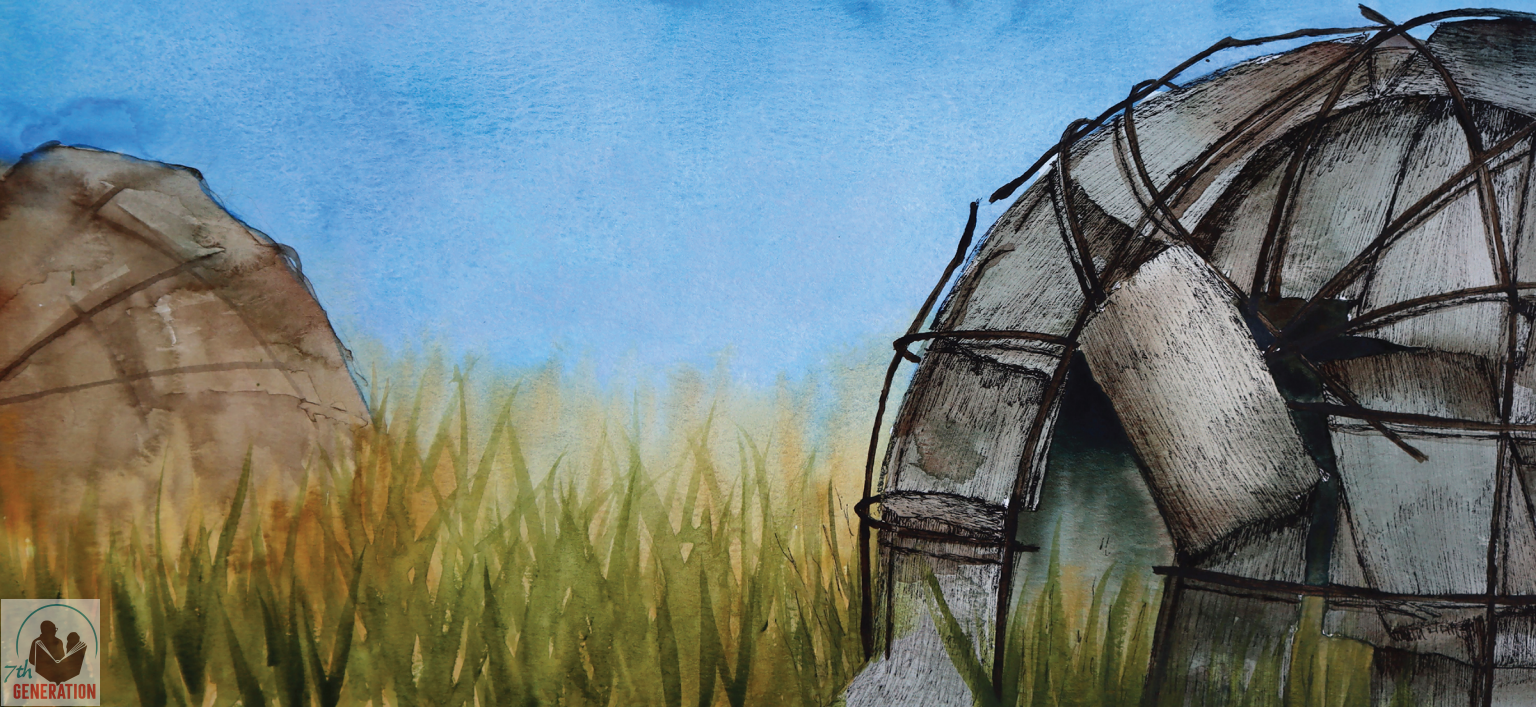



Long ago, when human beings were new to the world,  
the Creator gave them the gift  
of maple syrup.

Back then, all anyone had to do at any time of year was break a twig  
on a sugar maple tree and pure, sweet maple syrup would flow out.  
It was a very special gift indeed.

But when he arrived at their village,  
Gluskonba was surprised  
at what he found there.

He could not find a single human being, all the bark lodges  
were in disrepair, and weeds had grown up all around the village.  
It looked as if no one had been there for a good stretch of time.



A watercolor illustration of a forest scene. The background is a mix of light blue and green washes, suggesting a misty or rainy atmosphere. Several vertical brown lines represent tree trunks. In the foreground, a person with dark hair in a braid, wearing a brown tunic and boots, stands looking up at a tree. The person's right arm is raised, touching a branch. The tree has a few green leaves. The overall style is soft and painterly.

It was thin, watery sap. As soon that liquid started dripping into the mouths of the people, they realized something was wrong.

As that rain fell on the tops of the trees, the water soaked in, working its way down and into each branch. Now what flowed out of the tree was no longer sweet syrup

“You have abused this special gift given to you by the Creator,”  
Gluskonba replied. “No longer will you be able to get this pure  
maple syrup. You must now go back to your lodges and repair them.

You need to hunt the animals, gather plants, build your canoes  
and snowshoes, and do all the things that you were meant to do.”  
“You are right,” they said. “We will do as you say.”



But seeing how sad their faces were, Gluskonba took pity on them.

Working together, just as Gluskonba had said, the people once again had their maple syrup. With smiles on their faces, they looked into each other's eyes and came to a realization.

He had given them back each other. The reward of community, of people coming together for a common goal, was even sweeter than the sweetest maple syrup.



By making it harder for them to harvest the syrup, Gluskonba had given them an even greater gift.

**T**ranslation from English to Abenaki is complicated and often requires significant changes made to either version in order to make each true to the unique patterns of each language. This is primarily because Abenaki is a holophrastic language in which a single word functions as a phrase or sentence.

Rather than allowing either language to be diminished due to their disparities in foundational structure, we have included two separate tellings of our story. One is drawn from English and the other is drawn from Abenaki. The differences in communication styles between the two languages are more clearly illustrated using this method. It also helps avoid literal translations that are not only often hard to read but also hard to understand.

The English-based version offers an easy-to-read telling. The Abenaki-based version is especially valuable for anyone who is actively involved in language reclamation efforts, since it authentically represents the Abenaki language. Both versions are faithful to the heart and the message of the story.



N8wad / k'milgonna / senómoziak / p8gwizogalos8b8n.  
Kwanigadek / kadowesmida / sogalos8b8n / w'kiziba  
poskwena / beska8dwenis / ta / sogalos8b8n / bagebatasten.

Long ago / we were given / maple trees /and pure maple syrup.  
All year round, / if someone was thirsty, / syrup / they could  
break off / a twig / and / syrup / dripped out.



Salakiwi / Klozk8ba / w'kiston / odokaw8t / aln8baa.  
Paiôt / wd'odanaw8k / sigwagan.

Once / Klozk8ba / decided / he should visit them / the human beings.  
When he came / to their village / it was empty.



Anigenop / w'wíwnwigw8menow8l.  
"T8ni / pm8zowinnoak?" / Klozk8ba / wd'elaldamop.

It had grown up with trees and vegetation / between their homes.  
"Where are / the people?" / Klozk8ba / he wondered.



Niga / w'nodamen / msinasat8gwat / sen8moziikok.  
Wd'ellossan / kpiwik / ni / w'meskawōna / pm8sowinnoa.

Then / he heard it / a sighing sound / from in the maples.  
He goes / to the woods / and / he finds them / the humans.



Mziwik / lesinobanik / nagwakwa / kbasizekowal.  
kizi w'boskwenowōl / beska8dwenisal / ni  
Sogalos8b8n / w'chigitowōnnō / bagebatasten / wd'al8mdonakwōk.

All of them / they were lying / under the trees / their eyes closed.  
they had broken off / twigs / and  
syrup / they let / it drip / into their mouths.