6

Briggs, E

Kapluna Daughter

There was never any end to the mutual dislike with which Nilak's and Pala's kin regarded each other. Though its expression waxed and waned, it rarely, if ever, disappeared altogether. It made no difference whether Niqi made patau or not; if one excuse for hostility failed, another was found, and so a steady round of incidents provided opportunities for watching how the Utku handled the irritations engendered by, or expressed in, bad temper, stinginess, and unhelpfulness.

My own relationship with the Utku gave me even richer opportunities to observe the handling of difficult social situations, because the differences between my behavior and that of the Utku could not help but create difficulties, on occasion, for the latter. On the whole, the situations that created tension between me and my Utku hosts were different from those that disturbed the peace between Pala's kin and Nilak's, because the nature of my aberrancy was different from that of Nilak and Niqi. The married couple were, perhaps, not very good Eskimos in the eyes of Pala's kin, but I was not Eskimo at all. It was not only the

strangeness of my face and tongue that made me different. I was incongruous in other ways as well. I was an adult, yet as ignorant of simple skills as a child. I was a woman, yet I lacked the usual womanly attributes of husband and children; a "daughter," yet independently wealthy and accustomed to organizing my own life. This last incongruity, especially, gave rise to tensions that were different from those in which the married couple were involved. Another difference between my situation and theirs was that whereas the standard to which their behavior should have conformed was clear, it may not always have been so clear in my case. Since I was a foreigner, more tolerance may have been felt for my peculiarities than for theirs.

In one respect, however, there was real similarity between Niqi and myself, namely in the degree of our volatility and in the demand, which applied equally to us both, that the volatility be controlled. Toward the end of my stay I learned much about the way in which I was regarded from the resemblance between the treatment accorded to Niqi on the one hand and to me on the other. It was only by degrees, however, that the way in which I was treated became similar to the way in which Niqi was treated, and the evolution of that similarity was instructive in itself.

I. Stranger and Guest: Graciousness

In retrospect, my relationship with the Utku seems to divide approximately into three phases, in which from the Utku point of view I was first a stranger and curiosity, then a recalcitrant child, and finally a confirmed irritant. This does not mean that I was never liked. I was, at times. Days and weeks passed very harmoniously, but I want to describe here the less harmonious aspects of the relationship, which illuminate the ways in which the Utku handled the problems created by my presence.

The initial phase of the relationship I have already described in part. In this period I was treated with all the solicitude that is accorded an honored guest. When I visited in the Eskimo tents, I was given the softest seat, often a seat on the family ikliq, and, like the always privileged children, I was offered milk and sugar in my tea. My interests were tended equally in

my own tent. When I offered food to my visitors, they never took advantage of my ignorance of an owner's prerogatives; I was always urged to serve myself first, the largest pieces of the bannock that I hospitably fried were always urged upon me, and if I offered to share a meal with a visitor, the latter never failed to ask whether I had finished eating, before he took the pot I held out to him. My fish supply was always replenished before I felt the need, and often even the usual division of labor between men and women stood in abeyance as men offered to fetch me water from the river or to refuel my primus.

To be sure, such solicitous acts were not wholly altruistic. Neither did they necessarily signify that I was liked. They were, not surprisingly, motivated in part by fear *(ilira)*, which was admitted only months later, and by a desire for profit, if a word of such exploitative connotations can be used of the very moderate requests that Utku make of their wealthy kapluna visitors. My hosts expected to be rewarded for their solicitude, both by my goodwill in a broad sense and by the tangible expression of that goodwill: a share in my kapluna supplies. As Inuttiaq put it once when I thanked a young man for repairing a tear in my tent wall: "If you are grateful, make tea." In the early days, before I was integrated into Utku life to the point where I might reasonably be expected to share my goods as a participating member of the community, people did not often ask for gifts; however, in addition to the services they performed for me, they besieged me daily with small bone and wood objects, nearly all the crude result of an hour or two of work: miniature models of fishhooks, fishing jigs, fish spears, seals, airplanes, and sleds, which their makers wished to trade for "a little bit" of tobacco, tea, sugar, milk, flour, or oats. Generous at first, I quickly became alarmed when I saw how quickly and in what quantity these trade goods were manufactured; but each request was so modest, and the Utku set such a precedent for generosity in their treatment of me that it was difficult—as I am sure they hoped it would be—to refuse them.

So in this early period of my stay, I was both guest and provider; and I played another role, as well, that of comedian. My curious appearance and manner were closely, though covertly, observed and gave the community endless amusement. The

unpronounceable plant names that I was required to repeat for entertainment on my first meeting with the married couple were brought out on other occasions, too, together with other known tongue-twisters, like the intensifying form "-hlkha," which I could never pronounce except as "-lzga." "Yiini," someone would observe, with a twinkle, "Niptaihlkha (it's terribly foggy)." And when I, knowing full well the nature of the game, obligingly agreed: "Eee, yes, indeed, it's terribly foggy: niptailzga," then my audience would be overcome with laughter, in which I was expected to join. Amaaqtuq once remarked to me: "You're nice *(quvia)* because you're comical *(tiphi)*."

So convivial was the laughter of the Utku and so gracious their attempts to smooth the unknown ground for me that I am chagrined to remember how thorny this first period was. Of course it could not have been otherwise. In such a new and strange situation it was impossible even to simulate the composure that the Eskimos would have approved of and that would have made the relationship between us comfortable and harmonious. I was afraid in those first weeks: afraid of freezing to death, of going hungry, of being seriously ill and unable to reach help. All of these fears, natural enough in anyone who undertakes to isolate himself in a completely foreign environment, were aggravated in my case by the exaggerated warnings with which I had been bombarded before setting out on my venture. I had been at pains to conceal from my well-wishers that their anxieties had borne fruit, but they had. By the time I arrived at Back River I was not at all convinced that my undertaking was rational and feasible. Long before the temperature reached zero, I had acquired three frost-reddened toes and twelve chilblains on my hands, which convinced me that I would never be able to survive the winter temperatures of thirty to seventy degrees below zero. The fear itself, of course, added to my chill, lowering my body temperature perceptibly and causing me to curse futilely at my anxiety.

My fear of food shortage was not quite as realistic, in a material sense, as the fear of cold. Though I had been alarmed in Ottawa by reports of "recurrent famines" at Back River, that myth had been exploded by a sensible priest in Gjoa Haven, who had experience of the region. The value that my kapluna food supplies had for me, therefore, was primarily symbolic. It was hard to

accustom myself to a diet of raw fish, eaten skin, scales, and all. I never did succeed in mastering the skin, but at first I tried, valiantly, though the scales stuck in my throat and the slime made me retch. Fish were usually plentiful, and I was rarely really hungry; nevertheless I craved the solace of oatmeal, dates, boiled rice, and bannock, and much of the time my secret thoughts crept guiltily around one problem: how best to create opportunities for gorging myself on these familiar foods without having to share them with the visitors who were so generous with their own food. It is hard for anyone who has not experienced isolation from his familiar world to conceive the vital importance of maintaining symbolic ties with that world and the sense of deprivation that results from their absence. One can be driven to lengths that seem ludicrous once one is safely back on home ground. Unpacking on my return, I was amazed to find eight sesame seeds that I had hoarded, carefully wrapped in tinfoil, for an emergency: a time of emotional starvation. Food provided many comforts beyond the fundamental satisfaction of a full stomach. Whenever anything went awry; whenever I failed to make myself understood; when Saarak wailed at the sight of me; or when the cries of the seagulls reminded me of home, my solace was food. Though I did not know it at the time, my dependence on food as a solace was very Eskimo; the problems were that I preferred my kapluna foods to the plentiful fish, and that the demand of the Eskimos for my limited supplies was great.

Frightened as I was of cold and hunger, mishaps seemed to occur constantly, and the smallest one assumed momentous proportions in my imagination. When I discovered that I had left my gun on the plane that brought me in; when I found that I had bought all the accoutrements of a fishnet but had neglected to buy the net itself; when I learned that I had been misinformed about the date at which the Utku normally move to their winter campsite and that as a consequence I had brought too little kerosene to the autumn site; when I understood Allaq to tell me that the caribou hides I had brought were not suitable for my winter clothing, ridiculous as it seems to me now, I was filled with panic. I had no realistic image of what the winter would be like, no idea whether the Utku would deal with it in ways that I could

tolerate, and, worse, no way of allaying my apprehension, since I could not speak Eskimo.

Equally appalling, however, was the thought of giving up and going home, after having stubbornly resisted all those well-meant warnings. "I told you so"s rang in my imagination and hardened my resolve. Nevertheless, the conflicting wishes and fears hammered for expression and, on occasion, made it difficult to smile in proper Eskimo fashion.

My spontaneous reaction to any sort of strain is tearfulness. I tried to suppress that reaction, knowing from previous experience with Eskimos that equanimity in the face of difficulty is a high virtue and that tearfulness is not to be countenanced; nevertheless I am certain that all too frequently I was unsuccessful in concealing my distress. The first such incident that I remember occurred on a Sunday morning, shortly after the return of the caribou hunters to the camp at the Rapids. A number of Pala's kin, including Inuttiaq, were drinking tea in my tent at eight in the morning when Nilak and his family appeared in the entrance. Nilak was oddly dressed: from underneath his short parka a plaid wool bathrobe flowed over his trousers. It was a costume that he affected every Sunday at that time, but I had not seen it before. He and his wife and daughter each carried a small calico bag containing, as I later found, a Bible and a prayerbook. I was puzzled, both by the bathrobe and by the mysterious calico bags, but no one volunteered an explanation. People sat and drank tea, and every hour or half-hour one of the men asked me: "What time is it?" I suspected that a church service was in the offing; it was, after all, the first Sunday since Inuttiaq's return from the caribou hunt. It was a dismal day in my private world, I can no longer remember why, and my anticipation of the forthcoming service did little to cheer me. On the contrary, the reticence of my visitors intensified my depression and made me feel altogether isolated. Though I very much wanted the opportunity to observe the religious behavior of the camp, I was sure they would not invite me to join them. So when I pronounced the time to be 10:30, and Inuttiaq confirmed my suspicion—"we are going to pray at 11"—I asked if I might come. Inuttiaq's face and Pala's went blank. The words of their reply were incomprehensible to me, but their reluctance, their hesitation,

were evident enough. I felt a spasm cross my face. Nothing was said on either side, but when the company rose to leave at eleven, Inuttiaq turned to me: "We are going to pray. You, too." And so, restored to cheer, I accompanied the others.

Tactful compliance was the characteristic response of the Utku in those early days, whenever resentment, fatigue, or anxiety brought the tears close to the surface or made my voice sharp. Such breaches of emotional decorum occurred fairly frequently, too, all precipitated by the fear of cold and hunger, and by the difficulty of communicating with my Eskimo hosts. Concerned about the effects of my untoward behavior, I recorded a number of these incidents even though at the time I had no idea how right I was to worry about Utku reactions. Now that I know how strongly they disapproved of volatility, I am astonished that they continued to respond with graciousness and, instead of withdrawing from me, continued to court me in a friendly manner when I was in a mood to permit it.

My moodiness in the early days, and the reactions of the Utku to it, are exemplified by my relationship with Pala, who subsequently became my grandfather. For various reasons, Pala attracted more of my impatience than did the rest of his kin in those first days. Nevertheless, Pala, like his kin, gave no sign that he was offended by my snappishness. Perhaps it would be more accurate to say that neither he nor the others showed offense in any way that was recognizable to me at that time.

In part, the friction between Pala and me arose from my unpleasant suspicion that he cast a covetous eye on my possessions. Though it never occurred to me that he might actually take something of mine (and neither he nor anyone else ever did), nevertheless I did not find his attitude attractive. There was a game he used to play with me, in which he pretended to steal from me, always ostentatiously showing me his action: "Yiini, watch!" or in which he pretended to reach for an object I was holding: a boot, a spoon, a piece of bannock. "Mine? Mine?" he would inquire, extending his hands with fingers curled in mock aggressiveness, his eyes and mouth wide in simulation of greed. And when I, entering into the comedy, made a great show of pulling the "stolen" object back, or hiding the object reached for, with exaggerated exclamations of alarm or umbrage, Pala and the

others present laughed with the greatest merriment. Others, taking their cue from Pala, used occasionally to play the same game with me, but Pala was its creator and chief actor, and it seemed clear to me that his real wishes were being expressed under cover of a joke.

Of all my possessions, tobacco was what Pala most craved, and it was tobacco that created the greatest tension between us. It was not necessarily that he craved it more than other people, but his wish to have it was certainly more clearly expressed. His visits were more conspicuously correlated than were other people's with the state of my tobacco supply; he was the only person who ever made the performance of a service *contingent* on receiving tobacco, and he was the only one who ever demanded, "More!" when, on request, I filled the men's tobacco pouches of a morning. His "greediness," for such I felt it to be, contrasted with Inuttiaq's attitude; Inuttiaq more than once stopped me when his pouch was half full: "That's enough; more later today or tomorrow."

In retrospect, I am not sure why I resented so heartily Pala's inroads on my tobacco supply. I do not smoke; he was not depriving me of a commodity that I cherished. But so constant were his demands that, imposing my kapluna sense of fairness on the situation, I feared he would manage to acquire more than his "share" of my limited supply. In particular, I feared that he would acquire more than Nilak and Niqi who, camped on the other side of the river, could not so readily "visit to smoke." Actually, from the Utku point of view, Pala probably should have received somewhat more than Nilak, since I was living in his camp and being fed by the members of his family; and even if Pala's share *was* disproportionately large I should not, in their view, have attempted to interfere. Nilak would have seethed quietly on his side of the river, and that would have been that. But I tried, in my kapluna fashion, to regulate the situation, which meant giving to Pala with obvious reluctance and in the smallest quantities that he would accept. I will never know how much of my unwillingness he sensed. I expect that his occasional demands for "more" are a sign that it *was* noticed, but he continued to visit, to smile, to joke with me, and to offer words and fish, as Nakliguhuktuq had said the Utku should do.

Unfortunately, Pala's attempts to teach me words irritated me, also. Whereas the rest of his kin quickly saw the need to pronounce words in slow and complete syllables so that I might write them down, Pala failed to understand what I wanted of him. The difficulty was caused by the nature of the syllabic system of writing, in which one symbol may represent more than one sound, and the final consonant of every syllable is omitted. Thus, a word that is pronounced approximately *a-ngil-zraq-tuq* is written *a-gi-ga-tu*. When Pala obligingly dictated words for me to write down, he always pronounced them as they were written, with all the distortions imposed by the script, and as a consequence, especially before I had discovered the reason why my written versions of words never coincided with the spoken versions, I sometimes lost patience. I would ask Pala to say a word—*angilzraqtuq*—slowly. He would oblige: "A-gi-ga-tu." I would repeat it back to him: "Agigatu." He would wrinkle his nose. "No, a-gi-ga-tu." And so it would go, around and around, with complete lack of comprehension on both sides, until impatience sharpened my voice, whereupon Allaq, Inuttiaq, or Amaaqtuq, all of whom saw at once where the difficulty lay, would interpose quietly: "A-ngil-zraq-tuq." These impasses never seemed to discourage Pala from continuing patiently to repeat, "A-gi-ga-tu," nor was there ever a change in the even quality of his voice.

Occasionally, Pala was the innocent recipient of ire that was really directed at other individuals, or at the Utku in general. There was the day, for instance, when Inuttiaq had brought me a delectable fresh char, the choicest of fish, for my day's eating, and then, with my other visitors, had proceeded to devour it entirely, leaving me nothing to eat. With each mouthful that disappeared, my anxiety mounted, and the cheer instilled by Inuttiaq's gift faded. And when I looked down at the untidy, dismembered skeleton on the gravel floor, resentment and depression choked me. My visitors also surveyed the bones, and Pala, as he left, remarked in a tone that, to my ear, held just a trace of chagrin: "We've eaten it all. But tomorrow, if it's calm enough to fish, we'll bring you some more." Unable to muster the proper cheerful gratitude, I querulously inquired: "What am I going to eat TONIGHT?" My visitors said nothing, only

smiled, but very shortly Pala reappeared with a large piece of rotted fish from the caches. It was what the Eskimos themselves were eating; it was all there was. "For tonight," he said, holding it out to me, "but it tastes awful." Still angry, I accepted his offering with a mutter of thanks, whose ungraciousness he gave no sign of noticing.

Pala was, to be sure, not the only person who encountered my moodiness in those autumn weeks before I moved into Inuttiaq's qaqmaq. My most egregiously hostile act was directed at Nilak and Niqi. Overcome with irritation at one of their prolonged visits, I simply turned my back on them, lay down, and pretended to sleep. They sat on for a while, quietly, occasionally speaking to one another in low voices so considerate-sounding that I, lying buried in my parka, was stabbed with remorse. Then, with a final murmur, they rose and left, tying the tent flaps behind them and carefully weighting the entrance with rocks to prevent the roaming pups from breaking in to steal from me while I slept.

The overt response of the Utku on each of these occasions was always the same: they humored me, complied with my apparent wishes, and seemed to ignore my ungraciousness. But now I wonder just how blind I was to the real feelings of people faced with my eccentricities. It is possible that in that early period they were watching, weighing, not yet confirming unpleasant judgments but puzzling how to interpret my strange behavior, just as I puzzled how to interpret theirs. The letters they wrote in the first two or three months to Ikayuqtuq in Gjoa Haven were not critical of my behavior. On the contrary; they said I was pleasant *(quvia)*, kind *(quya)*, and amusing *(tiphi)*, and that they were helping me because they felt protective *(naklik)* toward me. Knowing as I do now, however, the intensity of their aversion to hostile expressions, I think it unlikely that critical judgment was wholly in abeyance. There was fear (*ilira*) in their early feeling for me, too, as they later confessed, and I wonder if perhaps it was partly this fear, as well as their kindlier feelings, that made them continue to court me as they did, in spite or even because of the rudeness that came and went so unpredictably. Perhaps they were not sure how dangerous my moods really were and wanted to prove themselves unthreatening in order that I should treat them kindly in turn; I later had opportunity to see exactly that reasoning in their treatment of other kapluna visitors. In any case, I think it likely that these early incidents planted the first seeds of resentment toward me, resentment that, I fear, in Pala's case at least, ultimately hardened into firm dislike.

II. Family Living: Covert Conflicts

A week or two after my arrival, after Inuttiaq had adopted me as a daughter, my relationship with his family began to take on a different quality from my relationships with the other households. Nilak's family, and to a lesser extent, the families of the brothers Pala and Piuvkaq continued to refer to me as the "kapluna"; to treat me with ceremony; and to trade with me, rather than simply asking for small amounts of my supplies; but Allaq, and especially Inuttiaq, began to treat me as a daughter. Some of these changes I have described already. They were very warming. I enjoyed the fact that I was expected to participate, as far as I was able, in the daily work of the camp, and I basked in the approval that met my efforts. I was grateful for the family-sized chunks of caribou tallow that fell to my share, even though I had not yet learned really to enjoy the waxy stuff. I was grateful, too, that Inuttiaq took it upon himself to keep me supplied with the staple fish, insofar as the weather permitted, and that Allaq sometimes brought her breakfast or her sewing to my tent, to keep me company as she ate or worked. Most gratifying of all, perhaps, were the efforts that people made, had made from the beginning, to teach me the Eskimo skills that Ikayuqtuq had told them I wished to learn; and again, after my adoption, it was Inuttiaq and Allaq who took the primary responsibility for instructing, for encouraging, and for protecting me from too burdensome tasks. In all of these ways and more, I was made to feel that I belonged to Inuttiaq's family.

Of course, my daughterly status entailed responsibilities, too, and inevitably there were times when I failed to fulfill them graciously. The first occasion on which I recall feeling that being a daughter might have its drawbacks was the morning I was awakened at dawn by a light touch on my shoulder and looked up to find Allaq standing beside my bed. "Daughter, your

father feels like drinking tea." It was apologetically said, but I seethed inwardly at the disturbance. Though Utku are ordinarily considerate of sleepers—I never saw one waked carelessly or as a prank—nevertheless they do not hold sleep inviolable, and any need, however small, is reason enough to wake a person on whom one has a claim. To me, on the other hand, sleep is sacred. I cherish it, and in those days it was even more precious than usual, protecting me, as it did, for all too short periods, from the vicissitudes of the day: the icy breezes that attacked my fingers and toes, the raw fish, the incomprehensible words, the giggles, and above all, the necessity to hold myself in check. I found it exhausting to play an unfamiliar role all day long, constantly to try to react in ways that would be acceptable to my hosts, instead of in ways that came naturally to me, and constantly to keep alert to cues that would tell me whether or not I had succeeded. I buried myself thankfully in sleep at night and in the morning withdrew myself reluctantly from its shelter. So resentment roughened my voice when I replied to Allaq: "Help yourself!" and caused me to turn over sharply toward the wall and pull the sleeping bag over my head. The tea can was in evidence beside the entrance; Allaq could have helped herself by extending a hand, without even entering the tent, and I testily asked myself why she had not done so. She may have sensed my thought; in any case she answered it: "I could have taken *your* tea by the door," she said, "but I wanted to take the tea that you gave your father last night and that he forgot to take home." Permission granted, she silently filled her palm with tea and withdrew, tying the tent flaps behind her and rearranging the stone barricade that kept the dogs out, considerate acts well calculated to make me repent my abruptness.

By calling me daughter, Allaq had justified waking me. However, there was nothing in her request for tea that distinguished it from requests made by other members of the community for small amounts of my supplies. Neither was there anything different in Allaq's impassive reaction to my snarl. In early October, however, when I moved from my solitary tent into Inuttiaq's qaqmaq, the parental nature of Inuttiaq's and Allaq's relationship with me became much more evident, and the conflict between Inuttiaq's definition of the daughter role and mine began

to create problems of a new order. The first such problem was occasioned by the move itself. I had been anticipating the move for a month, but when the time came, I was taken by surprise.

The nightly snow flurries were no longer melting in the morning air, and the inlet had lain silent under ice for several days when I woke one morning in my tent to hear unaccustomed sounds of chopping. Rummaging for the several pairs of wool and duffel socks that always lost themselves in my sleeping bag, where I dried them as I slept, I pulled myself, reluctantly as always, out into the cold air. My boots, hung from the ridge pole, were festooned with feathers of frost, and as I drew them down, prickles of snow showered my neck. Shivering and cursing, I pulled on the frozen boots and, still in my longjohns, crunched across the gravel floor to peer between the entrance flaps. Almost all the men of the three households in our camp were out on the ice of the inlet. The old man Piuvkaq was chopping rectangular blocks, like huge dominoes, out of the ice. A dark oblong of water showed where other blocks had already been cut and removed. Pala was knotting a rope around one of these blocks, while other people stood in readiness to pull. I had not a clue to the meaning of the scene I was witnessing, and when Amaaqtuq, seeing my protruding head, came to pay her morning call, her explanation did not enlighten me: "They are making a qaqmaq." It was only as I saw the walls taking shape, the ice dominoes set up side by side in a circle and mortared with slush, that I realized what a qaqmaq was. "Qaqmaqs are warm," Amaaqtuq told me. "Not in winter but in autumn. They are much pleasanter *(quvia)* than tents. You will see. Are you going to live in a qaqmaq?"

I did not know, in truth, whether I was going to live in a qaqmaq or not; I did not even know whether I wanted to. Warmed and protected as I had felt on the evening, a month earlier, when Inuttiaq, with the offer of a cup of tea, had welcomed me as his daughter, I found myself filled with trepidation now that the move into Inuttiaq's dwelling was imminent. Could I tolerate the company of others for twenty-four hours a day? In the past month my tent had become a refuge, into which I withdrew every evening after the rest of the camp was in bed, to repair ravages to my spirit with the help of bannock and

peanut butter, boiled rice, frozen dates, and Henry James. So reviving were those hours of self-indulgence that I dreaded their loss. I prayed that Inuttiaq would not invite me to join them until he built an iglu in November.

My prayer was not granted. It was Allaq who issued the first invitation to join the qaqmaq household. She had brought her sewing to my tent, as she often did in those early days. She was making the body of Saarak's fawnskin winter suit while Amaaqtuq, at her sister's request, sewed the sleeves, and I, unable to assist in such useful preparations for winter, copied vocabulary notes. From the shore came sounds of qaqmaq construction; Pala's was nearly finished. "In a little while we are going to build a qaqmaq, too," Allaq said. "Would you like to move in with us then?" I hesitated. "I don't know; it's difficult; after a while I'll tell you."

"Eeee." She smiled, and nothing further was said. But soon after she had gone home, Inuttiaq came to visit: "Would you like to move in with us when we build a qaqmaq, or would you rather have a separate one for yourself?"

Again I hesitated; then in my halting Eskimo I tried to explain that I thought it might be difficult to live with others, especially at times when I wanted to work. Inuttiaq, in turn, insisted that I would be cold if I lived alone. The conversation grew increasingly confused, each of us uncertain what the other was trying to say—uncertain, too, how to extricate ourselves from the impasse. Finally, I thought Inuttiaq suggested that I sleep in his qaqmaq, for warmth, but that my tent be left standing as a retreat: "If you get tired." I was relieved at this compromise, and I accepted it gladly. Unfortunately, either my understanding was deficient, or Inuttiaq changed his mind, or both. I still do not understand precisely the chain of events that led to my finding myself four days later ensconced without refuge in Inuttiaq's qaqmaq.

It was when Inuttiaq started to build that I began to wonder whether I had understood aright. He began his qaqmaq, as Piuvkaq did, on the morning after Pala had built and moved into his. All three dwellings were to be clustered tightly together, as the tents had been, at the head of the inlet. But Inuttiaq's wall, unlike the other two, for some reason refused to hold properly.

When the first block fell, and the second broke at a touch, Inuttiaq decided the ice was still too thin for building. He turned to me as I stood nearby, watching. "I'll go fishing today," he said, "and when the ice is better, I will build another qaqmaq, for you (he used the singular pronoun), over there," and he gestured in the direction of my tent, some distance away. I assented, surprised at this development but vastly relieved at the thought that, after all, I should have a home of my own, and yet not be obliged to live in a windy tent.

When Inuttiaq appeared at my tent entrance three mornings later to ask if I planned to come and help with the chinking of "my" qaqmaq, I went with alacrity. The circle that Inuttiaq had drawn on the gravel was large, and when the walls were up, the building was, indeed, larger than either Pala's or Piuvkaq's. Inuttiaq asked me if it would be big enough for me, and when I assented, he sent me back to my tent to stuff my loose belongings into sacks for moving. Curiously, Allaq, over in *her* tent, was also packing. I wondered what for, but only when I saw the goods of Inuttiaq's household being moved into "my" qaqmaq did it dawn on me that "my" qaqmaq was, in fact, "our" qaqmaq. I tried hastily to reconcile myself; this, after all, was the plan to which I had originally agreed. It was when Inuttiaq informed me that my tent was to be used as the qaqmaq's roof, since his tent was not large enough, that dismay overcame me. I tried to control it with the thought that I could set up my double-walled winter tent as a refuge instead; but it was small and dark; it was not the cosily familiar summer tent in which I had been living, and I could not prevent myself from demurring at the sudden loss of the latter. I told Inuttiaq that, although I did have another tent, a warm tent, that I could put up, I would like to use the summer tent, folded up, as a seat therein. It was a ridiculous notion, born of an alarm that must have been completely incomprehensible to Inuttiaq, if he was aware of it at all. He must have recognized the folly of the demand at once, but he handled it with the indirectness characteristic of his people. Pointing out again that his own tent was too small to roof the qaqmaq, he offered to let me use that for a seat instead. Then outdoors, next to the qaqmaq wall, he stacked all the household goods that were not to be used immediately, both his things and mine for which there

was no room in the qaqmaq, and he covered the cache with his tent.

What could I do? I was helpless to protest, and the very helplessness made me panic. I looked at the square of gravel that had been my home for more than a month and felt its emptiness unbearable. I *had* to have a tent. Inuttiaq and Allaq were busy, setting a wooden door into the wall of our qaqmaq, mortaring the frame to the ice block with slush, and chopping away the ice inside the frame to make an entrance. Everyone else in camp was indoors, visiting or drinking tea after the day's work. There was no one to offer assistance when I took my winter tent from the household cache where Inuttiaq had laid it and carried it up to my old gravel patch on the bluff. It was a pyramid tent with four built-in aluminum corner poles attached together at the top. In order to erect the tent it was necessary to spread these poles as far as possible at the base, then weight down the canvas between them with stones. It seemed simple, but I had never tried it before, and a strong breeze, which swelled the canvas, did not help. I struggled to spread the poles, first on one side, then on another, while the wind continually undid my work.

"What are you doing?" Inuttiaq stood at my side. I tried to explain that if I was tired or wanted to type I would use this tent. "You can write in the qaqmaq," he said; "the tent will be cold." I tried to explain that this was a different sort of tent and that, heated with a primus stove, it would be warm. "I will write sometimes in the qaqmaq and sometimes here," I said, feebly trying to be pliant. But Inuttiaq, after pulling two of the poles apart for me in a half-gesture of helping, departed without further comment to drink tea in the tent of the newly arrived Qavvik, and left me to struggle by myself. It was the first time since I had been with the Utku that I had been left to cope with a difficult activity by myself. People came and went around the qaqmaqs at the base of the bluff, but no one else came up to inquire what I was doing or whether I needed help. And no criticism could have made me feel more vividly than this disregard the antisocial nature of my act.

The tent stood there, empty and unused, for two weeks, until we took it down in preparation for moving to the winter camp in Amujat. In those two weeks I had never felt the need of a refuge.

I basked in the warm protectiveness of Inuttiaq's household. What solitude I needed I found on the river in the mornings when I went fishing with Inuttiaq or, to my surprise, in the qaqmaq itself, in the afternoons when the room was full of visitors and I retired into myself, lulled and shielded by the flow of quiet, incomprehensible speech. No one ever mentioned the folly of my tent, even when they helped to take it down.

In many ways life in Inuttiaq's household was easier for me than life in my solitary tent had been. For one thing it was no longer necessary for me to play hostess. The fact that I could sit quietly in my corner and let Inuttiaq and Allaq entertain our visitors gave me privacy without the chill of isolation. Then too, Inuttiaq and Allaq did their utmost to make me feel welcome. I felt it in the parental responsibility that they assumed for my welfare, more than ever teaching me how to do things, feeding me, and protecting me from the dangerous effects of my ignorance of the land and climate. I felt it also in the many considerate allowances that they made on my behalf in the ordering of household life, assuring me from the first that, if I wished, I might type, or keep my lamp lit later than they at night, or "sometimes" eat kapluna food without offering it to them, "because you are a kapluna." They even said they were lonely when I spent an evening visiting in another qaqmaq. That was the most heartwarming of all.

Occasionally, to be sure, I wondered whether my parents' considerateness was a response to remembered snarls, an attempt to forestall any recurrence of such behavior. When Allaq, on my first evening, asked whether it would wake me if she opened and closed the squeaking door or made tea while I slept in the morning, I had uncomfortable memories of a morning past, when I had growled, "Help yourself" and pulled the sleeping bag over my head. Similarly discomfiting was the stormy day on which the qaqmaq, full of visitors, was kept hushed all day because I was asleep. Allaq even refrained from making tea once during the morning for fear of waking me. I was sleeping off an attack of indigestion, but she did not know that. She assumed that I was tired from getting up at dawn the day before to accompany Inuttiaq on a fishing trip.

It is possible that this assumption that I tired easily accounted

for a good deal of the leniency and consideration that was shown me during these weeks. Often, if I walked far, or tried to carry a full load of twigs, or worked hard at scraping a hide, people cautioned me that I would be tired; often they silently took my work on themselves, switching my load for a lighter one when we stopped to rest, or taking a turn at the scraping. On a number of occasions, too, people interpreted my withdrawal from company as a sign of fatigue, whether I had gone to bed early to conceal depression and to ease my cold toes, or whether I merely walked silently a little behind the others to enjoy the view and think my own thoughts.

I am not sure whether this interpretation of my behavior was owing to a perception that I was, indeed, tired, emotionally, if not physically, or whether it was owing to preconceptions about the feebleness of white women unaccustomed to Eskimo ways; both, perhaps. At the time, I did not question the solicitude; I was grateful, but I took it for granted. Only now am I impressed by the tolerant view that was taken of my unsocial behavior. Among the Utku themselves, fatigue is called on to explain lethargy and weakness that are produced by a variety of causes. Thus, a person who is mildly ill will describe himself as "not sick, only tired"; old people are also described as "tired"; and I suspected that depression might also be expressed as fatigue, as it is in our own society. But there are less kind ways of describing lethargic, unsocial behavior, too. If an Utku were lethargic or withdrawn as frequently and as unpredictably as I was in those days, his neighbors would have murmured in disapproval: "He is upset *(hujuujaq, huqu)*"; and in later months the Utku became as intolerant of my variations in mood as they were of one another's.

To some extent Inuttiaq's, and especially Allaq's, initial consideration of me may have been due to shyness, too. I had the feeling that Allaq, more than Inuttiaq, was afraid *(ilira)* of me in the first weeks after I moved into their home, and much later she admitted that she had been. Her shyness *(ilira)* was most noticeable as a reluctance to use my goods unless I expressly gave permission—and more, unless I volunteered that permission; she rarely brought herself to ask whether she might use a little of my tea or heat the water on my primus instead

of over the weak tallow flame in the hollow rock that served her in the autumn as a lamp. Her nearest approach to a request was a smiling statement: "While you were out fishing I didn't make tea, although my hands were too cold to sew." Sometimes she said nothing at all; it was Amaaqtuq who told me: "While you were out fishing this morning my sister made tea on the lamp instead of on the primus." Such reports were very effective; it did not take me long to learn that when I left in the morning I should leave instructions for Allaq: "Be sure to make tea if you get cold, and be sure to use the primus."

Inuttiaq had no such reluctance to use my goods, and this fact was a source of considerable tension between us in the first weeks after I joined his household. Already, before moving in with him, I had worried about the effect the move would have on the distribution of my property. The anxiety had several conflicting facets. I wanted to conform to Utku ideas of justice, but at the same time I was pressured by my American prejudice in favor of equality, and the latter was the stronger because I was still uncertain what the Utku ideas were. I was afraid that Inuttiaq might acquire a larger share of my wealth than was strictly proper, either in terms of his own code or in terms of mine. Moreover, questions of justice aside, I was also selfishly concerned about the almost certain increase in the rate of depletion that membership in a larger household would entail.

The one possibility that had not occurred to me was that Inuttiaq would take it upon himself to distribute my goods to the rest of the camp. In view of my concern for equalization of my kapluna benefits, I suppose I should have been relieved the first time I saw Inuttiaq generously hand a can of my tobacco to a smiling neighbor. I confess that I was not relieved; I was alarmed. If my goods were to be distributed, I wanted the credit for generosity; I did not want Inuttiaq to use my goods to increase his own prestige in the community, and noting the fact that our qaqmaq had suddenly become the social center of the camp, I was afraid that this was precisely what was happening. My alarm was the greater because, ludicrous as it seems to me now, I had the idea then that I ought to do my utmost to avoid disturbing the social balance of the community, the patterns of friendship and of interdependence, so that I could study those

patterns in their natural state. I said nothing to Inuttiaq, but tried to repair whatever damage was occurring by anticipating him. I offered supplies to our visitors, myself, before he had a chance to do so; but then, on occasion, he would instruct me, in the visitor's presence, to give more than I had done: "If you want to." In recording this now, I wonder whether perhaps he was attempting to teach me Utku generosity, but at the time I only imagined that he was trying to accumulate credit for himself, and though I smiled at the visitor, I do not believe I smiled at Inuttiaq. On occasion, my response to this situation was even more hostile. There was one time, for instance, when I had not been quick enough to offer first. Our visitor was Itqiliq, a young Netsilingmiutaq, who had been to school for four or five years and spoke some English. Inuttiaq had turned to me: "Itqiliq wants some tobacco." I smiled at Itqiliq and filled his pouch. Itqiliq smiled at Inuttiaq and thanked him. I smiled at Itqiliq and said in English, "You're welcome."

Neither Inuttiaq nor I, however, recognized the conflict overtly, though I am sure he must have been aware of my displeasure, and antagonism generated on this score may well have fed the other conflicts that developed during the winter. In any case, ultimately, without a word being said—really, without my being aware that it was happening at all—we reached a modus vivendi. One can of tobacco, one pound of tea, or one bag of sugar was always open and available on Allaq's side of the ikliq, and from that supply my parents offered, or gave on request, small amounts to our visitors; but the storeroom was in my charge. When the household supply, the open can or bag, was gone, I was informed, and I brought out a replacement. When neighbors wished larger amounts of anything than were forthcoming from our household supply, they approached me. During the winter, when Inuttiaq traded foxes, he had supplies of his own. These were in Allaq's charge; she dispensed them to me as she did to the other members of the family, and while they lasted, neither she nor Inuttiaq ever drew on mine.

The only time that Inuttiaq openly recognized my feelings concerning the distribution of my supplies was on one occasion when he had traded with my property, as distinct from giving it away. A Netsilik trapper who was camping in the neighborhood had asked him for several cans of my powdered milk and had offered in exchange shells to fit Inuttiaq's gun. Inuttiaq had traded as asked, then, scrupulously honest as always, had told me what he had done. I recall my displeasure, and I am sure he saw it in my face. He said immediately: "I shouldn't trade with your property." I agreed, but added: "This time it's all right." Inuttiaq continued: "I don't really need those shells. I'll give them back. I can get some in Gjoa Haven." And though I urged him to keep them, he reported several days later that he had returned them to the trapper.

So the covert struggle for control over my supplies was ultimately resolved, at least as far as the larger community's use of them was concerned. On one occasion, later, a conflict over Inuttiaq's own use of my primus stove broke the peaceful surface of our relationship, as I shall shortly describe. But apart from any questions of use, there was still another way in which, without my being fully aware of it, my wealth strained the relationship between me and my foster parents: it was heavy. Minimal by kapluna standards, my gear was mountainous from the point of view of the man responsible for transporting it. Too heavy to carry on foot, cumbersome to haul by canoe or dogsled, impossible to leave behind, my possessions were a nuisance from start to finish. I do not like to recall Inuttiaq's expressionless face as he surveyed the contents of my tent one day in June, and asked which of my belongings I was planning to leave on the hilltop when we moved that night to a new campsite, and his silent acceptance when I said it would be impossible to leave more than half. I lack the optimism and the seasonal attitude toward possessions, which are so useful to the nomadic Utku.

The Utku take with them during wandering seasons an absolute minimum of goods and leave the remainder scattered hither and yon on convenient hilltop boulders or, if perishable, in one of the large orange oil drums that mark the most frequented campsites. In one series of spring moves we left on the various hilltops near our camps the following articles, which the advancing season had rendered temporarily unnecessary or useless: our *qulliq* (the flat semilunar blubber, or in the Utku case, fish-oil, lamp that is a characteristic Eskimo possession), our foxtraps, a kerosene storm lantern, a dogsled, ice

chisels, winter bedding and fur clothing, an empty fuel drum, a urine pot, and a primus stove, temporarily out of order. Nobody would touch any of these possessions until their owners came for them, which they would do as the season demanded or as circumstances permitted.[1]

I found it disturbing to leave a wake of belongings behind me as I moved. I like to provide for contingencies; to take my rain clothes in case it rains and my warm clothes in case it turns cold; and I was very unwilling indeed to leave my precious fieldnotes and tape recorder under a quilt on the summit of a little hillock shortly before the river was expected to flood. Inuttiaq said: "It isn't going to rain, at least, not much." And: "Summer is coming; it will get warm soon." And: "The flood isn't going to reach the top of that knoll." I was unconvinced. My caribou clothing was irreplaceable; so were my fieldnotes and other equipment. And even greater than any practical worth was the symbolic value that my kapluna possessions, like kapluna food, had acquired. When I first set out for Utku country, a country judged by kapluna and Eskimo alike as dangerous and difficult for a kapluna woman to survive in, I had no means of assessing, rationally, my ability to cope with that unknown and, as I have said, my ignorance of the language prevented me from even questioning the alien judgments of those on whom I had to depend. I clung to my belongings with the strength of fear; and, to a degree, I continued to do so until one full cycle of seasons had passed, and I knew, through having lived them, what to expect of the seasons, of myself, and of the Utku.

When Allaq, under Inuttiaq's direction, sorted the goods of their household into piles to be taken or cached, Inuttiaq, especially in the first months, usually tried to give me instructions, too. But when I demurred, as I almost always did, he never complained. Perhaps it was because of this silence that I was slow to realize how burdensome my dependence on my gear must have been to him. To be sure, I was aware that when we

1. Rasmussen (1931), who saw the Utku in their spring camps where they were burning melted tallow in concave rocks, was under the impression that these Eskimos never used the traditional blubber lamps. I also saw concave rocks used as makeshift qulliqs in the autumn camp, and I shared Rasmussen's misconception until we arrived at the winter campsite and the real qulliqs were brought down from the hilltop.

moved short distances, Inuttiaq usually made two sled trips, one to move his own household goods and one to move mine. I noticed, too, that sometimes when we were preparing for longer trips, I was instructed to carry some of my things to Pala's sled or canoe, rather than to Inuttiaq's. But it was only after I had returned to my own country that I saw, in my photographs of a spring move, the contrast between Inuttiaq's sled load and Ipuituq's, the latter little over knee high, the former shoulder high. At the time, I was blind.

On one occasion this blindness led me to make a most misguided gesture of generosity. Knowing how fond the Utku were of the kapluna foods they ordinarily enjoyed only in the winter, I tried to furnish them to the camp (and to myself) during the summer, as well. I caused the community, and Inuttiaq in particular, only consternation. The food arrived by plane in early June, as we were about to set off on our month-long series of spring moves downriver, not to return until after the river flooded. There was no place to store the food, and it was far too heavy to transport. We stacked it on the summit of a knoll, erected my winter tent over it, and left. In August and September, when we happened to be camped near that cache, we enjoyed the food. Nevertheless, Inuttiaq's expressionless face when he looked at the boxes being unloaded from the plane in June, and his immediate decision to abandon them, made an impression even on my kapluna mind. I began to realize that it is not just "improvidence" or "poverty," as some kaplunas think, that makes the Utku buy "insufficient" flour to carry them through the summer when they are cut off from Gjoa Haven; they just do not want the bother of carrying it around with them. The following January, when I was on my way home, Inuttiaq said to me: "If you come back again, bring only a cup, a pan, a teakettle, and food. And if you have lots of money, bring a few ready-made cigarettes."

The problems created by my material possessions were not the only ones that complicated my relationship with my Utku parents. There was another sense, too, in which I must have weighed on them. At times I tried, as best I might, to help with the household tasks that were within my ability. I fetched water from the river, made tea, brought in fresh snow to spread

on the iglu floor and gravel to fill the concavities of the ikliq, jigged through the ice with Inuttiaq or hauled the day's take of whitefish in from the nets with Allaq and cut out the bellies (often a hundred or more of them) for oil. Nevertheless, I could by no means assist as a grown daughter should. For one thing, I was constantly torn between the needs of the household and the demands of my own work: to observe, preferably without interfering, and to record. Frequently, when Saarak shrieked with rage and the rest of the family and visitors were absorbed in appeasing her, instead of helping, I watched to see what would happen. After our breakfast tea, when Allaq knelt on her hands and knees to hack away the grimy surface of the iglu floor, I lay in bed and wrote, so that I would not forget the events of the early morning. Allaq never commented or criticized, unless the amused remark that she and others sometimes made—"always writing!"—was a criticism. I never knew; the voices were always cheerful. Still, I wonder whether at times Allaq did not contrast my sporadic and awkward assistance unfavorably with the help that Kamik must have given her before she went away to boarding school. Though Allaq, like the others, explicitly excused me from helping when I lacked the skill, her judgment may have been less tolerant on the occasions when I failed to offer assistance that she knew me capable of rendering. Then she may have considered me unkind and lazy: "Not wanting to help"; and such judgments, if she made them, would have contained a kernel of truth. It was not always my work that kept me from helping; it was sometimes simple lack of perception. I was, to my dishonor, by no means as careful to anticipate her needs as she was to anticipate mine; and, unlike Inuttiaq, she was loath to ask outright for my assistance, as she would have asked her own daughter. She usually waited for me to volunteer my aid.

But worse than my failure to provide Inuttiaq and Allaq with the services that they should have received from an adult daughter was the fact that they were forced to serve *me*. In many ways I was as unskilled as my small sister Saarak, less skilled then six-year-old Raigili. Allaq had to make and mend my fur clothing, chew my boots in the morning to stretch and soften them after the night's drying, and even, for the first month or

two, turn my fur mittens right side out when they were dried. She had to fillet my fish when it was frozen; and she thought she had to do it when it was thawed, too, but that was owing to a misunderstanding. True, I was inept at circumventing the lateral bone, and both my parents knew it, but then, I did not find it so very dreadful to eat bony fish. It was for other reasons that, when I was left to cope with my own fish, I sometimes failed to join the others at their frequent meals: either I was not hungry for a raw fish snack, or I was busy writing and was reluctant to chill my fingers with the wet fish. Inuttiaq or Allaq then would ask me if I did not feel like eating, too, and I, in order to avoid the rudely direct "no," would say, "in a while," a gentle form of refusal that was often used by Utku themselves. They would wait a while; and Inuttiaq might reassure me: "Whenever you feel hungry, eat; help yourself." But if I continued to work, sooner or later, Allaq would cut a piece of fish and lay it beside me, saying: "For you, if you come to feel like eating." Then, to show my appreciation, I ate, and so, inadvertently, perpetuated the service.

I have mentioned the mixture of gratitude and irritation that characterized my reaction to these services: gratitude that I was taken care of and irritation that I was thereby placed under obligation. There was another side to my reaction, too: the service was more seductive than I cared to admit. I came, after a time, to feel it my due and to resent it if, by chance, the usual courtesies were not forthcoming. At the same time, I was ashamed of allowing myself to be seduced in this way, ashamed that I enjoyed the solicitude of my Utku parents and my own childlike dependence. I did not realize how very natural it is for a person to feel childish, to enjoy being taken care of, when he is isolated from everything familiar, and especially when he lacks the skills requisite for existence in his new environment. Instead, I carried over the values of independence and reciprocity that had been appropriate in my own world, and often an inner voice reminded me that the services I enjoyed were not in any sense my "due"; that, on the contrary, it was time I recognized my obligations, behaved as much like a self-sufficient adult as possible, and showed my parents the same consideration they showed me.

This moral voice was supported, too, by the part of me that resented being treated as an incompetent—for that was one implication of the rendering of service. The Utku considered me even more incompetent than I considered myself. They saw most kaplunas in the same light, and though there was a measure of justice in their view, nevertheless the naïve arrogance of the image, the extreme to which it was carried, offended me as much as similar prejudices offend me in my own culture. None of the adult skills, domestic or scholarly, for which I was accustomed to receive recognition in my own world had value in the Utku view—if the Utku were aware of their existence at all. Inuttiaq, and probably others, even took for granted that Eskimos learn English much faster than kaplunas learn Eskimo. There was, as usual, some truth in his perception; nevertheless, he had little awareness of the effort involved in learning a foreign language. People more than once asked when I recorded the same word twice, six months or a year apart: "Do all kaplunas forget as easily as you do?"

One result of the low expectations the Utku had of me was that it became more difficult than ever for me to improve my skills. Somebody was always at my elbow to do the difficult job for me. On numerous occasions I tried to subvert the tendency to treat me as a prima donna or a child by taking it upon myself to do things that were usually done for me and by refusing the help that was always quietly proffered. Once in midwinter I wrote to Ikayuqtuq in Gjoa Haven, describing how very good the Utku were to me—so good and helpful that I was not learning how to do anything for myself. The word was duly repeated to Inuttiaq, when he was in Gjoa Haven on a trading trip, and one day shortly after his return, he said to me: "Ikayuqtuq says you want to cut your own fish—that you want to learn." I agreed that I did, and for a day or two after that, beyond reminding me that if I were hungry I should help myself, neither Inuttiaq nor Allaq made a move to feed me. But when meals came and went, ignored by me, fillets began appearing again on my plate.

More often than not, I fear, in my efforts to acquire skill I manifested a petulant stubbornness which, I am sure, my parents regarded as more childish than the dependence from which I

was trying to escape. There was the time I tried to improve the soles of my boots. It had been Ikayuqtuq's idea. She had noted, when I was in Gjoa Haven on holiday, that my boots had soles of caribou, which is warm but wears out easily. She had suggested that an outer sole of horsehide (obtainable at the Hudson Bay Company store) would make the caribou last much longer; and she had described to me the stitch appropriate for attaching the patches.

Allaq looked over at me questioningly when I took out the horsehide and the boots, then, seeing what I was about, she came over without a word and cut the patches for me. "After I smoke a cigarette," she said, "I'll sew them for you." I thanked her, but, wanting to practice, myself, I took up the second boot and began to sew it while she was occupied with the first. Under any circumstances, sewing leather is harder than sewing cloth, and this was my first experience of it. Moreover, though I did not yet realize it, I had not understood Ikayuqtuq's instructions as well as I had thought. Allaq had finished with her patch before I had properly begun on mine. "Shall I sew it?" she asked. But by this time hackles of independence had risen. I smiled, appreciatively, I hoped: "I'll do it."

Allaq smiled, too, and silently rolled another cigarette. The horsehide patch slithered over the smooth caribou sole, boggled, puckered, and refused to be sewn. Allaq, occupied on her side of the ikliq, seemed to notice nothing, but the second time I ripped the patch out, she appeared beside me. "I sewed it this way," she said, quietly, and she showed me a technique that I immediately recognized as the one Ikayuqtuq had described. I tried again, and ripped it off again. "Tack it," said Allaq, "here and here and here and here," and she showed me: on the center of the toe and the center of the heel and in the middle of each side. I did it again, and this time managed to sew all the way around the patch. True, the horsehide meandered in a most inelegant manner onto the upper part of the boot, making it appear that I was walking on the side of the boot, rather than on the proper sole. Still, the job was so much better than my past attempts that I decided to leave it. I showed it to Allaq.

"It's finished," she observed.

"It's not well done," I admitted.

She neither agreed nor disagreed. "Is it good enough?" she asked.

"I don't know; *is* it good enough?"

"I don't know; are *you* satisfied with it?"

I said I was, and nothing further was said. But one day, weeks afterwards, when I put my boots on, I noticed that no longer did one sole meander onto the upper boot; both soles were equally neatly in place. I wondered: had I disgraced Allaq as a mother by walking around in a tipsy boot? Was she sorry for my unkempt state or did it offend her sense of craftsmanship? Allaq never said a word.

On the whole, my helplessness seemed to be accepted as a matter of course by everybody, and it was consistently treated with tactful solicitude *(naklik)*, the same solicitude that characterizes Utku reactions to other helpless creatures, like puppies, children, and sick people: "Because you don't know how to do things, you are one to be taken care of *(naklik)*." If by chance I did succeed in acquiring some simple skill I was rewarded, as a child would have been, by the knowledge that the fact had been observed. "You are beginning to be less incapable *(ayuq)*," someone would say. It was what people said about babies when they began to smile, to speak, to grasp. Or: "You are becoming an Eskimo," a "person"; the word *inuk* has both meanings.

Inuttiaq and Allaq said these flattering things to me less often than others did, or such was my impression. I thought that perhaps they were more aware than others exactly how insignificant my growth in capability was, how little I was really becoming a "person." But perhaps there was just less need to be formally polite to a "daughter." Inuttiaq did reward me occasionally. More than once, when we were out fishing or checking the nets, I was happily startled to hear him say to a neighbor, gesturing in my direction: "She helps a lot, that one."

III. Recalcitrant Child: Open Conflict and Attempts to Educate

The innocent arrogance that I heard in the derogatory queries about kaplunas' memories was usually suppressed in my presence. Whatever Inuttiaq and Allaq may privately have felt, they never deliberately made me feel that my helplessness was either ludicrous or reprehensible. It was my own embarrassment that convicted me and made me suspect that this was a source of strain. A more obvious cause of antagonism than my helpless dependence was the reverse: my mutinous independence. And perhaps worse than the independence itself was my obvious irritation when Inuttiaq, asserting his fatherly prerogatives, ignored my wishes. In these situations, where we clashed as openly as I ever saw Utku do, Inuttiaq mustered his strongest weapons. Ultimately, the entire community made me suffer for my intractability and my temper.

Trouble was forecast already by the rebellious raising of the pyramid tent that marked my entry into Inuttiaq's household in October. From that time on, the atmosphere was never entirely peaceful, but the conflict between Inuttiaq and myself did not become acute until midwinter. I am not sure why it was so slow in developing. Perhaps in the early days there was still too much formality in our relationship, too much desire on both sides to create a happy situation. Warmed by the family life that I enjoyed so much more than my isolated tent and by the willingness of Inuttiaq and Allaq to take me into their midst, I often obeyed gratefully when Inuttiaq told me to make tea or bannock. And if I hesitated from a desire to finish what I was writing, Inuttiaq met me more than halfway. "Shall Allaq do it?" he would ask, and sometimes: "Shall *I* do it?" Had I been a good daughter, I should not have agreed to these suggestions, but I was innocent of that fact at the time. I always did agree, grateful that Inuttiaq was so obliging, and only now do I wonder whether he was trying, by shaming me, to teach me my daughterly duties. Certainly Allaq was taken aback when I agreed once to Inuttiaq's making bannock. Her laugh had an embarrassed ring to my ear, and though she was bootless on the ikliq, she hastily offered to do it herself if Inuttiaq would hand her the ingredients and the stove. But nobody seemed annoyed with me, and nobody informed me that my behavior was out of order; only the quality of Allaq's laugh and the hastiness of her reparation gave me a clue.

In other ways, too, Inuttiaq was more than considerate of me in those early days. One day, I recall, we had been caught by a

fierce snow-driving wind in the midst of our move from the Rapids to the winter campsite in Amujat, and had taken shelter for the night in an empty wooden shack built, I think, as a fishing camp by the Catholic mission in Gjoa Haven. It was warm, and *I* was warm for the first time in more than a month, and I seized so eagerly on the unexpected opportunity to type that for some time I forgot the rest of the family. Then, in changing my paper, I happened to look up. It was late in the evening. Inuttiaq's eyelids drooped as he smoked beside me. "Are you sleepy?" I asked. "No," he said, "but I will be when you finish typing." This time I stopped typing.

Perhaps if Inuttiaq had not been so extremely gracious to me at first, his everyday manner, when he reverted to it, would not have struck me so unpleasantly. I was disconcerted when he began to address me in the imperative form of speech sometimes used to women and young people, instead of continuing to use the more permissive forms. And I was jolted by the assumption he seemed to make that I would obey him unquestioningly, even when he gave me no reason for his order. Though his expectation was appropriate to my status as daughter, it seemed doubly arbitrary by contrast with his earlier anticipation of, and compliance with, *my* wishes. Perhaps it was partly these feelings—of which I am not proud—that made me susceptible to the remarks I heard in Gjoa Haven about Inuttiaq's reputation as a "show-off." In any case, the suspicion implanted there that Inuttiaq was ordering me around for his own enjoyment decidedly heightened my perception of his assertiveness and sharpened my resistance to it.

Another factor in the development of our conflict was Inuttiaq's moodiness, a quality that I saw, I think, only after I had been living with his family for some time. Although Inuttiaq was usually the most energetic member of our household, there were hours, and occasionally whole days, when he lay silently on the ikliq, so aloof that he seemed insensible of our presence—working, talking, and playing around him. His very position on the ikliq expressed aloofness. When properly in bed one lies with one's head toward the center of the dwelling and one's feet to the wall, and during the day one sits in one's sleeping place facing the center of the dwelling, where one can converse with

the visitors who stand or sit around the edges of the floor space by the entrance. A man sometimes sprawls on the ikliq if he is relaxing in his own home, his booted feet dangling over the ikliq edge out of consideration for the bedding; but he lies with his body curved, so that his torso is still oriented toward the social center of the dwelling. By contrast, Inuttiaq in an aloof mood turned his back to society, his head, and sometimes his face, toward the wall as he smoked or read the Bible.

He was not, in fact, as unconscious of his surroundings as he appeared; he was simply inert, torpid. He would hear if I asked him a question, but instead of answering, he would wrinkle his nose in the Eskimo gesture of refusal. In such moods, his helpfulness with small domestic problems was minimal, too. Ordinarily, if Allaq were not immediately available when Saarak began to bounce up and down in an agony of impatience for the urine can, Inuttiaq would reach for the can, which was always within arm's length, and place Saarak on it. In a passive mood, however, he would not move a muscle. Instead, he would shout for Allaq, who might be gutting fish in the storeroom. "Allaaq! She's going to pee!" Allaq always came running, with never a reproach, wiping her fishy hands as she ran.

It was only in the privacy of his family, or when women and children visited, that Inuttiaq would maintain a mood like this. If Mannik or Pala, Qavvik or Nilak came to visit, he sat up at once and entered into conversation with his usual geniality. At other times he ended his self-isolation by telling Allaq to brew tea or make bannock, or by jumping up suddenly and going out to visit somewhere, with never a word to us as he departed.

Whether Inuttiaq's moodiness was greater than other people's I do not know. He was not the only person who sometimes lay silently on his ikliq, resting, thinking, or perhaps merely being. There was often a companionable silence also among people who sat together, working or visiting. But Inuttiaq's nose-wrinkling refusal to communicate, his unhelpfulness in small domestic crises, and his physical position with his back to his audience all made his withdrawal seem different from others'. The quality of it was reminiscent of the passivity into which Allaq sank once during Inuttiaq's midwinter absence in Gjoa Haven, but it was not identical. Though Allaq, like Inuttiaq, was completely in-

active during her period of hibernation, nevertheless, unlike him, she remained responsive to her children and to me. Moreover, her passivity was so striking only on that one occasion, whereas Inuttiaq was frequently moody. Of course, it is possible that I was simply in a better position to observe Inuttiaq's withdrawals, and that when I entered other iglus their inmates roused themselves to greet me, as Inuttiaq did to greet his guests. But even when we lived jointly with Pala's family I never was aware of withdrawal like Inuttiaq's on the part of any of the members of Pala's household.

I could never guess Allaq's reaction to these moods as she sat quietly sewing, or smoking, or playing with Saarak in her corner of the ikliq. Her surface equanimity was never ruffled. As long as Inuttiaq ignored the rest of us, she ignored him. I found his aloof moods depressing, the more so because Inuttiaq and his family provided most of the warmth in my life. When I turned to Inuttiaq, expecting a friendly laugh or an answer to a question, and was met instead by a solid back or a silently wrinkled nose, I was more unpleasantly startled than if he had always been so withdrawn. His moods triggered mine; I sulked, and my resentment fed my insurgency.

It was in the middle of the first winter that conflicts between Inuttiaq and myself began to emerge into the open. The first one I recorded occurred only ten days after I had returned from Gjoa Haven in December. It was precipitated, as were others, by an act that must have seemed incredibly insignificant to Inuttiaq and Allaq, though it was by no means insignificant in its consequences for my work. The morning's net-checking and fish-gutting were finished, and Allaq had brewed the usual kettle of tea to warm us after our work. I planned to spend the rest of the day typing up some of the notes that had fallen into arrears during the Gjoa Haven trip, and to that end I was eager to warm the iglu up to the thirty degrees necessary to make my fingers flexible and the carbon paper printable. Unfortunately, as the chill began to dissipate and my project began to seem realizable, Inuttiaq appeared in the doorway. He had come for a cup of tea, but since he had not yet finished his outdoor work, instead of shedding his furs, as usual, and ensconcing himself on the ikliq, he sat down in the open doorway to drink his tea, sociably but

coolly. The subzero draft that cut through the iglu from the storeroom in which Inuttiaq was sitting threatened to undo in minutes the work of an hour. I asked him: "May I shut the door?" Inuttiaq looked at me in silence, his face expressionless; he did not move. Allaq hastily intervened: "Wait a while." I tried to explain the reason behind my apparently rude request: when the iglu was cold I could not write easily. But irritation devoured my still feeble vocabulary; I could not find the words. I stood up. "I want to go out," I said curtly, and Inuttiaq, moving slowly, as if to acknowledge my rudeness, moved aside just enough to let me pass.

I walked until nearly dark on the empty snowfields behind the camp, thinking kapluna thoughts, and feeling my anger still itself in the cold silence. The iglus were dim humps on the slope below me when I returned to camp. Raigili and Qijuk ran to meet me at the top of the hill: "Where have you been?" "Over there," I gestured, "walking." Raigili accompanied me back to the iglu and immediately reported to Inuttiaq, who was now in his place on the ikliq: "She was over there, walking." Inuttiaq repeated his daughter's question: "Where were you?" I told him. The wooden box on which I was accustomed to type had been placed in readiness in front of my place on the ikliq. Neither of us mentioned it.

That evening, after Inuttiaq had read a short passage aloud from the Gospels, ostensibly to himself, he gave me a lecture on Christianity, while Allaq hushed Saarak so that I should not lose a word. "God is Three," Inuttiaq said; "Father, Son, and Spirit. God made the world, and there is just one God for Eskimos and kaplunas. The Bible says so. God loves *(naklik)* us and wants us to belong to him. Satan also wants us. He takes people who get angry *(urulu, ningaq)* easily and puts them in a fiery place. If anyone here gets angry with other people, I will write immediately to Nakliguhuktuq, and he will come and scold *(huaq)* that person. If you get angry with me, or if I get angry with you, Nakliguhuktuq will come and scold the angry person." Allaq giggled at these illustrations, and Inuttiaq added: "We don't get angry here. If Nakliguhuktuq comes and scolds it's very frightening *(kappia)*."

Inuttiaq's lecture left its mark. Though I was not as awed by

visions of Nakliguhuktuq's righteous wrath as Inuttiaq undoubtedly hoped I would be, nevertheless I was reminded afresh of the urgent necessity for restraint, not only in my relationship with Inuttiaq, but in all other relationships, as well. I was acutely aware of the high level of control valued, and to a large extent achieved, by Utku, and with secret discomfort I contrasted that control with my own tempery reactions to minor misfortunes. Though my reactions were well within the bounds set by my own culture, in an Utku setting they did not seem so harmless. Innumerable instances of Utku control were filed in my mind as models to emulate. When Putuguk tripped against our primus and knocked the kettle of boiling tea to the iglu floor, no one, including Putuguk, expressed startle; I felt no unusual intensity even in the general murmur of laughter. "Too bad," he said quietly, refilled the kettle, and repaired the floor. When the sinew fishline that Allaq had spent days in braiding for Inuttiaq broke under his first experimental pull, Allaq laughed a little, and Inuttiaq handed the line back to his wife with no sign of reproach: "Sew it together." There were also times when people failed to control themselves, and so minute did these lapses seem to me that I was astonished at the criticism they drew. Once when Inuttiaq shot impulsively at a bird, which had flown as he aimed, Allaq, watching at a distance, had observed in amusement: "Like a child *(nutaraqpaluktuq).*" When the old man Piuvkaq prepared himself to be taken to hospital on the government plane, perhaps not to return, a tear had run down the nose of his fourteen-year-old son, and this incontinence was reported as amusing *(tiphi)* by the boy's older sister on her visits to the neighbors.

Applying Utku standards to my behavior, I felt each of these incidents as a personal reproach; but all too often my resolve to act in a way that Utku would consider exemplary was unequal to the situation. It was inevitable that it should be so. The control required was much greater than that to which I was accustomed to discipline myself. At the same time, I was under considerably greater strain than I was used to, and the resulting tensions pressed for expression. Though I did my best to express them through laughter, as Utku did, laughter did not come naturally. Discouragingly often after hours, or even days, of

calm, when I was congratulating myself on having finally achieved a semblance of the proper equanimity, the suddenness or the intensity of a feeling betrayed me. There was the coldness in my voice, which concealed a desire to weep with fatigue or frustration when I had to say for the thousandth time: "I don't understand." There was the time when, hurrying to leave the iglu, I unthinkingly moved Raigili aside with my hand instead of quietly telling her to move. There were the critical remarks I made in murmured English when the narrowed eyes and malicious whispers of Allaq and her sister, absorbed in a gossip session, irritated me beyond endurance. There was the burst of profanity (also in English) that I uttered when a lump of slush from the overheated dome fell for the third time in as many days into my typewriter and ended my work for the day.

The silence that met these transgressions seemed pregnant with disapproval, sensible as I was of my mistake. Conversation caught its breath for a second before flowing smoothly on again as if nothing had happened. Other transgressions were met with even more visible withdrawal. One day, in a fit of pique after my typewriter had received another bath of slush, I tossed a knife, too vigorously, into the pile of frozen fish by the door. It rebounded, knocking onto the floor one of the cups of tea that was cooling on a box nearby. "Iql" somebody murmured, and within a few moments the iglu was empty of visitors.

A similar incident occurred one day when I was alone in the iglu, trying unsuccessfully to skin and cut up a hard-frozen whitefish. I had thought a little chowder might allay the mild depression that afflicted me, and I thanked providence that I was alone for once and could eat the soup by myself without having to share. Unfortunately, the fish, the first I had ever tried to skin in a frozen state, proved unexpectedly difficult to handle. I tugged and fumed while my fingers froze, and my knife refused even to dent the surface. In the midst of my frustration, the door burst open and I turned to meet the eyes of two young neighbor boys, Pamiuq and Ukhuk. The two were constant companions, drawn together perhaps not only by their common age and sex, but also by shared experiences in the kapluna boarding school that they had both attended for several years. The two moved in a private English-speaking world of their own, their con-

versation a mystery to all except two or three other half-schooled boys. Charming as I thought them, they were the bane of my existence, because they knew (or professed to know) too little English to help me in my linguistic crises, yet enough to read (upside down as easily as right side up) the notes whose contents I did not wish to reveal. On this particular occasion, the sight of the boys released the guilt that I was trying to stifle with regard to my selfish activity; and the resulting outrage provoked a vehement outburst in English: "I HATE fish! And I hope when I go home I never see another fish." Ukhuk said, "Hunh?" in a voice of surprise, and I assured him again, with no less vehemence, that I regarded fish in a most unfriendly light. He murmured to Pamiuq: "Let's go out," and they departed precipitately, leaving me overcome with chagrin, to wonder which neighbors would be regaled first with that story.

I thought I had seen the last of them for the day, but in an hour or two, to my surprise, they reappeared, smiling and friendly, as if nothing had happened. I welcomed them gratefully, with pieces of the Christmas fruitcake that I was hoarding, and tried to explain that I did not really dislike fish; it was simply difficult to skin. We had, I thought, a delightful visit, and when, as the boys left, they told me how kind *(quya)* I was, I felt much reassured.

No repercussions from that incident ever came to my attention, but in general, as I later discovered, I was too easily reassured concerning the effects of my irritable lapses. When I succeeded in catching myself up, as I sometimes did after the first aggressive impulse had spent itself, if I recounted the incident afterwards with amusement and heard others laugh with me, or if people seemed to accept the generous gestures with which I tried to dispel the chill that followed my transgression, then I was persuaded that no damage had been done. How wrong I was I learned only a year later when, on my return to Gjoa Haven, Ikayuqtuq told me of the reports that Utku had made of me that first winter, the letters they had written to her, and the things they had told her and Nakliguhuktuq when they went to Gjoa Haven to trade. I had taken pains to conceal from Ikayuqtuq and Nakliguhuktuq the vexatious aspects of my life, wanting neither to arouse doubts concerning my adaptation to iglu life nor to appear dissatisfied with the treatment afforded me by my beneficent hosts. Nakliguhuktuq, however, reading the cheerful letter that I had sent with Inuttiaq in January when he went to Gjoa Haven to trade, had marveled aloud at my seeming happiness despite the coldness of the winter, whereupon Inuttiaq had observed: "She is lying. She is not happy. She gets angry very easily, and I don't think she likes us any more." Amaaqtuq had written in a similar vein to Ikayuqtuq. Instead of reporting, as she had in November, that I was kind and fun to be with, she described how annoyed I became whenever I failed to understand. Ikayuqtuq, concerned lest she make matters worse, did not let me know how people felt about me. Instead, she wrote a letter of advice to Amaaqtuq: "Kaplunas, and some Eskimos, too, get angry at themselves, sometimes, rather than at other people. If Yiini is angry, leave her alone. If an Eskimo gets angry it's something to remember, but a kapluna can get angry in the morning and be over it by afternoon." "I tried to make her think," Ikayuqtuq explained to me. "I thought maybe if she thought about it, she would understand."[2]

As I listened to Ikayuqtuq's story, gratitude at her unknown intervention and surprise at the accuracy of her intuition concerning the nature of my anger mingled with dismay: dismay that my volatility had so damaged my relationships with the Utku, and dismay, also, that my own intuition of danger had completely failed me.

My relationship with Inuttiaq must have suffered more than most. Though my irritability overflowed in other directions at times, it was he who bore the brunt of it, because of the frequency with which our wills collided. The time I objected to Inuttiaq's sitting in the open door was the first of several occasions when anger was openly recognized between us. The most memorable of these storms occurred that first January, shortly after Inuttiaq's return from Gjoa Haven. The two weeks of his absence had been an especially trying period for me. Having looked forward to a long and peaceful interlude in which to work, free from the interference of Inuttiaq's demands, I had

2. Note that the very similar comparison between Eskimo and kapluna tempers that was quoted in Chapter 5, section II, was made by a different informant from a different Eskimo group.

found myself instead faced with an iglu so frigid and a mother so passive that I could accomplish nothing at all. Silently, I fretted and fumed over the swelling pile of penciled scrawls, which there was no way to type. Obviously, nothing could be done until Inuttiaq returned, but I determined that when he did come, I would take drastic steps to improve my working conditions. I debated with myself whether perhaps I might go to live by myself for a week, or for a few days at a time, in the government building a few miles from our camp. The place was an empty wooden shell, built as a nursing station but never used except by me as a cache for my useless belongings. It had a kerosene stove, which would make it luxuriously comfortable. Or perhaps, I thought, Inuttiaq might build me a tiny iglu near our own, which I could use as an "office." It could be built small enough so that I could heat it with a primus stove. As a third alternative, perhaps I might set up the winter tent again; it had lain untouched in the nursing station ever since we had moved to Amujat in November. *Something* would have to be done, that was clear. The decision itself markedly lightened my inner gloom.

I broached the subject to Inuttiaq a few days after his return to camp. He listened attentively to my explanation: I needed a place to work; it was difficult in the iglu; either my fingers froze or the dome dripped or people wanted to sleep and I did not like to bother them. I said I had thought about going to live for a while in the nursing station, but that I was a little afraid the stove might not work well. It might go out, as a similar stove in a similar nursing station in Gjoa Haven had done once in December when I slept there. When I woke the following morning the temperature in the building had been thirty below zero. Inuttiaq agreed that the stove was unpredictable. Instead, he suggested that he take me to the nursing station every morning and fetch me again at night, so that I would not freeze. As so often before, he reassured me: "Because you are alone here, you are someone to be taken care of *(naklik)*." And as so often before, his solicitude warmed me. "Taking me to the nursing station every day will be a lot of work for you," I said. The round trip took an hour and a half by dogsled, not counting the time and effort involved in harnessing and unharnessing the team. He agreed that it would be a lot of work. "Could you perhaps build me a small iglu?" I asked, thinking that this would be by far the least taxing alternative for him. It would take only an hour or two to build the tiny iglu that I had in mind, and then he need concern himself no further. Lulled by the assurance he had just given me of his desire to take care of me, and by the knowledge that the request I made was not time-consuming, I was the more disagreeably startled when he replied with unusual vigor: "I build no iglus. I have to check the nets."

The rage of frustration seized me. He had not given me the true reason for his refusal. It took only two hours to check the nets, every second or third day. On the other days, Inuttiaq did nothing at all except eat, drink, visit, and repair an occasional tool. He was offended—but why? I could not imagine. Perhaps he objected to my substituting for his suggestion one of my own, however considerately intended. Whether Inuttiaq read my face I do not know, but he softened his refusal immediately: "Shall Ipuituq or Tutaq"—he named two of the younger men—"build an iglu for you?" Perhaps it would be demeaning for a man of Inuttiaq's status, a mature householder, to build an iglu for a mere daughter. There was something in Inuttiaq's reaction that I did not understand, and a cautioning voice told me to contain my ethnocentric judgment and my anger. I mentioned my tent: "I hear it is very warm in winter." Inuttiaq smoked silently. I struggled for a semblance of calm. After a while, he asked: "Shall they build you an iglu tomorrow?" My voice shook with exasperation: "Who knows?" I turned my head, rummaging—for nothing—in the knapsack that I kept beside my sleeping bag, until the internal storm should subside.

Later, when Inuttiaq was smoking his last pipe in bed, I raised the subject again, my manner, I hoped, a successful facsimile of cheerfulness and firmness. "I want to try the tent and see whether it's warm, as I have heard. We can bring it here, and then if it's not warm, I won't freeze; I'll come indoors." Allaq laughed, Inuttiaq accepted my suggestion, and I relaxed with relief, restored to real cheer by Inuttiaq's offer to fetch the tent from the nursing station next day—if it stormed so that he could not go on the trapping trip he had planned.

My cheer was premature. Next day Inuttiaq did not go trap-

ping, and he did not fetch the tent; he checked the nets. I helped without comment. The tent was not mentioned that day or the next, until in the evening, unable to contain myself longer, I asked Inuttiaq, in the most gracious voice I could muster, when he thought he might get my tent. "Tomorrow," he said. "You and Allaq will do it while I check the nets."

Morning arrived; the tent was mentioned in the breakfast conversation between Inuttiaq and Allaq. I could not catch the gist of the exchange, but when Inuttiaq inquired of a neighbor child who came in whether any of the young men of the camp were going near the nursing station that day, and was told they were not, I realized that once more the tent would not be brought. As usual, I was not informed of the decision. Had I been a good daughter I would have trusted Inuttiaq to keep my interests in mind and to fetch my tent in his own time, when convenient opportunity arose. Unfortunately, I did not trust Inuttiaq to do any such thing. The repeated delays had convinced me, whether rightly or wrongly I do not know, that he had no intention of bringing me my tent. I imagined that he had no faith in my assertions that it was a warm tent, that he could not conceive of a tent being warm in winter, and that he did not believe I would really use it. I had not used it, after all, when I had set it up as a refuge at the Rapids in October.

My voice taut with exasperated resolve, I asked what the weather was like outside. I said nothing of my intention; nevertheless, I was surprised when Inuttiaq asked why I wanted to know. "Why?" was ordinarily a rude question; I was forced to ask it frequently, myself, in the course of my investigations, since I had not yet discovered the more polite ways of asking for reasons; but I did not expect to be asked in turn. "Who knows why?" I replied. It was a rude evasion, and Inuttiaq said nothing, but went out to check the nets. When I began to put on my fur clothing, Allaq, too, asked what I planned to do; I never wore my furs in the vicinity of camp. "I'm going to walk," I said, more gently. I thought her inquiry was probably prompted by concern lest I wander off by myself and come to harm. I was too angry with Inuttiaq to consider that his inquiry might have been similarly motivated. I never felt as hostile toward Allaq as I did toward Inuttiaq.

Like Inuttiaq, Allaq was silent when I evaded her question, and silently she set off for the nets, dragging the sled on which she would haul home the netted fish. Watching her move away, coughing with the effort, her shoulders set against the harness rope, I felt a pang of remorse. The sled was not really so very heavy; it slid easily over the hard surface of the river snow; but it was my custom to help her pull, and it suddenly seemed unduly hostile not to do so now. I ran after her and picked up my half of the rope. But when we reached the nets, the sight of Inuttiaq enraged me again, and instead of staying, as usual, to shovel the drifted snow away from the holes, to help collect the fish and haul them home again, I set off without a word in the direction of the nursing station, invisible on the horizon. I had no intention of fetching the tent myself; it would have been impossible; but I needed a few hours alone, and vaguely I knew that the direction of my walk would be to Inuttiaq a sign, however futile, that I was in earnest about my tent.

I knew it would be a sign, but I did not dream that he would respond as charitably as he did. I had just arrived at the nursing station and was searching among my books for a novel to comfort me in my frustration, when I heard the squeak of sled runners on the snow outside and a familiar voice speaking to the dogs: "Hooooo (whoa)." Inuttiaq appeared in the doorway. I smiled. He smiled. "Will you want your tent?"

Gratitude and relief erased my anger as Inuttiaq picked up the tent and carried it to the sled. "You were walking," he said, in answer to my thanks; "I felt protective *(naklik)* toward you."

It was a truce we had reached, however, not a peace, though I did not realize it at once. It was nearly dark when we reached camp, so Inuttiaq laid the tent on top of the iglu for the night to keep it from the dogs. Next morning I went with Inuttiaq to jig for trout upriver, and when we returned I thought that finally the time was ripe for setting up the tent. Not wanting to push Inuttiaq's benevolence too far, and remembering the force of his response to my query about iglu building, I asked: "Shall I ask Ipuituq to help me put up my tent?" "Yes," said Inuttiaq. There was no warmth in his face; he did not smile, though he did tell me to keep my fur trousers on for warmth while I put up the tent. I obeyed, but the wind had risen while we drank our homecom-

ing tea, so that even in fur trousers tent-raising was not feasible that day or the next.

When the wind died, two days later, Inuttiaq and I went fishing again, most companionably. Relations seemed so amicable, in fact, that this time, on our return, I was emboldened to say directly, without mention of Ipuituq: "I would like to put up my tent."

Naïvely, I thought that Inuttiaq would offer to help. He did not. His face was again unsmiling as he said: "Put it up."

My anger was triggered again. "By myself?" I inquired rudely.

"Yes," said Inuttiaq, also rudely.

"Thank you very much." I heard the coldness in my voice but did not try to soften it.

Inuttiaq looked at me for a moment, then summoned two young men who were nearby and who came, with a cheer that was in marked contrast to his own manner, to help me set up the tent.

Inuttiaq's attitude toward the raising of the tent puzzled me. I failed to understand why he resisted it, unless he thought it ridiculous to set up a tent in winter. I think now that he did consider it foolish, not only because of the frigid temperatures but because of the winds, which can have relentless force in January. There was a storm the very day after the tent had been raised, and afterwards, when Mannik dug out our entrance and came in to visit, Inuttiaq's first question concerned the tent: "Is it still standing?" It was; and I thought I heard a note of surprise in the "mmmm" of his acknowledgment.

But it seems to me now that more was at stake than the feasibility of the project: Inuttiaq was personally affronted by my request. One clue to his reaction I find in a question that I hardly heard at the time. He had wanted to know, after the tent was up, whether I planned to sleep in it or only to work there, and I think he may have felt that my demand for a tent was a sign that I was dissatisfied with him as a father, with his concern for my welfare. He may also have considered an offense against his dignity the suggestion that he himself set up the tent. The thought crossed my mind even at the time, when he substituted younger assistants for himself; but in other seasons, when moving was the order of the day, Inuttiaq readily helped to raise my tent.

I cannot know Inuttiaq's thought, but in retrospect I see so many reasons why he might have opposed my wish that I am no longer astonished that he did resist it. I am surprised only by the extent to which he remained protective (*naklik*) throughout the whole episode, while obviously intensely opposed to my wish. Perhaps, in part, the protective actions were a shield for the hostile feelings, making it possible for Inuttiaq to convince himself that he was conforming to Utku values of helpfulness and obligingness. Or perhaps, as I believe, he really did feel both protective (*naklik*) and hostile toward me, simultaneously. It is possible that his outrage at my exorbitant demand was owing, in part, precisely to the fact that he was a good (*naklik*) father to me and he knew it. In any case, his behavior was a curious blend of opposites. He chose the site for my tent with care, correcting my own choice with a more practiced eye to prowling dogs and the prevailing wind. He offered advice on heating the tent, and filled my primus so that it would be ready for me to use when my two assistants and I had finished setting the tent up. And when I moved my writing things out, he told me that if I liked I might write instead of going fishing. "If I catch a fish you will eat," he assured me. But he turned his back on the actual raising of the tent and went home to eat and drink tea. And next day I saw his displeasure in another form.

It was Sunday morning and storming; our entrance was buried under drifting snow. Since there could be no church service, Inuttiaq and Allaq had each, separately, in a mumbling undertone, read a passage from the Bible. Then Inuttiaq began to read from the prayerbook the story of creation, and he asked if I would like to learn. I agreed, the more eagerly because I feared that he had perceived my skepticism and that this was another hidden source of conflict between us. He lectured me at length. The story of creation was followed by the story of Adam and Eve (whose sin was responsible for the division of mankind into kaplunas and Eskimos), and this story was in turn followed by an exposition of proper Christian behavior: the keeping of the Sabbath—and of one's temper. "God is loving (*naklik*)," said Inuttiaq, "but only to believers. Satan is angry. People will go to heaven only if they do not get angry, or answer back when they are scolded (*huaq*)." He said further: "If a kapluna police-

man kills me, I won't be afraid, because we'll both go to the sky and stand before God. I will go to heaven and live forever, but God will kill *him.*" He told me that one should not be attached to earthly belongings, as I was: "One should devote oneself only to God's word." Most striking of all was the way Inuttiaq ended his sermon to me. "Nakliguhuktuq made me king of the Utku," he said. "He wrote that to me. He told me that if people, including you, don't want to believe what I tell them, and don't want to learn about Christianity, then I should write to him, and he will come quickly and scold *(huaq)* them. If people don't want to believe Nakliguhuktuq either, then Nakliguhuktuq will write to Cambridge Bay and a bigger leader, the kapluna king in Cambridge Bay, will come in a plane with a big and well-made whip and will whip people. It will hurt a lot."

Much of this I had heard before, but this version was more dramatic than previous ones. It renewed my sense of Inuttiaq's inner fires and made me see, more clearly than I had before, something of the way he viewed kaplunas, generally. I heard the hostility directed against myself, as well, but again he had softened the latter by blending it with warmth, in the manner that I found so confusing. He knew *I* believed in God, he said, because I helped people, I gave things to people—not just to one or two, which God doesn't want, but to everybody.

In view of that commendation, it seems particularly unfortunate that my next graceless gesture, that very night, was to refuse a request that Inuttiaq made of me: to borrow one of my two primus stoves to take on an overnight trip he planned. "Request" is perhaps the wrong word; his manner was peremptory, and that was partly the trouble. "You can use that one in your tent," he said, "and I will borrow this one." He pointed to the one that I had contributed to the iglu household. He had not neglected to make provision for my welfare but, still raw from recent events, I was in a mood to run my own affairs. And, most important, I knew that if any accident befell that second primus, my hard-won tent would be useless to me. In other words, any systematic work would be impossible for the rest of the winter. To me, that was reason enough for refusal. To Inuttiaq, however, my attitude must have been neither comprehensible nor justified. I had two primuses; he had none, as

his own was cached in his overnight trapping shelter, a day's journey distant; and therefore it was right that he should borrow mine. I said I did not see why he could not share the primus that Putuguk and Mannik, his two young traveling companions, planned to take; it was standard practice to share traveling equipment in that way. Worse, instead of mentioning the anxiety that I felt for the safety of the stove, I phrased my refusal as a concern for Allaq's warmth. "She will be cold in the iglu without the primus," I said, "if I am using the other primus in the tent." It was a tactic that I had learned from the Utku, but behind the charitable words lay the knowledge that I would be troubled by guilt if I monopolized the only available stove in my tent while Allaq sat blowing on her hands in the iglu. (I knew by then how cold iglus could be when men, and stoves, were absent.)

It is just possible that Inuttiaq wished in some recess of his mind that the absence of that household stove might make it difficult for me to use my tent in peace, and that my refusal to lend the stove foiled that wish. But he had more obvious cause, as well, to demur at my resistance. After all, he, not I, was Allaq's "leader" and, in principle, he was mine, as well. I was interfering with his jurisdiction over both of us. "She won't be cold," he said.

When I remained silent, a sign that I did not acquiesce, Inuttiaq dropped the subject, and it was not until next morning, Monday, that I discovered how extremely angry he was with me. He did not plan to leave on his trip until Tuesday; on Monday he planned to fish, and I was, as usual, going with him. He had gone out to ice the sled runners, and I was pulling on my fur trousers when he reappeared, snow knife in hand, and announced in a ringing voice: "The tent is ruined!" So tense was the atmosphere at that moment that I was sure he had hacked the tent to pieces with his knife. He had not, of course; the dogs had torn the sleeve entrance off, and after Inuttiaq had left—alone—to fish, Allaq volunteered to help me sew it on again, sitting on the snow outside at ten degrees below zero. But as I sewed, racing against the freezing breeze and singing "Yankee Doodle" loudly with hastily composed English lyrics concerning the worthlessness of humanity in general and Eskimos and dogs

in particular, I still mentally accused Inuttiaq of feeling satisfaction at the damage to my tent.

His displeasure was, in fact, expressed more overtly that day than it ever was again, but he did not attack my property. Just the reverse: he refused to touch it. In lieu of the primus that I declined to lend, he had decided to take on his trip a feeble kerosene heater that he owned: "In case I get separated from the others in blowing snow," he said. It was unlike him to prepare for unpleasant contingencies in this way. Perhaps he did not wish to depend on the younger men, or perhaps he wished to assert himself against the conditions that my refusal imposed on him. I do not know his reason for deciding to take the heater, but when, on his return from fishing, he set about preparing his equipment for the next day's trip, I saw how I had alienated him. He picked up the two-gallon can in which he carried kerosene, and bypassing my ten-gallon drum, which stood in the iglu, open and accessible for household use, he took the can outdoors, pried his own, still unopened drum out of the snow where it stood in reserve, waiting for my drum to be emptied, and filled his can there on the slope, where the wind took toll of the precious fuel.

Surprised, and not a little remorseful, I followed him out, intending to reassure him that I would be glad to have him use my oil. But my choice of words was not felicitous. "Why are you using *your* drum?" He raised his head sharply from the drum, whose frozen cap he was trying to disengage with the hatchet, and with sharpness in his tone, too, he replied: "It is my will!"

The rest of the winter, for a wonder, passed more peacefully, at least on the surface. Partly, I think, this was because I spent a great deal of time closeted in my tent, typing up the notes that had accumulated during the months when conditions in the qaqmaq and in the iglu had prohibited typing. Partly, too, it was because Inuttiaq almost never again permitted his own hostility to emerge so overtly against me. In a flash of the eye; in a silence; in a comment unintelligible to me, at which Allaq laughed; in a surreptitious glance toward Pala or toward Mannik, who remained expressionless, I saw, or imagined I saw, irritation or disapproval; but the explosions, which still occasionally occurred, were all mine, and Inuttiaq's restraint in the face of them was extraordinary. Most often he was silent, sometimes he offered me something to eat, occasionally he reassured me that I was cared for *(naklik)*, and occasionally, too, he lectured me.

The most notable of these lectures was delivered one day in March, when I was disturbed because Inuttiaq had refused to repeat to me a conversation he had had with the husband of a woman, Pukiq, who was very ill. I thought the two men had been discussing whether or not Pukiq should send to Gjoa Haven for medical help, as she had so far refused to do for fear of being taken out to hospital. I was alarmed for her life, and conscience-torn, because at her request I had promised not to notify the priest in Gjoa Haven of her illness; and I thought, when I overheard a fragment of the conversation between Inuttiaq and Uyuqpa, that I could still help by explaining that Pukiq would not necessarily be sent to hospital if she asked for help; the priest might be able to contact the nursing station in Cambridge Bay and get medicine that would help her here at home.

But Inuttiaq replied to my question that Uyuqpa had said nothing at all; and he went off to attend to the far end of the fishnet, which he and I were checking. I began to shovel snow from my end with more than usual vigor, and when Inuttiaq was, I fear, not quite out of earshot, I said loudly in Eskimo: "You're lying."

Inuttiaq did not turn around, but later when, temper restored to resignation, I joined him at his end of the net, he looked up from his work: "Are you angry *(ningaq)*?" I blushed and hesitated, gesturing "no" and "yes" simultaneously. Inuttiaq laughed and said with surprising directness: "You get angry *(ningaq)* easily. It's nothing to get angry about. Uyuqpa was talking to me alone."

Inuttiaq was right, of course, which did not lessen my frustration. I had neither the desire nor the ability, however, to describe the complexities of my conscience, so I sought an explanation that would make sense to him and, more important, one that would reassure him that my temper was harmless. "I'm a little

bit angry *(ningaq)* from fear *(kappia)* that the kapluna leaders will be angry with me, because I didn't tell them that Pukiq was ill."

Inuttiaq nodded: "I, too, fear the anger *(ningaq)* of the kapluna leaders." But then his tone changed suddenly. "The kapluna leaders are not frightening *(kappia)*," he said. "They are not to be feared. Only God is to be feared. Nakliguhuktuq isn't afraid of the kaplunas and neither am I. You, too, should be neither afraid nor angry. You get angry easily. I don't get angry. If you keep on getting angry, I'll write to Nakliguhuktuq." There was no anger or disturbance in his tone, though his voice and his words were strong.

As I was about to reply, Allaq came from the iglu to join us, and the subject was dropped. Inuttiaq was exceptionally cheerful and solicitous of my welfare while we three finished checking the net, more than once asking me whether I were warm enough and not too tired. And when we returned home, he took special pains to see that I had a choice piece of fish to eat.

It seems to me now that my controversial tent proved more of a blessing in preventing the development of conflicts between Inuttiaq and me than I had any idea it would when I insisted on setting it up. I was astonished at the relief I felt during those hours in the tent. I expanded in the warmth that thawed my fingers and the carbon paper, and that on still days even made it possible to remove my parka, which I otherwise never did except at night in bed. The solitude, too, was more of a blessing than I had anticipated. Though quite aware of the irritations that beset me daily in the iglu: the murmuring voices, the giggles, the chill air, Inuttiaq's presence, nevertheless I had not felt the cumulative weight of these small strains until it was lifted.

I had only two regrets as I sat happily typing. One was that I was unable to see out of my shelter. I could hear footsteps coming and going among the iglus and voices calling, but the sounds gave me few clues to what was happening. I never knew what anthropologically interesting events I might be missing. I could not go outside to check, either, without turning off the primus that warmed the tent, and when the primus was off, my papers and typewriter all had to be put away, because within a very few minutes after the primus had stopped, the tent would

return to outdoor temperature, which might be anything from twenty to sixty below zero, and frost crystals would begin to fall on all exposed surfaces when the temperature dropped. For the same reason, I could not go home to eat during the day, and this was my second regret. However, a week or so after I had begun to work in the tent, I happened to mention my hunger, in a casual fashion, to Allaq, and that afternoon the squeaking footsteps to which I listened approached my tent instead of going by, and Allaq's voice said, "Yiini, here is tea for you." She had brought me a small kettleful of hot tea, already sugared and milked, and a lump of caribou stomach fat, as well. From that day on, either Allaq or Raigili regularly brought me tea and food when they were eating at home. Sometimes, Allaq said, it was at Inuttiaq's suggestion that she did this.

I was touched by this attention; and in the weeks following the January crisis, Inuttiaq made other gestures, too, that soothed and warmed me. Only a few days after he returned from the trip for which I had refused to lend my primus, he sent my kapluna father a message, the tone of which startled me by contrast with the events just passed. "Tell him," said Inuttiaq, "that because I am very grateful *(hatuq)* indeed for the help you are giving us with kerosene, I am feeding you with the caribou meat that I have fetched." A month later, when one of Raigili's two dogs was about to whelp, Inuttiaq asked me if I would like to "own" one of the pups for the duration of my stay, and the neighbors pointed out the significance of his offer: all members of a family, adopted or otherwise, own dogs belonging to that family's team.

Such gestures, as well as the more even flow of daily life, lulled me into believing that the hostile feelings that had infected the air earlier in the winter had been forgotten, and convinced me that the tensions that I continued to spark from time to time were momentary flashes without lasting effect. I am no longer sure that my peace of mind was justified. In retrospect, it seems to me possible that these warm acts were neither rewards for improved behavior on my part nor evidence of a generous willingness to accept me in spite of my thorny qualities, but were, rather, attempts to extract or blunt some of the thorns. I think my Utku parents may have hoped that the same techniques of pacification and reassurance that throughout the winter had

soothed crises away might also serve to prevent difficulties from arising. If I knew I was cared for *(naklik)*, I might not get angry so easily. I thought I heard similar logic in the admonition Inuttiaq once in a while gave his sulky daughter, Raigili: "Stop crying, you are loved *(naklik)*." Another possible motive may have been a desire to shame me, by virtuous example, into reforming. Perhaps these kind acts even had the effect of nullifying Inuttiaq's and Allaq's own prickly feelings, permitting them to prove to themselves that, as Inuttiaq had said, *they* didn't get angry, only *I* did.

IV. The Fishermen: Crisis

Whatever the interpretation of these particular incidents, it is clear to me now that there remained more of an undercurrent of tension in my relationship with Inuttiaq and Allaq than I perceived at the time. I had come to accept the everyday vicissitudes of the relationship as matter-of-course; consciously, I felt the rewards far greater than the strains. The same was not true, I think, of Inuttiaq and Allaq; but I saw their feelings only at the end of April, when our iglu melted and Inuttiaq ordered a move into tents. Then he decided (as usual, without telling me) that I should return to my own tent, rather than joining the rest of the family in theirs. And during the five months in which I lived in my tent before moving back into Inuttiaq's qaqmaq in the following October, Allaq almost never visited me, as she had done in the first days after my arrival.

To be sure, during the last two months of that period almost no one else visited me, either. Short of murder, the ultimate sanction against the display of aggression in Utku society is, as I have said, ostracism. Niqi, Nilak's overly volatile wife, lived her life in its vacuum, and for a period of three months during my second summer and autumn at Back River, I experienced it, too. It was precipitated, in my case, by a misunderstanding that occurred in August, at the start of my second year. I am sure, however, that the tensions of the preceding winter added their residue of hostility, as well, to create a situation in which the kapluna member of the community ceased to be treated as an educable child and was instead treated as an incorrigible offender who had, unfortunately, to be endured but who could not be incorporated into the social life of the group. The misunderstanding came about as follows.

At the time I went to live with the Utku, Chantrey Inlet was becoming increasingly known among sports fishermen in the provinces of Canada and in the United States. Every year in July and August small charter airlines in Ontario and Manitoba, which cater to sportsmen, flew men in, for a price incredible to me, to spend two or three or five days fishing for arctic char and salmon trout at the Rapids. Until a year or so before my arrival only a few had come each summer, perhaps five or six, but then they had begun to come in numbers. Fifteen or twenty, the Utku calculated, had come in 1963, and in 1964, when I was there, forty came, not all at once but in groups ranging in size from two or three to approximately fifteen. One or more of these groups was with us constantly from July 26 until August 23. They camped across the river from us, out of sight behind a point of land, and their outboard motors sputtered up and down the river from dawn to dark.

Some of these fishermen and their guide, a Canadian named Ray, kept to themselves on their side of the river. They traded generously with the Eskimos when the latter went to offer bone toys in exchange for tea, tobacco, and fishhooks, but otherwise they largely ignored the native inhabitants of the Inlet. The Utku—it was Nilak, Pala, Inuttiaq, and, later, Ipuituq, who were camped by the rapids that summer—liked Ray. He was a mild-mannered man, who had been bringing fishing parties to the Inlet for several years and who treated the Eskimos with dignity.

Individuals in other groups were less innocuous. Hard drinking, cigar smoking, and gruff-voiced, lacking in gentleness and sensitivity, they were the antithesis of everything Eskimo. They stared at the Eskimos; visited the Eskimo camp and photographed people without asking permission; peered into the tents; and when the Eskimos tried to trade for the coveted tea, tobacco, and fishhooks, one or two of these kaplunas offered instead strings of pink beads and other useless items, which the Eskimos were too timorous and too polite to refuse. The Eskimo women were particularly afraid *(kappia, iqhi)* of one of the plane pilots who, they said, had "wanted a woman" the previous year and had made his wishes known distinctly.

The Utku did not fail to notice differences among the fishermen and to judge some of them kinder *(quya)* than others, but whatever dislike they felt showed neither in avoidance nor, of course, in aggressive acts. The Eskimos looked forward with excitement to the coming of the kaplunas in July. As soon as the ice left the river, they began to listen for planes and, as they sat together on the gravel in front of the tents, they filed away at bits of caribou antler, shaping them into miniature replicas of fishhooks, pipes, knives, and other objects to trade to the kaplunas. Their talk was of tea and tobacco and of other things—food and clothing—which they had received from the fishermen in the past in very generous amounts, and which they hoped to receive again. When a plane was heard they hurried with one accord to the other side of the river in order to be present when the kaplunas landed, to help with the unloading of the plane, and to watch the strangers. Regardless of the quality of the men who had arrived, regardless of how the Utku felt about them, they treated all alike with the same obliging acquiescence with which they had treated me on my arrival. Their courtesy did not fail even when the kaplunas took advantage of their mildness to treat them in ways that I considered most humiliating. One champion wrestler picked up Mannik and held him horizontally, by shoulder and thigh, over his head: for a television ad, he explained to me. Mannik, who knew nothing of what was happening until he found himself in the air, giggled. On another occasion a loud-voiced man staggered off the plane, steeped in champagne, and wove his way over to Pala, whom he had singled out as the Eskimo "chief." Hugging Pala warmly, he inquired what his name was and invited him in incoherent English to be his friend. Pala, to my astonishment, understood the man to ask his name and replied "Peeterosi". (Peter, his Christian name). "Ha ha, Peeterosi!" roared the drunken kapluna. "Ha ha, Peeterosi! Le's be frens, I like Eskimos, nice Eskimos," and he stroked Pala's head, while Pala laughed mildly and resisted not at all. The other Utku watched, expressionless, in the background.

When we returned to our camp, later, I discovered that the Utku did have a way of retaliating against the kaplunas' condescending behavior; they made fun of it. They taught Saarak to imitate the drunken fisherman, and for months she ran from person to person, on request, stroking their heads and laughing with kapluna boisterousness in her piping voice: "Ha ha ha, Peeterosi, ha ha ha!" But even when I saw this mockery, my feelings were not relieved. I was ashamed of being a kapluna among such kaplunas, and I was humiliated on behalf of the Eskimos who watched, smiled, nodded, and submitted.

Yet I did not identify entirely with the Eskimos, and this fact made the situation even more painful. In spite of myself, I was drawn to the men camped across the river. Except for an exasperatingly brief conversation with a passing police officer in May, I had seen no member of my own culture and heard no English since the previous November. Neither had I tasted any kapluna food other than the few items: bannock, tea, rice, raisins, and chocolate, that I stocked in meagre quantities. Most trying of all, perhaps, I had had no mail since March, except for a few pitiful items, mostly bills and advertisements for camping equipment, which the police officer had brought in May. I deplored the insensitive ways of the men, and yet I was starved for the sights and sounds of my own world that they represented and for the familiar food that symbolized that world and that they had brought in enormous quantities.

But more detrimental to my peace of mind than the sudden sharp awareness of my deprivations was the fact that, since I was the only bilingual present, the members of each camp expected me to mediate with the other on their behalf. I often tangled the two languages hopelessly in my distress, unable to muster a coherent sentence in either one. It was not too hard to help the Utku in their attempts to trade with the kaplunas, since I almost always felt the Eskimos' requests reasonable. Difficulty arose only if a fisherman countered with beads a request for tea. Then I was tempted to demur on behalf of the unresisting Eskimo. Far more awkward were the requests that the kaplunas made of me. I was supposed to explain to Mannik why he had been so summarily hoisted skyward; to ask Nilak for his braided boot laces, though I knew no wool was to be had for replacements; and to negotiate with Allaq and with Niqi for the manu-

facture of fur mittens, though I knew that hides suitable for mittens were scarce and that our own winter mitten material would be used. The Eskimos would never refuse.

Most painful of all the transactions that I was expected to mediate were negotiations for the loan of the two Eskimo canoes. Once, each Utku family had owned a kapluna-style canoe of wood and painted canvas. The Canadian government had provided them after the famine of 1958, in order to encourage the Utku to depend more heavily on their rich fish resources than they had formerly done. One by one the canoes had been damaged and now either lay beached for lack of repair material or had been burned for firewood. Inuttiaq's and Pala's were the only two usable canoes remaining to our camp. During the spring, the canoes were used to transport the household goods up and down the river in the long series of moves, and during the summer and early autumn the men anchored them in midriver at the foot of the rapids and fished from them more efficiently than they could have fished from the shore. The canoes were used also to set and check the nets in the open river before freeze-up, and to ferry people back and forth across the river on various errands: to fetch birch twigs, which grew more plentifully on the far side of the river, to bring in needed possessions from caches, and to visit other families camped nearer the mouth of the river. The canoes had innumerable uses; without them Utku life would have been greatly constricted. Just how constricted I discovered when the kaplunas asked to borrow the boats.

All the groups, both the pleasanter ones and the less pleasant ones, wanted the use of these canoes. The kaplunas had two aluminum boats of their own, but these were not large enough to enable all of the men to go fishing at once. The ins and outs of the negotiations that I was forced to conduct are too complicated to record here, but the result was that from July 26, when the first plane arrived, until August 15, when the last large party of fishermen left, we seldom had the use of both of our canoes and sometimes we had the use of neither. The kaplunas suggested that to compensate us for the loan of the canoes, which prevented us from fishing as we would have done, they would bring us the fish that *they* caught during the day; Ray also offered to feed us a meal of kapluna food every evening. Of course, it was impossible to know what Inuttiaq and Pala thought of this plan when it was proposed, but they agreed to it with alacrity. I myself thought it sounded like a reasonable solution to the conflict of interests, one that would involve minimal discomfort for the Utku. In fact, however, the effects of the arrangement were more inconvenient than I had foreseen.

It was worst for the Utku, of course, when the kaplunas used both of our canoes. Then we were stranded on our shore and in many little ways were made dependent on the kaplunas. The days were spent not in fishing but in craftwork, as the men made toy after toy to trade to the kaplunas. Once Mannik went out to cast a throwline from the boulders along the edge of the rapids, but the hook, caught by the still swollen midsummer current, snagged under a stone and could not be retrieved until the kaplunas came to fetch us for our evening meal. Then they lent Mannik his canoe so he could paddle out to disentangle the hook. Once Inuttiaq shot a gull that was swimming near the camp. An occasional bird made welcome variety in our diet, but we could not fetch this one; we had to wait until it drifted to shore of its own accord. We ran out of sugar one morning, but the supply was cached on an island, so we had to drink bitter tea that day until, again, the kaplunas came to fetch us in the evening; then they took us out to the island in one of their outboards. We were deprived of our daily patau because we no longer had fresh fish to boil. The fish that the kaplunas brought us faithfully every evening were, inexplicably, fed to the dogs, and we ourselves ate the fish we had been drying for autumn and winter use. Not the least of the constrictions was our inability to visit the kaplunas freely. On the evenings when Ray was in the Inlet, if the wind had not whipped up the river too much, he came for us after the kaplunas had finished their supper and ferried us across to their camp for a meal, and after we had eaten, he ferried us home again. But often there was no visiting at all.

I do not know how strongly the Utku felt about the absence of their canoes and their dependence on the foreign visitors. Perhaps none of the alterations in the daily patterns troubled them as much as they did me. Characteristically, the Utku kept well under control whatever negative feelings they may have had. Gratitude was the feeling they expressed openly. Every week

they thanked God in their prayers for the help the kaplunas were giving them with food, clothing, and equipment, and, indeed, the kaplunas were incredibly generous with their supplies; the leader of one party even brought boxes of discarded wool clothing to distribute among the Eskimos. I chafed against our enforced dependence on the kaplunas, against the loss of our patau, and perhaps most of all against the restrictions imposed on our visits to the kapluna camp, starved as I was for the sound of English and the taste of American food. From my point of view, it was most painful when we had one canoe. When we had none at all, no one went to visit except when the kaplunas fetched us, but when we had one, the men went, frequently and at length, leaving the women and children at home. When they returned, after hours of visiting, their pockets were filled with candy and gum for the children, and they regaled us with detailed accounts of all the good things they had eaten in the kapluna camp: canned pears, and steak, and potatoes, and oranges. Oranges! I would have sold my soul for an orange. Inwardly frantic with frustration and envy, I tried to conceal my feelings and to reason with myself: I was being treated the way the Eskimo women were treated; but the feelings remained and may have caused me to read more covert resentment into the Utkus' own behavior than was actually there.

Nevertheless, a change was clearly evident in the atmosphere of the Utku camp during the period of the kaplunas' sojourn, a change that indicated to me that feelings other than gratitude toward the kaplunas lay under the surface. Though I have no way of knowing whether the Utkus' feelings coincided in detail with mine, there was evidence that the loan of the canoes was to them, as it was to me, a source of strain.

The Utku were as fascinated with the kaplunas as I was. As they sat about on the gravel beach, filing bits of antler and soapstone into pipestems and knives for trade, they watched the kaplunas trolling up and down the river in their borrowed canoes and laughed at the odd cant of the boats, weighted down by the outboard motors that the kaplunas had attached. "It would be nice to have a kika (an outboard)," Inuttiaq joked; "paddling is no fun *(hujuujaq)*." The others laughed. Talk was all of the strangers, their personal and collective peculiarities: this one has a big nose; that one is frightening *(kappia, iqhi)*, he doesn't smile, just stares; they are all disgustingly furry (that is, hairy); they drink liquor, and that is frightening *(kappia, iqhi)*, too; they never eat fish, just catch them and throw them back or give them away. Most of all, talk centered on the bounties that the kaplunas would probably leave for the Eskimos when they departed, as they had done last year. And when the kaplunas disappeared at noon and in the evening into the cove where they were camped and their motors were silenced, the Utkus' thoughts followed them. "I wonder what they are eating?" someone would muse with a little laugh.

Given such absorption in the fishermen and their activities, it would have been strange had the Utku not felt regret at being unable to visit them at will. The year before, when the Utku were camped on the other side of the Rapids, when no water separated them from the kapluna campsite, they had spent many hours standing in a silent cluster on the slope just above the kapluna camp, watching the comings and goings below them, and accepting the food and tobacco they were offered.

There were several signs that something was, indeed, amiss in the Utku camp. For one thing, people were afflicted with a most unusual lethargy. They yawned, complaining of sleepiness in midday, something I had never seen at any other season. Inuttiaq and Allaq once fell sound asleep at noon. I remembered that lethargy one autumn day after the kaplunas had gone, when Amaaqtuq was describing to me how one could recognize that a person was upset *(huqu)*. "He will sleep long hours during the summertime when people usually stay up late," she said, "and he'll sit idle instead of working."

Another puzzling phenomenon was the waste of the salmon trout that the kaplunas gave us. The fish were larger and fatter and more numerous than those we caught ourselves. In every obvious way they were desirable, and yet the Utku, who had accepted with such alacrity when the kaplunas offered us their catch, let the fish lie until they rotted on the beach where the kaplunas threw them; then they gave them to the dogs. Before the arrival of the kaplunas, the women had spent hours every day filleting the catches of their men and hanging them to dry in the sun. The dogs had been fed only the bones and heads. The kap-

lunas, good conservationists all, remarked on the cavalier way in which the Utku treated their gifts of fish, whereupon, wanting to justify to the kaplunas the apparently reprehensible behavior of the Eskimos, I tried to inquire into the latters' reasons for neglecting the fish. I was not satisfied with the replies I received. "The women feel too lazy to cut them up," said Inuttiaq. "Not at all," replied Allaq, "the fish are unpleasantly soft from having lain too long in the sun." The truth was, however, that even when the fishermen brought us fish caught only moments before, as they sometimes did after I had informed them of the Eskimos' dislike of sun-softened fish, the Utku still let most of them lie.

To be sure, neither the Utkus' lethargy nor their neglect of the kaplunas' fish was clearly attributable to the absence of the canoes. It was, characteristically, Inuttiaq who gave me the clearest evidence that the thoughts of the Utku did dwell on their canoes. One morning, two days after the kaplunas had borrowed both canoes, he asked me: "Are the kaplunas leaving tomorrow?" When I replied that those who had his canoe would be gone in two more days, he said with feeling: "That makes one grateful *(hatuq)*." The following day, he inquired again whether the kaplunas who had his boat would be leaving the next day, and when I assured him that they would, he went so far as to tell the guide of that party, through me, that "tomorrow" he would want his boat to fish in.

Curiously, though other Utku men, too, occasionally remarked as they sat stranded on the beach: "One feels like going fishing," or "One feels like eating fresh fish," nevertheless when the departing kaplunas returned the two canoes, nobody went fishing. The remaining kaplunas, covetously eyeing the beached canoes, commented on this inconsistency, too, and again I felt it incumbent on me to explain the Eskimos to the kaplunas. But when I tried, cautiously, to sound the Utkus' reasons for not fishing, telling them, truthfully, that the kaplunas had inquired, Pala replied: "When the kaplunas leave, we'll go fishing again"; and indeed, the day the last plane disappeared, the men sat and fished from their canoes all day in midriver. Not only that, they also set the nets for the first time since spring. What they did use the canoes for, as soon as they became available, was to

cross the river to visit the kapluna camp, frequently and at length.

The strength of Inuttiaq's desire to retain his canoe, for whatever reason, appeared a few days after the first group had returned it. We were expecting another group of fishermen to arrive as soon as the clouds lifted. Knowing this, and knowing that Inuttiaq had been restless without his canoe, I tried to assure him that the kaplunas would not take it amiss if he refused to lend it again. If he wished, I said, I would tell them; and I warned him that if they used the boat when they were drunk, they might break it. Inuttiaq responded strongly. "I don't want to lend my canoe," he said. "I want to fish in it. If those kaplunas ask to borrow my canoe tell them they can't. The kapluna leader gave us those canoes because he cares for *(naklik)* us. It's Eskimos he cares for, not kaplunas, because we live under more difficult conditions *(ayuq)*, and he said that if any harm came to those canoes, the people who damaged them would be stabbed with something metal—I forget exactly what—something metal, yes? It will hurt." He made a stabbing gesture in the air and turned to Allaq for confirmation, which she silently gave. Little did I suspect how much trouble my literal interpretation of Inuttiaq's instruction that day was to cause me.

The fishermen arrived in due course, and shortly thereafter they came for a canoe. Trouble began almost at once, but I was not aware of it. The Utku did not lend their best canoe, Inuttiaq's; they lent Pala's, which was slightly leaky; but even so, I was annoyed at their compliance. I wished they had refused to lend either and, in my irritation, when the kapluna guide asked me for assurance that the Eskimos would really use the fish he offered as rental payment for the canoe, I replied that the Eskimos had not used the kapluna fish before when they were given, and probably would not do so now. Pala's fourteen-year-old son, Ukpik, freshly arrived in camp after a winter at school in Inuvik, listened, expressionless, to my remarks.

The rest of the day passed uneventfully. As usual when they had the use of a canoe, the men spent a large part of their time at the kapluna camp, but they returned with less booty than sometimes; this trip leader did not believe in "spoiling the natives." Next morning early, I woke to hear the sound of an out-

board approaching, and kapluna voices down at the shore. Anxious not to lose an opportunity to use my native tongue, I dressed and joined the men, Eskimo and white, who clustered at the edge of the beach. Inuttiaq and Pala approached me as I went toward the group. "The kaplunas are going to borrow the other canoe," they told me. "They say they will return it when they are through with it."

The kapluna trip leader corroborated what Pala had said. "That first canoe is no good," he said; "it has a hole in it, so we have to borrow this other one." There was, indeed, a sizeable rent in the canvas, which had certainly not been there when we loaned it and which made the canoe unusable. The two men who had come with the guide were already attaching the outboard to Inuttiaq's canoe, as Inuttiaq and the other Utku men watched.

I exploded. Unsmilingly and in a cold voice I told the kapluna leader a variety of things that I thought he should know: that if he borrowed the second canoe we would be without a fishing boat, that if this boat also was damaged we would be in a very difficult position, since a previous guide had forgotten to bring on his return trip the repair materials that Inuttiaq had traded for, and that we would be unable to buy materials ourselves until the strait froze in November. I also pointed out the island where our supplies of tea, sugar, and kerosene were cached and mentioned our inability to reach it except by canoe. Then, armed with my memory of Inuttiaq's earlier instructions, I told the guide that the owner of that second canoe did not wish to lend it.

The guide was not unreasonable; he agreed at once that if the owner did not wish to lend his canoe, that was his option: "It's his canoe, after all." Slightly soothed, I turned to Inuttiaq, who stood nearby, expressionless like the other Utku. "Do you want me to tell him you don't want to lend your canoe?" I asked in Eskimo. "He will not borrow it if you say no."

Inuttiaq's expression dismayed me, but I did not know how to read it; I knew only that it registered strong feeling, as did his voice, which was unusually loud: "Let him have his will!"

I hoped my voice was calm when I replied to Inuttiaq: "As you like," but I was filled with fury at kapluna and Inuttiaq alike, as well as at myself for having undertaken the futile role

of mediator, and my tone was icy when I said to the guide: "He says you can have it." Turning abruptly, I strode back to my tent, went to bed, and wept in silence.

V. Persona Non Grata: Ostracism

That incident, bringing to a head, as it did, months of uneasiness concerning my volatility, marked the beginning of a new phase in my relationship with the Utku. Some days passed, however, before I became aware that I was ostracized. My work seemed somehow more difficult than usual, I felt tired and depressed; "bushed," perhaps, I thought, in need of a vacation. There was certainly reason enough why I should be tired; the strain of the summer, the long isolation without mail, and the frustrations engendered by the presence of unlikeable kapluna men, my impossible role as mediator—all had taken their toll. Now that the men were gone, I spent a great deal of time alone in my tent, typing notes, writing letters, and trying to analyze my linguistic data. I felt little desire for company and was grateful when the smiling faces that appeared from time to time between the flaps of my tent entrance withdrew again without entering. I noticed nothing unusual in the behavior of anyone toward me.

Realization came suddenly and from an unexpected source. Autumn was upon us. The kaplunas, fearing to be weathered in for the winter, had departed precipitously in a sudden snow squall the day after my outburst—an unfortunate coincidence, I am afraid—and the able-bodied members of our camp, released from their fascinated vigil around the kapluna camp, had gone off to hunt caribou, leaving, as usual, only the infirm, the immature, and the school children behind in camp. Pala, his daughter Amaaqtuq, and I were the only adults who remained. Knowing that the school plane was expected imminently, I wrote letter after letter to send out. There might be no opportunity to send out mail again until November.

Pala also wrote a letter to be sent—to Nakliguhuktuq—and, smiling warmly, he gave it to me to keep until the plane should come: "So I won't forget to send it," he said. The letter was in syllabics, of course, and, moved by I know not what amoral spirit, I decided to read it—to test my skill in reading Eskimo. It had

been written ten days earlier, the day the kaplunas left. It began, more or less as I had expected, by describing the bounty of the kaplunas and how much they had helped the Eskimos. Then it continued in a vein that I had not anticipated: "Yiini is a liar. She lied to the kaplunas. She gets angry *(ningaq)* very easily. She ought not to be here studying Eskimos. She is very annoying *(urulu)*, because she scolds *(huaq)* and one is tempted to scold her. She gets angry easily. Because she is so annoying, we wish more and more that she would leave."

I pored over the crudely formed syllables for some time, unwilling to believe that I was reading them correctly. Perhaps I was inserting the wrong consonants at the ends of the syllables; the script does not provide them. But I was not. There was only one way to read the characters. So there was a reason why my work was going poorly! And my depression was not all due to the fatiguing summer. What shocked me most was that, in thinking back over the ten days since I had spoken to the kapluna guide, I could recall no change in the habitually warm, friendly, considerate behavior of the Utku. Though I had had few visitors, I had attributed that fact to my obvious preoccupation with typing; I had assumed that it was I who was withdrawing from the Eskimos, not they from me. Whenever I joined the group sitting on the beach in front of the tents, I was welcomed with smiles, as always, and every morning when tea was brewed for the camp, the kettle was brought to my tent so that I might share. Indeed, care was always taken to provide me with two cups, a matter that required special attention, since I drank much more slowly than other people. Generosity was shown me in other ways, too. When the kaplunas departed, leaving behind them a boatload of food for the Eskimos, Inuttiaq had taken it upon himself to distribute it among the households. There were tea bags, potatoes, onions, powdered milk . . . Pala's household acquired a thirty-pound tub of jam. To me, Inuttiaq gave one of two large roast turkeys and ten boxes (a disproportionate share) of lard. When I protested at the latter gift, saying that I still had some lard in my cache on the island, Inuttiaq insisted that I take it: "Because you help people so much."

I think now that Inuttiaq's gifts were probably telling me that in addition to my other defects I was considered stingy, but at the time that explanation did not occur to me, and I could not reconcile his generosity and the considerate behavior of the other Utku with Pala's letter.[3] Perhaps, I thought, the letter had been written in umbrage, which the passage of time had soothed. Or perhaps it was only Pala who felt so hostile toward me. Unfortunately for such consoling hypotheses, a day or two after I had read Pala's letter, Amaaqtuq paid one of her rare visits to my tent. Asking if she might have a piece of paper and a pencil, she wrote a letter to Ikayuqtuq, and delivered it into my keeping until the plane should come. With no moral qualms at all this time, I read it, praying that her sentiments were friendlier than her father's; certainly her smile had been of the warmest and her manner as a visitor had been most appreciative. But her letter matched Pala's, word for word, only elaborating somewhat on my obnoxious characteristics and on the gentle virtue of the Utku in dealing with me. She told Ikayuqtuq again, as she had the previous January, that I became angry *(qiquq)* every time I failed to understand something, in spite of the fact that linguistic difficulties were unavoidable *(ayuq)*. "Because she is the only kapluna here and a woman as well, we have tried to be good *(pittiaq)* to her, but even though we try to help her she gets angry *(qiquq)* very easily without cause. It's sometimes very annoying *(urulu)* and makes one lose patience . . . She keeps doing what she shouldn't, even when she's told not to." As Pala

3. I have suggested elsewhere in this chapter that Utku may sometimes use obligingness and generosity to shame a person into better behavior, or perhaps just to express hostility in an inverted way—to say, in effect: "I am a better person than you are." Strategies of this kind have been noted by other observers of Eskimos, too; it is not unusual to find a social offender treated with exaggerated consideration and concern. Freuchen (1961:155–160) illustrates this in a delightful story about his Greenlandic Eskimo wife, Navarana. Navarana, outraged by the smallness of a gift of meat she had received, responded with exaggerated gratitude. She loaded down the unhappy donor with all of the rarest kapluna foodstuffs in her own larder, and sent her away wailing with shame. Conversations with Jonathan Jenness (1966) concerning Alaskan Eskimos from the Bethel area, and with Milton Freeman (1967) concerning the Canadian community of Grise Fiord also support the observation. With regard to both Grise Fiord and James Bay Eskimos, Milton Freeman mentioned the reverse kind of inversion, as well: if A is scolding B, and C feels sympathetic with the victim, B, he (C) will appear to take A's side and scold B even harder than A does. This indicates to B and to the rest of the world that C is really on his side. However, I did not notice this kind of behavior among the Utku, perhaps because scolding so rarely occurred.

had done, Amaaqtuq accused me of lying (I assumed this was a reference to my telling the kaplunas that the Utku were wasting the fish the kaplunas gave them, and I found later that I was right) and she said that people wished increasingly that I would go home. The letter ended, however, on a more cheering note: "Now she's becoming very nice *(pittau)*, thank goodness *(quya)*. Sometimes she's pleasant *(quvia)* and amusing *(tiphi)*. She has been kind *(quya)* tonight during my visit."

Pala was not alone, then, in his condemnation of my behavior, and the disapproval was not an ephemeral thing; people still wanted me to go home. On the other hand, that last sentence gave me hope. Perhaps if I exerted all my will to maintain a semblance of the equanimity I could not feel, there was a possibility that the situation might be repaired. I began to watch more closely the way Pala and Amaaqtuq treated me, trying to discover signs, however minute, that would tell me how I was regarded. And I did see things that had escaped me before. Not only was I visited very seldom and very briefly (now I put a new construction on this fact); I was also, in subtle ways, encouraged to stay in my tent. By faithfully bringing me tea every time it was brewed, Pala and Amaaqtuq forestalled my coming to drink it with them outdoors or in their tent, and they did not invite me to join them as they used to do. When I did visit in Pala's tent, I perceived no difference in the welcoming warmth of my hosts, but now and then I thought a smile seemed slightly dimmer than usual; and when I asked questions, as I often did on various subjects, the answers, though rendered smilingly, were usually brief or evasive. More often than formerly, the answers seemed to be "unknown," and I later discovered that Pala had lied to me during this period, "because," as Inuttiaq told me, "he didn't want to talk to you."

I did my utmost to appear unperturbed, to appear not to notice. And so covert were these small withdrawals that at times I succeeded in persuading myself that they existed only in my depressed imagination. The illusion that all was well, however, never lasted for long. I felt myself in limbo, and I fumbled for a way to break out. I wanted to confront my punishers with my knowledge of their feelings toward me, and to explain why I had acted as I had toward the kaplunas, but I feared I would

only shock them the more by my directness. I considered the advisability of leaving on the school plane when it came; it was expected any day. I had not intended to leave for several more months, but since my work had come to a standstill anyway, perhaps there was no use in staying on. There were other inner voices, however, which told me to stay. I feared I had not gathered adequate data for the dissertation that was supposed to result from this field trip; and I did not wish to admit defeat before those who had said at the outset that Chantrey Inlet was too difficult a place for a white woman to live.

I buoyed myself stubbornly with the last sentence of Amaaqtuq's letter, and I thought I did see signs that disapproval might evaporate if my behavior warranted it. The isolation in which I found myself was not wholly consistent. After several days during which only smiles and tea had passed between me and the Eskimos, suddenly, for no apparent reason, an overture would be made: Amaaqtuq would bring her sewing to my tent and sit with me while I worked; Pala would respond in detail to one of my questions or would call me to tea in his tent. Relief and joy would dissolve the oppression and convince me that I had done right to decide to stay. Unfortunately, however, such moments of joy were rare. I was unable to maintain the flawless equanimity that the situation seemed to demand. As Amaaqtuq quite justly observed, I was upset when I did not understand, and if I showed so much as a glimmer of discomposure, if I said, "Too bad!" with feeling, instead of laughing, when she confessed to being confused by my speech, it was enough to drive her away immediately, pleading, with a warm smile, that she was sleepy or needed to urinate.

Such incidents occurred all too frequently, and each time I sank back into gloom. As I tried in self-protection to maintain a clinical distance from my difficulty, it struck me that my gloom itself aggravated the situation. It seemed to me that at times Pala and Amaaqtuq withdrew less from my irritability than from the depression that instantly resulted when I became aware of my lapse. One such incident occurred when the school plane came at the end of August without the autumn supplies of food and fuel that I had expected, and worse, without the mail that I had hoped for. There was still a possibility that the Catholic

missionaries in Gjoa Haven would send their fishing boat down to Chantrey Inlet, as they sometimes did in September, in which case supplies might yet come; but the chance was remote, and if the boat did not come, there would be no outside contact until the end of November. My disappointment was intense, and my control, I congratulated myself, was herculean; but again it was not perfect. I joked with the pilot in a tone so aggressive that, hearing myself, I was sure the listening Eskimos, attuned to the tone but not to the words, could not help but hear the anger while the attempt at humor must escape them. Again, I felt, I had failed, I had alienated people, and before Pala and Amaaqtuq had a chance to show their displeasure, I walked away from them. When I withdrew, so did they, and so a vicious circle was created. I reproached myself for being unable to reassure people with a show of warmth, but I felt none. Both the Eskimos and I became increasingly sensitive to my acts. I grew more and more discouraged; the others grew more and more intolerant.

Matters did not improve when the caribou hunters and their families returned to camp. Inuttiaq and Ipuituq and the members of their households seemed to feel just as strongly as did the members of Pala's household that my behavior was reprehensible. They wrote no letters to Gjoa Haven—they could not; the plane had come and gone—but in all the same hardly perceptible ways they isolated me. Indeed, I felt more isolated than I had been before they returned, since now the group whose periphery I circled was so much larger.

The only people who treated me with favor at any time during this period were Nilak, his wife, and his daughter. All summer while we were camped together at the Rapids they had courted me more than they had done at any time since my arrival at Back River a year earlier, but toward the end of the summer this behavior was intensified. They brought me offerings of tea, bannock, and fish, and even asked if I would like to come to their tent to eat, rather than being served in my tent. Niqi invited me to go with her and Tiguaq to gather plants for fuel, and Nilak offered me tidbits of information on the private life of Qavvik.

My reactions to this attention were mixed. To Tiguaq, who continued patiently to help me with my linguistic work, I was

grateful, but I suspected her parents of their usual ulterior motives: a desire for material gain. They seemed, in my jaundiced view, to be pressing the advantage that my social isolation gave them to ingratiate themselves with me. After the departure of the kaplunas, who had replenished in some small degree our supplies of tea, sugar, and bannock ingredients, these goods dwindled rapidly, until by early September there was almost nothing left. Nilak's goods diminished even faster than those of the other households, because both Inuttiaq, as an assertive trader, and I, as a kapluna, had received more than he had in the first place. As autumn wore on, therefore, Niqi more and more frequently came with a cup and a hesitant smile to ask for a "tiny bit" of my last bag of tea or sugar, or to offer me bone toys, which I valued less than food, in exchange for one of my last few boxes of rice. Nilak and Niqi must, justifiably, have felt they had earned these bits of food by treating me kindly. Nonetheless, I begrudged them; at this point whatever remnants of cheer I felt were contained in those grains of sugar, rice, and tea.

I resisted the kindness of Nilak and his wife for another reason, too. I sensed in it a recognition, perhaps shared by both Pala's faction and Nilak's, that now I was aligned with Nilak's family as a pariah among pariahs. Perhaps that feeling was a figment of my depressed imagination; perhaps not; I do not know. In any case, I began to notice parallels between the way in which Pala's people treated Niqi and the way they treated me. Her isolation was similar in quality to mine and, paradoxically, the more akin to her I felt, the more need I felt to dissociate myself from her.

VI. A Vicious Circle: Depression and Hostility

I am not sure whether the silence that surrounded me gradually increased in intensity as the autumn advanced, or whether the new manifestations of hostility that developed were simply a result of qaqmaq living. In any case, it was in October, after the qaqmaqs were built, that I became most sensible of my isolation. I was not at all sure that Inuttiaq would invite me to move into his qaqmaq again, as I had done the year before. I

was not even told that the dwellings were under construction on a point of land out of sight a quarter of a mile from the summer camp. It was Niqi who informed me, when I asked why the tent camp was empty that day. So the relief I felt was the more grateful when, after the dwellings had been built, Allaq came and told me to pack my belongings so that she could help me move—into their qaqmaq.

The difference in my situation from that of the previous year, however, was quickly apparent. Indeed, it was partly the contrast with the previous year that made my isolation so striking. The year before, Inuttiaq's qaqmaq had been the social center of the camp, always filled with family and visitors. Enclosed in protective warmth, I had suffered only when people impinged on me too much: when Inuttiaq told me to make tea or to give Itqiliq some tobacco, or when the laughing conversation had gone on, uninterrupted, for too many hours. This year, Pala's qaqmaq was the social center. Inuttiaq, Allaq, and the children, too, spent the better part of every day at Pala's. Even Nilak and Niqi stopped courting me and spent their time either at home or at Pala's. Too conscious of the meaning of this change to enjoy visiting, myself, I sat at home most of the time in our empty qaqmaq, took detailed notes on the way my camp fellows and I handled our hostility, wrote virulent twenty-page letters which could not be mailed until November, and read Jane Austen. And when the other members of the camp were served their daily patau in Pala's qaqmaq, I brought mine home to eat, because there never seemed to be a corner for me to sit in, in the other qaqmaq. On better days, the two little girls Raigili and Akla, and the two older ones Amaaqtuq and Tiguaq, ate in our qaqmaq, too, since Pala's really was crowded, but they sat in a huddle over their tray in the middle of the ikliq, giggling with each other, and I was not included in the conversation. On particularly bad days, they did not come at all but preferred to squeeze into Pala's qaqmaq. It was at this season that Niqi, popping in on one of her flighty visits, remarked that our qaqmaq was even colder and emptier than theirs.

Even in the early mornings when the family woke and at night when we were preparing for bed, I was isolated. It was as though I were not there. If I made a remark to Inuttiaq or Allaq, the person addressed responded with his usual smile, but I, like Niqi, had to initiate almost all communication. As a rule, if I did not speak, no one spoke to me. If I offered to fetch water or make tea (which I seldom did), my offer was usually accepted, but no one ever asked me to perform these services. I did not realize how pointed this avoidance was until one day when we were cooking something. I do not recall what was being made or who had initiated the cooking; I think it likely that I had done so, since the primus stood on the floor in front of me, instead of in its usual place near Allaq. Nevertheless, when the pressure began to run down, unnoticed by me, Inuttiaq turned not to me but to Allaq: "Pump up the primus." And she had to get up and come over to my side of the qaqmaq to pump up the primus. Had he spoken to me, I would only have had to lean over to do it.

Inuttiaq did not consult me when he was hungry for kapluna food, either, as he had done the previous year. My supplies were almost gone, but I still had a bag of oatmeal, two or three boxes of rice, some raisins, and a little powdered chocolate, which we drank thin and sugarless (a tablespoonful dissolved in twenty cups of hot water). Instead of asking me, as he had before, "Shall we make rice?" he said to Allaq, "Make rice!" And she obeyed with alacrity, as I sat silent in my corner.

Too late I realized the dignity inherent in the Utku pattern of authority, in which the woman is obedient to the man. I envied Allaq the satisfaction of knowing that she was appreciated because she did well and docilely what Inuttiaq told her to do. And sealed off, as I felt, from the life of the camp, watching it around me as if through glass, I realized, too, with a force I had never felt before, how vitally necessary society is to men. If I could have gained acceptance then by abandoning my own ways and transforming myself, emotionally, intellectually, and physically into an Utku, I would have done so. But I still had objectivity enough to know that the idea of "going native" was ludicrous, that such a metamorphosis was impossible; after all, it was my inability to be Utku in important ways that had created my difficulties in the first place.

Invisible as I felt in the qaqmaq, the other occupants gave evidence that they found my presence, however walled off by their silence and mine, extremely irritating. One day about a

week after we had moved into qaqmaqs, Inuttiaq even suggested that when we moved into iglus later on I should be physically walled off, to a degree. Often when Utku build their permanent winter iglus they attach to one side a small chamber called a *hiqluaq* in which to store the fish they net. The hiqluaq opens into the interior of the iglu by way of a hole just big enough to crawl through. Inuttiaq's idea was to build such a hiqluaq for me to live in; after I left, he would use it in the orthodox manner, for fish storage.

To be sure, it was not always my mere presence that was irritating. No matter how hard I tried to prevent it, every now and then, small hostile acts slipped past the barriers I set against them. Such an incident occurred one day when Saarak was crying for raisins. Instead of handing the box to Inuttiaq, who was sitting beside me, so that he might pass it to Allaq on his far side, I tossed it, in an ungracious spirit, directly to Allaq. Allaq took a cupful of raisins and tossed the box back to my side of the ikliq. Inuttiaq had given no sign of noticing my gesture, but when the box landed beside me again, to my immense surprise, he asked loudly and with distinct annoyance: "Was that tossed?" Allaq admitted that it had been. "Like a kapluna in the house!" said Inuttiaq in the same loud tone. I had never heard him raise his voice to Allaq before, and I never heard him do so again. I could count on one hand the times I had heard him speak with such undisguised annoyance to any human being; he had done so once to me during the midwinter upheavals, and once to Kamik, after having endured in silence all summer long the torments she inflicted on her sister Saarak. He must have been hard pressed to have scolded Allaq then.

Another of the incidents that awakened me to the intensity of the irritation I aroused also involved raisins. On this occasion I actually knocked Saarak's head with the box, which I held in my hand. I had intended only to call her attention to the raisins she was screaming for, since she was so absorbed in tearing Amaaqtuq's cloth parka with her teeth that she had ignored several verbal offers, but, tired and impatient, I hit her too hard, and she wept. Up to that moment, the day had been an unusually cheering one. Allaq had offered to mend my boots, and both Amaaqtuq and Tiguaq, to my astonishment, had stayed to visit

with me, following the afternoon patau. Now, when Saarak burst into tears at my impulsive gesture, depression washed over me again. Tiguaq, Amaaqtuq, and Allaq all soothed her tenderly. I should have soothed her, too, but instead, my voice cold with discouragement at my impulsiveness, I said: "You're not hurt; have some raisins." Allaq silently took some raisins and handed the box back to me with a smile. Tiguaq very shortly excused herself and went home, and neither Allaq nor Amaaqtuq looked at me or spoke to me for the rest of the evening. Instead, they brought out some religious comic books and pored over them together, while Amaaqtuq, in pious tones, described the scenes portrayed and discoursed on moral subjects. "Niqi gets angry *(urulu)* easily," she observed. "She doesn't listen to what the missionaries tell us: that we should love *(naklik)* others." And she coached Saarak in the Lord's Prayer.

In spite of all these tensions I was still treated with the most impeccable semblance of solicitude. I was amazed that it should be so—that although my company was anathema, nevertheless people still took care to give me plentiful amounts of the foods I liked best, to warn me away from thin ice, and to caution me when my nose began to freeze. Allaq one day made explicit the ethos of concern. Our tea was all gone, and so was our cocoa; we were drinking infusions of dead weeds, which we scraped with ulus from under the shallow snow and boiled in the teakettle. Bilberry bushes were my favorite; their essence tasted a little like an exotic Chinese tea; other plants tasted more like clean earth, but the brew was hot, and not unenjoyable. I had asked Allaq whether in the old days, before the Utku had access to commercial tea, they had brewed teas from these plants, as they did now. "Very little," she said; "only once in a while. The only reason we do it every day now is that you are here; we do it for you." That was not strictly true, of course; the other households also brewed such teas every day for their own consumption. But the factual falsity of her statement made its message all the more forceful: the Utku saw themselves, and wanted me to see them, as virtuously solicitous, no matter what provocations I might give them to be otherwise.

Nevertheless, the tensions could not help but poison even the most courteous gestures. I wanted to go ice fishing, as I had done

the previous year with Inuttiaq. The solitude of the open river refreshed and soothed me after the very different solitude of the qaqmaq. Jogging from foot to foot for warmth in rhythm with the rise and fall of the jig in my hand, I rested my eyes on the snowy hills and my thoughts on the kapluna world to which I would be returning soon—as soon as the strait froze, I promised myself. Last year Inuttiaq had seemed to acquiesce willingly in my desire to fish. He had located and cut my fishing holes and adjusted my line with as much care as he did his own, and when I had caught a fish, as I frequently did, his smile had been pleased and his words approving: "You fish well." I had wanted to learn to cut my own fishing holes, but so willing had Inuttiaq been to do the job for me that I had been embarrassed to persist stubbornly and ineptly while he stood silently by, offering now and then to help; so I had never learned.

This year Inuttiaq was not pleased to have me accompany him on his fishing trips. Sometimes, if I asked to come, he would assent, but the gesture was empty. Instead of selecting a virgin fishing spot for me and cutting a fresh hole through the whole thickness of the ice, he reopened a hole that somebody had used the day before. It was easier, there was less ice to cut through, but it was also, in his view, well-nigh useless. In Utku belief, fish do not readily come to the same hole twice. Similarly, instead of supplying me with a fresh sliver of whitefish tail, such as he himself used for bait, he might, on occasion, hand me a piece that had been cut the day before and was therefore less efficacious. Possibly he knew that I was unlikely to catch anything, anyway, since the sinew fishline that Allaq had braided for me at my request was too short for use in many of the usual fishing spots. When Allaq had handed the half-made line to Inuttiaq to measure in arm-lengths, as he measured his own, he had judged it completed, though it measured only five arm spans, as compared with the seven that he required for his own line. On the other hand, he may have forgotten the length of my line. He certainly had forgotten it by midwinter, by which time the unpleasantness of the autumn was past. Concealing in a joke his wish to have my line, he suggested that he might steal it when I left, as I was about to do. Half-jokingly, too, I reminded him that it was only five arms long. Inuttiaq looked at

me with surprise, denied it, measured the line to check my assertion, and laughed in acknowledgment.

In any case, that October I was convinced that Inuttiaq had not the slightest interest in my catching a fish, that he took me along only because it was difficult to refuse my direct request. When he planned distant trips he did refuse to take me. "I am going overland today," he would say; "you will hurt yourself on the sharp rocks when the sled hits them." And he arranged for Niqi, the other pariah, to take me with her when she went to fish near camp.

One incident I find hard to explain, however. I feel in it a more genuine solicitude than I felt in many of the other formal gestures of concern that were my lot that autumn. Yet, since the incident was never mentioned in my presence and explanations were never given, I will never know. The morning was unusually windy, even for October. The ice was black glass, and snow snaked, hissing, over its surface. Inuttiaq, Allaq, and I had been fishing together at the edge of the rapids, close to camp. The rapids were never solidly frozen at any season, and this early in the autumn there was still a large expanse of open water in the vicinity of our fishing holes. The water was so close to us, in fact, that had I been alone I should never have trusted the ice. As it was, I relied on my companions' judgment and paid no attention. After an hour or two I was roused from my daydream by Inuttiaq's voice: "Yiini! You're going to get wet!" Sure enough, the wind, stronger all the time, was blowing a rapid stream of water directly toward us. In another minute it would reach my feet. Inuttiaq and Allaq had already wound up their fishlines and were picking up their tools in preparation for moving to another, safer fishing spot, farther from the rapids. I wound up my own line in haste and started after them; they were already some distance away, walking with the swift, shuffling slide with which Utku make their way across the bare autumn ice. I, too, had learned never to raise my feet from the ice as I walked, and ordinarily I managed quite well to keep up with my Utku companions. Today, however, the fates were against me. Perhaps the wind was unusually strong, or perhaps I was unusually tired; my depression did consume considerable energy. In any case, Inuttiaq and Allaq, shuffling along with

no apparent difficulty, were growing smaller and smaller in the distance, while I was blown three feet off course for every few steps I took forward.

I had struggled in this way for perhaps a quarter of a mile; camp was just opposite me to the right, and Inuttiaq and Allaq were, I judged, another quarter of a mile ahead of me, still moving. Suddenly, something in me gave up. I had no will to struggle further. Dropping to my knees and lowering my head to the ice, I crawled toward home, seething with humiliation and rage but totally unable to stand up. Shielded by the parka hood that fell over my face, I wept at my ignominy. After I had gone some distance, I looked up to gauge my direction. The camp was straight ahead, several hundred yards away, and in front of Pala's qaqmaq stood every member of the community who was at home that morning. My face, my whole body, burned, in spite of the freezing wind. I dropped my head again and stubbornly pursued my four-legged way toward the watching group. When I looked up again in a few minutes, not a soul was visible. Only the dogs lay curled asleep on their chains.

I went straight to our empty qaqmaq and busied myself with irrelevant domesticities. I was fastening a long-damp washcloth to the outside of the qaqmaq roof, hoping that the wind would finally dry it, when the door of Pala's qaqmaq creaked and Allaq emerged. But how did she get there! She had been following Inuttiaq to a new fishing spot far down the river when last I had seen her. She looked at me—questioningly, I thought —as she approached, but did not mention what she had seen. I laughed, hoping the laugh did not sound as forced as it felt. "I almost got blown away." Allaq laughed, too, then, and replied: "The wind makes one feel like blowing away." I asked how it was that she was not out fishing with Inuttiaq. "He sent me home to make bannock," she said. "Too bad *(hujuujaq)* I couldn't keep on fishing." I wondered. Had Inuttiaq really been struck by a sudden craving for bannock? Or was he responding to my mishap in the way he knew best?

Unfortunately, I forced myself to laugh all too seldom. The vicious circle that I thought I perceived in September remained unbroken throughout October and into November. Looking back at my notes for that period, I am impressed not only by the

careful way in which the Utku preserved the face of our relationship but also by their occasional tentative attempts to approach me. Some of these overtures I saw at the time, as I have said, and they gave me hope. Others I failed to see, and I fear that my blindness was mistaken for conscious rejection. Inuttiaq, within a few days of our moving into the qaqmaq, gave me two such opportunities to participate in family life, and I was oblivious to both of them until too late. In the first instance, he hummed quietly, as if to himself, a tune that in other days I had often played on the recorder. Inuttiaq had loved to have me play the recorder, and this tune, "The Tavern in the Town," had been one of his favorites. I paid no attention to his invitation. He never hummed recorder tunes again. On the second occasion his overture consisted in saying the Lord's Prayer exceptionally slowly one evening. The family often repeated it at bedtime, but usually Inuttiaq led it at top speed, mumbling the words under his breath so that they were doubly incomprehensible. This time every word was distinct. It was the first time Inuttiaq had conducted bedtime prayers since we had moved into the qaqmaq. Five months had passed since I had last heard him; consequently the unusual quality of his enunciation failed to register until he had reached the last sentence. I resolved that on the next evening I would join in. But next evening, and on all succeeding evenings, he recited the prayer in his usual rapid mumble.

VII. Reconciliation

October dragged into November, bringing no change in my situation. The men were waiting for the strait to freeze so that they could go to replenish our long-exhausted supplies of tea, flour, and tobacco. I waited for mail: mail from home, and perhaps even more important, mail from Gjoa Haven. After reading the letters written by Pala and Amaaqtuq to Nakliguhuktuq and Ikayuqtuq in August, I had written to Ikayuqtuq, myself. Though I did not confess the source of my information, I told her that I was afraid she would hear unpleasant reports of me from the Utku, and that I wanted her to know my version of the story. I told her, in brief, that my attempts to protect the Utku from

the inroads of insensitive kaplunas had, I thought, been misinterpreted by the Eskimos, and that the latter were unhappy to have me stay longer with them. I said I hoped that she, knowing the ways of kaplunas better than the Utku did, would be able to explain my irascible behavior to them. There had been no reply from Ikayuqtuq; the Catholic boat had failed to appear in Chantrey Inlet in September, just as I had feared. Now, however, finally, there would be word from Gjoa Haven, and I had confidence that Ikayuqtuq and Nakliguhuktuq, already so understanding, would help me again.

There was another reason, too, why I waited impatiently for the strait to freeze. Buoyed as I was by the hope of Ikayuqtuq's intervention, I had nevertheless decided that as soon as a plane could reach us I would leave. I had planned to stay until January or March, but the exhaustion that had grown in me as a result of the autumn's events made me fear for the winter, the more so as the strain was beginning to take physical toll. And my resolve to leave had been strengthened by the cheerfulness of Inuttiaq's acquiescence. I had therefore written a letter to send out with the men to the priest in Gjoa Haven, asking him to arrange by radio for the government plane to come and pick me up.

For all these reasons, when finally one frozen dawn I stood outside the qaqmaq and watched Inuttiaq's and Mannik's sleds disappear into the north, my spirits leapt. A physical weight was lifted; I could breathe freely, knowing that within two weeks (Niqi said six days, but she was foolish) the men would return with reassurance and that within a month (two at the most) I would be on my way back to the kapluna world where a person could snarl a little without disastrous consequences. I was ebullient. Had I dared, I would have hugged Allaq, who stood beside me. As it was, I channeled the joy into generosity. "Shall I make some oatmeal? Shall I help you sew Raigili's new parka? Do we need some water?" I had not felt such good will for months. The effect of my new cheer on the others, moreover, confirmed my suspicion that my depression had created a vicious circle. Allaq, and others, too, responded, it seemed to me, with much more warmth than at any time in recent weeks, and I was

too euphoric to notice whether or not it continued to be necessary for me to initiate our conversations.

Inuttiaq and Mannik returned ten days later. They had lost their route in bad weather on the way home and had bypassed the fifty-pound flour sack *full* (Inuttiaq emphasized "full") of my mail, which had been left for them to pick up on a certain promontory two-days' travel north of our camp. "It can be fetched later this winter if the foxes don't destroy it," said Inuttiaq reassuringly. But the response the men brought from Ikayuqtuq and from Nakliguhuktuq surpassed my most sanguine expectations; it made even the missing mail seem, for the moment, a paltry disappointment. Inuttiaq reported: "Nakliguhuktuq says that the kaplunas almost shot us when Yiini was not there." He turned to me: "Did you write that to Nakliguhuktuq?" I denied it; and later in Gjoa Haven Nakliguhuktuq denied having made such a lurid statement to Inuttiaq. But I did confirm the gist of Inuttiaq's report.

The effect was magical. That night after Inuttiaq and the children were asleep, Allaq's voice came out of the dark. "The kaplunas almost shot us?" Again I denied it, but exulting in the long-denied opportunity to explain my behavior, I told her what I had written to Ikayuqtuq and something of the reasons for my anger at the kaplunas. Allaq's response was a laugh of surprise: "So *that* was it!"

She must have repeated to Inuttiaq what I had told her, because at midday next day, when I came home from fishing with the children, Inuttiaq immediately began to interrogate me on the moral qualities of the various fishing guides who had brought parties to the Inlet during the summer, and for two days, off and on, he and other members of the camp continued to ask me for information about them. The wall of ice that had stood between me and the community dissolved. People talked to me voluntarily, offered me vocabulary, included me in their jokes and in their anecdotes of the day's activities—and Inuttiaq informed me that next day he and I were going fishing together.

With a suddenness and a completeness that astonished me, I was renewed. I expanded in social approval and regretted only that it was improper to hug these people who had accepted me

once more. Still, one fear laid a sobering hand on my joy—the fear that a misunderstanding might occur again. It cautioned me not to ask too many of the questions that Utku found so impertinent; it adjured me not to relax such control as I had over my volatility; and it caused me to tense with trepidation when I asked Inuttiaq if I might, after all, stay until after Christmas. Would it make them unhappy *(hujuujaq)*?

My fear was not eased when I saw Inuttiaq's odd expression. Was it only the untoward directness of the question, or did he have reservations? He hedged: "Why?"

"I think sometimes I'm difficult *(ayuqnaq)*."

"In what way?"

"Am I inconvenient *(ihluit)* in the iglu?"

Inuttiaq was hard pressed, I think, but he replied nobly: "You are not very inconvenient *(ihluit)*. You are not inconvenient. You may stay because you help people a great deal with kerosene."

That Inuttiaq was not wholly happy to have me stay seemed clear. Being father to a kapluna was difficult, I knew it, and his tactful reply could not conceal it. I had other evidence of his feeling, too. There was the remark he made, suddenly, when we were both sitting, silently working, on the ikliq: "I think you're a leader in your country." The remark had no obvious context; it must mean, I thought, that Inuttiaq had never reconciled himself to my intractable behavior. There was the slightly wild look that I caught in his eye when I said I thought that I might someday return to Back River. The look vanished when Allaq explained that I meant to return after I had been to my own country, not merely to Gjoa Haven. "Eeee," he said then, "we will adopt you again—or others may want to: Nilak, perhaps" —he laughed—"or Mannik, if he marries."

But there were more positive feelings, too. I still remember with happiness one afternoon in late November, shortly after we had joined the rest of the Utku at the winter camp in Amujat. The iglu was filled with visitors, and the hum of the primus, on which tea was brewing, mingled with the low voices of Inuttiaq and his guests. I knew every detail of the scene even as I bent over my writing, and I paid no attention until suddenly my mind caught on the sound of my name: "I consider Yiini a

member of my family again." Was that what Inuttiaq had said? I looked up, inquiring. "I consider you a family member again," he repeated. His diction was clear, as it only was when he wanted to be sure that I understood. And he called me "daughter," as he had not done since August. "Eeeeee." It was little enough to reply, but perhaps he heard the gratitude in my tone.

There is another memory, too. Inuttiaq and Allaq and I were alone in the iglu. Inuttiaq had asked me whether other "learners," like me, might someday come to Back River. I asked whether they would be unhappy if others came. Inuttiaq replied: "We would be happier to have a woman come than a man—a woman like you, who doesn't want to be a wife. Maybe *you* are the only acceptable kapluna."

Allaq's feelings about me as the time of my departure neared were not so clear. When I repeated to her the question I had asked Inuttiaq, whether it would be inconvenient if I stayed, she reassured me: "You're only inconvenient when we move." And when Inuttiaq one day heard me inquire the meaning of a very simple word and asked me whether I had learned the Eskimo language imperfectly, Allaq salved the discomfiture that I had tried not to show. "You know other words," she said. And next day, when she and I were sitting alone in the iglu, she repeated to me a complimentary remark that she had heard the previous winter about my ability to speak Eskimo. She talked with me on subjects that no one else felt free to discuss, laughed about her former shyness *(ilira)* of me, and shared jokes and reminiscences with me in a way that seemed quite in accord with my own affection for her. In all ways, she seemed more at ease with me than were any other members of the community, except perhaps Inuttiaq and Saarak. Still, it was a remark of Allaq's that precipitated my departure.

Since December I had been trying to decide whether to leave in January or in March. Inuttiaq advised March, because there would be less danger of my freezing on the long dogsled trip (I had given up the idea of summoning a plane to take me out). There was another reason for his preference, too, namely that my heavy load of gear would be less burdensome in March, because the lengthened days would shorten the trip, but he did not stress this thought. "If you prefer to leave in January,"

he said, "we will take care of you then, as well as in March, and we will try to keep you from freezing."

I was torn with indecision, and when neighbors asked me my plans I always put them off: I was waiting for a letter about money; I was going to take a long walk in the winter air to test my resistance to frostbite before I decided; or I simply did not know. People stopped asking, but they did not stop watching for the little signs that would indicate the way my thoughts were tending. They read my mind before I knew it myself. Allaq was particularly acute. I caused hearty laughter one day in Pala's iglu by remarking, as I entered, that the entrance passage stank. "That's because you're going home soon," said Allaq. "You didn't used to think it stank." A little disconcerted, I hastily explained: it was only because one of the pups had had diarrhea there. Allaq noted also that my aversion to raw whitefish seemed greater than the previous winter. Whitefish was a noxious fish in almost everybody's view, but it was the winter staple, and the year before I had eaten it as stoically as others did. This second winter I lacked appetite unless there was salmon trout, caribou, or fox in the larder, and Allaq explained this phenomenon the same way: "It's because you're going home soon."

A voice told me that Allaq was right, that I was, indeed, releasing my hold, little by little, on Eskimo things and drawing my own ways of life around me again, as the kapluna world began to seem real and attainable once more. True, in some ways the arctic world also seemed to have acquired an added vividness. I savored, even more than I had before, the gentle Eskimo voices, the peacefulness of the iglus on their moonlit slope, the wolf-howl of huskies, and the intensity of the winter silence; but the very poignancy of my perception seemed to confirm Allaq's impression that my departure was nearing.

On the other hand, I suspected that Allaq's vision might be sharpened by her own wish that I should leave. To this day, I am not sure which of us made the decision that I would leave in January. It came about in the following way.

Inuttiaq and Mannik were planning a trading trip to Gjoa Haven in early January to replenish the kerosene supply. The fuel was almost gone, and we were eking out the last gallons

by burning papers, stray bits of wood, and expendable clothing in a stove made from an oil drum sawed in half. The men said they would leave as soon as we finished eating a caribou that had been fetched from one of the autumn caches. I had still not decided whether I would accompany the men, when one day I noticed that both Allaq and her sister Amaruq were absorbed in sewing. "Your traveling furs," they explained. "So they will be ready for you."

At this news, the fear that had never quite died—the fear of another change in the emotional climate—was reawakened. Did Allaq perceive that I was eager to leave, more eager than I myself knew, or was it she who wished me to leave? Watching her with the suspicious alertness of anxiety, I could not be sure. Once in a while I thought I caught a glimmer of hostility. On one or two occasions, in pouring tea for the family, Allaq forgot to fill *my* cup, and her laughter, when I remarked on the omission, seemed to my ear as excessively hearty as her laughter on another occasion when she had caught herself neglecting to offer Niqi a cigarette. I heard an unaccustomed stridence in her laughter also on another occasion, when I castigated myself, jokingly, as a "bad kapluna" for cutting the back instead of the belly out of a fish I was gutting. On the other hand, her friendliness disarmed me, so that I chided myself for letting imagination run wild. I puzzled, until one day a remark that Allaq made to Niqi tipped the balance, and I resolved, finally, to leave. Allaq and I were alone in the iglu when Niqi popped in on one of her brief visits. Allaq, standing on an oil drum by the door, was scraping the night's accumulation of frost feathers off the ice window, a morning routine, while I sat, writing as usual, on my corner of the ikliq across the way. Niqi, making conversation with me, remarked, as people occasionally did, that Utku would be unhappy (*hujuujaq*) after I had gone. Such remarks were delightful to hear, and though I reminded myself that the words were probably more gracious than sincere, still I somewhat shamefacedly allowed myself to be flattered. I was taken aback, therefore, when Allaq, perched on her oil drum above Niqi, murmured: "I don't think we'll be very unhappy." After Niqi had gone, I asked Allaq, in a general way, how people felt when others went away: ought people to remain happy (*quvia*)? Allaq laughed. "No," she

said. "People are usually unhappy (*hujuujaq*) when others go away, especially if they know they are not going to see them again. Of course, they are sadder at first than they are, later." I pressed the question, then, indiscreetly focusing it again on myself. "You just told Niqi that people wouldn't be unhappy when I left." Allaq covered herself beautifully, as I might have known she would do. "I was joking. It's only because you are eager to leave that we won't be sad *(hujuujaq);* because you are growing unhappy here." She laughed. "Are you growing unhappy?" She laughed again, a merry laugh in which I joined, cooperating with her effort to assure me that she was joking. Then she continued, seriously: "We *will* be unhappy when you leave—more at first than later. I speak truly. And I think Saarak will be more unhappy than Raigili."

We left a week later: Inuttiaq, Mannik, Ipuituq, Qavvik, and I; it took that many to carry my several hundred pounds of gear. Allaq proffered last tidbits of data even as she helped carry my things out to the sled. And when Inuttiaq's team was harnessed and the other sleds were already sliding out across the river, she came and silently, in a most unusual gesture of farewell, clasped my hand. My mind went back to the only other farewell handshake I had seen. It was the parting of the old man Piuvkaq with his adopted son when Piuvkaq had mistakenly thought the government plane was taking him away to the hospital, probably to die. I, too, might never return, though I had said I would like to, if I could.

Pala also gave explicit recognition to my departure and, doing so, sharpened my sense of separation. "So you are going to Gjoa Haven," he said. "If you don't freeze, you should be all right (*naamak*)." And Niqi echoed him: "Don't freeze or be cold." The other women who stood on the slope were silent. Inuttiaq motioned me to the sled and with a tug at the anchor and a sharp-breathed "ai!" released the team. We slid down the slope in the wake of the other sleds, Inuttiaq running alongside to steer with pulls and shouts. I looked back. Pala, Allaq, and the others were black shapes on the dog-stained slope with its domes of snow—motionless, still watching. "The neighbors," said Inuttiaq. He waved, and I waved, too.

The last parting of all was with Inuttiaq. He and Ipuituq had

come to visit me on their last evening in Gjoa Haven. I had just moved into one of the small stone iglus that had been built by a former priest for the use of his Eskimo parishioners. The temperature inside was still close to sixty below zero, and my primuses were both solidly frozen. Inwardly cursing at them, at my ineptitude, at the temperature, at life in general, I was struggling to discover what ailed the stoves when the door creaked open and Inuttiaq's head appeared; Ipuituq's smiling face was close behind. "Coooooldl" Inuttiaq observed. "Shall I do that?" Not waiting for my answer, he took the icy primus out of my hands and showed me how to hold it over a storm lantern until it thawed. I was astonished at the strength of the love and gratitude that I felt for him at that moment—grief, too, that next morning he was leaving. I would have left Gjoa Haven before he came back to trade again. "Eat!" I said. "Are you hungry?" They were, of course, and Inuttiaq offered Ipuituq's services in heating up the various cans of kapluna meat that I had bought. My gratitude overflowed into words, too. "I will be sad *(hujuujaq),* I think, when you two leave, because you have helped me very much." The two men ate in silence, but after we had finished and we were drinking tea, Inuttiaq said: "I, too, will be sad *(hujuujaq),* I think, when I first leave here. The iglu is going to be wide." "I, too," said Ipuituq. They recounted the purchases they had made that day and recalled the homes they had visited and what they had eaten. The teakettle was empty. "I have to pee," said Inuttiaq. "I'm going out. I'm going out, and in the morning I'm leaving." Ipuituq followed him out without a word or glance.

I had letters from Back River twice before I left Gjoa Haven in March. Allaq said: "Saarak asks where you are and mistakenly thinks you will come soon." She and Inuttiaq both said: "I didn't think I'd care *(huqu, naklik)* when you left, but I did *(naklik)."*