

# *Kwädāy Kwändūr*

## *Traditional Southern Tutchone Stories*

As told by

Marge Jackson, Mary Jacquot, Jessie Joe,  
Jimmy Copper Joe, Copper Lily Johnson and  
Jessie Jonathan

Compiled and Translated by  
Margaret Workman

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Catharine McClellan. *A History of the Yukon Indians: Part of the Land, Part of the Water*. Douglas & McIntyre, Vancouver/Toronto, 1987. p. 302. Photo taken at Burwash Landing in 1968.

**Mary Jacquot,  
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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>MARGE JACKSON</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>MARGE JACKSON'S STORIES</b>	<b>2</b>
Story of Àkhjìyis	2
<b>MARY (COPPER JOE) JACQUOT</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>MARY JACQUOT'S STORIES</b>	<b>12</b>
Story of Gáts'ada	12
Story of Kàdìkhak'in	16
The Woman Who Married a Moose	18
<b>JESSIE JOE</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>JESSIE JOE'S STORIES</b>	<b>22</b>
The Bear Story	22
The Bear That Did Not Want Light	26
The Thoughtful Slave	28
The Wolf Story	31
The Wolf Story (bilingual)	36
Äsùya and The Wolverine	48
Äsùya and the Crow	50
Äsùya and the Mouse	52
<b>JIMMY COPPER JOE</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>JIMMY JOE'S STORIES</b>	<b>58</b>
Sha Kay Dadaya	58
Life of an Indian	64

<b>COPPER LILY JOHNSON</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>COPPER LILY JOHNSON'S STORIES</b>	<b>71</b>
Sha Kay Dadaya	71
The Bear Story	76
The Loon Saves a Blind Man	78
The Crow Made the World	80
<b>JESSIE JONATHAN</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>LIFE STORY OF JESSIE AND ALFRED BROWN</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>JESSIE JONATHAN'S STORIES</b>	<b>87</b>
My Life	87
Äsùya and the Wolverine	91
Äsùya and the Giant Bear	93
Äsùya and the Eagle	95
Äsùya and a Big Animal	97
Äsùya and the Big Worm	98
Äsùya and the Old Man	99
Äsùya and the Mouse People	101
Äsùya and the Big Water Snake	103
Äsùya and the Mink Lady	105
Äsùya and the Giant Wolverine Man	108
Äsùya and the Rock Ptarmigan	111
Äsùya and the Giant Animal	112
Äsùya and the Marten	114
The Crow and the Owl	116
The Crow and the Whale Fish	117
The Crow that Ate People	120
Two Boys Lost On an Ice Floe	122
The Stolen Woman	125

## ***Preface***

I am very pleased to welcome the publication of this book of traditional Yukon aboriginal stories by Southern Tutchone Elders.

Jessie Joe and Marge Jackson are still with us to share their wisdom and love. The other story-tellers have passed on, but their memories are still strong among our Yukon First Nations peoples.

This book will serve as a fine addition to the repertoire of materials which can be used in classrooms throughout the Yukon. There is still a great need for books which tell our stories and our history from our own perspective.

I thank all those people who made this book possible. Margaret Workman has worked long and hard to bring the Elders' voices alive in faithful English translation, and I congratulate her and YNLC for a job well done.

We hope you, the readers, will enjoy these stories.

Mási cho,

Ed Schultz  
*T'ántay*  
Grand Chief,  
Council of Yukon First Nations  
August 2000



TOGETHER TODAY... FOR OUR CHILDREN TOMORROW

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## ***Introduction***

I have translated these traditional Southern Tutchone stories from tapes which were originally recorded by Mrs. Agnes MacDonald, Mr. Daniel Johnson (Tlen) and myself from 1969 to 1984. One tape was recorded more recently (1998) at YNLC.

I have tried to convey the Southern Tutchone meanings in natural English. Personal names and place names have been left in Southern Tutchone.

The stories are important to me. I know the narrators well having grown up among them at Äshèyi (Aishihik). These stories are familiar to me from my childhood in one form or another.

Stories are important in our traditional life and are passed down from generation to generation. The same legends included here were told to the narrators by their own mothers and grandmothers. It is important for the young people of today to learn from these stories and to understand the importance of the relationship between people and animals, to learn proper behaviour, and to show respect for all living things. The stories are told as a guide.

I hope these stories will be useful as a teaching resource for classroom use as well as for general interest. I also hope they inspire others to do similar work.

My personal thanks go to the storytellers for having shared their knowledge, and to Mrs. Agnes MacDonald and Mr. Daniel (Johnson) Tlen for doing the taping. My thanks also to Mr. John Ritter, Mrs. Anne Cullen, Mr. Doug Hitch and other colleagues at the Yukon Native Language Centre for encouraging me and assisting me in this work. Ms. Josephine Sias provided photos and valuable biographical information on some of the narrators, and I am most grateful to her. Ms. Cheryl McLean of Aboriginal Language Services also provided encouragement and support.

Margaret Workman  
*Äyedindaya*  
August, 2000

## **Marge Jackson**

### *Tàákhēlama*

Mrs. Marge Jackson is a fluent speaker of Southern Tutchone. Her traditional Ägunda (wolf) clan name is Tàákhēlamaḡ. She is the daughter of Maggie Jim (Mats'äsàma) and Little Jim. She was born at Dakwàkàda (Haines Junction) and grew up at Otter Lake (Canyon Lake).

When she was eight years old, her family moved to Łughḡ (Klukshu). When she was 25 years old she moved to Shadhäla (Champagne) with her husband Peter Jackson. They hunted and trapped between Klukshu and Champagne, living off the land, until their six children became school aged. Then they moved to Haines Junction, where she is still living today.

# Marge Jackson's Stories

## Story of Àkhjìyis

Recorded by John Ritter  
YNLC  
April 7, 1998  
YNLC Tape 2743

- 1 *Shäwshe nàjè kàch'e dän äyet ts'än kàch'iq á'àn dhäl yanda àn shadejèl, säl ka ätl'a äyet Äch'at Dhäl (Gopher Mountain) kwäni yū kay ts'än.*
- 2 *Lü dekē ch'äw nakededäl áthè tū Shäwshe ts'än äyū ye kàkejèl t'l'à.*
- 3 *Dèshū nakedèjèl ch'äw kanday kày késj.*
- 4 *Äyet Àkhjìyis ukē dèya tth'ay dedän kàzhàya kày yèsj t'l'ày yekē ändal k'e tágàya gà neeya hq' òtth'ay äyet kanday, äyū kàch'äw k'ā yè tu k'äshädèkhèl k'e kwändür yè tånadal á'àn. Ujedènji tth'ay äyet kanday ukē ändal ts'än k'e.*
- 5 *Ät'l'à tayagel tth'ay á'àn dän ts'än, tu täníya äni kàk'e dän uts'än dèjel tth'ay.*
- 6 *Dedän yì'q ka tū Ägay ày kàch'e äyū. Dedän kàthe ukè nàdhät ka, kàch'e dedän mächù yìlì ch'a äyet tágà.*
- 7 *Kàk'e kàch'e äyū nàkekenje ts'än kàkech'ì Khì Dhäl kay nàkedäl, säl ka, denji ka, kanday, may shū nàts'ele k'e ghàkeyègän.*
- 8 *Tl'äwchù Zhän Män äyet dèdū ts'än Dezadeash mäts'ì k'ù ä'q, äyet ghàts'äni Khì Dhäl ts'äni.*

- 1 A long time ago there were lots of people living at Dalton Post and they used to come up this way to that mountain which they called **Äch'at Dhāl** to hunt gophers. That mountain is behind the Klukshu Mountain and they called it Gopher Mountain.
- 2 After they had done their hunting they would return to Dalton Post using the same trail.
- 3 One day while they were returning home (to Dalton Post) they wounded a moose.
- 4 This man named Äkhjìyis, was the one who wounded the moose and he had to track it down. He followed the moose tracks to where it had crossed a little creek. There in the creek he saw lots of salmon. They called this creek **Łu Ghà Chùà**. When he saw all this salmon in the creek he stopped following the moose and decided to catch some fish and take them back to his people and tell them about a creek he found lots of fish in it.
- 5 He brought back all the fish he had caught and told the people about the little creek he had found. Then the people went down there.
- 6 He was the one that first found the place, and that was why that creek (**Łu Ghà Chùà**) used to belong to the Wolf clan. He was the first one to stand in that creek, and that was why the water and the river belonged to him.
- 7 While the people were living there they would go up on that **Khì Dhāl** and hunt for gophers, groundhog, moose and sheep and then dry them.
- 8 The mountain that they call **Khì Dhāl** is on this side of **Tl'äw Chù Zhän Män** and it is on the north side of Dezadeash Lake.

- 9 *Kàk'e kàch'e ätl'a shakāt tu ghàkìlā k'e nakedèjäl k'e, mäla kwätl'ä kìjya hq' ñtth'ay ätl'a äyet dhäl kay. Kàk'e kinyìlā dela k'e tì yeèkhì.*
- 10 *Kwänèch'ì t'l'ä Shäwshe ts'än tàkedèjäl nū. Áchì ts'än keyìnlā dāzhän dän Shäwshe yū takeyáchäl. Áchì ch'e kenāw.*
- 11 *Äyet t'l'äy tàkedäl nū shèk'ā udunèn dùsèla k'e kàzhà mätà kwädèkhì. Mämq ts'ätlāw tädéda k'e dāzhāw äsay äni tth'ay udunèn.*
- 12 *Ätl'äy kàkyajël k'e dèshu äyū takyadäl k'e kànū nasay t'l'ahù ughär k'ènya tth'ay kwāshāw dek'àn shāw dètè k'e.*
- 13 *Yanda dīnāw nsay ts'ätlāw ts'än kanda dāzhāw änj. Kàk'e änāw nitā nndü dèkhì ch'e dāzhāw änū.*
- 14 *Kàk'e kànū da detà k'e tädèya gwän äjāde'ì. Jà átà jàk'e ünū tth'ay.*
- 15 *Kàk'e ch'āw dúkhël nìdhì nū kwändür dètth'ay k'e. Kanda äch'ì kàch'e mätà.*
- 16 *Mätà takyat'är k'e kànū daghän, jà ädè may kàkejäl na ch'e ädè dhäl kay, äyet ts'än dūjäl ni äk'ān ch'āw äni.*
- 17 *Äkàkwíthät utà ätl'a mämq undäl kwändür nū.*
- 18 *Mätl'äy k'e may ka kākändā kinyìlāy äyī tth'a kèkegrū äyet yū kīnda yèni tth'ay detà, may ka. Kàk'e utth'èyi kwäné'ì tth'ay mähìgay ta kwäné'ì yè detà. Kàk'e kàsha t'l'ähù äju yedúkhel làch'e nū u'en nàthät yèts'enìq.*

- 9 They spent all summer drying fish and when they returned to Khì Dhāl, that man saw that his brother-in-law had been there while they were gone and had gone up on that mountain and done some hunting. Then that man went after his brother-in-law and killed him.
- 10 After that they all went back to Dalton Post and brought the body back home. When they got back they told the people there that the man had just died.
- 11 Their children were still very young when their father had killed their maternal uncle. So after that every time the family returned to the place the mother would always cry, the children said.
- 12 When they returned to the place again, the mother started to cry again and her son who was now getting to be a big young man asked why she was crying.
- 13 The young man asked his mother again, “Why do you always cry every time we come here back here to this place?” he asked his mother. Then she told him about his father killing his uncle here and that that was why she always cried when she return to this same place.
- 14 His father had already gone out hunting when his mother told him about the murder. Then he asked his mother, “Where did my father go?”
- 15 As soon as he heard the story from his mother he wanted to kill his father. His father also had a slave with him.
- 16 When his father and the slave returned he said to his father, “You know where we always go hunting sheep on that mountain, let’s go up there right away.”
- 17 That was when the father knew that the mother had told the boy about what had happened to his uncle.
- 18 When they got to the top of the mountain the boy told his father, “Go to the edge and look down there for sheep.” While his father was looking down over the edge looking for sheep the boy came up behind and was going to push him over, but when he saw all the grey hair on his father’s neck he just couldn’t kill him.

- 19 *Mätl'äy kàyèñü dā nindal t̄ü áñāy łāwa ghà naníché nà ándüa yek̄ü, ätl'a sāl ghq nàkek̄ü yū kàni. Äyü łāw naníché nà. Áñāy Łu Ghq kwäts'än nindal yèñü detà.*
- 20 *Äyet t̄l'ä kàch'äw utà nadèzha t̄l'äy kàyìlà uyandāy dèkhì. Äyet nadl̄ü detà t̄l'ü dèkhì. Detà jedákhèl t̄l'ü yū k'e uyandāy dl̄ü dèkhì äyet dū.*
- 21 *Shèk'a h̄ü shùthän nàkekwin'à ch'äw łanadal tth'äy, mätà. Łü gädzadèya n̄ü Shäwshe ts'än.*
- 22 *Ätl'a dän ts'ädèkhì, ghàketlq ch'e nà kwäni.*
- 23 *Mäyèññjì dāk wädanjèl yū. Ätl'a łakyat'är k'e, keke ñtth'äy dets'än yè.*
- 24 *Äju h̄ü mätlqy gúnk'à ghàch'ì ch'e nà tth'äy. Gúnk'à ätl'a nena uyè ts'egh̄y kàch'e, nena uyè ts'ekèt k'e kàch'ü ädāy nàts'egèt k'e nena uk'è ts'ekèt h̄q' tth'äy. Äju h̄ü dän mätlqy gúnk'à äch'ì h̄q' tth'äy.*
- 25 *Kàk'e kànuq gúnk'à dèdhü tth'äy äh̄ü. Kàk'e kànuq, äju uyíñjì dàdích'èl yū äni tth'äy. Kàkwìnthät ts'äjedákhèl yū.*
- 26 *Ätl'a łàthe nàdhät, Shàk'antà üye kàch'ea, ätl'a äyet Ts'ürk'i dänchi n̄lì ch'è tth'äy, he was like a chief.*
- 27 *Äyet äñèñü nänjèl, ätl'a Łu Ghq Chüa nènu ts'än, äju neéjèl tth'äy denù k'e. Äñèñü dèth'i.*
- 28 *Tl'áh̄ü dän łàch'ì uts'än nítadèya tth'äy ätl'a kàthè nàdhät yèts'eni, ätl'a chief n̄lì kàch'e ch'a, kàthe nàdhät. Ätl'a äshāw n̄lì kàch'e dā. Äk'än íshq yū äshāw íñjì dayíday kàch'e kàts'enìq äh̄ü.*
- 29 *Dädinlèl, nila kànnlà yū yèni tth'äy, d̄l̄ikh̄i nū. Ye uyè kàdin'al nla d̄l̄ikh̄i yū keyèni nū. Äju yèch'ìq k̄l̄ì tth'äy uyè ächē dakèl.*
- 30 *He know kwäts'eshāw keka kwädajäl yū. Ätl'a ächē ts'ukèt dāw.*

- 19 Then he told his father to go back down and to not stop at his uncle's place. He was talking about the gopher camp. "Don't go there," he told him. "Go right through and straight back to Klukshu," he told him.
- 20 He didn't really want to kill his father, so after his father left the boy killed the slave in place of his father.
- 21 The people were still setting up camp when the father returned and packed up and went right through to Dalton Post.
- 22 They say that the man that was murdered had lots of relatives.
- 23 He knew what was going to happen when the man's family found out so when the people came back and went to see him and his wife they were just sitting there.
- 24 A long time ago not too many people had guns. Only very few people could afford to have them. It took too many furs to buy just one gun. The furs had to be piled on top of each other and reach the height of the gun in order to buy one gun.
- 25 One day they heard a gun shot and he knew that some people were coming for him. He thought, "I don't know what is going to happen to me. They might kill me."
- 26 The man that was the leading his people was a member of the Crow clan and he was like a chief, a very important man, and his name was **Shāk'antà**.
- 27 When those people came, they stayed on the other side of Klukshu Creek. They did not come over to their side of the creek.
- 28 When they reached the other side this one man who was an Elder and leader of his people came over to see them. "You see me sitting here in front of you as an Elder?" he asked them.
- 29 Then the leader came and asked him why he had killed his brother-in-law and how was he going to pay for it. He told the head man that he was poor and that he didn't have anything to pay for the death.
- 30 He knew that they were going to ask a lot in payment for taking the life of one of their relatives.

- 
- 
- 31** *Ät'ày kàyènū da äyī tágà dá'ày dàtèl, ka ádàt Khì Dhāl hụ dá'ày dàtèl äjädànji nīth'ay.*
- 32** *Mätl'ày ch'äw ätl'áhù Ts'úrk'i ày nlū äyī Łu Ghạ Chùà yè Khì Dhāl shū Ts'úrk'i ts'àn n-nats'ändhàt kuchù ulè du.*
- 33** *Tl'áhù, kwändür lan kwäch'e.*

- 31** Then the man said that all he had was this creek (**Łu Ghà Chùà**) and **Khì Dhāl**. “Those will be yours (if you let me go),” he told the man. “Down there will be yours and that **Khì Dhāl** too will be yours (if you let me go).”
- 32** That’s how that Klushu Creek belongs to the Crow clan now and that **Khì Dhāl** (Big Game Hill) too also belongs to the Crow clan in exchange (for payment for taking a brother-in-law’s life).
- 33** That’s the end of this story.

<b>Southern Tutchone</b>	<b>Literal</b>	<b>English Name</b>
Shäwshe	<i>(no literal translation)</i>	Dalton Post
Äch’at Dhāl	<i>— mountain</i>	Gopher Mountain
Łughà Chùà	<i>place-for-fishing-creek</i>	Klukshu Creek
Khì Dhāl	<i>big-game mountain</i>	—
Tl’äw Chù Zhän Män	<i>grassy-water-? lake</i>	



## **Mary (Copper Joe) Jacquot**

### *Nach'ädñch'ea*

Mary Jacquot of the Kajät (Crow) clan was the daughter of K'akhyuamą and Copper Joe (Dháldatà). She was born in 1900 in Lynx City, near the mouth of the Nisling River. Jessie Joe, Jimmy Joe, and Copper Lily Johnson were her brothers and sisters. Two other sisters, Kitty and Bertha, died at a young age. Their grandfather, Copper Joe's father, was Copper Chief from the White River area.

After Mary's mother died, Copper Joe took her sister Jessie and her brother Jimmy Joe to live with their aunt at Lynx City. Then he took Mary, Kitty, and Copper Lily Johnson back to the White River area where her grandfather Copper Chief had a house.

Mary married Louis Jacquot from the Alsace region of France, who, with his brother Gene, established a trading post at Burwash Landing about 1904.

She passed away February 26, 1996.

# *Mary Jacquot's Stories*

## **Story of Gáts'ada**

Recorded by Margaret Workman

June 2, 1978

Burwash Landing, Yukon

CHON Tape CHON0009

This is a true story about Chief Isaac of Aishihik, **Äzhäntà** or **Gáts'ada** (he had two Indian names). He saved his people at Aishihik from starvation. His Indian name, **Gáts'ada**, was also give to one of his grandsons, Eddie Isaac.

Spring had returned to Aishihik and the people were rejoicing after coming through a very cold long winter. It was early June. The leaves and flowers were just starting to come out. All the animals were having their young babies. The ducks and birds were laying their eggs. Everything looked good. It looked like another good summer was here again.

One day a cold north wind started to blow and no one thought anything of it because the north wind had blown at this time of year before. The north wind blew for days and days and soon it started to snow. The snow got deeper and deeper, and the weather was getting colder. The snow covered everything. The rivers and lakes had frozen over and the ice got very thick so that people could not set their fish nets. The baby animals all froze to death and all other animals died of starvation because they could not forage for food under the deep snow. The people ran out of food.

Some people would build a big fire on the meadows to thaw the ground and dig up a few bear roots and make broth out of it and share it with other people. Soon they were too weak to dig up roots and hunt. Some died from starvation.

Chief Isaac went out hunting every day, but he too had no luck in killing any game. Sometimes he would return with a grouse or a squirrel and his wife would make soup out of it and try to make it last for his family. He was getting weaker by the day from lack of food. Finally he moved his family to a place where they could dig up roots and made a camp for them. He left his family there.

He took two young boys from the village and went up into the high country where they might be able to find moose, caribou or a bear that had survived this harsh cold weather.

When they arrived at a suitable place, they made a camp and hunted from there. The two boys hunted with Chief Isaac until they became weak from lack of food and could no longer hunt with him. Chief Isaac was also getting weaker. He cut two sticks and strapped them along both sides of his legs to help support his weak legs.

He went out to try and find a moose for one last time. He knew that if he did not find food soon they would all starve. When he got to a thick growth of trees, he saw squirrel tracks in the fresh snow, he followed them to the squirrel's den. He propped himself up against a tree trunk and got his bow and arrow ready.

He waited there with his arrow pointed at the hole in the ground where the squirrel had gone in. He waited a long time and it was getting to be late afternoon when he heard some sticks breaking near by. He thought it might be a fox coming to check out the squirrel den. He sat there very quietly and waited.

Then he saw a cow moose moving through the trees towards him. The moose came right towards him, her full attention on the squirrel's nest high up in the tree, and did not see the man sitting below. The moose stopped below the squirrel's nest and reared up on her hind legs trying to knock down the nest to get at the dried mushrooms inside. The man below the tree took careful aim and shot. The arrow pieced right through the moose's heart. The moose jumped into the air and ran away through the trees.

Chief Isaac got up and followed the tracks through the snow. He saw where the moose had laid down and then got up again. The moose was losing a lot of blood. He followed the moose for a long way. Then, just as it was starting to get dark, he saw the moose lying down among some willows. He sneaked up real close and took a shot.

The moose tried getting up but could not because it had lost a lot of blood and was too weak. Chief Isaac went right up to the moose and killed it with his axe. He cut the moose stomach open and took the guts only, then he covered the rest of the moose with snow so the other animals would not bother it. Then he went back to his camp.

When he returned he made soup out of the moose guts and fed some to the two boys, a little at a time so they wouldn't get sick. He told them to take it easy and not to eat anything solid for a couple of days, they must just drink broth.

One of the boys was so hungry that he ate some of the meat from the soup and got really sick and died the following morning. Chief Isaac and the one boy moved camp up to where the moose was. They stayed there several days resting and eating soup made from the moose meat and nothing else until they were strong enough to travel. Then they made a toboggan out of the moose hide and loaded on a small portion of the meat, light enough for the two of them to pull. They went back to where they had left the Chief's family and made some moose meat soup and fed them.

He told his wife what had happened to the other boy and that he must go back to Äshèyi village and take some meat to the people there. After that he would go and see the boy's family.

When the Chief and the boy arrived at the village, they found the people very weak and sick. Some of the people had died.

They went to one of the homes and made a big pot of soup. They went around to each household and gave each person there about half a cup of soup to drink. They did this twice a day until they were strong enough to eat some meat.

Meanwhile Chief Isaac went back each day to check on his wife and family. As soon as they were well enough to travel he brought them back to the village.

Chief Isaac and his wife went around to each household helping them in any way they could until they were strong enough to be on their own again. Äzhäntà got some of the men together and helped bring in the rest of the meat.

This was how the people of Äshèyi were able to survive the coldest spring in history. After that the weather turned warm again and the snow melted. The people were able to hunt and fish again.

From that time on **Gáts'ada** became a very important name among the people of Aishihik. The name **Gáts'ada** will only be given to a man of the Crow clan who has helped his people and helped them in their time of need and hardship. That name is not given to just anyone.

A long time later that name was given to his youngest grandson, Eddie Isaac, who was a good hunter and trapper. He always helped those who needed help. He never turned anyone away who came to him for help and always shared with his people whenever he killed a moose.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

[Translator's note: Eddie Isaac passed away in February, 1967, and is buried at Champagne. He was in his eighties when he died.]

## Story of Kàdìkhak'in

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
 November 9, 1984  
 Burwash Landing  
 YNLC Tape 857 (side B)

This is a story about a coast Indian man that used to live at Hutshi. His name was **Kàdìkhak'in** and he was an old man with long white hair. He was married to a woman from **Tágù Ch'än** (Tagish People). Daniel's great grandmother comes from these people. I want to tell you this story so you will know about these things.

People say that all the young babies started dying when their mother's milk started drying up, their mothers could not produce any breast milk. They say that lots of babies died like that. When the last baby died, Kàdìkhak'in's son came to see him and asked him what he was doing to the people, and why was he singing all the time. He asked him if he knew what he was doing, because people were all dying off. Did he really want all those people dead? If so, why?

One day people went to see a different old man. He was a dream doctor and he told them that someone from the **Zäntuch'än** [Tanana] people had cast a spell on these people. The hunters could not kill moose or caribou because the animals always avoided them. They could not get close enough to kill a moose and people were dying from starvation. No one was bringing in any kind of food. People were just surviving on watery soup made from plants and whatever small game they could catch.

One day some people went to see the old man and asked him what kind of song he was singing and what it meant. He went out and brought in something that looked like a doll and put it beside the fire so no one would steal it. Then the old man told them that he had seen sheep coming down the mountainside. He then told them to sit quietly while he sang a song calling to the sheep to come this way:

*Ánù dú'är du.*

Then he told the men where to set their sheep snares. "The first sheep to come down will have a broken horn and it must walk into the snare or you will not eat," he told them. He told the men that they must set the snare in just the right place and they must not miss this sheep or everyone will starve. He told them if that

sheep walked through the snare then the spell was too strong. He continued singing to counteract that strong spell.

Gee, some people were really bad a long time ago, but today these young people do not believe in that kind anymore. Maybe some still do, we really don't know that for sure.

When the men got to the place where they were told to set the snare, sure enough they saw a sheep with one side of his horn hanging down and blood all over it and it was coming down the mountain trail in front of the other sheep. People say that there were people living inside the mountain a long time ago and they used to call them little mountain people (**Dhál Dāna**). They were the ones who had broken the sheep horn off with their big club.

As the men watched the sheep coming down to the place they had set out the snares, they heard that old man singing and his voice echoing through the valley. The lead sheep ran straight into the snare with blood running down his neck. It was just like that old man was chasing those sheep right into the snares. The men clubbed the sheep that they had caught in the snares.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Woman Who Married a Moose

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

August 19, 1969

Burwash Landing

YNLC Tape 855 (side A)

This happened a long, long time ago, in the old days when people and animals could talk to each other. They say that it was a moose who turned himself into a handsome young man and then married this young woman.

They were married for quite a while because they had two children. The husband did not like it when his wife fed some meat from a moose head to her children, because the youngest one was still breast feeding. He told his wife, "I do not like parts of my head being fed to the likes of that little worm." She didn't know what he was talking about. I guess it was because the youngest one was still suckling at his mother's breast that he called his son that little worm.

The man went out hunting one day and killed a moose. When he came back he told the people where he had killed a moose and that they were to go out and bring in all the meat. He told the people that he wanted them to bring in the whole moose head and give it to him and to not cut anything off the head. So the people went out to bring in the moose meat and he stayed home to wait for them to bring the moose head to him. So he waited and waited but the men did not bring the moose head to him, so he went out looking for them. He went back to where he had killed the moose.

Meanwhile, one old man who lived nearby had come with the people to the moose kill. He told the people, "The only reason he wants that moose head is because it is a choice part of the moose. It is fat and tasty. That is why he is stingy for it. He does not want someone else to have it even though he had killed the moose himself. When someone kills a moose they are supposed to give the choice parts away." Then that old man said, "I don't want to give the moose head to him," and took the moose head for himself.

The rest of the men tried to convince that old man to let him have the moose head, but that old man said, "No. I want the moose head for myself," and he took it.

When that man came back and saw the moose head missing, he cut off a front shoulder from the moose and packed it home to his wife. When he got home he

cut the moose front shoulder in half and told his wife to wrap the meat up in a white caribou skin. “But be very careful not to cut into the bone when you cut some meat off,” he told his wife.

He told his wife that he had to go away from them and that she should cut a bit of meat off from the moose front shoulder everyday and cook it for their children.

Late that night he told his wife that he was leaving them and to remember what he told her to do with that meat and to cook it for their children.

When the wife woke up the next morning she found her husband gone. After feeding her children, she went out to find his tracks and followed them. The tracks started off as human tracks and then along the way they turned into moose tracks. She followed those tracks until she saw a herd of moose up in the valley. The moose tracks that she was following disappeared right into the middle of the herd of moose.

[Short passage of song.]

Then she turned around and went back home.

From then on that woman would unwrap the caribou skin every day and cut some meat off, cook it and feed her children and then wrap it up again in that white caribou skin. The next time she unwrapped that meat it had turned into a whole front shoulder again.

That was how she and her children survived that long cold winter when lots of people starved. They say that all those people starved all around them and died off because they could not get a moose or caribou. They could not kill any kind of game. When the hunters went out it was just like the moose knew that they were coming and would all run away.

All the other people had died and they were left all alone. Just the woman and her two children survived that long cold winter.

One day the woman was cutting some meat off the shoulder and she accidentally cut into the bone. Then she heard a noise outside and she went outside to see what was making the noise. She saw a moose running into the bush down by the river. She called out to the moose to help them and said that all the people had starved because he would not give himself to the people.

When she went back into her house the meat she was cutting was gone. It was just like someone had taken it.

They stayed there a long time and her children were now growing up into young men. They could now go out hunting for their mother. The first couple of times they went out hunting they did not get anything. But they would go out hunting every day.

One day they came home with some meat and told their mother that they had killed a bear, a sheep and a caribou and that they had lots to eat now and they were saved from starvation. That moose had helped them because they were his children.

That is why people take good care of the moose head when they kill one. After they take the parts of the moose head they want, they put the head up in a tree. That way no animal can chew on it and the moose spirit will be happy.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## **Jessie Joe**

### *Ta'ana*

Ms. Jessie Joe was born around Christmas time in 1910 at Lynx City. Her traditional Kajät (Crow) clan name is Ta'ana. She is the daughter of K'akhyuqamä and Copper Joe (Dhädatà). Her mother died when she was a baby. She is the youngest of five children. After her mother died, her father took her and her brother Jimmy Joe to live with their aunt at Lynx City and took Kitty, Mary Jacquot and Copper Lily Johnson back to the White River area where her grandfather Copper Chief had a house.

When she was around three years old her father came back for her and her brother and took them to Champagne to meet the rest of her sisters. They stayed there for one year and then moved back to the White River area. Jessie and her brother Jimmy lived, hunted and trapped around that area for many years. After the Alaska Highway was built they moved to the Landing. That was what Burwash was called a long time ago, before it became Burwash Landing when the Jacquot brothers opened a trading post.

## *Jessie Joe's Stories*

### **The Bear Story**

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

November 9, 1984

Burwash Landing, Yukon

YNLC Tape 855 (side b), 856 (side A) – Story 1

One time there was a young girl taken by a bear. While out picking berries with some women, she spilled her bucket of berries. A nice young man came and told her he knew of a place where there were lots of berries, and he would help her refill her bucket. She went with him and he led her a long way away from her family.

Before long it was fall time and soon it would be winter. She would sit by the fire and sing this song (Jessie Joe singing). Her husband would ask her why she sang like that. She told him that she wanted to go back and see her mother, because she was worried and lonesome for her mother.

Soon it was winter time. He would feed her berries, gophers and other small game. He gave her anything she wanted, all the food that bears eat. He fed her real good all winter long while they were living in the den. Maybe six months had passed while they were living in the den. They had three kids.

One night he had a dream. The next morning he told his wife that in his dream the people had found them. He wanted to know what she thought he should do. He must go out and fight. She told him that the men that usually hunted up this way for food were her brothers, and she did not want him to fight them.

Then he told her if that was the way she wanted it, he would not take anything with him when he went out to meet them. He told her that after her brothers had killed him, to tell them to burn his head.

Soon they heard a dog barking at the entrance of the den, the dog had picked up the bear scent out on the snow. The bear got ready to go out and meet the hunters.

As soon as the bear came out of his den the hunters killed him. They shot him with bows and arrows and his body rolled down the hill. While the brothers were busy skinning out the bear, the dog that found the bear den came back. There was a cross sign on his forehead and around his neck was painted with red ocher. They had never seen that before and wondered what it meant. They tied the dog up and

told the youngest brother to go back up and get the rest of the arrows and bring them back to them.

The boy didn't want to go back up there, but he went back up to the bear den. When he got there someone had gathered up all the arrows and had tied them into a bundle and had put them at the entrance of the den. He picked up the bundle and ran back down to his brothers. He asked them why they had tied the arrows into a bundle and left them in front of the bear den, and then sent him back up there for it. The brothers told him they did not know what he was talking about. They did not tie those arrows into a bundle and leave them there after they killed the bear. The younger brother insisted that they did leave them there. The older brother told him he still didn't know what he was telling them.

Then he told him a story about how his older sister had gone missing a long time ago, and just maybe she was still alive and living in the bear den. He would have to go back up there with him and find out who had tied the arrows together.

The younger brother did not want to go back up there again, but his brothers told him that if that was their sister up there she might be needing their help. He was very scared but he went back up to the bear den.

When he got close to the bear den he got his arrow ready and approached the den very slowly, then he heard someone calling out to him from inside the den. "Who is out there?" the voice asked. The boy gave his name and told the voice about how his older sister went missing a long time ago. His brothers had sent him up here to check out the bear den and find out who had tied their arrows into a bundle and then left them by the den.

The girl told her brother that she was his lost sister and that the bear they had just killed was their brother-in-law. She then told her brother that he must go back to the others and tell them that they must dress the bear's head and put it in a good place. She also told him about how she had asked the bear not to fight with her brothers and to give up his life. That was why the bear did not put up a fight when the hunters came for him, he was doing what his wife had asked of him.

The sister told her younger brother that she could not come out and show herself to him, but he must go back and tell his brothers about her and how to take care of the bear's head. They must go back to her village and tell her mother to come for her tomorrow, and to tell her that she has three children and for her to sew some clothes for them and bring them to her.

The young boy ran back down to his brothers and told them that the bear they had killed was their brother-in-law, and that their sister had told him what to do with the bear's head. The sister would wait in the bear den until her mother came for her and her three children.

The brothers did as the sister had instructed them to do with the bear's head. After dressing the head they burned it. They heard a loud scream echoing through the mountains and through the trees as the bear's head turned to ashes in the burning fire. They got very scared when they heard that scream, and packed up in a hurry to leave that place and go home. When they got home they told their mother about killing a bear and then finding their lost sister in the bear den and that she had three children with her.

The next morning their mother went with them back to the bear den to see her daughter and her children, and bring them back to the village. When the daughter got close to the village, she told her mother that her brothers must build a shelter away from the village and not too close to other people, because the humans had strong body odor which can be offensive to her and the children. She had almost become part bear herself after being away from humans for so long, and she had become a very good hunter just like a bear.

The brothers built her a shelter away from other people. Other people pretty well left her and her children alone and did not bother them. Soon other children in the village got used to the children and started playing with them. They lived among the people for a long, long time and her children were getting big.

One summer day her youngest brother came to her and asked her to play like a bear for him. He showed her some willows he had made into little arrows and wanted to practice shooting at her and pretend he was hunting a bear. She told him she could not do that. She told him that his young nephews were finally getting used to people and playing with other children. Why did he want to spoil that for them? She also told him that she and her children were once close to becoming bears and were having a very hard time in keeping the balance between being humans and becoming real bears. She wanted her children to become full humans and live among the people.

Just the same, her brother wouldn't leave her alone. He would come every day and bother them about playing bear hunting with him.

Several days later he sneaked up behind her and threw a bear skin over her and ran away and hid behind some willows. He waited for her to come after him so

that he could shoot at her with his little arrows. As soon as the bear skin was thrown over her she turned into a female bear and turned to protect her young children. She went after her younger brother and caught him and ripped him apart.

Her children also turned into bear cubs and they took off up into the mountains and never came back.

That is why children were taught from a very early age not to say bad things about bears, because they can sense what people are thinking and about other animals too.

Jimmy Joe says a long time ago when people killed a bear they used to bury the eyes. Nowadays they don't do that any more. When people kill moose too, they are supposed to take the eyes out and throw them into the fire. It is bad luck to take the moose head home with the eyes still intact. Jessie Joe's father taught her how to take the moose eyes out when her father killed a moose, and to this day she still does that. Her older sister taught her how to take care of the moose head too. After the moose head has been skinned and the best parts have been removed, they would put the skull high up in a tree before leaving the kill site.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Bear That Did Not Want Light

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing, Yukon  
November 9, 1984  
YNLC Tape 855 (side A) – Story 1

A long, long time ago, animals used to be just like people. They lived and talked like them.

One time, all the animals of this world came together and had a big meeting. The world was dark because there was no sun or moon or stars at that time. When all the animals gathered together, the bear was the boss over all of them.

Two foxes were sitting by a lake, blowing pebbles through a willow bark they had twisted off and saying that it would be like this when a person dies and sinks to the bottom very slowly. When the bear saw them, and heard what they were saying, he picked up a big rock and threw it into the water. The heavy rock made a big splash and disappeared. He told them that it would be like this when a person dies, he would not ever come back.

“And now you tell me, why should they come back?” he asked the fox. The fox got mad at him and told him that they didn’t like what he did and they ran away from him.

After that, all the animals gathered at one place and asked each other how they could change this world, because they were all tired of living in this constant darkness. They had never seen any light, it was always dark. “What can we do to make it be daylight during the day and dark only at night?” The bear stood up and asked them why they should change anything and make daylight. “It should always stay dark,” he told the rest of the animals.

All the animals, the lynx, fox, and wolf, all these animals wanted it to stay dark, because they said the hunting was better in the dark. The rest of the animals like moose, sheep, caribou and other animals all said that they were tired of living in the dark all the time and wanted some changes in this world.

The bear had a big black packsack, he picked this up and disappeared into the bush.

The animals built a big fire and they all gathered around it to decide what they wanted to do. Then they heard the bear hollering in the dark for someone to come and show him the way back to the fire. He had lost his way in the dark. No one

wanted to help him so they left him alone to find his way back by himself. The moose told the others, “Leave him alone. He thinks he’s so smart just because he is bigger than most animals. Let him find his own way back.” So all the animals left him alone. They kept hearing him hollering for a long time and all the animals were laughing at him for getting lost.

Finally after a long time they started calling to him to show him the way towards the fire. The bear saw the fire and found his way back to them. When the bear returned and he saw all the moose and sheep around the fire with all the rest of the animals, he got mad, because that was what he went hunting for. All the animals gathered around his pack and asked him what he had in there and wanted him to show them. The bear reached into his packsack and pulled out some large bear roots. All the animals started laughing at him. The bear got really mad at them for laughing at him. They told him now maybe he could see why they wanted it to be daylight, so that they could see when they are out hunting for food. They told him that they would take care of everything and make light. The bear still did not want light. He told the animals that he was the boss and if he wanted darkness it would stay dark.

Finally the foxes had enough of this argument. They told him, “Just look in your pack and see what you brought back. It’s just full of roots that no one can eat, and besides, you get lost in the dark.”

“We want to be able to hunt in daylight too,” they told him.

The bear still insisted that he did not want daylight. Then a crow flew down to them. The fox jumped straight up into the sky after the crow, and jumped right through the sky and broke daylight. They call this breaking the dawn (**kamba k’ench’äl**). That was how daylight was brought to this dark world. Old timers say that it was the fox that broke daybreak.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## The Thoughtful Slave

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing  
August 19, 1969  
YNLC Tape 855 (side A)

Once there was a lot of people living together at this one place and they had nothing to eat. It was not like it is today. The government helps people a bit that have families and also helps feed their children. In those days people would have to travel around all over the place always looking for food.

This one man was considered a very rich man because he and his wife owned a slave. You call this person **kunda** (slave) in Indian language. They were living by a lake just like this Kluane Lake.

It was around March and it was getting to be spring time. The snow was melting away from the lake shore and from the bluffs around this lake. That slave would dig up the bear roots from the bluffs for his master. When he found a good place where lots of bear roots grew, he would make a big fire, thaw out the ground and then dig up the roots. The slave did this all winter long, travelling all over the place always looking for roots and food for his master. The only thing his master was good at was sleeping all day long. When the slave came home late in the day, he would cut wood, make a fire, and boil some roots for his master.

One day he was walking along the shoreline of this lake. He came to a peninsula and made a fire on one side to thaw out more roots and dig them up. He decided to take a shortcut through the bush to the other side. When he came to the other side of this peninsula he saw an air hole on the lake where the ice had melted away. It was around springtime in the month of April. The month of April is when ice melts away from the shoreline and you can see water. You call this air hole **tadhäl** in Indian language.

When he saw this big air hole, he stood there a long time. He wondered why such a big hole had melted in the ice and what could possibly have made it. As he stood there watching, he saw something that looked like gasoline floating on the surface of the water. He went closer to the hole and dipped his finger into the water and tasted it. The slime on the water tasted like grease. He wondered what was in the water and why it tasted like grease. Then he dipped his whole hand in this time and licked it off his hand. It tasted like fish grease.

Then he saw something like fat which floated to the top of the water so he fished it out. It was fish fat. He returned to the bush and got some birch bark and made it into a large pot and filled it with this fat. It was one of those big fish that you see in the ocean. It had swum into a shallow bay in the lake and had gotten beached there under the ice. It could not get out of there and that's where it had died. He filled his birch bark pot with this fat and took it home to his master. When he got home he made a fire and put the fat on to cook.

After the fat was cooked, he called the master and his wife and told them that he had made some soup with a new type of roots he had found and he wanted them to come and eat it. When his master came in and saw all this grease floating on top of the soup, he asked the slave, "What have you put into the soup? I have never seen root soup like that before." The slave told him that he had not put anything else in the soup. It was just plain old roots, the same as he had always cooked before. But his master did not believe him. He tasted the soup and told the slave that it was not just plain root soup because to him it tasted like fish.

Then the slave told his master about how he had taken a shortcut coming home from the lake and found a big hole that had melted open in the lake. There he had found this big fish which had died under the ice. "That's where I found these fish guts and fat," he told his master.

He told his master that he thought God thought that he was a poor man having a hard time finding food. He knew that he needed help. It was probably God who led him to find the place where the big fish had died.

Early the next morning the slave led them back to where he had found the big fish stuck in the ice. When they got there they saw that the big fish had floated to the top of the water.

What he had found the day before was just a small portion of the fish which had rotted off and had floated to the top. That's what he had found. When they got back there they saw this huge fish floating in the water. They were really happy, because they knew that they would be able to feed all their people.

They spent all that day cutting that big fish and making drying racks to dry the fish meat. Maybe it was a whale, because they say that it was really huge. They made lots of dried fish and put it into their cache.

After a long time the rest of the people that had moved on to hunt for food returned to their camp. They found lots of fish hanging from the drying racks.

Even though the fish was not quite dry they ate some right away. They had gone without food for a very long time and they were really hungry.

The old people say that a long time ago people were always looked after in some way and got help from somewhere when they were starving. This happened way before my time.

My grandmother use to tell me these stories, and she says that God always looked after those people. That was how he led that slave to where that big fish had died, because this slave was out everyday looking for food for his master. He was also helping other people by showing them where to find the roots and how by thawing the ground out, digging out the roots was made a lot easier.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Wolf Story

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

Burwash Landing, Yukon

November 9, 1984

YNLC Tape 856 ( side B) – Story 3

The wolves were just like humans too, a long time ago. They lived and talked like humans but they were still animals.

A long time ago, people used to travel around all over this land hunting for their food. One time, this man broke his leg while he was out with a hunting party. They were a long way from home and he got tired trying to get home in the deep snow. The hunters had killed some caribou and they knew that they could not carry him home and carry some meat back to their families on this same trip. So they made a shelter and boiled up some meat for him. Then they made him comfortable by wrapping him in warm caribou skins, making a big fire and putting lots of wood within his reach. Then they told him to wait there until they came back for him.

He could not get up or do anything for himself because both of his legs were broken. When he woke up the next morning it had snowed through the night. He was completely covered by the snow. The boiled meat that was left for him had frozen. As he lay there under the snow, he tried chewing on some of the frozen boiled meat. Days passed as he lay there under the snow and he did not know how long he had been there.

Then one morning he heard some people talking. They were asking each other where was the best place to set up camp. Then he heard one of them near him say that he had found a good wood pile here. “So let’s make fire right here,” he told the others. He heard them moving around above him. He heard them making a fire and then someone else said he had found a frozen caribou skin that someone had left behind. He dug out a little hole through the snow from his hiding place and watched them through the peep hole.

They were the wolf people. They brought the caribou skin by the fire and all were examining it closely saying that a wolverine must have killed the caribou. Old people say that wolverine is the wolf’s maternal uncle (**undüa**) that they are members of the same clan.

After a long time a wolverine came to the wolves' camp and asked them why were they camping there. Had something happened to one of them? One of the wolves whispered to him that they thought there was someone under the snow, and that he was still alive. The wolverine went over to where the frozen caribou skin was on the ground and lifted it up, and there from under the snow he saw a face looking up at him. "There is a man under here and what are you going to do with him?" the wolverine asked the wolves. The wolves told him to talk to him and see what he was doing there.

The wolverine went back to where the man was and pulled back the caribou skin covering and said, "Brother-in-law, what are you doing under there?" The man told the wolverine that he had broken both his legs a long time ago, and that the people had left him there. They never came back to get him, and he couldn't get up or walk.

The wolf was the boss of the wolverine, and he told the wolverine to help the man and heal his legs so he could walk around with them. The wolverine told the wolves to make a big fire. So they built a huge big fire. Then they cooked some special food and fed it to the man.

After the man had eaten, the wolverine removed the covering from the man's legs, took him by the hand and told him to stand up. The man stood right up, his legs had all healed, and he walked around just as if he had never broken his legs.

After they had all eaten and were getting ready to move on, the wolverine told the wolves to fix the man's legs up really good and go on ahead of them and they would follow. The smallest of the wolves got up and told the man to straighten out his legs in front of him. Then the wolf turned and padded his tail up and down one leg, and then the other leg, and told the man to move his legs. The man moved his legs around and then stood up, he could walk around really good, just like before he broke his legs.

Early the next morning the wolves left the camp and the man and the wolverine followed behind them. They spent all that winter following the wolves. One day they found a place where some people had killed a moose, they followed their trail and saw some smoke coming from a campfire. When they came to where they saw the campfire, they saw some nice fat moose ribs roasting by the campfire. When they got closer they saw some bows and arrows sticking up in the snow and they saw some wolf claws hanging from the bows as decorations.

When the wolves saw those claws being used that way they got really mad. The wolverine told the people that the wolves did not know how they did things, and that was very strange to them. That was why they got mad, he told the people. The wolves camped there that night, but they got up early the next morning and moved on while everybody was still sleeping.

When the man and the wolverine got up, they found everyone had gone, and they found the people's trail and followed them. They travelled a long way before they caught up with the people. They had killed another moose and were roasting some meat by the campfire.

When they came into the camp they saw a wolf's lower chin lying on the ground along with the end of a wolf's tail.

The man and the wolverine went right past the people's camp and travelled on until they caught up with the wolves again.

The wolves asked the man if he had seen the people's bows at the first camp, and saw what was hanging on them and also about what they had seen at the second camp. The man told them that he had just stopped in at those people's camp, and that he did not live with them. The wolves were so mad at the way those people were using the body parts of the wolf for decorations that they turned on him and killed him and tore him apart.

The wolves moved onto another camp after killing the man. They travelled a long way before setting up camp for the night. That night, wolverine sat up all night crying for his brother-in-law:

*äju-shetlq-hq-hà*  
*äju-shetlq-hq-hà,*  
*äju shetlq-hq-hay.*

Finally one of the big wolves jumped up and told him to be quiet so they could get some sleep, and, if he missed that man so much, to go back in the morning and gather all his body parts together and bring them back to them. Early the next morning the wolverine went back and gathered all the man's body parts together and brought them back to the wolves. He followed the wolves instructions and laid out the body parts: head, body, arms and legs, and did exactly what the wolves told him to do.

After he had done that, the one wolf started to sing his doctor song over the body and slowly the body parts started growing back together again. The wolf doctor sang over that man all day, and late that night the man came back to life.

Early the next morning the wolverine told the wolves to take that man and help him find his people. The wolves all took off in different directions to find the man's people. Late in the afternoon the wolves came back and told the man that they had found his people and they would take him back to them. They went on ahead and the man and the wolverine followed behind. Soon they came to a big hill overlooking the camp.

They sat up there until the man caught up with them and showed him the camp they had found. There were campfires burning all through the camp. They asked the man if these were the people that had left him behind to die, and whether he still wanted to go back to them. The man told them that he wanted to go back to his people. The wolves told the man that they would allow him to return to his people if he promised not to tell anyone about them or how they had healed him. They told him again and again, "don't tell anybody." They told the man that they would allow him to stay with his people for two nights, then they would call him back and he was to return to them.

The man went down towards the camp, and when some people saw him coming they gathered around him and asked him to tell them how his legs had been healed. Without even thinking the man told them how the wolves had healed him. After two nights the wolves came back and started crying all around their camp. All night long the wolves cried and kept calling for him. Finally the man went out into the night and shouted to the wolves. He told them if they were so hungry to go and find their own food because there was nothing for them here and cursed them down for keeping the people awake all night. The wolves knew that it was the man they had helped because they knew his voice.

Early the next morning the man saw the wolves sitting on the hillside above the camp where they had brought him two nights ago. He knew that they had come back for him. He went up to them to tell them that he had found his people, and that he wanted to remain with his family. The wolves did not give him a chance to say anything, they just grabbed him and tore him to pieces killing him.

After that the wolves made a promise to each other that they would never help another man again, because they could never be trusted.

That is why long ago when a person killed a wolf, they used to cut the muscles on the front legs and back legs and cut the head off and put it up in a tree.

This story was told to me by my father and other old timers when I was growing up. We were taught never to talk about wolves and other animals. Nowadays young people say anything they want about animals and are never taught proper behavior towards animals. The old people say that the bear and wolves know when people talk about them.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Wolf Story (bilingual)

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

Burwash Landing, Yukon

November 9, 1984

YNLC Tape 856 (side B) – Story 3

- 1 *Ägay shū äju unātāy ughā kwäts'átè nàch'ì. Dän yàkinlì ch'ē tth'ay.*
- 2 *Äyet ch'ē tth'ay dän dämbàt ka k'ànadäl, kaday ka. Äyet zhà, tth'ay, dän k'e dätth'än k'enghür dā. Utth'än k'èagür.*
- 3 *Äju nats'ädúche. They got tired of him. Utth'än tånadàgür. Äyet shàch'ea dän k'ànadäl yū, uzi ts'āghq. Äyet hàts'ìlā dän k'e, nats'änníchì. Äthàn müür all tū äthàn k'e ughq ämür ts'ásì. Ghàk'e ät'äts'íchì äyet dän.*
- 4 *Uzì dhù unathū ts'ìlā. Äyet t'at nats'ínchì. Hàk'e hàch'ea. What can he do? He can't get up, utth'än k'èagür yè. Sür shū ughq hū zhqts'àn pile ts'ásì. Tl'áhù, äju shū ughq shàkwädìch'e hq.*
- 5 *Äyet zhà ch'e. Äyet dän utth'än k'èagür äyet shàch'e. Hahù, yāw uyè kwäyeníkhýāw yū shachì. Don't know how long shachì.*
- 6 *Äyet shànja, kàch'e äda shachì, na. Dùuch'ì k'e. He don't make fire, usür shū ughq nàts'änlā gwàn dāw. Thù shàch'ea dän shachì. Lù dàkwàádhat k'e äthàn tån key'ìq yékhù. Ätl'a ughq yets'èmür yékhù. Äyet kì kwänjì.*
- 7 *Äyet zhà ch'e, shachì ch'äw tl'áhù, yāw t'ay shachì ch'äw, ädìtth'ay. Dän ghàkwänjē, tth'ay. “Gaay, dàkwäch'e k'e zhq̄w? Jū jenītrü k'e?” kenü. “Ätthyèn yū sür ätlq äyet nshän ätlq yū t'at kwàn dàk'q,” kenü. Dän k'e áhù yāw t'ay shachì.*
- 8 *Äyet ch'e, áàn dän kù kwäzhät ta k'àkedäl k'e, “Sür kajänàya kay kwàn kedìnk'q,” ätl'a ägay äny.*

- 1 Wolves too, you cannot talk about them without them being aware of it. They were people too, they say.
- 2 It was like this, they say that people used to travel around all over, looking for their food, for moose. That's when it happened, they say, that this one man broke his legs. His legs were broken.
- 3 There was no way for them to pack him back. They got tired of him. His legs were really broken. That's when, as the people were walking around, they killed some caribou. When the people had done that, they left him. Boiled meat, all (kinds), lots of meat, they made boiled for him. Then they left this man behind.
- 4 They put a caribou hide over him. They put him in that. And then it happened. What can he do? He can't get up with his legs broken. They made a pile of firewood close to him this high. My goodness, they were not concerned about him at all.
- 5 This happened too. This man with the broken legs was sleeping. And then it started to snow with him, covering him right over, where he was sleeping. I don't know how long he was sleeping.
- 6 So, they say, then he lay sleeping. What else could he do? He didn't make a fire even though they had put firewood there for him. So that man just kept sleeping. I don't know for how long after he was chewing on the frozen meat. And then he was chewing on what they had boiled for him. He lived on that.
- 7 Thus it happened, in fact while he was sleeping, while he was sleeping under the snow, he heard something. People were talking, they say. "Gee, what has happened here? Where do we sleep?" they asked. "Down there we could light a fire in that place with lots of wood and stumps," they said. The man, though, was still sleeping under the snow.
- 8 And then it happened, when they were moving about in the people's old camp site around there, the wolf said, "You guys make fire on the pile of wood."

- 9 Äyet shàniḡ äyū uzí dhù äla. Äyet kàkinlà. Ádāy uzí dhù kàkinlà. Uzí dhù nashànàtän. Äyet kàch'e uzí dhù kàkinlà k'e äyet dän äthū ghàkwäjäntl'ùr káthq̄. Dän k'e kuk'wánáta k'e cheèjäl. “Nàday khī äghàn t'ay,” kenu. “Dän äda.” Kàkeni, “Dän äda. Dän kwänjì uzí dhù t'ay,” kenī. Yāw ukay nìkhyāw ch'ā äyet.
- 10 Nàghay, ätl'a ägay undü ch'e yèts'āni. Quite a while ägay kē kùya. Kàk'e kàni nàghay demūra ke ta, “Heey! Dàkwàzhà kā dàátth'i?” änu.
- 11 “Dän äda,” yèts'ānu. “Dän äda äyī yū. Äyet uzí dhù t'ay dän kwänjì äda,” yèts'ānu. Kàk'e āniḡ, äyet uzí dhù dāy äshàt k'e, äyī dän uk'ānāta k'e, tū äju kwājē, tth'ay. Äju hello ch'i änu.
- 12 Äyet yèni, “Dän jenìda ch'e. Äyī äda,” kwäyèni. “Dàdátèl k'e? Dùunje du áthān k'e uts'à'ù dàátth'i,” änu.
- 13 Kàk'e kànu, “Dùúch'e? Mäts'àn kwänje,” keyènu ägay.
- 14 Tl'à āni tth'ay nàghay, “Ála-a? Dìnízhà kwàch'āw?” yèni.
- 15 Äyet dän shàni, “Ah kwädq̄y ch'āw áttth'ān k'àägür. Át'àshets'íchi kwàch'e,” änu. “I can't get up,” änu.
- 16 Ägay kutth'āt nli tth'ay tl'áhù nàghay. Kàk'e kàniḡ, “Hähooyh! Tl'ákù, dákē íshal nji äyè k'ànudā nì, ághq̄ nási,” änu. “Kwàn dāk'à,” kwäyèni. Ughày ch'āw kwàn kānk'q, ägay.
- 17 Lù thājq̄ ts'ímür ts'ilà. Ughq̄ ghàts'é múr. Kēghānnshāt. Kàk'e ich'ākwädāla. Tl'áhù äyet dän utth'ān k'àagür, tl'áhù nīya k'e, äyet dän k'ànada làch'ì.
- 18 Äyet shàniḡ, “Äkù dän kē äyè k'ànuḡa. Äyè company ulè. Dákē k'ànüt'àr shì,” änu.
- 19 Äyet kàniḡ, dän ghàdinjäl tl'à, tth'adāy nakinchi. Ketth'ān nttth'ìla. Äyet shàniḡ, “Dùjzhà kwàch'āw,” keyènu.

- 9 So they say, there was a caribou skin lying there. That's the one they lifted. They lifted that caribou skin. The caribou skin was frozen. It happened that when they lifted that caribou skin, that person suddenly glared up at them. As he looked at them they jumped back. "Frozen lynx under there!" they said. "It is a person." They said, "It's a person there. A living person is under the caribou skin," they said. It happened that the snow had snowed on him.
- 10 Well, they say that the wolverine is the wolf's maternal uncle. After quite a while he arrived behind the wolves. Then the wolverine said, to all his nephews, "Hey! What happened that you all are sitting around?" he asked.
- 11 "A person is there," they told him. "There's a person down there. Under that caribou skin there is a live person," they said to him. Then they said, as he lifted up that caribou skin, as the person down there looked up at him, he did not talk at all, they said. He did not even say hello.
- 12 Then he said, "The person is sick. The one down there," he said to them. "What are you guys going to do? What do you guys want him to do as you all sit around in front of him?" he asked.
- 13 Then he said, "What about you? You talk to him," said the wolves.
- 14 After, the wolverine spoke, they say. "Brother-in-law! What happened to you?" he asked him.
- 15 That man said, "Ah, a long time ago my legs got broken. They left me behind, they did," he said. "I can't get up," he said.
- 16 The wolverine is in fact the boss of the wolves, they say. Then he said, "Hähooyh! Okay, fix him for me in order that he will walk places with me as I walk behind you guys," he said. "You guys make a fire," he told them. Now the wolves made a fire, following his order.
- 17 They made very strange boiled things. They boiled it for him. They fed him. Then they uncovered him. Finally, when that man whose legs were broken finally stood up, that man walked around.
- 18 Then he said, "OK, he will walk with me behind the people. He will keep me company. We will walk behind you guys," he said.
- 19 Then they say, after the people had eaten, they sat him upright. They straightened his legs out. Then they said, "What happened to you?" they asked.

- 20 “Äkiǰzhà áttth’ān k’āagür kwäch’e,” änu. “Äyet shäts’inlà, ät’äshäts’inchi,” änu.
- 21 Äts’amür tl’ä, dän ghàdinjäl. Kàk’e hani näw nàghaya, “Hùha’ ákù! Dákē dīnshal thān shāwa. Äyidükhan,” äni, “Dákē k’anūt’är shì. Utth’ān kay ághq shàw náte. Utth’ān nási,” änu.
- 22 Hùch’à ägay dùsèla nìya. Nìya k’e, “Á’ù ntth’ān jū kǎnn’i,” yèts’ānū. Dätth’ān jū kà’i. Nch’ā ägay dāshè yè tū ugà níkhäl dāy. Łù ätl’ä, dàshū, tày hū, “Ntth’ān nchiq,” yènu. Äyet ye’i. Dätth’ān zhā’i. Dāshè yè ye’i. Utth’ān gà yeyé’i ánāy.
- 23 Jà dän neètla k’e chèètla tth’ay á’àn chùzhan. Ätlä k’e dän kē kedà’är. Ntl’ē ch’āw dän dàjäl. Kwänáthe ägay dà’är. Dän kē keat’är. Kàkech’i ch’āw dän kē k’àket’är all winter long.
- 24 Äju dän yèenjì yū. Kathana ch’e dhäl kay dù dän shaájäl lq k’e dän kanday jenäjäl lā’. Äyet k’e dän kē kya’är ch’āw. Á’ù kwän shāw k’e kǐ’a äthèn yū jà.
- 25 Jà kwän shāw dāk’àn ghāy kay k’e kanday shī ts’ách’ù hq’. Kanday ts’ääkhì hq’ k’e. Ntl’e näts’āni dän kē ha’är. Dän kē kākǐ’är k’e k’à chì ätq k’akädà’är. Ägay t’äke’är k’e, “Ála äk’ā k’à kò nǐ’i?” äni tth’ay.
- 26 “Ēhe, k’à kò ätq nǐ’iq ádāy yū. Sál k’à kò ätq nǐ’i ts’än k’e ägay kegān ut’adìnch’i shū nǐ’i,” äni tth’ay. Äyet zhà ägay kuyàkwìdhät.
- 27 “Äju, äju deyènjì kà ni. Kùkā zhà dáyàkùdhät,” nu, ägay ts’än. Ägay give up. Ätl’ä k’e ntl’e dän kwāshq dādäl k’e dādän k’e shākenächī. Atl’a hù jū kākēnje dän kē kyä’är. Ts’ätlāw dän kē k’äkät’är, kanday yè uzi shū keghā.

- 20 It happened to me that my legs got broken,” he said. “Then they did this to me, they abandoned me,” he said.
- 21 After they cooked, the people ate. Then the wolverine said, “My goodness sakes! I walk by myself behind you guys. Heal him,” he said. “We will walk behind you guys. Make good his legs for me. Heal his legs,” he said.
- 22 After a while a little wolf got up. When he got up, “Straighten your legs toward me like this,” they told him. He did his legs like this [narrator gesture]. Then the wolf patted with his tail all along, all the way up (one leg). After that, again, the other one too. “You do this with your legs,” he told him. Then he did it. He did this to his legs [narrator gesture]. He did it with his tail. He did it along his legs, all the way up.
- 23 All of a sudden, when the man got up, he marched, they say, to outside. After that, they went behind the people. Early in the morning, the people left. Before them, the wolves had left. They followed behind the people. This is what they did, they followed behind the people all winter long.
- 24 He had not been with people for a long time. All of a sudden, down the mountain, it looked like people had come around and it looked like people were chasing after a moose. Then, while they were following these people, way down there a big fire was rising up, way, way down there.
- 25 There, where the big fire was burning, they were roasting moose ribs. They had killed a moose. In the evening, they say, they were still following the people. When they arrived behind the people, they passed a bow lying there. When they caught up to the wolves, “Brother-in-law, did you see an arrow shaft?” he asked, they say.
- 26 “Yes, I saw the arrow shaft lying up there. When I saw the gopher arrow shaft lying there, I also saw a wolf’s toenail attached,” he said, they say. That’s when the wolves got really mad.
- 27 “No, they do not know you people. That’s why it is, that you guys are mad,” he said to the wolves. The wolves gave up. After that, at night while those two were sleeping, the people moved out, but those two kept on sleeping. So when they found out, they went after the people. Always while following the people, those two killed moose and caribou too.

- 28 Äyet ts'än kedäjäl kàch'iq dän kàanjäl kē kyadäl. Kanday k'e tən shajennch'ür. Kàch'e dän ukē shach'ea á'ù.
- 29 Ägay dayān shū, ätl'a udaghà, ätl'a nena daghà, uyèdà dayān ätq áyiyū äzhän shū ägay shèlà. Ushèlà, ägay shè lan yèts'äni ushèlà yèts'äni.
- 30 Äye nu, dän kē ntl'e tåka'är. Äthän k'e ghàts'ách'ü. Ämür kanday shī yè ts'ách'ü. Łåka'är k'e, yeka kàni k'e keyedákät k'e, “Ála?” keyènu, “Ála! K'à kò äk'ā n'iq?” keyènu.
- 31 “Èhē, k'à kò n'ì.”
- 32 “Dàhùch'ì k'à kò nìlà?” yèts'änū.
- 33 “Ägay dayān ätq ádāy äyet k'e ushèlà shū,” äni. Ägay yàkwìthät k'e, tū keyàts'adäch'äl. Keyedàkhì.
- 34 Ätl'è k'e shàniq, dän däjäl. Tl'è k'e áhù unāy next camp. Kàk'e shàniq áhù nàghaya k'e äsay, äsay. “Ála,” nu k'e, “Äju shetlq -haaaaw - äju shetlq qqq-haaaa.” Ntl'e nāy nàghaya k'e, ntl'e nāy äsaya, äsay, “Äju shetlq-haaaaw- äju shetlqqa.”
- 35 “Gwaay! Dän uts'amala n̄yet. Tl'áhù! Dän shuyàni,” ts'ènu. “Nda,” yèts'änū. “Ädāw ughq nànnída k'e, uthàn nashìlè,” yèts'änū.
- 36 Kàkù nädàzha ádāy utän. Ukē nayanìkù ù yu. Äyet kànch'e tū uthàn ch'i nashèla . Ulà uts'än ghànazhā tth'ay dā. Ntl'e tàket'är n̄tth'ay edàkq k'e.
- 37 Ätl'è shànì ahù ula uyè tånadāl ntl'ē ch'äw. Äyet ts'än däjäl k'e tl'áhù dän k'ū k'ekējäl, nàghay. Tl'áhù dän k'e kwàn shāw ghàdàk'àn. Łàts'ì ätlq kùlì. Kàk'e kàch'e, dän udu dätth'i, keni. Ätl'a äkhì ät'änkji.

- 28 As they left from there, that's when they followed where the people were going. The moose tracks and the trail were together. It could be the people's trail this way.
- 29 A wolf's lower jaw too, even its chin hair, even the chin hair of an animal, the lower jawbone was lying down there, as was a wolf's tail-tip too. His tail-tip, is what they call the end of a wolf tail. His tail-tip they call it.
- 30 And so, they arrived at night behind the people. They cooked meat. They cooked boiled meat and moose ribs. When those two arrived, that's when they asked those two, " Brother-in-law!" they asked those two. "Did you see that arrow shaft?" they asked those two.
- 31 "Yes, I saw the arrow shaft."
- 32 "What kind of arrow shaft was it?" they asked him.
- 33 "A wolf's jawbone is lying up there, and his tail-tip too," he said. The wolves, getting mad, thoroughly ripped him apart. They killed him.
- 34 After that, they say, the people left. After that, (they went to) the next camp, over that way. That's when, they say, the little wolverine was really crying and crying. "My brother-in-law," he cried, "Äju shetlā -haaaaw - äju shetlā äää-haaaa." All night long the little wolverine, all night long he was crying and crying, "Äju shetlā -haaaaw - äju shetlāää."
- 35 "Gee wiz! You are chasing the people's sleep away. Enough! Let people sleep," they told him. "Sit," they told him. "Then go back for him and gather his body parts," they told him.
- 36 Then he went back way up along his trail. He followed along it exactly. When he got there, he gathered every last bit of his body parts. He made sure even about the parts of his hand, they say. He returned at night, they say, when it was just getting light.
- 37 After, they say, he came back with his brother-in-law early in the morning. When those two left from there they finally passed a people's camp, the wolverine. In fact the people had several big fires burning. Lots of smoke was billowing. That's when people were waiting for him, they say. Then there was a healing through hands-sweeping-over.

- 38 “Dän nànje n’ìq?” keyèny. “Ughq nànnzhàa?” keyèny.
- 39 “Èhè’,” äny. “I am going to see them.”
- 40 “Lāwa ka, “Ägay nashäkikhì,” ch’e dunì nà. Don’t tell nobody,” keyèny. “Lāw ughq kundūr nà,” keyèny.
- 41 Äyet shànìq, “Ughq nùnzhàa?” keyèni tth’ay.
- 42 “Èhè’,” änī.
- 43 “Lāki níkhēl jè nka huts’unjē hì. Kàk’e dän ghq nūnzhà,” yèts’äny. “Lāwa dághq kundūr nà, ntth’ān nayītsi yū,” keyèny.
- 44 Ätl’ā k’e dän tannya k’e, äny.
- 45 “A’ay! Dìjzhà ch’āw? Ntth’ān shāw nāzhà,” keyèny.
- 46 Lù ch’āw, “Ägay nashäkikhì ch’e,” äny. Lù keyùnjì du ätl’a äyet, “Ägay nashäkikhì ch’e ätth’ān,” äny.
- 47 Ätl’ā k’e ahù two night ägay tl’áhù kù yana ägay nì’är k’e ghàsāy yè k’e, “Gho-ow-ow-ow-ow.” Ntl’e nāy yènsay, yènsay.
- 48 Äyet änìq, “Hähooyh!” Uyèkwìdhät.
- 49 Ägay uyenāsay nā ntl’e. “Dāts’ān taadúzhà du.” They want him to come back.
- 50 Äyet nì ntth’ay, “Hähooyh! Shèk’ān. Yambät ye ghq nū tànn’är áday,” äny jà. He cuss them down ägay ts’ì. They know it’s him. Ätl’a dādän äni yū keyènjì, ägay.
- 51 Äyet kàch’ì tl’áhù nadāzha ádāy kuta ts’àn. Äyet keyìlà. Ägay keyèts’ädäch’äl, tì usàla ts’àn. Ät’ākìyìchì nū. No more. Dän ät’ākìchì.
- 52 Tl’ā, “Äju dän ts’àn nànnìnji. No more.”
- 53 Ägay ts’ädākhē k’e dän ts’adaākhe làch’e. Ätl’a long time ago ägay shū dìkhi jè nà, zhān uch’ät, sinew, kākā ts’anàlè. Lāyde.

- 38 “Do you see the people living?” they asked him. “Do you want to go back to them?” they asked him.
- 39 “Yes,” he replied. “I am going to see them.”
- 40 “Don’t you ever tell them, “The wolves healed me.” Don’t tell anybody,” they said to him. “Don’t tell about it,” they said to him.
- 41 Then they said, “Do you really want to go back to them?” they asked, they say.
- 42 “Yes,” he said.
- 43 “We will call for you after two nights. Then you will go back to those people,” they told him. “Don’t tell them about us, that we healed your legs,” they said.
- 44 After, when he came among the people, he talked.
- 45 “Hey! What happened to you? Your legs got better.” they said.
- 46 Suddenly, “The wolves healed me,” he said. So that they would know about this, “The wolves, they healed me, my legs,” he said.
- 47 Because of this, after two nights the wolves gathered all around the camp and they started to cry, “Gho-ow-ow-ow-ow.” All night long they cried and cried.
- 48 The man shouted, “Hähooyh!” He got mad.
- 49 The wolves were crying for him all night. “We want him to return to us.” They wanted him to come back.
- 50 That man said, “Hähooyh! Go away! You go back up that way for your food,” he said. He cursed the wolves. They knew it was him. Then the wolves knew that it was he himself that spoke.
- 51 After a while he finally went back up among them. They did this. The wolves ripped him apart into really little pieces. They threw him away. No more. They shunned people.
- 52 After, “We will not help people. No more.”
- 53 When you kill wolves, it is just like killing people. Since a long time ago, also, if you kill a wolf, you have to pull out this back leg sinew, the sinew. That’s what you do.

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- 54** *Ätl'a kwädāy ts'an k'e kànàch'ì ch'e ka díshì. Unāl ughq kwíndür zhän. Ätl'a uch'ät kànìch'i, yänù shu, uyāch'ät shu, ätl'a first time ägay ts'ädākhē k'e, ätl'a kàts'ä'ì yū, äniq áta. Ughq kwändür k'e ghàý díshì shahū. Äju ní'ì. Gwàn ch'äw just kwändür ghàý díshì.*
- 55** *Uka shädíkät k̄a n-nàdíshì dāzhän kwändür. Ätl'a ätā ándāl kwändür k'è níshì. N-nāl kwíndür.*
- 56** *Uncle Sam [Johnson] yè Jesia [Johnson] shu dūnkät ñjè. Ätl'a ts'enke kwändür yèkenjì ka.*
- 57** *Tl'áhù kwäch'e.*

- 54** Because they have done that from long ago I am telling this. For that reason I am telling about it. The sinew that stretches this way, this way too, the leg muscle too, the first thing when you kill a wolf, this is what you do, my father said. I too am telling according to the story about it. I have not seen it. But now I tell just according to the story.
- 55** I am telling you this story because you asked me for it. Just like my father told me the story, I am saying it. I am telling it to you.
- 56** You ask uncle Sam [Johnson] and Jesia [Johnson] too. They know lots of ancestor stories very well.
- 57** That's all.

## Äsùya and The Wolverine

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

Burwash Landing, Yukon

August 19, 1969

YNLC Tape 858 (side A) – Story 1

In the old times people say that the wolverine was also a man who was called Nùghay.

One time Nùghay and Äsùya went hunting. When Äsùya came to where Nùghay was living, Äsùya married Nùghay's sister .

One day Nùghay told Äsùya he wanted to go hunting with him. He knew where there were lots of moose and he would show him if he went with him. So Äsùya and his brother-in-law went hunting. Nùghay wanted to get Äsùya away from camp because he was planning to kill him.

They went a long way and it got dark and it was getting cold, so they decided to make camp for the night. While Äsùya was making camp Nùghay was gathering wood. He was gone a long time before he returned with a little bit of wood.

They were getting ready to go to sleep when Nùghay returned with a rotted out stump. He was planning to burn Äsùya's **dänthù** [fur-lined pants with mocassins attached] and kill him. Before Äsùya went to bed he filled the rotten stump with dry branches so it would burn all night. Nùghay said to Äsùya, "Brother-in-law we better get to sleep, so that I can show you where the moose are in the morning."

When they got settled into their nice warm blankets, Nùghay started to tell Äsùya stories. He told stories long into the night. Äsùya was getting sleepy listening to Nùghay telling stories. Nùghay waited until he thought Äsùya was sleeping. Then he got up and switched their **dänthù** from where they were drying on the drying rack by the fire. Then he went back to bed.

Äsùya waited until Nùghay was sleeping and then switched the **dänthù** back. Then he heard Nùghay get up and watched him stuff his **dänthù** inside the rotten log and throw it into the fire and jump back into his blanket.

The next morning Äsùya got up very early and got dressed and was putting on his **dänthù** when Nùghay jumped up and tried to grabbed the **dänthù** away from Äsùya saying that they were his **dänthù**, because he had hung it on his side of the pole. Äsùya told him that these were not Nùghay's **dänthù** because it was sewn a different way. He made Nùghay take a good look at it and it was sewn differently

from the one he had. Then Nùghay cried out, “Oh my brother-in-law, what am I going to do? My **dänthù** have fallen into the fire.” Äsùya told him that he had to go back home from here. Nùghay said to Äsùya, “Brother-in-law, please send someone back to me with a pair of **dänthù** when you get home.”

As Äsùya was getting ready to leave he asked Nùghay why he had stuffed his **dänthù** into the log and then burned it. Then Nùghay knew that he had been found out and he knew that he could not do anything else. So Nùghay started calling for the north wind to freeze Äsùya. Äsùya went down the trail and found a sheltered place to wait out the storm.

When the wind had stopped he went back to where he had left Nùghay and found his frozen body. Äsùya went back home to his wife and stayed there for another two nights. Then he told his wife about Nùghay burning his own **dänthù** and that he had left him there and she should go and look for him. When she got there she found his frozen body.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

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## Äsùya and the Crow

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing, Yukon  
August, 19, 1969  
YNLC Tape 858 (side A) – Story 2

A long time ago people were going hungry. The men would go out hunting every day but they could never kill a moose or caribou. The crow would follow the people wherever they went. When the men would go out hunting, the crow would always fly ahead of those hunters. When he saw a moose he would fly down to the moose and tell him, “Run away, run away, the hunters are coming for you,” and the moose would run away.

They could never get a moose and lots of people starved to death on account of that crow. After the person died the crow would eat the body. That was why he did not want the people to get food, because then he would be out of food. He would no longer have dead bodies to feed on.

The men had tried killing him with their bows and arrows, but he always sat way up high on top of the tallest tree where the arrows could not reach him. As soon as he saw someone approaching he would fly away and no one could kill him.

One day Äsùya and his wife came to the village and there were only a few families left. Äsùya told his wife that he was going to pretend to be sick and make it look like he was dead. “Lay my body out and fix my feet and lay my hands out beside me. Cover my body with some branches and cry for me,” he told his wife.

The crow landed on top of a tree close by and watched her laying her husband’s body out. When she had finished she turned to the crow nearby and cursed at him. The crow just sat up there on top of the tree and laughed at her. “See what you have done to a very good man. Why don’t you come down here so I can club you down and kill you too?” she yelled at the crow.

“Why don’t you just go away?” the crow called back to her. Then she turned to her husband one more time and put his hands over his eyes and put tree branches over his face. After she had done all that, she left her husband’s body to return home. The crow followed her to make sure she was going away.

When she was far away and the crow was sure she was leaving he turned back and returned to where Äsùya’s body was.

When the crow got back to the body, he walked around the body and said, “Now what part is the best place to start eating, the nose cartilage or start at the back fat first,” he said as he strutted around Äsùya’s body. Then the crow jumped up on the body and walked toward the head part. Äsùya reached up through the branches and grabbed the crow around one leg and pulled it down through the branches. The crow tried pulling on his leg but it wouldn’t come out. He thought his feet had gone through the branches. The crow said, “What has the man down there done to me? Has he finally caught me?” as he was trying to pull his feet out.

“Yes, **tatsàn** has caught you,” Äsùya said as he jumped up from under the branches. The crow begged Äsùya to let him go. Äsùya picked up a big club and broke both of the crow’s wings.

“Now **tatsàn** has got you,” Äsùya told him as he tied a rope around the crow’s neck and led him down the trail towards their camp. The crow jumped up and down saying, “Kaak, kaak,” as Äsùya led him away. With both wings broken he could not fly.

Äsùya led the crow to where his wife had set up camp. He told his wife to tie the crow up to a tree where he could watch him. Äsùya then went to gather wood. He gathered lots of wood and made a big bonfire. Then he brought the crow close to the fire and told him to sit there. Soon the crow started jumping up and down crying, “Älu, älu,” But Äsùya just kept him there until the crow burned to a crisp. Just a little pile of smoldering black charcoal was left where the crow had once been.

The next day Äsùya went hunting and got a couple of moose for the people. It took them at least three days to pack in all that moose meat.

On the fourth day Äsùya saw the black charcoal still smoldering by the fire. Finally Äsùya picked it up and threw it into the snow. Just as the charcoal landed in the snow it turned into a black crow and flew up into the sky and flew away. Äsùya called after him and told him that he was going to be small from now on and not to bother people again.

That is why the crows are all small and black today.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

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## Äsùya and the Mouse

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

Burwash Landing, Yukon

August 19, 1969

YNLC Tape 858 (side A) – Story 3

Äsùya was following some people's trail. The trail was well used. As he was walking along he met a porcupine on the trail. The porcupine had a sheep skin on his back. Äsùya ran up to it and clubbed it and threw the little blanket up onto a tree.

Then Äsùya cooked and ate the porcupine. After he ate, he started back down the trail. Further down the trail he heard someone calling, "Kalà, kalà, my little puppy kalà, kalà, come here, come here," the voice called. Äsùya went towards the voice and saw a mouse coming towards him. The mouse people were using porcupines as dogs. Äsùya had eaten that mouse's dog.

The mouse came up to Äsùya and asked if he had seen her dog, because her dog was missing. Äsùya told her that he had not seen any dog, but that he had met a porcupine on the trail and had killed and eaten it.

"My, what are you saying, and where is my blanket that he was packing?" the mouse asked him.

Äsùya told her, "Oh I threw that old blanket up on a tree."

The mouse ran back to where she had left the rest of the people and Äsùya followed her down the trail. The mouse told the rest of her people that she had met a man that eats dogs and that he was coming this way, so everybody had to watch their dogs and make sure that they were all tied up close to their camp.

When Äsùya came there he saw several porcupine wandering about the mouse people's camp.

One woman told the men to kill two dogs for Äsùya to eat. "Maybe if he is kept busy eating the two dogs he will leave the rest alone," she told the people. Then the people gave him two porcupines as a gift. Äsùya was happy, now he had plenty of meat for his own use.

Äsùya lived with the mouse people for a long time. The mouse lady that he had first met, whose porcupine he had eaten, gave him her young virgin daughter to be his wife. That is why they called him the virgin's husband.

One day the men were going hunting and Äsüya went with them. They were setting out snares for moose. The men told him that the snares he had set were too big and that the moose will go right through them. As he watched them setting out their small snares, he began to wonder what kind of animal they called moose.

After all the snares were set out some of the men went up the valley to chase the moose down to where the snares were set. They told Äsüya to stay and watch the snares and to kill the moose as soon as it was caught in the snare. The men went up the valley to chase the moose down towards the snares.

Later in the afternoon Äsüya heard the men yelling, “The moose are coming, the moose are coming.” He waited looking to see the moose, but he did not see any moose coming. He just saw three wild turkeys fly past him and land through the trees below where he was waiting.

The mouse men came back to where he was waiting and when they saw that he had not killed any moose they were mad. They told his father-in-law that he should take back his daughter and send him away because he was not a very good hunter for letting those moose get away.

Äsüya asked the old grandfather, “What kind of animal do you people call moose?” because he did not see any moose while he was waiting by the snares. He had just seen three wild turkeys fly by and land in the trees below him.

The old man was really mad and stomped around asking, “What do you mean you just saw turkeys.” Then he turned to the rest of the people asking, “My goodness, is he really that stupid not to know what a moose looks like?”

Äsüya left the men and went down to where he had seen the turkeys land in the trees. He found the turkeys and shot all three with his bow and arrows. He brought them back to the hunters and told that them this was what he called wild turkey. When he returned to where he had left the hunters they had already left for home, so he followed their trail and caught up with the old man who was mad at him for letting what he called moose escape. He threw one of the turkeys at him and told him, “Here is your moose.” The turkey landed on top of him with one of the turkey’s legs pinning him down. Then Äsüya went on to catch up with the rest of the hunters. When he caught up to them they were rushing back towards where the old man was still yelling for them to come back and help. He was still stuck under the big turkey.

When he returned he found his wife gone. He went looking for her and found her with her mother. Her mother had taken her back because he had not killed those moose and had let them get away.

The people were all kept busy bringing in all the meat on their little toboggans. After all the meat was brought in, they cooked one of the turkeys and fed him. Äsùya sat down and ate almost half of that turkey. The mouse people were really surprised at how much he ate. They said, “Look at that man eating the whole moose by himself.”

After he had eaten, Äsùya went hunting and killed a real moose and brought some moose stomach and meat back to his wife. He hung the fat moose guts up on a drying rack to dry. During the night his mother-in-law got up and took down the fat bum guts and threw them into the fire. When the fat caught on fire it really started to crackle and splatter grease everywhere and the mouse people all ran away. Äsùya took the fat out of the fire and cleaned it up and hung it back up and told his mother-in-law not to throw his food into the fire again.

The next day he got the people together and told them to help bring the rest of the moose meat into camp.

One night he was returning late, and in the dark he fell through thin crusted ice on the creek he was crossing, and got his snowshoes wet. When he got home he stood his snowshoes up by the side of the doorway to dry them off.

The next morning he heard a lot of commotion outside. People were screaming and running around. He went out and asked his father-in-law who was there what all the excitement was about. The old man told him that Äsùya had come back with dust from in front of a bear den, The mouse people called this bear water bear. When they saw the frozen water on the snowshoes they said that he had found a bear den and had come back with the dust-from-in-front-of-bear-den. They were very afraid that the bear would follow and get them all. He told his father-in-law about how he had to cross a creek coming back and had gotten his snowshoes wet and that that was just frozen water on his snowshoes.

Meanwhile all the mouse people were attacking his snowshoes and shooting at them with grass blades. They were using grass blades as arrow shafts.

The people told him to come with them and that they would show him where the big bear lived. They led him back to a lake and he did not see any bear there. They stood there by the lake waiting for the bear to come out, but the bear did not

come out. The mouse people told him to go back home and get his blanket. Äsüya did as he was told. He went back home and got his blanket.

When he came back they told him to throw it out onto the ice. He took his blanket off and threw it onto the ice. All of a sudden the ice started breaking up and a huge water snake came to the surface of the water from under the ice. The mouse people started shooting at it with their grass arrows but it did not hurt the big snake. Äsüya killed that snake for them with his real arrows. The news of Äsüya killing the bear spread among the mouse people and they all came running down to the edge of the lake to see the bear that Äsüya had killed.

Äsüya helped the people cut up the snake and boiled the meat and they all ate some meat. Then he gave some meat to his mother-in-law and told them to eat it all and not to save any of it. They wondered why he wanted them to eat all the meat, so they saved some meat.

The next morning he found all the mouse people with their heads frozen to their pillows. He chiseled out his wife's and her parents' heads. He told them he hoped that they had learned a lesson from this experience and to obey when people tell you not to do certain things. There is always a reason behind it. He had told them not to save any of that snake meat and the fat had thawed and then frozen again. That was why their heads had frozen onto their pillows. After he had made sure that all the mouse people were safe, he told them that he had other places to go. He left them to continue with his journey.

Long ago people say that Äsüya had long beautiful hair and all kinds of bad animals had tried to kill him so they could take his hair.

People don't really know what kind of man Äsüya was. He went around the world getting rid of all the bad animals that used to eat people. He could turn himself into different forms to deal with certain kinds of animals. Some say that he was a beaver man.

Tl'áhù. That's all.



## Jimmy Copper Joe

### *Uts̄ Nèkhits'älj*

Jimmy Copper Joe of the Kajät (Crow) clan was the son of K'akhyұamą and Copper Joe (Dháldata). Mary Jacquot, Jessie Joe, and Copper Lily Johnson were his sisters. Two other sisters, Kitty and Bertha, died at a young age. Their grandfather, Copper Joe's father, was Copper Chief from the White River area.

After Jimmy's mother died, Copper Joe took Jimmy and his sister Jessie to live with their aunt at Lynx City. Then he took Jimmy's other sisters, Mary, Kitty, and Copper Lily Johnson back to the White River area where their grandfather Copper Chief had a house.

Jimmy spent many years working as a guide for a big game outfitter. He used to pass through Aishihik on his way to guiding in the Nisling area. In Aishihik he met and married Jenny Isaac. She was the daughter of Chief Albert Isaac and Elsie Johnson Isaac. He and Jenny moved to Burwash Landing where his four children were born, Art, Louise, Benson, and Bonnie.

There is more information in this volume about this Elder in his story, *Life of an Indian*.

## *Jimmy Joe's Stories*

### **Sha Kay Dadaya**

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing, Yukon  
November 9, 1984  
YNLC Tape 856 (side B)

**[The first part of this story was told in English. It was completed in Southern Tutchone by his sister, Jessie Joe.]**

No one really knows who Sha Kay Dadaya was. Old timers say that he came from heaven and he was the one that made the sun and the moon. He was an orphan. He was found by an old grandmother while people were travelling through this one place.

The grandmother also had two sons-in-law and three sisters to look after her. She was coming way behind them when they were travelling. She heard a baby crying so she turned off the trail and found a naked baby boy lying under a big tree. She had a rabbit skin rope with her and she wrapped the baby in that and took the baby with her.

Long after the people had set up camp, she arrived with that baby. She asked the other people who had left their baby behind under a big tree on the side of the trail.

Nobody knew about that baby or where it came from. No one wanted him so she adopted that baby boy. It did not take long for that boy to grow up. He could do everything for his grandmother like hunting rabbits and other small animals.

One day his grandmother told him to take their dog with him to help pack the rabbits home, because every time he went out he came home with lots of rabbits and it was too many for a little guy to pack.

He told his grandmother that he will drag the dog along behind him while checking his rabbit snares. He left the camp leading the dog behind him, but as soon as he got around the corner he had choked the dog. When he came home he told his grandmother he had worked hard dragging around this dog behind him all day and he was tired. When his grandmother went out to look at the dog, he was dead and his mouth was full of snow. His grandmother was mad at him.

One day his grandmother told him that she was going to make some rabbit snares for him and she would like him to go out and hang up some snares for the rabbits.

Grandmother made some rabbit snares out of sinew and he went out to set some snares. After that he went out to check his snares every day, but never brought any rabbits home.

Days went on and still he never caught any rabbits. He told his grandmother that he had hung up lots of snares. But how come there is no rabbit? One day his grandmother went with him to check his snares and she found the snares hanging from trees here and there. She told him it was no wonder he could not catch any rabbits.

She took down all the snares off the trees and showed him how to find a well-used rabbit trail and set the spring snares. Every day after, he started bringing one or two rabbits home every time he went out to check the snares. He had lots of snares set out, but that's all he brought home every day. No one knew what he was doing. Here he had built a cache in the bush away from their camp and he was storing the rabbits in there and just bringing home enough for them to eat each day.

One day his brother-in-law told him that they had seen lots of caribou tracks. They had to go out and track them down the next day and get some meat for the people. The people were running out of food.

That night this young man told his grandmother to make him a pair of snowshoes because he wanted to go hunting with his brother-in-law the next day. His grandmother made him a small pair of snowshoes, about two or three feet long. That's how small he was. He sat by the fire and started breaking some tree branches and started singing. His grandmother told him to be quiet but he sat up singing that song all night long. No one knows what that song means, but it goes something like this:

*tudał-tl'äle-hà-notl'è-hu'ena-sha-kà-hà-hay-he-yà.*

The next day he went hunting with the hunters and he showed them where the caribou were. They killed some caribou and they roasted some fat caribou meat for him. When he got home he told his grandmother that war was coming. He told his sister to get him some water in a birch bark pot and put it into the fire. That pot floated to the other side of the lake. He did that several times and each time he put that birch bark pot into the fire it floated to the other side of the lake. He told his grandmother that that was how many people were going to be saved when war comes.

[**Jessie Joe continues to tell the story from here in Southern Tutchone**]

When the birch bark pot came back he threw it away. Then he dug out a shelter under the snow for his grandmother and told her to hide under there. Some people did not believe him when he told them what was going to happen. Some people used to make fun of him all the time when he told them things about things he had seen in his visions.

Some young boys would step on his snowshoes and he would trip and fall down. Then they would step on him and push him into the snow and then laugh at him. They did that because he was so small and they always made fun of him.

They used to treat their worthless dogs better than they treated him. Why did they do that to him? Just because he was an orphan? Old people say that you must be kind to people like that.

One night he asked his brother-in-law to give him one of his arrows. The brother-in-law gave him an arrow and he threw it into the fire and watched it burn and then he went to sleep. The brother-in-law did not say anything.

The next day when he woke up he told his brother-in-law, "If you go down the trail and see an arrow track sliding on the snow, follow the track until it goes down into the roots of a big fallen tree. Make a big fire there."

The brother-in-law left camp early the next morning before any one else was up. He walked along the trail until he found a sign of his arrow skidding along on the snow and followed it. It led up to a big fallen tree and he found his arrow embedded into the tree roots just like his brother-in-law had told him it would be.

He made a big fire there just like Sha Kay Dadaya had told him to do. When the snow melted away from the base of the tree, he saw an opening to a bear den. Sha Kay Dadaya followed his brother-in-law and caught up with him at the bear den. They smoked the bear out of the den and when the bear came out they killed it. Then they took the meat back to the village and fed lots of people.

A few days later he told the people he had a vision of seeing lots of caribou, then he went around the village and started chopping down some trees. His grandmother told him not to do that, he might hurt some one with those falling trees. He told his grandmother that he was felling those trees in the direction towards the caribou so they will stay in that area and not go away before the hunters could get to them. After that he went back home and got out his little bag made from a moose bladder and got some tree pitch and painted some patterns on

that bag. He threw some tree pitch into the fire and the flame shot straight up into the sky. The grandmother shouted at him saying, “What is that orphan boy doing? Is he trying to burn us out of our home?” she cried. He told his grandmother that he had built a house for her in the bush far away from other people and he wanted her to move into it right away. As soon as his grandmother had moved into her new house, he went back to the old house and chopped down a really big tall tree and felled it towards where he had dreamed the caribou would be.

Early the next morning he came back to the village and climbed up on the tall tree he had chopped down, and walked along it to the end and disappeared. People ran to where they had last seen him, but he was gone, and all they saw from there were tracks made by a magpie leading away from that tree. People were really mad when they saw that and said, “That stupid bird was going to chase away the caribou before the people can get to them.” When the hunters followed his tracks, they found where the caribou had run away from him and how he had run after them. They found his ragged little coat made from rabbit skins that he had taken off and further on they found his snowshoes.

The men found where he had chased the caribou up a gully towards the mountain and over the pass on to the other side. When the men finally caught up with him he had killed all the caribou on the other side of the mountain and he was waiting for them. He had killed enough caribou to feed all the people in their village. When they got to him he was sitting on top of a clump of dried branches high up in a spruce tree up about four or five feet off the ground.

He told his brother-in-law to make a fire. The men did as he asked and made a fire. Then he told his brother-in-law to tell the rest of the men to take the caribou fat part from the end of each caribou stomach and put in some of the lacy fat from the caribou stomach, and pack it all into each caribou abomasum and bring them to him. The men did as they were told and brought all the caribou abomasums filled with fat to him. He counted all of them and told his brother-in-law that one was missing. The abomasum from the caribou that was next in line to the lead caribou was missing and he wanted it found and brought to him.

His brother-in-law went back to where the men were butchering up the caribou to look and then came back and told him that he could not find it. The rest of the men also told him that they had looked everywhere and that they could not find it either. Sha Kay Dadaya told his brother-in-law to cut some willows and bring them to him. When they brought the willows to him, he made a roasting stick and roasted

the first caribou abomasum for the old man that had helped him when the other young men used to step on his snowshoes and push him down into the snow and step on him. After the fat was roasted, he draped it over the snowshoe frame and passed it to that old man.

For the rest of the men he draped the fat over the bow and roasted it and passed it around to each man. He did that for each man. Then he told them that one of the caribou abomasums was still missing. The men told him that they had brought all the caribou abomasums they had found and that there was no more left.

He knew that someone was lying to him, and he sat down by the fire and started crying, “The abomasum belonging to the caribou which is next in line to the leader is missing.”

His brother-in-law told the rest of the men that if anyone had that bag of fat to give it back to him right away. But they told him that nobody had it. Maybe someone that was starving had eaten it because that fat can be eaten just like that.

Then he started to cry again, “The abomasum belonging to the caribou which is next in line to the leader is missing.” He kept crying this song over and over all day long. The men finally packed up all their meat into the caribou hides and made them into sleds to pull their meat home.

He left before the men and they could hear him crying that song all the way back to the camp. He got back to camp way ahead of everyone. He started working on his grandmother’s house as soon as he got back and packed lots and lots of wood into the house still crying that same song over and over while working on his grandmother’s house and packing in wood.

That night it started to snow. It snowed all night long and by morning it must have snowed about fifty feet, old timers say. All the people were living in brush houses. They were not living in tents or houses in those days. By morning they were buried under the deep snow and they all froze to death.

That boy sat by the fire in his grandmother’s house still crying. His grandmother begged him to stop crying. But he just kept right on crying. He would not stop no matter how much she begged and gave him anything he asked for.

By late in the afternoon all of a sudden he jumped up and started rising up towards the opening of the smoke hole in the roof of the house. She grabbed him by the pants trying to pull him back down but one side of his pants leg ripped off.

That's why if you look up at the full moon now you can see a boy with one ripped pant leg standing on the moon.

After the boy had gone, the grandmother put lots of wood into the fire. She sat beside it and sang a song to the boy asking him why he had gone away leaving her all by herself. She begged him to return to her. He was her only grandchild. He should return to her.

While she was grieving there by the fire, she heard his voice calling to her through the smoke. He told her that he was coming back for her and to be ready. He did not want to leave her all alone. Then all of a sudden there was a rush of wind and his grandmother was picked up from where she was sitting by the fire. He grabbed her hand and they were both lifted straight up to the moon. He took his grandmother with him to the moon.

If you look up at the full moon on a good clear night you can still see him holding his grandmother's hand.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## Life of an Indian

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing, Yukon  
November 9, 1984  
YNLC Tape 857 (side A)

[Narrated in English.]

Everything I learned about living off the land I learned from my father. No one has to worry about me. This is my dad's country. He knew that I could take care of myself since I became of age. He taught me everything I know.

When we were growing up, my dad never bought any white man food. We always had Indian grub. Even today I hardly have store-bought food. Now, since the white man told us Indians that we could not hunt anywhere we wanted to, the land that we have always hunted on has all overgrown. Not many people travel around all over this land any more. They look at this land as if it is their plantation and they have grown everything on it. That is not the way we look at it. This land, and all on it, was put here for us to live by. That is the way my father brought me up.

I was raised on wild game and fish by my father, and I am still living the same life style that I learned as a child. I have been trapping and hunting since I was 12 years old. When my father died, my young sister Jessie Joe and I were left alone. Other relatives in our village helped us and I was old enough to hunt and trap and look after my young sister.

When I wanted to get married I asked my sister what she thought about it. She thought it was fine, so I got married and we had four children. We looked after our children really good and the other people in the village are well supportive of all the children too.

That was the way the Indian people were. If anything happened to both parents then other people took them in as part of their own family and took care of them.

When I was growing up here with my father as a young boy this place was not called Burwash. We just knew it as Landing. That was what people used to call this village. This place was named by two Americans. They called this place Burwash Landing and that is how it got its name.

When my father killed a moose and brought in all the meat, he would go around to all the families and tell them to come and get some moose meat for their family.

That is the way my father taught me too, from early childhood, how to share with other people the meat or fish I get. That was the way the old people taught their children from a very early age. You must not be greedy or stingy with food.

Now they made our hunting ground into a park and we are not allowed to cross that Alaska Highway to hunt over on the other side any more. What is going to happen to our people? I am not an otter to live on fish alone from this Kluane Lake. When are those white people going to realize that they are forcing about sixty of our people up against the lake as if this is the only area in this whole dog gone Canada? To make this, our hunting area, into a park and force us up against the lake. I don't think this is right for people to treat other people like that. Who do the government people think they are? Did they make all the animals on the land so that the game commissioner can look after them? As for me, I have no job, and I have to hunt off this land to feed my family. All these government people think about is themselves. They look after themselves first and don't think about giving other people hard times. As an Indian we never did that. We have always helped each other and others who needed our help.

Now we are just stuck in this one area, we might as well just give up because our way of life is finished. A long time ago people even used to grow gardens around here. Now I see houses going up all over the place and fences going around them. People have no place to move around or a big place to put in a garden around here. I remember when Louie and Gene Jacquot first came they showed our people how to put in a big garden and everybody worked in that big garden and shared what they grew. They grew carrots, turnips, potatoes, cauliflower, parsnips, and all other kinds of vegetables.

Now people don't do that any more, because if they want something they can just pick it up at the store. Nowadays hardly any one makes bannock too. They just buy bread from the store. I live here alone in my house and if any one of the young people want to find out how old people used to do things a long time ago, they can come and see me. I will tell them. Just don't think that I don't know nothing. You have to ask to learn about things.

People are going to meetings all the time, but they don't tell us anything about it or what is going on at those meetings, just because I don't talk good English, but I understand it really good.

I hope the young people take good care of their old people and make sure they have lots of wood and water and hear everything the old people talk about and learn about these things I talk about.

Young people should learn to keep their kids clean and when they send them off to school, make sure that they are clean and get a good education and learn everything they can. That is all I want to say about these things now.

**[Here he talks about Daniel Johnson (Tlen)'s grandparents.]**

Enda was Chief Jackson's daughter from Selkirk. Jessie Joe used to call her older sister. She was Daniel Johnson [Tlen]'s grandmother. Jimmy Johnson met and married Enda at Selkirk.

Jimmy Johnson's mother and father were from Aishihik. That was where he grew up. Jimmy Johnson's dad's name was Nàday. His English name was Old Man Johnson. He died in 1949.

One time, Old Man Johnson, Copper Charlie (Jimmy Joe's uncle) and Albert Isaac went hunting up around Little Arm. Old Man Johnson went way ahead of them. When they caught up with him he told them that he had met up with a bear and it had charged at him. He did not have time to get his gun out so he had hit the bear in the forehead with his little hatchet and the wounded bear had taken off into the bush. The men went after the bear and they found it dead not too far away in the bush. He had split the bear's head with his little hatchet. Old Man Johnson said that when the bear first charged him he stuck out his arm towards the bear at an angle so that when the bear opened his mouth it could bite the thick coat on his elbow. As soon as the bear opened his mouth wide he pulled his arm back and struck him in the head with his hatchet. He buried it in the bear's forehead and dropped down and the bear just kept on going and ran into the bush.

A long time ago when people used to hunt with bow and arrow they had special arrows for every game. They did not just use one type of arrow for every animal. There were specialized arrows for different game. People used to use cottonwood to set their spring snares because it doesn't break that easy. For setting big game snares they used spruce tree and the bows were made out of birch.

The bow made especially for hunting big game was bent the opposite way to what you see in the bows today. They were very tall bows. When you pull back on the string and let it go, it goes with a loud ting sound and very fast. You could

bring a big moose down with it. The arrow head for big game was made out of copper and for small game, like gophers and rabbits, they used the bones made from horns of moose or caribou.

When people came up from Selkirk, they always brought lots of arrow sticks with them because the best kind of wood used to make arrow shafts grows around Selkirk. They are close to the Yukon River. That is where good birch grows, along that river. My dad used to trade copper for them. He used to have lots of copper, that is why they used to call him Copper Joe. We used to call the Selkirk Indians **Chu gà kwäch'ān**, because they lived along that big river.

We used to get copper up from the head of White River. That river is called **Nazatl'āt**. It is not far from the Highway. **Nàlà Chù**—Generec River runs into White River. That is where we used to get copper. We would trade with the Selkirk Indians and they would pack it all the way back home.

Old man Jonathan from Selkirk was one of the men that used to come up here to trade with us. I knew his son Sam Jonathan and grandson Eddy. All these people that I used to know have all died off now. He sang a song people used to sing to each other when they leave. It means, “Tomorrow as soon as the sun is going down, I will come behind you.”

**[Jessie Joe helped Jimmy with this half of the story because he had forgotten parts of it.]**

A little story that goes with this song is that one time this man and his wife were living by themselves. Her husband would go out hunting all the time but he did not kill anything. They were both starving. One morning as her husband was out hunting she found one rosehip. She bit the berry in half and saved the other half for her husband. When her husband came home she took out the half bitten off berry for her husband and told him that this was all she found in the bush and she had eaten half of it and saved him the other half of the berry. After the man ate the half eaten berry, he told his wife that she was lying. He said that she had eaten all the berries and had only saved him this one half of a berry. He got mad and took his knife and cut her throat.

After he had killed her, he cut her stomach open and found only half of the berry in her stomach. She had been telling the truth about finding only that one berry of which she had saved half for her husband. He was very sad and sorry that he had not believed his wife.

[**Jessie and Jimmy sang the song that he made to his wife:**]

“I am very sorry my sweetheart, when the sun is setting, I am going to follow you.”

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

# Copper Lily Johnson

## *Säl Kàjäna*

Although her birthdate is uncertain, Copper Lily Johnson was estimated to be in her mid nineties when she passed away on Saturday, July 25, 1986 at Burwash Landing.

Her father was Copper Joe, of Copper Centre area, Alaska; and her mother was Mrs. Copper Joe of the Lake Lebarge area. Copper Lily married Jimmy Johnson many years ago and moved to the Kluane Lake area. A Southern Tutchone of the Crow clan, Copper Lily followed a traditional lifestyle of hunting, fishing, and trapping in her homeland.

Of her many children, she is survived by her son Peter Johnson and daughters Rita Joe, and Margaret Johnson; and numerous grandchildren and great grandchildren.

The passing of Copper Lily Johnson into the spiritual world has her many friends, from all over the Yukon and Alaska, remembering her lively spirit and wonderful sense of humour.

Her life's journey is over but her spirit and the warm memories of her time with us lives on in the hearts of family and friends.

*From the funeral bulletin*

(Säl Kàjäna was born in Snag, Yukon in 1893.)



## ***Copper Lily Johnson's Stories***

### **Sha Kay Dadaya**

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing, Yukon  
Summer, 1970  
YNLC Tape 854 (side A)

This story is about how an old lady who found a baby. It could be a story about Jesus, the one that lives up there that people pray to. I really don't know. But this is an old story that people tell.

A long time ago people were travelling and this old lady was walking a long way behind with a walking stick. It was winter time and the snow was very deep. She was trying her best to keep up with the people. Then she heard a baby crying. It was coming from under a big tree off to the side of the trail. She went off the trail to look, and there was a baby, lying on a blanket, kicking and crying.

She wondered who would throw away a baby in this deep snow. She packed up the baby in her blanket and followed the people. When she caught up with the people she showed them the baby and asked if they knew who had thrown the baby away. No one knew anything about the baby or who it belonged to. They said that no one had thrown a baby away.

That old woman decided to keep the baby and bring him up as her own baby. This little baby grew up really fast. In a matter of days, or within ten days, he grew up to be a young man.

This old woman had children before, but people say that they were killed way down at the other end of Kluane Lake while they were out hunting. Not many people know all the details about what happened there.

So this old woman and her young son stayed by themselves, away from other people. People pretty well left them alone too. The boy kept himself busy by making little bows and arrows.

One day his grandmother told him to take the dog out and chop down some small trees and set out some rabbit snares for her. He asked his grandmother if he really had to drag the dog around with him. His grandmother told him that he had to take the dog with him as a watch dog. Then she told him about how her other children

went missing while out hunting and had not returned home. She told him that they might have been killed. That is the reason that she is all alone now.

The little boy got all his arrows together and was ready to go. He asked his grandmother one more time if it was really necessary for him to drag that dog around with him. So the little boy took the dog and went out to set rabbit snares.

A long time later he came back and was dragging the dead dog behind him. The dog had choked to death by his tight collar. The boy must have been dragging him a long time because his mouth was packed with snow. His grandmother started yelling at him as soon as he got home and asked what had he done to that poor dog. The boy went over to the dead dog and patted it and told the dog to wake up. That dog sat right up as if nothing had happened.

The boy went out every day checking the snares, but he never brought any rabbits home to his grandmother. His grandmother was wondering why he was not catching any rabbits. So one day she decided to go with him and see how he had set those snares. They came to the first snare and his grandmother could see why he was not catching any rabbits. He had just hung the snares up on the trees. His grandmother asked him why he had done that. He told her he was just doing as she told him to do. She had told him in Indian language to chop down some small trees and hang the snares from them. His grandmother went around with him and showed him how to set all the snares properly. The snares in those days were not like the wire snares we use today. Rather, they were made out of babiche and the snares had to be set as spring-like snares to hang the rabbit so that it did not chew the snare. After that, every time he went to check the snares he would come home with some rabbits.

One day, he asked his grandmother why she was always alone and where all the other people were. She told him about how her girls were killed and his uncles went out hunting one day and someone had taken them and they were never heard from again. After his grandmother had told him about his brothers and sisters, he got busy and started making lots of bows and arrows and making a stockpile of them.

One day he told his grandmother that he was going out hunting up to the big mountain to hunt for some sheep and to see if there were any other people around. His grandmother begged him not to go. She did not want to lose him too. He might get hurt. That boy did not grow very big. He was only about three feet tall.

No matter how much his grandmother begged him not to go, just the same he left to go hunting.

He came to a place where his grandmother had told him that his brothers were killed and his sisters had gone missing. He took some small poles from their old campsite and went down the trail leading away from the old camp. He started caching a few arrows under some brush and marking the place with the poles he had brought. Soon he saw some piles of wood that someone had been cutting and he heard some people and went towards them. As he got within sight of the camp he started walking really slow. He kept falling down, he wanted the people to think that he was just a young boy who had wandered far away from his own people and become lost and was very weak.

He came to where the big pile of wood was and fell down making it look like he couldn't get up again. He tried getting up a few times and kept falling back down. The people watching him thought he was dying. They asked each other what that was, some kind of crow trying to fly? What he was actually doing was every time it looked like he fell down he was burying some arrows under the snow.

When he finally got up to the camp he saw lots of people. He recognized his two older sisters who his grandmother had told him had gone missing. He kept falling down as he was coming towards the people. He went up to where an old man was sitting on the other side of the fire. He fell down in front of the old man, shaking all over, making out like he was really sick.

The old man asked the boy where he had come from. The boy told him that he was homeless and was just looking for people to live with. Then the old man picked up a big club and swung at the boy trying to kill him, but the boy ducked out of the way. The little boy pulled out one his arrows as he was rolling away and jumped up and shot the old man. The old man fell over dead. Then he turned to the rest of the people and started shooting them one by one. The rest of the people tried very hard to kill him, but no one could touch him. He killed all the people at that village except his sisters. Then he turned to his sisters and patted them on the head and their memory returned. Then they helped him bury the bodies and they all went home to their mother.

When the boy returned home to his grandmother he told her that he had gone hunting and had a very successful day. He was quite happy that he was able to bring home her daughters.

One day word spread among the people that lots of caribou had been spotted. The men were getting ready to go hunting. He wanted to go hunting with the hunters so his grandmother made some small snowshoes for him and he got ready to go hunting the next morning.

Meanwhile he started chopping down trees and told his grandmother that he was going to build her a house so she would not get cold while he was away. Some people came to see his grandmother to see if she could get him to stop chopping because he was making too much noise and scaring the caribou away. No matter how they begged him to stop, he would not quit until he had finished building his grandmother's house. Some people got really mad at him for that.

The next morning, when his grandmother got up, the house was finished and he was nowhere around. He had gotten up really early in the morning and had gone after the caribou. He killed lots of caribou and was waiting for the hunters to catch up with him. He knew that some people didn't like him, because he was always good at everything he did. He sat there and waited to see which one of the men was going to say something to him. Nobody said anything and they all got busy skinning out the caribou and cutting up the meat. Then they made a fire and started cooking some meat by the fire. He noticed that one fatty part from a caribou abomasum was missing. He asked the hunters where that part was. No one would tell him where it was and he started to cry and begged them to give it to him. Then one old man asked him why it was so important to him that he would cry for it. The old man told one of the young men to go and find that abomasum and give it to him. But none of the young men would tell him where it was or give it to him. He was thinking that it was time for him to go back up to where he came from and he wanted to use that abomasum as a bag.

The people brought back all the caribou meat and everybody had plenty of meat for the winter. Even his grandmother had lots of meat. That night he told his grandmother that it was time for him to go back home because, no matter how he helped these people, they had not listened or helped him when he had asked for that special fatty part of the caribou abomasum. He told his grandmother to look after herself well. She had plenty of meat and rabbits and other game and a good warm cabin that he had built for her. She would live very good from now on, because she had taken him in and took very good care of him when no one else would. Then he told his grandmother to go to bed and he would sit by the fire.

The next morning when people got up, all the caribou meat they had brought in was all gone. People were running around looking everywhere for their meat, but they did not find any meat anywhere. The caribou meat had come back to life and had become whole caribou again. They had run away, leaving the people to starve. The only ones that were safe from starvation were the old grandmother and his sisters and their husbands. The boy she had rescued and treated good had made sure that they had plenty of food for the cold winter, but the rest of the people all starved to death. The next morning he told his grandmother that it was now time for him to go back up from where he came from. His grandmother begged him not to leave, but he told her he must go.

Just as he was rising up towards the opening of the smoke hole on top of the roof, she grabbed him by the pant legs and one pant leg ripped off. To this day if you look up at the moon when it is full, you will see the man on the moon with one ragged pant leg. Then he came back one more time to his grandmother and sang a moon song for her

*u-u dada nū chakū kya ta shäna yanda dayū nehu heya.*

Then he told his grandmother to always live good and help other people and that this is the last time she will be seeing him.

A long time ago, when the eclipse of the moon happened, people used to go outside and sing this song and pray. But today the young people do not do these things any more and those white people are always fooling around with that moon. Maybe the young people should be told this story about that little man on the moon. They probably won't believe you anyway, thinking that they know about everything. They don't believe us old people any more. That is the end of this story.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Bear Story

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)  
Burwash Landing, Yukon  
November 28, 1984  
YNLC Tape 855 (side A) – story 3

This is another story about a greedy woman who would not share bear meat with her husband.

It was a very long cold winter and this one old woman and her husband were living alone. The other people had moved on, moving from place to place to find a good hunting ground and a place to fish. They were left behind because they were getting old and could not keep up with the rest of the people. In those days, people used to move around all the time following game and animals, and they would have to move fast. This old couple was slowing them down.

The husband would go out hunting every day to try and find a moose or other smaller game. Each night he would come back with nothing. They were starting to die without food and they had only a small amount of dry meat left. Each day they would eat just enough to keep hunger away.

One day, while this old woman was out setting rabbit snares, she found a bear den. She gathered wood and branches and set a fire in front of the den and smoked the bear out and killed it. After she skinned the bear she cooked a small piece of it and ate it. She hid the rest of the bear meat under the snow and went back home. She did not tell her husband about the bear she had killed. She would go out every day and have some of that bear meat. She never told her husband or gave him any of the meat. Soon her husband was starving but she continued to live off the bear meat all by herself, giving only a small amount to her small son.

They decided to move camp to another place. After her husband was out of sight she put the bear skull up on a long pole and caught up to her husband. They moved camp a long way from their old camp. One day her older brother caught up with them. She told him that they were glad to see him and hoped that he had brought some food with him. They were without food and near starvation. Her brother asked her what was she talking about. He and his family were the ones without food because they had not been able to find any game. He had found their old camp site and had found the bear skull that she had put up on a pole. Then she went out and down the trail to where she had hidden her sled and got some bear meat and gave it to her brother.

The old man sat by the fire very quietly and never said anything as his wife went and got some meat for her brother. After his brother-in-law had left to take some meat back to his family the old man killed his wife and the young son. He left their camp to move to another place.

Several days later the brother returned with his family and found his sister's and her son's dead bodies but her husband was gone. He made camp for his own family, and putting his sister's and his nephew's bodies away, he packed up to follow his brother-in-law's trail.

He caught up with him and was going to kill him, but his brother-in-law told him the story about why he had killed his wife and son. Then he told the story about her killing the bear and how she and her son had kept it hidden while he was starving. The two of them had stayed strong and healthy while he was getting weaker day by day from hunger. That was why he had to kill the boy too, because he had learned bad things about not sharing food with him. He was learning how not to share with others from her. He felt very bad that he had to kill his own son but it had to be done to bad people like that so others would learn from it.

The brother felt sorry for the old man because he was in such a weakened condition. His sister was wrong in hiding food from her husband in those hard times. Her greed had killed her.

He brought the old man back home with him and fed him. The old man stayed with them until he was strong enough to hunt for himself. Then he moved on to another place to start a new life for himself.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

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## The Loon Saves a Blind Man

Recorded by Daniel Johnson (Tlen)

Burwash Landing, Yukon

November 9, 1984

YNLC Tape 855 (side A) – Story 2

A long time ago a young woman and her old husband were living alone. Everybody else had moved on to a better hunting ground. They were left behind because the old husband was blind and he was slowing the rest of the people down. The woman would go out hunting every day and bring home small game for them to eat. They lived that way a long time. This young woman was getting tired of always looking after that old man.

One day she went out hunting and never came back. That old man waited and waited for his wife to come home, but she never came back.

Days went by and he was getting really hungry and thirsty and needed to drink water real bad. He crawled out of his tent and sat outside. A little way from his tent he heard water lapping up against the shoreline and he knew that there was water nearby. So he started crawling towards it praying that he would reach the water and save himself. When he reached the water he heard a loon calling from the middle of the lake. The old man called out to him for help. The loon asked him what was wrong with him. He told the loon that his wife had left him because he was blind.

The loon swam up to him and told him to get on its back. The old man climbed on the loon's back and it swam out to the middle of the lake with him and then dived deep under the water. The loon came up and then dived again about three more times. Then it swam to shore with him and asked if he could see anything. The old man told the loon he could see a little bit now. The loon told the old man to get back on its back, then swam back out to the middle of the lake again. He dived way down, down very deep, and came back up and the old man told the loon that he could see very clearly now. Then the loon dived with him one more time and he could see really good again. The loon took him back to shore and asked again if he could see everything clearly. He told the loon that he could see everything around him very clearly now.

Then he told the loon that his wife had left him to starve. The loon told him to go and find where his wife had gone. He found the trail that his wife had taken and followed her. When he found a camp and got a closer look he saw his wife sitting

by a fire under a rack of drying meat. She had killed a moose and was making lots of dry meat.

He went into her camp and asked her why she had left him behind to starve and had not come back for him. She told him that she had wounded this moose and wandered a long way from camp. By the time she caught up to it she was too far away from camp. That was why she had set up camp here to dry the meat and she was going to go back and get him later. He knew she was lying.

**[Lily can't remember the rest of the story.]**

She says a long time ago when someone kills a moose they made sure that everybody got a share of the moose meat. Every Indian person was taught to share with each other, especially your husband. You never know when it would be your time to need help, so you learn to share what you have.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Crow Made the World

Recorded by Daniel (Johnson) Tlen

Burwash Landing, Yukon

November 9, 1984

YNLC Tape 853 (side A) – story 1

- 1 *Ts'úrk'i äzhà kàdìnya kwädq̄y zhän nän kay. Nän k'ätl'áásj ch'e kwäni.*
- 2 *Äyet äzhà gúch'än kek'ayedintè. Dazhän nän kay dáshe ts'än ts'úrk'i äzhà nän k'ätl'áásj. Łáshe ch'äw chu ch'ī äch'e, yèts'enia: äghän nt'ay shū, äyet sha, hu zhazha. Ätl'a ghäyenà'ì k'e uyè nanät'à k'e nän kay łáshe ch'äw uyè kwälanät'à.*
- 3 *Äju k̄u ts'üdläw kwäni ts'úrk'i. Kwädq̄y ch'äw änäwkwäkhì uthe yèts'eni shū. Däkenäkäw yèts'eni udunèna, äyet yìnlà tth'ay. Dunèn ughq̄ äsj tth'ay.*
- 4 *Uthe chu k'ànàka yū, sän ughq̄ däkènatl'ùr tth'ay. Kàch'e nayedátl'ùr k'e, chu k'ànàka ch'äw, sän dakènatth'et. Ätl'a ts'úrk'i daghày kàkwäch'ì. Ätl'a dāzhän chu nu'ì du. Ädaghày kàch'ì. Kàch'e ch'äw chu yedàdq̄ kwäniq̄.*
- 5 *Äyet k'ètl'q̄, äju nàkwànthat ch'äw, udunèn kùlì. Ätl'a äyet ts'úrk'i dunèna.*
- 6 *Ätl'a äyet dän k'e chu nà'ì. K'ètl'q̄ kàjānadhù, tth'ay, ádāy. Á'än uyè nännt'ay, tth'ay, äyet chu k'e. Äyet sha ádāy yè yat'ay äla shū łàashe ch'äw yenà'ì ch'e kwäni.*
- 7 *Dazhän kwändür ts'ándü äch'e. Äju ulan ts'än kìnjì. Kwäch'e tl'ähù. Änaätq̄y kwätl'et yè äju kìnjì kùlì. Tl'áhù kwändür. Zhq̄ ts'ināy änaätq̄y kwatth'ät.*
- 8 *Ts'úrk'i shū nłäts'än kekwänjī k'e n-ndū kwädätel k'e keni. Kànàni nà dän kwädq̄y.*
- 9 *Jà adè Mary Jacquot yè dághà mël ta k'ànit'är k'e kàch'ì nà t̄u ts'úrk'i t̄àki dákē k'ànädäl k'e nłäts'än ghàkwänjē ghànàni. Łù kànàni ch'äw, dákē kànät'a.*

- 1 A long time ago it was the crow that came down onto this land. He made all of the world, they say.
- 2 Now it is the white man that really likes it. The crow that made the land, everything on this land. It was all of it, even the water, they say: those plants too, that sun, also the moon. After he stole these things, while he flew around with them, he covered everything on this land with them.
- 3 They say that you can't beat the crow. A long time ago a rich man had a daughter, they say too. The child of the one they call God, that's the one, they say. It made a child for her, they say.
- 4 His daughter, where she was dipping water, dirt fell into the container for her, they say. When she would spill it out and dip water again, dirt fell into it again. It happened according to the will of the crow. So that he would steal this water. It happened by the will of the crow. Finally, she just drank the water, they say.
- 5 After that, not long at all, she had a baby. That was the crow's baby.
- 6 It was then that person stole some water. After, he flew far away, they say, way up. He flew all around with it, they say, that water. That sun way up there in the sky too, he stole all of it, they say.
- 7 This is a long story. I don't know it to the end. That's it. Because I have forgotten everything, I don't remember anything. That's all the story. From here on I have forgotten it.
- 8 Also, when two crows talk to each other, they are passing on some bad news, they say. People a long time ago used to say that.
- 9 While checking on our snares down that way with Mary Jacquot, then as two crows were flying behind us, it was just like they were talking to each other. All the while talking, they were flying around us.

- 10 *Kàk'e shèni Mary, "Dànàni nū äyet ts'ürk'i. Äju kànàni ch'e nà. Ye ka änū?" shèni. "Aju sòothän kwädajèl ka äni." Kàk'e, nänìzhàt ka, äk'al dákù ts'àn nadìt'är.*
- 11 *Äyet ts'àn äju kwädädhät ch'äw, Nthenada (Annie Ned) dägälì yè Burwash yū tàkea'är. Ághq nànya k'e shèni, "Nla ghq nàniya. Kwändür ndäw äch'i," shèni. Ádāy kwäts'àn dèya.*
- 12 *Shekená'i k'e Margaret yè ádü áyèdū kedä'är. Lù Margaret ághq tàändal k'e, ák'waánjì äsay yè. Kàk'e shèni, áshela Jimmy Joe áthè hospital yū ächì hq. "Kwändür ditth'ay," shèni.*
- 13 *Äyet kwändür ditth'ay k'e tì tãnuushà níthän. Áyenjì k'ekwänidà yák'è. Äju uk'e keni níthän. Jà äju tàki nùikhèla Jimmy ní'i kwäts'àn, ätl'a áthè Whitehorse mbät ka dèya k'e.*
- 14 *"Shän ní'i jèk'e kwädänütì shì," kwäyèdíshì. "Áthè nàsháchè," kwäyèdíshì.*
- 15 *Kàk'e ch'äw Whitehorse ts'àn dän áyè dàjel. Äyū tíshal k'e, doctor áshela chē ghè nàshèchì k'e, kàk'e sa udäníti.*
- 16 *Kàk'e kwäts'àn ch'äw dazhän dunèna kwäts'àn kwíshe. "Tl'áhù ädq, 'en kúthì dāw kwàk'ù k'e."*
- 17 *Äyet kwäts'àn ch'äw udànìtì ch'e ts'ürk'i iyènjì dàkwädanjèl yū. Äyet k'èt'l'è cheshù kàkwàzhà nà. Ätl'a äyet Bessie ughra danjèl hq k'e shù.*
- 18 *Jessie Joe äts'àn kùya k'e, shèni, chìch'a äda ch'äw, ts'ürk'i tàki umbät nàninjèl k'e, kekwänje òtth'ay. "Ye ka kenū?" shädákät. Äyet dzänù ch'äw äzhà Bessie ughra motorcycle yè ujädègi. Kùka díshì, udànìtì ch'e ts'ürk'i dän ts'àn ghàkwänjè k'e.*
- 19 *Tl'áhù.*

- 10 Then Mary asked me, “What are those crows saying? They never did that before. Why are they talking?” she asked me. “They talk because something not good is going to happen.” Then, because we got scared, we returned to our house in a hurry.
- 11 Not very long from then, Annie Ned came to Burwash with her husband. When she came to me, she said, “Go to your brother-in-law. He has news for you,” she told me. Then she went up there.
- 12 When they saw me, they came down towards me with Margaret. Really, when Margaret came to me, she hugged me while crying. Then she told me my younger brother Jimmy Joe died in the hospital down there. “I heard the news,” she told me.
- 13 When I heard this news, I really felt like jumping in the water. Then I felt really bad. I thought what they said was not true. Not even two nights had passed from when I had seen Jimmy, when he went down to Whitehorse to get some groceries.
- 14 “When I see for myself, then I will believe you,” I told them. “Take me down there,” I told them.
- 15 Right away some people went to Whitehorse with me. When I arrived there, when the doctor took me to my younger brother’s body, only then I believed.
- 16 From that day on I have talked to the young people. “Quit that drinking, give it up when it is cold.”
- 17 From that day on I believe that the crow knows that something bad is going to happen. After that it happened again. It did also when something was going to happen to Bessie’s son.
- 18 When Jessie Joe came to me, she said, that while she was sitting outside, when two crows landed in front of her, they started talking to each other, she said. “Why are they saying that?” she asked me. The very same afternoon, Bessie’s son was killed with a motorcycle. That’s why I say, I believe it when the crows talk to people.
- 19 That’s all.



## **Jessie Jonathan**

### *Chùtsia*

Jessie Jonathan of Canyon Creek passed away Sunday, May 7th, 1995 in Whitehorse.

Born near Tincup Lake in the Burwash area, Jessie celebrated her 100th birthday last Christmas. She was a stalwart supporter and teacher of traditional living to all. Many lives have been touched by this matriarch. She was very careful to see that no one was overlooked, everyone was important to her.

Virtually all of her life was spent living close to the land by harvesting the natural food sources and trapping. To the very end she was independent and did all she could to care for herself.

Jessie managed to raise her six children while living a traditional nomadic life between Dezadeash Lake, Tincup Lake just to the east of the Donjek River, Aishihik Lake and over to Champagne. Most of this travel was done by means of rafts made by the family. Furs were traded for necessary supplies and fish and moose meat was dried for the winter. Jessie did her share of packing supplies by person as well as by dog team and horseback and guiding the raft to the next area of a continuous journey.

Her last migration has ended, leaving behind her many family members and friends.

Funeral services for the late Jessie Jonathan will be from the Community Hall in Champagne, Saturday, May 13th at 1:00 p.m. Rev. John Brown and Pastor Ed Bergman of Yukon Bible Fellowship will be officiating.

*From the funeral bulletin*

## ***Life Story of Jessie and Alfred Brown***

### **Fred Brown Sr., son of Jessie (Brown) Jonathan**

The story begins with my parents as good teachers and good supporters. They raised us up in our cultural way of living and helping others, no matter who they were, like my grandparents did in the past. They weren't proud and didn't overlook anyone who needed help. I know this since I was a child or I am getting to realize this in my old age.

My parents came from two different communities. Mother Jessie was born at Tin Cup Lake, Burwash, and my dad Alfred was born in the Six Mile Lake area, this end of Dezadeash, on a mink ranch where my grandparents raised mink and trapped.

We travelled between these two communities in two different seasons: spring and fall time. From Aishihik, after trapping time in early spring, we would travel between lakes ridding all the way into Champagne, where my parents would sell the furs early in June to the trading store owned by George Chambers. That was a great treat for me when I saw all that candy in the candy jars, different things to play with and go to school for short hours in Champagne.

As the month of July went by, every family would start their journey up the Dezadeash River along Dezadeash Lake to Klukshu to dry salmon. My dad would work in the placer mine either at Squaw Creek or Shorty Creek while the women would be catching and drying the salmon.

When summer was over, or nearly over, the men would come back from mining. In Klukshu the fish would be bundled into fifty pound packs and transported by dog pack and horse pack. At the south end of Dezadeash everyone had a cache made of logs, size 10'x10' where they stacked their dried fish.

Before freeze-up they made a raft, some had a boat with a motor, and would transport the dried fish to Champagne. They would raft out into the lake and put up a sail to drift down to the mouth of the Dezadeash River, then the current of the river would take over and they would drift faster into Champagne.

When this journey was over, my mother and dad would start our journey back to Aishihik for trapping season.

To make the story short I will close here. Thank you for your support and strength.

*From the funeral bulletin*

# **Jessie Jonathan's Stories**

## **My Life**

Recorded by Margaret Workman  
Canyon Creek, Yukon  
September 7, 1979  
YNLC Tape 2863

I was born at a place called **Gyü Nats'ät'à** by a lake called **Tl'ür Mān** in the Nisling River area. I do not know how old I am. I was born in the winter. My mother and I were brought back to Aishihik by dog team by my grandmother. I don't know the English name for that place, just the Indian name for it, but people used to go down there all the time in the summer to fish for king salmon. That's how they put up salmon for their winter food.

From there we would go back to Aishihik and then on to **Ttheghür Ngà** for sheep and caribou. **Ttheghür Ngà** is way past Gladstone. People used to travel all over the place getting food and game for their winter food. Nowadays we can't do that anymore because the white man thinks he owns this land now and people are scared to hunt in just any place.

People would go with dog packs and sometimes horses. They would dry their meat and cache it and then the people would go on over to Kluane Lake travelling over the mountains to a place we called **Äghàts'ädàla Chù**. We would travel alongside that creek to Kluane Lake.

I moved to Haines Junction from Aishihik a few years ago, but I don't know what year. I moved here because I was getting old and there was no one to look after me up there after my husband died. Annie Nicholas lived with me for a while after my husband died. Now I live by myself.

My auntie was a real expert at sewing with porcupine quills. She used to make real nice things with it. You have to use two needles when you do quill work. It was just like doing bead work, all colourful and pretty. I have seen her making things out of beaver tooth too. I have never seen other people doing what she did with the beaver tooth. It was hard work. I sew things too, but I have never done quill work. I don't sew much now.

We used berry juice to make all different colours. It was just like using coloured beads. She used to make pretty slippers, jackets and all kinds of things. Nowadays

nobody does that any more. They just use beads, because it is easier to sew with them. To prepare the quills for sewing, you cut the tips off and lay them out on a hard surface and squeeze all the air out of them until they are flat. And then put them into the hot dye and simmer until the quills are soft. We used to use berry juice or plants to get all different colours. Now you can buy the dye from stores. I remember the first time people bought beads was from Louie Jacquot. He had a store at Kluane Lake. One big bundle only cost one dollar then. When people went over to Kluane to get groceries they would bring back lots of beads and from then on our people learned to sew with beads.

When I was a very young girl my auntie and my father's mother taught me how to sew with beads and how to make slippers and moccasins. I used to sit with them and watch and I would copy them. That is how I learned to sew. They were always sewing. After my father's mother died, he lived with Sophie Watt. She was just like my mother when I was small. She took good care of me. She brought me up after my father's mother. That is why I go to see her all the time at Burwash. When I went to see her a few weeks ago she was walking around with the aid of two canes, and she was outside splitting some wood. She was a strong woman.

A long time ago people used to make pants out of animal skins. For making pants, the hair would be left on and we called these pants **dáthü** and sometimes it would be a one piece suit. It was made out of sheep skin and caribou skin. Sometimes the feet would be sewn right onto these pants. They were really warm. Now every thing is made out of cloth and sometimes they are not that warm. Even the women used to wear these kinds of clothing. Some people would sew porcupine quill work on the clothing and they would make them really pretty.

The summer clothing was made from tanned skins and they were like using cloth. I never made one myself, but I used to watch my grandmother sew them. Once, my grandmother made me a nice coat out of a sheep skin. She sewed silk trimming around the bottom and around the sleeves and down the front. I was not very smart then, because I jumped into the water with it. We were travelling down towards Silver Creek by Kluane lake when this horse came running towards me. My dad and grandfather were out on the lake with a boat. I was with my grandmother walking the dogs and horses when this horse came charging at me. He chased me right into the water. I swam out to the boat and my father had a hard time getting me into the boat, because I was very heavy with my sheep skin

soaking up all that water. When they brought me back to shore my mother was really mad at me for ruining my nice skin coat.

When a person had a bad cold they used to boil spruce bark for medicine. Juniper berry is good as heart medicine too. One time Tom-Toma had a really bad cold and he told us kids to go and gather some cranberries for him. He fried them up and ate them all and got better. The little black weed that looks like branches that grow close to the ground is also good for colds. To stop heavy bleeding from deep cuts a person would go to a medicine doctor who would blow on it and the bleeding would stop. It would heal right over real quick and sometimes there would be no scar where the cut was. In the old days we had real good Indian doctors. That was before the white man came to this land.

A long time ago the Aishihik people used to travel all over the place hunting and making dry meat and fish and storing them away for the winter months.

One time we were way down by **Dązhūr Chù**, at a place by the Nisling River, where people always camped when hunting in the summer. That is where a grizzly bear attacked Eddie Isaac. He had killed a sheep and was dragging it down the mountain to find a good place to skin it. Jimmy Johnson was way down further from him. As he was bringing the sheep down he did not notice where a bear had a den. He had dragged the sheep over the bear den coming down that mountain. The bear came out and attacked him from behind. The bear picked up the sheep and tore it apart just like tearing apart old cloth, then it came after my paternal uncle (**Átāya**) Eddie Isaac. He fell to the ground and stuck out his legs towards the bear and the bear bit into his legs and start ripping at them. That way he had time to get his gun and shoot the bear between the eyes killing it. Then he yelled for Jimmy Johnson to come and help him.

When Jimmy got there he found Eddie in a pool of blood with his legs and upper thighs all ripped apart. He got his shirt and pressed the torn flesh back onto the legs and wrapped them and brought him back to camp. This Indian doctor named **Nàdaya** was with us. He told the people to stay away from Eddie and not to look at the wound and sent them all outside. He told us that if we looked at the wound and thought bad thoughts it would not heal properly and would leave deep scars. We could hear him singing and blowing on the wound and we all stayed away from where he was working over the wounded man. After that it did not take long for the wounds to heal over. You could still see the scars but they did not show that much. It did not take that long for Eddie Isaac to get better and hunt again.

Then we all returned to Aishihik Village. Eddie recovered fully from the bear attack. He learned the bear talk from Nàdaya too and he was able to talk to bears whenever he met them while out hunting, and was never bothered by bears again.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

### *Place-Names*

<b>Southern Tutchone</b>	<b>Literal</b>	<b>English Name</b>
Gyü Nats'ät'à	<i>where king salmon is cut</i>	—
Tl'ür Mān	<i>deep lake</i>	Serpenthead Lake
Ttheghür Ngà	<i>along the pass through the mountains</i>	Gladstone Pass
Äghàts'ädàla Chù	<i>people-moving-through creek</i>	(flows into Kluane Lake)
Dəzhür Chù	<i>silverberries river</i>	Donjek River

## Äsùya and the Wolverine

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

April 20-22, 1983

Haines Junction, Yukon

YNLC tape 2161 (story 1)

This is the story about Äsùya and how he went around the world straightening out the animals who used to eat people. It was a time when people and animals used to communicate with each other.

A long time ago, this smart man, they called him Äsùya, was going to travel around this world and fix-up all those animals that used to kill and eat people. He wanted to go all around the world and save the people. The reason he made a spoon out of a sheep horn was because it was thick and strong and would last a long time. He would drink soup with it in his travels. They say that by the time he had finished his journey he had licked a hole right through his sheep horn spoon. He also took his sheep horn club and stuck it into his hair bun. He used it as a club to kill the bad animals too.

He set out on his journey. The first animal he met was a wolverine. They say that the wolverine was really big a long time ago. Äsùya decided to make camp and have something to eat. The wolverine came and sat himself down across from him by the fire and said, “Maybe you will give me some of your soup and tell me some stories about where you have been.” That wolverine was very bad. He had killed many people too. After they ate, he said, “Let me help you build your lean-to. You must be very tired. I want you to get a good rest.” He wanted to kill Äsùya after he fell asleep. He told Äsùya, “I’ll put some wood into the fire for the night.” He went and pulled down a piece of wood that was rotted right through. That was the kind of wood he put on the fire. Then they got into bed. He said, “We are both wet, we should put up sticks for drying poles and dry out our **dáthü** [fur-lined skin pants with moccasins attached].” Äsùya put his **dáthü** on the top pole and the wolverine put his on the bottom pole. Then they went to bed.

Not very long after, Äsùya heard the wolverine snoring as if fast asleep. Äsùya pretended to sleep too, but he was really listening to the wolverine. Soon he heard the wolverine snoring in a deep sleep. He got up and took his **dáthü** down and hung them on the bottom pole and put the wolverine’s **dáthü** on the top pole where his **dáthü** had been and returned to bed. Soon he heard the wolverine get up and walk over to his bed and listen. He pretended to be asleep, snoring really loud, but

he was watching the wolverine through a little hole in his blanket. He saw the wolverine take down the **dáthü** from the top pole, thinking that they were Äsüya's **dáthü**, and stuff them into the burning hollow log in the fire. It was his own **dáthü** that he put into the fire thinking that it was Äsüya's **dáthü**. Then he jumped back into bed and went back to sleep.

Äsüya got up very early in the morning before the wolverine and put on his **dáthü**. The wolverine jumped up and told Äsüya, "That is my **dáthü** you have on. It is my **dáthü**. Give it back to me," he said.

"This is not your **dáthü**," Äsüya told it, "I saw you stuff your **dáthü** into that burning log last night."

The wolverine said, "No, that was not my **dáthü**. I did not have my **dáthü** hanging on the top pole," he told Äsüya. Äsüya was packed and ready to go. The wolverine started to fight with Äsüya, so he took off down the trail towards the shore of the lake. Then he ran out on the ice toward the edge of the open water.

All of a sudden a really strong north wind started to blow. He kept running around the open place on the ice with the wolverine chasing him. The wolverine was getting colder and colder and told Äsüya, "My feet are frozen now."

"Who told you to throw your **dáthü** in the fire?" Äsüya asked him.

Even then he would not give up trying to kill Äsüya until he fell down and couldn't get up any more and there he froze to death.

Then Äsüya threw his body into the water and said, "Your kind will never kill people again," and left.

Tl'áhü. That's all.

## Äsùya and the Giant Bear

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 – Story 2

Äsùya continued on, then he came to a couple. They say that they used to call this kind of people giant bear (**shárchí**) a long time ago.

A giant bear saw Äsùya coming, he quickly turned his wife into a pretty young girl and told her to sit quietly by the fire. Then he went to meet Äsùya and invited him to their camp. He told Äsùya, “I would like to give you something to eat, but we are starving and have no food. We haven’t been able to get a moose because there is a really big grizzly living up on the hill. Every time someone kills a moose he comes down and takes it away and eats it. Everybody has been too afraid to go out and hunt anymore. Could you help us kill this bear?” He brought some sharp grass blades to Äsùya and told him to tie them onto his arrow shaft. “These grass blades are very sharp. We hunt with them.”

Äsùya took out a couple of arrows from his hair bun and tied a big long blade on them. Then he went down to a meadow to look for the bear. He looked at his arrow thinking that just maybe that giant bear was trying to fool him. So he pulled out one of his good arrows to keep it ready just in case he needed it.

Soon he heard a noise, looked up and saw a big bear coming down the hill towards him. He got his arrow ready and waited. The big bear came straight for him. He waited until the bear got really close and took a shot. The arrow just bounced off the bear and it kept coming. He tried the second shot and the same thing happened. He pulled out his real arrow from his hair bun and shot the bear right under the arm pit. The bear let out a scream and yelled, “Dad, you have hurt me really bad.” It was that giant bear’s daughter. She was wearing a big grizzly bear’s skin.

After she was wounded, she came after Äsùya to kill him. He ran through the bush. He could hear her hollering after him, saying that she was going to kill him when she caught up with him. She tried everything to kill him but she couldn’t get close enough to catch him. Finally he jumped into the water and turned himself into a beaver and swam out to the middle of the lake. The giant bear tried all day to get him. Sometimes she would pretend to go away and then sneak up on him, but he would hear her and swim out to the middle of the lake again.

She even tried setting a snare, but he would go through it without getting caught in the snare. Finally she sat down on the lake shore and started hollering, “Curlew (**Ñts’ilür**)! Come to me and drink all this water out of the lake. Where have you gone?” she asked. Then she saw the curlew come out to the shore on the far end of the lake. The giant bear told him to drink all the water out of the lake so she could get at that beaver. The curlew is a shore bird with a long bill that hooks at the end. It looks just like a snipe, but is bigger than a snipe.

Then the curlew started to drink the water. He drank, and drank, until he was as big as this house. He must have been a big animal. After the water was completely drained from the lake, the giant bear ran out to the middle of the lake and started digging around through the water moss, looking for the beaver. He spent all day running back and forth digging through the mud, and still he could not find Äsùya. Finally, just as it started to get dark, her father came out to help her.

Äsùya saw a yellow legs (**tádùra**) eating along the lake shore. They say that the yellow legs was really big a long time ago, just as big as a crow. He told the yellow legs, “These bad people are trying to kill me. Do you see that big bird sleeping on the shore? He drank all the water out of the lake and drained it. I would like you to go over there and poke a hole in his stomach to fill up this lake again.”

So the yellow legs flew over to this big bird. The curlew said, “What are you doing around here?” Don’t come too close, you might hurt my stomach.”

The yellow legs said, “I won’t bother you, my children are starving and I am looking for fresh worms for them,” and went about looking around him. He worked around to under his stomach and gave it two big sharp picks and the big stomach sprung a big leak. The hole got bigger and bigger until it burst and the water came gushing out and filled the lake back up. The giant bear and his old wife were drowned and they will never eat people again.

Tl’áhù. The end.

## Äsùya and the Eagle

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 – story 3

After killing the giant bear and his wife, Äsùya went on to where he had heard about this big eagle who was eating people. They say that the eagles were really big a long time ago.

He went up to a big mountain where the people had said the eagles had their nest. When he got there, there were two big baby eagles in the nest. He got a long stick and poked at them and said, “Who is the biggest tattle-tale here?” The oldest boy eagle said, “That will be my youngest sister. She always tells our parents everything.” The youngest eagle told Äsùya that her older brother was lying, that he was the one that told everything to their parents.

Äsùya knew that the girl eagle was telling the truth. He got a very sharp pointed stick and went under the nest and rammed the sharp stick up through the nest, right through the young male eagle’s body. The young eagle jumped straight up into the air and over the side of the nest and disappeared down the mountainside.

Then Äsùya turned to the young girl eagle and asked her about her parents. “What happens when your parents are returning home?” he asked the young eagle.

“The weather will usually change when they are coming back,” she told Äsùya. “When my mother is coming, wet snow will start falling. When my father is coming a hail will come ahead of him.” Äsùya made a hole through the bottom of the nest and covered it with some leaves. He sharpened a long pole and hid under the nest and waited.

Not very long after, wet snow started to fall. The eagle mother was coming back to the nest. The mother flew onto the nest and asked, “Where is your brother?” She told her that her brother had a bad headache so he had gone down for some cold water and had not returned yet. “What is that smell here? I smell something that was not here before,” she said, as she jumped around in the nest.

The baby eagle said, “What is that thing you are carrying? That must be what you smell.” It was half of a human body she had brought back. While she was bouncing around in the nest, Äsùya reached up through the hole and grabbed the eagle by the leg, pulled her down, stabbed her and threw her down the mountain.

Not too long after that it started to hail. The little eagle said, “My father is coming back now.” Äsùya went and hid under the nest again and waited. Soon the father landed in the nest. He was carrying the bottom half of a human body.

“Where is your mother?” he asked. The little eagle told him that her brother had a very bad headache and that her mother had taken him down for some cold water. “What is that smell in this nest?” he asked the young eagle.

“What is that thing you just brought back. Does it have a smell?” the young eagle said.

Just the same her father would not believe her and kept running around in the nest looking. “It is not the same smell,” he told his daughter. Äsùya waited until he was over the open hole in the nest, then he reached up and grabbed him by the legs, pulled him down and killed him too.

Now the little girl eagle was the only one left. Äsùya knew that if he left her there, she too might start hunting humans. He would have to go out and hunt for her until she learned how to hunt for herself. He went and killed some gophers, ptarmigan, grouse and rabbits. He told the young eagle that this was the kind of food she was going to eat from now on. “Don’t eat people any more.”

He then took the remains of the human bodies and built a big fire and burnt them, so the young eagle would not get a chance to eat any of it. Then he sat by the young eagle and told her what would happen to her if she ever killed another human again. The young eagle said “I will never do that, I will do everything you have told me.”

Äsùya said, “That is good.” Then Äsùya pulled out some of the feathers from the eagle’s wings and left her, and returned home.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## Äsùya and a Big Animal

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction, Yukon

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 – story 4

My grandmother and Whiskey Shorty used to tell me these stories when I was very young. This is a story about some kind of big animal that used to live on this land a long time ago.

Äsùya came back home after killing all those bad animals and found that he had used up all of his bow string. He came to a mouse and asked him if he knew where he could get some tough sinew for his bow.

The mouse said, “There is a big animal that lives at the big meadow. That’s where I get my sinew.”

Äsùya went up to the meadow and saw a very large animal lying down on the grass. He tried getting close, but couldn’t. Then he saw a large meadow mouse eating on the other side. He went over and asked the large mouse if he would help him. The mouse said that he would. Äsùya told him to sneak up to the large animal and chew the hair away from under his armpit so his arrow could penetrate the thick skin. The mouse went up to this huge animal and chewed away the thick hair from under his armpit. He went back to Äsùya and told him that it was ready for him. Then Äsùya shot the large animal and killed it. Then he cut out the long sinew from the back of this animal and returned home and made a good strong bow string. After resting for a while he was ready to continue on his journey again.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## Äsùya and the Big Worm

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction, Yukon

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 – Story 5

Äsùya had heard about a big worm (**kwanlin shāw**) that lived up on the mountain.

Many young men had gone out sheep hunting up on that mountain and never returned. They used to call this big worm, water worm (**chu gyū**). I think it was because this worm could go anywhere, even in the water. They say that no one was safe around there.

So Äsùya went up into the mountains to look for this big worm. He found the place where this big worm (**gyū shāw**) was living. He went up higher on the mountain and then circled above the big hole and sneaked down to it. Then he rolled down a big rock making lots of noise as the rocks rolled down. Then he saw a huge worm come slithering out from that big hole in the mountain.

When the big worm was half way out of the den, Äsùya ran and jumped down on it. With the blade of his biggest spear, he cut off the head. Then he chopped up the worm into pieces and threw them out into space, saying, “Turn into rocks.” That was how red ochre was made, from that big worm’s blood. That is what they used for painting snowshoes.

After the flesh of the worm had turned into ochre, he scraped some of it into his little bag. He went back to tell the people that he had killed the big worm and that it would not be killing their people again. After that he left the people and continued on with his journey.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## Äsùya and the Old Man

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 – Story 6

After killing the big worm, Äsùya went back and told the people that he had killed the big worm and that it would not be bothering them again. Then he made some new arrows and left to where he had heard about this really bad old man and his wife who had been killing people and eating them.

He came to where this couple was living. They invited him into their home. He went in but stayed on the opposite side of the fire from them. He didn't trust them. The old man's wife came in and said she heard their dog barking up on the mountain and that it must have cornered a sheep. The old man asked Äsùya to go with him and help him kill the sheep. Äsùya agreed to go with him.

The old man tried to lead Äsùya up a well worn trail, but Äsùya didn't want to go up that way. He did not trust the old man. Instead he told the old man that they should go around the other side of the mountain and then come down above the sheep. They would have a better chance and get closer to the sheep. They climbed the mountain from the other side and got closer to where they heard the dog still barking. The old man led Äsùya to the edge of the bluff and told him to go down that way to the sheep. Äsùya went to the edge and looked and he saw evidence of where people had gone down to their death.

That's why the old man wanted them to go up that trail, so he could shove Äsùya over the cliff to where his wife was waiting below with a small copper adze, so that when Äsùya came sliding down she could club him to death. That was how they fooled people and killed them.

Äsùya looked down over the cliff and told the old man that he could not see a sheep or the dog that was barking. The old man walked over to the edge of the cliff and told Äsùya, "Come and see, the sheep is right down there." Äsùya made like he was going to come over and take a look. Then just as the old man looked away from him, he came up behind him and gave him a shove and he fell down the mountain.

As he came sliding down the mountain, the old man's wife jumped out of hiding and clubbed her husband to death. Too late, she realized it was her husband she

had killed. Then she hollered up to Äsùya saying, “Come on down here, you have made me kill my own husband.” Äsùya waited until it got dark and sneaked back to their camp and killed the old man’s wife too. From there he found a well used trail and continued on his journey.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## Äsùya and the Mouse People

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction, Yukon

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 – Story 7

After Äsùya had killed the cannibal people he followed the trail he had found. It was a well used trail so he thought there might be lots of people living nearby. As he travelled along the trail he came upon a little porcupine walking along that had a piece of ragged blanket on his back. He was pretty hungry by then so he killed the porcupine, singed it, and put it inside his packsack and went on to catch up with the people he was following.

He kept going until he heard dogs barking and knew that he was getting close to their camp. As he got closer to the camp, he saw a person coming towards him calling, “Kàla, kàla.” When he got up to Äsùya he asked, “Did you see my little skinny dog? He had a ragged blanket around him and he got left behind.”

Äsùya told him that the only thing he saw on the trail was a small porcupine which he had killed and eaten already. “That was my little dog,” he told Äsùya. When the two of them returned to camp, he told the people there that he had met this strange man on the trail and that he had eaten his little dog. He asked his people what kind of a man is this that eats dogs. Then he told the people to look after their dogs real good or this man might eat them too. He told the people that this man must have been without food for a long time and must have been starving. Then he told a young man to go and kill one female and one male dog and they would cook them and feed him. I wonder what kind of people they were, nobody seems to know. I think my grandmother said they were mouse people.

Äsùya told them that he did not eat dogs, just moose meat. Then the people told him about seeing moose up near the big mountain above their camp. They told Äsùya to go up to the mountain and chase the moose down towards them and they would wait on the trail leading down from the mountain and kill the moose for him. So Äsùya went up there to look for the moose. The only thing he saw there were some big wild turkeys and they all flew away up into the trees. He kept looking for the moose but did not see anything.

After he returned to their camp Äsùya told them that he did not see any moose, not even a moose track. “The only thing I saw was some wild turkeys and they all flew away from me,” he said.

They said, “That virgin’s husband let all that meat get away from him.” They all yelled at him and said, “We are going to club you for letting our food get away.”

Äsùya ran away from them and went back to where he had seen some turkeys land up in some trees. He shot a few of them with his arrows and as he was bringing them back to the camp, he caught up with a couple of the mouse people returning to camp from hunting. He came up behind them and threw one big turkey onto the back of their snowshoes. Then he shot four more and threw those onto their snowshoes too. The little people were all stuck because even the one bird was too heavy for them. They all tried pulling together but they couldn’t move. They just stayed in one place and yelled at him, “What have you done to us. We can’t take all these turkeys home. Why did you kill so many?”

They finally pulled some wing feathers out from one of the birds and cut off some meat and put it onto the feathers and they all pulled together using the feather as a sled. That’s how they finally got some meat home. They told Äsùya to live with them for a while and help them eat up all the meat. Äsùya told them that he really couldn’t stay with them because he still had a long way to travel. Then he left their camp.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## Äsùya and the Big Water Snake

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 (side B) – Story 8

After leaving the mouse people, Äsùya travelled for many days. He killed two fat moose and stayed there drying the moose meat, packing fat into the large intestines and hanging them to dry by the fire. After he had made lots of dry meat and fat, he broke camp and travelled on. He came to a big river and while crossing it he fell through the thin ice and got wet. Then he heard kids playing and dogs barking, so he headed towards them.

When he came into their camp, there were a couple of kids and an old man and his paternal aunt. When the old man saw him coming he hollered to the kids and said, “A big white bear is coming.” Äsùya called back to him and told him that he was just a man, not a bear. He had fallen through the ice on the river and was nearly frozen. He just wanted to come to their fire and warm up and dry out his clothes. They let him come into their camp and told him to dry off.

He took off his frozen pants and hung them by the fire on a stick. He also stuck his snowshoes into the snow on the other side of the fire. As soon as his pants started to thaw, the grease started melting off them and dripping into the fire. The pants got really hot from the fire and smelled really bad. The old man had one of the young men grab the pants down and run with them onto the ice and throw them into the water hole. Äsùya went and got a long stick and fished out his pants.

They told Äsùya to take his pants over to the little knoll away from their camp and dry them out there. “There is a big water snake (**tamethàn**) living in the lake,” they said. It was something like a giant worm but it lived in the water. “As soon as it smells burning grease, it comes out of the water near the shore and eats everything,” they told him.

Äsùya grabbed his pants and ran with them over to the knoll and threw his pants there. Just as he did that the ice on the lake started violently erupting. Huge chunks of ice came shooting up as the big water snake started to move around breaking up the ice. The water on the lake was churning and soon they saw a giant snake come out of the water. The people ran down to the shore and started shooting at the snake, but it just kept coming. Äsùya saw that their arrow blades

were made of just wide blades of grass. Äsùya got his arrows and ran down to them and shot the big snake with his sharp arrows.

After the giant snake was dead, Äsùya told the people to cut up all the meat and take it away from their camp and put it away in a high cache. Äsùya told them that none of the meat from the giant snake must be left by the lake, or put away on the cache in the direction the person's head is pointing when they are sleeping or lying down.

One young couple did not believe what he told them and had put small pieces of the meat on a cache behind their house in the direction that their heads were pointed when they slept. The next morning the people did not see them about their camp, so they sent someone to check on them. When they were found, their heads were frozen to their pillows. That was why Äsùya had told the people not to store the snake meat in the direction their head would be when they were sleeping. After he had killed the snake for them, he made a boat and started on his journey again down the big river.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## Äsùya and the Mink Lady

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction, Yukon

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 (side B) – Story 9

Äsùya made a birch bark canoe and left the people's camp and went down the river. As he was travelling down the river he saw something like a rope strung across the river with things hanging on it. When he got closer he saw that it was some dried human arms. The dried bones clashed against one another and made lots of noise, just like bells. This was being used as an alarm system.

When he came up close to these strung out old dried bones he lifted the string up really quietly with his paddle and passed under it. A little further down he came to another string across the river. On this one it had human head skins hanging on it. He also lifted that one up with his paddle and passed under it. Just as he got clear of them the string started to swing back and forth and the dried skins started to make lots of noise, it made a "läl, läl," sound really loud.

Someone came running down to the river. It was what people called the mink lady (**Cházhru**). She came running down and said, "What were those arms looking at that they didn't sound the alarm?" She came running down and jumped into the water and grabbed the boat with Äsùya in and dragged it up onto the shore. "Come on up to my camp and have some dry meat," she told him. Äsùya agreed and followed her up to her camp. There he saw lots of dry meat hanging on her drying rack. It was human meat.

As he sat down by the fire pretending to eat the dry meat she had given him, a little mouse came up behind him and whispered really quietly and said "Grandchild, that is human meat that she wants you to eat. She kills people and eats them. Don't eat the meat, the grease, or any water that she gives you. That grease is made from human fat too," the mouse told Äsùya. The mouse gave him some of her bear roots and a bit of grease she had. When the mink lady came back with more of the dry meat and grease, Äsùya told her that he was full and didn't want to eat anymore. "But I will put it away and eat it later," he told her.

After eating, Äsùya said that he had a headache and wanted to lie down. The mink lady told him she would go down to the river and get some cold water for him. When she came back with the water, Äsùya told her it was too warm and dumped it out on the ground. She told him that she had something for him as a

going-away gift, and she brought out some fancy beaded mitts and moccasins and told him to put them on. She wanted to see how they fit. Äsùya told her that he still had a terrible headache and would like a drink of cold water. The mink lady said she would get it for him. When she came back, Äsùya took the cup from her and he smelled it. It was her own urine that she was trying to make him drink. She had been using her pee to drug humans and would get them to go to bed with her and kill them by chewing out their rectum while they were in a deep sleep.

Äsùya told her the water she gave him was too warm and dumped it out. “There is a really cold creek running down by that big old tree over there,” he told her and said he would really like some of that. She tried to get the little mouse to go and get some of that water. The little mouse said that she was really too small to bring back a heavy cup of water. So she had to go and get the water herself. While she was gone, Äsùya told the little mouse to help him get his canoe back into the water and then chew a hole through the bottom of her birch bark canoe.

The little mouse went to work on the bottom of her canoe right away. Äsùya jumped into his canoe and paddled out to the middle of the river. When he saw the mink lady come running down towards the water, she screamed that he was not the only one with a boat, and he was not going to get away from her. Äsùya saw a big lake and an island over on the other side of the river and headed towards it. Meanwhile the mink lady was still coming behind him. Paddling as hard as she could and all the time still screaming that he was not going to get away from her. Even if he reached the island he was heading for he would not be able to hide from her.

As she got to the middle of the lake her canoe was almost filled with water and started to sink. Too late, she saw all the little holes the mouse had chewed in the bottom of her canoe. The canoe went down with her still screaming. Her mouth filled up with water and she drowned.

Äsùya reached the island, made a lean-to and then built a fire to cook some food before going to bed. Then he remembered the mitts the mink lady had given him. He took them out of his pack and put them out on a tree branch and then went to sleep by the fire.

Äsùya awoke early the next morning and saw the mink lady sleeping on the tree branches where he had put the mitts. The mitts were missing. Äsùya got up really quietly and got his long pointed copper spear. He put it into the fire and jumped back into bed and pretended to be sleeping. He waited and checked the spear. The

person across from him was still sound asleep. She was sleeping on her back spread eagle with her legs spread wide apart. He waited until the spear got red hot then jumped out of bed and jumped across the fire and rammed the hot spear into her rectum, killing her instantly. Then he threw the body into the fire and burned it.

After killing Chāzhru and burning her body, he packed all his belongings back into his canoe and continued down the river.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## Äsùya and the Giant Wolverine Man

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction, Yukon

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 (side B) – Story 10

After killing the bad mink lady, Äsùya travelled a long way down the river and then beached his canoe and travelled on land. He walked for many days before he came across a well travelled trail. It looked like lots of people had been using that trail, so he thought he would follow it and see what kind of people were living in that area.

He followed the trail and it lead to the top of a steep hill. He went to the edge and looked down and saw a slippery slide going down into a sharp rocky valley. It was a trap for humans.

When people came to this end of the trail and had to get down that steep hill, they would have to slide down that way. From where he was, it looked like there was no other way down except down the steep slope and there was no other trail leading around it. This was the way the wolverine was killing the people. They say that a long time ago the wolverine was really huge and used to eat people.

Äsùya threw his snowshoe down and saw it get stuck on something half way down the hill. He went along the ridge of the hill and looked for a good place to get down. He found a good place. By stepping on some rocks as a stepping stone, he sneaked closer to where his snowshoe had gotten hung up half way down the slideway. When he got closer he saw a whole bunch of sharp copper knives sticking out of the ground, with the sharp blades pointing up. He took his snowshoe off and hung his old coat in its place and sneaked down into some thick bushes at the bottom of the hill. From there he watched and listened and heard the wolverine say to his wife, “I think I heard the copper knives clanking together making noise.” He told his wife to make a big fire and said he would go up and check the trap.

Äsùya ran back to where he had hung is coat and put it back on and laid down among the copper knives. He watched the wolverine coming and lay really still. The wolverine saw the body among the bottom row of knives and said, “Now how did that body miss all those knives coming down that hill.” Then he picked up the body and put it over his shoulder and started back to his camp. Äsùya wondered how come the wolverine didn’t notice that there was no blood on his body.

On the way back to his camp, the wolverine had to jump across a little creek. As he jumped across, Äsùya let out a big fart. “What is the matter with this body, does it wish that he was still alive?” he said. As he continued on down the trail, Äsùya kept grabbing onto willows and branches and pulling back really hard and making the wolverine almost drop him.

The wolverine was getting mad and said, “What is the matter with this body? It could not have frozen that quickly for the hands to keep on hooking onto the branches all the time.” When he arrived back at his camp, he dropped Äsùya beside the fire, on the smoky side of the fire.

Äsùya lay by the fire where he was dropped. Two baby wolverines came over to look at him and he opened one eye just a little bit to see what they were up to. The young wolverine yelled at his dad, “Dad, he blinked his eye!”

The wolverine grabbed his stone axe and ran over there and told his kids to get away from there and he looked down at the body. He told his kids that the first thing you do when you kill a person is cut off his head. Then he looked down at Äsùya really good. Äsùya lay really still, not moving, not breathing at all. “My, he must sure have strong lungs,” he said. Then he turned away to look for his big knife.

He looked everywhere, but couldn’t find it. “Who has taken my knife and where have you put it?” he yelled and screamed. “Did someone put it under his big **dätth’ay**\*?” he yelled at his wife while throwing things around and looking. Soon his wife and sons started helping him to look for his knife.

While their attention was on finding the lost knife, Äsùya jumped up, grabbed a big heavy club and ran over to where they were all together inside their brush camp. He clubbed and killed them all. The female wolverine was pregnant, because as Äsùya was clubbing her, all the infant babies came running out of her stomach and he clubbed them too as they came out.

The last one was a little too fast for him and it got away and ran up a big tall tree. Äsùya tried all kinds of ways to get it down. He tried climbing up the tree after it, but it peed and dumped on him and Äsùya was forced to come down off the tree. These were really bad wolverines a long time ago. They used to kill and eat people. He tried to kill the little one with his arrows, but they just bounced off the tree branches.

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\* [English translation unknown.]

Finally he set a trap at the base of the tree and pretended to leave. He hid in the bushes and waited. Soon he heard the young wolverine screaming. He ran up to it and was going to kill it. Then changed his mind. He sat down in front of the young wolverine and talked to it. He told it (it was a young female) why her parents had to be killed. Since she had just been born and did not know what humans were, he would let her live. Then he showed her the kinds of animals she would eat from now on and told her to never, never eat people. The young wolverine agreed to everything Äsùya told her to do.

Before leaving, Äsùya burned everything in that camp, so that the young wolverine would not be around anything that had belonged to her parents and learn some bad habits from them. He wanted the young wolverine to start off fresh and learn new things of this world.

After that he left and went on his way to find other people.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## Äsùya and the Rock Ptarmigan

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2161 (side 2) – Story 11

After leaving the wolverine camp, Äsùya travelled a long way, camping many, many days. Then one day he heard some people talking.

When he got close to where he heard the voices he saw two ptarmigan people walking along the trail. They were saying, “I wish we could at least get some of their hairy feet.” That’s what they were saying. Then he noticed that they were rock ptarmigan (**ätthèdàl**). That’s the kind that used to eat people too.

He circled around and got ahead of them on the trail. He made a fire and got his bow and arrow ready and set them down beside him. Then he sat down beside the fire drinking his tea pretending to be busy and not notice them approaching.

They stopped on the trail when they saw him and waited. When Äsùya didn’t look like he noticed the two rock ptarmigan, they got their club ready and started to sneak up on him. Äsùya sat still and watched them approaching ready to kill him. When they got really close, all of a sudden he turned and got off two shots with his bow and arrow killing them both. He cut off their feet and put them on top of a big rock along with their bodies. Then he left the area.

Tl’áhù. That’s all.

## Äsùya and the Giant Animal

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 (side B) - Story 12

My grandmother and other people did not say what kind of big animal this was. But they say that this huge animal used to eat people a long time ago.

There were some people living in a small village, and they say that this huge animal ate them all because no one could kill it. The only people that were left, when Äsùya found them, were a mother, a father and their two small children. When Äsùya came there, the father had gone out hunting and the mother was left alone with her young children, a boy and a girl at their camp. The boy was quite big because he helped his mother kill this big animal.

After Äsùya had killed the ptarmigan he was walking down the trail when he came to these people. They told him about the giant animal that had been coming around trying to kill them, that it had eaten everyone, and that they were the only people left in their village.

Later that night, they heard it coming again and that woman and her children climbed up to where they had built a platform in a big tree. They stayed there all night while that animal kept circling at the base of the tree all night long. When it got light again, they all got down off the tree.

Äsùya told her to make a big fire and make lots of boiling water and put it up on the platform and be ready when that giant animal came back. She and the children got busy boiling lots of water and packing it up to the platform. They wanted to be ready for when that huge animal came back. Meanwhile her husband had not returned from hunting and she was getting worried. When her husband was returning home, he had met up with this giant animal and it had killed him. His wife did not know that her husband was dead.

Äsùya made a long pole and tied a sharp pointed copper spear to it. Then, towards evening, they all went up on the platform to wait. Just as it was getting dark they heard the giant coming. It had finished eating her husband and was coming after them next. They saw it coming across from the other side of the lake. It was coming around by the lake shore. The woman and her two children climbed up to the high platform and got ready. Äsùya had gone down the trail to look for

her husband and had not yet returned. They watched this animal come up under the tree that they were in and circle it looking for them. When it tried getting at them they started shooting arrows at it, but the arrows just bounced off it. They think that he had some sort of medicine power to deflect the arrows away from him.

When the animal went away and down the trail, the mother and her son got down from the tree and hauled up more of that hot boiling water onto the platform. Then they heard it coming back. They climbed back up and got ready. When the animal got up to the tree that they were in, it went around the base and then looked up at them. As it was looking up and trying to get at them it had its mouth wide open. The woman grabbed one of the buckets of boiling water and dumped it into its big open mouth.

It fell back down and then it tried to get at them again. Again the woman grabbed the other bucket boiling of water and waited until it got closer and she tossed the boiling water into its mouth. It let out a loud scream and fell to the ground. Its heart was burnt out. The boy grabbed the spear, went down the tree and stabbed at it until it was dead. The mother came down and helped her son cut off both of its big feet. People didn't really say what kind of animal that was. They waited there a long time for their father, but he never returned.

Many days later Äsüya came back and told her that her husband had been killed. Äsüya made sure they had lots of rabbits, gophers and all kinds of other food before leaving them. He told them that they would be all right now and he would be travelling on to other places that he had heard about where other people were also having trouble with man-eating animals, and he left their village.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## Äsùya and the Marten

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

November 4, 1983

YNLC Tape 2163 – Story 13

The last animal that Äsùya came to on his journey around the world was the marten. People say by the time he had finished his journey he had licked a large hole through his sheep horn spoon. He carried his spoon in his hair bun.

One day as he was walking along he came to a large lake. He thought it would be a nice place to camp, by the lake. When he came to the lakeshore he started to make camp. As he was gathering wood he saw a man coming towards him pulling a heavy load. Äsùya went up to the man and said to him, “My you sure are pulling a heavy load there, you must be moving camp. Where are you pulling it to?” he asked the man.

The man told him he had been hunting up the valley by the mountain and had killed a moose. He was pulling the heavy moose large intestine back to his wife and family, who lived just a little ways down the lake, he told Äsùya as he sat on his load.

Meanwhile as he was telling Äsùya about his hunting experience, he was pushing a gaff hook under the snow towards Äsùya. He tried to gaff him between the legs and pull him down. Äsùya saw what was happening and jumped out of the way just as the marten pulled on the gaff. Äsùya ran to his sled and pulled off the covers and found a bunch of dry branches and sticks and told the man, “I thought you said that you were bringing a load of moose guts back to your wife. How come the sled is loaded with lots of dried branches and sticks?”

The man got really mad at Äsùya and grabbed a big stick and started chasing him around. Äsùya ran round and around the sled until he caught up to the man from behind. He hit him over the head with his sheep horn spoon and jumped on him and clubbed him to death.

Äsùya stood over the body and said, “I did not travel all over this world getting rid of all the bad animals who were killing people and eating them so that you can kill me.”

After killing that bad marten, Äsùya stepped over the body and left him there to rot in the sun and continued on his journey.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Crow and the Owl

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 – Story 1

A long, long time ago people used to have hard times without matches, because they could not cook their food without fire. They used to get flint from that place called Giltana (**Tl'el Tāna**) on the Aishihik Road. They had hard time without fire.

One day a crow came to a little owl (**ätthèl̥a**) and asked him if he could fly out to the middle of the ocean, where the smoke was coming out from a volcano, and bring back a hot rock so he could make a fire. The owl wanted to help so he said he would do it. He flew over to where he saw lots of smoke coming out of the mountain. They say that the owl used to have a long beak a long time ago.

The owl flew over there and picked up a hot rock and flew back to where the crow was waiting. As he got close to shore his beak started to burn and he dropped the rock. He told the crow that he couldn't do it because he burned his beak. The crow told him, "I will make you a new beak if you go out and get another rock." The owl refused to go back for another rock. The crow begged and begged promising to make him another beak and cried until the owl agreed and went back for another hot lava rock.

This time the owl just barely made it back to shore with the hot lava and dropped it by the crow. The owl was rolling around on the sand in pain and said to the crow, "Look what you have made me do to my beak, it is all burnt off. You promised to fix my beak if I got you that hot lava." The crow grabbed some spruce bark and rolled it into a funnel and stuck it onto the stubby end of the owl's beak and said, "There, it is all fixed, I told you that I would fix it back just the way it used to be. Now you are more handsome than before." That's how the crow fooled the owl. That's how people found flint a long time ago and learned how to make fire and cook their food.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Crow and the Whale Fish

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 - Story 2

This is a story about how the crow killed a big fish. I also heard Gòkhią (Kitty Smith) tell this story too but it is different from the way I know it. I will tell it to you the way I know this story.

The crow was walking along the shoreline after leaving the owl, when he saw a big fish swimming around in the middle of the lake. They used to call this big fish **Łukāy**. People used to dream about this kind of big fish. The old people say that it must have been some kind of a big whale.

The crow told the big fish, “The birds are laughing at you and they said that they want to look down your throat and see your uvula.” The big fish swam around in the middle of the lake and opened its mouth in a really wide yawn. He told the fish that it would have to swim closer to shore so that they could see better. The big fish swam a little way towards the shore and opened its mouth again. The crow said, “You will have to swim closer to shore so that they can see better.” The big fish came right up to the shoreline and opened its big mouth really wide. That’s when the crow flew into its mouth real quick. I wonder how he thought he was going to come back out.

The fish swam back out into the lake with him. He was in the belly of that fish for a long time and the fish swam a long way with him. Soon the crow got hungry and started to eat the insides of that fish while the fish was swimming around with him. After eating all the insides of the fish he started eating the fish heart. After he ate the heart, the big fish died with the crow still inside that fish.

The crow told the fish, “You are the most important big fish of all, please float to a big village or town with me.” The dead fish floated with him for a long time. Soon he felt the fish bumping up against the shoreline. The fish had floated up on a shore beneath a large village. There was lots people living there. They saw this big whale (**Yaay**) floating on the shore and they were all excited and happy that such a big fish floated right to their village.

All the people got their knives and started to cut up the fish. As they cut open the stomach, all of a sudden something black flew out of it and flew straight up

into the sky. The people said that they saw something fly out of that fish and it had flown up into the sky and they had not seen it come back down and they wondered what it was.

The crow flew back down to the lake and walked back along the shore to where the people were still cutting up the whale. He came up to the people and told them that he had heard that when someone finds a big dead whale come floating into a big village like this there is going to be a big war there soon. He was lying to those people so that they would get scared and all run away and leave the whale so that he would have the whale meat all for himself. People were giving him some whale meat, but he still wanted more for himself. After they gave him some small pieces of fat, they told him to go away and leave the people alone and they chased him away. He couldn't do anything so he went and hid in the bush.

After a long time, towards evening, he saw some young people playing with some leftover fat down on the beach. They had put some fat into a bag and were throwing it at each other. He sneaked up to them and asked if he could help them open up the bag of fat. He told them there was morning in the bag. He grabbed the bag and chopped off a piece of fat and it became morning. The whole sky lit up. The people all got scared and ran away. He grabbed the bag and tore it open and ate up all the fat inside. After he cleaned up all the fat real good, he started walking along the shore away from the village.

As he was walking along talking to himself, he came to a big rock and leaned against it, still talking to himself. That big rock started to repeat every thing he was saying. The crow jumped away from the rock and said, "Who is this that is repeating every thing that I am thinking just like a gossiper," as he kicked the rock. The rock fell over and there was an old lady sitting under it. The crow grabbed the little old lady and started tickling her and she fell over and started rolling around on the sand. He kept tickling her until she couldn't get her breath any more and then the crow ran away leaving her there.

The crow continued on walking along the shore after leaving that little old lady. As he was walking he came to a woman sitting on the shore crying. He walked up to her and asked why she was crying. She told him that her husband had died a long time ago, and that she and her son were living here alone, and that he had gone out onto the lake to fish and had been swallowed up by a big fish. He was her only son, that was why she was crying. She also had a young grandson. While that grandson was playing by the lakeshore he also disappeared. They looked all

up and down the lake, but he was nowhere to be found. They never did find out what had happened to him. She went and lit a big bonfire all around the lake. They say that the big fish came up close to the shore, attracted to the fires and that's how the crow killed the big fish. I don't really know much about this story after that.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Crow that Ate People

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 - Story 3

After that, the crow came to some people that were starving. They had tried hunting for moose but were unable to kill any moose no matter how hard they tried. They just didn't have any food to give to the poor crow. As the people were dying, the crow would follow the people to where they laid out the body and he would eat their eyes and feed on parts of their body. The people tried to chase him away, but he would always come back. Old people say that the crow was a really big bird a long time ago and people were really scared of him—bigger than the largest eagle today.

The people tried hunting every day but could not kill a moose or any kind of game. Soon even the children started dying off. Soon there were only a very few people left and they were afraid to go out and try to hunt, because the crow would wait outside for them and try to kill them.

One early morning this one man dug a tunnel out the back door of his house under the snow and crawled a long way from camp. When he was far enough away from camp, he crawled out from under the snow and he was able to get away and go hunting. He went way up into a deep valley of the mountain range. There he found a set of moose tracks and followed them. He followed the moose and was able to catch up to the moose and kill it. He skinned the moose and packed the moose guts into his pack and followed his tracks back to his camp. When he got back to where he had tunneled out from under the snow, he crawled back to his house following the same trail.

When he returned home he fed the people, and then he had some young men go with him to where he had killed the moose. They were able to bring in all the moose meat, a little at a time, using the snow tunnel and working all night.

One day an elderly man died. A couple of strong men put the body by the doorway and hid behind the door and waited with big clubs. Soon the crow saw the body and came and started eating the dead man's eyes. They say that a lot of people had starved to death because of that big crow.

As soon as the crow stepped into the doorway one man grabbed his legs and dragged him down. Then the rest of the men jumped on him and tied him up. They put him close to the cooking fire and started cooking a big pot of moose stew in front of him.

He watched the people cooking and asked them where all that moose meat came from. They did not tell him anything. The people continued eating all that nice fat moose meat in front of him. He kept asking the people how did they get all that moose meat, but they would not tell him anything. Then the men picked him up and tied a long rope onto him and hoisted him up by the opening of the smoke hole and hung him there. They hung him there until he turned black and shrank into a small bird.

People say that a long time ago the crow was a white bird. The people hung him there until he turned black and died. That was how they killed that big crow. After the people had killed that big crow they were able to hunt and get moose and other small game without any problem and they did not go hungry anymore. And to this day the crows are always small.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## Two Boys Lost On an Ice Floe

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 (side B)

A long time ago, two young boys were sent down to the river to get some water while their parents were setting up camp. In those days people were always moving around hunting, fishing, and gathering food for the winter. They had a little dog with them. While they were on the ice, a chunk broke off with them on it and they flowed away down the river.

The ice flowed a long way with them until it flowed out onto a big lake. Meanwhile the ice was getting smaller. They flowed for a long time and they did not have any food. I don't know how many days they flowed without food. They were getting really hungry.

People say that those boys were missing for over one month. Finally their little dog died and they took the dog's intestine out and wound it around the ice to keep it from melting too fast. They started to pray that the ice would soon flow close to shore. Soon the ice flowed into shore with them.

From there they started along the shore in the direction that the ice had flowed with them, hoping to get home. They were able to catch some fish, and even killed a moose. They stayed there a long time making dry meat and fish. But as soon as they put some meat up on the cache, the next morning it would be gone. They looked for tracks but could not find any. Every night it would be the same thing. The next morning the meat would be gone again. Soon they were out of food.

One night the oldest brother stayed up all night to try and catch what was taking their food. In the middle of the night he saw someone moving around in the dark and taking down their food from the cache. He took a shot at it with his arrow. The arrow struck the thing in the side and it cried out. That's how he knew he had hit it. It took off running up the hill.

Early the next morning he followed the tracks, and they led him right up to a big rock and then disappeared. He walked all around that big rock and the tracks did not come out on the other side. He walked round and round and round that rock but could not find the tracks again.

Finally, in frustration he kicked the big rock. When he kicked it, the big rock opened up and there was a large room underneath. He went down into the room and there he saw lots of people sitting around a fire. They told him to come in and that they needed his help. They told him that one of their people had walked into a big stick and it was now sticking out of his side and he was dying.

They asked if he had Indian power (**nàche**) that could help to heal him. These people were the frog people, living underground. He went over to where the young man was lying down and saw that it was his arrow that was sticking out of his side. That was what he had seen moving around in the dark stealing their food off the cache and had shot at. They pleaded with him for his help, and that if he helped them, they would repay him very well and give him lots of things.

He tried to leave, telling them that his younger brother was waiting for him, but they wouldn't let him go. Finally he went over to where the young man was lying down and pulled the arrow out. Then he bandaged the wound and stopped the bleeding. They had him living with them for a long time.

They wouldn't let him leave until that young man was all better. They gave him all kinds of tools and equipment that he would need for hunting. That young man was very grateful to him for being healed.

After the young man was all better, he told them that he must really go back home to where his younger brother was waiting for him. He had been away a long time and he must be worried sick, wondering where he had disappeared to.

The frog people gave him a small blanket and told him, "If your young brother has died while you were gone, put this blanket over him and sing this song." Then they gathered around the blanket and sang a frog healing song. I used to know that song, but I forgot it. It was a really nice song. Then they let him out and told him that he would be looked after and would have good luck for staying and helping them. He started back home to where he had left his young brother.

When he got back home he found his brother lying dead under his blanket. He had starved to death without food. He got out the small blanket and laid it out over his brother and sang that frog healing song. The boy came back to life, then he told his younger brother about shooting a person who was stealing their food and following the tracks up to the big rock and finding frog people living underground. That was where he was all this time and he told about how they wouldn't let him go until the young man he had shot was all better. He also told him about the

healing blanket they had given him and teaching him their song. After his younger brother got strong enough, they started back to where they had left their parents.

While they were travelling, it started to snow. They came to a good high place where they built a lean-to. They gathered a lot of firewood and made a big fire on a little hump that was out in front of their lean-to. After the fire started burning really good and hot, they smelled burning hair. The older brother asked his brother if he had burned his hair. He said that he had not and that he too smelled the burning hair.

They looked around the fire and saw some moose hair showing through where the fire had melted the snow away. They dug away the rest of the snow from around the fire and underneath it they found two moose which had locked horns. Both moose had died, because they could not unlock their horns. They found two fat moose there under the snow. They uncovered the moose and gathered up lots of wood and built up the fire to thaw the moose out and got busy cutting them up.

They were very thankful that they had found all this good meat. It was the way the frog people were rewarding them for their help. They also had told the brother about how to always carry the blanket with him wherever he went. They made a skin toboggan out of the moose skin and cut up all the moose meat and loaded it onto it. They made a good strong lean-to and stayed there for most of the winter.

One day a man came into their camp. They told the man about how they became lost, and that they were trying to return home, but that they couldn't find anyone at the place where they had last seen them. They thought that their parents might have died. They told of how they had come here and found two dead moose with horns locked together. The man told them about some people living across the lake and that that was where he was from. While out hunting he had seen their smoke so he had come to see who they were. The two boys packed up all their food and belongings and went to live with the man and among the other people. They made a new life there for themselves.

Tl'áhù. That's all.

## The Stolen Woman

Recorded by Agnes MacDonald

Haines Junction

April 20-22, 1983

YNLC Tape 2162 (s ide B)

Once there was a man and his wife living by a lake. One day another man came into their camp, saying that he had travelled a long way in a boat and that he was very tired. He wanted to know if he could rest there at their camp. They fed him and told him to stay with them and rest as long as he needed to. The man and his wife gave him food and a place to stay and made him feel welcome in their home. He could come and go as he pleased around their place and he also helped them with their chores, bringing in water and wood.

The woman also went about doing her chores, feeding their dogs, cooking, checking her rabbit snares and running her fishnet.

The man stayed with them for a long time. Then one day he told them that he had stayed away from his family long enough and he should be returning home. They gave him some food and he left in his boat.

The woman's husband told her that he had seen moose tracks a couple of days ago and he was going to track them. He went off hunting and left her in their camp by herself.

After her husband had gone hunting, the woman went down to the lakeshore to clean some fish she had caught that morning. As she sat there cleaning fish someone came and grabbed her from behind. The man that they had helped and fed had come back to steal her. He carried her through the bush hollering and screaming. She tried grabbing onto trees and willows while being dragged through the bush to where he had hidden his boat, but he was too strong for her. She kept hollering hoping that her husband would hear her. When they got to the boat, the man threw her into the boat, tied her up and pushed off from shore.

When her husband returned he found his wife gone. He found the place where his wife had been cleaning fish. The fish were still there. He looked around the area and found some fresh tracks. He knew then that someone had stolen his wife.

The husband followed the tracks and found where his wife had pulled up some bushes trying to get away. He came to the lakeshore where the man had pulled his boat ashore and hidden it, while he had watched the camp waiting until the

husband had gone out hunting. He walked along the lake shore a long way and spotted the boat on the lake and called to the man and pleaded with him to return his wife. Her husband told the man that he would pay him and give him anything he wanted, if he would just return his wife to him. The man told the husband that he had what he had come for and there was nothing else he wanted.

Then he rowed out to the middle of the lake, far away from shore so that he could not swim out to them. The man then hollered at his wife telling her that he was going to get her brothers and that they would be coming after her. He told her to mark the trail wherever he took her so that they would be able to follow their trail.

The man took that woman a long way before they came to the camp where he had come from. That man already had two other wives. He set up a camp for her by his first mother-in-law so she could be watched and not run away. He went out hunting every day for his wives and came home with at least two or three caribou and other small animals like gophers or groundhog.

Sometimes he would take her out with him and she would mark the trail wherever they had been. Two years passed while she lived with those people.

The woman's first husband never stopped searching for her. He would go out every day and look for her. One day while out hunting up in the mountains, he found a bundle of dried wood tied together sitting at the entrance of a hole that led underground at the base of a glacier. He went back and got his wife's brothers and told them what he had found up at the valley between the mountains by the big glacier.

Her brothers and some other men went with him back to where he had found that bundle of wood. When they got there they found a tunnel leading under the huge glacier and they followed it. Every once in a while they would pound on the side of the ice and it would echo back at them. They travelled a long way before they came out on the other side among a big thick growth of trees.

They had been following the trail a long way when they saw smoke from a campfire. When they got closer they saw two old women sitting beside a campfire. They waited until it got dark and they sneaked up to the two old women's camp. They saw a man bringing in some firewood for them. They waited until it got really dark and then found a strong long pole and sneaked up behind him while he was sitting by the fire and pushed him into the fire with the long pole. The man fell into the fire and got burned really badly and he died shortly after that. Then

they asked the two old women where the rest of their people were, saying if they didn't tell them where the people had gone they were going to kill them too just like that man.

The two old women told them that the rest of the people had left them behind and gone on without them. The man they had pushed into the fire was supposed to look after them. Then they showed the men the direction the people had gone.

The men went down the trail that the two old women had pointed out to them. They travelled for days on that trail and had not caught up with any people or found any new tracks. Finally they turned back. Now they were really angry at the two old woman for sending them in the wrong direction.

When the men returned to where they had left the two old women, they had disappeared. The men found a place where they had dug a tunnel under the snow and from there they could not find them. They looked everywhere but they could not find those two old women. Finally they found a well worn trail. By this time they were really angry. They ran down the trail fighting mad and ready to fight anyone that they found in their way. They found an old campsite where the people had been living, but they did not find anyone there.

The husband of the woman that had been stolen found a well worn trail away from the camp. He went down the trail, and as he was walking he heard someone coming, so he hid behind some bushes and waited. Soon he saw someone pulling some caribou meat in a skin bag. When the person came closer he saw that it was a woman. He waited until she got closer and came out from behind the bushes and called her name and asked if that was her name. She told him yes, that was her name, and then told him the story about how she was stolen away from her people a long time ago, and how no one had come for her and that she could not get away or find her way back to her husband.

She told him that the rest of the people from this camp had gone out hunting. Some of the men had killed some caribou and the rest of the people were still at the kill site. This was actually the first time that she was by herself, without anyone watching her all the time. They had sent her to take some meat back to the camp early and start cooking for the evening meal.

He told her to go and hang the meat up on the drying racks and start cooking and go on as if there was nothing wrong. He told her that her brothers were also with him, that they had come to get her. He was going back to where her brothers were waiting and they would come for her when it got dark. Then she told her first

husband that she now had two kids and would get them ready and let them sleep with her in her own brush-type lean-to, away from that man and his other wives.

Then she went back to the camp and started cooking the evening meal for when the rest of the people returned to camp. She got busy packing dry meat, grease, fish and berries into her skin sled and took it to where her husband and brothers were waiting in the bush.

When the people came back, the man that had stolen her saw that all the meat was missing from the cache. He asked her what had happened to all their meat. She told him that a couple of the dogs had got loose while she had been busy getting wood for the camp fire and cooking. The old lady that lived across from her told her son that she had not seen any loose dogs in camp when she returned before the other people. But she told the old lady that she had tied the dogs back up before she came back to camp. That old lady suspected that something was going on, but she did not say anything to her son. Instead she said that maybe the dogs had packed all the meat away and they should go and look for it when it got light the next morning.

When it got dark she put her children to bed and made a big fire and sat beside it. After everybody had gone to bed she waited until everyone was sleeping, then she took her children out the back way from her lean-to and fled to where her husband and brothers were waiting. The men went into the camp and killed everyone in that camp while they were sleeping. They were great warriors. They killed everyone. No one was left alive. After they had killed everyone they took the woman and her children back to live among her own people.

Tl'áhù. That's all.