

The Baby with Teeth
by Julia White Dirt

naa móhma'xevéestovéhanéhe / nexa móhvéestovéhanéhe / naa / kásováahe naa
And there was a big camp, there were two camps. And a young man and

káse'éehe móxhenésonéhehevóhe / (móh)mé'ěševotsévéhéhe móxhoháeméhotóhevovóhe
young woman had a child, he was a baby. They really loved

□
henésonéhevóho (móh)mónéhenésonéhehevóhe /
their child. He was their first baby (child).

naa néhe'she hótóva móstaohke- / mó'òhkéhóenootaehevovóhe □
And then sometimes he would go out and leave them.

□
mó'òhkené'ěsevonéhnéhéhe hóhee(héstóva) móstaohké/-hóehnéhéhe □
He would crawl out of his wrappings, he would go out, □

móstaohke/=táháóhe=tséhe'òhtséhéhe // naa óhvóona'ótsee'ěstse □
he would go over there. And in the morning □

é'òhkeméovoneotsésésto ka'ěškóneho // héva mó=néhe mó'òhke- / □
some children would be missing. Here, it was he □

mó'òhke/máhéetóhevó=néhe /, tsé'tóhe má'séškoovo'ahe tsétáhestoestse //.
who would eat them (néhe) up, this one, He Runs Out of Toothpicks, as he is called.

mó'òhke- / naa néhe'she tsé'tóhe óhtaohkééváho'hóo'oo'heséstse / □
And then whenever he got back home (in the mornings) □

é'òhkema'xea'xaemeséstse heho mó'òhkéš'ěšémóhevóhe //.
he would cry and cry. He would awaken his father.

vé'hoomeha hea'e énénetáno naa máto péhevovó'eneha □
"Look at him, maybe he wants to nurse. Or else cover him up good," □

mó'òhkeévéhetóhevó=kásováahe tsévéstoemose // naa mó'òhkeéenéhešévéhéhe □
this young man would tell his wife. So the young woman would □

káse'éehe //.
do that.

naa // na'ha tséstaéšenéhešé=hotoo=/néheto'eétaese néhe / mé'ěševótse / □
And after he had done this three times, this baby

□

tsénéva'ónetotse hé'tóhe mósta- / móstao'sé=//ta'se=vonénomeotséhéhe □
on the fourth (morning) accidentally fell asleep, □

móxhánósésénáhéhe / móxxaema'hahtsenáxenáhéhe (é'ée)vé'hoomaesesto heške //.
he was lying on his back, he had his mouth wide open. His mother looked at him.

naa mó'òhkenèhenóvéhanéhe // héne'enátanó'tova nevá'eséstse ka'èškóneho □
And word was spread around, "Try to find out who has been killing the children

□
tséohkena'hótse / ééshóséhováneehéo'o / ka'èškóneho mó'òhké/-hetóo'xeváhéhe □
children. Some more are missing again," he would announce (as crier), □

hetane / naa mó'òhkenèšenòhtsetanó'tóhehéhe hotáhtse / heške móxh- □
a man. So (people) kept wondering about him. Here, his mother- (saw him), □

é'áahtse'tó'to'hovonené'tánóse ho'évohkótse² //.
there was meat stuck in between his teeth.

nóoo heá'éháma tsé'tóhe éohkenéhešéve tsé'tóhe / tséohkenovósea'xaeméstse / □
"Oh my, maybe he's the one that does that, this one who cries and cries □

mó'òhkého'éhóo'oohehéhe éxhetaesesóo heške // naa móstae'šévaenaehévóhe a'e □
whenever he comes home in the morning," his mother said about him. His mother □

heške naa heho /
and father became scared of him.

(nès)tanoo'hénone / móma'heónevéhéhe néstsenéhmá'senotaene éxhet- / □
"We'll leave camp and leave him. He must have power, he will kill us all,"

□
éxhetaesesto //.
they said about him.

naa néhe'se móhma'xepéhévevé'hanéhéhe móhma'xepéhévéhóheehehéhe / naa héne □
Then he was wrapped up real good, he was swaddled real good and that □

vee'e máto / (mó')éxovanéhanéhe // naa móxhe'koneo'omésé'hohehéhe. □
tepee also was made warm. And he (i.e. tent) was staked inside solidly. □

tsé'tó=hetane móstaévéhóo'xeváhéhe // (mós)taéenèhetóo'xeváhéhe □
This man announced all this. He announced that way (to the people). □

(móh)ma'xeamáxééhéstovéhanéhe mó'amáxeméhéhe /// naa móstá=hetoo- / □
The whole camp fled, they fled from him (baby). And □

móstavéseamáxemaehévóhe heške naa heho / (mox)he'koneo'omésé'hohehanéhe /.
hió motheò anä fatheò also fleä (witè the rest) (The tepee was solidly staked.

naa tséstaéše/néveeno'etse móhne'évatséhe'òhtséhevóhe / heške naa heho // □
And after four nights his mother and father came back. □

(móh)ne'éva/héhene'enóehévóhe / naa móstaáhtse'héne'enovóhevóhe □
They came back to find out about him. And he already knew □

tséhešého'èhnetsése / nénéhvé'nótseévéhého'èhnéme nénoo'hé'tovéme / □
that they came. "I don't want you to ever come around, you fled camp and left □

néamáxeméme // néstáhóea'eotsé'tovatséme éxhetósesto naa é'évaamáxemaesesto □
me, you fled from me. I'll come out and attack you," he told them. So his mother □

heške naa heho éssáa'ésètséhótaehésesto mó'e'šévaenaehévóhe
and father fled from him again. They did not even go in there where he was. They

□

tséhvé'néhešévése tsé'òhketóxena'hóse ka'èškóneho //.

were scared of him for doing what he did, for going around and killing children.

naa móstó'néšetó'ovenoo'héstovéhéhe / (móx)ho'nóevatséhe'šéhéve'hooméstse /.
He was left for good in the camp. No one ever did go back to see about him.

hena'hánehe. énéhe'éstósése
That's it. That's the way the story ends.

FOOTNOTES:

¹This text was narrated by Julia White Dirt January 20 1983 during a session at Busby School in which Mrs. White Dirt and her husband Charles recorded a number of Cheyenne stories for the benefit of the schoolchildren. It is not known who the recordist was. Mrs. White Dirt and her husband live in the Muddy Creek cluster of the reservation near Lame Deer Montana The paragraphing and title were supplied by the volume editor.

²The motif of a baby with teeth is important in Cheyenne traditional literature. Compare Sweet Medicine's prophecy about a baby being born with teeth at the end of one of the texts about Sweet Medicine.