



## STORY NUMBER 8

# *The Story about Survival of a Baby*

**W**hen the world was new, a lot of strange things happened. These strange things happened because of the medicine power that existed at that time. There are a lot of mysteries surrounding people receiving medicine power that we don't fully understand. Medicine power is the creation of the Creator. Therefore, the Creator is responsible for giving certain individuals medicine power. Some are given a lot of powerful medicine, some very little.

Because medicine power is the property of the Creator, the Creator handles it. If a promise based on such power is made, it will never fail. If a promise is made to an individual that he or she will live a long and healthy life, that will happen. It would not fail.

This story is about the Mountain people who made their living between the Yukon Territory and the Great Mackenzie River. In the springtime, these people built mooseskin boats and travelled down the tributary rivers to get to the Mackenzie River and the trading post. The rivers were dangerous to travel due to rapids and deep canyons.

One time, a group of Mountain people built a mooseskin boat to travel to the main big river. The water was low that spring, making travel on the rivers more dangerous. At a junction where one river joins another big river, two large families began to build a mooseskin boat to travel down the river to join another family at the fork of two other rivers further down.

When the big group got to the fork of the rivers, they waited for the other mooseskin boat to arrive. They had planned to go from there down the river together. The bigger group waited for two days, but the other boat did not arrive. The people began to worry because the river waters were low.

The bigger group prepared to conduct a search upriver for the other boat. They emptied the boat and went in search of the missing boat and people. They knew about a dangerous spot on the river where there was a deep canyon and turbulent rapids.

What had happened was that the mooseskin boat had hit a sharp rock on the river bottom and then banged against the canyon walls and broke up. All the people in that boat except one had drowned. We have information from a baby who was the lone survivor. When the baby got bigger, he was able to explain what had happened – that everybody else had drowned in the powerful turbulence of the river.

Back to our story... the searchers, pulling the boat up the river, saw a baby standing and crying on a sandbar. They picked up the baby, made a fire and took care of the baby. When they looked around, they found pieces of the broken-up mooseskin boat and also some bodies. They knew that everybody else had drowned. That is the first part of the story.

Much later, the baby explained, “Two beavers made me swim between them and took me to a rocky ledge. They held onto my clothes with their teeth and they swam through the rapids with me. They placed me on the sandbar. In no time, a she-wolf with a lot of pups came and took me in the bush where she had a den. I slept and sucked the wolf’s teat for milk and nourishment. I played with the pups and we understood each other.”

One time, a grizzly bear brought a fat caribou rib and left it in front of the wolf den. The pups started to eat it and the baby sucked the juice from the fat meat and also ate some of it. The

grizzly bear knew the baby was there because the baby had grizzly bear medicine power and they could communicate easily.

After about five days, the wolf took the baby to the sandbar on the river. The wolf went into the bushes close by. In the meantime, a lot of animals and birds came to visit the baby. He was not at all alone or lonely. Beavers, muskrats, otters and minks all sat on the shore. Small animals like squirrels, martens and mice all came to the baby.

Before long, the people who were travelling up the river and searching arrived. All the animals and birds took off. The people came and picked the baby up. They knew that the others had drowned. The searchers returned home with the baby.

Almost immediately, two strong medicine people conducted an investigation on the baby. When they had finished, they reported that the baby is a strong medicine power being and that he is alive because the beavers had come to his rescue quickly. He was promised by his medicine power that he would live very long. That promise cannot be broken. So good foster parents were needed to raise the boy. Later in life, everybody benefited from the boy. He helped a lot of people. So we have to do the best to raise the baby boy.

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