The sequel to the powerful memoir *Fatty Legs*

*a stranger at home*

*A True Story*

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**Introduction**

**My name is Olemaun** Pokiak—that’s **OO-lee-mawn**. Such a name probably sounds strange to you. I can understand, because there was a time in my life when it sounded strange to me, too. Would you believe that at one point I could scarcely remember my own name or even speak the same language as my mother? Well, it’s true. The outsiders had locked my tongue with the spell of their “education.” But I was named for a stone that sharpens a knife, and I was strong. I could not be worn down.
- Tuktoyaktuk
- Reindeer Station
- Mackenzie River
- Banks Island
- Great Bear Lake
- Beaufort Sea
- Alaska
- Yukon
- Northwest Territories
- Victoria Island
- Nunavut
- Aklavik
- Sachs Harbour
- Baillie Islands
- Peel River
- Baillie Islands
- Tuktoyaktuk
- Reindeer Station
- Richardson Mountains
- Peel River
- Mackenzie River
- Banks Island
- Victoria Island
- Nunavut
Chapter ONE

The boat crunched to a stop against the shore. My fingers gripped into the side of it as I propelled my body over the edge. “No,” I heard my friend Agnes call with a restrained cry. The shore was packed with people, though Tuktoyaktuk was very small. I pushed through the crowd, my canvas shoes rolling on the tiny pebbles as I searched for my family. It had been so long since I had seen them.
I heard a voice I recognized—it was my mother’s. She was speaking to my siblings. I turned and followed it, making my way through the throng to where she stood, with my two-year-old brother Ernest tied to her back and my sisters Mabel and Elizabeth still looking up at the boat for me to disembark. I wondered why my father had not run to meet me the minute my feet hit the shore, but he was not with them. I stood proudly before my mother and siblings and waited for them to rush toward me.

My mother gave me a strange look, as if to question why I was standing before her. I smiled, but she crossed her arms and shook her head. “Not my girl. Not my girl,” she shouted up to the dark-cloaked brothers in the only English I had ever heard her speak.

I turned around to look at them where they stood, perched like birds of prey at the rail of the Immaculata. Their beady eyes studied me. If my mother didn’t recognize me, I was certain that at any moment they would pounce on me and carry me back to their outsiders’ nest up the Mackenzie Delta.