

How Moccasins Were Made

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Transcribed and translated into Lenape by Zack Wiener

There was one a very beautiful young woman who lived in the Lenapehoking. Her beauty was known far and wide. A young man was really smitten with her. So, one time he went and played his flute for her. As he played his flute, she thought this man was really handsome, and liked the song he played. She said to him, "every day I have to come out of my wikipup to grind corn. When I come out, my feet get very dirty. Is there any way you can protect my feet so they don't get dirty?" He talked to his friends, and they went out and hunted a deer, and they skinned the deer, and they tanned the hide, and laid out the hide in front of the wikipup and didn't get her feet dirty. She was very pleased. She liked the guy more. It wasn't long until she said, "every day I have to walk to the creek and bring water back, and my feet get dirty. Can you help me with that?" The men wanted to hunt more deer and run a trail of hides from the girl's wikipup to the creek. The elders saw the men shooting the deer and said, "what are you doing?" The man says, "Grandfather, I love this girl, and I want to do whatever makes her happy." The elders said, "We use the deer for food. If you are going to hunt all the deer, we'll starve during the winter. Let me think about this." The next day, the elder called the man and said, "Listen, come here, I want you to get one skin, and we'll tan it, we'll make it soft." He got the skin. The elder took his knife and cut the skin and cut the skin in the shape of a foot. He cut another skin and made the first moccasin. He said, "give this to the girl." He put the moccasin on the girl's foot. Her feet didn't touch the ground, and she was happy. She in turn married the young man, and that's how the first moccasin was made.

Lomewe ahpu welsit skixkwe wiku Lenapehokink.
Long ago she exists beautiful young woman she dwells in the Lenape land.

Wemi awenik uwatuneyo welesu. Skinu kekhitahola.
All people they knew it she is beautiful a young man he loves her very much

Na skinu kwiikàmao na skixkwa ok ahpikwsu.
The man he visits her the woman and he played the flute.

Ok na skixkwe winkatamen ne asuwakan. Na skixkwe telao
and the young woman she likes it the song. The young woman she tells him

skinuwa, "Kwunikishukw kench nkechi ok ntakhoke.
the young man Every day must I go out and I pound corn.

Enta kwetkia, somi nisksita. Kaski hech wichemi?
When I return very I have dirty feet. Can you question you help me?

Na skinu pemetunhalao witisak ok kchulti
The young man he talked to them his friends and they went out

ok hnilawao ahtu ok poxinawoo
and they kill him a deer and they skinned him

ok shenkixtuwak ne ahtuwi xes nikani wewikewamema.

and they lay it down the deer skin in front of her house

Yukwe na skixkwe alewii winkalao na skina.

Now the young woman more she likes him the young man

Matanake luwe, “Kwunikishukw kench nta sipunk.

After a while she said, Every day must I go to the river

Nathepia, ok nisksita. Kaski hech wichemi?”

I fetch water and my feet get dirty. You can question you help me?”

Nek skinuwak luweyok, nulitunen temakenetet sipunk

The young men they say, we make it path to the river

wichi ahtuhwi xesak. Kikay weneyook nek skinuwak.

with deer skins An elder he saw them the young men

Payaxkhawao nek ahtuhok ok luwe, “Keku hech kemikentamuhemo?”

they shoot them the deer and he said what question you all do?”

Na skinu telao, “Mexumsa, ntahola wa skixkwe, ok

The young man he told him Grandfather, I love her this young woman and

nkata welhatenamu.”

I want she is happy

Na kikay luwe, “Kemehwawenanak nek ahutuwak.

The elder said We eat them the deer.

Xuniti knihelao xaheli ahtu ok kshaolamwihenach luwanke.

Soon you kill them great many deer and we will starve next winter.

Kench ntite.”

Must I think

Opanke, na kikay notumao na skina ok luwe,

The next morning the elder he called him the young man and he said

“Kelista, wentaxa. Kala ahtuwi xes. Na skinu tenemen. Na kitay

Listen, come here you fetch him deer skin The man he did it. The elder

chichilukehi alashi sita ok monitu netami ne lenhaksen.

he cut leather strips like feet and he made it first the moccasin.

Luwe, “Mila na skixkwa.” Na skinu hatun

He said, “Give it to her the young girl” The man he placed it

wsitink ne lenhaksen, ok welelintam.

on her foot the moccasin and she was glad

Na skixkwe wicheoo na skina, ok na neni monitu

The young woman she married him the man and that's it he made it

ne netami lenhaksen.

The first moccasin.