

First Poem

Ne' ne ëtyutyeëhtôôk íké,
 ne' ne niwakënöhtônyö'
 ne na' u' t nëkatënútë' ,
 uiwa' shö' nëkatwënôta' k,
 5 núti' seu' të' ëtwa' sâyê'
 uiwa' në nëkatënútë' .
 Uwëníyu' s nae uka' ö,
 ne' hu nae teknyatyanôéha'
 kä' nöhsa' ke nyunu' tsáké
 10 uiwa' u' tkahnu' tsaihtánô' .

Ne' ne ëtyutyeëhtôôk - it will continue to begin. íké - I want. ne' ne niwakënöhtônyö' - what I keep thinking.
 ne na' u' t - such. nëkatënútë' - what I shall sing. uiwa' shö' - stories. nëtwakatwënôta' k - how I keep
 attaching one word to another. núti' seu' të' - what kind of clan they are. ëtwa' sâyê' - we shall be a clan of
 people. uiwa' - story. në - this. nëkatënútë' - how I shall sing it. Uwëníyu' s - good words. nae - indeed. uka' ö
 - taste good. ne' hu - that. nae - indeed. teknyatyanôéha' - the two of them run a race. kä' nöhsa' ke - on my
 tongue. nyunu' tsáké - how many teeth there are. uiwa' - the story. u' tkahnu' tsaihtánô' - it's breaking my
 teeth in pieces.

Now I want to begin what is in my thoughts, and so I' ll sing stories about the family, that is what I' ll sing about.
 The words taste sweet, my tongue and teeth are running a race until my teeth break into pieces.

Hau' ís ne tetyatênôté' ,
 ne' kö' kê' tyatútyë nae ís!
 Kuwe nae ëhnyatënútë' ,
 tiya' tí nae öknyáthsi shô,
 15 hau' únë ëhnyatënútë' ,
 nëkhu ihne' s tehniya' tí!
 Thúha' te' wëtö nae te' ne'
 nëkhu te' hne' skwa' tehnyáké
 te' nëkhu te' hnyatatékë
 20 në yöëtsa' ke te' käähkwáhkö.

Hau' - hey listen. ís - you. ne tetyatênôté' - my brother, sister, cousin. ne' kö' kê' - my little sister, brother.
 tyatútyë - we have grown up together. nae ís - you. Kuwe - hey listen. nae - indeed. ëhnyatënútë' - you and I shall
 sing. tiya' tí - just the two of us. nae - indeed. öknyáthsi - we are friends. shô - just. hau' - hey listen. únë - now
 then. ëhnyatënútë' - you and I shall sing. nëkhu - here. ihne' s - we are both here. tehniya' tí - just the two of
 us. Thúha' - almost. te' wëtö - never. nae - indeed. te' ne' - not that. nëkhu - here. te' hne' skwa' - we two
 did not used to be here. tehnyáké - we two separate ones. te' nëkhu - not here. te' hnyatatékë - we don't meet
 each other. në - this. yöëtsa' ke - country. te' käähkwáhkö - northern, where there is no sun.

My brother, little brother, we grew up together. Now let's just the two of us sing while we are here where we
 seldom meet together in this northern country.

Ne' hu núně tyachtsakwaihsi
núně tehniyenöwö' khô
uëniyú ëtyatënútë' ,
kátsi shô khu ëtitsakô' ,
25 nunôtkö' uënö' ëtyënôök
tityahsawë työtyëênôni,
työkwe' tasé' nae tyahhtëti,
ne' kaiôni hni' sää' haste' :
huikê uiwa' shö' ëhniiwáôk
30 huikê uiwa' hunötênút
uënö' huikê Teutya' tkauweë,
uënö' ne Kahöhtsi' tahök
uënö' huikê Katsihsötis,
uënö' Nutkwistatekë' a,
35 këta' ke he te' käähkwáhkö
këhöktatye' në Uhíyú.

Ne' hu - that. núně - now then. tyachtsakwaihsi - let us both extend our hand. núně - then. tehniyenöwö' khô - let us grasp each other' s hand in to help. uëniyú - a beautiful song. ëtyatënútë' - the two of us shall sing. kátsi - come. shô - just. khu - and. ëtitsakô' - we shall both do our best. nunôtkö' - they are powerful in magic. uënö' - song. ëtyënôök - both of us shall hear their song. tityahsawë - let' s both begin. työtyëênôni - let' s both do it right. työkwe' tasé' - we two young people. nae - indeed. tyahhtëti - let us set out. ne' kaiôni - because. hni' sää' haste' - we are of a strong family. huikê - those. uiwa' shö' - songs. ëhniiwáôk - we shall both hear the story. huikê - that. uiwa' - story. hunötênút - they have sung. uënö' - song. huikê - that. Teutya' tkauweë - His Body is cleft. uënö' - song. ne Kahöhtsi' tahök - Grandfather of Twins. uënö' - song. huikê - that. Katsihsötis - Strikes the Mat. uënö' - song. Nutkwistatekë' a - Little Burnt Belly. këta' ke - in the field. he te' käähkwáhkö - where there is no sun, north. këhöktatye' - along the banks of the river. në - this. Uhíyú - Great River.

Now then let us extend hands and take each other' s hand, let us sing a beautiful song. Come and let us do our best, let us hear the song of those powerful in magic, let us begin now and do it the right way, young folks setting out, we of a strong clan. Let us hear the songs they have sung, the song of Cleft Body, of Grandfather of Twins, of Amulet Hitter, of Little Burnt Belly, on the meadows to northward, on the banks of the Ohio.

Unëhtsi huikê haknu' së
nêkê uënö' shö' hutênút
nu' yë khu ökeyestání
40 unëhtsi thsiyakuthe' tö
thsikeksa' a kanestä' ke
kehsisaskwa' ne tsyu' âka'
wahsi' ta' ke, kanestä' ke
khu kës wai thsa' kë' hushâ' ék.
45 Ne' hu huikê kaënöka' te'
wësu' shô niyötênúthak
wësu' hatikëhtsishö' ö
kakääka' te' hutikéútak,
u' kääs' a nae thsaawathúwät,
50 ne' skënö' ö watsi' he' skwa' .

Unëhtsi - long ago. huikê - that one. haknu' sê - my uncle. nêkê - this, these. uënö' shö' - songs. hutênút - he has sung. nu' yê - my mother. khu - and. ökeyëstání - she has taught me. unëhtsi - long ago. thsiyakuthe' tö - while she was pounding corn. thsikeksa' a - when I was a child. kanestä' ke - on the floor. kehsisaskwa' - I used to shoot at and hit. ne tsyu' âka' - the raccoon. wahsi' ta' ke - foot. kanestä' ke - on the floor. khu - and. kës - repeatedly. wai - indeed. thsa' kê' hushâ' ék - while I hit the ball. Ne' hu - there. huikê - that, those. kaënöka' te' - many songs. wésu' - many. shô - just. niyötênúthak - what she used to sing. wésu' - many. hatikëhtsishö' ö - the old people. kakääka' te' - many stories. hutikéútak - they used to tell stories. u' kääs' a - in the evening. nae - indeed. Thsaawathúwät - when it might get cold. ne' skënö' ö - slowly. watsi' he' skwa' - it used to get dark.

Long ago my uncle sang these songs, and my mother taught them to me while she was pounding corn, when I was a little child on the floor shooting arrows at a raccoon's foot, hitting a ball. There were so many songs she used to sing, the old people told so many stories on cold evenings as it was getting dark.

Úya' nikawënöka' te'
ahsö' nae nikaënöyêtö' s
ne' uateatye' skwa' wëne' skwa'
únë utahsehtö huikê
55 uhsuwi' shä' uskawakô,
ne' nukúwä' úwistakô,
usehta' ukwiyänyôt
ne' uënö' shö' ö kakwíyë' s,
utahsehtö khu kakää' shö'
60 héôwe kwë' kúnyë' uhtahkwa'
ne' hu khu ne kahatakô
ne' hu khu hutinöhsútö'
natikëhtsishö' ö huikê
ne' thëni' työ' skwa' nöta' ke.

Úya' - other. nikawënöka' te' - how many words. ahsö' - still. nae - indeed. nikaënöyêtö' s - how many songs are there. ne' uateatye' skwa' - it used to be along the path. wëne' skwa' - they used to be there. únë - now. utahsehtö - it has hidden. huikê - that. uhsuwi' shä' - hazel. uskawakô - in the bushes. ne' nukúwä' - acorn. úwistakô - in its cup. usehta' - willow. ukwiyänyôt - tips of the branches hanging down. ne' uënö' shö' ö - songs. kakwíyë' s - falling from the tips of the branches. khu - too. kakää' shö' - stories. héôwe - where. kwë' kúnyë' - whippoorwill. uhtahkwa' - its shoe (lady slipper). ne' hu - that. ne kahatakô - in the forest, blue cohosh. hutinöhsútö' - their houses. natikëhtsishö' ö - the old people. ne' thëni' työ' skwa' - they used to live there. nöta' ke - on the hill.

Many other words there are, there are still songs that used to be along the path, now hidden in the hazel bushes, in the acorn cup, on the tips of the willow branches hanging down, the songs fall like leaves from the tips of the branches in the fall, hidden also the stories in the whippoorwill's shoe, in the blue cohosh of the forest, in the houses of the old people who used to live in the hills.

65 Ne' nathu' hakeyëstání
ne' khu natiwënutatye' s
ne' ne kää' haste' utênút
uta' tu' shö' he kanyutae' .
Utikaaút utsi' të' öö'
70 héôwe ne kaötakêyatö' .

Ne' nathu' - spirit of frost. hakeyëstání - he has taught me. ne' khu - and. natiwënutatye' s - the grandfathers the thunderers. ne' ne kää' haste' - the strong wind. utênút - it has sung. uta' tu' shö' - waves. he kanyutae' - on the lake. Utikaaút - they are telling stories. utsi' të' öö' - birds. héôwe - where. ne kaötakêyatö' - the treetops.

The frost spirit has taught me and so have the thunderers, the strong wind has sung, and the waves on the lake. The birds in the treetops are telling stories.

Ne' huikê ne kakäaka' te'
ne' huikê tewake' nöthá' ,
kakwékö ka' husyönyánö' ,
kanënushä' íká' kakáá' ,
75 akathénút kanöhsötáá'
kanöhsötáá' ní' akyeä' tö
khu ne teyéwë' keutahkwa'
kakwékö nae akatéwát.

Ne' huikê - that, those. ne kakäaka' te' - many stories. ne' huikê - that, those. tewake' nöthá' - I have jumbled them, put them in a bundle, spoken them in secret. kakwékö - all. ka' husyönyánö' - charm bundles. kanënushä' - bundle. íká' - in it. kakáá' - story. akathénút - I have loaded up in a bundle. kanöhsötáá' - forehead burden strap. ní' - I. akyeä' tö - I have used it. khu - and. ne teyéwë' keutahkwa' - skis, sled. kakwékö - all. nae - indeed. akatéwát - I have stored away.

Those many stories I packed away (jumbled, muttering, talking in secret), all in charm bundles, a bundle with a story in it, I loaded them up and carried them with a burden strap, carried them in a two-runner sled, stored them all away.

U' watinestus kakwékö
80 kakää' shö' unestúniyö,
ne' kaiôni shô uthúwe'
uthúwe' naste khu ne' hu
héôwe u' kehsënönyánô'
ne' kaöshä' ke ëwöthúwät,
85 ne' skaöshât nikakäaka' te' ,
ëkhwahahsi' wai ke' nyánus,
ne' yö' kahtahkwa' ëkyeä' t shô
tëkahkeukwat uhkää' shö' ö
uwisâniyö ëkwánôt,
90 kakáá' ëswakäähsönyánô' .

U' watinestus - they froze. kakwékö -all. kakää' shö' - stories. unestúnyö - frozen solid. ne' kaiôni - because. shô - just. uthúwe' - it' s cold. naste - outside. khu - also. ne' hu - there. héôwe - where. u' kehsënönyânô' - I stored them away. ne' - that. kaöshä' ke - in a box. ëwöthúwät - it will get cold. skaöshât - a boxful, a thousand. nikakääka' te' - how many stoies there are. ëkhwahahsi' - I shall untie it. wai - indeed. ke' nyánus - my fingers are cold. yö' kahtahkwa' - pick, icepick. ëkyeä' t - I shall use. shô - just. tëkahkeukwat - I shall scatter. uhkää' shö' ö - chips. uwisânyö - solid ice. ëkwánôt - I shall give you to eat. kakáá' - story. ëswakäähsönyânô' - you will have a fresh taste of story.

All the stories froze solid, because it was cold outside and in the place I stored them away, in the box it got cold, the boxful of stories, I shall untie the lid with cold fingers, and chip off pieces from the solid ice with an icepick, and give you some to eat, let you taste the stories.

Ne' núnë ëkatënútë'
kaënyu' s kës ëkwënitkë' t
kakáá' aöhö' ö uka' ö
he niyu' tê unö' khwishä'
95 he niyu' tê únekäänöe' .
Sênö ëskénôt uka' ö
únekäänöe' unö' khwishä'
ne' shô aöhö' ö ní' wíyú
ëkatënútë' aöhö' ö
100 wíyú khu ëkekeutë' ní'
ne' wênishäkwékö ne' khu
tëtwáhët he tëtsyuhathe' .

Ne' núnë - now then. ëkatënútë' - I shall sing. kaënyu' s - beautiful songs. kës - repeatedly. ëkwënitkë' t - my words will come out. kakáá' - story. aöhö' ö - better. uka' ö - delicious. he niyu' tê - than. unö' khwishä' - boiled corn sweetened with maple sugar. he niyu' tê - than. únekäänöe' - sweetened water. Sênö - don' t. ëskénôt - you will give me to eat and drink. uka' ö - delicious things. únekäänöe' - sweetened water. unö' khwishä' - boiled sweetened corn. ne' - that. shô - just. aöhö' ö - better. ní' - I. wíyú - beautifully. ëkatënútë' - I shall sing. aöhö' ö - better. wíyú - beautifully. khu - too. ëkekeutë' - I shall tell a story. ní' - I. ne' - that. wênishäkwékö - all day long. ne' - that. khu - too. tëtwáhët - we shall stay up all night. he - until. tëtsyuhathe' - it will get light again.

Now then I shall sing beautiful songs and stories come out of my mouth more delicious than boiled corn sweetened with maple sugar, than sweetened water. Give me no boiled corn to eat nor sweetened water to drink, so that I shall sing more beautifully, and tell stories more beautifully, all day and all night until it gets light again.