

Tales from Gambell —

Eskimo Jack Frost

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Siberian Yupik speaking Eskimos have a tale or child's verse-like piece of frost man for mid-winter thoughts. It is an imaginary man whose name is Takevug, who's falls are heard in mid winter. That is the sounds we hear of cracks of ice around St. Lawrence Island and Siberia.

It is so cold and still sometimes in mid-winter that, only sounds we hear are loud cracks of ice and even in the homes. When this happens it is so beautiful that you'll want to hear it some more. The wind is not blowing it is calm, but it is so cold that you see your breath. That's the time the fall of our Jack Frost is heard, when he trip and fall down on the ice and snow.

When we hear this crack sounds, the parents would amusingly tell the children, "Now answer." So a child would make noise by hitting something hard.

The parent would say, now Takevug will get up smiling. If you don't make noise to answer his sound, he surely is not going to be happy, he will get up frowning.

So to make Takevug happy and smiling, we would make loud cracking sounds or hit the floor hard.

Those are some of the mid-winter icy crispy thoughts when the haze from the smoke surrounds you, as the ice moves there is smoke, from ever open water into deep sea.