

DISPATCH: ALASKA

Edited by David Hulén

KODIAK

HAIRYMAN TO HUNTER: 'LEAVE US ALONE'

When villagers in southwest Alaska last fall claimed to have seen a giant, hair-covered creature roaming the woods and tundra, it revived one of Alaska's oldest and most persistent legends: Hairyman. The Alaska Newspaper chain recently asked its readers to provide their own accounts of Hairyman encounters. Here's the story of one of them.

KODIAK — Dana Jacallen, a 40-year-old refrigeration mechanic, is sure he's had several encounters with Hairyman. He's also sure the creatures have given him a distinct message: "Leave us alone."

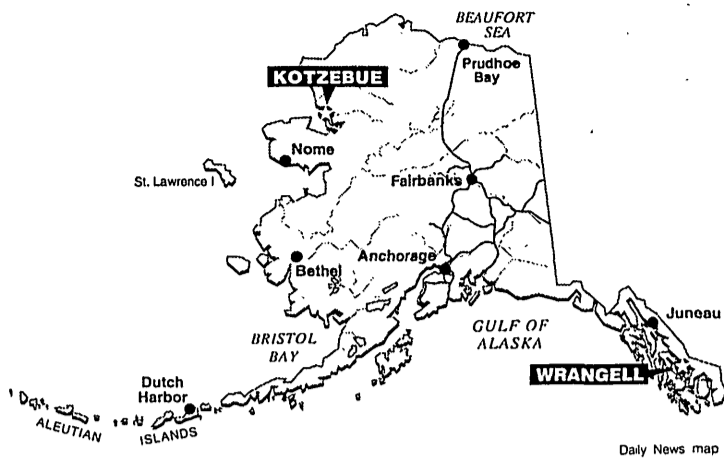
Jacallen's fascination with the creatures goes back to a cold morning in 1979 in the remote Etolin Island area near Wrangell. He and his hunting partner were hoping to harvest some of the deer they knew inhabited an alpine meadow at the head of the fiord.

They arrived by boat at dusk. Jacallen says his friend spent the night on the boat; Jacallen climbed the hillside with his sleeping bag and a tarp. He decided to sleep near the meadow, where he says he knew deer would be at first light.

He awoke with a start before dawn. There were tracks in the snow. "They were the imprints of bare feet but almost twice the size of my own size 10 boots," he said in a letter he wrote to the Kodiak Daily Mirror. He says he was scared but followed the tracks. He carried his rifle.

"I stopped and looked up. Fifteen feet away, one hand on his hip, the other gripping a branch of the hemlock that was just above my head, was the biggest, hairiest guy on two legs I ever want to see." He said the creature was 7 or 8 feet tall.

"Without thinking I started to thumb the safety off. He turned his head to stare at me straight in the eyes. His teeth were showing, but it was not a snarl or a grin. I want to say it was a knowing smile.



● Fifteen feet away . . . was the biggest, hairiest guy on two legs I ever want to see. ●

— Dana Jacallen

"I knew I could place a killing shot, but I also knew it would be wrong, even criminal."

Jacallen said he heard "an unmistakable sense of warning, as clearly as if someone had spoken. It wasn't logic, it wasn't fear — it was communication. . . . "He was saying to me with all the power of the spirit, 'Leave me alone.'"

The creature turned and fled. Jacallen said he scrambled down the hillside and met his partner on the beach. After daylight, he said, they retraced his steps. Hairyman's footprints measured 17 inches long and 5 or 6 inches wide. The impressions left in the mossy ground convinced them the creature had weighed 600 to 800 pounds.

Jacallen said the creature looked just like the Bigfoot in the movie, "Harry and the Hendersons."

"This one was equally as large, but more lean. He had long, silky hair. On his arm it was a good 6 inches long. He walked erect and he was quiet. He made no sound. He was graceful. . . . He had a

glint in his eye. He had intelligence."

He says he saw tracks twice more during the five years he spent trapping in the area. His traps were repeatedly sprung, and once disappeared, and he says he's convinced the creature was warning him to stay away.

Jacallen, who grew up on a homestead in the Talkeetna Mountains and has spent his share of time in the Bush, said he realizes telling his story will convince some people he is in the business of hot air.

But he says, "I've spent enough time in the woods to know the difference between when something is scaring me and when I'm scaring myself. There is no question in my mind about what I saw."

— Nell Waage
Kodiak Daily Mirror

NORTHWEST

THE WEE PEOPLE WHO ROAM THE TUNDRA

The Arctic Sounder dispatched a reporter to talk with residents of the Kotzebue Senior Center about Hairyman and the Inukins, the little people that reportedly inhabit — and cause mischief — in northern Alaska. Some excerpts:

Flora Penn
This is something that

happened to me and my friend one time. Once another lady and myself went on a trip up the Noatak with Norman Jones. When we stopped at Lena Sours' camp to pick berries we saw a little man. He was just sitting on the root of a driftwood tree smoking a pipe. He had a little pipe like a little barrel with a narrow handle. He had a pointed head, a big nose and pointed ears. We tried to hide and watch him for about an hour. He just smoked and looked around. Suddenly he jumped up and began to run toward the high mountains.

Old stories say that the little people used to stay with the big people long ago. Until one time a little person's child was playing with the big people's kids. Just playing and a dog gobbled up the baby of the little person. Ever since then the little people could never stay among the people.

Bobby Wells

This was told to me by my mother. In the Squirrel River there are two big rocks in the water. When it's deep water you can barely see them. The story is that these rocks were two dwarfs turned to stone and when the water is deep it's very dangerous because you can barely see them.

— Arctic Sounder

Hannah Newlin

Saul Shiedt told a story about one summer when he was hunting caribou. He was skinning the caribou, concentrating, trying to get the work done, because he had lots to do. He heard someone talking Eskimo. He was all alone so he started looking all around but saw no one. Then he looked down and there was a little man about 3 feet high talking Eskimo. Saul could understand him and they started talking. Saul had a gun, something like an old 30-30. You had to use a rod to load it. The little man was shorter than the barrel of the gun. He came up just under the tip of the gun. They talked about that gun. They talked about that gun and the little man's weapon, a bow and arrow. Saul tried to pull on the bow but it was so strong he couldn't pull it. After a while, Saul told him to get what he

wanted from the caribou. That Inukin only wanted the fatty part from under the bone of the knee. That's all. There's another story about Ferguson's old sawmill near Selawik. Kids used to play around there. One summer the kids saw some little men at the sawmill. I don't know what they were doing.

Lena Sours

A long time ago around the mouth of the Noatak River I had to stay alone in my camp. Some people left me there to go to Kotzebue. I had lots of dogs. One female dog, my son Tommy Sours' dog. A police dog, or she was a German shepherd. This dog started going around and around. Around and around she went barking at my feet.

Those Inukin, those little people, were in my tent. I had a gun so I yelled real loud "I got a gun!" I said "I'll kill you yet." They went and pukuk, dig around in my stuff, my parky. I tried to scare them. "You try to make trouble I'll shoot you yet," I said. They went away.

Joe Sun

I hear about this up there but I never tried to look into it. People from Maniilaq River had some things to say about it, though.

I hear from my parents in the Maniilaq area that there was this man hunting. He had a real rifle. (Not the old kind that you had to load through the barrel with a rod.) He saw a caribou he wanted to get close to, to have a shot at it. He saw another person trying to hunt this caribou too. When this man, a big man, got close to shoot the caribou it changed into a little man. The big man jumped at the little man who escaped and began running and climbing up the mountain.

These little man are strong. They hunt and catch whales that come to the mouth of the Noatak. When a big man and a little man fight for the whale the little man will always win.

□ Dispatch: Alaska, a compilation of news from around Alaska and about Alaskans, appears Sunday through Wednesday in the Daily News.

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10. Iatrogenic Disease (Disease caused by doctor's treatment) is the sixth leading cause of death in the United States. There are alternatives to prescription drugs and surgery.

Do you wish a voice of balance and reason in medicine? If so, we urge you to send a message of support to all Alaska Legislators for the confirmation of Robert Jay Rowen, M.D. to the Alaska State Medical Board. Free public opinion messages can be sent by calling 561-7007. Faxes can be sent to the Senate HESS and House HESS committees at 465-2069 and 465-2137.

Alternative Medicine Advocates encourages your support and membership to assist you in preserving your rights of Choice in health. For more information, come to the public meetings at the Loussac Library at 7:00 p.m. the first Tuesday of each month and call 563-5782 or 287-8911.

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