



## Legend of Wolverine

As Nēhiyawak, Cree People, we are told kāyas, long ago, there was hardly anything for all the animals to eat. Everyone was starving and they were having a hard time finding food.

So they all got together and they said, “You know what? This year we need to all work together. There’s namakikway, nothing, food. Namakikway micivin, no food, out there. We need to help each other survive in the winter. All the animals, the wolves, the mōswa, moose; all of these animals decided to work together.

Mōswa came forward and said, “I’ll sacrifice one of my children so we can all share it together. The animals harvested this mōswa that was gifted to them but they were told they had to share it: all the coyotes, the wolves, all the little creatures, but they were told they had to work together to share. Wolverine was part of that group.

So, together they harvested this moose and they decided they needed to put it up in a cache, in a tree. Back then they didn’t have freezers so they needed to keep the meat away from other animals and protect it. They bound four trees together and they put logs way up high in the tree and that’s where they stored the meat. They worked hard together and put mōswa up in that cache and they rationed it through this cold, hard winter.

They’d climb up the cache and grab just enough for everybody to have just enough to survive; not enough to get full on. They did this for a long time.

Finally, Wolverine decided, “I don’t get fed enough. I’m still hungry.” At night when everyone was sleeping, he’d climb up the cache, fill his stomach a bit more, and he’d crawl back down, cover his tracks, and go back to the rest of the animals.

Finally, the animals started noticing. “What’s going on? We’re taking care of this food we have but we seem to be running lower. It’s just not right.”

Meanwhile, Wolverine was getting hungrier and hungrier – getting greedy because he was feeding himself more than the other animals. He climbed up the cache and sat with this mōswa. He decided he was going to sit there. “I’m going to stay on this mōswa and I’m gonna fill myself up.” He started filling up his stomach, eating and eating and eating until he couldn’t move. He laid there, so happy with his full belly.

Next day, the other animals went to get some food and Wolverine was sitting there in the cache with a fat belly and he heard them coming. They started climbing the tree.



## Legend of Wolverine

"Wolverine, what are you doing? That's it! We're coming up there and we're gonna take the rest of that mōswa out of there. We're gonna protect it from you!"

They were trying to climb the tree but Wolverine was a mean fellow. He started throwing sticks at them and would swat his claws at them, and growl as they were trying to climb up. They couldn't get to the rest of the food.

For the rest of the winter, for days and days and days, the other animals would try and get at this meat, but Wolverine would sit there and fill his belly, sleep at night all filled up, his stomach fat, laughing at the rest of the animals, starving while he ate up the rest of this mōswa.

The other animals said, "You know what? We're gonna fix this wolverine. We're gonna keep him in that tree and we're not gonna make sure he can't come down."

Wolverine started to get thirsty and he thought, "Oh, I gotta get a drink of water." He tried to get down but the wolves and the foxes and all the other animals would bark at him and claw at him, growl at him, and throw sticks at him. They would chase him back up there. So, Wolverine was stuck up there in this cache, eating the mōswa.

He started eating the bones and his jaws were sore; he was so desperate and hungry. The meat was all gone. He'd eaten everything. There was nothing left to eat.

But the other animals kept guard on the tree and wouldn't let him down. Wolverine was stuck up there, freezing, and really starting to get hungry because he was used to having a full belly and now he was starving. The other animals were fine.

After a few days, he was getting desperate. He tried again to come down the tree but the animals were there and barked at him and clawed at him and wouldn't let him come down from that tree.

Wolverine got so skinny and started to beg the other animals, "Can you please? I learned my lesson. I'm gonna die here. I'm starving to death."

Finally, the wolves, coyotes, foxes, and other animals told Wolverine, "Fine. We're going to let you down from this cache now that you've hopefully learned your lesson from being greedy. Look what happens when you're greedy."

From now on, none of the animals are going to want to be around you. You can be by yourself. If we ever see you, we're going to chase you down and we're gonna do bad things to you if we ever catch you."



## Legend of Wolverine

So, we're told that to this day Wolverine stays all by himself because none of the animals wanted anything to do with him all because of what happened all those years ago. But you know what? Wolverine is still greedy and he still tries to go and steal food from other people. He won't kill it himself; he'll go stealing food. The animals are still after him and if they see a wolverine, wolves, coyotes and other animals will try and chase him down and they won't stop chasing him all because of what Wolverine did all those years ago.

Now you know the story of Wolverine as it was told to me kāyas.

Ēkōsi Maka