cahkâpêš kâ-kî-kohcipanihikot mistamêsa

pêyakwâ manâ mîna cahkâpêš kihtohtêw manâ ê-nanâtawâpahtahk kêkwâniw.

âšay manâ mâka mêkwâc ê-papâmohtêt nêtê wâhnaw, ohci-wâpahtam manâ mâka sâkahikaniniw; mêkwâc mâka mêkwâc ê-pâhpâskâtikohtân'ci awiyâšîša, pimotêw manâ mâka pinêšîš' ê-akosîn'ci mistikohk. otakaskwa manâ mâka nêtê wâhnaw pahkišininiwa nipîhk.

anihi manâ mâka kâ-pâhpâskâtikohtân'ci awiyâšîša môna kî-tôtam 'ci-n'tawâpamât ê-kostâcit.

'kwâni manâ mâka n'tawâc êši-kîwêt ê-kîwê-tipâcimostawât omisa kêkwâniw kâ-kî-wâpahtahk.

ê-takošihk manâ mâka tipâcimostawêw.

"nimišê," manâ itwêw, "ê-kî-wâpahtamân kêkwâ..., sâkahikan," manâ itwêw. "ê-pâhpâskâtikohtâcik awiyâšîšak," manâ itwêw.

"n'takask mâka nêtê kî-pahkišin nipîhk," manâ itwêw. "môna mâka n'tawât n'tôhc'... n'tawâpamâw," manâ itwêw.

" 'kwâni kwayask êkâ wêhci-n'tawâpamât," manâ mâk' itikow.

"kikiskên'tên n' âni 'wênihkânak anik' kâ-pâhpâskâtikohtâcik nipîhk?" manâ itêw¹ anaw iskwêw. "kišâspin kî-pahkopêyin anta nipîhk, mitoni ka-kî-otamikohtayak namêsak," manâ itikow. "mistamêsak ka-kî-mâkomikohtayak² mâka ka-kî-kihcipanihikohtayak," manâ itêw ošîma.

"nimišêh, 'kâwin' anima icwê. kisêkimin anim' ê-'twêyin," manâ itwêw. "môna mîn' ântê n'ka-itohtân," manâ itwêw ana cahkâpêš.

"wîpac waniškâhkan mîna kêkišêpâyâkê," manâ itêw omisa.

3 âšay manâ tâpwê mîna ê-'ti-wâpaninik, wîpac manâ waniškâw ana iskwêw.

koškonêw manâ ošîma

êkwâni manâ mîna tâpw' êti-kihtohtêt ana cahkâpêš kiyêkišêpâyânik.

kâ-k'-îši-wâpahtahk piko sâkahikaniniw êkotê 'n' êt'-îtohtêt,

ê-wî-n'tawâpamât awênihkâna kâ-pâhpâskâtikohtân'c'.

âšay man' âti-pêšiwâpahtahk, tâpwê âšay mîna kâ-pâhpâskâtikohtâcik namêsak.

'kwâni manâ '-'t'-îši-kapastawêpanihot.

Chahkabesh is swallowed by the giant fish

Excerpt from "âtalôhkâna nêsta tipâcimôwina / Cree Legends

and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay" (1995)

Once again then Chahkabesh set off in his search for something.

But now, while walking around and around, away off yonder he suddenly caught sight of a lake; and, in the meantime, while the creatures were breaking the surface making bubbles he shot at a bird perched on a tree. But his arrow fell far away in the water.

With those creatures making ripples as they broke the surface, however, he was unable to go fetch it because he was afraid.

So then [he thought] he might just as well return home, go back and tell his older sister what he had seen.

On arrival he told her the news.

"Big Shishter," he said, "I saw someth... a lake," he said. "With creatures making ripples as they broke the surface."

"But my arrow fell away over there in the water," he said, "and," said he, "it was better for me not... me not to go after it."

"It's a good thing that you didn't go after it," she said to him.

"Do you indeed know who those ones are who make the ripples breaking surface in the water?" that woman said to him. "If you had gone in the water there, the fish would most surely have grabbed hold of you," she said to him. "The giant fish would have bitten you and they would have made off with you," she said to her young brother.

"Big Shishter, don't shay that; you frighten me saying that," he said. "I won't go there again," said Chahkabesh.

Then he said to his older sister, "Get up early again tomorrow morning."

Now sure enough when day was beginning to break, that woman got up early.

She nudged her little brother awake.

Now then Chahkabesh set off again in earnest while it was morning.

Just where he had seen the lake, that's the way he set off as he was anxious to go after whoever was making the ripples.

And now as he drew within sight of it, the fish were in fact already breaking the surface in ripples again.

At that he jumped straightway into the water.

He began to swim.

XAVIER SUTHERLAND

ati-pimâtakâw manâ.

âšay manâ wîpac ê-pimâtakât, wêhci-k'-ôtamikot³ manâ tâpwê namêsa. 'kwâni manâ tâpwê kâ-'ši-kohcipanihikot.

4 âšay manâ mâk' ana iskwêw kîtawi-pêhêw ošîma 'ci-pêci-kîwên'ci. kinwêš manâ pêhêw ê-'ti-otâkošininik.

"šā!" manā itwēw. "māškôc mînā cahkāpēš kî-kapāšimow anta sākahikanihk," manā itwēw. "'kwāni 'kā māškôc wēhci-takošihk," manā itwēw ana iskwēw.

'kwâni manâ 'ši-kihtohtêt. okwâškwêpicikan manâ kihtohtahtâw. omôhkomân mâka.

âšay manâ tâpwê wâpahtam animêniw sâkahikaniniw cahkâpêš' kâ-k'-îši-pahkopên'c'.

'kwâni manâ 'ši-kapastawê'pinahk okwâškwêpicikan, âšay manâ piko wêhci-manawêpahtahk ana namês kwâškwêpicikaniniw.

'kwâni manâ 'š'-ocipitât. akwâtâpâtêw manâ mâk' anta, askîhk.

kâ-mohci-mahkatayêsihk man' âna namês ê-mišikitit mistamês.

'kwâni manâ 'ši-mâci-wêpišwât ana iskwêw.

"nimišêh, nimišêh," kâ-matê-ytwêt manâ cahkâpêš. "ka-mâcišon, ka-mâcišon. pêhkât, pêhkâc," manâ itwêw.

"n'âpatisiyan⁴ ô kâ-itwêyin. kikî-wîhtamâtin 'š' êkâ 'ci-pahkopêyin nipîhk," manâ itik' ômisa.

otâmahokow manâ.

'kwâni manâ mâk' kâ-pêc'-iši-kapatêyâhtawît anta namêsihk ohci. 'kwâni manâ mâk' âši-kîwêcik ê-nîšicik.

"kikî-wîhtamâtin oš' êkâ 'ci-kapâšimoyin anima⁵ sâkahikanihk," manâ itwêw ana iskwêw. "mâtika mâk' êkâ wîskâc kâ-tâpwêhtaman; mâtika mâka êy-ihtiyan," manâ itâkaniwan cahkâpêš.

êkwâni piko êskwâpihkêyâk.

He had hardly begun to swim when, sure enough, he was grabbed and pulled under by a fish. And then, without further ado, he was swallowed right down.

Now then, however, that woman got tired of waiting for her young brother to come home. She waited for him a long time as evening began to come on.

"Oh dear!" she said. "Chahkabesh has probably gone bathing again there in the lake," she said. "That's probably why he hasn't arrived," the woman said.

At that, she set off. She took her fish hook along with her, and her knife.

Now then she actually saw that lake where Chahkabesh had waded in. Then, at that, she threw her fish hook in and immediately the fish took hold of the hook.

Then she pulled him. She pulled him ashore there, on the land.

That fish just lay with a huge stomach, an enormous, giant fish.

Then that woman slit him down.

"Big Shishter, Big Shishter," Chahkabesh could be heard saying. "You'll cut me, you'll cut me. Carefully, carefully," he said.

"Never mind that chattering," his older sister said to him. "I told you not to go into the water."

Then she smacked him.

At that then he stepped out from the fish; then they went home, the two of them.

"I told you, didn't I, not to go bathing there in the lake," that woman said. "See, you never believed it; and now look at the state you're in," Chahkabesh got told.

That is the length of the story.