

Mary Makes a Qaspeq

Written by Cindy Hardy

Illustrated by Putt Clark

Mary Makes a Qaspeq is a fictionalized account of a typical relationship between a young girl and her grandmother. The story was developed from the childhood experiences of Evelyn Yanez and Dora Andrew-Ihrke who grew up in Togiak and Aleknagik respectively, two villages in southwest Alaska. This story chronicles Mary visiting with her grandmother. Her grandmother is making a *qaspeq*, a versatile women's garment that can be worn in the house and outside while berry picking. Mary not only observes her grandmother make a *qaspeq*, but she begins to make an outfit for a doll (*sugaq*). Mary makes the doll for her best friend Christine, who will be spending the summer at fish camp.

Mary Makes a Qaspeq is part of the *Math in a Cultural Context* (MCC) series. This story, like others in the series, highlights everyday activities of Yup'ik people connecting Yup'ik culture, math, and pedagogy. In this story, the importance of relationships is highlighted as well as a way of teaching; mathematically the story embeds measuring, folding (symmetry), and putting pieces together to make a product.



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Part of the series:
Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders
Jerry Lipka, Principal Investigator



Part of the series *Math in a Cultural Context: Lessons Learned from Yup'ik Eskimo Elders* ©

Translated by Dora Andrew-Ihrke and Evelyn Yanez
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About *Mary Makes a Qaspeq*

Mary Makes a Qaspeq takes place in Manokotak, a village in southwest Alaska, and is a fictionalized account of a typical relationship between a young girl and her grandmother. The story was developed from the childhood experiences of Evelyn Yanez and Dora Andrew-Ihrke who grew up in Togiak and Aleknagik respectively, two villages in southwest Alaska. This story chronicles Mary visiting with her grandmother. Her grandmother is making a qaspeq, a versatile women's garment that can be worn in the house and outside while berry picking. Mary not only observes her grandmother making a *qaspeq*, but she begins to make an outfit for a doll

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This work has been generously supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Alaska Native Education Program grant to MCC for the project entitled *Returning the Gift: Systemic Implementation of and Effective Culturally Based Math Curriculum and Professional Development Program*.

Vocabulary:

Qaspeq: Thin hooded garment, usually of cloth, worn as a parka cover, as a jacket or dress.

Sugaq: Yup'ik-style rag doll.

Kass'aq: White person, Caucasian.



Mary sat on the big chair by the window in her living room in the village of Manokotak on a rainy Saturday. Outside, the clouds looked thick and gray and the river ran slow and murky on its way past the village. Mary listened to the rattling sound the rain made on the metal roof of her house and felt just a little sad. School was over for the year and her best friend, Christine, was going away to fish camp for the first part of summer. Mary had to stay in the village to help her Grandma.

Mary ran her hands along the scratchy cloth of the chair arm. She kicked her feet against the legs of the chair. She thought of summer, of the sound of four-wheelers kicking up gravel along the road of the village, of the smell of fish smoking and drying in racks, of the sweet and sour taste of blueberries after a day of picking out on the flats. Last summer, she had done all these things with Christine. This summer, she would be by herself.

Mary aqumllerpagmi aqumgaurtuq livingroom-ami egalrem caniani enemi Manuquutarmi. Ellarvagluni Maqinruluni. Ellami qagaani amirlut tunguluteng mamtunganateng. Kuigat-wa carvanirpeknani currlugluni. Mary-m niicugniurluke ellalluum tuq'urallra qerriryiit enem qaliqaani. Angniilkarrluni aqumgaurtuq.

Elitnaunrirluteng aiparnikngaa Christine-aq ayakatarluni neqlivimeggnun, kiakerraam ayagnerani. Mary uitaarkauluni nunameggni ikayualuku maurlurni.

Mary-m unatmikun ellaigaraa aqumllerem qall'ia qeggagcetellria elumaarraaq. It'gamikun kitngiarak aqumllemi iruuk. Umyuaqluku kiallerkaa, nepait four wheeler-aat tumyarakun qaugyamek puyiqaqlriit. Tepait neqet puyurcivigmi agalriit-llu qer'ani. Neqnirqellriit quunaqluteng surat iqvarraarluteng manigcetellriami. Allragni-gguq kiagmi makunek ayuqenrilngurnek Christine-aq-llu pilallruuk. Maa-irpak kiakan ellii kiimeciiqluni.



She heard her father come into the arctic entry. He stomped the mud off his boots and rustled his rain jacket as he took it off. Mary pushed her back against the cushions of the chair and closed her eyes, hiding. She didn't want him to see how sad she was. When he came in the room, a faint smell of motor oil came in with him. He was quiet for a moment, and Mary squeezed her eyes shut and tried not to make a sound.

“Where's Mary?” he said. “Well I'm tired. I think I'll sit in this empty chair.”

Mary could feel a giggle tickling up her throat, and, before she could stop it, she giggled out loud. She half opened her eyes. She could see her father's back, his shirt and jeans, as he pretended to sit down, but everything was a little blurry and striped by her eyelashes. Mary knew she was too old to laugh at this game, but she couldn't help it.

“This chair's making a strange noise,” her father said. “I guess I better turn it upside down and look at the springs.”

Mary felt the chair tip backwards. She squealed.

“No, stop! I'm in this chair,” she said. She opened her eyes and looked up. Her father's face looked upside down, a whole upside down laughing face. He tipped the chair back up slowly and leaned over the back of it, so he could see her.

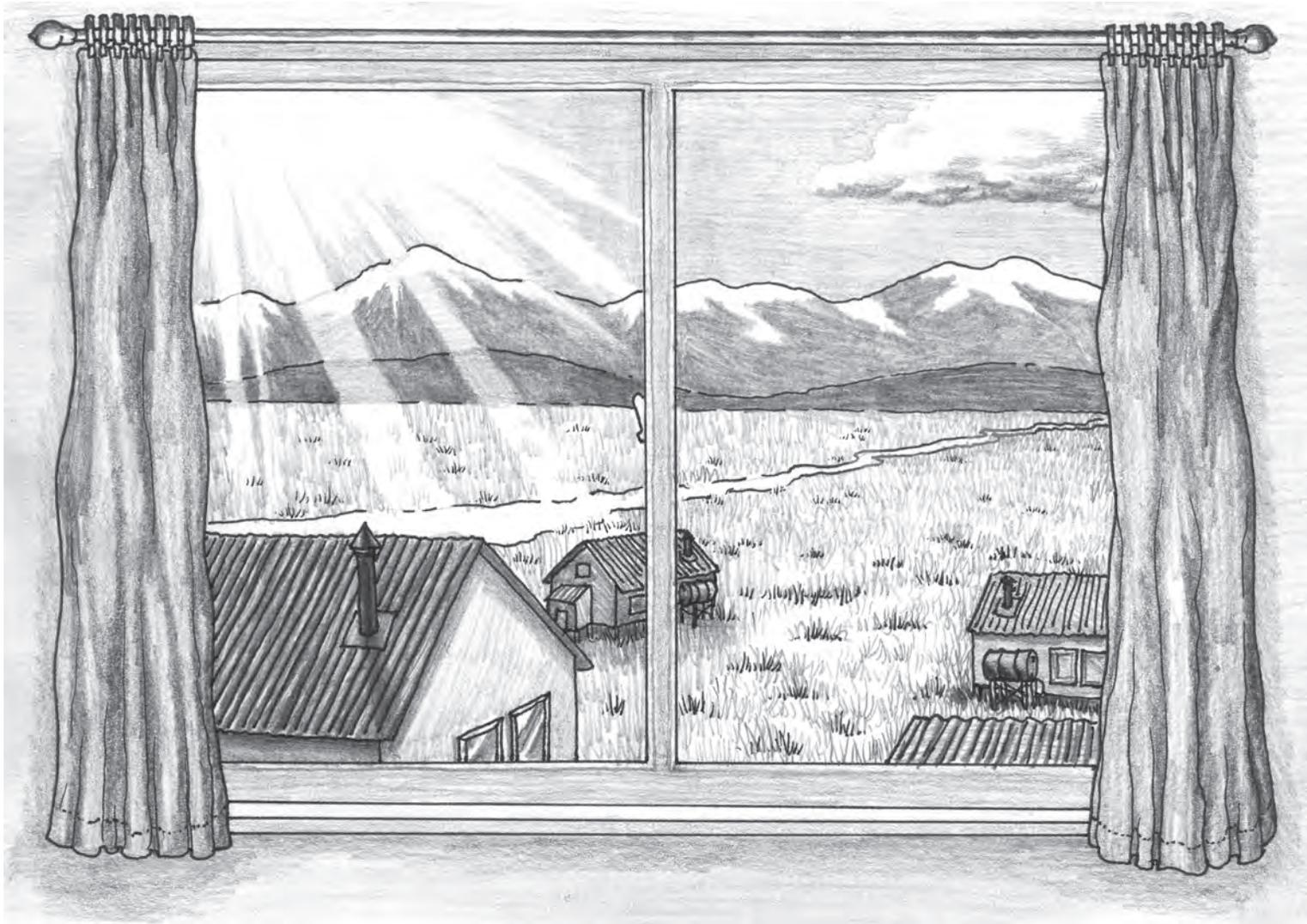
Aatani niitaa cakma itellria elaturrakun. Cakma tup'allaraluni marayairak ivrassuutegni cali-llu evcugluku qaspeni yuunginanerminui. Mary-m tunumikun aqumlerem tunua cingaa, iigni-llu cikmirlukek iirrluni. Tangresqumanrilami ataminun angniilkartellermini.

Itrami atii narnaqluni tepsaqluni machine-aat uqulleritnek. Nepaunani atii uitaqertuq. Mary-m iigni cikempaumalukek uitaurtuq, nepailcaarluni.

Aptelliniuq atii, “Naugga Mary?” “Atak wavet aqumlii yuilngurmun aqumlerem, taqsuqa.”

Mary-m igyaraa tuar kia avlequciiqii. Ancilagluni engelallagtuq iigni uitemyuarlukek. Tangersugngaluku atami tunua. Aatami elumarraa qaralilek ulruk-wa jeans-aak, aqumnguaqatallrani aqumleranun. Mecignaunateng tangellri gemeryain patumalukek iik. Nallunrilamiu waten pilaan ciungani taugaam engelaruni, temcinaqngan.

Atii qanertuq “Una tang aqumlleq allakatun neperluni. Atak mumiggluku acia yuvriqerlaki spring-ai. Mary-m ayuqucia uvertengaarcen aarcillagtuq qanerluni tuaten, “Qang'a taqi. Aqumlermetua.” Iigni uillukek quletmun tangrraa. Maaten piuq atiin kegginaa ulpiangqaluni. Engelarturluni atiin kegginaa ulpiangqaluni. Eluciatun cali ellia aqumlleq cukaunaku. Aqumlerem tunuakun igvaqatararaa panini.



“How come you’re sitting here?” he said.

“I wish Christine didn’t go to fish camp,” she said.

“It’s good to have friends,” he said.

Mary looked away from him. He wanted her to feel better, but she still wanted to feel sad.

“I saw Grandma today,” he said. “I was outside working on the four-wheeler and she came by on her way back from Auntie’s house. She said to come by and see her.”

“Uh-huh,” Mary said. They were both silent for a moment. Mary couldn’t hear rain on the roof any more. She turned her head so she could see out the window. Over the rooftops of the village, a streak of light broke through the clouds.

“It’s clearing up,” her father said. “You won’t even need your raincoat; just your *qaspeq*.”

Mary slid down in the chair until she was sitting on the floor. Grandma was always busy doing something, like they did in the old days. Mary liked to watch her and learn the way she did things, but Grandma wasn’t Christine. She didn’t run through mud puddles or play hide-and-seek in the willow bushes or sit in the sun and laugh about nothing like Christine did. Grandma sewed and danced Yup’ik dance, her feet close together in one spot, her body bouncing in time to her singing, and her arms and hands floating to the movements of the stories.

“Ciin wani aqumgasit?” Atiin aptaa.

Mary-aq kiuluni, “Kin tayim Christine-aq ayallrunrilli neqlivigmun.” Atiin kiuluk, “Yugnikngangqelleq assirtuq.” Mary-m atani uluraa. Angnirivkangnaqsaacaqaa atiin Mary taugaam Mary angniicugtuq. Atii qanertuq, “Maurluun tangellruaqa unuamek. Four wheel-aliurinanemni ellami maulurpet ullallruanga uternginanermini anaanavet eniinek. Paqeskiugguq mauluun.” Mary, “Aa-ang.” Nepaiteqerlutek tamarmek. Mary-m niitenriqertaa ellalluum tuq’urallra enem qaliqerrani. Takuyarluni qinertuq egalerkun. Enet allat qaliqaita yaatiitni ellamek amirlut akunliitni tanqigmek tangertuq. Atiin pia, “Ella assiriinartuq. Ellalliurcuuteryarairututen, qaspeqainaan taugaam.”

Mary cukaunani ellurtuq aqumllermikun atrartuq natermun. Aqumkallagluni-llu natermun. Maurlua-gguq cauratuug ak’a imumicetun piciryaramitun. Mary-m tangvagyunqeggaa maulurni caliaqan. Elitelaami tangvauruku. Maurlua-gguq taugaam Christine-aunrituq. Aqvaquayuilami mecagkun Maurlua wall’ iirutaarluni uqviarni wall’ caunrilngurnek temciyuglutek akerciuraqamek Christine-aq-llu. Maurlua mingqelartuq cali-llu yurarluni. It’gak canimellullutek yuraraqan, taugaam kass’ikegguni yuraraquni. Tallik, unatai-llu kiimek pekqurlutek yurain qanengssainek.



Mary got up off the floor and took her *qaspeq* off the hook by the door. The flowers on the cotton cloth seemed faded since last summer. She pulled the *qaspeq* on over her head and smoothed the ruffle, like a skirt, by her knees. There was a stain on the ruffle from last summer's blueberry picking, and a little tear in the sleeve from when she and Christine had jumped off a wooden platform at the playground and landed in the gravel. She moved her shoulders around. The *qaspeq* felt tighter than last summer. She opened the door, went out the arctic entry, and stepped into her rubber boots. Then she opened the outside door onto her steps.

The air felt damp on her face. The clouds were breaking up and Mary could see sunlight on the hills across the river. They still had snow on them and they glowed in the light. Down the gravel street, she could see someone riding a four-wheeler, splashing up dirty water from its tires as it drove through the puddles. She could see Grandma's little blue house a few houses away, with its steps and railing leading down to the road.

Mary nangerrluni tegua qaspeni agalria amiigem caniani. Qasperan qaralii naucetaaruat uiluteng, allragnillaungami qaspeq. Qaspeni ataa akua-llu unatmikun ellaigaraa kituggluku. Akuani qasperan suram keptellrulliniluku. Alkaumaluni-llu alian nuniini. Alkallrua-gguq qeckartaallermek Christine-aq-llu naanguarvigmi qaugyami. Tusliuqertuq, maaten qaspera cagnirinrullinilria allragnimi. Amiik ikirrluku elaturramun an'uq, irvassuutegni-llu all'ukek. Elaturram amiiga ikirrluku manulqain tutmayaikun atraqertuq.

Kegginamikun ellam yukutii elpekaa. Amirluirutqetaangan Mary-m tangerrluku akertem ciqinqallra pengut qaingitni kuigem akiani. Qanikcangqelliniameng cali tangerrnaqluteng, akertem ciqinqaumiiki. Unani-wa tumyarami qaugyalegmi tangrraa four wheel-alria, ciqertaraqluni mecagnek. Tangersugngaluku maurlurmi qiugliq enecuarii, yaaqsinrilkiini Christina-m. Tauna enecuararam tutemqai alaunateng tumyaratmun caumalriit.



Mary began to walk along the street, splashing her boots in the puddles as she walked. She liked hearing her boots squish in the puddles and seeing the drops of water fly up. In her mind, Mary spelled out the letters of Christine's name as she made each splash. There were so many letters to spell that Mary was at Grandma's steps before she got through the name three times. Grandma was standing in her doorway watching her, her purple flowered *qaspeq* down below her knees.

"Must be a big bear making all that splashing," Grandma said. "Mary, you better get in here quick!"

Mary ran up the stairs two at a time, feeling her legs stretch at each stride. It seemed easier than last summer, so she tried the last three steps together. The toe of her boot bumped on the plank—they were new and her toes didn't quite reach the tips of the boots—and she fell toward Grandma's *qaspeq*. Grandma wrapped her arms around her in a hug.

"You are like your dad when he was your age," she said, "always running and jumping."

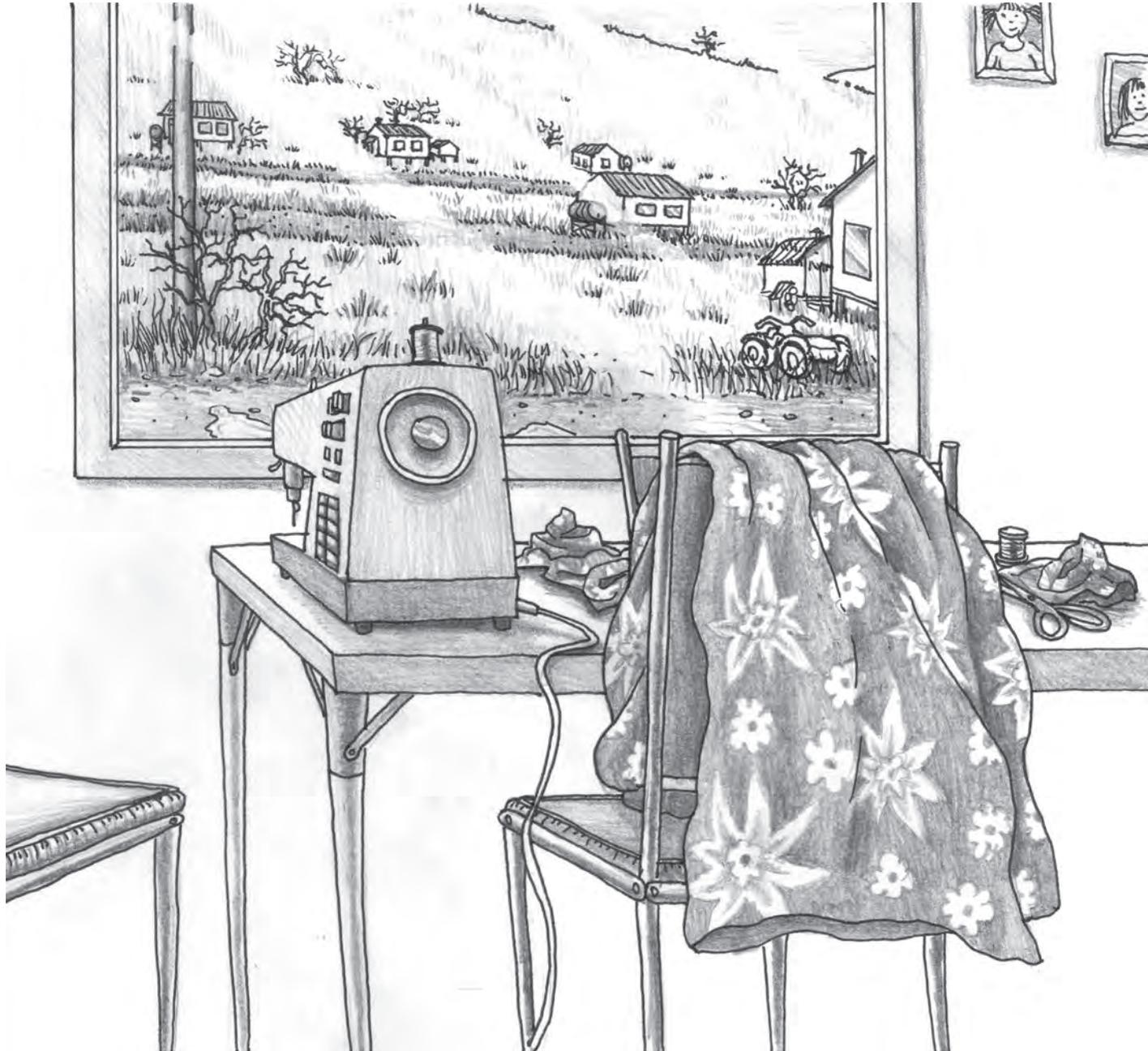
Mary liked the smoothness of grandma's old *qaspeq*. The cotton was worn and the tiny purple flowers on it had faded, but, to Mary, it was the *qaspeq* that meant Grandma—her hugs, her cups of sweet strong tea with fry bread.

Mary piyuaguq tumyarat-ggun qevcallertartelluki meciit piyuanginanermini. Niitnikluku mecarpallaralleq, mer'et-wa qevcallerrluki. Mary-m umyuamikun igaulluku Christine-am atra aturturluki qevcallertellriit. Amllerameng Christine-am atra igauteellri umyuamikun, tekitelliniuq maurlurmi eniinun igaupailegmiki umyuamikun Christine-am atra pingayurqunek. Maurluan-gguq tangvauraraa agiirnginanrani. Qaspera-gguq qesuuraq naucetarualek taktataluni ciisquan aciagni.

Maurluan pia, "Ungungssiuyugnarquq qevcallertaralria. Mary cukamek itqerten.

Mary may'ugertuq tutemqat-ggun amlliraqluni malrugnek tutemqagnek. Amlliraqan-gguq nengengataqluteng yualui irugkeni. Allragni-mi qacignarqenrungalan amllilliniuq nangenret tutemqat pingayun ataucikun. Putukuan ivrassuutiin puukarluku tutemqam aciarrii, paallagluni-llu Maurluan qasperan tungiinun. Maurluan akuqallinia Mary. Pillinia Mary, "Aatan ayuqan uksurtatkellraten. Aqvaquatullruuq, qeckaryunqeggluni-llu."

Mary-m assikaa Maurlurmi qasperan ellaigalriani manigcetellria ak'allaq qaspera. Cotton-aaq elumarraq atullicipiarluni. Naucetapiaruayegai qesuurat uimaluteng. Taugaam qaspeq tauna umyuaqut'laraa tuarpiaq Maurluq. Qes'artellri, culriit saayui taperluteng assalianek narnaqluteng.



They walked into the house. Mary slipped her feet out of the boots and left them in the arctic entry. Then she wriggled out of her *gaspeq* and hung it on a hook by the door, just like the hook at her own house. She could see scraps of bright-colored cloth spread all over the couch and on the kitchen table. Some fabric with blue and yellow flowers lay across the back of the chair by Grandma's sewing machine.

"Whose *gaspeq* is this?" Mary asked.

"Look at it," Grandma said.

Grandma picked the fabric up from the chair and spread the pieces out on the table: two long rectangles for arms, two bell shaped pieces for the front and back, a smaller half circle for the front pocket, and a long straight strip that could be folded on one edge for the ruffle

Enemun itertuk. Mary kamilartuq ivrassuutairluni elaturrami. Pekqurluni qasperirtuq, agarrluku-llu amiigem canianun. Agarrvigmun agartaa pikucimegnun enemeggni. Tangerrluki amlleret elumarrallret kepumalriit saggingaluteng couch-ami, stuulum-llu. Ilait elumarrallret sagtat naucetaarualget qiuglinek esirlinek-llu tevingaluteng tunuani aqumlleran Maurluan machine-aan caniani. Mary-m aptaa, "Kiam una qasperkaa?" Maurluan pia, "Yuvrirru" Maurluan tegua elumaarraaq aqumllermek saggluku-llu stuulum qainganun. Malruk taksurunqellriik yaassiguak tallirkak. Malruk kulukuunarngalnguuk elucilgek elumaarrak. Cunaw manukaa tunukaa-llu. Mikcuar avga akaganqellriim avga kalmaanarkaa. Taktuaq-wa akurkaq tapingaluni.



“It’s for a girl,” Mary said. “It has flowers on it and it has a ruffle

Mary picked up one of the sleeves and held it up to her arm. The bottom of the sleeve came halfway between her elbow and her wrist.

“It’s too short for me,” Mary said.

Grandma didn’t say anything.

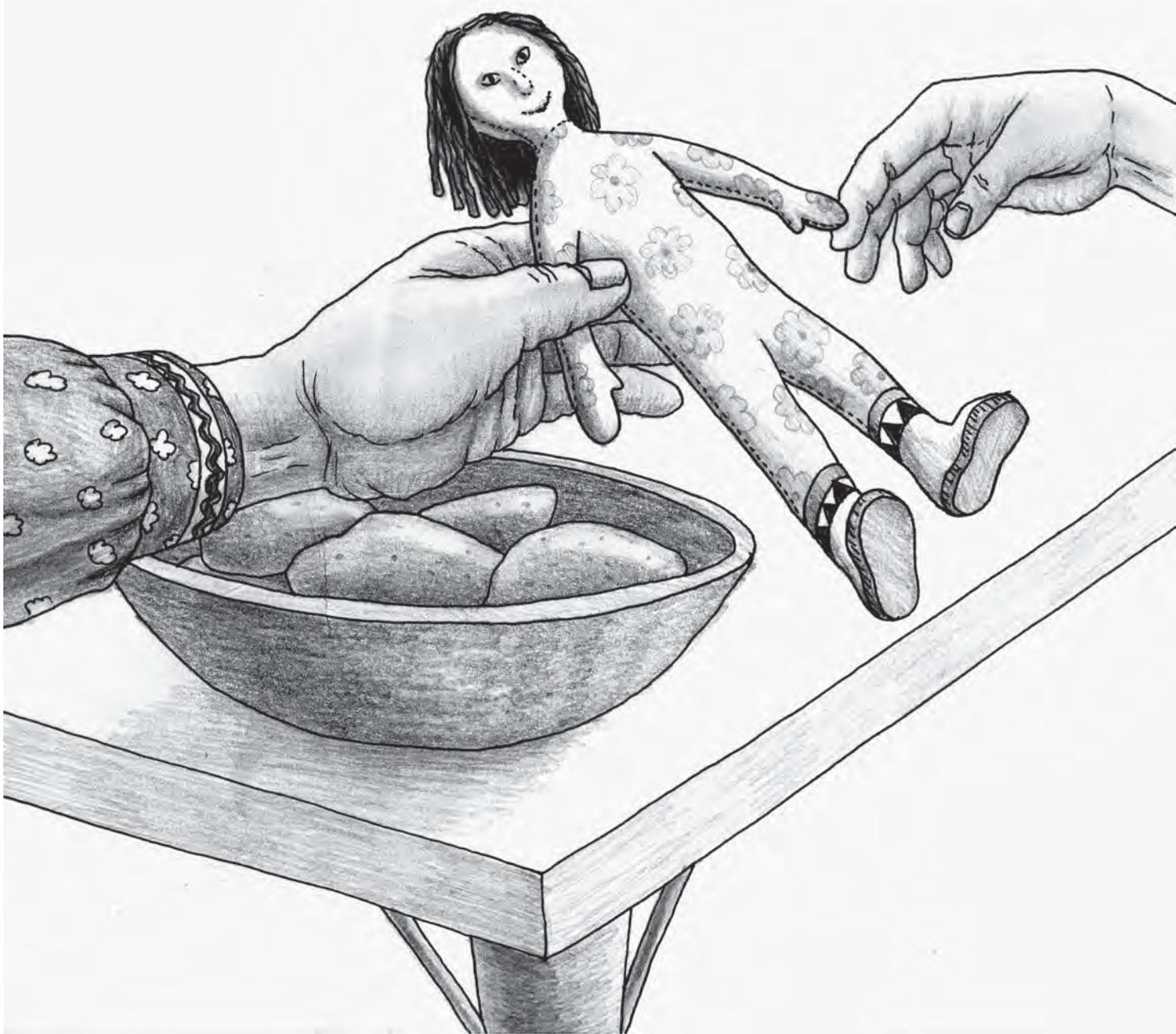
“It’s not for Christine. She’s bigger than me.”

Grandma stepped over to the counter, picked up a bowl of fry bread and handed a piece to Mary. Mary chewed it, tasting how the soft bread got sweeter as she chewed and thought about the *qaspeq*.

“It’s too big for a *sugaq* or a baby.” Mary was very curious, but she knew she’d find the answer if she waited and watched her Grandma work.

Arnam pikaqaa. Naucetaangqertuq akurkarluni-llu. Mary-m tegua aipaa alirkaq. Aliminun-llu ellitassiarluku. Nanilnganani akunliignun ikusgan tayarneran-llu ellimaluni. Mary qanertuq, “Nanilkaqa.” Maurluan kiunrita. Mary qanertuq, “Christine-am pikaqenrita. Wangni angenruuq.” Maurlua amlirluni skaapanek tegutuq qantamek assalianek. Cikirluku-llu Mary. Mary-m tamuanginganermi assaliaq neqnirivsiarnganani umyuaqluku qasperkaq.

Angssiyaagtuq sugamun wall piipiyaagarmun. Mary paqnayupiartuq, taugaam nallunrituq kangingeciqluku utaqakuni. Tangvagluku tuaten Maurlurni calilrani.



“Here,” said Grandma and handed her a *sugaq*, made of flowered cloth with a white canvas face. It had black yarn on its head that looked like a girl’s black hair cut just below the ears, like Mary’s and Christine’s.

“Grandma,” Mary said. “It needs a *qaspeq*.”

“Why don’t you make it a *qaspeq* so it can go to fish camp and the mosquitoes won’t get it,” Grandma said. “There’s scraps over there.”

Mary looked at the pile of fabric scraps on the couch. She found some pink cloth that had red flowers on it. She liked it, but put it back; the red parts would attract bears if the *sugaq* went berry-picking. Then she saw some bright green scraps with yellow flowers on it

“Christine has a *qaspeq* this color,” she said. Grandma nodded, cutting the blue and yellow cloth into a pattern for a pointed hood. Her scissors squeaked as she opened and closed them on the cloth.

Maurluan pia, “Kita” Tunaa sugaq qasperuayaalek naucetaaruanek, kegginarluni elumarrallermek qatellriamek. Nuyaruarluni tungupagmek qilaagkamek. Kepumanguayaarluteng nuyai ciutegni engelkarllukek, Mary-inkugtun Christine-aq-llu. Mary-m maurluni pia, “Qaspengqerciquq. Pilinrilken-llam qaspermek neqliyarniartuq. Egturyiqenritniartuq-llu. Tang yaani elumarrallret.”

Mary-m yuvrirai elumaarrallret couch-ameInguut. Nalkutuq elumaarramek kavirrlugcetellriamek, Kavirlinek naucetaarualegmek. Assikluku taugaam ellinqiggluku. Kavirlit assiilkengatki Ungungssit, sugaq iqvaryaruaqan. Tanglliniuq cungaglimek elumaarramek esirlinek naucetaarualegmek.

Qanlliniuq Mary, “Christine-aq makucimek qaspengqertuq. Maurluan angllinia kepuriinanermini qiuglimek esirlimek-llu elumaarramek, nacarkaanek qasperem. Nuussicuak nepliaqaqlutek kepiaqami elumaarramek.

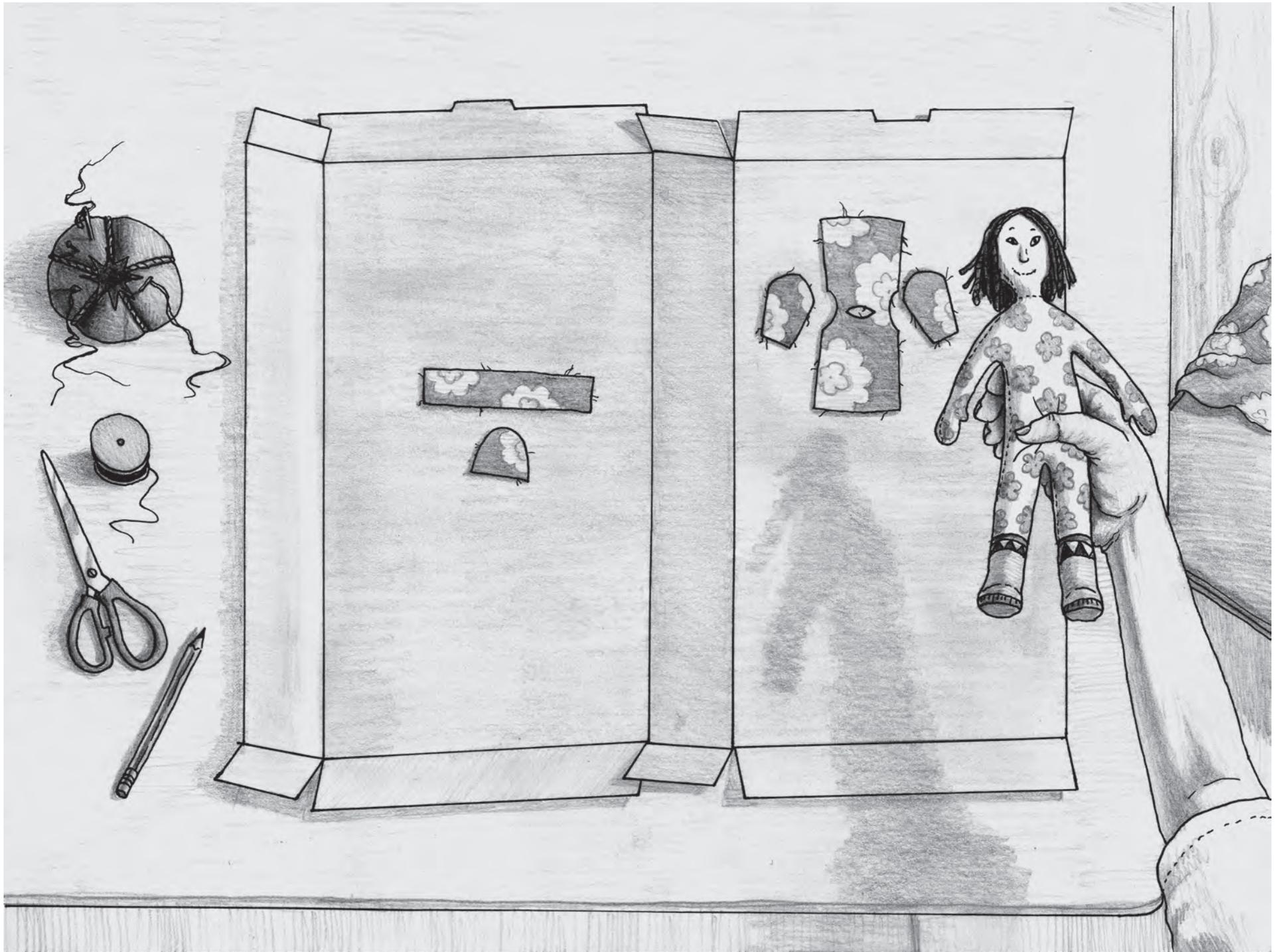


“Use the little table,” Grandma said nodding toward the folding table beside the TV. A small pair of scissors like the ones Grandma used lay on the table next to a red pincushion spiked with silver pins and a few needles with some yellow, blue, and green thread trailing down from them. Mary laid the *sugaq* and the cloth on a kitchen chair and pushed the chair over to the little table.

She spread the green cloth on the *sugaq* and tried to imagine all the parts of the *qaspeq* fitting on the *sugaq*. She looked over at Grandma, who was cutting around a piece of cloth. Mary walked over to the kitchen and found an empty cereal box on the counter. She reached up and pulled it down, then got a pencil from the can of pens and pencils by the phone. She looked over at the pieces of *qaspeq* on the table and at the shapes of them. Grandma was working silently, cutting and moving pieces of cloth.

Maurlua qanertuq, “Stuulucuar aturru.”, Nayangarluni tungiinun tapcetulim stuulucuaaram, t.v-m canianelnguun. Nuussicuaraak, maurluan atutukiin ayuqekkek stuulum qainganllutek. Caniani-wa kavirliq mingqutnek kakicissuun imarluni qevlertellrianek pin-anek. Mingqutrarnek ilaluteng yualukalegnek esirlinek, qiugliq cungaglimek-llu. Mary-m ellia sugaq elumaarra-llu qaspeliarkani aqumllermun. Cingluku-llu aqumlleq stuulucuar mun.

Ellia sugaq cungaglim elumaarram qainganun, umyuaqluki-llu tamalkuita qasperem elirqutai. Engelqিতেকেন্গনাqluki sugamun. Mary-m takuyaraa mauruni. Maurlua-gguq kepuriluni elumaarramek. Mary piyualuni qerartuq kitchen-aamun aqvalluni cereal box-aamek skaapat qaingatnek. Kiipiggluni yaggluni tegutuq yaassiigmek atrarrluku-llu. Igarcuutmek tegulluni igarcuutet caquatnek qanercuutem canianelngurmek. Tangvagluki elumaarrallret umyuangcartuq naliatnek atullerkaminek. Tuaten piinanrani maurlua nepaunani caliqcaaralria. Kep’iqcaarluni elumaarrarneq elirqiluni. Qaqiutaqamiki ilait avillircaraqluki.



Mary took the scissors and cut the cereal box open and spread it out so that the gray cardboard inside of the box lay flat on the little table. She studied the *gaspeq* pieces that Grandma had cut and began to draw the shapes on the flat cardboard. The pencil made a scratching sound as she drew, and the wooden floor creaked as she and her Grandma moved around, drawing and cutting. The light from the window slanted into the room and made the cloth look brighter.

Mary went back to the chair with the cloth and the *sugaq*. She held the *sugaq* up beside the shapes she had made. The drawings were smaller than the *sugaq*. She erased her pencil lines and slowly drew the shapes again, comparing them with the doll's arms, her cloth body, her canvas head.

Mary-m ullirrluku yaassiik sagtaa. Saggluku stuulucuar mun. Elilluki elliin elirqutet maurlurmi kepullri, ayuq'liluki elirquciluni, yaassiik aturluku. Igarcuutii setugmiarnganani pilinguarinanermini. Muriit natret qiaryiggluteng peктаallermegnek, pilinguarinanragni kepurilutek-llu maurluni-llu. Akertem ciqinqallran egalerkun elumaarram qaralii tangqigcetevkarluki.

Mary-m ataam utervikaa akumlleq elumaarraq mingqerkani malikluku, sugani-llu. Sugani yaatiiraa elirqumalriit piliami caniatni. Elirqumalriit mikellruluteng sugami. Erevqaarluki erevcissuutmikun elirqutkani pilingigtai sugani aturluku sugami tallik, temii, nacao-llu.



“I remember when I made my first *qaspeq*,” Grandma said. “It was for a *sugaq*, too, like that one. I cut out all the pieces and sewed them together and they were too small for the *sugaq*. I forgot to leave room around each piece for the seam.”

“Oh!” Mary said. She took her pencil and made a border around each piece where she would sew the seams and the hems. “Did you have a best friend?”

“My best friend was your Auntie,” Grandma said. “She still is my friend.” Grandma gathered up the pieces of flo - ered fabric and walked over to the sewing machine.

“Your Auntie had a birthday party,” Grandma said. “She opened a box and it was a big *kass’aq* doll with blonde hair. I told my grandma I wanted a doll and she made me a *sugaq* out of cloth, like that one. I wasn’t happy with it, then, because it wasn’t a *kass’aq* doll. Now, your Auntie and I both make dolls.”

Maurluan neqeraa, “Qaspeliqerrallelni sugam qasperanek pilillruunga, tuacetun. Kepurluki elirqaat, mingeqluki taugaam maaten piaqa mikelkellinikii sugam. Angtucanritliniluki elirqutet keluut nunakait.”

Mary piuq, “Oh” Tua-ll angtucariluni elirqaaminek. Angtucariinanermini maurluni aptellinia, “Aiparningqellruuten-qaq?”

Maurluan kiugaa, “Aiparnikellruaqa anaanii. Cali aiparnikaqa.”

Maurluan avurraarluki naucetaarualget elirqumalriit ullagaa sewing machine-ani.

Maurlua piuq, “Anaanii anutiillruuq. Ikirciluni yaassiigpallermek maaten piuq kass’aq irniaruaq esirlinek nuyarluni. Maurluqa qanrutellruaqa irniaruaryuglua taugaam sugalillrunga tuacetun. Quyavkenii kass’artaunrilan. Maa-i wangkuk tamarmegnuk anaanan-llu sugituukuk.



Mary carefully cut the pieces of *qaspeq* pattern out of the cardboard, looking over at Grandma's pieces still spread out on the table. Grandma began to sew on the machine, a whirring, clattering sound. Mary laid out the pattern pieces on the cloth and traced around them with the pencil.

Grandma picked up the long rectangular sleeve pieces and pulled them apart so that she had two sleeves.

"It's a good thing I folded my fabric first, so that I would have two of everything," she said. Mary looked at her own cloth, spread flat on the little table. She picked the pattern pieces of the fabric and folded the cloth in half, pressing a crease in the fabric with her thumb. Then she laid the pattern pieces out on the cloth again.

Mary-m aturluku yaassiik elirqutarkanek kepuriuq. Kepuriinanermini maulurmi elirqaari sagingalriit stuulum qaingani tangerqaqluki. Maulua mingqengartuq sewing-machine-ai kallaggluteng, egg'augg'lluteng-llu. Mary elirqutet eliluki elumaarramun, igaraun aturluku elirquciuq.

Maurluan kepnerrallregni taksurunqelliik alirkak nuqlukek avtak malruurrlukek. Maulua, "Anirtima tapluku elumaarraq ciemek pillruaqa, taumek malruktaalriit tamarmeng." Mary-m yuvriraa elumaarrautni sagingalria stuulucuarimi. Teguluki elirqutni elumarramek nutaan taptaa elumaarraq, ayautmikun neggluku elumaarram tapnera. Nutaan elirqutni ellii elumaarram qainganun.



“I wish I could go to fish camp,” Mary said

“Then the mosquitoes would eat you alive,” Grandma said. “When the wind is not blowing, you have to have a good *qaspeq* to cover up with and you have to tie the hood with a string so the bugs don’t get you. I like to stay here to visit with your cousin, Anna. She needs someone just like you to stay with her while she’s here.”

Mary remembered Anna, who had come with her mother from Anchorage to visit as a baby. Mary had followed Anna around on hands and knees, crawling like a baby, even though she was in first grade. Mary thought about Anna as she traced the pattern pieces on the green cloth. Anna would be four now, Mary thought, since she was almost a year old when she came to visit before and Mary had been six. Maybe the *qaspeq* was for her.

Elirqutni elliinanermiki elumaarramun Mary piuq, “Ayaglikiq tayima neqlivigmun. Maurluan kiugaa, “Egturyat neryaraatgen. Anuqaitaqan qaspermek aturyarauguten pilinqegcaaraumalriamek. Assirluten capumaluten. Nacan-llu all’uku qillercaraa-llu qillrulluku. Egturyiqenritniartuten. Maancunqegtua senirrviklaamku ilungaan Anna. Elpetun ayuqellriamek aipangqerquni assiryartuq maantellrani.”

Mary-m umyuaqertaa Anna piipiullrani taillrani nunalluni aanani malikluku Anchorage-aamek. Mary-m maligcuararaqluku aurriluni Anna. Aurriluni piipiyaagarcetun first grade-aungermi. Mary-m umyuaqaa Anna elirqillermini cunqaglimek elumaarramek. Anna-gguq setamanek uksunguq, Mary umyuaratequq. Ataucimek allrakungqellruuq Anna taillermini, Mary-llu arvinlegnek uksurluni. Aipaagni sugaq Anna-m pikaqaa.



Mary held the pieces of cloth she had cut alongside the *sugaq*. The sleeves were a little longer than the arms and the body a little wider, but they seemed like the right shape for the *sugaq*. Grandma straightened up at the sewing machine and held up the blue and yellow *qaspeq*—the body of it without sleeves or ruffle.

“Come here, Mary,” she said. Mary walked over to her. Grandma held up the sewn cloth body of the blue and yellow *qaspeq* and looked at it, then looked at Mary. “It will turn out,” she said. “You’re the same shape as Anna.”

“That’s who the *qaspeq* is for!” Mary said. “She can use it in the summer, so the mosquitoes won’t eat her alive.”

“Maybe that would be a good idea,” Grandma said. She bent over the sewing machine again and it clattered as she pushed the cloth through it.

Mary-m tegumiaqai elirqumalriit qasperkat kepullni sugaq yaatiirluku. Alirkak takenruurlutek sugam talliigni. Temkaa sugam iqtunruurluni. Taugaam engelqaqnganaaki sugam. Murlua nengkanirluni sewing machine-ami mingqerraarluni, yaatiirluku-llu qiugliq esirliq-llu qasperan temii.

Murlua qanertuq, “Taqaa Mary.” Mary-m ullagaa. Murluan yaatiirluku quigliq esirliq-llu qasperem temii, tangerrluku Mary, qanertuq,” Pitacqeggngatliniuq. Anna-tun angtauten.

Mary qanertuq, “Taumun cunaw piliken. Aturciqaa kiaku egturyiqenritniartuq.” Murlua kiugaa, “Aipaagni tuaten assirciq.” Ataam cikvikluku sewing machine-aq mingquq kallaggluni elumaarra q mingeqnginanraku.



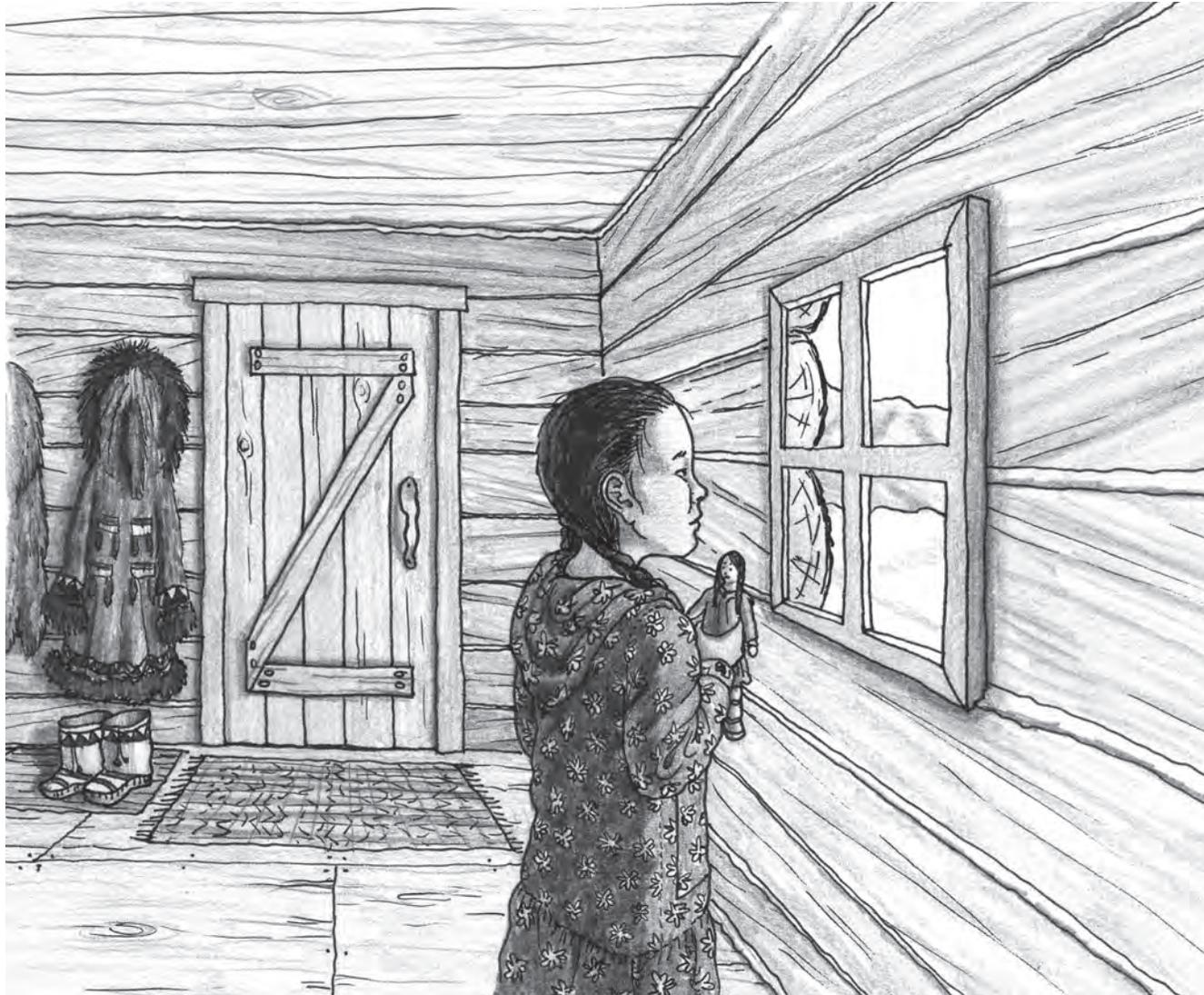
Mary pulled a needle out of the pincushion, the one with the long piece of green thread in it. She made a knot in the end of the thread and began to sew the pieces of cloth together, holding them back to back so that the dull inside of the cloth was showing. She poked the needle through the cloth and drew the thread through, making tiny, straight stitches, the way Grandma had taught her last summer when she had made a *sugaq* blanket and a baby pillow.

“I’m going to call this *sugaq* Anecia,” Mary said. “This *qaspeq* will keep the mosquitoes off at *sugaq* fish camp.

Mary-m antaa mingqun kakisngalleq kakisngivigmek, taktuamek cungaglimek yualukalek. Qillercirraarluni yualukam iquanek, mingqelliniuq, elirqaat ullingavkarluki. Mingqun kapulluku elumaarramun, culirrluku-llu mingequni. Kelupiayaarluni, nalqigluteng kelui, maurluan elicallratun kiak.

Elicallrua maurluan kelupiayaanermek sugaan ulianek, putuskanek-llu pililrani Mary.

Mary qanertuq, “Una sugaq aciraqa Anecia-amek. Uum qasperem egturyiqevkarngaitaa, sugat neqliviguaratni.”



“Good idea,” Grandma said. She picked up her scissors and snipped off some thread from the seam on the sleeves. “When I was a girl, they said we shouldn’t take our dolls out to other houses in the winter. It might make the winter longer.”

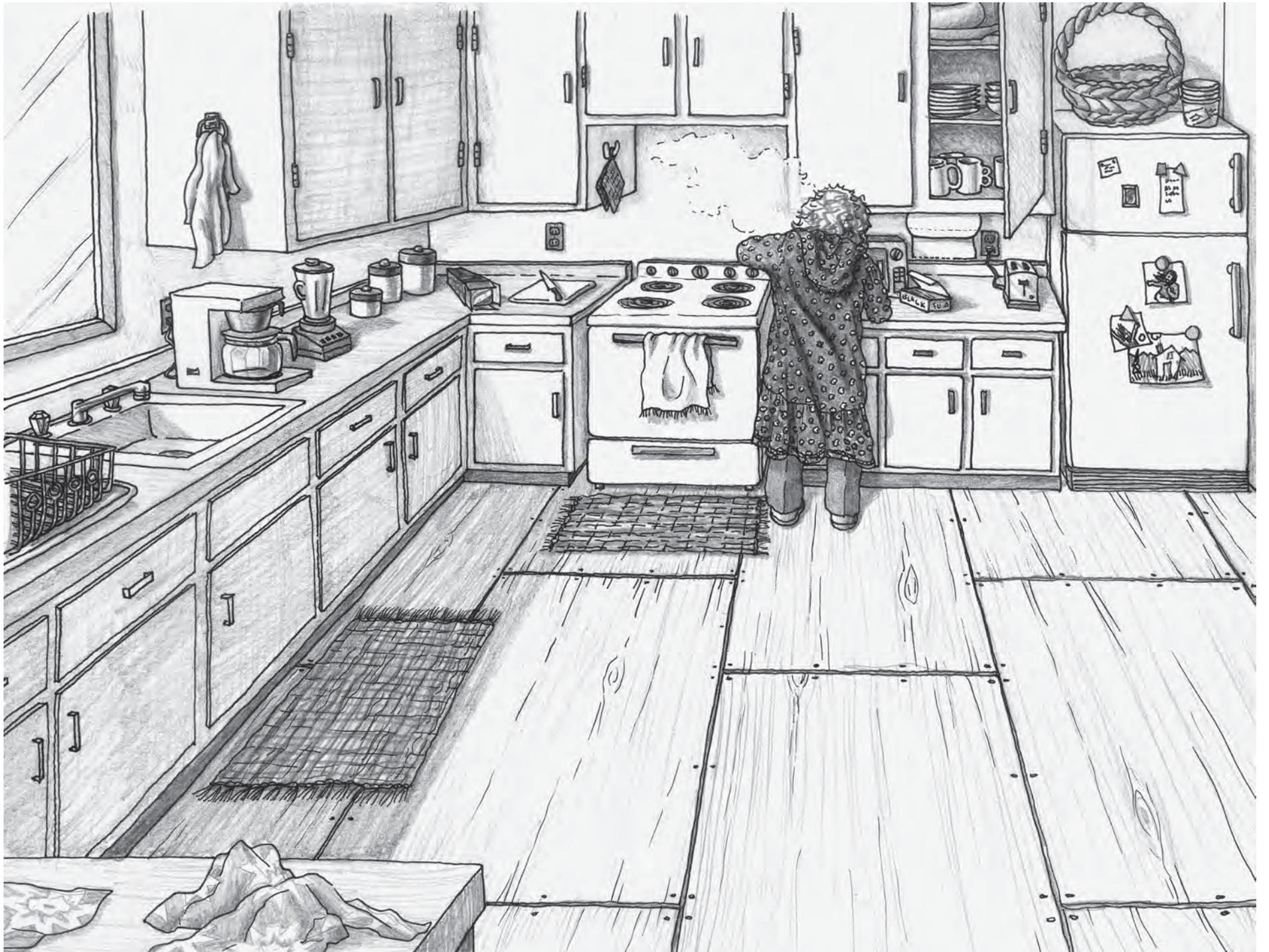
Grandma pushed back her chair and stood up, stretching her arms, then went over to the stove and turned on the kettle.

“Once,” Grandma said, “my aunts, who knew better, snuck me outside with a *sugaq*. After that, I’d look out the window every day to see if the winter was lasting longer and it would be my fault.” She opened the cabinet and pulled out two cups and the box of teabags and set them on the counter. “Things are different now,” she said.

Maurluan kiugaa, “Nutaan atam.” Maurluan nuussicuagni tegulukek kepqeraa yualuqaq agalria alian mingqellran iquanek. Maurlua, “Nasaurluullemni qanrut’lallruakut anutaaresqevkenata sugamtenek allanun enenun uksumi. Uksuriinarnayukluku.”

Maurluan cingaa aqumlleni tunutmun, nangerrluni-llu. Talligni yagqaurraarluni, kaminiaq ullagluku saaniililuni.

Maurlua qanertuq, “Anaanagma iirlutek anutellruagnga sugaqa malikluku. Kinguakun egalerkun qinengqauralallruunga uksuriinaryukluku. Uksuriinarcetnayukluku wangnun, wii tusngangaarlua.” Skaapanek tegutuq malrugnek saskagnek, saayunek-llu. Elliluki-llu qaingitnun skaapat. Maurluq cali qanertuq, “Maa-i cat cimirtut.”



Mary looked down at the cloth she was holding, concentrating as she pushed the needle in and out and the green thread slid through the cloth. When she was finished with both sides of the *qaspeq*, she turned it inside out, so that the bright green side with the yellow flowers showed. She slipped the cone of cloth over the doll's head. It fit, with enough room for the arms. The tea kettle whistled. Grandma poured hot water into the cups. Mary could smell the bittersweet smell of brewing tea. Grandma pushed back the scraps of cloth and paper from one end of the table and set the cups down.

“That’s plenty of sewing for today,” she said. “Your dad will be by soon.”

“Maybe I can come tomorrow and sew my *qaspeq*,” Mary said.

“Maybe you can finish before Christine leaves,” Grandma said. “That way she can take the *sugaq* to fish camp. That *sugaq* could cut up salmon, I bet.”

“Or pick blueberries in the fall,” Mary said. “Like Christine and I could pick.”

Mary-m pinqegcaarluni: tegumiaqluku elirqaaq mingquq. Qaqiucami mingeqnermek murillgarlluku alaircelluki cungagcetellria esirlit-llu naunraat. Nacaa acelluku sugaminun. Maaten piaq engelqaqluku sugam, Cali nunakarlutek talliiki. Saaniik qallallagluni qalriassuutii qalriaguq. Maurluan imirlukek saskak puqlamek. Mary-m narai saayurniq. Maurluan yaaqvaqanirluki elumarrallret elirqaat-llu stuulummi elliak saskak.

“Amlleriuq mingqelleq unuamek”. Qanertuq maurlua. “Aatan iterniarartuq.”

Mary qanertuq “Unuaqu aipaagni tailua mingqeciqaqa qaspeq.”

Maurlua “Aipaagni qaqiuskuvet Christine-aq ayagpailgan. Tuatnakuvet malikniaraa sugani neqlivigmun. Sugaa neqliniartuq.

Wall’ iqvarluni suranek uksuaqu.” Mary” Wangkugtun Christine-aq-llu.



She heard boots thumping up Grandma's steps. Her father opened the door and came in the room.

"I smell tea," he said.

"Come get some. The water's still hot," Grandma said. He reached in the cabinet, and took out a cup, then pulled out a teabag from the box. He winked at Mary as he poured hot water into the cup.

"Looks like a lot of sewing going on here," he said. He reached into the bowl for a piece of fry bread.

"Oh, not much," Grandma said.

"This *sugaq* has to get ready to go to fish camp," Mary said. "Her name is Anecia. I'm going to stay here and watch Anna. I think we'll go beachcombing for driftwood, and play on the playground."

"And you can help grandma make fry bread," he said, still chewing. Mary looked at him and her Grandma sitting side-by-side at the table. She thought about what she and Christine might look like when they were as old as grandma and Auntie and still best friends.

"I'm glad it's summer," she said.

Tutmallaralriamek niituq mayurluni maurluan tutemqaini. Atiin amik ikirrluku itertuq. Atii qanerluni, "Saayurnimek narua." Maurluan piluku, "Tailuten imiriten qalamallrani." Skaapanek tegulluni saskamek, saayumek-llu anciluni saayut caquatnek. Wink-araa panini imirisnginanermini.

Atii qanertuq, "Anglilli mingqecilli-wa matumi." Qantamek tegulluni assaliamek.

Maurlua kiuguq, "Mingqessiyaallrunritukuk."

Mary qanertuq, "Una sugaq uptarkauguq neqlivigmun ayagarkauluni. Atra Anecia-auguq. Maanllua murilkeciqaqa Anna. Senami muragciqukuk tep'allernek, aquilunuk-llu nanguarvigmi."

Atii qanertuq tamuanginganermini, "Maurluun elpet ikayurniaran avukiuqan." Mary-m tangrrak aatani maurlurni-llu caniqliqlutek aqumgalriik stuulumi. Umyuaqiuq elkek Christine-aq-llu qaill ayuqellerkamegnek uksurtarikunek maurlumitun anaanamitun-llu, cali yugnikullutek.

Mary qanertuq, "Quy'aunga kiaguan."

