



## 7 Sisters Legend

We are told in legend that kāyas, long ago, that there were tepakohp nimisak, seven sisters, who did everything together and one thing they loved to do most of all was to dance. They would dance anytime they did anything like picking berries or hauling wood. They were always dancing and just loved to dance.

Their mom and dad knew this but their mom warned them. She told them, "My daughters, dance all day long if you want. Have fun and dance all day but at night, you absolutely never dance at night."

Their daughters loved to dance so much, they asked her, "Why? Why can't we dance at night?"

Their mother told them, "Well, if you dance at night, we're told that Nohkom Tipikawipisim, Grandmother Moon, will take you away."

The daughters listened to their mother for a while but they just loved to dance. One evening, their mother and father went to bed and these tepakohp nimisak decided, "You know what? I don't believe that. Let's go dance outside in the dark and in the moonlight."

So, they went out and started dancing and right away the one sister noticed that their feet weren't touching the ground and they were starting to go higher and higher. The one sister stopped dancing and she was scared. She could see her other six sisters dancing. They wouldn't stop dancing. She told them, "Stop dancing! Nohkom Tipikawipisim is taking you away!" They wouldn't listen.

She saw them go higher and higher and higher. Finally, she couldn't see them anymore. She was so heartbroken because she was left alone there and she looked and looked but couldn't see her sisters; she couldn't hear them; they were gone.

The next morning, their mother went to look for her daughters but there was only one daughter left and she asked her, "What happened?"

She said, "My sisters! They wouldn't stop dancing! We went and danced last night and they started lifting off the ground and they went into the air and then they were gone!"

Their mother started crying and she said, "I told you guys! Don't dance after dark because Nohkom Tipikawipisim will take you away! You guys wouldn't listen!"



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The one sister was heartbroken. She cried and she cried.

Days and days passed and the mother and father were happy to at least have their one daughter even though they lost the other six. They noticed the one daughter who was left was getting sadder and sadder. She stopped dancing, wouldn't eat, and hardly slept because she missed her sisters.

Finally, the mother and father had had enough. They told their daughter, "You know what? We want you, after dark tonight, when Nohkom Tipikawipisim is out to go outside and dance so you can be with your sisters"

Even though the sister was heartbroken, she longed to see her sisters again and dance with them. She waited until the sun went down and then went out and started to dance while Nohkom Tipikawipisim was shining down.

Sure enough, she started lifting off the ground and as she danced she went higher and higher, higher, higher until her mom and dad couldn't see her anymore. But they were happy because they knew at least the sisters would be together and she wouldn't be alone anymore.

The mother and father said, "We just wish we knew they were okay."

Just as they said that, they noticed in the sky, one after another, acahkwak, stars, started lighting up in the sky. Tepako hp acahkwak in a row; seven stars in a row could be seen brightly together. They could see them dancing. They smiled at each other and said, "Now we know that our seven daughters are together, dancing in the sky forever."

So, even to this day, as Nēhiyawak we are told that tepako hp nimisak are still dancing in the sky together and we can look up on a starry night and see them lined up, dancing.

So, that's the story of tepako hp nimisak.

Ēkōsi Maka