Arts & Humanities

Poem: "Song"

By Joan Naviyuk Kane '06SOA

Winter 2013-14

I.
I made a song in thirds and two remain,
ravined, while seasonally the gully swells
with sound. On the slopes we twine grass,
plait it thickly, its odor in the sun dissolves
with the salt of the sea, forever rising.

II.
He makes a song while winds
strew pebbles aloft
& carry clouds away.

Across a rock slide his trail
scales steep towards three tiers
of willow leaves & lichen

barren of caribou
gone to graze for all food.

III.
It is said that far beyond Imuruk Basin
huge birds hunt whales on the open ocean.

Once shoved downslope by downbeat gusts
a man alone fell to one knee, erred, aimed
& pierced such a bird between its breast

& the narrow column of its neck. Careening

first up into the air & then a swaying slip
into the valley below

it's come to rest
beyond the subterranean terminus

of a rivulet sourced from snow on now.

— *Joan Naviyuk Kane '06SOA*

Joan Kane’s collection *Hyperboreal* won the Donald Hall Prize for Poetry. Her first book, *The Cormorant Hunter’s Wife*, received a 2009 Whiting Writers’ Award. Kane ’06SOA lives in Anchorage, Alaska, and as 2014 Indigenous Writer-in-Residence at the School for Advanced Research is working on an autobiographical novel, Held.

Guide to school abbreviations
All categories >