



Niyanemse and the Giants

Today I'm going to tell you one of the legends of Niyanemse. I had done a video describing what I know about the Niyanemse character, who we're told through legend, was Trickster's older brother and how Trickster's older brother had made it his vocation to find these man-eating cannibal giants, track them down, and rid the world of them so they wouldn't harm any two-leggeds. So, this is one of those legends about Niyanemse as he was hunting these cannibal giants.

We are told that kāyas, long ago, Niyanemse was still tracking down and finding these man-eating giants and at this time, in Niyanemse's epic, we're told that he had nearly eradicated all the giants. He had driven them further and further north to where there's nothing but snow and cold. He had driven them that far north. He was looking everywhere, trying to find more tracks to track them down and eradicate them so men would be safe.

One day, he came across a single track of a giant and thought, "Okay. I'm not done." He followed the tracks, tracking this giant and Niyanemse, we're told, was a master tracker, just like his younger brother, Trickster.

It didn't take him long to pick up the trail. Slowly, he knew he was getting closer because in the snow and as it was getting colder and colder, the further north he went, he could see more and more tracks of giants. With his mastery of tracking, he could tell it was a pretty big group. He figured there were probably seven or eight giants and they were traveling together. It looked like they must have a camp nearby because there was a heavy trail.

He kept tracking and it was well into the evening, starting to get dark and harder for him to see. He knew he'd have to camp for the night soon. He passed by the little area with a nice tall tree, one of the few trees in the area because the land was so flat with little brush and not a whole lot of trees. But he had passed this one tree and thought, "I'll turn back soon. I'll go camp by that tree." Before he turned back, he saw this faint glow in the distance and he started sneaking up there, quiet as he could.

In the distance, he could see it was a fire and these giants were sleeping around this fire. He had found their camp. He thought, "Finally, I've tracked them down, but there's too many of them. I'm a good hunter and good at getting rid of these giants, but seven or eight of them?"



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There's no way I can take them all on. How am I going to do this? I'm going to have to try and take them on one by one."

He noticed that one of the giants was sitting up, probably keeping guard, but it hadn't noticed him. He thought, "I know what I'm going to do. I'm going to see if I can lure this giant away while he's keeping guard."

Niyanemse snuck further back down the trail and he let out a holler, "Tanisi!" The giant took no notice at first so he hollered a little louder, "Tanisi!" Finally, the giant noticed. "What? Something's making noise over there down the trail." The giant started going down the trail and went a little ways, sniffing around, "I don't smell nothing. I don't see or hear nothing."

Again, Niyanemse snuck a little further back down the trail and called again, "Tanisi."

The giant heard and walked toward the sound.

By now, Niyanemse was thinking, "I have to come up with a plan. How am I going to catch this giant?" But it was too late. The wind had shifted and the giant caught his scent and rather than go back to get his partners, the giant followed the scent. "I smell man. Oh, it's making me so hungry, I'm not going to let the others know. We're starving up here. There's nothing to eat, but I can smell this man.

I'm going to find him on my own and eat him by myself." He followed his nose, following the scent. And Niyanemse knew that he was done for, that the giant had caught his scent. What was he going to do? He remembered the tree that he had passed. So, he quickly went running towards the tree and he climbed up this nice tall tree as high as he could and he was hanging on at the top of this tree, holding his spear.

The giant was following with big strides, following the scent of Niyanemse and got to the tree. He looked up and could see Niyanemse up in the tree. Oh, Niyanemse thought he was finished. But, then he knew that these giants, despite their size, weren't very smart. They weren't very intelligent at all. In fact, they were kind of dumb. Niyanemse came up with a plan. He said, "I know how to get this giant."

The giant was poking at him with his spear. "Hey, hey food, get down here. I'm gonna chop this tree down. We'll get you out of there."

Niyanemse looked down and said, "Hey, hey, hey! Don't chop the tree. It's the only tree here. I give up. You got me!"

"Well, you come down here so I can eat you."

And Niyanemse said, "Well, no, I'm not going to come down there. You come up here and get me."



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The giant tried to hold onto his spear and climb with one arm and Niyanemse wanted to laugh at the sight of how dumb this giant was, trying to climb, putting his spear in his mouth, dropping it, picking it up, and it falling again. The giant was getting frustrated. "I can't do this. I need some help here. I'm gonna go get one of my partners."

Niyanemse didn't want that. So he said, "Hey, hey, giant. I'll help you."

The giant looked up at him, dumb look on his face. "How're you going to help me?"

"Pass your spear up. I'll hold your spear and I promise I won't do anything. I'll just hold it for you while you climb the tree with both hands. You can climb up and when you get high enough, I'll give it back to you and then you can get me."

The giant thought about this. "Okay. That's nice of you. Here." He reached up, handed Niyanemse the spear, and he started climbing the tree. "Oh! This food is good. It's going to help me get him." The giant got about halfway up the tree. Niyanemse smiled because he was holding this huge giant spear and he aimed it for the top of his head. Wham!! Right through his whole body.

The giant fell out of the tree and hit the ground with this big spear sticking right through him. Niyanemse was pleased with this and climbed down the tree. He was thinking about how he was going to get these other giants now. He was going to have to come up with a good plan. With all the commotion and what was going on, Niyanemse hadn't noticed these torches coming down the trail towards him. With all the noise they were making, they had woken the other giants and they caught the scent of him and they were running down the trail.

Niyanemse thought, "That's it. I'm done for." Then he thought, "Well, these giants aren't too smart."

He climbed back up to the very top of the tree where, hopefully, they wouldn't look and he hung on at the very top of the tree, watching to see what would happen. The giants all came running. They saw their partner laying in the snow with what looked like a big skewer through his whole body. His big spear was sticking from one end to the other out his head. And they were just growling mad with tears, "Oh our brother! What are we going to do? What happened to him? How did this happen? Must have been that two-legged we could smell. What are we going to do? There's nothing to eat here. We're getting weak. We're starving!"



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They were crying and mourning their loss and sad. One of the giants was looking at their brother with the big spear through him and something occurred to him and he stopped the others. He said, "Hey! What are you guys crying for?"

"Well, look! He's our partner here and he's gone. He's done for. He's got a spear through him."

"Well, what are you crying for? We're cannibals! Look at all this food we've got. In fact, we don't have to do anything. If we carry him with the spear to our fire, we could put him on top of the fire and roast him like a big chicken."

All of the other giants' faces lit up. "You're right! You know, this is food. You have a good idea."

Niyanemse was up there wanting to burst out laughing at what he was watching. The giants picked up their fallen comrade with two giants carrying the spear and they walked back to their fire.

Meanwhile, they were so caught up and excited about the meal of their brother that Niyanemse easily followed them, sneaking behind from bush to bush, watching them.

As he watched, to his horror and amazement, they started cooking their brother on the fire. And he thought, "I know what I'm going to do. These giants are starving right now and they're gluttons. Once they fill up their bellies, they're going to be so full, they're going to get tired and they're all going to go to sleep. Once they get in their deep sleep from eating so much, I can just walk in there and take them out, one at a time."

He couldn't watch them as they were eating. He had to look away. But just as he thought, they ate until their bellies were ready to explode. In the heat of the fire with full bellies, they all got tired. Soon after, they were all passed out, sleeping, snoring, and at his leisure, Niyanemse walked in and one at a time got rid of every one of the giants.

So, this is the story we're told about Niyanemse and how he got rid of that group of giants. Now you know one of the stories of Niyanemse.

Kinanaskomitinawah kahkiyaw, thanks to you all.