

Naknek

Morgan Dyce

Monday morning, Alice woke alone in her bed. After a while she got up and looked out the window to try and find the fishing boat that her husband was on. Alice opened the window and breathed in the cool sea air as she watched the boats leaving the bay. It was a thin bay in the north of Alaska that seemed to go all the way to the horizon before it opened up into the Bering Sea.

Alice checked the time as she went to make herself breakfast. She was shocked to see that it was 3.30 in the morning. It was the middle of summer so the sun hardly ever went down. Alice hated this; it used to frustrate her because she could never get enough sleep, and she would be run down and worn out all summer. Alice despised South Naknek, she was always cold, she was always tired, and she was forever bored with the lifestyle that her husband loved. She loathed the Alaskan small-town culture. There was a landing strip for the main street and also a pub that doubled as a general store. This was the only place to socialise, unless you wanted to go fishing. Although, funnily enough, every skipper was so sexist they wouldn't let a woman on their boat.

When Alice finished cleaning up the dishes from her breakfast and the night before, she sat down in the virtually empty living room. This consisted of an open fireplace, a recliner and a couch. There was also a large bookshelf that was full. This seemed to mock Alice in her boredom because she had read all of the books in the house at least three times. All

one hundred and eight books. She could name each and every single one in order of being read. Alice used to love reading, but knew it had become an annoyance to her seemingly endless boredom. She hadn't left Naknek in the three years. That's three years of the same thing day in and day out. Nothing new, no holidays, no friends, and nothing to do besides domestic duties.

Alice hated doing nothing, it drove her nuts. Some days it used to make her so mad that she would throw things and smash plates. She had threatened to leave her husband many times but she knew she couldn't. Alice couldn't even leave his side when he was home.

The next day, around 12.30, Alice went to watch some birds that lived in the bushes near Fifth Street, which was a little way down the road from her house. She didn't get the chance to see these birds often, they only used to come to town for two weeks each year. Alice never bothered to try and find out the name of the birds; she thought naming animals, especially wild ones, was pointless. She wouldn't care if they were called Penratotars as long as they were in the same place each year where she could go and see them. She loved the way they moved. She thought it was so trivial the way they twitched so fanatically and moved so fast, even though there was no obvious rush. They were a strange bird. They looked like a butcher bird but a bit bigger, with much bolder colours and long blue tail feathers, and their heads were a bold green.

It was 7.30 in the afternoon by the time Alice got home from watching the birds. Alice was making herself tea when she remembered one of her favourite shows was on the television. This also made her remember that she didn't have one anymore. South Naknek had a faulty generator that used to make power surges. The wiring in Alice's was faulty, so that was the end of the TV.

Alice went to bed at 9.30 in the broad daylight. Four hours later she woke to the freezing cold and the two-hour-long night time. There had been another power surge, and this time it had fried the heater. Alice swiftly went to turn on the

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light but it didn't work, the bulb was blown. Alice quickly stood up and headed for the cupboard with a torch in it. She pulled the torch out but it was too cold for the battery to work. Alice laughed to herself sarcastically, as she tried to warm up the torch with her hand. But there was no use. She got dressed in her warmest cloths and went outside. But she opened the door to a complete white out, the wind nearly blowing her off her feet.

Alice managed to close the door; she fell to the floor and began to cry as the windows around her were smashed out by the wind. Alice died in the cold embrace of the place she hated, surrounded by the tatters of her home.

It's the year 2015 and it's mid-August. This is just one of the stories of the people of South Naknek who had requested better protection against blizzards. The residents had warned that the weather patterns would change, thanks to the lack of action taken against global warming by the governments of the world. The story was a compilation of evidence gather by Alice Hubbard's husband. They were going to leave South Naknek that month. Jack Hubbard was going to surprise his wife when he got home from the fishing trip. Instead he used the money that he had saved for their first home to build a memorial for those who perished in the South Naknek White Out.



Morgan Dyce wrote this in 2010 when he was in Year 11 at Roxby Downs Area School in Western Australia.