

I Lived With The Eskimos

**by
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Chapter Two - Caribou Hunt

Caribou! You breathe the word more than you whisper it to yourself, for you are thousands of miles from civilization and a full day's trek on foot, maybe more than thirty miles, from the nearest living, breathing human being.

Caribou! And this was my first caribou hunt where I was entirely on my own.

It came about this way. Chief Lukas came to the Police Post at Port Burwell where my comrade and I were stationed. It's a lonely Post on an island at the top of Labrador on the Atlantic rim of Hudson Strait. If you look at a map of the northeastern sector of North America you will see where I mean. The mainland is Central Ungava, and not actually the Labrador.

"One needs meat," said Lukas the native chief, meaning the food supply of the local tribe was getting too low for safety, considering the time of year. It was February and we were past the four weeks of almost total night which marks the worst of winter just north of latitude 60. It was clear weather, and although blizzards are always a chance to be taken, I agreed with Lukas that it was a good time to go out after caribou.

"One goes," said Chief Lukas, and I knew by that he wanted me to be of the party, for the native Inuit or Eskimo of the Ungava region calls everything "One"; himself, his family, his relatives his dogs, the caribou, birds, beasts, fish - in fact, every creature and thing that contains Spirit, since he believes the world as he knows it to be made up of two kinds of Spirit, one Good and the other Evil, and the whole makes One to him.

We had loaded up the sleds and taken the two teams of dogs, eighteen to one, and twenty to the other, the five natives and myself. We figured on hunting on the Ungava mainland, maybe two "sleeps" inland or, as we would reckon it, a trifle under one hundred miles, since running with dogs means covering more mileage than when a man is alone and on foot.