

# Julie

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## About the Book

Reunited with her missing father, Julie the Eskimo is shocked by the changes in him - a proud hunter has become a tame farmer. Julie attempts to accept her new life until one of her father's musk oxen is killed ... by a wolf. Her father is determined to kill the pack and Julie knows that it is up to her to protect them. Battling with the will of her father and the harsh arctic elements, she sets out across the tundra in a last desperate bid to find her beloved wolves and save them, once ... and for always.

The stunning sequel to JULIE OF THE WOLVES

# Julie

by

Jean Craighead George

RED FOX

To Syd,  
who loves the wind and snow  
of the Arctic

## PART I

### Kapugen, the hunter

A WOLF HOWLED. He began on a note lower than a bear's growl, then climbed the scale to the highest pitch of the wind and held it there.

The cry travelled across the snowy tundra and was heard by a young girl standing at the door of a small green house. The wooden structure sat on the edge of an Eskimo village on the bank of the frozen Avalik River in Alaska. She pushed back the halo of fur that framed her lovely face and listened. The wolf was telling her to come with him. She did not answer.

Julie Edwards Miyax Kapugen knew the wolf well. He had shared food with her when she had been lost on the endless tundra. He had run and played with her. He had rested in her tent while she had nursed him back to health from his bullet wounds. Now he was trying to locate her. He must not find her. He must go away, far away. After many years of separation, Julie was going home to her father, Kapugen, and he, she knew, would kill the wolf.

'That is how it is,' she whispered to the howler. 'If you come near Kapugen, he will shoot you. He is like all Eskimo hunters. He will say, "The wolf gave himself to me."'

The howl rose and fell.

Julie squinted towards the distant caller. 'Stay away, beloved Kapu. I am going home.'

She waited. The wolf she had named Kapu after her father, the great hunter and leader, did not call again. Quickly she opened and closed the first door that led into Kapugen's house. She walked into the qanitchaq, an entry

room designed to keep out the cold. Its walls were hung with parkas and boots, and on the floor stood paddles, guns, and petrol cans. She put down her pack, took off her sealskin parka and maklaks, or boots, and hung them on pegs. She stepped to the second door, which opened into the living room, and hesitated.

She thought of her childhood on the Eskimo island of Nunivak in the Bering Sea, and of her maidenhood in Barrow on the Arctic Ocean. Then she thought of the day she had left that town desperate to end an arranged marriage. She had gone out on the tundra planning to walk to Point Hope and take a boat to San Francisco to meet her pen pal, Amy. On the tundra wilderness she had become hopelessly lost.

She tried not to think about the loveable wolf pack that had felled a caribou and saved her life. She must put them in the past. She had found her beloved father and was going home to him.

Yesterday he had welcomed her in this very house. Her heart had lightened and her burden of loneliness had fallen away. Her head had danced with joyful thoughts.

Her happiness had not lasted long. Within a short time she realized Kapugen was not the same father who had taken her hunting and fishing with the seasons on Nunivak.

He was not the father who had lived in grace with the sea and land. Kapugen had changed. He had a white-American wife, a gussak. He had radios, a telephone, and a modem cooker. Julie could have accepted these things had not her eyes fallen on Kapugen's aeroplane pilot helmet and goggles. She had seen them on the man in the aeroplane window who had shot Amaroq, the magnificent leader of her wolf pack. This she could not reconcile. When Kapugen had left the house, she had put on her pack and returned to her camp along the barren river.

There, alone in the crackling Arctic night with the hoarfrost spangling her tent with ice ferns, she knew she

must return. No matter what he had done, Kapugen was her father, and she loved him.

'We do not judge our people,' she heard the Eskimo elders say, and Julie pointed her boots towards Kapugen.

Now, only a wooden door stood between them.

She opened it and stepped inside. Kapugen was home. He was seated on a caribou skin on the floor sharpening his man's knife. He was alone.

He did not look up, although Julie knew he had heard her enter. She tiptoed to the iglek, a pile of furs stacked into a couch almost as tall as she. She climbed up on it, sat, and folded her hands in her lap.

Kapugen sighted along his knife to see if it was satisfactorily sharp. Julie picked a thread from her woollen sock. Kapugen selected a section of bearded-seal hide and cut a slender thong from it. He tied the thong around his boot. Julie sat quietly.

Presently Kapugen looked out the window at the marine-blue sky of the sunless winter day.

'The wind has died down,' he said. 'That is good.'

'The stars are bright,' Julie added.

'That is good,' said Kapugen.

A silence followed. Kapugen tightened the boot thong and at last looked at her.

'Did you hear the wolf?' he asked, looking into her eyes.

'I heard the wolf,' she answered.

Another silence ensued. Kapugen did not take his eyes from her eyes. Julie knew he was speaking to her in the manner of the Eskimo hunter who communicates without sound. His eyes were saying that a wolf did not give that call of friendship very often.

Julie did not answer. She studied her father.

Kapugen was a stocky man with a broad back and powerful arms. His face was burned brown from the Arctic wind and sun, and his hands were blackened by frostbite. His hair was shorter than she remembered, but his chin was

still smooth and plucked hairless. A faint moustache darkened his upper lip. He sat with his legs straight out before him.

'The wolf knows you.' He spoke slowly and thoughtfully.

'He does,' Julie answered.

Kapugen picked up the seal hide and cut another thong. Julie waited for him to speak again. He did not. He gave his knife one last hone and put it in the sheath on his belt. In one movement he rose to his feet and opened his arms. She jumped down from the iglek and ran to him.

After a long, comforting embrace, Kapugen lifted Julie's chin and touched the smooth olive skin of her cheek.

'I'm glad you came back,' he said. 'I was afraid I had lost you for a second time. I love you with the fullness of the white moon.'

'That's a lot,' she said shyly. He crossed his feet and lowered himself to the caribou skin, then pattered it and invited Julie to sit. Julie saw the question on his face. She answered it.

'I broke the marriage arrangement with the son of your serious partner.' Her voice was very soft.

'If a man and a woman,' Kapugen said in a low, even voice, 'do not love, they part company. That is the right way.'

They sat quietly.

Kapugen, Julie saw, wanted to know more about her past, but, respecting her privacy, he did not ask. She must tell him no matter how painful her memories were.

'Do you not know,' she asked in her gentle voice, 'where I've been since that day Aunt Martha took me away from you to attend school?'

'I only know you went to Barrow when you were thirteen and old enough to marry,' he answered, pacing his words slowly. 'I happened to meet Nusan, your mother-in-law, in that town. She said you had run off and died.'

‘That was a terribly sad thing for her to say when she didn’t really know,’ Julie said. ‘I am sorry. I will try to tell you what happened – perhaps not all – some things are still too sad.’

Julie told him about her unhappy life in Mekoryok, the town on Nunivak, her days in Barrow, her marriage, and how deeply she feared Daniel, her angry husband. She recounted her days on the tundra with the gentle wolf pack and its kind leader, Amaroq, but she could not bring herself to say that Kapugen had killed him. The words would not form.

When she was done, Kapugen lowered his eyes for a moment, then looked up at her. His eyes said how much he loved her and how grateful he was that she was alive.

Julie buried her head on his shoulder, and he hugged her against his strong chest. This time as he held her, she felt forgiveness run up her spine and into her heart and mind. Kapugen, after all, was a provider for his family and village. Eskimo providers hunted.

‘I am very tired,’ she finally said, her shoulders slumping. Kapugen brushed a strand of hair from her forehead. He lifted her in his arms, carried her to the iglek, and placed her upon it. She sank down into the sweet, soft furs and pulled a grizzly-bear skin over herself.

‘I am glad you came home, Miyax,’ he said, and kissed her. She smiled to hear him call her by her Eskimo name. Like most Eskimos, Julie had two names, English and Eskimo – Julie Edwards and Miyax Kapugen. Hearing her father call her Miyax made her feel closer to him, and she decided she would let only him call her that. The name bound the two of them to her mother, who had given it to her, and to each other. To the rest of the people she would be Julie.

She closed her eyes and slept deeply.

‘Good morning, Kapugen. Good morning.’

Julie sat straight up in her furry bed and looked around. The man’s voice was loud and crackly, but there was no one

in the room. Kapugen came out of the bedroom.

‘Good morning.’ He spoke to the glittering CB radio on the bookshelf. ‘Good morning, Atik. Good morning.’ Julie recognized the name of the hunter she had met with his wife, Uma, and baby on the frozen Avalik River. Astounded to hear him in the room, she slid off the iglek and sat on Kapugen’s caribou skin, watching the radio and listening intently.

‘Good morning, Malek,’ said a woman’s voice. ‘Good morning.’

‘Good morning, Marie. Good morning.’

For almost an hour the villagers of Kangik awoke and greeted each other on their CBs. Their voices filled the darkness of the sunless morning with cheer.

Ellen, Kapugen’s wife, came out of the bedroom and, seeing that Julie was awake, greeted her.

‘Good morning, Miyax,’ she said.

‘Julie,’ she said softly but firmly.

‘As you wish,’ said Ellen, and turned her back to dip up tea water from a thirty-gallon plastic container. There was no running water in frozen Kangik.

Julie studied Ellen. Her bright-red hair with its strange curls was an oddity to her, as were her pale eyes and eyelashes. Julie found herself staring and wondering about her father’s new wife. When breakfast was over, she climbed up on the iglek and watched Ellen at her desk. She wrote in a book, glancing up at Julie now and then as if to ask if she was all right. Julie said nothing.

Next Ellen read a book. When lunchtime came around she even cooked by looking at a book. In the early afternoon Ellen phoned her mother in Minnesota.

‘Hello, Mum,’ she said. ‘I have a daughter.’ She smiled and glanced at Julie.

‘Yes, she’s pretty,’ Ellen said. ‘Beautiful smooth skin and big almond eyes. Her hair is as black and shiny as polished ebony.’ Embarrassed, Julie slid back under the grizzly fur

and peered at her father's wife over the ruff. She wondered how this woman had got so far from home and why she did not go back.

'Want to say hello to my mum, Julie?' Ellen asked.

She did not answer. Julie knew English perfectly. Briefly she had forgotten it after Amaroq had been killed, but now she understood every word being said. She just did not feel like talking to Ellen.

Julie had been terribly disappointed to discover her father had taken a wife from the outside. To the Eskimos there are two peoples - the people within the circle of ice and the people outside it. Ellen was not from within. She moved and talked too swiftly. Her voice was harsh, and she laughed loudly like the jaeger seabirds.

Julie slowly adapted to her new life. She washed dishes and cooked fish and caribou meat for Ellen. She scraped skins and prepared them for the market, and she chopped ice in the river and put it in the container to melt.

She read Ellen's books when Ellen was out. Her English schooling in Nunivak had been excellent. She read the books avidly, eager to learn about the outside world. From time to time when no one was around, she would walk along the river and listen for her wolves. Once she heard Kapu, and looking around to see if Kapugen was outside, she cupped her hands and howl-barked a warning. Kapu replied with silence. He had got the message.

One day while Julie was scraping a bearded-seal skin to make boots, a new voice came in over the CB.

'Good morning, Kapugen. Good morning.'

'Good morning, Peter Sugluk,' said Kapugen. 'You are back, are you?'

'I am back, all right,' he said. 'And I am picking up two qivit sweaters Marie asked me to bring to you.' Julie recalled Uma telling her that the women of Kangik knitted sweaters and scarves from the warm, featherweight underfur of the

musk ox. Kapugen, she had said, sold these incredibly warm clothes to merchants in anchorage and Fairbanks for enormous prices, many hundreds of dollars.

‘Come on over,’ said Kapugen, and turned to Julie. ‘Peter Sugluk is my business partner’s adopted son,’ he said.

‘He speaks with a strange accent,’ said Julie.

‘It should not be strange,’ said Kapugen. ‘He speaks Yupik like we do, not Iñupiat like the people of Barrow and Point Hope.’

The Eskimo language has two branches. Yuk, or Yupik, is spoken in southwestern Alaska and Siberia. Inuk, or Iñupiat, is spoken across northern Alaska, Canada, and Greenland. Julie had learned Yupik in Nunivak and Iñupiat in Barrow. Although she understood Peter, who spoke Yupik, she could not place his accent. She wondered where he came from.

Presently there was a rap on the inner qanitchaq door.

‘Come in,’ called Kapugen, and Peter Sugluk stepped into the warm room.

‘Good morning, Kapugen,’ he said, and glanced at Julie. ‘You must be Julie. Good morning.’ His smile was beguiling and friendly.

Julie looked up at a bronze-faced young Eskimo. He was tall. His nose was straight, his cheekbones high, and his eyes were bright half-moons under dark brows. He wore a tunic of reindeer over close-fitting leather trousers. His maklaks were of polar bear, trimmed with sled dogs in black-and-white calfskin. Ermine tails with black tips danced along the trim of his sleeves and boots when he moved. He looked old to Julie, perhaps eighteen or nineteen as compared to her fourteen, going on fifteen, years. She looked down at her sealskin and went back to her scraping.

‘What they say is right,’ she heard Peter say. ‘You are beautiful.’

Julie went on working. She did not want to be known for her beauty, but for her wisdom and fortitude, Eskimo virtues. She did not look up until he opened the door and

was gone, but she thought she had seen him tap a toe and raise his palms in the dance symbol of celebration.

Two weeks passed. The days became turquoise blue as the earth tilted into the sun. By the time the bloody red ball came over the horizon on January the twenty-second, Julie felt comfortable in her new home and village.

One day when Ellen was teaching at the school and Kapugen was at the desk poring over papers, she put down her work and stood before him.

'Aapa,' she said softly, 'I have been gone a long time on the tundra and I have been deep in a dream world with the wolves. Now I am awake. What can I do to help you?'

'That is good, all right,' he said, looking up at her. Noticing that she was studying the papers he was working on, he spoke.

'These papers are the records of our musk oxen. Malek, Peter, and I keep track of them for the bank in Fairbanks. The bank finances our industry.'

'Industry?'

'All Eskimo villages are corporations now,' Kapugen said rising to his feet. 'Unlike the American Indians, who live on reservations under government supervision, we run ourselves like a business. Our people own stock in the village corporation and share the profits.' This did not make sense to Julie, but Kapugen seemed to think it was important, so she listened. 'The Kangik Iñupiat Corporation is pretty big, all right,' he said, pointing to numerals in the book. 'We have a musk-ox business, a construction company, a store, and an electrical-generator company. We also get money from the oil taken from our land.' She still did not comment, so Kapugen stood up and took her hands.

'Miyax, you must learn to hunt.'

'I can hunt,' she answered. 'I can trap ptarmigan and snowshoe hares.'

'You must learn to shoot a gun,' he said. 'We need you. Kangik is almost a deserted village. Many of the houses are empty, all right. The caribou have not circled back to us for two years, and the people are hungry. Many have moved to Wainwright and Barrow.'

'That is too bad,' Julie said.

'We are suffering,' he said. 'That is how it is.' Kapugen went into his bedroom. He returned with a .22 rifle and cracked open the barrel.

'Is there really so much hardship in Kangik?' Julie asked. 'I met your friends Uma and Atik up the river. Uma said that the people of Kangik make lots of money knitting musk-ox qivit into mittens and sweaters. She said you are raising musk oxen to help your village; and that you are a great leader.'

'Uma is cheerful,' Kapugen said, and smiled. 'She was raised to admire a leader no matter what he does.'

'I understand that,' Julie said softly.

'You do, all right,' he said, and looked at his helmet and goggles. 'You do, all right,' he repeated. Kapugen's face told Julie that her father now knew that the wolf he had shot from his plane was her friend. He looked very unhappy.

'Food is scarce in Kangik,' he said, hastily changing the subject.

'Can't you fly your aeroplane and get gussak food for the village?'

'When the caribou fail to return, no white man's food can keep us healthy.'

'The fish?' she asked.

'We also need flesh and fat to survive in the cold,' he answered. 'And nothing tastes so good as the caribou and whale.'

Julie smiled. 'That is true.'

Kapugen slipped several bullets into the .22 and put on the safety catch so the gun could not be fired. He handed it to her. They went into the qanitchaq and put on their

warmest clothing. Kapugen picked up his bear rifle. He put the carrying strap around his neck and rested the gun on his back. When Julie was dressed, he opened the door. The cold air sucked the breath from their mouths and swirled snow in their faces.

The sun was just rising, although it was ten o'clock. The rosy light illuminated a dip in the landscape that was the frozen Avalik River, and beyond it the huge platter that was Kuk Inlet. But for the village, a cluster of little wooden houses on pilings that kept them from melting the permafrost, all else was barren tundra.

Julie glanced at Kangik and held her breath. The village, which had seemed so vibrant on that first night she had laid eyes on it, was plain and dreary. Several of the houses were packing boxes in which snowploughs and trucks had been shipped to the villages along the Arctic coast. Many were boarded up and deserted.

A dull murmur caught her attention.

'What is that?' Julie asked. 'I hear it often at night.'

'The electric generator,' Kapugen said. 'It runs on petrol and makes electricity for our radios and cookers and lights.'

The humming generator, sounding like a sleeping bear, gave a strange kind of life to the still, cold village. Julie listened for another sound. A dog barked once, a door squealed as it swung on its hinges, and a voice called out. The sounds were swallowed by the subzero cold. She listened more intently. There was no sound from Kapu.

Kapugen signalled her to follow him, and they walked east on the river ice in the sombre polar light. After a short distance they both stopped and watched the sun light up the treeless, blue-green snow.

'You will like Ellen, I think, all right,' Kapugen said after a while. Julie did not answer.

They went on up the river. Their footfalls smashed the ice into snow. It squeaked like glass, swirled up, and fell softly, making a trail of powder behind them. The sun had rolled