

Book Review – Flight of the Goose, A Story of the Far North

By John Active

Flight of the Goose is written by a gussaq and it's a fictitious novel located in a fictitious village that resembles Inupiaq villages of the Norton Sound and Bering Strait regions of Northwest Alaska.

Lesley Thomas tells a provocative story about ancient ancestors between two unbelievably different worlds but Thomas is a perfect ambassador.

The book brought back many childhood memories of my growing up in the 1950's and 60's here in the Yukon Kuskokwim Deltas.

These decades brought many changes to us Natives. As in her novel we here in Yup'ik country faced new challenges and changes to our traditional life styles. We were inundated with regulations of our traditional hunting practices, including fishing commercially and for subsistence purposes.

The story takes place in Itiak, a fictitious village and much of the information she shares with us in her story was taught to her by Inupiaq elders.

The words of mystics, shaman's, witches, seers and healers pepper the book and exposes the knowledge of the people of Western Alaska villages, Kotzebue and Nome.

The book is about a young man who hunts geese to feed his family and another who studies geese to save them.

Flight of the Geese 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 book is published by Far Eastern Press in Seattle, Washington.