

THE BODY

Written by

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All characters are Western and Northern Alaska Indigenous peoples
unless otherwise noted.

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FADE IN:

EXT. TUNDRA - DAY

A ptarmigan hops on the snow covered tundra. CHUGI NICK, (27) a tall Alaskan Yup'ik woman, her hair in a long braid gently unraveling in the wind as she watches the ptarmigan. She wears a dark green winter Village Protection and Safety Officer uniform - out of place in this white expanse.

Chugi quickly lies down in the snow. She sights down the rifle she carries. Her forget-me-not beaded earrings clink slightly on the butt of the rifle as her slender fingers tighten on the stock. Dinner's gonna be ptarmigan tonight.

FADE TO BLACK.

A flutter and a shot rings out.

FADE TO:

EXT. MITZI BAY - RIVERBANK - DAY

ANNA RAYLEN (26), a small Inuit woman dressed in a similar VPSO uniform, paces back and forth on the frozen riverbank. Her jacket open, Anna wears a knife on her hip, inside the green snowsuit and on the opposite side the handle of her firearm peeks out as she moves nervously.

The snow shines almost too brightly.

MARTIN WASSALIE (35), a short fat Inuit man with long braided hair, skitters down the embankment to Anna. He isn't dressed for cold weather and snow - he wears blue jeans, a Steelers jacket, a Red Sox hat and open carries a pistol on one hip and a knife on the other. He carries an envelope in his hand.

ANNA RAYLEN

So. What do you want?

MARTIN WASSALIE

(smugly)

I want you to be more, shall we say, cordial.

ANNA RAYLEN

Cordial? You called me all the way
out here and-

MARTIN WASSALIE

-I have something you want.

ANNA RAYLEN

What?

MARTIN WASSALIE

Something you don't want nobody to
see.

Anna's eye narrow in suspicion.

ANNA RAYLEN

And...

Martin opens his envelope. Anna peeks into envelope. She is
crestfallen.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Why do you have that?!

MARTIN WASSALIE

If you don't let me into her house
then I'll show them to the judge.
He'll lift the restraining order
and you'll be left swinging in the
wind and your ex...

ANNA RAYLEN

But I didn't do anything wrong.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Anna. Anna. Anna...

Anna's painted into a corner and it shows. Fear, dismay,
and anger war on her face.

EXT - MITZI BAY TUNDRA - DAY

Two snowmachines meet one another. The engines stop. Martin
and Anna. We can't hear what he says but it's clear as he
leers at her. He begins to hand her the envelope when he
suddenly grabs her and pulls her close. He nuzzles her ear
until she forcibly pulls away from him.

She tears the envelope out of his hand and hops on her snowmachine as he yells back at her smugly.

MARTIN WASSALIE

(Laughing)

I still have the originals!

EXT. PAUGNA - ICED AND FROZEN DOCKS - DAY

Chugi drives her snowmachine on the river. Her rifle slung across her back and a brace of ptarmigan birds across the front of the handle bars. She slows the snow machine upon approaching town, Paugna, Alaska.

From afar, as Chugi slowly approaches the river docks, she sees the teacher, DANIEL ANDERS (37), a 6' imposing Inuit man, furtively meeting with Martin. Upon seeing Chugi, they quickly break up and leave by different paths.

INT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

Anna stuffs clothing into a duffle bag. Her linebacker of a boyfriend - EX-BOYFRIEND (30) - paces her as he agitatedly yells at her.

EX-BOYFRIEND

Nobody leaves me.

Anna pulls underwear and socks out of a plastic drawer system and places them into the duffle bag.

ANNA RAYLEN

I quit you months ago.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

The brace of Ptarmigans lay on top of a spread of newspapers on the floor. Chugi sit with her legs splayed and slits the feathers and skin of the ptarmigan. Chugi pulls a chopping board from the counter down to the floor. The clatter it makes morphs into:

INT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

Ex-boyfriend slams the top of the dresser, cracking the plastic. Anna jumps.

EX-BOYFRIEND

Nobody quits me!

ANNA RAYLEN

You know you're not supposed to be here.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Chugi pulls the skin and feathers off of a bird.

INT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

Anna grabs her duffle and tries to out pace him. He blocks her way out of the bedroom and grabs her arms. Suddenly he is all charm, his hands still hold her tightly.

EX-BOYFRIEND

I can make you stay, if I wanted.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Chugi pulls the feathers off of another bird.

INT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

ANNA RAYLEN

I moved for you. For your family.
I can't stay any longer.

Ex-boyfriend is now sullen and snide.

EX-BOYFRIEND

And I gave you my house. I gave you everything you wanted. You can't go anywhere.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Chugi pulls the innards out of a bird.

INT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

ANNA RAYLEN

I would be in my rights to defend myself.

Anna looks down. Ex-boyfriend looks down and quickly steps away, revealing Anna holding a small knife.

EX-BOYFRIEND
(derisively)
You're gonna hurt me with a little
pig-sticker?

Anna narrows her eyes at him.

ANNA RAYLEN
If I have to.

EX-BOYFRIEND
(Angrily)
You're nothing. Nothing but used
goods and no one will want you.

Anna exits the room, hurt but determined.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

THWACK! Chugi splits a bird in two.

EXT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

Anna exits the house with Ex-boyfriend hot on her heels.
STELLA (56) is outside walking toward Anna.

EX-BOYFRIEND
Come on, Anna!

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

THWACK! Chugi splits a second bird in two.

EXT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

As Anna turns to look at him, Stella gives him a stern look and they lock eyes. Stella seems too chipper for the situation.

EX-BOYFRIEND
Hey, Ma. Whatchyerdoin?

Stella gives him a perfunctory nod. A scowl flits across his face as Anna whips around to face Stella.

STELLA

Ah! Anna! How goes it? Naw, don't answer that.

ANNA RAYLEN

(emotionless)

Hello, Stella.

STELLA

I was wondering if I could get your assistance. I had some personal art go missing.

ANNA RAYLEN

Oh? I'm no longer a VPSO. Did you put in a complaint with the Troopers?

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Chugi pats the parts, counting them and putting them in order. She turns the heat on under a pot of water on stove.

EXT. ANNA HOUSE IN MITZI BAY - DAY

STELLA

Well- I thought I'd keep it in the family. I was about to put it on RatNet. I thought I'd give you a whirl before going live.

ANNA RAYLEN

(suspiciously)

What do mean?

STELLA

There's a bounty.

ANNA RAYLEN

(puzzled)

Oh?

STELLA

Um, a sort of award...

ANNA RAYLEN

(Flatly)

And...

STELLA

I'll give \$15,000 for the
recovery.

EX-BOYFRIEND

Ma!

This piques Anna's interest. But she is still suspicious.

ANNA RAYLEN

Why don't you get your son to do
it?

STELLA

You have more contacts and a
badge.

ANNA RAYLEN

And when I find it?

STELLA

(brightly)

I'll give you 15,000 dollars. You
and my son can buy a house - put a
down payment on a house.

Stella hands her a paper.

STELLA (CONT'D)

These. Ad goes live weekend after
next.

With a nod, Anna throws her duffle on her back, hops on the
snowmachine (starts it) and rides out of town through the
tundra.

CUT TO:

INT. VPSO OFFICE - DAY - FLASHFORWARD

Chugi sits at a desk in the VPSO building. On the door her
title: VILLAGE POLICE SAFETY OFFICER CHUGI NICK. The room
is in various states of being packed up. She writes a
police report by hand.

CHUGI NICK

The body was in a state of-

She crumples up the paper and tosses it aside. A sheet of paper floats to the floor.

CHUGI NICK (V.O) (CONT'D)

I, Village Police Safety Officer
Chugi Nick, being of sound mind
and body, observed Martin Wassalie
exit Patsy Wassalie's house.
Though they're first cousins,
Patsy's house has been vacant due
to probate proceedings...

FADE TO:

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi cuts carrots, celery and potatoes as she listens to the radio. The wind dances outside.

CHUGI NICK (V.O.)

That was also the day, Anna
Raylen, twenty six, came to visit
me at my residence. I have known
her for 17 years. She is a Chukchi
woman residing in Mitzi Bay. Moved
to Paugna on the seventeenth of
December after an altercation with
her ex-boyfriend. Also of Mitzi
Bay. Dammit. Let me start at the
beginning...

The music fades out and the RADIO ANNOUNCER breaks in over the radio.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Buckle down and buckle up.
Snowstorm of the decade is on it's
way. Alaska Weather Service says
the winds will be gusting at 80
miles per hour. Snow expected up
to 36 inches. Here are some tunes
by Tabitha Atit'lluk.

Radio PLAY'S Songs by Yup'ik by artists like Byron
Nicholai, Pumyua and more traditional songs. Chugi drops
the ptarmigan pieces into a sizzling frying pan. The Radio
Announcer fades back in:

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Good luck to Village Protection
Safety Officer Chugi Nick. She
applied to the Trooper Academy.
Give up those prayers she gets in.

Chugi smiles an embarrassed smile.

CHUGI NICK

Ah. Come on guys. Why you gotta do
me like that?

Chugi chuckles. The phone rings. Chugi answers. On the
phone is Howie Salinger, (an older female Yup'ik).

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Waqaa.

HOWIE SALINGER

Hey, Chugi! Just heard on the
radio that you've been selected
for the academy.

CHUGI NICK

No. Not selected, Howie. I
applied.

HOWIE SALINGER

Oh.

CHUGI NICK

Won't know until next month if I
get selected.

HOWIE SALINGER

I hope you do. You're great to
have around. Keeps the riff raff
out.

Howie chuckles and Chugi answers with her own chuckle.

CHUGI NICK

Quyana, Howie. There's a village
meeting tomorrow. Up at the VPSO
building.

HOWIE SALINGER

Yep. Goinna see if there's caribou
across the river. Bob said there
was. I could be back in time.

CHUGI NICK

Ai-yah. I got to go. Cooking.
Piuraa.

HOWIE SALINGER

Catch you later. Piuraa.

The line clicks off. Chugi smiles at it for a bit and then
unplugs the phone from the wall.

INT. PATSY'S HOUSE - DAY

Two sets of men's hands package Inuit art in the dim light
from a street lamp on the fritz. Breath clouds the air.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE

Later, about to sit down to her meal, Chugi hears a single
KNOCK at the door. After a second KNOCK, Chugi reluctantly
puts her bowl down on the table.

CHUGI NICK

Hold on. I'm coming. I'm coming.

Chugi opens the door to Anna in her VPSO uniform Chugi
greet her with ease.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Anna!

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi!

They embrace like the best friends they are.

CHUGI NICK

Oh my gosh, I didn't know you were
coming!

ANNA RAYLEN

How can I to contact you if you
don't answer your house phone, eh?

CHUGI NICK

Yeah, well. I'm out a lot.

Anna brushes past her to pick up an unopened package labelled with Chugi's name, She shakes it.

ANNA RAYLEN

What? What is it that I have —
you have — here?

It rattles. Chugi looks on with chagrin.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah, well-

ANNA RAYLEN

-I sent it to you last year. You
can't use the answering machine if
you don't open the package.

Chugi gently takes the package from Anna.

CHUGI NICK

Okay. Look. Look. I am opening it
up.

She laughs as she tears open the package.

ANNA RAYLEN

(sarcastically)

Mm-hmm.

CHUGI NICK

Look. This is me hooking it up.

Chugi tries to hook it up more confused than sure. Taking
the wires from Chugi, Anna laughs at her.

ANNA RAYLEN

Here. Let me do it.

Anna plugs in the answering machine and after a moment
plugs the phone back in.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

There. Ready for your message.

Chugi touches the record button on the answering machine.

CHUGI NICK
This one right here?

ANNA RAYLEN
Yes.

CHUGI NICK
Good. I'll get to it later.

ANNA RAYLEN
Riiiiight.

Chugi presses the button and looks up at Anna. The machine is forgotten.

CHUGI NICK
You hungry? I's just sitting down to eat.

ANNA RAYLEN
Yes. Please! I am starving. What's it?

CHUGI NICK
Tundra chicken, carrots, celery and onion. And puhtayta.

They both chuckle as Chugi slides her bowl to Anna, who sits at the table to eat. Chugi serves herself another bowl and sits at the table.

The answering machine BEEPS long and loudly. They both look at it for a moment before giggling to each other. Anna takes a bite of the stew.

ANNA RAYLEN
Mm. Good. I should come 'round more often.

CHUGI NICK
(chuckles)
What does bring you here? Last I heard you were in Mitzi Bay. Did you marry into the Anders?

ANNA RAYLEN
Well, they're the biggest family out there. Kinda hard not to.

(MORE)

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

But not married. Mother was- I
couldn't- She rules like the
mafia.

CHUGI NICK

Shame. You'd make a good nuliaq.

Anna rolls her eyes at the comment.

ANNA RAYLEN

Certainly not *his* nuliaq.

CHUGI NICK

Why did you come all the way down
here?

ANNA RAYLEN

Looking for an Anders cousin.

CHUGI NICK

Oh?

ANNA RAYLEN

I heard he came down here buy
something.

CHUGI NICK

Something?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah, I dunno what. Missing
property in Mitzi Bay. Might be
related.

CHUGI NICK

Ohhhhkay, but that's pretty thin.

ANNA RAYLEN

Well, I needed some kind of excuse
to come see you. Three years is
too long.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah.

INT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Men's hands put a large package in the front seat of Daniel's SUV.

DANIEL ANDERS

I can get it on the next mail plane.

(Beat)

I've got another buyer in Seattle. Probably get \$80,000. Split three ways, that's a pretty nice penny.

That same someone pats the vehicle twice and their footsteps walk away. Agitated, Daniel watches a moment before he drives away.

LATER:

Anna enters the livingroom drying her hair and dressed in sweats. Chugi digs into a cabinet pulling out a handful of DVD's.

ANNA RAYLEN

Kids or old ladies?

CHUGI NICK

Old ladies and art.

ANNA RAYLEN

Ugh! I am sick of art. If I can't do something with it then it doesn't belong in my house.

Chugi chooses a DVD (like Thelma and Louise) and puts the left overs back. She shook her head wryly.

CHUGI NICK

You always were short sighted.

Anna makes a face and sticks her tongue out at Chugi, who makes a face back at her. Anna chuckles.

ANNA RAYLEN

Art only matters to you.

CHUGI NICK

(earnestly)

Anna, it's culture. It's life.
It's how we pass on our history
and our world. It's how we teach
our-

ANNA RAYLEN

(sarcastically imitates)

-We teach our children. Gawd. You
really did drink the Kool-Aid.

Chugi scoffs in disbelief.

CHUGI NICK

You never did get it. We need our
ways. We survive because of our
ways.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah, but we live in the real
world now and we don't need
nothing-

CHUGI NICK

-anything-

Anna rolls her eyes.

ANNA RAYLEN

To hold us back, Know-It-All. That
artsy fartsy stuff is
superstitious crap.

Chugi raises her eyebrow.

CHUGI NICK

Is it?

Anna squirms under Chugi's eye.

ANNA RAYLEN

(unsure)

Yes?

CHUGI NICK

(dismissive)

Art matters. Like your inner soul matters. All art matters.

Chugi pulls a well used 18" stick in the shape of 1/2 eel, 1/2 fish wrapped in fishing line from her wall.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Look at my jigging stick. It is beautiful and functional.

ANNA RAYLEN

But it works- It does work, right?

CHUGI NICK

Yup and makes me comfortable in my own skin. Look how it fits perfectly.

Chugi slips her hand into the well worn groove. Perfect fit.

ANNA RAYLEN

(unconvinced)

Yeah. I guess. But art can't put food on the table or get fuel for the stove. I need to work to do that. I need the Benjamins.

Anna pantomimes making money rain.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah. Yeah. I get it. You gotta buy flour and eggs. Don't I know it. Uuuh, so you don't like the art and yet yer here looking for art?

ANNA RAYLEN

Bounty. If I can recover it, there might be something in it for me.

CHUGI NICK

What is it with you and side jobs? Yer gonna get into trouble one of these days.

Anna is silent for a quick moment.

ANNA RAYLEN

It's no longer a side job. I quit Mitzi Bay. Handed in all of my reports...

CHUGI NICK

What?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah. I quit the VPSO. I quit the ex. For good this time. For me. Imma P.I. Private Investigator at your service, ma'am.

Anna tips her imaginary hat as Chugi eyes her skeptically.

CHUGI NICK

And you still showed up in uniform—

ANNA RAYLEN

—I got this, Chugi. I got this. Just put the movie in. I don't need a dissertation.

CHUGI NICK

Ii-i. Off my soap box, Panikaah.

Anna genuinely laughs. The mood lifted, Chugi opens her arms wide and tries to embrace Anna. Anna evades her.

ANNA RAYLEN

Nope! Not you daughter! Never.

Anna giggles, still evading Chugi's arms.

CHUGI NICK

Aipaq?

ANNA RAYLEN

In crime!

Chugi gives up the chase, laughing as she puts the DVD into her Xbox player. The system boots up, turning the TV on. Giggling, Anna settles into the couch.

CHUGI NICK

Thelma, baby, let's get to Las Vegas!

ANNA RAYLEN

(Southern accent)

Only if I can bring the cowboy-

CHUGI NICK

Boots!

ANNA BORLEN

Boots!

INT. SUV - DAY

Chugi drives Anna to the school. Chugi has her uniform on again. Anna not in VPSO uniform but her black civilian Carhart uniform. A pink shirt peeking through.

CHUGI NICK

Like I said, I gotta give a talk at the school. You be okay out here?

ANNA RAYLEN

Whatchyer not gonna invite me in to meet the folks?

CHUGI NICK

It's just a school.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah, but it's a new state of the art school.

CHUGI NICK

No art involved. Just enough money to make it work.

Anna purses her lips in frustration.

EXT. TO INT. VILLAGE SCHOOL - DAY

The Paugna Elitnaurvik, the elementary/high school was a small school that doubled as a community center to an untrained eye it looked more like a small warehouse, than a school. Chugi and Anna entered the front doors.

The lobby of the school was empty. The walls were plastered with kid drawings of various levels of animals and their environments. Awards, trophies and photos of Elders and children made this lobby look like any middle America school except the lobby was the size of a small doctors office.

Daniel Anders enters the lobby from an inner door, extending his hand in greeting before dropping it awkwardly.

DANIEL ANDERS
Chugi! Glad you could make it.

CHUGI NICK
My pleasure.

Daniel looks Anna up and down appreciatively.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
This is my friend, Anna Raylen,
from Mitzi Bay.

DANIEL ANDERS
You also of the VPSO variety.

Anna is disgusted at Daniels behavior.

ANNA RAYLEN
Whatever. Dude, I'll be right next
door. Imma go pick some things up
from the Native store.

DANIEL ANDERS
That's not next door. It's an
empty lot.

Anna, almost expressionless, stares at Daniel,
contemplating.

ANNA RAYLEN
You've been in the city too long.

Chugi stifles a laugh as Anna whips around and goes out the
door to the outside world.

CHUGI NICK

That'll teach you. Never under estimate a Yuk. We know how to get around in the world.

Chugi pokes Daniel in his belly.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

You *have* been in the cities too long.

DANIEL ANDERS

I can't help it if my parents thought Pizza 4 Less was an important institution.

CHUGI NICK

No you couldn't. So what did you do in the decade after that?

DANIEL ANDERS

School.

CHUGI NICK

And the decade after that?

Daniel looks uncomfortable. Chugi lets him squirm a bit before:

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

I jokes. Lets see about them kids. You seein' Josie still?

Daniel turns and leads Chugi back through the door he came from.

DANIEL ANDERS

Nah. She wants to buy too much junk off them there online order places.

Chugi's jolly laugh could be heard throughout the building as they walk down a corridor with three classrooms - one holding three computers and proudly proclaiming: COMPUTER ROOM.

CHUGI NICK

But you makin' them dollars,
Daniel!

DANIEL ANDERS

Not fast enough for her to spend.
I got bills, too.

Chugi feigns shock.

CHUGI NICK

Damn, son! We all got bills.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

In a circle of 10 kids of varying ages on the floor underneath the basketball hoop, Chugi speaks to them. Two high schoolers UVULAA (15), and PATRICK (16), sit a little apart from the circle, mumbling to each other. A third, a quiet young man, NERAA (14) sit apart from everybody, barely making eye contact.

High on the wall hang 3 masks. Ancient asymmetrical pieces made of wood, feathers and ivory with circle and dot imagery. Two of them have a second face peeking out from the 3-way split. The third is twice the size of the other two. It has a circle of people dancing inside another circle that encompassed the people and the mask. It also has white dots on the chin and a single seam down the center.

CHUGI NICK

These pieces tell the tale of our
lives. Atur- who made your
clothing?

Atur (10), a bright eyed girl, answers eagerly.

ATUR

My mama and my granma made my head
bands.

CHUGI NICK

Our culture is all around us.
Neraa, why do you go to dance
practice.

Neraa answers, still not making eye contact.

NERAA
(subdued)
It fun and I get out the house.

CHUGI NICK
Mm. Do you learn the songs?

NERAA
Ii-i.

CHUGI NICK
Do you know what they are about?
Can you tell me?

Neraa squirms uncomfortably. He reluctantly answers.

NERAA
Hunting. Fishing.

CHUGI NICK
Anything you like to do?

NERAA
I like the one about sledding.

Chugi cracks a smile and her eyebrows rising to her hairline.

CHUGI NICK
(animatedly)
Everybody loves that one.

Neraa sports a slight smile as the group erupts in laughter and make sledding down a hill movements including the little bumps that launch them into the air. (This is what the song consists of.) Chugi points to the three carved masks.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
These masks. They are from our history. They are from a time before contact.

A tentative hand goes up. It's little PULAA (9).

PULAA

But my mama said that culture
doesn't matter.

CHUGI NICK

Okay. And she put you in this
school to learn about it.

Anna enters and stands at the door behind Chugi.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Being Yugcetun is important. It's
important to know your history, to
know our language and our ways.

PULAA

I know I like to yurartua

CHUGI NICK

Pumyua!

Laughing and giggling, all of the children do the sledding
movements again. Chugi clears her throat amidst the
laughter and points to the masks, serious again.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Those keep us together. Through
them, we keep us together. That's
what keeps us alive and on the
correct path. When we lose that,
then we go down a darker path.

A bell rings in the distance. The children get up to go.
Daniel steps forward.

DANIEL ANDERS

Okay. You parents will be here
shortly to pick you up. Thank
Officer Chugi for coming to talk
about the importance of culture.

CHILDREN

Thank you, Officer Chugi!

Pulaa and Atur approach Chugi. Anna sees them reach out and
touch Chugi's clothing. Chugi laughs and the girls giggle.

Anna smiles at the tender moment before she leaves to avoid the 'crowd.'

EXT. SCHOOL - DAY - LATER

As Chugi shakes Daniels hand (firmly and one pump) amongst the children and parents, over his shoulder she sees Anna arguing with Martin.

DANIEL ANDERS

Thank you for coming today. The kids really liked it and I didn't have to make a lesson plan for today.

CHUGI NICK

Thank you. I appreciate the opportunity. Always good to speak to our youth.

He chuckles. Over Chugi's shoulder he sees the three older teens slink off around the back of the school. Patrick and Uvulaa seem to be in pursuit of Neraa.

DANIEL ANDERS

(distractedly)

Good. Good. I'll catch up with you later, Yeah?

CHUGI NICK

Piuraa.

Concerned, Chugi makes her way to Anna but Martin - seeing Chugi on her way - says something. Even from the distance Chugi could hear her.

ANNA RAYLEN

No! You can't do that, Martin!

Martin leaves her but not before he looks at her sternly. Anna is cowed. She gives up. Chugi arrives as Martin disappears between two houses.

CHUGI NICK

What was that about?

ANNA RAYLEN

Nothin'

CHUGI NICK
It din't look like nothin'.

ANNA RAYLEN
Family business.

Chugi is unconvinced but drops it.

INT. SUV - DAY - LATER

In the twilight of the Alaskan afternoon, Chugi drives, Anna in the passenger seat. The vehicle is quiet, each lost in their thoughts. Pulling onto main street, Chugi sees Martin exiting a house (Patsy's house).

CHUGI NICK
That's odd.

ANNA RAYLEN
What?

CHUGI NICK
Nothin'.

Presently, Chugi pulls up in front of a cafe with more snowmachines than cars parked out front. This is the Sip 'n' Git Cafe. The only eatery in town.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
When you gonna move down here?
It'd be good to see you everyday.

ANNA RAYLEN
Dude! We'd be sooo sick of each other.

EXT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Chugi feigns offense as they both get out of the SUV.

CHUGI NICK
What? Me? Never!

Chugi puts her fingers to her temples like a mentalist.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
You do still drink, umm. Umm.
Milik?

ANNA RAYLEN

Oh, gawd! You'd let me drink
milik?

CHUGI NICK

Not if yer stayin with me! Never
have any dairy in the house!

Chugi and Anna walk into the Sip 'n' Git cafe.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

The Sip 'n' Git had about seven tables. This morning, as with most mornings, they were sparsely populated. Two two spirit aunties wave at Chugi from the back. These are AUNTIE ONE (78) and AUNTIE TWO (85) a fixture in the village. Chugi throws them a nod coupled with a wide grin. Chugi takes off her gloves and hat. Anna follows suit.

CHUGI NICK

Hey, Roxy! Could I get kuuffiak
over here.

Chugi holds up two fingers.

ROXY

You want cinnamon rolls, too?

CHUGI NICK

That sounds real good! You cooking
this morning?

ROXY

Yeah. I got eggs and toast. Ran
outa fruit two days ago though.
You could have a steak.

ANNA RAYLEN

Damn, that sounds soo good.

CHUGI NICK

Sounds like we'll take two? By the
window.

Anna nods her agreement.

ROXY

It'll be out in a moment.

Roxy disappears into the kitchen as Chugi and Anna make their way to the table by the window.

CHUGI NICK

I was serious. When you gonna move here?

ANNA RAYLEN

Can't.

CHUGI NICK

My granma has a room for rent you could take.

ANNA RAYLEN

Aren't you forgetting something?

Chugi answers Anna's expectant look with puzzlement.

CHUGI NICK

What?

ANNA RAYLEN

I'd have to give up my job. Only one VPSO to a village.

CHUGI NICK

Well, damn. But you said you quit. But do you really want to stay in Mitzi Bay?

A dark cloud falls over Anna's face.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Clearly not. You let me know when you're ready. I'll let Petra know. You could work at the powerplant.

ANNA RAYLEN

You think of everything!

Chugi sits ramrod straight.

CHUGI NICK

(posh like)

Fail to plan, plan to fail.

They both bust out laughing and then stifle it as the other customers turn to look at the them.

EXT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Chugi and Anna talk animatedly in the window as customers go in and out of the Sip 'n' Git Cafe. Their food comes and there is a moment where they talk to Roxy who laughs at a joke Chugi tells. The sun dips below the horizon as Chugi leaves the table to fill up her coffee cup.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - NIGHT

Anna suddenly tenses. Martin slowly passes by the window outside. His eyes bore into her. He gives a half salute that turns into a point. Anna catches her breath. Martin leaves her view. Chugi sees Martin leave but makes no comment when she sits down. Anna doesn't know Chugi saw Martin.

CHUGI NICK

I think I've had a weeks worth of coffee rations today. Time to check buildings. Pick you up in an hour?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah. I'll pop over to the store to pick up some jerky and butter and then over to the gas mart for some fuel.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

The wind and snow makes the visibility almost nil as Chugi, now in civilian clothes, looks out into the dark swirling white mass from her door.

CHUGI NICK

You shouldn't go home in this weather. 200 miles is a long way. Radio says it's gonna get worse before it gets better. But they always say that. Your choice.

Anna watches the weather pensively.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah, I don't think I'd make it.
Temperature is dropping to
negative forty-five. That's my
cutoff for traveling long
distances.

Chugi gives her a perfunctory nod.

CHUGI NICK

Good decision.

Chugi pulls a pan from outside the door. Ice crystals
blanket the pan and some snow has accumulated on the top.
She kicks the door close. Chugi looks thoughtful and then
irritated at her thoughts. A decision is made...

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Last night's dinner. You can add
the caribou if you want.

ANNA RAYLEN

(surprisedly)

Me?

Chugi places the pan on the stove. As Chugi puts her winter
gear on, Anna looks at her expectantly.

CHUGI NICK

I have to go check something. I'll
be back by the time the soups
thawed out.

ANNA RAYLEN

Where you goin'?

CHUGI NICK

To look around. It's my job.

Chugi shrugs at Anna's wry look.

ANNA RAYLEN

At forty-five below?

CHUGI NICK

Look, blankets are beside my bed.
Don't take them all. I'd like to
be warm tonight, also.

(MORE)

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Wood is stocked on the front porch
and by the shed underneath the
tarp.

ANNA RAYLEN

When you comin' back?

CHUGI NICK

Gawd! You sound like a little kid!
"Are we there yet? Are we there
yet?" I'll be back when I get
back.

Chugi opens the door assisted by a wind gust. She plops her hat on her head pulls her gloves on and scoops up the orange snowgoggles and she disappears into the storm.

EXT. SNOWSTORM - NIGHT

Chugi walks through the night, her flashlight ineffective but she still shines it up ahead. The snow swirls around her. The buildings flash like dark forms in the night. A lonely call of a ptarmigan. A CRACK from a window pane. [A subtle thwack] Chugi whips her head around at the sound. A small window is still intact but with a crack through the center.

CHUGI NICK

(muttering)

I hate that.

The snowstorm worsens. Chugi can't see in front of her. She yells at the air.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Who pissed you off?

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MAIN STREET - NIGHT

Chugi struggles down main street in the no visibility storm, until she bumps into the Sip 'n' Git building. Visibility suddenly gets better. A small crowd exits the cafe streaming past Chugi. Chugi enters as the last person exits the cafe.

ROXY

Hello?

Roxy looks around and at the door as it shuts. Chugi sits on a bench by the door pulling off her gear as quickly as she can before she overheats.

CHUGI NICK

What's going on? Somethin' happen?

Before Roxy can answer, Martin strolls in nonchalantly but Chugi is immediately suspicious. He passes her and leans on the breakfast counter.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Hey, Roxy.

ROXY

Martin. They found someone on front street.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Damn. Any one I know?

ROXY

Maybe. At Patsy's old house.

MARTIN WASSALIE

I thought that was empty. Bad spirits or somethin'.

ROXY

Yeah, well. I can't help you there.

Martin taps the countertop. It plainly irritates Chugi. A snowmachine is heard stopping in front of the cafe. The headlight flashes in the window before it is turned off. Two chunky ladies walk in. Roxy catches their eye and one of them holds up two fingers. They take off their winter gear. Chugi changes her mind and prepares to go out into the storm.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Wow. I didn't hear anything. I just came from Rhonda's across town.

One of the chunky ladies dresses quickly and exits the cafe. Chugi follows her out into the storm. The lady rummages in a bag mounted on the snowmachine. Chugi turns towards Patsy's house.

EXT. PATSY'S - NIGHT.

Chugi arrives at Patsy's, the house Martin left that morning. The front door is open. Village members cluster in front of the house, their flashlights illuminate the interior. Chugi walks past them and into the house.

INT. PATSY'S - NIGHT

Chugi turns on her flashlight and plays it across the empty room. A cluster of people murmuring from the bedroom.

A single square table and a dining chair are the only furnishings in the open floor plan of the very small living room/kitchen. A cold woodstove sat in the corner of the livingroom.

A stray newspaper article, faded and torn, whips through the air as the wind vies for entrance into the house. Chugi can just make out the words in the dim light 'repatriated remains' and 'Sitka, Alaska.' Curious she picks it up. The date says, 'Wednesday November 24, 2018' and has a picture of a Tlingit man speaking to a crowd in a library. Chugi places the newspaper clipping on the table but the wind blows it away, again.

She heads for the cluster of heads in the bedroom picking up bits of conversation as she does. RICKY (28), BOB (65), THERESA (32) surround the body, looking down on it, with HOWIE SALINGER (49) squatting. Howie puts the blanket down, hiding the body, as Chugi enters the room.

The room has an old mattress atop box springs and a cheap bed frame with boxes pushed under it. The 70's wallpaper faded and peeling. Frost frames the window, which has a crack running diagonal through the center.

Howie stands, wiping her hands on her garage uniform as she does. She smears blood on her name patch.

HOWIE SALINGER

(disbelievingly)

I tried to save her. How could
this happen here?

The blanket is covered in clouds, rainbows, and baby ducks on it. Chugi thought it would be comical if there wasn't a body under it. She gave a short scoff and an equally tight smile before looking at each with a measured look but they don't meet her gaze. The fear is palpable in the room.

Ricky shakes his head in disbelief.

RICKY

What were they doing in here?

They look at the walls, trying not to see what is plainly there - hair, bits of flesh and blood splatter accompanied by the large pool of it. No one wants to be in this room. A large crack runs diagonal across the big window. A red splotch decorated the window like a surrealist painting.

BOB

Looks like a fight.

HOWIE SALINGER

Big fight from the looks of it.

Theresa, ever practical, looks out the window.

THERESA

There won't be anybody here until
the storm clears.

A single generic winter boot sticks out from underneath the blanket. A black scarf lay in a corner. A glove on the window sill... and blood. Blood everywhere. Howie looks around before she gives a slight shudder.

HOWIE SALINGER

We should leave. I'm in the middle
of a caribou that needs cutting
up.

CHUGI NICK

Don't touch the body.

Howie nods.

HOWIE SALINGER

We can close up the house and
leave it be.

Chugi nods in agreement.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah. You do that. I'll call the
Troopers. See if I can get
through.

Chugi exits the room. Bob shivers violently. They look at
each other in disbelief and fear. Howie gives an answering
shiver. They back out of the room and close the door.

EXT. PATSY'S HOUSE

Chugi strides down the front steps and down the street. She
takes out her cell phone and dials Anna as the snow swirls
around her. It rings almost too long before Anna picks up.

ANNA RAYLEN (O.S.)

Hello?

CHUGI NICK

Hey, Anna.

CUT TO:

INT. CHUGI'S ONE LIVING ROOM HOUSE

Chugi's voice fades in and out

CHUGI NICK (O.S.)

Got ... business ... office, Anna.
I'll be a while. ... happened.

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi? What? I can't hear you,
Chugi. What happened?

CHUGI NICK

... a body. I ... troopers. I'll
be ... late.

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi? Chugi? I can't hear you.
Where are you?

CUT TO:

CHUGI NICK

I'm going to the VPSO Office,
Anna. I'll call when I get there.
If I can get reception- Anna?
Anna?

The call has dropped. Chugi is frustrated but resigned. The snow swirls around her as she stuffs the phone into her coat while she disappears into the snow laden night.

INT. VPSO BUILDING - NIGHT

Inside the VPSO building, Chugi walks across a large room with chairs placed in circle. A table laden with coffee supplies is labelled above with KUUVVIAQ. The room is ringed by doors labelled DETAINEE, EVIDENCE, CARVING and VPSO. Chugi makes a bee line for the VPSO open door. Inside, a cluttered desk faces the doorway. The desk is full, stacked with papers, picture frames, oosiks, ulus, Yupiit masks and a carving of a hunter with a spear ready to strike at a seal surfacing. She drops her keys on the desk as she takes off her jacket.

Surveying her desk, Chugi grabs a mask and hangs it on a hook ready to receive it on the wall behind the desk. Stepping back to review her handy work, she gives a satisfied smile. Her smile widens as she takes in the two things on the wall - the mask and a candid VPSO graduation picture. Anna also appears in the picture. She gazes at Chugi almost with hero worship.

Back to business, her eyes drop to the CB on a long shelf below the mask. The shelf is littered with additional police electronics - handheld radios, charging stations, and extra microphones for the radios and the CB.

With pursed lips, she turns on the CB radio. The light flickers on the screen as she raises the mic to her lips.

CHUGI NICK

Beaver Station, Beaver Station,
comeback. Beaver Station, Beaver
Station. Paugna One calling for
Beaver Station.

The radio spits out static for a long moment before a very
patchy voice comes through.

TROOPERS.V

Paugna One, ... read ... - bare...
Comeback.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah, ah, the storm is playing
havoc with our system.

TROOPERS.

Storm? Bad ... system.

CHUGI NICK

If you can hear me. I've got one
unidentified female body.
Comeback.

TROOPERS.

Paugna One Paugna One. ... You're
breaking ... Call ... after
...storm passes. Comeback.

CHUGI NICK

Affirmative, Beaver Station. Will
do what I can on this end-

TROOPERS.

Paugna One? Paugna One? ...
breaking up.

Frustrated, Chugi stares at the radio with dismay.

CHUGI NICK

Paugna One out.

She hangs up the mic and the radio light goes out.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Anna looks out the kitchen window - watching the snow as it whips around the house. Fear and loathing war across her face.

ANNA RAYLEN

I have never seen a body like that. Why would someone be so violent?

Chugi flounces on the couch. Anna whips her head around to Chugi, narrowing her eyes.

CHUGI NICK

What? It's my house. And I'm tired. Come sit.

Chugi pats the couch. Anna crosses to the couch to sit. She looks back at her hands as sadness consumes her.

ANNA RAYLEN

I have always admired you. You mean a lot to me.

Chugi gives Anna an impish smile.

CHUGI NICK

Only as much as you let it.

ANNA RAYLEN

I need to come to Paugna more often. Get back to my roots.

CHUGI NICK

We'll alternate, yeah?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Anna pulls up in front of the cafe and enters, stomping her boots to knock the snow off. The Two Aunties are in the back giggling and showing affection. An old woman seated near the window waves at her. This is GRANDMA (72 but looks 60). Howie is also in the cafe. Anna waves at her and both women wave back.

ANNA RAYLEN

Waqaa, Roxy. Can I get a cup of Saskaq and kuuffiak? I'm sitting with Grandma today.

ROXY

You get your own cups. I'll bring the coffee and tea bags. Sugar?

ANNA RAYLEN

Honey?

ROXY

Sorry, sweetie. Not until the barge comes in the summer.

Anna gives an apologetic smile.

ANNA RAYLEN

Well, can't hurt to ask.

ROXY

(wryly)

I'll give you that.

Anna retrieves the cups from the condiment and cup station and places them next to Grandma as she slides into the chair across from her.

ANNA RAYLEN

Must be a lot of honey drinkers here. We still have honey in Mitzi Bay.

Grandma's face lights up as Anna situates herself.

GRANDMA

Watchyerdoin? I am so glad you came.

ANNA RAYLEN

I'm glad I made it. How you doin'?

GRANDMA

Too much has happened. Someone was killed last night.

ANNA RAYLEN

(subdued)

I know. Howie told me. Said it was
horrific.

GRANDMA

Salinger is always one for
spreading news.

Anna scoffs.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah. Gossip hound. I think she
takes special delight in spreading
such horrible news.

Roxy approaches with a coffee pot and a hot water pot.

ROXY

How are you ladies doing today?
Can I getcha anything?

ANNA RAYLEN

You still have your oatmeal on in
the back?

ROXY

Yes. With brown sugar or maple
syrup?

ANNA RAYLEN

Both? And Grandma, you want eggs?
I'd like eggs, too.

Grandma nods her assent.

GRANDMA

And steak. I'm hungry.

ROXY

Right-o!

Roxy exits to the kitchen. Anna can hear her banging pots
and dishes around.

GRANDMA

Enough about that. How is your
husband?

ANNA RAYLEN

Ex. Boyfriend.

GRANDMA

Oh? What happened?

ANNA RAYLEN

Nothing. He wanted more than I can give.

GRANDMA

So. No grandbabies then.

ANNA RAYLEN

Not yet anyway. Unless I adopt. I could do that and live at Chugi's.

GRANDMA

You could. There are lots Yugcetun children who'd love a good stable home.

ANNA RAYLEN

I would need to vet them so Bethel doesn't happen again.

GRANDMA

He was sad and feeling lost. As long as you let them know they are found, Bethel will not happen again.

A moment of silence stretches out before them. The coffee pot sizzles in the background. There is a faint clinking as Roxy washes dishes in the back. The radio plays.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

That was Ossie with his rendition of Whale's Song. A lullaby his momma, Darlene Anvik taught him. Are you ready to get your dance fans out? Come to the Council meeting on Commemoration Day and show us what you got! Bob and Ricky will be dancing the Paugna Mask set. At the VPSO building tomorrow.

(MORE)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Festivities will start at 7pm.
Bring a dish, aye. And we'll see
you there.

Local music begins to play softly on the radio.

ANNA RAYLEN

(softly)

I want to hang out with my best
friend.

Grandma gives her a puzzling look. Anna is nervous.

GRANDMA

And do what?

ANNA RAYLEN

Live with her. Grow old with her.

Grandma has regained the twinkle in her eye.

GRANDMA

At least with her you'd have a way
to pass on our culture. She has so
much knowledge. A true culture
bearer.

Anna relaxes.

INT. VEHICLE - DAY

Anna drives the SUV back home. The snow hinders visibility.
Wind gusts periodically rock the SUV. Anna drives slowly.
Chugi sits in the passenger seat.

CHUGI NICK

I don't know why I can't drive.
It's not like I'm too tired.

Anna taps her head and looks at Chugi.

ANNA RAYLEN

Dammit. Let me concentrate. I
can't see the road.

CHUGI NICK

Look. I'm just sayin', adopting is
quite reasonable.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah.

CHUGI NICK

When would you adopt these mythical kids?

ANNA RAYLEN

Village kids could use a foster home near home. I could try them out and then adopt them.

CHUGI NICK

A try before you buy? Seems kinda ethically challenged.

ANNA RAYLEN

I could adopt the Henry kid.

CHUGI NICK

Come live with me before you decide. You need to get over your ex first.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah. Yeah. Sounds reasonable.

CHUGI NICK

More than reasonable.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Anna whittles a block of wood by the fire at Chugi's house. Chugi nudges her and Anna shrugs it off and snuffles.

CHUGI NICK

Allergies acting up again, ay?

Anna nods her head and continues to work the wood.

ANNA RAYLEN

I wish...

Beat

CHUGI NICK

You wish what?

ANNA RAYLEN
(whispers)
Nothing.

They sit in companionable silence.

INT. VPSO BUILDING - NIGHT

The village council meeting.

The whole village is there. Kids run around and elders get fed. Small obvious dance groups sprinkle the crowd, easily spotted because of their fur dance fans, matching qespaq's and/or fur and bead headbands. Daniel stands in the middle of the room and turns as he speaks to the crowd.

DANIEL ANDERS
Every year we do this. Every year
it's the same. Every year we see
each other. Every year we take
care of each other. Let's never
change that.

The group murmurs assent and heads nod.

DANIEL ANDERS (CONT'D)
Everybody here knows Bob. Bob is a
direct descendent of the maker of
this third iteration of the masks.
He is here, as he does every year,
to remind us of the story of us.

In Yup'ik with english subtitles:

BOB
Thank you very much. I am filled
with gratitude that you have
decided to join me on this dark
night. We have had many dark times
in our many years of being here.
This is the story of you. This is
the story of us. Those-

Bob points to the masks, now leaning up against the wall.

BOB (CONT'D)

There were two brothers whose
names have been lost to history.
They left their village.

Ricky picks up one of the smaller masks and an audience member picks up the other one (BROTHER 1 and BROTHER 2). The Brothers actions are dance pantomiming (in Inuit style dance) during Bob's speech/song. A drummer plays an Alaskan Inuit skin drum throughout.

BOB (CONT'D)

It was too crowded and very little
game.

The Brothers face each other as if to fight.

BOB (CONT'D)

The people were fighting with each
other.

With the drum beat (sped up), the Brothers charge but the whip around with the backs to each other – stylistically fighting off imaginary foes. They turn to dance side by side pantomiming paddling.

BOB (CONT'D)

The two brothers came upriver in
the spring. Farther than any had
ever gone

They brothers 'plant' their paddles.

BOB (CONT'D)

They found a spot that was this
here village. They were prosperous
and enjoyed a good life.

The drum beat slows as Brothers shoot rifles, clean a hide, eat and then rock a baby.

BOB (CONT'D)

Only one thing missing. Families.
In the spring of one year the
brothers danced traditional dance.

(MORE)

BOB (CONT'D)

They danced for 5 days straight - asking for the land to give them a wife.

The drum beat quickens as, five times in quick succession, the Brothers shoot rifles, clean a hide, eat and then rock a baby

BOB (CONT'D)

Afterwards they fell into a deep sleep.

The dancers stop and look up. Every one pauses.

BOB (CONT'D)

Oh ho, hup. Ho, hup.

Brother 1 pantomimes eating.

BOB (CONT'D)

The next morning there was stew on the stove when they woke. The first brother woke up to the smells. A light figure fed him and he asked if the figure was his wife. The figure laughed as he fell back to sleep.

The Brother 2 pantomimes eating while Brother 1 sleeps.

An audience member joins with the largest mask - the WOMAN. The mask is so big that only their feet stick out the bottom.

BOB (CONT'D)

They both woke the following day - no stew, no fire. They wondered if they had dreamed it. The next week as the brothers hunted for Tuntu (caribou) they came across a woman in their path. Her speech was not clear. It seemed she coughed a lot.

The Woman dances closer and closer to Brother 1 as Brother 2 becomes forlorn.

BOB (CONT'D)

This brother brought her home. The 1st brother took her as a wife. Soon the 2nd brother became despondent as the house filled with his brother's children. The woman spoke to the 1st brother and they both decided that she would be the 2nd brother's wife.

The Woman dance to Brother 2 but he pushes her away, still sad.

BOB (CONT'D)

The second brother rejected the gift, saying that you two belong together. One day she went home.

The Woman dances backward away from the brothers, who become sad. She dances back while opening her mask. It shows two faces. And many white feathers.

BOB (CONT'D)

The Woman came back the next spring with her cousin. The brothers were happy. They both had wives and the village filled with children.

The Brothers masks open to show many faces. The Woman mask slows and begins to close. She moves away from the brothers. The mask is set upright on the floor.

BOB (CONT'D)

Soon the women said that they must go. The men agreed but said they would look for them soon. The women left. That night a great rumble happened and upon first light the brother's and the children found a two new mountains in the shape of sleeping grizzly. It is said that the men danced themselves to sleep near them and if you look to the east you will see the four of them dancing in the aurora.

The masks open farther, showing children, spirits, the brothers and their wives and the spirit of those mountains and the aurora borealis. The music stops.

BOB (CONT'D)

It is said that as long as we have these masks, here in the village, the village will remain whole as our ancestor look after us. Invitational!!

The village members move to the open area and dances a shortened rendition of the story, with the masks.

INT. VILLAGE SCHOOL

In the gym, Chugi wanders the crowd, casually calling out greetings to people. Auntie One and Auntie Two wander about kissing babies and asking after everyone they meet. They suddenly talk in hushed tones when Chugi approaches them.

CHUGI NICK

Cama-i, Aunties! Long time no-see-um!

Chugi chuckles at her joke. Both Aunties look at her with trepidation. Auntie Two shakes her head sorrowfully.

AUNTIE TWO

Neklang. You should go home.

Auntie One digs her elbow into Auntie Two.

AUNTIE TWO (CONT'D)

(indignantly)

What?

AUNTIE ONE

Don't.

AUNTIE TWO

She should be as happy as we are.

Some kind of unwritten communication flows between the two Aunties, culminating in agreement with not talking to Chugi. Chugi becomes agitated as the Aunties ignore her.

CHUGI NICK

What? What? What did I do? Auntie One? Auntie Two, I am right here. What's going on here? Do you know something about Patsy's place?

The Aunties throw fearful glances at each other and leave by backing away from Chugi. Chugi throws her hands up and lets them go.

INT VILLAGE SCHOOL - DAY - LATER

Auntie one and Auntie Two, still feeling uneasy, wander through the crowds in the gym. Distracted, they bump into Howie.

HOWIE SALINGER

Whoa, Aunties! Be careful!

AUNTIE TWO

Chugi is still here.

AUNTIE ONE

She hasn't left yet.

INT. ELDER BOB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi walks up to a small cargo container house. The spray foam artfully sprayed and carved into a spotted seal beside the door. She knocks. It sounds muffled. The door swings open after a muffled response. Bob is just rising from his chair to open the door. His eyes go wide with shock as he stands but he doesn't give any other reaction. The radio plays in the background.

CHUGI NICK

Bob, what do you know about the body on front street. Why won't the Aunties talk to me?

Chugi comes in and shuts the door. The radio goes statically for a second. Bob backs away to give her room.

Bob is terrified now. The radio announcer stops the music. Bobs eyes slide to the radio. Chugi waits patiently for him to speak.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

This storm is gonna pack a wallop. Some say it's the storm of the century.

(MORE)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Had three of those since last fall. Stay safe and button up. Temperatures will continue to fall to well past -50 F. Phones lines are down but don't bother calling Arnold. He can't fix 'em until the storm blows over. Kiss your sweetie every time you leave. It might be your last. Keep listening for more updates, meanwhile, as you snuggle up to your aipaa, here is The Last Pow Wow Girl by Rez Dogs.

CHUGI NICK

I saw you at the house. You were terrified.

BOB

Yah.

CHUGI NICK

And it wasn't about the body. It was something else. What were you afraid of?

His words come out strangled

BOB

You.

CHUGI NICK

Don't look so shocked. You didn't hide it very well.

BOB

Why are you here?

CHUGI NICK

I have to investigate if I want to get into the academy.

BOB

You can't be here.

CHUGI NICK

Bob. I am not gonna hurt you.

BOB

I am not afraid of you.

CHUGI NICK

Who are you afraid of?

A snowmachine pulls past the front to the side of the house, the headlight flashes across the living room. Only one shadow is cast on the wall.

Bob goes around her to open the door. His eyes clearly show fear. Footsteps crunch on the snow as the snowmachiner walks length of the side of the house.

BOB

You gotta go.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah, okay. But I'll be back.

Chugi exits the house. Shakily, Bob closes the door after her.

INT. VILLAGE SCHOOL - A MEMORIAL - DAY TO NIGHT

The whole village has gathered in the school's gym. Howie holds a black cloth that has been draped over a large picture frame. Howie drops the cloth after a pensive side eyed glance at Chugi. She minutely adjusts the cloth and the flowers on the table nearby.

There is a subdued bustle in the gym. Suddenly a little kid screams in terror as they run from the entrance of the gym to their mother. The mother comforts the inconsolable child as the child points to the doors where Chugi, among others, enter the gymnasium.

INT. CHUGI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The radio play Yup'ik fiddle music as Anna carves more of the mask. She cuts herself and runs to the sink to take care of it.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Them Aunties. Sweet Aunties. They both know that this has been a trying time.

(MORE)

RADIO ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

They ask that you come over and
share a cuppa with them. They'll
have the moose stew hot and ready
tomorrow from 9am to midnight.
Come sit a little, cry a little,
and laugh a lot.

Anna breaks down crying as a mournful song plays on the
radio.

INT. MARTIN'S SISTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Chugi finds the door to the house open. The light shines
out. The snow swirls around the entrance. She walks up to
the entrance and peers in. Martin is throwing a knife at
the floor.

CHUGI NICK

So this is what you do in your
spare time?

Martin continues sticking the knife in the floor.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Your sister's not gonna be happy
about the state of her floors when
you get done.

Martin sighs exasperatedly and slams the knife on the
table.

MARTIN WASSALIE

She better not bitch about the
floor at all.

A gust of wind slams the door shut as Chugi stares at him.
Slowly Martin looks up. He fearfully looks up at Chugi
before he becomes more sullen.

CHUGI NICK

What do you know about the body at
Patsy's?

Martin agitatedly runs his hands through his hair, settling
himself on the single ratty chair.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Don't know nothin' about no body.
Why she was there? She shouldn't
have been there.

CHUGI NICK

Why not? The house has been empty
for a long time.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Good thing Howie was there or it
could have...

Martin sits back on the couch, rationalizing.

CHUGI NICK

What could have what?

MARTIN WASSALIE

Howie tried to help.

CHUGI NICK

I know. For all her gossip, she
does try to help.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Got to get away.

Chugi is upset with Martin but seeing the gentle
interrogation wasn't going anywhere, she stops speaking and
Martin keeps evading her eyes.

Martin thumps his head several times with his fist as if he
could beat the thoughts out of his head.

MARTIN WASSALIE (CONT'D)

Get out...

CHUGI NICK

You feel shifty.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Go away.

CHUGI NICK

Martin!

A dish falls from the counter in the back. Martin turns to look at it. Looking back at the door he slowly backs away from the dish.

MARTIN WASSALIE

You can't be here. You not...

CHUGI NICK

Well, I am here. What do you know?

MARTIN WASSALIE

I've got nothing to say.

CHUGI NICK

What do you know?

Martin yells pointedly at the dish:

MARTIN WASSALIE

Get out!

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

The radio plays and the storm rages. Anna sips her tea on the couch. Chugi looks out the window.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Time to slow down with your aipaq
- or your honey - with some Ruben
S and the Mermaids.

The radio plays a slow song and Chugi crosses to sit on the couch with Anna. Chugi leans her head on Anna's shoulder. Anna smiles slightly.

INT. VILLAGE SCHOOL - NIGHT

Chugi wanders through the hallway. Looks at pictures of Bob and his collage of pictures under a banner of: MEET YOUR ELDER PROGRAM. In them he is happy, determined and, sometimes, serious as he shows youngsters of varying ages how to fish, trap, hunt, drum and carve. Chugi hears a noise. Some giggling. Rustling. Curious she follows the noise to a hallway. The Great Mask Dances resting it's chin on the floor, in the middle of the hallway. It swings back and forth. The boys Patrick and Uvulaa play fight with it. A great voice booms out of it.

DANIEL ANDERS

Fee Fi Fo Fum, I smell the blood
of a Gwich'in one!

CHUGI NICK

(sharply)

Daniel!

Daniel stops and peeks around the side of the Great Mask at the same time the boys whip around. Daniel's face drains of blood. An angry Chugi sternly looks at Daniel and the boys. The boys are then puzzled. Chugi is gone. Howie rounds the corner to see them and looks at them in dismay and anger.

HOWIE SALINGER

What are you doing?

Daniel recovers.

UVULAA

How did she...?

Patrick shushes him. Daniel puts on his teacherly voice.

DANIEL ANDERS

I am discussing the finer points
of the Great Mask and how these
gentlemen could someday be dancing
it for the community. You?

HOWIE SALINGER

(unsure)

I- Ahh. Goot. Don't let it sit on
the floor.

DANIEL ANDERS

Sorry. It slipped and I just now
caught it.

HOWIE SALINGER

Mm-huh!

Howie gives Daniel, Uvulaa and Patrick a hard stern look before turning around and leaving.

INT. VPSO OFFICE – NIGHT

Chugi tries to get the CB radio to work correctly, again. The light from the radio flickers. She lets out a frustrated groan.

CHUGI NICK
Beaver Station. Beaver Station,
comeback. Paugna One calling for
Beaver Station. Comeback.

Static. Modulating static. Even more frustrated Chugi turns off the radio and tosses the mic near it.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE LIVING ROOM HOUSE – NIGHT

Chugi sheds her outer gear as she tries to reach the ringing phone. She doesn't.

The answering machine turns on:

CHUGI NICK
"You hungry? I was just sitting
down to eat.

ANNA RAYLEN
Yes. Please! I am starving. What's
it?

CHUGI NICK
Tundra chicken, carrots, celery
and onion. And putayta."

Chugi's mood softens as the laughter cuts off as the answering machine BEEPS.

HOWIE SALINGER
Hey. I know you're having a hard
time. Um. And I'd hate to put more
on your plate but you're the
closest thing to a police officer
we got.
(beat)
The Great Mask is missing. Well, I
mean, it was misplaced. We can't
find it.

Chugi redresses and heads toward the door.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Chugi walks through the school parking lot. She sees Neraa, Patrick and Uvulaa on the other side. Neraa slowly backs up as Patrick and Uvulaa circle him.

PATRICK

Did you take it?

NERAA

What. No. No one did.

PATRICK

Your Dad took Roxy's money. You could have taken it.

NERAA

Well, I didn't.

PATRICK

How can we be sure. You took Atur's lollipop that one time.

NERAA

Gawd, Patrick, I was 4!

Patrick grabs Neraa by his front jacket.

UVULAA

Then who took the mask?

NERAA

I don't know but it wasn't me.
Maybe Bob wanted to make sure the
big one was ready for dance
festival. Go ask him!

Neraa wrests himself from Patrick's grasp and runs away.
Uvulaa and Patrick start to run after him when:

CHUGI NICK

Hey!

Her voice echos in the space. Uvulaa and Patrick stop
short, confused.

UVULAA

What?

A wind ruffles their hair as Chugi strides past. Both Uvulaa and Patrick shiver. The boys watch Neraa as Chugi runs after him.

EXT. MARTIN'S SISTER'S HOUSE - DAY

Martin packs a box.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Daniel sits at the counter by himself. Uvulaa and Patrick sit together in a back booth.

Howie follows Theresa into the Sip 'n' Git. Both are agitated.

THERESA

The Brother Masks are also missing
and we can't find-

HOWIE SALINGER

Bob's not at his house.

DANIEL ANDERS

Now all of them are gone?

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi leans against the counter as Anna fixes herself a sandwich from homemade bread and homemade roast. Anna tunelessly HUMS. Randomly looking out at the raging blizzard happening on the other side of the window.

CHUGI NICK

There something going on in the
village. Something's not right.
Everyone is scared.

Anna hums an UH-HUH sound during her humming.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Ivik's boy Uvalaa was messing with
Neraa again.

Anna, again, hums na UH-HUH sound during her humming.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Patrick practically accused him of taking our village masks. Okay, he did. You know there is some dry fish up on the top shelf, if you want to add to that sandwich.

The house is shook by a gust. Anna stops humming and looks up at Chugi. Her eyes follow Chugi as she crosses to the table. Anna follows her around the table to the shelves to retrieve the dry fish. She bites off a piece before loading her sandwich with it.

Anna set her sandwich on the table and crosses through the living room. To her small duffle bag where she pulls out the mask she started. It is now painted and stained in the style of the jigging stick still on the wall.

ANNA RAYLEN

Ah, Chugi. I made a mask for you. I thought I'd try your way for a change.

Anna puts on the mask and Inuit dances as she pretends to jig (fish) to an imaginary drum beat. Chugi laughs.

CHUGI NICK

Neklang, aipaq, you such a goof!

ANNA RAYLEN

-Bring on the boots, Chugi!

CHUGI NICK

Only if I can bring the cowgirl!

ANNA BORLEN

Only if I can bring the cowgirl!

Anna and Chugi laugh as they dance a quick western jig. Laughing they both fall onto the couch.

Anna takes off the mask.

ANNA RAYLEN

I carved it and I thought I'd give it to you on your birthday. But. What the hay. You can have it now.

CHUGI NICK

Oh, Anna! I love it. Tomorrow I
put it right next to my jiggling
stick. Yeah.

ANNA RAYLEN

Here—

Anna hands the mask to Chugi.

CHUGI NICK

Thank you.

INT. ELDER BOB'S HOUSE - DAY

Chugi closes the front door. The radio plays music.

CHUGI NICK

Bob?

Bob sits in a chair looking out over the snow swept plains
barely visible between gusts of wind. He faces away from
the door.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Bob? Whatchyerdoin'. Bob. You
asleep?

Chugi slow approaches the chair. She looks out into the
storm mesmerized. The radio plays in the background.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

The storm is kickin' up. Bundle up
or snuggle up. It a-brewin' out
there. This song is for our VPSO.

Something like *In The Arms of an Angel* plays. Bob groans.

CHUGI NICK

Bob!

Chugi rushes to squat in the front Bob. Bob's hurt. It's
bad. His front a mass of blood. He coughs his voice hoarse.

BOB

Chugi... Chugi... You can't be
here.

CHUGI NICK

Shh. Shh, Bob. Don't talk now.
Shh.

Chugi rifles through Bob's clothing, looking for the wound. It still oozes. A slash down Bob's side. Viscera, bone and blood.

BOB

No. Don't.

CHUGI NICK

Oh, Bob. I'm so sorry.

BOB

You don't have to be. I will be fine. But you, you have to go. You can't be here.

CHUGI NICK

Good thing I *am* here. You don't have to die alone.

BOB

Thank you.

Bob grimaces and grabs Chugi's hand. She grips his just as tightly as he expires.

CHUGI NICK

Oh, Bob...

Chugi sniffles and stuffs her tears, almost. The door slams open. Startled, she rushes to the door to shut it against the wind, but stops short from closing it. Looking out into the storm, Bob is there dressed in traditional regalia. Fading into the storm, he turns and 1/2 waves 1/2 beckons at Chugi. Chugi, surprised at Bob's appearance, takes a step toward him. At that moment the storm intensifies. Chugi backs up as the door SLAMS shut. Chugi crosses to Bob's body and lays a tender hand on his shoulder.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Whoa, there, you. We'll find out who did this. I'll find out...

After her solemn promise Chugi strides toward the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi walks through the pathways between the houses. Daniel packs something in a box in his house as Chugi walks by. She watches with suspicion but does not stop walking.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi stares off into the night, a cup of tea in her hand. Anna enters from outside and sheds her winter gear.

CHUGI NICK

When you gonna move in with me?

Anna turns her head sharply in Chugi's direction.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

I mean, you are practically living here now. I-

Anna puts a kettle of water on the stove.

ANNA RAYLEN

Aw, Chugi. What are you doin to me? I could stay here but I also need to see my peeps. Grandma tells me it's not healthy to stay so long.

Anna turns the radio on. The music fades as she moves to the sink to stare into the storm.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

The memorial service will be after the basketball game tomorrow. Come out and show your support.

A mournful song plays on the radio.

Anna grasps the sides of the sink and looks up with a shuddering breath, her grief permeating the house. Chugi hugs her and Anna melts into her arms.

CHUGI NICK

It's okay, Anna. It's okay.

ANNA BORLEN
Chugi. I miss—

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
I'll always be here for—

ANNA BORLEN
—you.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
—you.

The kettle whistles, startling both women.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Now shake that sadness off. Here
is the Funkier Chicken Polka by
the Funk Master and the
Freak-a-delics.

The mood broken, Anna reaches in the cupboard and makes tea
for two. As she pours the water from the kettle into the
cups, she looks about the house.

ANNA RAYLEN

Why am I here? I should go home.

Clearly not wanting to go 'home.'

CHUGI NICK

Why are you here?

ANNA RAYLEN

I wanted to move in with you. I— I
left him. But Stella offered me a
deal I couldn't pass up. And now I
think the strings attached are too
much.

CHUGI NICK

What strings?

Anna sits on the couch with her tea. The second cup steams
on the counter.

ANNA RAYLEN

The money, of course, is very
good.

CHUGI NICK

Money?

ANNA RAYLEN

15 K.

CHUGI NICK

(suspiciously)

15 K?! For *what*?

ANNA RAYLEN

Some art was stolen. Hers. I let her art get stolen under my watch. It's why I quit the VPSO. Apparently it had been in the family for a while. The reward is 15,000. I could start over in this house.

CHUGI NICK

So. 15. Is that why people are dying right and left?

ANNA RAYLEN

I—

Crosses to Anna.

CHUGI NICK

Our Elder passed as well. He had it hard. I saw him go. He wasn't alone at the end.

Anna sobs, unable to keep the pain inside anymore.

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi—

Chugi lays her hand on Anna's head. Anna does not remove it. Chugi concentrates. Things start clicking into place.

CHUGI NICK

The masks are— art. Someone is taking art. It wouldn't surprise me if they were being funneled into an art dealer in the lower 48 or Canada. I have to go. But I'll be back.

With a quick kiss on Anna's cheek, Chugi dresses and leaves the room. Confused, Anna holds her hand to her cheek.

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi?

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY - LATER

Chugi watches through the open front door as Anna cleans the entryway and small porch of snow.

Martin drives up on a snowmachine. Anna eyes him suspiciously but doesn't stop her cleaning. Martin turns off his machine and sits on it smugly. Finally, Anna finishes cleaning.

ANNA RAYLEN

(gruff and curtly)

What?

MARTIN WASSALIE

I still have the originals.

ANNA RAYLEN

And?

MARTIN WASSALIE

I don't even have to show them.
Just make 'em doubt you enough.
Just enough.

ANNA RAYLEN

To do what?

MARTIN WASSALIE

To make them think you're the
killer.

ANNA RAYLEN

You are such an evil man.

Martin chuckles.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Generally, no. But don't end up
like Bob.

ANNA RAYLEN
You killed our Elder?

Anna comes down off the porch. Martin meets her halfway.

MARTIN WASSALIE
Not so much. But dead is still
dead.

ANNA RAYLEN
Who then?

Martin shrugs his indifference.

MARTIN WASSALIE
I don't know. Daniel maybe.

ANNA RAYLEN
Why would you do that?

MARTIN WASSALIE
(wryly)
Again. Not me.

ANNA RAYLEN
What do you want, Martin?

MARTIN WASSALIE
I want you... To work for me.

ANNA RAYLEN
Doing what?

MARTIN WASSALIE
Procurement.

ANNA RAYLEN
(sarcastically)
Ooo. Stop with the big words.

MARTIN WASSALIE
I need you to be a distraction
again.

ANNA RAYLEN
For what. When was I— I never
worked—

MARTIN WASSALIE

When you talked to your
boyfriend's mother.

ANNA RAYLEN

Ex and I'm not doing that again. I
don't want to do that.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Didn't need to. And too bad! I
want you to keep Roxy at the Sip
'n' Git.

Anna gives him a derisive snort.

ANNA RAYLEN

No.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Yes.

ANNA RAYLEN

No!

MARTIN WASSALIE

I can make any one believe that
you killed—

ANNA RAYLEN

You don't own me. You're a small
man in a small town! Not even a
town— A village!

Martin raises his hand to hit her and—

Anna turns from to run to the safety of the house—

Chugi sees what he is about to do and—

The storm intensifies and—

Suddenly Chugi is right there—

Martin is flung backwards through the air, over his
snowmachine and into the snow on the other side. A result
of Chugi hitting him. Or a strong gust of wind. Or both.

Chugi looks at him flabbergasted. She looks at her hands, at him and back at her hands. And short circuits out.

Anna turns back to Martin and begins to laugh. Martin, angry, gets up to teach her a lesson but hesitates. He sees Chugi behind Anna. Anna turns around to look at what he sees but Chugi is not there.

He turns fearful and can't get out of there fast enough, dividing his attention between the road and Chugi.

Chugi puts her arm around Anna in a side hug. Anna turns away from her to walk into the house, wiping tears from her face

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE

ANNA RAYLEN
Dammit, Chugi. I wish-

Chugi is behind her.

CHUGI NICK
He won't come back. I'll protect
you. I'll always protect you.

Chugi turns on her heel to go back outside. Anna takes a deep breath and shivers.

ANNA RAYLEN
Chugi? Damn. That's the second
time.

Anna looks around the house in despair. She can't bear the silence. She quickly puts on her outdoor gear.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - NIGHT

Down at the cafe Howie, Ricky and Theresa, Auntie One, Grandma, Roxy, Daniel and the kids from the school, gather on the warming bench and the front tables. Martin sulks in the back, drinking coffee.

HOWIE SALINGER
How could they be missing? Who
does that?

DANIEL ANDERS

I don't know. Nobody born here.

MARTIN WASSALIE

Don't look at me. I wipe my nose daily. Don't want to go back to the pen. Do you?

Martin gives Daniel the stink eye.

THERESA

Somebody stole our masks. The center of our village. Another piece of our culture stolen.

HOWIE SALINGER

Anyone see anyone that don't belong?

RICKY

I ain't seen nobody. It's them kass'at. They've done it again.

GRANDMA

Boarding schools, our language, our children, our ancestor's bones and now our sacred ceremonial pieces.

HOWIE SALINGER

When will it stop?

MARTIN WASSALIE

The only new person here is that Anna.

GRANDMA

She wouldn't do anything. She was a VPSO!

DANIEL ANDERS

Was.

GRANDMA

Is!

MARTIN WASSALIE

Nah, man.—

Grandma looks angrily at him for his disrespect of being too familiar with her. Martin corrects himself quickly.

MARTIN WASSALIE (CONT'D)

Grandmother. She quit that job.
Before she came here.

INT. VPSO OFFICE - NIGHT

Chugi checks some art and auction houses online. The screen keeps messing up.

CHUGI NICK

Stupid dial up.

She writes a note:

"Bob's seal and caribou carvings - online at Found Things and maybe Aviᑦ of Tuntutooliak's mom's mask - Saxton Market. A tonne of our art online."

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi walks into the bedroom. Anna sleeps in her bed, a shirt of Chugi's wrapped around her arm. Her face almost touching the shirt. Chugi watches her with tenderness. Presently she climbs into the bed to spoon Anna. Anna visibly relaxes.

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Daniel sits on his couch and watches TV in a small cabin, in sweatpants and a hoodie. It is sparsely furnished with that single bed and several empty takeout containers neatly stacked on the counter. Two large chests take up most of wall space. The TV and VHS player sit on one of them. A hesitant knock on the door. He pauses player. The knock again, more sure this time. Daniel reluctantly opens rises off the couch and lumbers to the door. It's Anna. She does not come in.

ANNA RAYLEN

Daniel.

DANIEL ANDERS

Anna, what do you want?

ANNA RAYLEN

Martin says you did something to
the Elder that died.

DANIEL ANDERS

I—

ANNA RAYLEN

You what? You hurt him?

DANIEL ANDERS

No. I—

Anna shoulders her way into Daniels cabin. She surveys his
possessions with contempt.

ANNA RAYLEN

So?

DANIEL ANDERS

Anna, I don't know what you want
me to say.

ANNA RAYLEN

The truth.

DANIEL ANDERS

Even if I told you the truth, what
would that accomplish.

ANNA RAYLEN

More than you could know.

DANIEL ANDERS

What?

ANNA RAYLEN

Did you kill our Elder?

DANIEL ANDERS

Bob? I— No.

ANNA RAYLEN

Shh— don't say his name. You know
our ways. We don't need him to
come back and haunt us.

Anna lifts open a chest. In it, the Brother 2 mask wrapped in clothing.

DANIEL ANDERS

Sorry. I- I had nothing to do with him.

They both stand looking at the mask.

ANNA RAYLEN

I knew it. Daniel-

But Daniel is no longer watching her. He has taken off into the storm, quickly disappearing into the night.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Daniel! No! Comeback!

But he doesn't. Anna is horrified - he will never survive - not in the clothes he is wearing.

EXT. STORM RAGING

Daniel runs. The storm swirls around him. He stops. Lost. In the distance, a figure barely discernible in the storm. Chugi. Maybe.

DANIEL ANDERS

Chugi?

He heads toward it. To his dismay, it's a tree.

DANIEL ANDERS (CONT'D)

(confusedly)

A tree? Where the-

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi looks around in the teacher's house. It's has a ransacked look to it. The VHS tape is still paused where Daniel left it. Chugi opens the chest. It's empty. She looks closer. There are paint transfer on the inside of the chest. Of the same color as the Brother masks.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah, Daniel. What were you up to?

EXT. VILLAGE PATHWAY – NIGHT

Chugi makes her way through the village. Uvulaa and Patrick round the corner of a house.

UVULAA

Yeah, man. I don't kid.

Chugi stops. She cannot see them but if she were to continue, she'd bump into them.

PATRICK

Yeah, but Martin?

UVULAA

He killed two people over in Quinahauk.

PATRICK

I don't believe you.

UVULAA

Look it up on the internet. Says he did it in self defense, but my ma says he got away with murder.

When the boys pass Chugi, she isn't there.

INT. VPSO OFFICE – NIGHT

Chugi turns on the CB radio. The static from the radio fills the space. Through the static unclear voices are heard – not quite forming words. Chugi interrupts them when she push the mic button to speak.

CHUGI NICK

Breaker. Breaker.

TROOPERS.

You... Are...

Chugi takes out her pocket knife and unscrews the back of the radio. She fiddles with the insides. The static stops. She brings the mic to her mouth again.

CHUGI NICK

Paugna Station calling.

The static is back. The voices are back.

TROOPERS.

Dead...

She keys the mic again.

CHUGI NICK

Hello?

Chugi tries to dial in the station but it's not getting any clearer.

TROOPERS.

Go...

She keys the mic

CHUGI NICK

Comeback?

TROOPERS.

Home...

Chugi drop/throws the mic and steps back in fear.

CHUGI NICK

Wha-

She backs out of the office and walks to the coffee table and puts down her pocket knife to pour herself a cup of coffee to steady her nerves.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE LIVING ROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna puts in a DVD. Chugi sits on the couch. It's the one she last watched with Chugi.

ANNA RAYLEN

(singsong)

Boots. Boots. Boots. Boots. Boots.

Boots. Boots. Boots. Boots. Boots.

Boots. Boots.

Anna pushes play. She stands to STRETCH, closing her eyes. The DVD freezes on the FBI message. Chugi is front of Anna.

Just as Anna finishes her stretch and opens her eyes, Chugi leans in for a KISS. Anna can see Chugi. She JUMPS back and SCREAMS.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Chugi! You're- Patsy's- You-

Chugi suspiciously looks at Anna. It floods back to her. She short circuits away.

INT. PATSY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi stomps back into the room and almost steps on the body. The pool of blood has congealed and frozen. She looks around as the temperature drops and her breath almost fills the room. The body is there in the same position as she last saw it. Her brow furrows in disbelief, fear and curiosity.

CHUGI NICK

What-

She sees the duck blanket. The boots. Her boots are the same.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Can't be...

Chugi reaches slowly for the blanket and pulls it away from the body.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Who is it...

Her voice trails away as she can see it is her. Dead. Her sadness is reflected in her face.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE LIVING ROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

CHUGI NICK

It is *my* body on Front street.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes. How can you- What-

CHUGI NICK

-Yeah. Me too.

ANNA RAYLEN

How? Why—

CHUGI NICK

Unfinished business? Like who is killing everyone. It's a small village. Someone is the killer. I know it ain me. Isn't me. Wasn't me.

Anna nods in agreement, softening.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Come here.

Anna steps to her and Chugi envelopes her in an embrace. Anna melts.

ANNA RAYLEN

You never left.

CHUGI NICK

I never thought of leaving... I saw Bob. I almost— but I have things to do.

ANNA RAYLEN

Like find out who murdered you in the first place?

CHUGI NICK

And Bob and where Daniel went off to.

ANNA RAYLEN

Did you hurt Martin?

Chugi gives her a surprised look.

CHUGI NICK

Martin? No— I—

Relieved, Anna gives Chugi a quick hug before crossing over to the kitchen.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

That's two. Who do you think it is?

ANNA RAYLEN

Daniel.

CHUGI NICK

Daniel?!

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah. Daniel.

CHUGI NICK

And you base this on?

ANNA RAYLEN

His shifty eyes.

CHUGI NICK

And the empty chest with paint
scrapes and wood chips.

Anna exhales sharply, relieved. Her secret isn't out. Yet.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - DAY

Chugi's house is empty. The radio plays in the background.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

This is the storm to beat all
storms. The system covers much of
Alaska and parts of Canada.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Roxy cleans the counter as she looks out into the storm.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

It's gonna dump upwards of almost
four feet of snow. Shovel out your
Aunties-

INT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Daniel's house is empty. The radio plays as the storm rages
outside.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

-house and make sure everyone has
enough wood or fuel.

INT. VILLAGE SCHOOL – DAY

The school is empty. The lights shut off. The radio plays.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

In other news, no school today.
Daniel Anders seems to have gotten
himself lost.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE – DAY

Chugi drinks tea staring outside. The cup Anna made still sits full on the counter. Anna's empty cup next to it.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Here's to hoping that all who are
lost, find their way in the storm.

INT. VPSO BUILDING – NIGHT

Neraa has a piece of wood. A tree trunk. Resting on two folding chairs. The bark removed. He works at it with a small knife. Uvulaa walks in and surprised to see Neraa, stops. The radio plays in the background.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Sending love to all of our
grieving relatives in Paugna,
Alaska.

An uplifting song from the 70's plays on the radio as Uvulaa moves to see that Neraa has made the impression of an eye in the style and shape of the Great Mask. Neraa stops carving and backs up. Uvulaa leans against the coffee table.

NERAA

I wasn't doing anything.

Uvulaa is expressionless. Neraa fearfully.

Beat. Uvulaa indicates Neraa's work.

UVULAA

That's good.

Uvulaa looks at Neraa with new respect. Neraa eyes him with suspicion.

UVULAA (CONT'D)

No, but look. I'm sorry.

Neraa's eyes narrow in distrust and disbelief.

NERAA

What?

UVULAA

Look. I got a set of tools here.
You can use them.

Uvulaa digs in a box under the coffee table. He withdraws a bundle and thrusts it into Neraa's hands. Neraa reluctantly takes it. He unrolls the bundle and it's a set of carving tools, each in their own pocket. Clean. Unused. Shiny.

NERAA

Why would you give me this.

UVULAA

My Da sent a new set last week and
I know you need it. Otherwise you
wouldn't be worrying that wood
with your pig sticker.

NERAA

It's not mine. I found it.

INT. VPSO BUILDING — FLASHBACK

Neraa makes a beeline for the coffee pot. Guiltily, he pours himself a cup and the drowns it in sugar and cream. He sits on the chairs in a circle. Quietly contemplating. The CB Radio in Chugi's office comes to life with static. Neraa gets up, fearful someone has caught him. He creeps quietly to look into Chugi's office. Nothing. Something drops on the coffee table. Neraa jumps. The CB radio turns off. Neraa walks to look at what dropped. It's a knife. Chugi's knife. Small. He picks it up and turns it over in his hands.

END FLASHBACK

INT. VPSO BUILDING

Uvulaa looks at Neraa.

UVULAA

Creepy. It's Chooogi come to
haunt you—oooo.

Uvulaa makes ghost motions. They both chuckle and Neraa is
more at ease with Uvulaa.

NERAA

Dude. Bro.

UVULAA

Naw, man. But seriously. You do
good work. Chugi'd be proud.

NERAA

(reverently hushed)

Dude, don't say her name. She
could get stuck here.

UVULAA

Or the ancestors might take you...

NERAA

Dude, stop it.

Uvulaa shrugs it off but there is a hint of uneasiness
about him.

UVULAA

She always thought you'd be the
mask maker.

NERAA

(embarrassed)

Whatever.

EXT. VILLAGE SCHOOL — NIGHT

Anna calls out to Uvulaa

ANNA RAYLEN

Uvulaa!

Uvulaa stops almost compelled to walk toward Anna.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Uvulaa, whachyerdoin'

UVULAA

I- uh-

ANNA RAYLEN

What are you doing out so late.

UVULAA

I- I was to bring a package to Martin. Mom wanted-

ANNA RAYLEN

Howie wanted what?

UVULAA

Just some packages that Martin got.

ANNA RAYLEN

Why does your mom have them? Why didn't Martin get them directly? Eh?

UVULAA

I dunno. Martin gets his mail at our mailbox sometimes. He doesn't have his own house. He stays at his sister's or his cousin's house.

ANNA RAYLEN

Why doesn't he- Where's he been before?

UVULAA

Mom said he was in jail.

ANNA RAYLEN

Jail?

UVULAA

For murder in Quinahauk. He took some items that the owner wanted back.

ANNA RAYLEN

What. What did he take?

UVULAA

A seal carving.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY TO NIGHT

Chugi sits on the warming bench still dressed for the weather. She sips a cup of tea, warming her hands. Content, she looks at everyone. Ricky and Howie sit at one table. Theresa sits behind them at another table. The Aunties stare back from their post at the last table. Patrick at another sits in the back. The tension is palpable. Uvulaa walks in. He ignores Howie. She squints at him in displeasure. Uvulaa makes his way to Patrick.

PATRICK

Damn, bro. Your house ain't all that far away.

UVULAA

Dude, shut up.

Ricky stirs his coffee. The TING TING TING of the spoon hitting the sides is extra loud.

RICKY

All I know is that I couldn't find him. His house is empty. And with no phone service until this storm clears...

THERESA

After the body at Patsy's, our Elder and the sister's house - that's three bodies.

RICKY

Do we have a serial killer on our hands?

HOWIE SALINGER

We don't have three. Martin must have slipped and fell.

An audible gasp from those within earshot.

HOWIE SALINGER (CONT'D)

Where's Daniel?

THERESA

He's missing, too. We can't even
look for him in the blizzard.

Ricky nods in agreement.

RICKY

It's too unpredictable.

THERESA

Daniel probably took the masks.

HOWIE SALINGER

I wouldn't put it past him.

Ricky stirs his coffee loudly again as Howie looks out the window – her face unreadable before disapproval marches across. She turns to Ricky with a fake smile and puts her hand over his stirring hand to stop the ringing of the spoon in the mug. He stops stirring and pointedly puts the spoon on the table.

THERESA

Anna said she met him in
Anchortown and they had a thing.

Howie whips her disapproving look to Theresa.

HOWIE SALINGER

A thing? What thing?

THERESA

I don't know. It ended badly.

Chugi is gone.

INT. SUV – NIGHT

Anna impatiently drives on the road from Chugi's house. The snow swirls and blows. The SUV rocks back and forth in the wind. Suddenly Chugi is beside her.

CHUGI NICK

I didn't know you dated Daniel.

At that moment the wind hits the SUV so hard that it swerves. Anna over corrects before she gets it under control.

ANNA RAYLEN

What the— Don't do that! You
scared me.

The storm intensifies as Chugi stares out into it. Her face almost unreadable except for her mouth - a small thin line of irritation. Anna KNOWS Chugi is upset.

CHUGI NICK

You didn't tell me you dated
Daniel.

ANNA RAYLEN

I didn't. I mean, I did, but I
didn't—

CHUGI NICK

—Didn't what?!

The storm intensifies more. Anna slows to a crawl.

ANNA RAYLEN

Daniel was just a fling!

CHUGI NICK

A fling?! Is everyone a fling?

ANNA RAYLEN

No! I—

CHUGI NICK

You're just waiting for your ex to
take you back.

ANNA RAYLEN

No. I hate him.

CHUGI NICK

That's what you say every time you
break up with him!

ANNA RAYLEN

Not this time!

CHUGI NICK

No, Every time!

ANNA RAYLEN

No! I want—

CHUGI NICK

You don't know what you want!

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes, I do!

CHUGI NICK

And I can't give it to you.

ANNA RAYLEN

But. We can try together.

CHUGI NICK

Why were you with Daniel?

ANNA RAYLEN

I didn't love him. It was just a fling. To hurt my ex.

CHUGI NICK

To hurt your ex?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yeah, it didn't work and Daniel thought it was more than it could be.

CHUGI NICK

What do you mean?

ANNA RAYLEN

He kept calling. Kept showing up at my work. That's why I moved out of Anchartown and to Mitzi Bay.

CHUGI NICK

Anna, you got be straight...

ANNA RAYLEN

Just for a little bit.

They arrive at Chugi's house. Anna turns to face Chugi but Chugi is no longer there. From the steering wheels POV, Anna is left to make her way through the storm to the house.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE

Anna opens the door. The wind catches it slams it open, damaging it. Now it won't shut completely and the wind pushes the snow in through the cracks.

ANNA RAYLEN

(Under her breath)

Chugi! Chugi! Dammit, Chugi, where are you?

Anna strips her winter gear off and proceeds add wood to the stove. She puts a kettle on the stove as the lights flicker.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Chugi! Come on. Don't be like that.

The lights flicker before turning off permanently. Chugi flickers into existence on the other side of the couch. This is not friendly Chugi or even VPSO Chugi. This is Raging Chugi. She speaks in an amplified voice. Tightly. Barely controlled.

CHUGI NICK

You made a mess of you life and now with the masks missing, you're in the middle of it. Again! You take and you take and now our culture - our very way of life is at stake and you're still trying to make money. I am not liking what you have become. You're gonna have to make a decision!

Stunned, Anna opens her mouth and shuts it without saying anything. Chugi walks toward her in a rage. Chugi shoves the couch out of the way and with clenched fists she disappears just before reaching Anna. Anna drops to the floor crying. The lights flicker on.

ANNA RAYLEN

I'm sorry, Chugi. I am so sorry.

The lights turn off. There is nothing except the raging storm buffeting the house outside and the soft banging of the door.

EXT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT – NIGHT

Anna drives into the parking lot. Looks around. She screams Chugi's name inside the SUV and slams her hands on the steering wheel in frustration. She drives off.

EXT. PATSY'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Anna, desperate, drives up and unrolls her window.

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi! Chugi!

INT. SUV – NIGHT

Anna drives through town. The mask is beside her – underneath her protective hand. She wipes the tears from her eyes.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE – NIGHT

Anna is curled up in a nest of blankets on the couch, with the mask, nursing a cup of hot tea and cheesecake. She cries silently as if unaware of the tears. The strong wind still buffets the house.

EXT. STORM RAGING – NIGHT

Chugi RAGES at the world. The snow swirls thick around her. The wind whips her hair up into the night air.

EXT. VILLAGE PATHWAY

The wind whips around Chugi as she stalks through the village. Doors blow open, lights flicker and shut off as she passes. Dogs howl and the wind screeches. Chugi will not be tamed.

Howie turns a corner and stops – unsure.

HOWIE SALINGER

Chugi?

Chugi's face is masked with fury – almost a caricature of a person. Howie steps back.

HOWIE SALINGER (CONT'D)

Chugi- I- I didn't mean to- It
wasn't- Oh, GAWD...

Chugi walks, unseeing, past her. Howie is thrown backwards by a gust of wind/Chugi's fury.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE

Anna unwraps from her nest turned cocoon. The lights are still not on. The fire in the stove now just coals. Anna's breath puffs in the coldness of the room. She tries to close the door but now an ice jamb has frozen it open.

Shivering, she dons her coat and grabs the flat shovel and attacks ice jamb. The storm's ferocity still quite high.

There. At the edge of visibility, Chugi still stalks.

Her chore complete finally, Anna looks up. A silhouette in the snowstorm...

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi...?

Confused, Anna closes the door or tries to. Chugi stalks angrily toward Anna. Anna frantically kicks at the door to make it close. It finally does. Anna slides down bracing herself to keep the door shut as Chugi thumps on it, rocking the house.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

CHUGI! I'm sorry! Please! Chugi-
Why? Why Are doing this?

EXT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE – NIGHT

Chugi abruptly stops hitting the door when she hears the phone ringing.

The answering machine turns on:

CHUGI NICK

"You hungry? I was just sitting
down to eat.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes. Please! I am starving. What's it?

CHUGI NICK

Tundra chicken, carrots, celery and onion. And putayta."

The laughter cuts off as the answering machine BEEPS. The caller hangs up.

Chugi, abruptly calm, face on the door to her house, remembers who she is. She caresses the door, suddenly sad.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Anna. Oh, Anna. You vex me. How do we keep our way of life safe when we fight the murderers and thieves that live among us. Who's safe anymore? It's too much. Too much for one soul.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

The door no longer thumps. Anna has her eyes squeezed shut, her body tightly wrapped into a ball of fear. She leans her head back against the door as relief uncurls her body.

EXT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi is gone. The snow swirls around the house.

INT. VPSO BUILDING - NIGHT

Chugi enters her office, surprised that she is there. She turns and walks out and -

INT. PATSY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi walks into the back room of the house. A quick look at the livingroom assures her there is no one else in the house. The blood is still on the walls.

She looks over the crime scene. Something isn't right. The temperature drops. The boxes are no longer here. Neither is the body. The walls are clean again. Determined she walks out of the room and into -

INT. MARTIN'S SISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi stands in the middle of the living room watching Martin, who looks, brooding, out of the front window. He wears boxers and a T-shirt and socks. He half turns at something and -

MARTIN WASSALIE

Chugi-? Chugi, I had nothing to do with- Howie-

CHUGI NICK

Nothing to do with what?

MARTIN WASSALIE

With nothing. I didn't do anything.

Chugi wrinkles her nose in disgust at him as he nervously looks around the room. A box full of wrapped and semi wrapped carvings sits on the table. Her jiggling stick leans against the box. She notices it.

CHUGI NICK

You knew! It was you! You knew!

Chugi, turning to fury, stalks toward him as her voice echo. The path clears before her in her fury - even the woodstove and the cabinets move away.

About to reach Martin, Chugi disappears. Relieved, Martin searches for his phone in his jacket by the door, dropping it twice before he is able to dial.

MARTIN WASSALIE

She was *here!* Chugi! I know what I am saying. She was here! I don't think she knows. We have to tell someone!

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

Chugi places the pan on the stove. As Chugi puts her winter gear on, Anna looks at her expectantly.

CHUGI NICK

I have to go check something. I'll
be back by the time the soups
thawed out.

Chugi opens the door assisted by a wind gust. She plops her hat on her head pulls her gloves on and scoops up the orange snowgoggles and she disappears into the storm.

INT. FLASHBACK PATSY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi walks through Patsy's house. No lights. It's dark. The beginnings of a snow storm swirls outside. She enters the back room. Art and ceremonial object litter the room. With packing materials and post office boxes and plain cardboard boxes. The boxes are packed with real popped popcorn, clothing, newspaper, anything that could be conceivably used as packing material. Chugi turns to her left. Nobody. To her right. Nobody. She relaxes. The duck blanket lays on the bed full of little ivory sculptures.

Stepping into the room, Chugi sifts through the ivory and bone objects.

CHUGI NICK

Bob's pipe, Iqmiq's cribbage
board... I knew your were up to no
good, Martin.

Chugi is hit on the head from behind.

INT. FLASHBACK PATSY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A small FIREWOOD LOG CLATTERS to the floor as Chugi falls to the floor. BOOTS nudge Chugi and she groans. A hand plunges a KNIFE into Chugi's back twice. Chugi fights to roll over. Finally makes it. Blood trickles from her nose and mouth as she struggles to breathe. A SHOT rings out and the impact kills Chugi. The duck blanket is thrown over her.

END FLASHBACK

INT. PATSY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chugi stomps back into the room and almost steps on the body. The pool of blood has congealed and frozen. She looks around as the temperature drops and her breath almost fills the room. The body is there in the same position as she last saw it. Her brow furrows in disbelief, fear and curiosity.

CHUGI NICK

What-

She sees the duck blanket. The boots. Her boots are the same.

Chugi reaches slowly for the blanket and pulls it away from the body.

Her voice trails away as she can see it is her. Dead. Her sadness is reflected in her face.

Chugi is now the one against the wall sobbing. She'll never be with Anna.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)

Anna-

EXT. MARTIN'S SISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna holds onto the railing as she knocks on Martin's door. The wind moans a mournful song as it almost knocks her down. There is no answer. She goes around back to knock on the back door. Tripping over something, she gasps. Martin is frozen in the snow behind the house. His head bloody.

Indecision. Decision.

Anna walks up to the back door and pushes it open.

INT. MARTIN'S SISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

She quickly runs through the house looking for Stella's art. She finds some pieces in plain view, some in the cushion of the chair but the bulk of it is under the sink hidden in the saved plastic grocery bags.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes!

Anna quickly grabs the art with her gloved hands to stuff in a grocery bag. She stops. She looks around.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Aw, Chugi. Now you have me second guessing. What would you have me do?

Her indecision turns to conviction. She puts the art back where she found it.

EXT. MARTIN'S SISTER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Anna locks and braces the door with a 2x4 piece of wood.

EXT. VILLAGE PATHWAY - NIGHT

Anna walks between the houses. The wind whips. After a serious gust that almost bowls her over, Anna HEARS a piece of wood dropped. - TONK. She looks up to see Howie CHOPPING super dry wood. Anna steps back, to remain hidden, and observing Howie.

The wood sounds like a xylophone with each piece that falls to the ground. Next to Howie, her burn barrel, black with soot, shoots flames into the snowy night air. When she adds each piece of wood, the storm whips the fire higher and higher. Howie throws something small into the barrel.

INT. VPSO BUILDING

A man's hands puts the Brother 2 Mask on a hook in the carving room.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Chugi and Anna round the back of Daniel's house. The backyard swirls with snow and looks flat except an out building with the door ajar - the snow creeping in.

CHUGI NICK

I know what I found.

ANNA RAYLEN

But it's not out here.

CHUGI NICK

It still deserves a look.

ANNA RAYLEN

You forget— I'm not a VPSO anymore.

CHUGI NICK

Yeah, but your resignation hasn't been received yet. It takes a week or more to get there with this storm.

Anna hasn't thought of that.

ANNA RAYLEN

I— I need someone to witness this — someone other than you — even in your corporeal state. Your physical body is still at Patsy's, you know.

But Chugi is gone. Anna calls Ricky on her phone but it's displays a "call failed" message.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Dammit.

Anna calls Ricky again and it goes to his voice message.

RICKY (V.O.)

Yeah. Ricky here. I've gone fishing. I'll get back with you after I've had my salmon.

(Ricky laughing)

The recording ends with a BEEEEP.

ANNA RAYLEN

Hey Ricky, I need you to come to Daniel's house. I think he might have had a—

The phone beeps again.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

He might have done something to—
Oh.

She tries to dial again but there is no connection.

INT. VPSO BUILDING – NIGHT

Anna closes the door behind her and stands a moment in the dim light. With a sigh Anna walks across the carving area. The brother's Masks are back on the wall. She looks puzzled as she passes them. She opens Chugi's office door and there sits Chugi at her desk.

CHUGI NICK

Come in. Close the door.

INT. VPSO OFFICE – NIGHT

Anna closes the door.

ANNA RAYLEN

What's up?

CHUGI NICK

What exactly were you here for?

ANNA RAYLEN

To visit you. To...

CHUGI NICK

To what?

ANNA RAYLEN

What?

CHUGI NICK

Didn't you tell me you came to investigate the thefts in your village?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes...

CHUGI NICK

And you came here and now everyone is dying right and left.

ANNA RAYLEN

But I didn't kill them. I am not the one who.

CHUGI NICK

(softly)

What did you do.

(softer)

What did you do Anna?

ANNA RAYLEN

I- I-

CHUGI NICK

What did you do?

ANNA RAYLEN

Chugi, I didn't know! I thought I was doing a friend a favor.

CHUGI NICK

A favor?

ANNA RAYLEN

Martin stole them and I was the lookout. I didn't know but I should have.

EXT. VILLAGE ROAD/ INT. ANNA CAR - DAY - FLASHBACK

Anna driving to pulls up to Martin. They exchange words and she nods. She drives about a 1/4 mile to park and watches the street.

ANNA RAYLEN (V.O.)

I thought I was looking for his mother he wanted to avoid. He said he didn't know where she would come from and I- I- I watched the road for any car or snowmachine.

Martin comes back and hands her a package.

MARTIN WASSALIE

And a prize for the lady. I couldn't do this without you.

Martin takes picture of her with his phone as she opens it up, giddy and happy.

ANNA RAYLEN (V.O.)

He got the pictures of me. When he
come back he hand me a bag and I
unwrapped it and he took pictures.
I didn't know.

END FLASHBACK

INT. VPSO OFFICE - NIGHT

CHUGI NICK

Why, Anna?

ANNA RAYLEN

I couldn't tell you because he got
the pictures. I thought if I could
find out where he hid them then I
could steal them back and still
get the \$15,000.

CHUGI NICK

And your ex?

ANNA RAYLEN

(dismissively)

He would have stayed with his ma.
Ain no way in hell I'd go back to
him. I'm done with that life.

CHUGI NICK

Oh, Anna. I am in a conundrum.
What do I do with you?

ANNA RAYLEN

Nothing. Everything. I'll tell the
troopers when they get here that I
am guilty.

CHUGI NICK

Of what? Being a fool?

ANNA RAYLEN

(subdued)

Yes. Being a fool.

EXT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Ricky pulls up to the Sip 'N' git on his snowmachine pulling a sled. Grandma arrives at the same time.

GRANDMA

Ricky! What do you have there?

RICKY

I went to get some wood.

GRANDMA

Nekleng, You never did know how to plan ahead did you, Ricky.

RICKY

Ah, Grandma. But I found something.

GRANDMA

What did you find?

RICKY

Daniel.

With a sharp intake of breath and a quick glance at the night storm, Grandma backs up, fearful.

GRANDMA

Shh. It is forbidden.

The sled holds a chainsaw, a gas can and... a body. It's Daniel. Contorted. Frozen.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

The bell on the door to the cafe rings. Howie shivers as Chugi sits at the table with her. Chugi is not visible to Howie.

HOWIE SALINGER

Nobody is reliable in this village. I called Daniel. I called Martin. No one is reliable. I had to silence-

CHUGI NICK

But you are the only reliable person?

HOWIE SALINGER

Only me. I make plans. Good plans - and execute them. Very rarely someone gets in the way.

CHUGI NICK

I got in the way.

Chugi snaps into view. Surprised, Howie's head snaps up to see ethereal Chugi across from her. Fear floods her very bones. Howie rises to run...

HOWIE SALINGER

What?—

But Chugi reaches out and touches Howie's hands. Grasping them pushing them back to the table.

CHUGI NICK

No. Sit.

Roxy stops suddenly as Grandma enters with Ricky. All three stop to look at the now pale Howie. Chugi slowly fades into view as Howie speaks.

HOWIE SALINGER

I am a good person. I give to charity. Every year I buy all the food for our Mask Festival. And the school picnic. I am a good person.

CHUGI NICK

Nobody said you weren't. What happened to you?

HOWIE SALINGER

The money was too good. I needed the money. How will anyone respect me if I don't have...

CHUGI NICK

Go on.

HOWIE SALINGER

Daniel, pumped the kids for new pieces. Martin...procured them. They packaged them and then I shipped them off to my contact in Seattle.

CHUGI NICK

I bet you are so reliable that you kept the receipts.

HOWIE SALINGER

(wryly)

Gotta pay your taxes.

(Beat)

Howie finally wrests her hands away from Chugi and makes for the door – pushing through Grandma and Ricky.

RICKY

Hey–

But Howie punches him and Ricky falls to the floor as Howie runs out the door.

CHUGI NICK

You won't get far. The storm is too strong.

The storm intensifies as Chugi short circuits out.

EXT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE – NIGHT

Howie runs outside but skids to a stop.

The storm intensifies as ghosts of the village (Bob and more ghosts of elders and Chugi) gather and watch her disapprovingly as village people stream out of the Sip 'N' Git and neighboring houses. A ghost caribou joins. The cast a pale green light in the snowy night.

CHUGI NICK

You have disrupted the health of our town.

Howie tries to appeal to the villagers.

HOWIE SALINGER

No! I- I didn't mean to- I wasn't-

But the village ignores her.

CHUGI NICK

Go.

Realization floods Howie as the villagers turn their backs on Howie one by one, even the caribou. Until only Chugi, Bob and the ancestors are left watching her.

HOWIE SALINGER

(Plaintively)

I am on the council! There has to be due process!

EXT. VILLAGE PATHWAY - NIGHT

Howie runs into the stormy night through the village. Houses are barely visible in the stormy night as she stumbles through the paths. Every door is shut. Every light is off. No one to come to her aid. Chugi, the ancestors and the caribou follow her at a respectable distance.

Seeing the ancestors gliding across the top of the snow toward her, Howie panics, running away from the village until she runs off the dock and drops to the frozen river below (a 6ft drop).

The people and caribou ghosts watch her from the dock. The storm intensifies.

Howie's only means of escape is across the river. She slips and falls several times.

The ghosts continue to get closer. Howie pulls out her knife to protect herself. Realizing it won't help her, she runs still clutching the knife.

She stumbles again and drops the knife. The storm intensifies so much that it clears the snow from the clear ice.

Howie recovers and staggers across the river only to move a few meters and fall through a bad patch of ice.

Howie POV: She floats under the ice, downstream, holding her breath banging on the ice, trying to get back above the ice.

The ancestors watch her as she passes her own knife. She futilely reaches for it. Her hands scratch and scrape on the underside of the ice as the ancestors and Chugi watch almost indifferent.

Bob bends toward her. Hope flashes across her face. Bob places his hand on the ice.

BOB

(muffled)

You will have to make your way alone without the help of your ancestors. Even your totem has abandon you.

He gestures to the caribou who has turned from Howie before turning from her, himself.

END POV

Chugi picks up Howie's knife and plunges it into the ice fracturing it, obscuring Howie's view.

Howie POV:

The ancestors short circuit disappear as they turn away. The snow further covers up Howie's vision.

Howie, despairing, watches Chugi and Bob clasp hands and exchange words.

After a glance at Howie, Chugi shakes her head.

End POV

Howie lets out her breath and it's the end of her. The snow blows and soon there isn't a trace of her except for the knife handle sticking out of the snow but soon that, too, is gone.

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - NIGHT

The two Aunties sit in their usual spot at the cafe. Roxy washes dishes in the back somewhere.

AUNTIE ONE

I seen her again. We all see her.

AUNTIE TWO

How come you don't die like everyone else that sees her?

AUNTIE ONE

Those with the sight don't die, silly. How you think we get out stories and ways of speaking to the dead? Yeah?

AUNTIE TWO

So we all have the sight? 'Cause after that...

AUNTIE ONE

Every day we live is another day of rebellion, another day of survival. So say our ancestors.

AUNTIE TWO

Yeah. I'm glad I have you. Now and forever.

AUNTIE ONE

Now and forever.

The kiss chastely and contentedly hold hands.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE

Anna sits crying in the couch. Chugi appears in front of Anna. Anna slowly looks up to see Chugi.

ANNA BORLEN
Chugi.

CHUGI NICK
Anna. You-

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
Our Ancestors say you have more growing to do.

Anna nods.

CHUGI NICK (CONT'D)
You'll have to do it outside.

ANNA RAYLEN
(incredulously)
I am banished? Banished?

CHUGI NICK
Not completely. Not forever.

ANNA RAYLEN
By myself?

CHUGI NICK
That's generally how banishment
works. And—

ANNA RAYLEN
—How will I survive? How will I
eat? Where will I go?

CHUGI NICK
You will find a way—

ANNA RAYLEN
But why...

CHUGI NICK
You betrayed my — our trust.
While I wasn't used by you, I
can't take that you betrayed the
very essence of me. My culture,
our culture. My art — our art —
You helped disrupt the very being
of Paugna.

Anna pales. Her face falls in despair.

ANNA RAYLEN
How can I ever make that up to
you?

CHUGI NICK
You have a task that may get you
home sooner than you think.

ANNA RAYLEN
A task?

CHUGI NICK

A task. To repatriate the pieces
that...

ANNA RAYLEN

Oh...

INT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - NIGHT

Roxy cleans up. Everyone else has gone home. Except Chugi.
Roxy leaves and locks up. Chugi sighs. Puts her cup on the
bench and stands up.

INT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Good news, folks! Meteorologists
say the storm will dissipate
sooner than expected. It's gonna
be a fine spring out there!

EXT. CHUGI'S ONE BEDROOM HOUSE - NIGHT

The northern lights dance across the sky

INT. VPSO OFFICE - DAY

On a beautiful clear day, a nervous Anna nurses a thermos
of tea as she watches the Trooper plane land.

INT. VPSO OFFICE

TROOPER 1 and TROOPER 2 enter the VPSO office.

ANNA RAYLEN

VPSO Raylen, standing in for the
recently deceased VPSO Chugi Nick.

TROOPER 1

Deceased?

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes.

TROOPER 2

We received the distress call but
couldn't get through for weeks.

Anna places her now empty thermos cup on the coffee cart and puts on her winter garb as she answers them.

ANNA RAYLEN

We've been trying for weeks to get
ahold of you. The good thing is
that her body will be well
preserved.

EXT. PATSY'S HOUSE - DAY

A light sled now houses Chugi's body, pieces of the floor and frozen blood attached. The ducky blanket is in a clear plastic bag on top of her. A black coroner bag is unfolded beside Chugi. Anna nervously shifts from one foot to the other.

Flashes can be seen/felt heard from inside Patsy's house. Troopers 1 and 2 exit and Anna becomes still. She sniffs.

TROOPER 1

Oh, sorry. Were you close?

ANNA RAYLEN

(whispering)

Best friends.

(louder)

Good colleagues and friends from
high school.

TROOPER 2

Do you know why she was murdered?

The question that Anna has dreaded has arrived. A tear drops down her cheek.

ANNA RAYLEN

Yes. I- There was- We had an art
theft ring based here that she
stumbled on. Many people....

She couldn't continue.

TROOPER 1

Many people?

ANNA RAYLEN

Many people passed. I have it in my report along with my resignation.

INT. VPSO OFFICE - DAY

Chugi sits at her desk in the now empty of artifacts and papers office, writing.

CHUGI NICK

Bob, Martin and Chugi Nick can be directly attributed to Howie Salinger. Daniel ran off into the storm, for unknown reasons and, subsequently, died of exposure. Howie Salinger fell through the ice in an attempt to escape....

Satisfied, Chugi closes the report. She shakes loose her hair and gives a slight melancholy smile before short circuiting away.

Bob suddenly walks in. He opens and reads the last bit before he, too, is satisfied. The ancestors fade in and out around him before he short circuits away and the office is, once again, silent and empty.

EXT. SMALL AIRPORT LANDING STRIP - DAY

Anna and the Troopers load Chugi's body in to the small 4 seater aircraft. Anna touches Chugi one last time. A dance group dances Chugi's farewell dance at the side of the runway. As the plane takes off, Anna dashes the tears from her face before she drives away on her snow machine.

EXT. SIP 'N' GIT CAFE - DAY

Anna repacks her snow machine outside the cafe. Readjusting the gear as she prepares to leave Paugna. Grandma waves as she approaches the Sip 'N' Git. Anna waves back.

GRANDMA

Watch yer doin'?

ANNA RAYLEN

Packing. I gotta go settle my affairs and make my way down to the cities.

GRANDMA

Going away again, huh.

ANNA RAYLEN

I still have some growing up to do. It's what Chugi would want.

Grandma searches Anna's face for a long moment before agreeing with a nod. Grandma and Anna hug awkwardly for a moment before relaxing into the hug.

GRANDMA

You take care of yourself. And come back when you can.

ANNA RAYLEN

I will do my best. When I bring the art and—

GRANDMA

You come when you can. We'll be here.

(a twinkle in grandma's eye)

We still need a VPSO here.

Anna smiles and nods.

We see Chugi's mask in Anna's gear. She pulls it and places it in her jacket. Throwing her leg over her snowmachine, Anna pauses for a moment. Sadly sighs. The Aunties exit the Sip 'N' Git cafe.

ANNA RAYLEN

Alright... To the not Home.

Anna rides away on her snowmachine, the mask in her lap. A single tear falls from her cheek.

ANNA RAYLEN (CONT'D)

Goodbye, Chugi.

Chugi appears, diaphanous, with her jeans and a Qespaq. She rides on the back with her hair billowing in the wind. Snow flows from her hair. She wraps herself around Anna and wipes Anna's tears away. Anna gives a slight smile, more comfortable now that Chugi snuggles with her.

AUNTIE ONE

I love seeing her happy. She deserves it.

AUNTIE TWO

If anyone deserves it, it's her.

INT. TROOPER PLANE - DAY

Anna and Chugi are seen from the plane as they ride across the tundra.

Alaska village music (fiddle, mournful in Yup'ik, Inupiaq or English) plays across the airwaves before the DJ interrupts.

RADIO ANNOUNCER

Four people are dead in Pagna, Alaska and an indigenous black market art ring exposed. Initial reports are that one woman orchestrated the smuggling and killed to keep it secret before falling through the ice. Pieces funneled through Pagna to Seattle were sold across the world using the deep web. Pagna's own VPSO, Chugi Nick, a new Alaska State Trooper recruit, was one of the dead. This has been your news minute. Up to date news across Alaska and beyond...

Music continues.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. STUFFY CAFE IN AMSTERDAM - DAY

Anna eats at a stuffy cafe where Inuit art adorns the walls.

Her window seat shows that outside it had been raining. Anna is silent but notices several pieces on the wall are familiar.

INT. STUFFY CAFE IN AMSTERDAM – NIGHT

As Anna closes the cafe door behind her, slipping a credit card into her pocket, a bit of snow swirls around her ankles. She strides to the carvings, taking them off the wall and carefully packaging them into a bag. Chugi appears next to her.

ANNA RAYLEN

Hey, you.

CHUGI NICK

The packaging is at the hotel, ready to go. And this guy has a silent alarm. You have 6 minutes until police arrive and 3 until he arrives.

ANNA RAYLEN

Plenty of time...

She continues taking down the pieces. A localized snow blizzard storms outside the windows.

INT. AMERICAN CONSULATE, AMSTERDAM – DAY

Freddie Land (48), African American US Ambassador, receives a box from a clerk.

FREDDIE LAND

Thank you, Ben.

BEN

Yes, ma'am.

She opens the box. Inside is another unsealed box labelled with a Paugna, Alaska address and a note and a list with pictures of the art from the cafe walls. She shakes the box onto her desk and Yup'ik art pieces fall out in a swirl of snow. The pieces that fall out match the pictures.

FADE TO BLACK.