



XWÉMALHKWU HERO STORIES

A GRAPHIC
NOVEL

BY
VALEN ONSTINE,
ALINA PETE,
& GORD HILL

EDITOR
TCHADAS LEO

X W É M A L H K W U H E R O S T O R I E S

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River Bathing © Alina Pete

Hunting & Food Preservation © Gord Hill

Original Cover Art © Alina Pete

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NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

As a member of the Xwémalhkwu First Nation, it gives me great pride to be a part of this historic and modern take on how our nation is investing in the preservation and resilience of our culture, language and heritage. It is the duty of descendants of elders to preserve, retain and elevate the stories that they have gifted us.

Thanks to the artists, partners and funders of this project, this novel will be a resource to educate and inspire youth in the community to learn some of the historic and heartfelt stories from their direct relatives.

These stories are documented through Elders' recordings and a subsequent podcast, as a source of knowledge to the community at large.

When I was approached by Education without Borders Canada to help develop this novel you are about to read, I was nervous to accept this role in fear of not knowing how to manage such an important piece of work for my community. Thanks to the reassurance from all those involved in this project, the significance of this novel to preserve our history far succeeds any self doubt that I experienced.

As you go through each artist's rendition of these sacred Elder stories, I hope you feel the tone of our knowledgeable Elders through each individual character along with their dialogue.

ʔimot

Tchadas Leo

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Meet the Team

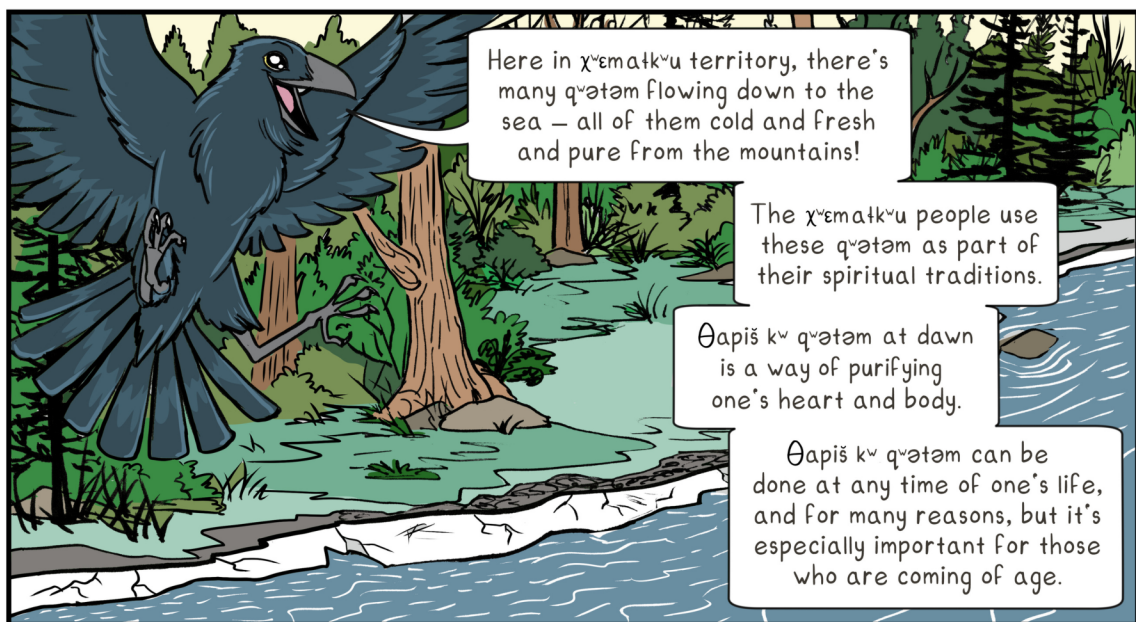
Emote

All proceeds directly support Homalco First Nation's language and cultural programs.

RIVER BATHING



WHERE THE
STORY FLOWS

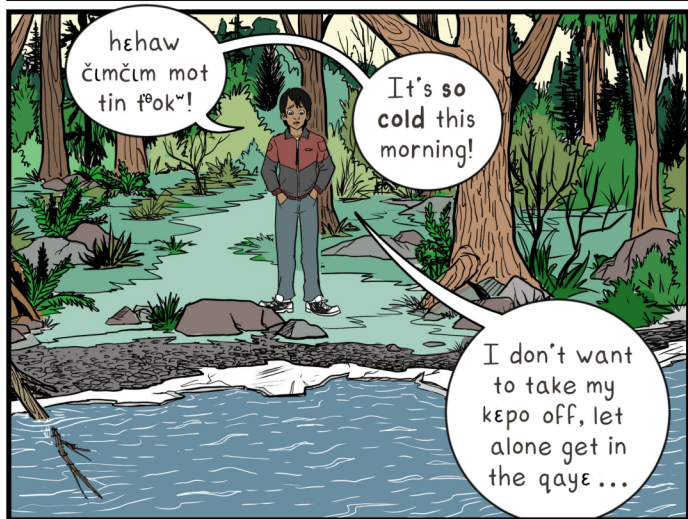


Here in x̣'emaṭ'v territory, there's many q̣'ətəm flowing down to the sea – all of them cold and fresh and pure from the mountains!

The x̣'emaṭ'v people use these q̣'ətəm as part of their spiritual traditions.

Θαπισ̣ κ̣' q̣'ətəm at dawn is a way of purifying one's heart and body.

Θαπισ̣ κ̣' q̣'ətəm can be done at any time of one's life, and for many reasons, but it's especially important for those who are coming of age.



hehaw
čimčim mot
tin ṭ'ok~!

It's so
cold this
morning!

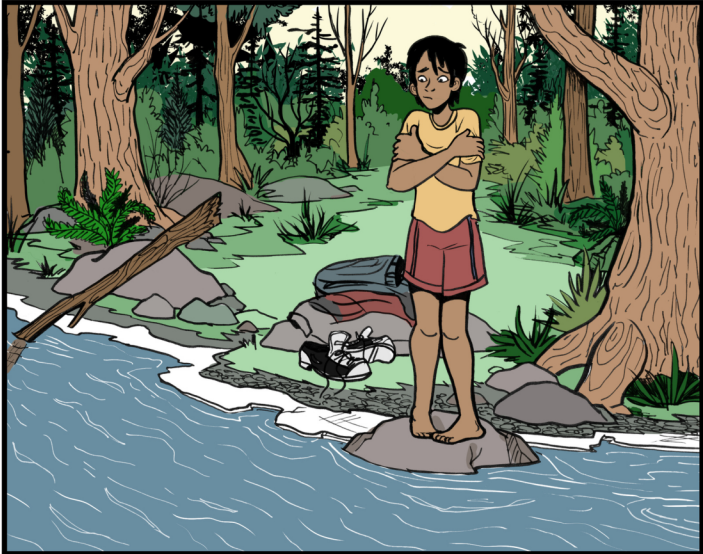
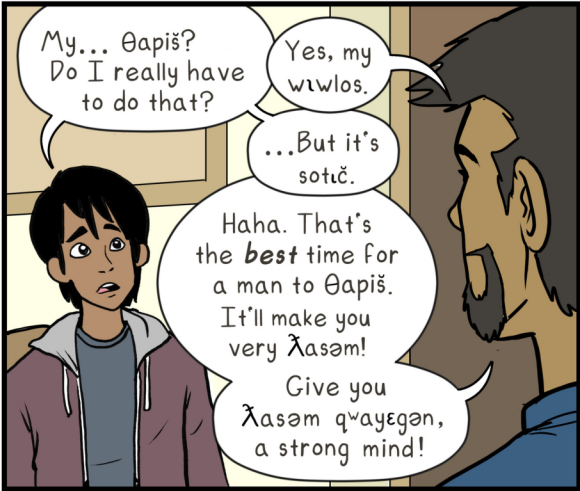
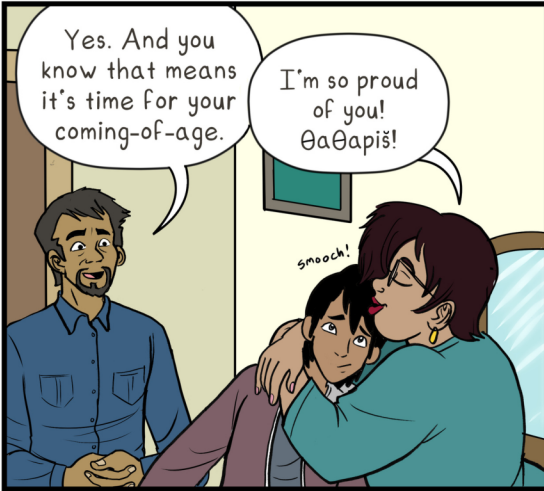
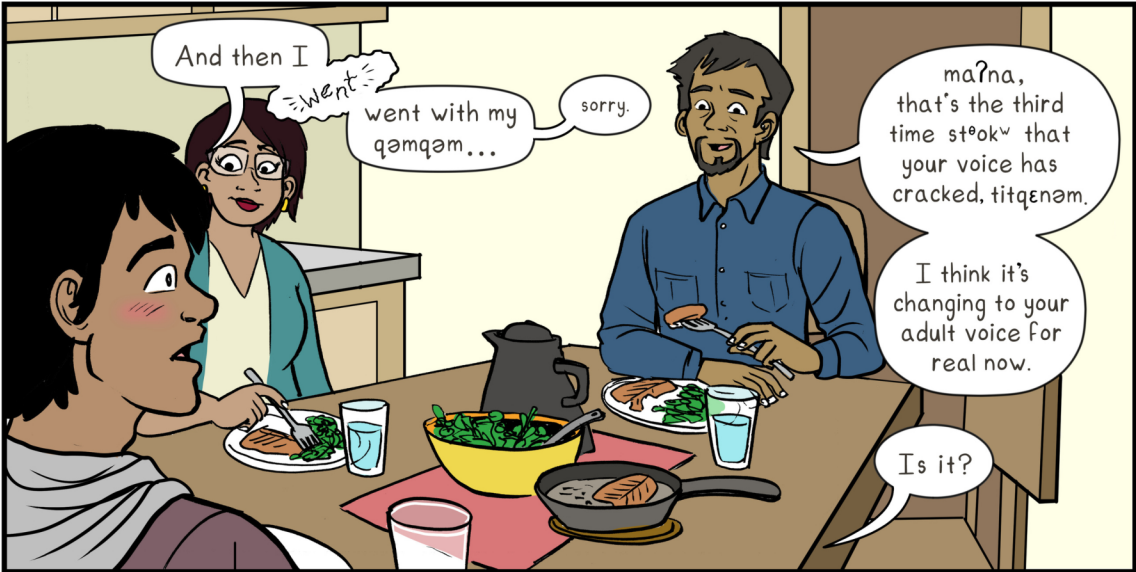
I don't want
to take my
kepo off, let
alone get in
the qaye ...

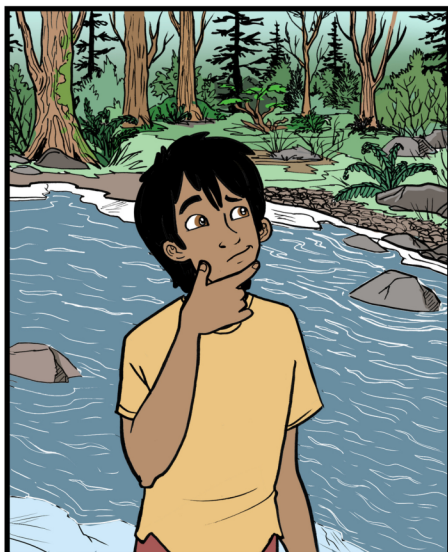
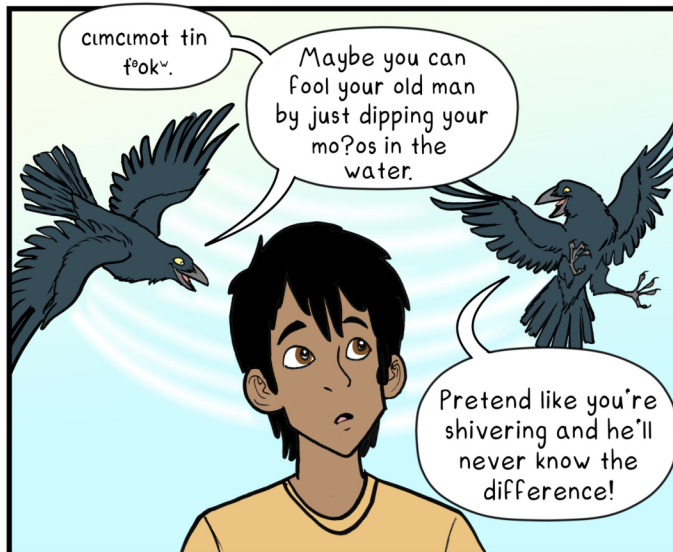


Ow!
It's so
čimčim it
burns!



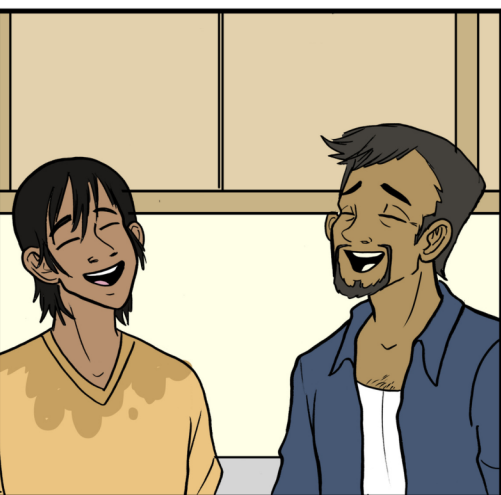
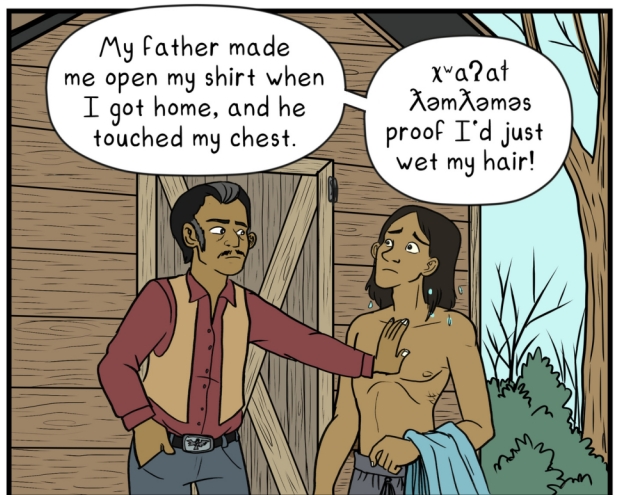
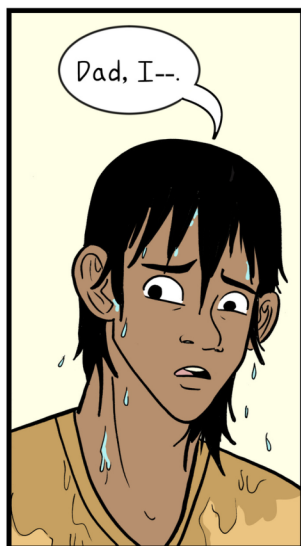
Why am I
even doing
this?

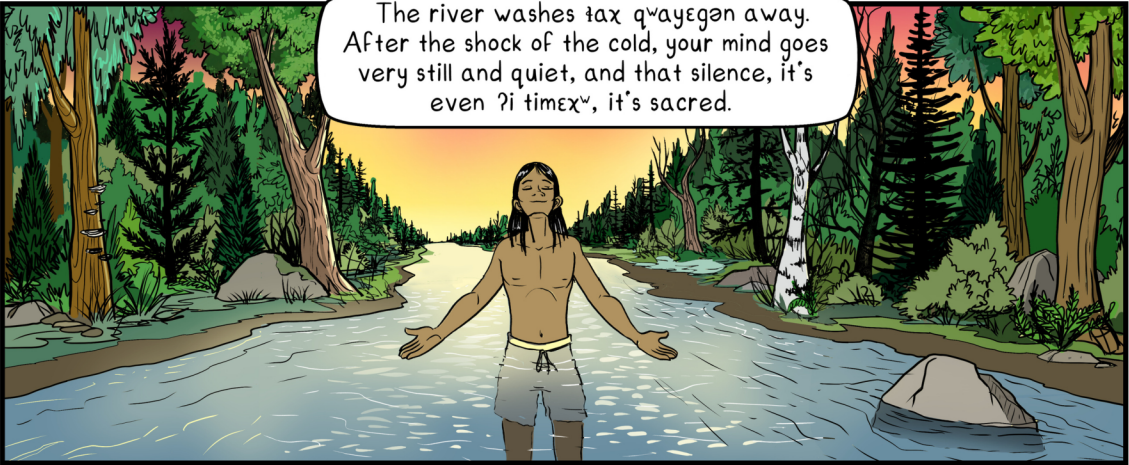












The river washes ʔax qʷayegən away. After the shock of the cold, your mind goes very still and quiet, and that silence, it's even ʔi timexʷ, it's sacred.



That's why we ʔapiš when we come of age, when we're recovering from grief, or other times we need to pray in this way.



That's what you should be seeking in your life right now.

ʔi qʷayegən.

ʕasem qʷayegən.

pit qʷayegən.



