

**The orphan boy and the noble man
as told by
Veronica George in 1994**

A long time ago between 1840 and 1850 that happened in Chunalac There was a war. The Chilcotin people attack the Carrier again and they were all ready, these Carrier people were all ready to celebrate for all over, Cheslatta and Portage, Tachie. They all gather food for a year and they going to meet in Chunalac. They going to have celebration. People from all the way from Nasko, they came. Like the leaders I guess. It will be chiefs and them.

And that happened in Chunalac them Chilcoton people attacked them and killed nearly all of them but few ran in the bush and they were saved. And this little boy I guess he ran in the bush with the rest of them and his father was slain, his father and his mother was murdered.

And this little boy the only grandmother he knew was living in Nautley. And he hung around with these people and they bring him back to his grandmother in Nautley and this grandmother trying to raise this little boy. He will be over eight year old that what this grandfather of mine telling me and his grandmother moved back to Nautley. That old lady use to live around near Beumont Park but she moved back to reserve and they built a little shack for her and her little grandson and they live right by Nautley river.

And this little boy happen to go around and he went into this one man's house. They call this men of that kind and women of this kind. This man they call him, in Indian they call him Deneza and in white man way they call him noble man. And his been looked after by a servant. They call them slaves. This slave had to cook for that nobleman and do all the wood and do all the cleaning for that man. He just stays there. I guess it's their tradition, that time and this little boy happened to visit this noble man. He sit along side the wall there and this slave woman cooked some fish for that man and she gave (him) that dish of fish and that little boy is watching that noble man eating. And that noble man he took the tail out of the fish and he took all the meat out from there and the little boy, I guess he wasn't watching. He put some ashes, fill up that fish tail with ashes and he put that meat on top of the ashes so it don't look like there's ashes in there. That noble man done that to that little boy and he hand it to that little boy and tell him to eat it. And the little boy grabbed the fish and he start eating it and he got choke on the ashes. Ashes went down his throat and he start coughing and the little boy start to get his nose bleeding coughing. I guess he pull so hard he go choke on them ashes and he threw that fish tail to the dog and he went back to his grandmother.

And his grandmother ask him, "What happen to you? Somebody hit you on the face?" but that little boy keep on coughing, he couldn't talk. Finally she gave that little boy some water. Make him drink water. And he breathe again and he told his grandmother

what that nobleman give him. Piece of fish and he put some ashes in there and he put the flesh on top so that ashes didn't look and that boy took a big bite of it and it was ashes. And that old lady said, "Don't go over there again!" He's suppose to be a noble man and you're not suppose to bother him. He didn't bother him, he just came to visit...visit the man. Sort of that little boy was kind of lost and looking for someone to love him.

And that old lady said, "You'll grow up, you will grow up and I'll teach you something. Someday when you grow up you'll fix that noble man. I'll teach you how to do it." And that little boy didn't know what the grandmother was talking about. And the grandmother knew what to do. She went, she went, she knows where the nest was. The nest of white head eagle. She climbed up the tree and she set snares for that white head eagle and she got that white head eagle. And she brought it home and she skinned it. Skinned it carefully and she stretched it that white head eagle, the skin, the wings and all. She didn't damage nothing. She knew what she was doing. And she dried it and hang it around. Leave it and she said, "I'm going to set snare for owl." And she looked and she looked, and she kind of thought where to go because she's an old timer, she know all the surrounding of Nautley. She got the owl nest and she set snare for the owl and she got the owl. She done the same thing as that white head eagle. She skinned it. She skinned it carefully. And she make that little boy mattress (from) that white head eagle. She made it mattress for that little boy and that owl skin, he cover him with that owl skin.

He grew up like that and he became dreamer, that little boy. He became a dreamer and he started to do miracle things. That old lady knew that little boy was confirmed in there. In a dreamer. So she said to the little boy now he's grown up to be a young man and the old lady asked, "Are you ready to do anything?" He told his grandmother, that he knew what to do and he knew about his dreams and he knew what to do. And the old woman said you know something about crane? We call that in Indian Delth, Delth. Delth den un zun, yulth nee and the little boy answered, yes I do, I know what to do about that crane. And the old lady told him what to do.

One afternoon it was nice and calm in Nautley. People are all getting ready for that salmon run. Some making sticks to hang the salmon on a rack, some are making fish trap, everybody working. And they see these two big birds playing in the sky this crane two big cranes playing. They bump one another and they fly that way and they bump on another again. Everybody came out of their house and they're sitting outside and watching that crane. He's acting funny.

And this little boy and his grandmother, they knew what's going on. And his just doing that at the mouth of Nautley and his just keep on going towards reserve. Sort of playing with one another. And that noble man, they took a blanket and put a blanket for him outside. He's going to sit on that blanket and watch them two big birds playing. And this old lady and the grandson sitting outside and watching that crane. Keep on coming

towards that noble man his house. And they just going on top and they just keep on doing it. Bump on another and they fly away that way. They fly around and they come back and they bump into on another again.

Pretty soon they just head down, their head straight down, dive right down to that noble man. Each crane grab him on the shoulder, on each side and they pull him. He's screaming that noble man, he's screaming but there's nobody can do nothing about it. He's up in the sky and this crane they pull him and they squish him again. They pull him and they squish him again. Just doing that and doing that and in the end he died. And they say his body was just like mud. Now, where the bridge is and then a little further towards the mouth there's a big hill there. The crane they drop the noble man right on the hill and they bump into on another again. They just keep on playing on top of reserve.

All the people they're screaming, they're scared. And these cranes they play and they play and they turn straight north to the mountain. And that old lady said," What that man done to you, he make you choke on ashes on that fish tail, you fix him, it's you that done it my grandson. That old woman said it and the boy didn't make motion because he's the one that done it. And they got that noble man. They had to drag him in. There's nothing left of him. And just burn him up just like that.

And that boy, that same boy, his grandmother send him in the bush to get that main stick you put it around the fish trap. Old lady start to fix the fish trap for salmon. This boy he went in the bush and he's making that stick. He found the right kind to fix, to help his grandmother fix that fish trap and Wiskeyjack come to him. He tell him, Wiskeyjack said, "Throw that away, throw that stick away. It's going to be no good to you. You're not going to make no use out of that stick that you are making. All the fish are going to come back to life and they're all going to go back into the river and there's going to be famine in this reserve. There's going to be nothing left what the people are going to put up. They not going to show nothing for it."

Wiskeyjack talking to this, the same boy. And this, the same boy, he obey Wiskeyjack. He threw away that stick and Wiskeyjack he say you make arrows. You make arrows, you make it really good and you put grouse feathers, grouse wings, each wing, each feather you put it on your arrow and you mark the place, you go alongside the hill and get the willow bark. Get a piece of willow bark and mark the tree where you put your arrow because winter time you wouldn't see where you put your arrow. When you mark it with that willow bark then you know where the arrow is.

So this boy instead of getting that tree he bring back bunch of arrows to make. They make it out of Saskatoon bush. He bring that with him and his grandmother really got mad at him and holler at him. He said what you going to make out of these arrows? I tell you to get that stick that we're going to fix our fish trap. You suppose to get that

stick and you didn't do that. You disobeying. What you going to eat in winter time. He never say nothing to his grandmother. Let him talk. He just go ahead and done it.

His uncle. His mother's brother's wife came over and she kick him from behind. You're suppose to obey your grandmother. You're suppose to do what your grandmother tell you. You're not suppose to fool around with arrow this time of the year. Like everybody is working. Getting ready for salmon. That's our winter food. And the boy still didn't say nothing. He just keep on working on that arrow. And that Wiskeyjack tell him what to do.

So after he fix that he put several distance to each arrow. He tell him to put in on the hill. Not to put it on level ground or anywhere but to put it on the hill. So he went across near that Fraser Mountain. He find a hill there. He went distance and he put the arrow and he make it with willow bark. He do that until that arrow was all gone. And he come back and his grandmother didn't even notice he had no more arrows but he didn't say nothing.

And that boy just help his grandmother make wood. Just to do part time to help his grandmother. There came salmon! He knew what is going to happen to salmon but he help his grandmother just to please her. And just about in the month of September for now a days we know what the month of September is. The leave turn yellow and the things, the grass turns yellow. Just about that time everybody was just about finished with salmon. All the racks are full.

And then one morning, north wind start to blow. It get really cold. And pretty soon it start to snow. And the boy knew what was coming. Wiskeyjack tell him already. And grandmother get very scared and she save eggs she dried. She's trying to put them away in spite of that cold weather. She put them in container. And she is trying to sew it up so no insect will go in there. And the boy just keep on making wood. The Wiskeyjack tell him it's going to be terrible cold. First of all the cold weather is going to come and then the salmon they're going to all go back to the river. No matter how dry they are. No matter they're in the cache. They put them away in the cache but they're going to get strong. They come back to life and they're going to go back to the river.

So all the racks...big loud noise came. Sound of thunder and every rack was moving. People got scared, they just ran back into their smokehouses. They see all that salmon come back to life. And his grandmother had two pieces of salmon eggs. She strap herself to the tree with that so that one, she would try to save. That poor old grandmother, her back was worn out that salmon, he jump at him, he jump at him try to get his eggs back. That grandmother stay put. All that pounding she got from salmon but she didn't let go.

Everybody, now everybody going to starve. That boy knew about it. He prepared. And that Wiskeyjack told him, "When the snow gets so deep and people start to starve go to

the first arrow that you put in the ground. Go to the first arrow. First, before you go out there, get your knife ready. Get some rope around you. What you're going to need over there. That arrow where you put it is going to be bear, bear hole. Where you put that arrow is going to be right near the bear hole. You kill that bear. You take a rope and put rope around his neck and drag it out. That's why you're going to need that rope. And you're careful with it. When you're going to give out that meat. Put little bit of fat with it to every family. Tell them not to eat that meat right away but take the broth for two days. Just live on the broth. If they eat that meat they'll die. They got to live on the broth, then eat that meat." That's what that Wiskey jack warned that boy. His two uncles still alive with their family and his aunty, the one that kicked him she was down. She couldn't move no more. Hungry.

He went into where he first put that arrow. Sure enough, there was a bear hole. Bear in that hole. So he got his little arrow ready and he shot that bear and he drag that bear out and he skinned it and he separate the meat and he took the fat part and he put his mitts what's inside the bear fat he put it in his mitts and he bring some meat. Going to boil for those people who are badly down. He threw his mitts to his grandmother. His grandmother told him to look for dried up rose buds for his sister. Sister was very poor then. Old lady open it up and he say, "bear fat!" The old lady fell down along side the fire and she faint. She didn't expect that kind and young man pick up that fat and he cooked it open fire so he can give them pretty poor give them a spoon at a time into their mouth. To keep their mouth wet with that bear grease. And the one that kick the boy when he was working on that arrow. She couldn't even move a hand and she says, what ever you got just wet my mouth. My mouth is dry he say. And that boy he give him bear grease and he got all the rest of the meat and after they all get better. They're up again.

He pack that meat in and he gave them so much at a time. He went all the way to Stellaquo. Nearly everybody was starved to death. And he went around on the north side. There was two sisters, they're still alive. They still alive and they're taking this paint. What you call paint. They make it in Sinkut Mountain. They had a little pouch containing that paint. They telling the young man they take few grain at the time and they live on that. And he gave them piece of meat and bear fat and told them not to eat the meat but take the broth.

And he went around second time and he didn't find nobody. No survivors, only his own relatives. Now where sunset beach is. That's where they living. And he check his second arrow. There was a bear again. And he shoot that bear and he skinned it and bring the meat to his uncles. All those survived he share with them. He share with all those who are alive. With all them arrows, where ever he put, there was a bear.

Pretty soon he built a big shack for his grandmother and his little sister and he bring some more bear meat. And that bear meat and bear fat they make it and save the grease and help those people who survive. He say, the last arrow he checked there

— was a bear in there. He got the last bear and he gave it to his oldest uncle. He shared with them. To share it among themselves.

And this is the boy, between the boy and noble man. The story. Is a true story. Is been told by my grandfather, Vanderhoof Jack and it is true story. It happen when he was just a young man and he lived in Nautley and he seen the two, the two cranes and he seen it how these two crane kill that noble man and my grandfather's picture is in the book. And this is the end of the story. That's very interesting.

Transcribed By Deborah Page
May 3rd 1996