**G**ii-wen (Ojibwe for “so the story is told”), moose once vanished from the land. According to Ojibwe legend, an owl flew north and chanced upon the herd grazing on balsam fir trees. The moose were thriving, without humans. The Ojibwe, on the other hand, couldn’t live without the moose.

Whither go the moose, so go the Ojibwe, says Norman Deschampe, chairman of the Minnesota Tribe of Lake Superior Chippewa/Ojibwe, Grand Portage Band. “Moose are at the center of our culture. Without them, we will cease to be Ojibwe. We’ve hunted moose since

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*During a time the Ojibwe call the freezing-over-of-the-Earth moon—early winter—a moose makes her way through tendrils of fog on one of thousands of lakes and ponds in the North Woods. Photograph: Jim Brandenburg/Minden Pictures.*

When the buffalo went away the hearts of my people fell to the ground, and they could not lift them up again.

—Chief Plenty Coups, Crow Tribe

Someday the moose, too, may be gone. Then all we’ll have left is stories to tell.

—Norman Deschampe, Chairman, Minnesota Tribe of Lake Superior Chippewa/Ojibwe, Grand Portage Band