

*Paul Brooke*

## PUTIGAROK

– a game of hide-and-seek played by Inuit children

### *Tannik* — White Man

An assortment of children  
play on the hillside,  
ducking and giggling behind  
the drowsy limbs of a willow.  
Their faces are dots of light —  
reflections of pure energy.

A young girl closes her eyes  
and counts backwards  
30, 29, 28,...3-2-1-hereIcome  
and she searches  
past red brick homes with heated  
sidewalks, past the Quik  
Shop with pizza-in-a-minute,  
past the park where her father  
taught her how to fly  
a purple bat kite.

### *Inuit* — North Slope Eskimo

An Eskimo girl with a face  
like a full moon pretends  
to be an old woman  
and curls up to sleep,  
but when she awakens  
her children are gone, taken  
by a terrible polar bear.  
Frantically, she searches  
past government-built houses  
with caribou skins drying  
on the porch, past smokehouses  
full of fresh humpback salmon,  
past the Trading Post with  
candy bars for \$1.50,  
past the North Slope Burroughs  
Office where her father once  
worked.