

# A Place All My Own



A collection of creative work by  
Aboriginal youth from Inuvik,  
Northwest Territories

# Acknowledgements

Special thanks to the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre, an initiative of the Canada Council on Learning, and the Inuvik Youth Centre for their generous support.

Editor: Johanna Skibsrud  
Cover Photograph: Suveni Dillon  
Graphic Design: Simon Routh

All works copyright © 2007 of their respective authors.

# Editor's Note

The writing in this publication was collected over the four-month period of the New Horizons Skills Link program, and reflects the tremendous vitality, innate sense of self, and endless sense of humour of the ten participants, whom I had the pleasure of working with from March to June, 2007.

Skills Link is a Service Canada-funded program that, thanks to the hard work and initiative of the Inuvik Youth Centre, was realized for the first time in Inuvik, Northwest Territories this year. Additional support for the New Horizons Skills Link program was provided by Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and Gwich'in Tribal Council. The program was designed to serve unemployed Aboriginal youth looking to re-involve themselves in their community. We received an incredible amount of support and encouragement, and over the four months of the program the youth learned from the generous educators, professionals, and elders of Inuvik.

Just as programs like Skills Link are opportunities for youth to learn from their communities, the creation of this publication is an opportunity for us to learn from them. I want to sincerely thank the Adult Learning Knowledge Centre for helping to give these youth a national voice. I would also like to thank the ten youth who were brave enough to use it.

Johanna Skibsrud

Program Coordinator

# A Place All My Own

By Suveni Dillon

I finally got a place all my own  
A tiny little place that I call home,  
And I am showing you how  
I'm all grown up now.

I'm standing here for all to see  
The woman that I was meant to be,  
And I am showing you all  
I'm a hundred feet tall.

I was doubted and they put me down,  
I would talk about it and they would frown,  
And I don't know how,  
But I'm showing them now.

I'm standing here for all to see  
The woman that I was meant to be,  
And I am showing you all  
I'm a hundred feet tall.

# The Unwritten History

My story does not happen in the present but in the very distant past. The land was peaceful, natural, and solitary. The people lived not only on the land, but with the land. They were called Inuvialuit and these people knew to take only what they needed or what was given to them. They did not destroy the land, and always gave thanks to whatever was given to them. The land was beautiful. Swarming with food and a perfect habitat for nesting birds. Everywhere you looked you were sure to see something swimming in, or drinking the clear water; better yet, the dance of the majestic loon. Inuvialuit had families to care for, and a whole village to help survive. In the vast northern lands there was plenty of food in the summer, but the winters were brutal and unforgiving. When winter started to come people would store their food in order to make it through the harsh winters. As harsh as this land was, the people were at peace. Inuvialuit and many other aboriginal peoples lived on this land and died with the land. Each region had its own village and its own group. The people lived in peace, and the land lived in peace—until, one day, fate struck.

Among one of these tribes was a young but already mature little girl who loved to explore and listen to everything that she could. This child–woman’s name was Sky Windstorm. Sky did not want to stay home because she was just as strong as most of the men.

“Stop,” said her father, Bear Claw Windstorm. “Daydreaming is not for women. Go now, pick berries. Fill the basket this time, my girl, and I will be able to marry you off.”

Sky stomped away. Once at the berry patch Sky started to pick, but then an idea came to her mind. The men were out hunting that day. She would definitely show the men, she thought, if she caught dinner before anybody else. Sky grabbed her harpoon and knife, which she sharpened herself, and took off. Nobody saw her because she traveled on the other side of the hill. Then it happened. She was stopped dead when she saw the biggest cow caribou that she had ever seen. It had no baby calf or anything, and just lay there as if ready to be killed. Sky walked slowly toward the animal, but it got up in a flash. This caribou started kicking and stomping poor Sky, until finally the kicking stopped.

When Sky woke up she was back at the village, and her father stood over her bed with angry eyes. Sky had been caught.

“You stay here and be a good little girl. You will obey me. Now, go get me water.”

Down to the river Sky went, and started to fill her basket with water. Then something made her look up and she saw a giant boat heading toward the village. Sky

ran and told her father and her father told everyone else. Soon they all gathered at the river to see these mysterious boats, but by that time they were gone.

“My girl,” her father said, “just because I am mad doesn’t mean you can lie to us.” Everyone walked away.

I did not lie, thought Sky, and I will prove it. That night she left her village to find out where these boats came from and why they were there. Sky walked for a day or two when she saw something twinkling like a star, but this star was on the ground. She was almost home when she heard a familiar scream. It was her mother. Sky ran towards the river and tripped when something grabbed at her ankle. It was Rolling Hills, her friend. Rolling Hills explained that the boats had appeared the night that Sky left. The people had seemed friendly so the Inuvialuit fed them, and then the people on the boat started to drink this stuff in a shiny bottle and now they drink and dance and sing and fall over. Then they raise their fists and hit women.

“Sky,” said Rolling Hills, “Don’t go there, they might get you too.”

Sky went anyway. She had to help her mother.

When Sky entered the village she searched for her mother but with no luck. She did find her beaten-down father who said, “Sky, I am sorry. I should have known. Now it’s too late. All the women are on that boat, and those men have a secret liquid in those jars. Go Sky, leave. Run away and don’t come back.”

But Sky didn’t. Just then, a door of the boat opened, and a woman came out carrying something shiny. The woman was Sky’s mother. Sky walked up to her mother and her mother said, “This boat is leaving, my girl, and I must go with it to sew their clothes, or else send someone to take my place.”

Sky encouraged her mother to find someone else to go in her place. Sky’s mother said, “My daughter, I would never want to leave you. These strange men are easily angered and hold a lot of hate, but they have useful stuff for us, so now we have to put up with them. They are leaving now but taking women from each camp to cook food for them, and sew their clothes.”

“My girl,” said her mother again, now in a more solid voice, “times are going to change, and things will never be the same. I must ship you off to what these men call school, and I hope you do well, because if you do not go, your father and I will pay the price. This is the first time that they have come to our vast land, and now we must go visit their lands to see what they will do to our lands and skies. You will survive though. You are tough, like your mother. No matter what, my girl,”

Sky's mother said, "no matter what." That night her mother passed on, and Sky was left with only her Dad.

One day her Dad said, "Sky, my girl, it is time. Do you remember what your mother said?"

"Yes," said Sky.

"It's time for school."

Sky jumped onto the boat, and waved goodbye to her father. Watching her homeland shrink, she remembered to be strong, and wondered if she would ever see her father again. But then she remembered her mother's words and knew that she would never give up until she did.

## **A Big Chance For A New Life**

**By Suveni Dillon**

Yesterday, my brother Miles and I looked at each other differently. He is mad at me for something, and I don't really know what it is. I think it's because I am finally standing on my own two feet. I don't know. All I know is that when he looked at me like he wanted to slap me and talked to me like I was a piece of shit, it really hurt, and it really angered me. I was so mad that even music couldn't soothe me. I wanted to curse and scream and hit something or someone, and I don't like to feel that way so I broke down and cried. A few hours later I got a phone call from my real brother, Raymond. He offered me a chance at a new life. He offered to show me life from a different perspective. In August, I am going to Edmonton and driving to Grand Prairie. He said he'll find me a house, a job, a life. But the life I have made in Inuvik is just finally coming together. It took a while to think about what I am going to do, and I haven't made up my mind. But I am not going to stop thinking about it until I figure it out. I want to go, but leaving my family and a home I know is going to be hard. I will need the strength of a million people to be strong enough to live, and have enough knowledge to move on.

# What Was Passed On To Me

By Patrick Bodnar

Barely anything was passed on to me, but some life skills in the bush and how to live on my own, because my mom was always drinking or out. I had to learn how to keep myself clean and healthy, and how to cook my own food, and stuff like that. But I always knew that my mother had love for me, even though she took her anger out on me. I guess that's where my anger comes from. I took out my own anger at school with other kids when I got older because of the way I'd seen how my mother was with me, always mad at me for some reason. But then I got tired of what she was doing to me, so I left her and got my own help from social services, even though I hated them telling me what to do with my life, and didn't listen to them at all. I was always around my sister, and stayed with her and her kids, so I learned that I always had to have respect and kindness in order to meet new people. But I always listened to my friends and let them tell me how to have fun, like stealing skidoos, and doing Bee's, and drinking and fighting. While I was drunk or stoned I didn't care what was going on at the time, just as long as me and my friends were enjoying ourselves. As I turned into a teenager I learned to try and control myself and my anger and manage what I had to do. There were always others who wanted to take care of me; I just didn't want to smarten up at the time. But then I went to jail for about a year, and came home after that. I learned a lot in jail, like self-management, and how to take control of my life, so that I could see what was going on. Then I started dating Vanessa and she has made me see the ways that I can fix my life so that I can smarten up. Now we've stayed together for about nine months, and a month ago she told me that she was going to have my baby. Now, when my baby boy or girl is born I'm going to have lots to do in order to teach him or her what they should know about life, so that they don't have to go through what I went through. My life was really hard for me, and I don't want that for the baby, too. So I gotta do what I gotta do in order that the baby doesn't see the same stuff that I did. I'm going to do my very very best so that he or she can finish school and have good friends. I wish that I'd finished school too, but I got myself into trouble with the law and at the school and now I can't go back. I'm going to do all I can to make a better life for my kid so that they can see a better life than I did. I'll do and teach my kid anything that is good, and that will help him or her grow up. I can't wait until my baby is born so that I can teach him or her and show them the world. I am going to teach my kid everything that I know, except for the bad stuff. I'm going to teach my kid every little thing that he or she needs to know.

# Who Am I

By Patrick Bodnar

This is me, Patrick Bryon Bodnar. Where I come from is a small town where everyone knows each other pretty much. Nothing is ever new around here. It's just same shit, different pile, every day. I really don't know who I am because I raised myself. Some friends helped me, and I know my family background, but the way I am is the way I am, and if no one likes it, they can deal with it, shut up, put up with it, or leave. That's what I think is who I am. So you see me. Now you know. I'm not going to change for anyone except for my kid, and my own good, if I really need to. People ask me who I am and I say, Patrick Bryon Bodnar, and if you don't like me, it's your problem.

# **Ultrasound**

**By Patrick Bodnar**

As I went to the hospital today I could not wait to see my baby. I was very excited, and when we got to the hospital I couldn't sit still at all. I walked in and saw my girl there on the bed. I could not wait to see how big my baby would look. With a smile on my face... come on... I can't wait... show me, show me, please.

# Untitled

By Linda Ann Firth

My name is Linda Ann Firth, I'm twenty years old. I'm a mother of a daughter, her name is Gracelynn Firth Storr, she is three years old.

I like learning new things each day and every day, and I like passing on my knowledge to my daughter, so that she can pass it on to her children. We both come from Inuvik, which means "place of man." We've lived here all our life.

Once I go back to school, I want to get my high school diploma. I want to move to Whitehorse to go to college, and become a social worker.

Right now I'm in a program called the New Horizons Skills Link program. I enjoy going to this program because I learn a lot from it. I get a lot of experience and already I have earned my WHMIS certificate, my Northernmost Host training, and my First Aid. I'm really proud of myself that I'm doing what I can for myself so that I can become something in the near future. Before this I wasn't in school, didn't have a job, and felt that I wasn't anything, really. I felt bad because I wanted to do something with my life, I wanted to feel good about myself, especially for my daughter's future. I was a drug addict, a drunk, or I drank every weekend. I smoked cigarettes like crazy. Now I don't drink, I don't do drugs, and I don't smoke as much as I did.

All of this change came from help from this program, the people in the program, my friends, and my family. They gave me all the support I could get, and they still do, and I love them all so much for it. If it wasn't for this program, my family and my friends, I wouldn't be who I am today. Today I feel great about what I'm doing in my life. I take it one day at a time and I think positive and have a good attitude. Believe in yourself, trust, love, and forgive.

My future is important to me, my daughter's future is important to me, and I'm not going to let anyone tell me wrong or change my way of thinking of what's best for me. I control my life, not anyone else. If I want to have a big change for myself I need to do it myself, nobody can do it for me.

# Why Is It Important To Know Who I Am?

By Linda Ann Firth

If I didn't know who I was, I would feel lost in the world. I wouldn't know what I was doing. I'm a Gwich'in Aboriginal from Inuvik, NT. I'm a mother of a three year old, who is half Gwich'in and half Inuvialuit. I think it's important to know my background and culture so that I can pass my knowledge on to my daughter, and she can pass on her knowledge to her children. It's important to me that my daughter knows who she is and where she comes from, so that she doesn't feel lost.

Today I need to know more about my background and who I am, but I do know which way I am heading, and which road I want to be going down, and what I want in life, and that's to be *happy*, raise my daughter the best way that I can, and become something.

I also think it's important to stay focused, think positive, and take it one day at a time.

# Untitled

By Andrew Bernhardt

My name is Andrew. I am from Inuvik (place of man), Northwest Territories. I am eighteen years old, and I have a twin brother named Albert, five sisters, and two more brothers. I grew up in Inuvik, and when I was growing up there were a lot of trees and nature. When I moved up on the hill I made a lot of friends and we always had something to do. We were never bored because there were a lot of places to play, but as we grew up, all of the trees and trails got cut down, and houses were built. Now I can see houses across from my house. We had skidoo trails and places to hide, and places to go sliding. Now I hear a lot of kids say, 'Man, it's boring here.' I get bored too sometimes, but I got older and I started to work. When I started time just went by fast, and I quit school to work. But here I am, eighteen, not finished school, and working at the New Horizons Skills Link program.

# What Was Passed On To Me

By Andrew Bernhardt

What was passed on to me was my bush skills from the elders, friends, and family. When I was a young boy I was always wanting to go out in the bush, so my mom signed me and my brother up to go out in the bush with Winnie Cockney. When we were there we learned how to check the fish net, and cut fish. But what my Dad passed on to me was how to put hardwood flooring in our house. He showed me how to fix all the drywall in the rooms and how to put the trimming on the wall; then he showed me how to fix the shower heads, and the taps and pipes. My Dad also taught me how to measure flooring and trimming and how to use the pipe cutters and the skill saw. Most importantly, my Dad showed me how to chop wood, clean up, and do a good job. What I would want to pass on to my kids is construction skills, out on the land skills, and survival skills, but I am not too sure right now, because it is still early to be thinking about all of this.

# I Understand

By Leona Arey

Yesterday you were there,  
Tomorrow you'll be gone.  
Waiting for me to come home,  
Waiting all night long.  
Sitting in your black arm chair,  
Tossing and turning, playing all the lonely songs.  
I walked these streets,  
Thinking all night,  
Wondering if the time is right,  
To let you go. "I understand"  
Why you never "stood up like a man."  
Now the time has  
come to an end.  
When you're gone,  
I'll still be your friend.  
Look into my eyes and you will see  
THE REAL BITCH INSIDE OF ME.

# **To Whom Ever This May Concern**

**By Leona Arey**

I am twenty-two years old, living in Inuvik, taking a course at the Youth Centre. This course is called "New Horizons Skills Link Program." This program is showing us how to work in the real world. There is a lot of stuff to do in this program so we never are bored, and can never say we get bored. I am trying my hardest not to miss or be late. Those are my most important goals for now.

This program has given me the confidence and self-respect that I really didn't have. I am a young woman who has dreams to follow but the road is going to be bumpy, so I better put my strap on. As I start on these dreams I'm going to be and act more mature, and try to straighten myself out.



**Sherra Lyn Allen** was born and raised in Inuvik. She is 22 years old, and the mother of two children, Kobe (5), and Kaelyn (18 months). She hopes to find a job where she doesn't have to file! Sherra enjoys spending time with her family and friends.



**Leona Marie Arey** was born and raised in Inuvik. She is 22 years old and the mother of Brendan (3). She would like to work as a community and youth worker. In her spare time Leona likes to party and spend time with friends.



**Andrew Bernhardt** was born and raised in Inuvik. He is 18 years old and has worked in construction and mechanics. He plans to return to school in the fall. Andrew likes playing sports, especially basketball, and being out on the land.



**Patrick Bodnar** was born and raised in Inuvik. He is 19 years old and would like to work in construction. Patrick enjoys spending time with his friends.



**Suveni Dillon** was born and raised in Inuvik. She is 19 years old and the mother of a 15 month old son, Mason. Some day Suveni would like to own a restaurant specializing in aboriginal food. She likes to write music and spend time with her son.

**Linda Ann Firth** was born and raised in Inuvik. She is 20 years old and the mother of Gracelynn (3). She plans to return to school in the fall. Linda enjoys swimming, picnics, and spending time with her daughter.



**Mishelle Furlong** was born in Inuvik and raised in Aklavik. She is 29 years old and the mother of three children, Riley James (10), Shannon (6), and Brayden (2). She plans to return to school in the fall and would like to give back to her community.



**Kathleen McDonald** was born in Inuvik, and raised in Norman Wells, Yellowknife, and Inuvik. She is 17 years old and the mother of Sierra (3). She plans to return to school in the fall. She enjoys spending time with children.



**Jessica Stewart** was born and raised in Inuvik. She is 19 years old. At the time of publication Jessica was expecting a new baby any day. Jessica likes animals, music, and spending time with her grandfather, Frank Stewart.



**Greg Taylor** was born and raised in Tuktoyaktuk. He is 17 years old and would like to work in construction or as a labourer. Greg enjoys all kinds of sports, especially hockey.



# My Best Friend

By Mishelle Furlong

There's an "Irishman" I know. He is my best friend, and his name is Joe.

I forever love my Daddy so!

He holds a special place in my heart, and no matter where we go we are

never gonna be apart.

As a little girl I would cry because I never wanted you to go.

We've shared happy times, hard time, also sad times.

I even wiped your tears, when you'd had too many beers.

"Oh well," that Irishman called Joe, he's my Dad.

He's my best friend, and I love him so.

# I Am Here, You Are Over There

By Mishelle Furlong

I am here, you are over there. I know you are gone. I know you'll be back but I don't know when. Since you've gone I feel so alone. I feel torn.

I am crying and yelling inside.

I know I love you, and you love me, so we will one day figure it out, I know. But why break my heart?

That I will have to ask you!

So, I put you aside. I have to remember my goals. I have family and friends to help. I said I feel alone, I know I'm not. Just without you. I put you aside cause I know I've got the strength to go on. I try not to show how I feel, but I know friends know. Now we are apart, I have to continue with prayer. For me, and for all.

Spiritually

Physically

Emotionally

Mentally

I am here, you are over there. I'm wondering, should I let you continue to break my heart? @\$#% no!

I am here, you are over there. I will forever keep you in my heart while we're apart.

# I'll Love You Now And Forever

By Jessica Stewart

Everyday that I don't see you

I hope and pray that the day goes good for you.

I thank God everyday that you're alive.

To watch me grow, and show you

I can survive.

I learned so much from you, you see.

Grandpa, you mean the world to me.

Now I wish I could spoil you with a house,

A truck, a boat.

You made me see that this cruel world is not so bad.

I'm so happy you're my grandpa,

I'm very very glad.

This poem I wrote for you comes from my heart,

Because I love you so much I don't know where to start.

To tell you now, my love will never change.

I love you now and forever, and it will

Forever stay the same.

# I Wish I Could Look Into My Future

By Jessica Stewart

I wish I could look into my future to see if my life is the happiest.

I can't wait for a couple of years to go by. To see how happy my grandpa is when he sees his first great grandchild grow into a woman her own way. I think my grandpa is very lucky to be in this world, because of how much I love him. He would trade everything in the world just to have a couple of years with me. I know how much he loves me but it's hard to describe in words that anyone will understand. Only my closest friends understand the love me and my grandpa share. I'd do anything for him. Whatever he wants I'll do my best to give him. I'll tell you now, my grandpa means the world to me. He's my life, my soul, my world. And I wouldn't know what to do if I ever lost him. I would cry at first, but after that, I'd lose it. I'd go nuts. I wouldn't know what to do. But having my child would save my life. I would be able to go on, but the world wouldn't be the same.

Having a best friend, cousin, and loving sister like Suveni, though. I know that means that my child and I are in good hands. Right now my grandpa is so proud of me and Suveni, because we are standing on our own two feet, starting off as teenage adults, and growing into adults. Even though we think we're just a little too young, we're doing this as a team, best friends in action.

My grandpa used to disapprove of Suveni as my best friend. He tried to keep me away from Suveni, but it didn't work. He even grounded me, and sent me to Aklavik to my mother, who I love so dear, and who is in my heart every day. I'd have to stay there for a couple of days, but when I came back I'd go see Suvie right away.

When we were about thirteen or fourteen my grandpa finally stopped trying to keep me from hanging out with her. He realized that Suveni didn't ever get me in trouble with anyone, and when I hang out with her, I'm safe.

# You Want To Know Who I Am?

By Jessica Stewart

You want to know who I am?

I can't tell you, because I don't really know who I am, but this is what I think so far.

I'm Jessica Stewart from Inuvik, NWT.

I'm Gwich-ialuit, with a little white man in my blood line.

I can be nice if you're nice to me.

I'm the odd ball in my family, which means I'm different.

I have a lot of friends, and a few enemies.

But everybody has enemies.

I respect people only if they respect me.

My love for my family and my friends will never die.

My greatest fear is losing my one and only grandfather, because I can't live without him.

I can't really explain my life because I don't really understand some things that go on, like who I want to be. There's so many things – I'm lost. But soon, one day, I will find the starting point, and

Die at the ending.

I think that June is when I will start my new beginning. My child will show me who I am and who I want to be in this world.

# **I Can't Wait**

By Jessica Stewart

I can't wait til the day that I see your cute face,  
Hold you in my arms, and then I'll feel safe.  
No one in the world can ever replace,  
The motherly love you're soon going to face.  
Just in case I don't turn out what you want me to be –  
Here's your Auntie Suvie.

# **To My Unborn Child**

By Jessica Stewart

When I first found out that I was pregnant, I didn't know what to do but cry.

I was scared to have you in my life because I didn't think I was going to be a fit mother for you.

And also, I think your so called father is not ready for a child to call his own. If you are wondering what I think of your father right now, it is not any good thoughts. But I think I can raise you on my own. There is no one in this world who would love you as much as your mother does.

I'll always love you no matter what you do. I will stand by you, my child, because that's what mother's do best. Mothers will love their children, cherish their children, and forever protect their children from harm, and that's what I will do for you for the rest of my life.

I thank God every day for bringing you into my life, because I didn't feel complete. I have all this family, and all these friends, but still I feel lonely.

I know why now. It was because I didn't have you. But soon – in June, that's when I can see your beautiful, handsome face, and hold you in my arms, forever.

Now I can't wait until June, but until then...

I love you, my baby, forever and always.

# **My Story**

**By Sherra Lyn Allen**

Well, my Auntie Frieda taught me to maintain a camp, and how to haul water and chop wood. It's hard work but it doesn't even compare with back in the day. My Auntie is actually my grandmother by blood, and the skills she taught me will remain with me forever. If I ever get a camp I will most likely pass it down, because it's important to know how it was for the Elders long ago. It was much tougher for them, and that's partly why I have so much respect for them. I can hack a week out there on the land, but then I get tired. Living out there would be way too hard for me. So this is what I would want to pass on to my children, if I ever get the chance.

# **Experience In My Life**

**By Sherra Lyn Allen**

The story I am going to tell is about my trip to Fairbanks, Alaska. I was on the trip as part of the Inuvik Drummers and Dancers. We were going for a gathering of all drum dancers from around the world. It was a great experience, and I enjoyed myself. I got to spend time with my Dad and sister and get to know them. I didn't get that chance in Inuvik. It was my first and only trip where I traveled outside of Canada. I enjoyed every part of the drive and the stay. The most interesting part of the trip was seeing the many different dances from around the world. I will never forget that trip, even though how young I was, then.

# Dear Kobe And Kaelyn

By Sherra Lyn Allen

Today we had an assignment to write a letter, so I decided to write a letter to both of you. So, here I go. Right now I am in a four-month course, which I am half-way through. Well, the program is going great so far. I am learning something new every day. I guess you could say that I'm working toward my brighter future. I can't wait to be finished the program because then I can be proud of myself and have a better and more enjoyable life afterwards. I'm happy right now and I feel better than I felt before I came into the program. I was getting fed up of staying at home and doing nothing for myself and, more importantly, for you two, the loves of my life. Mostly I am doing this program for the both of you, so that you can have an alright life – better than mine anyway. I'm learning a lot, and am grateful that I'm here. Both of you are home asleep with your Dad right now. I just wanted to let you both know that I love you with all of my heart, and that love will never stop. You are both the loves of my life! Muah!

# **This One Day**

By Greg Taylor

This one day I was born and then one day I will die.

# **I'm From**

By Greg Taylor

My name is Greg Taylor, and I'm from Inuvik, Northwest Territories, Canada, North America, the World, the Universe.

It's cool here.

# Days And Days Ago

By Greg Taylor

6 days ago I felt sad.

5 days ago I felt mad.

4 days ago I felt bad.

3 days ago I felt glad.

2 days ago I felt rad.

Yesterday I was a grad,

And today I'm going to change my pad.

# A Really Cold Morning

By Greg Taylor

This one really cold morning I was born in an igloo. I was born in a parka, and that's why I'm a Kuggie!

When I was five my parents told me I have to drink: it was their tradition. Man, it was rough, me a five year old drinking...but, it's my tradition.

At the age of seven I got used to drinking 60s and 40s everyday, and I wouldn't even have that bad a hangover.

The rest of my life I spent drinking booze like water, with a good taste to it.

At the age of fifteen, I died.

# Li'l Angel

By Kathleen McDonald

Once upon a time in the summer time there was this li'l angel who was all alone, sitting on a rock. She had her knees up, hiding her face. Then this angel who was a bit bigger than she was said, "Li'l angel, why are you crying on this rock?" Li'l Angel said, "Because this is my home, and my wings are not big enough to go anywhere else, so I'll just sit here until they grow."

"But, li'l angel, your wings won't grow unless you move somewhere else, other than this rock."

"But this is my home."

"No, li'l angel, your home is with us. I will give you your wings and you shall bloom with us on four promises."

"Yes, I will promise these four promises, please, anything," Li'l angel said. "Please show me how I can bloom with you and yours."

1. You shall be happy even when you cry.
2. You shall never harm one feather on your wing.
3. Show another a path that's right for them, but wrong for you.
4. And always follow your heart and soul.

So the li'l angel promised these promises and finally got her wings. Now she shares the same with the li'l angels with no wings.

# If There's One Thing

By Kathleen McDonald

If there's one thing I could tell the world it would be, don't grow up too fast. Life's not easy.

Well, it sucks when you think you know everything when you really know only some, and not everything. I see people on the road and I'm so curious as to why they chose the life they have over the life they once had. Before they realize that they can change, sometimes it's too late. You can become as successful as you want to be.

Growing up in this world is crazy. If you're in an isolated place, you have less opportunity to choose your friends and your boyfriends. Even when you're in the city—it's an everyday rush, but pretty soon you've got your kids, and your bills, and you're supporting a whole family. At certain points all you want to do is provide for yourself and no others: it's called not wanting to grow up. But at some point in your life you have no choice but to grow up. Hey, life's not easy.

# If There's One Thing

By Sherra Lyn Allen

If there's one thing I could change about the world what would it be?

I would change how people treat the world! I would encourage parents the most, because their children will be left on this earth, and then their children. I absolutely don't want to leave my children an earth that can kill them, just because of the laziness of pollution, of not recycling, of using power when they don't have to, and of throwing garbage all over the streets...

I was talking with my Aunt yesterday. She's a park ranger in Sach's Harbour, and she was telling us what she has to do when she goes on the land for work. What she has to do is bury her kleenex after using the washroom and put her cigarette butts in a film case, so that she can leave the park as if she was never even there. After she told me all of this I wanted to do more...it inspired me. So, people: please do more to try and save our planet. Especially if you are a parent. I think it's important.

# **If There's One Thing**

By Jessica Stewart

If there's one thing I could tell the world it would be:

That I'm happy,

Hungry, and glad to be in this program.

I'm having a baby.

I want a grown up dog, for Suveni.

I hope my labour goes easily, and that it's not too painful.

I hope my grandpa has a good day.

# **If There's One Thing**

By Suveni Dillon

If there's one thing I could tell the world it would be:

Protect the wilderness.

Use less gas.

Live each day as if it were your last.

Keep every piece of paper the government gives you.

Love your spouse, not your neighbour.

It don't matter how many times you fall, as long as you can get back up.

# The Barren Land

All across this barren land were animals, plants, and lives all at peace. Everything that was taken from the land was given back one way or another. On this land animals and people lived together in harmony until one day a loud noise was heard as it echoed through the land. It startled everything and everyone, including a young, not yet matured, wolverine. This little wolverine was curious and very adventurous so he followed the sound. Finally, he reached the place from where he had heard the noise, and there he met the fox, the caribou, and the Canadian goose.

“What was that noise?” asked the wolverine, who was pacing back and forth.

“They got my brother,” said the caribou. “One minute we were grazing on sweet grass and then, bang, I ran, but my brother...he didn’t even move, he just fell, and told me to run, so I did. I shouldn’t have left him. I should have stayed.”

“It’s not your fault,” said the fox. “I have been watching these strange beings that make the loud noise, and they are nothing like the beings that live here.”

The goose added: “Yes, I was flying in the big V’s when it happened, left and right my comrades went down as loud noises rang out over and over again. I landed in the bush for protection, I was so scared.”

The wolverine thought, and asked the fox, “Since you have seen these beings before, and watched them, how would you say that we could live at peace with them?”

The fox stared into the sun, and said, “There is no peace. They take without giving back, and hurt animals with large sticks that are loud, and spit fire – and why?”

The wolverine looked down in disgust. “Who, may I ask,” he said, “is going to tell the Inuvialuit about these strange beings, and how are we going to get rid of them?”

“First things first,” said the caribou. “Who is going to get the Inuvialuit to see this, without sacrificing themselves? I am not going to do that.”

Just then, a squirrel appeared in a tree standing beside them. “What are you doing here?” they asked. Everyone looked at the squirrel, and then decided together that they would send him to tell the Inuvialuit. The squirrel agreed that he would go.

The journey was longer and harder for the squirrel, but at least he was safer than the rest of the animals who had stayed behind to make sure that nothing bad

would happen. Now it was up to the squirrel to tell the Inuvialuit.

Meanwhile, the wolverine and the rest of the gang were planning on a way to take away all the strange beings' loud fire sticks. "Maybe without them they won't be able to hurt anyone," said the goose, who was determined to stop the problem.

"But what if we get caught," said the caribou, "who is going to help us then?"

"I'll get help," said the fox. "I know every short cut in this whole land."

"OK," they all said, and the fox scampered off in a hurry.

Caribou, who was scared, tried to talk them out of it, but then the wolverine added, "If we don't do anything now there will be more of them, and then there will truly be nothing we can do."

"Yeah," said goose. "Then they will slowly take our homes, our families, and our lives. Our families will not live long enough to carry on our traditions."

"Ok," said caribou. "I'll help."

Night came around and they made a plan. They were going to wait until there was complete silence and then take action. Wolverine led the way followed by caribou and, above them, goose flew to keep watch.

Wolverine went in and out of every tent and placed the fire sticks on the caribou's antlers and then, when they were done, they all left without getting caught. Up on the hill all the animals met and came up with a plan to fight, just in case.

At the other end of the land, the squirrel finally made it to his destination, and he also had a plan. He wrote "come" in stones across the ground in front of the camp, and chewed through a string holding pots and pans to make a racket. The Inuvialuit all woke up and noticed the word "come" and figured that the squirrel wanted them to follow him, so they did. They all left towards the camp of the other beings.

Night was over and the sun was coming up. The other beings awoke, yelling and stomping, to find that their guns were all gone. Just then squirrel arrived with the Inuvialuit. The Inuvialuit saw the other beings and asked each other who these people were, and how they got there. The Inuvialuit went down the hill and talked to the beings, and just as quickly as they came, the beings were gone.

Harmony once again was restored to the big barren land.