

## **Nkatenami**

by Elizabeth Bogal-Allbritten

Alapae ntukihela. Yukwe enta kishkwik nkatenami. Nkata nulinakwsi. Ntixamwi. Ntaton shiki tepet'hun. Wesken. Yu she sesape tepet'hun, nemalhelamen utenetetink. Shek ehenta wixenink mata awen ahpu! Ahpon ok putel hateyo. Ntite, "Tani hech ne shukelahpon? Tani hech nkahe ok nux?" Yukwe enta kishkwik nkatenami. Mweshatameneyo hech? Nuhuma neyo. Ehenta lematahpultink lematahpi. Kelixike. Luwe, "Kulamalsi hech?" Nteluwe, "Osomi. Tani hech nkahe?" Luwe, "Hakihakanink hakihe. Xuniti xu kaxksemena nel hempa. Mai kewichema a!" Nteluwe, "Tani hech nux?" Nuhuma ntelekw, "Pemeske mehemalamuntikaonink. Kench mikemosu. Mai kewichema a!" Kahti nemelimu. Et takuu uwatuweneyo, yukwe enta kishkwik nkatenami. Ntalemska. Mpemaska eshi mekeke. Yu tali neyook naxa ahtuwak ok kweti xinkchulens. Maxksu na chulens. Shelande. Nta sipunk. Nkentka. Ntashewil. Matanake nemachi. Ehenta wixenink neyook nux, nkahe, ok nuhuma. Keku nink mikentamuwak? Nehkuk! Asuwak! Nkahe kelenemen ne shukelahpon. Luweyok, "Enta kishkwik katenami!" "Ktapihemo! Ktaholuhemo," ntelaok. "Kemeshatameneyo, yukwe enta kishkwik nkatenami." Nkwetantamen ne shukelahpon. Somi winkan! Et nkahe kohatun. Nemitsihena. Nulelintamuhena.

## **My Birthday**

Early this morning I woke up. Today is my birthday. I want to look nice. I bathe. I put on a pretty wrap-around skirt. It is new. This here spotted skirt, I bought it in the little town. But in the kitchen, no one is there! Bread and butter are there. I think, where is the cake? Where are my mother and father? Today is my birthday. Did they remember it? I see my grandmother. She is sitting in the living room. She is sewing. She says, "How are you?" I say, "Fine. Where is my mother?" She says, "She is planting in the garden. Soon she will dry the clothes. You should go help her!" I say, "Where is my father?" Grandma tells me, "He is walking to the store. He must work. You should go help them!" I almost cry. I guess they do not know it, today is my birthday. I leave/go away. I walk through the meadow. Here in this place, I see three deer and a big bird. The bird is red. It is a hot day. I go to the river. I dance while I swim. After a while I go home. In the kitchen, I see my father, my mother, and my grandmother. What in the world are they doing? They see me! They are singing! My mother is carrying the cake. They say, "Today is your birthday!" "You all are here! I love you all," I tell them. "You all remembered it, today is my birthday." I taste it, the cake. It tastes very good! I guess my mother hid it. We eat. We are glad.