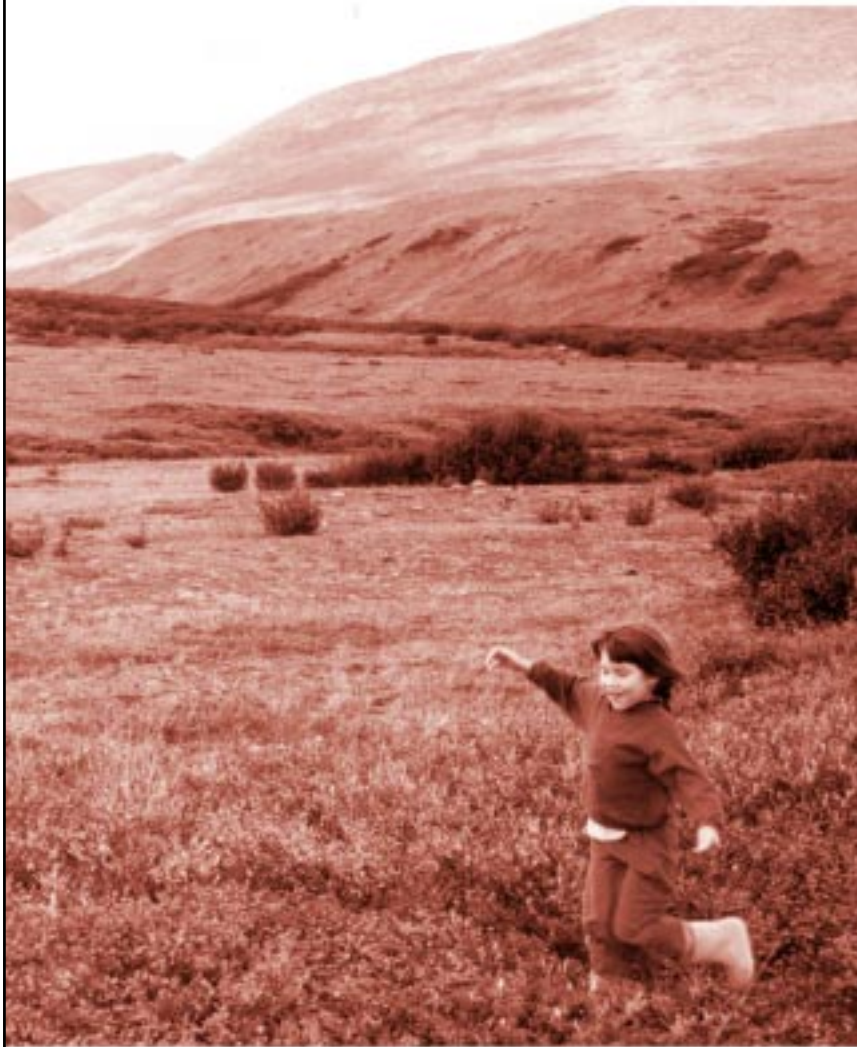


FLIGHT OF THE GOOSE

A STORY OF THE FAR NORTH



LESLEY THOMAS

FLIGHT OF THE GOOSE

by Lesley Thomas

Fiction

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lesley Thomas grew up in the Alaskan Arctic in an Inupiat Eskimo village and in Nome. Her Inupiat and Yupiit family members continue to teach her traditional ways. Trained in ecology, she once researched the effects of oil spills on arctic salt marshes. Thomas now lives in Seattle, where she taught English at the University of Washington. She returns to the Arctic to visit family, go to fishcamp, pick berries, watch birds and climb hills.

1971, the Alaskan Arctic. "It was a time when much was hidden, before outsiders came on bended knee to learn from the elders. Outsiders came, but it was not to learn from us; it was to change us. There was a war and a university, an oil company and a small village, all run by men. There was a young man who hunted geese to feed his family and another who studied geese to save them. And there was a young woman who flew into the world of spirits to save herself..."

So relates Kayuqtuq Ugungoraseok, "the red fox". An orphan traumatized by her past, she seeks respect in her traditional Inupiat village through the outlawed path of shamanism. Her plan leads to tragedy when she interferes with scientist Leif Trygvesen, who has come to research the effects of oil spills on salt marshes - and evade the draft. Told from both Kayuqtuq's and Leif's perspectives, *Flight of the Goose* is a tale of cultural conflict, spiritual awakening, redemption and love in a time when things were, to use the phrase of an old arctic shaman, "no longer familiar".

"The story took my breath away...I wept my way through it, identifying profoundly with both protagonists...All of the characters are thoroughly believable. The author has a fine grasp of the complexity of human relations and culture in such a village... She also writes beautifully. I was caught up from the first page...A remarkable book altogether."

Jean L. Briggs,

Professor Emeritus, Department of Anthropology, Memorial University of Newfoundland and author of *Never in Anger*.

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