

# KIDLIK'S KAYAK



**TERRY SHANNON**



THE GOOD AND THE BEAUTIFUL LIBRARY

## SOME INUIT WORDS

The Inuits have no written language of their own. Thus the spelling of Inuit words may vary from one interpreter to another depending on his translation of sound into writing. Words also may vary from one area to another.

*Artiggi* – inner coat or shirt made of skin (worn fur side in)

*Igloo* – winter house (whether made of snow, stone, sod, or wood)

*Iviuk* – walrus

*Kayak* – one-man canoe (sealskin cover over bone or wood frame)

*Kokiwok* – harpoon

*Komatik* – sled

*Kudele* – soapstone lamp, half-moon shaped (used for both light and heat, it burns blubber)

*Kulitak* – outer coat made of skin (worn fur side out)

*Mukluk* – boot made of fur

*Muktuk* – whale skin with blubber still attached (cut in pieces and eaten like candy)

*Nanook* – polar bear

*Netchik* – seal

*Tuktu* – caribou (species of reindeer)

*Tupik* – summer dwelling (generally a tent made of skins)

*Ugrug* – bearded seal

*Ulu* – woman's knife

*Umiak* – long boat which carries many passengers (usually paddled by women)



## KIDLIK'S KAYAK

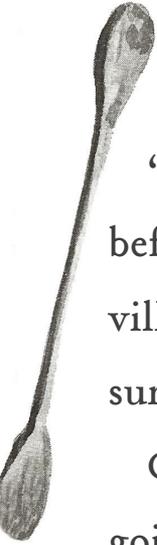
All was still outside the igloos in the Inuit village where Kidlik lived. It was evening. In the dusk, the igloos built of snow blocks looked like large mounds with smoothly rounded tops. Lights from the stone lamps inside glowed dimly through the windows made of ice.

Kidlik came out of the family igloo and took a deep breath.

“The time is almost here,” he said softly to himself.

For days he had been seeing signs that the Arctic summer would soon come. The sun was staying longer in the sky, and the sea ice was cracking here and there. Ducks were flying overhead, going north. The igloos were beginning to melt a little and drip water.

DOUBLE-ENDED PADDLE  
MADE OF DRIFTWOOD



“Yes,” thought Kidlik, “it will not be long before our family and all the others in the village will be moving down the coast to the summer camp.”

On that trip something very important was going to happen. He would make the trip in his own one-man hunting canoe, his kayak!

Last summer and all the summers before that, he had ridden in the big boat with the women and children. But not this time! This time he would be paddling along alone in the kayak he and his father, Mokah, had been making during the long winter just past.

How proud he was of its long, slim frame which the two of them had shaped together

A KAYAK





of driftwood. Kidlik was sure no other kayak would ever be so beautiful.

Looking toward the sea, Kidlik thought of the many hours Mokah had spent teaching him how to handle a kayak. It had taken many seasons, for kayaks are tricky. Yes, Mokah had given him more lessons than could be counted.

At first Kidlik had been awkward in his attempt to get in and out of a kayak. More than once he had tipped it over. At first he had been clumsy with the long double-ended paddle.

**INDOOR CLOTHING IS OF  
SEALSKIN AND CARIBOU  
SKIN WORN FUR SIDE IN**



There were times when it had seemed as though he would never be able to handle a kayak well.

But Kidlik's eagerness to cut silently through the water in a canoe of his own had kept him at it day after day. He had practiced faithfully in Mokah's kayak, sometimes with his father watching nearby. But sometimes he was alone in the shallow water near the shore.

Then came the time when he could slip in

and out of the kayak with ease, scarcely causing it to waver. With equal skill he could handle the paddle.



**FUR-TRIMMED HOODED  
JACKET, PANTS AND BOOTS,  
FUR SIDE OUT, ARE ADDED  
FOR OUTDOOR WEAR**

Pleased, Mokah had said, “You are ready at last, Kidlik. Together we shall make a kayak for you.”

Now the kayak frame was finished. And this very minute, back in the igloo, Pakti, his mother, was making a sealskin cover for it.

“Kidlik!”

It was Mokah calling. Kidlik turned and went back into the igloo.

All the family were there, wearing the undercoats which they took off only when they went to bed. In the hood of Pakti’s coat, Kidlik’s baby sister, Nagluk, nestled cozily asleep. His older sister, Ungluk, was busy softening sealskin for new boots for her father. Up on the sleeping platform, his younger brother, Tocktu, was playing with four lively puppies.

“Tomorrow,” Mokah announced, “I must



go to the trading post with the other men of the village. The snow is still firm enough for the sleds and the dogs, but it will not be that way long; it will be melting.

“So, Kidlik, you must journey to the place of the fat seals and bring back as many as you can. We will need more than we now have to last until the sea ice opens up enough for us to hunt them in our kayaks.”

Kidlik’s eyes shone with excitement at his