

Storyteller recounts Eskimo tale of magical crystal ball

Eskimo Young Man
and the Crystal Ball
By GRACE SLWOOKO

In Eskimo land there was nothing known as glass or crystal, except the frost, sometimes the frosty crystals are very beautiful on the ice and everywhere outdoors, when the sun shines on them. They are crystalline when the sun is lowest at the southern sky in mid winter. The frost crystals on the snow and ice sparkle all over, they are sparkly with red, blue and yellow, they are very beautiful and tiny.

There also is one crystal or a bright star that drops from the sky and gets into the earth. It is

very seldom seen, only once in a while. They say that when this is seen and if the person that sees it should dig up the place it went in right away. Some people have found a strange kind of rock or a crystal. And they would keep that as a charm or rather is for pains. When one is suffering from any sickness, a person that has it, would hit place around the pain gently for a while and blow it off. That always used to take the pains away. It was before the first aid things were learned and studied.

In the following story, the young man is seeing a very strange thing, a crystal or glass ball.

Once upon a time there was a young man, living in one Eskimo village. This young man would go on exercises, such as rock lifting and track every morning before taking any food. Then one time while he was out in the nice evening hours, he saw a sight on the snow in the light of the moon. What was that? He couldn't understand. It was a round thing a crystal clear a small ball, big as the young man's hand. He went and tried to pick it up, but it rolled away on the snow and around his feet. Then he turned around to grab it, he went on like this for a while (Then as in a fairy tale again, there appeared a man

when the crystal ball was not seen anymore).

The man talked to the young man and said, "Now young man, I'm coming to tell you something important. You know what you should do? You should go and marry the girl, the daughter of the family in your village. (He named the family)."

There the young man tried to think of what daughter the family might have. All he knew was that all the daughters of the family were all married and had their own homes. So he said, "That couple has no more daughters at home, all their girls are all married."

"No young man, not all," the stranger spoke to him. "That man and his wife are doing something very wrong. They are keeping one more girl at home. Ever since the girl was born, the parents planned on keeping her secret. So the girl is kept in the house all the time. Only in the evenings when the moon is bright, is the girl allowed to get out."

"That girl and all the girls are not to be kept secret. So, ask her for marriage." He also said to the young man, "Whenever you need me just put the crystal ball and turn away, I'll be there to help you. And the man disappeared, but the crystal ball appeared again. So the young man put the ball in a place on his belt."

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When he got home that day, he talked to his grandmother, saying, "Grandmother, it is time I should be getting married. And you should go and talk to our neighbors there, about me asking their daughter in marriage."

The grandmother asked in annoyance, "What daughter? All the girls of that family are married."

"They have one more, which needs to be given freedom. She is kept secret ever since she was born. The parents want to keep her in a very secret place, she can only be allowed to go outdoors when the weather is nice and the moon is bright the evening. So she needs to be

given freedom."

"Who told you that?" the grandmother asked.

"Oh, some help for the girl appeared to me," the young man told his grandmother.

So, the grandmother went to that couple whose daughters were all married and was welcomed by them very happily. And when they asked what they might do for her, she answered, "My grandson sent me over, he wanted to marry your daughter. I told him that all your daughters are away and have their own homes. But he said that you have one more and he wanted her."

The man and his wife went on saying, "He can marry our daughter, but first we want him to bring the 'Agyuut' at the top of the mountain." (The agyuut was the name for some power, when brought it should bring some supernatural strength.)

So the grandmother went home.

And the guy asked her, "What did they say?"

"They said that you can marry her, but first get the thing there on the top of the mountain, called agyuut, which means arrows and the bow."

So the young man got out in the evening and got the crystal ball out, put it on the snow and turned away for a while. And when he turned back it was a man then. And the man asked, "Did you ask for the girl?"

"They said that I should get the agyuut, which is on the top of the mountain," the young man told him.

Right away the man there said, "Yes they'll want that, but it is not on the mountaintop it is at the heavenly place called the 'day break.' No one can get it, they are just saying that to frighten you. I'll get it for you. So the man disappeared and the crystal ball appeared. And later on the man appeared and he had a large bag and it was glowing, the things in the bag were moving around. And he said, "Here, this is the thing they wanted, take it to them." and they urged the young man to take it back, saying "Take it back, it is unearthly, we just said it to keep the girl secret. You can marry the girl too."

So, after this the girl was given her freedom and not kept secret any more.

Alaska Airlines protests new route

Alaska Airlines has described as "ill-founded and potentially damaging to existing service" the filing by Western Airlines for C.A.B. authority to serve Juneau and Ketchikan during the peak summer months.

Ronald F. Gosgrave, Alaska's Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, issued the following statement:

"We note that the Western filing makes no mention of any deficiency of service to Southeast Alaska. That is no oversight, because Alaska Airlines' service in Southeast is outstanding and represents a dramatic improvement in quality and quantity over levels offered when Western served Ketchikan and Juneau.

"The request proposes to fill what it calls 'gaps' in the summer schedule, indicating that Western obviously did not take into account the summer schedule of Alaska Airlines, effective May 15. As a point of fact, the Western proposal fills no gaps; it duplicates our service.

"The one flight proposed by Western would depart Seattle within 40 minutes of our Flight 65, Northbound. Southbound, their flight would depart Juneau sandwiched between two of

Alaska's Southbound departures that occur between 4:35 p.m. and 5:55 p.m. If that isn't duplication, I don't know what is.

"Nearly the same situation applies at Ketchikan.

"What will happen if Western is allowed to re-enter this market? First, using vastly exaggerated forecasts of traffic stimulation to minimize its representations of diversionary impact on Alaska, Western's own estimates show that it will divert approximately \$2.3 million of revenue. Let me point out that \$2.3 is equal to 40% of our Company's net income for the entire year of 1975.

"Also, Western alludes to the fact that although it is requesting an exemption for a one-year period it would be quite content with an authorization for the peak season only. This is quite understandable because Western's filing claims it will earn half a million dollars during the peak season and virtually nothing for the balance of the year.

This cream-skimming posture which Western seeks to have the C.A.B. bless, sharply brings into focus the observations made by

Examiner Rublen in the Alaska Service Investigation when Western attempted to retain its Western-Ketchikan rights while deleting service at King Salmon, Gustavus, Yakutat and Cordova, as well as between Kodiak, Kenai, Homer and Anchorage. Examiner Rublen stated: "It is clear that Western is attempting to slough its unprofitable Alaskan points and segments and retain only the profitable ones. Revenues earned by carriers from profitable Alaskan routes should, to the extent practicable, be available to pay for needed Alaskan services."

Cosgrave continued; "A statement made by one of Western's own officials, in announcing its intent to seek the route, only serves to drive home the message of cream-skimming. The official, Howard Clifford, said: 'his airline would be interested in serving the route even if Ketchikan were excluded.'

"The unnecessary service proposed by Western threatens not only to undo the major service improvement made by

Alaska over the Seattle-Ketchikan-Juneau-Anchorage route, but also threatens the service levels provided to smaller cities.

The major reason the Board suspended Western at Ketchikan and Juneau and authorized Alaska to provide the required service was that it found that the needs of Southeast Alaska for effective and economic service could best be filled by an Alaska-oriented carrier that could integrate the longer-haul non-stop operations in the larger Southeast markets with service to smaller intermediate points. This is no less true today.

"We are proud of the continued improvements in service and equipment we have made in the Southeast over the past few years, and we look forward to further improvements. Our record stands in sharp contrast to Southeast service by Western, which lost its authority to serve the communities involved by a C.A.B. order in 1972.

"Introduction of redundant service simply endangers all air service to Southeast Alaska."

Hammond pleased with bond sale

Governor Jay Hammond announced the Alaska Bond Committee recently sold \$40 million worth of general obligation bonds at a net interest cost of 5.804 per cent, the lowest rate for the state in three years.

Hammond said the bond sale in New York was very successful in light of the current Bond Buyer Index of 6.87 per cent which is based upon a nationwide composite average of municipal bond sales.

The \$40 million bond sale will provide \$7.3 million for rural school construction, followed by \$5.4 million for the University of Alaska and \$4.9 million for highway, ferry and local service road construction.

Other purposes include \$4.3 million for port facilities development, \$3.8 million for health care facilities, \$3.25 million for airports, \$2.6 million for fish and game facilities, \$2.6 million for Pioneer's Homes, \$2.5 million for library facilities, \$2.3 million for trunk and secondary airports, \$550,000 for highway maintenance facilities and \$440,000 for state operated schools.

The bonds were purchased by the Northern Trust Company and Associates of Chicago.

Bids were also received from an account headed by the Bankers Trust Co., an account headed by Morgan Guaranty Trust Co., and an account

headed by the Chase Manhattan Bank.

These accounts represented many of the most substantial municipal bonds underwriting firms in the country and bidding for Alaska's bonds was quite aggressive.

The 5.084 percent interest rate was the lowest Alaska bonds have received since a \$31 million sale in August, 1973, according to Peter Bushre, comptroller of the State treasury. He explained that in the recent past Alaska has had to pay a higher interest rate on its bonds partly as a result of the confusion hanging over the bond market because of the New York City default threat which has diminished.

"The timing of this issue was excellent," said Bushre, "it sold into a relatively strong market."

So far this year, the State has sold \$80 million in bonds.

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