

The Story of Crow

by Angela Sidney

One time there was a girl whose daddy is a very high man.
They kept her in her bedroom all the time—
Men tried to marry her all the time, but they say no, she's too good.

Crow wanted to be born—he wants to make the world!
So he made himself into a pine needle.
A slave always brings water to that girl, and one time he gets water
with a pine needle in it.
She turns it down—makes him get fresh water.
Again he brings it. Again a pine needle is there.
Four times he brings water and each time it's there.
Finally, she just gave up—she spit that pine needle out and drank the
water.
But it blew into her mouth and she swallowed it.
Soon that girl is pregnant.

Her mother and daddy are mad.
Her mother asks, "Who's that father?"

"No, I never know a man," she told her mother.

That baby starts to grow fast.
That girl's father had the sun, moon, stars, daylight hanging in his house.
He's the only one that has them.
The world was all dark, all the time.
The child begged for them to play with.

Finally, the father gives his grandchild the sun to play with.
He rolls it around, plays with it, laughs, has lots of fun.
Then he rolls it to the door and out it goes!

"Oh!" he cries. He just pretends.
He cries because that sun is lost.

"Give me the moon to play with."

They say no, at first—like now, if a baby asks for the sun or moon
you say,
"That's your grandfather's fire."

Finally, they gave it to him.

One by one they gave him the sun, moon, stars, daylight—
He loses them all.

“Where does she get that child from? He loses everything!”
That’s what her father says.

Then Crow disappears.
He has those things with him in a box.
He walks around—comes to a river.
Lots of animals there—fox, wolf, wolverine, mink, rabbit.
Everybody’s fishing . . .
That time animals all talk like people talk now—
The world is dark.

“Give me fish,” Crow says.
No one pays any attention.
“Give me fish or I’ll bring daylight!”
They laugh at him.

He’s holding a box . . . starts to open it and lets one ray out.
Then they pay attention!
He opens that box a bit more—they’re scared!
Finally, he opens that daylight box and threw it out.
Those animals scatter!
They hide in the bush and turn into animals like now.
Then the sun, moon, stars, and daylight come out.

“Go to the skies,” Crow says.
“Now no one man owns it—it will be for everybody.”

He’s right, what he says, that Crow.

After Crow made the world, he saw that sea lion owned the only island
in the world.

The rest was water—he’s the only one with land.
The whole place was ocean!
Crow rests on a piece of log—he’s tired.
He sees sea lion with that little island just for himself.
He wants some land, too, so he stole that sea lion’s kid.

“Give me back that kid!” said sea lion.

“Give me beach, some sand,” says Crow.
So sea lion gave him sand.

Crow threw that sand around the world.
“Be world,” he told it. And it became the world.

After that, he walks around, flies around all alone.
He’s tired—he’s lonely—he needs people.
He took poplar tree bark. You know how it’s thick?
He carved it and then he breathed into it.

“Live!” he said, and he made a person.
He made Crow and Wolf, too.
At first they can’t talk with each other—
Crow man and woman are shy with each other—look away.
Wolf is same way, too.

“This is no good,” he said. So he changed that.
He made Crow man sit with Wolf woman.
And he made Wolf man sit with Crow woman.
So Crow must marry Wolf and Wolf must marry Crow.

That’s how the world began.

Source: Julie Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders*
(Norman: University of Nebraska Press, 1990) 41-47.