

Asiangutitsijuk Takunnausiqijannik

Changing Your Perspective

A Collection of Plays About Inuit Identity

Written by the Students of Nunatsiavut
for the Labrador Creative Arts Festival, 1978-2019

Edited and with an Introduction by Tim Borlase and Martha MacDonald

Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
1. THE TRADITIONAL LIFE OF THE INUIT	10
Re-Enacting the Seal Hunt, Makkovik, 1978	11
Women of Labrador, Hopedale, 1983.....	15
My Blue Heaven, Hopedale and Davis Inlet, 1989	27
Tundra, Nain, 2006	36
UnikKausiuvut Tautsejuk: Our Changing Story, Nain, 2012.....	53
2. HISTORIC EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITIES	67
The Silence Is So Loud, Nain, 1978/2005	68
A Play About Aunt Bertha Andersen, Makkovik, 1978	82
Up the Base, Hopedale, 1981	94
A Musical Tribute to Bill Andersen, Makkovik, 2003	106
An Afternoon with an Elder, Nain, 2013	112
Sâlagik AkKunaki: Beat the Storm Nain, 2016.....	125
3. SOCIAL PRESSURES THAT CHALLENGE THE CONTINUATION OF INUIT CULTURE.....	135
We Seek No City Streets Nor Lanes, Rigolet, 1981	136
Energy to Change the World, Postville, 2008	147
This Isn't Right, Rigolet, 2016	158
Change Minds, Not the Climate, Rigolet, 2019	172
4. INTERNAL STRESSES WITHIN COMMUNITIES	185
Sons of Labrador, Nain, 1980	186
Issumatsasiuk, Nain, 1985.....	198
IkKaumajammik: Memories, Hopedale, 1995.....	207
Who Am I? Nain, 2011.....	223
Ours to Have, Ours to Hold, Rigolet, 2018.....	239
Sedna Renewed, Hopedale, 2018	253
KaumanitsaunialikKuk: It Will Be Brighter Now, Nain, 2019.....	265
5. OUTSIDERS WHO CHALLENGE THE INUIT WAY OF LIFE.....	270
Inuvia Viet Nainimi, Nain, 1990	271
A Wonderful Life After All, Makkovik, 1992	289
There's Nothing We Can't Do, Postville, 2005	310
Them Days, Makkovik, 2018	321
Asiangulukisiani Piusigijait: Changing Your Perspective, Nain, 2018.....	331

Introduction

"Who am I? It sounds like an easy enough question, doesn't it? That's what I thought too, 'til I actually sat down to write this. I am Sam. Sam I am. I'm 16 and I've lived here in Nain my entire life. I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

I am a good friend. That's important to me. I love my family. Everything that Mom and Dad do, they do for us. They've done their best to give us a happy life and I am very thankful for that.

I'm just a typical teenager..."

When Mark Andersen of Nain delivered these lines in Nain's 2011 play, "Who Am I?" audience members might have thought that they were about to see a production focussing on traditional aspects of Inuit life as lived in northern Labrador. Instead, they were presented with a humorous, thoughtful and poignant examination of what it means to be Inuit in the twenty-first century. The question of identity has become increasingly important as Labradorians continue to redefine who they are. This project was carried out to see how that changing perspective is portrayed by Inuit participants in the plays of the Labrador Creative Arts Festival.

The following is an anthology of play scripts from the festival, spanning the early years of its existence to the present day. The collection features scripts from the five communities of Nunatsiavut, selected to show the ever-evolving sense of being an Inuk over the course of the 44 years since the festival began. While scripts dealing specifically with this topic from recent years are more numerous, pride and interest in Inuit identity date back to the earliest days of the festival, demonstrating the importance of that aspect of self-identification from the very beginning. It is evident when looking at the plays that whether consciously or not, young people's sense of belonging to their culture is an important building block in their creative work. While there are numerous opportunities now for youth to focus on their culture and their pride in it, for many years the festival was the main venue for creative exploration of ideas on who they were, as young people and as Inuit.

The idea of producing this script collection came to fruition through the timely establishment of the Nunatsiavut Government's research partnership with Memorial University, entitled *Tradition and Transition among the Labrador Inuit*. Tim Borlase and Martha MacDonald, as independent scholars and as long-term LCAF organizers, engaged in a multi-faceted exploration of Inuit identity as expressed through community theatre. This took several forms: the *IkKaumajammik* project extended

the LCAF model of student-developed plays into the establishment of adult drama groups and production of plays in the five Inuit communities; academic presentations on the exploration of identity through the LCAF were made at two Inuit Studies conferences and an arts and learning national conference; and two publications of play scripts, including this one, have been produced. We would like to thank the many people who assisted us with this publication, including our student, Jill Jablonski, and LCAF coordinator Sandra Broomfield. We would also like to thank Dorrie Brown for her insight into the festival, the *Tradition and Transition* partnership for funding for travel and publication, and Morgan Mills for digitizing the scripts and preparing this document.

The many former LCAF participants who agreed to be interviewed on festival participation were of great help in sharing their festival experiences and their thoughts on its importance in their lives. We also interviewed people about the adult drama group project that culminated in our recent publication *IkKaumajammik*. Our thanks go out to the following: Joan Andersen, Jermaine Andersen, Holly Andersen, Charlie Mae Dyson, Grant Gear, Cassie Jararuse, Rachel Saunders, Carlene Palliser, Marilyn Baikie, Robert Jacque, Desiree Wolfrey, Nicole McLean, Jean Flowers, Sophie Pamak, Nancy Ikkusek, Nancy Nochasak, Jennifer Denty, Caroline Nochasak, Linda Tibbo, Kim Andersen, Melissa Webb, Shannon Webb Dicker, Mark Andersen, Kim Andersen, and Marilyn Faulkner.

The Plays

The entire corpus of Labrador Creative Festival scripts numbers over 525, preserving the creative work of three generations of students from all the communities of Labrador. Through recent work, the collection has become more accessible and can be consulted at the Labrador Institute of Memorial University through contacting Morgan Mills at morgan.mills@mun.ca. The scripts will soon be available as well on the website of the Labrador Creative Arts Festival: www.labradorcreativeartsfestival.ca.

For the purposes of this anthology, we have divided the plays into categories according to the ways in which students chose to examine and present their sense of identity.

- Plays that depict the traditional life of the Inuit
- Plays that document historic events in the communities

- Plays that deal with social pressures that challenge the continuation of Inuit culture
- Plays that show internal stresses within communities
- Plays that describe interactions with outsiders coming to town and challenging the Inuit way of life.

These themes are distinct from the designated festival themes suggested each year as guidelines for brainstorming ideas.

The plays are presented as originally written with two exceptions. "Isumatsasiuk" (Jens Haven Memorial School, Nain, 1985) and "Inuvia Viet Nainimi" (Jens Haven Memorial School, Nain 1990) are presented as they were re-published in *Who Asked Us Anyway?* by the Labrador School Board in 1998. This volume was edited by Carol Bolt, a well-known Canadian playwright.

Inuktitut place names are presented using the spellings that were supplied in the original texts. There has been no attempt to standardize the spelling, and names are preserved as written to provide information about their meaning and significance.

Within each category, the plays are arranged chronologically.

The Festival

The Labrador Creative Arts Festival was founded by Tim Borlase and Noreen Heighton in 1974 and was conceived as a way for young people to come together, regardless of ethnicity, religion and geographic location, to celebrate their individual communities and express their collective concerns. At the time, communities were even more isolated than they are today, and the festival, along with the sports meets that began in the same era, was designed to increase interaction amongst young people while giving them a time and place to examine and present their collective identity. It was initiated at a time when young people had very little opportunity to study or research their own history and experience. In writing and producing one's own perspectives through theatre, it was hoped that young people would build confidence by articulating their own possibilities to aid them in becoming arbiters of their own futures. The Festival has evolved in many ways, embracing schools from other districts, testing new technology applied to the arts, and exploring emerging concerns and interests, but essentially it remains a forum

for young people to find and express their voices, and to receive the assistance of arts professionals in honing their talents and skills.

Reasons for Participating

Although this selection of scripts has been brought together to examine the changing presentation of Inuit identity, the festival itself does not carry an examination of identity as its only function. Indeed, interviews with former participants show that meeting new people and finding a sense of belonging are probably the top reasons for participation. Former Rigolet participant Desiree Wolfrey reported that she enjoyed working with visiting artists, and that the festival helped her learn how to speak in public. As with many others interviewed, she enjoyed spending time with students from all over Labrador. Being a festival participant gave her confidence and has helped her in her current job in that she uses techniques of being on stage when required to speak in public. These same positive effects have been reported by many festival participants over the years. Cassie Jararuse of Makkovik spoke of lessons learned about being reliable and embracing teamwork; Sophie Pamak reported that she and her Nain classmates learned about expectations and responsibility from LCAF, gained independence from travelling, and discovered the importance of good manners and respect when being billeted. Still others saw the value of the performances themselves in terms of the opportunity to address issues of concern in the communities without personally attacking or offending anyone, and Grant Gear of Postville talked about the ways in which plays made those issues relatable. For participants whose deep interest is in the arts, inspiration came from local artists returning so that children could get the sense of their own potential for creativity.

Plays have notably served the function of dealing with trauma and social issues in all communities in Labrador; youth have addressed suicide, underage pregnancy, alcohol and drug abuse, and family violence. Equally, students have produced comedies, fantasy plays and musicals, celebrating their own creativity and the rich resources of closeness and the sense of connection in their communities.

While many people interviewed remarked on their enjoyment of workshops and performances provided by visiting artists, the heart of the festival has always been the creation and performance of original plays by students. Script development is shaped by several factors, including the immediate events taking place in the community and the current popular culture influences familiar to students. Teacher advisors have always played a significant role. While scripts are conceived and

written by the student performers, teachers have often assisted with the writing process, and in some cases have emphasized the need to address serious topics at issue in the community, or have argued for pieces that highlight pride in Inuit culture. As Hopedale actor Jean Flowers reported on her years as a festival participant, their teacher wanted them to display their culture to other Labradorians. Their plays would celebrate its strength and longevity at a time when the media frequently reported negatively on aspects of life in Indigenous communities. Former Rigolet teacher Marie Rich said that she felt that many topics were taboo in earlier times and needed to be addressed, so she encouraged her students to explore topical issues such as AIDS and domestic abuse. Her feeling was that the community benefited when young people took the initiative to open up such discussions through their creation and performance. As Marie said: "When I [directed], it was about the right to speak. Drama gave you the right to say something."

Script production was also shaped by the festival themes, which became more strongly emphasized in the early 2000s. Once the festival was run by a group of community volunteers with a paid coordinator rather than by the school board, funding was sourced increasingly through grants. The committee's approach was to choose an overarching theme for the upcoming festival and use this to acquire funding, select visiting artists and provide a general central idea for button design, photography projects and play development. Hence, themes like "Coming Home" provided the opportunity and inclination to use the exploration of Inuit identity as the focus of the plays.

Examining Identity

In examining the idea of identity as displayed in the plays, it becomes evident that discussing Inuit identity specifically was less pronounced early on, becoming more strongly evident in the past 10-15 years. Some plays, particularly from Postville, presented a Labrador identity rather than an Inuit one. Teacher advisors from those times remarked that individual community identification was also specifically profiled. Makkovik preferred to create comedies and to draw on the town's musical history. Rigolet plays celebrated their community's attachment to the land; Marie Rich felt that living off the land was always an important facet of life in her community and it was perhaps significant that the boys who were deeply involved in hunting and traditional life in Rigolet were also interested in acting. Plays from Nain often experimented with various art forms to show the relationship between memory and culture. Hopedale plays varied widely; they were entertaining but also

focussed on bringing forward a message of concern about how their community was changing.

As the years of the festival progressed, it became clear that being Inuit was increasingly a part of the way young people wanted to present their identity. Caroline Nochasak from Nain reported that this was one of the benefits of attending the festival for her; acting and writing got her thinking about "things that needed to be said." She started attending National Inuit Youth Summits, addressing issues and actively wanting to change things for the Labrador Inuit.

Over time, festival scripts showed the assertion of Inuit identity as an increasingly conscious decision. The festival began in the early 1970s, when many of Labrador's most cherished institutions also formed and began to influence political activity and an increased sense of self. The Combined Councils, *Them Days* Magazine and Archives, and of course the Labrador Inuit Association all shared the same goal of ensuring self-determination and the celebration of Labrador identity in general, and for many communities, an Inuit identity. As this pride and self-confidence increased, it naturally began to manifest itself in the personal creativity of young people. People are reportedly more aware of their collective Inuit identity now; they use being Inuit as a "tool for engagement," as one participant noted, "Most people are very proud of having Indigenous culture and it's time to celebrate it."

The current emergence of a focus on Indigenous identity is a shift in contemporary Canadian society. After centuries of colonization, Indigenous people have asserted their claims to the physical landscape of Labrador and the sense of belonging that comes from a deep-rooted and long-time use of that space. At the same time, Inuit youth have used the playwriting model to examine the ways in which they feel their own identity is situated and have sometimes challenged the traditions and expectations people outside their communities may have of Inuit. While the early plays often made use of traditional activities and language, later plays, particularly after the formation of Nunatsiavut, employed humour to question the need for Inuit identity to be so closely linked with life as it was lived in earlier times.

This sense of confidence in reinterpreting culture is also seen in the forms in which plays have been written. As Caroline Nochasak reported, traditional storytelling has changed but can work in a new form. Throughout the years of the festival, students have relied on traditional Inuit legends to make a point in their plays, and as time has passed, they have used these forms in new ways. The 2018 festival saw two communities make use of the Sedna legend, re-casting the characters while

retaining the tension between generations. ("Ours to Have, Ours to Hold" and "Sedna Renewed")

Additionally, as discussed by participants, community narratives don't have to be traditional legends. The custom of "going off" and telling stories about those adventures has formed the setting for many plays. This sense of agency, reflected in the decision to alter traditional stories, illustrates the feeling of ownership and autonomy around culture; when a person feels that being Inuit is the foundation of their culture they are free to experiment with what that culture is. This message is at the core of the 2011 play from Nain, *Who Am I?*, quoted above, in which the central character is required to write an essay on that topic, forcing him to examine the changes in Inuit culture and how those new manifestations are equally part of who he is. This confidence in examining and presenting the changing identity of Inuit has become much more evident in plays in recent years, and perhaps reflects the establishment of Nunatsiavut as a benchmark in Labrador Inuit autonomy. Even when traditional cultural practices are emphasized in plays, they exist side by side with North American popular culture, modern media, and adopted traditions, such as those introduced by the Moravian church.

As seen in this selection of plays, understanding of culture is nuanced and changing. Youth see it as their task to inform others about Inuit identity, and to make them understand that resilience means moving forward towards reconciliation without forgetting how the past has created the present. The Nain play of 2005, *The Silence is So Loud*, recreates the 1978 play *Okak Spanish Flu 1917*, using *Them Days Magazine* and the film *The Last Days of Okak* as sources. Significantly, the updated play ends with speeches from the long-negotiated land claims agreement of 2005. As recalled by an actor from the troupe, the play is about hope.

Going Forward

The Labrador Creative Arts Festival is also about hope, and about possibility. As long-time festival writer, actor and director Robert Jacque from Rigolet told us, "The festival inspired me to have a different life." Our hope is that the festival will continue to give students the opportunity to explore all facets of identity, and to see the arts as a way of life and a way of living. As we have seen throughout our examination of the scripts, students see their way of life as the source of who they are. As the actor Sam concluded at the end of "Who Am I?": "*For generations we*

have fought for our survival on this shoreline. Today I am continuing that battle. The problems may be different, but I am lucky to have their knowledge, strength and experience to help me through.” This collection of scripts bears witness to four decades of Nunatsiavut students exploring what it means to be Inuit, giving voice to that sense of self. We are thankful to have had the opportunity to learn from them.

Tim Borlase and Martha MacDonald

1. The Traditional Life of the Inuit

These plays, often dating from the early days of the festival, are illustrations of the ways in which Inuit lived, worked and celebrated. For example, in Rigolet, early plays sometimes showcased dance forms that were known in the community, such as the Cotillion or the Handkerchief Dance. Other early plays incorporated Inuktitut, hunting practices, and cultural activities that drew on the past to reinforce students' sense of self. People interviewed remember working with elders to perfect their language usage. They took pride in who they were and wanted to demonstrate the life lived by their grandparents.

That is how it used to be. We were happy. We enjoyed each other's company. We knew how to have fun. We loved to laugh. Our stories were passed down from generation to generation around the fire. Our people found strength and comfort from the beat of the drum. Throat-singing was our entertainment. That was before... before radio... before resettlement ... before TV and Internet and cell phones. Before our lives got so busy with all of our "stuff." Now we're rushing around, disconnected from each other. There's been so many changes. We don't seem to be that interested in our stories... in our past... in each other...

—Jens Haven Memorial School, Nain 2012
UnikKausivut Tautsejuk: Our Changing Story

Re-Enacting the Seal Hunt

Makkovik, 1978

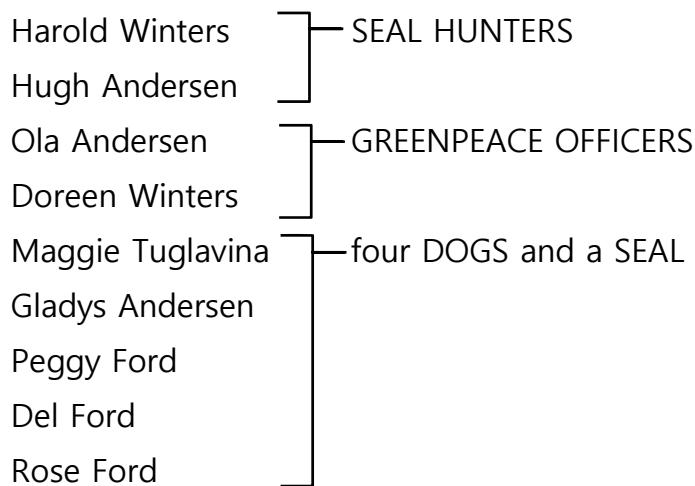
John Christian Erhardt Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Grades five and six in Makkovik are featuring a play about the controversial seal hunt and what happens when they come up against Greenpeace. Ideas for presentation: the possibilities for a presentation of an activity native to Labrador—without words—are tremendous. The importance of this play is in what miming actions take place. The use of sound effects made by the students to accompany the play, or the use of the audience as part of the set, can add to the production. Other possibilities for this type of very effective presentation are: (a) a skidoo trip and breakdown; (b) getting lost in the woods; (c) fishing when a storm comes up; (d) climbing a mountain when someone gets hurt; and (e) a wedding where guns are shot off.

ORIGINAL CAST



TEACHER ADVISOR

Joan Andersen

A bellicater (large lump of ice) hides the seal at one end of the stage. Some white material (snow) covers a stuffed seal near front centre stage. Four DOGS lie asleep at one end of the stage. As the scene opens, the two seal hunters (HAROLD and HUGH) come out of their houses, dressed to go off over the ice. They rouse the DOGS and begin harnessing them to cardboard komatiks. One (HAROLD) has a spear, the other (HUGH) a gun and tuluk (a blind).

HAROLD Where're you goin' today?

HUGH Out ootookin'. How about you?

HAROLD I might go as far as the sina.

HUGH It's a fine day for it.

Off they go, driving their DOGS with these commands: "hert!" = go ahead; "ouk!" = turn to the left; "heredter!" = turn to the right; "aaaa!" = stop. HUGH drives off stage. HAROLD stops at far stage and unhitches his two DOGS.

HAROLD Go find me a seal, now. Go on.

The DOGS sniff the ice all around and finally stop at the white spot of snow covering the stuffed seal and begin to snort, sniff and growl, etc.

HAROLD Go lie down.

The DOGS go off to the side. HAROLD takes aim with his spear and thrusts it through the snow. He pulls up a seal, puts it on the komatik, and hitches up the DOGS. He then drives them homeward using the same commands. HUGH now comes on stage from the opposite side driving his team of two DOGS.

HUGH Aaaa.

The DOGS stop. HUGH takes out his binoculars and spies around. A SEAL pokes up from behind the bellicater. HUGH spots it, quickly sets up his tuluk, and proceeds slowly toward the SEAL. When in range, he takes aim and fires. The SEAL's head falls. HUGH drops the tuluk and rushes to pull the SEAL away from

the ice-hole. Then he puts it onto the komatik and drives homeward, where HAROLD is outside feeding his DOGS some seal meat.

HUGH How many did you get?

HAROLD One. The dogs found it.

HUGH Did you spear it?

HAROLD Yes. How far out did you go?

HUGH Out around Ironbound Island.

HAROLD Lots of seals?

HUGH I only saw this one.

Suddenly, two Greenpeace officers carrying placards appear on the scene. They spot the seals.

OLA Oh, look there!

DOREEN Oh, the poor seal! (*She rushes to the dead animal on the komatik, kneels beside it, and strokes it despairingly.*)

OLA How could you? What has this creature ever done to you? It's never hurt you! It's so helpless. You're worse than animals. Where's your humanity? Have you no compassion? (*She speaks on and on.*)

HAROLD Want a seal flipper?

OLA (*caught off-guard; her mouth waters, and she rubs her stomach and looks around guiltily*) Ah, gee, well... after all day campaigning on the ice, it sure makes a body hungry. I could use a good meal. Ah, yes, I will.

Women of Labrador

Hopedale, 1983

Amos Comenius Memorial School



Hilda Hunter

Written by the Theatre Performing Arts Class 1983/84: Robina Pijogge, Barbara Pijogge, Hilda Hunter, Christine Winters, Lovey Piercy, Agnes Jararuse, Ben Mitsuk, and Sara Karpik.

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

This play is an historical look at the women of Labrador over the last 200 years. The play is done in mime, depicting the chores, achievements, and tragedies experienced by the brave women who did much in bringing Labrador to where it is today.

ORIGINAL CAST

NARRATOR	Robina Pijogge
INUIT WOMAN	Hilda Hunter
MISSIONARY WOMAN	Barbara Pijogge
SETTLER WOMAN	Lovey Piercy

CREW

LIGHTING	Ben Mitsuk and Agnes Jararuse
MAKE-UP	Sara Karpik

TEACHER ADVISOR

Larry Legere

SCRIPT

NARRATOR and actresses take their places on a dark stage. Each actress will be performing on different levels, with the NARRATOR at stage right. At a chosen point in the introduction music, the spotlight will come up slowly on the NARRATOR, dressed in contemporary clothes.

NARRATOR Tonight I want to take you on a journey back through time. I want to show you a glimpse of life as it was many, many years ago in Labrador. However, I will not be telling you of the accomplishments of men. Instead I want to tell you of the greatness of women.

Let's take this trip together. I want you to close your eyes. That's right—just relax and close your eyes and imagine we are all going back in time: ten years, twenty years, fifty years, one hundred, one hundred and fifty, two hundred years.

During the above, the spotlight will be turned off and podium light will be switched on.

NARRATOR Now slowly open your eyes. Our story is about to begin:

In the beginning, the Eskimos did not know that anyone else existed. They called themselves INUIT, meaning "The People." They had their own way of life, a way of life that helped them to survive in a land that was bleak and hard and often cruel to them.

The Eskimos depended completely on the success of the hunt. Animals supplied them with food, clothing and raw materials.

Lights come up slowly on an INUIT WOMAN who is miming the lighting of a blubber lamp.

NARRATOR One of these raw materials was the blubber from sea mammals. This blubber was burnt in homemade lamps often made of soapstone. The woman would slowly move the flame along a trail of blubber until the lamp was totally lit. This not only gave light but provided some heat for the inside of the igloo. This heat was not much, but to the Eskimos it was a delightful welcome after being in the cold Arctic wind all day.

Lights go down on the INUIT WOMAN.

NARRATOR In the year 1752, the first Moravian missionaries came to America. Soon, missions were set up along the coast of Labrador.

Lights come up slowly on the MISSIONARY WOMAN miming the lighting of a fireplace.

NARRATOR Many of the young men left Europe without wives and soon discovered the loneliness of missionary work. Many sent back home for their wives, who were often chosen through a lottery. This was always done with the young women's consent. After much prayer, a name was drawn and many young women soon found themselves in the cold mission houses that dot our coast. Usually there were several young couples who shared not only the mission house, but the chores as well. Each woman would take turns, cooking, cleaning, sewing and so on. Often the task of lighting the fireplace was left to the woman, since the man was often away from the village.

Lights go down on the MISSIONARY WOMAN.

NARRATOR With the coming of wood stoves, the settler woman found it much easier to cook and heat her home.

Lights come up slowly on the SETTLER WOMAN just getting out of bed. She mimes the lighting of the wood stove.

NARRATOR Like the other women, the job of lighting the stove was usually her responsibility. Her husband was often away hunting or trapping or fishing. Getting up to a freezing house is no fun for anyone, but this woman did it without complaint. It was expected of her. There was no one else around to do it. By the time her children were up, the frost had melted from the window panes and a good, hot breakfast was sitting on the top of her stove. The children would run to the stove and rub their little hands together over the heat and wait patiently while their mother dressed each of them near the warmth of the stove. Another day had begun.

Lights go down on the SETTLER WOMAN. Lights go up slowly on the MISSIONARY WOMAN, who is miming the planting of a garden.

NARRATOR Much of woman's time, in Labrador, was spent preparing for winter. Families often planted gardens when there was good earth to work with. They only grew hearty vegetables like potatoes, onions, turnip, carrots, cabbage, radish and even lettuce. Rhubarb was a very popular crop. The growing season might have been short, but the days, during summer, were very long. This encouraged the seeds to grow into healthy plants. The woman did not mind working with the earth. It gave her a break from her constant housework. It also gave her great joy later when she could serve a steaming meal with vegetables that she had grown with her own hands.

Lights go down on the MISSIONARY WOMAN. Lights go up slowly on the INUIT WOMAN, miming drying fish.

NARRATOR The Inuit woman too, did much to get ready for the winter months. After a good catch of fish, it was her job to clean them and lay them out to dry under the hot sun. The catch was brought to her by the

husband. Sometimes she would help him with his fishing, but she was never allowed to go on the hunt. It was believed that this would anger the gods and that the animals would consider it an insult to be hunted by a woman. They would leave the land and never return. After cleaning the fish, the woman would lay the fish pieces in the sun to dry. She always stayed close to the drying fish to watch for birds who would try to steal a free meal. But the woman's hands were never idle.

The INUIT WOMAN begins miming the chewing of and sewing of moccasins.

NARRATOR Even while sitting guard, she would do some handwork. This might have been embroidery work along the edge of a parka or on a pair of skin mitts. Maybe she would soften an animal skin by gently chewing on it, and begin the sewing of a pair of winter boots. The stitches are made to keep out not only the snow, but water as well. Stitching an animal skin takes a great deal of patience and skill. If she did the job poorly, it would mean much discomfort for her family. Cold, wet feet would mean an angry husband and sick children. So, she took her time. She did it exactly the way her mother or grandmother had shown her many years before. Parents and grandparents were the only teachers these people knew.

The lights go down on the INUIT WOMAN.

NARRATOR Teachers did come to the North with the arrival of the mission.

Lights slowly go up on the MISSIONARY WOMAN teaching a group of children—mime.

NARRATOR The missionary woman often took on the responsibility of teaching the younger children in the village. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were important but time was also spent studying the history and geography of Labrador. As with many other things, the woman had

very few educational materials to work with and had to make do with what she could make or find. Strange as it may seem, this woman did not teach her own children. When a child was about eight years old, all their belongings were packed and they were sent back to Europe to go to school. It must have been heartbreaking for these mothers to send their children so far away.

Lights down.

NARRATOR For all women in Labrador, housework was never done. There was always something to keep hands busy.

Lights up on the SETTLER WOMAN miming housework.

NARRATOR Daily chores included preparing meals, baking bread, washing dishes, sweeping floors, dusting, making beds, and looking after the children. Other jobs, like washing windows, scrubbing walls, mending clothing, sewing new clothes, preserving meat, fish and berries, knitting socks, hats and mitts, were done at regular intervals during the year. Because husbands were often away trapping, the women might find themselves hunting small animals and fishing when food was low. Many of these chores were done with three or four small ones hanging onto her skirts day in and day out.

Lights down on the SETTLER WOMAN. Lights up on the INUIT WOMAN miming ice fishing.

NARRATOR The Inuit woman, too, sometimes found it necessary to help with getting food. Ice fishing was something that Eskimo women enjoyed. It gave them a chance to leave the igloo and be by themselves. With a spear, the woman would patiently chop away at the ice, breaking it into small pieces. Every now and then she would bend over and scoop out the broken pieces. She would then go back to chopping away at the ice. Soon, water would be found and a hole would be

dug through the ice and slush. This was very cold work and much of it was done with bare hands. The woman would stop occasionally and put her hands into the sleeves of her parka. When the proper size hole had been made, the woman would drop a line attached to a piece of wood into the freezing water below the ice. Sometimes the woman would have to stand for a long time in the bitter cold before a fish would bite. When a fish was jigged, she would pull it in until the fish came out of the water. After removing the hook, she could throw the fish onto the snow around her. One thing the Eskimos did not need were refrigerators.

Lights down on the INUIT WOMAN.

NARRATOR The missionary woman was seen as a person who could do almost anything, and the village people were often knocking at her door with one difficulty or another. One job she often found herself doing was nursing.

Lights up on the MISSIONARY WOMAN miming the mending of a cut.

NARRATOR This might have been the pulling of teeth, delivery of babies, taking care of the sick and dying, and performing minor operations. The missionary woman had to make do with what she had. Sometimes helping people was very difficult because she did not have the proper medicines or equipment. Often, she would have to make her own remedies. Just imagine, she stitched up wounds, made small incisions, and pulled teeth with nothing to relieve the pain. At times she probably felt sick when faced with problems she did not have the knowledge or equipment to do anything about. Many people died who would not die today if they had the same problem.

Lights down on the MISSIONARY WOMAN.

NARRATOR Death was a fact of life for the people who lived in Labrador years ago. I want to recreate a scene that occurred now and again in the homes that dotted the rough and often cruel coast of Labrador.

Soft lights come up on the SETTLER WOMAN miming grief for her lost husband.

NARRATOR On a long, cold evening the wind is howling and shaking the window panes. Two days have now passed and still there is no sign of the fishermen. The woman walks the floor, back and forth, back and forth. She is very worried, but she will not allow herself to think the worst. But where are they? Are they still alive? Why does this storm not stop? She lights a small lamp and puts it in the window. Perhaps this light will guide her husband home. She is thinking too much, so she makes herself busy. She washes up the dishes left from supper. Perhaps she checks the stove, making sure the fire does not get too low. Her husband will need the heat when he returns. She warms up the soup for the third time that night. Won't he be hungry, too? She has put the children to bed, but the baby wakes up in his cradle by the stove. She picks him up to cuddle and comfort him. She tells him how much he looks like his father. She begins to cry. Dear God, why don't they come back?

Lights down on the SETTLER WOMAN.

NARRATOR The Inuit woman had a different kind of dying to live with. Unlike the other women, death was sometimes caused by this woman.

Lights up on the INUIT WOMAN miming the smothering of an unwanted girl child.

NARRATOR The problem was the birth of unwanted girl babies. Girls were not considered as important as boys. Boys grew into young men who would hunt and care for their families. An unwanted girl child meant one more mouth to feed. It was not considered wrong to do away

with such a child. Even so, this must have been a very difficult thing to do. What if the woman wanted to keep the child? What if she felt something special for it in her heart? But she did not think of these things. It would make what she had to do unbearable. And so, she would gently lay the child in its bed and smother it until it was dead. Such were the ways of the Inuit of long ago.

Lights down on the INUIT WOMAN.

NARRATOR After many years of service the missionary woman and her husband would return to Europe or maybe move on to another mission.

Lights up on the MISSIONARY WOMAN on the deck of a boat.

NARRATOR They would wait for the arrival of the one and only boat each year to leave the community. With her she would be taking away many memories, some beautiful, many sad. She had learned to live in a land where many others had failed and would fail in the years to come. She had accepted the challenge and she had won. Until her dying day, she would never be able to forget the land and the people of Labrador.

Lights down on the MISSIONARY WOMAN. Lights up on an INUIT WOMAN miming moving.

NARRATOR The Inuit of long ago moved from place to place in search of food. They were nomads, moving from one camp to another, always looking for the best hunting grounds, for those animals that gave them food and clothing. Igloos were left and new ones were built from the snow that surrounded them. The Eskimo woman was responsible for packing the cooking utensils and blankets and bundling up the children for the long, cold trip. This woman was never sure where she was going, or what hardships waited for her there. She did not worry about these things.

Lights down on the INUIT WOMAN.

NARRATOR Let us take one final peek at the settler woman who, unlike the other two, has moved little and has made her home a solid foundation for years to come. She knows that no matter what tragedies or unhappiness she has experienced, her joy for life and its challenges have been passed onto her children and she knows that they, too, will survive.

Lights up on the SETTLER WOMAN, miming the tending of plants.

NARRATOR And when her family has left her home for houses of their own, she will turn her attentions to new life. Perhaps she will fill her rooms and windows with plants. Plants are everyone's promise from nature that life will go on. This woman knows this. She knows that with patience, love, and nourishment, nothing is impossible. Even in the harsh lands of Labrador, her fragile plants will live.

Lights down on the SETTLER WOMAN.

NARRATOR I have come to the end of my story. Such an amazing history these women have created for the people of Labrador. But what of the young women of today?

Lights up slowly on all three women. They disrobe, revealing contemporary clothing. All have cosmetics (lipstick, eyeshadow, mascara), mirror, and brush. They transform themselves into the young women they really are.

NARRATOR Certainly, many things have been passed on to us from generations gone by. When the time comes, we will know how to care for a family. Housework will not be new to us. Preparing meals, taking care of 15 young children, tending the sick, getting ready for the winter months—none of this will be new to us. A choice to remain in Labrador, like many before us, or to leave our communities to attend a university, or a trade school or maybe just to experience the world

outside. Because we now know that things can be different. We have seen this on television, in magazines, during student exchange trips. We now know that with the right kind of training we can become a lawyer, a doctor, a welder, a nurse, a teacher, an engineer, a model, an actress, a dancer. These challenges are exciting but many of us will choose to remain, to continue building the history of Labrador. But no matter what our choice, we have come far enough, as we have shown you here tonight, to demand praise where praise is due, to expect thanks for a job well done. We are ready to walk forth and open the many doors life has waiting for us. Wouldn't you love to be around to see all the changes we are going to make?

Girls leave stage and walk through audience to exit.

My Blue Heaven

Hopedale and Davis Inlet, 1989

Amos Comenius Memorial School and Mushuau Innu School



ORIGINAL CAST

CARIBOU MAN/ANNOUNCER	Johnny Tuglavina	Amos Comenius
TSHAKAPESH	Andrew Karpik	
SEDNA	Susan Nochasak	
PROFESSOR/TORNRAK	David Nochasak	
FOX	Wayne Piercey	
NANUK	Junior Pijogge	
INNU WOMAN	Nora Mistenapeo	
INNU WOMAN	Martyne Rich	
PILOT 1	Ben Rich	
PILOT 2	Jeffrey Piwas	Mushuau Innu School
PILOT 3	John Tshakapesh	
PILOT 4	Clarence Nui	
PILOT 5	Frank Dicker	
BARTENDER	Mary Ann Piwas	

CREW

SPOTLIGHT	George Winters	Amos Comenius
LIGHTS	Tiny Boase	
SPECIAL EFFECTS	Ben Rich	Mushuau Innu School
LIGHTS	Jeffrey Piwas	

TEACHER ADVISORS

Bill Wheaton, Lou Byrne

SCENE 1: INTRODUCTION

Theme music: "My Blue Heaven." The ANNOUNCER walks out into the spotlight.

ANNOUNCER Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys of all ages...

Welcome to Goose High School and to the 1989 Creative Arts Festival.

Tonight, we're very fortunate to have as our guest visitor the world-famous historian, Professor Nochasak.

As most of you are probably aware, Professor Nochasak is a Labradorian. He was born in Hopedale and completed his school education there. When he was going to school in Hopedale he was involved with the very famous native troupe, Innuinuit. Through his association with them, he became interested in the history and legends of the native people of the north. Professor Nochasak obtained his Master's degree at Memorial University in St. John's, and went on to further studies at Harvard University, where he received his PhD.

Professor Nochasak has just returned from the Circumpolar Conference in Greenland, and has kindly consented to attend the Creative Arts Festival. We hope you will enjoy his lecture, as the legends of the Innu and Inuit unfold before your eyes. PLEASE GIVE A VERY WARM WELCOME TO PROFESSOR NOCHASAK!

PROFESSOR Good evening! It's a pleasure to be in Goose Bay.

This evening I have a story to tell you... a very interesting story indeed.

The story is illustrated by 'holograms'... as you know, 'holograms' are produced by laser-beams, which make the images seem life-like. The holograms were taken as part of my research into ancient native legends.

This story is not only about people, but also about the animals of Northern Labrador... specifically the spirits of land and sea. The animal spirits of the 1800s were very real to the Innu and Inuit. During the 1900s these spirits evolved into another reality, mythological creatures. Now, in this century, these same animal spirits are very real again... heroes to the native peoples of Labrador.

PROFESSOR NOCHASAK walks on slowly... nods his head to the audience... shakes the ANNOUNCER's hand... walks over to the podium and switches on the light... and ruffles through notes and clears his throat.

PROFESSOR The first hologram that I have to show you tonight is "Sedna, Goddess of the Sea."

A long time ago there was a young girl who married a bird and moved to an island with him. She was very unhappy because the bird treated her badly. One day her father came for a visit and decided to rescue her. They escaped in her father's boat. When the bird discovered they were gone, he created a terrible storm at sea. To save himself, the father threw his daughter overboard. The woman clung desperately to the sides of the small boat, but her father chopped off her fingers and she sank to the bottom of the sea. The young woman's fingers turned into whales, seals, and walruses, and she herself became a powerful spirit and was feared by everyone.

The second hologram is of Tshakapesh. Tshakapesh, as you may know, was the Innu spirit who a long time ago left Earth and climbed a tree until he reached the moon. He became what we know today as the man who lives in the moon. When the Innu people look up at the sky at night, they say, "There is Tshakapesh!"

The third hologram is of the "Caribou Man" from the Innu legends. It is said that he lives in a place called "Caribou House," somewhere

near Ungava Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. Caribou man protects all of the animals and prevents anybody from seeing where the animals live. For indeed, "Caribou Man" is the great "Caribou Spirit."

The fourth hologram is of Nanuk, the great white bear. This mighty hunter roamed the Arctic wasteland, unchallenged by anything, except man.

Nanuk was very powerful, and was admired not only for his strength, but for his exceptional intelligence. Nanuk... king of the vast frozen seas.

SCENE 2: THE HOLOGRAMS BECOME ALIVE

SEDNA Something is not right here. The creatures of the ocean are disturbed. Of all the years I spent in the icy cold waters, nothing compares to how I feel now.

CARIBOU MAN My sister, I feel the same way. The caribou herds are leaving their traditional calving grounds. They are dropping their calves early and the birth rate is getting less. Who dares destroy my animals?

NANUK Ahhh! I dream that the hunters of the north were calling me back to test my powers.

TSHAKAPESH Brothers! Sisters! For centuries I have been there, up in the moon with my sister and wife. Ever since the day that I climbed the tree to get to that beautiful land, I have never seen so much confusion amongst the people of Earth.

SEDNA Strange forces are drawing us together.

TSHAKAPESH It is time... time for us to go back before it is too late. We must return to the sky, water, and land.

SEDNA We must drive away the demons who have taken the land from the people of the barrens and the coast.

NANUK But we all know the power of these demons... they fly faster than an eagle, and roar louder than the giants.

CARIBOU MAN Their sound paralyzes the caribou so they cannot move. We have never seen anything like this before.

SEDNA I don't understand how a bird can fly so fast, or make such a deafening noise.

SCENE 3

PROFESSOR As you can see, our friends are concerned about the welfare of the people of the land. Gigantic birds are invading the Earth, and the people have no way to fight against them. The birds made so much noise that the animals were afraid. The animals were so afraid that they did not want to eat or sleep... they began to starve. The spirits of the animals became weak. The people became weak because the animals moved to far places to hide from the gigantic birds... they could not find the animals for food.

PROFESSOR The problem was that nobody, not the Innu or Inuit, nor the legendary creatures, could understand the power and purposes of these demons from the sky who infested their land.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have another hologram for you to look at... images of the creatures who control the powerful birds.

Scene 4

SEDNA, CARIBOU MAN, NANUK, TSHAKAPESH

CARIBOU MAN Just look around. Everything is dying. Look at those caribou over there. Years ago, I would have been able to get close to them... but now, I don't think that they even know me!

TSHAKAPESH It is hard to imagine that one time I used to be able to hunt and live on this land. Now there is nothing. On the moon I am happy, and there is lots of food. But here I see only death... just like a long time ago when those pale-looking people came across the ocean on the big wooden boats.

SEDNA Yes, I remember, Tshakapesh, when those boats came. All of us sea creatures were afraid. Those ships were bigger than whales. I remember all of the disease and death that happened to the people of Okak and Hebron.

NANUK And on the land, even the spirits of the great bear became weak with starvation. Nobody could understand what was happening!

CARIBOU MAN We have all seen the destruction from those earlier times. But now, my brothers and sisters, today we have another disease striking the hearts of the people... the giant birds!

TSHAKAPESH What are we going to do?

NANUK What are we going to do?

SEDNA What are we going to do?

TOGETHER To do! To do! To do!

VOICEOVER There's nobody there, there's nobody there... (repeated)

Five jet fighters enter the scene (the actors mime jets in flight, to a soundtrack of jet planes). CARIBOU MAN, SEDNA, TSHAKAPESH, and NANUK are afraid. Two Innu people are up on a riser. They are being attacked by the jets. Innu people express their fear in the Innu language. The noise freezes the mythological people. Planes leave the scene and the light focuses back on the main characters.

NANUK Tshakapesh, what happened?

TSHAKAPESH It was them... they are here again!

SEDNA Did you see those poor Innu people? They look so afraid.

CARIBOU MAN And all we could do is stand around and watch. We are powerless!

NANUK Tshakapesh, what are we going to do?

TSHAKAPESH I don't know... Caribou Man, we need your help.

CARIBOU MAN Come here, my friends. I'm going to tell you a story...

A long time ago there was an awesome, great spirit... the great beast of the sky that grew so large that the stars trembled. Its call was like the northern wind, and its wings created thunder. The spirit is called Tornrak. The demons who fly in the sky have disturbed Tornrak, and it is said that Tornrak has come back to Earth as a shaman, to search out the demons. Some say he is here now, disguised as a man.

SEDNA We all know the stories of Tornrak... What are you trying to tell us?

CARIBOU MAN The TORNRAK has greater powers than ours. We need it to come to us... we need it now!

SEDNA How are we going to do this?

CARIBOU MAN The way the people always found something in the past. We must concentrate our thinking on the Tornrak spirit, and it will appear before us.

NANUK We will use the drum to summon the spirit. If the Tornrak is near it will hear our call and join us in our fight against the demons.

TSHAKAPESH What if it doesn't hear us?

NANUK If we concentrate, we will find the Tornrak... it will come... LET US BEGIN!!!

NARRATOR (Narrator has now transformed into a shaman/Tornrak spirit) (drum in background) I hear your call, my friends... come, I know the place from which the demons came... I AM (together) TORNRAK!!!

TORNRAK begins narrating the "Beat of the Drum," and the jet fighters return. TORNRAK and the spirits seem to defeat the attacking planes. The planes go offstage. TORNRAK and the spirits back towards the rear of the stage, then suddenly they turn their heads and stare. The planes return and destroy the spirits. Their pilots take white canes and do a soft-shoe to "My Blue Heaven."

Tundra

Nain, 2006

Jens Haven Memorial School

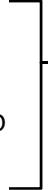


ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

"Tundra" is an original production written by a group of students at Jens Haven Memorial School about the struggle of Inuit youth to recall their heritage through traditional legends. While out for a snowmobile ride, three friends get stuck on the land when their machine breaks down. In an attempt to remain calm while waiting for help, they begin to tell each other stories that were taught to them by their elders. Little do they know that the "Shadows" Torngat (Spirit of the Land), Atsanik (Northern Lights), Immapisuak (The Sea), and Nanuk (Polar Bear) are watching over them. The playful shadows reminisce over the fading culture, but with a few tricks still up their sleeves, they help the youngsters along their way. Shane, Rebecca, and Melissa think they are alone in the wilderness, but with so many legendary spirits around, is anyone ever really alone and helpless?

ORIGINAL CAST

SHANE	Eugene Frieda
ANGELA	Abby Webb
REBECCA	Melissa Webb
TORNGAT (Spirit of the Land)	Sarah Hearn
IMMAPISUAK (The Sea)	Samantha Lyall
ATSANIK (Northern Lights)	Monica Montejano
NANUK (Polar Bear)	Danielle Baikie



Shadows

TEACHER ADVISORS

Kathleen Gilhooley, Robin Hunt

Begins with the stage black and the lights rising slowly. The audience can hear SHANE, ANGELA, and REBECCA arguing over a skidoo on upper stage left. All three are dressed for a skidoo ride.

SHANE What the hell are you doing? You don't know anything about skidoos... you're a girl, for God's sake!

ANGELA Shut up. I told you to take extra gas.

The lights come up stage left on the three friends.

SHANE The gas isn't even the problem!

REBECCA Ughhh! I knew something like this would happen.

ANGELA *(to SHANE)* Check the spark plugs.

SHANE I just put new ones in before we left.

ANGELA Check them anyway.

REBECCA *(whining)* I'm cold! We've been here forever.

SHANE Quit whining!

REBECCA I would if you could fix that piece of crap. You call yourself a Labrador boy and you can't even get a skidoo running.

SHANE kicks the snowmobile and stomps off to lower stage right and sits on the snow. ANGELA and REBECCA look at each other for a moment, then ANGELA makes her way over to SHANE, sitting down beside him. REBECCA simply sits on the skidoo, huffy. The lights come up down stage right as SHANE walks over.

ANGELA Calm down, Shane. It isn't anyone's fault. That skidoo's old, you know that.

SHANE Heh. Remember the last time we broke down? We shoulda learned our lesson on that piece of junk.

ANGELA Yeah, we were over to Kauk and had to walk all the way back. It was dark when we finally got into town. And the whole way back you were telling me horrible stories and freaking me out.

SHANE (*laughs*) Yeah, you really got jumpy when I told you the legend of the northern lights.

REBECCA I'm cold over here! It's like minus 26. Are you guys just going to sit there and do nothing?

SHANE You can try to start that machine if you want, but all I'm starting is a fire. Come over with us if you're cold. (*Gets up and begins to gather wood.*)

(REBECCA pauses a moment before going over. As SHANE busies himself with a fire, the girls talk. The lights go off at stage left.)

REBECCA So, what did he tell you about the northern lights?

ANGELA Well, first he started whistling and I asked him why the hell he was doing that, because I was annoyed. He said he was calling the lights down. It was practically pitch black and so much colder than it is now, but how beautiful the ice was under that sky.

SHANE (*interrupts*) You can only say that after. You were complaining constantly out there.

ANGELA (*kicks out/hits him, play-angry*) You weren't any help. (*to Rebecca*) He went on to tell me that whistling would make the lights come closer. The lights are spirits playing with a human head, and sometimes they need a new ball. So, if we were still all alone at midnight, out of town, they would come down and chop our heads off. (*with a sidelong glance to SHANE*) At least that's what he said.

While they are talking, TORNGAT and ATSANIK come out to centre stage and look on. Their light is low-ish and tinted (blues and purples). ATSANIK is indignant. They are tossing a head between them.

ATSANIK Well, that's not all true.

TORNGAT Hush. It is not often we get to be with the people, since they began to build homes from trees. Besides, you *do* play with skulls.

Atsanik simply sticks her tongue out to Torngat and remains silent.

REBECCA And you believed him?

ANGELA Well, being out there on your own with no comforts can, I dunno, change what's real. I know it couldn't really happen, but in the moment I guess I could've believed anything. Besides, it's fun to freak out a little.

SHANE Just wait until dark, Rebecca, and we'll see how brave you are.
(Devilish smirk.)

Stage cue: a match is lit and a fire gets plugged in from off-stage right.

ATSANIK *(to Torngat)* It's not like I couldn't chop off heads. I just don't.

ANGELA *(rolls her eyes)* Whatever. You're not so brave yourself. I know a few stories to freak you out.

SHANE Just try.

REBECCA Wait a second, are we going to be here long enough for dark?

SHANE They won't get concerned 'til after dark. *(By now he's finished with starting the fire and is once again seated in the semicircle.)* And seeing as that pile of crap over there won't start we're stuck until we're found. It'll be dark soon anyways.

ANGELA It'll be fine. Let's just talk, pass the time.

SHANE I know a story my Anansiak told me a long time ago. It's about the Kullapuliuk (*mispronounces the name*).

TORNGAT I know that story, but you call her the Kalupillujuik, not whatever he said.

REBECCA What's a Kalopalook?

ANGELA Kalupillujuik, dummies.

REBECCA pushes ANGELA.

ANGELA Hey! (*Rubs her arm.*)

The shadows TORNGAT and ATSANIK laugh silently. There is a sudden breeze due to their chuckle. Sound cue: wind sound.

ANGELA Ahhh, I just got a chill. How would you expect it to be pronounced right when you even screwed it up the first time? Just tell the story.

SHANE Geez... all right. So, there's this little girl a long time ago who wanted to go ice fishing but everyone was too busy to take her. She was about to go down on the ice by herself, just on the harbour, but her mother and father stopped her.

ATSANIK mimics the child skipping about, and TORNGAT imitates the parents stopping her. IMAPPISUAK enters stealthily behind TORNGAT and ATSANIK. The lights on the shadows are hazy, depicting a winter afternoon.

SHANE They say that if a child goes out on the ice alone, a sea monster, Kalupillujuik, will come up through the cracks and will take the child back under the ice. The girl doesn't believe this and goes down to the ice anyway. Once she gets there she feels mischievous and taunts the monster "Kalupillujuik, Kalupillujuik have stinky feet!" and that sort of thing. Suddenly, the monster comes up behind the girl and grabs her, and pulls her under.

IMAPPISUAK grabs ATSANIK and they struggle.

SHANE I don't remember how she got away, but somehow she did. That Kalupillujuik was nasty, the way my Anansiak described her. I had nightmares about it and I don't think I went to the shore alone in winter 'til I was ten or eleven.

SHADOWS laugh.

ANGELA I think that was the point.

SHADOWS laugh.

Rebecca (*snobbish*) What a fine story. Do either of you hear laughing?

The shadows who were laughing now suddenly stop.

SHANE It's probably the Kalupillujuik enjoying our ignorance.

REBECCA Yeah, whatever. It's dark, you know.

ANGELA Nah, the sun is only just gone. Sure, it's colder, but we're good yet.

The light dims: the sun has just set.

TORNGAT (*to IMAPPISUAK and ATSANIK*) They should build an igloo.

SHANE Hey, let's build an igloo.

REBECCA (*disbelievingly*) Do you even know how?

SHANE Can't be too hard. C'mon, Ang. Let's get building. (*Stands up.*)

ANGELA Who died and made you boss? (*Reluctantly stands too.*)

The pair makes an igloo shape out of painted juice boxes.

IMAPPISUAK You know, we should help them.

ALL (*after a pause*) Nah.

They all hover around the friends, sometimes pushing a box, sometimes tripping someone up, sometimes just hovering and watching.

REBECCA *(Remains seated by the fire.) Any more wonderful stories to share? (sarcasm)*

ANGELA Rebecca, how do you not know any of these stories? You grew up here too.

Lights on down centre as IMAPPISUAK speaks to the audience.

IMAPPISUAK So many of our people have forgotten our stories. They do not even bother to tell their children about us anymore. Soon there will be no one left to pass them on. Then what will happen?

The shadows shrug and hang their heads. As IMAPPISUAK walks back, lights fall back on all shadows, back centre.

REBECCA *(shrugging her shoulders) I don't know. No one ever told me. Forget about me. I wanna hear another story.*

ANGELA Well there's that Sedna story.

IMAPPISUAK *(excited) Oh, excellent. I wonder if they know the correct tale.*

REBECCA You already know I'm clueless, so go on, who's Sedna?

ANGELA *(while building) Sedna is the old sea goddess of the Inuit. In the legend she starts as an ordinary human girl who was very beautiful. Probably because she was so beautiful, she was conceited and very picky over the men who wished to marry her. Until one day when a stranger showed up on her island promising to marry her and fill her life with more riches than she could imagine.*

The shadows are acting out the story. IMAPPISUAK is acting as SEDNA. TORNGAT is the stranger for the moment. ATSANIK is watching. Lights are bright over the shadows.

TORNGAT *(to IMAPPISUAK as SEDNA) Come with me and I promise you great riches. Your pots will always be filled with meat, your lamp filled with*

oil, your bed covered in soft skins, and your clothes lined with warm feathers.

The three shadows continue acting out the story as the others talk.

ANGELA Sedna could not resist his song and agreed to marry him.

SHANE Well, that doesn't sound so bad.

ANGELA Hold on, there's more. On their voyage to his home, Sedna's husband transformed into a fulmar (*a bird type creature*). He left her alone on a rocky ledge, bringing her fish guts as her only source of food. In her loneliness, Sedna cried out for her father.

IMAPPISUAK Father, if you knew my suffering you would rescue me from this terrible place.

ANGELA Her father answered her cries and, in the spring, came to rescue her. He was so angry that he killed the fulmar. He pulled his daughter into his kayak and they paddled quickly away. They soon found themselves swarmed by other fulmars. Selfishly the father threw Sedna overboard to save himself.

REBECCA How sad. That's a terrible thing for a father to do.

ANGELA Let me finish. (*Pause*) Sedna did not make it easy for her father. She clung on to the side of the kayak but the old man fought back. He grabbed a knife and stabbed at her hands, cutting off each finger at the first joint. Her fingers bobbing in the sea turned into the first seals. Sedna grabbed the kayak again but her father cut off her fingers at the second joint, and these pieces became the walruses. Sedna tried again to clutch the kayak but her father cut off the rest of her hands, which became the first whales when they hit the water.

SHANE Gross man, sickening. So, what happened, did she die?

Blue light filter, to show SEDNA being in the ocean.

ANGELA No, Sedna was stronger than that. She sank to the bottom of the sea, but didn't drown. She became a spirit who guards her sea creatures. Unfortunately for Sedna, she could no longer comb her beautiful hair without any hands. At times Sedna's hair bothers her so much that she won't release animals for people to eat until a shaman visits and gently combs out her hair. There, finished!

SHANE That is one nice igloo if I do say myself. Let's go in. (*Crawls in*).

REBECCA That's an igloo? I am not going in there.

ANGELA It's warmer...

REBECCA Not if it all falls on your head.

SHANE (*Comes out again*.) What are you two yakking about? Just come on in. It's fine.

The Shadows shake their heads knowingly.

TORNGAT They don't make them as they used to.

ATSANIK kicks the igloo. Everyone watches as the igloo falls. SHANE has his back to it and turns when he hears it fall.

SHANE Oh, that sucks.

REBECCA Told you.

ANGELA Ughhhh... let's just huddle around the fire. It's dark now. No point in trying again.

IMAPPISUAK I pity them, you know. I'm nearly certain their grandparents could have built an igloo at their age, twice as big, that stood up without crumbling.

ATSANIK Their grandparents might have asked the spirits for some help.

TORNGAT They might not believe in the traditions anymore, but at least they know some of the myths. They are not completely disconnected from their culture.

SHANE Hey, shhhh ...

ANGELA What?

SHANE I thought I heard something.

REBECCA You're terrible. You're just trying to freak us out.

SHANE And wa?

REBECCA (*Rolls her eyes, then speaks to Angela.*) Do you know any more stories? Cultural stuff? I'm kind of getting into this on-the-land thing.

SHANE I dunno. You don't seem like someone who could last back then... life was hard.

The friends stare into the fire while the Shadows talk and act out what they are saying. The lights turn back to blue and purple "northern lights" over the shadows as they talk.

ATSANIK Oh, the olden days... what a beautiful time that was. The Inuit respected us, passed on information on surviving the land to their children, struggled day to day to live. (*Tragic and zealous sadness.*) Beautiful.

TORNGAT Women would sew and cook and care for the young while worrying about their husbands out on the land. They scarcely knew if they would return to them.

Imitations of a sobbing/stressed woman.

IMAPPISUAK I loved how they hunted my seals, using a screen to get closer until their harpoon could easily be thrown into the flesh of a seal resting on

the ice near his air hole. Many times, I would watch in glee, never knowing who would win, the seal or the hunter?

Imitations of a hunter and seal.

TORNGAT The sled teams! Men and dogs trusting in one another, almost like a single creature gliding across the landscape.

ATSANIK They had such wonderful songs then. I loved the stories, truly I would dance above them on a clear night for as long as they spoke or sang.

TORNGAT Do you remember how the people used the inuksuk?

The shadows build an inuksuk in the direction that the three teenagers will be taking home.

ATSANIK For guiding the way to special places, and to trick caribou. They would create a series of them to guide the caribou to a funneled end. Hunters would hide behind these piles of stone while the women would snap hides to scare and herd the caribou. They usually took only as much as they needed, for they were not wasteful.

IMAPPISUAK Unlike these foolish people. They may only be partially Inuit, but their heritage is on this land. It is like looking at a child grasp at water for me to see their language and ways slip through their fingers. Such a rich heritage... such foolish young.

One or all drop snow on the heads of the friends. Lights go black on the Shadows.

REBECCA It's snowing! Oh no!

SHANE It's only a flurry. (*Stands up.*) I gotta go take a leak. (*Walks off, stage left.*)

ANGELA How about another story, Rebecca? I hate it when it's too quiet.

REBECCA (*Shivers a little.*) Go ahead.

ANGELA All right, you know that stone on top of the hill back home in Nain? The one that looks like a polar bear from a distance, but if you go looking for it you'll never find it. Anyway, my grandmother was the first to tell me the story of how it got there.

The spirits are acting out the story. Lights come up on the Shadows (daylight).

ANGELA When Nain was still small, mostly only tents and very few houses, the men would often all go hunting together leaving the women, children, and the old. One winter day they all left taking the dogs with them, you know, for dog teams. The town was left practically defenseless, so when a polar bear, hungry from the sparse food, began lumbering towards them, there was cause for panic. There were no weapons left as the men took all of them on the hunt. An old man, who hadn't quite forgotten the shaman arts despite the missionaries, knew exactly what to do. He pulled out his old skin drum from his tent and began to beat it in a hypnotic rhythm and he began singing. His song was some sort of prayer to the spirits to protect them. Anyway, after some serious drumming the bear froze in place and turned to stone. So, the people were safe.

SHANE *(Comes running on screaming.) Ahhhhhh! A BEAR!!!*

REBECCA and ANGELA stand promptly and look in the direction that SHANE entered from.

ANGELA Where? I don't see any bear.

SHANE *(Out of breath and cowering behind the girls.) A... polar... bear...*
When I was... pissing... I saw one.

ANGELA Whatever, you're dreaming, or hallucinating or something.

SHANE Seriously.

NANUK enters, laughing.

ATSANIK Nanuk! That was not needed.

NANUK But it is fun. You know I wouldn't hurt them. They're just so foolable.

SHANE (*Walks over to the skidoo.*) Let's get this thing fixed. I don't want to be stuck here all night.

REBECCA It's dark right now, let's just wait until the midnight sun so we won't strain our eyes.

This flabbergasts the others for a moment.

ANGELA That means that it's daylight for 24 hours, not that the sun rises at midnight. And we're too far south for that anyway.

NANUK You know, if they had a sled team this would not have been a problem. But no, they must ride that horrible technology.

SHANE You know if we had a sled team we wouldn't be in this mess.

REBECCA Oh how I wish I could be back home on my computer... My boyfriend must be wondering why I'm not on MSN.

SHANE Poor ol' relationship. Geez, if I could I'd put you there too, just so I wouldn't have to put up with your whining.

REBECCA tosses her hair in a way to portray a "superior" attitude.

ANGELA Anyway... (*pause*) Shane, I honestly don't think you'll be able to fix it. Just wait a little bit more. I told my parents that we would be over in this area riding, so we'll be found sooner or later... someone will see our fire.

TORNGAT excuses herself. She must attend to some other matters, and exits the stage followed by IMAPPISUAK

SHANE You know there's plenty of reasons I don't wanna be here too late. Ever hear of the Smoker?

REBECCA Which smoker?

Seizing an opportunity to frighten, SHANE walks back over to the fire. ATSANIK gets a brilliant idea for mischief and trips him. The two girls laugh. SHANE gets up and dusts off, muttering something about a snow-covered root.

SHANE No, THE Smoker. He was a musher a long time ago. The story goes that one stormy day he took his dogs out in a whiteout. He was wise and experienced, so it had to have been important for him to do something so foolish, that no other would attempt. But his errand was never to be completed, for when he said goodbye to his family it was the last time anyone saw him.

REBECCA That's not scary... it's barely a full story.

Spotlight on ATSANIK as she speaks to audience.

ATSANIK I remember the storm. The spirits were angry... it wasn't long after the tragedies up on the north coast with the Spanish flu and such.

The lights go black on ATSANIK.

SHANE I'm not done. Now, getting lost is easy, especially in a storm. My uncle told me a story about being a young man and getting lost out on the ice trying to get home. He had a skidoo then, you know, one of them crappy old-fashioned kinds. He was following along the shoreline the best he could with the visibility, but his skidoo broke down on him in the middle of the ice. He didn't want to freeze, so he got off and started walking. It was hard going; he said it almost felt as if he was just going in circles. He was hungry, cold, and thirsty, and he had lost all orientation of where his skidoo was or where he had come from. He just felt like giving up. But up ahead of him he could barely see the figure of a man walking in what might have been snowshoes. My uncle tried to catch the person, 'cause he thought for sure that buddy was lost too. But no matter how fast my uncle walked, he couldn't catch him, so he just kept following. That

buddy led my uncle right into town, but then he disappeared. No one besides my uncle made it back to town that day.

REBECCA So?

ANGELA So it had to be the Smoker.

The Northern Lights come up on friends downstage right. NANUK enters, stepping on sticks.

SHANE You hear that?

REBECCA What?

ANGELA Ah, he only gonna fart.

SHANE No, listen.

A polar bear walks by the three children, stepping on more sticks.

SHANE Told you I saw one.

They start running in the opposite direction. The Northern Lights come up full stage.

REBECCA I'm scared.

ANGELA Don't be scared. Just keep running!

REBECCA What's that?

SHANE Is that another polar bear?

ANGELA No, it's a cabin.

REBECCA Can we go in?

SHANE Of course we can. It is a matter of life or death. Besides, I don't want to keep walking, knowing there is a polar bear out there!

ATSANIK That was a good idea!

NANUK I just had to do it. They would have frozen to death if I didn't scare them in that direction.

REBECCA Thank God for that polar bear. It's starting to get real stormy.

ANGELA We should get a fire started and put candles up in the windows so they know where we are to.

SHANE Ahhh, this is my uncle Ern's cabin. It's my first tirme here though.

ANGELA Me too. (*Giggles.*)

REBECCA I guess we'll spend the night.

IMAPPISUAK They will be okay now. Their parents are on their way to the cabin too.

As the three enter the cabin, SHANE pauses outside.

SHANE (*looking towards the sky*) Nakummek.

The Northem Lights dim as music plays and shadows drum. Fade to black.

UnikKausiuvut Tautsejuk: Our Changing Story

Nain, 2012

Nillialaugit Players, Jens Haven Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Inspired by "The Polar Bear in the Rock: Two Windows on the World" by the Labrador Institute of Memorial University and Derek Wilton and "Reflection from the Polar Bear—The Story of Three Shamans" by Rose Pamak, *Unikkausivut Tautsejuk* explores the transformation of Labrador Inuit culture.

The play uses the classic "play-within-a play" technique, as local Inuit legends are retold inside the main storyline of a family struggling to find a balance between technology and tradition. *Unikkausivut Tautsejuk* blends modern Inuit life with legend and aims to bridge the gap between generations, as the stories unfold. This play examines how technology influences culture and traditions. It also reflects on the changing nature of legends and other stories in the oral tradition. On a more literal level, each legend featured involves a physical transformation, emphasizing the LCAF's theme.

ORIGINAL CAST

<i>Introduction</i>		<i>Polar Bear Scene</i>	
Narrator 1, Teen, Mom, Anansiak, Child		Narrator 4	Alicia Dicker
<i>Sedna Scene</i>		Children	Megan Dicker, Toni Lampe
Narrator 2	Alicia Dicker		Amber Saksagiak
Sedna	Brianna Brown	Women	Brianna Brown
Father	Toni Lampe		Caroline Nochasak
Husband/Raven	Tyrone Lampe	Angakkuk	Tyrone Lampe
<i>PiKalujak Scene</i>		TEACHER ADVISORS	
Narrator 3	Brianna Brown	Catherine Boyle, Juanita Skanes	
Raven	Tyrone Lampe		
Angakkuk (Shaman)	Caroline Nochasak		

SCENE 1: UNIKKAUSIVUT TAUTSEJUK: OUR CHANGING STORY

A group of young people are sitting around a fire, laughing, talking and telling stories. They are dressed in traditional Inuit clothing (silapaks, akuliks and skin boots). Someone is drum-dancing and two of the girls are throat singing. This scene depicts Inuit traditions of long ago. While the scene above is played out, a narrator, similarly dressed, takes the stage and speaks. Spotlight on NARRATOR 1.

Narrator 1 *(motions to the scene behind/beside him/her)* That is how it used to be. We were happy. We enjoyed each other's company. We knew how to have fun. We loved to laugh. Our stories were passed down from generation to generation around the fire. Our people found strength and comfort from the beat of the drum. Throat-singing was our entertainment. That was before... before radio... before resettlement ... before TV and Internet and cell phones. Before our lives got so busy with all of our "stuff." Now we're rushing around, disconnected from each other. There's been so many changes. We don't seem to be that interested in our stories... in our past... in each other...

Present Day. Another group, this time inter-generational, arrives at a cabin after a long ride. They have gotten off their snowmobiles and are settling into the cabin for the night. They might sit around a woodstove or a fire of some sort. Some sit at the table, some a bunk and some on the floor, near the fire.

TEEN *(stretching to indicate how tired and stiff he/she is from the skidoo ride)* Long ride, eh? I'm tired and hungry. We should roast some marshmallows.

MOM *(looking surprised)* Long ride? You were cruising along, right comfy. Imagine what it was like in Anansiaq's Day, on dog team.

MOM passes around some marshmallows and sticks.

- ANANSIAK *(addressing her grandchild)* Sitting on the back of your big ol' skidoo, I never felt a bump. Smooth ol' ride. I almost fell asleep, like a baby. Good thing I don't snore! You would have had a fright!
(laughs)
- CHILD *(impatiently)* Gimme a marshmallow. Where's my iPod? I want to play a game. Hook up the generator so I can watch a movie.
- TEEN *(annoyed with younger sister)* Your iPod? That's my one! Ahhh... wish I could Facetime Toni or even do a Facebook chat!
- ANANSIAK looks confused. She glances from grandchild to grandchild.*
- ANANSIAK What language are you speaking, inngutak? Doesn't sound like Inuktitut... not even English... Issa? iPod, Facetime, Facebook... all kinds of faces!
- MOM Don't mind them, Mum. They're just missing their Internet connection, that's all. It'll be some good when we get that out here. We might even be getting cell phone service this spring.
- TEEN Cool! I can't wait!
- CHILD Awesome!
- ANANSIAK *(puzzled)* Inter-net? What kinna fish do you catch with that?
- Everyone laughs.*
- TEEN No, Anansiak. It's for our computers and iPods and stuff. We can go online, Google, send emails and all that.
- CHILD And I like YouTube... and games.
- ANANSIAK Google? How do you do that? Is it like a giggle? *(She laughs.)* I'm good at that.

- MOM *(frustrated with her children)* Forget about your technology for one night, eh? Let's get settled away for the evening. Tetuk and crackers would be good... and some of Anansiak's stories.
- CHILD *(not impressed)* Stories? Booorrinnnnnggg! Cartoons better!
- ANANSIAK When I was a girl, we had no cartoons... no computer... Our stories were passed on, down from generation to generation, just by telling them over and over again. Years ago, our people used the drum to tell stories, you know, like those drumdancers up to the school. And we didn't have any games either, like your ol' Fussy Birds...
- CHILD *(interrupts ANANSIAK, laughing)* Angry Birds, Anansiak!
- TEEN *(to sister)* Be quiet, you! *(to ANANSIAK)* Anansiak, tell us some of the stories you remember.
- ANANSIAK *(looking quite pleased)* OK... this is one of the most famous ones. It's about Sedna. Inuit all over the North share this story. In Inuit legend, Sedna was a beautiful young woman who lived in an igloo with her father. She thought that she was too good to get married. You'd say she was very proud and big feeling...

Lights fade on the cabin scene and lights come up on the legend scene (the other half of the stage). NARRATOR 2 resumes the storytelling.

SCENE 2: SEDNA

A young girl sits combing her hair, admiring her clothes, her beauty...

- NARRATOR 2 Hunters from near and far came to ask to marry Sedna, because she was so beautiful. But Sedna turned down every single one. She loved only herself.

- SEDNA No one deserves to marry me! I'm too beautiful for them!

Sedna's FATHER is outside the igloo and overhears her.

NARRATOR 2 Sedna's father overheard her and was outraged with his daughter's vanity.

FATHER *(furiously)* The next man who comes to ask for your hand will be your husband. You will say yes this time!

SEDNA shakes her head, "no". RAVEN/HUSBAND enters the stage.

NARRATOR 2 Sedna was adamant. She would not marry any of these unworthy men. Then, a strange man approached the igloo and asked to marry Sedna. Her father accepted for her and pushed his confused and furious daughter and her new husband out of the igloo.

FATHER *(waving goodbye)* Atsunai, Paniga!

NARRATOR 2 Sedna would not look at her father. She was too angry. She turned away from her father and rowed away from the island with her husband.

SEDNA and HUSBAND paddle their kayak.

NARRATOR 2 They rowed and rowed and rowed, looking for land. Finally they stopped at a little island. Sedna appeared to be very confused.

SEDNA Why are we stopping here? This isn't a good island to set up camp.

HUSBAND has his back to Sedna... laughs evilly... when he turns around, he's wearing a raven mask.

NARRATOR 2 When Sedna's husband turned toward her, she was horrified to discover that he was a huge raven.

SEDNA *(screaming)* Father! Save me! Come and get me father! Please bring me home!

NARRATOR 2 Sedna ran around the island, trying to escape from her raven husband. She cried and cried. Finally, after several weeks, her father heard her cries and paddled to the island to rescue her. Sedna's

father grabbed her and they ran to his kayak. They paddled away as fast as they could.

SEDNA and her FATHER mime the action described above. Sound effects for howling winds and crashing waves.

NARRATOR 2 Unfortunately, a storm was raging. The winds roared and the waves crashed. Suddenly the raven flew towards the kajak. Sedna and her father trembled in fear. Raven approached Sedna's father, who begged for his life...

SEDNA, RAVEN, and FATHER mime the actions above.

FATHER *(as Raven approaches him)* No, please! Take my daughter, not me!
Leave me alone. You can have her.

NARRATOR 2 Sedna's father tried to push her out of the kayak. Sedna gripped the kayak, pleading for mercy.

FATHER and SEDNA mime the actions above.

SEDNA *(desperately)* Atataga! Atataga! Don't do this! Please, don't!

NARRATOR 2 But Sedna's pleas went unanswered. She was too late. Her father hauled out his knife and cut off her fingers. Sedna lost her grip and fell back into the sea, falling into the depths like a snowflake falling from the sky.

FATHER takes out his knife and cuts SEDNA's fingers. SEDNA falls from the kayak.

NARRATOR 2 Sedna fell to the bottom of the sea. When she hit the sea floor, her fingers transformed into the sea creatures, like seals and walrus.

Lights fade out on the legend scene and the spotlight moves back to other side of the stage, for the cabin scene. The family is sitting listening to ANANSIAK, totally engrossed in her story.

ANANSIAK And then Sedna, herself, transformed with them. She became Sedna, the Inuit goddess of the sea.

CHILD Cool! Is that where the sea creatures came from? Did one of her fingers turn into a giant squid or a sea monster?

TEEN We should ask Sedna to bring send us some seals tomorrow, hey boy.

MOM That's why we leave some of our kill for Sedna, to say thank you for providing us with food.

ANANSIAK Yes, Sedna can be generous. That's when animals are plentiful. But if we forget to say nakkumek, she gets stingy and she keeps the seals, jumpers and whales from us.

TEEN (*appearing quite interested now*) Do you know any more legends like that one, Anansiak? Tell us another one.

ANANSIAK Let's see. There's another one, yeah... with Raven again... about how PiKalujak was formed.

CHILD (*excitedly*) Pikachu? Like on Pokemon?

TEEN (*laughing but annoyed*) No! PiKalujak... just north of here... Meatball Island. How was it made, Anansiak?

ANANSIAK Well, the elders used to tell a story about three angakuks. These three had a competition to see who was the most powerful. The angakuks were from Hebron, Okak and Nain.

Lights fade on cabin scene as the legend scene illuminates.

SCENE 3: PIKALUJAK

The action for the PiKalujak Scene is all mimed—no dialogue. Spotlight on NARRATOR 3.

NARRATOR 3 The Hebron angakkuk created a crow in the landscape. The crow was very important to the Inuit because he spoke Inuktitut very well, better than all the other birds and animals. People believed that the sounds of the language were connected to the sounds of the crow. This created a powerful bond.

As NARRATOR 3 tells this part of the story, the RAVEN dances across the stage behind him/her, flying around the stage space and eventually exiting off stage.

NARRATOR 3 Not to be outdone, the Okak shaman picked up a huge iceberg and hurled it through the air. The iceberg landed just north of Nain, out in Nain Bay.

As the narrator tells this part of the story, the shaman mimes picking up a huge , heavy iceberg and hurls it to the "south" of him.

Lights fade on the legend scene and illuminate the cabin scene once again.

ANANSIAK The iceberg turned to stone, becoming the rocky island that Nainimuit known as PiKalujak.

CHILD *(curiously and anxiously)* What about the Nain angakkuk, Anansiak? He was the strongest one, eh?

MOM *(gently but firmly)* Let Anansiak tell the story. Don't butt in... Listen...

TEEN Yes, Anansiak, what did the Nain angakkuk do?

ANANSIAK Oh, the Nain angakkuk was powerful, all right. There are many stories about his power and what he created. This is my favourite one... because I can look out my window and see the evidence of the legend... history come to life.

CHILD Out your window? What can you see? Did he make the Moravian Church? The fish plant? Or was it Northern?

MOM *(laughing)* No, you silly girl. It's something that's been on the outskirts of Nain a lot longer than any of those things. It's Nain's landmark. Can't you guess what it is?

CHILD Nain Hill?

TEEN Mount Sophie?

CHILD Annainaks?

ANANSIAK Good guesses, but no, I'm talking about the polar bear.

CHILD A live one? Where to? I've never seen a live nanuk in town before... only dead ones. We did see one out at Black Island once and one out at the sinna, seal hunting with Dad.

TEEN Not a real live nanuk. That one in the rocks, issa? Over across, below Mount Sophie, headed out Southern Point way?

ANANSIAK *(smiling)* BINGO! That's the one! Jackpot for you!

ANANSIAK hugs TEEN.

ANANSIAK You want to hear how that nanuk got up there?

Everyone nods "Yes."

ANANSIAK I hope I can remember how it goes...

Move again to legend scene. Lights fade out on the cabin scene and come up on the legend scene, where NARRATOR 4 takes over the storytelling.

SCENE 4: POLAR BEAR

NARRATOR 4 Our elders say that there are secrets in the hills. *(Look off, as if peering into the distance.)* A very long time ago, the men of the village went hunting. The women and children were left home alone.

Children and women wave goodbye, seeing the hunters off. Children play games while women resume their chores—cooking, sewing, cutting fish...

NARRATOR 4 Only one man, the shaman remained. He was too old and feeble to hunt, so he stayed in his tent to rest.

The old man feebly walks to a mat and lies down.

NARRATOR 4 The children played games and picked berries while the women carried on with their work. Many women were cutting fish.

Mime actions above.

NARRATOR 4 Suddenly one of the women spotted a polar bear across the harbour.

WOMAN *(screaming and pointing)* Nanuk!

NARRATOR 4 The people had to prepare for an attack. Polar bears are unpredictable. The women had no weapons though, only their ulus. They were willing to sacrifice their lives to protect their children. There were a few dogs, but they offered little protection against the huge nanuk. The children started to cry. The women were yelling, trying to round up the children. The dogs started howling. All of the commotion woke the old man.

Mime actions above—children crying, women getting ulus ready, sharpening them, pushing children behind them. The old man wakes up and hobbles out of his tent.

NARRATOR 4 The old man slowly hobbled out of his tent. He knew that there must be trouble brewing. He grabbed his kilautik, a drum made out of a seal's bladder. The old shaman went to investigate.

OLD MAN Suna? What's going on?

The women point at the nanuk, screaming frantically. The children are still crying.

NARRATOR 4 The old angakkuk understood. He did not have a knife or a harpoon, but he did have a powerful weapon. The kilautik is the heartbeat of the Inuit, of the animals, and of the land itself. The angakkuk had great wisdom and skill. He stood in front of the frightened Inuit and pounded his amazing drum. The dogs started to calm down and the children stopped sobbing.

The women's screams subsided. The kilautik calmed everyone.

Mime actions described above. SHAMAN beats the drum rhythmically, slowly.

NARRATOR 4 The children went back to their games. The women continued preparing pitsik.

Lights fade on Legend Scene. Lights come up on cabin scene.

ANANSIAK Surprisingly, when the angakkuk glanced at the polar bear, it appeared to be frozen, embedded into the hillside, like beautiful, gleaming white stone.

TEEN Awesome! A drum stopped the polar bear from attacking the village?

CHILD Too bad Mr. Murphy didn't have a drum that time the nanuk broke into his cabin. He hit it on the head with a frying pan, hey Mom?

MOM *(laughing)* You and your stories. You'll be a famous storyteller like Anansiak some day.

ANANSIAK Don't forget the important part of this legend. It's a great story, but if you climb the rocks and try to look for that nanuk, you won't find it.

TEEN How come? You can see it across most days.

MOM *(shaking her head)* Not all the time. They say that you only see the polar bear when visitors are coming.

Child Only on good days, must be. Lotsa planes some days. Not on weather hold days though!

Everyone laughs at her.

ANANSIAK Those are our stories. They are a part of who we are -where we came from, what we believe. They're not just my stories. They're your stories too. You have to remember them so you can pass them on to your children.

TEEN, CHILD We will, Anansiak.

Light fades for the final time on the cabin scene. Lights come up on the other side of the stage, which is no longer the legend scene, but the living room of the children's home in Nain. The scene is a modern living room. The kids are sitting around, "plugged in" to iPods, iPads, laptop, TV, etc. Everyone is engrossed in his/her own activity, oblivious to the other. ANANSIAK comes in, looks around, and groans disappointedly.

ANANSIAK (*disappointed and disgusted*) Ahhhhhh! Didn't you kids learn anything when we went off to the cabin? You're all plugged in to your ol' gadgets again!

TEEN (*explaining*) Anansiak, I've created a Facebook Group called "Legends of the Labrador Inuit". People are commenting all out, and posting their own legends and stories. Come look!

ANANSIAK goes over to look at the laptop or iPad.

CHILD And look at me! I'm on YouTube, watching videos. I want to make my own so I'll be famous, just like that guy from "Feel the Inukness"... only I'll be funnier... (*he dances*)

ANANSIAK (*laughing and smiling*) How good! I never believed that technology would be any good, real help to us. I always thought that it would destroy our culture and traditions. But I was wrong. I am so proud of

you my ingutaks, using technology to keep our culture and traditions alive. Imagine that! It does my ol' omatik good to see this.

TEEN *(gets up and puts an arm around ANANSIAK)* Anansiak, we'll always have our stories. How we tell them and share them might change, that's all.

CHILD *(comes over and hugs ANANSIAK too)* Thank you for sharing our changing stories. Nakkumek.

Curtain.

2. Historic Events in the Communities

In these plays, students based their work on events that shaped the history and molded the identity of Inuit, such as the Spanish Influenza and the Hebron relocation, and on the individual histories of community members. Joan Andersen of Makkovik was the teacher-director for *A Musical Tribute to Bill Andersen* (2003), and felt that Bill Andersen should be celebrated as someone who had shaped his community by asserting agency and control over community affairs. His actions in pushing back against the Joey Smallwood regime and helping to lead the charge for self-government began to change the face of Labrador. The historic events that led to the land claims process became part of Inuit identity. In these plays, identity as Inuit is related to the challenges people faced and their own resilience in collectively overcoming the effects of historical events outside their control.

BERTHA *(ironic) Here I am being driven in a real Labrador blizzard from Makkovik to Tissialuk—we're on our way to deliver a baby. When we get there—I hope it isn't twins. But yes, it will be twins like in Davis Inlet last week or the Post the month before. I've delivered near to a hundred babies on this coast—and only lost one.*

—J. C. Erhardt Memorial School, Makkovik, 1979
A Play about Aunt Bertha Andersen

The Silence Is So Loud

Nain, 1978/2005

Jens Haven Memorial School



This script was written by the 2005 cast and adapted from a 1978 script by the students of Jens Haven Memorial School, assisted by Tim Borlase and Linda Ford, originally titled *Okak: Spanish Flu 1917*.

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

The play consists of six actors who will assume various roles in the play. The focus is on Okak and the Spanish Flu that marked the end of this northern community. The play is not so much about Okak as it is about change and its impact on people.

There will be no curtain. Scene changes will be done through music, movement, etc. The set will be very simple with blocks for sitting, blocking, etc.

The auditorium is darkened and the stage dimly lit. The wind can be heard, faintly at first, then increasing in intensity and again fading. A drum beating accompanies the sound of the wind.

During this, actors move across the stage as though struggling against the wind. The wind stops, the lights change, and the actors take positions on stage.

ORIGINAL CAST

Jessica Dawe	MRS. WIDE, CHILD 2, STORY #5, etc.
Brendon Dicker	LEVI, PAULUS, AMOS, STORY #1, etc.
George Mogridge	ADAM, REVEREND, STORY #6, etc.
Crystal Webb	DRUM DANCER, OLD JOHANNA, STORY #4, etc.
Melissa Webb	INDIVIDUAL, PAULINE, CHILD 1, STORY #2, etc.
Shannon Webb	MARY, JOHANNA 2, STORY #3, etc.
Marcus Lampe	OFFSTAGE VOICE

TEACHER ADVISOR

Ray Budgell

SCRIPT

ENSEMBLE We are the spirit of Okak
 We are Inuit
 We came here a long, long, time ago
 We trudged over a frozen land
 Leaving our footprints everywhere.
 We suffered hardship to reach this great land we call ours.

INDIVIDUAL It was our land for a very long time

 We struggled
 And the struggle made us stronger
 We took the good with the bad
 And lived in harmony with all living things.

 We loved, gave birth, hunted, sang and danced

ENSEMBLE Some died and some survived

 But we enjoyed life just the same.

 And, in Okak, the circle of life was good.

(Individual moves forward during the following lines and removes mask. His face is white to represent a white European.)

INDIVIDUAL But then

 The winds of change could be heard
 First as a whisper

(Soft sound of wind as the chorus whispers words such as: John Cabot, England, King Henry, etc.)

INDIVIDUAL Then growing stronger

Urgent

Frightening

(Sound of the wind rising as the chorus speaks words such as: Fernandes, Lavrador, Bristol, Jacques Cartier, North West Passage, etc.)

INDIVIDUAL Now a raging storm

Tearing

Whipping

Stripping

(Wind reaches crazy heights as the chorus shouts words like: Hudson's Bay Company, King Charles, French, Moravians, Heathens, Christians, King George. During this the chorus reacts with extreme fear and confusion and retreats upstage. Wind and voices stop abruptly.)

INDIVIDUAL We fade (ENSEMBLE) (into the shadows of our own lives)

Small (as one drop in the great ocean)

With time (we slowly step forward)

Cautiously

Silently

What choice do we have?

We fall victim to white man's disease

To white man's ways,

We pay dearly with our identity, our lives

As once again we try to live in peace and harmony

The chorus whispers the word "harmony" repeatedly as they leave the stage. It is replaced by cannon blasts and band music. Levi rushes on stage shouting "It's the Harmony!" etc.

LEVI Adam, come on boy, it's the Harmony.
ADAM Whoohoo! Now I'll be able to go to Nain.
LEVI Nain, wha' ya wanna go there for?
ADAM Girls, boy. It's been a year and all the girls are getting pretty lonely.
LEVI Girls?? I didn't know all the girls in Nain are blind!
ADAM Wha' ya mean? At least I don't have a face like an ol' boot.
LEVI Ol' boot! Ol' boot! I'll give ya an old boot. (*Grabs him, kicks him in the rear, mock fight.*)

OLD JOHANNA with the aid of a walking stick makes her way to the wharf. MRS. WIDE attempts to rush past her.

MRS. WIDE Good, my food is here at last.

MRS. WIDE goes to break up the boys. As she returns, she trips and falls. Two young girls, PAULINE and MARY, are just coming on stage. They rush to help her up but she brushes them off. The girls leave her and make their way to front stage.

PAULINE Can't even help some people.
MARY What a contrary ol' bat.
ADAM What are you girls doing here?
LEVI Yeah, nothing for you here. Go home to your girls' work.

- JOHANNA (*pointing her stick*) You watch your tongue, ya young devil. Who do you think made dem boots ya got on? Youngsters dese days, got no respect.
- PAULINE The wharf is as much ours as yours, so mind your own business.
- MARY Besides, there might be some good-looking boys on the Harmony.
- PAULINE And anything is better than the likes of them (*nods towards the boys*)
- MRS. WIDE Goodness Gracious, are they ever going to get here? (*To Emelia*) They're as slow as cold molasses.
- EMELIA They have to be careful, Mam. The water is not very deep.
- MRS. WIDE Umph, they have been in here a thousand times. They should be able to do it with their eyes closed.
- EMELIA No hurry, Mam. We've got all winter before we see her again.
- CAPTAIN (*with megaphone*) All right mate, lower anchor. (*Big splash.*) Shoal water is shallow—stem to leeward—good, good. (*to people in boat*) Well, boys, it's good to be in Okak again.
- ADAM Captain, we want to come aboard.
- CAPTAIN I'm sorry, but there's a sick man on board.
- ADAM (*to Levi*) I just ga go on board. I put a piece of seal skin on the Harmony last year and I ga see if it is still there.
- JOHANNA (*to no one in particular*) I remember that game well. "Going Across" we called it. What we used to do was put a little piece of wood, or anything, inside the Harmony, maybe push it in a crack or something, and then it would leave on the Harmony. The next season we would check to see if it was still there. Old Tobias Kuru used to tell me how he put a small piece of his shit on the Harmony, just for fun 'cause he was

a child. When the ship came back the next year, sure enough, there it was, Tobias's little shit, still stuck on. We never knew where it went, but it was good fun. It was like a piece of us went to far-away places we could only dream about.

MRS. WIDE *(impatient for Johanna to finish her story)* Captain, captain!

CAPTAIN Yes, Mam.

MRS. WIDE Did you bring fresh food?

CAPTAIN Yes, Mam, a little.

MRS. WIDE *(to others)* I'd love to taste an orange—it's been two months. *(looks around)* The poor Harmony is looking worse for wear. What will happen if she's not repaired this winter? We may have no supply ship next year, and then Anthony and I will not be able to leave this place. I just know I'll be stuck here forever! *(the girls silently mimic her)*

JOHANNA I hope not, miss.

LEVI Who cares about a little ol' flu, let's go aboard. Captain, lower the ropes and a chair and we'll climb aboard.

CAPTAIN I'll let you up, but you'll have to take your chances. People in St. John's are sick already, and a few old folk have died.

ADAM Everyone is always sick in St. John's.

Everyone laughs. Lights fade as they leave the stage, still laughing. Then the laughter is replaced by sad throat singing and the light changes to red. JOHANNA and PAULUS are walking home at night. The sky is red and moving. JOHANNA stops to rest on a log, coughing as she speaks.

PAULUS There, my dear, take a rest. It must be the night air.

- JOHANNA Paulus, it will be hard to leave Okak and go sealing. It's getting harder each time I leave you.
- PAULUS We are too old to be apart now, Johanna. We should spend our last few years together.
- JOHANNA But, Paulus, when my family goes, I must go too. You know I have to look after my grandchildren while my daughter and her husband go to the ice for seals. (*long pause*) Look at the sky, Paulus. The atsaniks are red, so red that the snow is pink from the reflection. It is so beautiful! But we know, don't we Paulus, not to trust nature. We know she can be full of trickery. We know that when the atsaniks are like this, it is a sign that something will happen—and it won't be something good. I feel it in these old bones tonight.
- PAULUS The last time I saw them that colour, I ah, ah—ah
- JOHANNA Yes, Paulus, what is it?
- PAULUS Ah, nothing. I forgets what I was gon' say.
- JOHANNA (*struggling to rise*) Take me home, Paulus, take me home. I have a strange feeling that I am not well.
- PAULUS and JOHANNA slowly exit and the northern lights fade. We hear church music as chairs are brought in for the church service. When the congregation is seated, the lights fade in. JOHANNA is the last to come in, coughing.*
- REVEREND Seek ye the Lord while he may be found. Call upon Him while he is near.
- ALL The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon Him, that call upon Him in truth.
- REVEREND The sun goeth away; the shadows of the evening are stretched out.
- ALL And it shall come to pass that at evening time, there shall be light.

REVEREND Let us join together in hymn.

ALL *(sing)* Now thank we all our God
With hearts and hands and voices
Who wondrous things hath done
In whom the world rejoices
Who from our mother's arms
Hath blessed us in our way
With countless gifts of love
And still is ours today.

REVEREND We should all praise God for the Harmony's safe return to Okak. It has brought us much to be thankful for—enough food and supplies to carry us through the cold winter. We should also offer our prayers for the sick man on board the boat and for those who have died of the flu in St. Johns. We are grateful for our good health here in Okak. Grant us, O Christ, thy peace this night and watch over us until morning comes. Then may we be endowed with vigor of body, alertness of mind and strength of spirit to give thee loyal obedience for thy name's sake. Amen.

ALL God be in my head
And in my understanding
God be in my eyes
And in my looking
God be in my mouth
And in my speaking
God be in my heart

And in my thinking

God be at my end

And at my departing

Lights fade out as congregation leaves. Light up on JOHANNA.

JOHANNA Little did we know that it was to be our last church service in Okak. Right after the service, I left for Cutthroat to take care of my grandchildren, not knowing the suffering and death facing my people. At Cutthroat, my cough grew worse and I grew weaker, yet I stayed waiting for my daughter and her husband to return. But they did not return—no one returned. I waited and waited, and hoped and prayed, and when our food was gone, I hoped and prayed no more, and I gathered the children around me.

Light fades a little on JOHANNA and rises on the following scene.

JOHANNA 2 Come here, children, I will tell you a story. Last night, I seen a big ol' star, after you was in bed.

CHILD 1 What was it, Anansiak?

CHILD 2 Grandmother, you look sick.

JOHANNA 2 Maybe it is only that I am old. But last night I saw a wonderful strange star. First star I seen since your mummy died. And now I feel that I am just about done. There is nobody else left on the island but us. All died. We have no food or wood left. I'm going to leave you and walk and take Jefta's boat to Okak.

CHILD 1 But Grandmother, it's ugly old weather.

JOHANNA 2 I must go now while I have some strength.

CHILD 2 But there's lots of wood yet.

JOHANNA 2 Listen, children, I am going to die. (*Children go to her.*) It's okay, children, ssshhhuu, its okay. I am an old woman, I have lived my life and it's been a good life. Now, I have to go and get some help for you. Now it's your turn to live to carry on what I've taught you.

CHILD 1 I'll go for you.

JOHANNA 2 No. Stay here and take care of your little sister. There's a little seal meat left for you. Don't eat too much and don't go outside. Too much dogs. Get snow from the window for water. Save what you have—goodbye, my children. (*She kisses them, and turns to go. As she opens the door, we hear dogs snarling and howling. She speaks.*) Nanook, I know you don't understand, but look after the children. But first, take me to the boat. I can hardly see.

As lights and sound of dogs fade out, the light fades in on JOHANNA.

JOHANNA To leave those little children was the hardest thing I ever done. I don't know how I rowed that boat to Okak. I was sick and weak and as the cold crept into these old bones, I would feel my mind slipping. I was tired, so tired. My mind went numb like I was in a dream. And in that dream, the snow floated softly around me like a warm blanket, and up ahead shining through the snow and with open arms was the spirit of my dead father. I struggled to reach that light and my father, I felt the oars slip from grasp, yet I am still moving toward that light. Then I feel hands lifting me, lifting me into the light.

(Light dims on Johanna and fades in on Johanna 2 being brought on stage by the REVEREND and UNCLE AMOS.)

JOHANNA 2 The children are still out. ... there nobody else.

UNCLE AMOS Out where? Please, wake up---wake up, you must tell me.

JOHANNA 2 At. ... Cutthroat. (*She dies*)

REVEREND *(Kneeling by AMOS and helping him up)* She's gone, Amos. *(Kneels to bless JOHANNA 2.)* He shall feed His flock like a shepherd. He shall gather His lambs in His arms and carry them in his bosom. The Lord gives and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

UNCLE AMOS *(in awe)* She rowed. All the way here. How she made it through all that ice I'll never know.

REVEREND She was a brave woman and God works in mysterious ways. Some of us must go up to Ten Mile Bay to Cutthroat. There are still two small children alive. *(They take the body off stage and JOHANNA leaves.)*

Sound effects as the survivors of Okak enter to tell their story.

INDIVIDUAL 1 It was a blessing that God took Johanna. The ice moved in fast and a month passed before help reached the children. By then, one child had died, taken by starving dogs when she went outside for water. The other was barely alive and still protected by Nanook, the faithful lead dog.

INDIVIDUAL 2 It was a blessing that Johanna did not live to see Okak—dying.

ALL We survived but we will not forget the sights, and sounds, and smells of Okak—dying.

STORY #1 I was 20 years old in 1918 when the Harmony came to Okak. That ship did not live up to her name, as the very next day the Spanish Flu swept through Okak. Whenever November comes, I think about it, my friends and all my own family and how they were killed.

STORY #2 I was just a child. I watched helplessly as my parents died in Okak. All the children whose parents were dying were put in my grandmother's house to look after them. I remember a woman coming in one morning and saying she was cold. She had a blanket wrapped around her and she asked if she could sit by the stove to

warm herself. She lied down by the stove and she died there—just like that.

STORY #3 I remember the bodies, night and day, and the darkness, just lying in the darkness with the dead and the sounds of the dying. After we go to bed we would look at this unusually large star moving westward. As time went on we did not know what time it was or what date. Then we realize through the full moon that it must be near Christmas. After we returned to Okak, there was the job of burying the dead. I remember seeing belongings and clothes lying everywhere outdoors. Even now I don't like to see clothes lying around outdoors or people sleeping on the floor. And, I still look for the unusual star we used to watch and never seen again.

STORY #4 The old dogs were the worst. They were so hungry they used to break in the houses, see—eat the bodies. One feller told me he was trying to haul out a dog, he thought, from under the bed, to drive it out of the house. He hooked at it with a stick or something. All the time, it was his sister's head—he thought it was a dog. No wonder he cried—he couldn't stand it, hardly, when he was tellin' us, you know.

STORY #5 I was just seven at the time. We had gone to the winter hunting grounds and I stayed in a house by myself after my family was all dead and eaten by the dogs. I stayed in that house for three months with just a few biscuits and hard bread for food. There was a little boy who was with me. I may have starved him to death because I didn't know how to feed him. I tried to feed him milk from his dead mother and tea. I remember him getting out of breath. I had him on my lap for a while, but put him down because it was getting dark. As soon as I did, he was taken by a dog and torn to pieces. He was still alive, I think. This is something that still haunts me to this day. I was only seven.

STORY #6 When we was killin' off the dogs, there was a lot of ravens. I can't forget those old ravens. They did strange things like flyin' before daylight. They was a strange colour, almost grey, not black like now. Sometimes as soon as daylight they'd be flyin' like crazy. Sometimes they would be flyin' all night. I think they were death itself.

ENSEMBLE And now, Okak is no more
The silence is so loud
It screams its simple message
Of a people strong and proud
And now, Okak is no more
The graves no longer seen
The only living sign
Is the rhubarb patch so green
And now, Okak is no more
The living are all gone
Maybe it is time for us
To not try and right the wrong

The people put up hoods to assume the role of the chorus and take positions as at the beginning.

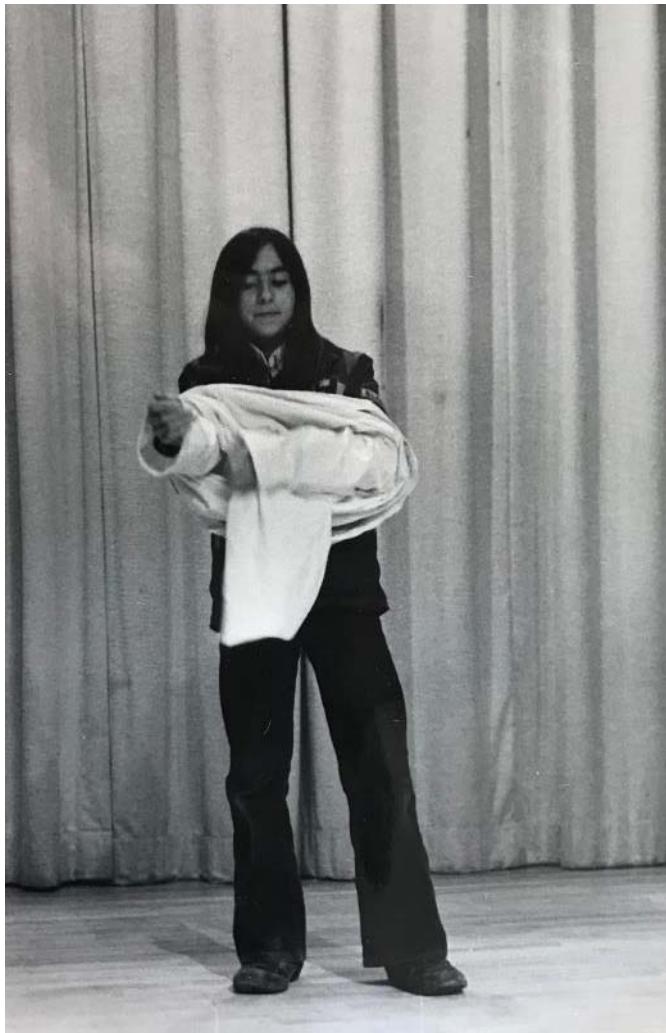
ENSEMBLE We are the spirit of Okak. We have seen great change since 1918. We have suffered your loss, felt your pain, and understood your anger—
BUT most of all, we have lived your hope.

As we listen to speeches from the signing of the land agreement, the members of the ensemble slowly make their way to stage centre and lie down as in a mass grave. When the speeches end, the light slowly fades on the mass grave.

A Play About Aunt Bertha Andersen

Makkovik, 1978

John Christian Erhardt Memorial School



Blanche Winters

Written by J.C. Erhardt Memorial School students in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8, based on information gathered from friends and relatives in the community of Makkovik, and their own improvisations.

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

This is a play about Bertha Andersen (1872-1950), who was a travelling midwife, trapper, church elder, and postmistress in Makkovik. The play is acted in 5 scenes.

ORIGINAL CAST

Hugh Andersen, Karen Andersen, Ola Andersen, Del Ford, Jacko Jararuse, Susanna Jararuse, Maggie Tuglavina, Blanche Winters, Doreen Winters

CHARACTERS

AUNT BERTHA ANDERSEN	MINISTER
DRIVER	CHURCH CONGREGATION
DOGS	CHILDREN
AUNT BERTHA 2	LAWERENCE SAUNDERS
SUSAN MITCHELL	FREEMAN SAUNDERS
two MEN	STEVEN
two WOMEN	RALPH
HARRIET	two RESCUERS

TEACHER ADVISORS

Fiona Andersen, Harry Jensen, Mavis Penney

SCENE 1: EN ROUTE TO TISHIALUK

The lights slowly come up on a team of DOGS pulling a komatik from stage left to stage right with BERTHA riding in the box and being driven by the DRIVER. Both occasionally brush the snow away from their faces. The DRIVER whistles and yells at the DOGS. Noise of a dogteam running and barking. The sound falls as BERTHA begins talking.

BERTHA *(ironic)* Here am I being driven through a real Labrador blizzard from Makkovik to Tishialuk—we're on our way to deliver a baby—when we get there—I hope it isn't twins. But yes, it will be twins like in Davis Inlet last week or the Post the month before. I've delivered near to a hundred babies on this coast—and only lost one.

When I goes on a trip, I takes along my medicines and powders Dr. Currie sends down from St. Anthony, but I put just as much faith in my own medicines. I make them myself—juniper, spruce, bread poultices and a drop of brandy, and I put the most faith of all in the Lord.

(sings) Frail children of dust

and Feeble as frail,

In thee do we trust

Nor find thee to fail

DOGS give a feeble yelp and fall over. The komatik tips over stage right-centre, and BERTHA falls out of box. She and the DRIVER survey the damage and she resumes singing.

BERTHA *(ironic)* Thy mercies how tender

(hopeful) How firm to the end

(As they begin work) Our maker, defender,

Redeemer and friend

BERTHA and the DRIVER right the komatik and test the snow.

BERTHA Do you think we should camp?

DRIVER It's late, snow's bad, and the wind's up. Probably best to put up for the night here and get going early in the morning.

BERTHA (*to DOGS*) Well here's a fine spot you've landed us all in. Can't go forward, won't go back—so I guess we'll have to spend the night here—or what's left of it.

DRIVER takes dog food off the komatik, then begins to set up the canvas tent downstage from the komatik to shelter them for the night. They crawl in and bundle up in sleeping bags and talk.

BERTHA Yes, I wonder where all those babies are now. There's the Evans in Ben's Cove, the Saunders in Davis Inlet, the Winters in Hopedale, McNeills in Island Harbour, Jacques in Kippokok Bay, Broomfields in Big Bight and Seal Cove.

DRIVER I guess some of those babies are trapping foxes and killing seals now. I guess they've grown into fine young men and women.

BERTHA Yes, and Chards from Aillik, they've gone back to Clark's Beach and Bay Roberts, like the Mercers—that's where they come from. And Andersens in Makkovik and Adlavik, and the Mitchells in Makkovik, the families just get bigger and that means more and more work for the midwife.

Blackout. End of scene 1.

SCENE 2: AUNT BERTHA'S KITCHEN

BERTHA and the DRIVER leave the tent. The tent stays up and the komatik remains, but the DOGS leave. BERTHA 2 moves to her kitchen. The lights go up

slowly and we see her arranging furniture—stage left, up and centre—a table, several chairs, and blankets folded neatly. An opaque projector shows old family photographs on the stage and auditorium walls. BERTHA 2 wanders around her home and talks to herself.

BERTHA 2 Our family is moved around a bit since we're all grown up—John and Wilson and myself is all that's left home. Susan's married in Island Harbour—Ellen in Kippokok, Samuel in Island Harbour Bay—Harry and Jim at Adlavik. We're all spread out—and Father and Mother gone, and poor little Annie Marie.

(Walks a bit in silence.)

Father built most of the furniture here—chairs, tables, cupboards, all built from our own lumber. Even my wardrobe—we had the glass come after it was finished. Here's some pictures of our family. Here's Father and Wilson and Sam and me—and here's Mother and the boys.

(BERTHA 2 walks a bit in silence.)

And here's the family Bible—it's one of my dearest treasures. Grandfather gave it to Wilson—and Wilson reads it every evening before we all goes to bed—and the Moravian text in the morning before breakfast. There's records of all of us here *(reads)*

Samuel 1860, Annie Marie 1862—she only lived 23 days—Susan 1863, Ellen 1865, Jim 1867, Christina 1870, me in 1872, John in 1874, William in 1876, Harry 1878, and Wilson 1882. Our whole family history is here.

Here's my work basket—needles, wool, sinew, thread, pincushion, material. I buys that when the boat comes—and skins. I love working with skins—Harriet cleans most of them for me.

Knock at the door.

- BERTHA 2 Who's that? The boys back already? No, 'tis Susan Mitchell, come for a yarn, I suppose. Step in, Susie!
- SUSAN I come to see about the mail, Bertha, and to see what you was about.
- BERTHA 2 No news on the mail. See here what I've been making—a new pair of skin boots.
- SUSAN Nice, too.
- BERTHA 2 These are the bedlamers Wilson got out of my nets last week—they're scraped and washed good in soap, and I dried them. See how I got them cut—they're too small to use lengthwise. I'm going to finish the embroidery on the tongue in silk. They'll be a beautiful pair of boots.
- SUSAN You'll send those to the industrial shop in St. Anthony?
- BERTHA 2 No, I'm making these for a friend. Now set a bit and listen to the new hymn I've learned from the Tune Book.

Hymn music from off-stage. BERTHA 2 mimes playing. She and SUSAN begin to sing, and other people come in to sing as well. When they finish, they sit around the table and begin to tell tall tales about hunting. As they speak, one at a time they get up and give "testimonials" to BERTHA 2. Those at the table gradually lose their voices and mime conversation. BERTHA 2 joins the table and occasionally laughs a deep belly laugh.

- 1ST MAN I can picture her as always a lady. Everyone thinks of her with respect. She's always working. (*resumes his position telling tales*)
- 1ST WOMAN One time my aunt was sick with TB. She was so sick the blood was coming out of her mouth. Now this was in the winter, so no boats could come in to get her. She was lying in bed, too weak to move, the blood only coming out of her mouth. Well, Aunt Bertha went to

work, got the temperature in the room right—not too cold, but she made sure there was enough fresh air. And she made food and medicine for her. Well, when they finally come for her, Aunt Bertha had my aunt up on her feet and walking around outdoors. It must have had something to do with Aunt Bertha's partridge broth and Friar's Balsam. (*resumes her position telling tales*)

- 2ND MAN Aunt Bertha was a good hunter. She had her own 22 rifle that she did all her hunting with. I can recall her bringing home sometimes 15 or 20 partridges. She'd hunt seals nearby. I'd daresay she was good as the men but she didn't go as far away. She always wore a long skirt right to her ankles. You could see her walking off to her traplines on snowshoes, skirt dragging in the snow and the 22 on her back. And when she came back, the bottom of her skirt would be frozen, like lace. (*resumes his position telling tales*)
- 2ND WOMAN She had a way to talk to people. She would always cheer them up when they was having problems and when they went away they would feel peped up and more confident. (*resumes her position*)
- BERTHA 2 Susan, you mind the time your dogs got into the fight with our dogs?
- SUSAN My dogs! Your dogs was loose and started running over our dogs—
- BERTHA 2 My dogs!
- SUSAN Your dogs!

The people at table drop away and the lights dim. Four "DOGS" crawl toward each other at centre stage during the speech and begin pantomiming a fight. As lights go up on the DOGS, they increase their growling and barking, and SUSAN and BERTHA 2 rush to their respective teams to separate them. Finally, they get them at opposite sides of the stage, their growling and yelping gradually dying away. The DOGS creep off-stage quietly.

SUSAN (excited) Your dogs!

BERTHA 2 (*centre stage, wiping her bands proudly*) Our dogs!

BERTHA 2 turns her head to listen to the sound of church bells.

SCENE 3: MAKKOVIK MORAVIAN CHURCH

The lights dim then rise again up centre. BERTHA 2 begins to get herself ready for church—she moves to stage left. The sound of the bell fades. She describes items as she put them on.

BERTHA 2 Sunday dress, navy blue, with a white lace collar and cuffs. Sunday doesn't seem right unless I have it on. My Sunday boots—we frost-cured these skins last spring—how white they are now—and I do like that embroidery. Here's the apron. Now my dickey—and my church cap. I'll have to get that bow fixed. Still have the pink ribbon in my cap. Guess they'll soon start calling me "the old maid." I haven't worn my white shawl this long time—Easter'll soon be here.

HARRIET You ready to go over, Bertha?

BERTHA 2 (*Checks her ribbon in the mirror by the door.*) It's getting late. Lucky I managed to set up the palms for Palm Sunday yesterday.

HARRIET If we don't leave soon, the others will already be there. I'm awful glad it's Easter time. Makes me know the winter soon be over.

HARRIET and BERTHA 2 walk across to up-stage centre, then enter through the church door into the church. They begin to arrange tables and the congregation arrives and begins to sing a hymn. They stand as the MINISTER enters from the rear and walks to down-stage left, where he begins to read his text. Children in the front begin to misbehave.

MINISTER For thy long-suffering with the sins of men from the beginning even until now.

ALL We thank thee, O Lord.

MINISTER For the redemption of the world through the shame of the Cross and the pain of the Passion.

ALL We thank thee, O Lord.

MINISTER For all who have filled up thy sufferings in their own bodies for love
of thee and of their fellow men.

ALL We thank thee, O Lord.

BERTHA 2 glares at the offender—then shakes a finger and finally gets up from her seat and taps an authoritative finger on one child's shoulder—he freezes for the rest of the service—BERTHA 2 sits.

MINISTER Now we will sing the Hosanna anthem.

The ORGANIST begins to play.

BOYS (*sing*) Hosanna, blessed is he that comes!

GIRLS (*sing*) ... Hosanna,

Blessed is he that comes!

BOYS ... Hosanna.

GIRLS Hosanna

BOYS Hosanna

GIRLS Hosanna

BOYS **Blessed is**

GIRLS

BOYS He that comes in the name of the Lord!

GIRLS He that comes in the name of the Lord!

The congregation sings the hymn, standing as the MINISTER leaves, then the congregation leaves and HARRIET and BERTHA 2 begin to put away the tables and chairs as the lights dim and the furniture is arranged for next scene.

SCENE 4: THE ANDERSEN HOUSE: MAIL DAY

The lights come up, and off-stage are distant sounds of a dog team. Gradually the sound gets closer and louder, then stops. Two men enter the kitchen and join BERTHA 2 and HARRIET, who are sitting and waiting at the table. The two men are LAWRENCE SAUNDERS of Davis Inlet and his son FREEMAN. They put a couple of bags of mail on the table and BERTHA looks at it, taking her time. HARRIET offers the men a cup of tea and they sit around the table.

BERTHA 2 Fine lot of mail this month. What is the trail like to Tishialuk? Did you see many deer? Anyone else on the trail?

LAWRENCE (*who has been trying to hurry BERTHA 2 along*) The trail was clear. There were lots of deer—I was close enough I could have taken a good shot at some—and the only other person I saw was Freeman here.

FREEMAN We haven't got all day now.

More sounds of dogs offstage getting louder and louder, then stopping. In walk STEVEN and RALPH from Pottle's Bay. They unload a bag of mail beside BERTHA 2, and BERTHA 2 goes through it. The men discuss conditions on the trail.

STEVEN We have plenty of snow, though, and there's another storm coming. Hurry, Bertha, we want to get across the neck before dark.

BERTHA 2 Now, there's no need to hurry. Stay a bit and let us hear your news. How is Lucy's baby?

LAWERENCE She's doing all right, Aunt Bertha. She's still small and not eating good yet, but she's fine. Now, hurry up.

BERTHA 2 I must send that poor woman some medicine when you go back.

LAWERENCE Be glad to take it along.

BERTHA 2 (*to STEVEN*) How is the Broomfield family in Big Bight?

STEVEN They're all fine.

RALPH Come on, Dad. Help Bertha get that bag packed up. (*They move towards a mailbag that BERTHA 2 has abandoned.*)

BERTHA 2 This is my job. You done yours in your time. Now I'm going to take my own time to do mine.

The men sit down again. BERTHA 2 continues to sort out the mail.

FREEMAN What do you have for supper, Aunt Harriet?

HARRIET Sealmeat and potatoes.

STEVEN How's the trapline, Bertha? Did you get any furs this winter?

BERTHA 2 I got 3 mink and 5 foxes—good ones.

RALPH You should send them to the Post in Rigolet—you'll get a better price.

BERTHA 2 No, I keep all the furs I get to sew with.

The men finish eating, and BERTHA 2 finishes the mail. The men pick up the bags and take them outside. They say goodbye and soon the dogs are yelping, loudly at first, then fading. BERTHA 2, meanwhile, gets ready to go outside. She puts on her coat and snowshoes, slings the 22 over her shoulder, and goes outdoors. The lights fade.

SCENE 5: EN ROUTE TO TISHIALUK

Lights come up with BERTHA and the DRIVER as we left them, huddled in the tent, the komatik behind them and the dogs getting restless at centre stage.

A party of "RESCUERS" comes up to the tent.

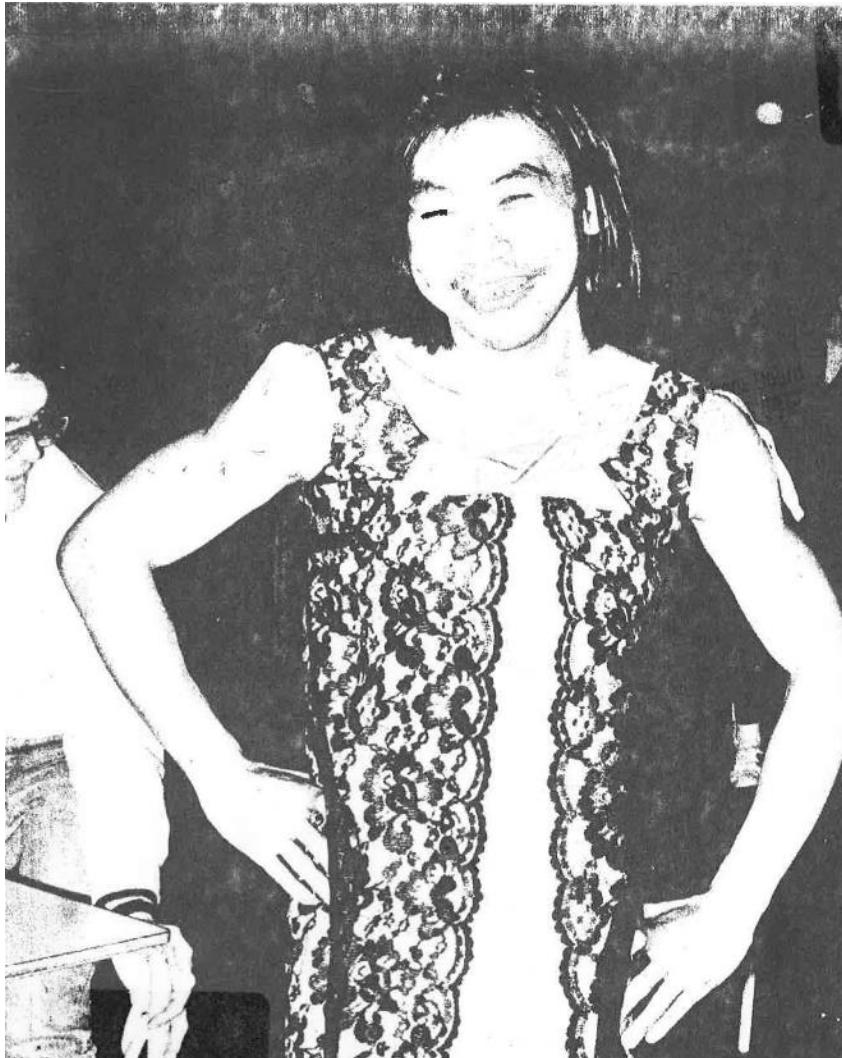
- 1ST MAN Bertha? Bertha Andersen—is that you?
- 2ND MAN Let's see to the dogs. They're getting awful excited. Ought to get a fire going, too.
- 1ST MAN (*to BERTHA, who is emerging from the tent*) Have a hard night of it, Bertha? You look kind of cold.
- BERTHA We spent a cold night of it. We couldn't find enough wood to keep the fire going, but it wasn't too uncomfortable—had a grand game of cards while we were waiting for daylight. Thanks, boys, for coming out to look for us—we should be able to make good time to Tishialuk. Looks like it'll be a fine day.

They sit around the fire and mime a conversation. The lights dim.

Up the Base

Hopedale, 1981

Amos Comenius Memorial School



David Millie

Written by the students: Chesley Piercy, Sandra Flowers, Patty Dicker, William Hunter, George Abel, Barbara Pijogge, William Nochasak, and David Millie.

ORIGINAL CAST

MOM	Patty Dicker
DAD	Chesley Piercy
ANANSIAK	David Millie
GEORGE	George Abel
JESSIE	Sandra Flowers
KITTY	Barbara Pijogge
3 AMERICANS	Chesley Piercy, William Hunter, William Nochasak
DRUNK WOMAN	David Millie
YANK	David Millie
MAN 1	Chesley Piercy
MAN 2	William Hunter

TEACHER ADVISORS

Marion Cheeks, Jim Shea

SCENE 1

The Onalik kitchen in Hebron. The scene begins with MOM sweeping the floor, muttering to herself about the dirt and how her daughter JESSIE doesn't help. Enter ANANSIAK walking very slowly across the stage to sit beside the kitchen table in her rocking chair.

MOM How's you today, Anansiak? Your cold any better?

ANANSIAK makes no response.

MOM That Tom isn't back yet. Out all day and never gets a thing to eat. Hunter, huh! Gee, George will be home in a minute screamin' his head off, complaining about nothing to eat again. That Tom makes me boil. Sometimes I wonder if he goes out to hunt or just to stay away all day.

DAD enters.

DAD Out all day and never got many partridges. Tired of it. Hopedale will be better, I suppose. I'll be able to get a job at the American Base.

MOM Stop talking about Hopedale. You know I don't want to go. Anansiak doesn't want to go. What's wrong with hunting? Ever since the government said they were movin' us you never seem to be any good at huntin' anymore.

DAD It's no good to depend on hunting when we can have something secure like a job to depend on. At least there'll be food on the table.

MOM What about Anansiak? You knows she don't wanna go. She was born here and she wants to die here and so do I.

DAD There's hardly anyone left. You gonna die here all alone or wha? Almost everyone has left and gone to Nain or Hopedale. There's no sense in staying or wanting to. The government says it'll be better and more convenient for us to live there.

MOM Don't we have a say in where we live? I don't care what the government says. (*Grabs ANANSIAK.*) You don't want to go, do you, Anansiak?

JESSIE enters.

JESSIE Hopedale? Did someone say Hopedale? You mean, we're finally leaving?

DAD and MOM answer together.

DAD Yes.

MOM No.

JESSIE Bowling, Bingo, Booze~ Movie, M~N. Oh~ I can' t wait.

MOM Is that all you thinks about? Just think how poor old Anansiak feels. She'll be heart-broken. (*Moves toward ANANSIAK.*) You don't want to go to Hopedale, do you?

JESSIE She's old anyway. She's gonna die soon.

GEORGE enters.

GEORGE What's for supper?

MOM Oh, shut up. He only got two partridges, and I haven't had time to pick 'em yet.

GEORGE You shoulda took me hunting with you. We woulda got more.

DAD You gotta go to school.

JESSIE George, we're goin' to Hopedale

GEORGE What fer? I don't wanna go to Hopedale.

DAD There'll be a bigger school there, more kids for you to play with.

GEORGE Bigger school! EEE, how sick.

JESSIE Aw, come on, George boy, there's bowling.

GEORGE Waste of time.

JESSIE Booze.

GEORGE Too young fer that.

JESSIE Bingo!

GEORGE What's dat?

JESSIE Men

GEORGE Only good fer you.

JESSIE Movies.

GEORGE Movies? Let's go!

MOM Is that all you think of is fun? Just think how poor Anansiak feels.
And you know I don't want to go.

DAD Look at this house—it's a shack, in Hopedale you'll get a new house
fer nothin'—bigger and better than this.

MOM A new house, how good. (*Eyes light up.*)

DAD And a new vacuum, so you don't have to sweep.

JESSIE Maybe you'll shut up about the dirt!

DAD What about Anansiak? How are we gonna move her?

Pause. Everyone looks at each other, then at ANANSIAK. Everyone moves towards her and carries her off the stage. ANANSIAK shakes her head and repeatedly says "Oka, Oka, Oka."

SCENE 2

This scene opens with JESSIE in her bedroom, sitting in front of a phone. She dials the number.

JESSIE Hello! Is Kitty there? Hello, Kit, what's you doing? Goin' up the base or wha? Got my Avon in today, all kinds ole junk: lipstick, rouge, eyeshadow, the works—red, green, blue. All kinda colours! You see that cute little fella, Sexy? You know the one, about 6'3", blond, deep blue eyes! Wears tight green uniform. Gonna get him tonight. OK! Hurry up! See ya in an hour! Bye.

JESSIE begins to put make-up on as though the audience were her mirror. Music accompanies her scene. Meanwhile, in the living room:

DAD I'm sick of it, work, work, work, no chance to go partridge hunting anymore.

MOM Yeah! If I don't get a taste of partridge meat soon, I'll forget what it tastes like. That stuff down store is no good to eat. Too expensive to buy anyway.

GEORGE When you gonna take me partridge hunting?

DAD You gotta go school, boy.

GEORGE Ah! I'm sick of it.

MOM Do your homework yet?

GEORGE Hah! Never even brought my books home.

DAD Never brought your books home? How do you expect to get a job without education?

GEORGE Rather go hunting. Never goes hunting anymore.

DAD But I never had the chance you have. You can't make a living hunting these days4

KITTY enters.

KITTY Hi, everybody!

DAD Hello, Kitty.

MOM Hi. Where you going tonight?

KITTY Up the base.

MOM Wha you go do up there?

KITTY Dance.

GEORGE Who with?

KITTY Yanks!

GEORGE Ah, they're no good.

KITTY Better than you.

GEORGE Too good for us now or wha?

KITTY Ah! Shut up you

DAD I hope that's all you're doin' is dancing. I hope you're not drinkin any of that booze up there.

KITTY Oh no! We wouldn't do that.

DAD I hope not, if I find out you are, I'm gonna give you a lickin'. And you know, those Yanks, they're only out for one thing.

GEORGE snickers and teases KITTY.

KITTY Jessie, ready yet or wha?

MOM I dunno, she's upstairs putting something on her face. She said something about make-up.

KITTY Oh yeah! She got her Avon in today.

JESSIE comes down the stairs. The family is taken aback.

DAD Oh my God, your face!

SCENE 3

Bar scene. Three YANKS are present, sitting on bar stools, conversing. A DRUNK WOMAN is also present, trying to get the YANKS' attention.

YANKEE 1 Ah wonda waht I'd be doin now if ah waz in New York city.
YANKEE 2 Shoot man, I'd be doin' more than this.
YANKEE 3 What would you be doin' now if you were in New York City, Boy?
YANKEE 2 Eatin pizza, drivin' mah hot rod, watchin' the Yankees play baseball.
YANKEE 1 Ain't nothin' do round heah.
YANKEE 3 Ain't no chickies in these heah parts.
YANKEE 1 Look at that thing. Who's gonna have her tonight?
YANKEE 3 You can have her You always take yo chickies when they're drunk.
YANKEE 1 I had her last night. (*to YANKEE 2*) It's your turn to have her.
YANKEE 3 (*to YANKEE 2*) Yeah! It's your turn to have her.

JESSIE and KITTY saunter across the stage. The YANKS whistle and nudge each other, at the same time trying to ignore the DRUNK WOMAN.

YANKEE 3 Oh man, lookey tha. Don't get much like that round here. I'm gettin' the tall one.
YANKEE 2 I'm getting' the short one.
YANKEE 1 I'm getting'...
YANKEE 3 Well, ahm getting' one before any of you two do.
YANKEE 2 Me, too!

YANKEE 1 Bert but...

YANKS saunter over to "chickies." Meanwhile, YANKEE 1 is trying to ignore the DRUNK WOMAN, who is trying to get his attention.

YANKEE 3 (to tall girl) Where you been all my life, Chickie?

TALL GIRL Hebron.

YANKEE 3 Hebron? When did you move down to Hopedale?

TALL GIRL Last week.

The TALL GIRL and the SHORT GIRL are all the time nudging each other and giggling.

YANKEE 3 You like it here?

TALL GIRL Yes.

YANKEE 3 You know how to dance?

TALL GIRL (Giggles and nudges the SHORT GIRL.) Yes.

YANKEE 3 You wanna dance, Chickie?

(The TALL GIRL giggles and nudges the SHORT GIRL again.)

YANKEE 3 You wanna dance, Chickie?

TALL GIRL Yes.

YANKEE 3 Come on, then!

During this conversation, YANKEE 2 and the SHORT GIRL are carrying on an unheard conversation and necking. The one couple advances to the dance floor and begins to dance. Meanwhile, the DRUNK WOMAN is trying to get YANKEE 1's attention. He continues to ignore her. The DRUNK WOMAN staggers out of chair and shouts to YANKEE 1.

DRUNK Hey you ay, you wanna dance you ay?

(The DRUNK WOMAN stumbles over and drags YANKEE 1 out to the dance floor. They start to dance. They stumble and fall.

SCENE 4

This scene takes place in a kitchen in Hopedale. JESSIE and MOM sit at a table.

GEORGE (*Slams his glass down on the table.*) Kablunak, damn White Man, your ol' husband, no good fer nothing. Went up the dam three times last week, fell in twice.

MOM Give him time. He'll get used to it.

JESSIE Yeah. Look at all them books he reads.

MOM Can't eat books, though.

GEORGE Dad took him seal huntin' this morning. Trying to make a man out of him. I suppose he's froze by now.

DAD and YANK enter. YANK goes over to the stove, shaking.

DAD Should have seen the seal we got. Must have been about 375 pounds. It took out almost an hour to cut through the blubber.

YANK feeling sick.

DAD And the heart was about this big. The blood was just drippin' out of it.

YANK feelin' really sick now.

DAD What's fer supper?

YANK Heh! I'm plobbed starved to death. Never had a bite to eat all day.

MOM Boiled porcupine in fat pork.

YANK (*Giving a sicking sound.*) Have any of you people around here heard of T-bone steak?

EVERYONE Ah, shut up.

YANK While, back home...

EVERYONE Ah, shut up

MOM Around here it's kill or be killed. Can't sit around and watch TV or read them books.

DAD Yeh? look at him some lazy, hey.

MOM It's your turn to...

DAD Oh, no. Uncle Sam, it's your turn to dump the pail.

YANK (*Jumping from the chair and dropping his book.*) Shoot, ain't touchin' that. Come on, Honeybunch, let's go back to the good ole living in the U.S. of America.

SCENE 5

Two MEN at the base looking for firewood. MAN 1 is picking up firewood, and MAN 2 walks in with an empty komatik.

MAN 1 Come up the base for some firewood too or wha?

MAN 2 Yup. You been up here long?

MAN 1 Coupla hours only. Gotta scrounge for the wood now. Hey, look, an old bingo card. Remember the games?

MAN 2 Oh yeah, I remember. Got kinda lucky once, won the jackpot, \$200.

MAN 1 Yeah, them ole Yanks, some sucks—easy money, lots of jobs, lots of jackpots. Good thing I got six kids, or I'd be starvin' now.

MAN 2 Oh, got 20 bucks? I want to buy some beer. Ain't had some in a while now.

MAN 1 Naw, boy. My cheque ain't here yet. Family allowance is late too.

MAN 2 Gotta dollar for yeast for some home brew?

MAN 1 No boy, haven't got a cent. Good times up the base remember?
Look, we're in the club now. (*Picks up a broken beer bottle.*)

MAN 2 Good ol' times, boy. (*Picks up a pair of pantyhose.*)

Both start to laugh.

MAN 1 (*Shakes his head.*) Yeah, some times. (*Begins to pick up wood and put it on the komatik.*)

MAN 2 Just firewood now. (*Sits back, looks directly at audience.*) Yeah, at least them ol' Yanks left us something even if it is just firewood.

A Musical Tribute to Bill Andersen

Makkovik, 2003

J.C. Erhardt Memorial School



ORIGINAL CAST

GUITARIST	Jason Edmunds
SINGERS	Andrea Andersen, Jenna Andersen, Tobey Andersen, Kendra Jacque, Lorraine Onalik
INTRODUCTORY SCENES	Colleen Andersen, Cassie Jararuse

TEACHER ADVISORS

Joan Andersen, Tracy Tucker

SCENE 1

All walk in, wearing hats.

- 1 He was a family man.
 - 2 He was a fisherman.
 - 3 He was a community activist.
 - 4 He was a wildlife officer.
 - 5 He was a politician.
 - 6 (*Wearing a bandana. Everyone stares at her.*) He had a sense of humour, okay?
 - 7 WHO are you talking about?
- ALL Bill! Bill Andersen!

SONG 1

Jason Edmunds on guitar. Tune by Jason, an original composition.

Uncle Bill was a great man.

Everybody loved him so.

Wife named Mary came from Ben's Cove

His life partner, she loved him so.

Nine dear children looked up to them

Try their best to pursue them.

Instrumental interlude.

Fishing, hunting was his life's store

At Ikey's Point where his father fished before.

His house was a place for strangers
Soon were friends what good conversations.

Instrumental interlude.

A man of action, he'd do what you'd ask him
Work full force. That is how he stood.
Uncle Bill, he was a great man
Everybody loved him so.

SCENE 2

Bill is miming placing fish up on the splitting table, gutting it and splitting it, and throwing it in the barrel by him.

BILL John, turn on the radio, will ya.
RADIO This is VOCM, the voice of Newfoundland. Let's hear what our new premier Joey Smallwood had to say at the Colonial Building today.
SMALLWOOD Thank you, my friends, for voting for Confederation. Things will get better. I promise you that. And I want to personally see to it that every Newfoundland is looked after.

SONG 2

Tune of "She'll Be Coming Round The Mountain."

Bill was listening to the radio one day
When he heard Premier Joey Smallwood say
Every single Newfoundland will now be looked after
'Cause that's the Confederation way.
Bill will be coming in the harbour on the Kyle

He'll be coming in the harbour on the Kyle
He will come in St. John's Harbour
He will come in St. John's Harbour
He will come in St. John's Harbour on the Kyle.
He had a meeting with Joey 'bout a store
Joe looked interested and said tell me more
"We ain't got no supplies, for bread my people cries
Joe, give us a hand, will you please".
He'll be coming round the cape with a store
He'll be coming round the cape with a store
Oh, Bill will be comin'
Yes, Bill will be comin'
He'll be comin' round the cape with a store.
We will all go out to meet him when he comes
We will all shake his hand when he comes
Way to go, Uncle Bill, you have a political will
And you became a politician.
He'll be coming with water and sewer next
He'll be coming with water and sewer next
He'll be coming with water and sewer
He'll be coming with water and sewer
'Cause he's a great doer, he is.

SCENE 3

On the phone.

BILL Garfield, you gonna host the thing again this year? Over.

GARFIELD What's tha now, Uncle? Over.

BILL The Combined Councils. Over.

GARFIELD Oh, you wants to hold it here again this year? Over.

BILL Well, yes. Hopedale is the most central place. Plus you got better long distance service than us. None of this "over" business. Over.

GARFIELD No sweat, Uncle Bill. Do you want me to do the calling and invite people? Just give me a list and I'll make the phone calls. Mel Woodward for sure. He's our member in the House of Assembly, right? Over.

SONG 3

Tune of "Still Waiting" by Sum 41.

He had an idea, we thought it was good

Combine the Councils, yes we should.

Meet together in one big place

Rural development in YOUR FACE!

Spoken parts:

Invite the press

And the government too.

We'll tell them what we want them to do.

There's strength in numbers

Five is louder than one.

Let's make noise to the government boys!

Here's our wish list

What we want arranged.

We won't be quiet

Till we see things changed.

Get Bell telephone and IGA

CN Marine and Lab Airways.

Let's make a noise to all the government boys.

Repeat first verse. Interpretive movement to music. Jason plays guitar.

An Afternoon with an Elder

Nain, 2013

Jens Haven Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Our play mostly takes place in a classroom. An Elder has come to tell some students about what life was like in Nain when she was young. She first tells them about moving from Hebron and how it was difficult to adjust to a new place. The second story she tells is how she met her husband when they were roughly the students' age, and how they had to overcome some biases that existed due to the relocation. Finally, the Elder gives a visual presentation to the students demonstrating how various things have changed (transportation and technology) from when she was their age until the present.

ORIGINAL CAST

ELDER

Toni Lampe

MULTIPLE ROLES

(4 KIDS, 2 BOYS, 3 GIRLS, MOM, DAD)

Amber Saksagiak, Anthony Saksagiak,

Megan Dicker, Brianna Brown

SCENE 1

A school classroom. An elder has come to talk to students. The elder sits in a chair while the students gather around her.

ELDER Hello everyone. Some of you may know me, and some of you may be meeting me for the first time. I am very pleased to come and speak with you today. I understand some of you would like to hear about my life, and how I ended up here in Nain. Who has the first question?

One of the students shyly puts up their hand.

ELDER Yes m'dear. What is your question?

KID 1 How old are you?

KID 2 Show some respect! She doesn't need to tell us how old she is!

KID 1 I'm sorry. What I mean to say is, what was like in the 1800s? Is it true you used to use a tin can and string as a telephone?

KID 3 No, I heard that was how they had to connect to the internet. Anthey didn't even have Facebook. They just had (*confused*) books?

KID 4 Books? You mean those things we listen to on our iPods?

KID 2 My teacher tried to get me to scroll through one of those once. I kept waiting for popups to come and distract me... (*disappointed*) but they never came.

KID 3 (*annoyed*) Guys! Come on. We all know what books are. I think what my simple-minded classmates wanted to ask was: how did you send out a tweet with two cans and a string?

KID 4 AHEM!

ELDER Oh, what it was once like to be young. I'm not that old... no. Believe it or not, not even my parents were born in the 1800s.

- KID 3 1700s?
- KID 1 Will you be quiet!
- ELDER Ha-ha. No, no, no. My parents were born in the 1900s, just like your parents. Times were different then... but a lot of the things are still the same. We hunted then, much like we do now. Just certain parts of it have changed. Our tools have improved.
- Our methods of transportation have expanded. Nain... this is your home, and it was likely home for your parents too. But it wasn't always my home.
- KID 2 You're from Hopedale? Lucky! I went to Hopedale once and...
- ELDER No... not Hopedale. Though I have friends and family who live there. No, I was born in Hebron and that is where my parents were from too... It was very difficult when we were relocated. We were forced against our will to leave our home. The government didn't even check with us to see if we wanted to move.
- spacing
- KID 3 They forced you? They didn't give you a choice?
- ELDER That's right. They gathered everyone in the church. The government knew how important the church is to the Inuit. We wouldn't want to do anything to disrespect the church. I believe this was a Thursday.
- KID 4 You went to church on a Thursday? Holy Mac!
- ELDER Ahem. Some of us went to Nain. Some of us went to Makkovik and Goose Bay. We were given houses, but they weren't our homes. We no longer had our traditional hunting grounds. It was very difficult to get used to.

Cue music and dim lights while we set up the flashback scene.

SCENE 2

A family is sitting down at the table.

- MOM Girls, I want you to help me set the table, and get ready for when your father gets home.
- KID 1 I hope he gets lots of partridges. It seems like forever since we've had any partridges.
- KID 2 Yeah, Mom, do you think he'll have any this time?
- MOM I don't know, girls. You know your father is still trying to find the good places to hunt. It's not like it used to be. When he knew all of the places to go. Now it's trial and error. Some days he is able to get some, and some days not at all.
- KID 1 Doesn't he just need to look up in the sky? I mean partridges fly don't they?
- KID 2 It's not that easy, dummy.
- MOM Girls! You know how I feel about those names.
- KID 1 Sorry, Mom. It's just that some of the other kids at school are starting to say things, and I don't know what I'm supposed to say back.
- MOM How is school, my darlings? How do you find your classes and your classmates?
- KID 2 It's different.
- KID 1 Yeah, I don't even know what we're talking about most times. The teacher forces us to speak English. (*glum looking*) I miss Inuktitut, Mom.
- KID 2 Me too. I'm slowly forgetting how to speak it...

- KID 1 Nancy isn't coming to school, she has to take care of her mom.
- MOM Too many people are getting depressed and sick. It's very hard living here, being controlled. I do not like it at all.
- KID 1 *(starts pouting)* I miss home, being free.
- MOM *(hugs KID 1)* Me too. But this is our home now. We have each other.
- KID 1 Some of the kids make fun of us. Say we're from the other part of town.
- MOM Don't take to heart what the other kids say. They're still learning just like you. Once they get to know everyone better they'll be your best friends. You'll see.
- KID 2 It's been years, though, Mom. Things don't seem to be getting any easier.
- KID 1 Today in school I told some of the other kids how many partridge Dad used to get. One kid said I was lying. They said that Dad is a bad hunter. That he can't provide for us. That he's going to cause us to starve and we'll go hungry.
- KID 2 That isn't true! You know that.
- KID 1 I know, but it really made me angry. When recess was over, and that kid was running back to class, I accidentally stuck out my leg. And he tripped on his face.
- KID 2 *(laughing)* Did they know you did it on purpose?
- MOM That is not how I raised my daughter.
- KID 1 *(to KID 2)* No, I was tying my shoe. Not my fault he was running. And didn't look down. And didn't see my leg raise up just so that he was sure to trip over it.

KID 2 Haha, it would have been funny to see the mud on his face. That'll teach him for saying things about Dad that aren't true.

KID 1 It was an accident!

DAD comes home from hunting.

MOM Did you get anything?

DAD Got three partridges today. It was good. I'm still not sure where the good hunting places are yet. Everything is still so new even though it's been five years. Bob showed me a new spot.

MOM Really, Bob showed you? I didn't know you and Bob were even friendly.

DAD He heard about how good of a hunter I was back home. Said he wanted to see if it was true. I'm a little rusty. But it was good to show him how good I was.

MOM You hear that? You kids be sure to tell that to those bullies tomorrow. Your dad can hunt!

KID 1 Mom, I thought you were mad at me.

KID 2 Does that mean I can trip a few kids and throw some mud on them. I know, I'll make a list!

DAD What are you kids talking about?

MOM That's not what I meant. I'm sorry. I shouldn't have said that. But maybe Bob will tell his kids, and then you kids won't be teased as much anymore. This is proof that your dad can hunt.

DAD (*lovingly*) You didn't think I could hunt? I thought that's what made you like me in the first place.

KID 2 I'm going to be sick.

SCENE 3

Back to the classroom. Cue music and dim lights.

- BOTH KIDS Wow...
- KID 1 So people from Nain were mean to you? But everyone from Nain is so nice and loving! I can't picture anyone being like that to someone who isn't from here.
- ELDER Times were different then. People had already lived here, and it took some time before everyone accepted us. Now it isn't as much of an issue. But I'm sure if you ask someone who has recently moved here, they'd say the same thing.
- KID 2 Was it hard being bullied because your daddy couldn't hunt?
- KID 3 Her daddy could hunt, dummy! He just wasn't used to the areas.
- KID 1 Don't call him a dummy! You're no better than the bullies from her day.... Dummy.
- ELDER Kids will be kids. You have to learn not to take things said too seriously. And every now and again... if things aren't going your way... just trip things up a little.
- KIDS Ha-ha-ha.
- ELDER I'm just joking now, that isn't what you should do.
- KID 1 So you liked your husband because he could hunt?
- KID 3 Well, that's why all of the girls are so obsessed with me. They don't call me Nain's best goose hunter for nothing you know.
- KID 4 I've never heard anyone call you Nain's best goose hunter.
- KID 3 Ummm. I guess you haven't been on my Facebook lately. I made it my status a few nights ago.

- KID 4 I thought it was a joke. You know. An April Fools sort of thing.
- KID 3 In November?
- KID 2 She didn't say it was supposed to be funny.
- ELDER (*laughing*) Oh my. You kids remind me of me and my friends when we were your age. Friendship, families, that is something that remains important throughout the ages.
- KID 1 You said you fell in love with your husband because he was such a good hunter. Was that true?
- ELDER (*laughing*) Well, there was more to it than just that. But I guess you could say that's what drew him to me. In fact, we weren't ever supposed to be together if our parents could have had their way.
- KID 3 See. Told you. Nain's best goose hunter is going to have his pick of the gander.
- KID 4 (*disgusted*) Gross. What do you mean? Why would your parents be against it?
- ELDER Are you sure you want to hear the story of how me and my husband met? You won't find it boring?
- KIDS Yes!
- KID 3 (*quietly*) No... I mean, yes.
- ELDER Well, believe it or not... it all started over a bit of caribou...

SCENE 4

Cue music, dim lights. Scene change. A young girl and a young boy are playing hopscotch. After recess bell the girl is talking to her friends.

- GIRL 1 He's really cute, eh? I think I'm getting a crush on him.

- GIRL 2 You would be rye cute for each other too!
- GIRL 3 Him? I don't know... I heard his family isn't the greatest. I heard that they have stolen from others.
- GIRL 1 Who told you that?
- GIRL 2 You can't always believe rumours. People says all kinds of things about everyone. Lots of it isn't even true. Remember when people said you came to school on a Saturday and stayed until you went home at lunch, even though nobody was at school!
- GIRL 1 Yeah... but wasn't that true?
- GIRL 3 It was only until recess. And that is completely different.
- GIRL 2 That's exactly my point! You can't believe everything that everyone tells you. People mix up the facts.
- GIRL 1 I don't care what anyone says. I like him, and I think he likes me too.
- GIRL 2 Has he held your hand yet?
- GIRL 3 If he did... I hope you washed your hands after. I don't believe in cooties, but I heard he has some kind of newly found cootie. And...
- GIRL 1 Anyway, no, he hasn't held my hand. We have just started to talk more and we walk home together after school.

Cue music, dim lights. The next day at recess...

- BOY What you got planned to do after school?
- GIRL 1 Nothing at all, I'm supposed to fetch water and clean up, but it can wait.
- BOY Maybe we can go for a picnic not too far from your house. I just happen to have all of the supplies right here. Never leave home without them!

SCENE 5

BOY and GIRL are picnicking and talking and laughing. Music plays while BOY and GIRL have a picnic.

GIRL You know, every time we walk home my mom looks at me really mad. She would be disappointed if she knew about us.

BOY It's all right, you won't get caught. You're safe with me.

GIRL I do feel safe. But I don't know what it is that my mom has against you.

BOY There are lots of rumours going around about me and my family. They're just rumours. You don't believe them, do you?

GIRL No! Of course not! It's just hard when everybody is telling you things, you know? Especially when it's my own family... (*looks in the distance and sees MOM*)

MOM enters and shouts at the GIRL to do her chores and finds the two together. She is furious and she takes the GIRL home yelling at the BOY that they can never see each other again. The GIRL is crying and looking back at the BOY.

MOM Just what do you think you're doing? You know you have your chores to do after school? And what are you doing with... *him*. We raised you better than to hang around the likes of him! Do you have any idea what this is doing to our family? (*to BOY*) And you, I don't ever want to see you around my daughter again. Ya hear me? EVER! I don't want any daughter of mine hanging around thieves.

BOY exits. GIRL is still crying.

MOM I'm sorry you had to see me get on like that. I don't mean to get that upset in front of you. But, you know somebody stole our caribou. I got a feeling it was his family.

They seem just like the type to do it. And that so-called boyfriend of yours, his brother was the last one out before the curfew and I'm going to go have a talk with his family after supper! Straighten out a thing or two!

GIRL No, you didn't!

MOM Yes, and by being with that boy you're going to give yourself a bad name!

GIRL But Mom!

MOM Come on now, let's get home.

Dim lights, cue music. The family sitting at their kitchen table. There is a knock at door, MOM answers it. A different BOY from a different family is at the door.

MOM What are you doing here? (*gasp*) Oh, my ribs! Thanks for returning them!

BOY 2 Umm, I actually took them last night. Sorry Miss, my anansiak was running out of food. Then I heard word was going around that his brother stole it, so here! I'm really sorry. Please don't tell my folks!

MOM No, keep it. Next time don't steal, please. I don't want to hear about anybody going hungry. All you have to do is ask. Say hello to your parents for me, and if you or anyone needs any food again, and we have some to spare, all I ask is that you come see my husband or me first. Nobody likes a thief.

BOY 2 leaves.

MOM I feel so bad for blaming your friend's family.

GIRL I told you, Mom, you've got to apologize. By the way, will I be able to see him now? We're just friends.

MOM *(doesn't sound convinced)* Mmhmm. Seemed like a little more than friends to me. Who just happens to have all the items for a picnic on them like that? Seems pretty fishy to me!

Cue music and dim lights.

SCENE 6

Back to classroom scene.

KIDS 1, 2, 4 Aw!

KID 3 Picnic supplies eh? Think I might have to use that one.

KID 2 What, being the best goose hunter isn't enough for you?

KID 3 Just a little more ammo for my arsenal... you guys should really be writing this stuff down.

ELDER *(laughing)* Oh my, how I miss being young. Well, kids, I think my time is almost up now. Does anyone have one last question?

KID 2 Do you miss the old way of life? What was it like?

ELDER I certainly do! It was very simple without all the technology like we've got now. Everybody listened to their radio. Kids were more respectful. Their parents punished them better and everybody would play outside or visit each other.

KID 4 I wish it was like that now.

KID 1 I know, everyone's just inside and on Facebook. It's rye lame now.

KID 4 Do you like the way of life now or how it was before?

ELDER That is a hard question. I definitely loved how we socialized more in the past and we were allowed to hunt caribou. But it's good this day and age, being able to go off not as worried because we have better technology like GPS and spot guns instead of the harpoon and the

bow. We have it so much easier now. I actually have a slide show you can watch...

Slide show and music..

KID 4 Well, on behalf of everyone here, I just want to thank you for taking the time to talk with us today. I feel like we learned a lot, not only about your life, but what life was like in Nain before all these modern changes.

KID 2 It makes me even more proud to be from Nain than I was before.

ELDER It was my pleasure. It was so nice to be able to take the time to talk to all of you. To get to know you, and believe me, I've learned a thing from you kids too. Oh, and before I forget, you should all follow me on Twitter.

KIDS You're on Twitter?

ELDER Oh kids... so gullible.

All exit except KIDs 3 and 4.

KID 3 *(nervous)* So you want to walk home together?

KID 4 Oh, does this mean I get to hear more stories about Nain's best goose hunter?

KID 3 If you like... I was also thinking we could have a picnic...

KID 4 takes him by the hand and they walk off the stage. Curtains.

Sâlagik AkKunaki: Beat the Storm

Nain, 2016

Nillilaugit Players, Jens Haven Memorial School



ORIGINAL CAST

AMBER, a teen	Amber Saksagiak
ADDITIONAL ROLES	Shawna Dicker, Erin Tibbo, Chase Holwell, Nancy Nochasak
NARRATOR 1 (Atsanik)	HUNTER
NARRATOR 2 (Storm)	five HEBRON RESIDENTS
NARRATOR 3 (Hebron)	five CHILDREN
NARRATOR 4 (Dorm/boarding school)	six TEENS
NARRATOR 5 (Loss)	six RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SURVIVORS

TEACHER ADVISOR

Juanita Skanes

SCRIPT

As the curtains open, the main character struggles across the stage. Wind howls (sound effects for a storm). This is all bold-change to be like earlier ones?

TEEN/AMBER Sometimes I feel like an outsider, a stranger. I feel like I don't fit in, like I don't belong. Should I even worry about being like everyone else? These feelings of anxiety, this struggle for identity, it's created a storm inside me. When things are going badly, someone always says, "Stay strong." What does that even mean? How am I supposed to do that? Where am I going to gather that kind of strength? I don't know if I can beat this storm.

AMBER is distraught, with her head in her hands. The wind continues to howl, but fades as the lights above change to green and purple, like the Northern Lights. Music starts... a segment of "Beat the Storm," by the Sundogs. Gradually AMBER looks up, looks around, and notices the Northern Lights, watching them, while listening to the music. She seems to be calmed by them.

AMBER *(looking up)* Atsanik... what do the elders say? Something about the spirit of our ancestors, our loved ones who've passed away? Maybe they have the answers I'm looking for. If only they could help me.

The music fades but the lights continue to flicker and dance across the sky.

NARRATOR 1 *(offstage)* Answers? Ah, life is filled with questions, isn't it? We all need the strength to keep looking for those answers. Our people have been faced with challenges since time began. We've struggled, but we have overcome them. We've been beating the storm for such a long, long time.

Takunnâk... Nâlak... Ilanniak... Watch... Listen... Learn...

Sâlagik AkKunak... Beat the storm.

The lights fade. Winds howl, even more fiercely. Character leaves stage or drifts into background. Another character, HUNTER, enters, struggling against the bitter wind. He/she mimes being cold, fighting the wind, trying to find shelter. Hunter mimes building an igloo and crawling inside to weather the storm.

NARRATOR 2 For thousands of years, Inuit struggled for survival in the harsh, unforgiving, but beautiful North. Did we give up? No. We fought back. We did what we had to do to survive. To beat the storm.

Winds subside. HUNTER emerges from the igloo, stretching and warming his/her hands to prepare for the day. HUNTER greets the morning, smiling into the sun. He/she mimics hunting, maybe seal hunting, demonstrating patience and perseverance. A time lapse video here could suggest the passage of time.

NARRATOR 2 Imagine the patience and perseverance! Our very survival depended on it. Giving up was not an option. Those qualities prepared us for the storms to come.

The lights fade, and music begins. Church music plays (a Moravian hymn, maybe a recording of the Nain Choir or Brass Band). The actors gather in the Church, sitting and praying, listening quietly. One actor/government official reads an announcement (explaining the relocation). (This can be read or a recording). The actors are stunned, almost numb. The official leaves as other actors get up and walk out of the church scene. Actors are visibly shaken, crying even. (Actors could leave stage and then walk on again for their conversations.)

ACTOR 1 Leave Hebron? Where will we go? What will we do?

ACTOR 2 I don't want to go! I grew up here. Generations of my family are here. My loved ones are buried here.

ACTOR 3 My heart is breaking! But if they say we have to go, I guess we have to do it.

ACTOR 4 Cowards! They told us at church because they knew we'd be quiet there, that we wouldn't argue or protest.

ACTOR 5 They might take me away from here, but my heart will always be in Hebron.

Actors freeze. NARRATOR 3 (HEBRON) steps out, centre stage.

HEBRON And they left. Life was even more of a struggle. The jobs that had been promised didn't exist. Housing was atrocious! Living conditions were pitiful. Hunters had to get accustomed to new places to hunt and gather. There wasn't enough wildlife to provide for everyone. As years went on, people suffered. Their pain manifested itself in different ways—alcohol abuse, depression, domestic violence, emotional trauma—effects of colonialism. Some were battered by this desperation and others endured it. Some found strength somewhere. Everyone tried, in their own way, to beat the storm.

As the narrator speaks, actors mime the story—hunting animals unsuccessfully, not having any money, poor housing, drinking, fighting, despair, etc.

AMBER Anansiak told me stories about relocation, about what it was like growing up in Hebron and Nain. Families were split up. It was difficult, but she survived it. We did too. As tragic as it was, as wrong as it was, we are stronger now, as a people, because of it.

Audio/video plays: part of the government's apology for the relocation, part of the attempt at reconciliation.

AMBER A few years ago, Anansiak went back for the apology, for the dedication of the monument recognizing everyone who was forced out of Hebron. She said that accepting the apology and forgiving them, that showed how strong and resilient we really are.

Project a collage of pictures: Hebron restoration, Torgats, Base Camp, etc.

AMBER My friend and his family go back to Hebron every year. They greet tourists and help with the restoration, but mostly they are living the old, traditional way.

Project a picture of family living in Hebron for summer.

NARRATOR 3 The restoration of Hebron symbolizes how we look to the future but hold on to a bit of the past. We're bringing our homeland to a new generation. We're sharing it with the world. We're preserving it for our children and grandchildren. That gives us hope. That makes us stronger. Sadly, the storm did not end with relocation.

Actors mime being taken away from their families. Then children are punished, smacked, for speaking Inuktitut.

NARRATOR 4 This storm ripped children away from their families. They were taken away. They were punished for speaking Inuktitut. Children cried themselves to sleep at night. Too many were mistreated – abused – physically, emotionally, verbally, sexually. The pain raged. How could they survive this?

Actors represent the children at residential school, maybe playing outside the school.

CHILD 1 I don't care how much they hit me. I'm going to use my language. They won't stop me. I won't let them.

CHILD 2 Those other kids call me a dirty Eskimo, a Skimo. I don't care. I know you don't like it when they say that but I'm not going to cry. I'll fight them if I have to.

CHILD 3 I'm going to keep speaking Inuktitut, in private though, so I won't get in trouble. I don't want to forget it. It's more than just my language, it's a part of who I am.

CHILD 4 Let's sneak off and speak it together, sing our songs so we won't lose them. Maybe we won't be so homesick. Maybe it will help us stay strong.

CHILD 5 I hope I get picked to go home for Christmas. We need to be ready...

The children run off, singing in Inuktitut (probably Sorutsit).

NARRATOR 4 They faced a storm of anger, loneliness and confusion, even after they came home. Some of their families didn't really know them anymore. Some of the parents battled their own storms as they were reminded of their own pain and loss. As hard as they'd tried, some lost their language—out of fear and out of shame—and communication was challenging. But some of them held on to it. I'd like to think that gave them strength.

Actors gather, representing the older, grown up kids from residential school. They might be smoking, listening to music.

TEEN 1 Strange being back, hey? We must be too used to Goose Bay and Striver now.

TEEN 2 Yes, hey. Even the food is different. Always wild meat and fish, country food. I'm not used to that any more.

TEEN 3 My parents are always mad at me, complaining that I don't remember my Inuktitut. Getting fussy because I can't skin a seal or pluck a partridge. Don't even get me started on making pualuks and kamek.

TEEN 4 How are we supposed to know how if no one taught us? If we didn't see anyone do it?

TEEN 5 It wasn't our fault. We were forced to go. Maybe they just feel guilty because they let us go.

- TEEN 6 Well, we're back now so we've got to make the best of it. This is home. If we're here, we might as well make it better—be better. Things can be different. We didn't suffer through all that for nothing!
- TEEN 3 Too much responsibility! I need a drink! (*laughs*)
- TEEN 5 That won't make things better.

Actors freeze. AMBER steps forward, out of that scene.

- AMBER Did the storm pass? Some of my family went to residential school. But they don't talk about it. My great-uncle did go out to St. John's for court. Then he went again to hear the settlement.

Video/audio of court decision/announcement. Actors mime hearing the good news. Hugs. Tears of joy and relief. Now actors play the adult residential school survivors.

- SURVIVOR 1 It won't erase what happened but it will bring us some closure.
- SURVIVOR 2 It's not about the money. It's about acknowledging what was done to us.
- SURVIVOR 3 Not just us... Our kids, our grandchildren. What did it do to them? We didn't learn how to love in the dorm. We didn't get the affection that children need. We didn't really learn how to be parents.
- SURVIVOR 4 Those of us who are still around have to accept that and try to move on. It's in the past.
- SURVIVOR 5 Hopefully our families can understand that. Their love and support gives us strength.
- SURVIVOR 6 We got through that. We can get through anything.

"Beat the Storm" plays again as another group of teens hangs out, drinking, smoking, etc. There's a fight or disagreement. One wanders away alone. There's

the sound of a gunshot. Black out. The lights fade and then come up on teens crying, hugging each other, and consoling each other.

NARRATOR 5 Throughout the late '90s and early 2000's similar scenes played out around the community. Over and over again. Few families escaped. The circumstances may have differed but the result was always the same.

Actors cling to each other in support, embracing or in a line, arms linked or holding hands, walking away.

NARRATOR 5 They survived because they had each other. Sometimes that's all they had. They beat the storm together. But some didn't... The ones who remained are forever scarred, but they learned a lesson in strength, persistence, determination, and resilience.

AMBER My parents lived through those dark times. Life was hard—funeral after funeral. But as time went on, their resilience grew. They never forgot the friends and family they lost but they knew that they had to go on living. They didn't want that life for us. They wanted something better—a life of promise and potential.

Audio/video clip depicting lands claim deal, self-government (formation of the Nunatsiavut Government).

NARRATOR 5 Years of hard work and determination finally paid off. What those children of the relocation and residential school fought for, what they lived for and worked for... that was finally a reality. We had our own land claim and a government of our own. It was a time of energy, excitement and enthusiasm. Our resilience helped us achieve this.

AMBER is centre stage or comes to the centre.

AMBER I can see now that my ancestors faced hardship and won. Throughout all of the pain and suffering they endured, they

managed to stay strong. Maybe I can too. Maybe I don't have to fit in.

NARRATOR 1 You know what? You're not an outsider. Sure, you're not like the rest of the crowd. Good. Those things that differentiate you, define you. Your past—personal and cultural—is the very baseline of your identity. Look at what your grandparents did and their grandparents before them. What you're going through—what you feel right now is a desire to fit in, to give up what makes you, well... YOU. Don't conform. Don't fit in. Look at what you've endured. Just think about it. You've made it this far. Don't let the efforts of your ancestors be in vain. They sacrificed so much for you. Stay strong. Stay YOU.

Other actors come out to the front of the stage.

NARRATOR 1 Whatever storms may come, you don't have to try to beat it on your own.

ALL Atautsikut akKuank sâlagigajattavut. We can beat the storm together.

ACTOR 1 We have so much to keep us going, to make us proud of who we are.

The following lines are spoken loudly with pride and enthusiasm.

ACTOR 2 Our love of the land.

ACTOR 3 Going off, groing strong.

ACTOR 4 Our music.

ACTOR 5 Posaunik.

ACTOR 6 Nain choir.

ACTOR 1 Carving.

ACTOR 2 Art.

ACTOR 3 Photography.

ACTOR 4 Film-making.

ACTOR 5 Sewing.

ACTOR 6 Hockey.

ACTOR 1 Volleyball.

ACTOR 2 Drama.

ACTOR 3 Our culture.

ACTOR 4 Our families.

ACTOR 5 Our friends.

ACTOR 6 Our language.

ACTOR 1 Our strength.

ALL Our resilience.

AMBER Life will bring more storms, but we will face it together, create a good day and Beat the Storm.

One actor could beat a drum. Music plays again.

3. Social Pressures that Challenge the Continuation of Inuit Culture

These include plays that describe development projects threatening the way Inuit want to live. As Robert Jacque from Rigolet described their play, *This Isn't Right* (2016) about the Muskrat Falls protests, "It was a big topic on everyone's minds and we were the most affected by it." The script was developed based on the personal experiences of community members, and the whole town came out to see the play. A similar event is explored in the Postville play *Energy to Change the World* (2008), examining the conflict between those supporting the development of a uranium mine and those who fear that traditional values will be endangered. As one character proclaims, "Not all of Labrador's energy is in the ground, eh? Most of it is in its people!"

(A roar of recorded voices.)

VOICE As Labrador Inuit we cannot be bought, and most certainly (not) by a project that will impact the way of life and the future of Labrador Inuit and other Labradorians.

VOICE The development of this resource has been researched, studied, considered, and resolved by some of the greatest minds in the world.

VOICE The development of Muskrat Falls will power homes and business.

(Voices become jumbled together as speed increases.)

VOICE Muskrat Falls will mean an end to dependence on oil...

VOICE It's very important that our lives matter.

VOICE We're working very hard to address the concerns.

VOICE We are running out of time.

VOICE We will take the time to study the findings further.

—Les Rigolettes, Northern Lights Academy, Rigolet, 2016

This Isn't Right

We Seek No City Streets Nor Lanes

Rigolet, 1981

Northern Lights Academy, Rigolet

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Goose Bay as Port Labrador would be detrimental to life in Rigolet; the native people of Labrador (including Inuit, Indians and White settlers) have more rights to Labrador than outsiders.

CHARACTERS

Mayor Oliver – Mayor of Rigolet

Mayor Brown – Mayor of Goose Bay

Gerald Payne – MP for Labrador

Edward Waters – MHA for Torngat Mountains

Patrick Smith – MHA for Mealy Mountains

Margaret MacKenzie

George MacKenzie

Fern]—Children of Margaret & George

Kelly

Gary

Lily Newell

Jeff Newell

Sally]—Children of Lily & Jeff

Jim

Grandmother

Minister

A Local Person

TEACHER ADVISOR

Amanda Gaultois

SCENE 1

1981, Rigolet. A public meeting with the mayors of Goose Bay and Rigolet as well as the federal MP and the two MHAs in attendance. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the entry of the MV Arctic into Lake Melville and the possibility of Goose Bay becoming Port Labrador.

OLIVER I am the Mayor of Rigolet, and as everyone knows, we are here to discuss Port Labrador and the first trip of the MV Arctic. Here we have Mr. Patrick Smith, the representative for the Mealy Mountains district; Mr. Edward Waters, for the Torngat Mountains district, and Gerald Payne, MP for Labrador. Also, we have Mayor Brown of Happy Valley-Goose Bay. On behalf of the Council of Rigolet, I wish to state our position. As everyone knows, the MV Arctic will cut a path so's that it will be virtually impossible to reach the opposite side of the Bay.

Our reasons for doing this is a means of livelihood for the people. Activities such as hunting, trapping and fishing require many of our people to cross the Bay to pursue these activities. Many times, these people return late in the evening and even late at night. We need assurances that everything will be done to ADEQUATELY mark the track cut by the MV Arctic, so that no one will be drowned or lose their snowmobiles in the crack. Mayor Brown, you may state your position of the Council of Happy Valley-Goose Bay on the entry of the MV Arctic into Lake Melville.

BROWN The town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay wants to become Port Labrador for different reasons, one being to build up the economic base of

- Goose Bay, hopefully attracting an aluminum smelter and other industry.
- SMITH I am 100% behind Mayor Brown and his fellow council members. His reasons for wanting Port Labrador in Happy Valley-Goose Bay has my total respect.
- WATERS As my position reveals, I am backing up Mayor Oliver of Rigolet and his council members. After all, Rigolet is an older community than Happy Valley-Goose Bay and it stands for more rights. What do you think Mr. Payne?
- PAYNE I think that Mr. Waters' got a point, but me being the Federal representative for both communities, I have got to equalize my thoughts.
- OLIVER I don't mean to cause a furore; however, as you are our federal representative we wish to know your position.
- PAYNE In my heart I am against the disruption of livelihood—but then again, who can stop progress?
- OLIVER We are trying to, and are hoping to succeed. Is it necessary to destroy a means of livelihood and natural resources of one town, just to boom another? Think of the people of Rigolet!
- LOCAL Right! Think of the people! Just because we are not as politically powerful as Happy Valley-Goose Bay does not mean we should not have the right to continue our way of life.
- OLIVER Perfectly good point.
- BROWN If we do not have Port Labrador, we will not be able to continue our way of life in the way we want. We are trying to build an economic base the best way we can. The old ways cannot always survive. It would be nice if they could; however, like Mr. Payne said, "Can we

stop progress?" The economic development of the whole region must be considered more important than that of one small area.

OLIVER Now hold on one second there, Mr. Mayor of Goose Bay! Whatever it took, or how long it took to build your community, ours is growing too, and has a right to, just like yours did. And me being the chairman, I am strongly opposed to your feelings and judgments.

SCENE 2

Rigolet, 1985. FERN enters.

FERN Mum, there's no cabbage down to the store.

MARGARET There's never anything down to that darn store!! I'm sick and fed up with it. I can't even cook the meals I wants to cook!

GEORGE What's you grumbling about now, Margaret? You can go one day, I suppose, without having cabbage.

MARGARET I've gone one day too many. There's no vegetables, no fruit, the pork chops are green, and the beef is black. I'm sick of this place.

GEORGE Those are things you have to put up with when you live in a small community during winter. Wait 'til summer, and you'll have all the fresh food you want.

A door slams and GARY and KELLY bustle in.

GARY Don't go hanging around with Sally. It's near supper time and what good are those Newells anyway?

KELLY They only wanted me to stay for supper and I wanted to because they were having seal meat.

GARY Seal meat!! Yucky!!

GEORGE Kids, will you quiet down? Because I got a big enough headache already. And Gary, I don't want you talking that way about the Newells. They are a nice family.

MARGARET Like Gary says, Kelly, I don't want you hanging around with those Newells, leave alone eatin' their food!! George, why don't we just go Goose Bay? You can get a job, I can have running water, the kids will have proper schooling because the school is closing down. Maybe life will be better. If it don't work out, we can always come back.

KELLY Not in a million years! I'm not leaving!!

FERN Yeah, let's go. Then I can see two live TV channels!

GARY Maybe it's not a bad idea. I'll get away from the hunting and fishing and maybe I'll be able to do something I want to do.

GEORGE Hey, everybody, that is not a bad idea, at least there's some entertainment up there! (*holds up a bottle*)

SCENE 3

Rigolet, 1985. Everyone is sitting around the table. They have just finished supper.

LILY Mmmmm! What a hearty meal. I wonder why Gary wouldn't let Kelly stay for supper. They must have something awful good, to walk away from seal meat.

JEFF I know! I believe Margaret MacKenzie is contrary as the weather anyway!

GRANDM. More than likely they got old store-bought canned food and Marg can't even cook that right, for land's sake.

SALLY I sure wish Kelly could've stayed here and enjoyed the seal meat. It won't be long now before we might not be able to get any, with that ice-breaker up there scaring them all out of Lake Melville.

JIM You're right, that ice-breaker is really gonna do some damage. We can't even get down Back Bay with that track tore in the ice.

GRANDM. Lily dear, can you help me to my room, it's time for my nap.

LILY and GRANDMOTHER leave.

JEFF Jim, did you get the dry wood in for the night?

JIM No, I guess I'd better get it in before it gets too dark.

LILY walks back in.

LILY Come on, Sally, let's get these dishes off the table.

KELLY enters, upset and crying.

KELLY Mrs. Newell, Mrs. Newell, I don't wanna go, I don't wanna go!!

LILY Go where, child?

KELLY Mummy and Daddy says we gotta go Goose Bay, and I just don't wanna go!

JIM enters with dry wood, while JEFF is speaking.

JEFF Now why would they go and do a thing like that?

SALLY Mother hates this place. She says there's no decent food, no running water and she says she's had enough of this place.

JIM What's wrong with this place, it suits me just fine, and I'm sure it suits you, too, doesn't it, Kelly?

KELLY Yes? But what can I do?

LILY I don't know, child. I just don't know.

SCENE 4

Goose Bay, 1990. Margaret is knitting, George is reading a newspaper and drinking, Kelly is reading a book, and Gary is smoking and reading a comic.

MARGARET George, did you get the welfare money today? I wants to go to bingo tonight. The jackpot is five hundred dollars to go!

GEORGE Money, money, always wantin' money! You spend all mine and I have none for myself.

MARGARET All you do is drink it anyway.

KELLY All you two ever do is fight. I wish I was back in Rigolet.

MARGARET I don't want to hear tell of that place, leave alone see it.

GARY Rigolet? Who would want to go there? There's nothing to do in that place.

KELLY At least if you were down there, you wouldn't have broken into the drugstore to get those pills and ended up in jail for a year.

GARY Mind your own business. Life must be awful dull being a goodie-two-shoes all the time.

KELLY As soon as I get the chance, I'm going back to Rigolet.

MARGARET Give me some money, George, 'til I gets out of here.

GEORGE All I got is this five dollar bill. (*He pulls money out of his pocket.*)

MARGARET (*Grabs the money.*) That'll do. (*Exiting.*)

George Don't expect to find me here when you get back.

Margaret I'm not worried.

FERN enters.

FERN What's on TV?

GEORGE Don't know, don't care. I'm getting the hell out of here. (*Gets up to leave*).

FERN Where you goin'?

GEORGE I'm getting out of this house tonight and taking the first plane back to Rigolet!

KELLY Yeah, and I want to come too!

GARY Who cares if you're going? I'm not! I suppose you're taking that witch of a Gladys with you!

GEORGE (*Grabs GARY by collar*.) I don't want any jailbird dope addict talking like that about my Gladys!! You stopped being my son long ago. Come on, Kelly, let's go.

GEORGE and KELLY walk off stage. FERN is still watching TV, and GARY reads his comic. Time lapse. A short time later, MARGARET enters.

MARGARET George, where are you? I needed one more for the jackpot!!

GARY He and Kelly left a while ago. He's going back to Rigolet and he's taking that no-good Gladys with him.

MARGARET It had to happen sooner or later, all that bum ever did was drink anyway.

FERN How can you say such a thing? He came here to please you, and you never cared about him. All you ever think about is yourself. You made his life miserable, so Daddy found someone else to make him happy.

GARY Shut up, Fern, and go back to your TV! You got no right to talk to Mother like that. So just shut up!

FERN Shut up! I won't shut up. I'll get my own place. I make enough money now to do whatever I want!

FERN walks out.

SCENE 5

Rigolet, 1990. GRANDMOTHER enters, supported by JIM, and MOTHER enters, supported by SALLY and a MINISTER. All sit down, all crying except the MINISTER.

LILY Why did it have to happen? Jeff was such a young man, such a good man...

GRANDM. He was so caring. I remember one time...

SALLY It's all their fault and now Daddy's dead and gone, lost in the ice-cold water, all because of the ice breakers, cutting up the Bay. I'll stop them if it's the last thing I do!!!

MINISTER There, there child, he's gone to a far better place with the Lord, and he'll never again feel pain. You should be happy for him, not sad.

SALLY exits.

LILY But how can I go on without him? Life doesn't matter anymore.

JIM Somehow I'll take care of you, Mother. Even though it's impossible to hunt seals, we'll pull through on other wild meat.

GRANDM. I always knew you were a good boy, Jeff, just like Dad.

All the women suddenly cry.

JIM Dad has left us, Grandmother. I'm Jim, your grandson.

LILY Come on, Grandma, time for your nap.

Jim That's all right, Mother, I'll take her.

JIM and GRANDMOTHER leave.

- LILY Now with Jeff gone it's gonna be hard to take care of Grandmother and my family too. How am I going to support us all? Where's the money gonna come from? I never thought I'd have to go on welfare.
- MINISTER I'll try to make arrangements for Grandmother to go to the home in Goose Bay if you want.
- LILY Thank you, Reverend, that would be so kind of you. I wouldn't know how to go about it myself.
- GRANDM. (*from off-stage*) I hears you. I'm not going!! Now that Jeff's gone, you got your chance to get rid of me, but I won't leave Rigolet!! Not while I'm alive!!
- JIM It'll be all right, Grandma.
- LILY (*to MINISTER*) I never wanted to get rid of her, but I just can't take care of her all by myself.
- MINISTER I understand, Mrs. Newell. Sometimes life seems so cruel, but it will all be made clear on the last day.
- LILY There can't be any God, or he wouldn't have let this happen to my Jeff.
- MINISTER Everything happens for a reason, and his death must have been for some purpose.

GEORGE and KELLY enter. Greetings.

- GEORGE I just got back to Rigolet and heard about Jeff's accident. You have my deepest sympathy.
- LILY Where's Marge and the kids?
- GEORGE I've had enough of life in Goose Bay. Marge and the kids can have that life if they want to. Kelly and I prefer life here at home.
- KELLY Where's Jim?

LILY He'll be so glad to see you girl, he's been waiting so long for you to come back. Now you can be my daughter. Something has to be done about those ships before I lose my son too.

SALLY enters and goes to centre stage. Lights dim. One light on SALLY.

Sally I am the President of the LIA and I wish to announce the last trip of the MV Arctic. We the native Labradorians have won our rights and we now control our own destiny. The outsiders will control us NO MORE!!!

All sing verses 1 & 3 of the Ode to Labrador.

Energy to Change the World

Postville, 2008

B.L. Morrison School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Being confronted with the fact that a moratorium may be taking place, different people have many different views on the subject, whether it is Aurora workers, Nunatsiavut representatives or local town members. The decision for the moratorium goes ahead, for better or for worse.

ORIGINAL CAST

ADAM	Shane Gear
JACOB	Gregory Jacque
TIFFANY	Gillian Gear
SPEAKER 1	Grant Gear
CITIZEN 1	Bronson Jacque
CITIZEN 2	Jessica Sheppard
CITIZEN 3	Heather Edmunds
NATALIE	Heather Edmunds
NUNATSIAVUT REP 1	Bronson Jacque
NUNATSIAVUT REP 2	Jessica Sheppard
NUNATSIAVUT REP 3	Heather Edmunds

TEACHER ADVISOR

Jennifer Baker

SCENE 1

Workers of Aurora Energy Inc. are arriving back in Postville (on chopper) after a two-week shift in camp. Chopper noise is heard. The 3 workers take off their headphones, exit the "chopper".

JACOB Thanks for the lift.

Chopper takes off - recording of chopper.

ADAM Wow, it's great to be back home in Postville.

TIFFANY Your family will be glad to have you back for this two-week turnaround.

JACOB Yeah, you're lucky to live in such a great spot and only have to leave home for a couple of weeks at a time. Poor Tiffany and me, we spend three months at a time before we get a chance to go home to our families in Vancouver.

ADAM Yeah, I'm lucky all right. The pay is great, even if it is really hard work.

TIFFANY Any plans for your break, Adam? Will you be taking the wife and kids to the cabin, or maybe doing a little fishing?

ADAM Oh, for sure. But first we have to think about that public meeting that's going on tonight at the community centre.

JACOB Yes, we'll all be there to give William Wayland some support. It's his job as liaison officer for Aurora to hear the concerns of the community and take them back to the Company to get some answers.

TIFFANY You're kind of caught in the middle, aren't you, Adam? I mean you must have family members and friends who want the

Nunatsiavut Government to stop the mine. So many people are afraid of uranium because of the effects of radiation.

- ADAM That's right. The Company has had experts come in and tell the people that this deposit of uranium is very low grade, and the effects of its radiation are no worse than things like using a microwave oven or sitting at a computer all day. But some people don't believe that.
- TIFFANY If Nunatsiavut does impose a 3-year moratorium on the mine, Jacob and I will just be sent to work at other projects of Aurora Energy in other places, but what effect will it have on you, Adam?
- ADAM Well, for one thing, there are certainly no other jobs around here that pay the salary I'm getting now. My wife will have to go back to work, if she can get back on as a clerk in the store. And as for me, I may have to try for a job with Voisey's Bay, or even on the island for their new project at Hebron. Then I'll be like you guys - - away from home for maybe three months at a time.
- TIFFANY That will be hard on your wife and kids.
- JACOB Look on the bright side, you two! Maybe the moratorium will be voted down and the mine will go ahead right on schedule.
- ADAM I guess the meeting tonight will help our representatives make up their minds which way to vote. I'll see you both there. (*Starts to leave.*)
- JACOB Yeah, later, Adam. I'll meet you around the refreshment table!

JACOB and TIFFANY exit opposite. Lights down

SCENE 2

ADAM'S wife, NATALIE, is cooking supper. ADAM enters and NATALIE throws her arms around his neck, smiling.

NATALIE Adam! It's so good to see you!

ADAM You too! Two weeks in, two weeks out, I really can't complain, but I hope the two weeks home lasts longer! (*Adam takes a sniff of his house*) Something smells really good. What are you cooking?

NATALIE That would be your favourite meal, caribou stir-fry.

ADAM (*licking his lips*) Yummmmm, let's dig in. Kids! I'm home... hey, where is everybody?

NATALIE They're gone to the gym. So it's just the two of us! A chance to get caught up on all the news. (*They begin eating; after a short while she continues, disappointedly.*) Adam, I've been hearing things around town...

ADAM (*surprised*) Yeah, like what, Natalie?

NATALIE Well, I don't know if this is true or not, but there have been some people talking about the Nunatsiavut Government holding a vote... something about stopping the mine. If this moratorium is put in place, what will we do? Torngat Fisheries closed our fish plant last year, and there haven't been any homes built in Postville by Torngat Housing in the last couple of years. Where will you find a job? What's really going on? You work for Aurora, you must know.

ADAM Yes, it's true, the Nunatsiavut representatives will be voting to see if they want to impose a moratorium to temporarily stop the mine or not. There's a public meeting tonight at the community centre for people to ask questions, and for our representatives to get a feeling of how the people want them to vote. What really bugs me is that the mine affects Postville more than any other community, but all the communities will have representatives

voting. Postville is only one of five communities voting, and I'm not sure that the other towns see the project the same way we do.

NATALIE Yeah, I guess you're right, Adam. And if our own town is split on both sides of this issue, how can we expect the other communities to agree? I'm afraid the vote will be pretty close, but I hope the moratorium doesn't pass. (*Awkward silence.*)

ADAM This supper is really good, I must say. (*Looks at Natalie, smiling.*)

NATALIE Thanks... but thinking about all of our bills, and the new skidoo we were going to buy this fall, I'm not hungry anymore...

She gets up and leaves the dinner table, leaving ADAM by himself. Lights down.

SCENE 3

A public meeting being held at the local recreation hall, where an Aurora speaker is standing, addressing the crowd of local citizens.

SPEAKER Good evening, everyone. I know that you all have many questions that you want to ask, which is why we are having this public meeting. By way of introduction, my name is William Wayland and many of you already know me. Nunatsiavut Government has been in support of Aurora's mining activities in the early stages of exploration, and even has allowed drilling for core samples of uranium ore. We are now at the point where we need further commitment to begin an open-pit mine and actually extract the product from the ground. So, if we could get started, and ask questions one at a time, I'm sure I will try to answer to the best of my ability.

CITIZEN 1 (*Stands.*) How will this mine benefit our community, and Labrador?
(*Sits.*)

- SPEAKER That's a great question. If the mine is allowed to go ahead, it will benefit Labrador as a whole by getting itself noticed as a source of uranium worldwide. As you are aware, Aurora does its best to try and help each community; donations are usually given moments after the request. In addition to that, we are committed to hiring local people, and training those who are willing to learn. It will be a great career for many local residents. (*sits*)
- CITIZEN 2 (*Stands.*) I understand that the market never stays in one spot; it's always going higher or lower. I'm just wondering with the price of uranium going down and you selling it for maybe \$40.00 a pound, would this be enough to break even with finances? (*Sits.*)
- SPEAKER With the great amount of low radiation uranium we have found, each pound costs \$43.00. However, we will not sell it at that price because we know that different companies are competing to get uranium for electricity, to replace hydro, and they will even sign contracts to buy uranium before it's even processed. Therefore, we know we have it, and they want it so badly we will more than likely sell it for about 20 to 30 dollars more than the cost price. (*Sits.*)
- CITIZEN 3 (*Stands.*) What about the environment? There's a lot of talk about tailings that have to be disposed of somehow. What about the water and the wildlife? And what about the open-pit mine when the uranium is all gone? Will you just leave the land with giant holes in it?
- SPEAKER We are dedicated to make sure that we have the highest standards of workplace safety, health, and environmental protection. The process that we have underlined was to cover back in those holes, making sure that the land can recover its beauty. If we make a mess, we will clean it up. We also are looking at ways of dealing with the

tailings and we will present some choices to the people later on.

(*Sits.*)

CITIZEN 1 (*Stands.*) I don't know why everybody's so negative about radio activity! We only have one radio station here, and I for one think it could use a whole lot more activity!

CITIZEN 2 Oh sit down, Hank. (*Others laugh and whisper.*)

SPEAKER (*Laughing.*) I would like to thank each and every one of you for your questions and concerns. There are refreshments over there next to Tiffany, (*points to TIFFANY*) and if you think of any other questions, just look me up afterwards and I will gladly hear you out.

Lights down.

SCENE 4

Nunatsiavut government representatives are sitting around the table, dressed in traditional dickies, with their hands folded.

REP 1 (*Stands.*) You all know why we are here; we have a very important decision to make about our land. This decision regards the moratorium; should we put a stop to Aurora's plans for an open pit mine or let them go ahead with their mining? (*Sits.*)

REP 2 (*Stands.*) I believe we should all vote yes to the moratorium. Look at all of the different health concerns uranium can and will cause, look at the damage it will do to habitats, the land itself, the wildlife, the fish, the water. And what about the tailings that are supposed to be so dangerous? A moratorium will give the Nunatsiavut Government time to put some guidelines in place to control Aurora's activities, and it will give them time to come up with a suitable plan to dispose of the tailings. (*Sits.*)

- REP 3 (*Stands.*) To every situation there are negative effects, but let's look at the positives for a moment. Aurora has stated that they have the highest standards of environmental safety, as well as health safety. They have told us that they will find a way to contain the tailings, and get rid of the material. They are in the process of figuring that out. What if we stop them now, and they end up pulling out altogether and getting their uranium from somewhere else? We need the mine for employment. What else do we have? (*Sits.*)
- REP 2 (*Stands.*) If they do not know how to get rid of these tailings as of yet, my vote remains the same. (*Sits.*)
- REP 3 I have been speaking to some of the elders and they say we need to consider the young people. Living off the land was fine in their day, but nobody can survive or raise a family that way today. Our young men and women need jobs. In their day there was barely enough money to survive and almost everybody in Labrador was poor, but now we have the chance to make good money and have a standard of living that was never possible before. I know how I am going to vote.
- REP 1 (*Stands.*) Thanks to everyone who put in some interesting points; now we have to get down to business. All in favour of the moratorium, raise your hand.

Four of seven hands are raised. Postville's two reps do not raise their hands.

- REP 1 Then it's final, the moratorium will be imposed on Aurora for three years. Their drilling operations must stop immediately and cannot resume until the moratorium is lifted. Meeting adjourned.

Lights down.

SCENE 5

The news of the moratorium being put in place over Aurora has spread fast throughout the coast of Labrador. TIFFANY and JACOB are having a small discussion over a cup of coffee on their last day.

TIFFANY You know Jacob, I'm sure gonna miss this place. (*Drinking her coffee*)

JACOB Yeah, but look on the bright side. We may be back here in three years! (*Jacob cracks a grin and Tiffany shares a laugh*)

TIFFANY (*quietly*) I guess so, but three years is very long time, and I may find something else.

JACOB Well I know that I'll be back. Aurora is the best company I have worked for yet, and Labrador is a beautiful place with some really great people. (*Drinks*)

TIFFANY No doubt, but it sure seems as all of this went by so fast. (*Tiffany stares around*) I have many memories and friends that I will never forget. Like Adam and his wife, Natalie. (*Tiffany wipes her eyes; Adam enters*)

ADAM Hey Jacob, hi, Tiffany. I just dropped by to say goodbye.

JACOB Hey, man, it's only temporary. Your ugly mug is the first thing I want to see when we get back to Postville after this moratorium is over. After that it will be smooth sailing all the way!

TIFFANY Promise you'll stay in touch, Adam. I don't want to lose my friends; that is something that no government or moratorium can take away from me.

ADAM Sure thing, Tiffany. There's always Facebook, right?

TIFFANY smiles.

JACOB Of course, Tiffany! We should be happy about everything we shared. It has been unforgettable. Between the beautiful scenery, the beautiful facilities, and the beautiful Labrador women (*looks at crowd with a smile*) I was beginning to get spoiled.

TIFFANY Adam, what are you and Natalie going to do now?

ADAM I don't know yet. I'll draw EI for the winter. I mean playing Guitar Hero and watching hockey never gets boring, right, and we'll see what happens next spring. My people have survived here on the coast of Labrador for thousands of years, and we have always found a way.

TIFFANY That's right, Adam. Not all of Labrador's energy is in the ground, eh? Most of it is in its people!

JACOB Right on! (*Lifts his coffee cup.*) Here's to Labrador Energy!

SCENE 6

Each student one at a time comes out on stage, saying one word of the phrase, "Labrador—Enough energy to change the world!" written on large cards.

This Isn't Right

Rigolet, 2016

Les Rigolettes, Northern Lights Academy



SCENE 1

The SPEAKER is standing downstage centre, speaking to the audience. A group of people are watching on downstage right.

SPEAKER They are putting people's health at risk.

CROWD murmurs in agreement.

CROWD This will change our way of life forever!

SPEAKER They are creating a public health hazard. They are refusing to clear cut and remove the topsoil in the flooding area. This will release poisonous methyl-mercury into the water, and our traditional food will become contaminated!

CROWD I will not stand for this!

CROWD murmurs in agreement.

CROWD Make Muskrat Right!

CASSIE walks onto stage. As she approaches ALISON, the chanting sounds fade.

CASSIE taps her on the shoulder. Lights focus on CASSIE.

CASSIE Excuse me? What's going on here?

ALISON Um, this is a protest.

CASSIE For what?

ALISON We are rallying against the Muskrat Falls project. have you heard of that?

CASSIE Well, I've heard of it. Look, I just moved here. What is this all about?

ALISON So, a while ago, the government announced a brand new hydro-electric project on the Churchill river. It was supposed to bring cheap, clean power to Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.

CASSIE But this sounds pretty good to me. Why are you all protesting against this?

ALISON Um... It's hard to explain. Here, Shania can explain this better. Hey, Shania!

SHANIA Yeah?

ALISON Cassie wants to know why we're protesting against this. You're better at explaining than me.

SHANIA Okay. So this project is a dam of Muskrat Falls, on the Churchill River. The problem is, the company in charge is refusing to clear away the flooded area.

CASSIE So what does that mean?

SHANIA When this area is flooded, a chemical called methyl-mercury is going to be released from the soil into the water, and this chemical happens to be harmful to humans.

NATHAN When they say harmful, they mean it. It could make you go blind!

CASSIE is shocked.

SHANIA But, if they clear-cut the area and remove all of the soil, there will be far less methyl-mercury exposure.

ALISON And that's what we want. This methyl-mercury will climb up the food chain until it is in our food!

NATHAN This is going to endanger our very way of life!

CASSIE Oh, but isn't this electricity still good?

NATHAN This is our lives at risk!

CASSIE Well, yeah, I guess so.

ALISON looks over at the SPEAKER.

ALISON It looks like the protest is over. If you want, you can come over to my house tomorrow, we can talk more about it.

CASSIE Uh, okay.

Lights return to normal. Sounds return.

SPEAKER I want to leave the government this message: Don't play Russian roulette with our lives! We will not stop until changes are made!

CROWD cheers. Lights fade.

SCENE 2

Lights up. CASSIE is entering the door to their home, set contains door at stage left, couch, chair and small coffee table. Set is repeated in Scene 3. CASSIE'S MOTHER is sitting in a chair, reading a book.

CASSIE Hey, I'm home.

CASSIE walks over and sits down at the couch.

MOTHER Hi there, dear, how was your day?

CASSIE It was fine.

MOTHER Did you meet anybody?

CASSIE Well, I met a few people at a rally down by the dock.

MOTHER A rally?

CASSIE Yeah, there was a gathering today protesting against the Muskrat Falls Project.

MOTHER Oh, that. Look dear, I wouldn't get caught up in that if I were you.

CASSIE What? Why not?

MOTHER It's just, well I don't really see what those people are going on about. "Poisoning us." It seems to me that the government is doing the right thing, giving us this clean energy.

CASSIE Yes, but don't you think it's sort of bad, for them to ignore the idea of this project contaminating their food supply?

MOTHER Just remember what your dad always said. Anything in life that is worthwhile involves some risk.

CASSIE looks troubled.

CASSIE (*hesitantly*) Yeah, I suppose I see what you mean.

Lights fade on stage left. CASSIE walks over to stage right and sits down on her bed. She turns on her laptop. Voices are projected through speakers, describing quotes argumentatively, for and against the project. As the quotes continue, voices rise in volume, until it is a roar of voices, and CASSIE closes the laptop. Beat, then lights out. The lines found below will be recorded and not spoken onstage.

VOICE Announced a 6.2 billion dollar deal to develop the Lower Churchill hydroelectric megaproject...

VOICE Downstream in Lake Melville, the report finds, methyl-mercury levels are expected to increase by as much as 380 percent if only partial clearing takes place in the reservoir...

VOICE If people in the area are told not to eat fish, seabirds and seal because of high mercury levels, they will be compensated.

VOICE As Labrador Inuit we cannot be bought, and most certainly (not) by a project that will impact the way of life and the future of Labrador Inuit and other Labradorians.

VOICE The development of this resource has been researched, studied, considered, and resolved by some of the greatest minds in the world.

VOICE The development of Muskrat Falls will power homes and businesses across Newfoundland and Labrador with clean, renewable energy for generations to come.

VOICE I consider this to be what we would call cultural genocide, because our culture will die because of this.

The voices become jumbled together, as their speed increases.

VOICE Muskrat Falls will mean an end to dependence on oil...

VOICE It's very important that our lives matter.

VOICE We're working very hard to address the concerns.

VOICE We are running out of time.

VOICE We will take the time to study the findings further.

SCENE 3

CASSIE meets up with ALISON at her house, set is repeated from Scene 2 with small changes to distinguish it from previous scene. Stage right is changed to a kitchen, with table and chairs. CASSIE knocks, and is answered by ALISON.

ALISON Hello! Come in, make yourself at home.

CASSIE Hi.

Both walk over and sit down at the couch.

ALISON Would you like something to drink? Tea? Coffee?

CASSIE Tea's fine.

ALISON All right, just a minute.

ALISON walks to the kitchen.

CASSIE I did some research last night.

ALISON Oh yeah? What do you think about it now?

CASSIE Well...

ALISON walks back to the couch with two cups of tea.

ALISON I guess it is a lot to take in after just hearing about it.

CASSIE Yeah, it is. I didn't realize how much of an impact it would have on you.

ALISON It's our way of life. I can't imagine losing my connection with the land. This food is important to all of us.

CASSIE I can't stop thinking about the benefits, but then I look at the cost of it all, and...

ALISON My family and I believe that this is too big of a price to pay.

CASSIE Yes, and I see that, but... I don't know.

ALISON Well, it seems quite simple to me.

The door opens. ALISON'S brother NATHAN and their GRANDMOTHER walk in; NATHAN has two partridges in his hand.

NATHAN Hi! We just got some partridges!

ALISON Ooh, great!

CASSIE Uh, what's a partridge?

NATHAN and his GRANDMOTHER look at each other, confused, then NATHAN holds up the partridges.

NATHAN This!

GRANDM. Hello, what's your name?

CASSIE I'm Cassie.

GRANDM. Well, nice to meet you! So, you're staying for supper, I assume?

CASSIE Oh, um, sure!

ALISON Yes, the salmon just finished cooking!

GRANDM. Oh, great! Come along, Nathan, you can help me set the table?

NATHAN Uh, okay.

NATHAN and GRANDMOTHER cross to stage left.

ALISON So, anyway, there's going to be a presentation at the town hall tomorrow, it's going to explain all of the effects of methyl-mercury, and all of that stuff. Wanna come with me?

CASSIE Sure, I'd like to know more about this methyl-mercury that's causing such a big fuss.

ALISON I think it would be good information to know.

GRANDM. Supper's ready!

The GRANDMOTHER sets the platter of salmon on the table.

ALISON Oh, you're going to love the salmon, it's my favourite.

CASSIE Ooh, Yum!

CASSIE and ALISON cross to stage left.

GRANDM. Oh, it smells good today!

They all sit down at the table.

NATHAN Save the tail for me, please!

GRANDM. Well, I guess this will be the last salmon that we'll have.

CASSIE How come?

GRANDM. Next year, like it or not, the methyl-mercury will be in the water, and that means it will be in the fish too.

CASSIE Oh, right...

NATHAN And I don't really want to eat poison fish.

GRANDM. And it's not just the fish, either. The seals and the sea-birds eat the fish too, and they eat lots of them, which means more and more mercury.

CASSIE I didn't realize that.

GRANDM. I remember when Dad would fry up a fish for our breakfast each morning... I never got sick of it. It is one of my favorite foods.

CASSIE This isn't right.

Beat, then stage goes black.

SCENE 4

Seats are placed on either side of a SPEAKER. CASSIE, ALISON, and her family walk to their seats.

SPEAKER Thank you all for coming here tonight. We have put together this presentation to inform everyone on the effects of methyl-mercury, which will be released as a result of the flooding of the Muskrat Falls reservoir.

Methyl-Mercury is a chemical found in the soil. It is not harmful as long as it is in the ground, but it will be released into the water when the dam is flooded. Now, clearing away all of the fauna and soil in the flooding area will decrease the amount of this chemical released into the environment to a safe level, but there are no plans at the moment for the company to clear away anything.

This methyl-mercury is a neurological toxin, that is, it affects the central nervous system: the brain and spinal cord. Its effects are very similar to that of Cerebral Palsy, which include problems with

movement and coordination, lung function impairment and decreased mental functioning. These effects are most prominent in infants, and it may cause growth problems, as well as sight and hearing impairment. Of course, these effects vary in intensity based on how much of the chemical one is being exposed to.

NATHAN So, how much methyl-mercury will we actually be exposed to?

SPEAKER That is an excellent question. Based on the research that has recently taken place, we believe that mercury levels in and around Lake Melville will increase by 380%, if there is no clearing of the reservoir area. However, if all of the topsoil is cleared away, the methyl-mercury levels are estimated to rise by only 13%. This is what we are fighting to achieve.

ALISON I know that to avoid this poisoning we have to stop eating our traditional food. Can you explain why?

SPEAKER The methyl-mercury that is in the water will affect all organisms within the marine environment. This includes seals and birds that prey upon fish. The higher up the food chain it goes, the more mercury there is. It starts in the plankton, then a tiny organism will eat that, and another will eat that, on and on until it comes to the fish and other animals that are eaten by people, and as this methyl-mercury rises up the food chain, it accumulates, which means harmful doses end up in our food.

If you have any more questions, we have put together a pamphlet about all that we have discussed tonight. Thank you for coming.

Applause. Lights out.

SCENE 5

CASSIE walks through the door of her house. Stage left is identical to that of Scene 2. Her MOTHER is on the couch reading a newspaper.

CASSIE Hello.

MOTHER Hi.

CASSIE I just got back from this presentation—and before you say anything, yes, I know that you told me not to get involved, but I think this is important. I'm going to the protest later, and I want you to come with me. Here, look at this, I got it from the lecture.

MOTHER takes the pamphlet and reads it.

MOTHER Where did they get their information from? I have read that the company involved with the project has said that the flooding will not affect any of the people in this area.

Where are you getting your information from? Research has proven that the flooding will cause methyl-mercury levels to rise to a dangerous level for the people who eat the food!

This research that you speak of was undertaken on behalf of the government fighting against Muskrat Falls! Who says it isn't biased?

CASSIE If you actually research this, you would know that the research by the Nunatsiavut Government had covered a larger area and spent more time upon it than that of the company involved with the project. Who says they aren't biased?

MOTHER Perhaps, but they're in too far now to stop this project! Too much money has already been put into it!

CASSIE You see, that's the thing, they don't want to shut the project down! They want all of the land that will be flooded to be cleared of

vegetation and soil, because that will reduce the levels of mercury to a point which isn't harmful. If you're going to take a side in this argument, at least get your facts straight!

MOTHER Okay, now you're going too far!

CASSIE All right, I'm sorry, but I just want you to see that these people that are fighting for their culture, these land protectors, are doing the right thing.

MOTHER Why are you being so passionate about this? This isn't your fight. You don't have to go to this protest.

CASSIE This isn't just about them. It's about all of us. This is a human rights issue.

CASSIE walks away. MOTHER sits back down, picks up the pamphlet, reads it again. Beat. Lights out.

SCENE 6

CASSIE walks onstage, meets her friends standing in a group, holding signs.

CASSIE Hello!

ALISON Oh, hi!

CASSIE What's going on?

SHANIA We were just talking to Nathan about the protest in Goose Bay. He just got back.

CASSIE Oh yeah, how did that go?

NATHAN It was good. We protested near the front gates of the worksite. We let the workers out, but kept anyone from getting in. I also took part in a walk to our local M.P.'s office. You know, I'm quite proud of how many people showed up.

CASSIE I'm really proud of all of the support that is being given, from all across Labrador, and all of Canada!

SHANIA And it's not only aboriginal people, everyone is supporting us.

NATHAN looks at watch.

NATHAN Okay, guys, looks like it will be starting soon.

ALISON You're coming with us to the rally, right Cassie?

CASSIE Yeah, but I don't have a sign.

SHANIA Oh, that's fine, we have a couple extra ones.

They all exit stage left.

SCENE 7

ALISON, CASSIE, SHANIA, and NATHAN are standing on either side of SPEAKER, who is downstage center.

SPEAKER Thank you all for coming, I am proud to see so many people show up for such an important issue. Today, I want to hear your voice, because this issue is about you. This is an open mic discussion; does anyone wish to speak?

ALISON walks up to the mic.

ALISON I'm here today for future generations. When I was younger, and I'm sure there are many out there that are proud of this as well, I had the privilege to shoot out of a rifle. My great-grandfather witnessed it. I'm sure he wouldn't want our culture to go down the drain. I want my children and grandchildren to have the same experience.

SPEAKER Thank you for your very touching words.

SHANIA walks towards the mic.

SHANIA So, this past summer I shot my very first seal. My parents and siblings were with me. I had this huge, happy expression on my face. My brother was trying so hard to kill one before me and my dad said, "Give your sister a try, b'hy." He handed me the gun and on my second shot I got a huge jar (seal). My brother got really jealous. I want to see my children and grandchildren feel the excitement I had when I hit the seal.

SPEAKER What a nice story. Thank you for sharing that with us. Anyone else?

CASSIE walks to the mic, hesitantly.

CASSIE I just moved here a week ago. I didn't know much about the Muskrat Falls project, but my new friends told me about it all, and I for one think this is terrible. I can't imagine losing such a big part of my life. Though it hasn't had much of an influence on me, it has for all of these people who call Labrador home. I want to Make Muskrat Right.

SPEAKER Thank you for sharing your thoughts. Thank you to everyone who spoke here today, I truly believe that the people of Labrador are resilient, and together, we can ensure that our land is protected for years to come.

Change Minds, Not the Climate

Rigolet, 2019

Les Rigolettes, Northern Lights Academy



ORIGINAL CAST AND CREW

REPORTER	Zoe Shiwak
AURORA	Ella Jacque
EMMA	Alison Palliser
PEARL WILKINS	Clear Blake-Pottle
AGNES	Ocean Pottle-Shiwak
SOUND	Taylor Shiwak

TEACHER ADVISOR

Jennifer Denty

Downstage right is a basic living room set with a couch, chair and coffee table. Downstage centre are two easy-to-move chairs. Downstage left is a basic bedroom set with a bed and desk or nightstand. Note: the basic living room set should experience a simple set design switch before Scene 5.

SCENE 1

Downstage center.

- REPORTER Are you comfortable with me recording our conversation for this interview?
- AURORA Yeah, no problem.
- REPORTER How did you come up with your famous slogan?
- AURORA It actually came to me in a dream one night.
- REPORTER Okay, what brings you to this rally today?
- AURORA I feel really strongly about the climate crisis and how it is affecting my community and our traditional lifestyle and culture.
- REPORTER Interesting. Can you explain that more?
- AURORA Our cultural practices such as hunting and fishing are forced to change and adapt to the change in climate.
- REPORTER Can you give me an example?
- AURORA The warmer waters are causing the animals' migration patterns to change, and they are no longer near the traditional migratory path. My uncle has been fishing in the same place for years, and now he notices that they aren't as plentiful as they were.
- REPORTER Fascinating. Have you noticed any other changes around your community?

AURORA One big change I noticed is the change in ice conditions. The ice freezing up later in the year and melting sooner than previous years. This affects the travel and hunting we do during that time of year.

REPORTER Are changes like these what inspired you to become an activist?

AURORA That's a big part of it, but...

AURORA looks up as if she is remembering. Cue flashback sound. The two chairs downstage center are removed.

SCENE 2

Downstage left.

AURORA I can't believe my parents made me get this job. It's the worst, all I do is go talk to old people.

EMMA At least you can go outside, I'm stuck inside with kids all day.

AURORA I'd much rather deal with kids. Have you ever tried talking to an old person all day? All they do is ramble on about the olden days.

EMMA Isn't that what you're supposed to do? I thought your job was to collect stories from the elders to create a digital archive.

AURORA Yeah, I guess you're right, but it doesn't make it any more fun.

EMMA But the money is fun.

AURORA I guess you're right. I'll just think about all the money I will have when I'm done with this job. (*Looks at her phone.*)

EMMA Anyways, lunch is almost over, we better get going.

AURORA Ughhh fine, I'll see you after work.

SCENE 3

Downstage right. AURORA knocks on the door.

- PEARL Hold on dear, gotta put the cats away. Don't want them getting outside. Go on, Whiskers. Mom got company.
- AURORA Uhhh, no rush? (*Opens door.*)
- PEARL Sorry for the wait. Come in, come in. Have a seat on the couch. Don't mind the fur.
- AURORA I'm working for the DHSD and we are putting together a digital archive of what life was like in the past. Are there any stories you want to share?
- PEARL Well, back in the spring of '62, I was on my little 12 when I saw a little kitty running across the road and I instantly fell in love. I remember like it was yesterday. Of course, Wilbur didn't want me to keep the cat, but ya knows I was gonna keep 'er. I named her Minnie. Turns out she was a boy. I never found out until she—well, he—started spraying around the house, and let me tell you, that made Wilbur want him even less. But I always gets my way. So Minnie became Minard and we kept him till the very end.
- AURORA That's a wholesome story, but uhhh, we are looking for stories based on the land and traditional practices.
- PEARL Ohhhh, I have a few of those too. This one time me and Wilbur were off fishing when we came across this huge polar bear. Don't see many of those as close to town anymore. Anyway, Wilbur got out his rifle and shot him right between the eyes. We dragged him onto the kamutik and took him home to be cleaned. Wilbur gathered the b'ys and cleaned the sucker up, and what a skin come off of that. We kept it in the living room and oh, how the cats loved it. Our third cat, KaKuktak, loved our rug. Slept on it everyday. Sadly, one day when I was runnin' to the door, I stomped on her cause she was blended

into the rug. She was all white, don't ya know? Poor girl had a broken leg. Never walked the same since.

AURORA Well, that's still not really what we are looking for, but thanks anyways.

PEARL I got some old pictures if you think that would help.

AURORA That would be perfect.

PEARL This one is a picture of my 7th cat, Patches. Now, he ran away shortly after we got him. But this one, God rest her soul, her name was Muffin. She was Whiskers' mom. She was blessed with 30 kittens in her life. Unfortunately, Wilbur and I were never blessed with our own litter, but we had our cats.

AURORA I think that's all for today. Thank you for your, uhhh, stories.

PEARL Glad I could help, dear. Sure you don't want a cup of tea before you goes?

AURORA No, that's okay, thanks.

AURORA leaves.

PEARL Oh, Mommy's coming now, darlings.

SCENE 4

Downstage left.

AURORA Oh my God, today was such a drag. This woman wouldn't stop talking about her cats.

EMMA Oh, you musta been at Mrs. Wilkins's house. She's always trying to drop her cats off at the youth centre. I swear to God she thinks they are humans.

AURORA You should have heard the way she talked about them, referring to them as her children and calling herself their mother.

EMMA It could be worse. A kid wanted to give me a present and so I opened my hand and this kid had the audacity to give me a piece of poop.

AURORA That's disgusting! I'd quit right then and there.

EMMA I thought about it, but the money's good.

AURORA Okay, you win. Your day was worse than mine.

EMMA I know.

EMMA starts having a sneezing fit.

AURORA What's on the go with you?

EMMA Not even a bless you?

AURORA Sorry. Bless you.

EMMA Wait, you were at Mrs. Wilkins's right?

AURORA Yea and wa?

EMMA You know I'm allergic to cats. You're basically a ball of fur. I gotta go.

AURORA True. It's late. I gotta go to bed, I got another long day with Mrs. Wilkins again tomorrow.

Sneezes as she leaves.

SCENE 5

AURORA wakes up, checks the time and jumps out of bed

AURORA Oh no! I'm late again. (*Grabs her books and rushes out of the bedroom towards center stage.*)

AURORA Gotta go, Mom!

MOM (voice) Are you at least going to get breakfast?

AURORA Mom, I'm already late. I gotta go, b'y!

AURORA is on her way towards stage right when she hears a cat scream/hiss and startled she drops her books.

AURORA That darn Mrs. Wilkins and her stupid cats.

AGNES Would you like help with that?

AURORA Yes, please.

AGNES Why are you in such a rush with all these books?

AURORA I'm late for work.

AGNES Where do you work?

AURORA I have a student job with the DHSD to collect stories from elders.

AGNES Ohh. You're the one doing the interviews?

AURORA Yeah, I'm actually on my way to see Mrs. Wilkins right now.

AGNES Would you like to come in here instead? I know Mrs. Wilkins can be a handful with her cats.

AURORA Uhh, I'm sure they wouldn't mind if I interviewed you instead. I can always go back to Mrs. Wilkins' tomorrow, I guess.

AGNES It's settled, then. Come on in.

They walk into her house downstage right.

AURORA You have a nice house, Mrs...

AGNES Just call me Agnes.

AURORA I'm here to collect your stories to create a digital archive. Would you mind sharing some stories of what life was like back when you were young, and would you mind if I recorded you?

AURORA turns on the record function on her iPhone. AGNES seems very interested in it.

AGNES Not at all. Well, back in 1853, I mean 1953, I was 13 when my Ataatak decided to take me hunting, and back then, not many fathers would take their daughters hunting. However, I loved being on the land and helping out with things my older brothers used to do. Anaana already had eight other girls to help her out. I had no interest in helping make the clothes and light the Kudlik, I mean stove. Anyways, I was out with my Ataatak and I couldn't help but notice the beauty of the land, the ice covering the ocean like a big blanket, the ice-capped mountains glistening in the sunlight that soaked into our skin and gave us a good brown palik. Gosh, I miss those days.

AURORA That sounds beautiful, Agnes.

AGNES Would you like a cup of tea before I finish my story?

AURORA Sure, thanks.

AGNES exits stage right and brings back a cup of tea.

AGNES So, what do you youngsters be up to these days?

AURORA Not much. Everyone is glued to their phones nowadays.

AGNES There was no such contraptions in my days. Our eyes were glued to the beauty of the land. Oh, how much the land has changed.

AURORA So how has the land changed since when you were younger?

AGNES Well for starters, the ice was more predictable and reliable for traveling in the winters and springs. Also the migration patterns of the animals have been changing and the hunters are having a harder time locating the most bountiful spots.

AURORA This information is all really helpful, Agnes.

AGNES Happy to help.

AURORA It looks like it's almost dinner time. Is it okay if I come back after lunch?

AGNES I'm always here if you need to find me.

AURORA I'll just clean this mug for you.

When AURORA is gone, AGNES slips a book into AURORA'S bag.

AGNES Don't forget your books, dear.

AURORA leaves.

SCENE 6

Downstage left. AURORA is on the phone with EMMA.

AURORA Give me a sec, Emma. I have to get my lunch out of my bag. Hold on. I'll put you on speaker.

AURORA reaches into her bag and pulls out her books and notices a book that isn't hers (the one that AGNES slipped into her pile).

AURORA Hmm, I must have taken this from Agnes's house.

AURORA opens the book and it starts to glow as the lights go down.

EMMA Ari? ARI? AURORA?

SCENE 7

Downstage center. Actors dressed in black show the following images with white props that are illuminated with a blacklight:

- [Music mixed with nature sounds] Fat polar bears and large iceberg.
- [Ice cracking sounds] Iceberg cracks and a tree emerges from behind
- [bird's chirping then tree crashing sound]. The tree dies.
- Skinny polar bears crawl across the stage and die tragically.
- [Fire sounds] Earth on fire.

SCENE 8

Downstage left

EMMA AURORAAAAA?
AURORA (*Dazed and confused.*) Woah, sorry, I zoned out for a bit there.
 Uhhhh, I gotta go. I'll call you back after.
EMMA Are you serious?
AURORA Yeah, I uhhhhh, gotta go.

SCENE 9

Downstage right. AURORA frantically knocks on AGNES'S door with no luck.

AURORA Hello? Agnes?
PEARL Aurora, what are you doing?
AURORA I'm looking for Agnes. This is her house, right?
PEARL Yeah, it was like 100 years ago. Well, at least that's what my mom told me.
AURORA What do you mean? I was here with her this morning.

- PEARL I was told that she was killed by the Spanish Flu in 1918. Are you sure it was this house?
- AURORA Yes, I'm sure, I accidentally took a book from her this morning. Look, I'll show you. Aurora looks into her book bag trying to find the book, but it isn't there anymore.
- AURORA I swear it was here a minute ago.
- PEARL Are you sure you're okay? Would you like to come in for a glass of water?
- AURORA I'm fine. It's just, I was umm, and she was, and the book.
- PEARL Okay, sweetie, let's get you home.

SCENE 10

Downstage left. AURORA goes to her room.

- AURORA Okay. Nothing happened, I'm not going crazy. Everything is gonna be okay.

AURORA turns on her TV and tries changing the channel, but it keeps going back to a news report about climate change.

- AURORA What is going on?

Keeps trying with no luck.

- AURORA What is this channel, anyway?

AURORA starts watching the climate rally news report.

- AURORA Forget this. I'm going to sleep.

AURORA Falls asleep. AGNES visits while she is asleep and puts a sign on her desk.

- AGNES Change their minds, not the climate. I believe in you, Aurora.

AGNES leaves.

SCENE 11

- AURORA Emma, I think I'm going insane. I can't stop thinking about the climate strikes. And this one phrase keeps replaying in my mind. My TV was messed up yesterday, and I couldn't watch anything but the climate strikes. I went to sleep and that woman I interviewed was in my dream talking to me. She was telling me to change the climate. I don't know what it all means.
- EMMA Calm down. Do you hear yourself right now? You sound like a madman. Please explain to me what you're trying to say to me.
- AURORA Well, yesterday I interviewed a woman named Agnes, and I accidentally took a book from her house and when I got home I opened it and it glowed and I saw all this stuff. So I went back to her house and she wasn't there and Mrs. Wilkins came and told me she died about 100 years ago of the Spanish Flu and I don't know what to think.
- EMMA What house did you go to?
- AURORA You know the one across from Mrs. Wilkins?
- EMMA Yeah. Nobody has lived in the house for ages.
- AURORA What do you mean?
- EMMA I mean that house has been deserted for years. My nan told me that when Agnes died, no one ever went back in there.
- AURORA But I was in the house yesterday! I was talking to Agnes! I'm not mad. I know what happened.
- EMMA Okay, calm down. Let's just say that you're right and that you were talking to a ghost. What do you think she wanted?

AURORA I think it has something to do with how the world has changed and it needs our help. It got me thinking about how the climate crisis is very important. I can't explain it. I just feel like I have to do something about it.

EMMA Well, tomorrow there is a climate strike here in town. If you are still feeling the way you are, you should go and join them.

AURORA Yeah, actually, I think I will.

SCENE 12

Downstage center. The two chairs are back.

REPORTER So? What inspired you to become an activist?

AURORA You wouldn't believe me if I told you...

4. Internal Stresses within Communities

Some of these plays depict differences of opinion between generations on what is valid in Inuit culture, while others question an identity based on cultural norms of the past. A good example is *Issumatsasiuk*, where a student must choose between attending a science fair or going hunting with his father. It is clear that students felt the need to put their own stamp on their identity. As one early participant said, once their long-term teacher-advisor moved on they decided to write a comedy the next year and steer away from themes of traditional presentation of Inuit. "We wanted to live in the modern world where we didn't have to use our traditional clothing and so on. In the last five or ten years we are embracing it a lot more." This complex view on the value of tradition versus the practical considerations of life on the coast is examined with some sophistication in the Postville play on uranium development, where the characters of the elders point out that the current realities of young people needed to be addressed, saying that living off the land was fine in their day but nobody can survive or raise a family that way now.

In Nain's 2012 play, *UnikKausiuvut: Our Changing Story*, a familiar complaint by a grandmother about the use of technology in place of traditional forms of communication led to a solution whereby young people used social media to record and share traditional stories. Caroline Nochasak reported that in producing this play the actors wanted to connect two issues: the concern people have with the overuse of technology and the distress felt by young people that they don't have the traditional skills they see in their older community members. These plays shows how compromise and mutual respect can work to resolve internal disagreements.

AMALIA *God! Where would we go? What would we do? I couldn't leave here!
My family is here! My friends! My roots are here!*

SYBIL *And that's exactly how they felt. Leaving their home, the only place
they knew for their whole life. And they had no choice. They had to
go. Make no wonder they talked about the old days so much. Their
bodies might have moved but their spirit stayed in Hebron.*

—1995 Amos Comenius School, Hopedale
IkKaumajammik: Memories

Sons of Labrador

Nain, 1980

Jens Haven Memorial School

Written by Jens Haven Memorial School students in grades 8 through 11.

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

The students wanted to show just how their lives changed and why. Many of the changes have come due to the fact that northern Labrador has become more accessible to outsiders through the means of improved transportation. This accessibility has led to the introduction of new ideas and lifestyles to the people of northern Labrador. It has resulted in the uprooting of their culture and the losing of their life skills, such as hunting, trapping, fishing, and crafts. It has led to a breakdown of their society through excessive use of alcohol which has resulted in a breakdown of the family life and its present conditions. There is some ad libbing throughout the play.

ORIGINAL CAST

Junior Ford	JOSHUA (the grandfather)
Maria Star	TABEA (the blind grandmother)
Heather Denniston	SYBELLA (the mother)
Gary Baikie	HENRY (the 19-year-old boy)
Marni Knight	JUDY (the pregnant 17-year-old and narrator)
Sarah Leo	DORIS (the 14-year-old girl)
Jerry Uvloriak	NICKY (the 12-year-old boy)

TEACHER ADVISOR

Catherine Kaulback

SCENE 1

The family is gathered around the kitchen table. The grandparents are eating seal. The others are eating canned foods from the local government store.

- DORIS Beans! Again!
- NICKY Yeah, we always have beans.
- MOTHER You should be glad you're getting anything at all with the money we've got.
- JOSHUA I remember when there was no stores and we had to live off the land. But now, everybody lives off the government.
- HENRY This is modern times now, not your old days. Times have changed.
- MOTHER Yeah—for the worse. The prices at the government store are some high. I had to pay \$2 for one loaf of bread!
- NICKY You should make some of your own bread. It would taste better.
- MOTHER Whenever I feel like making bread there is never any wood in the house.
- DORIS I know whose fault that is!
- NICKY I knows, too.
- HENRY What the Hell are you looking at me for?
- DORIS 'Cause you're the one that's supposed to do it.
- HENRY Yeah, I suppose if I get time when my cheque comes in—I might go wooding.
- JOSHUA If you got some money to get the gas to go wooding, might be able to get a caribou at the same time, because Jacko Merkeratsuk saw some up at Kingurertik Brook.

Eating continues. NARRATOR comes on.

NARRATOR This is a typical family situation which is happening in many of the coastal communities of Northern Labrador. Some of the problems that occur in the play are due to changing times. Though it may seem a bit exaggerated, the situations in this play are very real and show the many pressures of the changing times on these people.
(She takes a seat at the table.)

JOSHUA Good weather now. You boys should be off hunting. When I was young, I always had to be off hunting, but you boys are always sleeping and laying around.

NICKY How big was the biggest seal you caught?

JOSHUA 'Bout as big as you are!

NICKY Could you show me how to hunt seals some day?

DORIS Oh, shut up!

SYBELLA Nicky, are you planning on going to Children's Day down to church on Saturday?

NICKY *(excitedly)* Yeah, we've got to wear skin boots and the Brass Band is going to play.

HENRY Whatcha going to go there for? That's stupid.

NICKY Gee, Henry, it's going to be good.

JOSHUA Judy, you want to try some seal meat? Jacko got three yesterday when he was out hunting.

JUDY No, thanks.

JOSHUA You want some, Nicky?

NICKY *(holding out his plate)* Nakomik.

JOSHUA Henry, you should've been seal hunting with the Ford boys this past fall.

HENRY Why?

JOSHUA Because they got over 700 seals. That would have brought in some good money and fresh meat.

HENRY Yes, but I don't even like seal meat.

NICKY Good ol' taste; it is better than beans!

JUDY You hear about Benigna Jararuse?

DORIS What about her?

JUDY She saw Jacko Ikkusek last night.

DORIS What a laugh, boy.

HENRY Yeah, but what about you out with Sam Kohlmeister?

JUDY and NICKY laugh.

JUDY Na—

HENRY Yeah, I suppose with all the other boys you went out with, it's hard to tell.

JUDY Shut up!

MOTHER Don't go talking like that! Judy, why don't you go start on the dishes.

JUDY There's no more water. Henry, go carry the water for me.

HENRY No, you go get it yourself.

JUDY Ugly—

SYBELLA I must go finish off my needlework. We need more money to buy food. I was able to get 50 dollars from one of the teachers for the skin boots I made her.

TABEA Tetsaleulaunga. (= "Make me tea.")
DORIS Speak English, will you?!
SYBELLA Get her a cup of tea and stop being saucy.

SCENE 2

JUDY helps her blind grandmother (TABEA) to the living room. DORIS gets the tea and a coke for herself from the kitchen. Everyone is seated around the living room, except for JUDY, who goes back to stacking the dishes. JOSHUA is smoking a pipe; NICKY is working on his homework.

JOSHUA Nicky, you got a lot of homework tonight?
NICKY Yeah.
JOSHUA When I was your age, I didn't even go to school.
DORIS I wish I never had to go to school... It's sick!
NICKY Gee, it's good, boy. I wants to be a teacher.
HENRY Sick ol' job, eh?
JOSHUA If you wants a better education, you should go to the dorm at North West.
NICKY Next year, eh?
MOTHER Maybe. We'll think about it.
NICKY I'll get a chance to see it when I go out to the Drama Festival next week.
HENRY Lucky you're getting out of this old dump.
DORIS Maybe you'll get to visit Gilbert Flowers then, at the group home in Goose.

HENRY You mightn't even get out, 'cause the forecast don't look good for next week. Gee, my old skidoo will be some hard to start then, if the snow gets in it. It's falling apart now.

JOSHUA Well, if we still had dog teams, you wouldn't have that problem.

MOTHER Now, don't argue...

SYBELLA (*doing needlework*) Henry, what time is it?

HENRY Six o'clock.

SYBELLA Henry, the Twin Otter got in today from Goose. Did you pick up your unemployment cheque?

HENRY Na, didn't get around to it.

SYBELLA Well, I want to go to Bingo. There was a letter from your father in St. John's. (*AMOS is serving time in jail.*)

NICKY How's Dad doing?

SYBELLA (*putting her needlework down and picking up the letter*) Listen, and I'll read it to you.

"Dear Family,

As the sun rises for a brand new day

My memory starts to fade away.

I try to remember the things of my past

And try to make them last and last.

I remember the crisp, frosty snow

As I look up in the sky and see the clouds flow.

As I try to refresh my memory with Labrador books

I am reminded very much of Labrador's young spring brooks.

As I hear the cell doors slam somewhere down the halls,
It reminds me of Labrador's unforgiving cold and stormy falls.
I hear in my mind the call of the geese through the night
And remember their long southerly flight.
And as I remember the caribou that run,
I try to forget the trouble that I've done.
As evening approaches, the sky is red.
I remember the trouble that I caused and I wish I were dead.
It shouldn't be long before I am home,
And I'll hunt and trap where the animals roam.
It's not going to be long now, you'll see
And I'll be a man who is happy and free.
How I long to come home to Labrador,
Because this life is such a bore.
Love, Dad."

NICKY Gee, I wish he was home now. I miss him a lot.

SCENE 3

The lights dim, and everyone exits except for NICKY and his grandparents (JOSHUA and TABEA). The lights come up and the NARRATOR comes in.

NARRATOR Another typical night—my brother, Henry, is heading for the club; Doris, my rather wild sister, is out looking for a good time. Mom and me are headed for Bingo, and the jackpot looks good tonight, though we never win. Left home are Nicky and our grandparents.

The NARRATOR exits.

- TABEA *(knitting)* Kailaugit, Nicky. (= "Nicky, come here.")
- JOSHUA Come here a bit, Nicky.
- NICKY *(looking up from his homework)* Wha—?
- JOSHUA See if you can remember the Eskimo we taught you last night.
- NICKY Yeah, okay.
- JOSHUA Say "snow."
- NICKY Akitik. (= "pillow")
- TABEA *(laughing)* Okka, aputik. (= "no, snow")
- NICKY Oh, aputik.
- TABEA *(nodding)* Auh. (= "yes")
- JOSHUA Try "tree."
- NICKY Napuk. (= "komatik bars")
- TABEA *(chuckling)* Okka, napatuk. (= "no, tree")
- NICKY Ugly—hard—napatuk. Tree.
- JOSH. & TAB. Auh. (= "yes")
- JOSHUA We'll teach you a couple of new words and then maybe you can put it all in a sentence.
- NICKY Yeah, okay.
- JOSHUA Let's see. Say "rabbit" for him, Tabea.
- TABEA Rabbit *(in Eskimo ["ukalik"])*
- NICKY Woman's silipuk *(in Eskimo ["kulitak"])*

General laughter. NICKY tries again and gets it right. Same thing when the grandparents teach him "tracks" ["tumik"]—he says "beard" ["umik"] by mistake. He then puts the sentence together: "I saw the rabbit tracks in the snow by the trees."

SCENE 4

Later on that night. Lights come up. SYBELLA and JUDY enter from the kitchen door.

NICKY Mom, you win anything tonight?

SYBELLA Na, but I had one number, boy. Now, you get off to bed.

NICKY Ugly—how come I gotta go to bed, anyway?

TABEA (in Eskimo) Nicky, you shouldn't talk to your mother like that.

JOSHUA In my time, when I was your age, I was in bed at 7 o'clock.

MOTHER That's right—now get off to bed.

Everyone says goodnight. SYBELLA helps TABEA off to bed. JOSHUA is left listening to the news on the radio. Lights off.

SCENE 5

HENRY is sitting alone, drinking a beer, thinking about his life. His thoughts:

HENRY This is the pits. What am I doing in a place like this? Dad don't care for us. Mom wears the pants in the family. With a father who's in jail all the time, it's no wonder that I have one pregnant sister and one who stays out all night. Look at me: I'm turning into an alcoholic. Why did I have to be born into a family like mine? Why did I have to be born at all? Nobody cares for us. Nobody at all. Judy's boyfriend got her pregnant and then left her. Doris stays out all night on one-night stands just sleeping around, and I can't even get a girlfriend.

People around here must think we're all fools. At least one of us could make something of ourselves. I think I will. I'll put down this drink, walk out of here, and start to make something of myself.

SCENE 6

NARRATOR As you can see, the excessive use of alcohol has led to a breakdown in this family life, and also in many others. Not only did it put my father in jail, but it has caused Henry to become a bum. Using the money he gets from unemployment cheques, Henry goes out drinking instead of helping to pay the food bill. After a night out, he comes home to take his frustrations out on the family, as you see in the next scene. Joshua has gone to bed. Henry and Doris come in arguing.

HENRY Oh, you're only another girl to him!

DORIS You're just as bad yourself!

HENRY You can say that about me, but if Mom ever finds out about you down at the shrimp boats—!

DORIS Shut up!

HENRY You'd better watch it, or you'll end up like your sister.

DORIS slaps HENRY. HENRY, cursing under his breath, starts to shake her. DORIS screams. JOSHUA enters the room to see what the noise is about.

JOSHUA What's you doing?

They stop, surprised. DORIS begins to cry.

JOSHUA (*speaking mainly to HENRY*) When your father went away, you changed. You drink all the time. You don't care what happens to yourself. You spend most of your time drinking. That will not help you. You have to help yourself. You won't hunt like we did, 'cause

you don't need to. There's a store you go to. If you don't hunt, you have to do something to keep from so much drink. Look for work. There isn't so much, but I hear that the people are trying to get a business of their own started. You say you don't like white man's ways, but there is no going backwards to the old days now. I know. You have to try and use your own skills in a white man's world. This business by the people may be what you want. It will let you show what you can really do. And now, I am tired. I hope you will think about what I said.

The lights dim.

SCENE 7

The family is again seated around the living room. The lights come up.

NARRATOR Those words that Joshua spoke really affected Henry. Deep down, he knew his grandfather was right. One month later, the effects of his lecture are showing. Henry is now employed in the new hunting and fishing co-op. He has now accepted the fact that our father is gone for a long time and that he must look after and take responsibilities for this family.

NICKY Grandma, Grandpa, let's sing the song that Sid Dicker taught us.

As slides are being sown in the background, the family sings "Sons of Labrador," written by Sid Dicker of Nain.

JOSHUA You know, that deer meat sure made this Sunday dinner taste good, Henry.

HENRY Yeah, not bad at all. I got my cheque yesterday from the co-op, so I think I'll gas up and go hunting partridges tomorrow, 'cause the boys say that there's lots up around Pardy Island.

JOSHUA Sounds good. Maybe we could go together and then next Saturday we'll go seal hunting and take Nicky.

NICKY Yeah, I would like to go. So I could learn how to hunt seals with Henry.

NARRATOR In ending this play, this typical family has solved many of the problems that they encountered. They stood the pressures of the hard times and came out on top. Judy had her baby and the family accepted it as their own. Nicky was able to attend North West and further his education, while our father returned home from prison to again take his place in the family.

Issumatsasiuk

Nain, 1985

Jens Haven Memorial School

This play was written by the students and edited for publication by Carol Bolt, 1998.

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Isaac, the main character, has to make a choice between going to a science fair and going on the traditional deer hunt. Note by Carol Bolt: A struggle between the old days and the new propels this drama. Slides of the hunt and a demonstration of a science project take us beyond the words in the argument.

ORIGINAL CAST

ISAAC	Elias Obed
FATHER	Sabina Hunter
TEACHER, MOTHER	Beatrice Hunter
JACKO	David Harris
DIANE	Lucy Jararuse

SCRIPT

The play begins with slides of the hunt. Lights come up on ISAAC, sitting in the takeout, alone. JACKO and DIANE enter.

DIANE Hey, look, there's Isaac. He seems real depressed.
JACKO He didn't talk all day.
DIANE Gee, there must be something bugging him. Let's go see what it is.

They cross to ISAAC's table and sit down. He ignores them.

JACKO Hey, Isaac...
DIANE What's the matter? We're your friends, you can tell us.
ISAAC I'm just sleepy.
DIANE If you were sleepy, you'd be home in bed. Don't try to hide it from us. We can tell you're depressed about something.
JACKO You didn't talk all day in school, you didn't get any work done, and now you're here by yourself.
ISAAC I failed my English exam, okay?
JACKO We didn't even have an English exam.
DIANE Isaac, there must be something really wrong if you're lying to your friends.
JACKO Don't you trust us?
ISAAC There's nothing you can do.
JACKO Just talk it out.
ISAAC It's nothing.
DIANE/JACKO Isaac... Come on...

ISAAC *(Reluctant)* I got picked for the science fair...

DIANE *(Excited)* When?

ISAAC Next week.

DIANE Why are you so depressed? Everyone wants to go!

ISAAC The science fair is the same weekend as the hunt... and my father... he wants to go on the hunt.

DIANE What do you want to do?

ISAAC I want to go to the science fair... but the hunt is a tradition...

DIANE Just tell your father, Isaac...

But on the other side of the stage, ISAAC's MOTHER speaks to ISAAC'S FATHER. ISAAC turns towards them.

MOTHER Warm out, boy! Is the ice going to be bad?

FATHER No, it's too early for it to be bad. Won't be bad for a while yet.

MOTHER What are you cleaning that gun again for?

FATHER I'm getting ready for the hunt next week. Making sure it's in proper working order. I can't wait, boy. This year's hunt is going to be better than ever. Especially since Isaac is coming and I can teach him what my father taught me. (*ISAAC enters.*) Speak of the devil! We were just talking about you and the hunt. Can't wait, boy get those little tuktuk.

MOTHER Do you have your gun ready, Isaac? Not much time left now before you go off.

ISAAC I'll get around to it, sooner or later.

FATHER What do you mean "later"?

MOTHER Isaac... you don't seem very excited about it.

ISAAC I want to go on the hunt. But does it have to be next week?

FATHER It's always this time of year... you know that.

ISAAC Couldn't it be a little later?

FATHER What's all this talk about later? You know we're going next week.

ISAAC Yeah, but...

FATHER But what?

ISAAC Yeah, but... I got picked for the science fair.

MOTHER Did you? When are you going?

ISAAC I'm supposed to go next week.

FATHER Next week? We're going hunting next week. This is your first time. I want you to learn now... while I'm still here to teach you.

ISAAC I know. But I want to go to the science fair, too.

FATHER You can't do both things at once. (*Pause. Family exchange glances.*) You're going hunting. That's the tradition.

ISAAC breaks away from his FATHER to speak to the audience.

ISAAC I can't make up my mind. What should I do? Listen to my father or my science teacher? When I told my father, he seemed so angry... I know he expects me to forget all about the science fair... I hate my father for going hunting... If he was more understanding and thought about how I felt, he would be a better father. It's up to me what I want to do with my life...

FATHER I can't understand that boy. He was so excited about going on the hunt. Science fair... how is that going to help him become a man? Always something interfering these days...not like before. We just did what had to be done... except... We were living in Hebron. It was

such a beautiful place. Then everybody started to move. They told us it would be better in Nain. A hospital. A school...

ISAAC I'm so confused. I love him. He's my father. I do like hunting but I dunno... the science fair means a lot to me... I wonder if my science teacher knows what the hunt means...

FATHER Oh, how I hated to leave Hebron. But I thought if I raised my family my way, everything would turn out okay. I thought I could keep the old ways, even if I left Hebron. I thought my son, Isaac... would value the important things, but now this... this science fair. It won't do him any good at all. He has to go on the hunt. It's the only way.

Lights fade on ISAAC and his FATHER and come up on DIANE and JACKO in a school hallway.

DIANE That was a good old class, eh? No work! We spent the whole time talking about Isaac's project!

JACKO Yeah!

DIANE Have you got your project done?

JACKO No, of course not.

DIANE Too bad we didn't... we would have been able to go.

JACKO Mine wouldn't have been as good as Isaac's.

DIANE The teacher thinks Isaac's is going to win.

JACKO I think he'll win. If he goes.

DIANE Have you seen him today... is he in school?

JACKO Why not?

- DIANE Because he was pretty depressed yesterday. And maybe he told his father...
- JACKO If you were him what would you do?
- DIANE I'd pick the science fair. It's the chance of a life time.
- JACKO I'd go on the hunt.
- DIANE He could always go on the hunt next year.
- JACKO But his father wants to teach him this year. Besides, it's the tradition.
- DIANE This is his only chance. He'll be too old next year. And he has to think of his future. He could make science his career... he could get out of Nain...
- JACKO Tradition is more important. Most of it's gone already. It needs to be preserved. Language is gone already, most of it, anyway.
- DIANE What's language got to do with deer hunting?
- JACKO Language is tradition. And deer hunting's tradition.
- DIANE If he's gone a week, how will that affect tradition?
- JACKO He's going to miss the hunt... he's going to have to wait another year. And he might just keep making excuses...
- Enter ISAAC.*
- ISAAC What are you two talking about?

DIANE We were talking about what you should do, since the teacher spent the whole period talking about your project. And Jacko thinks you should go on the hunt and I...

ISAAC (*Flares*) It's none of your business. It's my decision.

The TEACHER enters.

TEACHER Hi, Isaac... getting your project ready to go?

ISAAC What chance does my project really have? I mean of making it?

TEACHER Isaac, you have the best project in this school... maybe even in this entire district. You've really got something going here. I'd say... oh, let's say your chance should be at least seventy-five per cent in favor of winning overall.

ISAAC I might not be able to go.

TEACHER But, Isaac, you have to go. I mean, your project is the best...

ISAAC Well, I'm not sure yet.

TEACHER Why?

ISAAC Next week... the deer hunt is next week and my father is really expecting me to go with him.

TEACHER But you can go with him next year.

ISAAC You see... he wants to teach me this year.

TEACHER Well... couldn't he teach you next year?

ISAAC It's just that it's... well, it's tradition.

TEACHER Now, Isaac, what difference is it really going to make to the tradition if he teaches you this year or next year? With the work you're doing, you have other things besides deer hunting ahead of you.

ISAAC I don't know...

TEACHER Isaac, is your father pressuring you?

ISAAC I just have to make up my mind...

TEACHER Do you want me to talk to your father for you?

ISAAC No... No, I'll work this out alone.

TEACHER What do you really want to do?

ISAAC I... I really want to go to the science fair.

TEACHER But are you going to go? (*Pause.*) If you don't go, Bob will be able to take his project. He's in second place right now. I know his project doesn't measure up to yours... yours is really in a different category. But if you don't go... well, give me your decision by tomorrow. I have to make all the arrangements, you know.

ISAAC Yeah, I'll let you know tomorrow for sure.

But FATHER enters as ISAAC exits. He clears his throat.

TEACHER May I help you?

FATHER Are you Isaac's teacher?

TEACHER Yes. You must be Isaac's father.

FATHER I've just come to see what this so-called project is about.

TEACHER Isaac has worked very hard on his project. You should be proud of him.

FATHER My son is a very hard worker, but why does he have to go away?

TEACHER Isaac doesn't have to go away... the choice is his but...

FATHER But what?

TEACHER Your son is a very bright student. If he goes to the science fair he will have the opportunity to meet other students and learn from their work... here, let me show you his project.

The TEACHER demonstrates the project to ISAAC'S FATHER. The FATHER thinks for a moment, then...

FATHER Gotta leave now. Nakomek. (*He turns away from her. The TEACHER shrugs and exits. The FATHER speaks to the audience.*) I don't know about Isaac and his science stuff. I want him to go on the hun... I want him to come with me and not with that teacher... he's my son, not hers.

ISAAC'S MOTHER enters.

MOTHER Try to understand. He has a difficult choice to make. You've made difficult decisions before.

FATHER It's not the same.

MOTHER Isn't it? (*FATHER looks at MOTHER.*) Think of it this way. You were pressured to come to Nain. You wanted to stay in Hebron, do what your ancestors did. But you also wanted to move on in life and now Isaac has the same problem you had to face. He can either move on in life or stay back and struggle with a tradition that is running out... (*MOTHER watches FATHER, who is brooding silently.*) Things do change you know. (*ISAAC enters. A pause before he speaks.*)

ISAAC I've decided to go to the hunt. Bob can go to the science fair if I don't make it.

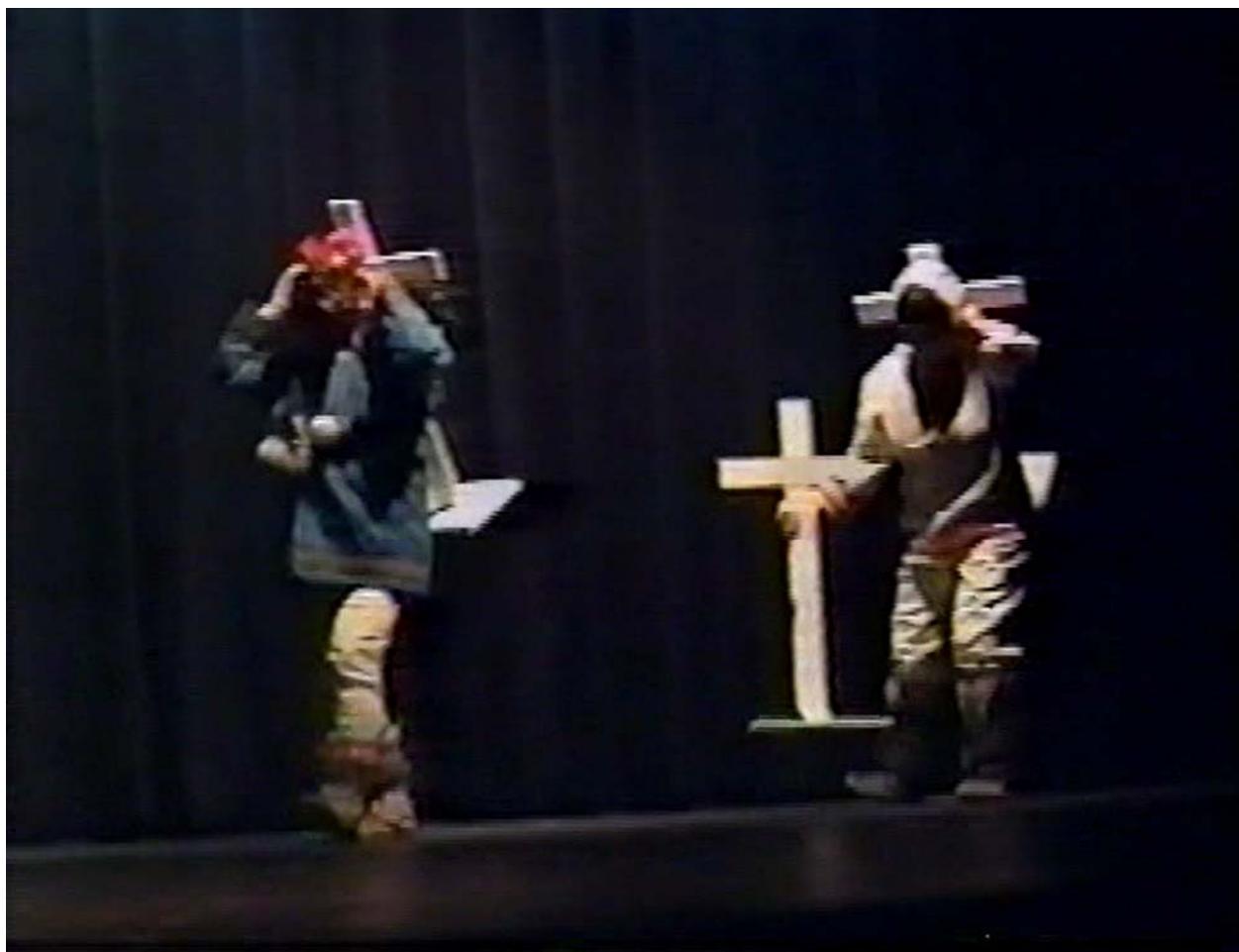
FATHER Ahhh... go to the science fair.

ISAAC and FATHER embrace awkwardly. Fade to black.

IkKaumajammik: Memories

Hopedale, 1995

Nalujuk Players, Amos Comenius Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

The play focuses on the ever changing lives of three Inuit teenagers as seen through the eyes of their dead elders. This play is dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Sybella Nitsman and Mr. William Abel and all Inuit elders who serve to remind us how unique our Inuit heritage is.

ORIGINAL CAST

ETHEL	Bernice Lucy
LUCY	Pauline Jararuse
SYBILL	Inez Piercy
MILLIE	Connie Pijogge
AMALIA	Rachel Tuglavina

TEACHER ADVISOR

Norma Denney

SCENE 1

Three young girls are roaming around a cemetery. They are looking for the headstones of their relatives. They walk on stage as if wading through water, looking for fish.

- MILLIE It's too scary here, let's go!
- AMALIA It's daylight, stupid. There's nothing to be scared of.
- SYBILL Would you two hurry up! I promised Mummy I'd put these flowers on Anansiak's grave.
- MILLIE I'll stay outside. You two go on without me.
- SYBILL Oh Millie give it up. You've been listening to too many old ghost stories!

AMALIA Ah, she's afraid because the last time she was here, she was with Alfred and somebody caught them and frightened the life out of her.

SYBILL What?

MILLIE Oh, Amalia, that's not true. Take it back!

AMALIA Millie, everybody knows about you and ALFRED. Jeannie told me you were so scared, you looked like you belonged in here.

MILLIE Stop it, Amalia! Or I'll tell everybody about you and Andrew!

AMALIA and MILLIE try to grab each other, but SYBILL steps in between them.

SYBILL Would you two knock it off and help me find Anansiak's grave?

They roam around the cemetery.

MILLIE Here it is, Sybill.

The girls gather around the gravestone.

SYBILL Lucy Mary Sybill Jararuse, born 1902 in Hebron and died in 1988 in Hopedale.

MILLIE What an old woman, 86. My anansiak's only 76.

AMALIA I think my anansiak's here somewhere. Hey Millie better be careful, you could be steppin' on her right now!

MILLIE Ahhh....! (*Monkey Dance.*)

SYBILL Amalia you should be ashamed of yourself. We're in a cemetery, for God's sake. Have some respect.

AMALIA OK, OK, I just couldn't resist. Millie is so easy to scare.

MILLIE You're evil, Amalia Onalik. Your poor old anansiak is probably watching you right now wherever she is.

AMALIA And if she is watching me I hope she can hear me when I tell her that I'm not too crazy about the name she left me!

SYBILL What's wrong with your name Amalia?

AMALIA What's wrong with it? Amalia Julianna Sabina Ethel Onalik! That's not a name! That's a roll call for a senior citizens home!

MILLIE You should be proud of your anansiak, Amalia. Mummy told me she was a real brave woman when she was in Hebron years ago.

SYBILL That's right. I heard she was one of the only people left in the village when the Spanish Flu killed everybody. She even had to bury her own brothers and sisters before the husky dogs ate them!

AMALIA Alright! Alright! I get the idea! So, she was a brave woman. There's lots of them around today!

MILLIE Not like her, Amalia!

SYBILL Gee, imagine what that must have been like. Digging graves for your own family. Ugly, eh!

Lights fade on the girls. The lights begin to rise on stage right. Two figures in white approach centre stage.

LUCY Look at them, Ethel. They're back again. (*She turns around.*) Ethel!
ETHEL!

Ethel walks from offstage surprised.

Ethel Sorry, I'm late.

LUCY What were you doing?

ETHEL Oh, I was just talking to Philip Kairtok. I haven't seen him in years.

LUCY When did he get here?

ETHEL Oh, I'd say about half an hour ago.

LUCY What happened?

ETHEL A stroke, he said. Just like that!

LUCY Oh, no. Poor old Tabea. She must be in a hard way. She depended on Philip for everything.

ETHEL Yeah, but from what I hear she won't be too far behind him.

LUCY Well I suppose that's a good thing.

ETHEL looks across the stage and spies the girls.

ETHEL Lucy, why didn't you tell me they were here?

LUCY I tried, but you were busy with Philip.

ETHEL My, look at your Sybill, Lucy. What a pretty young girl she is.

LUCY Yes, she takes after her grandmother.

ETHEL There's my Amalia. Sometimes I wonder what will become of her. It's so hard for her mother, you know. Ever since William died, Amalia's changed.

LUCY Don't worry, Ethel. She's a good girl. She's just young. It's hard for the young today, you know. So much to do. So many temptations.

ETHEL I know, but I can't help but worry. It's not like our day, Lucy. I pity the children today. I feel for them. Sometimes I wish I could just talk to Amalia like I used to and tell her everything will be OK.

LUCY In our time, our biggest worry was getting the fire lit or cleaning all our skins so Mummy could make her boots.

ETHEL But Lucy, do you think they understand that? Do you think they realize what we sacrificed and went through. I don't want them to forget. They must understand!

LUCY All we can do is wait, Ethel. Wait and hope that they will learn.

ETHEL and LUCY move towards the girls.

AMALIA Wow, did you feel that?

MILLIE Feel WHAT?

AMALIA Like this breeze of cool air behind me.

SYBILL It's just the wind, Amalia.

AMALIA I don't know. It's almost like there was someone behind me, and then they were gone.

MILLIE Ohhhh...

SYBILL Come on, you guys, let's go. It's close to supper time.

They stand to leave.

AMALIA Hey, Millie! (*She puts on a mask.*)

MILLIE What?

AMALIA BOOO!!!

MILLIE screams and runs offstage.

SCENE 2

The girls come on to the stage, seal crawling. The three girls are in AMALIA's bedroom, talking about the events of the day.

MILLIE The only time I'm going back to that graveyard is when I'm dead and buried.

SYBILL Ah, come on, Millie. When one of your relatives dies, you'll have to go back there.

AMALIA Knowing Millie, it won't take a funeral to get her back to the graveyard. All she's got to do is look at Alfred's rear end. (*Laughs.*)

MILLIE Why don't you shut up, Amalia? At least I've got somebody.

AMALIA Like, duh, Alfred is someone to go to. All he thinks about is what girl he's going to take to the graveyard next.

SYBILL Come on, you two. Don't make fun. A graveyard is a sacred place.

AMALIA I know, I'm sorry. (*Pause.*) You know, I wonder what our anansiaks were doing when they were our age?

MILLIE Probably raising babies or hauling wood or making boots.

MILLIE and AMALIA laugh.

AMALIA From what I heard, they didn't have a gym or a pool hall. There weren't any dances either. God, that must have been boring.

SYBILL Everyone thinks it was boring and dull back then, but from what my anansiak told me before she died, I can tell you there was plenty to do. Sometimes I wish we could go back to those ways.

BOTH Are you racked, or what?

SYBILL Millie, your anansiak is still living. Did you ever ask her about Hebron and why she left?

MILLIE NO!

SYBILL Why?

MILLIE I don't know. Not interested, I s'pose.

The ghosts stand.

SYBILL Well, did you know that our grandparents had to leave Hebron? The Moravian mission station closed down and then the government came in and told everybody they had to leave.

AMALIA How do you know, Sybill?

SYBILL Because I took the time to sit down with my anansiak. Because I wanted to know who I was and what I was all about.

MILLIE I heard Daddy and Anansiak say something about that a long time ago.

The two ghosts enter from offstage.

ETHEL Look at all this stuff! What is it, Lucy?

LUCY It's their way now, Ethel. The posters, the movies, and the videos.

ETHEL Look, Lucy: M-e-tal-li-ca, Me-ga-deth. What is this?

LUCY Don't worry, Ethel. They say it's a stage they go through. This will pass. There are just so many things for them to become involved in. Children are curious.

ETHEL I am afraid now that we are gone, they will forget about us forever.

LUCY I don't think so. Come and listen.

They move over to the girls.

SYBILL The hardest part was when Anansiak visited Atatsiak's grave in Hebron for the last time. Mummy said she cried and cried.

MILLIE Gee, poor old woman. Imagine, somebody coming in here today and telling us we've got to leave Hopedale and not come back no more.

AMALIA God! Where would we go? What would we do? I couldn't leave here! My family is here! My friends! My roots are here!

SYBILL And that's exactly how they felt. Leaving their home, the only place they knew for their whole life. And they had no choice. They had to go. Make no wonder they talked about the old days so much. Their bodies might have moved but their spirit stayed in Hebron.

The ghosts move behind the girls.

AMALIA Gee! There's that breeze again. Don't you feel it?

MILLIE You're probably getting the flu, that's all. Just put on another sweater.

SYBILL Come on. Let's get up to the pool hall before it closes.

They leave. Lights fade.

SCENE 3

Pool hall. The three girls are dancing as the ghosts enter offstage.

LUCY My oh my, look at the way they dance today.

ETHEL Dancing? That's not dancing. It looks like they're having a seizure!

LUCY Remember when we used to go to dances?

ETHEL What, fun eh?

The ghosts step dance.

ETHEL Oh yeah. All the young people in the village would go. What a time. Remember David and his accordion?

LUCY Yes, and the harder he would play, the harder we would step 'er down. It's a wonder the foundation didn't break in under us.

The two women laugh.

ETHEL Oh, I can see it now. (*She walks around.*) David on the accordion, the boys on one side of the hall, and the girls on the other.

LUCY Remember how shy the boys used to be? How long we would wait for one of them to come over and ask us for a dance?

ETHEL You remember that time you wanted to dance with Jimmy Tooktashina so bad that you went over and asked him?

LUCY Oh my, the poor feller almost wet his pants. But when he got going, you couldn't stop him.

ETHEL Those were the days. (*Pause.*) And now look at them. Jumpin' and floppin' around like a bunch of fish out of water.

LUCY Sometimes it scares me. I mean, just look at the way they're moving. You know where this is going to lead. Ethel, what happened? Where are their morals?

ETHEL I know, I know. If the elders saw us moving like that, they would ban us from the village. We wouldn't be able to show our face.

LUCY They're all lost, Ethel. They have no direction. No leadership. I see the future and all I see is despair, if things don't change.

ETHEL What's wrong with our people? They don't care anymore? Their spirit is dead. How did this happen?

Lights fade on the ghosts. The girls stop dancing.

AMALIA Ahh, come on. It's only 1:00 a.m. It's early! One more song! Come on one more. Ah, stupid man.

ETHEL's ghost passes by AMALIA.

SYBILL Leave it alone, Amalia. Come on. Lets go home before our parents come after us.

AMALIA Do you guys smell that?

MILLIE Smell what?

AMALIA I don't know. It's like perfume or something. I swear it's the same perfume Anansiak used to wear.

SYBILL You really are crazy Amalia. First you feel cold breezes, and now perfume. What next? Ghosts?

AMALIA I'm not kidding, you guys. I really smelled her perfume. Ever since we went to the graveyard the other day, weird things have been happening to me.

MILLIE Oh, stop it. You're scaring me, Amalia. Sybill, tell her to stop!

SYBILL Amalia, the weather's changed. It's fall now. It's colder. You probably got a chill the other day when we were in the graveyard.

AMALIA OK, so what about the perfume? Explain that, smarty pants!

SYBILL There were about sixty girls here tonight. Any one of them could have been wearing that perfume. That's what you smelled.

AMALIA I s'pose you're right. Come on. Let's get out of here.

The girls leave. AMALIA lingers behind, then leaves.

SCENE 4

Classroom: World Geography class.

MILLIE Sybill! Do you have your geography questions done?

Girls perform cat's cradle.

SYBILL Of course I do. I always do my homework. Why are you asking?

MILLIE Can I see yours? I'm afraid I might have my questions wrong or they don't make sense.

SYBILL Why are you always afraid, Millie? Ask the teacher. Don't always depend on me.

AMALIA walks in and joins them.

MILLIE Amalia do you have your questions done?

AMALIA Why do you want to know? It's none of your business anyway.

MILLIE Hey, don't eat my head off. I only asked you a question.

SYBILL Amalia, what is with you? You've been a real pain to be around the last couple of days.

MILLIE Ah don't notice her. It's PMS again.

AMALIA Shut up, Millie. How did you get to be such an expert? You only got your period last year. Little girl.

SYBILL Knock it off, Amalia. That's not fair. Whatever's bugging you, that's no reason to take it out on Millie.

AMALIA I'm sorry OK? I'm just a little touchy here lately.

MILLIE Are you still on edge about the graveyard?

AMALIA Ever since we went there, all I can think about is Anansiak.

SYBILL So?

AMALIA I never really thought about her before, but now I feel like I should have and that I've missed out on something.

MILLIE You know, the other day Anansiak came over to the house and I started talking to her about Hebron. Boy, you should have seen her, She was laughing and really having a good time. Made me feel good.

SYBILL I used to be the same way with Anansiak too. We used to talk for hours about everything.

AMALIA You two are lucky. You've got memories. I've got nothing. I guess it's like they say: you don't know what you've got until you lose it.

MILLIE I think your grandmother knows you care, Amalia. But it's just so weird to hear you talk that way.

The ghosts enter and stand behind the girls.

AMALIA You think maybe I'm beginning to grow up?

Lights fade on the girls. The ghosts talk.

ETHEL Oh Lucy, can you believe it? Amalia cares. She really cares.

LUCY Of course she does. She never really forgot yo. She just misplaced you.

ETHEL Misplaced me?

LUCY You see, in her world there are so many things pulling at her that she forgot what was really important.

ETHEL That's the trouble, isn't it? The world they live in places so much pressure on them and they don't know where to turn. They don't know who they are. They're just so lost.

LUCY But you know, when I see our grand-daughters, it gives me hope for the future. They'll be our leaders one day, and they'll do us proud.

ETHEL They need to be strong. There are so many challenges facing them.

LUCY Education. Work.

ETHEL Family. Career.

LUCY Children.

ETHEL Husbands.

BOTH Voisey's Bay!

LUCY Oh, don't get me started on that!

ETHEL Who are those people? Where did they come from?

LUCY A bunch of money-hungry, greedy land rapists. I'd like to...

ETHEL Lucy! Lucy! Calm down or you'll have a heart attack! Don't die on me.

LUCY Ethel. I'm dead already.

ETHEL Oh, yeah. You're right.

LUCY Come on. I hear there's another one coming. Maybe it's someone we know.

The lights fade as the ghosts exit.

SCENE 5

Graveyard. AMALIA & SYBILL visit the grave of AMALIA's grandmother.

SYBILL How come Millie's not here?

AMALIA Her and Alfred again.

SYBILL Here in the graveyard?

AMALIA No, behind the fishplant in a box.

SYBILL How do you know?

AMALIA Her father caught her.

SYBILL Oh wow!

AMALIA Yeah, I don't think we'll be seeing her for the next few weeks.

The girls walk around.

AMALIA Can you believe I'm actually here? It wasn't all that long ago, I didn't care or ever came here.

SYBILL But you're here now, and you do care. That's what matters. Sometimes we need a wake up call to get us to realize what we have.

AMALIA What about the others? When will they wake up? What if they don't? What if it's too late for them?

- SYBILL I don't know, Amalia. Some never will wake up, I'm afraid. But you know something? Someday we're going to be adults and it'll be up to us to lead our people.
- AMALIA What if we don't grow up?
- SYBILL What do you mean?
- AMALIA Look over here. Cathy Kairtok. She was only 20 years old. I don't want to end up like that.
- SYBILL Amalia, she had a lot of problems. She had a baby, her parents were dead, and she had all that pressure at university.
- AMALIA And that gave her the right to kill herself? Don't you see what I mean? She didn't fit in. She didn't know if she should stay in Hopedale or leave. She was too smart to stay here but she couldn't fit in outside. The only way out of it for her was a pill bottle.
- SYBILL But we have to learn from that. We have to take our culture and learn how to use it in the world today. Cathy couldn't do that, but we can. We're strong.
- AMALIA Promise me something, Sybill.
- SYBILL Sure. Anything.
- AMALIA Promise me that no matter where we go when we leave here, or what we turn into, that we'll always be there for one another.
- SYBILL Sure I will. I promise. Better yet, let's make a pact to always come back here every year to these graves for our own reality check.
- AMALIA Promise.
- The girls hug.*
- SYBILL It's getting colder. I'm gonna head on home. You coming?

AMALIA You go ahead. I'll be there in a minute.

SYBILL See you!

AMALIA See you!

AMALIA fixes the flowers on the grave.

AMALIA I'm sorry, Anansiak. I didn't listen to you earlier! I hope you forgive me.

AMALIA gets up to leave. Suddenly she feels that she isn't alone.

AMALIA There's that breeze again. (*She turns around to see her grandmother.*) Anansiak! How can this be happening? OK! OK, I'm dreaming. This isn't real. I fell and hit my head. I'm not going crazy.

ETHEL It's me, Inngutak ("grandchild"). Don't be afraid. I have very little time here so please listen. I've been watching you these last few days, and I am so proud of you. Your future is so wonderful and you will experience many things. Just know that I am with you always. I am never far away.

The ghost fades away, but drops a scarf.

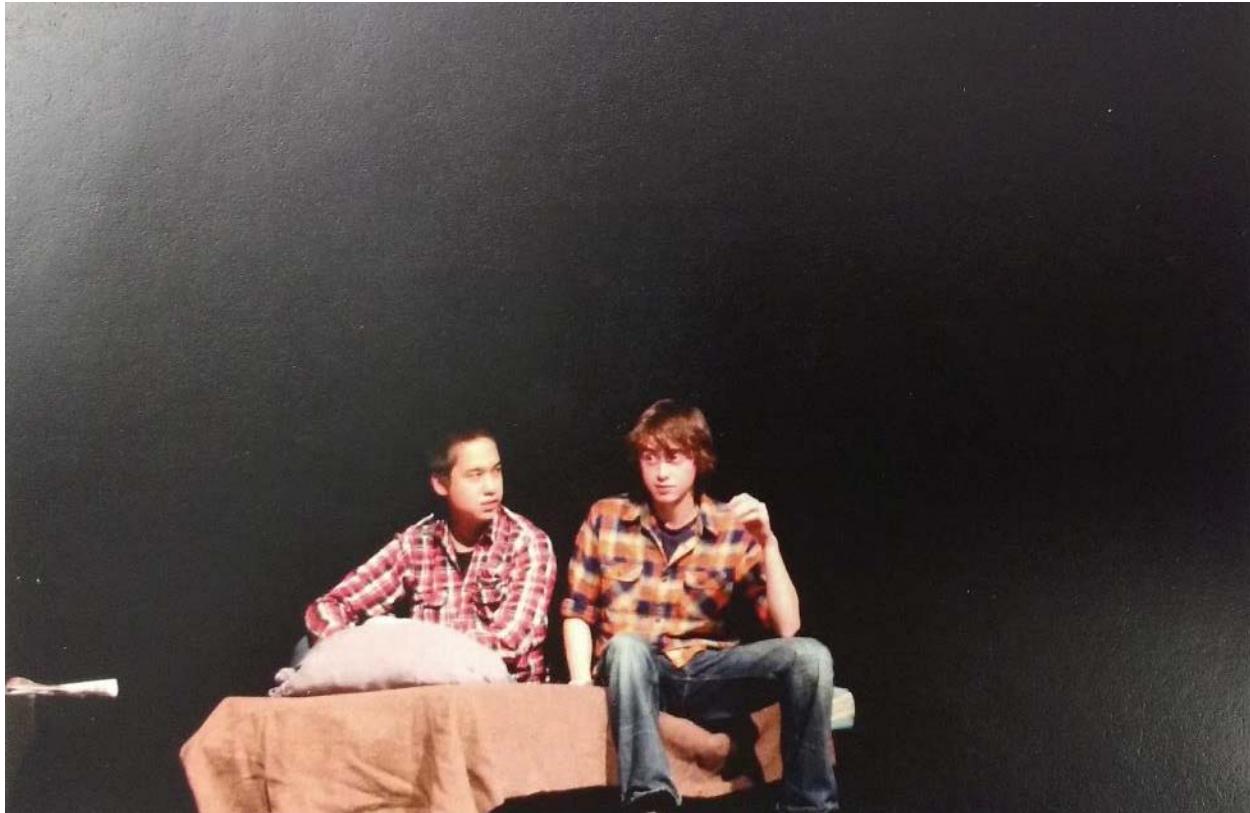
AMALIA Anansiak! Anansiak! Wait! (*She picks up the scarf.*) Good bye, Anansiak. Nalligivagit ("I love you").

Lights fade. The End!

Who Am I?

Nain, 2011

Jens Haven Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

16-year-old Sam has a big assignment coming up for school. It's a simple enough question, but Sam is struggling with his response. Follow Sam along his journey of self-discovery, as he looks for answers from a cast of quirky characters (including his family and his best friend) and from his grandfather's journal. *Who Am I?* traces Sam's path along the figurative and literal shorelines of his identity.

CHARACTERS

SAM	16 years old, working on an essay for school
TEACHER	28 years old, English teacher
JORDAN	16 years old, Sam's best friend
SELMA	14 years old, Sam's younger sister (typically annoying)
DAD	38 years old, Sam and Selma's father
JORDAN'S GRANDFATHER	67 year old underwear model
MOM	36 years old, Sam and Selma's mother

TEACHER DIRECTOR

Catherine Boyle

SCENE 1

Spotlight on the school scene. After school. TEACHER sits at her desk, correcting papers. SAM saunters in to catch up on the work he missed while he was away from school.

SAM	Hey, Miss, did you do anything while I was gone?
TEACHER	Of course not, Sam. We couldn't go on with our work while you were away. The class was just be lost without you. We didn't read any poems or answer any questions. We just sat there, waiting for you to come back.
SAM	Uh... oh... Really? I didn't miss anything?

TEACHER Sam... I'm kidding. Of course you missed something. Why do students always believe that life at school stops when they miss a day? Yesterday I introduced the new theme we'll be discussing. It's Identity. I gave the class an assignment. You have to write an essay—at least 750 words—on that topic. Write about who you are and where you're from.

SAM *(smiling widely)* Well... my name is Sam and I'm from Nain. There: 100%.

TEACHER Ahht! There's more to it than that! About 742 words more! This is more than a simple name/age activity or a Facebook profile. I want you to dig deep. Find out about your ancestors, your traditions. Tell me about your morals and your beliefs. Maybe you can discuss your interests and your opinions. I know you're Sam and you're from Nain, but who are you, how do you define yourself? Take some time to think about that. Put your thoughts on paper and pass it in to me next Friday.

SAM *(looking overwhelmed)* I s'pose. *(drawn out, exaggeratedly)*

SAM walks off stage. The TEACHER sits there, shaking her head, drinking coffee and continues her marking. Lights fade on school scene.

SCENE 2

Spotlight on SAM's room. SAM sits at a desk, writing that identity essay. There's a garbage can in front of him, filled with crumpled up paper. Frustrated, SAM balls up another paper and throws it into the garbage, and goes on writing and talking aloud to himself.

Sam My name is Sam. I am sixteen years old. I'm from Nain. I was born on June 2th. I... ughhhhh!!!! *(Scribbles across the page, rips it up, and*

throws that one in the garbage too. Starts again.) Who am I? I'm Sam. You know who I am. I've been in your class for the last three years!

SAM scribbles furiously, then crumples up the paper, throws it in the garbage, and kicks the garbage can over in his frustration. He sits on his bed and sighs heavily. He looks up to see his DAD at the door. DAD has come in to check on SAM, worried by the noise.

DAD Sam? Wha you freaking out for, son?

SAM Trying to work that stupid oh stupid assignment. Ahhh—it's just stupid.

DAD Well, you might think it's stupid, but don't take it out on that poor ol' garbage can. It didn't do anything to you.

SAM Sorry, Dad. It's such a stupid assignment—made me mad, tha's all.

DAD What's it about? Maybe I can help.

SAM It's about finding out who I am or where I came from or whatever. Gosh, I already know who I am!

DAD Then why is it so hard?

SAM I don't know. Just give me some time. I can't think.

DAD Okay. Just come and get me if you need some help.

SAM I won't.

DAD And take it easy on that garbage can! (*Walks out of the room, leaving SAM to work on the assignment.*)

Spotlight on a guy holding a sign that reads, "5 HOURS LATER!" Lights come back up on SAM, who is in the same position. He wakes himself up with his snores. Shaking himself awake and rubbing his eyes, he realizes that's he has fallen asleep and is still no further ahead on the assignment.

SAM Okay. Maybe I do need some help with this... DAAAAADDDDDD!!!

DAD (*responding in a similar wail*) WHAAAATTTT?

SAM I need help!

DAD WHAAATTTT?

SAM (*losing patience*) I NEED HELPPPPP!

DAD All right. (*running in*) What?

SAM Uh... remember how I said this assignment was easy?

DAD Yeah.

SAM It's not that easy...

DAD Okay, son, I can't tell you who you are, exactly, but I can tell you about our family. Maybe that will help.

SAM It's a start, I guess.

DAD My parents came from Hebron. Their families lived there most of their lives. Your grandparents spent their early childhood years there, before they were relocated. Good ol' stories from up there, boy. Hey, you should read Atatsiak's journal. He kept a diary for years.

SAM That might be a good idea. I do have a lot more to write. What did Atatsiak do for a living?

DAD Your grandfather was a fisherman and later he worked at the plant. Your grandmother stayed home and took care of me.

SAM The fish plant? Is that part of our family identity? Didn't you work there too?

DAD Yeah, I met your mother at the fish plant, while she was shucking scallops. She was so pretty... her technique of opening those scallops... it was so beautiful. I took her to the bar and had a dance with her. We were inseparable! Later that night we went home and...

SAM *(interrupts)* Oh my gosh! Dad, be quiet! I don't want to hear that stuff! I don't think I'll use that in my assignment. I've had enough of this I'm going out.

SAM gets up and walks out. DAD just sits there.

SCENE 3

Spotlight on JORDAN's house.

JORDAN Wha you doin?

SAM Wha you doin?

JORDAN Wha you doin?

SAM Wha you doin?

JORDAN No, seriously, what are you doing here?

SAM Nothing much. Just wanted to get away from the house for a while. Dad was trying to help with that "Who Am I" assignment. I just couldn't get into it. What are you doing? Got yours done awa?

JORDAN Actually I'm just finishing mine!

SAM Are you serious? I never even really started yet!

JORDAN It's not that hard, you just gotta know who you are and who your family is. For example, my grandfather is an underwear model!

SAM *(grossed out)* Don't you mean was?

JORDAN No, he still is. I got some pictures. Here he is when he was young *(shows SAM a picture)* and here he is now...

SAM *(disgustedly)* No, no, no—put that away! I don't wanna see that! *(pushes the picture away)*

JORDAN Why? What's the matter with you?

SAM Look, I just don't want to see a seventy-something year old man in his underwear, OK?

JORDAN For your information, he's 67!

SAM That's the point! I don't wanna see some old guy in his underwear!

JORDAN You calling Grampa ugly? He still got it!

SAM I didn't say he was ugly, but he's 67! I don't think he's a hot si—

GRAMPA *(from offstage)* Jordan! What's all the commotion?

JORDAN Sam thinks you don't got it anymore, Grampa!

GRAMPA *(offstage)* Don't got it? *(walks onstage)* How's this for "don't got it?"

GRAMPA opens his robe and flashes them. The boys scream.

JORDAN *(screaming)* Grampa! Where's your underwear?

GRAMPA looks down... looks back up at the boys.... ties up his robe... shrugs... and walks offstage. There's a long, awkward pause....

SAM So, what is that we have to do again?

JORDAN Do for what?

SAM That identity assignment!

JORDAN Ohh yeah. Yeah, you just to uhmm, ask yourself these QUESTIONS
(He looks through piles and piles of papers and hands SAM one of them.)

SAM *(reading)* Questions to ask yourself: Who am I? Hmmm... so, Jord, who am I?

JORDAN You're Sam!

SAM SAM I AM!.... Seriously though, who am I?

- JORDAN You're a nice guy. Honest. Except that time you accidentally killed my pet sea monkeys. You drowned them! I loved those little guys and their cute little crowns.
- SAM Dude, I'm sorry about that. I didn't try.
- JORDAN Yeah, just don't do it again. We got new ones last week.
- SAM Ok, no problem. I'll stay away from the sea monkeys. So, what did you write about where we're from? I mean, that's stupid, isn't it? Most of us are from Nain, so we're all going to have to the same old answers.
- JORDAN Nah, I don't think that's all there is to it. Miss was going on about how our community shapes us.
- SAM Oh, like that theme for the Creative Arts Festival last year? Shorelines, wasn't it? How we're living on the edge or something like that?
- JORDAN (*singing a line from Lady Gaga*) I'm on the edge of glory!
- SAM I always liked this one better (*sings "Livin' on the Edge..."*)
- JORDAN (*laughs*) Sort of like that, I think, but more about how our identity is influenced by our culture and traditions, stuff like that.
- SAM What? OK, we're Inuk. What does that even mean? I know I'm Inuk. I just am. What does she want me to write about? Oh, no—it's not going to be one of those assignments, is it? All political and serious? I am an Inuk. No, I don't eat raw meat, except *kuak*, and I don't live in an igloo, but I've been in that one Levi made down Southern Point, and I don't drive a dog team—my skidoo is faster and doesn't bark as much. You didn't write that kind of cultural crap did you?
- JORDAN Uhhh... yeah.... a bit anyway. I talked about how I like to go off on the land and go hunting.

- SAM You? Hunting? When did you ever go hunting in real life?
- JORDAN OK, so I don't like hunting. I'm still Inuk, though.
- SAM Of course you are. What else did you write? I suppose you said that you were a drumdancer and throatsinger too. And your family comes from a long line of powerful shamen.
- JORDAN Nah, I didn't say that (*laughing*) but I did say that we come from a long line of strong, hot men!
- SAM You're crazy! You can't write that!
- JORDAN I guess I can't, but I can't lie either. Being Inuk is a big part of who we are. It's hard to explain.
- SAM Yeah, I know what you mean. Being Inuk isn't something you can separate from your identity. It's not just the typical stereotypes of some guy dressed in fancy furs, standing patiently over a seal hole for hours. It's not all about the boarding schools and relocation either. Sure that's part of where we came from—what our families have been through. But we're more than that. There's more to me than that. But what? What are my qualities?
- JORDAN You're a good friend. You're always there for me when I need it. You have a big future ahead of you. You have a knack for cooking. You make the best cereal.
- SAM Maybe I'll write some of that in my assignment. Speaking of cooking, I should go home I'm starving! I hope I can eat—if I can keep that image of your Grampa out of my head. Ughhhh. (*shivers with revulsion*)
- JORDAN Don't remind me! I'll see you tomorrow. Don't get too stressed over this assignment, OK? I hate it when you're grumpy in school.

SCENE 4

Spotlight on SAM's house.

- MOM Hey honey, where were you all day? I didn't know what time you'd be home, so I never ran the bathtub for you.
- SAM (*quickly and sternly*) Mom, I stopped taking baths in the 7th Grade!
- SELMA Yeah—smells like it!
- SAM Shut up! Who asked you, anyway?
- MOM Come on—quit that fighting. You know how I hate it. Where were you all day, Sam?
- SAM I was over at Jordan's. He had some good ideas about that assignment I'm working on. I still don't know exactly who I am yet. I don't know what to write.
- MOM You're my adorable baby and I want you to graduate. I'll be so proud! So, go to your room and write that down.
- SAM What do you want me to write?
- MOM That you're my *adorable* baby! (*sooking him*)
- SELMA He's a baby all right, but I'd hardly call him adorable. Deplorable, maybe.
- SAM Mom! That's no help! (*to his sister*) You're lucky Mom's here.
- MOM Sam, she's your sister and you love her. Remember how cute you were? You'd play with her dolls and dress them up and let her put make-up on you and...
- SAM OK, Mom, enough with the walk down memory lane. That stuffs no good for my paper. I need to write about who I am—my qualities, beliefs, stuff like that.

MOM Oh, you've got lots of great qualities. For one, you're very trustworthy.

SELMA Except for the time he killed Jordan's sea monkeys! Murderer!

SAM *(sister)* Will you ever shut up! Just leave me alone, boy. God—annoying. *(to Mom)* Thanks, Mom, but I already have that written down. *(heavy sigh)*

SELMA *(grabbing him)* Don't use that tone of voice with her! *(in an evil voice)* Now you tell me who you are right NOW!

SAM Get a life! I'm Mom's adorable baby. Who are you?

MOM Sam, you know she's only teasing you because she loves you. Just ignore her, then, and focus on the assignment. So you're my adorable baby (*cuddles him*). What else are you?

SAM I guess I'm pretty funny.

SAM What did you say?

SELMA Something. Nah go tell you.

MOM glares at them.

SELMA Haha... just kidding. I said, "love you, brother!"

SAM But I thought you said...

MOM Sam, just drop it. Go on to your room and work on that paper. It won't write itself. Get at it. Don't forget—you're funny and adorable.

SAM Yeah, I have a lot of writing and reading to do.

SCENE 5

In SAM's room, SAM picks up his grandfather's journal and begins to read...

SAM Maybe the answer is in here somewhere.

SAM's grandfather's voice plays over a recording.

RECORDING November, 1973. It's taken me a long time to put my thoughts down on paper. People have been talking about relocation. I was just a kid then, but I remember everyone gathering at the church. My father said that they took us to the church so we wouldn't argue with the government's decision. Everyone was shocked to learn that we'd have to leave. They promised us that life would be better in Nain. There'd be a school and a hospital. Better housing. Jobs.

My mother cried when we loaded all our belongings onto the boat. My father did too. The day we left Hebron, my parents went to the church and then to the graveyard to say their last prayers, their last goodbyes.

We were all so sad to leave our homeland. When we got to Nain we were crammed into shacks in the village. Life was hard, but we were happy to be together, as a family. Our friends and neighbours helped us a bit. That was our way. Those days were challenging, but we grew to love our new home.

Relocation reminds me of going away to school. I didn't go. I had to work. I went fishing with my father, but a few of my friends went. They were homesick a lot.

They complained about the food. Teachers bawled at them if they spoke Inuktitut. Other students called them Eskimos. And worse. There are ugly stories. People don't like to talk about it. In a way I'm glad that I didn't get an education. I did what I had to do to survive—to help the family. We all did.

Survival... that's what it all comes down to. Our people have struggled to survive on these shores for hundreds, thousands of years. Some people call this The Land God Gave to Cain. Yes, it's a barren, unforgiving land. But it's a land of rugged beauty. It's been a challenge, but the land has been good to us too. We have managed to live in harmony with our environment, with the animals and with visitors who have come to our shores.

It's early days yet, but people say that we'll have our own government some day. We will manage our own affairs and make our own decisions. If we remember the struggles of the past and keep our eyes on the promise of the future, I know that we'll survive. Just like we always have.

SAM Wow... I've heard about all this before, but reading my atatsiak's words makes it all more real. (*Sighs.*) I need a break...

SAM puts on his iPod and goes out for a walk.

SCENE 6

Sam is alone, walking along the beach/wharf/etc., listening to his iPod, skipping rocks. Wordlessly, he reflects on his grandfather's words and heads home.

SCENE 7

Spotlight/lights come up on home scene. SAM bursts in the door, excited that his writer's block is gone. He knows what to write.

SAM Yo Momma, Papa! I know what I'm going to write now. I got to start writing. This is going to be awesome!

MOM Really? I knew it would come to you, if you were patient enough.

SELMA (sarcastically) I'm soooo proud of you, brother! (*in a serious voice*)
 Better get 100%! Or else!

SAM God, you're weird! But thanks for your support. Now get lost so I can
 do my homework.

DAD comes in.

DAD Way to go, son! Start writing then! We want to read that paper!

SAM goes off to his room to write. Lights down on home scene.

SCENE 8

Lights on school scene. Back at school.

TEACHER Ok guys. It's Friday! Who has their assignments done?

SAM runs into the classroom.

SAM I dooooooo!!!!

TEACHER Well, that's an enthusiastic response! Would you like to read it to the
 whole class?

SAM Ummm... yeah... sure...

Who am I? It sounds like an easy enough question, doesn't it? That's
what I thought too, until I actually sat down to write this.

I am Sam. Sam I am. I'm 16 and I've lived here in Nain my entire life.
I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.

My family came here from Hebron. They didn't want to move. They
were forced to leave their home. In the early days, times were tough.
Money was scarce. Housing was substandard and inadequate. They
were lonely for their home, for their land. They had to abandon their
familiar hunting and fishing grounds and look for new ones around
here. But they didn't complain. They struggled. They did what they

had to do to survive... like our people always have. I hope that I have their strength to carry me through my difficult days. People helped each other. They shared whatever they had, even when they didn't have much.

I'm the same way—I'd share my last bite of poutine with Jordan if he was hungry, and I let him play my music.

In my family, we work hard. For generations my family have worked in the fishery—on the sea or in the plant. It might not be the best job, but it was an honest day's work and it put food on the table for my father and for us. Now, I'm not saying that I'll work in the fish plant too, but I'm not afraid of hard work. I have respect for people who work hard for what they have.

My people are resilient. No matter what hardship life throws at them, they manage to make it through.

I am a good friend. That's important to me. Jordan is my best friend. He knows that I'd do anything for him. I got his back and he's got mine. And he still likes me, in spite of those stupid sea monkeys!

I love my family. Everything that Mom and Dad do, they do for us. They take care of us, feed us, clothe us and put a roof over our heads. They don't expect anything in return, except maybe a little respect. They've taught me to love my friends and family. I even love Selma... sort of. They've done their best to give us a happy life and I'm very thankful for that.

I'm just a typical teenager. Sure I have the same problems most people my age have—except a grandfather who's an underwear model. Man, I'm grateful that I don't have to deal with that!

My grandfather was a fisherman, who only had a grade 8 education. He was honest, loyal, hard-working, kind and helpful. He passed those traits and values down to my father and, hopefully to me.

For generations we have fought for our survival on this shoreline. Today I am continuing that battle. The problems may be different, but I am lucky to have their knowledge, strength and experience to help me through.

Ours to Have, Ours to Hold

Rigolet, 2018

Les Rigolettes, Northern Lights Academy



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

Join Raven and her Anânsiak on a thrilling adventure that brings Inuit legends to life. Engage your senses and suspend your disbelief as you view the creation of a goddess, hear the whistling amongst the northern lights, and feel the cold wind as you approach the snow and the ice.

ORIGINAL CAST

ANÂNSIAK/DRUM DANCER	Ella Jacque
RAVEN	Ocean Pottle Shiwak
KUALLAPILLUIT/ANANSIAK	Zoe Shiwak
LAVENDER/DRUM DANCER	Alison Palliser
MYSTERIOUS FIGURE/ DRUM DANCER	Shania Williams
LIGHTING AND SOUND	Taylor Shiwak
STUDENT DIRECTOR	Shania Williams

SCENE 1

(Downstage centre is a simple living room set with a rocking chair and a coffee table full of books. Downstage left we see RAVEN'S bed. Anânsiak and Raven enter stage left and take their places in the living room.)

ANÂNSIAK It was a long time ago when we lived in igloos and sod houses, a time where we lived off of berries and smoked fish. There was no such thing as seals. There was no such thing as whales. Until one catastrophic day...

(Images of the legend created by the cast/crew are projected on a screen as the voice recording of the legend plays.

RECORDING It was a beautiful afternoon. Blue sky, calm waters. It was a day where everyone wanted to get the fish and berries they needed for the coming winter. Sedna and her 2 brothers, Amaqjuak and Kallik, were up early and ready to go out on the land. Their parents were very old and not mobile. So they couldn't leave with their children. The siblings set out on their quest to feed their parents and the elders of the village. Little does Sedna know, there weren't enough berries to feed their whole family. Once Amaqjuak and Kallik got out of sight of the village, they pushed Sedna over board. She grasped the side of the boat, knowing this was the end. She held for dear life. Amaqjuak hauled out a very sharp knife his grandfather had made for him, and chopped Sedna's fingers off all at once. Not knowing how to swim, Sedna sank to the bottom of the ocean. Suffering to breath, she looked up to see if Kallik was trying to save her. Instead she seen her fingers. They were magically turning into seals and whales. She lost sight of it all, passing out from all the water filling in her lungs. She laid on the ocean floor, nearly dead. Until the Lord up above seen how she would have died. He reincarnated her as a goddess. She was the goddess of all sea animals and the most

powerful land animals. If someone made her mad, she would make the hunter and his family starve until he or she apologized. That is the story of how the seals and whales came to be. It is said that she is still at the bottom of the ocean floor, living in her whalebone house. If someone makes her mad she would make the hunter not see any animals to kill until he or she apologized.

ANÂNSIAK That's the legend of our ancestors.

RAVEN I heard this story so many times before. Why don't you bug my brother? Why are you telling me again, Anânsiak?

ANÂNSIAK Your brother isn't here for me to bug. He is gone hunting with your dad. They should be back next week, plus you're almost 16 now, my child. It's important you know your history. Generations ago, when your Great Great Great Aunt Sedna turned 16, she suffered a terrible fate.

RAVEN Times have changed, Anânsiak. We know legends aren't real. Aunt Sedna didn't die in the ocean. Her fingers didn't turn into seals. She lived during a difficult time and they wrote the myth up about that.

ANÂNSIAK Believe if you will, but all legends have truth behind them and I fear it will get passed on to you. You were born with the scars of your ancestor and that's something we need to worry about, Ingutak.

RAVEN The only thing that I'm worried about is my CDLI courses. I need to catch up on my school work, and I have a math test tomorrow. You can tell me some other time. I need to go and study. I love you, Anânsiak. Goodnight.

ANÂNSIAK Nagligivagit, Ingutaga. Goodnight.

RAVEN goes to her room. She falls asleep. DRUM DANCERS enter from opposite sides of the stage and begin to play softly in the background. KUALLAPILLUIT enters stage left and starts to pace behind RAVEN.

KUALLAPILLUIT Human child, human child. Ours to have, ours to hold. Forget your mother, forget your brother. Ours to hold under the ice. (Repeats 2-3 times.)

DRUM DANCERS stop. They exit the stage. KUALLAPILLUIT exits the stage after she finishes her quote. RAVEN jolts awake, looks around, calms herself down and falls back asleep.

SCENE 2

Next morning. Lights up downstage right. LAVENDER can be seen doing her morning yoga when RAVEN calls her.

RAVEN I had the strangest dream last night.

LAVENDER What was it about?

RAVEN I don't know. It's really hard to explain. I remember there was a weird lady saying something to me or about me or... something.

LAVENDER Maybe you were related to the weird lady? Did she look familiar?

RAVEN She was wearing a black dickie and her hair was really long and flowy. Her voice was really creepy. She was chanting something right ugly.

LAVENDER That sounds kind of bad. Maybe you're possessed?

RAVEN I don't believe in the whole spirit world.

LAVENDER So, why did you call me if you didn't want the truth?

RAVEN I needed to talk to someone. I can't go to my Anânsiak. She'll tell me some strange legend again.

LAVENDER Maybe your grandma is right. Legends always have some truth behind them. Plus, you should respect your elders. She'll be gone one day.

RAVEN Anyway, I need to get breakfast and head to school. I'll talk later.

LAVENDER Bye, bye butterfly.

SCENE 3

Kettle whistle.

ANÂNSIAK The kettle is ready. Can you make me some tea, please?

RAVEN walks off stage left and returns with a cup of tea.

ANÂNSIAK You know what that whistling reminds me of?

RAVEN Is this another one of your strange legends?

ANÂNSIAK Ingutak, my legends are not strange, they're the history of our people. They're our past and our future.

RAVEN (*Rolls her eyes and sighs.*) Fine.

Northern lights: voice over while images created by the cast/crew play on the screen.

RECORDING My Anânsiak told me when I was a child to never whistle at the northern lights. I was always so confused as to why I couldn't. One night I was very curious. The northern lights were dancing through the sky. I began to whistle. The spirits in the sky began to move faster and the lights became brighter. The colors were changing from green to yellow, and yellow to purple. I was in disbelief. They were so beautiful. I continued to whistle. The lights were beginning to grow and come nearer to me. I realized how dangerous they were becoming. I heard footsteps of people running. I heard cheering. I looked up and seen a walrus head. Terrified, I ran to my mom. I was crying and I apologized. She told me that if I waited long enough, the spirits would think I was one of them and kick me the walrus

head. The walrus head would've knocked me out and the spirits would take my soul up with everyone else.

RAVEN *(Checks the time on her phone.)* Oh no. I'm going to be late for school now. I have math first and I have an important test.

ANÂNSIAK This is important. You have to learn to respect your elders, Ingutak.

RAVEN I do respect you, Anânsiak. I'm just so caught up on my CDLI courses, I'm not really paying attention to my past right now. Don't you want me to have a future?

ANÂNSIAK You won't have a future if you don't listen to what I'm trying to say.

RAVEN I have to go to school now. I love you, Anânsiak.

ANÂNSIAK Nagligivagit, Ingutaga.

RAVEN exists stage left for school.

SCENE 4

RAVEN enters, very exhausted. Notices ANÂNSIAK looks weak and sick.

RAVEN Oh my gosh, Anânsiak. Are you okay? You look so sick!

ANÂNSIAK I need to tell you something, Raven.

RAVEN What is it? Is it about my brother?

ANÂNSIAK No, no, he's fine. Do you remember when I told you the story about your Aunt Sedna?

RAVEN Of course. You told me so many times.

ANÂNSIAK Ever since that terrible tragedy, our family has been cursed with a terrible fate and that happens to be yours, Raven. The first born female in the family is always born with the same scars as you. My older sister had them and your mother had them. When she turned

16, she mysteriously disappeared one stormy night, just like your mother did. I don't want that to happen to you, my girl.

RAVEN You're not well, Anânsiak, I think you need some rest. Remember, I'm not going anywhere. Let's get you to bed.

RAVEN helps her ANÂNSIAK off stage left and calls LAVENDER. Lights up downstage right. We see LAVENDER who is sitting in the lotus meditation pose.

RAVEN I'm seriously worried about my Anânsiak. She's saying strange things to me. Like more weird than the legends.

LAVENDER What kind of weird things?

RAVEN She's basically telling me that I'm going to die and that I'm going to get taken by my Aunt Sedna.

LAVENDER Oh my goodness. What if you are going to die? What if your grandma is right? I'm coming over.

LAVENDER ends the call. Lights out downstage right.

RAVEN I'm fine... deep breaths... Not going to die... Just relax... Nothing is going to happen... (Dozes off.)

DRUM DANCERS enter from opposite sides of the stage and begin to play softly. This time the drumming gets more intense. KUALLAPILLUIT enters stage left and starts to pace behind RAVEN saying her quote.

KUALLAPILLUIT Human child, human child, ours to have, ours to hold. Forget your mother, forget your brother. Ours to hold under the ice. (*Repeats again a few times.*)

KUALLAPILLUIT blows snow at RAVEN. LAVENDER knocks, KUALLAPILLUIT exits the stage. LAVENDER enters stage right. RAVEN is in a deep sleep.

LAVENDER Raven... Raven? Raven! (*Shakes her awake.*)

RAVEN Lavender? Is that you?

LAVENDER Umm.... Yes. Is your window open?

RAVEN I didn't open it. Why?

LAVENDER There's snow everywhere!

RAVEN This might sound crazy, but I did have another dream about that lady again.

LAVENDER And...?

RAVEN She blew snow on me...?

LAVENDER That's impossible. Unless it has happened before... (*LAVENDER gets really excited and hurriedly goes through the books on the table. She flicks through the books.*) I think your Anânsiak is right. I think we should look through the legends of the past. Here you try this one (*passes RAVEN a book*), and I will try... this one! I have a good feeling about this one!

"Myself and I" story by Hubert Palliser. LAVENDER and RAVEN start to read. As they read, we hear LAVENDER read to herself through a voice over.

RECORDING I was between 34 and 39 years old. Eva Palliser and I were married then. It was in the spring, my wife and I was getting wood for the summer, my parents had stayed home. We were at the wood all morning; my wife stayed in the woods to saw up the wood while I took a load of wood out to the cabin. On the way out of the woods, I stopped the skidoo, got off to check and see if there was any wood that had fallen off, and to check to see if the string was tied on right. I looked and saw the line was dragging, so I started walking to it, bent down to pick it up and when I stood up I looked and saw myself! We wore the exact same clothes. He never said a word; all he did was looked at the wood and the line that was dragging. I closed my eyes for a second and when I opened them he was gone. I had never seen ghosts ever in my life but if this was a ghost I wasn't

scared. I went back to the cabin to tell my father (John Palliser) and mother.

LAVENDER Oh no. Listen to this.

RAVEN stops reading and listens to LAVENDER.

LAVENDER When they had heard what I saw, they said to me that I was going to d—

RAVEN What? He's going to what? No, no, no.

LAVENDER Die.

Offstage we hear ANÂNSIAK scream.

LAVENDER What was that?!

RAVEN I think it was my Anânsiak! Wait here. I will go check. (*Rushes off stage left to check on her ANÂNSIAK.*) Anânsiak, are you okay? What happened?

ANÂNSIAK Yes, I am fine. I just saw... a huge spider. That's all.

RAVEN Oh my goodness. I didn't know you were afraid of spiders... As long as you're okay. I'm going in to study now and head to bed. I love you, Anânsiak. Goodnight.

ANÂNSIAK I love you. Goodnight.

RAVEN enters stage left and returns to the living room.

LAVENDER What was that all about?

RAVEN She just seen a huge spider. She's acting kind of strange.

LAVENDER Like what, now?

RAVEN She didn't say "Nagligivagit" tonight. She didn't call me her Ingutak. She just said I love you. Good night... I think I'm just overthinking it. I hope I'm just overthinking it...

- LAVENDER What's your bag? You're so stressed, maybe it's just your horoscope.
I'll go check.
- RAVEN What's my bag?
- LAVENDER Yes. What's the mysterious annoyance that's making you so upset?
I'd rather say what's your bag, because it doesn't take as long to say
and it's really common sense and everyone should know how to
speak my langua—
- RAVEN Okay. I get it. I don't know what my bag is.
- LAVENDER Right. I was going to check your horoscope. Just a second. (*Checks pockets.*) I forgot my phone. I was in such a rush that I forgot my
phone on my bed. I'll tell you tomorrow at school?
- RAVEN All right. Goodnight.
- LAVENDER Give a hug, ladybug.
- RAVEN Calc you later.
- LAVENDER Blow a kiss, goldfish.
- RAVEN Chip chop, lollipop
- LAVENDER Peace out, girl scout.
- RAVEN Time to scoot, little newt.
- LAVENDER Parting is such a sweet sorrow, that I shall say good night till it be
tomorrow.

LAVENDER exits stage left and RAVEN goes to her bedroom. She falls asleep.

SCENE 5

RAVEN's dream is projected on the screen through images created by the cast and crew. She jolts awake and sits on her bed for a few seconds. She crosses the stage to the living room and discovers that her ANÂNSIAK is also awake.

- RAVEN Anânsiak, what are you doing up? Are you okay?
- ANÂNSIAK I'm fine. (*Looks at her hands.*) I'm old, very old, but that is fine.
- RAVEN Are you sure you're okay?
- ANÂNSIAK Fine. Now why are you out of bed?
- RAVEN I just had a terrible dream.
- ANÂNSIAK Oh. What kind of dream?
- RAVEN It was my mom... I think it was the night she went missing. It's almost like I was her. She kept saying Kuallapilluit and I saw these horrible creatures. What does that mean? (*RAVEN looks at the table and grabs a book that has a picture of a KUALLAPILLUIT on the back cover.*) This book! These are the creatures that I saw. (*She starts to read from the book.*) The Kuallapilluit is a child-snatcher. No one really knows why these creatures love to take children. Perhaps they take children because they are lonely and like the company, or maybe they like how children taste? Or is there perhaps an even darker reason for the snatching?
- ANÂNSIAK (*Snatches the book.*) That was just a silly dream. Don't waste your time thinking about it. I have a better story for you. Have I ever told you the story of Old Smoker?
- RAVEN I think so. Isn't that the one who leads you to safety?
- ANÂNSIAK No. You're thinking of Old Mother Bucksaw.
- RAVEN No... It's the other way around. I'm almost positive.

ANÂNSIAK Do you never listen?

RAVEN Sorry, Anânsiak, do you want some tea?

ANÂNSIAK I hate tea.

RAVEN But you love tea. Are you sure you're okay?

ANÂNSIAK Positive. Now. Listen to your Grandmother.

ANÂNSIAK Old Mother Bucksaw... She was a leader in her life. She loved to help people. She wasn't bad at all. Unlike Old Smoker. Listen to his name: Old Smoker. He rips your hair out and smokes it. He wears all black, his dogs are even black. He comes from Satan. Old Mother Bucksaw, on the other hand, comes to help you. She leads you where you need to go. If you see an old lady without hair, follow her. She wears light grey clothes with mukluks. Remember that.

RAVEN I'm sure it's the other way around. I'm almost sure you told me Old Mother Bucksaw was the one that smokes your hair, but, I guess I should listen to you, Anânsiak.

ANÂNSIAK Ignore the past. Listen to me now. It's late. Go to your room and head to bed. Tomorrow is going to be a day you'll never forget.

RAVEN I guess my 16th birthday is pretty special.

ANÂNSIAK Yes. 16th birthdays are pretty special in your... our family. Goodnight. Love you.

RAVEN goes to her bedroom.

SCENE 6

Phone dings.

LAVENDER Oh. My. Gosh. You'll never believe this... You need to come over ASAP.

RAVEN What? Why? I'm in bed right now. Can't it wait until tomorrow?

LAVENDER No. This can't wait until tomorrow. Come over. Now.

RAVEN I'm tired. It's really ugly out. I just don't feel like going out and getting lost. I really don't want anything worse on my mind. This needs to wait until tomorrow.

LAVENDER You won't get lost. You need to know this. Your horoscope is not good... It's not good at all. This cannot wait until tomorrow. Come over. Now!

RAVEN All right. Fine, I'll be over in a minute.

RAVEN exits the stage into the audience. She hears footsteps and looks around, but sees nothing. A mysterious figure starts to follow her. On stage the set is being cleared to create a blank stage with a snowy platform downstage center.

RAVEN Hello? Is someone there? (*Continues to walk and hears footsteps behind her.*) I know you're there...

FIGURE Hello, Raven...

RAVEN Who are you? How do you know my name?

FIGURE A special friend told me about you. She tells me everything about you.

RAVEN Friend? Do you know Lavender? I'm on my way there now.

FIGURE Not anymore... I came here to give you a message. Lavender is waiting for you... down on the ice.

RAVEN This doesn't make any sense. Why would she be on the ice? She told me to go to her house.

FIGURE There's only one way to find out. Follow me.

RAVEN Wait, I know you. My Anânsiak told me to follow you if I saw you.
You're Old Mother Bucksaw?

FIGURE Your Anânsiak is wise. Yes, very wise. Now follow me.

The mysterious figure leads her back on stage. On the stage RAVEN's ANÂNSIAK is on stage left chanting. The drum dancers enter from opposite sides of the stage and begin to play softly. Throughout the scene the drumming gets more intense...

RAVEN Anânsiak? Is that you? What are you doing here? It's too cold. You're going to get sick. Let me take you home.

ANÂNSIAK Home? I am home.

RAVEN No, Anânsiak, you are on the ice. Here, take my hand so we can go home.

ANÂNSIAK Don't you ever listen?! I am home.

FIGURE We brought you home.

RAVEN Anânsiak, please, we have to go.

OLD MOTHER BUCKSAW and ANÂNSIAK start to walk towards RAVEN.

BOTH Ours to hold. Under the ice!

Sedna Renewed

Hopedale, 2018

Nalujuk Players, Amos Comenius Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

A modern twist on the Inuit legend of Sedna. Sedna defies her father by marrying the woman she loves, only to discover she has been lied to and isolated. Staying close to the legends origins, *Sedna Renewed* is a story of forbidden love, betrayal, and a warning to gather only what you need to avoid Sedna's wrath.

ORIGINAL CAST

SEDNA	Billie-Jean Tuglavina
MATIE	Shavonne Tuglavina
ATÂTAK	Denver Edmunds
GOOD HUNTER/PRIEST	Chloe Dicker
EVIL HUNTER/EVIL SHAMAN/NARRATOR	Shannon Jararuse

SCENE 1: MENTION OF SUITORS/LOVE FOR PARENTS

SEDNA and her ATÂTAK sitting at ATÂTAK's kitchen table. ATÂTAK is peeling potatoes. SEDNA is knitting.

ATÂTAK So, Sedna... who have you chosen to be your husband?

SEDNA Well, Atâtak, I have something to tell you...

ATÂTAK (*Stops peeling potatoes.*) Are you pregnant?!

SEDNA (*Puts down her knitting.*) No, no, no, no, I'm (*pause*), I've chosen my partner (*longer pause*). Matie.

ATÂTAK Your friend Matie? (*Confusion.*) That's a woman. What have I done to deserve this?

SEDNA Since you're my dad, I didn't think this would change the way you see me as a person.

ATÂTAK This changes everything! That's not the way this goes, Sedna, end of discussion. You are finding yourself a HUSBAND immediately!

SEDNA But Matie will be a good provider. She told me she has her own little island, with all these beautiful creatures and so many resources for our life. She promised me a beautiful home, the finest sealskin clothes, healthy wildlife foods, our own private hunter, and a wealthy lifestyle.

ATÂTAK You think a woman can provide for you? No, Sedna, end of discussion. I forbid this!

SEDNA falls to the floor crying.

SEDNA (*Weeping.*) Why can't you accept me for who I am? I love Matie like you love my mother!

Fade out.

SCENE 2: SEDNA AND MATIE

SEDNA and MATIE are up on a hill (the edge of the stage). SEDNA is genuinely speaking to MATIE, but MATIE is manipulating SEDNA.

MATIE So, how was your day?

SEDNA It was going good (*pause, looks at MATIE*), until my Atâtak mentioned the marriage. It was pretty stressful.

MATIE Why is that? Are you doing okay now? Do you want to talk about it?

SEDNA My Atâtak doesn't like how we are together. He asked me who I will marry (*pause, looks away*), and I told him it was you.

MATIE So he didn't take it well?

SEDNA No, he said it goes against who our ancestors really are. He told me that they didn't work as hard as they did for me to end up without a husband.

MATIE What your dad doesn't see is that the way we feel on the inside is not a choice we made. It's who we were born to be.

SEDNA Well, I guess you're right. Despite what people might think or say, I think it is only normal the way we want to live and express what we feel on the inside. (Pause, smiles and looks at Matie.) It would be so good if we could go on our own little island for our honeymoon.

MATIE Come with me, Sedna. We don't need to stay here. I have made a comfortable life on the island. You do not need your Atâtak or his approval.

SEDNA and MATIE stand up to leave. MATIE helps SEDNA up.

MATIE All the things I promised you, you can enjoy in peace with me!

SEDNA and MATIE walk offstage as lights fade out.

SCENE 3: THE WEDDING

SEDNA, MATIE, and the PRIEST are in the church. SEDNA and MATIE are wearing female silapaks, and the PRIEST is in priest attire. SEDNA and MATIE are walking down the aisle from opposite sides of the stage. The Raven Song is playing: <https://youtu.be/BqRmhfgH7mY>. SEDNA and MATIE reach the PRIEST at center stage.

SEDNA *(Whispers.)* I'm so excited!

MATIE *(Whispers.)* Me too, cripes!

PRIEST We are gathered here today to celebrate the love between Sedna and Matie. Sedna, do you take Matie to be your lawfully wedded wife? In sickness and in health, for richer or poorer, for better, for worse, to have and to hold until death do you part?

SEDNA I do.

PRIEST Matie, do you take Sedna to be your lawfully wedded wife? In sickness and in health, for richer or poorer, for better, for worse to have and to hold until death do you part?

MATIE I do.

PRIEST If any person believes these 2 should not be joined in marriage, speak now or forever hold your peace.

ATÂTAK bursts through the doors.

ATÂTAK *(yelling)* Stop this wedding!!

SEDNA Father, you don't have a say in what I do anymore. I am 30 years old and this is one of my rights.

ATÂTAK This is a disgrace to our family. It is unnatural for a woman to marry a woman. Why are you doing this!? *(Turns to the priest.)* How can you allow this?? Do you have no morals? *(Charges the priest.)*

PRIEST God loves everyone. I believe people are made to live the way he made them.

ATÂTAK I cannot support this!

ATÂTAK storms off stage. Continue with wedding.

PRIEST Please exchange your rings. (Pause for the exchange of rings). I now pronounce you wife and wife. You may now kiss the bride (lights fade as they lean in for a kiss).

PRIEST leaves the stage as SEDNA and MATIE walk towards center stage and sit on the edge of the stage. MATIE is excited. SEDNA slowly turns sad.

SEDNA Was I wrong? (Pause. Motions back and forth to herself and MATIE.)
Was this wrong?

MATIE No, no, no, no. You can come far away with me where your father won't bother us. (Puts a hand on SEDNA's arm.) The love we have for each other is stronger than the forces trying to tear us apart.

SEDNA and MATIE hug. SEDNA is still sobbing. Fade out.

SCENE 4: MATIE'S ISLAND

SEDNA and MATIE walk into their house. MATIE sits on a ruined couch while SEDNA walks around with a confused look on her face.

MATIE We are finally alone, my love. After waiting all this time, I finally get to have you all to myself.

SEDNA looks around the house, examining the floors, walls, and general mess of the house, growing more upset as she looks.

SEDNA (Growing angrier, pausing at each sentence.) I'm getting a little freaked out. What are you talking about? This house smells like a dump (pinches her nose). Why are all the floors cracked up? Why are

the walls so dirty and where are the furs you promised me? You friggin' promised you would have all these nice things waiting for me! Where's everything you promised?!

MATIE (*Attempting to soothe SEDNA.*) I'm working on it, I'm working on it. Don't worry about it. (*Pats SEDNA's back and continues lovingly.*) I'm going to give you everything you need and want, but I don't have time for it right now.

SEDNA swats MATIE's hand from her shoulder and backs away from her.

SEDNA The time? The time?! You said you had all this done! What do you mean? (*Pause, hands in the air, motioning around the house.*) Where is everything? (*Hands on hips.*) Where are you going to find all the things you promised me now?

MATIE (*Madly/aggressively.*) I told you, I'm waiting for time. I will give it all to you plus more.

SEDNA I'm not happy at all! I was promised all these things. Don't promise me something if you can't follow through! (*Pause, looking disappointed.*) I married you and find out you have told me a bunch of lies!

MATIE We rushed into this marriage because of your father! It's all his fault I cannot follow through on my promises right away.

SEDNA If this is how you see my family, I don't know how this marriage will work! Do you not respect my fam—? (*Pause. Takes a deep breath.*) Maybe you're right. But it still doesn't give you a reason to treat me like this. Do you even respect me?

MATIE I do respect you! I do love you! I want to give you everything, but in time.

SEDNA *(Calmer.)* Why would you promise me a lifestyle you cannot provide?
Why would you deceive me, Matie? *(Pleadingly.)* I feel betrayed.

MATIE But now we can be together. Would you have come if I told you I
didn't have the life I want for you? Would you have accepted my
proposal?

SEDNA looks at MATIE then around the house some more, and picks up broken items with anger and disgust.

SEDNA *(Angry again.)* Take me home! I want a break. This is ridiculous! I'm
going for a walk to blow off some steam.

SEDNA storms out. Fade out.

SCENE 5: SEDNA WALKING

SEDNA begins on stage right by steps (spotlight?). MATIE and INUK SHAMAN are offstage. MATIE is stage right, INUK SHAMAN is stage left.

SEDNA *(To herself, walking through the audience.)* I didn't marry her for the
money, but I never thought she would lie to me this way! *(Pause for stage script.)*

MATIE walks onstage. Sits on the couch and opens a book. INUK SHAMAN walks onstage.

SHAMAN I am an evil shaman. You have sinned by lying to your wife. *(Pause for SEDNA script.)*

SEDNA I feel so betrayed! God, what did I get myself into! *(Pause for stage script.)*

MATIE I'm sorry for what I've done, I know I have wronged my wife! *(Pause for SEDNA script.)*

SEDNA *(Should be at back of audience.) I've got to go see Matie, sort this mess out. Who does she think she is, lying to me this way? (Pause for stage script.)*

SHAMAN Until you show remorse, you will live the life of a crow. *(Waves hands at MATIE as if putting a curse on her. Pause for SEDNA script.)*

SEDNA *(Yelling.) Matie! Matie! I need to talk to you!*

SEDNA returns home (stage). MATIE is a crow. A crow caws in the background whenever MATIE speaks.

SEDNA *(Back on stage.) Where's Matie?*

CROW MATIE It's me!

SEDNA What happened to you? Why are you a crow? *(Pause a few seconds.) You're freaking me out! (Pause a few seconds, looking confused.) Can crows talk?*

CROW MATIE Ca-ca, ca-ca! *(Pause.) No, I can talk, dummy! An evil Inuk shaman changed me!*

SEDNA But, but, how can that... *(SEDNA faints.)*

CROW MATIE That awful shaman! All I wanted was my love with me in my home! A few lies for a lifetime of happiness, is that so much to ask?

Fade out.

SCENE 6: STORM

SEDNA onstage doing housework (sweeping, putting book away). ATÂTAK storms in.

ATÂTAK Sedna, I've come to apologize. My daughter, I'm so sorry!

SEDNA *(Turns around, drops broom.) Oh Atâtak, I'm so miserable here! Please take me home.*

- ATÂTAK *(Looks around the house.)* Why are you here in this shack? Where is your home? The beautiful home Matie promised you?
- SEDNA Matie came up with excuses to get me here so quickly. *(Motions around the room)* This is our home. She lied to me. She's a crow, she's an actual crow!
- ATÂTAK What? How dare she? *(Pause.)* What do you mean, she's a crow?
- SEDNA She's a real life crow! An evil Inuk shaman transformed her and now she is a crow!
- ATÂTAK Ohhh, I've heard of this before. We should leave this place right away. Bad spirits are all over this island!

(SEDNA and her ATÂTAK leave the stage together, ATÂTAK pulling SEDNA by the arm. Fade out.)

SCENE 7: BOAT

SEDNA and her ATÂTAK are rowing in the boat.

- SEDNA Thank you, Atâtak, I've missed you so much. I cannot stay there with Matie in shambles.
- ATÂTAK Anything for you, my daughter. This is the right thing. I understand you loved Matie, but she has lied to you to get you to the island. She can't really love you if she is willing to lie to you this way.
- SEDNA I know, I know. It saddens me to feel so alone but it warms my heart that you understand and love me still.

CROW MATIE appears above and behind SEDNA and ATÂTAK.

CROW MATIE You think you can just leave me this way? I'll teach you!!

Storm begins. Sound of crashing waves and howling winds.

ATÂTAK *(Looking around.)* Oh no, a storm's coming! It's because of that awful wife of yours!

SEDNA I'm sorry, I'm sorry! I didn't think things would end this way.

CROW MATIE A curse on your Atâtak! If you won't love me, neither will he!

SEDNA No! Not my Atâtak!

CROW MATIE flies away. Storm picks up. Sound of crashing waves and howling winds even louder.

ATÂTAK SEDNA! You're rocking the boat! Don't you care if we live? You awful girl!

SEDNA Atâtak! I'm sorry!

ATÂTAK If I were alone, I would be home by now. Why are you coming back with me? Why do I have to put up with your nonsense!?

ATÂTAK pushes SEDNA overboard. She screams out.

ATÂTAK Let go! Be gone!

ATÂTAK swats at SEDNA's fingers. SEDNA hangs on.

SEDNA Atâtak, this isn't like you! It's the curse that's making you this way.

ATÂTAK cuts off SEDNA's fingers. SEDNA screams loud. Fade out. Spotlight on NARRATOR on runway, stage left.

NARRATOR Sedna's fingers are cut from the nubs of her hands. They turn to sea creatures and Sedna turns into a sea monster with a mermaid's tail and seal flippers. Her transformation to goddess of the sea and marine animals has given her great influence over both animals of the ocean and hunters alike. Sedna learned the need to be humble outweighs the desire of beautiful material goods. She uses her influence to guide and aid hunters who are kind, caring, and sparing

of lives; while using her leverage to misguide and deceive hunters who are wasteful.

Fade out.

SCENE 8: GOOD HUNTER VS. EVIL HUNTER

SEDNA is sitting on a high stool stage, mid to right, near the back, while GOOD HUNTER brushes her hair. SEDNA is admiring herself in a hand mirror she is holding. SEDNA looks very pleased.

- GOOD I am so thankful for the animals you provide my family, Sedna.
- SEDNA You care for my hair when I cannot. Of course I return the favour.
- GOOD Thank you for all you do.
- SEDNA I make the animals give their lives so you don't have to give up yours. I had to turn into a completely different person (pause), which I am so thankful for. Good comes from bad things.
- GOOD I am so thankful for all you do for me and my family. Providing animals for us to hunt is a wonderful way to care for my family.

GOOD HUNTER picks up gun/fishing pole and leaves to hunt stage left. EVIL HUNTER walks onstage from stage right carrying his load for the day.

- EVIL I got so much today! (*Holds up meat.*) I don't even need all this.
(*Cuts off meat and throws some away.*)
- SEDNA You are wasteful! You shall not benefit from the lives of the animals anymore! (*Waves hands at the EVIL HUNTER as if putting a curse on him.*)

EVIL HUNTER walks offstage to the right. Lights fade briefly, and the EVIL HUNTER re-enters the stage from the left and goes on another hunt.

EVIL There's nothing out. My family is starving! Sedna, why did you put a curse on me?

SEDNA You were wasteful of the animals' lives! You cannot treat their lives like they are nothing.

EVIL I am sorry! I have, I have! Please forgive me, Sedna!

Fade out.

SCENE 9: CLOSURE

Spotlight on NARRATOR on runway stage left.

NARRATOR As we can see, Sedna has great influence over the lives of the animals. She teaches us we must not take for granted the lives of the animals we hunt and fish. Greed achieves nothing worthwhile. The legend of Sedna reminds us to be thankful for that which we have, to be grateful for that which we are given, and find reason and have faith for that which we do not currently have. Kindness, humility, and respect are worth more than we can label with a price tag. Thank you for your attention and have a great night!

Fade out.

KaumanitsaunialikKuk: It Will Be Brighter Now,

Nain, 2019

UnikkâKatigelautta Players, Jens Haven Memorial School



ORIGINAL CAST

NARRATOR 1	Samantha Saksagiak
NARRATOR 2	Chloe Blake
NARRATOR 3	Dione Kohlmeister
NARRATOR 4	Novalee Webb
NARRATOR 5	Jimmy Karpik

As the play opens, actors cross the stage from opposite directions (in the dark). The actors randomly shout words and phrases connected to the darkness (or describing their situation). Actors will also say topics/problems that create emotional darkness. For example, "I need help!"; "What's the point?"; "It's too dark!"; "I can't find my way"; "I'm lost"; "Where's the light?"; etc.

SCENE 1

Black out. Sound effect for power shutting off. Lights out. Spotlight on NARRATOR 1.

NARRATOR 1 Darkness can consume us, as individuals and as a community. We might struggle through sickness, loss, depression, grief, abuse, or addiction. Sometimes we battle personal issues like low self-esteem. For some of us, our families and relationships are stressful. School feels like a dark place as we're overwhelmed and disengaged with our work at the same time. As a community, darkness comes in other forms. We worry about food insecurity, inadequate housing, water problems and transportation issues. It's 2019 but it feels like we've gone back in time. We will never forget that our ancestors struggled. Their dark days centred around their very survival. Their light was dimmed by things like colonization, racism, relocation and residential schools. They fumbled through the darkness and looked for the light. They held onto the glimmers of light that illuminated their way. Most of those came in the form of culture and tradition.

Greenish blue spotlight on stage (for Northern Lights scene).

SCENE 2

Drumdancers enter.

NARRATOR 2 The Northern Lights have been around longer than we have. Some consider them to be the spirits of our ancestors, guiding us on our journey.

Drumdancers perform.

NARRATOR 2 They remind us of the awe-inspiring power of nature. The atsanet motivate us to be creative. Their beauty influences artists and photographers. No matter how many times you've seen them dancing in the sky, they never fail to amaze you with their dazzling light show.

Lights fade on drumdancers. All dancers exit but one.

SCENE 3

Lights up on one actor who prepares to light a kullik. Light on narrator.

NARRATOR 3 For thousands of years, Inuit have used the kullik as a source of light and heat. We illuminated and warmed our igloos, sod houses and tents with these seal oil lamps. The kullik is a symbol of our strength and ingenuity. Today that light is mainly ceremonial, but when we light the kullik we know it is a special, important occasion. To be invited to light the kullik is an honour, illuminating our culture and our respect for the past.

Lights out on kullik scene and narrator.

SCENE 4

Lights up on cabin scene as actors mime lighting the lantern/kerosene lamp.

NARRATOR 4 Nothing is more heartwarming or welcoming than that glow of the lamp at the cabin. Far away from the stress and busyness of everyday life, we cling to the old ways at the cabin. We can

reconnect with nature and embrace the simplicity. It's such a peaceful, rejuvenating time. We might sit and play cards, or read, or sew, or just listen to stories told in the lantern light. In the woods, in the pitch black night, the lamp light gives us comfort.

Lights dim on cabin scene and narrator.

SCENE 5

Lights up on Christmas scene. Actors set up Christmas tree and decorate it.

NARRATOR 5 As Moravian Inuit, our Christmas traditions are strong. Families and the whole community come together to celebrate the holidays. There's no light as magical as the lights of Christmas. Today we decorate our trees with lights but our ancestors actually put candles on the trees. Those flickering flames represented our faith. Most homes also hang a Moravian star at the beginning of Advent. That light remains for the whole Christmas season.

Actors put "candles" on the tree. Actor sets up the Moravian star.

NARRATOR 5 Perhaps the most anticipated event of the year is the Candlelight Service.

Actors mime service. One carries a tray of apples and candles and hands them out to the children.

NARRATOR 5 All of the children under 15 will receive an apple and candle. This symbolizes Jesus lighting up the world.

Actors hold lighted candles and sing "Sorutsit."

NARRATOR 5 New Year's Eve is another celebration of light, but as exciting as fireworks and sparklers might be, most of us look to the hills around Nain, searching for candles in the snow.

Actors mime placing candles in the snow.

NARRATOR 5 Often families will place a candle in memory of lost loved ones. As a community we celebrate the end of one year and the beginning of a new one, bringing new hope.

All narrators/actors come out on stage, centre.

NARRATOR 1 Even in darkness, we can find the light.

NARRATOR 2 Our culture illuminates us. We will shine brighter when we remember that.

NARRATOR 3 Life will bring challenges and we might feel like we're in the dark.

NARRATOR 4 But we need to remember that there is kindness, compassion and love.

NARRATOR 5 Our strength comes from our resilience.

NARRATOR 1 Working together and communicating will help us through the darkness. We need to recognize and appreciate the positivity that surrounds us.

All We are the light. Our flame will never burn out.

Actors/harrators hold apples and candles and sing "This Little Light of Mine".

5. Outsiders Who Challenge the Inuit Way of Life

These plays create scenarios in which visiting tourists, students or teachers, for example, assume their superiority over the local culture but are proven wrong. Plays from Nain were often about identity in this context: in *Inuvia Viet Nain* (1990) an RCMP family goes to Nain and the mother is initially hostile to the local culture until local young people show her how she has misjudged them.

BEN *Everybody wants to go and change and be and do! They talk about past times being so great, they don't mention how we'll never see our friends and families and how scary it'll be when we first get there. I've tried to keep my fears to myself, but it's no use. I'm just afraid and nobody seems to understand that.*

—B.L. Morrison School, Postville, 2005
There's Nothing We Can't Do

Inuvia Viet Nainimi

Nain, 1990

Jens Haven Memorial School

This play was written by the students and edited for publication by Carol Bolt, 1998.

ORIGINAL CAST

LISA	Trudy Dicker
SHEILA'S MOTHER	Donna Webb
NYMPHA	Regina Obed
SHEILA	Sheila Ford
LIZ	Liz Angnatok
ALLAN	Allan Angnatok
SUSAN	Susan Saksagiak
REX	Rex Holwell
JULIUS	Julius Barbour

SYNOPSIS

In this gentle story, about prejudice and understanding, a young girl and her new friends help the girl's mother adjust to life in a new community.

SCRIPT

(As the school bell rings, a group of friends meet. SHEILA watches from the sidelines.)

- SUSAN What are you all doing tonight?
- LIZ You all going to Lisa's party or what?
- JULIUS There a party or what? I didn't know... what time?
- REGINA I heard it's 8:30 and everyone's gonna be there.
- LIZ Lisa's parents are gone for the weekend, so it's party time!
- REX Did anyone ask the new girl?
- SUSAN You should ask her.
- JULIUS I don't think she's the type that will go to a party.
- REX Won't know until we ask.
- REGINA Go and ask her then, you knob.

(REX's friends exit as he approaches SHEILA. He turns back a few times before he gets the courage to speak.)

- REX Uh, hi... I'm Rex and you're Sheila, right?
- SHEILA Yeah. Hi, Rex.
- REX So how do you like it here in Nain so far?
- SHEILA Well, I don't know anyone yet, but the place is really nice. I'm really enjoying it.
- REX Well there's a Christmas party going on tonight and I'm wondering if you'd like to go.
- SHEILA Sure. I mean... who's giving the party?

REX Lisa. She lives next door to the thrift shop. You know where that is?

SHEILA Yeah, I think so.

REX So it's a date?

SHEILA I'll have to ask my mom first but I'm sure I'll be able to go.

REX I'll pick you up at 8:15, okay.

SHEILA Fine. See you then.

REX (*Walks away but turns.*) I don't know where you live.

SHEILA Right across from the radio station. The white house.

REX Oh, I know where it is now. So I'll see you tonight.

(*REX exits. SHEILA watches him go. Her MOTHER enters to establish SHEILA's house.*)

SHEILA Guess what, Mom? This guy Rex invited me to go to a Christmas party with him tonight.

MOTHER Where is he from?

SHEILA From here, Mom. From Nain.

MOTHER I don't want you going if he's one of the Eskimo boys from around here... well, is he from outside?

SHEILA No, I don't think so, but he seems really...

MOTHER Look, I told you you're not going to start hanging around with the crowd from around here!

SHEILA Mom, we're around here for three more months yet. What do you expect me to do? Stay home and watch time pass away?

MOTHER If that's what it takes to keep you away from those kind of people...

SHEILA What kind of people? They're no different than we...

- MOTHER If you start hanging around with those people, before you know it, they'll have you into drugs, sniffing and drinking.
- SHEILA Mom, you know that's not true!
- MOTHER There are a lot of stories about this place and the people here.
- SHEILA Don't tell me you believed everything you heard about Nain. Did it ever occur to you, people sometimes over exaggerate or start rumours.
- MOTHER I'm sure everything I heard about the people around here is true.
- SHEILA Mom, I would understand if you didn't want me to hang around with them but only if you got to know them first. You can't judge them on what you've heard about them. You've got to give them a chance.
- MOTHER If I give them a chance, I know I'll regret it. I already know all I need to know about them.
- SHEILA Well, think as you wish, but I'm going to get to know these people and give them a chance to show me how nice they really are. Which means I'm going to that party tonight, whether you want me to or not.
- MOTHER You are not.
- SHEILA Yes, I am.
- MOTHER I knew coming to Nain was a bad idea. It's changed you already.
- SHEILA Changed me?
- MOTHER You're starting to talk back to me a lot more and trying to disobey me.
- SHEILA It's not Nain that's changing me. It's you and your way of thinking about the place, not to mention the people. You're unbelievable!

MOTHER You listen to me! All that I'm trying to do is protect you! That's my job. I'm your mother!

SHEILA Protect me from what? The horrible and wicked people of Nain? I don't care what you say, Mom. I'm going to that party and don't even try to stop me!

MOTHER Sheila! (*But SHEILA exits. Her MOTHER follows as the gang enters, dancing, to establish a party.*)

Julius So when are the other five coming?

Lisa I doubt if any more people will show up. Ten of them called and said they can't make it.

ALLEN I know the reason for that. Charles Penn is throwing a party too and he got alcohol...

REX enters with SHEILA. They dance.

JULIUS Did Rex and Susan break up or something? He and Sheila seem to be getting pretty close.

LISA They broke up a few days ago, but I think Susan wants him back.

LIZ enters. She's obviously drunk.

Julius: Oh, oh! Here comes trouble. (Susan enters. She's drunk too.) Make it double trouble!

LIZ (*Making fan*) Ooooh, great party, Lisa! Would you give me some pointers on how to throw a party as good as this?

LISA Okay. Rule number one, no drinking alcohol.

SUSAN So what are you supposed to drink... Kool-Aid?

LIZ Quit wasting your breath on these people. They're a bunch of sucks.

LIZ tries to pull SUSAN away, but SUSAN notices REX and SHEILA.

SUSAN Wait, Liz. Look who's here!

LIZ Who?

SUSAN My ex and the new girl in town... Hey, Rex, new girlfriend already?

REX Come off it, Susan! Don't you think you should go home before you pass out?

SHEILA If you need some help, I'll be glad to walk you home.

LIZ You hear that, Susan? She don't think you could take care of yourself. She wants to be friends with you after she stole your boyfriend.

SHEILA He's not my boyfriend... we're just friends!

SUSAN (*Pushes SHEILA.*) You make me sick!

SHEILA I don't want to fight with you. I told you, we're just friends.

SUSAN (*crying*) Don't give me that crap. I'm not stunned, you know. How would you feel if a new girl came into town and stole your boyfriend?

SHEILA Please, listen to me.

SUSAN (*still crying*) Come on. Let's fight. You're not scared to take me on, are you?

JULIUS Come on. Just calm down.

LIZ Just stay out of this, Shortie.

LIZ pushes JULIUS. REX approaches SUSAN.

REX What I do now is my business, not yours, so get out! And I'd be glad if you stay out of my life, too.

JULIUS What losers!

All but LIZ and SUSAN exit as the lights change to indicate a change of scene.

LIZ Forget about Rex. He's not worth it.

SUSAN But I miss him so much. I want him back!

LIZ Come on, Susan. He's a knob. You deserve someone better.

SUSAN Look, if you don't want to hear about my problems, just leave me alone!

LIZ Susan...

SUSAN Go! Just leave me alone! Get outta my sight!

LIZ Okay. I know when I'm not wanted!

LIZ exits. SUSAN falls to the ground, crying.

SUSAN Oh, Rex... You'll be sorry. (*She rummages in her purse and produces a razor blade. She gets to her feet and holds it to the light.*) You'll be sorry.

SUSAN exits. Enter SHEILA and REX from the opposite side of the stage.

REX So how did you like the party?

SHEILA It was excellent. I had a great time. Most of the people I met seemed so friendly.

REX Yeah. The majority of the people here are nice, but there are a few who are different.

SHEILA I noticed there were a few people drinking at the party... do you drink, if you don't mind me asking?

REX No, I don't mind at all. No, I don't drink. Do you?

SHEILA No, I tried it once, but I didn't like it much... I got really sick.

REX It seems you went through the same experience as I did.

SHEILA You drank before? You don't seem like the type of person who drinks.

REX Well, I did once and never again.

SHEILA That's one thing we have in common so far.

SHEILA'S MOTHER enters from the other side of the stage. She is wearing a coat. She looks up and down the street, worried.

SHEILA Well, here's my house. Thank you for inviting me to the party. I had a great time.

REX Will we see each other again? Some time soon? I mean, maybe we can do something next weekend if you want.

SHEILA Sure. I'd like that. So, I'll see you next weekend.

REX Yup. I'll give you a call.

SHEILA Well good-bye.

REX Yeah, good-bye.

They stand facing each other for a moment. SHEILA takes a step towards REX. Her MOTHER calls.

MOTHER Sheila?... Sheila, is that you?

SHEILA Well, I guess I should be going.

REX See you. (*He exits as MOTHER approaches.*)

MOTHER What did you do at the party?

SHEILA Nothing much. I had a good time there, though and I met a lot of nice people.

MOTHER Was there drinking or sniffing going on?

SHEILA I told you I had a good time. That don't mean there was any bad things going on.

MOTHER I asked a simple question, Sheila. All I wanted was a simple answer. How many people were at this party anyway?

SHEILA About six.

MOTHER What can you do with only six people?

SHEILA Don't ask.

MOTHER Why not? What are you hiding from me?

SHEILA Nothing!

MOTHER So what did you do? With six people?

SHEILA We danced! We talked! Anything else you'd like to know?

MOTHER Don't talk to me in that tone of voice, young lady, or

SHEILA Or what, Mom? You'll ground me? Keep me from seeing my friends?

MOTHER I had just about enough from you. And if keeping you away from your so-called friends will smarten you up, that's what I'll do.

SHEILA (*Turns to exit.*) Don't expect me home tonight.

MOTHER Sheila, come back here! You never know what kind of people are out there.

SHEILA and MOTHER freeze. LISA enters from the other side of the stage.

LISA I hope you and your mom didn't get into an argument because of you coming to my party.

SHEILA turns towards LISA. Her MOTHER exits.

SHEILA She's so prejudiced about everyone here in Nain. She don't want me to become "attached" to you guys, whatever she means by that.

LISA A lot of bad things are said about Nain, but it isn't that bad here.

SHEILA I know. You don't have to explain that to me. I know what it's like and I like it. I have nothing whatsoever against Nain.

LISA So are you and Rex an item? (*SHEILA laughs.*) Well, are you seeing him?

SHEILA Well, I've only known him for two days but we're doing something again tomorrow night.

LISA Ooooh. Are you going to start seeing him?

SHEILA Well, he hasn't asked.

LISA Would you?

SHEILA Hey, let me ask some questions? Who are you interested in?

LISA Allan. I thought everyone knew that.

SHEILA Are you two seeing each other.

LISA Well, I'm kind of tired. Wanna hit the sack?

SHEILA What about Allan?

LISA You could take my bed and I'll take my parents' room. You want to call your mom first?

LISA leads SHEILA offstage as LIZ, ALLAN, and JULIUS enter.

LIZ Gee, bad, eh? Susan got so crazy about Rex that she tried to kill herself.

ALLAN If that old man didn't find her, she would have passed out and froze herself.

JULIUS Do you think we should visit her?

LIZ The only thing I'm scared of is Susan telling other people I was drunk too. And if my parents find out, I'm in deep trouble.

JULIUS Why are you so worried about getting in trouble when your best friend is in the hospital?

LIZ We had a fight, okay. She's no best friend of mine. You two can visit her!

ALLAN Come on, Jul, let's go!

JULIUS You'll regret this someday, Liz. What if it was you who tried to kill yourself? Wouldn't you want your best friend to visit you?

ALLAN and JULIUS turn to go.

LIZ Hey, you guys, wait up! (*They turn back towards LIZ*) You're right. I would want my best friend to visit me.

ALLAN Let's get a get well card for her before we go in.

They exit as NYMPHA enters with SHEILA'S MOTHER.

NYMPHA Have you heard about Susan?

MOTHER Susan who?

NYMPHA Susan Saksagiak, the girl who used to go with Rex, your daughter's boyfriend.

MOTHER Nympha, he isn't her boyfriend...

NYMPHA Rex broke up with Susan and she just went crazy like the rest of the people here. She tried to kill herself

MOTHER and NYMPHA exit the other side of the stage. LIZ, JULIUS, and ALLAN enter with SUSAN who is wearing a hospital shirt and a bathrobe. She is reading her get well card.

LIZ I'm sorry we had that fight last night.

SUSAN What's it to you? Is that the way a friend treats another friend?

LIZ I didn't know what I was doing. Alcohol does that to you sometimes. I realized this morning that losing a best friend feels bad. Do you forgive me? (*A long pause.*)

SUSAN Do you guys forgive me for how I behaved at the party last night?

ALLAN We forgive you.

JULIUS But maybe you should ask Lisa for forgiveness. She's the one who threw the party which you kind of spoiled.

ALLAN And you did go to Charles' party when you said you'd go to hers.

SUSAN You're right. I shouldn't have gone to Charles' party. That was a dumb decision. There was nothing to do at that party anyway, except drink.

JULIUS Drinking is dumb for people our age, anyway. For people of any age, really.

LIZ Drinking, then trying to end your life because of a guy is crazy! Promise me you won't do anything like that again.

SUSAN I promise. (*She holds out her hand.*) Friends?

LIZ (*Takes her hand.*) Best Friends.

They exit as SHEILA enters with her MOTHER from another part of the stage.

SHEILA Mom, would Rex be able to come over for dinner tomorrow?

MOTHER Won't he want to spend it with his family? I mean, tomorrow will be Christmas Eve.

SHEILA His family is away. They won't be back til late. I mean, imagine spending Christmas Eve dinner alone.

Christmas music begins.

MOTHER Well, I guess he can come over but don't plan on making it a habit.

SHEILA'S MOTHER exits, distracted. As REX enters, the lights might change to indicate a change of scene.

REX Hi.

SHEILA Come in. It's cold out there. (*She takes his coat.*)

REX Thanks.

SHEILA Are you worried about your folks not getting back from Webb's Bay this evening?

MOTHER enters.

MOTHER Hello, Rex.

REX Hello, Mrs. Anderson. (*Pause.*)

MOTHER So were you drinking on the night that Susan tried to commit suicide?

SHEILA Mom!

REX That's okay, Sheila. No, I don't drink. I don't smoke either, for that matter.

MOTHER So, Rex, what grade are you in?

REX I'm doing grade 12 this year.

MOTHER What are you planning on doing next year, then?

REX I'm going to university and I'm hoping to become a doctor.

MOTHER Oh, that's great. It will take a lot of hard work, though. I'm speaking from experience.

REX I'm willing to do what it takes. (*A long pause.*) So are you two guys going to the candle light service at church tonight?

MOTHER The candle light service?

REX Tonight at seven, everyone goes to church and the people who are sixteen and under get an apple. Inside the apple is a lit candle. It's part of a tradition.

SHEILA Really?

MOTHER That sounds really nice.

REX Then all the kids have to stand up and sing a song called "Sorutsit." I love it.

On the other side of the stage, the young people enter with apples and candles. They sing "Sorutsit." MOTHER, SHEILA and REX have been frozen.

MOTHER It sounds really nice.

SHEILA Yeah.

REX Well, are you going?

MOTHER I wish we could, but I'm afraid Nympha is coming over this evening...

REX Well, at least I hope you heard our church band play.

SHEILA When did they play?

REX Well, they go around town playing quite a bit through the Christmas holidays.

MOTHER Really? They just go around and play?

REX, MOTHER, and SHEILA freeze as the band enters to play. When they finish their song, they exit.

REX And they'll be playing on the church at Easter time.

SHEILA Don't you mean by the church?

REX No, they actually get on top of the church and play their instruments on Palm Sunday.

MOTHER You're joking, right.

REX It's another tradition.

SHEILA Oh boy, this community amuses me! What other things do I have to look forward to during this Christmas?

REX The Nalijuk.

SHEILA The Nalijuk?

MOTHER What's that?

REX On January 6th, old Christmas Day, Nalijuks come out and go around with a stick or something. If the children run into a Nalijuk, they have to sing a song or the Nalijuk will hit them.

SHEILA Will the Nalijuk hit them hard?

REX If the children don't sing, but if they do, the Nalijuk will give them some candy.

REX, SHEILA, and MOTHER freeze. A NALIJUK chases some CHILDREN on stage. He corners them and hits the ground with his stick, to indicate he wants them to sing. Two sing and he gives them candy, but one tries to run away. The NALIJUK chases the CHILD as if he wants to hit him. Everyone runs offstage.

REX And on the night before what we call Nalijuk's Night, kids hang up their stockings again in their homes and the Nalijuk fills it up with little things.

MOTHER The more I learn about this place, the more I like it.

SHEILA Mom, could Rex and I go over to the church? Just before Nymptha comes?

NYMPHA enters behind MOTHER.

MOTHER *(smiles)* Why not?

SHEILA Thanks Mom.

SHEILA hugs her MOTHER. She and REX put on their coats and exit as NYMPHA approaches SHEILA'S MOTHER.

NYMPHA What has gotten into your head? I mean, you're letting your daughter go out with an Eskimo boy. Aren't you scared?

MOTHER Scared of what? There is nothing to be scared of. Rex is a really nice boy. Every town or community has its bad points.

NYMPHA But this place has more bad points than good. Haven't you heard all the rumours about Nain.

MOTHER That's just it! They are rumours and not facts!

NYMPHA And this boy, Rex is from Nain... how long has Sheila known him?

MOTHER I heard you're no amateur at meeting men.

NYMPHA And what do you mean by that? That isn't true.

MOTHER Now you see how untrue things can be said. You shouldn't believe everything you hear.

NYMPHA I've never had to put up with this kind of thing before.

MOTHER Maybe that's because nobody ever stood up to you because your overdomineering personality would smother them.

NYMPHA This place has gotten something into your head. Before you know it, you'll be living in igloos, riding on a dog sled and eating raw fish.

MOTHER I will not end up living in an igloo and maybe riding on a dog sled is fun and raw fish may be good. Well, there's no doubt that it can't be worse than your cooking.

NYMPHA You're defending Eskimos...

MOTHER Why not?

NYMPHA I'll have nothing to do with Eskimos or with people who like Eskimos! I don't know how you could stand those people.

MOTHER I don't know how I could have put up with you.

NYMPHA I'm not taking any more of this.

MOTHER Good-bye, Nympha. I don't ever want to hear you talk about the Inuit or Nain people again. Ever.

SHEILA and the other teenagers arrive to watch NYMPHA's exit.

SHEILA Mom, what's wrong with Nympha?

MOTHER I thought you'd like to know that I'm considering transferring to Nain. Would you like to live here for a while, Sheila?

SHEILA I would love to!

LIZ That's great!

LISA Oh, Sheila, we'll have so much fun. We'll have boil ups and maybe we'll go on a caribou hunt or seal hunt. You'll love it!

REX enters.

REX Love what?

SHEILA Oh, Rex, we're considering staying here in Nain.

REX That's great, but this will cost me my medical school tuition.

SHEILA What do you mean by that?

REX Well, girls like presents, don't they? We've still got Valentine's, Easter, and your birthday ahead of us. But I don't mind. I'm glad you're staying.

REX hands SHEILA her Christmas gift.

SHEILA So am I, Rex.

The band enters to play as everyone takes their curtain call.

A Wonderful Life After All

Makkovik, 1992

J.C. Erhardt Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

The play is a story about a naive young teacher from Newfoundland who is hired to work in a remote Labrador community. Due to her misconceptions about rural life in the north, she allows herself to be made a fool of by some opportunistic young students. By the time she finally realizes what has been going on, she has been made to look like a complete idiot. In a strange twist of circumstances, she gets the last laugh on the students as well as finding herself a man.

ORIGINAL CAST

GERTIE GOOSTON	Angie Chaulk
LOLA GRANOLA	Rebecca Winters
TOMMY TOOKALOOK	Alvin Jacque
WALDO STIFF	Kirk Andersen
GRETA GARGLESMELL	Marilyn Winters
BOY NAMED ERIC	Eric Andersen
BOY NAMED ERROL	Errol Andersen
GIRL NAMED APRIL	April Andersen
GIRL NAMED KERRI	Kerri Mitchell
FIREMAN	Eric Andersen

MUSIC

"You've Lost That Lovin' Feeling" by the Righteous Brothers
"Foxy Lady" by Jimi Hendrix

TEACHER ADVISOR

Brian Leslie

SCENE 1

Setting: late August during a hot sunny day at the airstrip of a coastal Labrador community called Outaluk. In the background, there is a windsock accompanied by the sound of airplane engines. When the engines stop, two young BOYS enter the scene from offstage. They have summer jobs unloading luggage and begin doing so from just offstage opposite and bringing it back to stage center. The BOYS are wearing shorts, T-shirts, and sunglasses. Each BOY picks up two pieces of cargo; BOY 1 picks up a suitcase and a box while BOY 2 takes two suitcases. As they are moving, BOY 1 drops what he is carrying on the foot of BOY 2, who yells, "Ahhh!" and jumps up and down. From the direction of the plane, a female voice screams.

GERTIE Watch out! My life is in those things!

BOY 2 drops a suitcase.

GERTIE Oh! Can't you people do anything... Ahhh!

GERTIE trips on the steps to the plane and lands on the ground and onto the stage. She's wearing heavy winter clothing, goggles, fur coat and hat, gloves, etc.

GERTIE Oh, no! Why did I even come? Leave my stuff alone! I'll handle it myself!

GERTIE begins to stand up, and the BOYS leave. GERTIE goes over to her luggage and begins to pick up her things. Some KIDS who were berry-picking near the airstrip notice her situation and enter from offstage. ERIC and ERROL are among them.

GERTIE Oh, here come some local children. Maybe I should speak to them.

GERTIE reaches into her shoulder bag and produces a large English-Inuktitut dictionary. She gets frustrated while flicking through the pages, closes the book, and tries to communicate with them in broken Inuktitut.

GERTIE Atita Nilik!

The KIDS look at each other and giggle.

ERROL Hello, there?!

GERTIE (*Surprised.*) You speak English?!

ERROL Yes, of course I do! (*Looking surprised.*)

ERIC Ah... Miss... What you just said...

GERTIE Yes? (*Smiling proudly.*)

ERIC That's not your real name, right?

GERTIE What do you mean, that's not my real name?

The KIDS look at each other and giggle.

ERROL But you said that your name was... uh... Miss... us.... Miss Fart!

GERTIE No, I didn't!

TOGETHER Yes, you did!

GERTIE Well, I certainly didn't mean to! I was trying to say, "Hello, my name is Miss Gertie Gooston and I need a ride into town."

ERIC We are just berry pickers, Miss. We would give you a ride, but we've got no gas!

The KIDS begin to laugh, and exit laughing.

GERTIE: Smart aleck kid!

Principal LOLA GRANOLA gets off the plane and stops and stares at GERTIE.

LOLA (*Smiling in disbelief.*) You must be looking for a hunting lodge or something?

GERTIE Why? Do I look like a person who likes to kill animals?

LOLA No, more like a person who has eaten a few in her time!

- GERTIE Well! (*Huffily.*) You've got some nerve!
- LOLA So have you, to wear something from the Davey Crockett collection at Sears. It's late August, for goodness sake!
- GERTIE Well, I was coming to Labrador!
- LOLA Even the Abominable Snowman doesn't have on that much weasel wear. After all, it's Labrador, not the Ice Age. Has that thing had its shots yet? (*Refers to coat.*)
- GERTIE Everyone's a comedian. Who are you, anyway? America's funniest Inuk?
- LOLA Let's just say I'm a Labradorian who's seen one too many mixed-up visitors.
- GERTIE Look! How can I get a ride into town? Are there any tundra taxis around here?
- LOLA Tundra taxis?! (Shakes her head in disbelief.) That could be a problem! They're changing spark plugs on the huskies, don't you know! The two-thousand-icepan-check up! So! What're you doing up here, anyway?
- GERTIE I'm a teacher with a degree in English. I've just graduated from university, and it's my first time away from Newfoundland.
- LOLA That explains it! Back on the Island, a degree in English plus a dime might get you into a pay toilet at the Mall!
- GERTIE I doubt, considering your isolation, that you would be qualified to say anything about my career.
- LOLA Well, considering the fact that I am the principal at the school, you would be surprised to learn how qualified I am to control your career, Gertie Gooston. I have been expecting you.

GERTIE Oh, my! I'm so terribly sorry! Please forgive me! You see, my medication is wearing off and I had no idea who you were. My therapist says... Oh, never mind, that's another story. I'm so embarrassed!

LOLA That's okay, Gertie. I have met creatures from darkest Newfoundland before. It may take some time, but with a good doctor and a strong belief in God, everyone will get used to you.

GERTIE Thank you... ah...

LOLA Lola... Lola Granola.

GERTIE Well, it's a pleasure to have finally met you, Miss Granola.

LOLA Oh, please, call me Lola, Gertie.

GERTIE Oh, okay, Miss Lola-Gertie.

LOLA What did you call me?

GERTIE I called you Miss Lola-Gertie.

LOLA Why are you calling me that?

GERTIE You told me to call you Lola-Gertie.

LOLA I said, "Call me Lola, Gertie." I'm Lola and you are Gertie.

GERTIE Oh! So your first name is Lola!

LOLA Yes! That's right!

GERTIE Well, Lola Lola-Gertie, you have a funny name, but I'm sure that I'll get used to it.

LOLA (*Frustrated.*) Look, just call me Miss Granola!

GERTIE Okay. Okay. Whatever you say. Boy, what a weird chick!

LOLA Here comes Tommy Tookalook. He is here to drive you wherever you are staying. This is going to be one of those years!
 Good luck, Tommy!

LOLA exits.

TOMMY Okay, boys, put these things in the truck over there. (*Turns to Gertie.*)
 So where is ya stayin'?

GERTIE I'm staying in Greta Garglesmell's basement apartment.

TOMMY That's right across the road from my house. So... is ya married,
 Gertie?

GERTIE No, I'm not. How did you know my name?

TOMMY Oh, I always finds out the names of new people when they comes to town. And you're the only fresh woman to come here in over a year.

GERTIE Oh, no!

TOMMY You know, Gertie, I senses a chemistry between us. You know, like opposites attracting.

GERTIE Oh, you mean where I have teeth and you don't?

TOMMY Well, actually I do. But my brother Billy needed them for a barbecue!
 Nothing worse than gumming your moose!

GERTIE Tommy, just take me home.

TOMMY All ready?

They exit.

SCENE 2

Outside of GRETA GARGLESMELL's house. Boys and girls are playing ball.

ERIC You know, I can't wait for the new sports complex to open.

ERROL I know. I just live for sports. If it wasn't for the new complex, school would be a real drag!

KERRI We'll probably get to go on trips to sportsmeets and everything!

ERIC Move over, Michael Jordan. Here comes Air Andersen!

APRIL You mean Airhead Andersen!

ERIC Hey, I'm no dummy!

ERROL Oh, come on! You're probably the only person to spell potato with an E!

Suddenly the truck stops and GERTIE steps out. TOMMY brings the bags.

GERTIE Look, Tommy, I appreciate the ride, but I think that having dinner with you would be a bad idea. Somehow, when I think of romance, squirrel burgers and beer just don't cut it. Besides, dating you would probably violate the Wildlife Act!

TOMMY Please, Gertie! You're the only woman for me!

GERTIE Don't beg, Tommy. I only like men with class.

TOMMY Tommy has class. No pride, but lots of class!

GERTIE Go home, Tommy!

TOMMY Okay, but remember this! You are destined to be Tommy's love muffin!

TOMMY exits.

GERTIE Oh, brother!

ERIC Hey, get a load of her!

ERROL Didn't your father catch something like that once?

ERIC Yeah, in the basement! Thank goodness for penicillin!

APRIL Shhh! Here she comes!

GERTIE Oh, hello there!

ALL Hello!

GERTIE Do you all speak English?

ALL Yes!

GERTIE Well, isn't this exciting! All of these delightful northern people speaking the language of Newfoundland!

ERIC Ah... Yeah, right!

KERRI Miss?

GERTIE Yes?

KERRI You eat too much fibre, don't you, Miss?

GERTIE What?!

GRETA I thought I heard a stranger's voice out there. You must be Gertie Gooston.

GERTIE Why, yes, I am.

GRETA I'm Greta Garglesmell. I own the basement apartment that you will be staying in. Why don't we go upstairs and I'll get you the key. You can also meet my pet cat, Puff.

GERTIE That sounds good, except I'm allergic to cats.

GRETA Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Come on. I'll put Puff in the bathroom.

GRETA and GERTIE exit.

ERIC You know, if she is half as dumb as I think she is, we could have a ball!

APRIL What do you mean?

ERIC Oh, come on! She's only got two brain cells in her head, and one's there to keep the other alive!

ERROL Oh, I see! So what do you want to do to her?

ERIC Anything we can. If we are lucky, she'll even help us.

KERRI Shhh! Here she comes!

GERTIE and GRETA re-enter.

GERTIE Thanks so much, Greta!

GRETA Now, remember, if there's anything you need, don't hesitate to ask!

GERTIE I won't!

GRETA Oh, by the way, have you met these kids yet?

GERTIE Well, no, not really.

GRETA Then let me introduce you to them. This is Eric, Errol, April, and Krista. They love sports, and always play near the house. Kids, this is the new teacher, Miss Gooston.

GERTIE So you like sports, huh? Well, so do I. I even tried out for an Olympic team once.

ERIC Yeah, the Olympic fart sniffing team.

GRETA Okay, kids! Help Miss Gooston any way you can. I've got to go! See you later, Gertie!

GERTIE How about helping me bring my things inside?

ALL Okay, Miss!

Everyone enters the apartment with the bags.

GERTIE Just put them down anywhere. What a nice apartment! And the first thing that I have to do is to use the bathroom.

ERIC Bathroom, Miss?

GERTIE Yes, Eric. You know, the room with a sink and a toilet.

The kids all giggle.

KERRI But, Miss, this is Labrador.

GERTIE I know this is Labrador, but people have bathrooms, don't they? (*She walks to a door and opens it.*) See! There it is!

ERROL But, Miss, in this part. of Labrador, we've still got big problems with the toilets.

GERTIE What do you mean?

ERIC Well, Miss, toilets are very new here, so they are still very dangerous.

GERTIE Dangerous! Why?

ERROL Because of the sewer shrews!

GERTIE Sewer shrews! What are sewer shrews?

APRIL They are like rats, Miss.

ERIC Yeah, only smaller and nastier.

KERRI And in Labrador they all got rabies.

ERIC Yeah, and when you sit on the toilet, they finds ya and comes straight up the pipe for supper.

ERROL He's right, Miss. They shoot up and nibble your bum.

KERRI And then you catch rabies. It makes you drool and then you die.

GERTIE So what do you do? Use outhouses?

APRIL No, we can't use outhouses.

GERTIE Why not?

ERIC Too much frost in the ground to dig 'em.

GERTIE Not even in summer?

ERIC Come on, Miss! This is Labrador! Don't you know nothin'?

GERTIE Well, what am I going to do? I can't hold it forever! Everyone does it in the woods, right?

ERIC Come on, Miss! We are more than that! What do you think we are, a bunch of savages?

GERTIE Well, I'm sorry. But what do I do?

KERRI We've got a really good system here in Outaluk.

ERIC Yeah! You get a white plastic bag, spread it between two chairs and you can figure out the rest!

GERTIE You've got to be kidding!

ERIC No, it's the truth, and when you are finished

GERTIE Wait! Don't tell me! I'll bet you bury it out back right!

ERIC Don't be so foolish. You hang it on the clothesline!!

GERTIE You what?!

ERROL You put it on the line...

APRIL And a man comes by in his truck and picks it up.

GERTIE This is insane! Do you really expect me to do all this?

APRIL Well, if you don't, the sewer shrews will get you!

GERTIE I'm beginning to regret coming here.

ERIC Well, Miss, we'll leave now so that you do your bag thing.

SCENE 3

GERTIE is in her apartment fretting about the day's events.

GERTIE Oh, how will I ever survive up here? A few more days like this and I may crack up!

There's a knock at the door.

GERTIE Who could that be?

She goes to the door and opens it. TOMMY appears with the song "You've Lost that Lovin' Feeling" playing in the background.

GERTIE Not now! Get lost! Oh, my nerves! Maybe a good steak will make me feel better.

There's another knock at the door.

GERTIE Who is it this time?

She opens the door.

ERIC Hello, Miss! Me and Kerri thought we would drop in and see how you were doing!

GERTIE How am I doing?! Because of your bag advice, Greta freaked out at me, and Mrs. Knobgobbler has gone mental!

ERIC Mrs. Knobgobbler! She's the town nutcase!

KERRI And everyone knows that Greta Garglesmell freaks out at everything!

ERIC Everyone avoids her because any little thing could set her off!

KERRI And she has always been against the bag idea, and doesn't mind showing it!

GERTIE Really? I had no idea!

ERIC Whatever you do, don't take them seriously.

GERTIE Well, I did let them get to me. I thought that a big steak would cheer me up. You are welcome to stay and have some. I just have to go out to the grocery store and buy some meat.

ERIC Grocery store? Miss, you are in Outaluk now, not Newfoundland! You can't buy meat that easily.

GERTIE There must be some place to get meat up here.

ERIC Well, there is one place where you can get some.

GERTIE Good! What time does it close?

KERRI It's one of those 24-hour places.

ERIC Yeah, sort of like Sobey's Food Village in St. John's.

GERTIE That's great! Where can_! find it?

KERRI Oh, you don't have to go far, Miss!

ERIC Yeah, this place is really big, too. It stretches from the Torngat Mountains to the Labrador coast and the meat is fresh daily.

GERTIE Oh, come on!

KERRI He's serious, Miss!

ERIC Yup. Up here in Labrador, you have to catch your own meat.

GERTIE But I've never caught an animal in my life!

ERIC Well, Miss, this is your lucky day because me and Kerri are two of the best moose catchers on the Labrador, ain't we?

KERRI That's right, and we're going to help you bag your first moose!

GERTIE What?! You two?!

ERIC That's right, Miss. Besides, who else do you know that can help you?

GERTIE Well, I suppose someone's got to teach me if I want to survive up here.

KERRI That's the spirit!

ERIC Come on, Miss! Stick with us. You're about to bag your first moose.

GERTIE I've got a bad feeling about this.

All exit. Soon, on a road near town, they lie in wait for their catch.

GERTIE Are you sure that this will work?

ERIC Of course, Miss! Would we lead you wrong?

GERTIE But we are so close to town. What if someone sees us?

ERIC Nothing to worry about, Miss! Just do as we tell you.

KERRI Okay! The first thing—if you want to bag a moose, you've got to have a bag. Here you go! (*Gives her a sack.*)

ERIC Now you need to put on this moose hat so that the moose thinks you're his buddy. Then you hide away and do your moose noise.

GERTIE How do you do that?

KERRI You put your hands up to your mouth and go "Mo-o-o-o-ose!"

ERIC Now, when the moose trots by, you bang him on the head with this moose knocker (pulls out caveman club) and put him in the bag.

GERTIE This must look ridiculous! I can't believe that I am doing this!

KERRI Shhh! Something's coming! Do your moose stuff!

GERTIE Mo-o-o-o-ose! Mo-o-o-o-ose!

ERIC and KERRI sneak off, snickering. GERTIE jumps out to hit the moose, but it's LOLA GRANOLA, the school principal.

LOLA So this is what you get when you cross a moose with a moron!

GERTIE Oh, Miss Granola! I know how this must look!

LOLA Like one of Santa's reindeer experiments horribly gone wrong!

GERTIE Oh, Miss Granola, I feel so stupid!

LOLA Trust me, Gertie. Go with your feelings!

GERTIE All I wanted was some fresh meat.

LOLA Follow me, Gertie.

GERTIE Where are we going?

LOLA Back to your place. I think we need to have a little coat.

They enter GERTIE's apartment.

LOLA Okay, Gertie, sit down. We have to talk.

There's a knock at the door.

GERTIE Just one moment 'til I get the door!

She opens door and it's TOMMY again, wearing a pink fur coat and carrying flowers, this time to the tune of "Foxy Lady".

GERTIE You again! Forget it! You don't have a chance! (*She slams the door.*)

LOLA Who was that?

GERTIE Just a guy from Geeks are Us.

LOLA I've got to be honest with you, Gertie. You have only been here a few days, but already everyone in town thinks you're crazy! If you don't smarten up, you won't have a friend in this town. I mean, first, there was the plastic bag on the clothesline, and now this moose mess.

GERTIE But I have only been doing what the kids have been telling me. I'm just trying to fit in.

LOLA Look, you silly goose! Those kids are playing you for a fool, and you are falling for it. You've got to start using your head! Tomorrow's a very important day for all of us, especially you, and I won't have one of my teachers acting like an idiot! The grand opening of the sports complex is the biggest thing to happen to this town, and the superintendent himself will be coming. So get your act together! Understand?

GERTIE Yes, Miss.

LOLA Okay, get a good night's sleep tonight, and I'll see you tomorrow.

LOLA exits.

GERTIE Good-bye.

How could I have been so stupid? I'll get those kids tomorrow! I need a good cup of tea to calm my nerves.

GERTIE starts to make some tea and there is a knock on the door. GERTIE opens the door and it is the kids.

ERIC Miss... Miss!! (*Frantically.*)

GERTIE Don't you "Miss" me! I've got a good mind to...

APRIL But, Miss, there's a house on fire!

KERRI You've got to call the fire department, Miss!

GERTIE I'm not falling for any more of your lies.

ERIC But look out the window, Miss.

ERROL See for yourself.

GERTIE *(Goes to the window.)* Oh, my gosh, you're right! I've got to call the fire department. I'm so sorry for doubting you kids.

ERIC It's okay, Miss. Just hurry, before it's too late!

KERRI Let's go, everyone! Maybe we can help the firemen.

GERTIE Okay! Good bye, kids...

Hello, fire department? There's a house on fire next door to Greta Garglesmell's house. My name? Gertie Gooston. Yes, that's right. Please hurry! *(Hangs up telephone.)*

I feel so bad for doubting those kids. For once, they were telling the truth. What's that sound? Oh, it's the fire truck! That was fast!

GERTIE stares out the window at the smoke.

GERTIE Okay, they are getting out. They are smashing in the door with their axes! What's this? One of them is walking towards my place. I wonder what he wants.

There's a knock at the door. GERTIE opens it.

FIREMAN Are you Gertie Gooston?

GERTIE Yes.

FIREMAN You must think you're some funny!

GERTIE What do you mean?

FIREMAN You know very well what I mean! The next time you tell us there's a fire and there isn't one, we're going to call the police!

GERTIE But there was smoke pouring out of the house!

FIREMAN Maybe that's because it's a smokehouse, you weenie! You know, a place where you put meat to smoke it. That's awfully hard to do without a fire!

GERTIE I don't believe this!

FIREMAN Neither do I!

FIREMAN exits.

GERTIE O-o-o-o... those kids! (*Furious.*) This is the final straw! Tomorrow they'll get the shock of their lives. At the opening of the complex, I get my revenge!

GERTIE storms off stage.

SCENE 4

Official assembly in the gym.

LOLA Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the official opening of this wonderful facility. It is a special day for us all and today we have some special guests among us. None is more important than the man who has worked the hardest to see our dream become a reality. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you the Superintendent of our School Board, Mr. Waldo Stiff. (*Applause.*)

WALDO STIFF Ladies and gentlemen, it is indeed a dream come true for the town of Outaluk to have the best gym and sports complex in all of Labrador. However, none of this could have come true without the tremendous generosity of the millionaire banker, David Lee Rothschild. Unfortunately, Mr. Rothschild couldn't be with us today as he is on vacation in South America due to some unfortunate criminal charges back in St. John's. However, he has given another person total authority over who gets to use these wonderful facilities so I would stay on their good side if I were you. Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you his daughter, Gertie Gooston. (*Applause.*)

ERROL Oh, no!

- ERIC It can't be!
- GERTIE Thank you, Mr. Stiff! I would like to say that as well as fulfilling my job as a teacher, I will work hard to make this facility work and to make my father proud. And on behalf of my father, I now declare these wonderful facilities officially open. (*Applause.*)
I would also like to say that this facility will be open to all of the people of Outaluk for their enjoyment except for a certain group of children, whom I would like to have a chat with.
- KERRI We're doomed!
- ERROL What do we do now?
- ERIC As the old saying goes, "Let's make like horse dung and hit the road!"
- The KIDS make a fast escape.*
- WALDO STIFF Thank you, Gertie! I would also like to say that the job of managing the financial affairs of the sports complex has been awarded to Tommy, or should I say, Dr. Tommy Tookalook.
- TOMMY Thank you, Mr. Stiff! When I finished my business thesis on Trickle Down Economics, I dreamed of the day when I could use my education to help my hometwon of Outaluk. Well, that day has finally come!
- WALDO STIFF Thank you, Tommy! I am sure that you will do a great job working closely with Miss Gooston.
- TOMMY The closer, the better!
- WALDO STIFF This concludes the official ceremony. I would like to thank everyone for coming tonight, and if you would kindly proceed to the lobby at this time, there are free jello jigglers and kool-aid for everyone.

Everyone exits except GERTIE and TOMMY.

- TOMMY Why did you come here if your father is so rich?
- GERTIE Because I wanted to get away from the pressure of being recognized as a spoiled rich girl. I wanted to prove myself and make a difference in the world without my father's friends and influence. But as I have learned the hard way, there is no real escape.
- TOMMY But what about your last name?
- GERTIE Oh, it's my mother's maiden name.
- TOMMY Too bad it sounds like fart. I guess that's why she got married. So that there would be one less fart in the world.
- GERTIE Why are you still in this town? With your PhD, you could have a great job anywhere.
- TOMMY Nope! I fished. The money's better on the government package.
- GERTIE You know, the government could use a mind like yours, Tommy!
- TOMMY No way! The skeletons in my closet got meat on 'em!
- GERTIE I suppose that there is a lot to get to know about each other.
- TOMMY I guess there is. Would you like to start by going to the dance with me Saturday night? I got new teeth and everything!
- GERTIE Oh, Tommy! I'm a sucker for a man with a full head of teeth.

They hold hands.

- TOMMY Ya know, Gertie, if we got married, our kids would be rich, toothless wonders.
- GERTIE It could be a wonderful life after all.

They hug.

There's Nothing We Can't Do

Postville, 2005

B.L. Morrison School

Written by Rebecca Jacque

ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

This play is about a group of Labradorian high school graduates who find themselves packing up their school lives and are about to venture out into the unknown: university in Toronto. While packing, they discover treasures and memories that they find hard to leave behind. But in realizing the strength they obtain, they also discover that they have a very rich culture and background that they'll take with them always; and with that, there's nothing they can't do.

ORIGINAL CAST

DAMIEN	Greg Jacque
CHRIS	Jan Bremer
CINDY	Hilary Edmunds
ALLEN	Hayward Sheppard
BEN	Andy Jacque
MICHELLE	Megan Edmunds
SARAH	Glenda Sheppard

TEACHER ADVISORS

Nancy Hall, Ingrid Rose

SCENE 1

Lights appear on two brothers sitting on the floor, packing; friends are sitting around watching TV.

DAMIEN *(packing, points)* Hey, Chris, you wanna hand me that alarm clock over there?

I have to make sure to pack it in here so I'll know where it is when we need it. The hotel might not have one and those early morning flights can be brutal.

CHRIS *(passes the alarm clock)* Good, I don't have to pack mine. Just make sure you don't lose it!

DAMIEN I won't.

CINDY *(snatches it away)* You most certainly will! I'm packing it in with my stuff.

DAMIEN *(to CHRIS)* See, it's good to have a girlfriend who controls every aspect of your life.

CINDY smacks DAMIEN. CHRIS exits.

ALLEN *(slides up behind DAMIEN and CINDY)* Can I ask you guys where exactly Chris is going? Isn't he a bit young to be going off to college?

DAMIEN He's not. He's just coming so far with us. We're going to drop him off at my dad's place in Halifax and then on to Toronto like we planned.

CINDY *(whispering)* Since the divorce, it's been really hard for him being away from his dad for so long. And now that Damien is going to be away at university, his mom thinks it would be a good idea for him to attend school up there for a while.

ALLEN Oh, right. Poor guy!

CHRIS enters.

CHRIS Our tickets are here. (*Waves them around.*)

DAMIEN Oh, good! I got mine really cheap, 'cause I told the ticket agent lady it was my eighteenth birthday. (*Stands up.*)

CHRIS Yeah, I know. I tried the same thing but she said she would never believe in a million years that we were twins.

ALLEN I wonder why!

The two brothers look each other up and down.

BEN (*Sitting extremely close to the TV.*) Will you guys keep it down! I'm trying to watch *Shrek 2* here!

CINDY Ben, shouldn't you be packing too?

BEN There's plenty of time for that, Cindy. We're not leaving for another two weeks.

ALLEN But Ben! There's loads of stuff to do before then!

BEN No, not really. Just packing up my room and goodbyes. I can do that in three days tops.

DAMIEN (*rubbing his own back*) It's harder than it looks Ben, really!

BEN (*chuckles*) Yeah, sure Damien. Five bucks says that when you're all done here, Cindy's just gonna take it all out and re-pack it anyway.

DAMIEN clenches his fists jokingly at BEN.

BEN Seriously, you guys, don't worry about it. When it comes time to get on that plane and venture out into the unknown, I'll be ready. But for now, shhhh! It's getting to the good part!

CHRIS, ALLEN, DAMIEN, and CINDY all shake their heads.

SCENE 2

Lights dim, then reappear on CINDY, sitting on her bed packing; friends are sitting around her.

- CINDY This packing business is really overwhelming! You girls should be glad you're not going to university for another two years. My advice to you, start packing up your stuff now and you MIGHT be ready by then!
- MICHELLE *(lying on the floor in front of the TV)* It can't be as bad as all that. After all, the boys can do it.
- SARAH No, the boys can NOT do it! I looked through Allen's room this morning, and it's a mess! Cindy, I hope you re-packed all of Damien's stuff for him?
- CINDY Don't worry. I let him do it himself in front of his friends, but when they left, I went right to work on it. The one I worry about is Ben. I don't think he knows how to pack—sloppy or otherwise!
- MICHELLE Nope. Come to think of it, I'm pretty sure he's only ever gone as far as Makkovik.
- CINDY Oh wow, I didn't know that. It must be scary for him to think about leaving here and going to live in Toronto. I couldn't do it without Damien.
- SARAH Yeah, it's so great you guys get to go together. You were such a cute couple at your grad! I can't believe the four of you have actually been accepted to the same university. You'll have to keep an eye on Allen for me 'til I get out there.
- CINDY Don't worry, I will. I have the feeling those boys still need a lot of mothering yet.

DAMIEN, CHRIS, ALLEN, and BEN come running in with food and dive for the TV, pushing the girls out of the way.

MICHELLE Boys!

ALLEN We brought pizza!

DAMIEN (*to CINDY*) Looks like the packing is coming along nicely.

CINDY (*waving her arms around nicely*) It's not! How can you say that? Look at this place!

DAMIEN Ok, fine. It's a disaster! (*Cindy smacks him.*) Owwww! (*Rubs his arm.*) When are you gonna stop doin' that?

CINDY When you learn!

DAMIEN Learn what? (*Cindy smacks him again.*) Oh, that!

SARAH and MICHELLE nudge CINDY to look at BEN, who is sitting directly in front of the TV.

CINDY So, Ben... how's the packing coming along?

BEN (*Still looking at the TV.*) Oh, just fine.

CINDY That's good. (*Shrugs at her friends.*)

ALLEN Boy, I can't wait to get out of here. So boring! I'm NEVER coming back here if I don't have to.

CHRIS Yeah, I know what you mean. I haven't even graduated yet and I can't wait to leave. I'm so glad I'll be living in Halifax.

MICHELLE Hey guys, don't depress us. Me and Sarah still have a few years left in high school before we can even think about going anywhere.

SARAH Yeah, I can't wait to go! It'll be even more boring now with you guys gone.

DAMIEN You'll be out there with us soon enough, and you won't wanna come back either.

BEN Shhh! I'm TRYING to watch *Shrek!*

CHRIS No, that was *Shrek 2*. Now, I'm watching the first one.

CINDY So, in other words, you're done packing?

BEN Not quite, but I will be soon enough.

SARAH Why don't you tell us how much you have packed and ready to go?

MICHELLE Yeah, Ben, tell us.

BEN Will you girls get off my back already! Cindy, I told you, when the time comes, I'll be ready. (*Looks around the room.*) This place is a mess. Why don't you worry about getting yourself ready, and let me watch my movie.

ALLEN Easy there, Ben. The girls are just making sure that you'll be ready. If you need any help, you know we'd be glad to help you sort out your stuff.

All shake their heads.

SCENE 3

Lights dim and reappear on ALLEN packing. Friends are sitting around watching TV.

ALLEN (*putting books into a box*) Man, when did I get time to read all these? Shakespeare, Sophocles, some great writers!

SARAH And you'll be a great writer too someday.

ALLEN I hope so. Ben. Can you pass me the tape there by your foot?

BEN sits with his eyes glued to the TV, silent.

ALLEN Damien, can YOU hand me the tape?

DAMIEN (*passes tape to Allen*) Wow, you're not taking all of those are you?

ALLEN Nah, just boxing them up to get 'em out of the way here.

ALLEN tapes up the box and hands it to CHRIS, who takes it and puts it to one side.

CHRIS You've sure got a lot of stuff that you are taking.

SARAH Yeah, his dad is turning his room into an office and he doesn't want too much of his stuff left around.

CINDY That's a good idea. I wonder what my room will be used for when I'm gone.

MICHELLE What's in all those boxes over there, Allen? (*pointing offstage*)

ALLEN Awards and little things from the Creative Arts Festival and Sportsmeets and stuff.

MICHELLE Oh, I don't think I've kept anything from the Dramas and Sportsmeets I've been to.

ALLEN My mom always liked to have little things like that put up around the house.

SARAH Yeah, 'cause he's a little momma's boy, that's why!

GIRLS Awww!

MOTHER (*from offstage*) And don't forget to pack all the new underwear I bought you!

The GIRLS giggle.

SARAH See, what'd I tell you?

CHRIS Don't worry about it, Allen. I know what it's like! That's why I'm glad I'm finally gonna get to see my dad for awhile. He doesn't care about my underwear.

ALLEN (*Digging through papers and mess. Pulls out a medal.*) Hey! My very first Sportsmeet medal! Can you believe I still have this?

CINDY (*looking around*) I can believe you still have your first baby tooth somewhere in this mess!

All look at CINDY. What?... You were all thinking it!

DAMIEN I remember that Sportsmeet. It was my first. We beat Hopedale for first place at ping pong.

MICHELLE Yeah, and I came third in running.

CHRIS That wasn't the best one though! I remember one year we beat Rigolet at Volleyball. I know it was only once, but hey, I got a medal out of it.

SARAH (*pulls out some papers*) Look! These are from Drama.

Everyone goes to look at them.

ALLEN I can't believe Tim Borlase retired! He put so much into the Festivals to make them what they were.

DAMIEN Yeah, I know a lot of people who are gonna miss him!

CINDY He was probably thinking the same thing we are: *Time For A Change*. And that's why we're leaving for Toronto in (*pauses to look at her watch*) five days, seven hours, and twenty~seven minutes! Anybody excited yet?

DAM. & ALL. Me!!!

BEN (stands up) I'm sick of this! All you want to talk about is leaving and changing and moving on. What about our lives here? Sure, it's boring sometimes, but that's life!
Why do we always have to be changing? You guys never appreciated living here!

BEN storms out; all are shocked.

SCENE 4

Lights dim, then reappear on BEN sitting in his room, head in hands.

BEN Everybody wants to go and change and be and do! They talk about past times being so great. They don't mention how we'll never see our friends and families and how scary it'll be when we first get there. I've tried to keep my fears to myself, but it's no use.
I'm just afraid and nobody seems to understand that.

CINDY, ALLEN, and DAMIEN come in to find BEN sitting in a huge mess. CINDY goes to sit beside BEN.

CINDY Ben, are you ok? We're all very worried about you.

DAMIEN and ALLEN sit beside them and nod.

CINDY Why haven't you got anything packed? We've only got a few more days before we leave.

BEN I really don't know what to say, other than, I don't want to go! I'll miss it here too much. And it'll be scary in the city. You guys can make it anywhere. But me, I'm just a Labrador boy, plain and simple! I'll never last out there.

DAMIEN Ben! Is that all it is? We're all scared, Ben. All of us! It's gonna be a drastic change from what we're used to, but we have each other, and

a strong heritage that we'll take with us no matter where we go. Surely that must count for something.

ALLEN He's right, Ben. We've all taken time to think about the old times and how much fun we've had. But we know that no matter what, we're all Labradorians at heart and always will be! Just because we leave the place doesn't mean the place leaves us.

CINDY I don't think it ever does.

BEN But you guys keep talking about changes. Why do we always have to be changing?

DAMIEN Changes are a way of life, Ben. Everything that lives has to go through some kind of change, sooner or later.

ALLEN But nobody says these changes have to be bad, and we're not looking to change who we are, just what we'll be doing for the next few years.

CINDY And we'll all help each other through whatever changes we need to make. That's why we're going together, remember?

BEN (*smiling*) I remember. I just don't want my family to think they've spent so much time teaching and raising me, just to have me run off and leave them the first chance I get.

CINDY They won't. I'm sure they want you to go on and take what they've taught you and become the best person you can possibly be.

BEN I guess you're right. But I'm sure going to miss hunting with my dad and fixing my ski-doo and attending the youth gatherings every year.

DAMIEN We'll all miss those things. They're great memories and we're lucky to have them. Some people never get to experience the North like we do.

ALLEN Right, but we'll make new memories and nobody says they can't be just as great.

BEN But they won't be the same.

DAMIEN No, they won't. Nothing can replace what our culture has given us over the years. But we have a strong background, and it's time we go out into the world and use what we've learned to make a difference.

CINDY What do you say, Ben? Let's go out there and show them what we're made of! Be true Labradorians!

ALLEN Yeah, and when Christmas rolls around, we can make plans to come home and visit.

DAMIEN And I'll call ahead and tell your dad to break your ski-doo for you so you'll have something to fix when you get home.

BEN Home?

ALLEN Sure, this is our home. Where else can you go and make a huge mess and have someone else clean it up for you?

BEN That's true. I can live with that.

CINDY Good! Now can we please get started on this room? We've got five days to get you ready and out the door.

BEN That's right! We'll never do it in time. I'll have to ship everything!

CINDY We'll get it done. (*Starts picking up papers.*) We're Labradorians pulling together—there's nothing we can't do!

Them Days

Makkovik, 2018

Kverna Creators, J.C. Erhardt Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

A teacher moves to an indigenous community not knowing anything about Inuit culture. Throughout the course of the play, he learns some valuable life lessons that help him embrace other cultures, people and new experiences.

ORIGINAL CAST

MR. CRITCH	Ryden Andersen
JOBY	Preston Clark
JACKO/CLEMENTS	Jayden Winters
SOPHIA	Harley Ikkusek
JAMES	Jesse Ford James
MAKUS/LEVI	Errol Martin

SCENE 1

Setting: in the school library. Everyone in class looking bored. No wifi.

MR. CRITCH Ok, b'ys, the internet's down again. Everybody go find a book to read.

JOBY Ugh, this is so boring. I could be playing Fortnite right now. (*Makes shooting action.*)

JACKO Yeah, I can't believe we actually have to read. We could choke from the dust on those books.

JOBY Come on. We finds a book before Critch gets mad at us.

All the students walk to the bookshelf, with no enthusiasm. They browse library books for a short time.

JAMES Hey, look at this thing... it looks five hundred years old.

SOPHIA Umm... it's actually 90 years old. (*She points to the cover of the book.*) Can you even read?

JAMES Pffffttt. I knew that.

SOPHIA Whatever. Of course you did.

MR. CRITCH James and Sophia! Have you chosen a book yet? Come on now, focus!

JAMES Yes, yes. (*Mumbles something.*)

MR. CRITCH (*Stands up.*) What did you say to me?!

JAMES Nothing, nothing, I got one, calm down. (*Goes and sits down.*)

MR. CRITCH Detention.

JAMES For what???

SOPHIA Hahaha, suck it.

MR. CRITCH You too, Sophia!

SOPHIA I didn't mean it!

JAMES looks over with a big grin. Lights go down.

SCENE 2

The scene opens with MR. CRITCH asleep at his desk with his feet up, and JOBY and JAMES are sitting in detention.

JAMES Did you find anything sensible to read?

SOPHIA Yeah, man. Mine's about the Kardashians.

JOBY Mine's about Donald Trump making America great.

JAMES (*Whispers.*) Well, mine's about our ancient Inuit ancestors. (*Starts to read...*) This is actually quite interesting.

In order to show this to the audience we can have a character say it. Perhaps a recording.

SOPHIA Wow, you can actually read?

JAMES glares at SOPHIA but continues reading.

JAMES This book's from back before my pop was even born.

"Rewind" sound. Flashback. Light shift. "Remembrance harp" sound effect.

JAYDEN and ERROL enter dressed in aboriginal clothing, then stand around waiting for a seal.

LEVI Fadder, it's been 6 hours. My hands are froze. Do you think we should go now?

CLEMENTS Auka sulli.

LEVI Ugh. We'll wait another bit. I hope mother has the Kullik going.

CLEMENTS Yaw son, yeet.

LEVI My mitts are froze to my harpoon.

Wind blowing, hear scratching on ice.

LEVI Udjuk! Udjuk!

LEVI stabs the seal and blood goes everywhere. Light shift, harp sound, back to the classroom. SOPHIA walks over to CRITCH and tries different things to wake him up: pokes him, shakes him, and smacks the desk. CRITCH awakes.

MR. CRITCH No, Mommy, Jeremy don't wanna take a bath. (*Opens one eye and looks around.*)

Students oddly glance.

SOPHIA What are you going on with now, sir?

MR. CRITCH Oh, uh. You guys are free to go

JAMES still in his seat, reading.

MR. CRITCH James, it's time to leave. I have to go.

JAMES Just a few minutes. I'm almost done the chapter.

MR. CRITCH Now, James! (*Drags James off the stage.*)

JAMES Wait, I've got an idea! We should go seal hunting tomorrow!

Lights go down. Closed scene.

SCENE 3

The scene opens up to the younger ones going seal hunting in the modern day. SOPHIA and JAMES get ready to go seal hunting for the day.

JAMES Beautiful day out, eh, Soph?

SOPHIA Sure is. (*Texting on phone.*)

JAMES Ready?

SOPHIA Hold on. I gotta send my streaks.

Skidoo takes off.

JAMES Look, udjuk!

SOPHIA What's an udjuk?

JAMES Udjuk is a square flipper in Inuktitut.

SOPHIA Square what? Whatever. He's so cute. I wanna take a Sealfie, get it?

JAMES Forget the selfie. We need food for supper.

Skidoo prop. Go to other side of stage.

JAMES (*Sees the seal and takes out a gun.*) You gotta aim for the nose. If you shoot him in the head, he will escape.

SOPHIA What? Why?

JAMES (*Annoyed sounding.*) Sink like a rock.

SOPHIA Good shot!

SOPHIA helps JAMES strap the seal onto the ski-doo, and they drive off. Lights go down. SOPHIA takes a Sealfie.

JAMES Sophia, come on. It's getting dark!

Scene closes.

SCENE 4

Maybe SOPHIA and her dad (MAKUS) in this scene, to have SOPHIA change her mind on technology and her books and look into learning more about her culture. SOPHIA realizes she don't know enough about her Inuit culture and where she originated from. She slowly finds interest in her culture.

SOPHIA Atâta, I feel like I don't know anything about our culture. Where can i learn?

MAKUS That's because you are too into the modern day life.

SOPHIA I didn't understand how important my culture was.

MAKUS It's important to know where you came from, and who you are.

SOPHIA Is it too late to start looking for answers?

MAKUS It's never too late, Panik, never.

SOPHIA Where do I start?

MAKUS You can read some *Them Days* books.

SOPHIA There's this boy in my class named James, and he reads *Them Days* books allll the time.

MAKUS Ask others. They can help you find out more.

Scene closes.

SCENE 5

A few of the students as a group come together in unison. JAMES is in math class, and he falls asleep. JAMES is acting out his day dream of the Northern Lights coming to chop his head off. He whistles. The Northern Lights in the background turn angry colours, then JAMES starts pushing it and whistles all out, pissing off the Northern Lights.

JAMES Oh, look, they're dancing!

Play audio clip of "Jesse's Dream." JAMES runs and the Northern Lights viciously chase him. JAMES hides. The scene changes back to the present, the lights come up, and MR. CRITCH yells at JAMES.

Mr. CRITCH James!! James!!! Time to wake up and write your notes. (Kicks desk.)

JAMES Wowww, you wouldn't believe what I just read.

MR. CRITCH Was it more important than math? If not, I don't want to hear it.

JAMES It was about our culture... isn't that important?

MR. CRITCH I didn't say your culture wasn't important. I said math was more important.

JAMES Ooh, sir, it's very important that we know where we come from. A lot of people are uninformed about aboriginal peoples even though we live in the same country.

JAMES tosses book to CRITCH.

JAMES Look, read this. Here's your homework for tonight

MR. CRITCH What's this? I don't have time to be reading this.

JAMES If you ever want to learn about us students, then you would make time.

MR. CRITCH I'll think about it, but don't hold your breath.

Scene closes.

SCENE 6

MR. CRITCH is reading while students are finishing their math work.

MAKUS Sir, what's the square root of 49?

MR. CRITCH ignores MAKUS and continues reading.

MAKUS Sssiiiiirrrrrr, the square root of 49.

MR. CRITCH Ummmm, 2.

JACKO Sir, it's 7, not 2. Are you even paying attention to us?

JOBY Sir, are you awake?

MR. CRITCH Yeah, I'm just so fascinated by what's happening in this book.

JOBY What are you reading?

MR. CRITCH *Them Days*. Do you still skin seals with a... yew-lew?

MAKUS You mean an ulu, sir?

MR. CRITCH I guess.

MAKUS Yes, we do sir, and it's pronounced "ooo-looo."

JACKO Sir, we really should take you seal hunting, so you can see for yourself!

MR. CRITCH I'd like that, guys.

JOBY How about Saturday?

MR. CRITCH Sure.

JOBY We've had teachers in the past who actually put in their own time to understand our history. Our history shapes who we are as people today. Our people have overcome many obstacles.

SOPHIA It's okay to not to know, sir, we can help teach you.

Idea: the resolution to the play could be the students convincing MR. CRITCH that their heritage and culture is an important part of their lives.

SCENE 7

SOPHIA, JAMES, MAKUS, JOBY, and MR. CRITCH all go seal hunting. JOBY comes out with a sign reading "Saturday morning."

SOPHIA Are you excited, sir?

MR. CRITCH Ain't I ever?

JAMES We are happy to take you on your first seal hunt.

MR. CRITCH I don't know what to expect.

JAMES Every hunt is different.

JOBY You need to shut up now, sir, or you'll scare away all the seals.

Everyone giggles.

JACKO There's fresh holes over there. We might get one today.

MR. CRITCH How do you kill it?

Everyone shushes him.

JOBY You'll find out soon enough

Small, four second pause. Gun shot.

MAKUS Did you shoot en?

JAMES Yup, first shot.

MR. CRITCH Woah!!!! That was so coool. Thank you for taking me, b'ys. I feel like I really learned a lot about your culture today.

JACKO Now we have to skin the seal, and you will have the honour of eating the liver.

Starts to skin the seal and takes out the liver.

JOBY Here, sir, you have to eat a piece.

MR. CRITCH The liver... not even cooked?

JACKO Yeah, it's tradition.

MR. CRITCH Oh well, if it's tradition, then I guess.

The lights go down. CRITCH takes the liver eats it, and throws up. The scene closes.

SCENE 8

A funeral.

JAMES I can't believe he died. Who would of thunk he was allergic to seals?

Scene closes.

Asiangulukisiani Piusigijait: Changing Your Perspective

Nain, 2018

Nililaugit Players, Jens Haven Memorial School



ORIGINAL SYNOPSIS

What happens when you bring young people together to confront stereotypes?
Join students on a Youth Exchange for Reconciliation to see what unfolds.

ORIGINAL CAST

Novalee Webb	MARY, 16 years old; from Nain; she is of mixed ancestry but is a beneficiary of the NG; she feels mistreated and misunderstood by both cultures
Samantha Saksagiak	MARGARET, 15; from Nain; outgoing and funny but can be serious too; passionate about her culture
Lauren Pilgrim	FRANCESCA, 15; from Newfoundland; non-Indigenous youth who is interested in learning more about Inuit culture and building the relationship between cultures
Dione Kohlmeister	SHERI, 15; from Marystow; a positive, cheerful girl who is excited for the experience
Jimmy Karpik	JAMES, 17; non-Indigenous; forced to attend the gathering as a way to address his intolerance (his guidance counsellor thought he'd benefit from the experience)
Colby Holwell	Tech

SCENE 1

At the airport in Goose Bay, waiting to head to Nunatsiavut for a youth cultural exchange to promote reconciliation. SHERI, FRANCESCA, and JAMES are in the lineup waiting to board. The youth visitors approach the plane, on the way to Nain. Two are excited. JAMES is obviously stressed.

VOICE *(Offstage.)* Announcing the security call for Flight 961 for Nunatsiavut. Passengers prepare for boarding at Gate 3.

JAMES *(Nervously looks out the doors at the plane.)* Gee, that plane looks so small. That can't be our flight. Is it?

FRANCESCA I don't care how small it is. I'm excited to go. I can't wait to get there!

SHERI Ok, guys, enough talking. *(They move through the line and make their way towards the plane.)* Let's try to get good seats.

JAMES *(Looks at his boarding pass.)* What? Don't we have assigned seats?

FRANCESCA No, I'm guessing the plane is too small for that. Looks like it's first come, first served. It is a Twin Otter, not a 747.

SHERI I'm sure it'll be fine. Come on, it's all a part of the adventure. Wanna try to sit by each other?

FRANCESCA Sure! I call the window seat.

JAMES No thanks, I'd rather sit by myself.

The girls look at each other and shrug their shoulders, then board the plane. Once he boards, JAMES realizes how cramped it's going to be.

JAMES I guess there's no chance of sitting by myself.

FRANCESCA How long is the flight?

SHERI The pilot says 1 hour and twenty minutes to Nain.

FRANCESCA Let's buckle up and enjoy the ride.

SHERI I hope it's a nice, smooth ride. You ok, James?

JAMES is ignoring them. He puts in his earbuds and stares out the window. He's restless, trying to get comfortable. The girls look out the window, admiring the scenery.

SCENE 2

MARY and MARGARET prepare for the exchange. MARY and MARGARET are centre stage. A photo of Nain is projected on the screen behind them.

MARY It's not easy to change people's opinions, is it? Some people are just too close-minded and others are just too ignorant. They just don't understand. I'm a bit nervous. What if the people coming for the Youth Exchange are all negative and judgy?

MARGARET Hopefully they won't be like that, but if they are, we have to educate them: show them that their stereotypes and judgements are wrong. That's what this project is all about. We have to come together, listen to each other, share our stories and develop respect for each other. That's why we created this youth exchange for reconciliation. We want to build that relationship, build the future we want...together.

MARY You're probably right. It's just not a simple fix though. We have to head to the airstrip soon and pick up our guests. That would be a bad first impression...leaving them waiting down there all alone.

MARGARET Yeah, come on. Let's go. (*She turns to face and address the audience.*) We're so happy to have you all with us for the conference and exchange. Listen to our stories, hear our truth, hope for change... as we move forward together.

SCENE 3

The girls exit stage right. The visitors enter, dragging luggage from the plane to the terminal. Then MARY and MARGARET re-enter, greeting them.

MARGARET Atelihai. Welcome to Nain! Good flight, awa?

The other girls and JIMMY look at each other, confused.

SHERI Hi! We had a great flight. The scenery is spectacular.

MARY That's why we call it Nunatsiavut... our beautiful land.

FRANCESCA It was awesome, wasn't it, James?

JAMES (*Visibly angry.*) That was the most horrible flight I've ever been on. The plane was too crowded and hot. I couldn't take my backpack with me. I hope my stuff isn't busted up. I'm starving... I can't believe there wasn't even a flight attendant. And no snacks!

MARGARET Come on, we have snacks up at JS. That's the community centre where we're going to have the meetings and discussions for the exchange.

SHERI Is it far? I really need to use the bathroom. I knew I shouldn't have had that Pepsi before the flight.

JAMES Yeah, how could I forget there was no bathroom on the plane? Not acceptable.

FRANCESCA Well, we're here now. Chalk it all up to experience and we'll know better for next time.

MARY Come on, guys. We'll take care of everything at JS and get you sorted out with your billets.

SHERI Is there a taxi?

MARGARET No. We're the taxi. We came down on our Hondas. I can take you and Francesca, and James can ride with Mary.

FRANCESCA Sounds like fun!

MARY It's not going to be a joy ride. But maybe later we can go out for a ride on the trails or something.

JAMES Where are your helmets?

MARGARET We don't use helmets.

JAMES I should have known.

SHERI Can we go now? I really need to go to the bathroom.

MARGARET I'll try not go over too many bumps.

They laugh and get aboard the Hondas to head up to their meetings. JAMES does not look happy.

SCENE 4

At the JS for meetings. Blocks are arranged in a semi-circle/arc for the discussions.

MARGARET Good afternoon, everyone. Thank you for deciding to participate in our first Youth Cultural Exchange for Reconciliation. We have to acknowledge the past but we also have to think about the future we want to build.

MARY Margaret and I will be your youth facilitators during the conference. We'll be leading these discussion sessions and we also have some cultural activities planned. We hope that you'll enjoy your visit and understand us a little better.

MARGARET Our discussions might bring up some serious, sensitive topics. We will have counsellors and support on hand from DHSD and from LG Health.

- MARY The point of these sessions is to get your issues out in the open. Ask the difficult questions. Share your views, even if they're different from ours.
- MARGARET We want everyone to feel comfortable enough to be honest and safe enough to speak their truth. That's a first step toward healing.
- FRANCESCA Where do we even start?
- SHERI Is there a list of topics for us to talk about?
- MARGARET We didn't create a formal list, because we weren't sure what you wanted to learn about.
- MARY We have so much to share with you... about our language, our culture, our home... I just hope we have time for all of it.
- MARGARET James. You're not saying much. Maybe you'd like to start. What would you like to learn about? Our food, traditional skills, hunting, our language, our values?
- JAMES I don't think I should have come here. I really don't know much about this place and the people at all... except what I've heard from other people and what I've seen and read in the media.
- MARGARET That's honest, anyway. Sadly, most of what ends up on the news about us is negative.
- MARY Well, why don't we start there? With the negative stereotypes that some people seem to have about us.
- SHERI Uh, Ok. I'm confused. You said "us." Are you Inuit, Mary?
- MARY Yes, I am Inuit. Some people refer to us as Kablunangajuit. That means that my ancestors are both Inuit and non-Inuit. But I just happen to have blonde hair and blue eyes.
- FRANCESCA Do you get bullied or picked on because of that?

- MARY Sometimes. There are some kids at school who tease me and some adults who ask me who I am, or if I'm from here. But it's the same when I go out to Newfoundland. There's a few people who make fun of my Nain slang and ask dumb questions like, "Do you live in igloos?"
- MARGARET That's what we want to change... we want to educate people so they won't need to ask silly questions like that.
- JAMES So, do you live in igloos? In winter, I mean.
- MARGARET Nah, it's too cold and it's way too hard to watch Netflix or play Fortnite in an igloo. The TV screen keeps fogging up. (*She laughs.*)
- MARY (*Giggles.*) Margaret likes to tease. She tries to make you believe. But seriously, knowing how to make an igloo is an important skill to have. It can save your life if you're caught out on the land in a storm. Some people might use them for hunting, but that's rare now.
- MARGARET It's too bad that we had to schedule your trip for fall. We don't have much snow yet, so there's no igloos to be seen. You'll have to come back later on.
- SHERI I'd like to do that. Maybe we could sleep in an igloo.
- FRANCESCA That would be cool. Literally. (*She laughs.*)
- MARY Is there anything else you're curious about?
- (The visitors pause, pondering the question, wondering what to ask.)
- FRANCESCA There's something I've wondered about.
- MARGARET Go ahead. Don't be shy.
- FRANCESCA Why do you speak English so well? I thought we'd have a hard time understanding you.

- SHERI Yeah, I was hoping that we might learn some Inuktitut while we're here.
- MARY Inuktitut is not spoken as much as it could be. There's lots of reasons for that, though.
- MARGARET Right now we don't even have enough Inuktitut teachers in our 4-12 school. Those teachers who were fluent have retired and it seems to be hard to find replacements.
- JAMES So your own people don't want to teach you your language? Why? They don't get paid enough?
- MARY It's much more complicated than that. Our elders are the main ones who speak Inuktitut. There are lots of other people who are passionate about the language, but it's not easy to learn.
- JAMES Maybe if you tried.
- MARGARET Inuktitut is a complex language. It's not just about learning a few vocab words Do you learn French in school?

They all nod.

- MARGARET Was that easy to learn? Are you fluent? Maybe you even had French Immersion all through school. We don't have those options for learning Inuktitut.
- JAMES Couldn't your families teach you?
- MARY Like I just said, it's not as easy as that. For generations, our ancestors have been taught that their language was wrong. That they had to learn English.
- SHERI Why?
- MARGARET First it was the Moravians and then residential schools, or boarding schools... or just even regular schools. They weren't allowed to speak

Inuktitut. They had to learn English. They'd be punished for speaking their own language.*

FRANCESCA That's not right. How unfair.

MARY Exactly. It certainly didn't make them want to teach us, to put us at risk for suffering like they did.

JAMES But if your language was important to them, they would have.

MARGARET Language is important. It's who we are. Some people were determined to keep that alive and wouldn't let missionaries or teachers or anyone beat that out of them. But we can't blame those who didn't share their language with us.

JAMES Why not? It's their fault you don't speak it today.

MARY There was a lot of stigma attached to speaking Inuktitut.

MARGARET That's something we have to let go of. We can't just blame them and be angry. We need to accept that and move on. That's why I'm trying my best to learn as much Inuktitut as I can. I participate in the Inuktitut Speak Off every year. I'm proud to share my language that way. Maybe I'll inspire other young people to do the same thing.

SHERI That's awesome! You could teach people to speak Inuktitut. Maybe you'll be an Inuktitut teacher yourself.

MARGARET Maybe. But I'm aiming to be the President of the Nunatsiavut Government.

* The students' explanation here for language loss is one that is frequently recounted in recent years, but interviews with elders in Nunatsiavut and historical documents show that the Moravian missionaries taught students in Inuktitut until Confederation with Canada in 1949 brought about changes in the education system. Inuit community elders contributed to the decision to teach English as well, feeling that knowing two languages would be an advantage to the children. Even after Confederation, bilingual teachers who were from the Nunatsiavut communities continued to use Inuktitut in the classroom to assist students who spoke Inuktitut as a first language. (See *Inside Stories*, by Martha MacDonald, for further reading.)

FRANCESCA Go for it! It's great to see young people here have such high goals.

MARY Why do you say that?

JAMES I guess she's thinking about that media image again—we hear about high dropout rates, poverty, insecurity, TB outbreaks and the high rates of suicide. Those facts must make it challenging to live here.

MARY There are challenges here, like there are everywhere. Maybe because we live in such a small place, so isolated from everyone else, it seems like a bigger problem.

MARGARET And the reality of our history has added to that challenge. A hundred years ago, the Spanish Flu epidemic almost wiped us all out. Then came relocation and residential schools. We've been through a lot.

SHERI I know families that were relocated on the island too. Whole communities were abandoned.

JAMES But there's a difference. They don't have these social issues.

FRANCESCA We don't know that, though. Maybe they do.

MARY There's more to relocation than moving homes. Our ancestors lost their traditional hunting grounds. They were moved into small, substandard houses. There was little chance of work. Those conditions contributed to the social issues you mentioned.

MARGARET And those conditions lasted for decades. Sure, it's still going on today. We have a housing crisis. Some houses have ten or more people in a three bedroom house.

JAMES appears more and more agitated.

MARY Does that answer your question, James?

JAMES Not really. I feel like I'm being blamed for relocation, for residential schools, for every bad thing that has happened to your people. I had

nothing to do with it. It's not my fault. It makes me angry, especially when you get free money from the government.

MARGARET Free money? What do you mean?

JAMES You don't pay taxes, do you?

MARY Oh, yes. We pay taxes. Just come down to Northern with us later and see how much we pay for stuff. And there's sales tax on top of that. We pay income tax too.

MARGARET We do get funding for post-secondary education. But that's because of everything that was taken from us—our land, our homes, our hunting and fishing grounds, our language, our culture.

JAMES It frustrates me that I have to pay my own way for university or get a student loan but you can go for free. And how many of you actually take advantage of that?

FRANCESCA James, you can't blame them. Why are you angry with them?

MARY There are more and more of us going to university and college, getting the training we need to find good jobs. The people who came before us were abused by people in power and didn't often get the opportunities we have today.

SHERI I think this is another big part of what you and Margaret mentioned at the beginning. We need to acknowledge the past and find a way forward.

MARGARET Yeah, as traumatic as it has been, we Inuit have survived whatever challenge has come our way. We are resourceful and resilient. It's hard sometimes to think about moving forward, because sometimes it feels like we are forgetting the past. But that's not what we're doing. We need to learn from it. All of us do.

- MARY James, you have to accept what happened in the past. You might not have relocated us or sent us to residential schools or abused us, but your attitude is keeping those problems alive. You don't seem open to learning about us.
- JAMES I don't know what you want me to say. It was my ancestors who did all that, not me. It feels like you want me to carry that blame.
- SHERI Do you really feel like that?
- FRANCESCA Do you feel guilty?
- MARGARET We're not trying to make anyone feel guilty. How about feeling some empathy? And really trying to understand what it is like to live with intergenerational trauma. My anânsiak and atâtsiak went to boarding school. They were ripped away from their families and spent their nights crying themselves to sleep. Other kids bullied them—beat them up. Some of the adults there abused them or turned a blind eye to other students who assaulted them. They were beaten if they spoke Inuktitut. When they did come home, they didn't really fit in because they'd lost a lot of their culture. They'd lost a lot of their language. How do you think that made them feel? It's affected them and the rest of us—for our whole lives.
- SHERI I'm glad that you shared that, Margaret. I don't think I realized how awful it was.
- JAMES Bad things happen to other people too. You can't dwell on it. You have to move on.
- MARY That's why we're here, meeting like this. Having an exchange of ideas, an exchange of cultures. It's not as simple as moving on.
- JAMES I still don't think you should keep blaming white people for everything.

FRANCESCA Nobody's blaming us.

There's another pause. The others look at JAMES.

JAMES I'm sorry that it happened to your people, to your family. I never knew what happened in residential schools.

MARGARET Thank you, James. It's been a long day. We've touched on some difficult subjects. I think we should go home and get some rest. Tomorrow we have an outing planned. That will be a nice break from the seriousness of today's sessions.

Everyone gets ready to leave, and says goodbye. Lights fade out and then fade in.

SCENE 5

The exchange participants are at the dock, preparing to go off seal hunting for the day. Some blocks will be used to create the "boat" in the centre of the stage.

MARY Ok, everyone. Let's load our supplies into the boat.

MARGARET directs the others to put the supplies on board.

SHERI What are we going to do? Go fishing?

MARGARET There's no char around right now. Might find a few rock cod, but we're not going fishing.

As they load things on board, JAMES seems to be annoyed.

JAMES Do we really need all of this stuff? How long are we going for? A week?

MARY It helps to be prepared. We don't want you guys to be cold or hungry. And we might need all this if the weather gets bad or if something happens while we're gone off.

FRANCESCA Gone off? Off what?

MARGARET That's what we say when we're going hunting or fishing. We're "going off."

FRANCESCA Oh, cool. I'm learning some Nain slang.

JAMES Is there going to be enough room for us? How are we all going to sit comfortably in there?

MARY We all might not be comfortable. It's not really a pleasure cruise. Someone might be lucky and have to sit on the grub box.

MARGARET Don't worry, we'll be fine.

They all get on board the boat. They have to rearrange things to find seats. The other actors freeze when MARY addresses the audience.

MARY It was a beautiful day out in boat. The girls were amazed at the scenery and the wildlife they saw along the way: black bears on shore and grumpuses and seals in the water. My brother slowed the boat when he spied a small seal ahead.

MARGARET Look over there, see that black spot on the water?

SHERI What is that?

MARY It's a seal.

FRANCESCA How cute!

As the boat nears the seal, MARGARET takes out a gun.

MARGARET Mary, pass me the bullets.

JAMES What the hell are you doing with that gun?

MARGARET We're going to get that seal.

MARGARET aims at the seal. The visitors are horrified.

FRANCESCA I can't look.

MARY Don't look, then, if you're going to be upset.

MARGARET takes her shot and kills the seal. MARY helps hook the seal into the boat.

SHERI Oh, my God! Look at all the blood! You shot it in the head.

MARY Good shot, Margaret! You're a great hunter.

JAMES You killed that poor, innocent seal.

MARGARET Thank you. We're going to eat it and use every part of it. It's how we survive—how our people have survived for thousands of years.

FRANCESCA It's hard for me to look at. I'm not used to this. I don't go hunting back home.

JAMES No, we're civilized. We buy our meat at the supermarket.

MARY Yes, slaughter houses are so humane. You're upset about this, but you don't worry about cows, chickens and pigs that are killed for your food.

JAMES It's not the same thing.

FRANCESCA Maybe it's just because we see our meat all packaged up nice and neat. We don't see how the animals die.

SHERI I've gone hunting with my dad—rabbits, grouse and moose—but I haven't been seal hunting before.

MARGARET Oh, if I'd known that I would have let you shoot it.

SHERI That's ok. I don't want to kill anything. I just go with my dad. I've never shot a gun.

MARGARET Most kids here go hunting and have their own guns. You teach them young, so they'll know how to provide for themselves and for the family.

MARY Yes, it's something that's honoured and celebrated... someone's first kill. You'd give it to your godmother or a family member.

SHERI What are you going to do with this seal? Give it away?

MARGARET It's not my first seal. I got my first one when I was ten. We'll make good use of this one, that's for sure.

Actors freeze, except MARY, who addresses the audience.

MARY Everyone enjoyed the boat ride home. It was such a nice peaceful day on the water. Our visitors kept stealing glances at the seal Margaret shot, feeling sorry for it and wondering how they would bring themselves to eat it. Little did they know the surprises that we had in store for them.

Actors pantomime the boat landing. They unload the boat and drag the seal over to the beach to be skinned. MARGARET takes the lead.

JAMES Are you going to gut it right here in front of us?

MARY She's going to skin it first. This seal has a nice pelt. It'll make some beautiful mitts or maybe kamet—sealskin boots.

MARGARET Yeah. Lots of work, though. We skin it, clean it, stretch it and dry it before we can make anything with it.

MARGARET mimes skinning the seal.

FRANCESCA I don't think I can watch.

SHERI Yeah, I don't want to see the guts.

MARY The intestines are my favourite.

JAMES Disgusting! You're going to eat them?

MARY Not right now. We have to braid them and boil them first.
Mmmmm...

MARGARET starts to cut the seal's eyeball.

MARGARET I've got a treat for you. Seal eyes! My favourite!

MARGARET pops the eye into her mouth. The visitors are shocked. Some gag. Others shudder or look away.

MARGARET Don't worry. There's another one, if any of you want to try.

FRANCESCA Is it safe to eat?

MARY Yes, of course.

SHERI I think I'll try a piece.

MARGARET Go big or go home.

MARY Go on, I dare you.

JAMES That's just disgusting. I don't want to see that. If I try seal meat, I want it to be cooked.

SHERI It's all part of the experience, right? Ok. I'll try it.

MARGARET We'll cook up some seal meat and doughboys for supper. You'll all get a taste.

FRANCESCA Thanks for the day. I'll never forget this.

JAMES Neither will I.

The actors mime packing their supplies and heading home.

SCENE 6

The actors are preparing for the next outing, a night hike. MARY and MARGARET will be leading them to Morhardt, a hill overlooking Nain. SHERI, JAMES, and FRANCESCA are getting their gear ready when MARY and MARGARET arrive to pick them up.

MARGARET *(Addresses the audience.)* It's the last night of the exchange. Mary and I decided that a night hike would be a nice way to end the sessions. We'll see a bit of the town, maybe some wildlife, and if we're lucky, the northern lights.

MARY Hey guys, ready to go?

MARGARET Why do you guys have so much stuff? You don't need all this. We're just going for a walk around town. We'll take the foot bridge and go over across and head up to Morhardt for a fantastic view.

MARY Yeah, take your cameras or phones. You might get some breathtaking pics.

They all head off on the hike.

FRANCESCA Is it safe to walk around at night? It's getting dark already.

MARGARET We're fine. If we do come across any drunks, we'll avoid them. Are you afraid of getting jumped? There's five of us. Nobody will try anything.

FRANCESCA I certainly hope they don't.

JAMES Is there a lot of crime here?

MARY I don't know the statistics, but look around you. There's kids still out playing, people are out walking. If it was that dangerous we'd all be locked up in our houses, afraid to come out.

SHERI I'm more afraid of those wolves. Please tell me they're dogs and not a pack of wolves.

MARGARET Yeah, they're dogs. There's no wolves around here yet.

JAMES Yet?

MARGARET Sometimes there are wolves around town. They follow the caribou and other prey.

FRANCESCA I hope my battery's charged up. Sounds like there could be some great photo ops.

SHERI You seem so calm and relaxed about it all.

MARY This is our home. We recognize the challenges but we also learn how to deal with them.

SHERI Is it worth it?

MARGARET Definitely. You'll see.

They walk around the stage, "hiking."

JAMES (*Hunches his back and painfully sighs.*) My back is killing me! How much longer is this going to be? It better be worth it. (*He takes out a walking stick.*)

MARY Isn't this better than walking on all that pavement and cement in the city?

JAMES No. At least it's flat.

FRANCESCA Now, James, don't forget about all the potholes we have.

SHERI And sometimes the sidewalks are in poor shape too.

MARGARET We watch the news too. Big breaking story. A car got a flat tire on the Outer Ring Road. (*She laughs.*)

FRANCESCA It is getting a lot darker. There aren't many street lights over here. How much longer?

SHERI Yeah, I'm enjoying the exploration, but I'm not looking forward to being mauled by a bear or chased by anyone.

MARY There's no need to be scared. We are almost guaranteed to be safe.

JAMES Almost? That's reassuring.

MARGARET We're just going up this steep hill and we'll climb to the top. Got your flashlights?

The group trudges to the top of the hill, miming actions.

MARGARET (*Addressing the audience.*) We finally made it safely to the top of Morhardt. There wasn't a wolf or a fox or a bear or any interference. We could see all the lights of Nain city.

The group take selfies and other photos with the town as a backdrop.

MARY Ah, perfect! Look over there, guys.

FRANCESCA What's that?

JAMES Bears? Wolves? Just kidding.

MARGARET It's the atsanit—northern lights—Aurora Borealis.

SHERI Air Borealis? Our flight was nice but not as beautiful as that.
(Laughs.)

The group takes more pics. Lots of ooohs and aaahhhhs.

MARY Make sure you don't whistle. They might decapitate you. *(Laughs.)*

FRANCESCA and SHERI squeal and jump in fear.

JAMES Yeah, right. I don't believe that. *(He whistles.)* See, I still have my head. Nonsense.

FRANCESCA Aren't you scared?

SHERI I wouldn't test my luck.

MARGARET Come on, guys. It's only the Northern Lights. They won't actually decapitate you. But if you keep whistling, you might see them dance.

The group whistles softly and watches as the lights dance across the sky.

MARY People say they are the spirits of our ancestors.

FRANCESCA I've never seen anything more beautiful and captivating.

SHERI Same here! It's a lovely night. Too bad it has to end.

MARGARET Yeah, I know. It'll be hard to say goodbye to you all tomorrow.

MARY But we have our trip to look forward to—the second part of the exchange, remember, when we go out to St. John's to experience your life.

JAMES is off to himself, staring up at the sky. MARGARET walks over to him.

JAMES It's awe-inspiring. Overwhelming.

MARGARET Yes, the northern lights are a sight to behold.

JAMES It's not just the northern lights. It's this whole trip. I think it's opened my eyes a lot.

SHERI Going to try seal eyes then?

JAMES (*Laughs.*) My eyes haven't been opened enough for that.

MARGARET I think we've made some strides. There's still a long way to go, but we have to keep trying.

MARY Mission accomplished.

All group members join together, arms around each other.

MARY We'll move forward...

ALL Together.