.

(314) Then they all lay piled up around the lodge. (315) A great many buffalo were lying piled up. (316) Then White Buffalo Woman was among them, also. (317) They had already made the little boy go back. (318) He thought he would be in the lead so he went in the lead.

(319) “Son, call your mother over here,” he told him. (320) So then he called her and she arrived back here. (321) She arrived there. (322) “What? What?” she said. (323) She was thinking, “He wants to marry me.” (324) “What?” she said. (325) This one (the magpie) said, “You will race with this thing. (326) You will race with Moose Woman,” he said. (327) “Whichever of you reaches my older brother first, you will marry him. (328) You will run back here from that place in the distance, run back from there.” (329) So then, this magpie made something like a man’s head out of clay.<sup>52</sup> (330) It was here in the middle so that when they came back, White Buffalo Woman would get stuck, just as they had made her son get stuck. (332) He [the magpie] would do that same thing to her.

(333) So then she came back quickly from that direction. (334) “Come on, hurry and start back!” So then both of them were coming back. (335) The kept coming back and at first they were just sloshing through the mud and eventually she gave up and turned around and went back. (336) She turned and went back instead. (337) Then this Moose Woman came through the mud and got

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<sup>51</sup>Willow is an inferior wood for arrows because it is so soft and flexible. The trickster’s choice is typically inept and humorous. See ss 306-307, where his poor choice catches up with him.

<sup>52</sup>Mrs. Ditmar doesn’t know what the head shape might signify. It seems that Mrs. Weasel is making a comparison but it is unclear to what.

out. (338) So she was standing way over there. (339) “Yuk! That thing on your leg stinks something awful!” she said because she was still jealous.<sup>53</sup>

(340) “From now on, you will never take a Nakoda person as your husband,” he told her. (341) Next time, you will marry your own kind, though. (342) You will mate just for a short while in the summer,” he said, he told her. (343) Then this White Buffalo Woman, well, she just went crying back to the west, it is said.

(344) That’s the end.

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<sup>53</sup>Elk [not moose] have a musk pouch on the leg. Mrs. Ditmar has heard this story told with an elk in place of the moose.

## 9. Raised by Buffalo

(1) Again, again there was a camp with many lodges, it is said. (2) So this one man [an announcer] (said), “Hey, this is a used-up camp site. (3) This is an used-up camp site [so] we will leave. (4) Let’s move to a new camp site,” he said, they say.

(5) “Oh, what he said is difficult for me.<sup>54</sup> (6) How on earth will I get there with my grandson, I wonder,” she said. (7) She had a grandson who was an orphan. (8) She also had a dog. (9) So then she lived in a shabby tent and she was taking it down. (10) Then she hitched the old dog to the travois. (11) She put her grandson into a little bag and packed him onto the dog travois, you know. (12) So then they were all going, with some of them dragging their lodge poles as they went there. (13) So then she was leading this old dog. (14) She was holding it and leading it while also using her cane as she went along.

(15) Oh, all at once a rabbit jumped up in front of them. (16) Oh, then the dog chased after it, taking the child with it, because it was hitched to the travois when it chased after the rabbit. (17) The dog lost the child in a clump of sage. (18) This old woman didn’t have any idea where it lost him. (19) So then they camped over there. (20) They looked for the child, even the young men, riding their horses, looked for him but the didn’t find him anywhere.

(21) So then the boy was lying in the sage. (22) (I don’t know how big this boy was – that’s just how they tell it.) (23) So these buffalo were grazing along. (24) They found the boy. (25) “Ah, Grandson, why are you sitting here like this? (26) I will take you as my grandson. (27) Come here. (28) Come here,” he said. (29) So he sat down over here and the buffalo sat down. (30) As he did that, he plucked out his own kidney and fed him. (31) “Come on, Grandson, you will grow up. (32) Eat this.”

(33) So then the little boy ate, so he ate. (34) So then he stayed with him. (35) That one (the buffalo), lived in a group of buffalo that stayed together in a small buffalo herd. (36) Again, in the same way as before, the little boy ate. (37) So now they called him Raised by Buffalo. (38) Now the boy was getting bigger. (39) Again he had nothing to eat. (40) Again he (the buffalo) took his own testicle and he (the boy) ate it. (41) He gave it from one side. (42) His grandfather gave him one testicle and he (the boy) ate it up. (43) He was crying again. (44) He stayed with him crying like that for several days. (45) He plucked the other one out and gave it to him. (46) These little testicles weren’t very big. (47) Again he ate it up.

(48) So during that time he went with the buffalo wherever they went. (49) Whenever he lay down beside him on the ground, “Come on, Grandson, climb up here. (50) Hold onto my mane,” he told him whenever it was that way. (51) So the child climbed up on his grandfather and lay on his back. (52) Whenever he got down, whenever he lay down on the ground, the child got down. (53) So then he always played around this buffalo lying on the ground and he cried. (54) So, “Come on! (55) One of you feed my grandson for me,” he said, they say. (56) So a different one came there and he, too, took out one of his kidneys and gave it to him. (57) So then he stayed with them again.

(58) So now he had become big. (59) So then again, again he was crying. (60) Again, “Come on, feed my grandson again,” he said. (61) Another one came and took his out and gave it to him. (62) Again the little boy ate it up. (63) He took his time eating it. (64) He played all around

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<sup>54</sup>At s5 the focus shifts to an unnamed old woman and her grandchild.

his grandfather lying on the ground, even climbing on him every which way. (65) He climbed up on his grandfather, on his beard, and also chasing around underneath his grandfather. (66) So he always played by climbing on his grandfather.

(67) He was crying again. (68) He (the buffalo) sat up quickly. (69) “Come on, once more. (70) My grandson is crying. (71) Feed him again,” he said. (72) Again, another one, yet another one plucked his testicle out. (73) He fed him again.

(74) Ah, as time passed, he was big. (75) Then he said this, “Grandson, you will go back to your people,” he told him then. (76) So he threw himself on the ground, just wailing. (77) “Grandfather, Grandfather, I don’t want to go back,” he said. (78) “They already abandoned me, Grandfather,” he said. (79) “I don’t want to go back,” he said. (80) “No, Grandson, that’s where you are from. (81) Despite what you wish, you cannot stay with us,” he said, they say.

(83) Right then they took him to a hill. (84) They put him over there. (85) They put him there and the little boy saw the buffalo turn their backs and he was just wailing. (86) Again he said this, “Grandson, they will surely find you,” he told him. (87) When they find you, when they take you inside, Grandson, tell them to smudge,” he said. (88) “They will tell you to tell the story, Grandson. (89) You must tell them how I managed to raise you,” he said.

(90) So that calmed him down. (91) Having talked him down, they left him over there and they must have hidden from him as they left. (92) So he was staying on the hill watching to see which way his grandfather and the rest had gone. (93) But he didn’t see the buffalo anywhere.

(94) Oh, from over there a rider came. (95) He came and reached there [where the boy was]. (96) He reached there. (97) “Ah, Boy, where have you come from?” he asked him. (98) “What’s your name?” he said. (99) “I’m called Raised by Buffalo.” (100) Oh, so then this rider rode away again. (101) “That boy who disappeared long ago is sitting over here on the hill. (102) I asked him his name and he said he calls himself Raised by Buffalo.” (103) Ah, the old woman heard this. (104) “Oh, who is this ‘Raised by Buffalo?’” she asked him. (105) “I, myself, lost a boy,” she said.

(106) So then she looked, then everyone came riding up to him from all over, you know. (107) “Wait, don’t touch me,” he said, they say. (108) “Smudge first. (109) Don’t touch me,” he said. (110) So then they lit some sweet grass and they smudged. (111) Right then they took hold of him and took him back home. (112) Again, they were about to take him into the tent so again, “Smudge the lodge if you are going to take me in there,” he said. (113) Oh, the smell of humans was strong! (114) So then they stirred up the fire and smudged only the honor place and brought him in. (115) “Come on, tell us how it is that you survived,” he said to him. (116) “Ah, the buffalo found me. (117) They found me. (118) My grandfathers found me. (119) So then they raised me that way,” he said. (120) Ah, then some of the young men asked him, “Ah, how on earth did they raise you?” (121) “My grandfathers all gave me their kidneys and I ate them up,” he said. (122) “I also kept eating their testicles and became a young man. (123) So then my grandfather had this plan. (124) He told me to come home, so I came back here,” he said.

(125) Oh, when the old woman heard this she was overjoyed. (126) “Oh, this is my grandson, I think,” she said, as she came tottering on her cane. (127) She almost recognized him again, it is said. (128) “Grandson, is that you?” she said. (129) “Yes, indeed, Grandmother, it’s me,” he said. (130) “Grandmother, I’m now called Raised by Buffalo. (131) I’m called Raised by



Buffalo," he said.

(132) That's the end. (133) (Rose laughs.)

## 10. Star Child

(1) (This one is rather long.) (2) There lived a big tribe, it is said, *you know*.<sup>55</sup> (3) So here two young women were best friends. (4) So there were two young women.

(5) So one of these young women said, “Hurry up! Let’s go sit on that low branch for a while,” she said, they say. (6) She was with her girlfriend. (7) So then they went and she sat on this low branch, dangling her legs.<sup>56</sup> (8) It was a very bright night. (9) So one of the young women said, “Oh, how I wish I could marry that bright star!” (10) Well, then, “Yes,” the other one said, in support. (11) Then that one, “Come on, we should go back,” she said. (12) “It’s getting late.” (13) So they went back.

(14) Again, again the next night they met again. (15) “Hurry up, let’s sit a while over there. (16) Let’s sit a while over there again,” she said. (17) “Let’s sit a while on that low branch.” (18) So they went again. (19) Again they sat down on it over there. (20) They sat down.

(21) And, oh! there was a young man! (22) A young man was coming. (23) Ah, he was sweet. (24) He had covered himself in cedar perfume. (25) He stood at the side of that same one where she sat. (26) “So, what was that you said last night?” he said, they say. (27) “Oh! I didn’t say anything!” (28) “No, last night you said something.” (29) “No, I didn’t say anything. (30) I told you already, I didn’t say anything,” she said. (31) So that same one [the man], “No, last night when you sat like this you said something,” he said to her. (32) “Oooh, yes,” she said. (33) “I said, ‘oh how I wish I could marry that bright star out there!’,” she said. (34) “Well, hurry up, we’ll go. (35) That was me!” he said. (36) “Hold me around the neck,” he said. (37) So then she was afraid of him so she held him around the neck. (38) “Close your eyes,” he said. (39) So the woman closed her eyes. (40) “Open your eyes,” he said to her. (41) She opened her eyes. (42) Oh! She had arrive at [his] country with him...

(43) Ruth:<sup>57</sup> “You forgot something. (44) He scared her friend and she went back home.

(45) Rose: She went back home. (46) Her friend jumped up.<sup>58</sup> (47) She ran back to her own place but she didn’t tell that he took her friend up above. (48) (But we’ll leave it that way now.)

(49) So then he was taking her this way. (50) They arrived over there and there was a big

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<sup>55</sup>Mrs. Weasel often says “you know” in English, usually after a statement that she assumes is familiar or obvious to her listeners. In this case it is because many stories begin with some variation of “there was a big tribe.”

<sup>56</sup>Lit: ‘she was sitting letting both her legs go free’

<sup>57</sup>Ruth Weasel LaMere, one of Mrs. Weasel’s daughters, was sitting in on the recording session at Mrs. Weasel’s request. Mrs. Weasel had had some health problems and was concerned that her memory was not as good as it had been. At the time of this recording, Mrs. LaMere was an adult but she had grown up hearing her mother tell these stories over and over. Here she reminds her mother of a detail that she has omitted. Mrs. Weasel acknowledges the omission but chooses not to elaborate on it.

<sup>58</sup>Mrs. LaMere uses the word *t’ak’ónaku* ‘male friend of a man’ rather than *šitkú* ‘female friend of a woman’ (see sentence #6). Mrs. Weasel repeats the error in the following sentence.

lodge and he went inside with her. (51) She was staying there with him.<sup>59</sup>

(52) Now, back then, they used to dig prairie turnips, these prairie turnips. (53) So, oh! this one [the man, her husband], “Where have you been?” (54) “Ah, there’s this place over there with lots of prairie turnips,” she said. (55) Ah, all at once, “The ones with green stems, don’t dig up the kind with green stems!” he said to her.<sup>60</sup>

(56) The man would regularly go off hunting and then come home. (57) As a result, she was always tanning hides and slicing meat to dry, too, and she kept doing that with him. (58) Now she pregnant. (59) Even though forbade her, still she kept going and digging up prairie turnips. (60) So she thought, “I wonder why he said that?” (61) So thinking, she dug up the green ones, kind of hitting them out of the ground. (62) So she looked there.<sup>61</sup> (63) So, oh! there were her people, so, so, all the young men, everything! (64) Then she recognized that it was her own people, where they lived.

(65) She put the dirt back the way it was. (66) “Oh, I will go back there,” she thought, “I will go back there. (67) I will make a rope that I might reach there. (68) So meanwhile she kept tanning hides. (69) Whenever he went hunting, she kept tanning more of the hides. (70) So that’s how she made the rope, *you know*. (71) Then a “back bundle” as they called it – I don’t know how much she made, maybe this much, some amount, I don’t know how much. (72) Then she made as much as she could carry comfortably in this so-called “back bundle.” (73) So then the other one, the young man, was about to go hunting again. (74) “Ah, I might return later than usual. (75) I’ve killed all the game over here,” he said.<sup>62</sup> (76) Now, this man had a feeling that she was up to something.

(77) So it was that as soon as her husband disappeared over the hill, right away she took the rope she had hidden and wrapped it in a buffalo robe, put it on her shoulders and went to where she dug the prairie turnips, and enlarged the hole with her digging stick.<sup>63</sup> (78) She used her stick to make it big enough for her to fit through. (79) She dug it maybe about so big. (80) She did that and she tied it [the rope] tightly to her metal stick. (81) So she put one end that way and the other end she tied around herself. (82) So then she dropped through the hole. (83) So then, from the metal stick, she went back down, hand over hand, going down and down that way. (84) Oh! She almost reached, her toes kind of tapping the trees, you know. (85) So she was swinging there [because] it wasn’t enough.

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<sup>59</sup>When a woman stayed with a man in his lodge, the couple were considered to be married. No formal wedding ceremony was required. One word for ‘spouse’ is *kic’i’u*, literally, ‘a stay-together’.

<sup>60</sup>Young prairie turnip plants are green. As they mature they become gray and fuzzy. Why the husband specifically prohibits green prairie turnips is not explained.

<sup>61</sup>Knocking them out of the ground as she did, she made a hole in the ground. She looks through that hole. This detail is not explicit here, but it is a common feature of all versions of this story.

<sup>62</sup> i.e., he will have to go further than usual to find game.

<sup>63</sup> *ómoḥpa* ‘to cave in by means of an instrument’ does not specify the instrument, but the likely instrument in this case is her digging stick, and subsequent information indicates that it was made of metal.

(86) So this man returned from hunting and put his kill down, but the one was there. (87) “Ah, where would she have gone, I wonder,” he thought. (88) He was standing in the doorway. (89) He was looking and looking. (90) There was no one in the lodge. (91) So then, “I think she did what I told her [not to do]. (92) She said there were plenty over here,” he thought, so he went over that way. (93) Aha! He saw where she had been digging all these prairie turnips. (94) He was digging there where they lay. (95) “Oh, this is the place.” (96) He went a bit further. (97) Oh! He saw the metal stick on a slant. (98) Aha! He looked there to where his wife had tied herself and was swinging, having only gotten so far.

(99) Ruth: The tribe had left.

(100) Rose: They still lived there . . . – I don’t know whether they had left.

(101) So, anyway. (102) That young man was looking for a stone. (103) Looking around for it, he call the stone he found ‘Grandfather’. (104) “Grandfather, go hit that woman over there on the head,” he said. (105) “Don’t do it to the boy,” he said. (106) He knew she was carrying a boy. (107) He did that and he threw the stone. (108) So then it was falling straight towards the woman and she fell over. (109) The woman fell flat on her back. (110) Her stomach burst open with the impact.

(111) So then the baby came out and crawling to his mother’s breast he lay down there and nursed. (112) He went to the other side and did the same. (113) Alas, as it happened, his mother was drying up. (114) That little one had already quickly learned to walk and went round his mother. (115) Again he lay down there and always sucked. (116) He would go to the other side and suck again.

(117) So then he was playing around there. (118) So he seemed to see something blue in the distance. (119) So he stayed kind of close to his mother. (120) So at night he always lay down by his mother, who still lay the way she fell. (121) So then he always lay down that way and when he awoke, he would have his mother’s breast in his mouth.

(122) So then he looked in the corn stalks and there was this old woman planting there. (123) So the tribe had left and there was no one left but this old woman living in the woods.

(124) So that’s the way it was. (125) This old woman went to where she planted and she went looking. (126) Ah, there were the tracks of a child, and it had been breaking up the corn stalks. (127) “What is doing this, I wonder, she thought then. (128) She went all around but there was nothing. (129) “Oh, I’ll go back.” (130) She cut some cherry wood and took it back with her. (131) She intended to trick it, whatever it was. (132) She made two things: a little digging stick and a little bow and arrows.<sup>64</sup> (133) So then when she had finished, “Oh, whatever it is, if it’s a girl it will take this one. (134) If it’s a boy, it will take this one. (135) She put them in the corn stalk along the path she expected it to take, you know. (136) She did that and the old woman

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<sup>64</sup>*jtázipapana* ‘little bow, as for a child’ (the reduplicated syllable *pa* used with the diminutive ending *-na* indicate that the item is intended for a child). Mrs. Weasel does not specifically say ‘bow and arrows’ but ‘bow’ appears to entail arrows. Later in the narrative she refers to arrows, which similarly appears to entail a bow. I have not encountered a mention of the two together, as in the English expression, “bow and arrows.” See also n.16.

headed back.

(137) So the next morning she came again. (138) So she looked and only the little digging stick was there. (139) The little bow had disappeared. (140) “Ah, it’s a boy, then. (141) I intend to catch him,” she said. (142) “I will try to catch him,” she said, though.

(143) He knew she was hiding. (144) “Ah, what’s this shriveled up old woman doing, I wonder,” he said, they say. (145) He hid from her, too. (146) He, himself came into the brush and was watching the old woman, you know. (147) So then the old woman over there was making a plan: the digging stick was close by and she would jump up and grab it, and so thinking, she stayed crouched down. (148) “Ah, I doubt anything will come. (149) I’ll shoot at whatever shows comes up,” he was thinking. (150) He kept sneaking along among the corn stalks with the arrow that way. (151) Nothing was coming. (152) Nothing was coming where the little digging stick lay. (153) She passed by the planted rows over there. (154) He saw the old woman crouched down among the corn stalks. (155) Oh! he just barely missed her with the arrow.

(156) “Grandson, it’s me!” she said. (157) She grabbed for him over that way. (158) He bit her all over, even taking chunks of skin out of her, even though she was his grandmother. (159) “Oh, Grandson, I’ll watch over you. (160) I’ll make nice arrows for you. (161) Hurry up,” she said. (162) But he just kept fighting her this way. (163) She held him the whole time he was acting this way, him pulling her hair, and she got back home with him. (164) “Wait, Grandson, use the arrows I make for you to shoot gophers,” she told him. (165) Oh, she was fooling him, though, in order to calm him down. (166) “Hmph! Hurry up and make them for me,” he said. (167) Oh, again she quickly went and cut cherry wood and peeled it, and having done that, then she put them together with magpie feathers and having done that she said, “Come on, here they are,” she said. (168) Well, right away he was shooting at everything with those arrows, knocking ashes all around, you know. (169) So now she said to the boy, “Sit still!”

(170) “Listen, Grandson, I’m going to gather wood,” she said.<sup>65</sup> (171) I’ll gather enough wood for a fire,” she said. (172) Don’t go looking around back here,” she told him. (173) So then the old woman left. (174) She was breaking sticks this way to carry on her back – she probably couldn’t carry very much.

(175) So then the boy thought, “I wonder why she said that?” (176) He lifted it up and looked.<sup>66</sup> (177) Oh! There was a rattle snake over there licking juneberries.. (178) So then he quickly grabbed an arrow and shot it. (179) He dragged it over and tossed it onto his grandmother’s bed. (180) \*Gasp\*, so then he ran and ran toward where his grandmother had gone. (181) His grandmother was on her way back. (182) “Grandma!” (183) “What’s wrong?” she said. (184) “Those juneberries you saved for me, Grandma, something ate them up!” he said.

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<sup>65</sup>*jhyú* This usually means ‘come on’, enjoining the listener(s) to accompany the speaker. In this instance, it is clear that she does not intend for the boy to come with her so it seems to be used simply to get his attention. This is the only instance I am aware of in which *jhyú* is used in this way.

<sup>66</sup>‘he lifted it up’ This apparently refers to the tipi liner, a swath of hide suspended from about two feet up the tipi poles and extending around the entire interior of the lodge. This had several functions, one of which was to create a storage space out of view of the living space.

(185) “A rattle snake ate them up! (186) “For Pete’s sake!”<sup>67</sup> “Grandson, I didn’t save those juneberries for you!” (187) She threw down the wood she was carrying and went back with him.

(188) “Wait, Grandson, I’ll go throw it away,” she said then. (189) She wrapped it in something and that way. . . (190) (I guess she buried it that way.) (191) She did that and took a knife and cut her legs all over.<sup>68</sup> (192) Then, well, she was bloody from having done this to herself so on her way back she picked some itchberries and was carrying them along.<sup>69</sup> (193) The other one ran to meet her. (194) “Grandma, why are you bleeding all over?” he said. (195) “Oh, Grandson, I picked these itchberries for you and that rose bush scratched me all up,” she said, they say. (196) She gave him about four itchberries.<sup>70</sup> (197) “Here, eat them.” (198) The other one put them in his mouth and ate them.

(199) Again, “Grandson, I think I will go gather wood. (200) Don’t look in that direction,” she said, “up over this way.” (201) The same way as before, the old woman left again. (202) “I wonder why my grandmother said that,” the thought, meanwhile. (203) Again she was off looking for wood so, climbing a tree, he peeked in and there was a raven over there eating juneberries. (204) The same way as before he took an arrow and he shot it. (205) So then he shot it down and it fell over there. (206) So then he got down. (207) He ran in the direction his grandmother was, to meet her. (208) His grandmother was coming back carrying wood.

(209) “Grandma!” he said. (210) “What?” (211) “Those juneberries you were saving for me – a crow ate them up so I killed it,” he said. (212) “Oh, for the love of Pete!” (213) Again she threw down her wood again and went back. (214) “Wait, I’ll go throw it away, Grandson,” she said. (215) “I’ll throw it away,” she said. (216) So then, again she wrapped it in something. (217) Again she carried it away. (218) She did it again. (219) Again she sat over there and using a small bloodletting knife she slashed her legs all over. (220) Well! She returned bleeding this same way. (221) Again he ran back. (222) “Why, Grandma, are you bleeding?” (223) Ah, I picked these itchberries for you and the rose bush scratched me all over. (224) Here, eat these,” she told him, giving him the itchberries.<sup>71</sup> (225) Again, again, she went back with him that way.

(226) The next day, again, “Grandson, I will go gather wood,” she said. (227) “Don’t go

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<sup>67</sup>*wahítéšjhtjyen* There is no precise translation for this. There are no oaths or swear words in Assiniboine, but this expression comes close. Literally, it means to dislike something in the extreme and connotes extreme annoyance.

<sup>68</sup>It was the practice for women to slash themselves when they were in mourning. Apparently, the snake was her husband. There are many stories in which men or women marry animals of one kind or another, as for example, later in this story and in another story in this collection, “White Buffalo Woman.”

<sup>69</sup>*yžjhjtká* ‘itchberries’, *yžjhjtká hú* ‘wild rose bush’ Itchberries are the fruit of the wild rose bush and are so called, according to Mrs. Ditmar and Mrs. LaMere, because eating them can cause the skin to itch. The grandmother seems only to be using the itchberries to create an excuse for her cuts, rather than to harm her grandson.

<sup>70</sup>*k’úk’una* ‘she gave him (as to a child)’ This is “baby talk”, derived from *k’ú* ‘give’ by reduplication and the diminutive suffix *-na*.

over toward that hill,” she told him. (228) Ah, the same way as before, the old woman left. (229) When she had left, this one said, “Why ever did my grandmother said that?” (230) So then he was going and going toward the hill.

(231) From out of nowhere something appeared. (232) “Come on, come on! Come in, come in, come in!” it told him. (233) “Raised by His Grandmother, come in!”<sup>72</sup> (234) Well, a lodge-like thing opened up. (235) He went in. (236) “Ah, this is where I always sit,” he said, they say. (237) He sat down there by the door. (238) “Hey! Well! All my older brothers, they all went hunting. (239) They’ll be back any minute,” he said. (240) Right after he said this, right then, he heard a kind of knocking sound. (241) “Ah, come on, someone has come to visit, someone has come to visit,” he said. (242) One of them came into the lodge. (243) “Ah, where did you come from, Raised by His Grandmother?” he asked him and then they all came into the lodge. (244) “Ah, Raised by His Grandmother, where did you come from?” they all asked him, as they all drew into the lodge. (245) Then they all sat down over there.

(246) “Everyone! Come on and cook some guts for Raised by His Grandmother.”<sup>73</sup> (247) So then right away, the one sitting there by the door with him broke it off, stirred up the coals to cook the guts for him. (248) He cooked it. (249) “Come on, taste it for him to see if it’s sweet!” he said. (250) In that way he said, “Yum! He’s going to eat something good!” (251) Then each one of them licked it all along the row. (252) So they passed it around this way. (253) It reached him (the boy). (254) This duck said, “When it reaches you, when it reaches you, throw it directly into the fire and make it spark up.”<sup>74</sup> (255) “You will make all their teeth fall out,” he said. (256) So then he watched them handle it. (257) It reached the last one, “Ah, you will eat something delicious, Raised by His Grandmother, come on!” (258) He sparked up the fired and threw it right into the middle. (259) All their teeth fell out. (260) So right then he ate it. (261) He took his knife and was eating it. (262) So right then he made all the snakes’ teeth fall out.

(263) “Come on, tell him a bedtime story,” he said.<sup>75</sup> (264) The first one sitting here [said], “This Raised by His Grandmother went to visit at the lodge of eleven young men. (265) So the eleven young men had gone hunting. (266) Then they came home from hunting and then they cooked guts for

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<sup>72</sup>This is the first time the Star Child is addressed by a non-relative, so a name is needed. The name “Raised by His Grandmother” is merely descriptive, rather than formally bestowed, although it occurs in a later episode as well (see also *Cicuwahe* in this volume). Traditionally, relatives used kinship terms when speaking to or of one another. Characters in a story are identified by a narrator generically as “the boy” or “the old woman” or “the man” or simply “this one.” Proper names were used very seldom, and the use of such a name usually signals that the speaker is not related to person nor, by extension, to the person’s camp circle, and is most likely an outsider.

<sup>73</sup>*ʔapšútʔaka* ‘guts, specifically the large intestine’

<sup>74</sup>Out of order, Mrs. Weasel mentions in an aside that the boy is wearing a duck’s head necklace (s.279). The duck’s head is alert and can speak, offering instructions and warnings. There is a separate episode in which the boy acquires the necklace but it has been omitted from this narrative.

<sup>75</sup>*ohýkaka* A classification of story that includes events assumed to be fabulous, not historically true, similar to the Western notion of “fairy tale.” These stories were primarily told to children, often at bed time to fall asleep by. In addition to being humorous, they reflect cultural notions and often teach proper behavior through negative example.

him and then they tasted it to see if it was sweet, all of them sitting in the lodge, they tasted it to see if it was sweet. (267) When it reached him, he sparked up the fire and threw it right into the fire and all their teeth fell out, it ssseeems.”<sup>76</sup>

(268) Ah, one after another told said the very same thing. (269) “Raised by His Grandmother went to visit in the lodge of eleven young men. (270) The eleven young men came back from hunting. (271) They cooked guts for him. (272) Then all of them tasted it for him to see if it was sweet. (273) So then it reached him. (274) When it reached him, he tossed right into the fire and then Raised by His Grandmother ate the guts and he made all their teeth fall out, it ssseeems,” he said. (275) Ah, they all repeated it that way, word for word. (276) So it reached this one, and when it reached him, he was the last one. (277) “Raised by His Grandmother went to visit in the lodge of eleven young men. (278) So they had gone hunting, then they cooked guts for him. (279) He made all of their teeth fall out, it ssseeems,” he said, and as he said that, he fell asleep. (280) Meanwhile, . . .

(281) Ruth: Was it the storytellers who fell asleep?

(282) Rose: Yes, each of them fell asleep after it told the story.

(283) Ruth: This boy would have fallen asleep, too, when this little duck head woke him up . .

(284) Rose: That’s the one that woke him up.

(285) Ruth: You didn’t tell about that.

(286) Rose: That thing around the boys neck, a so-called duck’s head necklace, frantically bit him whenever [he was falling asleep] and woke him up again. (287) So then it really lit into him. (288) “Come on, take your knife and cut all their heads off! (288) Hurry!” it (the duck head) told him. (289) He took his knife and cut the neck of the first one, then the other one, then the other one, then the other one, then the other one, then the other one . . .

(290) Oh-ho! The one sitting next to him dove into the ground. (291) “Raised by His Grandmother, beware when the moment comes that you lie down and put your mouth to the water to drink,” he told him. (292) “Hmpf! There’s nothing wrong with my mouth!” he said. (293) So then he went outside and went home.

(294) He was going and going back home. (295) He went into the lodge. (296) His grandmother was sitting there. (297) “Oh, where have you been again?” she asked him. (298) “Ah, that place you told me not to go to, I went over there to that lodge of eleven young men. (299) They had gone hunting so then they cooked guts for me. (300) They cooked guts for me, so then I ate it. (301) I tossed some of it in the fire when it had reached me – these eleven young men had been tasting it for me to see if it was sweet, and when it had reached me, I threw it on the fire and made all their teeth fall out.” (302) “Oh, but those are monsters! (303) It’s a wonder you came back alive!” she said.

(304) The next day, though, again she told him, “Don’t go in that direction, kind of over this

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<sup>76</sup>Although performative vowel length is generally not reflected in this transcription, nor in the translation, here it is part of the story, indicating that each snake falls asleep as he finishes the story. This is humorous because the storyteller is not the one who is supposed to fall asleep.



way.” (305) Again, that one thought, “I wonder what she means?” so again he went. (306) Eventually he kept seeing something, *you know*. (307) Oh, now it got really hot and so he was very thirsty. (308) Well, they say this boy was holy, powerful.<sup>77</sup> (309) So he said, “Oh, if only it would rain!” (310) Oh! suddenly there was a cloud burst coming down [?so he left?].

(311) So then he was going along. (312) Oh! there was something like a dog track or buffalo track filled with water and it was tempting. (313) It was tempting and just wonderfully clear. (314) Ah, so then this one [the boy] was very thirsty. (315) He knelt down and said, “Aha! This is what he told me about. (316) Well, I doubt he would be here, anyway,” he thought. (317) So he did that and here it [the snake] went inside of him! (318) Oh! He took his knife and stabbed himself and cut himself. (319) He left there again. (320) He cut himself again. (321) Alas! It went into his brain. (322) Oh, my! he had cut his head off this way, and said, “Oh, if only there would be a wind storm!” (323) Then there was a wind storm, then there was a downpour, then there was hail, so he said, “If only it would fill my [head] with water! (324) And if only it would get really hot so this water would boil!” (325) So then this big wind storm knocked his head over so it was sitting on its back [upside down] on its brain. (326) Then it got [filled with] the rain. (327) Then it got really hot, but it wasn’t hot enough [to drive the snake out] and he couldn’t lie still.

(328) Every once in a while it [the snake] would peek out. (329) Ah, this one said, “Raised by His Grandmother was always kind of holy,”<sup>78</sup> but it kept on peeking out and pulling itself back inside. (319) It kept doing that. (331) “Ah, he’s dead.” (332) I doubt he’s holy,” he kept muttering so now it came out. (333) So right then, he caught it by the neck and jumped up. (334) So now, “Raised by His Grandmother, let me live! (335) Let me live and you will be even holier than I am.” (336) “Yes, you will live, you will live.” (337) He was looking for a stone. (338) Oh, a big stone was lying way over there. (339) “Yes, you will live, after all,” he told it. (340) Right then he stopped at the stone and he filed its nose down. (341) He kept filing it, so he called them ‘hog-nosed snakes’<sup>79</sup>. (342) He filed it all over on the stone. (343) Then he said this to the snake. (344) (It was the snake that had gone inside him.) (345) So he said this, “You will never bother people again. (346) You and your brothers won’t bother them,” he said. (347) “Whenever people see you they will fear you,” he said. (348) “Furthermore, [?wherever you are from time to time they will kick you.?]. (349) You will mean nothing to them. (350) They will call you hog-nosed snake, but you will live. (351) You will never be lucky,” he told him and then he threw him away, it is said.

(352) So then he was going and going back home. (353) He was going and going back home, and the went into the lodge, *you know*. (354) “Ah, where were you again?” (355) “Ah, Grandma, Grandma, over there a snake almost killed me! (356) “Oh, but I told you,” she said, ““Don’t go over there!’ I said, though!” (357) “Grandma, I caught it and I really filed its nose on a stone,” he said. (358) ““You will be called hog-nosed snake,’ [I told it],” he told his grandmother. (359) “Oh, no! You gave it

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<sup>77</sup>*wak’á* ‘holy, mysterious, powerful’ There is no adequate translation for this word. It encompasses a range of spirit power and many people and things in nature are said to be *wak’á* although the manifestations of power can vary greatly.

<sup>78</sup>*wak’ák’g*, redup. of *wak’á* Reduplication can either intensify or diminish the meaning of a verb, depending on context, but even in context the distinction is somewhat subjective. In this instance either ‘very holy’ or ‘kind of holy’ would seem to be plausible but my consultants all perceive it here as meaning ‘kind of holy’.

<sup>79</sup>*p’aknázutka* ‘the hog-nosed snake’, a kind of flat-nosed water snake

a real name! (360) Why on earth did you give it a real name?" she said.

(361) This boy went on from there again. (362) (It's still that boy. (363) It's still this Star Child.)<sup>80</sup>

(364) So he was going on from there. (365) He arrived at a tribe. (366) So they were encamped. (367) They were all encamped, and the beds of the old women were of this kind of grass. (368) So they cut that kind (of grass). (369) Then (the boy) said, "Grass, make yourself hard." (370) The boy was lying in the grass and said, "Make yourself hard, grass." (371) So that grass made itself tall. (372) Oh dear! when they went to cut it, the old women couldn't cut the grass. (373) Then, then one of these said, "Oh, why aren't you cutting it on this side where it's really good the way it should be?" (374) "Oh, it's extremely tough and we can't cut it," she said. (375) So then the old woman... the boy said this, "Make yourself soft, make yourself soft, make yourself soft, grass, so my grandmother will [be able to] cut," he said.<sup>81</sup> (376) Hmm, then the old woman quickly cut along quickly, after all. (377) All at once he said, "Ah, Grandma, you might cut me!" (378) Oh, so then she said, "Grandson, if you hadn't spoken I would have cut you. (379) Where did you come from, Grandson? (380) It's dangerous lying there like that. (381) Hurry up, I'll take you home and take care of you," she said then. (382) She carried him home on her back along with the grass she carried. (383) She arrived back home with him. (384) She arrived home with him and he stayed with her.<sup>82</sup>

(385) Then whenever a certain strange thing happened, she said to the little boy, "Don't go anywhere, don't go anywhere, Grandson, there are monsters living in the center of the camp. (386) They are grizzly bears but they are monsters; they kill Nakoda people." (387) Oh, he got curious but whenever they went by one of the lodges going, "Grrr, grrr," she said to the little boy, "Don't look at them! (388) They're monsters!"

(389) They were drumming on something again over there. (390) (Well, she already told him they were drumming.)<sup>83</sup> (391) Oh, when it was about to happen, he saw the bear and its mate and cubs. (392) It stood in the door and said, "Who is that drumming? Who is that drumming?" the bear said. (393) Whenever it said that, the bears would eat some Indian people. (394) Then that one (the boy) – I

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<sup>80</sup>There was a break in the recording session and Mrs. Weasel is noting that this is a continuation of the story she was telling in the earlier recording session (i.e., Start Child pt.1).

<sup>81</sup>*mik'úši maksjksjka* lit. 'my grandmother will cut repeatedly' The reduplication plus the enclitic of potential *-kta* imply the ability to cut, even though it is not explicit. Also, although there is no conjunction, the cause-relating conjunction *c'én* is implied, and I have included it in the translation.

<sup>82</sup>*úúkakana* 'he stayed with her' This word, derived from *ú* 'to stay', has the base vowel lengthened by the durative enclitic *-:ka*, which always lengthens the previous vowel, but the word is also an example of "baby talk," consisting of reduplication plus the diminutive/endearment enclitic *-na*. "Baby talk" may be used when speaking to or of a child, and may also be found in the speech of small children themselves. See other examples in "Twin Boys" in this collection. Another type of baby talk is seen in s.555 in this story, deriving from use of an incorrect pronoun.

<sup>83</sup>The reference to drumming in s.389 is premature, which Mrs. Weasel realizes and she corrects herself parenthetically in this sentence.

don't know where he got it from...<sup>84</sup> (395) So then whenever they passed by in the early morning, as usual, these two bears, he with his mate, along with their three cubs following along, he threw the door flap open. (396) "Who is it that made me lose sleep?" he said. (397) Then that one said, "They're coming!"

(398) Then that one said, they say, "Grandma, make a little drum for me." (399) "Oh, Grandson, all this drumming is forbidden. (400) All loud talking is also forbidden, Grandson, by these monsters in the middle of the camp." (401) "Make me a little drum!" he said. (402) Oh, so then she used something and quickly made it for him, you know.<sup>85</sup> (403) In this way, toward evening, she hung it on a tripod, the kind that was always in the lodge for hanging a kettle, she hung it there, then. (404) Ah, now she also made a drumstick for him. (405) "Oh, Grandson, this is a risky thing you are going to do. (406) We won't survive it, Grandson." (407) "Ah, what do you mean, Grandmother?" (408) Oh, so it was going to happen. (409) Now...

(410) [Ruth:] He was going to try it out, you say.

(411) [Rose:] Yes, he would try it out, they say.

(412) [Ruth:] Had she already made it and he was he drumming?

(413) [Rose:] It was already evening over there. (414) "Is it dry, Grandma?" (415) "Leave it alone, don't bother it!" (416) He took it down and [started] drumming.

(417) Then, oh my! now – *now*, this bear suddenly appeared! (418) He couldn't tell who it was so he was going to come early the next morning. (419) Oh, so then the boy sang something; he sang all night long. (420) He kept drumming and drumming and drumming while he sang and sang. (421) Then as daylight was coming, "Ah, Grandma, I'm going to go to sleep." (422) "Oh, Grandson, you can't ever sleep! (423) They'll come!" (424) \*gasp\* This old woman was worried about when the bears will come back outside [their lodge] , watching, just sitting, beside herself with fear.

(425) Oh, so now as it would happen, that bear was coming. (426) He appeared and now he stood. (427) She heard the female coming, too, with her three cubs. (428) He appeared and now they were looking around all the lodges. (429) They looked, wanting to know where that drumming was coming from. (430) Now they were coming around the camp...

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<sup>84</sup>s394 is a false start. Mrs. Weasel is anticipating the boy's having a drum, but the reference is premature.

<sup>85</sup>Mrs. Weasel occasionally concludes a statement spoken in her language by saying "you know" in English. These minor code switches are not consciously interjected but neither are they indiscriminate. A more thorough examination would be worth pursuing, but it may be said that they generally follow comments that would be obvious or clearly understood by listeners within the culture. Here she notes that the grandmother would unquestionably comply with her grandson's demand. I asked Mrs. Ditmar why it would be assumed that the grandmother would comply when the story shows the boy (amusingly) to be immature and impulsive; the grandmother warned him of the dangers, the consequences of which are potentially deadly, yet she makes the drum for him. Mrs. Ditmar replied that it was customary to be obliging toward a first son or, in this case, a first grandson, for this grandmother who has taken in a boy who has no parents. The tendency to indulge children in this manner seems to have been a common feature of traditional child rearing.

(431) [Ruth:] Something burned them.

(432) [Rose:] He drummed all night and that grizzly bear, inside the lodge...

(433) Whenever heard it...

(434) [Ruth:] ...that drumming...

(435) [Rose:] ...he kind of jumped into the fire. (laughs). (436) It singed him...

(437) [Ruth:] You didn't tell how they showed up all singed...

(438) [Rose:] Yeah – they showed up over here singed, turning every which way. (439) They weren't able to go anywhere because whenever he hit the drum this way, they fell down. (440) They even fell into the fire, then they just looked a sight, they were so badly burned. (441) So now they were coming in the morning. (442) (I don't remember how he stopped them. (443) They got there, he said , maybe – he left...)

(444) “Wait! (445) Stop outside. (446) Wait, stop,” he said. (447) “You are not to bother the people this way again. (448) You can't be chief of this tribe. (449) You are to go back,” he told them. (450) You will kill things for yourself, you will hunt for yourselves. (451) You will go to the west,” he told them then.

(452) With his mate and cubs, for some reason... (453) He sent them trotting away crying toward the west, it is said.

(454) I guess that's the end.

#### White Raven<sup>86</sup>

(455) So now it's early in the morning. (456) Once again...

(457) [Ruth:] Are you going to tell about Runs Away from His Grandmother?<sup>87</sup>

(458) [Rose:] Yeah, this is the last one about Runs Away from His Grandmother.

(459) “Grandson, your grandmother is sitting over there. (460) Just go your grandmother's lodge over there,” she told him. (461) So then this little boy went. (462). So he was going for quite a while.

(463) He stayed with some other little boys like him.<sup>88</sup>(464) Then he asked them, “Where is my

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<sup>86</sup>Mrs. Ditmar also refers to this as the ‘white vulture’.

<sup>87</sup>Ruth (Rose's daughter) refers to the character by a different name, but it is still the one called “Raised by Grandmother” and “Star Child”. I don't know why the name changes. Rose mimics the name Ruth uses in her reply in s458 but does not use it again.

<sup>88</sup>i.e., orphans

grandmother's lodge," he said, they say. (465) "She lives in that poor tent that stands over there." (466) So that's why he went over there.

(467) "Oh, Grandson, where have you come from?," she said. (468) "My grandmother told me, 'Go to your grandmother,' so I came," he said. (469) "Oh, but Grandson, I don't have any thing to feed you! (470) There's this bad thing sitting in the middle [of the camp circle]. (471) It's a monster, Grandson, living in the middle," she said they say. (472) "Every morning, Grandson, the camp crier goes by calling, 'There will be a buffalo hunt!' all around the camp. (473) So then, as many as are able follow along and then, Grandson, they eat [there]," she said. (474) "So then, it, too, goes. (475) It flies around over the people and then the game smells bad [i.e., it spoils]. (476) When they bring the meat back, Grandson, unfortunately it is already spoiled." (477) "Grandma, I will follow along." (478) "No, Grandson, you have no business going, you have no business going!" (479) Ah, he wrapped a buffalo hide around himself and tied some things together for himself and then [said], "Grandma, I'm going."

(480) As they all went in that direction, this one, too, just followed along, running along. (481) Then they stopped in a group. (482) That one (the boy) stood beside the chief. (483) "Ah, I wonder how will we manage to kill a lot of them," he (the chief) said, they say. (484) The chief gave him a hard look. (485) "Ah I wonder how we will manage to kill a lot of them," he (the boy) said.<sup>89</sup> (486) "If we pass along both sides of them, we'll surround them and then we's easily shoot many of them here." [boy speaking] (487) "No one ever spoke to me like that!" he (the chief) said. (488) Then, even though he (the boy) had told how to kill a lot, he knocked him out. (489) So then [having done the surround] in this way, everyone was butchering, *you know*. (490) After they butchered, they cooked and then they all ate. (491) That being done, now the white raven flew around above them. (492) "Rot, you meat!" [it said] as it flew over it. (493) Whenever they brought game home, the game would spoil. (494) So this boy was lying there.

(495) So everyone went back home. (496) "Old Woman, your grandson got knocked out over there because he talked back to the chief." (497) "Oh, I told him he shouldn't go!" she said.

(498) So when they had all left, when they had all left, that one (the boy) jumped up. (499) He felt around himself to see whether those things weren't there – ah, his arrows were still there where he carried them on his back. (500) He took one and said to it, "Come on, my arrow, go for a fat little buffalo! (501) "I'll take it back to my grandmother." (502) Oh, then his arrow went all by itself and whichever direction it had gone, a little buffalo lay right there. (503) Well, he took whatever parts he wanted, then he took those and went back.

(504) Oh my, when he arrived back home, his grandmother was crying. (505) "Oh, I told my grandson not to go, I told him not to go," she said, they say. (506) Instead [to stop her crying], "Grandma, take all this – take it and eat it!" he said. (507) "Oh, that's not possible, Grandson, whenever they bring meat home like this that you have, it always smells bad," she said. (508) "No, Grandma, cook some of it! We'll eat." (509) So the other one cooked. (510) Ah, the old woman tasted it. (511) It tasted delicious. (512) Oh, at last he and his grandmother then ate their fill.

(513) Again, so once again, on a later day, he (the camp crier) was going all around the camp

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<sup>89</sup>Although it is ambiguous from the words alone who speaks the repeated phrase, "Ah, I wonder how will we kill a lot of them, it is clear from Mrs. Weasel's performance because she uses a higher pitched voice for the repetition, indicating that the boy is repeating, or mimicking, the chief's words.

saying, “We’re going on a buffalo hunt!” (514) Again many, many were hungry, so they all went along way over there. (515) This one [said], “Grandma, I will follow along.” (516) “No, they’ll just knock you out again over there, Grandson.” (517) “No, Grandma, I’m going to go along.” (518) Once again (the camp crier) said, “We’re going on a buffalo hunt!” (519) He said it going all along the camp circle. (520) Again this little boy wanted to go. (521) Oh, but [she said] “No, Grandson, they’ll probably knock you out. (522) Don’t go.” (523) “No, Grandma, I’m going to go,” he said. (524) And once again he tied this little bag onto himself somehow. (525) He wrapped a robe around himself and again he joined in. (526) So it was somewhere far away over there. (527) Then they were standing in a circle and this one (the chief) said, “Ah, how will we manage to shoot a lot of them, I wonder?” (528) This little boy stood there with him again. (529) Then the chief gave him a hard look. (530) “Ah, what was it you said? ‘How will we manage to shoot a lot of them?’ you said,” he said. (531) “Here’s how: when we circle around them, we’ll kill a whole lot of them over here.” [boy speaking] (533) Oh, my! again this other one (the chief) just knocked him out again, so he was lying there. (534) Meanwhile these [people] went all around shooting them, then quickly cooked and ate their fill. (535) Now meanwhile that white raven was flying around again. (536) “Rot, you meat!” it said as it was flying around. (537) Then, again, everyone went back. (538) Some of them cooked meat and hid it to get it home for themselves but nevertheless, it always spoiled before it could be eaten. (539) This white, eagle-like bird caused everything they would eat to spoil. (540) So it was the one [that was doing it].

(541) When everyone had left, just as before, the boy got up. (542) He looked all around but there wasn’t anyone around at all. (543) Then, just as before, he felt around himself. (544) He took that little arrow and said, “Come on, my arrow, go straight to a little buffalo.” (545) It did that and he ran over there. (546) A little buffalo lay over there. (547) It lay there because he had shot it. (548) Just as before, he then desperately [before it could spoil] butchered it there. (549) He took all that his grandmother could eat and packed it in. (550) Just as before, he went straight home with it.

(551) He arrived back at his grandmother’s lodge again and said, “Come on, Grandma, take it.” (552) Cook something and we’ll eat. (553) “Oh, Grandson, but it will spoil for certain,” she said. (554) “No, Grandma, cook it! (555) I’m hungry,” he said. (556) So then this old woman cooked some of it. (557) So she was cooking it and the old woman tasted some of it again. (558) “Oh, it tastes good!” she said, so then they ate. (559) Then they went to bed again.

(560) So after that, at daybreak, the camp crier went around again. (561) “We’re going on a buffalo hunt!” he said as he went around. (562) That one (the boy), “Come on, Grandma, hold on, Grandma,” he told her. (564) “There are only two more times.” (564) So in the end, he went. (565) He was going to join in again, they say. (566) In the end, the old woman didn’t say anything. (567) So in the end, he followed along. (568) He followed along and the same way as before, they stopped in a circle. (569) “Ha, how will me manage to kill a lot of them, I wonder,” he said. (570) Then again this on, this boy, said, “Ah, ‘how can we manage to do it,’ you said. (571) If we all surround them, we’ll easily kill a lot of them in the middle.” (572) He looked at him and he knocked him out again. (573) That made three times. (574) Just as before he was lying there while they killed a lot of them [i.e., buffalo]. (575) Then they butchered that same way and quickly cooked. (576) They ate, but then, having eaten, they took nothing back with them and they all went back. (577) They took the meat back home.

(578) So this one got up and again, again he felt for his arrows and took one. (579) “Come on, my arrow, go straight to a little buffalo,” and the same way as before, again he ran in that direction [and] where the arrow had gone, one [buffalo] was lying over there. (580) Again that one butchered it and also he took back for his grandmother all those little pieces here and there that she could eat.

(581) Then at last, it was to be the last time [they would go hunting].. (582) “Oh, Grandson!” she said. (583) “No one, Grandson, no one ever did this before. (584) Hang on , Grandson, at last, at last, tomorrow will be the last time.” (585) “Alright.” (586) Right then he said, “Grandma, I will come back. (587) I’ll be back late. (588) “Put a stake in the ground here,” he said. (589) “Whatever it is, Grandma, I will catch it,” he said, “whatever it is.” (590) “It has abused the people, Grandma. (591) I will wait for it,” he said.

(592) So then he went among them. (593) So now it’s the fourth time [unintelligible]. (594) “Hmm, I thought I already knocked him out,” he thought. (595) So right then, he [ducked down? stooped down?]. (596) “Ah, come on, come on, everyone. (597) We’ll all circle together quickly and we’ll kill a lot of them,” he said they say. (598) Oh my! again, “Ah, they’ll just run away when we surround them,” he told him. (599) He knocked him out again. (600) Oh then in the end, all the other young men like him, he stopped all the other young men like himself. (601) “Burn them all [i.e., the buffalo they had killed],” he said. (602) “However many you kill, take the kidney from the last one we shoot, then pull it out and put it down,” he said.

(603) [Ruth:] The little boy said that?

(604) [Rose:] The boy is the one that said that. (605) “I will catch whatever it is that has been abusing you,” he said. (606) “You will eat,” he said. (607) “Come on, do what he said,” they said that way, then they all took it back and burned up all the cattle, *you know*.

(608) [Ruth:] The buffalo. . .

(609) [Rose:] The buffalo, yes. (610) It was the buffalo they burned up. (611) Then they killed this last one. (612) Then they pulled out the kidney and...

(613) [Ruth:] That boy. . .

(614) [Rose:] It was that little boy, now it was that one.

(615) [Ruth:] So he turned himself into a buffalo.

(616) [Rose:] He turned himself into a buffalo. (617) Now they cut it (the kidney), that way, out of the other side. (618) They cut it from that side so it lay there. (619) Well, so then now they took it all back. (620) Again now, again now, that white raven said, “Smell bad [i.e., rot], game!” (621) He saw the kidney, just poking out as it lay there. (622) He went over there and he was craving that kidney. (623) And he was flying around there. (624) He was flying around and then he sat on it and was hopping around on it. (625) “Ah, this boy is tricky,” he said. (626) He flew away a little, landed again, flew off a bit further and came back again just so far (hopping around near it but not actually going up to it). (627) He kept landing on the hind quarter, *you know*. (628) This was because he wanted to eat the kidney, he wanted to eat the fat. (629) Ah, that way [as a buffalo], that way he was lying there waiting [for it to turn rotten]. (630) So then they had all left. (631) There was no one else there, just this buffalo. (632) So he was waiting for the meat to spoil because he really wanted to eat this kidney. (633) He sat on the hind quarter [of the buffalo] and he would edge toward the kidney, then he (the boy as buffalo) grabbed him by both feet and jumped up.

(634) Then he went over there to his grandmother’s lodge. (635) Ah, meanwhile then, “Raised by Grandmother, let me live, let me live!” (636) Raised by Grandmother said instead, “Yes, you will

live, you will live,” he told him. (637) “You will live!” he told him then. (638) So then he was running and running, holding him...

(639) [Ruth:] Did he let him go first?

(640) [Rose:] No, not yet.

(641) [Ruth:] . . . so after he’s white he let him go.<sup>90</sup> (642) So then he was flying around in the distance...

(643) [Rose:] O, that . . .

(644) [Ruth:] “Who’s telling the truth,” he said . . .<sup>91</sup>

(645) He grabbed a spider web and tied it on his (the raven’s) ankle. (646) “Yes, you will live,” he told him. (647) “Ah, you came back.” (648) “Yes,” Raised by Grandmother [said], “you will live with [your own] people,” he said. (649) So then he (the raven) said, “Let me go!” (650) “Let me live,” he said. (651) “Yes, alright,” he said. (652) That tribe...

(653) [Ruth:] “You’re holy,” he told him, though.

(654) [Rose:] “You’re holy, but you’ll be holier than I am,” he said. (655) So he was holding onto the spider web there. (656) “Ah, get out of here!” he told him. (657) “Get out of here! Leave!” (658) So then here he kept holding the spider web. (659) So then he kept unrolling it. (660) He (the raven) looked at himself, flying in circles and coming back. (661) Then he looked all over himself, “He didn’t tie anything on me anywhere,” he thought. (662) “Anything yet?” (663) “No, he must be holy after all,” he [the raven] said [to himself]. (664) He flew the same way again. (665) He flew a little bit higher. (666) Raised by Grandmother said, “Do you think your people will live?” (667) Oh! he pulled him down. (668) Oh! now he was terrified, saying, “Let me live, Raised by Grandmother!” (669) He [the boy] held both his feet. (670) “Grandma, tie this raven to it [the stake] for me with about this much [rope],” he said. (671) So then he built a fire beside it [the stake] she had erected. (672) “Tie it on over here.” (673) So the old woman tied his legs like this. (674) “Put lots [of wood] on the fire, Daughter, so it will be smokey,” he said.<sup>92</sup> (675) “It will be smokey, Daughter,” . . . uh . . . he said . . .

(676) [Rose:] Grandma . . .

(677) [Ruth:] Grandma.

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<sup>90</sup>Mrs. LaMere probably meant to say, “after he’s black,” since he’s already white and will be made black later in the story.

<sup>91</sup>Mrs. LaMere’s comment about ‘who’s telling the truth,’ suggests that a portion of the story has been omitted.

<sup>92</sup>As we see when Mrs. Weasel’s daughter corrects her in s.676, Mrs. Weasel meant to say, “Grandma” rather than “Daughter”. Mrs. Weasel seems to be aware that she has misspoken by her hesitancy in s.675. In Assiniboine the speech error is more conceivable because the words are somewhat similar: *mik<sup>h</sup>uś* ‘grandmother’ vs. *mic<sup>h</sup>úkš* ‘daughter’.



(678) So in this way he brought everything there. (679) Oh! then that extremely white raven got smoke on him. (680) Oh, then he got colored all black.<sup>93</sup> (681) Then the raven [said], “Raised by Grandmother, let me live. (682) Raised By Grandmother, let me live.” (683) “Your people will live, but they will go begging,” he said, caring nothing for what he (the raven) said. (684) Instead he turned him black.

(685) “Alright, Grandma, that’s enough,” he said. (686) So she untied it and gave it to him. (687) He kept holding him this way as he lectured him. (688) “If you keep doing this, your people will not thrive. (689) You will never bother the people in this way. (690) Then your people will be many in the future. (691) You will never bother the people in this way,” he said. (692) “Instead, you will kill whatever you can for yourselves over that way. (693) You will not bother the people,” he said. (694) You will stay somewhere else, you will not stay with the people,” he told him. (695) They will call you ‘black raven’,” he said. (696) So that’s the crow.

(697) [That’s the end of this one.]<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup>According to Mrs. Ditmar, in another version of this story, the fire is built inside a tent that the boy has asked his grandmother to erect. The boy has the bird sealed inside the tent so that it fills with smoke and the more the bird thrashes around, the more smoke he raises.

<sup>94</sup>This sentence is in the original transcription but not on the sound recording from which the present translation was done.

## 11. Ȫktómi Marries Whirlwind Woman

(1) Again, Ȫktómi was going along, it is said, you know. (2) Well, he saw a big tent. (3) “Ah, I guess, I guess I’ll go there,” he said. (4) So then he was going there. (5) Oh, a woman was sitting in the lodge and she was quilling. (6) Oh there were lots of quilled outfits hanging on a line in the lodge then. (7) You could not have said which was more beautiful than the other. (8) So then he lifted the door. (9) A woman! Oh! the beautiful woman sitting in the lodge was quilling. (10) She was using porcupine quills.

(11) “Ah, I was looking for you, and here you sit, it seems” he said, they say. (12) This one [said], “I was looking for you.” (13) “Yes, come in,” she told him. (14) So because of that he sent into the lodge. (15) This one said, “I was coming this way. (16) “I’ve been miserable, so... (17) Yes, it would be good if I married her,” he said to himself. (18) “Yes, if you’re brave enough, you can marry me,” she said, they say. (19) “Well, I’m not afraid of you, anyway. (20) I’ll marry you,” he said.

(21) So, “Sit down over here,” she said. (22) So then he sat down over here. (23) She took her [bag] here and was feeling around for some pemmican. (24) She put it in something and she fed him. (25) So then Ȫktómi ate. (26) He ate pemmican. (27) So [?then] it was day. (28) “Come on, this is an old camp site,” she said. (29) “I’m going to pack up.”

(30) [Ruth:] She made him wear those clothes.

(31) [Rose:] Hmm?

(32) [Ruth:] ...wearing the clothes...

(33) [Rose:] Yeah, oh!

(34) “Come on, wear one of those,” she said. (35) “You’re married to me now, then,” she said. (36) Oh, my! he took the best one and he wore the quilled one. (37) It was quilled all along the sleeves. (38) All along the leggings, too, since it was one of that kind of outfit they called *wa?ázut’upi* [a decorated outfit].

(39) Right then she said, “We’ll break camp now.” (40) “Oh,” Ȫktómi said, as he rushed around doing everything. (41) Ah, the woman made a travois. (42) She leaned it at an angle and tied it on. (43) “Sit here,” she told him. (44) She made him sit there like that. (45) There was not horse. (46) The woman herself would pull it. (47) She put him on a wooden [frame] tied to the travois and he sat there.

(48) Umm, long ago they had this round thing like a saddlehorn, you know, like a nose-shaped thing to hold on to. (49) So now she went, this whirlwind. (50) Oh, my! She ran through dense patches of itchberry (wild rose) bushes. (51) Now he was desperately hanging onto the handle. (52) Well, all at once she was tearing along at full speed and spinning as she went. (53) Then she just went right through every thorn bush around. (54) Oh, all the nice clothes he wore were ragged. (55) He camped then and the woman set up camp. (56) Then he said to her, “Ah, I guess I’ll go outside and just go over this way,” he said. (57) Well, he got up from there and instead, he ran and now Ȫktómi ran away.

(58) So he was running, running, running away like this. (59) Oh my! somewhere far away he thought, “Am I sleeping?” (60) He fell fast asleep this way and was lying like that. (61) Pretty soon

she came and camped on top of him. (62) Oh, then she said to him, “Get up and eat!” (63) He jumped up quickly and - oh! - it was his wife sitting there! (64) So then she fed him and he was eating.

(65) “Ah, I guess I’ll go for a stroll over this way,” he said. (66) Well, he peeked in then. (67) “Ah, look! (68) I met some young men. (69) They said my mother is dying,” he said. (70) They told me I should come in a hurry.” (71) Ah, the woman looked, she looked over there but she didn’t see anyone. (72) “Ah, they were already out of sight when you looked at them,” he said. (73) “they went along there,” he said.

(74) So just as before, Iktómi was running and running and running. (75) He ran through thickets there and he kept going and going and going... (76) He lay down on the ground among the thickets because he was exhausted. (77) Oh, again she camped on top of him. (78) Oh (\*groan\*), “Get up and eat,” she told him. [Rose laughs.] (79) He sat up and there was his wife again! (80) So she had turned up again!

(81) Ah, then, then, once again, “Ah, Wife, maybe we could stay here for the winter. (82) I piled up a lot of wood.” (83) So he was fooling her again. (84) “I guess I’ll go over here. (85) I’ll look for more wood,” he said, pretending. (86) He took off from there again. (87) Again he ran and was running and running. (88) There was a hole there and he went to it.

(89) Oh, he lay down inside there. (90) Well, this woman was coming, too, and just as before, she camped on top of him. (91) Well, she said to him, “Come on out and eat this.” (92) He lay there inside and she was camped above him. (93) So anyway, oh, he was thinking, “I wonder how I can still get away?” (94) He jumped up and ate. (95) “No, if something happens in the future, I thought maybe we could escape by running in here, so that’s why I’m digging it,” he said, they say. [Rose laughs.] (96) That guy was just lying!

(97)(Rose muses: “I don’t remember what happens after that,” but then she continues.)

(98) So then he was going on from there. (99) “Ah, I suppose I’ll let him go,” she thought then. (100) He was going along. (101) Well, he met someone then. (102) “Ah, how are you doing?” he asked him. (103) “Ah, I’m camped over here,” he said. (104) “This is where I live,” he said, they say. (105) “Well, come on, we’ll go back there.” (106) Well, he met this young man, you know. (107) So then he went back with him. (108) So then this woman packed up and went off somewhere. (109) Oh, my, when he got back there, [he said], “Ah, you should never have come by here! (110) You made her leave me!” he said they say.

(111) That’s the end. [Rose laughs.]

## 12. The Twin Boys (Morning Star and Evening Star)

(1) Well, there was a big tribe camped over there. (2) From among them, one got married. (3) Then he said, “Come on. (4) ‘Live alone,’ they always say.<sup>95</sup> (5) Let’s live that way, off somewhere away from camp,” he said. (6) So then he left with his wife. (7) They camped somewhere away from camp. (8) So now his wife was already pregnant.

(9) Meanwhile, this man was going hunting. (10) In that way when he had been hunting, he would return home with game, antelope and the like. (11) The woman would cook all these things. (12) So the man was about to go outside when he said, “Ah, Wife. (13) A man will come here. (14) That particular one will come here,” he said, they say. (15) “He’s not human, so when he arrives, don’t feed him,” he said, they say.

(16) He said this and, taking his [bow and] arrows, he went hunting.<sup>96</sup> (17) He left. (18) This is how it was when all at once someone turned back the lodge door.<sup>97</sup> (19) She looked. (20) Now it was that one – it was that [non-human] man. (21) “Oh, I see you’re at home,” he said, and he came inside.<sup>98</sup> (22) He came inside and sat down over there. (23) Then the other one thought, “Oh, how can I get him to leave right away?” (24) So she turned back. (25) (I don’t know what she fed him, but it must have been dried meat, since she took her knife.) (26) She fed him.<sup>99</sup>

(27) “Ah, I only eat on top of pregnant women,” he said. (28) Then he saw that woman’s knife. (29) (I don’t know where that knife is supposed to have come from.)<sup>100</sup> (30) So, then the woman lay down there like that. (31) She lay all the way down so that her stomach was showing. (32) So then he put it [his plate] here and ate. (33) When he finished eating, he put the plate – it was a wooden plate – aside. (34) He took the knife and stabbed her on this side (the top) and slashed her.

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<sup>95</sup>The man’s claim is odd since it was universally accepted that one’s survival depended on maintaining a productive relationship with one’s camp circle.

<sup>96</sup>*wahjke* ‘arrow(s)’ entails the bow. The reverse is also possible: *jtázipa* ‘bow’ frequently entails arrows. (see also s72 and s86). In English, the two items are commonly referred to together, almost like a compound noun, “bow ’n’ arrows.” When the Assiniboine reference to either bow or arrows entails the other, the full English phrase is used in the translation. Otherwise, when one or the other is specifically intended in the Assiniboine, as judged by context, only the single item is given in the translation.

<sup>97</sup>Skin lodges (tipis) had a hanging flap over the doorway opening, so a door was opened by turning it back, or lifting it.

<sup>98</sup>*é naká hušté* lit. ‘you’re sitting here, it seems’. Mrs. Ditmar interprets the phrase as an idiomatic expression meaning approximately, ‘I see you’re at home’.

<sup>99</sup>It may seem odd that the woman feeds the visitor in spite of her husband’s injunction, but she has little choice. Custom of the time dictated that visitors be fed and furthermore, she is away from the camp circle and defenseless. She can only hope that by observing customary behavior, the man will eat and depart. This may also explain her compliance with the man’s odd request that he be allowed to place his plate on her stomach as he eats.

<sup>100</sup>Mrs. Weasel’s uncertainty here is surprising because she has just told us in s25 that the woman herself had supplied the knife, and it may be assumed that all women carried, or had close to had, knives because they regularly butchered meat and cut it up for cooking. Nonetheless, the fact that she twice comments on the knife underscores the importance of the knife to the plot.

(35) And there were two children lying inside. (36). He pulled them out and [said], “Get out of here! (37) Stay at the place by the door,” he told him. (38) He pulled him out and tossed him over there to the place by the door.<sup>101</sup> (39) This place he tossed him was called *ʔuʂúta*.<sup>102</sup> (40) He took the other one out and [said], “Get out of here! (41) You will stay here in the swamp,” he told him. (42) Then he tossed this other boy over there into the swamp, it is said. (43) He did that and left.

(44) So this man was returning from hunting now, so he was coming. (45) Oh, he was peeking in. (46) There was his wife, lying on her back, killed. (47) “Oh, no, Wife! (48) I told you, ‘Don’t feed him,’ when [he comes],” he said. (49) “I wonder what he did with my children? (50) He pulled them out, he said, they say. (51) He saw two wombs so there must be two of them.

(52) Over there he made one of these so-called *wóćakne*, a scaffold.<sup>103</sup> (53) Then he put his wife on it, wrapping her in a buffalo robe and putting her on it this way. (54) He went hunting again. (55) He [must have?] gone hunting, as before.

(56) So then this little boy, Little Stays by the Door, came out. (57) “Come here! Come here!, we’ll pway, Little Stays in the Swamp,” he said.<sup>104</sup> (58) Then, oh! this one said, “Maybe your father is home.” (59) “No, he went off somewhere. (60) Hurry up,” he said. (61) So then he peeked in [and] there was no one. (62) He played there, too, and they played in the ashes. (63) Oh my! they scattered lots of ashes then. (64) They made track there, playing in the ashes, *you know*.

(65) So they did that, and now they knew that he (their father) was about to come back. (66) Well, he ran like a flash towards there and jumped into the water again. (67) This other one, too, went into his place. (68) The he (the father) was peeking in. (69) Oh, there were lots of ashes! (70) So there were two little tracks. (71) “Ah, these are the children’s tracks,” he said. (72) “I think I’ll make a little

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<sup>101</sup>Although Little Stays by the Door was pulled from the womb first, he will be referred to as the younger brother throughout most of the story. An exception is in s82 in which Little Stays by the Door is named as Little In the Swam’s older brother. Mrs. Weasel shows further confusion on this point also in s206 when she says “Little Stays In the Swamp,” attempts to correct herself and again says “Little Stays In the Swamp.” Logically, Little Stays By the Door is the elder, but the point is moot because the relative birth order of the boys is immaterial to the plot

<sup>102</sup>*ʔuʂúta* refers to either one of the places immediately to the right or left of the entrance to a lodge. Most tipis had a tipi liner suspended from the loge poles around the circumference of the interior of the lodge. Little Stays by the Door is expected to creep into the space between the tipi liner and the exterior wall of the tipi, just to one side of the entrance.

<sup>103</sup>When Mrs. Weasel uses an “old word,” a word that is not commonly used in a late-20th century context, she often gives an explanation of the word, as here and earlier in s39. In these instances, the Assiniboine word is retained in the translation.

<sup>104</sup>*ʔškátatanakte* This is baby talk, so it has been translated with English baby talk. At several points in the story Mrs. Weasel uses baby talk to remind her audience that the boys are small children, serving to explain their frequently childish behavior.

[bow and] arrows and also a little digging stick.<sup>105</sup> (73) I'll find out what they are."<sup>106</sup> (74) So then he put them over there at the back of the lodge. (75) He went hunting again. (76) He left.

(77) After a while that one said, "Come on!" (78) "My father made something for me, look!" he said. (79) So then the other one said, "Oh, your father is at home." (80) He peeked in again. (81) Then there was no one. (82) Only his older brother was in the lodge. (83) Ah, so then he looked all around the tent and there was no one home, so he went inside. (84) He played with him. (85) They didn't take the digging stick. (86) They took the little bow [and arrows]. (87) "Ah, he didn't make anything for me, at all" he kept saying. (88) Ah, [he said that] even though it was lying there along with it. (89) The little digging stick lay over there with it (the bow and arrows).

(90) So then they played in the lodge again. (91) The man cleaned up the ashes again and left, you know. (92) He always cleaned up the tracks they would make and left. (93) Again now they knew the man would come back. (94) "Scram! Your father is coming back!" he said and again he jumped into the deep part of the swamp over there. (95) He dove in. (96) The other one pulled himself inside.

(97) Then he was coming inside [and] there were two tracks. (98) "Ah, there are two of them. (99) "\_\_\_ I [will] catch them. (100) He made another bow and arrow and put it over there again. (101) He did that and he hid from them. (102) So he was hiding from them in the place by the door. (103) So then, "Come on!" he said, they say. (104) "Come on! (105) Father went hunting again. (106) We'll play again. (107) He made a little [bow and] arrow for you, too. (108) Come on!" he said. (109) The other one came back. (110) "Oh, he's in the lodge," he kept saying. (111) "No, there's no one. (112) Hurry up! (113) Look what he made."

(114) The other one (the father) tricked him into coming into the lodge this way. (115) He grabbed both of them. (116) "Oh, my sons, it's me! (117) It's me!," he said. (118) They were really pulling their father's hair hard. (119) Then they were scratching his neck but nonetheless he kept holding onto them. (120) "My sons, it's me! (121) I'll make really nice bows [and arrows] for you. (122) Stay with me, My sons," he said. (123) "Your mother died," he said to cajole them. (124) He had just barely calmed them down when one of them [said], "Hurry up and make them for us, those very nice [bows and] arrows." (125) Oh again he cut cherry wood, making them just a bit larger so they could shoot with them. (126) Finally he made them for them, both identical. (127) "Look, my sons, when you shoot, you should shoot at gophers," he told them. (128) He gave them to them. (129) Then they were happy. (130) After that the one didn't go back to the swamp. (131) The other one who always pulled himself inside (into the space by the door) didn't do that either. (132) Then, "My Sons, play with these things outside. (133) Don't bother your mother. (134) That's your mother lying there," he said. (135) Oh, they really looked. (136) Their mother was buried, lying that way. (137) "Sit still, My Sons," he said. (138) "I'm going hunting. (139) I'm going over here. (140) I won't go far. (141) I'll be back soon," he said. (142) Then he left.

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<sup>105</sup>*wahj'kp'ep'ena* 'little arrow(s)' entails a bow as well, just as later, in s86, *jt'azipapana* 'little bow' entails arrows. A reference to one frequently entails the other.

<sup>106</sup>Male children were given bows and arrows to play with; little girls were given digging sticks, reflecting the tools that they would use as adults. The conceit here is that little boys would intuitively choose the bow and arrow and little girls would intuitively choose the digging stick. A similar experiment is conducted by the grandmother in "Star Child" in this volume.

(143) So then this one looked. (144) Now, “Come on! Let’s shoot at our mother,” he said. (146) The other one, Little Stays in the Swamp, said, “Oh, but our mother’s dead.” (147) But he (the other one) insisted. (148) Again this other one [said], “Come on!” (149) Let’s revive our mother,” he said. (150) So then he was throwing them up there. (151) As those arrows came down, this one said, “Watch out, Mother! watch out, Mother! (152) They’re sticking in you!” he kept yelling, standing underneath. (153) The fourth time they did that, their mother was moving. (154) She was trying to turn over, you know. (155) They did it again. (156) “Oh, you could have shot me,” she said and she sat up. (157) She tried to get off. (158) So then she did get off. (159) “Oh, My Sons, you could have killed me,” she said – (though she had [already] been killed). (160) She said this simply to her children. (161) So this way, they went into the lodge with their mother.

(162) They were watching for their father. (163) Well, he came into sight – their father, you know. (164) So then they ran back to him saying over and over, “Father!” back and forth, so he (the father) thought, “Ah, something else [has happened].” (165) He hurried up. (166) “Father, he shot my mother in the side, and our mother came back to life from his shot! (167) Our mother got down and now she’s sitting in our father’s lodge!” they kept saying over and over, back and forth. (168) “Ah, Father, he’s the one [that did it],” he said, blaming each other, you know. (169) They finally caught up with him because they had brought their mother back to life. (170) He arrived back home and now he looked. (171) “Ah! Ah! My Sons, you have done well by bringing your mother back to life!” he said with feeling. (172) He told them that.

(173) All at once the other one told them, “Go this way. (174) Don’t go over that way, My Sons,” he said. (175) Then the younger one thought, “I wonder why our father said that?” (176) So then (I don’t know where he got horses from, but he must have gotten two pinto horses, and he also got two spotted dogs. (177) He gave one horse to each of them for their own. (178) He gave one of the a dog for his own, then he gave the other one a dog for his own.

(179) So then both of them had horses. (180) The woman made so-called pad saddles for them (181) She even quilled the corner edges of them – that woman, you know. (182) So then each of them had a quilled saddle, you know. (183) She quilled the corner of the saddle this way, but the corner of the saddle was quilled all over.

(184) “Why did my father say that about that direction over there, I wonder?” he thought, so he took his horse. (185) He saddled up and ran his horse to the hill—the younger one, Little Stays by the Door.<sup>107</sup> (186) Then that one was looking for something he could shoot as he went, you know. (187) Then all at once an elk was standing there. (188) Then he spurred his horse and chase after it. (189) Now he was about to shoot it when it went completely dark. (190) That poor little guy didn’t know where it came from. (191) Oh, now it rained. (192) It rained over there and then there was also snow splattering on the ground over there. (193) That one (the boy) broke up sticks and then made a big fire beside a tree, piling on wood and sat warming himself that way.

(194) “Ah, I’ll go back when it’s day,” the thought. (195) Suddenly an old woman was coming this way from the east. (196) “Oooo,” she said as she came. (197) “Oooo,” he heard her saying as she

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<sup>107</sup>This is an error: Little Stays by the Door is the elder brother.

came. (198) The she came closer wearing a cowhide robe around her shoulders.<sup>108</sup> (199) She appeared using a cane.

(200) “Oh, Grandson, you’ve done a good thing by building a fire. (201) I’m about to freeze.” (202) “Ah, sit down there,, Grandmother. (203) Sit there and warm yourself, Grandmother. (204) Soon it will be day,” he told her. (205) So then something was about to happen – the old woman thought, “I wish he were asleep. (206) So then something was about to happen: now he was sleepy, Little Stays in the Swamp - Oh! Little Stays in the Swamp.<sup>109</sup> (207) Then, “Grandmother, if you are sleepy, lie down on the opposite side [of the fire],” he told her. (208) “You’ll stay warm,” he told her. (209) “Yes, Grandson, I’ll do it. (210) Grandson, instead I’ll watch out for you,” she said. (211) “If it’s about to burn you, Grandson, I’ll wake you,” she said. (212) So then this one (the boy) fell asleep. (213) So then this old woman was searching around in her lap. (214) She was wearing a deerskin around her shoulders, something called an *okpúliknipsis’a* [a kind of pouch], so she felt around and pulled out a bundle. (215) “Now, what do I need in order to add another tree?” she said [speaking to herself]. (217) And she broke a stick and chewed up the small end of it. (218) She poked the little horse with it then... it was a tree! (219) She poked the person, too. (220) At that, he jumped up, so she made him into a very straight tree. (221) She did it to his little dog, too. (222) That one she made into a curved piece of wood (curvy tree). (223) While she was doing that, it became day so this old woman left.

(224) So then the other one got lonely [because] his younger brother had gone somewhere. (225) So then he [said],” Ah, my younger brother didn’t come back. (226) I think I’ll follow his tracks,” he said. (227) So then he saddled up and whatever direction he (his brother) disappeared in he followed, too.

(228) So he was going and going. (229) Oh, he would go that way. (230) Again, again he slowed down to a stop and then there was this elk. (231) He began to walk, speeding up to a trot and went towards the woods. (232) “Oh, this, this, this – this is the one that did something to my younger brother!”<sup>110</sup> (233) Well, \_\_\_? so now he took his [bow and] arrows. (234) Now he was about to shoot it and, just as before, it went completely dark. (235) Well, so then he didn’t know which way to go, because it was dark. (236) So then he was at the woods and it seemed he was about to shoot when it was moving. (237) There were lots of ashes there. (238) “Oh, my younger brother must have built a fire here. (239) I’ll find out what’s going on.

(240) Then he broke some sticks and built a fire there again. (241) It was a roaring fire. (242) Oh, he was about to go again when he heard [the] old woman coming. (243) “Oooo,” he heard her

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<sup>108</sup>*ptewányuwa šinána* ‘cow hid robe’. Mrs. Weasel probably meant to say simply *pté šinána* ‘buffalo robe’ The present story of the twin boys is pre-Contact, as evidenced by its structure and themes, and domestic cows were introduced by Europeans. Also, in the Star Child narrative, Mrs. Weasel said *ptewányuwa* when she meant *pté* and was corrected by her daughter. It is therefore reasonable to assume that ‘buffalo robe’ is meant. here.

<sup>109</sup>According to her earlier statement in s185, this is Little Stays By the Door. When Mrs. Weasel says “Little Stays In the Swamp” she realizes her error and corrects herself – but says “Little Stays In the Swamp” again. In fact, Little Stays In the Swamp is probably the correct name for the character in this part of the story, since he is the younger brother and it is the older brother who comes to his rescue.

<sup>110</sup>It’s a bit oblique, but this is where it is revealed that the elk and the old woman are one and the same. It is more explicit in s304. The old woman has been using an elk form to lure the young men.



(moaning) as she came. (244) “Oh, this is the one.” (245) Again he heard her coming. (246) “Oooo,” she said. (247) She came so then he looked at her. (248) Oh, [this] old woman must be coming. (249) She reached him and said, “Grandson, you did this well.” (250) Then it rained and snowed again.

(251) Well, he took his little saddle and saddle blanket. (252) He covered it with skins and sat down. (253) (This is Little Stays By the Door). (254) He covered it and sat adding wood to the fire. (255) “Ah, Grandmother, I’m sleepy,” he said. (256) “If you want, lie down over there, Grandmother,” he [said]. (257) “Ah, Grandson, if you catch on fire, I’ll tell you, Grandson. (258) Lie down, Grandson.”

(259) So then he went here and turned his little saddle on its side and used it as a pillow. (260) So, this little saddle blanket had a hole in it. (261) He was looking through it. (262) “I wonder how she killed my younger brother,” he thought as he kept looking. (263) All at once he stretched out. (264) “Grandson, that spark landed on you. (265) You’ll catch fire,” she kept saying, but instead he lay still and kept looking. (266) Over there he thought, “Oh, so this is it.” (267) “So many things,” she said.

(268) All at once she said, “Oh, what is it I need to not make trees?” (269) So she felt around in her lap again. (270) “That’s not it. (271) Oh, *this* is the one that cures,” she said. (272) “[And] I use *this one* to make trees.” (273) She said this and put it over there. (274) He was watching her. (275) She did that and – she probably had teeth – she chewed the end of that stick thing. (276) She dipped [the stick] in it. (277) Now his dog was lying across the fire. (278) First, she touched it with the stick. (279) He saw a crooked branch there. (280) It was the dog again. (281) Oh, now she turned around and now she was going to do the same thing to him. (282) He jumped up and grabbed the stick away. (283) “Grandmother, what are you doing?” he said. (284) “What did you say, Grandmother?” he said. (285) “Nothing, Grandson. (286) Let me live, Grandson. (287) Let me live. (288) I didn’t say anything.” (289) “No, you said something, Grandmother. (290) You said something. (291/293) You said, ‘Which one of these turns them back?’ you said to them. (292) Where’s the one that cures?” (292) “This is the one, Grandson. (294) If you want it, take it. (295) I make trees using this one, Grandson. (296) Touch [them] right there with the stick and mutter without making any sense.” (297) Then he touched her with the stick. (298) Then a bent stick of rotten wood was standing there.

(299) So then he poked them with the one she said would cure. (300) He went along poking all of them, then the young men stood up, restored to themselves. (301) “Go back to wherever you came from,” he said, (302) “This old woman will never do this again; she was the elk,” he told him.<sup>111</sup> (303) “Come on, go back! (304) I will go back, too.” (305) Suddenly there was daylight. (306) And then it was a nice day. (307) So then he touched his younger brother and he, too, stood up, and his little horse, too, and then his little horse was neighing. (308) His little dog, too, was barking because it recognized him. (309) “Ah, Younger Brother,” he said. (310) “You don’t listen to anything I tell you,” he said. (311) “You won’t ever see me again,” he told him. (312) “You will appear first, Younger Brother. (313) You will be called the ‘evening star’ (Old Man in the West). (314) (Oh, it seems to me that’s the one.) (315) “Me, I will rise over this way at daybreak. (316) Me, I will be called the ‘morning star’, he said. (317) “Always remember that,” he told him. (318) Then he went back with him.

(319) He went back with him, so they arrived back home. (320) “Father,” he said. (321) “An old woman almost killed him, but I brought him back, he said. (322) “I told him not to [go] but he didn’t listen to me. (323) Father, you will never seem me again, when we come back. (324) Their

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<sup>111</sup>The old woman had used her elk form to lure young men into the woods.

mother also told him, “Oh, My Sons, it makes me feel good that you’ve come home,” she said, they say.

(325) “My Sons, don’t go over here,” he (the father?) said, they say. (326) Again he thought, “I wonder why he said that?” (327) “Hurry up! let’s go over there,” he said. (328) So then he was shooting arrows as they were going along. (329) Oh, they saw a tent. (330) They arrived there. (331) Their uncle was sitting there with something missing. (332) “Ah, Uncle, why are you sitting like this?” he said. (333) “Ah, Nephews, a man came here and I gambled with him,” he said. (334) “He told me if he beat me, I would win his body.<sup>112</sup> (335) So then, “Me, if I beat *him*, he said I would win his body. (336) So then he said if he beat me, he would win my head from me. (337) Then he beat me, Nephews,” he said. (338) “So then he cut my head off. (339) He carried it away somewhere.” (340) “Ah, Uncle, we’ll go look for it for you,” he said. (341) “Ah, Grandsons,<sup>113</sup> that one who took my head went over here into the clouds.” (342) “Come on, come on!”<sup>114</sup>

(343) So then they were going along somewhere. (344) They were going along. (345) Ah, they saw a tent. (346) They were going there and then they reached it. (347) Then, “Ah, Grandsons, what are you looking for, Little Stays in the Swamp, Little Stays by the Door? (348) What are you looking for, going along this way?” she said, they say. (349) “Ah, Grandmother, we’re looking for our uncle’s head.” (350) “Ah, he already came by here with a cane yesterday and he left,” she said. (351) “Ah, Grandsons, I’ll help you,” she said. (352) “This one who took your uncle’s head is the sun,” she said, they say. (353) So then she gave them picks. (354) “Grandsons, you will go on the rock cliff with these. (355) Using these, going hand over hand, you will go up high. (356) Whey the get worn down, Grandsons, say, ‘Come on, Grandmother, take these,’ and throw them down. (357) That’s how your grandmother will help you. (358) “Go!” she said as she gave them to them.

(359) So again they went. (360) They were going along and again a tent appeared and they saw it. (361) Another of these (grandmothers) said, “Oh, Grandsons, what are you looking for, Grandsons, Little Stays in the Swamp, Little Stays by the Door?” (362) “Ah, Grandmother, that one won our uncle’s head. (363) They say he took it over this way so we’re following after him.” (364) “Yes, Grandsons, he went through here yesterday. (365) Well, then, Grandsons, I will help you, too. (366) Maybe you’ll get there, Grandsons.” (367) She gave each of them a woodpecker, the kind that hops around on trees. (368) “If you’re unable to go (up the cliff) say, ‘Let me be this,’ and that way it will be well, Grandsons. (369) If the claws are crooked; ;if you can’t go [i.e., dig] any more, Grandsons, say, ‘Here, Grandmother! Take your things back!’ (370) Yet another of your grandmothers is sitting up ahead. (371) Maybe she’ll give you something, too.”

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<sup>112</sup>*makténa* ‘he beat me’ – should be *wakténa* ‘I beat him’ Mrs. Weasel corrects herself in the next sentence.

<sup>113</sup>*Mit’ákoš* ‘Grandson(s) - Mrs. Weasel has misspoken herself here and in s347: she meant to say, *Minéksi* ‘Nephews’.

<sup>114</sup>*ǰhyǰ* does not precisely mean ‘come on’ in the English language sense. It may be used any time someone is urging someone else to action. In this case, it seems likely that the uncle is urging his nephews to hurry after the one who took his head, rather than the boys saying, ‘come on’, especially since there is no additional quotative to indicate a change of speaker. This being the case, “Go on!” would be a more appropriate translation in the context.

(372) So then they went on from there again. (373) They were going and going and going along, you know. (374) Oh, they saw another tent. (375) They went there and it was another grandmother. (376) “Well, Grandson, what are you looking for, coming this way with your younger brother, Little Stays in the Swamp?” (377) “Yes, Grandmother, that one won our uncle’s head and took it back over there so we’re following after our uncle’s head,” he said. (378) “Yes, Grandson, they left three days ago. (379) He passed by walking with a cane. (380) He stuck it on his cane through a hole in the back of your uncle’s head and he went by walking with a cane. (381) I think I’ll help you, Grandsons. (382) She caught some fireflies and gave them to them. (383) “Grandsons, say ‘Let me be this!’” (384) She said this and gave fireflies to both of them. (385) “Go! (386) Yet another of your grandmothers is sitting up ahead. (387) She, too will probably help somehow. (388) You will get there. (389) She might help you.

(390) So then they went. (391) Oh, they saw another tent. (392) Again they got there. (393) “Ah, Grandsons, what are you looking for over here?” she said. (394) “Ah, that one won our uncle’s head so we’re going to look for it for him,, Grandmother.” (395) “Ah, Grandsons, I will help you,” she said, they say. (396) “Look, I will tell you about this one. (397) At midday he stops there [at a place] for an instant. (398) He only stops like this for an instant, then he disappears. (399) [When] he stops there, Grandsons, grab for it right then. (400) Then quickly jump through the hole that’s there to come back here,” she said, they say. (401) Again she gave each of them plumes. (402) “Say, ‘Let me this’, and blow on them! (403) You will get there,” she said. (404) “Hold on to them,” she said.

(405) So then they went on. (406) Oh, there were the monster’s tracks leading back to the so-called sky door. (407) “He always stops there, Grandsons.” (408) So then they stopped there together. (409) They both blew on them this way. (410) So they were going along and they stopped at the lodge. (411) “There’s a stone there, Grandsons. (412) Sit behind it,” she said, they say. (413) “When he stops there for a moment, grab it quickly, and when you throw yourselves down, it will be extremely hot, Grandsons; you will burn,” she said. (414) So that’s how they did it now.

(415) Now there was a big stone there. (416) They sat down behind it, [the tracks? showing the direction he always came from. (417) The worn-down place was supposedly where he always stopped, called ‘midday’.<sup>115</sup> (418) Well, whenever the younger one, Little Stays by the Door, said, “Older Brother, Older Brother, I’m burning!” he would push on him, quickly taking his hand to keep him from shaking. (419) “Older Brother, I’m buurning!” he said. (420) Oh, just as he was about to go, here he (the sun) came. (421) Now he was leaning on his came. (422) He was leaning on his cane to press it into the ground and looking all around. (423) Oh, this one (the boy) jumped up. (424) He threw it down, and his younger brother, too, and holding it (the head) in front of him, he threw himself down [through the hole].

(425) So then they were on their way back home. (426) They arrived back home. (427) They ran like this to their uncle’s lodge. (428) So they were going along. (429) “Uncle, are you home?” (430) “Yes.”

(431) Ruth: Where did they put those things they gave them?

(432) Rose: Where?

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<sup>115</sup>*ápóskokan*: Mrs. Ditmar says this is an old word, no longer commonly used.

(433) No, those *wahjšwa* thingies...

(434) *Tʰahjšpa* (picks).

(435) Ruth: How did they use them?

(436) Rose: They held them like this.

(437) Ruth: Well, why did she give them... [unintelligible: Rose and Ruth speaking at once]. (438) You didn't tell that.

(439) Rose: They went over there [and] now they had these picks she gave them, you know. (440) So they went up high. (441) So then they looked. (442) Now they were worn down, so they said, "Come on, Grandmother, take these things of yours." (443) He threw them down. (444) Again those woodpeckers climbed this stone [cliff], it is said. (445) These other ones were hopping here and there all over. (446) So then they were going along. (447) So the claws on these other ones were completely crooked. (448) And then they slid to the bottom. (449) Once again they threw these other ones down. (450) "Grandmother, take your things," they said. (451) They went on from there again, and now those fireflies, as they're called, were making sparks in the trees. (452) You never see them. (453) So they turned themselves into these. (454) Then they quickly climbed the cliff.

(455) They had almost reached there. (456) They reached a town, as it's called. (457) Then after that they used these plumes. (458) They were about to blow on them that way. (459) So then this one looked. (460) They held them like this and blew on them that way. (461) Now they arrived over there and then they sat behind this big rock. (462) So they sat behind it and their little younger brothers – his little younger brother was burning, you know. (463) So he was afraid. (464) "Don't say anything," he said. (465) "This one is coming close," he said. (466) So then this one was trying to sink the head (on its stick) into the ground so then the older one jumped up holding his little younger brother by the hand. (467) He grabbed the head and right away they jumped through the hole. (468) Then they arrived back home, it is said. (469) They arrived back in this country over here. (470) So they ran in the direction of their uncle's lodge. (471) They were holding their uncle's head as they were going along. (472) They arrived at their uncle's lodge.

(473) "Uncle, are you home?" he said to him. (474) "Yes," he said. (475) He was at home. (476) "Uncle, we brought your head back," he said. (477) "Yes, Nephews, I thank you," he said. (478) So then he looked. (479) Well, then I guess they teased him, putting it [the head] on [him] every which way. (480) Sometimes they put it this way, sometimes that. (481) Well, every which way, in fact. (482) "Ah, Nephews, you're playing with my head. (483) Put it on right for me!" (484) So they put it on for him. (485) "Ah, Nephews, I thank you," he said. (486) "It feels good to have my head back, Grandsons.<sup>116</sup> (487) No one but you has ever gone over there. (488) Come on, I will see my older sister. (489) We'll go back," he said. (490) He stood up and then they went back.

(491) "Mother, Father, we brought our uncle's head back," they said. (492) "Oh, My Sons, that is good. (493) Your uncle thanks you, My Sons. (494) Your uncle would have been without a head for ever," he said. (495) So then they all went into the lodge together and sat down in the lodge.

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<sup>116</sup>This should be *Tʰušká* 'Nephews'.

(496) Now he (the older boy) said, “Father, this one doesn’t listen to me. (497) He, my younger brother, my younger brother will be called the sunset or evening star. (498) Me, I’ll be called the morning star. (499) We’ll be separated, Younger Brother – you will never see me,” he told him. (500) So it was this way, they never saw each other. (501) One of them [went] this way, the other [went] this way – the so-called morning star appears in the morning, the other in the evening.

(502) This is the end.

### 13. The Jealous Sister-in-Law

(1) Well, a large tribe camped over there, it is said. (2) Among them was an older sister, an older sister living alone with a young man. (3) Her mother and father were dead. (4) So then she lived with her older brother – oh– she lived alone with her *younger* brother. (5) Then the woman said this to her younger brother, “Younger Brother, you should look for a wife who could stay with us.”<sup>117</sup> (6) So the young man left for a foreign tribe somewhere. (7) He left, married a woman, and came back home.

(8) So it went on like that. (9) It went on like that and now she was pregnant. (10) Oh! this woman he brought back was crazy. (11) So at night she said she had bad dreams. (12) “Oh, get up. (13) I had a bad dream. (14) I dreamt your older sister killed your best horse. (15) Get up,” she said. (16) So he got up and went to look at the horses. (17) So that horse lay dead. (18) So he came back and said, “Ah, that’s alright. (19) I don’t know why my older sister did that,” he said.

(20) It was night again. (21) They slept again as before. (22) Again [?she saw] dawn was coming again and as before, “Oh, get up. (23) I had a bad dream. (24) I dreamt your older sister killed your oxen!” she said. (25) “Get up,” she said. (26) He got up and, as before, he went outside. (27) Again, the oxen lay dead. (28) He came back again. (29) He came back. (30) As before, again he said, “I don’t know why my older sister did that.”

(31) Once again it was night. (32) So it was night again. (33) Again [?she saw] dawn was coming and as before, “Oh, get up. (34) I dreamt your older sister killed you pigs!” she said. (35) The young man got up again and went outside and went over there. (36) The pigs lay dead. (37) He came back into the lodge again and said, “Ah, I don’t know why my older sister keeps doing that.”

(38) So then in the meantime, she must have had a baby. (39) So then they went to bed. (40) Oh! next morning, “Oh, get up, get up. (41) I had a bad dream!” she said. (42) “She killed my son!” she said. (43) “Your older sister is even lying there holding the knife.” (44) This woman had cut her child’s throat and her sister-in-law was sleeping over there. (45) As she slept that way, she managed to put the knife in her hand. (46) She put it in her hand in such away to make him think it was his older sister. (47) So she lay that way, holding it. (48) When he went there, he looked at the knife and, oh, it was all bloody. (49) “Ooh, ooh, she killed my son!” she said.

(50) So this one (the sister) got up. (51) She didn’t want to tell her younger brother all about the young woman. (52) Apparently she had put the knife there. (53) “Older Sister,” he said to her, “Older Sister, put on your best clothes. (54) Put on your buckskin outfit.” (55) So she was rummaging around (for her clothes). (56) Then he told her, “Braid your hair, too,” and she braided her hair. (57) Ah, she prepared herself nicely. (58) When she had braided her hair, he said, “Come on, Older Sister.” (59) There was a pine tree by the door of their lodge. (60) “Climb this,” he told her. (61) So she climbed up. (62) So then it seems there was a branch on this pine tree. (63) Then she sat down there in the tree. (64) She sat up there in the tree, hugging it. (65) Ah, so then he followed her. (66) Oh, he went way up. (67) “Ah, [Younger Sister... oh,] Older Sister,” he said, “Older Sister, hold your hand out,” he said. (68) She held her hand out. (69) He cut it off. (70) He threw it down. (71) “The other one, Older Sister.” (72) So now she showed the other one. (73) He cut the other one off, too, and took it and tossed it over there. (74) He did that and he went down. (75) When he had gotten about this

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<sup>117</sup>*tuwéĥ kic’i muk’ú c’éyaka* This phrase compresses two ideas, that the man should take a wife (*kic’i’?u* ‘a spouse’) and that the wife should come and live with them *muk’ú* ‘stay with us’.

close, he jumped. (76) Oh, there was a stick poking up and he jumped right on the stick. (77) Having landed on it, that pine stabbed him through the foot.

(78) [Ruth:] The young man...<sup>118</sup>

(79) [Rose:] The young man. (80) It's the young man who jumped. (81) Ah, so then he looked at it. (82) The pine (stick) had gone all the way through his foot. (83) So then she managed to get down somehow, using these (handless arms). (84) There was nothing there now. (85) So then she was coming down the tree, holding on somehow.

(86) [Ruth:] The young woman...

(87) [Rose:] ...she arrived at the place where the young man had landed on the pine (stick). (88) So her younger brother was standing there and she said, "Younger Brother, if I had my hands, I would take it out for you."<sup>119</sup> (89) She went crying down the road.

(90) A little ways from there, there was a boat. (91) "Oh, I'll get wet." (92) So then whenever she saw itch berries, she bit them off like this.<sup>120</sup> (93) The itch berry [thorns] scratched her all up and tangled her braids but she kept biting them off. (94) She kept biting them off and eating them.

(95) So then she went on. (96) There was a trail in the woods. (97) So she was going along the trail. (98) Oh, she saw a hollow log just big enough for her to fit into. (99) Then, too, there was a tremendous rain storm. (100) So somehow or other she managed to sit down inside. (101) She turned backwards and that way she could get into the hollow log to sit. (102) She was sitting inside there.

(103) The all at once a little dog peeked in. (104) It peeked in here and somehow went into the hollow log just so far and sat down. (105) The little dog was coming and now it licked her. (106) Then it went (whimpering), "Um, um, um, um, um," as it was licking her. (107) Then the little dog spoke. (108) So then, "Sit down. (109) I will bring something to eat," it said. (110) "I am the dog of the chief's son," it said. (111) "He always feeds me very well," it told her. (112) "Stay right here," it said. (113) Then the little dog went out of the hollow log.

(114) So then this young man was riding along. (115) So he was going back. (116) So they were ready to eat now so they all sat down. (117) So then he looked and now this little dog took bread in its mouth, took meat in its mouth, and put it together on a little plate. (118) They fed the little dog. (119) "Ah, it never did this before," [they thought]. (120) It held it with its mouth and looked all

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<sup>118</sup>Ruth asks for clarification because there is no distinction between 'he' and 'she' in the Assiniboine language. In English, no clarification is needed because the pronoun 'he' makes it clear that it is the young man who has impaled his foot. Similar clarification is requested in s86, and again, no clarification is needed in English because of the pronoun.

<sup>119</sup>This sentence could also be translated, "...when I have my hands, I will take it out for you." Even though the young woman will, in fact, regain her hands, at this point she has no reason to expect this so the past subjunctive hypothetical form is used to indicate that the young woman regards her statement as being contrary to possibility.

<sup>120</sup>'itch berries' are the fruit of a particular kind of rose bush. The berries can be eaten but are said to cause a rash.

around at them here and went outside holding it in its mouth. (121) “It must be planning to eat it outside,” [they thought].<sup>121</sup>

(122) So then it went along the trail through the woods, going to the hollow log again and it jumped in. (123) It did that and the woman was still sitting here. (124) It held it in its mouth and the little dog put it right here near her mouth. (125) It did that and then the woman took bites. (126) She had none (i.e., no hands). (127) They held it like this and sat like this because she had no hands. (128) So then whenever the little dog fed her, she was eating its food.

(129) Again it said, “I will come again when my master feeds me some more,” it said. (130) Saying this, it went outside again. (131) Then this woman continued to sit inside the hollow log. (132) Then it went back the same way. (133) All at once they had already fed it several times and the little dog kept doing that. (134) It held it with its mouth and that way it (went) along the trail through the woods, looking back the whole time. (135) It kept doing that. (136) After it had done this several times, this one (the young man) spoke to his father. (137) “Father, my dog is acting strangely. (138) Whenever I fed him, he usually ate it up. (139) Father, it always holds it in its mouth and goes outside. (140) My horse is tied outside,” he told him. (141) He also had two younger sisters. (142) “Younger Sisters, watch the little dog closely [to see] wherever it goes. (143) Watch it closely,” he said.

(144) So then he saddled a horse for his son and tied it by the door. (145) So then they were giving a lot more food to the little dog on purpose. (146) Once again, once again the little dog looked closely at them, looking all around. (147) It looked all around and then grabbed it and it was like that. (148) Looking back as it held the meat in its mouth, it looked back and went outside.

(149) So then they all watched. (150) “Which way did it go?” (151) “It went along that trail in the woods.” (152) So the young man mounted his horse and chased after it. (153) So he was following it, going and going. (154) Oh, it was trotting along over there along the trail through the woods with those things in its mouth. (155) He watched carefully where it would go.

(156) All at once it darted off the trail, and ran along a smaller trail. (157) He was going along and now the young man [saw] a big log lying there. (158) It had a hole in it. (159) He changed direction there and thought, “It went this way.” (160) The little dog was already there with her, the little dog feeding the woman the food by using its mouth.

(161) Oh, so then he went where his dog had gone and peeked in. (162) Oh, there was a young woman inside there and she was beautiful. (163) She was missing something. (164) She had no hands. (165) “Ah, my little dog was acting strangely so I chased him. (166) So you’re the one it comes to feed, it seems,” he told her. (167) “Yes,” she said. (168) “Why are you sitting here this way,” he asked her. (169) “[\*sighing\*], My younger brother, my younger brother did this to me. (170) My younger brother cut them both off of me this way,” she said. (171) “Ah, I will marry you,” he said. (172) “I will have you, I will take you back. (173) Come on,” he said.

(174) Well, the little dog was whining and barking. (175) The little dog was this kind of very little white dog. (176) Well, it was really wagging its tail and whining because his master was going to

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<sup>121</sup>s119 and s121: There are two ways to interpret these sentences, either as the implied thoughts of the people observing the dog’s behavior or as direct quotations of their thoughts. Mrs. Ditmar prefers the latter, as seems to be indicated by Mrs. Weasel’s intonation.



take her back with him. (177) So then he pulled her out and went back with her. (178) He was going back with her and not they stopped at his door. (179) He said, "Father." (180) "Yes." (181) "My dog found this woman," he said. (182) "Father, I'm going to marry her," he said. (183) "Alright."

(184) So then he brought her into the lodge. (185) Ah, they were happy they were going to have a sister-in-law. (186) They also fed her then, cutting up (her food) for her and were feeding her. (187) So then she married the young man, the chief's son. (188) Then her belly grew large. (189) So she was pregnant now. (190) Then there was a distant land [?]. (191) "Ah, I'm going far away, Younger Sisters. (192) Take good care of your sister-in-law," he said. (193) "Yes, Older Brother, we love our sister-in-law dearly. (194) We will take good care of her." (195) So then the young man went somewhere far away.

(196) Then there was a different young man that they had as a worker, doing odd jobs outside. (197) He did all the jobs outside. (198) So the (woman) had a baby. (199) She had twins. (200) So both of these little boys had little stars on their foreheads.

(201) So the young woman (women?) wrote him a letter. (202) So then they sent this young man, called Ȫkc'ȷcuna, to take the letter, so he left.

(203) [Ruth:] They wanted to tell their older brother about the children she had borne.

(204) [Rose:] Yes! (205) They told him everything. (206) "Oh, Older Brother, my sister-in-law had two boys. (207) On their foreheads, Older Brother, there are little stars, on these, my little nephews. (208) Well, they are such very cute babies, with these stars here on their foreheads," she said—she meant right here (narrator pointing to her own forehead). (209) Because of this they told him to come back from wherever he was staying – [he must have gone away somewhere to work, \_\_\_\_\_?]

(210) So that other man was going along, going along. (211) It was Ȫkc'ȷcuna taking the letter now. (212) Oh, he saw a big log cabin. (213) Two young women were walking around outside. (214) He was about to pass them. (215) "Oh, Ȫkc'ȷcuna, come here, come here! (216) Come here, we'll play gambling games," she said. (217) "Let's deal some hands. (218) Where are you going?" (219) "Oh, I'm going over this way. (220) I have a long way to go. (221) It will probably be night by the time arrive," he said. (222) "Oh, come on, why don't deal some hands." (223) They spread something out to play on and had already dealt the cards. (224) "Come on," he said, too. (225) Then they fed him something. (226) Then meanwhile they mixed in some kind of medicine and they gave it to him. (227) Even so, he kept eating it and because of it, he fell asleep. (228) He slept.

(229) As he slept, they rummaged through his things and looking at them. (230) Ah, now they read that there were two very cute baby boys with stars on their foreheads. (231) "Hurry back, Older Brother. (232) We wish for you to see your sons," she said. (233) These two (young women) ripped it up and threw it away. (234) Then, "Older Brother, these two children are pigs. (235) They completely soil your place," she went so far as to say. (236) Now these two young women said bad things there. (237) She did that [i.e., put the false letter back in his pouch]. (238) He woke up startled (at having fallen asleep) and left quickly in embarrassment.

(239) Having left quickly, he arrived over there. (240) "Ah, they told me to bring this to you, so that's why I came," he said. (241) Oh, woe! (242) He opened it and read it. (243) It wasn't what he expected. (244) He wrote a letter back. (245) "These are my own children. (246) These are my own

children. (247) If I see this for myself, I will throw them away. (248) If what you say is not true, I won't do it, once I see my children for myself. (249) Hold onto them," he said. (250) "I will be back soon."

(251) He (the messenger) came back the same way. (252) "Oh, come here, we'll gamble!"

(253) [Ruth:] It was that Ukc'cuna with the other letter.

(254) [Rose:] He was bringing back another letter; Ukc'cuna was there again. (255) He arrived back there – he must have been following the same trail as before. (256) He arrived back at the same place and these two women were outside. (257) "Oh, come over here. (258) Let's play card games, come here. (259) So again, again he went inside, this crazy person, Ukc'cuna. (260) He joined in the card games again and played a long game with them. (261) "Come on, eat this." (262) Again, again he ate it as he had before. (263) Oh, again he fell asleep. (264) He was snoring.

(265) They stole the letter from him in the same way as before. (266) Again, they read it. (267) So, "When you receive this letter and you have finished reading it, have Ukc'cuna throw the children out. (269) You said they had soiled my lodge," he said. (270) These were all the bad things these young women wrote. (271) Then they put it back in his things. (272) Then he jumped up and left.

(273) So he was going back. (274) "Oh, I wonder why my older brother wrote back," she thought. (275) They read it and they both cried because of it, you know. (276) "I wonder why my older brother said that. (277) Why did our older brother say that," she said. (278) Oh, they prepared the children's things for them to leave, tying them on one side of her. (279) Well, she was crying, too. (280) Her sisters-in-law stood on each side of her and braided her hair. (281) Once was on this side and the other was on the other side. (282) They took time to braid her hair nicely for her. (283) They, too, were crying as they braided it for her. (284) They tied the children on her back in such a way that they couldn't fall out. (285) Unfortunately, she couldn't do anything to help because of what she was missing. (286) She had no hands. (287) Oh, just as before, she ate itch berries by biting them off.

(288) [Ruth:] They told the young woman to go outside.

(289) [Rose:] Yes, they told her to go outside and she was crying along the trail through the woods, you know. (#) Then children were, too. (290) Oh, she saw a lake. (291) A big lake came into view. (292) It was a big lake. (293) Oh, she was thirsty. (294) These (children) were about to cry, too. (295) Both of those she carried on her back were already whining. (296) So then she waded out to the deep part. (297) "I will get a drink for myself," she said... uh,... she thought. (298) Oh, then she went this deep. (199) Then she went farther, going deeper into the water. (300) Then that was as deep as it got. (301) When she went like this, so that both of them were coming off, she straightened up. (302) Whenever she sat down, it seemed they would fall off. (303) Whenever she bent down as if to touch her lips to the water, both the children always seemed to be falling off. (304) Using just her arms, she pressed them to hold them on, but they kept sliding off. (305) So she went in deeper. (306) But then he (a spirit) found her.<sup>122</sup> (307) Oh, now she almost touched the water with her lips when both of the children came loose and fell in. (308) She made a vain attempt to grab them as they fell and then her hands came back because of the water. (309) So she was able to pull them out and right away she went to the shore and sat down there. (310) Using (her hands) she nursed them then. (311) So then both of

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<sup>122</sup>This reference to the spirit is slightly premature, anticipating his appearance in s312.

them were sitting there as she nursed them.

(312) Then all at once what seemed to be a man came and stood here. (313) “Ah, why are you like this?” he asked her. (314) “Oh, my younger brother’s wife, my sister-in-law, is crazy and my younger brother cut my hands off,” she said. (315) “Then I went wandering aimlessly and crying.” (316) “Yes, yes, I know those things,” he said. (317) “Put four sticks this way,” he told her. (318) Then something else seemed to fall (from somewhere) – a knife. (319) So then he (cut) willows. (320) He spread something on the ground and she put both of them down. (321) They slept.

(322) So since this is where she will live, he put four sticks over there like this, putting them in four places. (323) “Come on,” he said to her. (324) Sit down holding your (children),” he said, seeming to speak over her head. (325) So she took them and cuddled both her little children. (326) Then, “Close your eyes,” he told her. (327) So then she closed her eyes. (328) “Say, ‘I wish this were my house’,” he told her. (329) “I wish this were my house.” (330) “Say, ‘I wish I had some workers’.” (331) “I wish I had some workers, too,” she said. (332) So then, “Say, ‘I wish for all the things I will need to use inside the house, too’,” he said. (333) “Say, ‘I wish there were something in the house for my children to sleep on’,” he said. (334) She said it, then [he said], “Come on. (335) Open your eyes,” he told her. (336) This kind of house [that she had wished for] was sitting there. (337) Her children were there. (338) Oh, she was happy and she looked outside. (339) There were several young men outside working, you know. (340) So then she was standing outside there, this young woman, and she was thinking, “Now that I am finally living well, I will never go anywhere else,” she said.

(341) Oh, then she recognized a black horse that was coming along the trail. (342) It was coming very fast. (343) Then it came into view. (344) Then it was going up and down the hills. (345) Oh, as it was doing that, she stood watching this. (346) He looked all around and he saw a house that had never been there before. (347) “Ah, I guess I’ll go ask here,” he said. (348) “Maybe if she passed by here, they saw her.”

(349) [Ruth:] The one saying that is her husband, who chased after her.

(350) [Rose:] What? Oh, yes, this was her husband riding out to look for her. (351) He had come back. (352) Well, those young women tearfully told him what had happened, each in turn. (353) “Older Brother, both of them had these little stars.” (354) Oh, then he almost recognized the one standing in the door. (355) But he didn’t recognize the one standing in the door because of these [hands]. (356) She opened the door and [?\_\_\_\_\_]. (357) So this was the one. (358) Well, so he was coming. (359) He jerked his charging horse to a halt. (360) His horse was panting.

(361) “Ah, I want to ask you a question,” he said. (362) “Yes, what is it, what is it?” (363) Did you see anyone, a woman, pass by here carrying children?” (364) “No, no one passed by through here.” (365) No one has passed by here since I’ve lived here. (366) “Does anyone live over there?” he said, they say. (367) “I don’t know. (368) I never go anywhere. (369) I just stay here at my house. (370) Then he almost recognized here but because of these he wasn’t sure. (371) It was because she had hands.

(372) Then that one said this, “Ah, it’s that  $\text{Ukc}^{\text{c}}\text{cuna}$ . (373) My children have little stars on them. (374) But those young women living in the middle are monsters and they sent him with the wrong letter. (375) When he arrived over there, they stole my letter and kept given me wrong letters. (376) They’re the ones,” he said. (377) So then, “So I came back. (378) Whenever he gave it to me, I sent him back with my own letter. (379) When he arrived back here, they had given him the wrong

letter again. (380) They kept saying I said to throw them out.

(381) She looked at him and smiled as she spoke to him. (382) “Yes,” she said. (383) “So, that’s what you thought, it seems,” she told him. (384) Your children are lying inside. (385) It’s me.” (386) “Are you my wife?” and then right away he embraced her. (387) “Come on, show me my children,” he said.

(388) So he went inside with her. (389) She took the cover off of the little boys. (390) She had covered their heads. (391) “Why have you covered their heads like this?” (392) “Untie them and look if you want to know.” (393) Then the man untied them. (394) Oh, both had sparkling stars from the beginning – they had been on their foreheads from the beginning. (395) “These are my children,” he said. (396) “We will go back,” he said. (397) “No, if you want me back, we will stay here,” she told him. (398) “You will stay here,” she told him. (399) “All these workers you see outside are mine,” she told him. (400) I will raise my little one here at my house. (401) I am raising them. (402) “Ah, I won’t go back,” he said. (403) So then he pulled his saddle and [rig?] off of his horse. (404) So then he stayed there with his wife.

(405) So then the young woman... uh, the young man hitched the young woman’s horses up. (406) “Come on, we will go back to my father,” he said. (407) “We’ll visit him.” (408) So then he sat down with her. (409) They sat holding one another. (410) The woman sat holding him and the man, too, sat holding her as they rode back.

(411) They were going back and then he stood at his father’s door. (412) “Father, I found my wife,” he said. (413) “Ah, so it’s you, Son, did you find her and my grandsons, too?” he said. (414) “Ah, these are they, Father,” he said. (415) They had grown larger now, but the stars were still shining. (416) Well, the young women were overjoyed, too.

(417) Well! They put Ukc’jcuna on trial. (418) They wondered why he had done this with the letters. (419) Then he [told them],” Whenever I went, whenever I went, whenever I went, I couldn’t pass them by. (420) Ah, they called to me and called to me, telling me, ‘Let’s play a game.’ (421) Then they took me inside. (422) I ate whenever they fed me and I always fell asleep from that. (423) That must be when they took it,” he said. (424) “I didn’t know they took it. (425) Then whenever I woke up, I jumped up and ran off again. (426) Whenever I came back again, they just kept flagging me down again. (427) ‘Why not come here? Why don’t we play a game, Ukc’jcuna,’ [they said] to make me come. (428) Then they chased me. (429) Whenever I arrived back here again, we played cards. (430) Each time, they took turns feeding me. (431) ‘Come on, Ukc’jcuna, why not eat?’ (432) They told him to do that meanwhile. . (433) So whenever he ate it, he dozed off and snored. (434) It was just as before. (435) They wrote and said he said to throw them out soon. (436) I didn’t know I had slept. (437) When I got back here, and they read it, that’s when it happened. (438) That’s how it was,” he said.

(439) (Somehow those horses were probably tied there but I don’t remember.)

(440) [Ruth:] Ukc’jcuna...

(441) [Rose:] Yes. (442) Yes, there were four horses and they tied his ankles to two of them. (443) They whipped the horses and pulled him into four pieces, it is said. (444) That’s what they did to Ukc’jcuna. (445) They went home and sat down, it is said. (446) That’s the end.

(447) [Ruth:] Then her older brother was riding there...

(448) [Rose:] Yes. (449) They went to her older brother. (450) They went. (451) They got to where he had jumped. (452) “Ah, Older Brother,” she said to him. (453) “I promised you that if I had hands, I told you I would pull this out for you. (454) Over here is where you fell.” (455) Then she yanked it out of her older brother with a scraping sound. (456) That pine had been growing on his foot.

(457) I guess they went back from there. (458) So they were going back from there. (459) They camped beside a lake over there. (460) They arrived back here at the house and went in and sat down.

(461) This is where it ends. [Rose laughs.]

#### 14. P'é'òhìnòka (Hole-in-the-Head) People

(1) Again, there lived a big tribe. (2) When their young men went hunting, they kept disappearing. (3) “Another one has not returned!” the camp crier would announce. (4) “Ah, these young men must have gone somewhere. (5) Maybe I’ll go, myself,” [a young man] said.

(6) So then he did leave, and so he was going along. (7) Then he came to a cut bank that was trodden down all the way to the bottom. (8) “Oh, this is the place!” (9) There were these tracks here at the cut bank, *you know*. (10) So he stood there at the cut bank and looked intently at it. (11) “Oh, this is the way they must have come,” he thought.<sup>123</sup> (12) Over where (they) would have come through here, there was a metal thing (wherever they may have gotten it), a metal thing that was pounded in really firmly. (13) “Oh, so that’s it!”

(14) All at once, not knowing quite how it happened, he fell into a sitting position and he, too, slid down. (15) “Oh, this is how! Oh, this is how!” (16) He was going along like that. (17) Oh! then he saw that sharp thing sticking up out of the ground like this. (18) He was headed straight for it! (19) Just as he had gotten close to it, he turned himself somehow so that his belt got caught on it. (20) It didn’t stab him. (21) Nonetheless, he was helplessly stuck. (22) There was no way to get away. (23) No matter how he turned himself, he couldn’t [get free]. (24) No matter how he tried, twisting every which way, he just couldn’t do it.

(25) The all at once there was a man coming from over there. (26) Then, having stopped over there, he was sort of peering around. (27) “Aha! It’s my frozen game,” he said. (28) “Oh, this is the one.” (29) He. . .

(30) [Ruth:] The one killing the young men?

(31) Rose:] It was the one who was killing the young men. (32) This one now, he said that it was frozen. (33) Now he reached it. (34) So then he hooked it and pulled it out. (35) As he was wrapping it up, he (the young man) was lying there looking at him the whole time [to see] what he was going to do. (36) Having wrapped him up, he hoisted him onto his back. (37) He packed him on his back. (38) (You can just imagine how he packed him on his back.) (39) This man, this monster, was packing the young man on his back, going along with him packed on his back. (40) He (the young man) was catching hold of branches. (41) He held on to it and whenever he let go, he (the man) kept falling down while carrying him on his back. (42) “Ah, my game is getting caught on the branches,” he said, they say. (43) He kept going on carrying him that way, up and down, falling and getting up again [working his way down the embankment]. (44) Then just as he looked at the one he was carrying, he got hit in the eyes. (45) “Oh, oh, oh! a branch snapped back on me!” he said. [The narrator laughs.] (46) “The branch hit me in the eye,” he said, they say.

(47) So then he was going back. (48) So he was looking over that way. (49) Then he was still going back. (50) Mmm, once again, [the young man] grabbed him on both sides of his head and twisted his neck. (51) Ah! my hair got caught on a branch, he said, they say. (52) He was still heading back like that. (53) He kept looking over there. (54) Oh, the lodges were all standing [there]. (55) “He’s coming with meat, he’s coming with meat!” they kept saying. (56) “Come on, tie all these sticks up like this. (57) This one is frozen. (58) He’ll thaw staying up high over there. (59) We’ll eat him

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<sup>123</sup>This is the translation given by Mrs. Ditmar, which she prefers to the more literal “Oh, I think they kept going over here.”

tomorrow,” he said, they say.

(60) “Ah, this is something good,” he thought, they say.<sup>124</sup> (61) So there at the lodge, they tied him to the wooden pole at the door of the lodge. (62) They put him up there and then they built a fire here, *you know*, so he would thaw. (63) So then, whenever he (the young man) looked at the children, he thrust open his clenched fist, (an extremely rude gesture). (64) “Father, the meat made a rude gesture at me. (65) [indistinct] (66) “No, it’s just thawing own and so it moves around,” he said, they say. (67) He did it again. (68) He did it again. (69) He was keeping an eye on the children. (70) Well, now to be different, he stuck his tongue out at them. (71) “Father, the meat keeps sticking his tongue out at me!” (72) “No, he’s frozen, so his tongue comes popping out as he thaws,” he said, they say.

(73) So it was, and everyone went to bed. (74) “Go to bed! (75) Tomorrow we’ll eat this one,” he said. (76) Oh! they were just snoring up a storm from every direction, *you know*.

(77) Meanwhile he got up and climbed down and there was this rotten log there, a rotten log lying outside. (78) He brought it inside and put it on [the pole, in his place]. (79) He ran away. (80) So he was running away. (81) He followed along the way that [the man] had brought him running along following through that way. (82) When he got to the slide he was trying to get to the top somehow, *you know*. (83) A big tree was standing there. (84) So he went up to it. (85) He climbed it and sat there, the young man did.

(86) So that’s how it was. (87) Well, now dawn was coming. (88) “Come on, hurry up! (89) Get up, Wife! (90) We’re going to eat this meat.” (91) She took it down and she chopped up that wood and she boiled it. (92) (I don’t know what she boiled it in.) (93) Then she called all the children. (94) When they were eating, “Father, this meat tastes like wood,” they said.<sup>125</sup> (95) “No! (96) Eat it! (97) It’s that meat. (98) Where would she have gotten wood from so that it would taste like wood?” he said, they say. (99) Ah, so then the children ate that rotten wood anyway. (100) They kept looking at it, and these little ones knew that it was rotten wood. (101) Yes, then he, too [recognized it, saying], “Ah, they’re right Wife, this is rotten wood. (102) I guess I’d better go after my meat.” (103) He took a metal spike and left. (104) He went over there with giant steps.<sup>126</sup> (105) He kept going in the direction of the tracks he smelled.

(106) Oh, as you may recall, he (the young man) was sitting up in the tree. (107) “Aha! My meat is sitting over there,” he said. (108) Now he tried to climb the tree, *you know*. (109) So now he was getting closer. (110) “Put your head down!” he (the young man) said. (111) “Bark chips might fall in your eyes.” (112) “My meat is giving me advice,” he said, they say.

(113) “Ah, give that to your meat; he’ll hold that metal spike for you,” the “meat” said. (114) “Ah, my meat is giving me advice again.” (115) That crazy guy went ahead and gave the metal [spike] to him anyway. (116) “Put your head down. (117) They’re going to fall in your eyes.” (118) “Ah, my

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<sup>124</sup>s60 - not sure who is saying this

<sup>125</sup>Mrs. Ditmar says that while the literal meaning is ‘it smells like wood’, the sense is that it *tastes* like wood.

<sup>126</sup>Josephine Weasel Mechance, when working on the original transcription, said that P'è?òlìnòka is a giant, and said that he is chasing the young man by taking giant steps. It may also be that Mrs. Weasel was indicating giant steps by signs.

meat is giving me advice again.” (119) So in that way, he was showing [exposing] the hole [soft spot at the top of the head] as he was climbing the tree.

(120) Just as he came close like that, well! then he (the young man) drove the spike into the crown of his head as hard as he could, *you know*. (121) Then he drove in way, way in. (122) Oh! he went crashing down. (123) So then he jumped up and was holding on to it like this. (124) “My meat killed me!” he said. (125) He went back towards there [his camp].

(126) So then the young man jumped down, because [the coast was clear]. (127) He ran off to wherever he came from and got back there, it is said. (128) I guess that’s the end of his part in this story. (129) He was heading back from there...

(130) [Ruth:] That Hole-in-the-Head...

(131) [Rose:] Hole-in-the-Head went back. (132) So he was going back. (133) “My meat killed me! My meat killed me!” he said. (134) When he said that, they all watched him. (135) He held on to that metal thing as he walked. (136) “Ah, he fooled you,” one of them said. (137) “What will they do so that he will live?” they said. (138) “Hey, [everyone]! Call Jktómi.<sup>127</sup> (139) He’s smart.” (140) So [they call went out], “Jktómi, come quickly,” (141) “Yeeah.”<sup>128</sup> (142) (So this Jktómi – you know what he’s like.) (143) A different one ran [to him]. (144) “Jktómi, they said you should hurry up.” (145) “Yeeah,” he said, they say. (146) Well, then he was coming there. (147) He was loafing along.

(148) He opened the door and was looking inside. (149) He saw something sticking up out of this one. (150) He was moaning in pain, this Hole-in-the-Head was, because of the metal pushed way far in. (151) That one (Jktómi) peeked in and: (152) “Pound it all the way in,” he said, and he turned and left. (153) “What did he say?” (154) “Pound it all the way in,” he said. (155) “Come on!” he said. (156) They pounded it in. (157) “Ow!” he kept saying. [The narrator laughs.] (158) Whenever they pounded on it, he said, “Ow!” (159) Oh dear, then they pounded it in as far as it would go, until it was out of sight. (160) Oh dear, they killed him!

(161) Well, then they butchered him up. (162) They busily cooked him up and passed him around. (163) “You, eat this; you, too, eat this.” (164) Those people ate up one of their own.<sup>129</sup> (165) Jktómi stopped again and now he came towards them. (166) Then he opened the door. (167) “One of the legs!” Jktómi said. (168) “Come on, one of the legs!” (169) So, once again they lopped off a leg and gave it to Jktómi.

(170) I guess that’s the end. [The narrator laughs.]

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<sup>127</sup>‘everyone’ is added to indicate that a plural imperative form is used: everyone is told to call Jktómi and it is, humorously, universally agreed that he should be called.

<sup>128</sup>Jktómi’s response has the intonation of a yawn.

<sup>129</sup>As grotesques as this seems, recall that this is, in fact, a band of cannibals, who eat young men who fall into their trap and who referred to the young man they caught as “meat.” This humorous tale expresses a taboo against cannibalism.



