

## **PROLOGUE**

The swirls of snow have almost subsided. The helicopter that brought me out here, I can no longer see or hear. What strange coincidence of events has brought me here? Out here, in the middle of nowhere. Out here, to a place where I think only the foolish must live. A place that few have ever heard about or considered traveling to. A place, that may as well not even exist.

Have I crossed the border between madness and reality? Did I think I could find a sense of who I am out here? It looks so barren and lifeless. The frigid air burns my cheeks. I never thought it could get this cold. They say night time temperatures in late March reach well below freezing at -25°C. That is -13°F, which sounds a little cozier, until I remember that freezing is still 32°F. One wrong step and I could die from exposure in the frigid water. I'll be out here for ten days. If I screamed for help, would anyone hear me? Why am I here?

At any given moment, I feel a silent desperation of loneliness. I hear only my breath. I've never been in one, at least I don't think I ever have, but the whiteness of ice and snow at times seems like they might be the walls of an insane asylum. Is this a sick joke played by God? Yet, I

also feel a sense of freedom here that I've never felt before. It scares me, but I can't run away from it. Like a slave escaping their master, having too much freedom can be scary, I must continue.

I can barely pronounce the names of the places I have traveled through to get here. Kangerlussuaq, Ilulissat, Qaanaaq. At least I can pronounce where I'm at now, Cape York.

The joke is, if you feel like you've been everywhere, there's always Greenland. Except for my one day stopover in Copenhagen a few days ago, I've never been to Europe, Asia, Australia, or anywhere else outside of America. Might I be among the dumbest tourists in the world to come here first?

My first footprints have already been covered by the swirls of snow kicked up from the helicopter. It's as if the evidence of my existence has been erased before I've even had time to make new ones. Perhaps it doesn't matter out here, for I feel a sense of timelessness and serenity. The accident and grief of the past seem so inconsequential. What sequence of events in recent memory and in my past of almost thirty years of life have fated me to be standing in the middle of this cold, very cold, barren, white, desert-like place?

Am I here to question the assumptions about my own life and how I live it? Is this the place that will give me the conviction and fortitude to set my own spirit loose from the chains that hold it down? Will I discover a freedom that I have always had, but just never got to know? Or is it a freedom that I once had and have just forgotten?