

Title: Conversations

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SIX

NETAOANSOM

One day when Glooscap and Nogami were walking along in the woods, a young man. This young man looked very strong because he was tall and physically strong with dark coloured eyes. Glooscap asked the young man his name and how he arrived. The young man introduced himself. He told Glooscap that his name is Netaoansom, the son of Glooscap's sister. In other words, his nephew. He told Glooscap that he was strong and that they could all live comfortably. Netaoansom could run after moose and bring them down with his bare hands. He was so strong. Netaoansom said that he was blowing so hard it caused the waters of the ocean to become rough and the waves were blown to the shore on the sandy beach and finally rested on the tall grasses and sweetgrass. Its fragrance was sweet. The sweetgrass held onto the foam of the waves high in the midday sky. Nisgam gave Netaoansom spiritual and physical strength. Gisolg told Glooscap that if he relied on the strength and power of his nephew, he would lose strength and understanding of the world around him.

Glooscap was so glad for his nephew's arrival to the Mik'Maq world, he was glad that the rivers and seas to come to shore and give up their lives. The reason for Netaoansom and Nogami did not want to kill all the animals for their survival. On the nephew's arrival, they all had a feast of fish. They all gave thanks for their survival to rely on their brothers and sisters of the woods and waters. They relied on their survival.

SEVEN

NEGANOGONIMGOSSEESGO

While Glooscap was sitting near a fire, Nogami was making clothing out of animal skins. Netaoansom was in the woods getting food. A woman came to the fire and put her arms around Glooscap and asked "Are you cold my son?" Glooscap stood up and asked the woman who she is and where did she come from. She explained that she was Glooscap's mother. Her name is Neganogonimgooseesgo. Glooscap waited until his nephew returned to the fire then he asked his mother to explain how she came to this world.

Neganogonimgooseesgo said that she was a leaf on a tree which fell to the ground and formed on the leaf and glistened while the sun, Nisgam, began its journey. It was at midday when Nisgam gave life and a human form to Glooscap's mother.

strength of Nisgam entered into Glooscap's mother.

Glooscap's mother said that she brings all the colours of the world to strength and understanding. Strength to withstand earth's natural forces Mik'Maq world; its animals and her children, the Mik'Maq. She told them understanding and co-operation so they all can live in peace with one another.

Glooscap was so happy that his mother came into the world and since he called upon his nephew to gather nuts, fruits of the plants while Nogami gave thanks to Gisoolg, Nisgam, Ootsitgamoo, Nogami, Netaoansom and his family. They all had a feast in honour of Glooscap's mother's arrival to the world.

The story goes on to say that Glooscap, the man created from the sun, to live with his family for a very long time. He gained spiritual strength by listening to his grandmother's wisdom. He relied on his mother's love and spiritual power. His mother's love and understanding gave him dignity and respect. His brothers and sisters of the wood and waters gave him the will and the force to survive. He learned that mutual respect of his family and the world around him was a key to survival. Glooscap's task was to pass this knowledge to his fellow Mik'Maqs so they could survive in the Mik'Maq world. This is why Glooscap became a central figure in Mik'Maq storytelling.

One day when Glooscap was talking to Nogami he told her that soon there would be a great fire and he and his nephew. He told her that they should prepare for that occasion. Nogami made all the necessary things ready for a long journey to the North. When everyone was ready, one evening, Glooscap told his mother and nephew that he and Nogami were going to the North. He said that they will travel in the direction of the North where the people were in danger. Glooscap told his mother and nephew to look after the fire to let it go out.

After the passing of seven winters, "elwigneg daasiboongeg", seven spirits will rise and when they land on the ground seven people will come to life. Seven spirits will rise from the ground and seven more people will come into existence. From these spirits will come seven women and seven men. They will form seven families. These seven families will travel in seven directions from the area of the Great Fire. Glooscap said that once they reach their destination, they will further divide into seven groups.

Each group will have their own area for their subsistence so they would not be dependent on other groups. He instructed his mother that the smaller groups would share the resources which included animals, plants and fellow humans.

Glooscap told his mother that after the passing of seven winters, each group would return to the place of the Great Fire. At the place of the fire all the people would have a celebration of their continued existence in the Mik'Maq world. Glooscap said that the Great Fire signified the power of the Great Spirit Creator, Gisoolg. It also represented the strength of the light and heat of Nisgam, the sun. The Great Fire held the earth together. Finally the fire represented the bolt of lightning which hit the earth when it was created. The fire is very sacred to the Mik'Maqs. It is the most powerful force in the world.

Glooscap told his mother and nephew that it is important for the Mik'Maq and thanks to the seven spiritual elements. The fire signifies the first food for Nisgam, Oositgamoo and Glooscap. Fire plays a significant role in the legend and represents the power of the sun, Nisgam.

In honour of Nogamits arrival to the Mik'Maq world, Glooscap instructed that fourteen and twenty-one rocks would have to be heated over the Great Fire. The rocks will be placed inside a wigwam covered with hides of moose and caribou or willow bark to face the direction of the rising sun. There should be room from seven men to sit around a pit dug in the centre where up to twenty-one rocks could be placed. Seven willows and seven beech saplings will be used to make the frame of the wigwam, covered with the hides of moose, caribou, deer or mud.

Seven men representing the seven original families will enter into the wigwam and honour to the seven directions, the seven stages of creation and to the seven elements of health. The men will pour water over the rocks causing steam to rise in the wigwam. The men will begin to sweat up to point that it will become almost unbearable. The men who believe in the spiritual strength will be able to withstand the heat. Then the wigwam will be a lodge full of steam and shining like new born babies. This is the way the Mik'Maq should honour Nogami's arrival.

In preparation of the sweat, the seven men will not eat any food for seven days and drink the water of golden roots and bees nectar. Before entering the sweat lodge they will eat the sweetgrass. They will honour the seven directions and the seven stages of creation. Netawansom's arrival to the Mik'Maq world. The sweet grass must be lit from the Great Fire.

Glooscap's mother came into the world from the leaf of a tree, so in honour of her, a pipe made from bark and leaves will be smoked. The tobacco will be smoked in a pipe made of a tree and a bowl made from stone.

The pipe will be lit from sweetgrass which was lit from the Great Fire. The bark, leaves and sweetgrass represents Glooscap's grandmother, nephew and mother. The pipe called "spebaggan" will be smoked and the smoke will be blown in seven directions.

After honouring Nogami's arrival the Mik'Maq shall have a feast or meal. They will eat fish. The fruits and roots of the trees and plants will be eaten in honour of their mother.

Glooscap's final instruction to his mother told her how to collect and use the barks and roots of seven different kinds of plant. The seven plants together will be called "ektjimpisun". It will cure mostly every kind of illness in the Mik'Maq world. The seven medicinal plants are: "wikpe"(alum willow), "waqwonuminokse"(wild black-cherry), "hemlock", and "kowotmonokse"(red spruce). The Mik'Maq people are divided into seven areas which are as follows:

1. Gespegiag
2. Sigenitog
3. Epeggoitg a, Pigtog
4. Gespogoitg

5. Segepenegatig

6. Esgigiag

7. Onamagig