

Story Page - Kiskîtamásowin (Wisdom) by Jonas Larivière

Value (Title of Story):	Kiskîtamásowin (Wisdom)
Elder's Name:	Jonas Larivière
First Nation Affiliation:	Canoe Lake First Nation
Language:	Nêhiyawêwin (Cree)
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1. "I am Jonas Larivière. I have not always been from Apâsihk (Canoe Narrows). My parents always moved from place to place. That was the way of life back then. Their main place of travel and movement was northeast of Canoe Narrows. As a young man in 1918, one of the places I travelled to was located north of Wêyakwin, called Pêyâsiw Acih (Thunderbird Hill), also known as Molonosa. This journey to Pêyâsiw Acih is a long story, however, I will tell you the short version.
2. My parents, at the time I am talking about, travelled constantly moving from place to place all summer and winter. At times they owned a house here at Cree Narrows and would leave to live in an âpahkwasinêwikamik (tent) for up to two years.
3. During their lifelong journey, Ohkow Sâkahikan (Pickerel Lake) now called Doré Lake, was one place my parents buried five of my relatives; four sisters and one young man. Their bodies lie buried over there. In all, we were fourteen brothers and sisters. Eight lay buried here at Canoe Narrows. Of all my relatives I am the only one living.
4. My parents brought me into this world at Kinêpik Sâkahikan (Snake Lake) which is now called Pinehouse Lake. They had wintered there. The next fall my parents paddled to Canoe Lake for the first Treaty payment of this area; in 1906. I was born shortly after this trip and they made our home here the following year.
5. Once we moved to Canoe Lake we never returned to live at Pinehouse Lake. Instead, we stayed at Pahkisikêw Askîy (bombing range) for two winters. The name of this area was also called Nêhiyaw Apâsihk (Cree Narrows). Buffalo Narrows was called Mostos Apâsihk (Buffalo Narrows) or Cîpwêyânêw Apâsihk (Dene Narrows).
6. My father's name was Morand and my mother's was Rosalyn. Askîy-ohci-iyiniwak (people from the earth) was what we were referred at the time. All of my relatives on my father's side were âpihtâwikosisânak (halfbreeds). As for my brothers and sisters, when my father married a Cree woman, he adopted the Cree way of life and that is how the family became Cree. Today, when you hear the Larivière name it is usually heard within the Métis community, unlike our family.
7. Rabbitskin, from the Big River area and my father were brothers. The Rabbitskin family are my close relatives. Our mother was a descendant of the Derocher family.

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Apparently there was a man named Asinîs who was quite a lady's man. He had many women. Two of which were my father's mother and in Cree tradition her little mother. Through old man Derocher's escapades we became related to them.

8. I did not attend school because I loved the way of life my parents had taught me; a life dependent on trapping, hunting, fishing, gathering and living in harmony with nature. Always living with what nature provided did not prevent us from going where we pleased and living the lifestyle of the true nomadic people my family was used to. Life was quite easy. For example, during some mid-winters my family and I would live in a tent. It was fine. No one complained. No matter how cold the weather was, when we would go to play outdoors we would just put extra layers of clothes on to keep warm. These clothes were white in colour and were made from blankets issued by the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). The coats made from these HBC blankets were very large.
9. At Derocher Lake my parents built a house made from logs (referred to as a mohcihkowanîhikêwikamik or trapper's cabin). We remained there most of the time; at least until I was much older. Ohpahkopêwinihk (wading in water place) is the proper name for Beauval if you remember the old Cree. It was another place we frequented. As I and my brothers and sisters became older we each lived there for lengthy periods. La Plonge Lake was referred to as Ohpahkopêwin Sâkahikan (wading in water lake).
10. It was in 1918 when our family left Canoe Narrows for our last trip to Pinehouse Lake around the time of Ohpahôwipîsim (migrating moon). I was twelve years of age at the time. From Canoe Narrows towards Beauval, my parents and I would paddle towards Onihkap portage which was three miles in length. We paddled steadily down the Dorè River camping here and there. We then came to the narrows opening into Dorè Lake. From Dorè Lake we paddled towards Sôsiwâpisk Sâkahikan (Smoothstone Lake). The place I am talking about and where the Cree paddled their canoes were referred to as Môniaw Sâkahikanihk (Whiteman's lakes). After crossing the lake another portage about three miles long would be waiting for us. This portage would then take us to Mahikan Sâkahikan (Wolf Lake).
11. We would travel slowly, but steadily. Our journey was like a big circle. There were times when we would leave during the night. I am not sure how long this last trip was in days. It included the days when we would set up camp. It was a long journey. There were four of us in all. I travelled with my father in a birch bark canoe. My sister paddled with our mother. The lakes were teeming with ducks. With my first twenty-two rifle I shot at them and after each successful shot we'd pull up to shore, roast and eat the ducks.
12. When we arrived at Wolf Lake, Rabbitskin, my father's blood relative and

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brother, and all his family were very happy to see us. Other families from Canoe Narrows would also come to Wolf Lake to also visit with relatives from that area; while others came and turned back after awhile.

13. Nothing was difficult about living in the bush. Rabbits and other meat from wild animals were our main diet. Bread or bannock was rare. Once in a long while we would eat bannock cooked outside in an oven made from clay and rocks. Mmmm!! It was delicious. Various delicacies such as rabbit on a stick would be roasted in this oven also, the stick revolving to make sure it was cooked evenly. We skewered the rabbit onto a stick and hung it upside down. All these methods of cooking we learned from living outdoors. In the fall, dried moose meat hung from racks to prepare for the winter.
14. Fish was plentiful at Derocher Lake. I would go with my sister to check the nets. Net fishing was good. The fish were big and healthy. There was a time though, when the fish died out at Derocher Lake. It was sudden. Wâwâskêsiw and Chitek Lake were other areas that my father trapped and hunted. Thunder Hill was a turning place where we would arrive, stay awhile and begin our journey homeward.
15. I have never been lost in the wilderness, day time or night time. No matter how dark or how far away I was away from our camp I could find my way home. To recall how I found my way in the darkness is now a faded memory. I once set out late at night to arrive at my destination to meet the sun coming up the next morning.
16. Dogs for sleds were around ever since I can remember. Many owners gave their dogs English names. Others would give a dog a name by watching how it acted. Good sled dogs could take you home as you slept on the sled. There were times when I would get very tired and let my dog team take me home; and indeed they would get me there. All I would have to say was 'mush'. The first horses came to Canoe Lake in 1950. Up until then, it was dogs who ruled the northern trails.
17. I have had two loving partners in my life. Their last names was Pîwâpisk (Iron). My first wife was a young woman. When she passed away her sister came to help me with my children. Eventually I married her.
18. Today young people do not listen nor do they speak using their Cree language. Their main language of conversation is English. They really have adopted the white man's way of relating. Youth are at a great loss when it comes to practicing and living their Cree culture. I encourage a life based on a belief in a Creator to be followed by young people.
19. One day something might happen on this planet so we must gather whatever we

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need in order to survive. This is often said by many people that have spoken of future changes. The earth was flooded by water drowning all the people. That is the same situation that we are in now. People of that time did not bother to listen to wise people. That is what is happening today. However, those that were spiritual, that practiced a good way of life, and who were aware, were not punished. Only the ones that did not listen all perished.

20. To be in tune with one's self is important today. To value your life. To be kind and not be pressured towards negative actions. Using your mind wisely is the way of thinking that is needed today. Young people must become a praying person; to be able to ask for help when they are in need. Gathering food and other things is not as important as being a prayerful being.

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1. Jonas Lariviere niya, namôya kakikê ota no hayan wapasihk. Tapitawê nikih-pa-pampicinân. Êkosi piko kayas êki-isi-pimacihohk, kikwask mâna ota wasakam Wapasihk. 1918 ohci ê-oskinêkiyan niki-itohtan Wêyakin, Pêyêsiwacihk (Thunderhill). Molonosa êkwa isiyihkatêw anohc. Êyako oma pimacihowin Pêyêsiwacihk êsi, kinwês acimowin, mâka apîsîs Ka-cimostatin.
 2. Ninikihikwak oma ka-cimoyan Kih-pa-pam-piciwak Kakikê papamih Kapê-nîpin mâna Kapê-pipon. Askaw waskahikanihk kih-wikiwak, ota wapasihk. Êkosi kawa mâna sipwê-piciwak, pakwanikamikohk ê-nitaw wikicik nantaw, askaw niso askiy.
 3. Pêyakwaw ê-pim-picicik okaw-S âkahikanihk, Dore Lake ê-siyihkatêw êkwa anohc, êkota ninikihikwak Kih-nahiniwak niyanan owahkomâkanowawa. Nêwo iskwêwak êkwa pêyak oskinêkiw. Êkota êsa mâna êki nahinihcik. Kahkiyaw niyanân nêwosap niki-itahtasinan, napêwak mâna iskwêwak. Ayênanêw ota nahinawak wapasihk. Niya êkwa piko ê-pêyakoyan.
 4. Kinêpiko-Sâkahikanihk nikih-nihtawokin êyako êkwa Pinehouse Lake kitamihk. Êkota ê-mêkwa piponiscik Ninikihikwak. Êh-takwakik êkwa êsa Wapasihk Kîsi-pimiskacik, ê-tipahamatohk oskac êkospi 1906. Mwêcasis oma kakih nihtawikiyan. Êkosi êkwa ota kakih ati-wikicik.
 5. Pahkaci êki ispiciyahk Wapasihk êkosi namôya nitôh-wâyinonan, Pinehouse Lake isi. Têyakwac Pahkisikiw-askihk (Bombing Range) niki ayanan niso pipon, Nêhiyaw wapasihk mâna mâna kih-isihkatêw. Buffalo Narrows wiya mostos Wapasihk Kih-isihkatêw apoh mâna cipwêyan Wapasihk. (Dene Narrows.)
 6. Nohtâwîy Morand kih-itaw êkwa nikâwîy Rosalyn. Askicyiniwak nikih-itikawinan

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mâna êkospi. Kahkiyaw niwahkomâkanak nohtâwîy isi ohci, kih-apihtaw-kosisaniwak. Niyanân wiya nicisanak, kawikimat nohtawiy nêhiyaw iskwêwa, kih nêhiyaw pimacihow. Êkosi kaki isi-nêhiyâwêy âhk. Anohc kâpêhtaman wihowin oma Lariviere, osam piko apihtaw kosanihtakwan, namôya taskoc ota niyanân.

7. Waposwâyân (Rabbitskin) mistahi Sîpihk ohci êkwa nohtâwîy kih-wicisânihtowak. Cîki niwahkomawak, Rabbitskin. Nikâwînan wiya Derocher ohci. Pêyak êsa mâna awa napêw asinîs êki-wihkiskwêwêt. Tanitahto iskwêwa êki-wiciwat, pêyak awa nohtâwîy okawiya êkwa pêyak okawisa. Êkosi kisêyinêw Derocher ohci êkwa koh-wâkomâyahkik.
8. Namôya noh-kiskinohamakosin mâka mitoni niki miywêhtên tânisi kaki-isi-pimatisîyahk ninikihikwak. Êya-ohpahikêyahk, ê-mah-macîyahk, ê-pah-pakitahwayahk, êkwa mîna ê-mah-monahaskihkwêyahk, ê-mostacihoyahk askihk. Mîna namôya nôh-nâkanan tê-tohtêyahk itê kawi-itohtêyahk. Soskwac êpa-pamacihoyahk, êkosi piko êki-isi nakayâskamahk. Nikî wîhci pimacihonân, taskoc oma ka-pihta pipohk askaw mikih-wikinan pakwayanikamikohk namôya awiyak nantaw ohci itwew. Kiyam êyikohk ka-tahkayak ka-mêtawêyahk, soskwac nikih âyahkwêta postaywinîsânân. Êhki-sowahoyahk Aywinsa mâna, akohpa êki-ohcosiycikatêki, Wapiskawa anihi akohpa êkwa ê-masinastêki. Hudson Bay (H.B.C.) ohci miskotakaya mitoni mâna êki-mah-misaki.
9. Ninikihikwak kih-osihtawak waskahikanis, Mistikwa ohci êkota Derocher Lake. Êkota nikîh-ayiyanan osam piko, iskohk ê-ati-oskinêkiyan. Beauval, opahkopêwinihk kih-itamwak mâna, êkota mîna niki-ahayanân. Ê-oskayiwêyahk nicisânak êkota niki-wahwêkinan. Kâh-kinwêsis Laplonge Lake mîna pêyakwan êkosi ki-isiyihkatêw mâna opahkopêw Sâkahikanihk.
10. 1918 êkospi kaki nakatamahk wapasihk, êskwayac Pinehouse Lake ê-itohtêyahk, ohpahowi-pîsim mêkwac ê-akimiht. Nisosap ê-itahto piponêyan. Wapasihk ohci isi Beauval ê-isi pimiskayahk ninikihikwak. Onihkap portage ati isi nantaw nisto tipahaskân. Dore River nipimcimânan, ê-pim-kah-kapisiyahk êkota ohci Dore Lake nisakiwê-cimânan. Dore Lake ohci êkwa ni-pim-cimânan Soskiwapisk sâkahikanihk, (Smooth Stone Lake) isi. Kâyimotâmân oma, nêhiyawak mâna êkota êki-isi-pimiskacik. Môniaw Sâkahikanihk. (White Man's Lake) kihitamwak. Êkota ohci Nitâsocimânan Sâkahikan, asamina êkwa êkota ohci nikaskawahtanan nisto tipahaskan, êkosi Mahikan Sâkahikan Nî-totihtinan.
11. Pêyahtik ni-pimacihonan nisihkac. Taskoc pêyakwan ê-mosci-misi-waskahtêyahk. Mihcitwaw posko-tipisk niki-sipwêhtanan. Namôya niki-cinahon taniyikihk ê-nocihtayahk êkospi kinwês wiya, êkwa ê-nêwiyahk ê-pim kah-kapêsiyahk asici.

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Nohtâwîy niya niwicêwaw Waskwây-osihk, êkwa nisîmis mîna nikâwîy nisowak kotakihk osihk. Mitoni sîsîpak ê-ayacik. Nipim-pah-paskiswawak, oski-paskisikanîs êki-ayayan, êkosi mîna êkwa êpim-kapayahk ê-nawaciyahk, ê-mowayakik sisipak.

12. Wolf Lake, ka-takohtêyahk, Rabbitskin, nohtâwîy owahkomâkana êkwa wicisana, mîna kahkiyaw kotakak mîna kih-miywêhtanwak ka-wapimkoyakik. Kotakak mîna mîna wapasihk ohci kipê-kah-kihokêwak. Owahkomâkanowawa êpi-kihokawacik êkwa atiht ê-mosci-pê-itohtêcil êkosi kawi êsi-kiwêwak.
13. Namôya kîkwây ohci-ayiman sakahk kôh-tacihock. Waposwak, mîna kotaka, ênto-wiyas niki ohta-panihonan. Pahkwêsikan namôya mwasi noh-môwanân. Askaw piko nikih-môwanân, wayawêtimihk ê-nawaciyahk mistikohk ohci. M-m-m wihkicisiw! Wapos mîna êkosi nikih-isi-nawacanan mistikohk êkah-kwêskiniht. Kahkiyaw ohi êki-kiskinohamasoyahk wayawêtimihk kohtacihoyahk. Ka-takwakik wiya êkwa wiyas nikih-pasinan akwa wanihk.
14. Kinôsêwak mîna kih-mihcitowak Derocher Lake, Nikih-wicêwaw mîna nimis ê-natâhyapêyahk. Kih-mêywasin kapakitahwahk, Misikitowak kinôsêwak êkwa ê-miyosicik. Mâka pêyakwaw mîna kih-miscinêwak êkota Derocher Lake sisikoc. Wawaskêsiw mîna Chitek Lake, Kotaka ohi Sâkahikana, nohtâwîy kih-na-nocihcikêw êkwa ê-mah-macît. Thunderhill mîna êki-ohci wâyinoyahk. Kâ-takohtêyahk êkota êki-ayiyayahk êkosi mîna kawi êkota ohci êkî-kiwêyahk.
15. Namôya wihkac noh-wânisinên sakahk ê-kîsikak apoh ê-tipiskak, kiyâm ka-tipiskak apoh wahyaw ka-yayân ita ka-kapêsiyahk, kawi nikih takohtan. Anohc êkwa namôya nikah kiskisin tânisi mîna êki-isi-kaskihtayân. Pêyakawaw niki-sipwêhtan ê-tipiskak nitakohtan itê-kawi-itohtêyan ê-wapahk mwêci êpi sâkastêk.
16. Atimwak mîna kih-itakowak totapahicik ê-kiskisiyân. Mihcêt ka-otêmicik ki-mônîyâw wihiwak otêmôwawa. Atiht kih-wihiwak tânisi kisi-waskawêyit oma. Ka-miyosicik atimwak kîkî-kiwêhtahikwak kiy âm ê-nipâyin otapanaskohk. Mihcitwâw mitoni oma kanistosêyan nikih kiwêhtahikwak, “mush,” piko ê-itwêyan, êkosi! 1950, nistam misatimwak kaki-ayacik wapasihk. Êkota iskohk osam piko nayistaw atimwak êki-apacisicik kiwêtinohk.
17. Niso miki-pê-owiciwâkanin iskwêwak pêwapisk ê-isi-kâsocik, nistam niwikimâkan kih-oskayowo êkosi kakih-nakataskêt, osimisa niki-pê-wawicihik awasisa êpi-kah-kanawêyimat. Pêyisk niki-ati wikimaw.
18. Anohc ka-kisikak oskâyak namôya nitohtamwak, namôya mîna apoh nêhiyawêwak.

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Tâpwê piko akayasimowak, Mitoni ê-otinamasocik akayasimowin. Wanisinwak ita kispâyiniyik ta-pacihtacik onehiyaw pimatisiwinowaw. Nisî-kiskên pimatisiwin mîna ita-mamawi-ohtawimaw ê-tâpwê wokîmiht êyako ta-pimicisahakik oskayak..

19. Apoh êtikwê kitahtawê nantaw kikwây têspayin ota askîhk, êkwa piko ta-mamawinamahk tahto kîkwây ê-nitawêyihтамahk toh-pimacihoyahk. Mihcitwaw nipêhtên oma êyako ê-mamiskotamihk. Kih-tê-ayak mâna ka-pah-pikiskwêcik, tânisi otê nikan kawi-ispayik. Askiy êsa mâna kayas êki-iskipêk, êkwa aysinêwak êki-miscinistapawêcik. Êkosi oma asamina pêyakwan ê-itapiyahk anohc. Mâka oki kaki-mawimoscikêcik ka-mîwasiniyik pimatisiwin ka-pimitisahakik namôya ohci pâsastêhokowisiwak. Aniki piko êka kah-nitohtakik kî-wanihowak êsa.
20. Ta-miyo-mamitonêyihтак awiyak anohc ka-kisikak, êyako kihcî-yihтакwan. Ta-kistêyihтакman ki-pimatisiwin. Ta-miyohtwâyin, êka kîkwây mîna ta-wîpihikohk. Tapacitayin ki-mamitonêyicikan kwayask isi, êyako kan-tawêyihтак mâkawêyin. Oskayak êkwa piko tamaci-mawimoscikêcik, ta-nitomacik, mantowa-ta-wicihikowisicik, kâ-kwêtamacik micowin, mîna kotaka kîkwâyaya, namôya êkwayikohk kihcî-yihтакwanwa, namôya taskoc tâ-ka-kîsimot awiyak.