

Title: 0023-Our Voices-Legend of Wiisaakechaahk
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In the other tapes I have talked about the use and application of legends. In the other tape I give an example of the legend of Giant Skunk and also the legend of the Water Fowls speaking and thinking as human for the purpose of finding out our ancestor's - Omushkego who live in the Hudson and James bay area - knew that their had been animals before the human beings before the human beings came to exist on earth. There is also a story about other types of animals that existed long time ago.

There is a very short story, we don't know for sure exactly how long it is. But it said, one time there were giant animals who roamed the land and have disappeared and went underground. And thus they will come again at the end of the earth when the earth comes to an end, near come to an end. That I don't know if it were true it come from our people. It perhaps came partially from the European story. However, this statement, these stories, these "quotation," as they are called, came from our people long time ago. Perhaps, Christopher Columbus mentioned about dinosaurs, or Vikings who came ten thousand years ago. We don't know. But anyway, we will go on. So that's the beauty of the stories.

Now I am going to pick this story, this legend about a trickster. Some people call it a Trickster. Some people call him Nanabush and we Omushkego people call him Wiisaakechaahk. We don't know for sure how to translate this thing, what we can say is he is a pain in the neck or any other parts. But the thing is that's the kind of person he is. He always trick people and to get his ways. Not only people, tricks also animals. Most of the time he get his way, but sometimes he is beaten by his own making. So we are going to talk about this guy.

So there is about ten parts to this version. Ten stories. But I don't know them all. I might have forgot a few now. But I will put a few here, as best as I can. You must understand that the translation of the Cree - Omushkego language to English language. There is a tendency to lost the value. Mostly, on the humor part. Whether it's supposed to be humorous to make people laugh. Sometimes, maybe you don't get that language. Sometimes even disgusting. But anyway, I'm not worry about that. Because I not going to use that. If it does not apply in English, fine. So there it goes. Oh yes, even though it has ten parts or more, of this Wiissakechaahk story, it doesn't matter whether you started. Any story, you can started anywhere, no matter where. No matter where. Sometimes the legends of Wiissakechaahk can start anytime even in a short time. Even just maybe, maybe two minutes. Just to pick out the funny part. And people will quote it and people will laugh and act good. And they still want to laugh at sometime, because our native people know. Laughing is a greatest thing to make people ease their tension, or greet friendship with open conversation, or even to close the conversations. So the legends are very useful. And now here we begin. Oh yes, once more, I want to remind the listener, many of the things that were mentioned here in this Wiissakechaahk story will be similar to fantasy, or similar something like we experience today like television programs for kids. We see the ninja frogs, whatever it is, turtles. Things that doesn't happen. So here in the story, also it may sound like that. But most of the things mentioned here, they did happen in a small way. So what makes it so possible to hear the story, it's not the special effects of the movie. It's not the speed and slowness of the movie... or the camera which will make it. Or the cut part of the movie strip. It is not that. But the story will bring tricks because of the character that plays the story... he's supposed to be a trickster and also a mystic person. Mysticism involved in the story, shamanism involved in the story, but mostly the shamanism.

So shaman or medicine man, whatever you want to call him, that I must explain first that shamanism has a general term for people whom have the power to move things, to disintegrate things, to disappear things, to make illusions, to make you see things, to make you hear things, even for you to die. Anything... anything is possible for these shaman... shaman person. Shaman is a mind over matter sort of thing. But it's all

connected to the spiritual thing. So I have already explained these things in the other tape, the first tape. Now we are going to listen to this guy.

Wiissakechaahk is a wanderer, is adventurer and he is also a single man. He's not married. So they say he travels... he appear from the west part of this country, from this Hudson and James Bay. He was known he was expected to pass through the country, but he was expected come from the east and to move towards west. But in the section, in the territory where he lives, he doesn't move right pass. He his lives in the territory, or district. He... he stays awhile. He stays with people, he stays on the land. He knows all the rivers and all the lakes, the bay areas wherever the Native peoples enjoy most. He would participate in the seasonal activities. He would also... also go into the bay amongst the people wherever they have festivities, wherever they gather. And ask to know all the people and all the districts and territories and the river systems. He moved to the next section. And that's where many... he came from the east doing the same thing towards west until he comes to the end of the land. That's the story says. By doing this, the people around the Hudson and James Bay area knew that he would be passing through that he would be staying amongst the people. That we will be the neighbour or he will be a hunter or he can be a fisherman. Hunting and everything. Or sometimes he would sometimes join the animals. He was able to do that. I guess apparently around this area, when he was traveling through. Because he doesn't stay with any one family at length, he probably stay with family for a season, and move on to the next family or other areas for the next season. So he's a loner type of person, but very adventurous and very mystic. When he wants something he will play a trick on people or animals in order to get his way. I guess this is why people call him trickster. He fits the description anyways. When the story starts he's the shaman. He can do anything.

Now, once upon a time Wiissakechaahk was traveling. So it's been a long time since he seen a man. It's kind of lonely for a human being. So he's decided to search for the family on the land. We don't know for certain where, but we think it's between James Bay or Hudson Bay area. There were lots people then. People who were started all over. There was no villages. The people live wherever they can find life. So he

wanders off to where he knew the people would be staying. Since then he wanted to... wanted to... wanted to... he's a man. He has a man's emotions. And he wants to lead the same desire as man. He needs a female companionship. He wants sex to be clear. There he has it in his mind because he hasn't seen humans for some time. Especially he wanted to see a woman. So he sets off to find, find some people. He knows the family. They were not far away from where he is. So he travels to... he knows... he knows the family there. There were about two families at least. He knows that there was an old lady and was his daughters and daughter married and he knows there is some single people.

Anyways, he knew that there were some single women and so he went. And that was exactly what he was interested in anyway. So he went searching for the family. And sure enough a few days later, he came upon the camp. He saw the trails, the tracks of the people, men hunting. He knows the direction where their camp would be. So he investigated the trails. Tracks where they lead to mostly to pin point where the site where the camp would be. Finally he figured it out and he walk towards it. And this was close to the evening and the sunset would be very soon. But in the right timing. He was really hoping to do something. Because he so... shall we say so horny, he wanted sex right away. So asked to figure out how to get sex very quickly without so much. Not necessary rape people anything, women. So he decide to use a trick to help him to get what he want. So he think about it while he was walking. How would he do it? How would he accomplish his wishes? So finally as he investigate the tracks leading to one... one center. He knows that will be the camp... there will be the camp is located. By this time he already found his plan. He already formed his plan and what he's going to do.

So he decided to play a trick on those women. He knows that men will not be home yet. Because men are always hunting in the day time. And they don't usually get home till sunset or even late after sunset. And that's why he know for sure the men will be away. And all of the women will be home. And that's what he wanted. And so he had a plan. He was certain it would work... he would make it work anyway. So he walked... walking toward what he thinks the camp should be located. Sure enough, the closer he gets the more tracks and the sign the camp will be there. And now he was getting excited trying to be in a hurry, he re-run through his plan in his mind, how long it should take to do that. And... so it going to be the right timing before the sunset. So as

he walks towards... he's aware and he is watching the roads and all that kind of stuff and where the wind is coming. He knows that the wind was in his favour, because the wind was from the west sort of thing. Which is usually because the wind is gusting this time of the season. This is the spring season. Early... or middle of April thereabouts. Just when all the animals begin to stir and mate. He too as a human, he begin to feel that. So anyway,... he has all the plan in his mind. All he has to do now is put into action. So final he came upon this camp. It's large... large camp which usually hold about three families. So he knows ... he wasn't sure yet if these were the right people he come to. He knows that there will be single women and all that. That's why he come to this camp. Anyway, he just as usual, the traditional way to allow people can know that you are arriving, he just raised the tree sort of... the tree hit with the axe so they will know he's coming.

Sure enough as soon as he hit the tree and a youngster come out and say, "There is a stranger." And later on, a bit older children came, and then the teenagers and finally the mother and grandmother showed up later. So he walks in a takes off his snowshoes and put down his axe and personal possessions, which he carries only in his back. So he'll hang it there outside. So they said - after the greeting and all of the usual stuff. So the women - that's as a tradition, always invited the stranger - said "We have some soup." (Soup is the only thing they had to offer because they had no tea then. And soup is always... it's available whichever... however, they made it. We don't have to go through that, because we want to get to the story). So they says, "Come in and have a soup, hot soup you must be tired." And he says, "Yes, that will do." He says "Sure I'm hungry." And right away he said "I can't stay", because it was almost sunset. So he says, "He has to go... I want to make a distance." And that's all he says for the time being just to let him know he's not going to stay. When a stranger arrive in an evening before sunset, the usual thing is to offer him a place to sleep in a home. But that's why he said right away, he can't stay. It's strange way also, why would a person want to travel late in the evening when it's time to stop unless there's an urgency. There was inside there was an old lady... I'd say about sixty-years old. And there was her daughter who was thirty-five or forty, and there were a daughter as children, sons and daughters. Not this... there was only a few girls. One was about twenty and the other teenager. So he looked them over

and all that stuff, you know, him and his desire to have them. So he decided... well as looked them over... as they... as they move around and do things. When they prepare food and everything. So he wants them. So he judge them and all that stuff. Really his sex is all he has in his mind, never mind the food, but they were busy arranging the food to feed him as a tradition. Finally they offer him the food... they say "Here's the food, you can have your supper and the soup." And whatever they offer, so he says, "thank-you."

So he eats and he try to eat very fast, he seem to be in a hurry. So the middle-age woman says asks, "Why are you in such a hurry? Why is so urgent?" And he says, "Why I can't stay. I didn't want to stay. I can't stay here. I want to go on. I may not be good to you. So he says I may have a disease." "What kind of disease?" They says. Now the ladies are getting excited. They are getting serious; they're getting anxious and all that stuff. Want to know what's... what's wrong with him. Usually, when a stranger come he would gradually... he would be a happy to spend a night or to stay a while, unless there was something wrong. So this guy was Wiissakechaahk. They know him, they know who he is. So they say, "Why, why is it?" So he always call each other my brother, my sister. So he says, "My sisters and I'm sorry to say I didn't want to scare you. There is a disease coming, the epidemic, it's very bad. Kills people. And there is no cure for it they say. So I was trying to move ahead of it." By this time the ladies and the old ladies are getting very curious. Because the women are the medicine people. The women are usually the nursing peoples and doctors for the family because they have all the knowledge about the herbs and plants they can use to cure almost any disease they have. That's why they were so curious, because they wanted know: "How does this disease affect anyone? And how do you cure the disease, they want to know?" And Wiissakechaahk says, "Well I don't know, I really don't know. I never really asked, because I never really saw it. I just hear about it. I just met some people on the way and met them on life travel, and they said there's a disease that kills and very infectious. And there's no cure for it, really. And it's very quick, it arrives and it leaves. And it can be given to somebody else." So the ladies were really getting... they were really getting worked up now. So they... the constantly ask, "Can you think of any cure at all for this disease. And how did they describe it and how do they feel and what does..." And he

says, "I can't tell you, I really can't tell you, because it's very strange kind of... kind of thing."

So by this time he was almost finished eating and it was almost sunset. And I guess it was sunset already, because it was getting dark inside. So he said, "Well I have to go. I don't want to get catch in this thing. All I can do is to warn you. And if there is anyway you can avoid it or cure it. So if you have anything... But there is nothing much I can do." So they say, "Ok." They were very anxious. They women were ringing there hands and all that stuff and they don't know what to do and at last as he goes out there ask him again, "Can you think of anything? Can you suggest anything to do? Did you hear anything at all? How to prevent of cure this disease?" So he says, "I didn't want to tell you this, because it's embarrassing." So they said, "Tell us anyway." They told me that some men they had met, the only way they can prevent it is to stick their head into the ground and left the rear end up. So the women say, "Strange really. Is it contagious because is in air... because in the air we breath?" "Yes, that it sounds like it." He says, "That's maybe why they put their head down in the ground, not to inhale." So anyway, so he says you... "But how do you know when it's coming?" they say, the women. Well he says, "It travels with the wind because this wind seems to have in with this disease. There is usually a gust of wind that brings the disease." Surely they he's not begin to formulate their defense, or prevention or whatever. So he says, "Good bye and good luck to you." And the women were just reluctant, they say, "If we were to leave, how far behind is... you?" Oh he says, "Oh, I don't know. It could be very close. It was only yesterday I met a man who said they had it, so I moved away from there. It could come any time, just prepare for it. So to him, that's all he can do there. Stick away in the ground, stick our bum in the air, or hide your mouth into the ground. That's all you can do. So if you hear it and just quickly do that. That's all I can say."

So he went out and took off in the direction of... turned around and went in. But the parents of the men; the men folks are still out. And it was after sunset. Soon the men folk will be in, and he knows that. So he took off not far from the camp and turned around and went towards where the wind is coming from. What he did was, he cut the branches, or willows or XXtagholdersXX, and tie them together. And he begin to run toward the camp. And those XXtagholdersXX and everything he drags sounds like as if

the wind is coming. And that is what he wanted the women to think. As soon as he reached the camp he can hear the women says, "There it is, there it is, there is a wind." I guess automatically then, what he did was you know, he went around the camp dragging XXtag-pollsXX and everything and it makes sounds... like... something like make sounds of gust of winds is moving over the trees. And soon as he ran around twice and soon as he get in front of doors, he take off his snowshoes and lift the door flap and look in and here were the women putting their heads in the ground and stick their bum-side up. So all he did way walk right in. And he has his way and he has his sex. As he had planned to do.

So anyway, actually, he has his way and then he walks and travels off again. Grab... grab another, grab his snowshoes and those XXtagholdersXX and he drag them off like the sound goes away. And then when he goes away back to the teepee; the wigwam, we can see the people, these women are talking to each other. They said, "Did you get it?" And somebody says, "No not me." And all those say, "No I don't feel a thing?" And nobody was there, nobody says anything. Finally, they new there was one. There was one girl that say, "Yup." They say, what's wrong did you hear us, did you get anything." And then she says, "Yes, I get it." "So how does it feel?" And she says, "It feels good," and all that stuff.

Anyway that's the end of that story. So once again the trickster Wiissakechaahk once again had his way and this is to put it mildly, the story. And it's very mild. But it's not... its not even humour. But amongst the men sometimes it's very funny, just amongst the men. The way they describe that woman. But it is always said in a different way, the way I have just said it, it's very mildly put together, for the sake of the young people and the young children. They wouldn't... they wouldn't ask us. But the Elders, the older women and the older man, they understand exactly what it means. They would giggle, or at least give a little smile if there is a children. So this is the way that the story goes. It may... it made that way. So the stories are very flexible. That's one part of a story about a trickster.

So he went on. He had his way. He had tricked some people, but it doesn't say what happened to him after that. The story picks up again only later. And once again he

was by himself. And this time... this time he was hungry. This was in the middle of August. There somewhere there in August or September. Just when the geese are beginning to find coastal region and all that stuff in the Hudson and James Bay. And this time he was traveling by himself again, as usual. And he was hungry. Really decided to have a special cooked goose, and goose dinner would be nice. He was very hungry. He hasn't eaten very well. And he was thinking and traveling towards the... he just travels... wanders all the... he was hunting, I'd say. All he has is a bow and arrow, tomahawk, probably a very rough knife. He also have a sling, he also a sling. You know for a spoon, the ropes sling. That's what he has that. Got all these things, even if you are an expert, you only hit only one or two geese and the sling, you have one chance one shot. Unless you can do something... unless the geese were still moving. That's the time you can get as many as you want. But seeing that is he was a wise man, besides being a trickster, he never kill more than he needs. He has to eat everything that he gets first. If he ever does eat anything. Then it was one of those days he wanted to have a feast. He wanted to take care of self, he wanted to satisfy himself with food, and he was thinking. Why not have a feast on myself. Once in a while he does that. Once in a while he'll kill an animal and probably caribou and moose and he would stay there. Just cook the way he likes and preserve the food and use all the animal, like the way it should be. And he wouldn't leave that area until he finished. So it's one of those wishes that he wanted to do. So now it was for the geese.

So anyway, he was thinking about that and he went to look around for where the geese used to be, hang around. So he remembered this special small river, more like a creek. It used to be a place where the geese always eat. Canada geese and snow geese and any of the geese. It's one of these lake type of thing. Lake and inlet and outlet and everything. So he went there.

So as he was walking on the shore, then all of a sudden he hear the geese. A bunch of geese. He can hear them, they were eating. So he went up slowly, sneaking the river or the creek and soon enough there was open water there. Quite a large size of a lake, or a pond actually say. That is only... that is only about three hundred feet long maybe and probably only a hundred feet wide, two hundred feet wide. But very shallow with lots of grass around. Just the type where the geese and ducks likes to eat. So he

sneaks there and look over it and sure enough there were Canada geese and swans and all kinds of them. Even some loons in there. So anywhere he went back. Pull himself back and he decided what to do. So he began to plan. "What should I do with geese, birds? Not to only get one, but lots. How do I do? So I would have feast." Finally he decided to trick them. "I wonder if would work," he thought. He knows the Canada geese and snow geese and some other ducks and all that stuff, usually they want to know what they saw. And what... they're curious, especially the Canada geese in the springtime. But they still have that nature. They're wise and also they know what they saw and they want to know what they saw. And make sure that it's safe and ok. So he knows, Wiissakechaahk know all these things about the birds. So he uses that, he uses their curiosity to trick them. For instance, so instead of him hiding from them, he decided to come into the open. But before he exposes himself in front of them, he had a bag, you know, you're ordinary pack bag. There's not much in it, just a little utensils, maybe that he used to eat with. And not even any clothes, but he never has any clothes... So he decide to put lots of moss in this bag, pack it... and put stones in it too. To make it look like he's carrying very heavy and something bulky inside. The ordinary man wouldn't look like that. The ordinary hunter wouldn't carry anything like that. Unless he has... he has had a successful hunt. Anyway, he walks.

Soon as he expose him self and the geese and ducks saw him, he did pretend not to look at them. Just walked on the shore, it was nice shore. Sandy shore, on the north side. Because north side is favorable place for the people to camp. Usually on the shores of the river on the north side. So the sun can shine into the shore... that's why they do that... in the middle of the summer. For they always favour that place. So he has the same instinct that other people have. So he walks there. And on south side of the pond was wide open muskeg and all the bird are there eating. Some in the creek and some out there in washing... and the other pond is larger away past up the river and usually that's where the ducks would eat. So as he walks over there and Canada geese were the closes ones where he walks, sees that he pretend not to... bother them, not even looking at them. The Canada geese, you know, just wondering why. So they called him, "Hi Wiisaakechaahk." And he says, "Hi XXcreeXX." XXcreeXX means my brother. But he didn't stop he just kept on walking. So they say, "What's wrong with him? Something

wrong?" So they say, "What does he got in his bag. They say lets ask him." So the ducks and the geese came in and says, "Really strange. What he's got?" So they call him again, they say, "Hey Wiisaakechaahk. Tell us what you got in your bag." And he didn't stop, he still walks. And he says, "It's nothing of your interest. My profession." So they say, "What's in it." They know that human doesn't carry that big a bag. Bag and... and a simple travel... no they don't do that. "You have something." Especially men. So they more curious and lots of them came in and close by and they say, "Would you tell us what's in it?" So he got their attention very closely now. "Well," he says, "if you want to know that bad, what I carry in my bag is my secret and my private... private possession. So he says, "What is it? Tell us!" So he says, "It's my songs." So all the ducks and geese and swans say, "Songs? How a person can carry the songs in a bag? The ducks and geese they do not carry a songs." So they begin to say, "How does he carry the songs." So they say, "How do you carry the songs in a bag?" So he says, "I have my way. But you guys have your songs, but you have them in your mind. Mine, I carry them." So that they find very strange. So finally they say, "So sing us a song." So he says, "No, this is a private thing. I don't sing on any time. It has to be a special arrangement. Got to be a stage if I want to perform in front of the audience and I have to have that stage, or place where I could sing." And they said, "Well, why don't you create it right now? We will wait for you. Day light is still high and I'm sure you can do it." So he stop. And he says, "Are you serious that you want to hear my song?" And so they say, "Yes, we will wait, we will come. We will get some old people to come, more of us to come." And he says that's what he wanted. He wanted as many as that to come. So he says, "Ok, you have to give me time." And right away, where he was standing, there was a nice sandy beach right there, a few rocks. And over the banks there was a nice white moss ground. And beyond it, away from the river there were lots of trees. The kind of trees that people use for making wigwam, or T-P. So he says, "I have to make a large wigwam. There is quite a few of you. I could fit you in and where I could sit, because I do not perform to people who... just anyone. You have to be invited or inside and close to somewhere. They say, "Ok," and all excited and they haven't heard him sing. He must be very special to carry his songs in the bag. And that's what they wanted. So they say, "Go ahead, we just will

have to... we will have to continue eating here, and call us when you are ready.” So he said, “Ok, and he went into the woods and said I will be right here.”

So all the duck and geese went back to eating and feeding all the young and stuff. And you can hear in the bush there a thrashing sound and all that stuff and this was Wiissakechaahk making a large teepee, a large wigwam. He was making a makeshift wigwam, but he has no covering. Be he does not want to make a moss house, but just to have an... an enclosure. So that nobody can peak in. So uses lots of poles and he uses parts to cover around it, just half way was good enough for... but you know the geese have wings, they can fly. That's why he doesn't want to use a few poles. Usually when you... when someone makes wigwam or teepee, usually you need about twenty sticks, at least. Twenty sticks or even twenty-four. The four sticks to control the wind flap, and twenty to put them around. He has to put them four inch apart, so he had... so he needed lots of sticks, lots of poles. And that's what he did. And all the part he... he created the parts. He skinned the trees. And the parts he put them on the bottom and right up, like a shingles. What had there... whatever he does, it works for him. And also he take out the roots, the tree roots. Any kind or roots. The roots were like a rope for them in those days. That's the only kind of rope they used to have. I mean, make-shift rope. I mean make-shift rope. So he pull lots of those, around the T-P, around the base. And cover them with the branches and everything. In the middle, he let the ground stay as it is. But at the back door, that's where he put his seat and also he has created the drum... he has made a drum. Which seems to fit the bulbous bag. He made it so he can say,... he said to the duck that this is what he was carrying. His song is there. He use this to sing, this little drum. So that what the geese and ducks were so anxious to see... what is... what does it look like, his songs. Actually, it was a drum. But he didn't carry the drum, he made the drum. Because he can make the drum. Probably, not truly, but he has a... remember he has a... he has a shaman power. He can do tricks. So anyway, it just makes it more impressive to the ducks and geese and all of that.

So he calls them. He says, “Hey there brothers, I am ready! I'm ready to sing.”
[END OF SIDE 1 of 2]

TAPE TRANSCRIPTION: LOUIS BIRD ORAL HISTORY PROJECT – 100 MIN.

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“LEGEND OF WIISAAKECHAAHK”

So he finally get them all to enjoy the dance together and then... in one song, he says, “this dance is for you to dance together, something like waltzing. So you listen to my instruction.” So he begin to dance and drumming and half way through there is says, “Now put your heads together.” You know how geese got long leg and the swans and the ducks. So he says, “Put your head together.” So by this time all the ducks and geese were dancing, very freely and not aware of anything amongst themselves. They were totally enjoying themselves. And then once again Wiissakechaahk gave instruction and he says, “Now close your eyes.” And they begin to close their eyes and dance together and all the swans and Canada geese and Snow geese winding their necks to each other. Then again he says, “Now move around, move around.” And then they go move around together. And by this time Wiissakechaahk was preparing as he sing. Because the ducks and the geese are so busy dancing and enjoying themselves. Then Wiissakechaahk pick out those roots that he place around the teepee, uses as a rope. He make the rope... he had make the loop of them. All he did was as they pass, through it over their neck and tie it quickly, amongst the geese and swans first. And then he just choke them and through them over... over the side as he sang. And everybody was busy, nobody knows what was happening, because all they hear was their feathers rustling as they dance, so they didn’t notice much. They didn’t know that... until the loon became to aware of something that the dance place was not as packed as it used to be, begin to move around pretty easily and he notice that there were not as full as it was. And Wiissakechaahk kept on tying those necks together and throwing them aside as he sing. Then for sure, some of these ducks also aware that the room was getting empty. And the loon, being sneaky as he is, he opened one eye to see what’s going on. And as he was open his eyes right away he saw

Wiissakechaahk tying the geese together and throw them aside. And he scream and he says, “Wiissakechaahk is killing us,” he says. And as soon as he say that and every other remaining ducks and geese, they open their eyes and hear was killing... they were killed. And they screamed and rush out to the door and because of the loon that screamed, he’s not a very good walk around the ground and he was trampled over by the door. And by this time Wiissakechaahk was... had killed half of them anyway. And just because the loon as give the warning has just step on the loon as we tried to drag himself out... step on his back. And that’s where we see today the loon has a very bad back, squashed-like. That’s why he cannot walk on the ground. And that’s the end of that part.

And now Wiissakechaahk himself, thanks himself his luck... lucky stars that he was able to get all kinds of geese and ducks. And he says to himself, “Now, I’m going to feast.” By this time all the ducks remaining...ducks and geese have take off into the river and... really get scared. Because there was no geese or anything around in the lake anymore. Wiissakechaahk was by himself. And gradually did himself, he has succeeded. He has once again his tricks has worked again.

And now he begin to decide, “Now how am I going to cook these things? The best way to have my feast.” Usually, when you have the ducks and geese they would be plucked and cooked. But him, since that he wanted to...wanted to cook special way... cook them at one time, he decided to... to do it special way. There’s a way to cook geese a special way when there are no pots or anything. He could roast them. He could pluck them all and roast them, or even smoke them, or even any other ways. Since that he didn’t have the pot, he decided the next best thing. So said to himself, “Well, I’m going to cook them in the sand... roast them in the sand.” Now first I going to explain what roasting in the sand is doing... is done. First of all people use to... when they do it right, they say... they would pluck the geese, leave the feet in... or sometimes not necessarily the feet in, and they would rap the geese... plucked geese after take the guts out and wrap them in the leaves. Some kind of leaves that you can find on the lakes. Something like a lin... like a... I think they call them lily pads or frog pads, they call them. And some of them are under water. They are very wide leaves. Usually that what people use to wrap the geese around and put them in the sand. First, before they put them in the sand. Some people do it differently. Some people just make a large fire over the sand, a very large

fire. Then after they heat it, after the sand has been heated right down to maybe a foot or so, then they would just make a hole in their and put a geese in and bury the goose in there. Usually after about an hour or two the goose would be cooked very nicely. But him that... Wiissakechaahk because he was so... he was so greedy and he was hungry. So after deciding what to do, he didn't bother to pluck the geese, he just put them right in. What he did was... take a... take a sand and then he make a fire in a sand, a large fire. And he heated the sand and shifted over again and all that and after he satisfied there was enough heat, then he put all the geese in. Head first and stick out the feet. He didn't pluck them. So he buried them with the hot sand, very hot sand. And he left them there. Nobody says, "How many he got?" but there were lots. And after he buried them and he left them there, he said it should take about... should take a long time to cook.

And meanwhile he says, "I might as well take a nap." So he did that. So in order for him to sleep, he knows that there would be some animals traveling by or anything and they have steal. He was aware there would be foxes, there would be something, even human. So he decided to sleep for a while, or he chose the place to sleep was right on top of the riverbank. The riverbank was not that high really. So he decided to have a guard. Somebody should keep an eye on his cooking. So in order to do that, there was nobody around. So he talks to the...his rear end and says, "Well, you watch." So he lay down his bum to the riverside and his says, "You watch and let me know if anybody steal my food." And it so happens that he fall asleep. It's late in the afternoon. And he went to sleep. Usually the geese when they are cooked like that it probably take about an hour or so. But with the feathers in them and all it would take a little bit longer. And so happen that there was some human around. There was some people around there. They too were looking for some food, they were hunting. This was famous place for them to hunt. That's why they were traveling this smallriver, small creek. And they said they were about two canoes, two maybe three. What the native people do in those days were... they used to drift along the river and if they see the ducks or geese on the river they would stop. And then they would sneak from the shore and shoot the geese with the bow and arrow. And this is.. that is what they were doing, they were sort of drifting down the river and the guy was sitting in front of canoe always look ahead so if they see a geese and you back up. And they were going to the shore and sneak up on the geese. And this

was what they were doing. And the leader of the canoe just keeping his eye open. And then this was a famous place here, usually lots of geese. As slowly coming down, they don't even move, just very slowly. And the man kept looking on the water and there was nothing. The lake, the pond was empty... except that he saw somebody was sleeping on the bank. Somebody was laying there. The bum side was exposed and he wants. Then all of a sudden he recognize...gave a sign to back down... back up onto the... to the shore, and he says, "There's nothing there," he says. "There nothing move, geese, no nothing. The only thing I saw there, I am sure there is somebody sleeping out there. See his bum sticking out." "A bum sticking out?" They say, "but why?" And they begin to talk to each other and who would do such thing. So they know that there was Wiissakechaahk around, he always do something unexpectedly. So the could be Wiissakechaahk. So they say, "Why would he do that?" So they begin to wonder and they talk about why he would do that and why there's no geese there now and they say, "He must of kill the geese. And so there's nothing left there now." So they say, "Well let's take a look again." So this time... this time this guy just went ahead by himself and look at this person laying there. His bum... his bum is bare and as soon as he expose himself, he can see that this man is going to fart. And he back down. Went back to his group and he says, "You know this person sleeping. But every time that I expose myself, you know, he wants to fart." So he says, "That's him alright, that's him alright. He must be using his rear end to... as a guard... as a watch how we do." So they say, "We will sneak behind him and you stay here. Just pretend that you are here and you are not going there. Try it first," and they say, "You try that. And if you walk towards him... and if he wants to fart, see if it will work if you just sign it, give a sign to stop. If it doesn't go, that means we... we beat him." So he tried it, and sure enough, as long as he make a sign to stop, he didn't fart. So he kept on walking towards it and always giving the signal to shut up and the man didn't fart. They know this is Wiissakechaahk. And the rest of them went down, they can move very quickly. And this person who guarded... make not to let go. And meanwhile, the rest of the men of the men take all the geese from the sand and they cut the feet off and throw the geese... I don't know if they were poked already but they stole his geese. They cut the feet off and stick it back into the sand. After they finished that they rearranged the sand so they don't show any tracks. And after they

finished... this person who's taking care of this rear end stayed put there and walks away until they all went down the river. Then finally, they take off. So they have stole his geese.

In the meantime, Wiissakechaahk just slept. It was towards the evening now by the time he woke up. He woke up all of a sudden. All rested and everything and the first thing he think about was his geese, his cooking. So he says, "Oh my! I overlooked... I'm sure I over cooked my cooking. Just wondering," he says. Talks to himself he says, "Was there anyone coming. No, nothing." So he jump up and grab his stick to... dig out one. Nothing there. And he says, "Ah yes I did over cook." He pull another... another set of feet. Same thing until he became aware that there was nothing attached to it. I begin dig and there was nothing. All the feet had been cut from the body of the geese and whatever he buried there. So he begin to realize that while he was sleeping some human must have steal. Only human can do that. Animal would have just pulled them off. Human pull them off and stick the feet off and he knows. So he went to the shore, the water. On the shore the sand, there was no sign. No sign of foot prints or anything. But in a deeper water, in the shore at the water level, there is a sign there, there is a foot marks. There canoe marks. So he was very certain that he has been... he has been robbed. So he was very mad.

He doesn't know where those people are now though. He knows they would be far away. So there was nothing he could do. He can only be mad at himself, mad at his rear end because it didn't give him any warning. So he talks to his rear end. So he says, "Asshole, why didn't you warn me." And finally there's nothing he can do. All he can do is eat those feet that's left over, but he still mad at himself. Finally, he talks to himself and he says, "I'll fix you," he says to his rear end. "Because you didn't give me no warning." And there was still the fire there where he left the fire burning. So he rekindles the fire and put the stone in there. And when the stone begin to get hot, he sits on it. That's to punish his rear end for not warning him. Sound like his rear end did not have no feeling at all, which is part of the rest of him. Oh anyway, after he finished he decided well that's enough punishment. So that's the end of the story at that moment.

So it's said he went down to move on to other section of land. I was... he was hungry because he lost all his food. All the stuff, well planned feast that he wanted to have, they... it didn't turn out. And now it's his mistake. Once he was repaying for his tricks to the animals that he did kill. He didn't have all that feast. He realize that.

So he went down and traveled places and all that stuff. Then all of a sudden he... he notice that when he was trying to sneak on the ducks or whatever... he was trying to hunt, he begin to fart when he moves a little bit. Every time when he want to sneak up on animal or anything, he would fart. And he would scare the animal away. At first he thought it was very funny, when he walks he would fart with the short steps and they were very short farts, quick ones. Quick too. And he would take a long stride and there was a long sound coming out from his rear end. Soon enough he was getting very... very hungry, because he hadn't eaten. He began to starve cause he couldn't hunt anything because of that. Finally the day came that he was starving, he was truly... the end just seemed to be just... few more days. And there was nothing to eat. And then finally that's the end of the story about him starving. There is a bit to it that doesn't sound too good. I'm going to leave that out. So that's the end of that part.

Finally the season, the days gone and the season went by and he survived. The problem with him was that he was too greedy for his... the way he is. And then one day when he was traveling he has forgotten his mistake, his greediness. He still carries on his tricks to anyone he can beat. And this time was a time when he was thinking about having a different diet. Again he was traveling on always on the creeks. People use to always for creeks and rivers to hunt. Because that is where all the animals and birds are always traveling.

Then one day he was walk... he was walking this river, following the river. And then all of a sudden he saw a deer on the riverbank. And it's late in the fall. Not late, just late in September or thereabouts. Just when the berries are plentiful. And he saw this bear eating berries, berries like we... the bears like to eat berries, especially in the fall they eat cranberries, when they're fully ripe. So he saw this bear and again he thought about the bears by this time are near going into their den and would be very fat. And especially when they eat berries they would be very tasty and he thought about how nice it would be to have a bear, bear steak or things like that. Again he decided, he didn't go

right up to the bear. And he decided that... to trick him, another trick to do. So instead of trying to kill him right away, he walks up... he walks up to the bear. And the bears look up a bit scared. And then he says, "Hi brother." And the bears says, "Hi!" So he walk up to the grizzly and he says, "May I join you?" The bear says, "Help yourself." So he says, "Sure. Ya, sure." Says, "Ya, I will join you. Let's have a... let's gather the babies." So the bear says, "Well, there's plenty." So they start to join the bear, and it's like a friend and they eat berries and the sleep and they eat again, keep on looking for the berries. By end day he was getting hungry for different kind of food. He looks at the bear, "It would be nice steak to have." So he was forming his opinion, "How he was going to kill him. Can't just tackle him. Can't just kill him because he's more like a friend. Trusting friend." So finally he decided it's time. Soon he's going to leave. Soon he's going to go into his den. It's now or never. So he begin to form his opinion how he is going to trick him. So he talks to him just like anybody else and the bear would answer him. Whatever he talks about the bear would just go along.

And then one day he says, "Do you know one time I was..." He began to play tricks on him. He says, "Do you see that thing there in the distance?" Actually there's nothing there. But he says, "Do you see that thing there?" And the bear says, "No, no I don't see anything." And he pointed farther and he say, "Do you see that crow out there sitting there?" And the bear says, "No, I can't see that far, I don't see that far." But Wiissakechaahk know he doesn't see that but he just part of his trick. He kept on doing that to him. Always pretend to see something and the bear kind of [HAND GESTURE]. So the bear says, "I don't see that far. I don't see. My eyes are not that good. Not like you." So he says... so Wiissakechaahk says, "I was like... I was like that a long time. I had a... I had a very poor vision, especially at long distance. I can see close that time. Then one day somebody told me what to do. How to cure my eye-sight." And the bear says, "Yeh? How did that go? How did you cure your eyes?" He says, "Ya, I did get the cure and now I got a very good sight. I can see far distance, most anyone." "Yes," says the bear, "I would sure would like to see far. I would like to have a good sight, like you." "Well it's not... no problem," he says, "It's no problem to do that. The cure is right there, you are eating it. The berries!" "Ya, ya these," says the bear and he looking at the berries. Says, "Yup! And what do you... how do you cure these things?" So he says,

“You have to put them in your eyes. You have to squeeze them into your eye and after that they will be sore, alright. After that you gonna sleep. And then when you wake up you will see clearly.” And the bear says, “That sounds easy enough.” “But these things are they hurt in your eyes when you squeeze them?” So he says, “Yes. They are very, very painful the first time, but you just have to close your eyes and go to sleep. After you sleep many hour you are cured. And then you have a better sight than me, maybe. So the bear says, “Well, let me try these, let me try so I can see.” It’s apparent that she cannot see things as far as I can see. So the bear says, “Ok. Fine then. I really didn’t care much about them.” So he says, “Ok, let’s go down the river and let’s... right on the sunny side. The side we do the sun bathing. Nice afternoon... for that.” So then he say, “Ok.” And so the bear walk down with him and they pick a nice grassy place and they lay... they lay him down. Wiissakechaahk put this... put him there and he got the berries in him. Give lots of berries in him... with him... in his hand, whatever. And he says, “Ok, you lay down here.” So he put him on a pillow as a stone. And the bear said, “This stone is hard. But Wiisakechaahk say, “Well, that’s the best way.” “Because that stone will reflect the heat in your head and comfort you and all that stuff.” The bear was... do what he says. So he begin to squeeze the berries into his eyes, and then the bear is just agonized with these painful things in his eyes and that friend squeezing another berry. Soon the bear had all of these running down his face and everything. And finally he says, “That’s enough, that’s good enough. Now you lay you... lay your head here on a stone hear and go to sleep. And I’ll sing for you.” And the bear says, “Ok.” And then he began singing a song, sort of like a lullaby. He says, “I’ll sing you to sleep.” So finally he sing and the bear begin to drift into a sleep, forget all about the pain. Usually the bear sleeps in the afternoon when he eats the berries. And that’s why Wiissakechaahk say that. Cause he knows the bear’s going to sleep anyways.

So the bear went to sleep. So he went to sleep and Wiissakechaahk sits by and by this time he wasn’t singing. So he thought, Wiissakechaahk, was fully sleep now. So he look around and look for the big stone, big rock which he can lift. He walks up to the bear, lift the big stone and just before he before he drops it, he slip on the rock, Wiissakechaahk. And he drop the stone just beside his head.

Which bring the bear awake. And he says: “Ha, ha, ha, ha... what’s a matter... what happen?” And Wiissakechaahk says: “Oh, my brother I was just exercising my muscles with this stone and I slipped and nearly kill you. And the bear says: “I’m alright. God helps. I was alright.” He still couldn’t open his eyes. Says: “How is your eyes?” He says: “How does he feel?” “Still feel... I couldn’t open them. They’re very sore still.” He says: “Well go back to sleep and I will exercise a little distance away from you.” So he put him to sleep and the bear went back to sleep. So this time he make sure that he was sleeping. The bear was actually snoring this time. He had shifted his head to into the side way. So anyway, as soon as he was certain that the bear was fully sleeping, pickup the rock again. Pickup the rock and right there well balanced, right in front of him, and he dropped that stone right into his head and he killed the bear instantly. Once again he had his way. And then he congratulated himself that he has tricked the bear.

Now he begin to plan this time. Remember the last time he lost his food. This time he says, “He’s not going to lose it.” So he took the bear up into the bank and cut it open into strips and the best way possible. He started to make a fire and he roast all the meat and all the tenders and everything and the fat and everything. And he was so, so eager to have a feast by himself... this time he didn’t go to sleep. He just begin to eat the best part of it...best delicious cooking and soon he was full. The bear was still hanging there and the bear meat and everything. And he was full. He couldn’t eat anymore, simply couldn’t eat.

He just laid down there, sits there beside. But the bear meat still looks delicious... couldn’t stop himself. So he decided, you know I shouldn’t really sleep at all. Cause he was sleepy. Because he was greedy and wants to have his way all the time. So he decide, “I should squeeze myself with the trees so I can digest fast.” So he got up and looked around and not far away from his cooking, his cooking he found the trees, tamaracks, standing close by. Just the right size for his body. And tamaracks standing there. So he went sit between them. Right into the guts there. Then he talks to them and says, “Now squeeze, so I can digest my stomach.” So the trees started squeeze, slowly. They squeeze and they squeeze. And he says, “no, no, not too much, just a little bit. Just gradually.” So they did. And later on they begin to squeeze again. And he says, “No, no, no, it’s too hard, it’s too hard, it hurts!” And then it stops and then he begin to relax.

And again the trees begin to... to twist each other on top of his stomach and hold him there. By this time he says, "Not too much, too much, just stop." And by this time the trees say, "Ok you birds and animals, come and eat. There is some food here." And all of a sudden, there's animals, foxes and mink and all kind... wolverine and...Canada jay and all those flesh eating birds... ravens, crows and all that. They all came. And then they begin to eat this food and... and Wiissakechaahk was held there by these two giant tamaracks and he said, "Let me go, let me go, they eat all my food!" And the trees didn't say a thing, they just hold him there.

Finally, there is so many animals and birds eating his food and... soon his food was barely left there and he was getting mad. And he fight the trees and wouldn't let go. And then finally, he got so mad. By this time there was hardly anything left in his... in his cook, in his kitchen. And all the food was eaten. And finally he got so mad, he got up and says... get off of the trees and started to beat the trees... no he didn't beat the trees yet, he just went to run to his kitchen and all his food was gone. There barely any... just a little bit left. And he was so mad for the trees and he went over them and worked them over. Twist them and all that stuff and way... And they say now that's why we see the tamaracks are twisted into... and are out of shape. Because Wiissakechaahk was mad at them. So once again he lost out.

So the moral of the story is that him, Wiissakechaahk as powerful as he is, trickster, tricks as he is... what gets him most of time is his greediness. He is too greedy. And he lost out. He lost so much things and for that reason sometime he lost very stupidly. Which he didn't think could possibly be happening. So he teaches a story that we shouldn't be so greedy. We should live moderately. We should never want something materialistic so bad to so much that we would rush to nature things that the way it should be. Like killing the food and cooking lots of food and trying to rush your digestive system by using the power of something. And that's what it teach us. We should...that's how the native people use to teach...that you should not kill any animal that you can not put away or preserve for use. For every legends that's been used is to teach the people... the people amongst our people not to do things that's not necessary. Most of all not to be too greedy because you always lost out at the end if you are greedy.

So that is the use of the legends. So Wiissakechaahk, Wiissakechaahk lived on. He lived on for a long time in this area. One thing about this Wiissakechaahk story is that it's hard to imagine a person going to be human, the size of a human and his land marks can be so big... and then stones, the formation of stones... the signs of it is a stone marking. There is a place in the Cape Henrietta Maria where there's a stone formation that looks like a... shelter. But the stones are large, there's no human can lift them. And they say that was Wiissakechaahk a temporary shelter. And that place not far from it... about two miles or three miles towards north-west. There's also a landmark where you can see the stones at the bottom and in the center there's one big stone that stands about eight feet high, a round shape. Has been placed... as if it has been placed and they say that is the mark of Wiissakechaahk. They said where he had sit in the morning. And there's a place here in Fort Severn, probably about fifty miles inland. There's a rapid there and the riverbank is... is walled with - what do you call this kind of rock? - slate rock? Or... the white rock anyway, and in the middle there's a fast water there. And in the middle there's a stone that sticks out, a round stone right in the middle. And they say that's where Wiissakechaahk jump across and he lost his medicine bag and it was sitting right there in the middle of the river. And there's another sign out there in XXWanaminXX Lake. They call it... the giant... beaver house. So it seems like Wiissakechaahk that killed a beaver there and there and left the blood running there on the rock. And it seems to be exactly like that. There's a large hill and the bottom of it there is a kind of a rock that is red. They say that beaver blood. So Wiissakechaahk when he was moving towards west. That's a symbolic things. So don't know what kind of man he is, whether he's a giant or an ordinary man.

So that's the end of this section of the story Wiissakechaahk. Next time we will listen to the Chakaapesh. But there's ten parts to this Wiissakechaahk story... ten parts at least. And some of it is very funny. Some of it is just a story. So that's that.

[END OF TAPE]

