


In
Anishinaabemowin
and English



Aamo-binashee Hummingbird

Written and illustrated by **Jennifer Leason**

Translated into Anishinaabemowin by **Norman Chartrand and Jennifer Leason**

The page features a light blue background with a decorative border of stylized black branches, green leaves, and purple flowers with yellow centers, arranged in a repeating pattern around the central text.

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Hummingbird / Aamo-binashee

Author/Illustrator: Jennifer Leason

Translators: Norman Chartrand and Jennifer Leason

October 15, 2024

In this dual-language picture book in Anishinaabemowin and English, a child is chased by Windigo, who preys on isolation and insecurity. But Kokum calls to the child with a message of hope, and a hummingbird arrives with teachings of love and resilience.

FORMAT

8 × 8"

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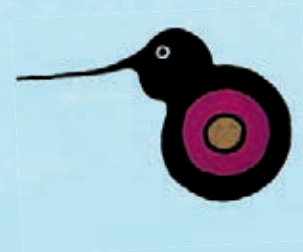
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KEY SELLING POINTS

- When an Indigenous child loses her way and is isolated and full of self-doubt, her grandmother and ancestors send help in the form of a hummingbird messenger, who brings teachings of resilience, love and connection.
- Author Jennifer Leason began writing this story after being visited by a hummingbird at her window, at the time that her mother departed this world for the spirit world. She shares this story as a reminder of our connection to our families and our ancestors, who continue to guide our journeys.
- This beautifully illustrated story expresses hope, healing and reclamation of Indigenous strength and identity in the wake of oppression and trauma.
- This is a dual-language book in Anishinaabemowin and English. There are many dialects of Anishinaabemowin, and this book presents a phonetic spelling of the language as learned by the author and co-translator in Duck Bay, northeastern Manitoba. This dialect is sometimes referred to as Western Ojibwa, Nakawēmowin, Saulteaux or Plains Ojibwa.

PHOTO CREDIT: JODI O PHOTOGRAPHY



ABOUT THE AUTHOR/ILLUSTRATOR

JENNIFER LEASON is an off-reserve member of Minegoziibe Anishinabe (Pine Creek First Nation), Manitoba, and the proud mother of Lucas and Lucy. Dr. Leason is a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous maternal child wellness and an associate professor at the University of Calgary. She is the author and illustrator of *Meennunyakaa / Blueberry Patch*. She lives in Treaty 6 Territory.

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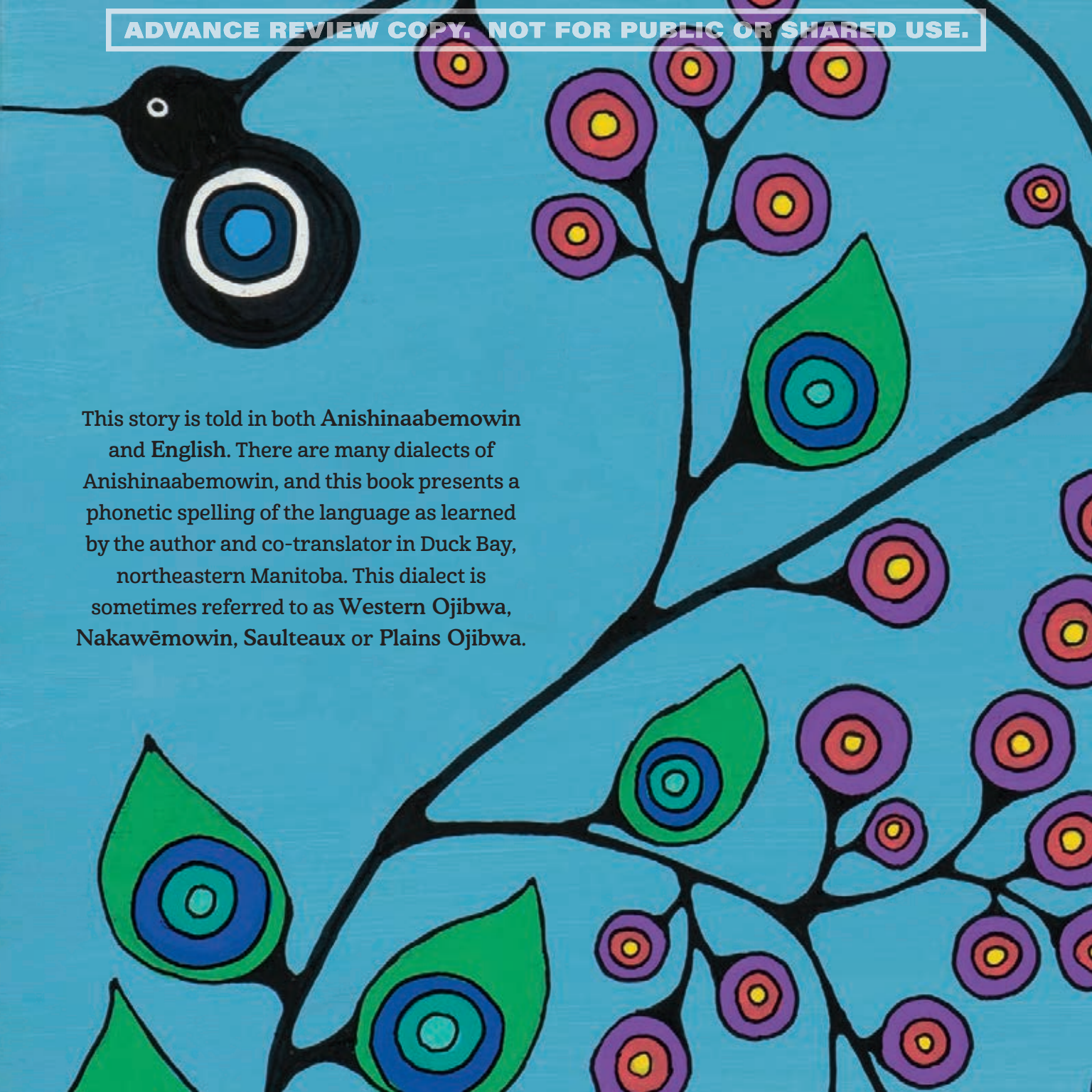
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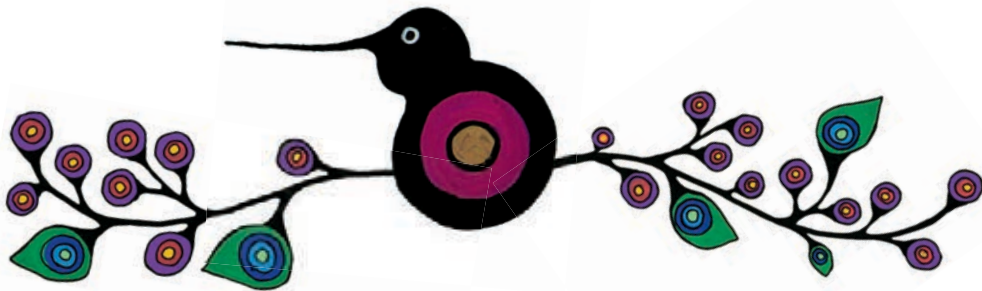
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Aamo-binashee Hummingbird



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ORCA BOOK PUBLISHERS





Mee abii megaw abee-binoogii-yang
kedum-minowiin, megow ka-ke-ta-tisor ke
motecheowag. Ema Meeshomis, Kokum endo-what
yeta Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan.

Keo-taminimiin, kega-ka-bec kessic. Apowata
minowang ema mittogoke, eko-scon-owang
neging-anaming ashogunning. Ke kee-moote-yang
ema Kokum ca-koo-kit-gt, Otum-mimo-wang
ech-quasowiin sheo chimo-gaa-gowiin.

Ema peshue-ca-qetiga-what mano-miin
adamung neepin-wakak-yiigun. Meetma ka kee
otum-min-owang.

When we were children, we would go to my
grandparents' house in Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan.
We would play outside while the adults visited.

My sister and cousins and I played all day, running
through the trees, jumping and splashing in the water
under the bridge and eating from Kokum's garden.

We played along the wheat fields behind the
summerhouse. This was our playground.



Gitche-gon na doo kee-omsi-dium kee-wiin
tabida dumago-ing to on-qee konobimityang.
Kega was ache isa-yang.

Koko kee-windamaqonan tabida Windigo
keno-tes-gut-tay.

Windigo keno-tes-gut-tay.

Windigo ka kitum-ee-gonnay-ed-ttago-ocunon
eema ta-atwiin.

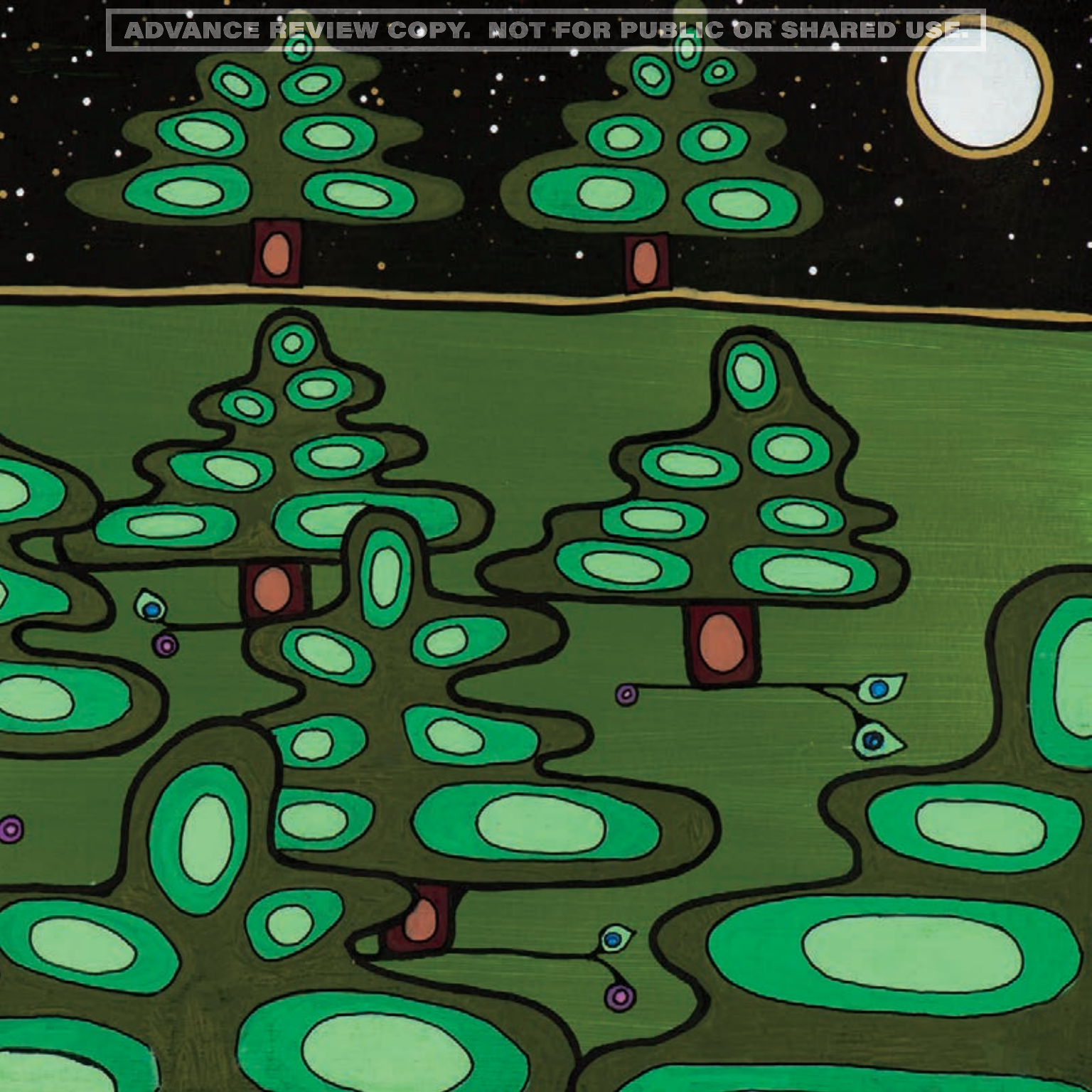
We were told to stay close and watch out for
one another.

Kokum cautioned that if we weren't careful,
Windigo would eat us.

Windigo is always hungry.

Windigo would eat us whole and leave only
our bones behind.





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Kee-kanton abinoogi-wiaan epimito-waan
eema o-kanda-guck eneet-biccut
enac-atawendannun Windigo ebiminoisowiit.

Kabiit-neka-nee-baan-gishimuut keesis shi-go
Windigo ay-gona.

Windigo eco-nog-bimit-ayewa-cun-dung
ka kima kee-goo oma. Andee
co-wonsi-pematisan.

No-kum ka-wiin nega-wasa dis-asee-ima onji
kawa-conoc. Kee can-nemic koo-ko-tash.

I remember running through the pine trees
after dark, with Windigo chasing after me.

The sunset and shadows were Windigo's gaze.

Windigo looked deep into my being, knowing
where I came from before I was born.

It knew me. I was scared.

Windigo awa kakistipicut.

Kakistipicut omin-aan-dan tipicut.

Kaa-nee-ka wasa geesha-see aying-go-ge
ema kawas-koneck shigo tabida pe-sho
ande ema, shigo kii-enwabanuck.

Windigo ekit-oo ne-stick gone-ick shigoo
dai-ach-ing da-bod-tawaa.

Windigo is the darkness.

Darkness cultivates darkness.

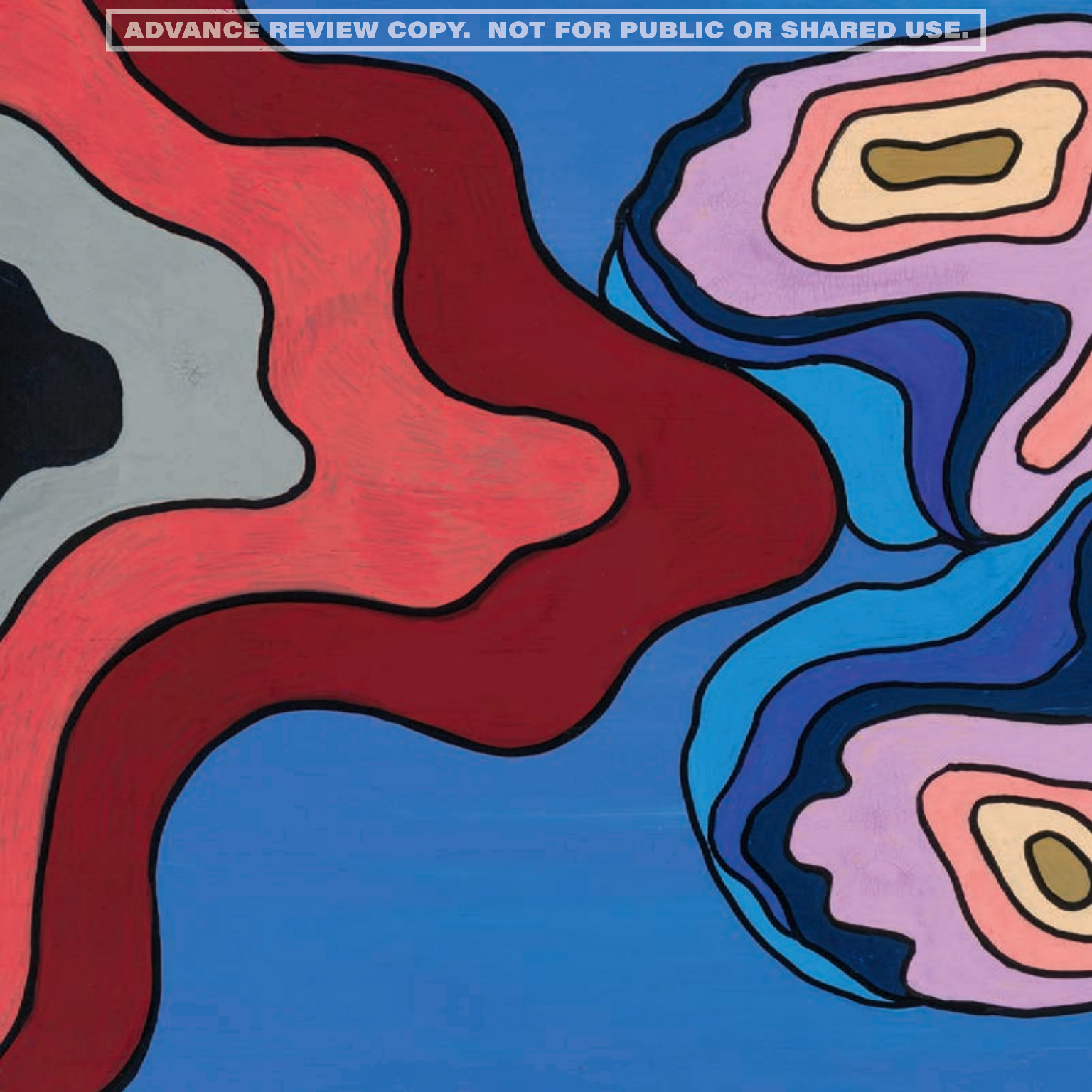
I tried not to stray too far from the light.

But Windigo's lies crept into my heart,
and I began to believe them.





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Shon-gi-see-yun shego majenda-go-se-ee-yan.

Yak ha-kee-kand-mun kessica kawanee-ka.

A no-chee kago-kessica ema attee.

Eeen-ga yay-ka kee-kam-do-mun ka-ween ke
kam-dash-een.

Kina-miin-owiin omii-giin ee-ay-ye
debwe-wan.

Kiina won-ato-miin ey-yay-kanda
wendam-mung.

Onan niin? Onan niin? Onan niin?

Strength turns to weakness.

I forget what I once knew.

Confusion causes me to doubt
everything.

The things that I believed were
true turn to lies.

Lies eat the truth.

I lose hope.

Who am I? Who am I?
Who am I?



Kan-gkeg-go et toot
ta-man onish-shis-noon.

Kawiin ne-ka keg go-ett
toot ta-man shego
koy-yuck.

Kawiin nee-paw kazzee.

Kawiin yaminick
ne-wap-skeesh-izee.

Kawiin ko-yack don
nee-mee-yazzee.

Nam-ma-taap.
Ka-kee-by-an-doom.
To-dumoya-kai
enigo-waan.

Kamiit je-na-mutt-tub
ka-pa kindo shego
ka-do-than-a-go
nan-any-kowan.

Kawiin tabisca
pe-shiish-e-go-zian.

Windigo na-wuutch
anii-midimdo shego
kush-itibick-kuck
omii-gin ka-nii keesis
kanen-nii-but.

Everything about me is
wrong.

Nothing I do is good
enough.

I'm not smart.

I'm not white enough.

I do not pray the right
way.

"Sit down. Don't talk. Do
what you are told."

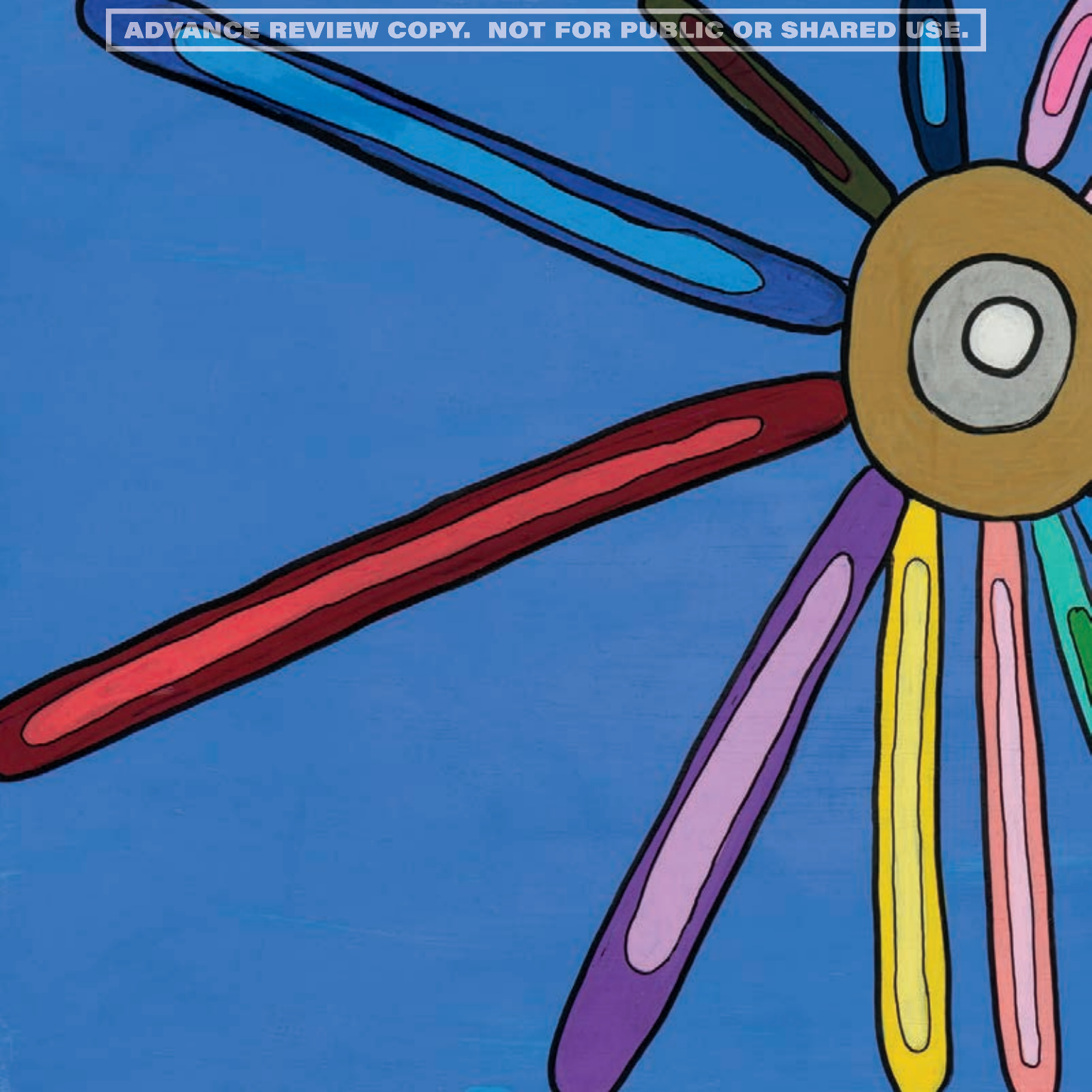
I sit on my hands and keep
quiet.

I am empty.

Windigo grows bigger,
and darkness eats away
the dying light.









Ka-wiin peka ke-pit-cheen.

Papeca-catch undo-tun.

Meminick tago meminick.

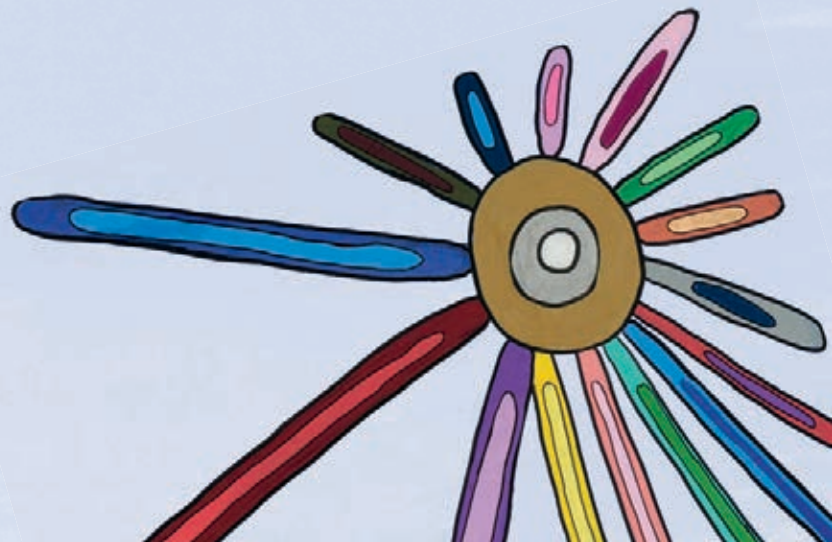
Niin meminick shigo meminick.

“No...wait. STOP!

Slow down. Listen.

Enough is enough.

You are more than enough.”



Waniscan damis asha-chee wan-nish-kay-gun.

Kego-wan it-tochan-ya kan-da wand damun.

Kiin kee kitchee iman-da kosa-peatich na wuttch mee-mick ky im-nan damun.

Na wuttch ke-nee-paw-ka apeach ky-iman danion.

Kiin ka-kim-na keg-go onish-is-sin.

Ka kiin-na-keg-go onish-isin bematizee-ay-yun.
Yaa ke teput-tum-un ya-ka pimus-ayun onna akiin.

Kokum is calling.

“Wake up, my child. Wake up, my children. It’s time to wake up.

Do not lose hope.

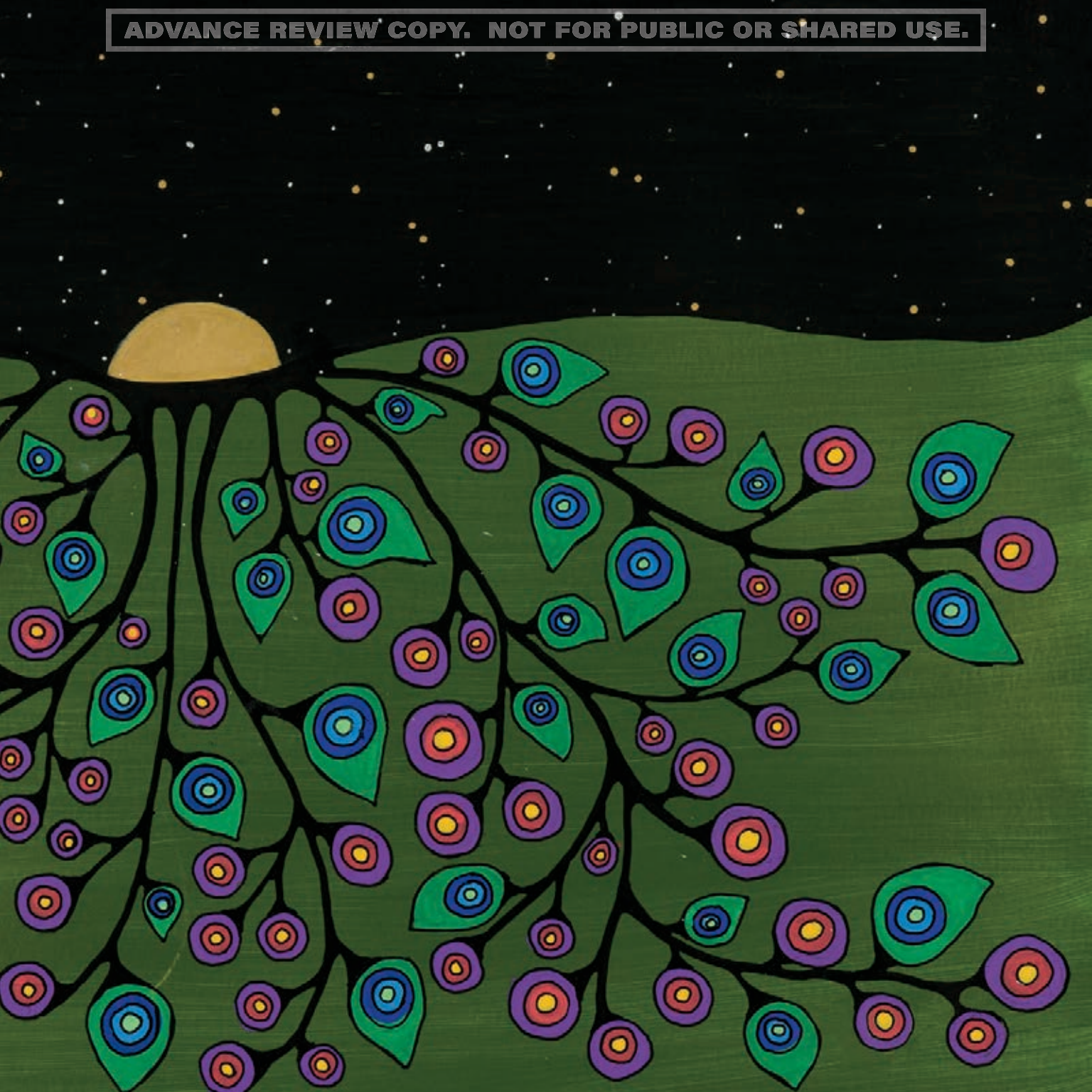
You are more precious than you know.

You are brilliant.

Everything about you is right.

Everything will be good in your life when you walk what you believe is your path here on this earth.”







Peck-shoo kee-kin nob mick-kook.

Kespin wanise-nun ima ka-kishkeetepikuk kam-ma
ka-kay mick-a-mun unda-iyak wnan nishin
un-pimo-say-yun kas-kan-di-gook miitikuck.

Ka kandan ka-kn a-ky kimishomisuck shigo koo-kuck
ke-we-chee pimosumick-kook tabida. Ke-we-chee
wick-gook kee-sag-kee-kook. Chee mittchay guet-chee
ma-ta-ock. Kawiin nii ka-kee pe-chee go-see.

“The ancestors are watching over you. You never
walk alone.

Whenever you are lost in the darkness or trying to find
your way home through the pine trees, remember that
the medicines and helpers are all around you.

The grandfathers and grandmothers love you. They
will help you—all you have to do is ask.”



Wii-chii-shin. Nii-wamishin.

Kawiin kee-kand daseen akow-nan
ett-toot damun.

Wii-chii-shin. Nodan kand-dan kii-ka
apshee-go-wan.

Yes, help me. I'm lost.

I don't know what I'm doing.

Help me. I need to know I'm not alone.







No-goom keekisepp aamo-binashee a-onishee-sitt.

Kee-ponee ne-wass emi-gu-nig ke chee nana dan-dom.

Ash-m-wega nogoom zaag-iba-gaa
eh-kee-pee-wee-chee-wiit.

When I woke this morning, a hummingbird with a bright
fuchsia chest came to my window.

How strange, I thought. It's early in the year. It's only May.

She came to help me.





Aamo-binashee ence ab-bee weendum mow-witt
ka-kina-keggo kee-pee-chee-ma-gut.

Aamo-binashee ence pa-mashee nee-gan-esh-ee
kama-as-ap pmio-pi-say awiin da-ma-go-ing a
kingo-ma-ka-wung chee k-neb-dunm-ming ka-kee
ish-dee biimatizi-wang kawiin me-me-je-ay-yung.

Pishamego chim-matizee-yung.

Hummingbird is a spirit messenger and teacher.

She can fly backward and forward. She teaches us
to learn from the past but not get stuck in old ways.

“Just keep going.”









Aamo-binashee ence ep-pitoot-kee-chee
ka-goo min-an-do-koon shego kazz-sha-ting
imatizee-yung koo-yuck. Pimatizee-win
onish-ee-shin shego chee-saga-git-yung.

Hummingbird teaches us the importance of
love and joy.

She reminds us to cherish the beauty and
gifts within and around us.

“Life is good.”



Aamo-binashee shego ka-ga chee
kee-pum-young kee-ta-che-eman.

A-kin-og-ma-go-wing pee-cheen na-gow
no-goom shego wa-bung. Zag-git-ing tabida.

Ga-gin-a a-way-aa pes-sig-omo kagim-a-way
oma akin-tach-go pechick.

Hummingbird teaches us to reopen our hearts
when hurt has closed them.

Her wings trace an endless figure eight—a symbol
that love is forever.

“Love always. We are one. We are all connected.”







Kespin Windigo mo-shee-yat eg-guno-bimick kama apa-kit-an-na-mut
ema okeck-gun.

Kespin e-pin sho-wick ima kas-kan-dig-ook mitti-kuck.

Kespin ko-wan-ish, kespin en-dom-min a-wan-ish-shin.

Ma-meek-wan-don aamo-binashee shon-gut mas-kee-kee.

Ke-ta-a-wuck mi-suck-um-mick a-wee chee-kock a-sha-gee-kock.

Whenever you sense Windigo's gaze or feel its breath down your neck...

Whenever it is chasing you through the pine trees...

Whenever you feel lost...

Think of the hummingbird medicine and know that you are loved.

You are, and always have been, forever loved.



This book is dedicated to our mother, Patricia (Moosetail-Fagnan; Beauchamp-Chartrand) Leason,
and to all the beautiful women for their matriarchal wisdom. Thank you for your
love and light and for reminding us to embrace all our teachers.

—J.L.

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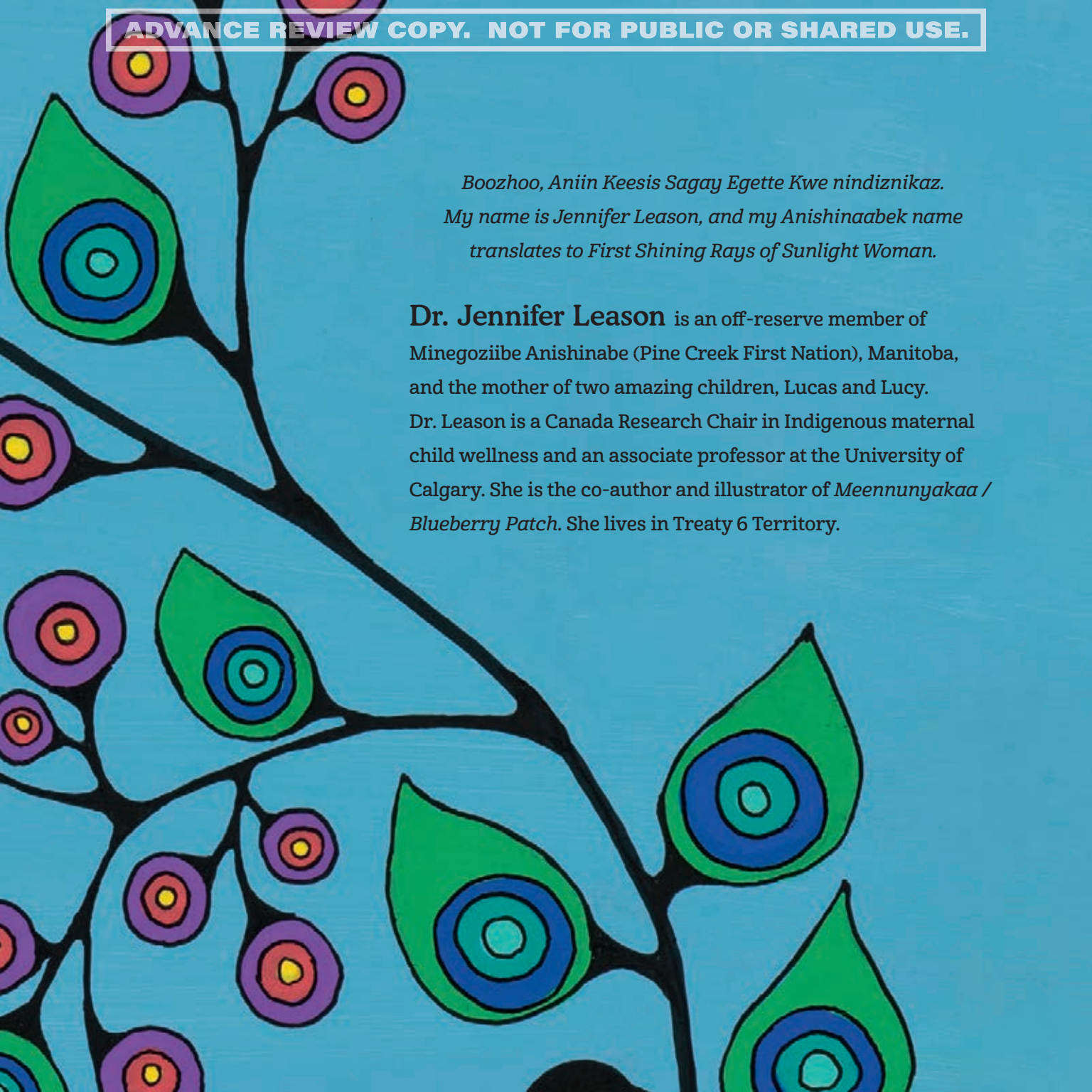
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Reflections from the Author

In May 2013 I was visited by a hummingbird at my window. How strange, I thought. It was much too early in the season, and the feeder was on the other side of the house. She was persistent as I kept looking up from my work. So I researched hummingbirds on the internet, wrote some words on sticky notes and pasted them to my window as a reminder of the hummingbird and her medicine. Three weeks later when I went outside, below the feeder was a dead hummingbird. She took my breath away, and when I picked her up, I saw how fragile she and life were. An hour later my sister phoned to tell me that our mother had died from a sudden heart attack. I was devastated that I never got to say goodbye. As I packed to go home for her funeral, I glanced at my window and saw the sticky notes and the words I had written. Words that I believe were my mother's last message to me as she departed this world for the spirit world. Words of wisdom and medicine and a reminder of our connection to our family and ancestors who guide our journeys.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean", with a small dot at the end.



*Boozhoo, Aniin Keesis Sagay Egette Kwe nindiznikaz.
My name is Jennifer Leason, and my Anishinaabek name
translates to First Shining Rays of Sunlight Woman.*

Dr. Jennifer Leason is an off-reserve member of Minegoziibe Anishinabe (Pine Creek First Nation), Manitoba, and the mother of two amazing children, Lucas and Lucy. Dr. Leason is a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous maternal child wellness and an associate professor at the University of Calgary. She is the co-author and illustrator of *Meennunyakaa / Blueberry Patch*. She lives in Treaty 6 Territory.

You never walk alone.

*Kokum warned us to watch out for one another.
If we weren't careful, Windigo would eat us. But one night,
alone in the darkness, I felt its breath on my neck. Windigo's
lies crept into my heart, and I began to believe them.*

In this deeply emotional and beautifully illustrated story, the ancestors send a hummingbird to a child lost in Windigo's darkness. Its teachings of resilience, love and connection bring the child home and remind us that the ancestors are always watching and can help us find our way if we only ask. This story is told in both Anishinaabemowin and English.

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