Dzax Dina Xudhoy
Spruce-Pitch Man Story

by Hannah Maillelle
Dzax Dina Xudhoy
Spruce-Pitch Man Story

A traditional story
told in Holikachuk Athabaskan
by Hannah Maillelle

Transcribed by Chad Thompson
Translated by Hannah Maillelle, Alta Jerue, and Chad Thompson
Illustrated by Cindy Davis

Iditarod Area School District
McGrath, Alaska
1987
Deka Dina Xugpak
Spine-Pitch Man Story

A Nukluk story
translated by Herman Metlizek
by Herman Metlizek

Iditarod Area School District
McGrath, Alaska  99627

© 1987 Iditarod Area School District

First printing, 1987       225 copies

Prepared for publication by
Alaska Native Language Center
Box 111
University of Alaska
Fairbanks, Alaska  99775-0120

The University of Alaska is an EO/AA employer and educational institution
Nitonh ye tthuxdi xidadliith'e ts'ine.
Nitegl gits'ooxili'anb tanei yil axa gits'ooxili'anb.
Yaxi xidadliith'e ts'i dina yil xulitth'egi ts'in'.
Tamon xitsux xido' xidadliith'e:
They say that a mother and daughter were living alone.
They were helping each other work with a fishnet.
They lived there and never saw any other people.
They lived on the edge of the big beach.
They say that a mother and daughter were living alone. They were helping each other work with a fishnet. They lived there and never saw any other people. They lived on the edge of the big beach.
Dina edin ina' ts'ixixineg.
Ixildi' miyed xit'anh.
Ixildi' xuloogg tix naxeyidzax.

They did not even know people.
Now they had a canoe.
And they would put pitch on it every spring.
Nanggu miq'alnig oqo tthek'onixut'us.
Ixiłdi' naxeyiłgheyh ts'i.
Xidits'ey naxidzax.

They would go back into the woods for the pitch.
Then they would melt it.
They would put the pitch on their canoe.
Xutl'on tix xiį́dį xiye tameł tanaxiłkith.
Yootthin dixi't'anh.
Ixiį́dį' koo xuloogg ninixudidhit.

After a while they would put the fishnet in the water.
They would go fishing.
It was springtime again.
"Data' sideyan' nanggu," yiggi niq'ałonh donh iłne.
"Data' sideyan' nanggu, dzax oqo q'adhisdoy ts'in' got," yilne.
"Nigot yitanadhdeo ts'in' tamel ts'iixildi ghanentlniyh," yilne.
Iixildi' q'eyh too tth'ok ghuteł ts'in' nanggu tthek'itadhiyo.

"I should go back into the woods alone," that girl said to her mother.
"I should go back alone for pitch," she told her.
"You stay here and work on the fishnet," she told her.
Then she took a birchbark basket and started going back into the woods.
Nanggit didlang tsux tux q'a'edoyh.
Dzax dił'anh ts'i.
Ixiłdi', "Nitoo nigo dadz iy dinats'ey tlagg.
Ants'a xełedz dint'a," ne ts'i, yinedhin ts'i.

She walked back there among the big spruce trees.
She gathered spruce pitch.
"Well, this is enough for our old canoe.
It looks like it's pretty good," she thought.
Xíłdi, “Ts'anataghísimoł,” yinedhinhs
ts'i go natathiyō xiyił.
“Siq'a dent'a he'?” mezne.
Xiyił ts'adalighith.

Then she thought, “I’ll go back out now,”
and she started walking back out.
“Do you like me?” somebody said.
She became frightened.
“Koo dima nigo didne?” yinedhinh.
“Dina ło koo xoolanh,” yinedhinh.
Ixiłdi' niłq'adz xoonatl'-anh.
Ene' dina qul.

“Who could be saying that?” she thought.
“I didn’t know that there was anybody else around,” she thought.
Then she looked all around, both ways.
But there was nobody.
Ni'oogh ts'itł tix xuyil xinandadliyoy yił tix xune'l'anh.
Ey dina qul.
Ixiildi koon natathiyo xuyil.
“Siq'a dent'a he'?" mezne.

She looked among the willows and standing trees.
Nobody was there.
Then she started to go back home again.
“Do you like me?” somebody said.
Xiyił koo yit nineyo ts'in'.
Nadigg didlang ts'ima tix xuneľ'anh, nadigg yit tix xuneľ'anh.
Nadigg xoozohnh koo didlang tsux q'idz niłts'adalggiz di
dats'idhido, kel.
Kel dadhido.

She went there again and stopped.
She looked up among the spruce branches; up there among them she was
looking.
Up there in the fork of the big spruce tree, there was someone sitting, a boy.
A boy was sitting up there.
“Ninh ḥo ey didene,” yiłne.
“Siq'a dent'a he’?” yiłne.
Yiggi niq'ałonh, “Ey,” yiłne.
“Niq'at,” yiłne.

“Is that you who said that?” she asked him.
“Do you like me?” he asked her.
That girl told him, “Yes.”
“I want you,” she told him.
Ixiłdi' yits'i nana'ediyo ts'i ts'ixiłdi yiyił ts'ana'ediyo.
Yiyił ts'ana'ediyo ts'ixiłdi yiyił xidana'ediyo.

He came down to her and went back out of the woods with her.
He went back out of the woods with her and went into the house with her.
Yiggi monh, “Dima edinh,” yił yidenel ts'in'.
Ixíldi' nanats'in neneyo.
Xigh k'ots'in neneyo ts'ixíldi' yixi xithdho'.

Her mother never even said, “Who is that?”
Then he went across the room from them.
He went over on the other side and they started sitting there.
Dzan tux nayigg xinxdie'onh xu dhido.

In the daytime he sat down there in a hole that he dug.
Ixildi' dzanh tix th'iththoy ts'i xalts'in' ninooxoodidhik
xiyil diggi na'edoyh.
Ni'oogh q'a'edoyh.

He would never go out in the daytime; only when evening came would he get up.
He would walk around outside.
During the day the mother and daughter put that spruce pitch she got on their canoe.
She would melt the pitch and they would put pitch on that whole canoe.
Then he got up.
He got up and went outside again.
“Gałtim nito o koo dixił'anh,” xiłne.
Ixit'di' ey koo dixitatl'-an'.
Ixit'di' gałtim lonh hiy getiy dixighel'an'.
Xutl'onh, “Nitto nigo dadz dixił'anh,” xiłne ts'in'.

“Go get some inner bark,” he told them.
Then they began to gather it.
They gathered quite a lot of inner bark.
After that, “Do it this way,” he told them.
Niłts'oniňiyilk'ił.
Yitиль'oghonh “Nitoo nigo dadz xiq'a nixhtl'ootl," xíłne ts'in'.
Xiyenatl'l'ootl. Gixiniłtl'ootl.

They tore it in strands.
Afterwards he told them, “Braid it like this.”
They started braiding it. They were both braiding.
Ligimith hiytsux xinatl'tl'ootl.
"Nigo nenl'anh," xeyił ne ts'ixiłdi.
Xa'ilts' in' tix xuyan' xiłdi ts'i yinił'anh thena'edooyh.
Dzanh tix xiłdi nayigg miłniltinh, eydi dzanh.

They braided a big, round ball of it.
"Come and see this," they told him then.
He only went out to look at it in the evening.
During the day he would stay inside and sleep the whole day.
“Natth'e iy tth'egínaultl'ootl,” xíłne ixiłdi'.
Xeyiníítl'ootl.
Getiy nitsix ts'in' didiyoxq.
Ts'ixiłdi, “Gil ixišdl' doodoo iy,” xíłne.

“That’s not enough, braid more,” he told them.
They continued braiding.
It became very big.
Then he said, “No more now.”
Nitoo xalts'in', "Dixildi yiggiy nitoo natthet miyed oo'ixlkith iy," xiline.
Ixildi' yiggi niq'alonh de'ilne,
"Nitoo ey tl'ool ghadhedo tooq'amon," yiiline.

In the evening then, "Okay, now take that down and tie it to the canoe," he told them.

Then he said to that girl,
"Now sit by the rope at the edge of the water," he told her.
Ixiid'i' ey yiggi monh digginatathiyo ts'i.
Nadiggi yix xidana'ediyo.

Then her mother went back up the bank.
She went back into the house.
Nane' tadhqan', ey kel xalts'in'.
Nane' tadhqan'.
Yiggi tl'ool miyed eyitlkith hiy ghadhido, ey yiggi niq'ałonh.

The boy began paddling upriver in the evening.
He began paddling upriver.
The girl sat by that ball of rope that was tied to the canoe.
Eydi tthidi yigh dhido xingo.
"Siq'a naghelał," yilne ts'ixildi.
Yiq'a yinalal nane' ghiqal xingo.

The whole night went by while she sat by it.
"Let the rope go after me," he had told her then.
She let the rope out while he paddled upstream.
Then he had told her,
“When you get to the end, start pulling it back,” he told her.
“Ningilgimith,” yiłne ts'ixiłdi.
Yixudz diyitat'l-an'.
Minixelyigg xits'i xoodhił xuyił yigh nena'edilot.

“Rewind it into a ball,” he had told her then.
She started doing that.
It was close to morning when he came drifting back to her.
Yiggiy tthigitthing getiy lon digheł'an' miq'idh xuyił
niyit'uł.
Nayigg miyed yet xuyił.
Ixiłdi' niggi na'ediqanh.
Xanagitat'oł ts'i niggi na'ediqanh ts'iyixudz.

He got quite a lot of those seals, tied and hanging on the sides of his canoe. Even inside the canoe.
Then he landed the canoe on the shore.
He landed just before the sun rose.
Ey yiggi monh diggi na'ithdonh, ey yiggi niq'ałonh.
Eydi dzan xiłdi xiyighin tthe'iłk'ił.
Xułedz nixiyilayah ts'i xinanayigg milniltinh.

The mother got up, and that girl did too.
All day long they skinned them.
They put them away well while he slept in the house.
Ixiłdi' xiłts'in' koo ninaxoodidhít.
Xiyił koo tthena'ediyo.
Ixiłdi' tthena'ediyo ts'ixiłdi q'adon xiq'a xildi.

Then it became evening again.
He went outside again.
Then he went outside and did what he had done the day before.
“Nane' natighisiqal,” ne.
Ey yiggi niq'aloni xildi tooq'amon nena'ediyo.
Tooq'amon nena'ediyo ts'ixildi yitadhdo'.

“I'm going to paddle upriver,” he said.
The girl went back down to the edge of the water.
She went down to the edge of the water and started sitting there.
Mił axa dint'a.
Q'adon koo eydi dzan mił'el'tel ts'i.
Eydi dzan xuyił mił'el'tel ts'in' mił axa didiyq.
Mił axa ditadhne'.

She was sleepy.
She had not slept the day before.
She was sleepy because she had not slept all day.
She started to get very sleepy.
Ixiłdi' xiday go tl'ool ottun'.
Ey yiggi kel nane' natathiqanh.
Didata soo' ey yiggi monh yits'i tthena'ithdoy.
Monh yix xidana'ediyo ts'i adeg nadhtanh ts'i mïniltinh nadig.

She was supposed to be holding the rope.
The boy went back upriver.
Her mother should have gone out to her.
Her mother went back up and into the house and went to sleep.
Xingo tooq'amon dhido ts'ixilidi mił enadlidaq, ey yiggi niq'ałonh.
"Xiday go tl'ooł yił nateneyh," mezne. Mił nadlidaq.

While the girl was sitting at the edge of the water, she fell asleep. "Pull the rope back," he had told her. She fell asleep.
The sun came up. The sun came way up, and then that girl woke up suddenly.
She woke up suddenly and started pulling the rope, but it was light.
It was very light.
Yiyił ghuniyhtl xuyił nanedz miyed miyet dina qul.
Miyet dina qul niggi noyinetonh di.

As she was pulling the rope, the canoe came toward her and nobody was inside it.
Nobody was in it when it came to the shore.
Miq'alniq nathit yit dhi'onh.
Ixixildi tadhtsax.

It was a pile of pitch gum in the front.
Then she began to cry.
Toomon dhido ts'i tadhtsax.
Miq'alnig ene'ithilot, ey yiggi kel.

She sat at the edge of the water and cried.
The boy had turned back into a pile of pitch gum.
It was a pile of pitch guns in the days before air conditioning.

In those days, we would send kid into the attic to dig out a gallon of paint thinner.

Then she began to cry. She didn't know what was wrong with her. She just knew she was cold.

I didn't say anything. I just passed over the pile of pitch guns and didn't say a word.