

THINK ABOUT THE FUTURE

A Penobscot Tale

Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

Setting: A large forest with berry bushes and a small lake

Characters:

Narrator

Little Chuck

Grandmother

Narrator: Little Chuck lived with his Grandmother Woodchuck in a lovely forest where wild animals roamed among the tall trees and lush grasses. He was very ambitious as he grew and listened very carefully to his Grandmother's instructions about hunting, and fishing. One sunny morning, Little Chuck ran to his Grandmother with much excitement!

Chuck Grandmother, Grandmother, would you please make me a bow and arrow? I want to hunt DEER. I'm bored eating fish and rabbit all the time.

Grandmother: Certainly, Little Chuck. I will have it ready by tomorrow morning.

Narrator: The next morning, Little Chuck could hardly wait for the sun to rise. Quickly, he rose from his bed, washed, dressed, ate his breakfast, then ran with outstretched arms to his Grandmother.

Chuck: Grandmother, Grandmother, are my bow and arrows ready?

Grandmother: Of course, Little Chuck.

Narrator: Little Chuck ran into the forest and not very long after, he returned with a DEER! Grandmother was smiling broadly.

Grandmother: What a fine grandson I have! I wonder what he will catch next?

Narrator: Grandmother didn't have long to wait because the very next day Little Chuck returned from his hunt dragging a BEAR!

Grandmother: My, oh, my! Little Chuck you amaze me! What's next?

Chuck: Well, Grandmother, I want to learn how to make a canoe so I can hunt ducks.

Narrator: And so Grandmother showed Little Chuck how to make a canoe. Quickly, he climbed on board and swiftly paddled around the lake. As night fell, Little Chuck came back with many, many ducks. The weather began to change so that the fierce winds made it impossible to paddle his canoe. All of the game in the forest were hiding in shelters. So Chuck was very sad and began to sing a wishing song.

Chuck: I wish I had a game bag made of hair
I wish I had a game bag made of hair
I wish I had a game bag made of hair
The strongest game bag ever!

Narrator: So, Grandmother pulled out her own woodchuck hairs and wove them into the strongest game bag ever. Little Chuck took the game bag and ran into the woods shouting.

Chuck: The end of the world is coming! Quick! Climb into my game bag for safety.

Narrator: After the animals ran into his game bag, Little Chuck tied it tight and carried it home to Grandmother.

Chuck: Grandmother, Grandmother, look what I have! I have ALL the animals trapped in my game bag.

Grandmother: Little Chuck, what have you done? You must not take ALL the animals because our descendants will have nothing to eat. You must think about the future. Grandson, you must let these animals go.

Chuck: All right, Grandmother. Go home, animals. There is no more danger.

Narrator: Early one morning, Little Chuck noticed how hard his Grandmother was working to catch fish. He decided to help her by building a trap across the river mouth with an opening for the fish to get in. Then he went to the ocean and shouted.

Chuck: Come quick, all fishes! The ocean is going to dry up, so swim into my river for safety.

Narrator: Once all of the fish were in the trap, Little Chuck closed it tight and carried it home.

Chuck: Grandmother, Grandmother! I have so many fish here in my trap that you will never have to catch fish again!

Grandmother: Oh! Little Chuck, once again, you have not thought about the future. What will our descendants eat if all of the fish are here? Soon the fish will die because we can not eat all of them. You must let them go.

Chuck: You are right, Grandmother. I did not think about the future. I shall open the trap and let the fish go.

Narrator: That day, Little Chuck gained some wisdom. He still had much to learn but he had the good fortune to have his wise Grandmother Woodchuck to teach him.