

Through the Eyes of the Eagle

(English text- Paiute translation)

[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC – safer, healthier people.

A young Indian boy named Rain That Dances lived in a small Indian village. The village was near the foot of a high mountain. The big city was not too far away.

Rain That Dances was a happy little boy. He liked to play with his friends. He also liked to sing and dance with the men in the village.

On this beautiful day with the sky so blue, Rain That Dances was fishing along a small stream. As he waited for the fish to bite, he saw a great bald eagle. The eagle was resting on an old tree stump not far from where he sat. He had never seen a great bird so close.

Now eagles always fly away when a person comes too close, but for some reason, this great bird just stayed where he was as Rain That Dances came close to the bird. Rain That Dances thought the eagle was hurt and couldn't fly away. As he got closer, he saw the bird was not hurt at all.

“Mr. Eagle, what is wrong with you?” Rain that Dances said out loud. There must be something else wrong with the great bird. But he did not know what it was. “Maybe the eagles will tell me what is wrong,” Rain that Dances thought to himself. So he asked the bird again, ‘What is wrong? Why didn’t you fly away when I got close to you?’ The eagle looked at the young boy and said, “I am just too tired and sad because of all the things I see as I fly around this great land.”

Rain That Dances gave the bird a surprised look and asked, “What do you mean? I look around here, and it's just beautiful! See, the sun is shining. There are beautiful white clouds in the sky. The river has plenty of fish for you to eat, even though the fish won't bite my fish hook. So there's nothing to be sad about.”

“You're right, it still looks beautiful!” replied the eagle. But the great bird thought about the stories the Old Wise Eagle used to tell about the things he saw as he flew around. Now things had changed.

The great bird said to Rain That Dances, “As I soar high above the clouds, I see the beauty of the world around me. I see the high peaks of the mountains. I see the valleys below, where the waters flow in the rivers. I have seen Brother Sun greet each morning of a new day with sunlight. I have seen him say goodnight as Sister Moon comes to light up the dark sky.”

The eagle continued. “The Old Wise Eagle told me stories about the things he saw with each new day. He saw the Bear, the Buffalo, and the Deer, and he saw your people being very active. Those days were hard, but your people all worked together and shared everything. Hard work and being active was a way of life for everyone.”

The eagle told Rain That Dances, how years ago, the men worked hard to take care of everyone in the village. They had strong, healthy bodies. They used to hunt for buffalo and deer, for this was food for the village.

The women worked hard, taking care of their families. They planted seeds in Mother Earth to grow the foods that kept their families healthy and strong. The children helped with the chores, but they also played with each other.

“Now, as I fly around, I do not see the children playing and moving around like the Old Wise Eagle used to see. Children are also eating foods that are not so good for them. That makes me sad.”

“Why does that make you sad?” asked Rain That Dances.

“I am sad because this makes people get sick. They are not as healthy as they can be, said the eagle. “Many of your elders are now sick with a disease they call diabetes. And the young children will get it, too, unless they make changes in their lives.”

Rain That Dances was quiet for a few minutes as he thought about the people in the village. He thought of the elders who could no longer see the beauty around them because their eyes could not see. He thought about the people who were sick. He also thought of the people who could no longer walk, but used wheelchairs to get around.

He had never thought of these things before, but now knew the eagle was right.

“You do have reasons to be sad. Now, I am sad, too. What can I do to help my people be strong and healthy again?” asked Rain That Dances.

The eagle looked at the young boy and said “I had a dream last night about this very thing.”

Rain that Dances got a big smile on his faced, jumped and asked, “What can I tell them?”

The eagle said, “There is much to tell. You can let your people know that there are things they can do now. They can be healthy and will not have to get diabetes. Going back to some of their traditions, such as the foods their ancestors used to eat, becoming active once again, and passing those traditions on to their children are important. In my vision, your people hold the answers; they just have to think back.

Now, it's getting late and you need to get home. If you come back tomorrow, I will be here. I will tell you more of what your people can do to be healthy and strong again.”

Rain That Dances left the eagle. He will come back the next day. He knew what the eagle was telling him was true. He had seen his people get sick with this disease. Now, he has a chance to learn what his people can do to be healthy again. He also has a new friend, the great bald eagle.

“Tomorrow is a new day,” Rain That Dances said with a smile on his face. He waved to goodbye to the eagle. “I’ll see you tomorrow, and I’ll bring my best friend with me.”

The eagle also wants you to hear what he has to say. Please join Rain That Dances in reading “Knees Lifted High.”

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.