Tobaan

Atsah̲

Tobaan Atsah

Central
Koyukon
Athapaskan
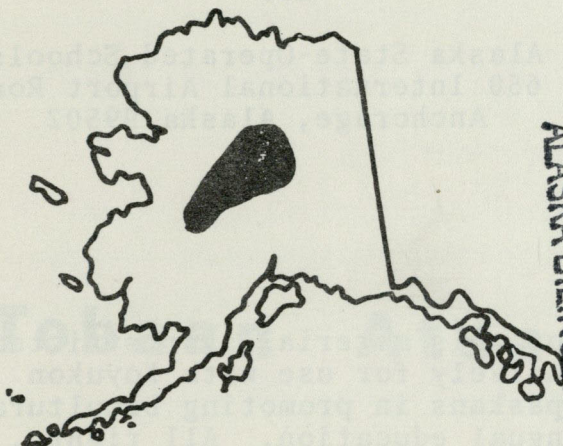
written by

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Koyukuk, Alaska

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Tobaan Atsah

Tobaan Atsah is the most popular
Indian story. It is as well-known as
Little Red Riding Hood or *Goldilocks
and the Three Bears*.

There are also different versions
of *Tobaan Atsah*. This partly depends
upon which village the story is told
in and who is telling the story.

The author was born and raised in
Cutoff and moved to Huslia as a young
girl when the village was moved. She
later moved to Koyukuk when she married
Benedict and began raising a family.

<div align="right">Kusga - David Henry</div>

Ya<u>g</u>a ghal ts'u<u>h</u>ut'aa<u>n</u>,
daghal dikahon neeł <u>k</u>un' <u>k</u>aa
<u>h</u>aldo. Daghal ya<u>g</u>an yoz aa<u>h</u>aa
dint'aa go dinaa<u>k</u>' oło<u>n</u>. Dahoon
antaalyo go keel. Ts'u<u>h</u> ba<u>k</u>al
hootaaldla', ba<u>k</u>al hootaaldla'.

Dahoon <u>k</u>'udaa neehooneełtaa<u>n</u>
go dinaa<u>k</u>'oło<u>n</u>. Ts'u<u>h</u> didna'
ghulido ts'in' <u>k</u>'udaa <u>h</u>adaałina<u>h</u>.
Nidaats'in' ło doghaslaa<u>h</u> didna',
oodnee.

Once upon a time there was a man
porcupine and his wife living in a camp. The
young lady was carrying a baby. One day
the young man went out hunting. And he never
came back.

Soon she had her baby. And so she just
sat home with her baby. She got tired of
staying home. And she started thinking what
she could do with her baby.

1

Dahoon k̲'udaa k̲'o-eeditłaah̲
go ya̲g̲an yoza. Ts'uh̲ k'ikaadinee-on
yogh needinaanee-on̲. Yiyił
soodil-ol laagha. Dahoon k̲'udaa
yogh h̲adeeyo. Ts'uh̲ go
k'ikaadinee-on noydeetinłbiy̲tł go
ya̲g̲an yoza. Go ts'ibaa kin t'oh̲
k̲unoydinołbiłtł. Ts'i oh̲ dit'aan̲,
adidzaan̲ toh̲ dahoon k̲'udaa nikoh̲
ts'i didiyoh̲. H̲uyił binoda
dinaa k̲alaa ts'a h̲uk̲'aa-eelneek.

Soon the baby was crawling around.
so she gave the baby a piece of punk to
play with. She left her while she was
playing with the punk. The baby was
rolling the punk around. She rolled it
round and round the spruce tree. She
grew big while she was doing this. Then
she found out there wasn't anybody around.

2

Ts'uh doogh k'otaałiyo ts'i
notłin nok'udeeyo. Ts'uh yoonaan
huneeł-aan huyił yoonots'in hun
dikin neełtaaghnaadiyon.
Nidaats'in' haahaa ło yoonaan
doghasnaah yeeneelin. Ts'uh go
tobaan lido dahoon taaltsaah.
Ts'uh tobaan atsah, tobaan atsah,
go dikahon.

Huyił doogh hun bikinaal
ghabaał. "Ganaa', dodeenee?"
go dikahon ałnee.

So she started walking around. She went
over to the bank. She looked across the river
and saw all kinds of trees over there. So she
started thinking, I wonder how I could get
across to the other side. So she started
crying while she was sitting on the beach.
The porcupine was crying on the beach, crying
on the beach.

Then along swam a muskrat. "What are
you crying for, Friend?" he asked the porcu-
pine.
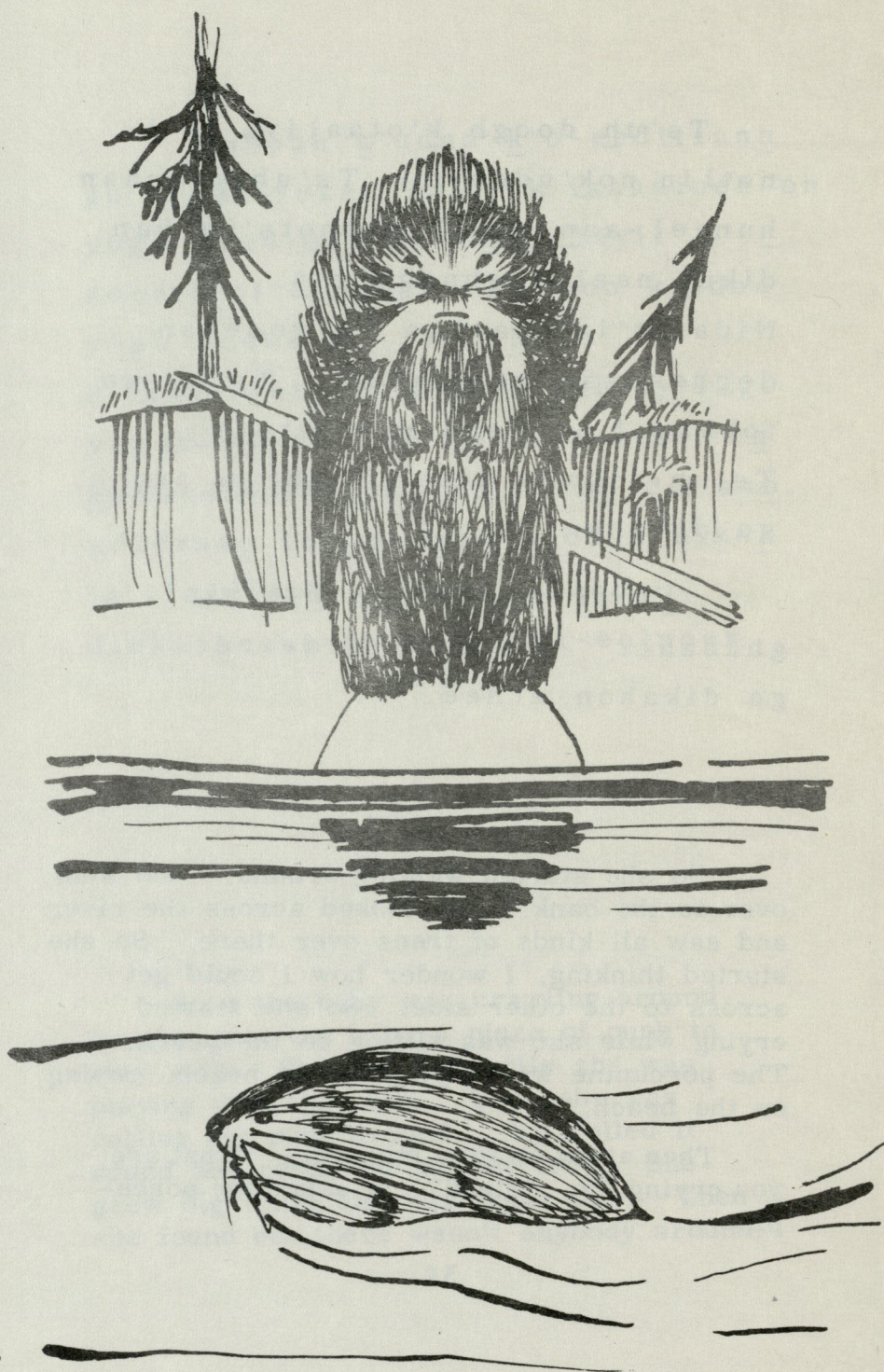
3

"Yoonaan diki<u>n</u>
neełtaaghnaalyo<u>n</u> da<u>h</u>u<u>k</u>'aat," nee
go dikahona. "Ts'ibaa yił, <u>k</u>'ee<u>y</u>
yił, t'aghał yił, <u>k</u>'as yił, ts'itł
yił, neełta<u>k</u>'aaghnaalyo<u>n</u> <u>h</u>o.

"Eeda' donee sika' <u>k</u>'a
doleeho<u>y</u>," nee go bikinaala.

"Nidee<u>n</u>, nogh nika'
daghotłeeya' <u>k</u>'ant'a," yiłnee.

"Honikitł totsiyoo<u>k</u>, dodnee
ahaa?" nee go bikinaal dahoon
ya<u>k</u>'ots'a hanodeedibaa<u>n</u>.

"I want to go across to where there are
all kinds of trees growing," said the porcupine.
"Where there are spruce, birch, cottonwood,
alders and willows, all growing together."

"Then get on my tail," said the muskrat.

"No thanks," she said. "Your tail is
skinny as an awl."

"Then what is the old tunnel nose crying
for anyway?" said the muskrat as he swam
away.

5

Ts'uẖ tobaan atsaẖ, tobaan
atsaẖ, tobaan atsaẖ. Huyił
doogh ẖun taaẖgoodz ghabaał.
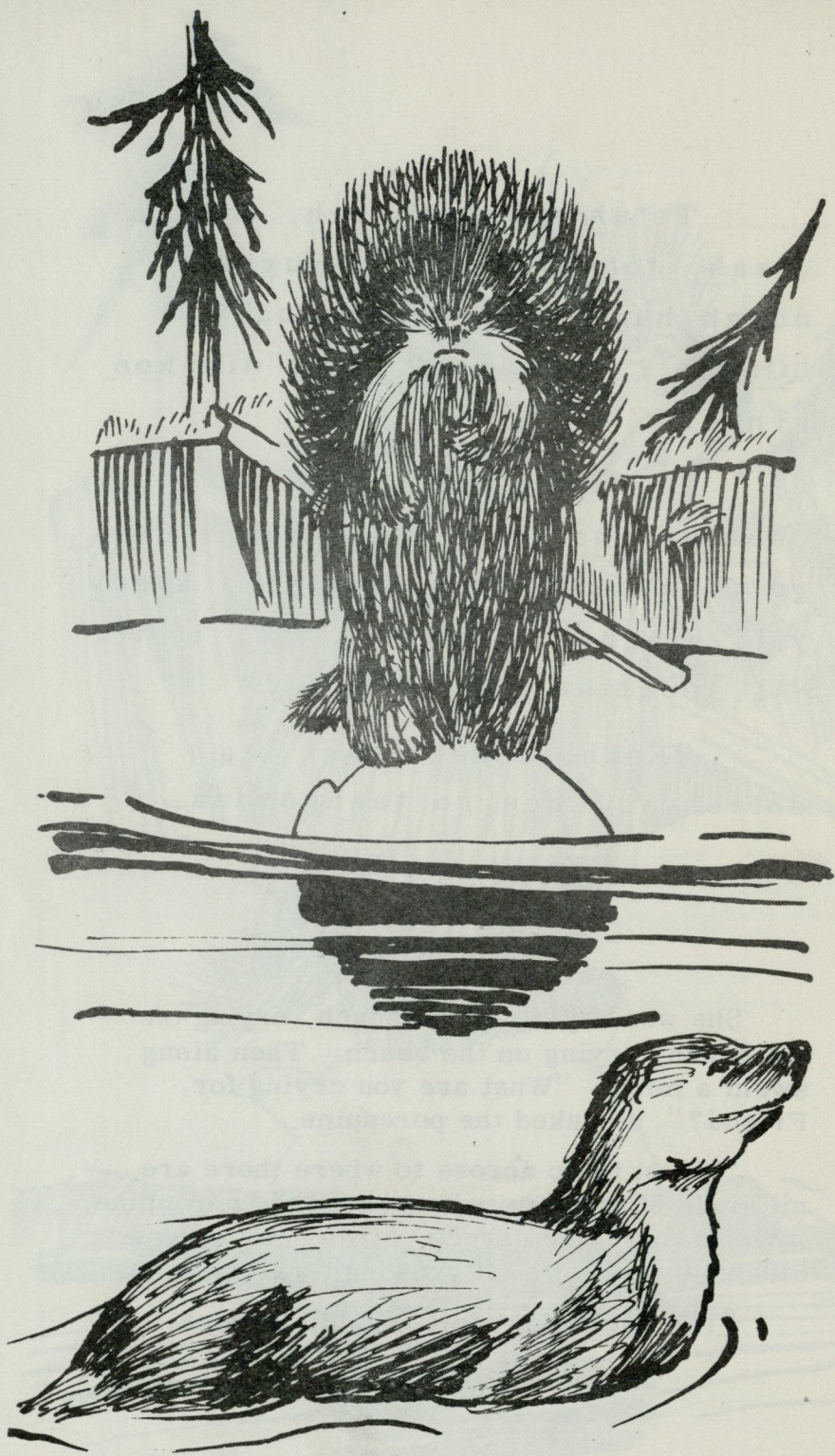"Ganaa', dodeenee?" go dikahon
ałnee.

"Yoonaan dikin
neełtaaghnaalyon daẖuk'aat," nee
go dikahona. "Ts'ibaa yił, k'eey
yił, t'aghał yił, k'as yił, ts'itł
yił, neełtaaghnaalyon ẖo."

"Eeda' donee sika' k'a
doleehoy," nee go taaẖgoodza.

She was crying on the beach, crying on
the beach, crying on the beach. Then along
swam a mink. "What are you crying for,
Friend?" he asked the porcupine.

"I want to go across to where there are
all kinds of trees growing," said the porcupine.
"Where there are spruce, birch, cottonwood,
alders and willows all growing together."

"Then get on my tail," said the mink.

7

"Nideen, nogh nika' kun'
gastł k'ant'a," yiłnee. "Honikitł
totsiyook, dodnee ahaa?" nee go
taahgoodza dahoon yak'ots'a
hanodeedibaan.

Ts'uh tobaan atsah, tobaan
atsah, tobaan atsah. Huyił doogh
hun bilaazon ghabaał. "Ganaa',
dodeenee?" go dikahon ałnee.

"No thanks," she said, "your tail is as
skinny as a stove poker."

"Then what is the old tunnel nose crying
for anyway?" said the mink as he swam away.

So she was crying on the beach, crying on
the beach, crying on the beach. Then along
swam an otter. "What are you crying for,
Friend?" he asked the porcupine.

9

"Yoonaan diki<u>n</u>
neeɫtaagh<u>n</u>aalyo<u>n</u> da<u>h</u>u<u>k</u>'aat," nee
go dikahona. "Ts'ibaa yiɫ, <u>k</u>'ee<u>y</u>
yiɫ, t'aghaɫ yiɫ, <u>k</u>'as yiɫ,
neeɫtaaghnaalyo<u>n</u> <u>h</u>o.

"Eeda' donee sika' <u>k</u>'a
doleeho<u>y</u>," nee go bilaazona.

"Nidee<u>n</u>, nogh nika' kun'
<u>g</u>astɫ <u>k</u>'ant'a," yiɫnee.

"Honikitɫ totsiyoo<u>k</u> dodnee
ahaa?" nee go bilaazon dahoon
ya<u>k</u>'ots'a hanodeediba<u>an</u>.

"I want to go across to where there are
all kinds of trees growing. Where there are
spruce, birch, cottonwood, alders and willows
all growing together."

"Then get on my tail," said the otter.

"No thanks," she said. "Your tail is as
skinny as a stove poker."

"What is the old tunnel nose crying for
then?" said the otter as he swam away.

Ts'uh tobaan atsah, tobaan
atsah, tobaan atsah. Huyił doogh
hun noya' ghabaał. "Ganaa',
dodeenee?" go dikahon ałnee.

"Yoonaan dikin
neełtaaghnaalyon dahuk'aat," nee.
"Ts'ibaa yił, k'eey yił, t'aghał
yił ts'itł yił neełtaaghnaalyon
ho," yiłnee.

"Eeda' donee sika' k'a
doleehoy," go dikahon ałnee.

So she was crying on the beach, crying
on the beach, crying on the beach. Then along
swam a beaver. "What are you crying for,
Friend?" he asked the porcupine.

"I want to go across to where there are
all kinds of trees growing," he said. "Where
there are spruce, birch, cottonwood, and
willows all growing together," she said.

"Then get on my tail," said the beaver.
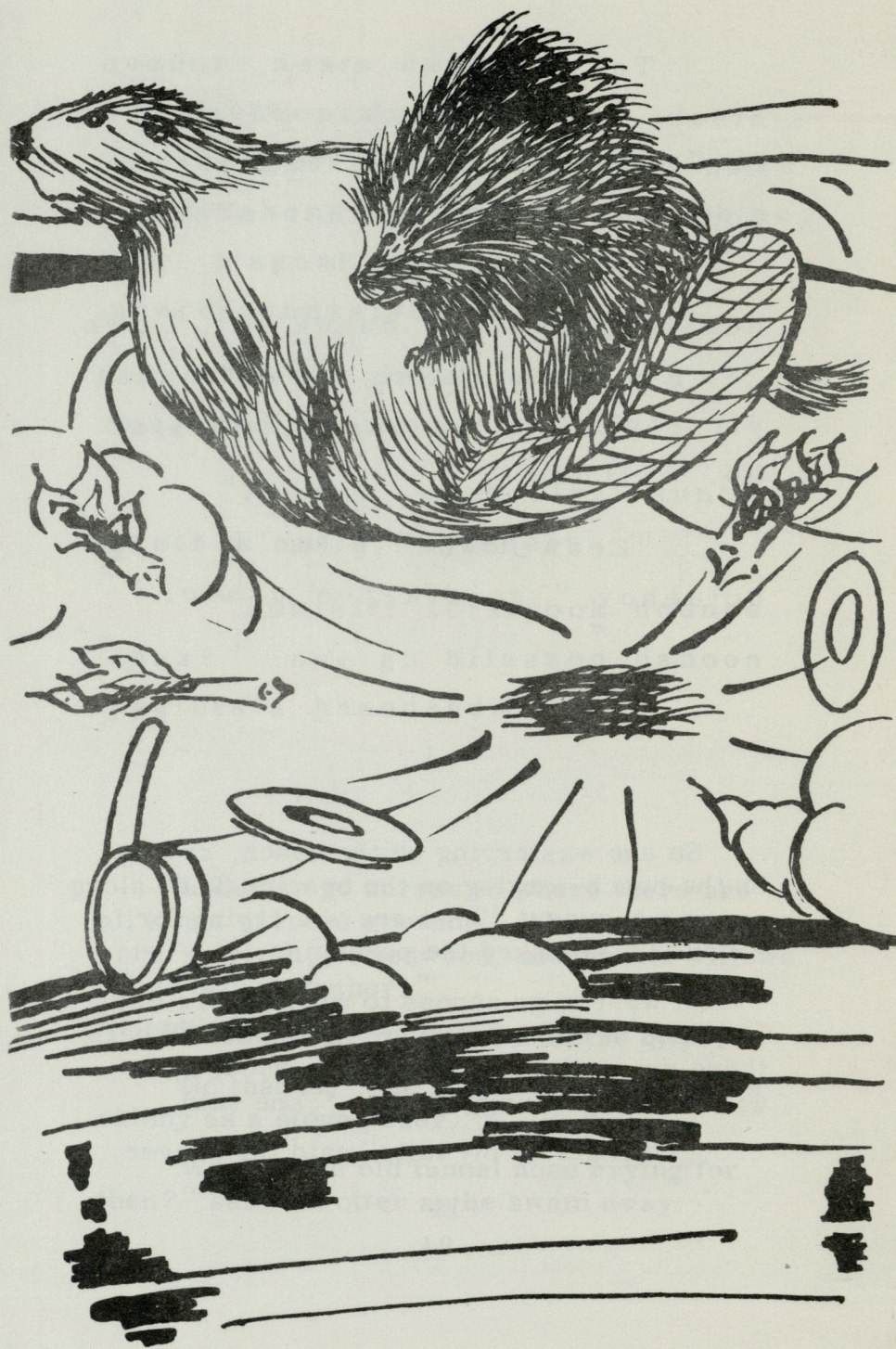
"Oho', oho', tłaa, sik'iłaats
ooło̱k o̱ko notaghasdoł," nee go
dikahon. Ts'uẖ ḵ'udaa dik'iłaats
ooło̱k o̱ko nołyo. Daḵ'udaa go
noya' ka' ḵ'a dolyo. Ts'uẖ ḵ'udaa
yoonaan hadeebaan go noya-a.

Dahoon ḵ'udaa k'itł ḵ'aat
didiyo̱h go dikahon. Ts'uẖ
k'inotaatłneek, hudeełk'oṉ huyił,
"Atłibaa! sika'!" daadiyo̱h go
noya-a. Dahoon kiłlit'aẖ.

"Okay, Okay, Wait! I'll get my cooking
pot. So she went and got her cooking pot.
Then she got on the beaver's tail. The beaver
started to swim across the river.

While they were going across, the por-
cupine got hungry. She built a fire and
started cooking. Then the beaver said,
It's hot! My tail!" And flapped his tail.

13
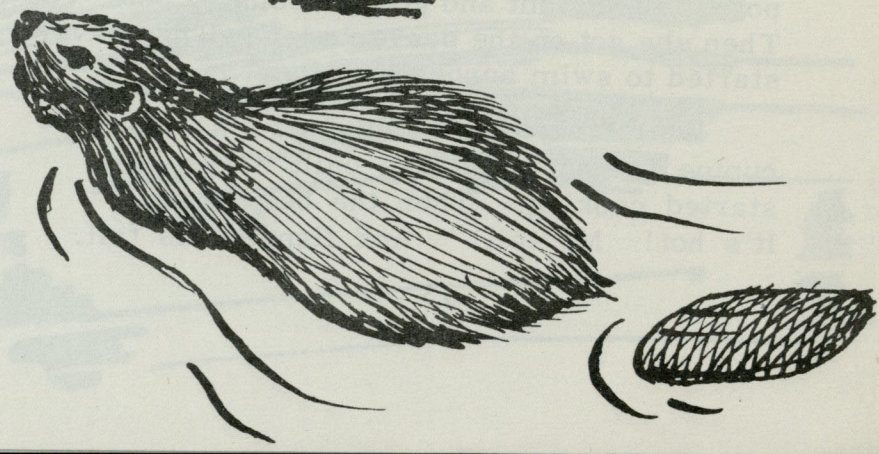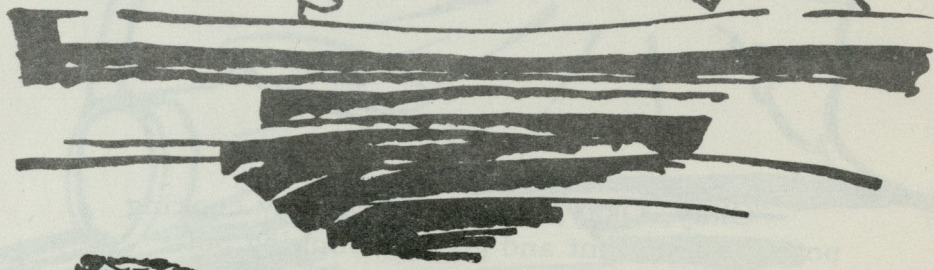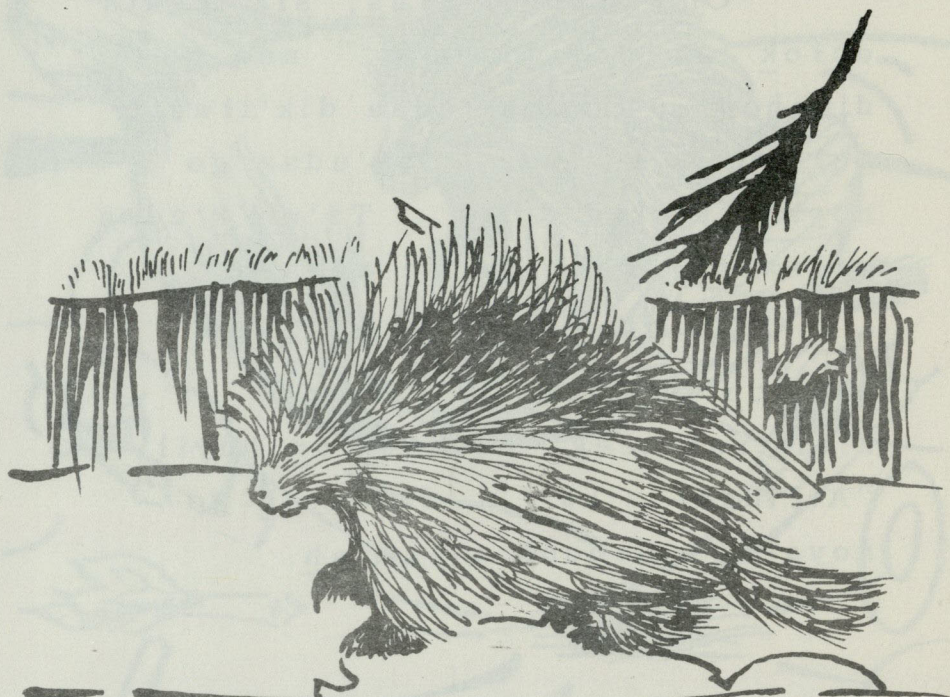
Ts'uh taadaalgots go dikahon.
Ts'uh taah kaatł'ogh neeghoneeyo.
Ts'uh go noya-a diyłnee,
"Neenkitł ti too nagheebinee'?"
yiłnee.

"Nideen," nee go dikahon.

"Nilo too nagheebinee'?"
yiłnee.

"Nideen," nee.
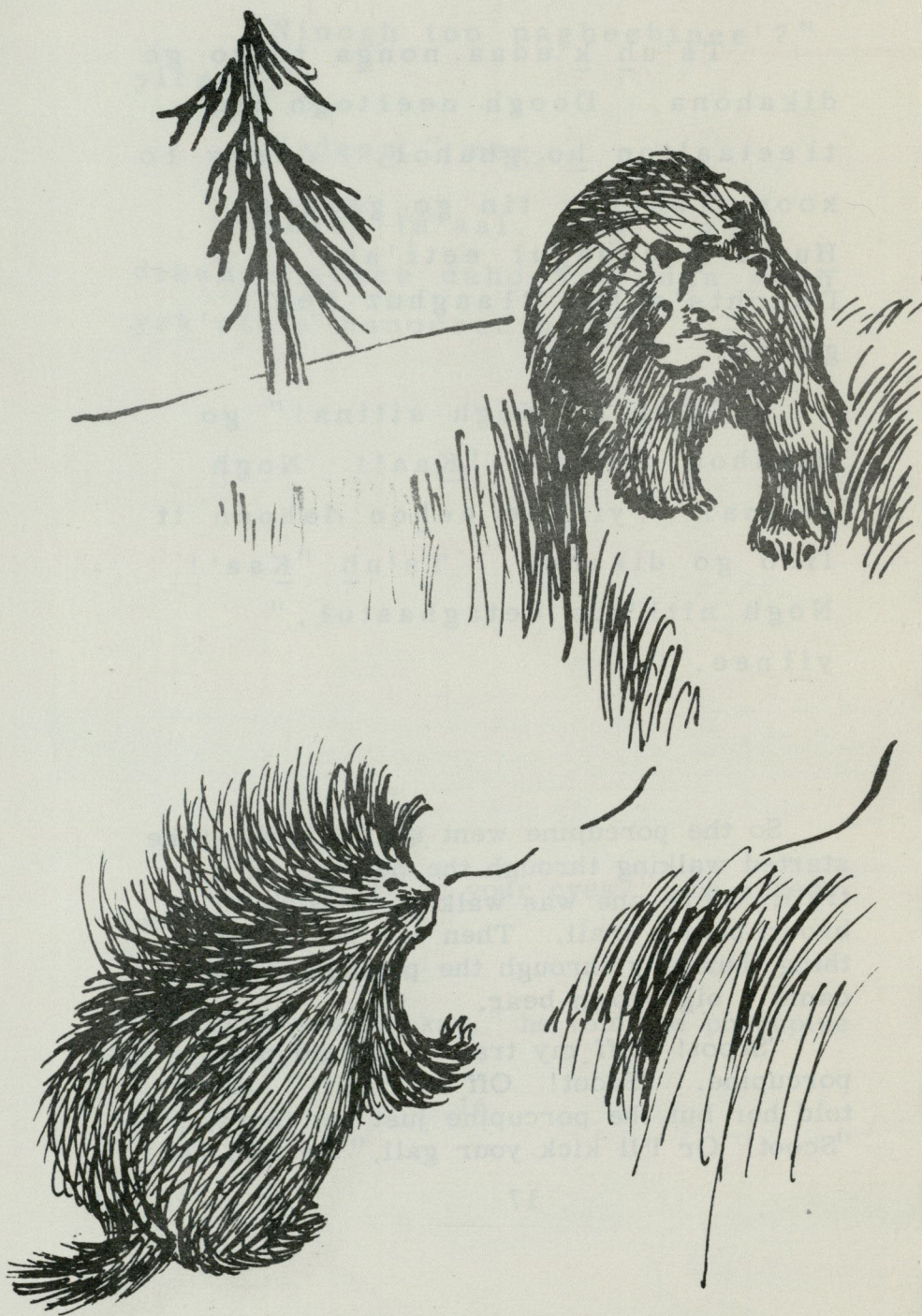
"Nidzeey too nagheebinee'?"
yiłnee.

The porcupine sank to the bottom. She walked along the bottom of the river. So the beaver asked her, "Did water go in your nose?"

"No," said the porcupine.

Then he asked, "Did water go in your mouth?"

"No," she said.

"Did water go in your ears?" he asked her.

"Dzo! Dzo! Sitł'its
hoołdla-aa," nee go dikahon.

"Kaa'! Nogh nikol-on
eetaghastuł," yiłnee. Dahoon
yeetaaltuł, huyił yakaa dlaghuł
go dikahon. "Abaa! Sakaa'!"
daadiyoh dahoon k'ak'o
taadlaghaał go tłaaghuza.

"Dzo! Dzo! Bakaanlees,
bakaanlees," yiłnee go dikahon
eehoo Dahoon neeneelit go
tłaaghuza.

"Ha! Ha! I don't have a gall," said
the porcupine.

"Scoot! Or I'll kick your liver," he told
her. So he started to kick the porcupine.
And the porcupine just hit the bear's foot
with her tail. "Ouch! My foot!" said the
bear and he started jumping around.

"Ha! Ha! Wet it, wet it," said the
porcupine. And so the bear died.

19

Ts'uh go dikahon neełtogh
tin notidoy dahoon k'udaa yagaa
k'idaatłtseen. "Doogh soogh tin
neełtogh seedoots, seedoots.
Doogh soogh tin neełtogh
seedoots, seedoots."

K'udaa at'aghał huydoh
taaldlit yeenslin da huy ghon'
naaltłgus.

The porcupine made a song while she
was walking back and forth through the por-
tage. "Here I go dropping my droppings
on my brother's trail; here I go dropping
my droppings on my brother's trail."

I thought the winter just started and here
I've chewed off part of the winter.

20