

Stacey Carkhuff and Polly Hyslop interviewing Ellen Dimet
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Tape 1

ELLEN DIMET: Anyway, my daddy related to Healy Lake woman and his (Her) husband. My daddy don't want adopt way – I'm the last one – the baby of the family. My daddy ask around. I going to have good home. He not happy they give me away. You know what I raised up with? Eagle Brand.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Mmm.

ELLEN DIMET: So, today I not feel bad, but I don't know my Mother and Daddy. (Her real parents) The daddy and my mother raised me. That's I choose to be my daddy and mother in my village. Someone ask me all the way down from Fairbanks, Chena – all the way down. My days, I could tell story, but right now – I'm just up and down, up and down. I forget it. That's how I begin - adopt way- but my mother – she's very wonderful woman. My daddy is blind – he was born like that. My dad used to make garden - huge garden. And my daddy blind but at least I had good food to raise up. Not like right now. I get junk food to go and eat, eat. No, I just raised up on the land, even though my daddy was blind. And I makes up my mind. I have to tell this word this morning. In my mind. Okay, I'm going to talk about what year I been to highway. (The) highway – how it looked. It seems like it there for me. The woman of me – I never forget it. Right now, I forget it now. Getting, losing my mind. 1946 – we in Mendees Cheeg. That's my village – Healy Lake. That's where I grown up. From there I got married. We got our own children. And the village sickness come out - some kind of sickness. Not only our village. Northway. All over where Native village. Either white people die off so much that year. But the one I real forgot it- where sickness come out. But, I'm the only one – I never get that sick. The way I am, I go to village. I go to old grandma's house. Grandma lay down. I gotta make tea for them. Hey, this is little story – I put it there. The one of the children will get it and learn. My little book – just not lots book. Just little bit of how I grown up. Many people thanks me for that. The kids use it at school.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Now, did you say you made the book?

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh.

STACEY CARKHUFF: So, it's hand made?

ELLEN DIMET: I can't hear.

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah. What she means is that she has a book that someone helped her make. It's a good book about her life in Healy Lake. With Connie, aye?

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah, With Connie Friend with the Tetlin Refuge. It's a good book but it's no longer – like limited print.

STACEY CARKHUFF: I'll find it. That's very interesting. You have a book!

ELLEN DIMET: Yeah, I make that book. Four hour – it take me. That time I not real sick and I know what I'm talk about. From Juneau, Anchorage, Fairbanks, all business people and the Lake – I make my little story around Healy Lake. Yeah. And everybody like it. For the children. I don't know some-iin say can't learn, but I don't know why? Exactly - I raise up in there. But I think copy that book too. He out of the one I fix where he copy story – whatever I say. You have one, huh?

POLLY HYSLOP: Uh-huh?

ELLEN DIMET: You use it?

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah. It's my treasure. I'm not going to let anybody...I hide it.
(laugh)

ELLEN DIMET: Okay. We came to highway. Um mm. Me and my husband and Agnus and Daisy. And I don't have my son, Talbert. And her (his) kids around right now. Her (His) kids all grown up. And he pass away. And we try to save our two daughters – Agnes and Daisy. And we never get nothing. We just taking off just the way we are. And so been hurt. Too many death. The time, I guess good reason. I know what I'm doing. Right now, you gotta have pair of gloves or you going to get sick. All those, I don't believe it. You not going to get sick from people. Right now, my grandson – take care (of me). . Every time I see doctor – my grand kids going to come. He say “no” – just be you. Sometime, we think – “oh, we don't want touch, we gonna get sick...” People – the word come out of their mouth. And you know what , our Native way – we never say that. Never. I hear a lot of young people, “Oh you gotta have uniform. When I come home, I going throw it away.” I hear all this. You know that's wrong. Like right now. Somebody come in and tell me. “(You) keep your house nice. You okay?” I say, “yes” “Doh no I going to say, “My cousin.” And that year. You not going believe it. And For me sometime, I don't want to talk about it. Sometime, I cry when that many children I lose. Right now, I got two and he (they) both not healthy anymore. And my granddaughter, look like going ready to die – the way it look. So back in the days – me and my husband. I told my husband, “Let's move down to fish camp in the tent. And just sit there. Get away from where my mother and dad bother me so much so we move down.(Their memory bothered her – they had passed away) My daughter – oldest one passed away. First one passed away. Next, my next son Alfred. Next, my daughter Francis. And I carry my baby for six month.. I take care old people and I fell down with wood. And I was miscarriage. That little girl too. And I got little last one before Daisy. Her name is Ena – four years old. Her daddy cut wood out there. Me, I was inside. Just inside cook supper or wait before dinner. I start to put up food to get to cook. Her daddy haul wood. And right there the hardest one I go through. After all my kids die. Her daddy cut wood and my

little girl play out there. He (she) wants cranberries you know under spruce sometimes like you can find - any kind berries. And that day, I take my daughter up and she pick this much cup – still that cup in there. That Native way – if right now you girls eat and if I'm lazy maybe we will leave it there for a while. And when you go out something happen to it. It's that dish - little dish give you a lot of tear. You don't know what I wait now. She's gone – that's Native life. And quite a bit I know about back life. But the one, I never see – I never talk about. I'm honest woman. I don't know how to lie. I don't smoke. I don't drink. I don't gamble. I don't do anything. I'm just good old kid's grandmother, I guess. I use it right now whatever my mother pass me on. The story – if you give your little story to someone and later on – whoever he had kids. “Oh, right there, this, right there. I meet this wonderful woman tell me this story.” And the child will see. The child learn from us. I don't believe it, I don't let nobody smoke in my house. Really! Because I'm pretty picky. I grown up hard way. And I don't like see young girl laze around and don't do nothing either. My kids all know what kind mother I am because I work hard for all my life. And okay – that tent – my little daughter. I wonder you and her - you going to be strong like me? Your mind going to be strong or break down so easy and you have to cry and then you make song. You sad day. You lose your loved one. Anyway, my little daughter walk around play out there. My daughter come back. She said, “Mom, I'm tired.” I just grab, “Oh, my baby tired” “Yeah, I'm tired” My little girl – this big. Pretty girl. I just grab my baby. I just sit behind stove on the chair. Pretty soon, my daughter's hand fell down. I just look at it and my daughter is gone, right in my hand. And I kind – something like that kind hurts. Better off you go to old people – how old people go through. This woman – maybe you going to talk with. Maybe she gone through what I did. I lost my daddy, grandma, my aunt. Just all die off. I can't do nothing. Her daddy make meat rack out there behind tent. We have four casket out there. We don't worry – like that. We don't worry. Even though we see our kids just there for us and round like... I tell my husband we got to make trail to village now. Getting warm up during the day. So, take us almost a month to take care of my kids body – put it away. Make big hole, me and my husband. We make real big one. My husband cry. I say, “Why you cry? Be like me” I say, “I got nothing to cry. Our baby go home – good place,” Today my kids-iin – just talk with them, what's good, what's bad – how I raised up. We don't use hot water to wash our face when we begin woman. Everything he tell us we do. We do to our hand when we begin to woman. And our feet –I think that's why my feet small. My grand kids – and I got sick out there in clinic. One of my grandchild –he's baby in family too- look at my feet. Told his brother, “Look my grandma got small feet.” And that's how – it lot of work. But, me – I never scare I'm going to get sick from them. Maybe good reason I am there. I not sick. I work hard. I go out cut wood, bring wood. Besides, I take care of my mother and daddy. And we got our own house. But, every in morning, early in the morning. I used to go. When you got first baby – first baby – if he's boy – the grandfather, grandma going to train...the baby. Not easy way. You got the just baby you just bundle up behind close and hold him there. Huge branch out there - just first snow ...Fall time...just fell down. And baby – just do like that.

STACEY CARKHUFF: So you dip him in the snow?

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh. Give it to the branch – tree. Baby...cold. And Maybe – two, three miles, I guess you going to do to that baby. Also, we not going to dress warm either. Cause this is being trained. This is how I been trained. Just like Army. From village...from village to long ways and we used to pack our meat and things like that. No wheel. Just only boat. We don't care about boat. We don't care about motor. Boat down there, but we just pack my baby...taking off. Sometimes I hold one. I never say I want a babysitter. That's where I raise my kids up. So right now, I have almost 63 grand kids I got. Over 63 now – not quite – we don't count it but that much our grand kids and great-grand kids. And I raised lot of somebody's kids too all the way through besides my kids. I never say I got no food to take this little kid needs food. And been born mother and got not much to survive. It's hard – The Lake. It's real hard. So, I raised one – my nephew. He passed away last year sometime ago, year. Luke, that's my nephew. The father, the Mother been buried down there – same lake, cemetery along side the river. I have quite a bit back story. Like I say, I want be honest if my grand kids want to learn. Yeah, I got three book up there. I want my grand kids to be learn. I can't tell my grandchild, "Oh, I used to this. I used to do this." Some people just make their family good. Some people say that, but I don't me. I have to be honest.

STACEY CARKHUFF: You tell them the truth.

ELLEN DIMET: Yeah. When I'm honest when say something, our children going to learn from us. And other hand, like I say, I don't believe it, I don't nobody smoke my house. I kinda like repeat, but just a story. And, uh... We don't want see our daughter our son drink and act just stupor. You know drinking people, their mouth dirty – cause they don't talk right. White people/Native people just like together. That's not different. This one I watched all those time. Like my grandson got married in Fairbanks 2-3 week ago. And this woman –she got real drunk. Fell down. Her dress just fly all over. Her boyfriend lift her up - fell down again. She's Noodleedn.. So no different than Indian and White people. No we're not different. We all alike. Maybe I'm brown and things like that. But we do respect for each other. That's what I taught my grand kids. I told Darrell – gotta respect no matter- white or man you see that's have to be your grandpa – you got to treat right. On the road you go down it. Save this for kids read it. You get up. You go down the road in the morning. And us Native people – we gotta have food on us. That we not going to let our husband go out eat – without eat – or our children. And, uh...when you begin woman - old time- it got to be cold water. And you get up – all your hand– you going to do like that. So, when you get old – you going have ugly hands. See, my hand not like before. But, me – I have leukemia. My skin a little bit color from that sickness. That's how we used to. We taught someone. You talk for your own life for whatever you tell. Maybe he not going listen, but when time's up, that word will come out. He will remember, "Hey, my dad and mom used to tell me I don't listen. Don't know what to do." You gotta real careful for whatever you do – highway, watch your wheel. And that's how I grown up. We have two different kind Indian sleigh – that's why I say that. The one's that is low – just without the birch. And used to be my favorite. Used to lay down – hitch it up one dog. I used to lay down. My dog drag me all over. If nothing, my momma had kitty cat. I used that kitty cat. I make his harness. I gets into my mother's cache. One brand new dishpan I pick and I hook it up. Kitty cat go down lake. I got little stick. I hit

that little - big huge cat I hit with little bit. "YEEAAWK," it going to say. Gee, I like to have that so that kitty cat drag me all over and I in trouble...I in trouble.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Uh...ha

POLLY HYSLOP: Hee..hee...hee, I love it.

STACEY CARKHUFF: That's a huge cat!

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Ha..ha..ha...ha..ha.

POLLY HYSLOP: And my aunt isn't very big either

STACEY CARKHUFF: No.

ELLEN DIMET: The biggest harness.

ELLEN DIMET: I train...um...Native people - like August...August we call Ch'iikksaa – that mean's everything yellow. We call Ch'iikksaa. And that where we move out – out of village for our food, berries, caribou – whatever on the land – beaver. Nothing you pass by. And other hand you don't have to waste no even little bit of food. And, uh...all what meat, all we got to use it – dry meat. Back days no refrigerator. And we dry every little bit and we use it. Us Native – we never waste food. You go out, you build fire. You got to clean stick - call jok. Just put there and you meat just hang to campfire. If something you want do cook like Indian way and that stick – you going put it just like stick and you meat right there, poked to ground, and that meat just hang – just like been cooking in fry pan if you know how. Uh-huh. That's one, that one I try to make book for my grand kids. Just only one for my own. I think better off, put it down. What young kids going know, learn- learn from us - how to be survive. You go out. If you got no matches. And still you going to build fire. With that Indian matches called...Ch'iniithee...come out from birch. You go out – other one ashes. Old people like it. This one I talk about – that's going to be this big and look like cauliflower.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Hmmmm.

ELLEN DIMET: And if you see that one on the birch, you got to take it out. That's you matches.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Oh. It's a fungus?

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh. That's matches. And you dry, you clean good. And you have a stick this long you carry around. Little one. And if you got big pack, maybe this long – you put it in there and that Indian matches, you going dry. You got to put that little stick with it. And ready prepare. Ready for to build fire. Also, kids got to learn. You got to

taught kids like that to be learn. I just hope someone teach kids. I can't do – me-
anymore. So, ah, anyway, you put that Indian matches – you got to have to have some
kind of cloth – Indian matches. And You go out to get – get Tth'aiy, K'ÄÄ – that I say –
birch, birch. And Tth'aiy – that's from Spruce tree. Those little neat one – just hang. And
dry one – that one the fastest fast you build fire with it – called Tth'Ä...iy. But Just like
piece of material just hang on a tree. I used to pick all the time – build fire so fast. And
you put- that- you matches, you put stick and maybe your mouth hurt, so don't slide and
your teeth, and hold and you just do like that. “Jiink, Jiink, Jiink, Jiink...” Pretty soon,
down there, that spark just like that. If you got right - do just exactly – going to start the
fire fast. If you don't know, take quite a while. And then you got to protect that matches.
Back days, we used to have little skins – soft and old fashioned. And we put Indian
matches there. Little birch bark to build fire with and we carry it around all time. He tell,
Ts'edoghanih. That means “You don't know what going to happen today and you got to
prepare.” And you matches, if you got matches if you have long hair. Stuck in to matches
on your hair. Just in case we fell in – that matches not going to be wet. Build fire fast.
And I see my grandpa. We got lot of caribou – for whole village. And he skin those
caribou. Us, we pack meat –to ready for my mother. You know our grandma going to cut
dry meat. That caribou skin – you got to clean inside real good. And you going to cut hair
off. You going dry real good. And then, fresh – we got to clean that inside skin. Whatever
meat, we going clean and then we dry it. Regular moose skin. And then, after dry, we
fold it. We just pile. And when we ready to go back to village and my daddy used to – the
one I talk about –he's blind. He look around. If no hole – “oh, John, uu-du' k'ol, he going
to say. that means “No hole” And he put special food – rib and brisquit – back days he
skin moose way old time. He have special food behind. We used to dry in smoke house
we used to dry. I have some in back – my friend give me. And you dry little bit for your
rice soup, or potatoes or whatever you got – just put it there and you can feed huge
(amount) people. And then, beaver. You got to have this big stick because beaver's too
heavy. This big stick. And you poke just like this meat I talk about. You poke real hard
and you going to cook whole beaver in the campfire too. Whole beaver going to be roast.
You put his tail, his feet – you clean it. He burn it, he clean it. And then, nice and clean –
he put it – he put in there inside and big beaver bake alongside the campfire.
Native life – pretty much I really like it. This is all I see – whatever I see. It's is the one I
talk about. The one I never see, I never talk about it. Someone ask me. I say, “I don't
know”. Cause why should I talk about it? You know, I'm not there. I don't see with my
eye. Whatever my daddy did, I see. I was with my dad and mother all the time. And my
mother sit out there. He cut... I just think about other day – moose soup bone. Soup bone
– gee I like that soup bone. And I remember that and that marrow inside caribou. My
mother out there – all day – he going work on that bone. He split it, put marrow inside of
bucket. All marrow – he take it out. And then my mother put that bone in that big bucket.
Cook at campfire. That bone – no meat. That much Native people respect. That much
Native people respect. And since you take this one out, that's why I put little story for
kids. Now he going listen. See that's way Native life, kids going think. That's way
survive. And if you young life, take care you young life, you going to have good life.
And one word, if you care for this maybe grandma, or grandpa. Sometimes grandma is
dirty. Sometime, grandpa's dirty. But, we never “attention” to. If we think it's dirty.
Clothes dirty. We gone down pack water and build fire outside in wash tub and we going

to wash clothes. We going to wash the clothes – hand wash. And we wash blanket with washboard. And I got my children, I got wash tub. Two wash tub. Us Native people. Us women. The father – he’s head of the house. Maybe he support his wife. Maybe he raise up the kids. So, we have to respect - if you husband. And my mother used to tell me, “You be sure feed your husband before out there – he going to be work. Don’t let your husband go out without eat”. That’s another one. That’s real serious. That one I pass on to my kids quite a bit. And lots little things. Just little story, but it’s good for our children. I just look forward to having my own book but I don’t know (if) I’m going fix it. Can’t. Getting losing my mind quickly now. So, I don’t know. But, maybe will - one day I come out with better story. This is a good story too, but –you know just this one – just like pass on. Us Native people – we fix book. I was always mad with my friend Connie. She don’t ask me, she send book to Whitehorse, and so I chew her out for that.

STACEY CARKHUFF: She didn’t ask you if you wanted it?

ELLEN DIMET: Huh-uh.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Oh.

ELLEN DIMET: This guy, himself said, “Oh, I got your book from Connie?” “Hmmm,” I say, “Lucky you my friend,”

STACEY CARKHUFF: Oh. So, who do you want to have your book.-Your family?

ELLEN DIMET: Hmmm? Just the family. Yeah. Yeah. My family already all got my book. My daughter, Daisy – she going to start to work on make book. I bet you everything she going to come out with it. My daughter – she’s hard work woman. Just work all time and she have quite a bit brain to talk. So, she might make, come out with it – her and my niece together for family.

POLLY HYSLOP: That will be good, Auntie.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Who is your niece? What is her name?

ELLEN DIMET: Ramona. Ramona David.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Okay.

ELLEN DIMET: I got to finish tell the story of highway now.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Yeah. Tell me whatever you want. Anything that you remember about the highway. Any story. That will be great.

ELLEN DIMET: Anyway, like I say, 1946 we came to highway -down big Gerstle Bridge. Way in the back tree, we used to stay there in the tent. Nobody to go back to Lake. We try to save our kids. That’s where we used to sit in tent. One year – that Big

Gerstle. Way in the back you see tree? It's right there, we used to stay there all winter in tent. Don't bother us. We go out toward to Big Gerstle And set snare for rabbits and fur. That's where our little money come. And sometimes, I sell moccasins and mitts and I got my little money.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Who did you sell it to?

ELLEN DIMET: We come to highway. Sometime, like...maybe sometime truck stop for us. Ask us if we go someplace. And sometime people ask us for sewing stuff. And that's way we earn our money too. And plus the man go out trap. And us too – we make our little money at home. But me – never hardly did that part. Not really. I sew lots, but I'm outside woman, I am. I don't want inside.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Oh, OK.

ELLEN DIMET: Yeah. I be Mother. But, make sure my kids eat. I make sure we all OK.

STACEY CARKHUFF: So , you didn't have time...

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh

STACEY CARKHUFF: to sitting and sewing.

ELLEN DIMET: Yeah. Don't have time. When you ready, and it's already time's up and you don't have time to do anything.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Right.

ELLEN DIMET: Anyway, that's where we spent...and uh...

STACEY CARKHUFF: What kind of...you said it was a tent?

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh.

STACEY CARKHUFF: What was it made of?

ELLEN DIMET: White material

POLLY HYSLOP: Canvas, huh, Auntie...

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh.

POLLY HYSLOP:...canvas, yeah.

ELLEN DIMET: Yeah, just like old days. Old days stuff, you can't get anymore. Old time tent – good – just thick one. Some made for winter time. And, uh – I never see tent like that. I see he set up tent for yard sale but it not like old days. Just different.

POLLY HYSLOP: Auntie. When you came to the highway in 1946 – is that first time you see highway?

ELLEN DIMET: No, we came on sleigh.

POLLY HYSLOP: 1942 – when they built it?

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-huh. No, before that. When we came to highway – rough road – just gravel. But sometime, we stand on road. We catch ride to Tanacross. He used to - Tanacross have Native store. We used to go there for our food – like dry stuff – flour and pilot bread and all those good stuff. And we used to shop in Tanacross Native school. He have Native school in there. And that's old village I talk about. And we used to go there for our food. Sometimes, we spent night. Sometimes we walk. I remember one time Tanacross, we spent night and next day we walk from Tanacross to Robertson. Back days, he used to have military and (they) left some buildings alongside the road. Maybe in Robertson, he have one house. Nothing in there. No bed in there – just floor. And one time, we left from Tanacross – we made it to there and one of my kids said, “too cold” so we stopped there. Kept fire going. It's nice stove in there. We filled that stove with wood and spent night there and next day, we get to Little Gerstle. And all our kids with us too.

POLLY HYSLOP: Is there dog team, Auntie. Dog team or walk?

ELLEN DIMET: No, this is walk

POLLY HYSLOP: Oh, my goodness.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Did you have a dog team?

ELLEN DIMET: We used to have nine dogs.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Nine? Oh, Wow.

ELLEN DIMET: I used to mush dog. Go out with my husband, trap. Trap line. And, I remember, I always go with my husband. I love that outside. Maybe that's why I got stuck (in) my house.

STACEY CARKHUFF: HmMMM

ELLEN DIMET: But real rough road. Sometimes, rock this big on road. And I remember one time – I going to go to Dot Lake. My kids iin – time to go to school. So, I going to move to Dot Lake and bus driver don't accept my dog. So, I put my kids in the bus and their daddy. Me – just behind. And I started walk from Big Gerstle, I mean Little Gerstle bridge. From there I started to walk. Carry my rifle. And I got one dog and my

dog pack little goodie for me and I walk from Dot Lake to Sam Lake. That's where sun going down. Along side of road, I set up my mosquito net and I was sleep, nothing bother. Some people scare. Nothing to be scare out there. Next day, I started walk and bus meet me and bring me pop and things like that.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Wow

ELLEN DIMET: So, I did walk quite a bit. Just quite a bit. Right now, maybe young people going to say, "Gee, I used to do that. I used to do that" And...but, we all know – Northway, Mentasta, Tetlin, Tanacross, Dot Lake – we all know who we are. No – can't secret. Just,, you know – just...we come down...like I say Tanacross visit all time. Sometime walk. Summer time, we walk, sometime. Winter time, we taken off in sleigh. You don't care where you go. If you have to be Indian – you don't care if you have to freeze – you never think nothing of what you going to do. My mother used to tell me, "Watch your walk, Don't look back. You going to be weak," my mother used to tell me. It's true. We never look back where we go. Seems like just ahead of...look. That's first time we see that road. He still walk on road. Just gravel. Just rough. Even though we caught ride – it don't worth it. Just too much rock. And that – he have big camp. Big Gerstle. Construction. And from those people work on the road – he all...like I say I think Big Gerstle he left two house. After you go bridge and in the back – two cabins. Not there anymore, but then he (Army) all pile there and I don't know – he all cook there too, I guess. Used to be camp – construction when I first come to highway. When I first come to highway, gee, I thought I going see good road. Instead, but, pretty rough. Pretty rough road.

STACEY CARKHUFF: So, you were about 16 when the road was built?

ELLEN DIMET: uh-huh.

POLLY HYSLOP: No, older than that.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Older than that?

POLLY HYSLOP: Auntie, how old do you think you are when road was built in 1942.

ELLEN DIMET: I think...I had Daisy when I was up 30. So 30 years old.

POLLY HYSLOP: About 30.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Oh, yeah. That's amazing. So, did you ever talk to any of the army or soldiers?

ELLEN DIMET: No.

STACEY CARKHUFF: You never saw them?

ELLEN DIMET: huh-uh?

POLLY HYSLOP: Those army people. They're nice to you, or they're ok?

ELLEN DIMET: No, just – I never see them. I say, just camp there.

POLLY HYSLOP: Did you see them far away?

ELLEN DIMET: huh-uh?

POLLY HYSLOP: You never talk to them, or nothing.

ELLEN DIMET: No, back days, we don't talk to nobody.

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah.

ELLEN DIMET: Cause, you don't know what you going to end up to.

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah.

ELLEN DIMET: And you don't know, you never know those people so you don't have to talk. But sometimes, truck stop for us. And I remember one time military stop for us after we pass. We start to walk from Robertson Creek – Robertson Creek - NiiTs'iil Iindiik Indian way, he call Nii Ts'iil Iidiik that mean everything yellow out there. That Sheep Mountain – people hunt there. And this house – bunch of Army in one truck just pile in. He see us. We walk on the road. And he ask one of us if we could sit back seat – ride. I remember I don't want to – but gets into back seat and drop us out in Little Gerstle. That's big – big for us. And by time, my husband don't feel good. He start to sick. He start to sick – and real - he don't feel good. So, what I did. Again., Sam Luke and his wife, husband, daughter down there for fish. And this people – that's my relative. Just hungry. No food. Got baby this big. New born baby. And I remember what I got for my son. And my son sick at that time. Doctor give me back, give me back to be die at home. And my son. I peek out there on the land. I know best got to do – whatever the word. But, sometimes, people say, “Oh, yuk.” Can't use that word. He say “InjÄÄ”. That's superstitious. You going to give bad luck to yourself if you say anything. And if you young lady, you don't have to talk about. You know me, I'm really kind of old time. Me, right now – I can't either pack my gun. If I got stuck, maybe I'm going to have my cane. If I see bear on my way, I say” Nah hoo nahtiindak” (Just like you, I'm hungry) And that animal going to hear you. I did my house right there. People talk about bear too much. Gee, bother me. And my porch, I sew one day. Brown bear come out and he look at me through window. I look at – “Hey, what you're doing.” And he look at me. Finally, I went out...that's way I've been taught. That's where you write it down. Other kids going learn.

ELLEN DIMET: You don't talk about bear. Bear. No. Either right now. We don't have to talk about. Maybe he sleep now. He going to hear us. Whatever, we hear. Anyway that bear – he go on porch. And he sit up. Stand up. Huge bear. And I go out here, open door.

“Old grandpa, what you think you’re doing. I’m hungry just like you. Go someplace. Don’t go where somebody going to shoot you. I’m trying protect you.” That bear he understand. He just like that -look at me. And I got nothing to give you. And I told, “Don’t go over kids. Don’t hurt kids.” But old grandpa don’t listen to me. He go this way. Other end of road, I hear shot. He kill that bear. Bear sleep right now. We talk about, he going know. Cause, way, way, way long, way all before us – and this man, his wife go out pick berries. And He got her little baby with her. Little girl. Every time, he see bear poop – he going to cry, holler – scare. And one day the bear twist around her mind. That little girl keep walk, walk, walk.. He don’t know he go far far away. And all of a sudden, he look around for his mother, dad –nothing. He holler for his dad – nothing. And pretty soon, he start to cry. And pretty soon nice looking guy come along. He ask, “Why you cry. Why you far away.” “Oh, my mother, dad over there” you going to say. No dad. No mother. He say, “You’re long ways from home,” this man tell. And this man tell, “Do you enough old to be married?,” You know, Indian marriage. And this young lady, he think this man’s real handsome. So, he married. And he married to. And all this time, he don’t show. He don’t change her regular clothes. And regular moose outfit he dress with. And one day, his husband say, “What... The day, long day and good day, I don’t know what to do,” Time before that, this young lady got little boy.....

TAPE 2

STACEY CARKHUFF: We were talking about the boy in the woods that got married.

ELLEN DIMET: Uh-Huh.

STACEY CARKHUFF: The was wearing the moose.

ELLEN DIMET: I’m glad you told me. I ready disappeared.

STACEY CARKHUFF: I wrote it down.

ELLEN DIMET: Anyway, he ask. Then, he got his first child. And poppa bear inside. In back days you going to have your first baby, you got to move out. That bad. People strict. He going to say, “Injih” And go out. The first baby. And after that baby born – that’s little boy. His husband tell it, “Dii jan dee?” he say. (What’s that?) And he say, “Oh iishee aa hooÄ,eh” That’s right there, he show to the lady – his wife. Walk out, just like regular bear. That girl – all – just don’t know what to think. But, then we not going to keep it. And that poppa bear, he just laugh at baby and die. And next one – he say again, ‘What’s that?’ “Oh, girl” “Oh, good...Ch’e iishyah oo-ts’a and di etÄ-Ä....That mean’s he’s going to pick lots berries for me. And this woman – that’s little boy, but he lie to his husband. And then he got three boys. This one – the father kill, so he got three boys. He (she) dress this boys just like woman, so the daddy don’t kill them. Till he all grown up. He all grown up. And the Mother – they make the clothes all the time. He make the clothes. And one day, he told the Mother, “Naa, (Mom) we got to hunt for moose,” And he say, “Careful” And “The clothes indeh” That means, “give me the clothes” He give clothes and out there on the...he all dress just like man and three brother-iin go out hunt

and that day – no moose. And he run into another bear. Maybe that’s the uncle. This boys shot this one bear with arrow and then all day he hunt – nothing. So he come back. And him – he stand out there and plan on what he going to do. And, he see the three boys. He go in - tell her. “Oh, look like we going to have visit.” Put that hot water, whatever, you know. This woman don’t know what to tell. Boy old grandpa gets mad. He’s mad. And This boys-iin come back with bear meat. He told his mother now. “Shoh...” That means, “We see bear. We kill,” The mother too, her heart beat. And He told his boys, “Real real careful. You don’t know what’s going be. Maybe he won’t going kill us. So, Be real good.” Anyway, he bring this bear meat. And this poppa bear, he put those mark on his mouth and around here and then boys going to cook that bear meat. He say, “No, I going to cook it.” And bear cook that bear meat. Hegoing eat. That’s why he put that think – pink. And he never talk all those time. He’s getting mean and his kids-iin go down (to the) Flat. “We going to eat berries,” “You guys put you own clothes, “ he tell his son-iin. Take his clothes out, give to the mother and he put bear skin. And poppa bear go with them and on the Flat -picking berries...eating berries and then Yaa Mann’ Tee Shy come along (that’s world man). He come along and he watch all those time. He watch. And pretty soon, he see woman.“Gee this is...it’s not right.” He just sit there. Hide it. He scared. He go in water and he breathe out with something. That one too. He got to have something. Breathe – if you drown, you in water. Maybe you can’t breathe- and you have water. And he have that kind. All of them walk around on the Flat like bear. He all with their father. And one...that one brother – he going shoot. And this boys don’t know this animal – their father. And real.-This boys don’t know. He don’t know how it happen. Anyway, he all eating berries and picking berries. And Yaa Man Tee Shy shown up to them. And he going shoot with arrow. Pull her head out. Wow, that’s not bear. And then, this boys got back to their Mother. “We got supposed to protect our Mother”. And those boys work hard. Way – quite a ways from house. He dig the hole where he got to breathe out. He cover the Mother. And he cut tree and this...all this load. And bear, he’s weird. He come back. He going to kill his wife. And this boys-in. Trail – one right there. One - right there. And other one, make sure that Mother is OK. And he going to shoot. He pull his head off. It’s too late. They did shoot. And then, he gets – that wild man gets in the water and try to save himself too. That’s why you got to respect that animal. Just like person. Just like us – he used to talk. Someone told me. I not there. Don’t see. But this is the real story. My dad and my mother give me.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Hmmm. That’s a really good story. I really like it.

POLLY HYSLOP: You want sing that song and I cook you lunch if you want. You want sing that song for her.

STACEY CARKHUFF: The Eagle Song.

ELLEN DIMET: Mmmm. Okay. Eagle song – that’s not dance song. That’s for ceremony. My granddaughter – taught my granddaughter how to dance to that Eagle Song.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Hmmm.

ELLEN DIMET: Get me that good half Ch'ishyaan t'aa (eagle feather) Make sure Eagle got thatand Eagle. Take good one.

STACEY CARKHUFF: So, would you sing this type of song at a Potlatch or at a Party?

ELLEN DIMET: Yeah, Potlatch we going to sing. But, not real too much. Everybody tape that song already. I think this one Ch'ishyaan. Ch'ishyaan.

STACEY CARKHUFF: Is that the name for eagle feather?

ELLEN DIMET: Mmmhuh.

POLLY HYSLOP: Yeah. Eagle. That's it? What else?

ELLEN DIMET: I need one more.

POLLY HYSLOP: Oh, one more!

ELLEN DIMET: Polly!

POLLY HYSLOP: Sorry, Auntie.

ELLEN DIMET: You ready?

STACEY CARKHUFF: Yep.

ELLEN DIMET: Naa doh, yah Ch'ishyaan noo Dzii Hiin ay Na' ee. Hay Hay Hay haa ay Hay hay hay haa ay Ii' ii' ii' ii'