

Essay: the future of my village

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The sun has not come up yet, and early this morning the air outside is dark, and cold. The beginning of the new day in cold December starts with the scene of silhouettes of buildings. And now the raising sun fill the air with red, pinkish light color. This time of the morning, the people of those buildings would be inside just starting to get around. But the man who is staring at those buildings, has not yet seen a soul. Nor has he seen one of those buildings turn their lights on.

Finally those silhouettes took form, the buildings were evacuated, torn down, windows broken, doors open, and now the snow could be seen inside them. The man who was staring at those houses saw a road, a road that is paved, partially covered snow and leading right into those buildings! Before the entrance there was a sign, a sign that said: You are now entering the old village of Quinhagak. That man who is staring at those buildings is day dreaming of how he used to play and live in that village.

What happened? He thought, where are the people of that village? As he was thinking about these things there was a knock on his door. He suddenly realized he was in his office in that modern three story building. He answered the door and in came his associate. "Ready?" He asked. "I'm ready," he said. Without another word, he took his briefcase and followed his associate. Down the halls and down the stairs they went until they finally were outside. Once outside he saw the new village of Quinhagak.

There were more buildings than of the old village. And these buildings were nice, modern homes. As he got in a car, he thought, I never thought this day would come. As they were driving he saw about four different churches, elementary school and a high school. High school students were just starting to come to school, some walked, others in cars and snowmachines. The students consisted of mostly Natives and some whites. Poor students, they don't know the past. He thought. It used to be that we, the Natives, didn't have to pay a red cent and still go to school. On this very land we also didn't have to pay land taxes. Needing license to go fishing, even to make a hole in the ice! We can't even cut across on other peoples front yard. One step into someones yard without an invitation means breaking a simple law that says: No Trespassing. Because people have to pay their land and property, they see that it doesn't get ruined by other people.

We now also get bills from the ones we didn't used to get in the past. Like water and sewer bills. The fish and game department has banded the law of hunting wildlife. Hunting of wildlife is not permitted anymore. Anyone who is caught hunting is fined and jailed. At only certain times the fish and game department sells tickets to hunt and kill wildlife, but only those who are richer gets to hunt after purchasing a ticket. Not only the community people does the hunting, people from outside Alaska do the hunting as well. Thinking of all these things made him forget where he and his associate were going. Where are we heading today? He asked Anchorage, you have got an appointment there at three this afternoon. He answered. Then he remembered what business he had to take care of.

Thinking back of what he was thinking, he thought. It seemed like only yesterday the people of Qunihagak lived happily and not much to worry about. Except maybe their light bills and a way to provide fuel for their homes. Speaking of homes, the everyday family affairs even have change! The food is different from what it used to be. All the meat we eat now, we have to purchase from the store. Those dry fish are scarce now. Because of the limited catch we have to abide with. Way of clothing has even change. Since we no longer hunt and trap fur bearing animals, there isn't anymore parkas, mukluks, skin caps and skin mittens. Todays Eskimos don't even sew crafts like they used to. People even own private telephones and has more effective television, which broadcasts live T.V. programs and news. Even the way of travelling has change. They now have hydro foil boats which they use to tour the surrounding area. Helicopters also provide services to those who need them. We don't have problems with electricity it stays on and on, it never goes off during the hours it suppose to be on. It use to be that it would go off by itself.