

**Legends by Jimmy Killigivuk—**

# **The Battle of the Winds**

(Copyright 1969 by Jimmy Killigivuk)

By JIMMY KILLIGIVUK

Point Hope, Alaska

Once long ago in the great North, there was a man who lived by himself. He stayed alive by living off the land and sea by hunting.

One day a northeast wind started to blow. It became very strong as well as cold, so much that the man couldn't go out to hunt. He waited and waited but the wind did not subside. Soon his food supply began to get smaller and smaller.

In bed one night after he had noticed this, the man began thinking:

"Where does that wind come from? It must start somewhere. I should try to find out. Tomorrow, I'll go and search for it."

The next morning he finished his food supply for breakfast, then started out toward the northeast. After a long day's walk, he camped overnight in a snow house. When he arose on the following day he saw that the wind was still blowing as strongly as ever.

"I wonder what kind of people live in the Northeast," he thought.

That afternoon, he climbed to the top of a hill in his path. From there he spotted a neat, well built snow house. He saw some people emerge from it. Then he spotted another igloo—

a not-so-neat sod house—about a half mile from the other one. He saw some people inside who appeared cold and uncomfortable.

The man walked to the snow house. When he reached it, a man came out to meet him saying, "My Chief told me to have you come inside."

After they entered, the man who appeared to be the head of the group asked, "Where did you come from?"

"I came from my home where I live alone," the visitor answered. "I have come to see where the northeast wind comes from. The wind has made too much bad weather and I am starving because of it."

"These are my people that you see inside this house. We make the northeast wind. Did you see our neighbor a half mile away? Right now I know of two people there who have frozen to death. We are happy. You see, they make the southeast wind, the bitter enemy of the northeast wind."

"Perhaps tomorrow the wind will shift to southeasterly," he continued, "then we will be in real trouble. Our snow house will melt. We will become very uncomfortable, for our clothes will be soaking wet and it will always be raining. You should stay here one more day. Tomorrow, you may see a southeast wind."

The next morning, when the visitor got up, he saw that there was, indeed, a southeast wind blowing. It was raining and warm. Nevertheless he stayed there. In the afternoon, the snow house started to melt.

After the men had become wet from the dripping, a colder southwest wind began blowing. Now they were sitting around in their sopping wet clothes.

"Now we have the troubles," the Chief said to the visitor. "We cannot hunt."

Later, two men froze to death. To the visitor, the leader sadly said:

"Every time we want to fight, we start a northeast wind. Our enemies get cold and they get sick and then they freeze to death. Then they start their southeast winds and we get sick and some of us freeze.

"You had better go home and leave us. We are always fighting. We don't use arrows—only the cold."