

Hoyyahám Totoyká

THE FIRST CHICKENS

William Joseph

Hoyyám k'awí, Huumitím piwím Nisenáaním totoyká peypét'om Huumitdí.

In the early days, the Popcorn Hill camp Indians kept chickens at Popcorn Hill.

Hac'e Nisenáaním máanom etak'ok'óyt'om.

All the Indians went there to look.

Hac'e miskoohóm máydikim peením etak'óyt'omám.

There must have gone two mischievous men to look.

Han Yuuledí Lumaydí idáwt'omám miim máydikim peením Lumaydí.

Those two men must have come to a Big Time at Plymouth.

Han weeydadáat'om miim totoyká henimihí...

They kept telling about the talking of those chickens,

“Awántiitim ni, uuc'úlpupum ni, ok'óm ni, too,” hát'omatoy.

they were said to have said, “Awántiitim ni, uuc'úlpupum ni, I am hungry, toh.”

“Miyáam totoykám henimín, hontamittím...”

“That is the way the chickens are when they talk, they are surprising,

“... etak'óybeem Huumitná wíkpáy Lumayic'é,” hát'om.

you must go to Popcorn Hill to look sometime when there is a Big Time,” the men said.

Hac'e Huumitdí Lumayic'é, bəəppayím Nisenáaním etak'óyt'om.

All the Indians went to look when there was a Big Time at Popcorn Hill.

Han etát'om peením oo, máydikin kilén ha.

They saw only two, a male and a female.

Han hontamítt'om Nisenáaním máanom etán.

All the Indians wondered as they looked.

Hac'e mîim máydikim, "ok'óm ni, too," hát'om.

Then the male said, "I am hungry, toh."

"Wenné k'aam, mîkikim, 'ok'óm ni, too,' há'asi mîim," hát'om mîim Nisenáaním.

"He is doing pretty good, he is right, he said, 'I am hungry, toh,'" said those Indians.

Homodí méet'oc'ey mîim totoyká.

I guess they caught those chickens somewhere.

Miyée amám k'awí Keliinedí Lánsismisém máydikim Nisenáaním kilé méyt'omám.

The year after that a Frenchman apparently gave a chicken to an Indian woman.

Hac'e Yuulená took'óyt'omám.

It seems she took it to Plymouth.

Hac'e mîyná Nisenáaním máanom etak'ok'óyt'om kan.

All the Indians went there to look again.

Han mîyenáan amá lok'tín ét'om, beyí Woolesém idawín toodawic'é lok'tín.

After that they saw many, now that the White men came and brought many.

Mîim mîyém, hontamítt'om ni laayín.

That is that, I was surprised when I was little.

LOCATIONS

Huumít	‘Popcorn Hill’
Yuulé	‘Plymouth’

HELPFUL VOCABULARY

Totoyká	‘Chicken(s)’
Ok’	‘To be hungry’
Etak’óy	‘To go look’
Hontamít	‘To be surprised’
-t’om	A word-ending that means the event happened a while ago.
-t’omám	A word-ending that means the event <i>apparently</i> or <i>evidently</i> happened.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Did you know that chickens are an introduced species in this area? If you heard that you could go see a new species of animal at Big Time, would you be excited?

Do you think roosters sound like they’re saying *Ok’óm ni, too?*

Did any words or phrases stand out to you?

BRAIN TEASER

The word *hontamít* means ‘to be surprised’. It is made up of *hon* ‘heart, chest’ and *-mit*, which is a word ‘building block’ we find in many Nisenan words that means roughly ‘motion away from or out of’. So, this verb sort of means ‘to leave one’s heart’. Can you think of an English idiom that is similar? *Hint: You startled me! I nearly _____ out of my _____!*

ABOUT THIS STORY...

This story was told by William Joseph, a.k.a Bill Joe, a Nisenan man from El Dorado County, to Hans J. Uldall in the 1930’s and adapted by the SSBMI Language Department for Huslá 2023.

Bill Joe did not give a translation for the first two phrases that chickens were said to say.

If you have questions about the story, please contact language@ssband.org.