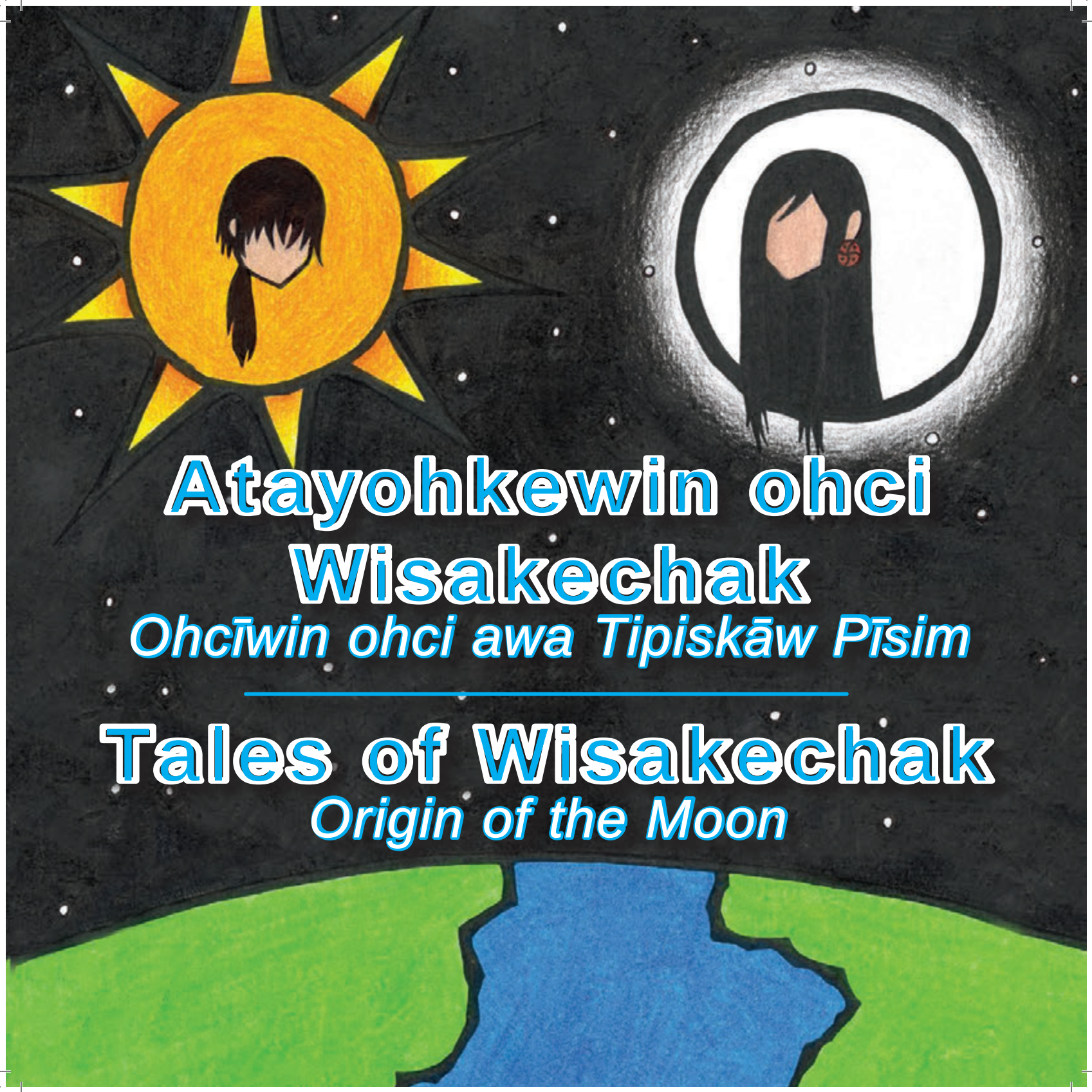


Atayohkewin ohci Wisakechak

Ohcīwin ohci awa Tipiskāw Pīsim

Tales of Wisakechak

Origin of the Moon

Storytelling is a tradition that has been passed on for generations upon generations in our culture. It is essential that we carry on this tradition of storytelling — for the survival of our language and our identity. Our goal in the creation of this book is to give those wanting to learn the Cree language a new resource, and also continue to inspire our youth through the age-long tradition of storytelling. We hope you enjoy and learn from Atayohkewin Ohci Wisakechak (Ohcîwin ohci awa Tipiskaw Pîsim).

Project coordination – Vance Sanderson, Paula Anderson and Kyle Napier

Story rewritten by the NWT Cree Language Program
Illustrations by Lynsey Landry, Alexa Funk and Jessica Hall
Translated into Cree by Mary Cardinal
Edited by Kyle Napier
Design and layout by Cascade Graphics, Fort Smith NWT

Published by
NWT Métis Nation Cree Language Program
Box 720
Fort Smith, NT
X0E 0P0
Tel: (867) 872-2770

The publisher gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution from the Department of Education, Culture and Employment of the Government of the Northwest Territories.

NWT Cree Language Program

NWT Métis Nation

Northwest Territories
Education, Culture & Economic Development

Atayohkewin ohci Wisakechak

Ohcīwin ohci awa Tipiskāw Pīsim

Tales of Wisakechak

Origin of the Moon

NWT Cree Language Program

KAYĀS,

namakīkway ayaw tipiskāw pīsim. Kīkway poko pīsim.
Awa otōsihcikew ayāwew twestamakewa awīna
nīsohkamākoht asci wīya atoskewin.

A LONG TIME AGO,

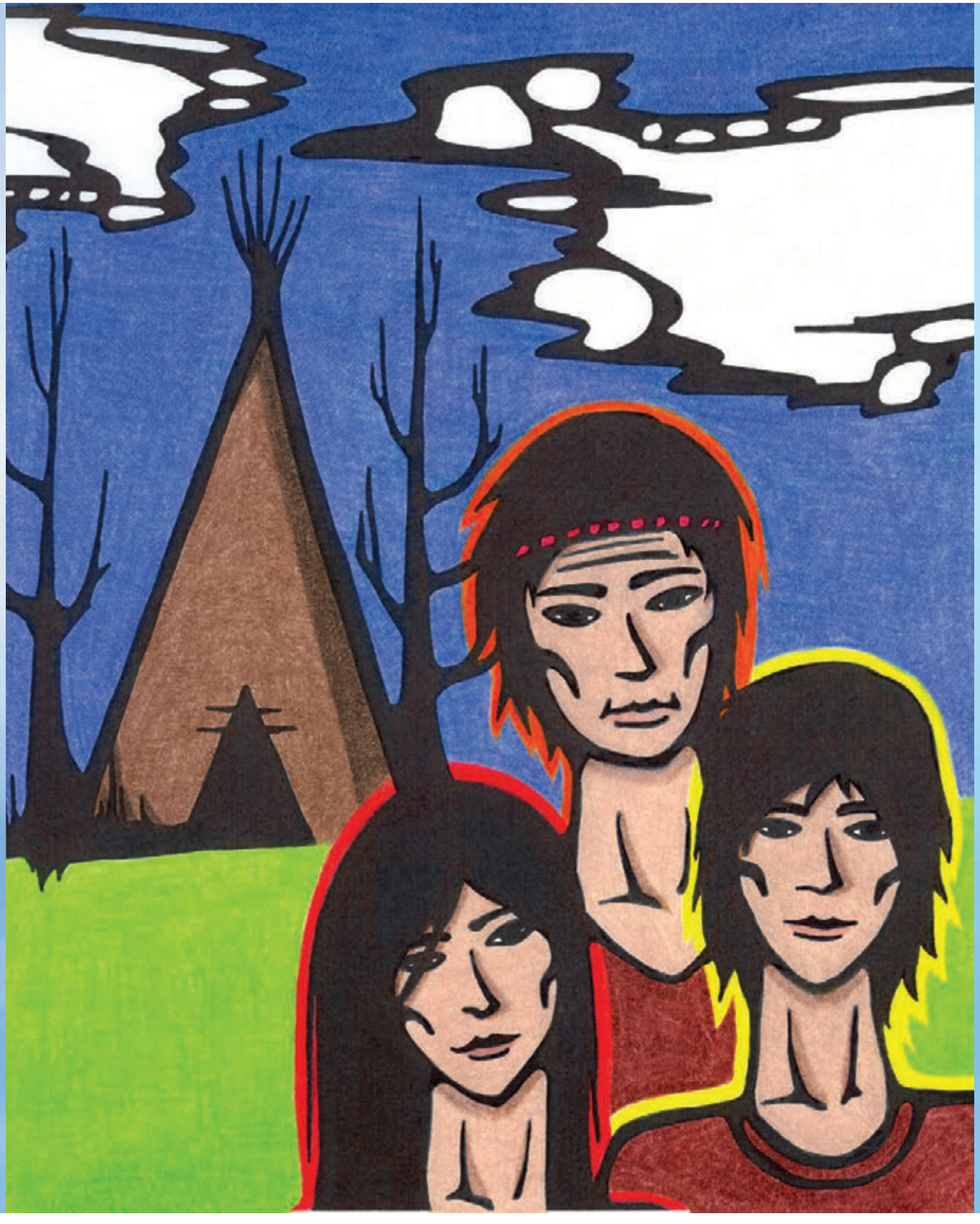
there was no moon. There was only the sun.
The creator has messengers who helped him with his work.

PEYAK AWA NĪSOKAMAKEW

esa onakateyicikew ohci awa pīsim. Wīya ayawew nīso awāsisa, nāpesis ekwa iskwesis. Kahkiyaw nisto wīkowak eta oma kīsik-askīy. Wiyawāw miyawātamohk pihci wiyawāw askīy.

ONE OF THESE MESSENGERS

was the caretaker of the sun. He had two children, a boy and a girl. All three lived in the sky world. They were happy in their world.



PEYAK KĪSIKĀW,

awa otānisimāw kanawetam oma kapesiwin.
Wīya kanaweyihtam kanatak mīna nahāwinakwan.
Espi wīya pahpaw wepinam oma pīwāya akohp,
ohi pīwāya pahkihtinaw eta oma askīy peyakwan kona.

ONE DAY,

the daughter looked after the camp. She kept it clean
and tidy. When she shook the feather bedding,
the feathers would fall to the earth as snow.

AWA OKISIMĀW MĀCIW

mīna nōcikinosewew. Espi wīya akotaht ayapya ka pasowiht, kitiskinikewa pahkihtinaw eta oma askīy peyakwan kimowan.

THE SON HUNTED

and fished. When he hung his nets to dry, droplets fell to the earth as rain.

AWA OPĀPĀMĀW SEPWEHTEW

kapekisik kanawehtak oma kihci iskotew kīsisikewin eta awa pīsim. Awa onakateyicikew metoni kihtehayiwiw. Kīyipa, wīya kanakatew ocawāsimisa moyawihkaci, kawi kapetakosiht. Wīya wehtamowiw, kispin pōnipamātsiyan, kīya poko kanakatihtaman iskotew ka kwahkotehk ahpo mīna oki ayisiyiniwak mīna pisiskiwak oma askīy ka sikocnipowak.

THE FATHER WOULD BE AWAY

all day keeping the great fire burning on the sun. The caretaker was very old. Soon, he would leave his children, never to return. He said to them, “When I die, you must keep the fire burning or else the people and animals on Earth will perish.”

KĪSIKAWĀW ATINIKPAYIHK ETA

espi mīna iskotew capasis ohci awa pīsim, awa opāpāmāw pikiwew nestosiw. Wīya kanawapimew ocawāsisa mīna itew, awāsisak, nitcawāsimisak, nitcawāsimisak. Niya poko ka sipwehtiyan ekwa. Moywihkac kawikapetakosiyan. Oki awāsisak mātowak mīna kaskeyihtamohk. Wiyawāw kiskeyihtmohk wīya kiyipa kapōnipimātisht mīna kanakataht.

DAYS PASSED BY

and when the fire was low on the sun, the father came home tired. He looked at his children and said, “Children, my children, my children. I have to go now. I will never return.” The children cried and mourned. They knew he would soon die and leave them.

KĪKISEPĀ,

ekwa poko kamacitahk oma pīsim iskotew. Oki awāsisak maci kehkāhtowak awīna kamacitaht atoskewin. Nīya nakanweyihtin oma iskotew, nīya nawac kihtehyayah, itew omisimaw. Namoya! Nīya napwew, nīya natōtin, itew awa osīmimāw. Wiyawāw tepwahtewak ohci awīna katōtak atoskewin.

IN THE MORNING,

it was time to start the sun's fire. The children began to quarrel over who would do the task. "I will tend the fire, I'm older," said the sister. "No! I am the man, I will do it," said the brother. They yelled at each other about who would do the work.

AYISIYINIWAK ŌMA ASKĪY

maci māmitoneyihtamohk, itewak, tānihke awa pīsim intowapimat tānihke otāhkesin. Wisakechak itotew ete awa pisim intowapimat tanihke otahkesin. Espi Wisakechak takosihk, awa nāpesis mīna omisa keyāpic kehkāhtowak. Wisakechak kisōwāsiw. Oki ayisiniwak mīna pisiskiwak ka sikocnipowak, wehtamowiw.

THE PEOPLE ON EARTH

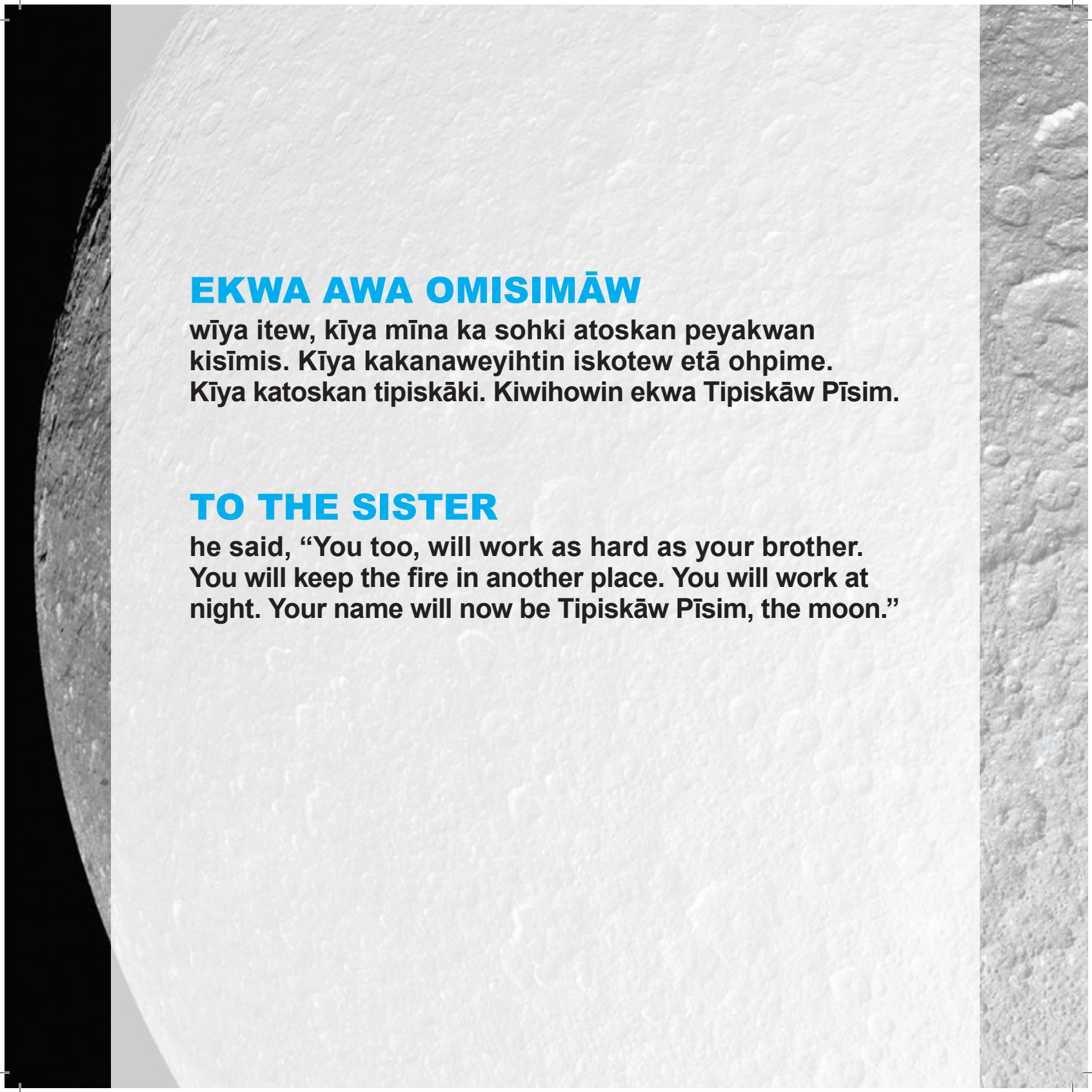
began to worry, saying, “Why is the sun so late?” Wisakechak went to the sun to see why it was late. When Wisakechak arrived, the boy and his sister were still quarreling. Wisakechak got angry. “The people and animals will perish,” he said to them.

KĪYA POKO

ka nakateyihtaman oma iskotew kakwahkotihk, wiya itew asci sohkehtākosiw itwahaht ohci nāpesisa. Kīya kiwihowin ota ohci Pīsim.

“IT IS UP TO YOU

to keep the fire burning!” he said with a heavy voice, pointing at the boy. “Your name from now on will be Pīsim.”



EKWA AWA OMISIMĀW

wīya itew, kīya mīna ka sohki atoskan peyakwan kisīmis. Kīya kakanaweyihtin iskotew etā ohpime. Kīya katoskan tipiskāki. Kiwihowin ekwa Tipiskāw Pīsim.

TO THE SISTER

he said, “You too, will work as hard as your brother. You will keep the fire in another place. You will work at night. Your name will now be Tipiskāw Pīsim, the moon.”

KA NISIHK

namoya kimiyo wihcetonawaw katepeyimototamihk atoskewin. Ōma kitimahiwewin, kiyawāw kawapamitonawaw peyakwaw tahtwaskīy ohci tapitawi. Kiyawāw kawapatinawāw, kitatoskewinawāw ohci ākāmāyihk ōma kīsik. Ekwa ispayiw. Kīyapic esko ōma kisikāw ispayiw.

“THE TWO OF YOU

do not get along well agreeing on tasks. As punishment, you will see each other once a year. For all time, you will see each other’s work from across the sky.” And so it happened. Even till this day it is so.

NWT Cree Language Program