

that I have no worries. My lead dog has travelled this trail many times and the team runs on in the rhythmical motion of canine teamwork. The pearlescent rays of a rising moon begin to filter through the black canopy of the spruce forest and patches of the trail are illuminated before me. The sled floats over an open pond which has been transformed into a luminous sea glittering with blue and white ice crystals and is just as quickly swallowed back into the dark bush. I close my eyes and sense the trail beneath my feet, anticipating each hill and curve, leaning into the turns and braking gently around the sharpest corners.

Soon I am sitting in front of a crackling wood stove fire, sipping hot tea and warming fingers and toes. Outside the dogs begin to howl in unison, rising to a haunting crescendo which dies as suddenly as it starts. Perhaps they are howling at the great globe of the moon which hangs suspended over the northern landscape or perhaps it is an affirmation of something wild and primeval. Listening to their song with a deep sense of appreciation and wonder, I know why the north has become home.

Suzette Delmage graduated from York University in 1979 with a Bachelor of Arts in Physical Education. She and her partner moved to the Yukon in 1987 and now operate a wilderness tourism business offering guided dog sled tours.

BERNADETTE R. NORWEGIAN

The Orphans, The Hooded and the Robed

These days are not for the hooded and the robed
 There is no more innocence
 No one can plead ignorance anymore
 The orphans have become wayfarers
 They walk along old pathways
 They point out wrongs committed along the way
 There is confusion and accusations
 The brothers and sisters are interrogated
 A plague is upon them
 There is bewilderment
 They long for the securities that served them well
 Prayers, solitude, the quiet, and detachment
 These days there is shame
 Who can explain it

They would rather the sombre and the still
 They are as a night without stars
 There is so much tribulation
 They live alone by not speaking
 When there is laughter they ask who laughs
 When there is talk they ask who speaks
 They want each a single bed, water and a cross
 They never lift their faces from their chests
 There is illness

The years are finished
 They must answer to the orphans grown
 Their church safeguarded the ugly things
 Their confessionals were protected
 The joy of God was made sorrowful
 The light of God made dim
 The reverence of God scorned
 And his children made to feel shamed
 Who can explain it
 The hooded and the robed
 They are being examined
 The orphans are in counsel.

Bernadette R. Norwegian, a Dene from the NWT, lives and works in Ottawa, Ontario. She left the North in 1989 to pursue a career in circumpolar research and now works for the Canadian Polar Commission.