Anishinaabe Agowidiwinan Niizh Zhawenjige Dibaajimowin:

A Treaty 2 Love Story

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Anishinaabe Agowidiwinan Niizh N’Daaw, zhigo Iskatewizaagegan Midewinini:
Hello all my relations. My name is Jason Bone, I am Turtle Clan, Dauphin Lake and Riding
Mountain is my home community, and I am Shoal Lake Mide person.

There are several people to thank in this project, but mainly a big three. First, I want
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friend. He is a good family man, and despite the grief he gets, is a Treaty 2 member through
kinship. Who is Treaty 2 is more than a conversation to entertain because of his work, but
important life changing research.

Additionally, I want to thank my ever inspiring father, and Order of Canada recipient,
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follow. My Uncle Wally Swain has been influential with his teachings throughout my life,
and in providing feedback for this book. The origins of his teachings, those 44 laws to learn
about in the Midewiwin lodge, as my Uncle told me, "come from Peter O’Chiese and Little
Black River. It was the starting and ending point of a journey west and back when he was
learning his teachings in those six different places, the seventh stop is back where he started,
home. In fact, there is still an impression in the rocks of a big knife, and an impression the
rocks of Weneboozhoo - first man’s bum and elbow, indicating where he rested. There’s a
little boys footprint there too. He said that Mide path used to be a wide one with many lodges
which would become narrow, almost covered and lost, but it would outspread again. We are trying to make that road wider here, like other places." We pledged to continue strengthening those 44 laws. Even to take them back to Black Island, where the last known Midewiwin leader, Morning Star, conducted ceremonies back in 1925 before his death in 1932. That must be where Peter O'Chiese first learned them in his youth.

Thanks to Terrence Nelson and Jason Parenteau who invited me out to Roseau Rapids Midewiwin in 2012. Aimee Craft for her Niibi - Water Work at Whiteshell as well. I offered my tobacco to learn about Midewiwin life from Ronald Indian Mandamin in Shoal Lake Ontario during this time. I still treasure every opportunity I have to be his Oshkaabewis - helper. Thanks also to Chief Norman Bone, Niigaan Sinclair, Derek Nepinak and Darren Courchene for their continued support throughout this project. Patricia Ningwance who clarified for romantic love, it would be zaagi’iwe-dibaajimowin or minwenindiwin dibaajimowin. Zhawenjige is more for love between family members. Non romantic, Lastly, the chapter one and three love stories are dedicated to the ladies in my life: Janice, Rylie, and my late mom Florence. My parents inspired me with 49 years of marriage. My wife who reminds me of my mom: a strong, beautiful woman who overcame so much in her life, to love. I hope my children, Giizhig and Rylie Anangoons, will read this someday and understand that they are special, important, and loved; to think about what Kitchimami did for Anangoons, how grandpa loves grandma. It was fitting to call this a love story because that is what I learned with Anishinaabemowin: Spirit love us so much and will always help us, if we ask. Just like I asked Baagak to help, and my prayer was heard. Now the bats are in trouble. This winter, 2020, we will honor those spirits on the longest day of the year.

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2 CBC Evening News, Bats are at Risk because of White Nose Syndrome. August 20, 2019.
Introduction:

A lot of First Nations people always start their introductions with their spirit name, clan, and where they come from. Elders often explain its important to use our language because Anishinaabe means lowered onto the earth. It is also important to ground teachings with our Creation Story. It is said in the beginning of time there was no light, no heat, then in the distance there was a sound of a rattle came. The sound of electricity. Then a blue light which represents the spirit of our people. According to Midewiwin teachings, there are four levels before spirit reaches mother earth. Spirit arrives in mom’s water, then it becomes life. Every person has a life's journey, from birth to death, spirit goes back. This is of course, a very short creation story for First Nations on Turtle Island. So that word, Anishinaabe, is the original word for our people: that a man was lowered to the earth.

On Turtle Island there have been important events happening. Some of the Creation Story is about the Ice Age. During this period in what is now North America, ice covered to Mexico. As the ice retreated and earth warmed, Anishinaabe people were moving back north to lands Around Lake Agassiz and the mountain ranges that emerged. There is Turtle Mountain, where ancient medicine can be found. Riding Mountain, where sacred water is. Wasagaming - Clear Lake, is clear because it is fed from underneath waterways. There is the Duck Mountains as well. The highest point in Manitoba where visions were sought. To the east are sacred rocks of the Whiteshell that hold the original Midewiwin teachings of Anishinaabe People.

This book will focus on the Riding Mountain area, as Riding Mountain and Dauphin Lake were the area that Treaty 2 was agreed in, and because I am a descendant of Mekis, who agreed on our behalf. According to the Anishinaabe, it was called Nawakwe Wiijiw, a reference to the sun when its at its highest point in the sky and shines in all directions. At
Riding Mountain, Clear Lake is sacred water that is supplied from beneath. This Mountain provided everything for people to survive: food, water, maple syrup, shelter, and medicine.

This area is also homeland to the Sioux and Cree, before the Ojibway. Today this mountain is now home to many Indian Reserve’s, but at one time, all these people were all interrelated according to kinship and clans. The point is First Nations were self supporting, before Treaty, the day of Treaty, and for a long time after Treaty, as well, as this book demonstrates. It wasn’t until the 1930’s, as Walter Scott mentions, that the good life for the people of Riding Mountain came to an end.³

Then after the war, Capitalism took root.⁴ Yet, through hunting and fishing, berry picking, as well as gardens - First Nations were very self sufficient. People used to pick up hundreds of pounds of seneca root a weekend, they could pick that all summer to make extra money.⁵ The mandatory Indian Residential Schools was a very turbulent time we are still recovering from. Then in the 1960s, welfare came into the reserve system, along with alcohol and other drugs, and contributed to the mess that First Nations are in today. If the would have created employment instead, what a different story this could all be.

Before treaty, and Before Confederation in 1867, the vast watershed of Hudson Bay (then called Rupert’s Land) had been the domain of the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC). For nearly two centuries, since receiving its charter from the British Crown in 1670, the corporation and its competitors had traded furs with Indigenous peoples in the interior of North America, establishing distinctive protocols for cementing commercial and diplomatic ties in the process that were also used during the Treaty Process.⁶ Indigenous peoples contribution to nation building is well documented but lacks public awareness. For example,

⁵ George Beaulieu, Sandy Bay Elders Tell Their Stories, 1996.
when Europeans arrived 500 years ago, First Nations guided them to survive all through Rupert's Land. Fur Trade was an important source of. First Nations were the key suppliers in the Fur Trade - foundational in the supply and demand - which shaped the current landscape of now Elphinstone.

In addition to the above mentioned Nawakwe Wijijw, which is a spiritual name, the Okanese band also called the mountain Wowwaswajicus, the hill of the buffalo chase. To the Assiniboines in the south, it was known as the Hill of the Buffalo Chase. This was the name which John Tanner, Sr., the first white trapper in the district, used. The Ojibways with whom he was closely associated called it “the Four Humped Mountain.” The original Fur Traders working out of Fort Dauphin referred to it as Fort Dauphin Hill. Alexander Henry called the range Fort Dauphin Mountain in 1799 and it was called Fort Dauphin Hill of David Thompson’s map of 1813. Short lived trading posts popped up in 1799 until 1805-06. They were first known as Riding Range on a crown land department map of 1858.

Beginning about 1820, a prominent family made their home in the area around Wasagaming - Cree for clear water - was that of Michael Cardinal, known as Okanese. He was a widely respected leader and chief, a Cree. Oral history of the area says that he understood the Midewiwin well which was an additional reason why he was able to settle in such a beautiful area. He came from present day Saddle Lake, Alberta area. His family grew over time and at one point, there were three wives - one a Dakota, one Metis from Turtle Mountain, one mixed Orkney and native. The Dakota women had three sons, Ouchuop, Mekis, and St. Paul. The French-Saulteaux wife had four sons. Antione, William Mucatehpense or Blackbird, John Jojo, and George, later chief. The Orkney women had

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8 Ibid., p. 10,11.
three sons, Yellowhead, Giizhigoowining - Moses Burns, born 1819, and Baptiste Bone of Clear Lake.⁹

There is the river the Okanese people called Keeseesatchewan, rapid flowing river. It flows out of Clear Lake and Lake Audy. The bend is an important juncture. On the map, the area north was known as old Strathclair. There was favorable settlement potential on account of rich soils, an abundance of good water, wood, pasture and gravel deposits, as well as a relatively easy route for water cargo. The rolling hills and open grasslands which had been kept fire clean for buffalo pasture, was appropriated for ranching purposes. The area north of the bend, is dotted with sloughs and lakes with stands of popular, spruce, birch, and offered excellent hunting and fishing. Elphinstone is located on the northern edge of better quality agricultural land and is bordered on the north by rough terrain and coarser soils more suitable for timber.¹⁰

The Okanese band lived a good life during these times, in the winter months, lived in the Riding Mountain around Lake Audy, west end of Wasagaming, and north of the present day golf course. There was food, fuel, shelter at its best. Fur, moose and elk were abundant. Some of the more popular winter campsites were along the west shore of Wasagaming near the Indian cemetery, another just north of the golf course, Kinnis creek along the old Gilbert Plains on Dauphin Trail. Fishing was good, there were game birds. Lake Audy was noted for its abundance of water fowl in the fall when ducks and geese stopped there on the migration south. Lake audy was called Poneeakesakaekun, or bird landing lake.¹¹

The buffalo migrated into the park during winter, and out onto the plains for the summer. So, in the spring, some of the families travelled over the east of the mountain

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⁹ Rarihokwats, Manitoba Documentary Treaty History vol 1 until 1849. Accessed 20 April 2019 at: https://www.academia.edu/24376127/Manitoba_Documentary_Treaty_History_vol_1_until_1849
11 Walter Scott, Our People of Riding Mountain House.
somewhere between McCreary and Ochre River, near the village of Ochre River for the making of maple sugar and syrup which was stored in weeggwass mukkuk containers made of birch bark and sealed with spruce gum in the summer. The Okanese people moved out onto the plains of the southwest side of the mountain for the buffalo chase and drying of meat. They made pemmican.\textsuperscript{12}

The place name for the present day reserve, before it was called Keeseekowenin, was Sakaadawakong - a reference to the land coming out of the bush. To the west was the Carlton Trail. There is also a place called the Forks. It’s where the Carlton Trail breaks off and there is an old established buffalo run along the east side of of Riding Mountain on a Lake Agassiz ridge. There were two stone forts were built at Upper Fort Garry (Winnipeg) in 1822, and the Lower Fort Garry, (Selkirk) in 1831. The overland Carlton Trail began to play a greater role in the development of the west and more Red River Carts full of supplies and trade goods winded their way North-West across the prairies to return laden with furs. Gradually it supplanted the original water route.\textsuperscript{13} Henry Youle Hind was the first to leave a record a written record of the area. It was called The Hind’s Report. He taught geology at the University of Toronto. He left Fort Garry on June 9th, 1858, and reached Fort Dauphin in early October.\textsuperscript{14}

After Confederation on 1 July 1867, the new country of Canada set out to acquire the huge tract of land, then known as Rupert’s Land and the North-West Territories. In November 1869, the HBC sold its lands in the western interior to the British Crown, which intended to transfer them to Canada the following year. The Indigenous inhabitants of Rupert’s Land were not consulted about the sale. The Metis resisted, forming a provisional government under Louis Riel. In the wake of the Red River Resistance, the Canadian government,

\textsuperscript{12} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{13} Manitoba Documentary Treaty History vol 1 until 1849. Accessed 20 April 2019 at: https://www.academia.edu/24376127/Manitoba_Documentary_Treaty_History_vol_1_until_1849
\textsuperscript{14} Ibid.
through the Manitoba Act, guaranteed 1.4 million acres for the Métis and their descendants. However, no negotiations or settlements were reached with First Nations peoples of the region, including the Anishinabe, whose lands were brought under Canadian jurisdiction, along with Manitoba, as the “North-West Territories” in July 1870. Aboriginal people in Manitoba had been advocating for a treaty with the federal government since the late 1850s. Other Aboriginal people attempted to fend off settlers.¹⁵

Chapter 1: The Day Before Treaty

Zhaawejige Dibaajimowin: A Love Story

Goozhis - Grandson: Grandpa, what was here, and what was life like before Treaties and Canada?

Miishoomis - Grandpa:

20000 years ago, they say all of Manitoba was under ice. This was the ice age. As the earth warmed, Southern Manitoba emerged from beneath this glacier. The earliest visitors to the park left traces of their passage in the form of artifacts. Tribes travelled the area by waterways, they were hunting buffalo, caribou, and grizzlies. Stone chipping have been found which indicate the use of weapons. Oral history of the Assiniboines and Cree indicate they
were in the park 2500 years ago.”

The Manitoba escarpment is a semi-continuous ridge running northwest to southeast across the southwest corner of the province, at its highest point it is known as Riding Mountain escarpment. The steep slopes of bedrock shale, drop into the terraces and valleys that were a favorite hunting spot for bison, elk, and moose. The adjacent countryside, was exposed grasslands. As glacial Lake Agassiz receded, the first inhabitants to this area came 12,000 years ago. East of the Rockies, as the ice and water receded, the mountain tops were the first places to hold life. These ranges include the Cypress Hills. The Moose and Porcupine mountains. The Duck, Riding, and Turtle Mountains. Hecla Island, the Whiteshell were the ranges that held life and were important sites.

There is also a French and English story to the area; the French lost their control in the area after their troops were recalled for the Seven Years War. The Fur Trade marked contact was before 1700 when Henry Kelsey encouraged trade for the HBC with the Cree and Assiniboine. The French entered Manitoba in the 1730s and 40s in an attempt to compete with the English posts. “The first record of eastern civilization touching on the Clear Lake area came in 1741. The famous French Canadian explorer La Verendrye. One of his sons came north, Pierre Gaultier de la Vérèndrye, came north through the valleys east of Riding Mountain in 1741. Here he encountered the Riding Mountain Crees who asked him to establish a fur post so that they would not have to travel to the far distant forts on the Hudson’s Bay. He named the body of water Lake Dauphin and the post Fort Dauphin in honour of the eldest king son of the King of France.

But that trading post is where the Turtle Spirit spoke. There is a story in the Fort Dauphin records about a shake tent and how the turtle powerful and helpful spirit. Story goes, Alexander Henry was a famous explorer, fur trader, and writer. In the winter of 1799-1800,
He spent the winter of 1799–1800 at a post near Fort Dauphin Mountain, at Riding Mountain before leaving there in the spring.\textsuperscript{19} It was there he sat with the Chippewas as they consulted their guardian spirit, the Great Turtle. He helped to build a huge wigwam of five logs, each 10 feet long and eight inches thick, covered by moose skins. He watched Indians light the sacred fires within the tent, saw the naked medicine man enter alone. Mystified and awed, he saw the great tent shake in a titanic ague. He listened to the sound of voices, of animal cries and screams that came from the tent. Then there was the silence of the eye of a psychic cyclone. At last the Indians clapped their hands with joy at what he described as "a low and feeble voice, resembling the cry of a young puppy." This was the Great Turtle’s voice, the spirit that always told the truth. The medicine man interpreted, and the tribe listened. Henry asked the Turtle if he would ever see his native land again. Yes, replied the Turtle, you will return to your friends. In 1764, Alexander Henry, fulfilled the prophecy of the Great Turtle, and safely returned to his people. He became a far-ranging trader on the northwest frontier, a man who could bargain for pelts, or compound an herbal remedy for disease with equal skill.\textsuperscript{20} This glimpse into the spiritual beliefs and ceremonies reveals how understood the world around them.

The Anishinaabeg smoked their pipes during the full moon, and had names for all the moons. Not like the time we know today. We were governed by clans, it shows them in the Selkirk Treaty. When the snow on the ground and ice from the lakes went, the sap from the trees ran. It was a happy time for the people of Riding Mountain. After a long cold winter, the people moved their camps to where there were a lot of maple trees. They made sugar and syrup. Moss was used, mostly by the women, for various cleaning purposes and mostly for the care of babies. There was muskeg ball over and it was easy to come by. Just west of the

\textsuperscript{20} Manitoba Documentary Treaty History vol 1 until 1849. footnote 54. From Doctors on the Frontier, by Richard Dunlop. An adaptation was published in the Journal of American Indian Education
Horod is where the Keeseekoowenin people used to get their moss and muskeg. Moss was easily cleaned and sterilized, either by boiling or laying it out in the sun. Moss was good for the babies moss bags. The tikinagan was a flat board with the babies moss bag attached. It also had a headboard and a hoop over which to drape netting to keep mosquitoes and flies away. They could be fixed up real fancy. In fact, these stories continue to inspire and create meaning today.21

John Tanner, born 1780, lived at the Hill of the Buffalo Chase (Riding Mountain) before Treaties as a young boy and man, he explained, "[t]o be a good hunter a person had to live with nature, learn from the animals and insects, while respecting even the wisdom of poison ivy. Falcon was taught about the Mide (Great Medicine) and Mide'wiwin (Great Medicine Society) to become a healer, protector and hunter. The Great Medicine Society promoted health in the use of herbal medicines and social, political and mental balance with all things on earth and in the sky. And Falcon's father gave him a megis shell, like the one that the Great Spirit had blown through to give life to the first human."22

Tanner was also dependant on the Great Spirit, and respected the guidance provided by spirit through dreams. His adopted mom, Netnokwa had a spirit dream that she told him about. In it she seen an animals breathe rising from beneath the snow, Falcon went and looked for the spot which had been revealed in her dream. After falling in a hole, he realized it to be a bear's den, and after getting out, shot the bear in the head. To honor Falcon's first kill, she held a feast to honor the Great Spirit and the bear, as was the custom.23 In its various forms Midewiwin theology incorporated the basic guidelines for living in communities in a responsible manner—something characteristic of all major world religions.24

21 Walter Scott, Our People of Riding Mountain House, p. 56, 57.
22 A Narrative of the captivity and adventures of John Tanner, (US Interpreter at the Saut de Ste. Marie,: during thirty years residence among the Indians in the Interior of North America), 19
23 Ibid, p., 41,42.
Mishomis- Grandpa: Come sit a bit closer, I will tell you a story, a reality that was gifted to the Anishinaabe people. Dibaaajimotaatiwin—stories are the harness of Nebaakawin—knowledge, and history. The knowledge from the stones and scrolls are over 8000 years old. That is just after the last movement of the last ice age. These teachings are a part of a way of life - Anishinaabe Izhiitchigeyaan – how we behave, how we conduct ourselves – Inaatiziwin. And it is a very important part of our lives. How we behave, how we react, how we plan, and how we situate ourselves amongst each other. To me Anishinaabeg is all human life, not just Ojibway people, but all humans.”

Once upon a time an Ojibway man named Mucus and a woman called We-ba, or Gate, had a boy, a child who was given the name of Kiizhkizit, or Cutfoot. When Kiizhkizit was a baby, his father was working hard outside and he did not notice, the hot noon sun in the sky overhead, nor the stranger that stood who stood in front of him. As Mucus worked, he saw the shadow of a human. Then he looked up and sure enough, there stood a man.

We-ba and Kiizhkizit were in the Wigwam nearby and they came out at once to see the stranger. The visitor looked so odd and unfamiliar that Mucus exclaimed, “You are a stranger to us!”

“Yes,” the unknown man replied. “I am just visiting around here.”

Mucus then called to We-ba, “Set out the mat and prepare food for our visitor.” We-ba brought out the food and placed it on the mat to motioned to the visitor and Mucus to sit down and have something to fill his stomach. Then the guest asked Mucus a question.

“How far is it to the next camp?”

“Oh, it is a long way but the sun is high, you can walk there before dark.”

25 Ron Indian Mandamin, Adding that that were recorded amongst the rock at Bannock Point, before many were moved without permission, or outright vandalized, 2018.
“It doesn’t matter to me how far it is,” the stranger replied.

Mucus wondered why the stranger was not at all tired in the hot sun and from all the walking. As they made their way back to the Wigwam, he looked over at him while they were walking along. Mucus stopped in amazement, the feet of the stranger were not touching the ground as he walked.

“Do you know who I am?” the stranger asked.

“No,” Mucus.

“I am a man sent from God in Heaven.”

He told Mucus that after today, Kiizhkizit would be the most important man of knowledge amongst the Ojibway - he would have all the knowledge that no one else had. As the first Ojibway to receive knowledge of the Mide-wiwin, it would be Cutfoot who taught the tribes about this religion.

“Would it be alright if I take Keeshkisit on part of the journey?” the stranger asked Kiizhkizit’s father.

“It is perfectly all right if he goes along,” Mucus said.26

At first, Kiizhkizit was too young, too small to understand what was being shared with him. So they sent him away, Anangokwan - to the Star World. It was at that place that he discovered, those four beautiful layers that are up above us in our solar system. That’s where these Gods sit, these Goddesses - Manitouwag. So when that little boy went through those layers he discovered different places that life once existed, and one of the planets was a place that accumulated life, but decided that it was too difficult to sustain, and it ended up collapsing. This collapsing caused this being to search for a planet; it searched for a very long time for a place to deliver, this work that needed to be done. So he was teaching this little boy the process that it took for the planet to develop, a water world - Niibikong.

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26 James Redsky. *Great Leader of The Ojibway: Mis-quana-queb*. 1972, p. 80, 81.
So that little boy received all these teaching, all these teachings that he needed to bring back to the earth. And as he was done receiving the knowledge from going out with Nigig, who served as an Oshkaabewis, to the Star World, he was called back to the lodge on the dark side of the moon. And there, that old man and old woman there, they taught him life. Taught him how to live it; how to be gentle; how to be kind; how to be honest; how to use our truth when we seek wisdom -nibaakaawin. And these things taught us how to love – giziwatiiziwin. And it taught us how to understand that process. Of growing from a small baby to an adult, to an elder; and that little boy grew within that lodge on the moon. By then he was getting older, into his teens, maybe into his twenties even, before they told him to pick up that vessel, awe mitigwaakik. And it was that mitigwaakik, that cup of life that held life, nibi - that beautiful water. And each guardian, each Manitou, put a little bit of water on that boy, Kiizhkizit – Cutfoot. And each time he was given that gift, he was wondering what that substance is because when he was taken from earth he was too small, he did not even get to know his parents.

So when he was being taught all these things, he felt this emotion inside and he needed to cry. All those spirits loved that boy so much, it caused his body to cry. And those spirits talked about that, his tears, those tears are what is on the earth. That beautiful saltwater - that sea, that ocean. All that water that is on earth came from the heavens. So this is where the old man starts to talk to Kiizhkizit,

“You take this knowledge back to earth, they are slowly, slowly, forgetting that importance of nibi, the importance of keeping it clean, keeping it good.”

So they invited that boy to come peer inside, look into that mitigwaakik,

“Come look inside this vessel,”

That boy saw the most beautiful things that he could, things that you can’t even imagine, such beauty, and such beautiful colors.
And they then they showed him the bad side to it. The things that could happen if we don’t take care of it, if we don’t keep care of our earth. They showed what could happen and he was distraught. He was scared, and he started to cry again. But before then Nigig- Otter came in. A little Nigig came inside that lodge, and Nigig spoke,

“I am going to show you a place along the way, but for now you need to know that this water was brought from the sky, when the earth was first created, it had no moon, it was just rock, molten rock and iron, all iron, this molten fire, everywhere. The earth was just starting to come alive, so this was the first process. All these things, made for nothing, made this planet, everything pooled together, and create what we call Mother Earth. There was no moon yet, and the gods were observing - they were watching the earth and it wasn’t coming to alive, it wasn’t moving, it was on fire, but it wasn’t moving. So they called an Asteroid, ‘go hit the earth, go hit it so that, so it will create a force, create something that they need.’ And sure enough, it created our moon -Dibiki-Giiizis. The moon is made up of only the top layer of the crust. And it pooled together, it started to move. It started to take shape into what we see it now. It began to rotate, and it rotated around the earth, and it triggered the earth to move too. So those two things move simultaneously. And it was then that they decided, it was now that they could start bringing life to earth. During this time, when the earth was being made for the very first time, they were searching for an element, what could they use on this new place, to calm it down, what could we use to keep it from burning up or growing too fast. So they talked, the Sky Beings; they gathered themselves together. Then they met at this place called Dabishkoo-Giizhig - opposite side of the day; and these beings were gathering. There were four females’ beings, they were ahead making everything happen, the pushers to this creation, this planet. And one of them they said, ‘There needs to be something down there, to keep it from
growing too fast. To keep it calm, keep it clean.’ And one of the guardians that came
was a being Shiwitaagan - Salt. So the Salt God came, and said, ‘I will take this down
if you want me too.’ And it was niibi – water, shiwitagan salt, brought nibi every so
slowly to earth, over time, and it was water that was protected by that salt. It was
brought to the earth in a little capsule, so the water wouldn’t evaporate as it entered
the atmosphere. So they called this beautiful mineral that keeps us alive. Shiwitaagan
- Salt, and it was those salt particles, bit by bit, coming to earth - Gichi-weweni. It
took a very long time for that earth to receive that water, but they entrusted that earth,
would safe keep it. They would have a beautiful place to deliver the next steps, to
create life. So Gizhe Manitou Ikwe (Sky Woman), decided that it was time that we
promote a change in the chemicals in the water. And it was algae, that beautiful algae
sprung the very first life on the earth; and that algae triggered oxygen. So this oxygen
was once a poison to the earth and it killed many first creatures. Oxygen killed the
very first building blocks of life, except that amino acid. And it was these amino acids
that grasped onto that oxygen and started to flourish; it started to grow. It created life,
it created everything that we see, created everything that we don’t see. The water,
algae, and the sun created Niswiwin - created that new gas, or oxygen.

So niswiwin became a Spirit, a Manitou. Niswiwin was part of that creation of the
birds, plants, fish, the organisms, but they didn’t live quite long. So Gizhe Manitou
Ikwe (Sky Woman) called that amino acid, Niswiwin, ‘Now we are ready, prepared,
now we can have this substance, nibi, the one that keeps things going, keeps things
moving.’ And as they gathered for that final time up in the heavens these four beings
lowered themselves to the earth and showed the animals. ‘This is what you are going
to do, to survive, to keep things going.’
And their first attempt with a human was not good. It didn’t live long, it was sick all the time. So they decided, we need something for that human, let’s give that human water, let’s build a new human, they made sure we built of those three things – the stardust, the earth, and the water; those three. They created that vessel that we are today. And it was nibi that turned itself into that substance that we call water. Water was used to create life, nurture life, protect life; those three things were given to the water world. So that life could be brought forward. So that life is an important part of our survival, that beautiful nibi, and as that water, that is, will always come first, will always be a part of our life; part of our living.

And that Water Spirit, when she left for the last time, she said to those Niibinaabe - merpeople, mer-beings, to keep reminding the humans, to keep themselves clean. ‘There will be a time when water will become very dirty, there is going to be a point where humans will get very sick, almost to a point where they will almost disappear.’ The Mer-people are the teachers to help keep that water clean. They are the teachers and the keepers of how to keep humans clean - they are us. They have the same human DNA match, they were once like us but they ventured out into the water, they evolved to grow fins. They still have legs they just have bigger feet to accommodate themselves in the water. They were scared of the forest so they ventured out into the water. They branched off; it's said that humans will almost kill themselves disobeying natural laws. The humans will want ownership of the water, and forget that they are them.

So as that little boy was growing, he learning about that process of the planet, how it was created; how that moon was created; how life; rejuvenated; how it blossomed. It started to root, show itself, emerged, and as that life emerged. Things took shape all around the world, all over the planet life started to sprout, and it took many, many
years for the first life to sprout, and it came from niibikong, that beautiful water; life emerged from there. And it took more years to develop to where we are today.

So that little boy learned so much about the first creation of the first planet; how things came to be; how life came to be; how different animals came to be, about animals that are no longer with us. The spirits -Manitouwag, showed his little boy these things, and he was filled with this knowledge. And they decided it was time for him to go back to the earth,

“Take this back to them, maajaan - go to them. Share with them, so they too can have balance in their life. That they can heal themselves.”

And as he is leaving, he is feeling sad that he has to leave, that he has to branch off from that lodge that he was at. He grew up in there, felt the love, that unconditional love from those beings. Those sky beings, they are the ones who taught us how to live.

So as he is travelling down, Nigig - Otter as promised before that he would visit him, he came. But this time Nigig didn’t listen to him. So that little boy, remembered, first this asemaa - tobacco should go. He remembered that and placed that asemaa, and finally that otter listened and came to him. And that little boy said,

“I am lost, I cannot find my way, I want to get down there but I can't get there, I don’t know how to get there,”

So Nigig said,

“I will take you so far, but only so far. Then I will have to leave you. But come here for now, I want to show you something.”

So Nigig gave him these directions. Told him how to use them, how to navigate the sky, the waters, the land. He gave them Zhaawanong – South, Ningaabii-anong – West,
Giiwaydinong- North, Waabanong - East, all these beautiful cardinal points, so we know how to use them, how to find home.

   So as he was showing him these things, the water -Nibikong, how that beautiful lake in that third layer - Mide-Zaaga’igan, how he called on it,

   “ambe wiijiishin - please come help us.”

As he is going to this place, coming to the end of this road, there is a river, a beautiful river of life. And there was a crane sitting there, Ojijaak, a sandhill crane. And that’s the first teaching that he was given, about the gifts that were given by the Gods, on the moon, and it's Love - Zaagii’idiwin. And Ojijaak said,

   “I am the keepers of the soul - Ojijaak, I keep them, I bring them to the earth, I watch over the fetus as momma carries it, I make sure that that child is strong enough to be born, make sure the vessel is strong enough, and I keep that water clean. To make sure that the water that is inside mom is clean enough, to hold that baby inside.”

So Ojijaak is telling Kiizhkizit, telling him how to take care of women, how to be respectful to them. She is also telling him they are the soul keepers. So when she is talking to this little boy,

   “We are going to give them names as they are born, I am going to talk to them; their birth I am going to talk to them before they are born. I am going to ask them what they could do for the planet, what could you do for humankind.”

So as this little boy understands these things, these memories that needs to be taken to the earth. He finally understands that each and every person has a divine destiny, a responsibility, a goal, no matter who you are, or what language you speak, this spirit is telling us, that you have work here on this earth. You were born here for a reason; Love it. Love your life, love you name, love your clan. That is what Ojijaak is reminded us, to do that.
There are other spirits this boy encounters and as they come to the end of that river Nigig tells him,

“I have to leave you know, I can’t go with you past here, but there will be another otter on the earth that will be with you all the time, it will be with you forever, giving you guidance.

And he reminded that little boy, your parents will be named after Otter, Oniigi’igoon, our parents. The ones that guide us to live a good life, aunts and uncles who shape our well being.

So as he is walking back to this earth, he knows he is an old man, he finds himself that he has aged. There is this a place where that old man was delivered too, Manitou Abi-Where the Spirit Sits, there is a place where a structure was made for his arrival, a landing ground. And we don’t really don’t know what it is that they saw, but they called it Meegis, this beautiful gleaming ship, this light, this sphere, that came down from the sky and brought that little boy back. So as he is brought back to the earth he is so weak, he cannot get up and he needs to find energy, but he can’t. He is craving water, but he can’t find it. All he finds is this beautiful medicine, cedar -giizhikaandag; it was that cedar that gave him that energy to get back up again.

He took a long walk, following this sound, he heard this sound guiding him to this spot, a place called Buffalo Point - Bizhiki Neyaashiing. And it was there that he discovered that he was taken from. His parents were still alive, he could see this beautiful place, Lake of the Woods, that glaringness from the sun reminding him of the importance of that Niibi. And as he is getting to that place they are ready to mourn him. His parents that were still alive were getting ready to mourn their son. Haven’t seen him for many years.

As they are there doing that they see this man approaching the village. They knew inside, mii’awe nigozis - they knew it was their boy. They could feel that connection, each mom on this planet has that connection, whether it is a human or animal, they have that built
in connection, knowing whom their child is, knowing where that child is, if that child is in
danger, if that child is sore, or ill, momma feels it. So as that little boy gets over here, he
delivers all this information; all this knowledge to his people.

And it was there that Gizhe Manitou Ikwe - Sky Woman re emerged as Mukwa - bear.
And it was Mukwa, who gave us that first lodge, Midewigamik- a teaching lodge. How to use
it; what should be in there; what instruments to be used; what songs to be used. People were
scared of her at first because she appeared to be a bear, but at the end of all those teachings
she transformed herself back into that Beautiful Sky Woman - we call her Niinaanikwe. She
periodically comes to the earth, over and over, to deliver knowledge- Gikendasowin, all of
these beautiful things that we need.

There was also another instruction: that what we do to the earth we do to ourselves.
Weweni - carefully take care of the earth, carefully respect it, and it will respect you. As he
was just about to finish what was being done in that teaching lodge - Midewigamik, that
vessel sounded. One of the things that this little boy stressed was how that drum, Midewakik,
represented us, Anishinaabeg - every human being on this planet; reminded how each human,
carries water, our blood, how important it is to keep it clean, and healthy because we only
have that one vessel, only the one body to live this beautiful opportunity called life. Inside it
is that beautiful water. Us too. It’s that water that's pumping through our veins. Our beautiful
heart that was given to us to do that work. The same thing with this earth, there is a core
inside her, that beautiful iron ore. That is the heart of mother earth. It pumps and twirls
facilitating gravity. It facilitates that water flow. Inside and outside the earth, those things
represent us. We sweat, we need to replenish ourselves, just the way the earth does.

This story is about Kiizhkizit - Cutfoot and his journey to the starworld -
anangokwan. Taught during sweats, sand teachings, to remind each other how to structure
human life. It’s a story about how Manitoba got its name: Manitou-Abi - where the spirit sits.
Even the word Anishinaabe- is a clipped word that means man lowered to earth. But that water needs to be regenerated, given time to rejuvenate itself by going through the earth. That natural filtration is losing a battle because there is not enough natural elements in the soil to clean that water anymore. We uprooted everything, took too much. That was what was being said.

These are Anishinaabe - Human teachings, they are all of ours. They were written in the scroll. Those petroforms are over 8000 years old. Anishinaabeg - humans all over the world searched, looked for a place, they surrounded themselves around a fire, teach each other structure, so remember these things. Share them because they are for all of us, not just the people here but all over the world. We are all connected through Nibi - Water. We are all interconnected. We never deny that to one another. That is why they say we never deny that doorway to be closed. Keep it open all the time. We need to love each other because that is the only thing that will work if we want to safe keep what we have left.27

27 Ron Indian—Mandamin, Guest Speaker for Ojibway Land Based Class, University of Winnipeg. 2018.
Chapter Two: The Day of Treaty

Aanikoobijigan Dibaajimowin: Great Grandparents and Great Grandchildren Story
GIWIZENS - LITTLE BOY:

Grandpa, why did the Anishinaabeg smoke pipes at the day of Treaty?

MISHOOMIS - GRANDPA:

They are asking those ancestors who left, to help us to consider those still coming. Aanikoobijiginan is the word for great grandparents and great grandchildren. They are asking the spirits help to help through prayer. Smoking tobacco that was given allows them to remember the things that were shared; to acknowledge that work that needs to be done. Acknowledge that work that continues to be done and how it needs to go forward. Niigaanibitiwin – so that this work continues into the future. That spirit is amazing how it does its work.28

The basic teaching of Elders is, in order to secure the future as a people, we must preserve our original history and teachings. First Nations history must be based on the language. It is the language of the people that will authentically and properly explain the nature of treaties and to maintain the original meaning of First Nations knowledge and heritage. The spirit and intent of the treaty is the term that the Elders usually refer to as the foundation and basis of explaining about treaties.

The meaning of treaty is usually based on seven (7) guiding principles of nationhood. These principles can only be explained by Elders through their languages. The history of First Nations will require the Elders teachings to form the foundation to put treaties in proper and orderly historical context. The nature of treaties will require a holistic view that includes First Nations perspective, legal interpretation, and the current policy implementation of treaties.

28 Ron Indian—Mandamin, Guest Speaker for Ojibway Land Based Class, University of Winnipeg. 2018.
Treaties 1 through 11 in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta were based on prior treaties of Eastern Canada. This means treaties cannot be viewed in isolation. There is a link between all treaties to the original legal recognition of First Nations and the Royal Proclamation (1763). Royal Proclamation was also based on the nationhood status of First Nations. Peace and Friendship agreements were reached as set out by the Two Row Wampum and The Covenant Chain of Friendship, etc.; during this phase radical title of Indigenous Nations came to be a meaningful and respected legal right. This was reaffirmed at the 1764 Treaty of Niagara.

This recognizes sovereignty, lands and water, resources, and governance. In 1864 Canada was going to be confederated into a super colony by acquiring the North-West Territories, and Rupertslands. It wasn’t possible however because of what was set out by the Royal Proclamation. The Proclamation said, whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our interest, and the security of the colonies, that the several nations and tribes and Indians with whom we are connected, and live under our protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the possession of such parts of our domains and territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by us, are reserved for them.

Treaty rights are confirmed and recognized in the current constitution (1982) and the founding constitution (1867) of Canada. In numbered Treaty Country Queen Victoria had said: I mandate that Treaties are to be negotiated in my name and under my supervision; for the sole purpose of immigration and settlement; compensation must be paid; and that the Treaties will be just and equitable. The Day of Treaty, the Crown requested consent to apply sovereignty, requested consent for certain lands in exchange for compensation. The position of Elders is that the Creator created First Nations existence and rights. The Elders are firm in their teachings that we as First Nations have pre-existing status of nationhood prior to treaty making.
Recent Supreme Court decisions support the notion that First Nations had nationhood rights prior to Canada's constitution. These rights were not created by the federal government. A Supreme Court decision instructs the government to implement treaties based on their historical context. The law also recognizes the oral history of First Nations as a fundamental right. Lastly, treaty was about equality and dignity. The intent of the treaty was about partnership, reconciliation, and co-existence amongst all nations. It is the mutual respect, recognition, benefit, responsibility, and honour of all nations people that will bring justice to the original spirit and intent of the treaty. It is in this spirit that this article hopes to facilitate and generate discussion as to the origin and nature of treaties.

**Giiwizens - Little Boy:** What did we cede, release, and surrender?

**Mishoomis - Grandpa:** It was for settlement and Immigration only, even says it in the document. Treaty 2 was signed on behalf of the Anishinabe by Mekis, Sou-sonce, Masah-kee-yash, François (Broken Fingers), and Richard Woodhouse. In the written text of the treaty, the Anishinabe agreed to “cede, release, surrender and yield up to Her Majesty the Queen, and Her successors forever” a large tract of very valuable land to the west and north of Manitoba as it existed in 1871, and three times as large as the province. It was all the land that was likely to be required by settlers for some time to come. In return, each band would receive a reserve large enough to provide 160 acres for each family of five.

You know, it is possible that the Aboriginal negotiators at Treaty 1 understood the treaty as a promise to share the land with newcomers, each group pursuing its livelihood without interference, particularly given how government treaty negotiators emphasized the Aboriginal ability to continue to hunt and fish on ceded tracts and muddled the concepts of “surrender” and “reserves.” These mutual misunderstandings may have been repeated during the signing of Treaty 2.
The Treaty Commissioners failed to include a provision on hunting and fishing rights in the written texts of Treaties 1 and 2, although Archibald had verbally promised that Aboriginal peoples would retain such rights in the ceded territory. In future decades, the settler government of Manitoba would begin to restrict Aboriginal peoples’ access to game and fish, in violation of these promises. The Supreme Court of Canada has found that the written text alone cannot grant an understanding of the “spirit” of the treaties: the courts must now examine the historical context and the perception that each party likely had of the agreement. Anishinabe lawyer and author Aimée Craft has pointed out that it is unlikely the Aboriginal participants understood the concept of “surrender,” particularly when the Euro-Canadian negotiators repeatedly assured the Aboriginal signatories that they would be able to continue using the natural resources on the surrendered tract — an idea seemingly incompatible with surrender. Likewise, it is possible that the Euro-Canadian negotiators failed to understand perspectives based in Anishinabe concepts of law, or inaakonigewin, that the Aboriginal participants brought to the treaty.  

Craft explains, the laws are in the legends.

Giiwizens - Little Boy: How come things are the way they are today?

Mishoomis - Grandpa: You have to understand there has been a tsunami of change that has come over us since we have been here. Today, Treaty Two Territory is a place of meeting, a melting pot of cultures that have all but erased history. The mound builders were even up here too. That’s how Pilot Mound got its name; there’s more up at Oak Lake. The Sioux were here, the Cree were here, then the Ojibway/Saulteaux. There were Dakota and

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31 Oak Lake: "Ox Trails to Blacktop. Oak Lake 100 Year History.
Ojibways wars. Epidemics were depopulating the prairies. The Red River Metis had the Buffalo Hunt Society- a governance structure. There were two hunts annually recorded by the Nor’wester in 1860.

Lake Manitoba is a community with a lot of connections to the Red Lake Ojibways in the USA. In Fairford, there was an inland missionary station established around 1842. It was a strong Anglican community by the time treaty was agreed. Fairford is the name of the minister’s hometown in England. There is also a pagan fraction to the Fairford band. They were one community before, Fairford and Lake St. Martin, but religion divided them.

Dauphin River band has their origins from the Lake Winnipeg people. There was also another religious break off in that community and they became Little Saskatchewan. They was a connection with Waterhen and Skownan previously, but a family relationship that didn’t work caused them to split up. Pine Creek is commonly associated with Metis and the Camperville Red River history, but their history is strongly connected Ojibway and Saulteaux families. Valley River was the Rattlesnake band and they had a monopoly on the Fort Ellice trading post. Crane River was very established at the south end of the Lake Manitoba. Mekis was an important Midewiwin spiritual leader Riding Mountain and Dauphin Lake band. They would have been the biggest community in the territory before they were split up and became Keeseekoowenin, Ebb and Flow, Waywayseecappo, Rolling River, Wawayseecappo, and Gamblers. There is a long history here.

Back then families of Mekis’ band lived on the mountain during the winter and in the Dauphin Lake area in the summer. Persons who became Chiefs of First Nations and who after the Manitoba House Treaty Gathering received reserves in Treaty 2 Territory appear on

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33 Rarihokwats. Manitoba Treaty History vol II through 1870, p 128.
34 Rarihokwats, Manitoba Documentary Treaty History vol 1 until 1849. Accessed 20 April 2019 at: https://www.academia.edu/24376127/Manitoba_Documentary_Treaty_History_vol_1_until_1849
the paylists of what was then “Dauphin Lake/Riding Mountain Band”, and according to those paylists, received their Treaty payment as Treaty 2 persons, three years before Treaty 4 had been entered into. Treaty 2 itself notes that there were several communities who were not represented at Manitoba House, and in the Treaty, it provides that Mekis, a son of Okanese, would represent those communities in the Treaty 2 process. Many of these same persons and communities subsequently had reserves set apart for them in Treaty 2 Territory. However, the adhesion to Treaty they agreed happened to be Treaty 4.

Peguis’ people entered into Treaty 1 but later after the theft of their reserve by government officials, were provided with another reserve in Treaty 2 Territory, without the consent of the First Nations in Treaty 2 Territory. When Treaty 5 was entered into at Norway House, the people who today are at Fisher River stipulated they wanted farm lands. Lt. Gov. Alexander Morris granted their wish by giving them only 100 acres per family of five and placing the reserve in Treaty 2 Territory without bothering to obtain the consent of Treaty 2 First Nations.

First Nations on the shores of Lake Winnipeg were included in Treaty 2 Territory when the Chiefs at Manitoba House drew the map of their territory including that section of Lake Winnipeg. Isolated and distant from the other Treaty 2 First Nations, they eventually began to identify themselves with closer Treaty 5 First Nations, even though the portion of the Lake they depend upon for their livelihood is in Treaty 2 Territory.

The boundaries of Treaty 2 had been set when Sandy Bay, part of the Treaty 1 collection of First Nations, was forced to move from its reserve in Treaty 1 territory to Township 18 in 1876. That township lies split half and half by the boundary between Treaty 1 and Treaty 2. Likely no one noticed at the time. As well, the Sandy Bay people, who had been in the area since at least 1808, had intermarried many times with the people at Ebb and
Flow and Riding Mountain was a frequent location, as is indicated on their paylists, “Absent at Riding Mountain.”

The Chiefs at Manitoba House in 1871 insisted that their exclusive territory was to be determined by a line which went southwestward to the northwestern corner of Moose Mountain. In 1904 when the province of Saskatchewan was established, the line separating it from Manitoba placed three First Nations in Treaty 2 Territory in Saskatchewan. When it was noted that the Anishinaabe community at Duck Bay, squarely within the boundaries stated in Treaty 2, had not entered Treaty, they were sent to another First Nation in Saskatchewan and Treaty 4 Territory and entered into an adhesion there. They later moved into Camperville, still deeper into Treaty 2 Territory.

No other Treaty area in Canada has had this mixture of complicated historical circumstances which raise questions as to “who is Treaty 2 and who isn’t.”

Treaties 1 and 2 were the first of 11 Numbered Treaties negotiated between 1871 and 1921. Treaty 1 was agreed 3 August 1871 and Treaty 2 was agreed 21 August 1871. The Treaty Commissioners knew the first treaty to be negotiated with Aboriginal people in the Canadian West would set a precedent. Important in their bearing upon our relation to the Indians of the whole continent.” The Commissioners sought and failed to negotiate a treaty with the Aboriginal people in northwestern Ontario, an area later covered by Treaty 3.

The negotiations for Treaty 1 did not start until 27 July 1871, after approximately 1,000 Aboriginal attendees, including men, women and children, had formed an impressive camp of roughly 100 tents in a semi-circle around Fort Garry. On 3 August 1871, Treaty 1 was agreed. The tense, eight-day proceedings reflected both the difficulty in reaching mutual understanding on Euro-Canadian concepts.

Each band was to receive a reserve large enough to provide 160 acres for each family of five (or in like proportion for smaller or larger families). Each man, woman, and child was
to be given a gratuity — or one-time payment — of three dollars, and a yearly annuity totalling $15 per family of five. The government also agreed to maintain a school on each reserve and to prohibit the introduction or sale of liquor on reserves. After concluding negotiations for Treaty 1, Commissioner Simpson, Lieutenant-Governor Archibald, and James McKay, along with the clerk of Manitoba’s Legislative Assembly, Molyneux St. John, went to Manitoba Post, an HBC trading post on the southwest side of Lake Manitoba, to complete Treaty 2.

Chapter 3 - The Day After Treaty

Anangoons Zaagi’iwe-dibaajimowin: Little Star Love Story

GIWIIZENS - LITTLE BOY:

“Mishoomis, tell me about that blue old roan horse we saw when he was down at the post.” Giiwizens - a young boy asks his Grandpa travelling back between the Fort Ellice Hudson Bay Company Post and the Riding Mountain Ranch. Mishoomis, immediately interested said,

MISHOOMIS - GRANDPA:

“That’s a grand old horse. In his day he was one of the best buffalo runners on the plains and everybody knew about him and how good he was.”

"Where did he come from?" giiwizens asked, "and how was he bred?"

Mishoomis said,

“I don't know how he was bred but I know about where he came from and how he came. But wait til tonight.”

So that night after supper and when the cattle were bedded down, he reminded grandpa to tell him the story:
A few good years ago, there was a band of Saulteaux Indians lived way up from the Assiniboine. Every summer they went on the big buffalo plains and some of the brigades of buffalo hunters.

Among the young men of the band was Kitchimami - Big Pigeon. He was nearly 20 and excelled in all that young men did to prepare themselves to be warriors. The nearest to him was his friend Wabi-Ogimaa, White Chief. They had a close friendship, Kitchimami’s father was killed in a fight but his mom raised him well. It wasn't too hard to raise a son given the buffalo and game we so plentiful. Now Kitchimami was able to hunt so people had no fear for the cold winter. But Kitchimami was not content. He wanted to be rich, to have many horses. He only had a few old horses to move things and were not able to go fast or far in the hunt.

Kitchimami did not want the horses for himself though, he wanted them because he wanted Anangoons - Little Star, the daughter of old Chipokat, one of the councilmen of the band.

This woman, Anangoons, was good to look at and very good at all kinds of work the women had to do. They met and spoke of their feelings for one another. Anangoons told him to have courage, she would be his woman and would take no other for her man. But old Chipokat knew other men besides Kitchimami desired her, and some had many ponies to give for her. He desired a big herd and did not look with favor on Kitchimami as a prospective son in law.

Wabi-Ogimaa and Kitchimami had often talked about this matter and at length. They decided to go on a raid to the south and bring back enough horses to satisfy Chipokat. They told their mothers, and one evening, Kitchimami contrived to meet Anangoons and tell her of the plan. She knew well the dangers he would face, but, it was the custom of young men to go
on raids. So she agreed with him, and planned to meet again soon. Their mother’s set about preparing the young men's outfits, it didn't take long.

Kitchimami contrived to meet Anangoons to say farewell. She gave him a farewell gift which she handed to him. It was a fine bead-worked Iskipitagan or firebag with a flint and steel, a piece of punk (rotten wood) for making fires, tobacco, moccasins, and lastly, there was a small sack of fine buckskin with a loop attached to go around the neck. Inside it, she showed him a big beaver canine tooth. Anangoons said,

‘This is a very strong medicine. It belonged to my mother's brother. He said it saved him many times when he was in deep danger. I have prayed to it many times asking it to help you and to take your prayers kindly.’

Kitchimami took her gifts and thanking her for them said,

‘I will treasure your gifts and always will I think of you. I know that Amik-beaver, is very strong and very wise. His tooth which he cuts downwards is very sharp so I will make many many prayers to him to protect me safely back to you.’

Then Anangoons, kissed him saying,

‘Have courage; be patient and cautious and Gitchi-Manitou will bring you back to me.’

The day after, in the evening, the young men set out. They were equipped with fine bows and arrows, good knives in their belts at their backs. They had pemmican and pounded meat for food when unable to kill for any reason such as hiding from an enemy in the bush, or waiting near a camp. Nearly everybody accompanied them to the edge of the camp. Some of the young men even went walking with them for two hours. Then they were by themselves and they travelled all night. They stopped after daybreak at a small creek. Just before they camped Wabi-Ogimaa shot a prairie chicken, then a partridge. These would make for a good meal. While Wabi-Ogimaa watched, Kitchimami made a small smokeless fire. He used dried
alder branches, which made a hot blue flame. While one watched, the other slept and thus passed the day.

The next night and day were the same. Buffalo grazed here and there all over but there was nothing to alarm them. Soon they reached the Souris river. They crossed it and continued on south. Here they had to be more cautious, they were approaching the land of the Big Knives, Gichi Mookamaan Aking - America, where their enemies, the Dakotas, dwelt. A few more days brought them to the Missouri River. They made a raft of dried logs to place their belongings, and covered it with more branches to look like a dead tree. They found the crossing smooth and stretching far out to the west they could see miles of open prairie. As they looked carefully all over, they thought they found signs of a used trail coming from the river and turning to the west. They followed the trail but to the north so as to avoid anyone who might be using it. It seemed to be a well used trail to the river.

As they continued the land became hilly and broken, but by evening, they discovered a real village. Immediately they searched the area and found a spring - just a trickle of sweet water in a thicket. Here they decided to stay. Wabi-Ogiuma watched from one side of the village, and Kitchimami the other. They discovered that the herd of horses was brought in near the village in the evening. They were not watched very closely - just watered and herded so they wouldn't get far away. But quite a number of the fine looking big horses were rounded up in the evening and taken into the houses. These they thought, must be the buffalo runners. The young men stayed hidden in the hollow. They would steal out at night.

But they watched carefully during the day with only one sleeping at a time. After three days, they decided to make an attempt to move in and they carefully went over their plans. They had discovered which horses went into certain houses and Kitchimami had made up his mind to have the blue roan that he had seen more than once. They knew where he went
when taken in for the night. The plan was for Kitchimami to go inside the house; Wabi-Ogimaa was to wait outside and take care of any horses that Kitchimami might bring out.

On the third night they waited until the stars, the Seven Persons, showed that it was midnight. They went towards the village. Gradually they approached the door of the house where they had seen the blue taken that evening. On touching the handle of the door latch Kitchimami was dismayed to find that some sort of bells were hung on the inside of the latch. What to do now? Must he give up his desire for the Blue Roan? If he ever got him home he would assuredly bring him his heart's desire. He decided to reach the horse some other way. Leaving Wabi-Ogimaa by the door, he went around until he found the outlet from the fireplace. It was summer and there had been no fire in the hearth. He knew the women did their cooking outside.

After saying a prayer to his Manito and his medicine, Amik - the beaver, he let himself down the chimney. He found himself in complete darkness. He could feel logs to his left hand and bare ground with his right hand. But further over, he could hear breathing. Kitchimami knew that Mandan houses were dugout of a sidehill and built with a front wall of logs, and a roof, covered in the earth it was dugout from. He could hear the horses on his left. They must be on the other side of the log wall. Then, with the utmost care, he moved along the outer wall until he came to a door made of hewn slabs. He discovered a short strap of bells such as were used on a dog harness. It had three little bells. These he grasped with his hand so that the balls inside the bells only rolled without making any tinkle - only a slight dull sound barely to be heard. With his other hand, he opened the door making no sound. He stepped out and laid the bells behind the corner of the house.

Before opening the door, Kitchimami's hand had touched some object hanging on the wall, he went back in and felt for this object and found it was a powder horn. He also found a shot pouch poking his hand behind the door he found a gun and handed it to Wabi-Ogimaa.
He flung the powder horn and shot pouch over his shoulders in a proper way. Now came the difficult part. Every horse he touched might snort and jump so he rubbed his knuckles along the wall and noticed the horses had heard him. They stood perfectly still and listened and then relaxed. He reached out and touched a horse, which flinched but did not snort or jump. Keeping his hand on the horse until he reached his head, he then untied him and led him outside. This took quite some time because he made the horse pause at every step so the sound would not be like a horse walking.

When they got the horse out they discovered it to be dark colored and could not be the blue roan. So, Kitchimami put the tie line into Wabi-Ogimaa’s hand and returned to the house. Now that he was a little familiar with the walls, it didn't take so long. He brought out two more horses, the last one being the blue roan. They could see the white on him. In going back and forth he found saddles and bridles and carried them out to Wabi-Ogimaa who prepared the horses. When all was ready Wabi-Ogimaa was riding one and leading the other and went ahead of Kitchimami who had the blue roan. They planned to make for the mouth of the valley and meet there, unfortunately, a dog gave a loud bark. This alarmed others and a great outcry arose. Kitchimami prayed to his medicine to help him, to protect him and tell him what to do!

With the dogs running towards Wabi-Ogimaa, the Mandans would know which way to go. Suddenly Kitchimami mounted and joined in the rush. He gained the lead and took pursuers to one side yelling as if he knew which way to go. He kept ahead and it was getting closer to daylight. Kitchimami got his bow and arrows ready. The pursuit had gradually died off and there was only one man who was fairly close and he had a gun. He suddenly stopped his horse and, before the Mandan fully realized that Kitchimami was not one of his own, it was too late. Kitchimami shot him clean through the chest and he fell from his horse.
kitchimami dismounted and took his scalp, his gun and equipment. He caught his horse, a
fine big black, remounted the blue roan and set off after Wabi-Ogimaa.

After sometime he found him on the bank of the big river. They found their trail
where they had crossed before. They crossed the river and they continued to ride fast,
changing horses every now and then. They kept going all day and at night, the horses were
very tired and so were the men. They tethered the horses near a small creek with lots of grass
before eating some pemmican. Wabi-Ogimaa was going to watch while Kitchimami slept, but
first Kitchimami said a prayer to Gitchi Manito and the beaver, his medicine, giving thanks
that they had succeeded so well, and asked for protection so the Manitouwag - Gods would
bring them safely home to their people.

Although they were both anxious to get home to show how successful they had been,
they did not hurry their horses. They gave them lots of time to feed by making short rides,
while keeping a keen lookout. They were back to the souris river and just after they had
crossed, and were headed towards the Moose Mountains, a party of Sioux, who had come
across their tracks, began to follow them. The party came in sight and were close, then
Kitchimami and Wabi-Ogimaa called on their horses for speed. They were pleased to find
that they could really leave the Sioux behind whenever they wanted to. Kitchimami and
Wabi-Ogimaa stayed ahead of them just enough to encourage them to keep coming.

The boys suddenly came onto a big trail. It was, evidently, one of those brigades of
buffalo hunters who were on their way to Fort Ellice. They had passed recently, so the boys
followed their trail. When the Sioux reached the trail they turned and made off - probably
expecting to be pursued in return. the boys soon caught up to the brigade and were kindly
received. Their horses were very much admired. The enjoyed the comfort, safety, and ease of
a big camp. At the crossing of beaver creek, they left the brigade and headed north. They
came to their people's camp up on the Assiniboine and were given a joyous reception by the
whole band. Their mother's were overjoyed and gave gifts to Gitchi Manitou and thanks in their prayers.

Kitchimami had made up his mind to lead his two fine runners over to Chipokat's tent and picket them there the morning after they arrived. But, quite early in the morning, a messenger came from Mr. Arnott, the Chief officer of the Hudson Bay Company at Fort Ellice, asking Kitchimami to bring his horses down to Fort Ellice as he wished to make and offer for them. He was very fond of good horses. Moreover, Chipokat was old and it was more likely that a number of mares would appeal more to him than a single horse, no matter how good he was. So Kitchimami went down to the fort, riding one, and leading the other. Mr. Arnott was greatly taken with the appearance of the horses and after a short ride, he offered 20 common horses for the blue roan, and 15 for the darker one.

The next morning Kitchimami, helped by some of the company men from the Fort, set off with his bunch. Early in the afternoon he came to the camp. Wabi-Ogimaa and some of the other young men helped him tie up herd, a short way off. At daylight the next morning Wabi-Ogimaa and Kitchimami went out and brought in the horses, watered them, put ties on twenty of them and picketed them in front of Chipokat's wigwam. Discussions went on all day long in the tent. About mid afternoon Chipokat and some of his friends took the horses and put them in with his other horses. As Chipokat was returning to his tent, he met a restless Kitchimami. Chipokat greeted him very kindly and said to him,

‘Come eat my son in law. We need to talk about wedding plans.’

Chipokat explained,

‘Rites of passage mark transitional periods in a person’s life and involve ritual activities and teachings designed to strip individuals of their roles and prepare them for new ones. A rite of passage is a celebration of the passage which occurs when an

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36 Walter Scott, Our People of Riding Mountain House.
individual leaves one group to enter another. It involves a significant change of status in society. Wiidigewin - Marriage or unionship between two people are practised ensuring commitment to one another’s life and livelihood; it is custom that a unionship be accepted by the family and related community members group. It was the responsibility of the community and family to ensure that a couple is held accountable to their promises made to one another. It was a form used to promote prosperity and to flourish as a group/nation.**37

During the wedding between Kitchimami and Anangoons the community witnessed, the teachings of Baagak were spoken of, an important reminder of relationships, how to conduct ourselves. Baagak is the flying skeleton, a haunting reminder to us to place relationships above material things, to be thankful for what we have - the food and water we eat and drink - the help we receive from the plant world, our loved ones, our significant others. Baagak was a lustful man, desiring to be with his own brother’s wife and killed him to do so, the first murder. But she committed her suicide in grief. Consumed by guilt, Baagak fell ill and died too. Never returning to spirit, his soul lingers trying to correct his wrong doings by watching the people who enter the forest, the wild places, watching those who still remember to put out their tobacco. Many hold this spirit as a bad omen that brings death, but Baagak can help put someone’s passing in a healthy place.

The White Skeleton Bird is also part of the teachings; it is the women’s component of the story. Her love is important, powerful, she loves unconditionally. She was a spirit who fell in love with the human Baagak—she pitied him, offered to help him when he crossed over to the spiritual realm. She guided him to his relatives, the bats, to help him learn how to survive in darkness, in caves. But Baagak didn’t trust her, or the bats, because of his own

37 Ron Indian—Mandamin, Guest Speaker for Ojibway Land Based Class, University of Winnipeg. 2019.
behaviors. He was haunted by the guilt that accompanied his memories. The White Skeleton Bird was so patient and ever-loving, but these beings are important because now they are living their lives for each other. They are mates for life like the eagles. Their bodies are vessels to continue life and transmit these teachings on to our children, keep them clean for each other. The teachings extended to our lodges and emphasize the importance of being responsible for children—always keeping a clean house so life can live there.38

That's how Kitchimami brought the roan horse to Fort Ellice and gained his heart's desire, Anangoons.

Conclusion

The objective of this book is to provide discussion on the origin and nature of treaties from a First Nations perspective. The meaning of treaty has various explanations and interpretations, either by First Nations or non-First Nations. This includes the legal interpretation of the federal government (Crown); and the original spirit and intent of treaty by First Nations. It is generally an accepted principle that treaty making provided the foundation of nation building of (now) Canada. The literature describing treaties is usually done by scholars from their background and experience. To be inclusive, treaties must include First Nations knowledge and heritage. This history from the perspective of Mekis' descendants. This story is not complete as it still needs the history from the descendants of

38 Ron Indian Mandamin influenced this portion when I was an Oshkaabewis for him that special day, the Wiidigewin -Wedding Ceremony of Cynthia Jourdain-Bird and Thunder Bird this past summer in Kenora Ontario. 2018.
Sou-sonce, Ma-sah-kee-yash, François (Broken Fingers), and Richard Woodhouse. I am hopeful this inspires them to look into their own history.

Mamawowe Gikidowin - Collective Message of the Anishinaabe Gathering

To all our Relations spiritual and temporal

We, the Anishinaabe Nation, have gathered in the territory of Treaty 2 to celebrate and strengthen our bonds of blood, clan and family; and to reconnect and commit to the legacy left to us by our ancestors:

Bimaatiziwin

The Great Spirit gave us Life, Reason, Will and Freedom.

Inaakonigewin

The Great Spirit also gave us Sacred Law and instructions to govern ourselves and our relations with other people.

Gitaakiminan
We were planted in special places in the lands, rivers, streams, skies, hills, prairies and forests of Turtle Island in which we were born and in which we inalienably belong to live as one with the four-leggeds, the crawlers, the fliers and the water beings and all life on earth according to the Sacred Law of Creator.

Ginaadawebimadiziwin

Our Grand Mother Earth gives us food, medicine and everything we need to complete the circle of life from infancy, adolescence, adulthood and elderhood in good health and security.

Maamowe Minwaadagitowin - Kizhwaatiziwin

We commit to Kizhwaatiziwin for one another.

We will assert and exercise our rights and duties to one another under Sacred Law

We will help celebrate the successes of each community and we will assist each one in their challenges when they seek assistance.

We will restore our original citizenship, language, laws, institutions, ceremonies, protocols, and procedures of governance.

We covenant and declare that we will build on this declaration toward full restoration of the Anishinaabe Nation.39

39 The message was added after the final reading and felt like a fitting conclusion. It comes from the Anishinaabe Gathering that was held in Rolling River dated August 16, 2019. There is no author listed but the conference was organized by Treaty 3 and the Southern Chiefs Organization. In the first sentence, I replaced the word 'Sandy Bay' with 'Treaty 2,' for consistency with the book.
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