# Julie of the Wolves

## INTRODUCTION

### BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF JEAN CRAIGHEAD GEORGE

Jean Carolyn Craighead was born on July 2, 1919, to a family of naturalists. She grew up immersed in nature, going on frequent camping trips that exposed her to the flora and fauna of her native Washington, D.C. George graduated from Pennsylvania State University in 1941 and went on to write professionally for many decades. She worked as reporter for *The Washington Post* in the 1940s and wrote for *Reader's Digest* from 1969–1982. George married her husband, John Lothar George, in 1944, and they collaborated on several books and had three children together before divorcing in 1963. One of George's first solo publications, *My Side of the Mountain* (1959) was a runner-up for the Newbery Medal. In 1970, George traveled to Barrow, Alaska (now Utqiagvik, Alaska) to research wolves for a piece she was writing for *Reader's Digest*. George's trip exposed her to the mannerisms of wolves and the culture of Utqiagvik's Iñupiat population, and these experiences would inspire her to *Julie of the Wolves* (1972). The book was a major critical success for George and won the 1973 Newbery Medal. The Arctic tundra became one of George's favorite places, and she would return to Utqiagvik many times after her initial trip. George published over 100 children's books over the course of her career. Her style combines sharp, scientific detail with lyrical prose, and she is celebrated for writing books that instill in children a sense of wonder and respect for the natural world. She died on May 15, 2012 at age 92 in Mount Kisco, New York.

### HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Though it did not become a state until 1959, the U.S. purchased Alaska from Russia in 1867. Most white settlers who colonized Alaska considered Alaska Natives to be ethnically and culturally inferior, and they enforced racial segregation laws to bar Alaska Natives from entering establishments and attending American schools. Although the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 granted U.S. citizenship to all Native Americans, legal segregation would continue until the passage of the Alaska Equal Rights Act of 1945. Even before Alaska became a U.S. territory, legislation passed on the mainland provided a foundation for the philosophy of forced assimilation that would imperil Alaska Natives' ability to uphold their traditional way of life. In 1819, the United States passed the Civilization Fund Act, which provided federal funding for outside organizations, often religious institutions, to educate, or "civilize" the country's Native American population. The federal government used this act to establish Native American boarding schools that "civilized" Native American children by removing them from their communities and forcing them to assimilate to Western cultural practices. Children were prohibited from wearing traditional clothing, using their own names, or speaking their own languages. The U.S. founded the Bureau of Indian Affairs in 1824, and the agency established additional schools that operated according to the philosophy of forced assimilation. Miyax attends one of these schools in *Julie of the Wolves*. Although the Civilization Fund Act didn't have a direct impact on Alaska at the time, its underlying philosophy of forced assimilation laid the groundwork for the government's relationship to Alaska's indigenous population.

### RELATED LITERARY WORKS

Jean Craighead George was a renowned author of children's literature who published over 100 books throughout her career, most of which center around nature. She wrote two sequels to *Julie of the Wolves*: *Julie* (1994), which begins minute after Julie of the Wolves ends, and *Julie's Wolf Pack* (1997), which is narrated from the perspective of Kapu, the young wolf Miyax befriends in the original novel. Another of George's notable books is *My Side of the Mountain* (1959), a children's novel about a young boy's struggle to survive in the wilderness of the Catskills. George has also published other children's books that take place in the Arctic, most notably *The Wounded Wolf* (1978) and *Water Sky* (1987). While *Julie of the Wolves* is about a young Inuk girl, Jean Craighead George is not an indigenous author. Some notable recent works of young adult literature by indigenous authors that feature indigenous characters include Darcie Little Badger's *Elatsoe* (2020), Dawn Quigley's *Apple in the Middle* (2018), and Angeline Boulley's *Firekeeper's Daughter* (2021). Finally, a central focus of *Julie of the Wolves* is Julie's struggle to survive the Arctic tundra's harsh, dangerous conditions. Other young adult novels that focus on a protagonist's struggle to survive in the wilderness include Gary Paulson's *Hatchet* (1986) and Scott O'Dell's *Island of the Blue Dolphins* (1960).

### KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** Julie of the Wolves
- **When Written:** Early 1970s
- **Where Written:** United States
- **When Published:** 1972
- **Literary Period:** Contemporary
- **Genre:** Children's Novel
- **Setting:** 1970s Alaska
- **Climax:** Miyax reunites with Kapugen but feels betrayed by his assimilation into non-indigenous society.

- **Antagonist:** Daniel, Jello
- **Point of View:** Third Person

## EXTRA CREDIT

**Banned Book.** Since its publication, *Julie of the Wolves* has created controversy among parents. It was number 91 on the American Library Association's list of the Top 100 Banned/Challenged Book: 2000–2009. Parents have mainly challenged the book's inclusion on reading lists due to its brief depiction of sexual assault.

**Frozen Fieldwork.** Jean Craighead George's trip to in Barrow, Alaska (now Utqiagvik, Alaska) to research wolves for an article she was writing inspired her to write *Julie and the Wolves*. In one instance, George watched a scientist at the Barrow Arctic Research Lab communicate with a wolf by biting its nose and making soft whimpering sounds. Later, a captive female wolf "accepted" George by looking directly at her.

## PLOT SUMMARY

Part 1 begins on the Alaska North Slope. Miyax, a 13-year-old Inuk girl, finds herself starving, alone, and hopelessly lost after running away from Barrow, Alaska to escape an unhappy homelife. She spots some wolves nearby and remembers how her father, Kapugen, once told her about a pack of wolves that led him to a freshly killed caribou on one of his hunting trips. Miyax vows to observe the wolves, gain their acceptance, and encourage them to share their food with her, too. Miyax focuses on Amaroq, a black, regal wolf who is clearly the leader of the pack. Although the wolves ignore Miyax at first, she gradually wins them over by mimicking their behavior and learning how to convey respect, dominance, and submission. Miyax becomes particularly friendly with one pup, whom she names Kapu, after Kapugen. All the other wolves—Silver, the mother; Nails, another adult male; and the pups, Zing, Zat, Zit, and Sister—accept Miyax into their pack. However, Jello, the antisocial, lone wolf whom none of the others respect, repeatedly antagonizes Miyax.

The bond between Miyax and the wolves grows stronger, and Amaroq lets Miyax take meat from a freshly killed caribou. Miyax grows more optimistic that she will survive long enough to continue her journey toward Point Hope, where she plans to board a ship bound for San Francisco to visit her pen pal, Amy. Still, Miyax remains wary of the approaching winter, knowing the tundra will be immersed in a months-long darkness in the near future. One day, Miyax returns to her camp and finds Jello eating the meat she stored in a makeshift underground cellar. Miyax chases Jello away with a knife but knows the loss of meat could have a devastating effect on her chance of survival. Shortly after this setback, the wolves leave, and Miyax is alone once again.

Part 2 is a series of flashbacks that chronicle Miyax's life up until this point. Miyax remembers moving with her father to an Inuit seal camp after her mother died, and she regards the years she spent there as the happiest time in her life. At the camp, Miyax reconnects with nature and her Inuit culture. During the Bladder Feast celebration, an old priestess whom people call "the bent woman" gives Miyax an **i'noGo tied**, a totem made from seal fur and blubber. One day, Kapugen's Aunt Martha arrives at the camp unannounced. She and Kapugen argue. Afterward, Kapugen tells Miyax that she has to move back to Mekoryuk with Martha to enroll in a Bureau of Indian Affairs school. Before Miyax leaves, Kapugen tells her that if she ever needs to escape, she can marry his friend Naka's son, Daniel.

Miyax moves to Mekoryuk and assumes her American name, Julie. One day, an old man from the seal camp comes to Martha's house and reveals that Kapugen disappeared while on a seal hunt and is presumed dead. The news devastates Julie, but she accepts her fate and moves forward. She tries to adapt to her new life in Mekoryuk, but the other Inuit girls tease her about her poor English and unfamiliarity with gussak (white) culture. Determined to fit in, Julie throws away her *i'noGo tied* and learns to read and write in English. One day, a *gussak* man named Mr. Pollock invites Julie to be pen pals with his 12-year-old daughter, Amy, who lives in San Francisco. Julie gladly accepts Mr. Pollock's offer and starts receiving weekly letters from Amy. Through these letters, Julie learns about the exciting, modern world that exists on the mainland. At the end of each letter, Amy begs Julie to visit her and describes **the pink room** Julie will stay in when she arrives. Meanwhile, Julie grows tired of her life in Mekoryuk. Amy's letters make the town seem dull, and Julie and Martha fight constantly. Julie decides to move to Barrow to marry Daniel.

When Julie meets Daniel for the first time, she is shocked to learn that he is developmentally disabled, and she momentarily wonders if her father knew about Daniel's condition when he made the arrangement. Julie's new life in Barrow is initially bearable. She helps Nusan, Daniel's mother, sew clothing to sell to the tourists. Daniel mostly ignores her, and she befriends a girl named Pearl Norton. However, Julie soon discovers that Naka is an alcoholic who beats Nusan when he is drunk. One night, Daniel comes home angry because the schoolchildren have been teasing him about not being able to "mate" his wife. He assaults Julie, attempting to rape her, and threatens to repeat the attack tomorrow. That night, Julie reclaims her Inuit name and leaves town on foot. She plans to board a ship at Point Hope and travel to California to see Amy, but she gets lost along the way.

In Part 3, the narrative returns to the present. Miyax discovers that somebody has destroyed her camp and stolen all her meat. The culprit, Jello, emerges from the reeds. Miyax chases him

away, packs her things, and continues her journey across the tundra. The first snow falls. Miyax sets up camp and hears her pack's familiar howls. Before Miyax can grasp what's happening, Jello reappears and steals her pack, which contains all her most important tools. Miyax knows her situation is hopeless. She drifts to sleep and mentally prepares to die.

Miyax awakens to find Jello's mutilated body next to her pack. She knows that Amaroq killed Jello to punish him for harming her, and she praises her "adopted father." Miyax continues her journey. Meanwhile, the days grow shorter, and the air grows colder. Miyax has a frightening encounter with a grizzly bear, but her wolf pack reappears to protect her. When she Miyax passes an oil drum, she knows civilization isn't far away. Wary of the *gussak* hunters who are likely nearby, Miyax sings to her wolf pack to warn them not to continue any further. Miyax finds a lost bird at her camp that night. She names the bird Tornait and takes him with her. The weather worsens, and Miyax loses track of her wolf pack. One afternoon, an airplane of hunters appears overhead. One of them shoots Amaroq, killing him. Another bullet wounds Kapu. Miyax brings Kapu to her camp and tends to his wounds. After seeing the violence the *gussaks* have inflicted on her friends, Miyax no longer daydreams about modern life in San Francisco. Instead, she builds an icehouse and resolves to live an authentic Inuit lifestyle in the wilderness.

One day, a family of Inuit hunters from Kangik, a nearby village, stumble upon Miyax's camp. The wife, Uma, tells Miyax about a master hunter from their village named Kapugen. Miyax realizes that Uma is talking about her father and heads to Kangik the next morning. Miyax reunites with Kapugen but feels betrayed when she sees that Kapugen has married a *gussak* woman named Ellen, assimilated to *gussak* culture, and abandoned the old way of life. Miyax leaves Kangik to return to the wilderness, but her plans change when Tornait dies suddenly. Miyax buries Tornait and sings a song to mourn the dying animals' spirits and the end of the Inuit. She reclaims her non-indigenous name, Julie, and returns to Kapugen.

## CHARACTERS

### MAJOR CHARACTERS

**Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards** – Miyax Kapugen is a 13-year-old Inuk girl who has run away from her abusive husband, Daniel, and is trying to survive in the Alaskan tundra. Having lost her mother and her father, Kapugen, years ago, Miyax is lost and alone. Although the environment she finds herself in is harsh and dangerous, Miyax's resourcefulness and deep reverence for nature—qualities she admired in her father—shine through. She's able to befriend a pack of wolves (led by the alpha male Amaroq) and a bird named Tornait, and the wolves bond with her and help her survive. In fact, the animals offer her more acceptance and affection than the people in her life have. It's gradually revealed that before Miyax ran away, she was lonely and felt pressured to assimilate to her town's non-indigenous culture, taking on the name Julie Edwards and discarding her traditional **i'noGo tied** amulet to fit in. She also had a tumultuous relationship with Martha, the strict great-aunt she moved in with after Kapugen was supposedly killed on a seal-hunting trip. As Miyax navigates life in the wilderness, she initially daydreams about her pen pal Amy's strange, exciting life in San Francisco, hoping to board a ship to California and stay in Amy's **pink bedroom**. But when gussak (white) hunters kill Amaroq for sport, she becomes disillusioned with non-indigenous culture and resolves to live a traditional, solitary Inuit lifestyle instead. But at the end of the novel, when Miyax is reunited with Kapugen (who, it turns out, is alive after all), it's implied that she'll return to living a more modernized life in town. Miyax's decision implicitly acknowledges the futility of trying to preserve a traditional way of life amid the pressure to assimilate.

**Kapugen/Charlie Edwards** – Kapugen is Miyax's father. His English name is Charlie Edwards. He is a legendary hunter known for his wisdom, bravery, and respect for traditional Inuit culture. After Miyax's mother dies, Kapugen and Miyax move to an Inuit seal camp to reconnect with their heritage. Kapugen teaches Miyax valuable lessons about nature and traditional Inuit culture, and they see themselves as kindred spirits, both better suited to the old way of life than to modernized society. Miyax is heartbroken when she eventually must leave the seal camp to attend a Bureau of Indian Affairs school back in Mekoryuk. Shortly after this, she learns that Kapugen failed to return to from a seal hunt and is presumed dead. Years later, Miyax relies on Kapugen's teachings when she becomes lost in the Arctic tundra. In fact, it's Kapugen who teaches her that wolves are "brotherly" and affectionate rather than vicious, which allows her to befriend a wolf pack that helps her survive. Kapugen is a constant presence in Miyax's memories, but it eventually becomes clear that there are really two versions of Kapugen: the idolized legend who exists in Miyax's mind and the flawed Kapugen who fails to live up to Miyax's expectations. At the end of the book, Miyax learns that Kapugen is alive, after all, and living in a different village. But when Miyax reunites with him, she finds that he's married to a white woman named Ellen and has distanced himself from Inuit culture. Worst of all, Kapugen now uses an airplane to hunt, just like the gussak hunters who killed Miyax's wolf friend Amaroq. Kapugen's assimilation into non-indigenous society destroys the image of him that Miyax used to have, transforming him from a brave Inuk hunter into a hypocrite who is destroying their Inuit culture.

**Amaroq** – Amaroq is the leader of the wolf pack Miyax joins when she is lost in the Arctic tundra. He is large, black, and regal. In Amaroq, Miyax sees the traits she most admires in her

father, Kapugen: bravery, wisdom, and an innate ability to lead and command the respect of others. Amaroq becomes something of a stand-in for Kapugen, and Miyax refers to the wolf as her "adopted father." Although Amaroq is initially suspicious of Miyax, he accepts her into his pack after she proves that she can communicate with them and follow the rules of their wolf society. Once Miyax is a member of Amaroq's wolf pack, he gives her the same protection he gives the others. As such, he defends Miyax against Jello, the antisocial lone wolf who repeatedly antagonizes her, eventually killing Jello in retaliation. Miyax sees Amaroq's violence not as abuse of his power, but as an action he must take to protect the integrity of his community. Kapugen once told Miyax that a wolf pack will turn on a lone wolf that steals food from the pack's pups, explaining that "there is no room in the wolf society for an animal who cannot contribute." Miyax thus interprets Amaroq's decision to turn on Jello as a decision to protect his community against Jello, who "cannot contribute" to it. Amaroq tragically dies after gussak (white) hunters shoot him from an airplane. His death is particularly horrific because the hunters fail to retrieve his body to collect a bounty, as is often their custom. Instead, the hunters leave Amaroq's body behind, effectively killing him for no reason at all. Since Miyax develops a deep bond with the wolves over the course of their journey together, Amaroq's death affects her deeply. In a song she sings before reluctantly returning to Kangik to live a modernized life with Kapugen, Miyax equates the death of Amaroq with the death of Inuit traditions, insinuating that *gussak* society has killed them both.

**Kapu** – Kapu is one of Amaroq and Silver's wolf pups. In addition to being the first wolf to approach Miyax, Kapu is also the wolf with whom Miyax shares the closest bond. Kapu's bravery prompts Miyax to name him after her father, Kapugen. In Kapu, Miyax also sees her father's innate ability to lead, and she predicts (correctly) that Kapu will one day be the leader of the pack. In Miyax's Inuit culture, people have "joking partners," or people with whom they have fun, and "serious partners," or people with whom they work. Miyax decides that she and Kapu are "joking-serious partners," fulfilling both roles for each other. Although Miyax and Kapu play together, they also look after each other. For instance, Kapu brings Miyax a leg of caribou when she needs food, and Miyax tends to Kapu's wounds after gussak hunters shoot and severely injure him. After hunters kill Amaroq, Kapu becomes the leader of his wolf pack. At the end of the novel, Miyax makes the painful decision to leave Kapu and the other wolves to go to "[her] own Amaroq," abandoning the love and acceptance she found among the wolves for an uncertain future with Kapugen in the village of Kangik.

**Jello** – Jello is the lone wolf of Amaroq's pack. Miyax describes him as "a lowly wolf—a poor spirit, with fears and without friends." He is standoffish and antisocial, and Amaroq doesn't respect him. Because of this, the other wolves often leave him out of their activities. For example, when the adult wolves go hunting, they force Jello to stay behind and watch the pups. Jello is the opposite of Amaroq: he doesn't care about protecting the collective wolf pack and acts out of self-interest alone. Miyax names him Jello after seeing him wiggle before Amaroq in a gesture of submission, but the name also reflects Jello's unstable moral backbone. Amaroq's decision to accept Miyax into the wolf pack threatens Jello, and he lashes out at her with increasing intensity, eventually destroying Miyax's campsite and stealing all her food. Jello's reign of terror comes to an end when Amaroq kills him as punishment for his selfishness.

**Amy Pollock** – Amy is a 12-year-old girl who lives in San Francisco, California. Her father, Mr. Pollock, works for the Reindeer Corporation on Nunivak Island and invites Miyax to become Amy's pen pal. The girls begin a written correspondence, and Amy's letters quickly become the only glimmer of happiness Miyax has in her unhappy life on Nunivak Island with Martha, and later, when she is trapped in an unhappy marriage with Daniel. Amy's descriptions of life in San Francisco enchant Miyax, who longs to see this strange, enticing world for herself. Amy ends each of her letters by begging Miyax to come to see her in San Francisco, promising Miyax that she can have a **pink room** in her house all to herself. For Miyax, the pink room symbolizes the appeal of non-indigenous culture, and the possibility that life in San Francisco could help her escape her miserable existence in Barrow. Miyax eventually flees Barrow to board a ship at Point Hope that will take her to San Francisco, but she gets lost in the Alaskan wilderness along the way.

**Pani NalaGan/Pearl Norton** – Pani NalaGan is a girl Miyax meets after she moves to Barrow to marry Daniel. Pani NalaGan is Inuit, but she, like Miyax, goes by her English name (Pearl Norton) in town and at the Bureau of Indian Affairs school. Pearl and Miyax quickly become friends. Pearl is sympathetic to Miyax's marriage situation and encourages her not to take it too seriously, promising that she can simply leave if she ends up not liking Daniel. Pearl's advice gives Miyax a glimmer of hope and contributes to her decision to run away after Daniel assaults her. Miyax and Pearl exchange a tearful goodbye before Miyax flees Barrow to board a ship for the mainland U.S., and Pearl supplies Miyax with food and supplies to aid in her journey. Other than the animals she encounters in the wild, Pearl is Miyax's only true friend.

**Tornait** – Tornait is a golden plover (a species of bird that breeds in the Arctic tundra) that Miyax meets at her campsite. She names him Tornait after a song Kapugen used to sing at the Feast of the Bird back on Nunivak Island. Tornait is Miyax's sole companion after she leaves her wolf pack to find her father, and the two of them develop a meaningful bond. When Miyax finally reunites with Kapugen, whom she has long believed to be dead, she offers him Tornait as a gift. After Miyax discovers the

extent of Kapugen's assimilation into Western culture, she decides to leave town with Tornait to live a more culturally authentic life in the solitude of the Arctic tundra. However, Tornait's death prompts Miyax to change her plans and return to town.

**Daniel** – Daniel is Miyax's husband. Like Miyax, he is just a child when they marry. Miyax's father Kapugen and Daniel's father Naka arranged the marriage when the children were very young, and Miyax eventually agrees to the arrangement to escape her strict great-aunt Martha's tyrannical rule. When Miyax travels to Barrow to marry Daniel and realizes that he is developmentally disabled, she refuses to believe that Kapugen knew about Daniel's condition when he made the arrangement. To Miyax's relief, Daniel mostly ignores her after they are married. However, his condition provokes considerable teasing from kids at school. When Miyax is home alone one day, Daniel storms through the door, furious because the other schoolchildren ridiculed him for not being able to "mate" his wife. Daniel attacks and tries to rape Miyax, though Miyax observes that Daniel's face shows that he is just as "frightened" as she is. Still, when Daniel finally releases Miyax, he laughs to himself and promises to assault Miyax again tomorrow. This attack assault is what prompts Miyax to flee Barrow, which leads to her becoming lost in the Arctic tundra.

**Martha** – Martha is Kapugen's aunt. Miyax goes to live with her in Mekoryuk when a law requires her to attend a Bureau of Indian Affairs school. Martha is strict and critical of Miyax, and the two of them rarely get along. Although Martha believes that "the old ways are best," she criticizes Kapugen's decision to abandon is life in Mekoryuk to move to the Inuit seal camp. When Martha promises Miyax she doesn't have to marry Daniel if she doesn't want to, Miyax is too stubborn and sick of living with Martha to take advantage of Martha's genuine attempt to protect her from becoming trapped in an unhappy arranged marriage.

**Mrs. Franklin** – Mrs. Franklin is Miyax's teacher. At the beginning of the book, Miyax recalls Mrs. Franklin's explanation for the sudden absence of lemmings (a type of rodent) in Alaska. According to Mrs. Franklin, lemmings' bloodstreams contain a chemical similar to antifreeze that keeps them active in the winter. When there are too many lemmings, they become anxious, which causes the chemical to build up, and the lemmings to die. Mrs. Franklin's explanation for the lemmings' disappearance is quite different from Kapugen's, which simply offers that "the hour of the lemming is over for four years." These opposing explanations—one desperate to explain the lemmings' disappearance with science, and the other accepting of nature's natural rhythm—represent the opposing cultures of the gussaks (non-indigenous people) and the Inuit.

**Nusan** – Nusan is Naka's wife, Daniel's mother, and Miyax's mother-in-law. She has a job sewing clothing for tourists who arrive unprepared for the Arctic's harsh climate and enlists Miyax to help her, though Miyax doesn't mind the work. Nusan is trapped in an abusive marriage to Naka, who is a violent alcoholic. Although Nusan is kind to Miyax, she doesn't make any attempt to protect Miyax from Daniel's abuse.

**Naka** – Naka is Nusan's husband, Daniel's father, and Miyax's father-in-law. He's also Kapugen's "serious" partner, which in the Inuit tradition refers to a friend with whom a person can "work and think." Like Kapugen, Naka is an "old-fashioned" Inuk who takes great pride in his indigenous culture. Though Miyax has fond memories of Naka from her days at the seal camp, she later discovers that he is a violent alcoholic who regularly beats Nusan.

**Judith** – Judith is an Inuk girl who attends school with Miyax in Mekoryuk. According to Martha, Judith disrespects her parents. When Judith invites Miyax to come over after school one day, Miyax notices that Judith's house has a gas stove, a couch, and cotton curtains, which signify Judith's family's assimilation into non-indigenous society. Judith and Rose, another schoolgirl, mock Miyax for mistakenly referring to Judith's charm bracelet as an **i'noGo tied**, a type of Inuit totem.

**Mr. Pollock** – Mr. Pollock is Amy Pollock's father. He splits his time between his home in San Francisco and Nunivak Island, where he works for the Reindeer Corporation. Mr. Pollock puts Miyax in touch with Amy, initiating the girls' pen pal friendship. Mr. Pollock is a kind and helpful man. For instance, a young man named Russel tells Miyax that Mr. Pollock has been instrumental in helping him and many others recover from alcoholism.

**Atik/Roland** – Atik is a skillful Inuk hunter who lives in the village of Kangik. He and his family stumble upon Miyax's remote campsite on their way to hunt caribou in the mountains. Through Atik's wife, Uma, Miyax learns that Atik has a mentor in town named Kapugen (Miyax's father), whom people regard as the most legendary Inuk hunter of all time. This is how Miyax learns that her father, who had been presumed dead after failing to return from a seal hunt, is actually alive and well.

**Uma/Alice** – Uma is an Inuk woman who lives in the village of Kangik. She and her husband, Atik, and their son, Sorqaq, stumble upon Miyax's campground on their way to hunt caribou in the mountains. Uma tells Miyax about Atik's mentor, a man named Kapugen who people regard as the greatest Inuk hunter of all time. Uma's chatter reveals to Miyax that her father has been alive all along.

**Ellen** – Ellen is Kapugen's new wife. She is a white schoolteacher at the mission in Kangik, the village where Kapugen settles after becoming lost while seal-hunting. Kapugen's marriage to a gussak (a white person) disappoints Miyax, who views the union as an attack on their traditional Inuit culture and a sign that her father isn't the man she thought he was.

## MINOR CHARACTERS

**The bent woman** – The bent woman is an old priestess Miyax encounters at the Bladder Feast at the Inuit seal camp. She gives Miyax her first **i'noGo tied** and explains to her that animals' spirits are contained in the bladder.

**Miyax's Mother** – Miyax's mother died when Miyax was only four years old. She doesn't appear in the novel, though Miyax briefly mentions that her mother called her Julie, which suggests that she was more inclined to assimilate to non-indigenous culture than Miyax's father, Kapugen.

**Rose** – Rose is a girl who attends school with Miyax in Mekoryuk. She and Judith laugh at Miyax after she mistakenly refers to Judith's charm bracelet as an **i'noGo tied**, a type of Inuit totem.

**Nails** – Nails is an adult male wolf in Amaroq's pack. Miyax thinks of Nails as the pups' "spiritual father."

**Silver** – Silver is an adult female wolf. She's Amaroq's mate and mother to Sister, Kapu, Zing, Zat, and Zit.

**Sister** – Sister is the smallest of Amaroq and Silver's wolf pups.

**Zing, Zat, and Zit** – Zing, Zat, and Zit are three of Amaroq and Silver's wolf pups.

**Sorqaq** – Sorqaq is Uma and Atik's infant son.

# TERMS

Bureau of Indian Affairs – The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) is a U.S. federal agency that was founded in 1824. The agency implements and regulates laws relating to American Indians and Alaska Natives. One of its more controversial policies was the establishment of federally funded boarding schools designed to forcibly assimilate indigenous children into Anglo-American culture.

Gussak – *Gussak* is a Yupik slang term used to refer to a white person.

Inuit/Inuk – The Inuit are a group of indigenous peoples of northern Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. Inuit means "people," and the singular form of the word is Inuk. Today, the term is often used to refer to the collective Inuit and Yupik peoples, although it should be noted that the Inuit and Yupik are distinct groups of people who speak distinct languages.

Iñupiat – The Iñupiat are a group of Alaska Natives, encompassed in the larger group of Inuit-speaking peoples. Iñupiaq is the singular form of the word and can also refer to the Iñupiaq dialect of the Inuit language. This dialect is distinct from Yupik.

Yupik – The Yupik are a group of indigenous peoples who traditionally inhabited western, southwestern, and southcentral Alaska, and the Russian Far East. Yupik is a broad designation that refers to the Alutiiq, Yup'ik, and Siberian Yupik peoples.

Quonset – A quonset hut is a steel, semi cylindrical building structure. They were first manufactured in 1941 when the U.S. Navy required lightweight, shippable, and easily assembled buildings. The structure featured an open interior, allowing it to be used for a variety of uses, from barracks to offices to housing.

# THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

## HUMANS VS. NATURE

*Julie of the Wolves* takes place in the barren and unforgiving Alaskan wilderness, where a 13-year-old Inuk girl named Miyax Kapugen is alone, starving, and lost. She's fled to the Arctic tundra after her husband, Daniel, tried to rape her. The novel follows Miyax as she struggles to survive treacherous conditions and find her way back to civilization, and as such, the book presents a broader conflict between humans and nature. The book specifically highlights how Miyax's struggle for survival is tied to her indigenous culture, as she draws on her Inuit background to guide her as she traverses the tundra. Many of her ideas about nature and survival come from her father, Kapugen, who taught her the importance of understanding and establishing a relationship with nature that is anchored in respect and equality. These are values that allow her to befriend and understand the pack of wolves that aids in her survival. They also make her wonder whether the natural world is, in fact, *preferable* to society. Although people often stereotype wolves as vicious and uncaring, the animals Miyax befriends in the tundra treat her with far more respect than her husband, who attacked and dehumanized her. For this reason, Miyax repeatedly expresses her desire to remain in the incredibly dangerous Arctic wilderness rather than return to her life in town.

The novel also juxtaposes the Inuits' respect for nature with the disrespect for and exploitation of nature that Miyax associates with gussak (white) culture. For example, before Miyax feasts on a caribou that the wolves have killed and allowed her to share, she "pa[ys] tribute to the spirit of the caribou by lifting her arms to the sun," acknowledging and respecting the animal for providing her with necessary sustenance. In contrast, the *gussak* hunters in the novel show no respect for nature and simply kill animals for sport. To them, the natural world is theirs to use, control, and conquer as they please. Miyax's culture

considers this attitude immoral, because "it encourage[s] killing for money, rather than need." Kapugen's criticism expands on this point, arguing that such hunting disrespects the natural order of the world: fewer wolves results in too many caribou grazing, which means the lemmings will starve and die out, and so on. In its portrayal of human brutality (Daniel's violence toward Miyax and the hunters' senseless killing), *Julie of the Wolves* shows that people can be just as harsh and unfeeling as nature. And through the Inuit wisdom espoused in the book and Miyax's deep communion with animals, the novel suggests that nature is worthy of respect and reverence. As such, any conflict between humans and the natural world should be solved by learning to coexist peacefully in nature rather than conquering it.

## MEMORY AND DISILLUSIONMENT

Even though Kapugen, Miyax's father, doesn't appear in person until the end of the novel, the reader learns a lot about his character through Miyax's many memories of him. Kapugen played a formative role in Miyax's life: after Miyax's mother died, she and Kapugen moved to a seal camp to live according to the old Inuit way of life. Miyax grows up believing that her father died while on a seal-hunting excursion (although this turns out not to be true). Even before her father's supposed death, Miyax and Kapugen were separated when she was taken away to attend school, in accordance with the Bureau of Indian Affairs's compulsory education mandate for indigenous children. In the present, Miyax—who is trying to survive in the Alaskan tundra after running away from her abusive husband, Daniel—regards the years she spent with Kapugen at the seal camp as the best time of her life. It was during this time that he instilled in her a deep respect for their Inuit traditions and beliefs. Miyax idolizes her father and sees Kapugen and herself as kindred spirits, both equally inclined toward the old way of life and happy to coexist "with the cold and the birds and the beasts."

However, it eventually becomes clear that Miyax's memory of Kapugen is an idealized construction that she has created—intentionally or unintentionally—to replace the father she couldn't keep. When Miyax finally discovers that Kapugen is alive and reunites with him, her initial elation is replaced by bitter disappointment when she learns that Kapugen has eschewed his firmly held convictions about respecting nature and the old way of life. Miyax is horrified to find in Kapugen's house a crash helmet and goggles that are nearly identical to the ones worn by hunters who recently shot and killed Amaroq, a wolf Miyax befriended and considered her "adopted father." When Kapugen, a formerly revered Inuk hunter, admits to hunting from an airplane the way gussak (white) people do, it's as though he's admitted to killing Amaroq himself.

Miyax reflects as she leaves Kapugen's house just moments after being reunited that "Kapugen, after all, was dead to her." This thought suggests that although her father is physically alive, Kapugen as he was "to her"—that is, the romanticized image of him she created in his absence—is dead. Miyax's bitter reflection also implies that this romanticized version of Kapugen might have only ever existed in her mind. Her treasured memories of Kapugen, which Miyax initially relies on to bring her comfort and ancestral wisdom in the Arctic wilderness, show how memory is a powerful tool that can connect people to their loved ones or to entire ways of life that have largely been lost to history. Yet through her reckoning with the disparity between the father she remembered and the father he turned out to be, the novel also highlights the fallibility of memory and the human tendency to become disillusioned after glorifying the past.

## COMMUNITY AND SURVIVAL

When Miyax first realizes she is lost in the Arctic wilderness, it is her participation in a community—a pack of wolves led by Amaroq—that allows her to survive. Miyax is resilient and highly resourceful, but nature's unpredictability and brutality present her with many situations where these qualities are not enough to ensure survival. For example, when Miyax has a terrifying surprise encounter with a grizzly bear, she escapes unscathed only because Amaroq and his pack warn her of the bear's approach. Afterward, Miyax observes, "had [the grizzly] come upon her tent, with one curious sweep of his paw he would have snuffed out her life while she slept." She then thanks the wolves, acknowledging the critical role they played in saving her life. Miyax reciprocates this act of loyalty and compassion later on, when she nurses Kapu, a young wolf, back to health after hunters severely injure him. And beyond safety, community also provides Miyax with companionship. The novel emphasizes the foundation of mutual respect, affection, and love that underlies the wolves' commitment to one another: as an honorary member of the pack, Miyax addresses the wolves using familial titles (such as "brother" or "father"), and she and the wolves often exchange physical gestures of affection.

The novel further emphasizes the practical and emotional advantages of living in a community by exposing the negative consequences of individualism and selfishness. Jello, the "lone wolf" member of Amaroq's pack, is antisocial and independent to a fault. His behavior alienates him from his pack, lowers his status, and culminates in his death. Amaroq doesn't respect him, and as a result, none of the pack does either: Jello has to eat last when the wolves feast on their kill, and he's often relegated to the role of babysitter for the pack's five young pups while the adults are out hunting. Because Jello's status in the pack is already low, Amaroq's favoritism toward Miyax threatens him. Jello retaliates against this threat by breaking into Miyax's camp, destroying her house, and stealing her food. Miyax's father, Kapugen, once explained to her that wolf packs

turn on lone wolves that steal from the pack's pups because "there is no room in the wolf society for an animal who cannot contribute." And indeed, Jello pays the ultimate price for his actions when Amaroq kills him for the threat his individualism poses to the pack. *Julie of the Wolves* juxtaposes the negative consequences that befall self-interested characters like Jello with the security and personal fulfillment that Miyax gains through her commitment to Amaroq's wolf pack. In so doing, the novel suggests that community and compassion are more rewarding and conducive to survival than rugged individualism.

### TRADITION VS. ASSIMILATION

Miyax Kapugen straddles a divide between two vastly different worlds: her ancestors' Inuit traditions and gussak (white) American culture, which disrupts and displaces the old way of life. Miyax's very name illustrates this conflict. Among her own people, she is Miyax Kapugen, an Inuit girl who takes pride in the rich cultural and spiritual traditions her people—though these beliefs are increasingly perceived as "old-fashioned," even within the Inuit community. In another world, she is Julie Edwards, an American girl who is coerced into assuming an English name, learning to read and write in English, and complying with the Bureau of Indian Affairs's regulations. After Miyax runs away from home, while trying to survive in the Alaskan wilderness, she fantasizes about alternative lives that evoke both extremes. She imagines either leaving society to lead a traditional Inuit life in the Arctic tundra or running away to live an entirely modernized life with her *gussak* pen pal, Amy, in San Francisco. In Miyax's mind, there is no middle road: assimilation, no matter how slight, comes at the direct cost of dishonoring her past.

Although Miyax doesn't make it to San Francisco, she metaphorically turns her back on the past when she decides to return to an Inuit village, live with Kapugen (her father), and become Julie. But after she realizes how much Kapugen has distanced himself from Inuit culture in the years they've been apart, Miyax resolves to abandon her father, leave town, and return to the wilderness to live in absolute accordance with her ancestral ways. This changes when her bird friend, Tornait, dies shortly after they leave town together. In a state of utter loneliness and grief, Miyax realizes the futility of her quest to reclaim her Inuit identity. After singing a mournful song about the end of "the hour of the wolf and the Eskimo," Miyax, whom the book now calls Julie, "point[s] her boot toward Kapugen," implying that she will abandon her plans and return to her father.

The erasure of Miyax's indigenous name in the final line of the novel evokes a sad truth about the likelihood that she'll be able to preserve her indigenous culture. Even if Miyax can practice certain customs and maintain a degree of pride in her indigenous heritage as she lives in town, non-indigenous culture's coercive influence means that Miyax will *always* be met with circumstances that force her to compromise her cultural integrity. She will always be "Julie" if she chooses to return to society. Miyax's final decision to give up her Inuit name and culture pessimistically suggests that assimilation and indigenous cultural preservation may be mutually exclusive. As long as the pressure to assimilate exists, traditional ways of life remain at risk of disappearing.

## SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

### I'NOGO TIED

The *i'noGo tied* symbolizes Miyax's relationship to Inuit culture. The *i'noGo tied* is a traditional Inuit amulet made from blubber and wrapped in sealskin that brings its wearer luck and protection. Miyax receives her *i'noGo tied* from the bent woman, an old priestess she meets at the Inuit seal camp where she and Kapugen live after Miyax's mother dies. Miyax's time at the camp immerses her in Inuit traditions, and the *i'noGo tied* thus symbolizes a time in Miyax's life when she could take pride in her cultural identity. The amulet's significance deepens after Miyax learns that Kapugen is lost at sea and presumed to be dead. With neither the seal camp community nor Kapugen to sustain her cultural ties, Miyax relies on the *i'noGo tied* to remember who she is and all that she has lost.

But Miyax isn't always proud of her Inuit identity. Moving to Mekoryuk to attend school forces her to assimilate to gussak (white) culture, which prompts her to question her indigenous identity. In school, she has to learn English and assume an English name. Being surrounded by Inuit children who've spent their entire lives in town reveals to Miyax her complete ignorance about *gussak* culture and makes her feel like an outsider. Suddenly, she wonders whether the experiences at the seal camp she'd once considered to be "dear and wonderful" are in fact "strange" and unacceptable. As a result, the *i'noGo tied* becomes a symbol of shame and alienation rather than pride and cultural connection. In one instance, Miyax mistakes her schoolmate Judith's charm bracelet for an *i'noGo tied*. Judith and another girl, Grace, giggle at Miyax as Judith corrects her error. Miyax returns home that night and throws her *i'noGo tied* in the trash, and this action symbolizes her desire to erase the part of herself that makes her feel like an outsider.

### THE PINK ROOM

The pink room symbolizes Miyax's idealized perception of non-indigenous American culture.

After Miyax (who is Inuit) moves to Mekoryuk to attend school, she starts to exchange letters with Amy Pollack, a 12-year-old girl who lives in San Francisco. In her letters, Amy enchants Miyax with vivid descriptions of city life in San Francisco. At the end of each letter, Amy begs Miyax to come stay with her, promising that Miyax will have a pink room all to herself when she arrives. Miyax imagines running away to San Francisco and staying in the pink room in Amy's house to escape her own life, which becomes even more unbearable after she relocates to Barrow to marry an abusive boy named Daniel. Although Miyax once rejected assimilating into non-indigenous society, she now sees the promised pink room as a symbol of the better life she could have in the more modernized continental U.S.

After Daniel assaults her, Miyax flees Barrow. She plans to board a ship at Point Hope that will take her to San Francisco, but the plan falls apart when she gets lost on the way there. At first, Miyax fantasizes about San Francisco and the pink room to remain hopeful as she struggles to survive the Arctic tundra's harsh conditions. But her attitude changes after she witnesses two gussak (white) hunters shoot and murder her wolf friend, Amaroq, from an airplane. Miyax associates Amaroq's cruel and senseless murder with *gussak* people's immoral greed. After Amaroq's death, Miyax can only envision the pink room in Amy's house as "red with [Amaroq's] blood." Miyax's altered vision of the pink room symbolizes her disillusionment with non-indigenous culture. Amaroq's death makes her realize that she cannot remain loyal to her Inuit culture if she embraces fantasies of assimilating into mainstream American society. The pink room thus transforms from a symbol of possibility and hope to a reminder of how non-indigenous people have killed and degraded the people, values, and customs she holds dear.

## QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the HarperCollins edition of *Julie of the Wolves* published in 2019.

### Part 1: Amaroq, the wolf Quotes

❝ Not a tree grew anywhere to break the monotony of the gold-green plain, for the soils of the tundra are permanently frozen. Only moss, grass, lichens, and a few hardy flowers take root in the thin upper layer that thaws briefly in summer. Nor do many species of animals live in this rigorous land, but those creatures that do dwell here exist in bountiful numbers.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 9

**Explanation and Analysis**

This passage describes the landscape that surrounds Miyax as she carefully observes the wolf Amaroq's behavior and comes to terms with the reality that she's lost on the Arctica tundra. It plays a vital role in setting the scene for the reader, who might not be familiar with the topography of the North Slope of Alaska. The majority of the North Slope consists of tundra, sparse open land where low temperatures leave the soil permanently frozen and inhospitable to plant growth. A lack of trees, plants, and animals leaves Miyax with only "the monotony of the gold-green plain" and a lack of discernable landmarks, making it impossible for her to orient herself directionally. The passage emphasizes the tundra's barrenness to convey the gravity of Miyax's situation. It is bad enough to be lost in the wilderness, but Miyax also happens to be lost in a place whose climate and topography are notoriously brutal.

Of course, some species do make the tundra their home. The passage describes the "bountiful numbers" of creatures that survive in the tundra, which lays the book's exploration of the relationship between community, solidarity, and survival. By specifically describing the "bountiful numbers" of species that do manage to survive in this "rigorous land," the passage symbolically suggests that safety in numbers—the protection of existing in a larger community—is what allows these creatures to thrive. This point further contextualizes what is at stake for Miyax as she throws herself into the daunting work of winning over Amaroq and his wolf pack.

❝ Here she was, watching wolves—she, Miyax, daughter of Kapugen, adopted child of Martha, citizen of the United States, pupil at the Bureau of Indian Affairs School in Barrow, Alaska, and thirteen-year-old wife of the boy Daniel. She shivered at the thought of Daniel, for it was he who had driven her to this fate. She had run away from him exactly seven sleeps ago, and because of this she had one more title by gussak standards—the child divorcée.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Martha, Amaroq, Daniel

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 10

**Explanation and Analysis**

As Miyax watches Amaroq from a distance, the reader learns a bit about Miyax, her background, and how she's managed to become lost on the Arctic tundra. This passage introduces the idea that the pressure to assimilate has affected Miyax's cultural identity. First, by establishing that Miyax is both a "citizen of the United States" and a "pupil at the Bureau of Indian Affairs School in Barrow, Alaska," this passage reveals that Miyax identifies as both an American citizen and a Native Alaskan. As Miyax's story unfolds, her separate, competing identities alienate her from the rest of the world, leaving her uncertain about whether her loyalties should lie with the modernized non-indigenous culture she encounters in town, or the traditional Inuit values her father instilled in her from a young age.

This passage also introduces one of the customs of traditional Inuit culture that complicates Miyax's relationship to the old way of life. The shocking fact that Miyax is a "thirteen-year-old wife" hints at the traditional Inuit custom of arranged marriage and marrying young. Furthermore, the fact that Miyax felt compelled to run away from her husband, Daniel, implies that marrying young has had a negative impact on her life. More broadly, Miyax's decision to run away from her marriage represents her rejection of this particular Inuit tradition.

Lastly, this passage shows how Miyax's relationship to her culture and others shapes her sense of self. The titles attached to Miyax in this passage—daughter, pupil, wife, citizen, and child divorcée—describe various roles she has had—but not Miyax herself. Miyax struggles with her identity throughout the book because she has so many competing forces telling her who she ought to be. In contrast, consider the affirmation of identity the opening line exhibits: "Here she was, watching wolves—she, Miyax." The explicit embrace of her name on its own, unattached to any other person, title, or institution, suggests that Miyax feels most like herself when she is in nature.

❝ With the passing of the lemmings, however, the grasses had grown high again and the hour of the caribou was upon the land. Healthy fat caribou cows gave birth to many calves. The caribou population increased, and this in turn increased the number of wolves who prey on the caribou.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 14

**Explanation and Analysis**

At the beginning of the book, Miyax takes in the tundra's sparse landscape and notes that even the lemmings (an Arctic rodent species) are nowhere in sight. Then, she thinks back to December, when the entire lemming population had seemingly vanished overnight.

Although the absence of lemmings to hunt is unfortunate for Miyax, who hasn't eaten in days, she reflects on how "the passing of the lemmings" benefits the broader ecosystem. In the lemmings' absence, the grass they would've eaten has had the chance to grow high once more, which provides ample sustenance for the caribou population and allows them to thrive. The introduction of a thriving caribou population into the environment then provides the wolves with more prey to hunt, which, in turn, allows the wolf population to flourish.

This passage illustrates Miyax's reverence for nature and her belief that all species are equally important, a philosophy she arrives at through her father, Kapugen's, teachings and her Inuit culture. Miyax envisions the natural world as a balanced, interconnected system. In this system, no living being can exist without sacrificing another. Then they, in turn, must sacrifice themselves to uphold the natural order of the world—that is, every "passing" of one species happens so that an "hour" of another species can begin.

❝ Amaroq got to his feet, and as he slowly arose he seemed to fill the sky and blot out the sun. He was enormous. He could swallow her without even chewing. "But he won't," she reminded herself. "Wolves do not eat people. That's gussak talk. Kapugen said wolves are gentle brothers."

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards (speaker), Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 15

**Explanation and Analysis**

Miyax observes Amaroq up close for the first time, and the sheer size of him terrifies her: when Amaroq stands, it's as though he "fill[s] the sky and blot[s] out the sun." Miyax's

fear transforms Amaroq into a supernatural monster capable of cloaking the world in darkness and "swallow[ing] her even without chewing."

Miyax's fears subside once she realizes that her fear stems from misunderstanding: "Wolves don't eat people. That's gussak talk." Miyax's remark illustrates the opposite perspectives that *gussaks* (white people) and the Inuit have of nature. When Miyax dismisses her fears of Amaroq eating her whole because "that's gussak talk," she implies that it's characteristic of *gussaks* to fear and misunderstand nature. In contrast, the Inuit are more understanding of nature. Citing Kapugen's teachings, Miyax explains that "wolves are gentle brothers."

Kapugen's sympathetic view of wolves reflects his ability to relate to and understand them. To Kapugen, wolves and humans are not so different: both species are capable of love and affection, and even of directing those feelings toward the other species. In contrast, the *gussaks* see themselves as separate from nature. Their belief that humans are fundamentally different from animals renders them incapable of believing that wolves could feel emotions like love or "gentle[ness]."

This passage illustrates a central tension of the book, establishing not only the incompatibility of non-indigenous and Inuit attitudes toward nature, but also showing how Miyax has inadvertently internalized non-indigenous views that contradict the Inuit beliefs and customs Kapugen taught her in her childhood.

> He must indeed be their leader for he was clearly the wealthy wolf; that is, wealthy as she had known the meaning of the word on Nunivak Island. There the old Eskimo hunters she had known in her childhood thought the riches of life were intelligence, fearlessness, and love. A man with these gifts was rich and was a great spirit who was admired in the same way that the gussaks admired a man with money and goods.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 19

**Explanation and Analysis**

Miyax considers Amaroq's virtuous qualities and decides that "he must indeed be the leader for he was clearly the wealthy wolf." Miyax's assessment of Amaroq's virtues also introduces the reader to the values that her Inuit culture holds in high regard. These are the traits that Miyax believes make a person "wealthy," and ones she aspires to embody herself.

Miyax's Inuit heritage teaches her that wealth comes not from material goods, but from a being's "intelligence, fearlessness, and love." Miyax frames these different perspectives in cultural terms, contrasting Inuit and *gussak* notions of wealth. Whereas the Inuit measure wealth in terms of moral character, the *gussaks* "admire[] a man with money and goods," placing more value on material wealth than moral virtue. The fundamentally different views put forth in this passage lay the foundation for the reality that the *gussak* way of life is profoundly incompatible with the continued flourishing of traditional Inuit values. In this passage, Miyax is well aware of this cultural tension, and one can foresee how the culmination of her journey will entail having to make difficult decisions in light of this fundamental irreconcilability.

> The signal went off. It sped through his body and triggered emotions of love. Amaroq's ears flattened and his tail wagged in friendship. He could not react in any other way to the chin pat, for the roots of this signal lay deep in wolf history. It was inherited from generations and generations of leaders before him. As his eyes softened, the sweet odor of ambrosia arose from the gland on the top of his tail and she was drenched lightly in wolf scent. Miyax was one of the pack.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amaroq, Kapugen/Charlie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 24-25

**Explanation and Analysis**

Although Miyax has patiently observed and tried to mimic the wolves' nuanced social behaviors, Amaroq continues to ignore her, and she remains an outsider to the pack. Then, one day, Amaroq finally notices her. Miyax boldly approaches him, giving him a nudge under his chin as she has seen the other wolves do in a clear display of respect and affection.

Miyax's risk pays off, and Amaroq responds instantly: "the signal [goes] off. Amaroq's ears flatten[] and his tail wag[s] in friendship." Amaroq's body language is impossible to

misread—he has received Miyax's message of love and replied in the affirmative. In Amaroq's "softened" expression and "the sweet odor of ambrosia" he emits, he conveys the message that Miyax has been waiting for: "Miyax [is] one of the pack." Bonding with Amaroq is important to Miyax for two reasons: most urgently, Amaroq's acceptance means that there is now a real likelihood that Miyax will get to eat again.

In addition to this, Miyax's success with Amaroq validates the lessons about wolves that Kapugen passed down to her when they lived at the seal camp many years ago. Perhaps the most crucial lesson Kapugen taught Miyax was that wolves love one another and will love her too, if she learns to speak to them in their language. The undeniable affection that Amaroq conveys to Miyax after she cracks the code of his language shows her that Kapugen was right.

Finally, this passage demonstrates that Miyax has inherited Kapugen's affinity with nature. Miyax construes Amaroq's instinctual response to her chin pat as behavior that lies "deep in wolf history," and that was "inherited from generations and generations of leaders before him." Miyax's perspective recasts Amaroq's mere animal instinct as ritualized behavior steeped in meaning and informed by tradition. She acknowledges the complexity and nuance of the wolf language and shows a profound respect for Amaroq's existence as a living creature.

> "Change your ways when fear seizes," he had said, "for it usually means you are doing something wrong."

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Daniel, Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 42

### Explanation and Analysis

Miyax realizes that Amaroq's pack will likely leave her once the pups are old enough to undertake the nomadic life wolves lead during the winter months. The thought sends a paralyzing wave of fear through Miyax's body until she remembers the advice Kapugen gave her when she was younger.

"Change your ways when fear seizes," Kapugen once told Miyax, "for it usually means you are doing something wrong." Kapugen's advice advocates for taking control of one's situation instead of surrendering to adversity. To Kapugen, the energy a person expends on fear ought to go toward proactively finding a better path forward. After Miyax remembers Kapugen's advice, she wills herself to stop worrying about the wolves abandoning her and instead gathers vegetation so that she will be ready if the wolves do leave her behind. This passage displays Miyax's profound respect for Kapugen and how his teachings help her navigate the world, even in his absence. Miyax has thought about this particular lesson on multiple occasions when she's found herself overcome with fear, such as the night that Daniel assaulted her, prompting her to run away from Barrow.

But Kapugen's advice also foreshadows his assimilation into non-indigenous society. When the growing influence of *gussak* culture renders Kapugen's traditional Inuit hunting practices obsolete, he "change[es his] ways" and adopts the modern approach of using airplanes to target and shoot his prey. Kapugen's assimilation into *gussak* culture suggests he has decided that it is impractical to waste time mourning an old way of life that no longer exists. Instead, Kapugen "change[s his] ways" to align with what the dominant culture has decided is the right way of doing things.

> Miyax at last was sure of what had happened to Jello. He was the low man on the totem pole, the bottom of the ladder. She recalled the day Amaroq had put him down and forced him to surrender, the many times Silver had made him go back and sit with the pups, and the times that Kapu had ignored his calls to come home to the den. He was indeed a lowly wolf—a poor spirit, with fears and without friends.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Jello, Amaroq, Kapu, Silver, Kapugen/Charlie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 68

### Explanation and Analysis

Miyax watches the wolves running across the tundra and sees that Jello is lagging noticeably behind the group, so much that he's hardly an identifiable member of the pack. Miyax has always known that there's something off about Jello, but seeing him struggle to keep up with the others forces Miyax to see Jello for what he really is: "a lowly wolf—a poor spirit, with fears and without friends." Miyax realizes that Jello is a lone wolf.

In wolf populations, a lone wolf is a singular, usually young wolf that has either voluntarily left or been ejected from his

pack. Sometimes, food scarcity forces wolves of lower positions of power (like Jello) away from their packs in search of prey. The idiom "lone wolf" comes from this phenomenon and carries the connotation of an aggressive, antisocial outcast who must adapt to the heightened difficulties of surviving independently.

Understanding Jello's status as a lone wolf sheds light on the unceasing antagonistic behavior he unleashes on Miyax. Miyax's acceptance in the pack gives her access to the food and protection that the same pack denies him, and as a result, he views her as a threat to his survival. The book uses Jello's character to emphasize the importance of community. Not only does his alienation from the pack make him vulnerable to food scarcity and outside attacks, but, in a vicious cycle, it also increases his propensity toward the hostile, aggressive behavior that isolated him in the first place. Jello's solitude degrades his chances of survival, and it also degrades his soul. His example demonstrates the central importance of community to Miyax. In fact, she'll implicitly use his lesson to inform her profoundly difficult, final choice: whether to forgive and return to Kapugen, or to continue into the wilderness and become a lone wolf herself.

## Part 2: Miyax, the girl Quotes

❝ Later, Kapugen's Aunt Martha told her that he had lost his mind the day her mother died. He had grabbed Miyax up and walked out of his fine house in Mekoryuk. He had left his important job as manager of the reindeer herd, and he had left all his possessions. "He walked you all the way to seal camp," Martha told her. "And he never did anything good after that."

**Related Characters:** Martha (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Miyax's Mother, Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 76

### Explanation and Analysis

After Amaroq's pack leaves Miyax behind, she reflects on her past, chronicling the events that led her to this point in time. Miyax remembers how, after her mother died, Kapugen took her away from their life in Mekoryuk to live in a traditional Inuit seal camp. Miyax's complete admiration for Kapugen prevents her from criticizing his actions or motivations. However, Martha's comments in this passage hint that there is a darker side to Kapugen that Miyax's love and respect for her father prevent her from seeing clearly. Miyax typically thinks about her childhood as an idyllic time in her life, when she and her father reconnected themselves to their indigenous heritage, immersed themselves in nature, and abandoned the gradually Westernizing town.

While Miyax's observations are accurate to a degree, Martha's comments propose an alternate view. Martha sees Kapugen's actions in the immediate aftermath of his wife's death as irresponsible and careless. Although Kapugen might have done a good deed in reconnecting himself and his daughter with their culture to work through their grief, he did so at the cost of providing his daughter with a stable life. Martha remembers how Kapugen abandoned his "fine house in Mekoryuk" and his "important job as manager of the reindeer herd." After Kapugen moved Miyax to the seal camp, argues Martha, "he never did anything good after that." Because Martha doesn't share Miyax's all-consuming admiration for Kapugen, she can assess Kapugen's actions following his wife's death more objectively than Miyax can.

❝ To Miyax the years at seal camp were infinitely good. The scenes and events were beautiful color spots in her memory.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 76

### Explanation and Analysis

In a series of flashbacks, Miyax chronicles the years that preceded her misfortune of becoming lost in the Arctic wild. First, she recalls the early years of her childhood, during which she lived with Kapugen in a traditional Inuit seal camp on Nunivak Island. At the camp, Miyax and Kapugen immerse themselves in a traditional Inuit lifestyle, forgoing the modern amenities and non-indigenous influence that characterized their former life in Mekoryuk, a more populated town on the island.

In retrospect, Miyax views her experience growing up at the seal camp positively: "the years at the seal camp were infinitely good," she affirms. "The scenes and events were beautiful color spots on her memory." This line introduces a stylistic element the book employs throughout Miyax's flashback sequence, where Miyax matches colors to describe the vibrant experiences that shape her cultural

identity. For example, she remembers the Bladder Feast as black, blue, purple, and red, and the day she helps Kapugen pull ashore a white whale is silver.

Miyax's impulse to remember this time in her life as "beautiful color spots in her memory" reflects the nostalgia she feels for this simpler time in her life, before the social pressure to uphold non-indigenous cultural norms and fit in with her peers made her question the validity of her ancestral heritage. Matching these memories to colors symbolically oversaturates them, rendering them clearer, more pristine, and more composed—it's akin to the idiom of seeing the world through "rose-colored glasses," or seeing only what is positive. (Notably, rose is also a color that Miyax ascribes to one of her memories.) Miyax applies colors to her memories at the seal camp to preserve and sanctify this special part of her life—to protect it from the ravages of time and change that seem to afflict everything else in her life.

> "Wolves are brotherly," he said. "They love each other, and if you learn to speak to them, they will love you too."

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 78

**Explanation and Analysis**

During Miyax's early childhood years at the seal camp, Kapugen teaches her many lessons about wolves. A main focus of these lessons is the idea that wolves are social, affectionate creatures. "Wolves are brotherly," Kapugen explains to Miyax on one occasion. "They love each other, and if you learn to speak to them, they will love you too." This lesson becomes vitally important to Miyax when, years later, she finds herself lost and without food on the barren, incredibly dangerous Arctic tundra. Kapugen's teachings about wolves are what inspire Miyax to learn to communicate with Amaroq and his pack, and to earn their trust, acceptance, and love, just as Kapugen promised.

The book draws on the underlying message of Kapugen's lesson about wolves as a guide for existing in the natural world more broadly, as well. Kapugen's directive, "if you learn to speak to them, they will love you too," emphasizes a relationship between humans and the natural world that is built on equality, adaption, and mutual understanding. It suggests that if Miyax wants to survive in nature, she needs to learn how to adapt her behavior to nature, living in balance with it. The key to surviving in nature, unlike what the *gussaks* seem to believe, is not to control or conquer it, but to understand it, respect it, and live in harmony with it.

> "Yes, you are Eskimo," he had said. "And never forget it. We live as no other people can, for we truly understand the earth."

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 81

**Explanation and Analysis**

In a series of flashbacks, Miyax remembers her early childhood years living with Kapugen at a traditional Inuit seal camp on Nunivak Island. In one memory, Miyax proudly proclaims her loyalty to her Inuit name and heritage.

Kapugen affirms his daughter's cultural allegiance: "Yes, you are Eskimo," he agrees. (*Julie of the Wolves* takes place in the late 1960s or early 1970s. Today, "Eskimo" is considered an ethnic slur for Inuit people.) Kapugen's loyalty to their ancestral heritage is instrumental in developing Miyax's cultural identity. During her time at the seal camp, Kapugen passes down to Miyax an affinity for the natural world, a wealth of knowledge about Inuit spiritual beliefs, and respect for the old way of life. According to Kapugen, the Inuit "live as no other people can, for we truly understand the earth." Kapugen instills in Miyax a belief that the Inuit way of life is more spiritually fulfilling than the *gussak* cultural norms that have overtaken Alaska's more densely populated towns and villages. He urges that she "never forget" her ancestral heritage, even when the social pressure to assimilate into modern society coerces her to abandon her roots.

Kapugen's response becomes ironic by the end of the book, however. After living for years under the impression that Kapugen had died at sea, Miyax inadvertently discovers that her father is, in fact, alive and living in a small village called Kangik. When she finally reunites with her long-lost father, she feels disappointed and betrayed to discover that he has completely reinvented himself and abandoned his traditional Inuit customs for the conveniences of modernized, non-indigenous life. When Miyax was a child, it

was Kapugen who had encouraged her to reconnect with her ancestral heritage and to "never forget" who she is; in the end, however, it appears that Kapugen has failed to heed his own advice.

❝ Gradually Julie pushed Kapugen out of her heart and accepted the people of Mekoryuk. The many years in seal camp alone with Kapugen had been dear and wonderful, but she realized now that she had lived a strange life. The girls her age could speak and write English and they knew the names of presidents, astronauts, and radio and movie personalities who lived below the top of the world. Maybe the Europeans once thought the earth was flat, but the Eskimos always knew it was round. One only needed to look at the earth's relatives, the sun and the moon, to know that.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards

**Related Themes:**   

**Page Number:** 84-85

**Explanation and Analysis**

This passage occurs early in Julie's (Miyax's English name) new life in Mekoryuk and illustrates the transitional period between her old life at the seal camp with Kapugen and her new life in town among the Westernized Inuit. By this point, Julie has just learned of Kapugen's disappearance at sea, and she assumes he is dead. Therefore, when Julie "pushe[s] Kapugen out of her heart and accept[s] the people of Mekoryuk," she symbolically accepts the death of her Inuit culture and "accept[s]", however indifferently, its replacement with Mekoryuk's non-indigenous norms.

Even as Julie vows to assimilate, however, she remains torn between her two worlds at this early stage of her new life. While the pressure to fit in prompts her to assess her time at the seal camp in a critical light, reevaluating the life she'd once determined to be "dear and wonderful" as "strange," she also can't help but question whether her traditional life at the seal camp is really old-fashioned and inferior to life in Mekoryuk.

For example, even though the Westernized girls in town have a better grasp of English, science, and mainland American culture, Julie wonders whether her people's folk knowledge is really so inferior and foolish. After all, "the Europeans once thought the earth was flat, but the Eskimos always knew it was round. One only needed to look at the earth's relatives, the sun and the moon, to know that." ("Eskimo" is now considered an ethnic slur for Inuit people.) This comparison points suggests that since European culture is dominant in many parts of the world, Europeans' inflated sense of self-importance has led them to make misguided claims. Inuit traditional culture, on the other hand, stresses a more interconnected relationship with nature and has successfully allowed its people to flourish in the Arctic's harsh conditions for generations.

❝ "What a lovely i'noGo tied!" Julie said politely. "A what?" asked Judith. Julie repeated the Eskimo word for the house of the spirits. Judith snickered. "That's a charm bracelet," she said. Rose giggled and both laughed derisively. Julie felt the blood rush to her face as she met, for the first but not the last time, the new attitudes of the Americanized Eskimos. She had much to learn besides reading. That night she threw her i'noGo tied away.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Judith (speaker), Rose, Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Martha

**Related Themes:**    

**Related Symbols:** 

**Page Number:** 85-86

**Explanation and Analysis**

In the early days of Julie's new life in Mekoryuk, she accompanies her new schoolmates, Judith and Rose, to Judith's house after school. Judith's house initially makes Julie feel uncomfortable, because it's decorated in a modernized, Western style and full of many objects she doesn't recognize. For this reason, she's excited when she spots what she believes to be a familiar artifact in Judith's bedroom: "What a lovely I'noGo tied!" she compliments Judith.

Julia's attempt to connect with her peers backfires when what she believed to be an Inuit good-luck amulet turns out to be a charm bracelet. Judith and Rose "both laugh[] derisively" at Julie's mistake, and Julie feels instant shame for her ignorance about non-indigenous culture. Julie's negative experience at Judith's house will only be the first of many mortifying encounters with "the new attitudes of the Americanized Eskimos," Inuit who have assimilated to non-indigenous culture and regard Julie's traditional upbringing as old-fashioned. ("Eskimo" is now considered an ethnic slur for Inuit people.) When Julie realizes that she "has much to

learn besides reading," she refers to the cultural assimilation she must undergo if she wants to fit in with her new community.

On returning to Mekoryuk to attend a Bureau of Indian Affairs school, Julie finds that spending her formative years at the isolated Inuit seal camp with Kapugen has left her ignorant about the modernized world. She struggles to fit in and starts to feel ashamed of the heritage she used to be so proud of. When Julie returns to Martha's after her embarrassing afternoon at Judith's house and "thr[ow]s her I'noGo tied away," it symbolizes her desire to disassociate herself from the traditional Inuit customs that alienate her from her peers. Faced with the threat of social ostracization, Julie willfully parts with an important artifact that connects her to her Inuit heritage; her cherished, idyllic childhood at the seal camp; and her beloved Kapugen.

> As the months passed, the letters from Amy became the most important thing in Julie's life and the house in San Francisco grew more real than the house in Barrow. She knew each flower on the hill where Amy's house stood, each brick in the wall around the garden, and each tall blowing tree. She also knew the curls in the wrought-iron gate, and how many steps led up to the big front door; she could almost see the black-and-white tile on the floor of the foyer. If she closed her eyes she could imagine the arched doorway, the Persian rug on the living-room floor, the yellow chairs and the huge window that looked over the bay. Radios, lamps, coffee tables—all these she could see. And if she shut her eyes tight, she could feel Amy's hand in her hand and hear Amy's big feet tap the sidewalk. The second floor was always fun to dream about. At the top of the winding stairs four doors opened upon rooms lit with sunshine. And one was the pink room, the one that would be hers when she got to San Francisco.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amy Pollock, Daniel

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 97-98

**Explanation and Analysis**

Julie moves to Barrow to marry Daniel and live with his family. Her life there is dull, and the letters she receives from her pen pal, Amy, quickly become "the most important thing in [her] life." The detailed accounts of life in San Francisco that Amy includes in her letters offer Julie a glimpse into Amy's endlessly strange and fascinating home in the modernized world. Julie's remark about "the house in San Francisco gr[owing] more real than the house in Barrow" shows the extent to which Amy's letters have inspired a shift in Julie's attitude toward non-indigenous culture. When Julie still lived in the seal camp with Kapugen and adhered to a traditional Inuit lifestyle, she learned to disdain *gussak* culture for how its values so clearly contradicted her own.

Now, Julie's friendship with Amy makes her question her loyalty to Inuit culture and her animosity toward the West, and she even begins to see travelling to San Francisco as a way out of what has become a dull, unfulfilling life. Although Daniel mostly ignores Julie throughout the early period of their marriage, she feels trapped and bored in Barrow, and she might even blame her Inuit culture's outdated customs of marrying young for landing her in this unhappy situation. Amy's letters grant Julie a reprieve from this unsatisfying life.

The end of this passage references the pink room that Amy promises Julie she can have when she comes to visit her in San Francisco. To Julie, it's always "fun to dream about" the second floor of Amy's house, where the promised pink room, "lit with sunshine," lies waiting for her. The pink room symbolizes Julie's idealized vision of non-indigenous culture, specifically as it relates to her fantasies of a better life she might have in San Francisco with Amy.

> "Julie is gone," she said. "I am Miyax now."

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards (speaker), Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Daniel, Amy Pollock, Naka, Tornait

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 104

**Explanation and Analysis**

The night that Daniel tries to rape Miyax, she packs a bag and leaves Barrow with the plan to travel by boat to Amy and a better life in San Francisco. Miyax walks toward the beach, turns her back to Barrow, and reclaims the Inuit identity that her time in town stole from her: "Julie is gone," she proclaims. "I am Miyax now."

During the sections of Part II that chronicle Miyax's experiences living in Mekoryuk and Barrow, the book refers to her as Julie, the English name she assumes to conform to

the towns' non-indigenous culture. Thus, when Julie turns her back on Barrow, she also turns her back on the pressure to assimilate, which has made her feel ashamed of her indigenous name and culture. When she proclaims, "I am Miyax now," she expresses her renewed commitment to her Inuit culture.

Notably, Miyax's proclamation occurs as she faces away from town and toward the ocean. Miyax repeatedly demonstrates that she is better suited to life in nature than life in society. For example, while in nature, Miyax forms meaningful bonds with the wolves and Tornait, whereas she struggled to make friends in town. Many of the relationships she does have (such as with her husband, Daniel, or her father-in-law, Naka) are fraught with violence or disorder. Miyax's choice to face the ocean as she reclaims her indigenous name symbolizes the freedom and peace she will achieve when she trades stifling city life for the vast expanse of the tundra.

## Part 3: Kapugen, the Hunter Quotes

❝ Instantly she knew what had happened; Amaroq had turned on him. Once Kapugen had told her that some wolves had tolerated a lone wolf until the day he stole meat from the pups. With that, the leader gave a signal and his pack turned, struck, and tore the lone wolf to pieces. "There is no room in the wolf society for an animal who cannot contribute," he had said.

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amaroq, Jello

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 121

### Explanation and Analysis

Jello has just broken into Miyax's campsite and stolen her pack. It's a devastating loss for Miyax because the pack contained all her essential tools for survival. The next morning, comforted and intrigued by the smell of fresh wolf urine that she recognizes as Amaroq's, Miyax sets out to look for her missing pack. She doesn't get far before stumbling on the shocking sight of Jello's dead and mutilated body lying on the ground—beside her pack.

Jello's cause of death is no mystery to Miyax: "Amaroq ha[s] turned on him," she remarks gravely. Miyax has recently come to the conclusion that Jello is a lone wolf—a wolf with antisocial tendencies who either leaves voluntarily or is evicted by his pack. Miyax has always known that something wasn't quite right about Jello: he's always last to eat (if he gets to eat), Amaroq snubs him, the other adults leave him behind to babysit. Even then, the pups ignore him. Jello responds to this disrespect with open hostility, his natural aggression magnified by his precarious position as an outsider. Miyax, the most recent addition to Amaroq's pack, is his frequent target, and he repeatedly vandalizes her camp and steals her food. Last night's attack, however, was apparently the last straw for Amaroq.

Packs will tolerate a lone wolf, but only to a point. According to Kapugen, a pack will turn on a lone wolf who steals food from the pack's pups because "there is no room in the wolf society for an animal who cannot contribute." Once more, Kapugen proves to be a reliable authority on the complex innerworkings of wolf society. Jello has stolen Miyax's meat, boots, and most essential tools, and so her "adopted father," Amaroq, has turned on him to protect his pack's integrity.

❝ To amuse herself she thought of the hill where the white house stood in San Francisco. When it seemed almost real enough to touch, and very beautiful, it vanished abruptly; for the tundra was even more beautiful—a glistening gold, and its shadows were purple and blue. Lemon-yellow clouds sailed a green sky and every wind-tossed sedge was a silver thread.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amy Pollock

**Related Themes:**

**Related Symbols:**

**Page Number:** 122-123

### Explanation and Analysis

Miyax is searching for a camping site and starts to feel lonely, so she turns to her usual habit of daydreaming about the life in San Francisco that Amy describes in all her letters. This time, however, Miyax's fantasies about the modern world fail to capture her attention. Just as Miyax conjures an image of "the hill where the white house st[ands] in San Francisco" that is "almost real enough to touch, and very beautiful, it vanishe[s] abruptly."

When Miyax opens her eyes, she sees that the reality that lies before her is more captivating than any of Amy's letters: "the tundra was more beautiful," she realizes. Although she contends that her vision of San Francisco, too, is "very

beautiful," it is not alive in the way the tundra is. The book describes the colors that stretch across the horizon with lush, vibrant detail: "a glistening gold, and its shadows were purple and blue. Lemon-yellow clouds sailed a green sky and every wind-tossed sedge was a silver thread." This passage's vivid imagery conveys Miyax's deepened affection for the natural world.

The dreamy language and ample use of color in this passage is more often seen in passages focused on Miyax's daydreams of San Francisco or memories of her idyllic childhood at the seal camp—both of which, while pretty, have no basis in reality. Miyax's visions of San Francisco are fantasy, and her memories of the seal camp are warped by her nostalgia for the past. By depicting the tundra as more beautiful and captivating than any of Miyax's daydreams, the book foreshadows Miyax's ultimate disillusionment with society and further develops her deep communion with the natural world.

> And she liked the simplicity of that world. It was easy to understand. Out here she understood how she fitted into the scheme of the moon and stars and the constant rise and fall of life on the earth. Even the snow was part of her, she melted it and drank it.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Daniel

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 130

**Explanation and Analysis**

As Miyax and her wolves traverse the Arctic tundra, she spots an oil drum in the distance and recognizes it as a sign that she has almost reached civilization. Miyax realizes that while such news would have thrilled her a month ago, she's no longer excited about the prospect of returning to society. Miyax reflects on her indifference and realizes that "she like[s] the simplicity" of her life in nature, where all she needs are her basic supplies, the clothes on her back, and the inherited sensibilities of her Inuit ancestors.

She also finds this life "easy to understand" because she can be herself without having to navigate tricky social norms. Nature doesn't receive Miyax's traditional Inuit customs with the judgment, mockery, or skepticism of the Americanized Inuit in town. Nor does it hold her to the traditional Inuit customs that have harmed her, such as her arranged marriage to Daniel. Although Miyax's original plan had been to run away from her miserable life in Barrow and board a ship for San Francisco, this passage suggests that she's begun to question how fulfilled she'll be on the mainland, where all she'll really have done is exchanged one harsh and unfeeling society for another. Although Miyax's struggle to survive the Arctic tundra's harsh conditions has challenged her, it's allowed her to reclaim the affinity with nature that she had when she lived at the seal camp with Kapugen and gradually lost when she reentered society to attend school.

> The gussaks were paid to shoot them. A man who brought in the left ear of a wolf to the warden was rewarded with a bounty of fifty dollars. The bounty was evil to the old men at seal camp, for it encouraged killing for money, rather than need. Kapugen considered the bounty the gussaks' way of deciding that the amaroqs could not live on this earth anymore. "And no men have that right," he would say. "When the wolves are gone there will be too many caribou grazing the grass and the lemmings will starve. Without the lemmings the foxes and birds and weasels will die. Their passing will end smaller lives upon which even man depends, whether he knows it or not, and the top of the world will pass into silence."

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amaroq

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 133-134

**Explanation and Analysis**

Amaroq's wolf pack helps Miyax narrowly avoid a grizzly bear attack. Afterward, when Miyax spots an oil drum in the snow and realizes that she's nearer to civilization than she'd originally thought, she suspects that the presence of *gussak* hunters must have been what roused the grizzly bear from hibernation. Miyax reflects on the danger that the *gussak* hunters pose to her wolf pack and the broader threat that *gussak* culture's greed poses to the world.

*Gussak* hunting differs from the traditional hunting Miyax's father used to do, because *gussaks* receive a bounty for the wolves they kill. She remembers how the old Inuit men at the seal camp regarded this practice as "evil," since "it encouraged killing for money, rather than for need." Unlike traditional Inuit hunters, who honor the animals' spirits and respect the natural world by never hunting more than they require to survive, Miyax believes that *gussak* hunters feel

no reverence for the animals they shoot and are content to kill as long as it lines their pockets.

Miyax recalls Kapugen's complaints about these modern hunters. Kapugen's position expands on the old men's criticism of *gussak* hunting practices, arguing that "the bounty [is] the gussaks' way of deciding that the amaroqs could not live on this earth anymore." In other words, the *gussaks* kill so many amaroqs (wolves) with their uncontrolled, careless hunting practices that they're effectively putting the entire species at risk for extinction.

Kapugen puts forth a philosophy that all living things in nature exist in a state of interconnected, self-regulating balance. Because of this, when the *gussaks* kill off the wolf population, they pose a threat to the rest of the world, as well. With no wolves to prey on and regulate the caribou population, the caribou population overgrazes, which causes the lemmings to starve, which causes the animals who prey on the lemmings (such as foxes and birds) to starve as well. This chain of suffering and extinction will continue until even "the top of the world," or humankind, "will pass into silence," and life on Earth will come to an end. This passage further contrasts the Inuit respect for nature with the exploitation of nature that Miyax associates with *gussak* culture. It also lays the foundation for the overwhelming betrayal Miyax feels at the end of the book, when she reunites with Kapugen and finds out that he has adopted the very hunting practices he used to abhor.

> When she thought of San Francisco, she thought about the airplane and the fire and blood and the flashes and death. When she took out her needle and sewed, she thought about peace and Amaroq.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Amy Pollock, Amaroq, Daniel

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 152

**Explanation and Analysis**

After a pair of *gussak* hunters shoot and kill Amaroq, Miyax reevaluates her plans for the future in light of the new negative associations Amaroq's death has attached to her ideas about non-indigenous culture. When Miyax ran away from Barrow to escape her abusive husband, Daniel, her original plan was to walk across the tundra to Point Hope, where she would board a ship that would take her to San Francisco to see her pen pal, Amy Pollock. As Miyax journeys across the treacherous Arctic tundra, her fantastical dreams of a better life in San Francisco motivate her to push forward—despite her past negative experiences with non-indigenous culture and her increasing awareness of that fact that she is better-suited to life in nature than life in society. She's realized that she's more fulfilled by an old-fashioned Inuit lifestyle than by the modern world.

Amaroq's death destroys Miyax's formerly positive thoughts about San Francisco. After *gussak* hunters shoot Amaroq from a plane flying over the tundra, Miyax realizes that she can no longer separate her fantasies about San Francisco from her traumatic memory of Amaroq's recent death—from "thought[s] about the airplane and the fire and blood and the flashes and death." Miyax now attributes the cruelty, violence, and greed the *gussak* hunters displayed when they shot Amaroq to society as a whole. She realizes that traveling to San Francisco would mean assimilating into the same culture that created Amaroq's killers.

When Miyax stops thinking about San Francisco, these nightmarish visions disappear. Further, when she stops thinking altogether and "t[akes] out her needle and sew[s], she th[inks] about peace and Amaroq." Amaroq's death clarifies Miyax's relationship to her Inuit culture, nature, and society. She realizes that it wasn't Daniel or the outdated Inuit custom of arranged marriage that she was running away from when she left Barrow—it was society itself. Knowing this makes Miyax understand that running away to San Francisco will simply represent the exchange of one problematic society for another. When Miyax sits in silence and works with the simple tools of her ancestral past, "she th[inks] about peace and Amaroq," and this is enough to convince her to forget her dreams about San Francisco and continue living the simple life immersed in nature that she enjoyed before Amaroq's death.

> She would be very useful to him and they would live as they were meant to live—with the cold and the birds and the beasts.

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 162

**Explanation and Analysis**

A family of Inuit hunters from Kangik village encounter Miyax's icehouse on their way to the mountains and inadvertently reveal to her that Kapugen is alive and has a home in their village. Overjoyed at the prospect of reuniting with Kapugen, Miyax sets out toward Kangik the next day, daydreaming about how she and Kapugen will finally be able to "live as they were meant to live—with the cold and the birds and the beasts." The irony of Miyax's dream for her and Kapugen's future together is that it relies almost entirely on the past. When Miyax expresses her desire to "live as they were meant to live," she's referring to the idea that she and Kapugen "[are] meant to live" a simpler life in accordance with their ancestral Inuit heritage, just as they did in her idealized memories of the seal camp.

In this idyllic setting, Miyax and Kapugen immersed themselves in their ancestral traditions, isolated themselves from the outside world, and felt themselves free to live among nature—"with the cold and the birds and the beasts." This passage implies that Miyax thinks she and Kapugen can pick up exactly where they left off when she had to leave him behind to go to school in Mekoryuk. Miyax appears to ignore the significant amount of time that has passed since she last saw her father, and the degree to which he, she, and the world have changed in the process. Miyax's overly optimistic expectations for her reunion with Kapugen exacerbate the disappointment she will feel when she discovers that Kapugen has reinvented himself to adapt to the modern world and abandoned the Inuit culture to which he was once so loyal.

"Come in. I've never seen such a bird."

**Related Characters:** Kapugen/Charlie Edwards (speaker), Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Tornait

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 166

**Explanation and Analysis**

Miyax arrives at Kapugen's house in Kangik. When he greets her at the door, she offers Tornait (her bird friend) to him as a gift. Immediately, Miyax's reunion with Kapugen fails to live up to her expectations, though it takes a while for her to realize how disappointed she is.

When Miyax offers Tornait to her Kapugen as a gift, he doesn't recognize the bird as a golden plover. In English, Kapugen admits that he's "never seen such a bird."

Kapugen's confusion surprises Miyax. She named the bird Tornait after a song Kapugen sang on Nunivak Island during the Feast of the Bird celebration. "Tornait" derives from traditional Inuit religion and refers to a type of protective spirit, and Kapugen's song was about summoning this spirit's help. Miyax likely named the bird Tornait to pay homage to Kapugen's wealth of knowledge about the natural world and his reverence for traditional Inuit culture. Kapugen's failure to recognize Tornait's symbolic value challenges Miyax's long-held assumptions about Kapugen's boundless wisdom and commitment to Inuit traditions.

Kapugen's failure to recognize Tornait as a golden plover suggests that he is no longer—or perhaps never was—the all-knowing sage Miyax has conjured in her memories. The ignorance Kapugen displays in this scene lays the groundwork for the horrifying revelation Miyax will come to terms with only moments later: Kapugen has reinvented himself in a modernized style and abandoned his Inuit heritage once he settled in Kangik. This scene lends additional credence to the possibility that Kapugen never was the infallible, mythic defender of culture that Miyax had made him out to be.

Kapugen, after all, was dead to her.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 169

**Explanation and Analysis**

Shortly after reuniting with Kapugen, Miyax finds out that her father has abandoned traditional Inuit values and assimilated into non-indigenous society. Repulsed by her discovery, Miyax decides to leave Kapugen's house in Kangik and return to her solitary, traditional life in the Arctic wild. As she shuts the front door behind her, she observes, "Kapugen, after all, was dead to her."

Kapugen's assimilation into non-indigenous society marks the second time Miyax has had to mourn her father's death—the first time, ironically, was when he seemingly faked being lost at sea to run away to start a new life. Up until quite recently, when a family of hunters inadvertently tells Miyax that Kapugen is alive, Miyax always believed that Kapugen died on a seal-hunting trip. To cope with her loss, Miyax has spent years amassing and perfecting a catalog of

idealized memories of her father that depicted a legendary hunter who had boundless wisdom and unparalleled pride in his Inuit culture.

But having to incorporate this new Kapugen into her concept of him destroys the idealized image Miyax has cherished all her life. Kapugen's teachings were what kept up her spirits and gave her the strength to push forward when she felt hopeless about her prospects of survival on the Arctic tundra. In a certain regard, having a nostalgic vision of Kapugen meant Miyax was never completely alone. Now, however, Miyax must reckon with the fact that because she can no longer square her former memory of Kapugen with reality, she must let him go—for good this time.

Julie pointed her boots toward Kapugen.

**Related Characters:** Miyax Kapugen/Julie Edwards , Kapugen/Charlie Edwards, Tornait , Amaroq, Daniel

**Related Themes:**

**Page Number:** 170

**Explanation and Analysis**

This is the final line of the book. Miyax grabs Tornait and storms out of Kapugen's house once she realizes that Kapugen has assimilated into non-indigenous society and abandoned his traditional Inuit culture. Miyax decides to return to the wilderness and resume the traditional lifestyle she's grown accustomed to, but her plans change when Tornait dies suddenly, leaving her completely alone in her grief. Miyax, whom the book now calls Julie, returns to her sled and "point[s] her boots toward Kapugen," implying that she will return home to her father.

One key detail of this passage is that it now calls Miyax by her English name, Julie. The only other time this happens is in Part II, when a law requires Miyax to return to Mekoryuk to attend a Bureau of Indian Affairs School. The Westernized culture of Mekoryuk and later, Barrow, where Miyax moves to marry Daniel, pressures Miyax to speak English, assume an Anglicized name, and abandon many of her cultural practices. When Miyax becomes Julie on her way home to Kapugen, she signals her acceptance that her return to Kangik will require her to undergo the same cultural erasure she experienced in Mekoryuk and Barrow. She embraces her new identity now because she knows that "Julie" will be the inevitable outcome of her return to society.

Although Miyax views Kapugen's assimilation into non-indigenous society as an act of cultural betrayal, she decides to return to him because she believes that living an assimilated life among a community is preferable to the lonely, difficult life she would experience on the tundra. Furthermore, the many setbacks she encounters over Part III—the *gussak* hunters killing Amaroq, Tornait's death, Kapugen's betrayal—reveal the futility of trying to preserve her ancestral culture singlehandedly. When Miyax "point[s] her boots toward Kapugen," she surrenders to the destructive influence of non-indigenous culture that has conquered and replaced the traditional lifestyle she experienced many years ago at the seal camp.

But this line also contains a hint of optimism, however slight it may be. While Miyax accepts that she'll have to become "Julie" once she returns to Kangik, she notably doesn't call Kapugen by his English name, Charlie Edwards. Although the new Kapugen seems content to abandon the old way of life, Miyax's decision to refer to her father by his Inuit name reflects her willingness to forgive him. This implies a hope that the two of them might begin the shared, interconnected healing process of repairing their relationship and reclaiming what they can of their Inuit culture.

## SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

### PART 1: AMAROQ, THE WOLF

It's winter on the North Slope of Alaska. Miyax gazes at the Arctic sun and knows by the sky's green color that it's 6:00 in the evening, which is the time the wolves awaken. She places her cooking pot on the ground walks to the top of the frost heave. From there, she can see a pack of wolves in the distance. Miyax trembles with fear—not because of the wolves, which she knows are shy, but because she's lost on the vast, barren North Slope and hasn't eaten in days. The slope extends for hundreds of miles in all directions. There are no roads here, only scattered bodies of water. Miyax knows she needs the wolves to survive, but she's not sure they'll help her.

*The North Slope is an Arctic region of northern Alaska, located on the northern slope of the Brooks Range and along the coasts of the Chukchi Sea and the Beaufort Sea. The area is mostly tundra, or land where low temperatures keep the ground perpetually frozen, preventing tree growth. Miyax's ability to judge the time of day according to the sun's position in the sky shows that she is attuned to nature. Her instinct to turn to wolves for help further suggests an affinity with the natural world.*

Miyax stares at a majestic black wolf and tries to ask him for food. She knows it's possible to communicate with the animals, since her father, an Inuk hunter, once had a wolf pack lead him to a freshly killed caribou. But Miyax's father never taught her how to talk to the wolves.

*Inuk is the singular form of Inuit. As an Inuk girl, Miyax's indigenous background informs her close connection to nature. Miyax also seems to admire her father's wisdom as an Inuk hunter, since she's relying on it to help her survive.*

For two days, Miyax has studied the wolves' sounds and movements to figure out how to befriend them. She's selected a black, regal wolf to watch because he's largest in his pack and walks confidently, like her father, Kapugen. The black wolf appears wise, and the others imitate his behaviors. Although the wolf has ignored her so far, Miyax tries to be patient with nature, as Kapugen taught her to do.

*This section reaffirms Miyax's respect for her father: in comparing Kapugen to the regal wolf, she suggests that he, too, is a wise, natural leader. It also shows Kapugen's central role in connecting Miyax with her cultural heritage.*

Miyax is a classically beautiful Inuk girl: she has a small, round face, a flat nose, black eyes, and a lean but muscular figure. Like the polar bears and Arctic foxes, she has short limbs, the harsh climate of the Arctic having carved all those who live there into "compact" forms that can easily retain heat. Still, Miyax's figure won't help her if she can't find food. She grows impatient and calls out to the wolf: "Amaroq, *ilaya*, wolf, my friend," she cries, using a mixture of Yupik and English words.

*The Inuit are a group of peoples indigenous to the Arctic/Subarctic regions of Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. The word literally translates to "people." The physical adaptations that the Arctic's inhabitants have undergone over time shows how difficult it is to survive there. This, in turn, emphasizes the direness of Miyax's situation: the Arctic tundra is a dangerous place to be lost. The Yupik are another group of peoples indigenous to Alaska. Inuit is sometimes used to encompass the Yupik, as well, though the Inuit and Yupik are technically distinct groups of people. In Inuit religion, Amaroq (also spelled Amaguq/Amarok) is a giant wolf deity that stalks people who hunt alone at night. Miyax's tendency to use a mixture of English and Yupik words might imply that she identifies with both indigenous and non-indigenous American culture.*

Amaroq glances in Miyax's direction before returning his gaze to the three adults and five pups in his pack. His eyes soften as he looks at the pups, but they become firm as he scans his barren, flat surroundings. The tundra doesn't support life: only moss, grass, lichens, and scattered wildflowers grow in the summer. Few animal species live here, though the ones that do exist in great numbers. Amaroq's ears grow tense, and Miyax wonders if he hears an enemy approaching in a distance. After a moment, the wolf's ears relax.

*Amaroq's eyes remain firm out of an obligation to protect his wolf pack against the dangerous and unpredictable tundra. Despite the barren landscape, species are able to thrive here in large groups, which suggests that it's necessary to have the support of a community to thrive in such a brutal natural environment. This adds a layer of urgency to Miyax's situation: her chances of survival diminish greatly if she can't get help from the wolves.*

Miyax considers her situation. She is 13 years old, the daughter of Kapugen, and the adopted daughter of Martha. She's a U.S. citizen and attends the Bureau of Indian Affairs school in Barrow. She's married to a boy named Daniel, who is also the reason she ran away last week.

*Miyax is married despite being only 13 years old, which implies that marrying early is common and acceptable in her culture. Miyax doesn't elaborate on why she ran away from Daniel, but it's implied that the marriage put Miyax in a complicated or dangerous situation. After all, things had to have been bad for her to justify exposing herself to the dangers of the Arctic wild to escape her husband.*

Amaroq rolls onto his belly, and Miyax pleads silently for him to help her; she knows the sun won't set for a month, and she'll have no North Star to lead her home. Miyax talks aloud to herself to calm her nerves. She didn't know she could get lost here. She didn't bring a compass on her journey, since on Nunivak Island, where she was born, she could rely on plants and birds to guide the way and had figured it was this way everywhere.

*The North Slope lies within the Arctic Circle, where the sun doesn't set for nearly three months during the summer season. Conversely, from mid-November through January, the sun doesn't rise above the horizon. Nunivak Island is located in southwestern Alaska and has a relatively milder, subarctic climate. Again, Miyax's ability to navigate her environment without a compass indicates her Inuit culture's respect for and harmonious relationship with nature.*

Suddenly, Amaroq looks at Miyax, who cries out in excitement, leaps to her feet, and waves at the wolf. The wolf bares his teeth, and Miyax lays down on her stomach once more. Amaroq wags his tail. Miyax gives up and crawls down the frost heave and back to her modest campsite. Miyax couldn't take much with her when she ran away, and her campsite consists only of basic supplies: a backpack, a week's supply of food, needles for mending, a sleeping skin, ground cloth, and some cooking supplies. Miyax had planned to go to Point Hope, where she'd board the *North Star* (a ship that carries supplies from the continental U.S. to the towns along the Arctic Ocean) and work as a dishwasher or laundress.

*Miyax is excited because Amaroq's eye contact signifies that he is starting to accept her as a member of his pack. She lays down on her belly to imitate behavior she has observed in Amaroq and the other wolves. Miyax mimics the wolves because she knows she is a stranger in their land and must respect their customs. She has a reverence for the wolves and doesn't assume she is superior just because she's human. Point Hope is a city on the North Slope that's only accessible by plane or boat.*

Miyax's plan was to visit her pen pal, Amy, in San Francisco. She was curious to see Amy's strange and different world, with its televisions, carpeting, glass buildings, streets, and supermarkets. Most of all, though, Miyax wanted to escape the terrifying Daniel. Miyax starts to think about her marriage but blocks it from her mind.

*Miyax upholds her indigenous traditions, but her curiosity about Amy and San Francisco shows that she is attracted to non-indigenous American culture, as well. That Miyax can't bring herself to think about her marriage implies possible a history of abuse.*

Miyax built her first sod house, the traditional summer home of the old Inuit people, when she first arrived at camp. The shelter is imperfect but cozy: she windproofed it by spreading mud between the brick sod she'd cut with her *ulo*. Miyax placed her caribou ground cloth on the floor and her sleeping skin on top of that. She built a sod table beside her bed and placed some bird feathers on top of the table for decoration.

*The Inuit traditionally use sod to construct their dwellings because the tundra's harsh environment prevents tree growth. An* ulo *(normally spelled* ulu*) is a thin, fan-shaped knife with a handle made from antler, horn, or ivory and a blade made from slate. Traditionally, Inuit women used the* ulo *for a variety of purposes, including skinning and butchering animals, cutting hair, and shaping ice and snow for igloo construction.*

Miyax built a fireplace for cooking outside her house, but she hasn't had any luck finding food. All the lemmings in the area had disappeared last winter. Her teacher Mrs. Franklin had explained that the rodents have a special chemical in their bloodstream to help them survive the winter. But when there are too many of them, they get nervous, produce too much of the chemical, and poison themselves. Miyax's father had a different explanation, offering only that "the hour of the lemming is over for four years." When the lemming disappeared, so did the animals that hunted them: the owl, the weasel, the jaeger bird. With the lemming gone, the grass grew high once more, and the caribou returned to graze it, and the wolves returned to hunt the caribou.

*A lemming is a small rodent native to the Arctic tundra. Mrs. Franklin is referring to the common misconception that lemmings commit mass-suicide by jumping from cliffs. A 1958 Disney documentary called* White Wilderness *is partially responsible for popularizing the myth. In reality, lemming population fluctuations may be explained by the animal's instinctual drive to migrate in large groups when their population density becomes too high. Because lemmings can swim, they sometime choose to travel to their new habitat by water, and some inevitably drown in the process. The difference in Mrs. Franklin's and Kapugen's explanations for the lemmings' absence illustrates how significantly their respective cultures influence their worldview. While Mrs. Franklin's explanation has an empirical basis, Kapugen's observation that "the hour of the lemming is over" reflects his Inuit-influenced respect for Earth's natural rhythm. His indigenous background has taught him to see nature as an interconnected network of plants and animals, and he understands that the lemmings' temporary absence allows other species to flourish.*

Miyax nibbles at moss and wonders if she can survive on it like the caribou do. She thinks about Amaroq and decides that he snarled because he was trying to talk to her. Miyax returns to the frost heave and calls out to Amaroq once more, pleading with him to bring her some meat. Amaroq stands. Miyax sees how large he is and momentarily fears he will eat her, but she reminds herself this is just gussak talk, and that Kapugen told her that "wolves are gentle brothers."

*Dwelling on Kapugen's wisdom reinvigorates Miyax's quest to communicate with the wolves.* Gussaks' *(white people's) fear of wolves suggests that they have less of an affinity for nature than the Inuit. While* gussaks *see nature as threatening and don't take the time to understand it, Kapugen's Inuit culture draws him closer to nature, allowing him to characterize wolves as affectionate, "gentle brothers."*

A black puppy wags his tail at Miyax. His mother runs toward him and gives him an angry look. The pup licks his mother to apologize, and she smiles as she forgives him. Miyax recognizes the mother's expression, having seen it in her own elders' eyes. Miyax thinks about naming the mother wolf Martha, after her adoptive mother, but decides the wolf is too beautiful. She calls her Silver, instead.

*Miyax's observation that the bond between the black puppy and his mother isn't so different from the bond she shares with her elders shows how easily she relates to nature, which is likely a trait she inherited from Kapugen and their Inuit culture more broadly. Miyax indirectly insults Martha by claiming that Silver is too beautiful to be named after her. The slight against Martha suggests that Miyax isn't very fond of her.*

The three pups start playing with a bone. Miyax laughs when she realizes they're playing something similar to tug-o-war, a game Inuit children play with leather ropes. Amaroq looks at Silver and then at the gray wolf, which Miyax has named Nails. Silver and Nails walk toward Amaroq. Silver affectionately bites Amaroq's mouth, and Amaroq's tail wags excitedly; unlike the fox, Amaroq gets to see his mate all year. Nails bites Amaroq's mouth respectfully. Another adult emerges and rolls on his belly before Amaroq. Miyax looks at the dog's wriggling form and decides to call him Jello.

*This scene offers more evidence of the ease with which Miyax relates to nature. Seeing the similarities between the wolves' and the Inuit children's games boosts Miyax's confidence about being able to connect with the wolves the way Kapugen did on his hunting trip. The respect that Nails, Silver, and Jello show to Amaroq reaffirms his position as leader of the pack.*

Miyax decides the wolves' mouthing must be a ceremony, not unlike "Hail to the Chief." The old hunters on Nunivak Island think that intelligence, fearlessness, and love are the "riches of life," and Miyax thinks that Amaroq is a wealthy wolf. The pack of wolves continue to shower Amaroq with love, and he howls in delight. Seeing this display of affection convinces Miyax not to be afraid of the wolves.

*Once more, Miyax points to the similarities between wolves and humans. She posits that the wolf custom of mouthing is comparable to the American custom of ushering in the president with the "Hail to the Chief" fanfare. Miyax thinks Amaroq must be a wealthy wolf because she observes in him the characteristics, or "riches of life," that her culture values most. Seeing the wolves demonstrate their respect for Amaroq convinces Miyax that wolf culture and Inuit culture value the same traits: bravery, intelligence, and love.*

The wolves yip and howl before falling silent to follow Amaroq down the slope. Silver gives Jello a stern look, and Jello returns to watch the puppies. Miyax thinks about everything she's learned so far: how to respect the leader, how to be a respectful leader, and how to make Jello babysit. She watches Jello, who has already given up on disciplining the puppies. As they roll around and play, Miyax thinks the puppies are just like human children.

*The other adult wolves expect Jello to stay behind and watch the pups, who also ignore him. For some reason, Jello doesn't seem to have earned the same privileges or respect as the others. Figuring out why the pack views Jello as an outcast will help Miyax better understand wolves' values and unwritten rules. Once again, Miyax's careful observation of the wolf pups shows how much wolves and humans have in common. It also implies that community interaction and bonding are a big part of wolf culture.*

Miyax crawls slowly toward Sister, the smallest dog. She whines and shows Sister her teeth as the draws near. Sister lays down, and Miyax excitedly realizes she is speaking wolf. Miyax crawls around in a circle as all five puppies watch her. The black puppy approaches Miyax and barks. Miyax commends the puppy's bravery. She tells him he will grow up to be a great leader and names him Kapu, after her father. Kapu grins in understanding. Jello whines for him to return, and they begin to play again. Miyax sees that roughhousing is important to the wolves and tries to mimic their behavior. She snarls and rolls around, but the pups ignore her. Miyax returns to her camp.

*Miyax whines and bares her teeth in an effort to mimic the wolves' behavior. Her efforts seem to pay off, since Sister lays down before her in a manner that mimics the gesture of respect Miyax saw the other wolves display toward Amaroq. Miyax's decision to name Kapu after her Kapugen shows how deeply she idolizes and reveres her father's wisdom and leadership. The pups' roughhousing further shows how important community activity and bonding are within the wolf society.*

Miyax looks up and sees that Amaroq and his hunters have followed here back to her camp. Amaroq's ears rise aggressively. Miyax remembers that wide eyes signal fear, so she tries her best to narrow her own. She remembers seeing Kapu lunge forward when he was challenged. Her heart beats fearfully as she runs toward Amaroq and whines. Amaroq backs up and avoids Miyax's gaze, and she worries that she's offended him. She tries again, walking right up to the leader wolf and patting him under the chin.

*Miyax knows that she must demonstrate a willingness to speak the wolves' language and adhere to their norms for Amaroq to accept her as a member of his pack. She modifies her behavior to match Kapu's to show her respect for Amaroq and his way of life: Miyax adapt her behavior to nature, not the other way around. In other words, she doesn't believe that being human makes her superior or gives her special privileges relative to other species.*

Miyax's strategy works. Amaroq wags his tail and flattens his ears affectionately; he has no choice but to do so, since the gesture "lay deep in wolf history." Amaroq's eyes soften, and Miyax knows she is now one of the pack.

*Miyax's observation that Amaroq's response "lay deep in wolf history" recasts his instinctive behavior as a meaningful cultural practice. She sees his response as rich with meaning, not unlike the traditions humans inherit from their ancestors. This scene marks a major development in Miyax's relationship with the wolves: at last, her careful observation, imitation, and understanding of the wolves' nuanced system of behavior convince Amaroq to accept her into his wolf pack.*

Miyax waits all night for the hunter wolves to return with meat. When she finally spots Amaroq on the horizon, though, he doesn't have any food. Dejected, Miyax returns to her camp and eats raw moss until she feels full. She crawls into her home and peels off her wedding parka, gingerly placing it in her whale bladder bag to protect it from moisture. This is an old Inuit tradition she was taught in childhood, since damp clothing can be deadly in the Arctic. Miyax always protects her clothes from dampness, even though she doesn't need to in her gas-heated house in Barrow. Next, she removes the red tights, which her mother-in-law bought at the American store in Barrow.

*The traditional Inuit customs Miyax grew up learning aren't as useful to her in Barrow, where people have begun to embrace a new way of life. Barrow is the former name of Utqiagvik, a town located in Alaska's North Slope region. Utqiagvik is the northernmost city in the U.S. During the time the book takes place (late 1960s or early 1970s) Barrow had a population of around 2,000 and was (and remains today) the largest city in the North Slope region.*

Miyax crawls into her warm sleeping skin and forgets her hunger. She remembers how Kapugen taught her that wolves are shy and will leave their den if humans disturb them. Amaroq's pack hasn't left, and Miyax wonders if he knows she is human. She ponders the other wolves and decides that Nails must be a spiritual father to the pups. Miyax thinks Jello might either be an older pup or, perhaps, has only recently joined the pack by ingratiating himself with Amaroq, just as she is doing now. She falls asleep.

*The fact that Amaroq's pack hasn't left Miyax behind is an encouraging sign that reaffirms her acceptance into wolf society. Miyax seems to have more success earning her acceptance than Jello—there seems to be something strained about his relationships with the other wolves, but Miyax can't quite place her finger on it. The book seems to be laying the groundwork for a rivalry between Miyax and Jello, positioning them as outsiders competing for a position in Amaroq's pack.*

Miyax doesn't know how long she's slept, since the sky is the same color at midnight as it is at midday. It doesn't matter what time it is, however, since "time in the Arctic [i]s the rhythm of life." Miyax listens to the pups yip excitedly and knows their cries signal the end of the hunt. She dresses and leaves her home to investigate. As she eyes her reflection in the pond outside her hut, she's pleased to see that she looks thin, like the gussak girls she sees in magazines.

*Miyax's observation that "time in the Arctic [i]s the rhythm of life" conveys her understanding that she is at the mercy of nature and must adapt her behavior conform to its changes. Miyax's thin figure is quite unlike the stocky, "compact" build that she earlier described as being characteristic of the Arctic's native species and essential to their ability to retaining heat in their environment's cold temperatures. Even though Miyax's leanness is ill-suited to the tundra's harsh environment, she takes pleasure in her gussak-like appearance. Miyax's body image points to harmful effect non-indigenous culture has on her identity, as she sees thinness as beautiful rather than detrimental to her survival.*

Miyax climbs up the frost heave and watches the wolves. There's still no meat, but the three hunters' bellies look full. Miyax decides it's time to be practical and find something else to eat. She eyes the Lapland longspur birds in the sky and thinks there might be some young in their nests. Carefully, so as not to show her two-leggedness to the wolves, she moves into the grasses. She crouches low to the ground, the way Kapugen taught her. Miyax spots some young birds and their parent in the distance, but they're too far away from their nest for her to catch them. She looks in the sky and sees a group of jaeger, which sometime prey on carrion. When the jaeger dive down, Miyax realizes they must have found the wolf kill.

*Miyax hides her two-leggedness to downplay the unavoidable differences that remain between the wolves and herself. She seems to realize that Amaroq's acceptance of her depends on her ability to conform to and respect the wolves' ways. Although Miyax values communal life, her resourcefulness and self-reliance are also important parts of her identity. After she fails to receive food from the wolves, she proactively decides to hunt for herself. Once more, the book alludes to the major role Kapugen played in developing Miyax's survival skills and cultural literacy.*

Miyax runs toward where the jaeger dropped from the sky. She runs a while before realizing that she can't tell which frost heave is which. Luckily, she spots the empty lemming nest and is able to return to her sod house, though she reminds herself to be more careful. Miyax finds some arctic peas in the grasses and carries them back to her pot. She sees Silver running ahead and gets up to investigate. Silver eventually returns and chokes up a mound of meat for the excited puppies gathered around her. Miyax is excited to have discovered where the meat is and plans her next action. Kapu and Sister eat the meat but don't share with the other puppies, Zing, Zat and Zit. Amaroq chokes up some meat for the others.

*Miyax's impulse to forage for vegetation as she awaits the hunters' return is further evidence of her resourcefulness and independence. Now that she has discovered how the wolves carry meat back to their camp, her next task will be to figure out how to persuade one of them to share their stash with her.*

Miyax crawls toward Jello, who has returned from the kill and must have food in his "belly-basket." She whines at Jello. Jello lifts his head high and approaches her side of the frost heave. Kapu follows. To show Jello that she's in charge, Miyax grasps his nose firmly in her hand. Kapu senses Miyax's intentions and nudges Jello's mouth. Much to Miyax's delight, Jello chokes up some meat and places it before her. With his tail between his legs, Jello returns to the others. Kapu stays behind, watching Miyax curiously as she scoops the meat into the pot. Miyax tells Kapu that Inuit have "joking partners" to laugh with and "serious partners" to work with, and that she and Kapu are both: "joking-serious partners."

*"Belly-basket" refers to the wolves' practice of storing food in their stomachs to regurgitate for their young. This scene further develops the rivalry between Miyax and Jello. Although they both begin at the bottom of the wolf pack's hierarchy, Miyax asserts dominance over Jello when she and Kapu persuade him to regurgitate food for Miyax. In addition, Jello displays submissiveness when he runs away with his tail between his legs, suggesting that he sees Miyax as a threat. In referring to Kapu her "joking-serious" partner, Miyax suggests that the bond she shares with Kapu is no different than the bonds that develop between the Inuit—the fact that Kapu isn't human doesn't make their friendship any less meaningful.*

Kapu bites Miyax's heel, and she realizes that he wants to play with his big sister. Miyax reaches into her pocket to retrieve a mitten, but Kapu is too strong and yanks it away from her. Miyax gives up, and Kapu brings the mitten back to his siblings. He scratches a mark on the ground, and Miyax wonders if he's bragging about his mitten victory. Miyax returns to her camp, gathering grass and lichens to use as fuel for cooking. An hour later, she has a pot of Caribou stew.

*Miyax could respond to Kapu's sudden aggression with fear and anger, but her respect for nature allows her to understand and justify his actions—she even humanizes him when she wonders whether he's bragging about the mitten to his siblings, likening the mitten feud to a playground squabble among young children. The book's frequent descriptions of wolves' interactions with one another show that their social structure provides them with meaningful companionship as well as physical protection.*

Her vitality restored, Miyax shifts her attention toward finding her way to Point Hope. She realizes that more lichens grow on one side of the frost heaves and tries to remember if the wind comes from the north or from the west. She wishes she'd listened more carefully to Kapugen. She returns to her sod house to sleep.

*Lichens (organisms that form when a fungus and an algae live off each other) favor a dark, damp environment. So, they're more likely to grow on the north side of a surface, or whichever side receives less direct sunlight. As Miyax recalls this fact and wishes she remembered what Kapugen taught her about the wind, the book continues to emphasize Kapugen's influence on her knowledge of the natural world.*

Miyax awakens and eats more of the stew. When not much remains, she decides it's time to ask Amaroq for a full shank of Caribou. She remembers Kapugen telling her that wolves sometimes bring food back to their dens for injured members of the pack. Though she doesn't want to injure herself, she thinks this might be the only way to get more food from the wolves.

*Kapugen's teachings continue to influence Miyax; it's clear that she idolizes her father. Miyax's hypothetical willingness to injure herself reflects the seriousness of her predicament—the tundra is a dangerous and unpredictable place, she has no idea where she is, and she won't last long if she runs out of food.*

Miyax feels helpless, especially as she gazes at the cotton grasses that grow near the pond and sees that they are wilting, which is a sign of the approaching autumn. Autumn is dangerous, since with it comes snow and white-outs. If Miyax is stranded in the middle of a white-outs, she could die.

*Miyax's competence and wealth of knowledge about the natural world are no match for the incredibly dangerous environment of the Arctic tundra.*

Amaroq howls to assemble his pack for the start of their new day. Though it would be bedtime in Barrow, Miyax is operating on wolf time and gets up to join the pack. Miyax approaches Amaroq, whimpering and shaking her head. He wags his tail at her. Suddenly, Amaroq detects something in the air and leads his hunters across the tundra. Miyax sees their target in the distance: a herd of caribou. She watches as Amaroq sprints after the big animals. The other wolves follow, ganging up on the wailing caribou.

*This passage hearkens back to Miyax's earlier observation about the Arctic moving according to life's natural rhythms. To survive in the Arctic, Miyax has to discard the social construct of a bedtime and adapt to the rhythm that the wolves establish with their hunting patterns.*

Miyax looks back at the den and sees Kapu staring at her with narrow, aggressive eyes. She wonders why he's scared of her if he's never seen a human before, deciding it must be the "spirit of [his] ancestors" that makes him afraid. Kapu brings Miyax a bone to play with, and she giggles as they tug it back and forth. Jello calls for Kapu to return, but Kapu ignores him. Miyax picks up the bone in her mouth and runs. In an instant, Kapu lunges at her and takes her bare neck in his jaw. Miyax stifles a scream as she braces herself for the prick of Kapu's teeth piercing her skin. But Kapu's bite is controlled, and Miyax realizes he only wants her to drop the bone.

*Whereas* gussak *culture might view Kapu's behavior as vicious, Miyax respects that it is in his nature to act this way. Just as Kapu inherits his innate fear of Miyax from the "spirit of [his] ancestors," the roughhousing he displays here is instinctual, not a calculated act of aggression toward Miyax. When Miyax refers to Kapu's behavior as the "spirit of [his] ancestors," she implicitly compares Kapu's natural instinct to the cultural customs humans inherit from their ancestors. Miyax validates Kapu's actions when she views them as part of wolves' rich, meaningful history rather than uncivilized wildness.*

Miyax feels something brush against her boot and sees Zit, Zat, Zing, and Sister gathered around her. Miyax growls and bares her teeth at Kapu, who drops the bone. She smiles to herself but quickly remembers that the gesture is an apology to the wolves. Before she can correct her mistake, the five wolves jump at her. Miyax angrily tells them to stop, and all the pups retreat except for Kapu.

*Miyax faces unintended consequences when the pups interpret her smile as an apology. Her social misstep further illustrates the nuance and complexity of the wolves' language. Miyax's ability to identify her smile as having caused the pups to pounce shows that she is learning their language, even if she isn't fluent just yet.*

Kapu lunges into a tunnel and comes out on the other end. Miyax remembers learning that wolves only spend a few weeks in the nursery den, which is the space deep in the earth, at the end of a long tunnel, where the pups are born. After this, they resume their nomadic lifestyle into the winter months. Miyax grimly realizes that her wolf pack will soon leave, and she won't be able to keep up with them. Miyax trembles, but she remembers Kapugen's advice not to be paralyzed by fear but to learn and change from it.

*This passage reinforces how significantly Kapugen's teachings influence Miyax. Miyax displays incredible strength and resilience for a 13-year-old girl, and these traits seem to be rooted in the lessons Kapugen taught her.*

Miyax decides to hunt for herself. She cuts her red tights into strips of cloth to mark a trail, so she won't get lost. Miyax finds a bird roost and fashions a noose from the thongs on her boots. Before she can snare a bunting, a white owl dives and snatches the bunting with its sharp talons. Miyax decides to watch where the owl flies, knowing that male owls supply their young with an endless supply of food. The owl, or *ookpik*, eyes Miyax suspiciously before soaring into the sky. Miyax watches the owl drop onto a frost heave in the distance.

*Miyax heeds Kapugen's advice. Instead of fearing the wolves' abandonment, she hunts to ensure that she can survive in their absence. This scene further illustrates Miyax's resourcefulness and familiarity with nature: she repurposes the thongs on her boots to use for hunting, and she knows a lot about owls' hunting and childrearing behaviors.*

Miyax runs to the frost heave where the owl dropped the bunting. There, she finds a near-dead owlet perched inside its nest. The poor bird hisses at her before collapsing—the owlet is starving, too. Miyax scoops up the owlet and bunting and makes her way back to her sod house. As she nears camp, she finds a pile of caribou droppings and gathers them to use as fuel for her fire.

*Miyax and the owlet are not so different—both of them are relatively powerless creatures trying their best survive in an unforgiving environment. The owl's starvation emphasizes the tundra's barrenness. It also suggests that Miyax is struggling to find food due to the tundra's extremely limited resources, not because she's incompetent.*

At camp, Miyax plucks and prepares the birds. She removes the warm organs and eats them raw before cooking the rest of the meat. When she's finished, she gives a toast to the birds and eats. If she were a boy, she thinks, this would be a day for celebration: in Nunivak, it's tradition for a boy to fast the day he catches his first bird before celebrating the Feast of the Bird later in the night. Miyax thinks some traditions are silly but sings Kapugen's song about the "Spirit of the bird," anyway.

*Among the Inuit, it is traditional to honor the animal's spirit after a hunt. Miyax performs this custom when she offers a toast to the birds before eating. This scene reinforces how strongly Miyax associates Kapugen with Inuit culture. It was through Kapugen that Miyax received a cultural education, and she seems to uphold the traditions he taught her as way of honoring his memory. When Miyax sings Kapugen's "Spirit of the bird" song, she indulges traditions she thinks are silly out of love and admiration for her father.*

Kapu's yipping signifies the hunters' return. Miyax climbs the frost heave to greet them. She arrives in time to see Jello and Amaroq poised to fight. Amaroq lifts his head, Jello bows, and they settle their difference without a physical brawl. Amaroq's anger hasn't left him completely, though: he lunges at Miyax's mitten, which is still lying on the ground, and tears it to shreds. Amaroq stares at Miyax, and she realizes he's about to attack. Her heart beats as she flattens herself against the ground. Amaroq charges toward her. When Amaroq gives her a whine, she realizes he was only calling her, and she follows Amaroq back to the wolf den. The wolves circle the ground before settling down to sleep, and Miyax follows their lead.

*This scene widens the disparity between Jello and Miyax's relative positions of power in the wolf pack. Amaroq asserts dominance over Jello but makes no such advance toward Miyax: what Miyax initially believes to be aggression is only Amaroq's attempt to call her to join the pack. As Jello's social alienation grows more pronounced, the bond between Miyax and the other wolves in the pack strengthens.*

Miyax awakens suddenly to find Kapu curled against her leg. The wolves continue to sleep, which is odd, since they usually hunt when the sky is lime-green. As Miyax wonders what's different about tonight, she and the wolves are enveloped by a thick sheet of fog. Miyax realizes that the wolves won't be able to see through the fog to hunt and worries when she'll eat again if the wolves can't bring back more food.

*The image of Kapu curled against Miyax's leg shows that her affiliation with the wolf pack provides her with companionship as well as protection. The book seems to suggest that comradery and spiritual nourishment are as essential to survival as food and shelter.*

Miyax spots Silver lying down in the distance. Zing and Sister nurse until Silver growls and swats them away. The nursing has prompted Silver's milk to flow. Cautiously, Miyax approaches the sleeping mother and begins to suckle. The milk is sweet and rich. Suddenly, Silver grabs Miyax's shoulder in her jaws. Miyax freezes. Amaroq appears, and Silver lets go of Miyax. Miyax returns to Kapu, who flips his ear as though he's laughing at her. The fog thickens and hides Amaroq and Silver from view. Slowly, Miyax stands up. Amaroq snarls, and Miyax gets low before running back to her camp.

*Miyax's initial success at taking milk from Silver indicates her improved understanding of wolf behavior; she's able to assess Silver's body language and adjust her own accordingly that she was able to procure even a few drops. At the same time, Silver's adverse reaction points to the limitations of Miyax's position within the wolf pack. Although the wolves have accepted her, they do see her as different from them in some fundamental way. Amaroq's snarl when Miyax stands up reaffirms this difference: he perceives Miyax as a threat when she stands on two legs and makes her human characteristics obvious.*

The fog persists for hours. Miyax sits in her sod house and sings songs to pass the time. When she tires of this, she pokes her head outside and sees that the fog is a little thinner. She hears an airplane circling overhead and knows the pilot is waiting to the fog to break so he can land, since the same thing had happened when she flew from Nunivak to Barrow. The sound of the plane is louder now, and Miyax can through the fog the commercial plane that travels between Fairbanks and Barrow. She runs out, hoping the pilot will see her and send help, but the fog thickens and conceals her. She looks which way the plane turns and notes that Fairbanks, where the plane will return to land safely, is likely in that direction.

*The sound of the airplane is an encouraging sign of civilization. Miyax is disappointed when the fog conceals her from the pilot, but her newfound ability to judge the location of Fairbanks relative to her current position is a positive development as she waits for the nights to grow dark enough for her to see the North Star.*

Miyax hears Amaroq and the others bark and howl. The flog clears and she sees all the wolves, even the pups, running into the tundra. Suddenly, Miyax is afraid: are they leaving her for good? She scrambles to her feet and begins to gather all the edible plants she can find, knowing she'll need all the food she can manage if the wolves are no longer around to help her.

*Miyax's instinct to gather plants once she fears the wolves are leaving her emphasizes the brutality of nature—she can't spare a moment to mourn her friends' departure, because all her energy must go toward ensuring that she has enough food to survive in the wolves' absence.*

The fog thins, and Miyax can see Kapu before her, sniffing attentively. Suddenly, she hears a heavy rumble and sees a caribou running toward her. Silver, Amaroq, and Nails chase after the caribou. Amaroq leaps at the giant animal, sinking his teeth into its flesh. Silver and Nails join in the attack, and the wailing, dying caribou falls to the ground. "Without ceremony," Amaroq rips into the bull's side and begins to eat. The other wolves join in. Miyax watches as they snarl and gulp down big mouthfuls of food. Miyax knows the meat will soon be gone if she doesn't take her share and runs to her house to grab her knife.

*The wolves' successful kill marks the second positive development for Miyax: the airplane improved her sense of direction, and now the wolves have provided her with food. The way Amaroq rips into the Caribou's flesh "without ceremony" sets him apart from Miyax, whose Inuit culture has taught her to honor the animal's spirit for providing sustenance.*

Miyax approaches the bull cautiously, wary of disturbing the eating wolves. As she nears the caribou, she sees Kapu break a bone in two with his baby teeth and decides it's best to wait until the wolves are finished. Finally, Amaroq retreats, and the others follow. Miyax is about to approach the caribou when Jello appears to take his turn.

*That Jello can only eat after the other wolves have had their turn is further evidence of his low social status in the pack. Jello's move to take his turn at the caribou before Miyax seems aggressive and might be his attempt to regain some of the authority he lost during their last interaction. Once more, the book suggests that Jello views Miyax as his rival.*

Jello leaves, and Miyax has her turn. Before she begins to gather the meat, she honors the caribou's spirit by holding her arms to the sun, though she chides herself for being so "old-fashioned." She begins by peeling away the hide, knowing the pelt is just as important as the meat. She drags the pelt to her house to dry and returns to the animal to gather the meat. She cuts out the warm liver, the "candy," and eats it raw. Miyax spends hours cutting strips of meat and hanging them over the fire. She sings a song about Amaroq as she works, referring to him as her "adopted father." Miyax praises Amaroq in song, proclaiming "And I shall love because of you."

*In keeping with her Inuit culture, Miyax honors the caribou's spirit before proceeding to gather its meat. Miyax conveys a self-consciousness about her traditional values when she calls herself "old-fashioned," which suggests that society has taught her to look down on such values as obsolete or foolish. Miyax clearly idolizes her biological father, Kapugen, so it's a sign of her respect for Amaroq that she refers to him as her "adopted father."*

When the fog clears, Miyax runs up the frost heave to check on her pack. Amaroq sees her running on two legs and scowls at her, but he remits, seeming to know that "she could not change."

*Miyax and Amaroq's relationship is grounded in mutual understanding. Just as Miyax respects that Amaroq's skepticism of her is rooted in his instinct to protect his pack, Amaroq withholds judgement of Miyax's two-leggedness (which he might otherwise view as a threat) because he realizes "she could not change."*

Things go on in this manner for some time. The wolves go on more hunts, and Miyax continues to dry strips of caribou over her fire. She figures it must be the middle of August now, based on the position of the sun. The wolves measure time according to the pups. Today is their second day to explore. Yesterday, Silver took them out to the tundra to chase caribou, and they're excited to go out for another adventure. Miyax watches the wolves run and wishes she could join them.

*Miyax's use of the sun's position in the sky to judge the passage of time is similar to how the wolves plan their activities. Both rely on nature to orient themselves in time and space and give their lives meaning.*

Miyax looks around at the barren landscape and grows wary—she knows that autumn is quickly approaching. In the distance, she sees a herd of caribou running toward their wintering ground in preparation for the deep freeze. Miyax returns to her kill to cut more strips of meat. As she approaches it, she spots Jello, who snarls at her. Miyax realizes that Jello hasn't been with the others for a few nights now. The pack doesn't even need him to babysit anymore, since the pups have started hunting with their mother at night.

*Amaroq has never respected Jello, but now that the pups are older and more independent, the pack doesn't have much use for Jello, either. Jello is aggressive toward Miyax because he knows his place in the pack is in jeopardy, and he views her as a rival whose acceptance in the pack imperils his own.*

Miyax returns to camp with her meat and starts digging a cellar to preserve the meat, the way her people do at home. She digs the cellar about three feet deep, which she hopes will dissuade Jello from taking her food. She covers the cellar with sod and starts to cook a meal. Kapu approaches her with a bone. Miyax laughs—Kapu might run like an adult now, but he still wants to play like a puppy. Miyax offers Kapu some cooked meat, which he devours.

*Growing up in a traditional Inuit community gives Miyax the knowledge and skills to protect her food from predators. She demonstrates selflessness and consideration for the animals by sharing her meal with Kapu, despite having no way of knowing how or when she'll be able to replenish her food supply.*

A few nights later, Miyax sews herself a new mitten from the caribou hide. She notices that the sun is halfway below the horizon and knows that it will be winter soon, which means the land will be covered in snow and darkened by the Arctic night that lasts for 66 days. Based on the hour it takes for the sun to rise, Miyax knows today is August 24, the day the *North Star* arrives at Barrow. After tonight, the days will become rapidly shorter.

*Due to the Arctic region's latitudinal position in the polar circle, there is extremely limited sunlight during the winter months, when the tilt of the Earth's axis prevents the sun from rising above the horizon. The changing season corresponds with the arrival of the* North Star *in Barrow, which Miyax now must accept she won't be able to board. Miyax is a resilient character not prone to self-pity, but the rapidly waning sunlight and the realization that it's increasingly unlikely that she'll make it to San Francisco are two major setbacks that underscore the seriousness of her situation.*

Miyax has trouble sleeping that night, so she busies herself with work, putting away the finished smoked meat and scraping the rest of the fat from the caribou hide to use as fuel. When Miyax heads to her cellar to begin smoking the rest of the meat, she screams: Jello is digging at the sod, trying to steal her meat. Jello snarls as Miyax walks toward him, but she knows she has to assert dominance. She raps at Jello's nose with her knife, and he backs away.

*Miyax refuses to dwell in self-pity and funnels all her energy into the tasks that are most critical to her survival. Jello's aggression toward Miyax escalates when he breaks into her cellar to steal her meat. His aggression and selfishness stand in stark contrast to Miyax's willingness to share what limited food she has with Kapu.*

Miyax works awhile longer. Kapu drops by as before bedtime. Miyax is happy to see her friend and gives him a piece of cooked meat. Kapu beats the ground to play. Miyax twirls a scrap from her mitten in the air and is startled by how swiftly Kapu snatches it away—he's no longer a puppy.

*Even after Jello's recent attack on her food storage, Miyax continues to honor her obligations as a member of the wolf pack by sharing with Kapu.*

That night, as Miyax gets ready for bed, she hears Amaroq howling at a distant wolf pack. The other members of Amaroq's pack join in to greet the strange wolves. The voices of these other wolves sound strange and wild to Miyax, and she almost runs to Kapu for comfort. As she exits her house, she is startled to see Amaroq and his pack gathered around the pond. The wolves shower him with affection. Jello is the last of them to do so, and Miyax realizes he's at the bottom of the pack: "a lowly wolf—a poor spirit, with fears and without friends."

*Miyax finally realizes the truth about Jello: he's "a lowly wolf—a poor spirit, with fears and without friends." In nature, lone wolves are singular wolves that have left their packs voluntarily or whose packs have forced them out. Their solo status puts them at a higher risk of experiencing food insecurity and outside attacks. In reality, however, lone wolves are very rare among wild wolf populations. Jello's aggressive, unchecked individualism signifies weakness rather than resilience. His solo status makes it harder for him to get food, which is why he tries to steal Miyax's supply. On the other hand, the hostility Jello exhibits out of desperation only further alienates him from his pack.*

Miyax looks overheard and sees the migrating terns flying away. She resumes her work, setting out to find caribou chips to use for smoking fuel. When she returns, she sees her pack of wolves. Kapu is pouncing at the floor, and Miyax realizes the hour of the lemmings is back. Miyax sees another tern flying and maps its course on the ground across the mark she made to Fairbanks. She peels off a strip of sinew, stands at the center of the X, and makes a compass with her arms.

*The migrating terns are another way in which the natural world tells Miyax that winter is near. This means that the wolves, too, will soon depart. Once more, Miyax refuses to let anxiety about the wolves' impending migration consume her and funnels her energy into actions that will aid in her survival, such as making preparations to smoke meat and charting the terns' course on her makeshift compass. Her remark about the lemmings references wisdom Kapugen imparted on her years before, about the natural order of Earth, and how the lemmings' absence allows other creatures to thrive.*

In her house that night, Miyax opens her pack and takes out a letter from Amy. In the letter, Amy writes about all the things they'll do when Miyax comes to San Francisco, such as curl their hair, buy dresses, go to the theater, and visit the Golden Gate Bridge. Miyax falls asleep with Amy's letter under her cheek.

*This scene gives more insight into Miyax's relationship to non-indigenous American culture. Miyax takes pride in her Inuit heritage, but it's clear that the vision of modern American life Amy depicts in her letter also appeals to Miyax.*

The next evening, Miyax dresses, leaves her house, and crawls up the frost heave. She lies down on her stomach to greet Amaroq. "I'm ready to go when you are!" she cries excitedly. But Miyax's cries are met with silence: the wolves are gone.

*Reading Amy's letter reinvigorates Miyax's determination to reach Point Hope and travel to San Francisco. However, the wolves' apparent departure ruins her mood. This development metaphorically suggests that Miyax can't exist in the modern world and nature simultaneously: she necessarily must abandon one to hold on to the other. In allowing herself to be swept away by dreams of San Francisco, she chooses modern American society over the natural world, and she metaphorically gives up her position with Amaroq's wolf pack.*

## PART 2: MIYAX, THE GIRL

Miyax knows how it feels to be left behind. She can't remember much about her mother, since she was only four years old when she passed away, but she does remember what happened the day of her death. In her memory, she holds Kapugen's hand as they walk along the beach. Jaegers and sandpipers screech in the air overhead, and Kapugen says they're grieving with him. Miyax is happy to be going somewhere alone with Kapugen. At night, she sleeps under his sealskin parka. In the mornings, they wake and continue walking.

*Miyax uses the wolves' abandonment as a segue to reflect on times in her past when she's been abandoned. Part II is important because it gives the reader additional insight into Miyax's experiences in society, which, so far, the novel has only explored in passing. This scene reaffirms elements of Kapugen's personality that Miyax has highlighted in her brief memories of him. For example, Kapugen's remark about sharing his grief with the jaegers and sandpipers illustrates his deep connection with nature.*

Later, Kapugen's Aunt Martha tells Miyax that Kapugen lost his mind after Miyax's mother died: he'd left behind his nice house in Mekoryuk, his good job as the manager of a reindeer herd, and everything he owned. Aunt Martha tells Miyax that Kapugen walked her to the seal camp, "and he never did anything good after that."

*The book doesn't reveal how Miyax's mother died, but it's clear that her death traumatizes Kapugen. That he gave up his belongings and secure job suggests that his loved ones were much more meaningful to him than money or possessions—without Miyax's mother, nothing mattered to him anymore. Aunt Martha's statement that "he never did anything good" after taking Miyax to live in the seal camp implies that some kind of tragedy happened between this moment and the novel's present, which could be one reason why Miyax is separated from Kapugen.*

But Miyax enjoys her years at the seal camp with Kapugen: she loves the natural beauty and Kapugen's house made of driftwood. Looking back, Miyax will remember seeing the green-and-white-colored ocean "through Kapugen's hood" as she accompanies him to sea.

*Miyax's description of seeing the ocean "through Kapugen's hood" has literal and figurative meanings. Literally, the coat Kapugen is carrying her in obscures her view of the sea. Figuratively, the description might imply that Miyax's idolization of Kapugen obscures her recollection of this time in her life, imbuing every memory with sentimental associations that prevent her from reflecting on her childhood objectively.*

The Bladder Feast celebration is other colors: "black, blue, purple, fire-red," but Miyax mostly remembers it as "rose-colored," since this is the color of Kapugen's hand wrapped around her own. An old priestess called "the bent woman," whose face is covered in soot, dances at the celebration. When the bent woman finishes dancing, a spirit emerged from the dark wearing a mask that scares Miyax. On one occasion, Miyax looks underneath the mask and sees that the spirit is actually Kapugen's "serious partner," Naka.

*The Bladder Feast is an important Yup'ik ceremony held at the end of the hunting season to honor the souls of the seals harvested during the past year. The use of colors to chronicle Miyax's past builds on the idea that Miyax's love for Kapugen prevents her from seeing the past objectively. In particular, Miyax's memory of the Bladder Feast as "rose-colored" alludes to the expression of viewing history through "rose-colored glasses," which refers to how nostalgia can trick a person into romanticizing the past.*

Later, the men blow up the seal bladders and carry them out to sea to return them to the seals. The bent woman explains to Miyax that the bladder holds an animal's spirit, and that the men are returning the bladders so the old seals' spirits can enter the new ones and keep them safe until next year's harvest. The bent woman is "violet-colored" tonight, and she gives Miyax a piece of seal fur and blubber, which she calls an **i'noGo tied**.

*According to traditional Yup'ik shamanism, a hunter doesn't kill the seal's soul when they kill the animal's body. Instead, the animal's soul, which resides in its bladder is reincarnated in a new seal body. That Miyax remembers the bent woman as being "violet-colored" the night she gave Miyax the* i'noGo tied *(an Inuit good-luck amulet) is further evidence of how sentimentality colors Miyax's memories of the past.*

In another memory, Miyax recalls how Naka and Kapugen dance around on all fours, gradually rising to their feet and rocking back and forth as they "s[i]ng the song of the wolves." After the dance, Kapugen tells Miyax about the wolves he knew on the mainland in Nome, where he went to high school. Kapugen and his "joking partner" would go hunting in the woods, calling to the wolves to help them find their prey.

*Miyax's memory of watching Kapugen and Naka dance and "s[i]ng the song of the wolves" helps explain her impulse to connect with wolves later in life. Not only does she ingratiate herself with the wolves to increase her chances of survival, but it also helps her feel connected to Kapugen.*

A "silver memory" of Miyax's is when the sun emerges over the horizon for the first time that winter. She is with Kapugen at the beach, helping him bring in a white whale they caught in a net. In the distance, the men cheer. Miyax sees the bent woman "dancing and gathering invisible things from the air." Kapugen tells Miyax that the bent woman is putting the spirit of the whale in her **i'noGo tied**.

*Again, Miyax's impulse to associate specific colors with moments from her past reinforces the broader idea that sentimentality obscures her memories and prevents her from reflecting on her childhood objectively. Finally, this particular memory shows that Miyax's relationship to her Inuit heritage is inextricably connected to her love for Kapugen, who exposed her to Inuit traditions such as the practice of whale-hunting.*

Miyax doesn't enjoy summers at the seal camp as much as the other seasons, since summer is when families from Mekoryuk come to Nash Harbor to hunt and fish, which occupies much of Kapugen's time. The Inuit families from Mekoryuk speak mostly English and call Kapugen by the name Charlie Edwards, and Miyax by the name Julie. One summer, Miyax tells Kapugen that she is an Inuk girl and that her name is Miyax. Kapugen hugs Miyax and tells her that she and him "truly understand the earth."

*The Mekoryuk families are considerably more Westernized than the Inuit community that lives at the seal camp. They reveal their assimilation into non-indigenous American culture through their decision to forgo their traditional languages for English and to call Miyax and Kapugen by their Anglicized names. In contrast, Miyax's time at the seal camp has deepened her loyalty to traditional Inuit culture. She displays this loyalty when she boldly takes ownership of her name and identity as an Inuk girl. Still, Miyax's embrace of her Inuit heritage isn't only about rejecting assimilation into non-indigenous American culture. Ultimately, her cultural identity grows out of her love for Kapugen and how their shared culture unites them as kindred spirits who "truly understand the earth."*

Winter brings freezing temperatures and fierce blizzards. The people who stay at the camp during the winter are mostly Inuit people. Kapugen spends the winter evenings singing and dancing with the old men. Their songs are always "about the sea and the land and the creatures that dwell[] there."

*Kapugen and Miyax's decision to endure treacherous winter weather to remain at the camp reflects the seriousness of their commitment to live a traditional Inuit lifestyle immersed in nature and detached from the non-indigenous influence in town. The detail about the old men singing and dancing underscores the idea that community engagement is integral to survival: the Inuit who spend the winter at the seal camp engage in communal song and dance to endure the harsh, brutal winter months. The men's songs "about the sea and the land and the creatures that dwelled there" reinforce the respect for nature that's central to traditional Inuit beliefs.*

One September, Kapugen comes home with a sealskin and tells Miyax he is going to use it to make her a coat. As he gets to work cutting the skin, they hear the sound of a boat approach the beach, followed by footsteps. Suddenly, Martha is standing in the doorway. Martha argues with Kapugen, using English words that Miyax can't understand. Martha glances at Miyax from time to time. In the end, she shows Kapugen a piece of a paper, which causes him to shout "No!"

*Even though Miyax can't understand Martha, the fact that she's speaking English automatically renders her an enemy in Miyax's eyes—an unwanted visitor whose presence threatens the integrity of the isolated, traditional lifestyle she and Kapugen enjoy on the island. Moreover, Kapugen's emotional response to whatever information he gleaned from the piece of paper suggests that trouble is brewing. Miyax referred to Martha as her adoptive mother at the beginning of the book, so Martha may have revealed to Kapugen her intentions to take Miyax away from the seal camp and bring her back to live in town.*

Martha leaves the house after showing Kapugen the paper. A white man waits beside her boat. Kapugen follows Martha and speaks to the white man for a long time. When Miyax wakes up next morning, Kapugen holds her close to him and tells her she is going to live with her Aunt Martha because of a new law that says she has to go to school. Miyax doesn't argue with her father, since "it never occurred to her that anything that Kapugen decided was not absolutely perfect." Before Miyax leaves, Kapugen tells her that if she's unhappy living with Aunt Martha, she can escape by marrying Naka's son, Daniel, and living with them in Barrow.

*To Miyax, the white man who accompanies Martha represents Martha's loyalties to non-indigenous American culture and the corresponding threat she poses to the happy, traditional lifestyle Miyax enjoys with Kapugen. So far, the book has only hinted at the possibility that sentimentality obscures Miyax's memories of her father. Here, it fleshes out the idea explicitly by describing how "it never occurred to her that anything Kapugen decided was not perfect."*

After this, Kapugen packs Miyax's bladder-bag, wraps an oilskin around her, and places her in the boat. Miyax sits down next to Martha and tries to look strong for her father as the seal camp disappears from view.

*Kapugen sends Miyax away with the bladder-bag and oilskin so that she may remain connected to her heritage despite moving to town, which is considerably more Westernized.*

Miyax becomes Julie after she leaves the seal camp. Martha gives her a cot to sleep on, and she enjoys learning the English words in the books they read at school. One morning, an old man from the camp comes to Martha's house and speaks privately with her. When the man leaves, Martha tells Julie that Kapugen disappeared on a seal hunt a month ago. Parts of his kayak have since been found, but Kapugen won't be returning. Martha turns her back to Julie, and Julie flies out the door and runs until she reaches the beach. She screams "Kapugen!" into the water, but nobody answers her cries.

*Miyax becomes Julie in town, where it is customary to use Anglicized names and speak English. However, Miyax's new name reflects a symbolic transformation, as well: moving to town forces her to assimilate into non-indigenous American culture, which effectively destroys the traditional Inuit identity she developed during her time at the seal camp. This traditional identity suffers another blow when the man announces Kapugen's disappearance, as her relationship with Kapugen is what helped her understand her Inuit heritage. Kapugen's probable death severs the main lifeline that tied Miyax to her Inuk identity. As an example, nature no longer resonates with Miyax in the way it did when Kapugen was alive: when she cries into the water, she receives only silence where once she might have felt reassurance.*

Julie learns to live without Kapugen and adapt to the ways of the Mekoryuk people. Though her years at the seal camp were "dear and beautiful," she now understands that "she had lived a strange life" there. The Mekoryuk girls who are her age can speak, read, and write in English, and they know facts about presidents and astronauts.

*Julie's symbolic transformation from an Inuk identity to a non-indigenous American identity continues to evolve. Her exposure to this new culture alters her attitude toward the seal camp, turning an experience she once viewed as "dear and beautiful" into something that makes her "strange" and an outsider.*

One day, Julie runs into her schoolmates Judith and Rose on their way home from school. Judith invites Julie over to her house, and the three girls sit around the oil stove and talk. Julie examines the room and sees things she's never encountered before, such as a couch, a gas stove, and cotton curtains. Judith shows Julie her bedroom, and Julie is happy to see a chain that she thinks is an **i'noGo tied** on Judith's table. When Julie mentions the *i'noGo*, Judith is confused and tells Julie the object is a charm bracelet. Rose and Judith laugh at Julie, who feels ashamed. Julie throws her own *i'noGo tied* away that night.

*The couch, stove, and cotton curtains in Judith's house show that Judith's family has assimilated to non-indigenous American culture. Julie's unfamiliarity with these objects confirms that her years at the seal camp have made her an outsider who is ignorant to the dominant culture of Mekoryuk. She further solidifies her outsider status when she mistakes Judith's charm bracelet for an* i'noGo tied. *Finally, Julie's decision to throw away her own* i'noGo tied *when she returns home symbolizes her desire to disassociate from the Inuit culture that alienates her from her peers.*

Julie keeps studying and learns to read and write by the next year. She starts working at the mission that summer, cleaning and greeting visitors from the continental U.S. who come to see "real" Inuits.

*Julie's renewed efforts to learn English underscore her desire to distance herself from the Inuit culture that her short time in Mekoryuk has taught her to associate with shame and alienation. The detail about tourists who visit Alaska to see "real" Inuit people dehumanizes indigenous people and devalues their culture: it's as though the American tourists see themselves as spectators and the Inuit as a museum exhibit.*

The following year, Julie cuts her hair short and curls the ends. She takes a job at the hospital. On Julie's way home from the hospital one day, a gussak man driving a jeep pulls up beside her. The man introduces himself as Mr. Pollock. He tells Julie he owns stock at the Reindeer Company and has a young daughter named Amy who's about Julie's age back home in San Francisco. Mr. Pollock asks Julie if she'd like to be Amy's pen pal. Julie smiles and agrees, accepting the envelope Mr. Pollock removes from his pocket.

*Julie cuts her hair to conform to non-indigenous American norms and style trends. Her enthusiasm about having a pen pal likely stems from a genuine desire to connect with another person, since her time in Mekoryuk has been miserable and lonely. However, Julie has an added incentive to write to Amy, since doing so will likely give her more exposure to mainland norms and allow her to assimilate more convincingly into Mekoryuk's non-indigenous culture.*

Once Julie is alone in the mission library, she opens Amy's letter and is immediately enthralled. Amy is 12 years old and writes about her life in San Francisco. She says the few Inuit words her father has taught her are "pretty words that sound like bells," though she has trouble spelling them. Amy asks how to write the word daylight. Julie finishes reading the letter and thinks to herself, "Daylight is spelled A-M-Y."

*Amy describes Julie's Inuit language as "pretty words that sound like bells," which implies her genuine interest in Julie's way of life. Amy's interest in her culture is refreshing for Julie, who has grown ashamed of her culture since moving to Mekoryuk. Julie's remark that "Daylight is spelled A-M-Y" reflects her hope that a friendship with Amy might usher in a new, better phase in her life.*

Mekoryuk becomes dull once Julie starts receiving weekly letters from Amy. Through Amy's letters, Julie learns about TV, cars, and the carpeted floors of the high school Amy will attend next year. Mekoryuk doesn't have a high school, and only the wealthy Inuit families can afford to send their children to the mainland for school. Amy wonders if Naka would send her to school if she married his son, Daniel.

*The fantastical image of life in San Francisco that Amy brings to life in her letters persuades Julie to reevaluate her ideas about non-indigenous American culture. However, what Julie wants most is a way out of Mekoryuk—she's even willing to entertain the idea of marrying Daniel if it means she can start a new life somewhere else.*

Julie starts clashing with Martha, who criticizes Julie's short hair and complains about how disrespectful Judith is to her parents. Martha reminds Julie that "the old ways are best." She starts giving Julie more chores and refuses to let her go the movies with her friends. Julie starts to hate living at Martha's house and waits anxiously for the phone call from Naka to come.

*Martha claims that "the old ways are best," yet she facilitated Julie's departure from the seal camp that enabled her to uphold a traditional lifestyle. It's unclear whether Martha is as awful as Julie makes her out to be, or whether Martha's central role in taking her away from Kapugen skews Julie's opinion of her.*

Naka finally calls. The head of the Indian Affairs in Mekoryuk comes to Martha's house and informs her that Naka has written to send for Julie to move to Barrow and marry his son. Martha is concerned and tells Julie she doesn't have to go through with the marriage if she doesn't want to, but Julie tells her "the old ways are best," which silences Martha.

*Martha's concern doesn't make sense: if she believes "the old ways are best," it would logically follow that she'd be happy about Julie's arranged marriage. But, on the other hand, it seems possible that Martha knows something Julie doesn't know about Daniel, Naka, and the kind of life Julie will live in Barrow. Either way, Julie's willingness to enter blindly into this marriage is another example of how her admiration for Kapugen inhibits her from believing he is capable of wrongdoing: she trusts that the marriage will be fine purely because Kapugen arranged it.*

The next day, Julie travels to the airport. Martha trails behind. She drags her legs and complains about not having anyone to care for her when she's old and frail. Julie says a quick goodbye, and the pilot leads her into the plane. At first, Julie is afraid the plane won't be able to fly, but before she knows it, she's high in the air and watching Nunivak disappear behind her. At Fairbanks, Julie transfers to a smaller plane. The mountains and trees gradually disappear beneath them as the plane nears the North Slope.

*Julie's initial mistrust of the plane stems from her unfamiliarity with modern technology. Another thing to note here is that in Part I, when Miyax saw the plane in the sky and assumed it was headed toward Fairbanks, she probably drew this conclusion because she once rode in a plane traveling the same route.*

After waiting for the thick spring fog to clear, the plane lands in Barrow. Julie is momentarily afraid that she's made a horrible mistake, but the stewardess brings her her coat and escorts her off the plane to Naka, his wife Nusan, and Daniel before she can contemplate this any further. Julie recognizes Naka's eyes from the old days at the seal camp and feels a little better. Nusan, who is wearing a *kuspuck*, smiles at Julie. When Julie looks more closely at Daniel, she sees by "his green and dull eyes that something [is] wrong with him." Nusan sees Julie's concerned face and quickly tells her that, although Daniel "has a few problems," he's a good boy and will be like a brother to Julie. Julie relaxes.

*A* kuspuk *(spelled as* kuspuck *in the book) is a tunic-length hooded shirt of Yup'ik origin that various groups of Alaska Natives wear. Traditionally, they were made of animal skin and worn over a park. Julie's remark about Daniel's "dull eyes" suggests that he has a developmental disability. This realization sheds some light on Martha's reservations before Julie accepted the marriage offer. It also raises the question of whether Kapugen knew about Daniel's disability but arranged the marriage anyway.*

Julie happily follows her new family home. She's shocked when a minister and two strangers arrive at Naka's house the next day to officiate her wedding. Nusan gives Julie a sealskin suit to wear, and Daniel dresses in a gussak suit. Daniel's clammy, nervous hands grasp Julie's as the minister performs the ceremony. Julie wonders whether Kapugen knew that Daniel was dull but makes herself believe he did not.

*Julie can't believe that Kapugen might have known about Daniel's condition, because to do so would be to admit that Kapugen is flawed and less than the legend that she's built him up to be in her imagination.*

After the wedding, Daniel goes to his room, Naka steps outside with the minister and the other men, and Nusan sits at her sewing machine to finish some boots for a tourist. She tells Julie to make herself at home. Julie walks outside and sits on an oil drum, too afraid to think or speak. Some children pass by on their way to the blanket toss, where a crowd gathers around the community house. Some men unfold a giant skin, and everyone holds on to its edges. A child crawls into the center of the skin, bounces, and flies through the air. Julie looks away from the festivities, feeling horribly homesick for Mekoryuk.

*Julie thought her life would be better in Barrow, but now that she's here, she longs for the familiar comforts of Mekoryuk. Unfortunately, this seems to be a trend for her: she projects unrealistic expectations onto how much something as simple as a change of scenery can improve her life. Julie's unrealized dreams about her life in Barrow are similar to her dreams about running away to San Francisco: in either chase, she clings to a naïve hope that moving will solve the problems in her life. But these problems are, in fact, deeply rooted in issues like forced assimilation, grief, and problematic cultural practices that are too serious to be solved by a simple move.*

Suddenly, Julie hears someone call her name. She turns and spots a tall girl behind her. The girl introduces herself as Pani NalaGan, though her English name is Pearl Norton. Pearl leads Julie into an alley, past an old house, and into the giant quonset hut. Julie's eyes adjust to the dimly lit room, and she sees young people dressed in *kuspucks* and parkas sitting around tables and listening to rock music.

*The quonset's calming atmosphere symbolizes community's ability to emotionally restore people. When Pearl takes Julie to the quonset, she sees a world where she can take solace in belonging and sharing cultural experiences with other people, much like she did at the seal camp with Kapugen.*

Pearl buys a Coke to share with Julie. She tells Julie not to worry about her marriage, assuring her that they're normally just for convenience, and "even in the old days," nobody forced the kids to stay together if they didn't like each other. Pearl tells Julie she can just run away if it doesn't work out. The girls make plans to meet tomorrow.

*Pearl's advice is comforting to Julie because her Inuit background gives her intimate knowledge of certain traditions. As a result, Julie takes comfort in their shared heritage and feels less alone. This moment is also essential because Pearl's suggestion that Julie can run away if the marriage doesn't work out foreshadows—and possibly lays the groundwork for—Julie's eventual decision to do just that.*

Daniel is gone when Julie returns to Naka and Nusan's house. Nusan puts Julie to work helping her with her sewing: she makes clothing for airlines to sell to underprepared tourists who come to town without the proper clothing. Nusan looks at Julie and tells her that she's smart and pretty, and that she'll be fine.

*Pearl mentioned that arranged marriages usually are just a matter of convenience, and Nusan's order for Julie to help her with her sewing work suggests that Pearl is correct. Julie's presence in the household is convenient for Nusan, since it lessens her workload. In addition, Nusan's job—making clothing for underdressed tourists—stresses the cultural differences and misunderstandings that separate the Inuit from non-indigenous people.*

Julie doesn't see Daniel much that summer, and she sees him even less often once school begins. She starts to like her new home and enjoys cooking and sewing with Nusan. She looks forward to her free hours when she can meet Pearl at the quonset. Months go by, and Julie continues to correspond with Amy. The more they write, the more Amy's house in San Francisco becomes real for Julie, and she often daydreams about the beautiful house, and the beautiful **pink room** Amy has promised her she can have when she visits.

*The quonset becomes a haven for Julie because it offers her the protection of community and the comfort of a shared experience. The pink room Amy promises to Julie symbolizes Julie's hopes for what a new life on the mainland could offer her. She romanticizes the pink room and this hypothetical life, almost to the extreme degree that she glorifies Kapugen.*

That winter, after subzero weather prevents Naka from leaving the house, Julie realizes he doesn't have a job at all and just drinks all day. Naka becomes angry and violent when he drinks, and sometimes he even hits Nusan. Even so, Naka is friendly when he first wakes up and sometimes tells Julie stories about the old days at the seal camp. When Naka is nice, Julie can understand why Kapugen loved him.

*Julie had good memories of Naka because she associated him with Kapugen and life at the seal camp. The reality of Naka's alcoholism symbolically gestures toward the idea that one's memories are often unreliable.*

One night, Naka won't stop beating Nusan, so Julie runs to the quonset to look for Pearl. Pearl isn't there, but Julie sees Russel, the young man who campaigns around town to vote "No" on liquor licenses, sitting in the corner. Julie tells Russell about Naka's drunken violence. Russell nods sympathetically and tells Julie about a man from San Francisco who does business in Alaska and has helped many people, including Russell and his father, overcome their addictions. "Mr. Pollock," Julie guesses correctly. Suddenly, her **pink room** in San Francisco "ha[s] a new dimension."

*To escape the violence of her home life, Julie takes solace in the sense of community and belonging that the quonset offers her. Russel's campaign against liquor licenses alludes to Alaska's disproportionately high rate of alcohol abuse. In particular, the Alaska Native population is at a higher risk of developing alcoholism, with economic disadvantage and the historical trauma of forced assimilation and a loss of culture acting as contributing risk factors. Julie's remark that her pink room in San Francisco "ha[s] a new dimension" reflects her shifting attitude toward non-indigenous society. Increasingly, she views the pink room (and the possibility of a new life in San Francisco that it symbolizes) as preferable to her life in Mekoryuk, where she regularly witnesses violence and remains trapped in an arranged marriage. Russel's comment about Mr. Pollock helping people recover from substance abuse issues invites the possibility that Mr. Pollock might be willing to help Julie, too.*

January 23 is a celebration day: the day of the sunrise. The air in town teems with excitement. At noon, all the students file outside. The gussak principal stares at the sky as though "he really did not believe the miracle would happen." Then, it begins: the sky is emerged in an explosion of colorful light of the "burning red" sunrise. The Inuit people lift their arms toward the sky to praise the sun, and everyone else follows their lead.

*January 23 marks the end of the polar night in Barrow (now Utqiagvik). The* gussak *principal's skepticism toward the sunrise reflects his culture's distanced relationship to nature. Julie makes claims throughout the book that allude to non-indigenous people's dismissal of her culture as superstitious or foolish. Yet it's the non-indigenous townspeople who instinctively follow the Inuit people's lead and raise their hands to praise the sun. This suggests that even if some* gussak *people believe that their culture is superior to Inuit culture, this belief can't blind them to the magnificence of nature's beauty, like the rising sun. This scene paints Inuit cultural practices, particularly their reverence for nature, in a favorable light.*

Summer arrives, and tourists spills into Barrow. One night, Nusan comes home late and angrily tells Julie that Naka is in jail. She orders Julie to finish the *maklaks* while she retrieves him. Nusan leaves, and Julie busies herself with the boots.

Maklaks *are warm, soft boots worn by Arctic indigenous peoples and traditionally made from animal hide. The fact that Naka is in jail again suggests that Julie's romanticized view of Naka and his family was colored by her love for Kapugen.*

Daniel comes in sometime later. Although he normally ignores Julie, tonight he shouts at her that the kinds have been ridiculing "Dumb Daniel" for not being able to "mate" his wife. Daniel grabs Julie and forces himself on her, growing angrier when she tries to resist. Daniel pushes Julie to the floor and crushes her beneath his body, though Julie can see that Daniel is frightened, too. The room spins. Daniel swears and stands up. He laughs to himself, shouting "Tomorrow, tomorrow I can, I can." After Daniel leaves, Julie vomits. She stands up slowly and whispers to herself, "when fear seizes, [...] change what you are doing."

*Daniel's attempt to rape Julie fuels her decision to reject society and flee to the wilderness. His assault shows her that there is a greater likelihood of falling victim to violence and abuse in society than in nature. For as incredibly dangerous as the Arctic tundra turns out to be, Julie has yet to encounter as much violence there as she does now, at the hands of Daniel. Julie recites Kapugen's advice, "when fear seizes, [...] change what you are doing," to give her the strength to leave, but she overlooks the fact that Kapugen arranged the marriage that put her in harm's way in the first place.*

Julie packs her things. She sneaks out at midnight, stopping by Pearl's house to say goodbye. Pearl intuits what happened and asks Julie where she plans to go, but Julie doesn't say. Pearl gets some food and supplies together, and Julie orders her to tell Nusan that she saw Julie wandering on the ice if she asks about her. She sobs as she hugs her friend goodbye.

*Julie and Pearl's parting is emotional because Pearl is the only person besides Kapugen who Julie has genuinely connected with thus far. Julie orders Pearl to tell Nusan that she saw Julie wandering on the ice so that Nusan will suspect that Julie fell through the ice and drowned and won't look for her. Julie's request emphasizes how serious she is about running away: she is adamant about not wanting to return and not wanting to be found.*

Julie walks to the beach and crawls along the ice on her hands and feet until she can no longer see Barrow. She stands, turns to the ocean, and proclaims that she is Miyax now—not Julie.

*When Miyax reclaims her Inuit name, she symbolically reclaims her indigenous heritage. Likewise, she symbolically rejects society and embraces nature when she turns toward the ocean.*

## PART 3: KAPUGEN, THE HUNTER

Miyax ends her reminiscences. Back in the present, she stands atop the frost heave overlooking the wolves' abandoned den and cries out for Amaroq. She spots a piece of an antler on the ground and pockets it to use as a weapon. Miyax feels the spirits of her animal friends around her and wonders if they'll cross paths again.

*Miyax takes solace in her spiritual connection to nature. She knows she and the wolves are both a part of the interconnected natural world, which makes the wolves a part of her even when she isn't with them. In addition to spiritual nourishment, nature also provides her with physical protection in the form of the abandoned antler she repurposes as a weapon.*

Miyax walks back toward her camp. At the top of the frost heave, she is met with a disastrous sight: her house is caved in, her sleeping skins are shredded, and all her meat is gone. Miyax trembles with fear as she wonders what could be responsible for the destruction. Then, she sees a vicious Jello hidden in the reeds. Miyax instinctually backs up but corrects herself, knowing she must stand her ground. She growls at Jello, and Jello backs away with his tail between his legs. Miyax wants to hurt Jello but can't bring herself to "strike a coward."

*Jello's destruction of Miyax's campsite puts her in grave danger. Now, she has neither food nor the support of her wolf community to bolster her chances of survival. Miyax's refusal to hit Jello speaks to her selflessness and respect for other creatures: Even after Jello sabotages her, she refuses to seek revenge. When Miyax calls Jello a "coward," she reaffirms how opposite he is from Amaroq, whom she lauds for his bravery.*

Miyax keeps Jello at a distance and investigates the ruins of her house. She sees that her pack, which has some meat in it, is still intact. After Jello leaves, Miyax sees a lemming run across the grass, pursued by a weasel. Miyax smiles, realizing that "another cycle [i]s beginning."

*Miyax's realization that "another cycle [i]s beginning" references Kapugen's earlier lesson about the lemmings' absence being a good thing, since their migration patterns contribute to the natural cycle of life. When Miyax sees a lemming running before her, it marks the beginning of a new cycle, and she's hopeful that this cycle will balance out the misfortunes she's recently suffered by sending good fortune her way. The start of this new cycle also symbolizes the possibility of rebirth and renewal.*

Miyax packs her things in preparation for her journey. She hears a snowshoe hare scream and goes to investigate. Around the bend, Miyax is suddenly face to face with the hare's killer: a giant wolverine. Miyax fends off the wolverine and snatches the hare, placing it in the caribou skin to carry it. A tern flies past, and Miyax takes out her sinew, holds it in the air under the bird, and moves in the direction of Point Hope.

*Catching the hare is a sign that the start of the new cycle will mark a positive shift in Miyax's journey. Point Hope is the actual name of the town where Miyax is heading, but her journey toward Point Hope also symbolizes the hope for a better life in San Francisco that motivates her to push forward.*

At sunset, the clouds are dark and unreadable: they could bring a blizzard or hardly any snow. Miyax cuts into the frost heave with her knife and stuffs her ground skin into the cave. She climbs inside just as the snowfall begins, and she falls asleep.

*The novel interweaves Miyax's brief moments of good fortune with ominous descriptions of her natural surroundings to emphasize the sheer brutality of the Arctic tundra and the resilience Miyax and her people must possess to survive there.*

When Miyax wakes up, the sky is clear, and the tundra is only dusted with snow. Miyax is nervous: she can't shake the feeling that someone is watching her. Slowly, she crawls out of her cave and finds that the hare has vanished from the caribou skin. Miyax sings the song she made up about Amaroq to calm her nerves. That evening, she makes stew. As she's tending to the pot, she feels the earth tremble and sees two enormous male caribou standing before her. It's mating season, and the caribou begin to fight, smashing their antlers against each other's. After dinner, Miyax packs her things and searches for a campsite away from the caribou.

*Miyax isn't a superstitious character, so her unease and feeling that someone is watching her is an ominous sign that something is off. The vanished hare is also suspicious. So far, only one character has attempted to steal from Miyax: Jello. When Miyax sings a song about Amaroq, she pays tribute to Amaroq and Kapugen: her decision to calm herself with music embodies Kapugen's advice to respond proactively to fear instead of succumbing to it.*

Miyax settles on a campsite beside a pond. Unable to sleep, she takes out the wolf-puppy bone and carves a comb out of it. Later, when the sky grows dark, she excitedly notices that the first star of the year has appeared. She knows that the North Star, her guide, will soon be visible. Miyax hears wolves barking in the distance. Their cries seem wary at first, but they soon turn joyful. Suddenly, Miyax recognizes the barks of her pack. She listens for Jello, too, but doesn't hear his voice.

*Carving is a traditional Inuit trade that connects Miyax with her culture. The appearance of the North Star is an example of how the natural world exists in a state of balance. Although the impending winter will immerse Miyax in near-complete darkness, this darkness makes visible the North Star, which she can use to guide her to Point Hope. Miyax's inability to discern Jello's voice offsets her joy at hearing her pack: Jello could be nearby and poised to initiate another attack on Miyax.*

Miyax hears something rustling nearby and grabs her club before realizing it's just the wind. Ashamed of her fear, Miyax thinks about how incapable she is of following Kapugen's advise and responding to her fear by "chang[ing] what she [is] doing." But before she can relax, she sits up and screams: Jello lunges toward her, grabs her pack, and runs away. Miyax starts to panic—everything important is in her pack. She can't get anywhere with no boots, and her needle was in her pack, so she can't make any new ones, either. "My tombstone," she says to herself, and wonders how long it will take for her to die. Miyax falls asleep.

*Miyax's shame about letting fear paralyze her and not heeding Kapugen's advice causes her to dismiss the gut instinct that she is in danger. In this way, Miyax's admiration for Kapugen prevents her from assessing reality objectively. As a result, she can't react in time to defend herself against Jello, and he steals her pack, which contains the tools most critical to her survival. When Miyax says "my tombstone," she acknowledges the gravity of her situation: she has no food for sustenance, no tools, and no community to protect her in her newly vulnerable state.*

Miyax wakes up and smells the sweet smell of fresh wolf urine. She feels vaguely reassured, though she can't discern the urine's exact message. She wraps two skins around her feet to serve as temporary boots and looks for her pack, hoping Jello abandoned it after stealing the meat. If Miyax can find her pack and tools—her *ulo*, needles, and matches—she has a chance at survival. Miyax scans the ground carefully. She thinks that the old the old Inuit people at the seal camp had been "wise" for not relying on "man-made gadgets."

*The reassurance that the wolf urine brings Miyax suggests that it came from one of her packmates instead of Jello. Knowing that she has the support of her wolf community allows her to replace the resignation she felt last night with strength a renewed sense of hope. Realizing how helpless she is without the most essential tools renews Miyax's appreciation for the "wise" Inuit men at the seal camp who rejected the "man-made gadgets" modern society invented to conquer and exploit nature. These men adjusted their lives to fit the demands of nature rather than relying on tools to mold nature to conform to their needs.*

Suddenly, Miyax shrieks: on the ground before her lies the bloodied, mutilated body of Jello, and next to Jello, her pack. Miyax knows that Amaroq must have done this; she recalls Kapugen telling her that wolves turn on the lone wolf who steals from the pups. Miyax investigates her pack. The food is gone, but her ulo and needles remain intact—and this is all that matters. She praises Amaroq, calling him her "adopted father." Miyax realizes that reaching Point Hope is no longer important to her: she could just as happily live here for another year.

*Jello's attack on Miyax showed that he had no qualms about fulfilling his own needs at her expense. Amaroq turns on Jello because Jello has broken the pack's code of conduct by putting his own needs above Miyax, whom Amaroq considers a member of his pack. The fact that Amaroq killed Jello is undeniable proof of Miyax's acceptance in the wolf pack. Miyax returns Amaroq's affection when she refers to him as her "adopted father." She no longer cares about making it to San Francisco because the companionship she's found in Amaroq and his pack is more meaningful than anything she thinks she could find in society.*

One evening, Miyax feels lonely as she searches for a campsite, and she imagines Amy's beautiful house in San Francisco to occupy her mind. Suddenly, it strikes Miyax that the tundra, a "painted earth" with all its magnificent shades of color, is far more beautiful than Amy's house.

*Amaroq's attack on Jello touches Miyax. San Francisco loses its appeal for Miyax once she realizes that the wolves have given her a stronger sense of community and acceptance than her relationships in society. As she takes in the "painted earth" of the tundra, she realizes that she feels most at home in nature.*

Miyax trudges forward, unafraid as she sings her Amaroq song. She freezes sticks of grass in the water of an icebound lake and uses the frozen rods to form a tent. Amaroq calls to her, and she calls back to let him know where she is. A lemming runs through the grass. Miyax moves to catch it, but a fox beats her to it. Miyax grins and resolves to be quicker next time.

*Miyax demonstrates how comfortable she is in nature when she resourcefully repurposes frozen sticks of grass to construct a tent. Seeing the lemming reminds Miyax of Kapugen's philosophy about the natural order that governs all living things. Miyax grins at the fox that stole her would-be meal because she has a newfound appreciation for the interconnected natural world they both inhabit. She has faith that if she is patient, the balance of the universe will ensure that she has a turn to eat, too.*

Kapu emerges from the grasses with a leg of caribou in his mouth. He dances in circles and beats the ground with his paws. Miyax gives Kapu a strip of caribou hide to thank him. She brings the caribou leg back to her tent and prepares a stew. As Miyax waits for her stew to cook, the cold air inspires her to dance like the bent woman had danced at the seal camp. When it's time to dance about the evil spirits, Miyax improvises, as is tradition. Miyax dances to tell the story of Kapu bringing her the caribou leg. When she is finished dancing and feels how warm she is, she remembers that the old ways aren't "foolish" but "have purpose."

*Miyax's patience pays off as Kapu emerges with a bounty that is exponentially better than the lemming the fox snatched away from her. As usual, Miyax shares her meal with Kapu, reciprocating his act of goodwill in bringing her the caribou leg in the first place. Miyax's dancing further proves her shifting attitude toward the non-indigenous world: she's increasingly turning to traditional Inuit culture instead of Amy's letter for reassurance. Miyax's realization that the old ways "have purpose" and aren't "foolish" emphasizes her renewed commitment to Inuit culture. She thinks that reclaiming her people's traditions will lead her to a better life, and she's begun to see San Francisco as a naïve pipe dream.*

The sky darkens, and Kapu accepts some cooked meat. Miyax gazes at the sky and sees the twinkling North Star watching over her. Before going to sleep, Miyax cuts the rest of the caribou skin into strips and a circle, weighs down the pieces with stones, and drops them into the lake. She falls asleep to the sound of her howling wolf pack.

*Miyax sleeps peacefully, reassured by her wolf pack's protection and by the survival skills and wisdom that her traditional upbringing imparted onto her.*

When Miyax awakens, it's still snowing, and the air is colder than it was before. She breaks through the lake ice, removes the frozen skin she placed there the night before, and fashions them into a sled. She forms the remaining strips of skin into snowshoes. There will only be a few hours of daylight today, so Miyax works quickly. She finishes packing and continues her journey, noting the position of the North Star.

*Miyax finds meaning and fulfillment in using the traditional skills and wisdom she had to abandon when she lived in town. She honors the caribou by using its frozen skin to build a sled rather than wasting this part of the animal.*

Through the yellow-green light of the midday sun, Miyax sees that she is in the middle of the caribou's wintering grounds. She welcomes this news, hoping the presence of caribou might attract her pack. Miyax looks up and sees a skua bird, which means she's closer to the ocean than she thought. She follows the skua until her eyes land on an oil drum, which signifies that civilization is near. Miyax realizes that while she would have been thrilled to see the oil drum a month ago, she's more indifferent to it now that she's come to appreciate the wilderness. Amaroq barks in the distance. Miyax howls and walks toward his voice.

*Like the wise old men from the seal camp, Miyax adjusts her life to conform to the natural world: she uses the sun to tell time and the skua's presence to determine her relative location. Miyax's lack of excitement to see the oil dream shows how significantly her priorities have shifted since first getting lost. Although she initially thought the modern world could give her a better life, her experiences in the wilderness suggest that she feels more at peace in nature.*

It's dawn. Miyax warms her stew over a fire. She hears Amaroq bark insistently. The other wolves respond Amaroq's call, but they sound as though they've formed a circle around Miyax, which is odd. Miyax hears vicious barks and steps onto the frozen lake before her. About halfway across, she spots the dark, looming figure of a grizzly bear. The grizzly spots Miyax, snarls, and runs toward her.

*Amaroq's barks alert Miyax to the danger the grizzly bear poses. Once more, Miyax's participation in the wolf community offers her more protection than any personal resilience ever could.*

Miyax runs toward her tent, but she realizes the wind is blowing her scent in the bear's direction. She changes course and runs toward the south bank. Miyax wonders why the bear isn't hibernating—the wolves have been asleep all day and can't have been responsible for waking it. The wolves harass the bear, and Miyax realizes they are trying to chase it away from her. Finally, the wolves push the grizzly out onto the tundra.

*If the wolves didn't awaken the grizzly bear, something else must have roused it from hibernation. Miyax's puzzlement hints at the possibility that she and the wolves aren't alone on the tundra, and that danger is on the horizon.*

The experience leaves Miyax shaken, but she thanks her pack and resumes her trek. As she travels, she suddenly realizes why the grizzly was out: it's the start of the Americans' hunting season. Miyax knows that the gussaks are paid a bounty to shoot the wolves. The men at the seal camp thought this practice was evil, since it was "killing for money, rather than need." Kapugen used to say that the bounty was the *gussaks'* method of eliminating the *amaroqs* (wolves) from the earth, which is something they have no right to do. Without the wolves, there would be too many caribou grazing, which would mean the lemmings would die from not having enough grass to eat, which would mean that all the animals that prey on the lemmings would die, too.

*Because the allure of a bounty incentivizes* gussak *hunters to kill indiscriminately, they pose even more of a danger to the wolves than the grizzly bear. The* gussaks' *attitude toward hunting directly opposes the Inuit attitude. While the Inuit hunt only what they "need" out of respect for the animals who sacrifice their bodies to clothe and feed them, the* gussaks *have no respect for the animals they kill and no sense of humankind's place in the interconnected natural world. Greed motivates the* gussaks *to hunt beyond what they need, which throws the natural world into chaotic unbalance.*

Miyax realizes the oil drum she just passed marks the border between civilization and wilderness, and she thinks it's her job to warn her pack about the possibility of hunters. She wonders how to alert the wolves and begins to sing: "*Go away, royal wolf, / GO away, do not follow.*" Thickening clouds fill the sky, signifying a white-out, and Miyax decides to crawl into her shelter for the night instead of traveling. She pitches her tent and continues carving her comb. As she works, she realizes the comb isn't a comb at all, but a figure of Amaroq.

*Miyax upholds her obligation to her wolf pack, warning them about the danger of civilization, just as they warned her about the grizzly bear. In addition, she employs the traditional skill of carving to pay homage to Amaroq, which emphasizes Inuit culture's respect for nature. Beyond this, the Amaroq comb illustrates the deep bond between Miyax and the wolves that's developed over the time they've spent together.*

Miyax hears a bird call out in the darkness. She peers outside and sees a young golden plover just outside her tent. Miyax carries the bird inside, admiring how the bird's black and gold feathers glimmer in the light. Miyax has never seen a plover up close before, and she now understands why Kapugen calls them "the spirit of the birds." The bird is lost, malnourished, and dying, but Miyax tells him she's happy he can be here with her. She names the bird "Tornait, the bird spirit." Miyax places Tornait inside her sleeping skin and offers him a piece of caribou meat. Tornait devours the meat and falls fast asleep.

*Miyax names the golden plover Tornait to honor Kapugen and her Inuit heritage. She references Kapugen's "spirit of the birds" song in Part I when she toasts to the owlet and bunting she brought back to her campsite and recalls the Feast of the Bird celebration her old village would celebrate. The compassion Miyax extends to Tornait reaffirms her selflessness and culturally inherited respect for nature.*

The next night, the white-out is still too thick and impermeable to move forward. This is fine with Miyax, who has food, shelter, and companionship. She observes Tornait's tame demeanor and wonders if it comes from the loneliness of living in such an isolated place.

*It's interesting that Miyax reflects on Tornait's loneliness but never on her own. In fact, she seems content with the companionship her animal friends provide her and might even prefer their company to that of other humans. This emphasizes the degree to which Miyax prefers nature to society, perhaps because she's encountered people (like Daniel) who are even more brutal than animals.*

The white-out is lighter the next afternoon. As Miyax prepares dinner, Tornait rises in alarm. Miyax listens closely but can't hear anything. Suddenly, Kapu emerges from the mist. Miyax calls out to Kapu, but Kapu is distracted by something. Amaroq appears next, and Miyax throws her head back to signal happiness to her wolf friends. Amaroq stretches his neck back in a grand gesture before running back onto the lake. Kapu follows. Miyax tries to go, too, but Amaroq gives her a stern look, and she stays put.

*Although Miyax has become quite proficient in communicating with the wolves, this passage suggests that certain gaps remain in her grasp on their language: the wolves are unreceptive to Miyax's attempts to convey happiness and appear distracted by something that Miyax cannot discern.*

Miyax scans her surroundings for Silver, Nails, and the pups but can't find them. She wonders if Amaroq is teaching Kapu to be a leader—after all, a leader has to have "experience and schooling" in addition to bravery. The white-out disappears, and the stars emerge. With Kapu "in school," Miyax once more focuses her attention on San Francisco. She emerges from her tent and wonders how to tell the wolves not to follow her any longer and realizes she can give Amaroq the same look he gave her when he didn't want her to follow him and Kapu. Miyax hums to herself as she packs her bundle. She dons her snowshoes and places Tornait in her parka hood. Miyax pulls her sled behind her and trudges onward.

*To Miyax, a just leader undertakes the "experience and schooling" necessary for them to honor past traditions. She sees Amaroq training Kapu to assume his role as pack leader as similar to how Kapugen passed his knowledge of Inuit culture on to her. Realizing that Amaroq is training Kapu to take over as pack leader signals to Miyax that the wolves' cycle of life is continuing, and that she, too, should move on with her life.*

Miyax doesn't hear the airplane, but she sees its metal body glimmering in the sky. As the plane draws nearer, she can hear the buzzing of its engine. The plane begins to fly in a zigzag pattern, and Miyax realizes it is following the path of river. Rivers lead to seas, and this means she must be almost finished with her long journey—Point Hope can't be more than another night away.

*The plane is yet another indicator that Miyax is nearing civilization. The plane's zigzag pattern, which follows the path of a river, is additional evidence that she is nearing the end of her journey. Amaroq's earlier signal for Miyax to stay put suggests that he senses the presence of danger—maybe Miyax should be more concerned about the plane than she appears to be.*

Miyax sees fire blast from the plane and realizes people are hunting from it. She runs toward the oil drum for shelter, fearing that the hunters might mistake her for a bear. The plane follows her. Miyax reaches the drum only to find that it's sealed shut. Working quickly, she squeezes herself in the space underneath the curve of the drum and remains as still as possible.

*Because traditional Inuit hunters like Kapugen don't use modern technology to hunt, the men on this plane are probably* gussak *hunters. This poses a grave threat for Amaroq's pack, since* gussak *hunters receive a bounty for the wolves they kill.*

Miyax can hear gunshots. She looks overhead and sees that the plane isn't aiming for her—it's aiming for Amaroq. Amaroq and Kapu snarl and run, zigzagging across the snow. Miyax screams for Amaroq to come to her for shelter, but the plane overtakes him. Miyax hears the shots ring out and watches as Amaroq's lifeless body collapses on the ground. Miyax sobs uncontrollably. As the plane circles back, Kapu dodges bullets and sprints toward the oil drum. Miyax can see in Kapu's eyes that he's scared for the first time in his life.

*The hunters' modern technology renders the wolves powerless. Amaroq's death affects Miyax deeply; now, she has lost both her biological father, Kapugen, and her adopted father, Amaroq. Amaroq's death also symbolizes humanity's cruelty, and the helplessness of nature to withstand humans' brutality.*

Kapu reaches the drum. Miyax covers him with snow to conceal him, but blood from Kapu's shoulder turns the snow red. As the plane flies directly overhead, Miyax sees cities, bridges, TVs, and the **pink room**. The plane's sooty exhaust fills the air. The plane flies forward but circles back. Kapu moves to get up, but Miyax urges him to stay; she knows the plane is coming to pick up Amaroq.

*The images that Miyax sees when she looks at the plane come from the descriptions of San Francisco that Amy included in her letters. The fact that Miyax associates the plane with these images shows that she views the* gussak *hunters as emblematic of non-indigenous culture as a whole. Miyax seems to question whether she can morally bring herself to associate with the same culture that created the monsters who killed her dear friend.*

The plane flies low enough that Miyax can see the hunters inside the plane. They wear crash helmets and goggles and laugh to each other as they scan the ground. The plane picks up speed and flies higher, and Miyax realizes the men aren't going to pick up Amaroq. They didn't even shoot him for bounty—they shot him for nothing. Kapu continues to bleed. Miyax puts pressure on the injured vein. She pitches her tent around Kapu and warms the stew for them to eat. Once things have calmed down, Miyax tries to go to Amaroq, but grief immobilizes her. She stays and tends to Kapu, feeding him bits of stew. Upon investigating the wound more closely, she realizes it must be stitched closed.

*The hunters' laughter adds an additional layer of cruelty to their killing of Amaroq. Their flippancy also reinforces* gussaks' *lack of respect for nature. In Miyax's Inuit culture, hunters give thanks to animals' souls and use every part of the animals they kill. When the* gussaks *fail to retrieve Amaroq's body, it's clear to Miyax that they respect neither his body nor his soul. Miyax demonstrates her resilience yet again when she sets aside her grief for Amaroq to tend to Kapu's wounds.*

Miyax tenderly passes the needle through Kapu's flesh. He growls softly but remains still. Miyax sews up the wound and promises Kapu he will return to be the leader of their pack. The sun sets, and the northern lights flash across the darkened sky. Nails howls mournfully for Amaroq, and Miyax returns his cry. She decides now is the time to say goodbye to her friend and approaches his lifeless body. Amaroq's fur shines underneath the northern lights. Miyax sings to him and offers the bone carving as a totem. The pain in her heart lightens as she feels Amaroq's spirit is within her.

*Nails's mournful howl reflects the strength of his bond with Amaroq; Kapugen was right when he told Miyax that wolves love each other. When northern lights appear overhead, it's as though all of the natural world grieves for Amaroq. Miyax finds comfort in the Inuit belief that Amaroq's spirit didn't die with his body and lives on within her.*

The sun sets for the last time that winter on November 10. Kapu exercises in the darkness, walking back and forth across the tundra. Tornait sleeps in Miyax's furs. Miyax handles the darkness well enough; she can hunt caribou by starlight, though when the sky is overcast it's too dark to do much of anything. On these nights, she lights a candle and stays in with Kapu and Tornait. She continues to carve the antler-weapon, shaping it into five puppies with Kapu in the lead. She takes out Amaroq's totem and meditates on him, thinking to herself "the **pink room** is red with your blood [...] and I cannot go there." She realizes she no longer knows where to go.

*Amaroq's death destroys whatever naïve illusions Miyax might have had about non-indigenous society and modernity. She no longer believes that traveling San Francisco will offer her a better life than the one she had in Barrow or Mekoryuk, because she no longer believes that the culture in San Francisco and the culture that produced the men who killed Amaroq are meaningfully different. To Miyax, non-indigenous society as a whole threatens her Inuit culture and everything she holds dear.*

One night, Silver appears at the tent with a large hare in her mouth. Miyax realizes the pack is confused without Amaroq and can only hunt small prey like rabbits. She fears for them, knowing that kills like this won't be enough for them to survive the winter. Several nights later, once Kapu can run without falling, Miyax decides it's time to travel to the river, where there will be more game to hunt. She uses the North Star to guide her there. As Miyax travels, she sees the Brooks Range looming before her and knows her journey is nearly complete.

*The novel invites a loose comparison between the wolves' confusion and the human experience of grief. This further develops the idea that wolves are highly social, complex creatures who form meaningful bonds with one another. Miyax honors Amaroq's spirit by looking out for his pack, guiding them to a place where they might have better opportunities to hunt.*

One night, as Miyax sits and sews a boot, Kapu leaves and does not return. A day passes. Finally, just as she is about to go to bed, Kapu returns with the rest of the pack behind him. Miyax turns to Tornait and tells him they can go now—Kapu is leading the pack.

*Kapu's leadership restores order to the pack. Miyax knows that Amaroq's wisdom will guide Kapu through this new phase of his life, just as Kapugen's wisdom has guided her.*

At dawn, Miyax and Tornait continue on their journey. They look out for each other: Miyax feeds Tornait and keeps him warm, and Tornait keeps Miyax from becoming too lonely without her pack. As they inch closer to civilization, there are more and more oil drums. When Miyax sees 50 drums along a spit in the river, she sits down and thinks about what she actually wants to do. San Francisco makes her think about the airplane, gunshots, and death. When she sews with her needle, however, she thinks of Amaroq and feels content. Miyax realizes what she really wants to do is to live like an Inuit.

*Up until now, Miyax has remained torn between her desire to preserve the traditional Inuit way of life and her curiosity about life in San Francisco. The trauma of witnessing Amaroq's murder is a turning point for Miyax: it shows her that people can be more brutal than anything nature has thrown her way thus far.*

The next day, Miyax cuts blocks of snow with her knife and builds an icehouse. She spreads her skins across the floor and places Amaroq's totem over the door. Time passes, and Miyax feels content. She becomes skilled at hunting small game and enjoys carving in her free time. She listens for her wolf pack, though they never visit.

*Miyax finds fulfilment in preserving her Inuit culture and honoring Amaroq's spirit. The book draws Miyax's beliefs and customs from various Alaska Native cultures, namely the Yup'ik and Iñupiat peoples. Although the Yup'ik didn't build icehouses (igloos), the Iñupiat would use icehouses as temporary shelter during hunting trips.*

One night, Miyax hears the crunch of footsteps running across ice. She peers outside her house and sees an Inuit hunter. "*Ayi*!" she calls out, and the hunter returns her call. The hunter pulls up his sled beside Miyax's icehouse. A woman and child wrapped in furs stand beside him in the sled. Miyax greets them, though her voice is faint from disuse. She offers the family a place to stay for the night. They welcome their offer, explaining that they haven't slept since they left Kangik, a town on Kuk Bay. With this information, Miyax has a better sense of she is. Though she's farther away from Point Barrow than she'd originally thought, "she no longer care[s]."

*The book includes the detail that Miyax's voice is faint from disuse to emphasize how isolated she's been for such a sustained period of time—it's been months since she's interacted with another human. Miyax's realization that "she no longer care[s]" affirms her rejection of society. The names of towns are social constructs imposed onto land by humans and therefore mean nothing to her. As far as Miyax is concerned, all that matters about a particular place is whether it offers her the natural resources—food, water, shelter—necessary for survival.*

Though the family first speaks in the Yupik dialect, the man addresses Miyax in English now. He introduces himself as Roland and asks Miyax if she's alone. Miyax smiles but doesn't respond. Roland repeats himself, but in Yupik this time. Miyax answers, confirming that she is alone. The mother speaks now. She calls herself Alice. When Miyax appears confused, Alice calls herself Uma, her husband Atik, and their child Sorqaq. Miyax enjoys their names and offers to share with them the freshly killed ptarmigan bird she's cooking.

*English is Miyax's second language, so she might not understand Roland's words. On the other hand, Miyax's refusal to respond to English doubles as her symbolic rejection of non-indigenous culture. Once more, Miyax's willingness to share her limited resources with these strangers demonstrates the value she places on community. Ptarmigan is a type of grouse that is native to the Arctic tundra.*

Miyax is seized by the sudden desire to talk. Speaking in the Yupik dialect, she tells the family all about the river, the game, and the stars, though she leaves out everything about the wolves and the past. After dinner, Miyax's guests tell her all about Kangik, which is an Inuit village that now has an airport, mission, and a generator. Atik is proud of his village. After everyone is asleep, Miyax lies awake and considers her future. She thinks she can be helpful to the villagers of Kangik: she can teach the children to set traps, or make parkas, or carve. Most importantly, she'd be nowhere near San Francisco, where people hunt and kill animals for no reason.

*Miyax feels mostly fulfilled by her life in nature, but her sudden desire to talk to the family of hunters suggests that she's missed the company of people. While Miyax's current lifestyle allows her to carve, hunt, and undertake other traditional Inuit customs, she misses having a community of like-minded people with whom to share these cultural experiences. Miyax's desire to preserve her Inuit culture by passing it along to others, just as Kapugen had done for her, entices her to travel to Kangik.*

The next morning, Tornait awakens first. Miyax dresses herself before feeding him. Atik, Uma, and Sorqaq wake next. Atik goes to his sled and brings back bacon, bread, beans, and butter—foods Miyax had practically forgotten about. Though her mouth waters, she declines the food until Uma's obvious disappointment convinces her to nibble at some bacon. The meat is delicious, and Miyax momentarily misses the food she used to eat in Barrow. After breakfast, Atik prepares the dogs for travel.

*Miyax initially refuses the non-indigenous foods Atik and Uma offer her because all aspects of non-indigenous or modern culture remind her of Amaroq's death. The fact that Atik and Uma pack these foods illustrates how widespread assimilation has become across Alaska.*

Uma talks about her husband. Atik grew up in Anchorage and didn't know much about hunting until he came to live with his grandfather in Kangik after his father's death. When Atik's grandfather, too, died, Atik was adopted and taught to hunt by Kapugen, the greatest Inuit hunter there ever was.

*Uma's story about Atik's mentor, Kapugen, seems to suggest the impossible: that Miyax's father is alive, after all.*

Miyax stops cleaning her pot, carefully asking Uma where Kapugen was born. Uma tells her that Kapugen simply arrived in a kayak one day and built a house where he landed. Though Kapugen is rich, explains Uma, he lives in a simple house along the river. Miyax can hardly contain herself and urges Uma to say more about Kapugen. Uma gushes about how Kapugen arrived in town and transformed the formerly poor, alcohol-ravaged town of Kangik into a an "independent and prosperous" place.

*The revelations Miyax gleans from Uma's unbelievable story challenges everything that Miyax has believed about Kapugen's disappearance. Uma seems to imply that Kapugen arrived in Kangik in an intact kayak, which contradicts Martha's account of his disappearance, as she said that pieces of Kapugen's destroyed kayak washed up on the shore. Did Kapugen swim ashore, build a new kayak, and arrive in Kangik sometime later? Or is it possible that Kapugen was never lost in the first place—that he voluntarily left the seal camp to start a new life, and Martha simply lied to Miyax?*

Miyax turns from Uma to conceal her eagerness. For so long, Miyax had believed Kapugen was dead, and the news that he might be alive is almost too much to process. Miyax now knows what she must do: she must find Kapugen and ask him to save the wolves like he saved Kangik. Miyax can no longer contain herself, and she sings to herself, "Amaroq, Amaroq." Atik finishes preparing the dogs for their departure, and he, Uma, and the baby depart.

*Miyax's excessive admiration for Kapugen inhibits her from feeling angry or betrayed by his (possibly voluntary) absence from her life. Instead, she feels pure joy at this fortunate turn of fate. When she sings "Amaroq, Amaroq," she celebrates both of her fathers: the adopted wolf father who unexpectedly exited her life and the biological father who has just as suddenly returned.*

Miyax watches her new friends until they fade into nothing. She returns to her house and packs her things, singing as she works. Miyax slips Tornait into the hood of her parka, and they journey into the darkness. After a mile, Miyax hears Kapu barking authoritatively, urging her to stay. Miyax glares at her pack and tells them she must go, for "[her] own Amaroq lives." These will be the last words she speaks to her pack.

*Miyax's habit of carrying Tornait in the hood of a parka comes from a real Inuit custom. Inuit mothers wear a parka called an* amauti, *or* amautik, *which features a built-in pouch below the hood in which they carry their babies. When Miyax tells Kapu she has to go because "[her] own Amaroq lives," she points to the love wolves have for one another: in Miyax's mind, Kapu's love for Amaroq is no different than her love for Kapugen. Finally, the book discloses the important detail that this is the last time Miyax will see her pack. At this point, it's unclear what this means for Miyax's future. Although she initially seemed so confident in her decision to reject society entirely, the opportunity to reunite with her beloved father might be enough to convince her to return to society.*

Miyax wonders what she and Kapugen will say to each other. She thinks of all the things she can do for Kapugen with her new many new skills. She imagines the two of them "liv[ing] as they were meant to live—with the cold and the birds and the beasts." Miyax wonders if her father's face will look the same.

*Miyax wants to resume the traditional lifestyle that she and Kapugen enjoyed at the seal camp: she imagines them "liv[ing] as they were meant to live—with the cold and the birds and the beasts." Miyax hopes that her reunion with Kapugen will allow them to reclaim the shared life that Miyax's sudden move to Mekoryuk cut short.*

Miyax sees Kangik's lights long before she reaches the village. When she arrives, she pulls her sled to a spot beside the river and pauses to think, observing the town. She hears sled-dogs barking and is pleased to find that the town is really an "old-fashioned" Inuit village. Miyax spots two houses near the wilderness and decides the one with the wooden boats out front must be Kapugen's. She sees a woman leave, but she doesn't mind—she figured he might be married.

*Although Miyax prefers the natural world to life in society, Kangik, at first glance, appears to be a fair compromise between these two worlds. Though it's more modernized than Miyax's solitary life in the wilderness, it's a traditional, "old-fashioned" Inuit town lacking in the modern conveniences that towns like Barrow have adopted. However, the woman Miyax sees leaving Kapugen's house might suggest that Kapugen has changed more than Miyax wants to believe.*

Miyax walks down to Kapugen's house and knocks on the door. She holds Tornait in her hand. When Kapugen appears in the doorway, he is exactly as Miyax remembered him. Miyax says nothing at first. When Tornait tweets, she offers him to Kapugen as a gift. Kapugen warmly accepts Tornait, though he admits that he's "never seen such a bird." He invites Miyax inside, speaking English first, and then Yupik after Miyax shakes her head.

*Kapugen's failure to recognize Tornait as a golden plover is another sign that Kapugen has changed—or that he has never been quite as flawless as Miyax has made him out to be. The ignorance Kapugen displays here doesn't fit with the infinitely wise Kapugen who exists in her memories. The fact that Kapugen initially uses English to address Miyax also suggests that he's not as committed to traditional Inuit culture as Miyax imagined he would be.*

The house is warm. There are harpoons on the wall and a kayak hanging from the ceiling. The house reminds Miyax of the one at the seal camp, and she feels like she's finally home. Kapugen delights in Tornait. Miyax says Tornait is "the spirit of the birds." Kapugen asks where Miyax heard such a thing, and Miyax states her full name: Julie Edwards Miyax Kapugen. Kapugen's frostbitten hands touch Miyax's face in recognition. He explains that he couldn't bear to stay at Nunivak after Miyax left to attend school, so he decided to start a new life elsewhere. He returned to Nunivak to find her once he became rich, but she was already gone.

*Seeing decorations that remind Miyax of life at the seal camp temporarily quell whatever concerns she might have that Kapugen isn't the way she thought he'd be. It's a little odd that Kapugen doesn't recognize his daughter until she tells him who she is, but it has been years since they've seen each other, and Kapugen's initial confusion doesn't seem to faze Miyax. She also doesn't seem bothered by the fact that he willfully abandoned her to start a new life.*

The door opens, and the woman appears. In English, she asks Kapugen to explain what's going on. Miyax is shocked when she sees the woman's pale skin and reddish gold hair: her father has married a gussak. Kapugen and the woman talk. Kapugen speaks quietly, but the woman's voice is loud. When Miyax looks around the room, she sees things she hadn't noticed when she first arrived: the electric stove, the cotton curtains, the radio. Finally, she notices a helmet and a pair of goggles lying on the chair. Miyax stares at them until Kapugen notices her. He explains that he owns a plane now: because there are so few seals and whales, it's the only way to hunt. Miyax tries to push a horrific thought from her mind.

*Miyax is willing to ignore many warning signs that Kapugen isn't the man she thought he was, but she draws the line once she realizes he's married a* gussak. *Miyax views Kapugen's marriage to a white woman as an attack on the Inuit culture they once revered. As Miyax looks around the room, she realizes that she's surrounded by modern appliances—unavoidable proof of Kapugen's assimilation into non-indigenous society. When Miyax sees Kapugen's helmet and goggles, she realizes that he is no better than the* gussak *hunters who so callously and carelessly murdered Amaroq.*

The wife turns to Miyax and explains that she's a teacher in the school. She tells Miyax they must register her for classes, since it's hard to live in this town without speaking English. Miyax ignores the wife and turns to Kapugen. She tells him she's leaving for San Francisco tomorrow. Kapugen's phone rings. He writes down a note and tells Miyax that he'll be back shortly. He orders his wife, Ellen, to prepare some food for Miyax. Before Kapugen leaves, he slips on an Arctic field jacket.

*Ellen's comment about learning English shows Miyax that life in Kangik won't be much different than life in Mekoryuk. Here, too, she'll have to conform to non-indigenous cultural norms and abandon her traditional values. When Miyax tells Kapugen she's leaving for San Francisco, it's because she'd rather expel Kapugen from her life than come to terms with this new version of him. Kapugen's American-made field jacket is further proof that he has traded his Inuit culture for the conveniences of modern living.*

After Kapugen leaves, Miyax dons her sealskin parka, puts Tornait in the hood, and walks out the door. Upon leaving, Miyax realizes that "Kapugen, after all, was dead to her."

*Miyax's realization that "Kapugen, after all, was dead to her" expresses how betrayed she feels by his assimilation. Miyax had long believed that Kapugen was dead. Even though this turned out not to be true, he remains dead to Miyax because this new Kapugen has nothing in common with the Kapugen she remembered, or the Kapugen she hoped he'd be.*

Miyax retrieves her things and heads back to her icehouse. She knows she is an Inuk girl, so she must live like one. She plans for the future: she'll build a snowhouse in the winter and a sod house in the summer. She'll make traps and carve. Someday she'll find a boy like her, and they'll start a family together. Miyax thinks about what Kapugen said about the seals and whales being scarce, and she hears Amy's voice asking when she's coming to San Francisco. Kangik's lights disappear behind her.

*Kapugen's betrayal is another case of humans inflicting more pain onto Miyax than nature ever could. When Miyax leaves Kangik, she not only turning her back on Kapugen but on society as a whole: she decides to return to nature because she's tired of the people in her life hurting and disappointing her. When Miyax hears Kapugen's voice interspersed with Amy's, the implication is that Miyax believes that Amy is just as capable of disappointing her as Kapugen. As she travels back to her icehouse, she consciously leaves behind the lights of Kangik and the metaphorical lights of San Francisco.*

Tornait peeps weakly, and Miyax feels his body go limp. She offers him bits of chewed meat to eat, but he resists. Concerned about her friend, Miyax pitches her tent, lays down her furs, and lights a fire. The tent is warm. Tornait lies in Miyax's hands and closes his eyes. Miyax buries Tornait in the snow many hours later. She feels Amaroq's totem in her pocket. In English, Miyax sings a song to Amaroq's spirit about the disappearing animals, and the end of the hour of the Inuit. When she is finished singing, Julie "point[s] her boots toward Kapugen."

*Tornait's death prompts Miyax to undergo a final change of heart. Miyax views the deaths of Tornait and Amaroq as part of the broader cultural death the Inuit have endured through their forced assimilation into non-indigenous society. She realizes, too, how powerless she is to stop this cultural erasure singlehandedly. When she "point[s] her boots toward Kapugen," she acknowledges this powerlessness and gives in to assimilation. It's important to note that the book refers to Miyax as "Julie" once she decides to return to town. This implies that there is no middle ground for Miyax to take: she realizes that returning to town means she will have to give up her Inuit culture and alter her identity entirely to adhere to the non-indigenous values that the village of Kangik has embraced. Miyax's change of heart doesn't exactly stem from a desire to forgive Kapugen and repair their relationship, though the book does leave Miyax's willingness to forgive Kapugen up for debate; rather, she turns back because she's run out of options. She realizes that living alone in the wilderness and refusing to conform to modern society won't preserve her Inuit culture in the long term, and it's likely that she'll continue to suffer setbacks like Amaroq's and Tornait's deaths as long as* gussak *culture continues to spread across her people's ancestral lands. Julie "point[s] her boots toward Kapugen," but it's in a gesture of tired defeat, not expectant homecoming.*

## HOW TO CITE

To cite this LitChart:

### MLA

Charles, Carly. "*Julie of the Wolves*." *LitCharts*. LitCharts LLC, 21 Feb 2022. Web. 21 Feb 2022.

### CHICAGO MANUAL

Charles, Carly. "*Julie of the Wolves*." LitCharts LLC, February 21, 2022. Retrieved February 21, 2022. https://www.litcharts.com/lit/julie-of-the-wolves.

To cite any of the quotes from *Julie of the Wolves* covered in the Quotes section of this LitChart:

### MLA

George, Jean Craighead. Julie of the Wolves. HarperCollins. 2019.

### CHICAGO MANUAL

George, Jean Craighead. Julie of the Wolves. New York: HarperCollins. 2019.