

JENS HAVEN MEMORIAL SCHOOL

- SONS OF LABRADOR -

CAST: Joshua (the grandfather)	- Junior Ford
Tabea (the blind grandmother)	- Maria Star
Sybella (the mother)	- Heather Denniston
Henry (the 19 year old boy)	- Gary Baikie
Judy (the pregnant 17 year old)	- Marni Knight
(the narrator)	
Doris (the 14 year old girl)	- Sarah Leo
Nicky (the 12 year old boy)	- Jerry Uvloriak
Director	- Catherine Kaulback

The play, Sons of Labrador, was written by students from Grades 8 - 11 of Jens Haven Memorial School, Nain, Labrador.

The students wanted to show just how their lives changed and why. Many of the changes have come due to the fact that northern Labrador has become more accessible to outsiders through the means of improved transportation. This accessibility has lead to the introduction of new ideas and life styles to the people of northern Labrador. It has resulted in the uprooting of their culture and the loosing of their life skills, such as hunting, trapping, fishing, and crafts. It has lead to a break down of their society through excessive use of alcohol which has resulted in a break down of the family life and its present conditions.

SONS OF LABRADOR

Presented by Jens Haven Memorial School, Nain, Labrador.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

JOSHUA (the grandfather)	Junior Ford
Tabea (the blind grandmother)	Cindy Lyall Maria Uvloriak
Sybella (the mother)	Heather Denniston
Henry (the 19 year old boy)	Gary Baikie
Judy (the pregnant 17 year old) (the Narrator)	Marni Knight
Doris (the 14 year old girl)	Sarah Leo
Nicky (the 12 year old boy)	Jerry Uvloriak
Director	Katherine Kaulbach

SOME AD LIBBING THROUGH OUT PLAY

SCENE I

The family is gathered around the kitchen table. The grand-
parents are eating seal, the others are eating canned foods
from the local Government store.

DORIS: Beans! Again !

NICKY: Yea, we always have beans

MOTHER: You should be glad you're getting anything at all with
Money we've got.

JOSHUA: I remember when there was no stores and we had to live
off the land. But now, everybody lives off the government.

HENRY: This is modern times now, not your old days. Times have
changed.

MOTHER: Yea- for the worse. The prices at the government store
are some high. I had to pay \$2 for one ~~little~~ loaf of
bread!

NICKY: You should make some of your own bread. It would taste
better.

MOTHER: Whenever I feel like making bread there is never any
wood in the house.

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DORIS: I know whose fault that is!

NICKY: I knows, too.

HENRY: What the Hell are you looking at me for?

DORIS: Cause you're the one that's supposed to do it.

HENRY: Yea I suppose if I get time when my cheque comes in-
I might go wooding.

JOSHUA: If you got some money to get the gas to go wooding, you
might be able to get a caribou at the same time, because
Jacko Merkeratsuk saw some up at Kingurertik Brook.

-eating continues- Narrator comes on

NARRATOR: This is a typical family situation which is happening
in many of the coastal communities of Northern Labrador. Some
of the problems that occur in the play are due to changing
times. Though it may seem a bit exaggerated the situations
in this play are very real and show the many pressures of the
changing times on these people. (She takes a seat at the table).

JOSHUA: Good weather now. You boys should be off hunting. When I
was young, I always had to be off hunting, but you boys are
always sleeping and laying around.

NICKY: How big was the biggest seal you caught?

JOSHUA: 'Bought as big as you are!

NICKY: Could you show me how to hunt seals some day?

DORIS: Oh, shut-up!

SYBELLA: NICKY are you planning on going to childrens day down
church on Saturday?

NICKY: (excitedly) Ya, we've got to wear skin boots and the Brass
is going to play.

HENRY: Whatcha going to go there for? That's stupid.

NICKY: Gee, Henry, it's going to be good.

JOSHUA: Judy, you want to try some seal meat? Jacko got that yesterday when he was out hunting.

JUDY: No, thanks.

JOSHUA: You want some, Nicky?

NICKY: (holding out his plate) Nakomik.

JOSHUA: Henry, you should've been seal hunting with the Fox boys this past fall.

HENRY: Why?

JOSHUA: Because they got over 700 seals. That would have been in some good money and fresh meat.

HENRY: Yes, but I don't even like seal meat.

NICKY: Good ole taste; it is better than beans!

JUDY: You hear about Benigna Jararuse?

DORRIS: What about her?

JUDY: She saw Jacko Skkusk last night.

DORIS: What a laugh, boy.

HENRY: Yea, but what about you out with Sam Kohlmeister?

JUDY AND NICKY LAUGH-

JUDY: Na---

HENRY: Yea, I suppose with all the other boys you went out with, it's hard to tell.

JUDY: Shut-up!

MOTHER: Don't go talking like that!. Judy why don't you go wash on the dishes.

JUDY: There's no more water. Henry go carry the water for me.

HENRY: No, you go get it yourself.

JUDY: Ugly--.

SYBELLA: I must go finish off my needlework. We need more money for food. I was able to get 50 dollars from one of the teachers for the skin boots I made her.

TEBBE: Tetsaleulaunga. (Make me tea.)

DORIS: Speak English will you!

SYBELLA: Get her a cup of tea and stop being saucy.

SCENE 2

Judy helps her blind grandmother to the living room.

Doris gets the tea and a coke for herself from the kitchen.

Everyone is seated around the living room, except for Judy who goes back to stacking the dishes.

Joshua is smoking a pipe; Nicky is working on his homework, with Doris trying to copy.

JOSHUA: Nicky, you got a lot of homework tonight?

NICKY: Yea

JOSHUA: When I was your age, I didn't even go to school.

DORIS: I wish I never had to go to school.. It's sick.

NICKY: Gee, it's good boy. I wants to be a teacher.

HENRY: Sick ole job, eh

JOSHUA: If you wants a better education you should go to the dorm at North West.

NICKY: Next year, eh?

MOTHER: Maybe, We'll think about it.

NICKY: I'll get a chance to see it when I go out to the Drama Festival next week.

HENRY: Lucky you're getting out of this old dump.

DORIS: Maybe you'll get to visit Gilbert Flowers then at the youth home in Goose.

HENRY: You mightn't even get out 'cause the forecast don't look good for next week. Gee- my old ski-doo will be some hard to start then if the snow gets in it. It's falling apart now.

JOSHUA: Well, if we still had dog teams, you wouldn't have that problem.

MOTHER: Now don't argue - ~~Henry~~----

SYBELLA: (doing needlework) Henry what time is it?

HENRY: 6 o'clock

Sybella: Henry the twin^{got} in today from Goose. Did you pick up your unemployment check?

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HILL: Well, there was a letter from your Father in St. John's.
(Amos is serving time in jail.)
Will I want to go to Bingo.

NICKY: How's Dad doing?

SYBELLA: (putting needlework down, and picking up letter) Listen and I'll read it to you.

Dear Family,

As the sun rises for a brand new day

My memory starts to fade away.

I try to remember the things of my past
and try to make them last and last.

I remember the crispy, frosty snow,

As I look up in the sky and see the clouds flow.

As I try to refresh my memory with Labrador books

I am reminded very much of Labrador's young spring brooks.

As I hear the cell doors slam somewhere down the halls,

It reminds me of Labrador's unforgiveable cold and stormy falls.

I hear in my mind the call of the geese through the night
and remember their long southerly flight.

And as I remember the caribou that run,

I try to forget the trouble that I've done.

As evening approaches, the sky is red.

I remember the trouble that I caused and I wish I were dead.

It shouldn't be long before I am home,

and I'll hunt and trap where the animals roam.

It's not going to be long now, you'll see

and I'll be a man who is happy and free.

How I long to come home to Labrador,

because this life is such a bore.

Love, Dad

NICKY: Gee, I wish he was home now. I miss him a lot.

SCENE 3

Lights dim, and everyone exits except for Nicky and his grandparents. Lights come up and the narrator comes on.

NARRATOR: Another typical night - my brother, Henry, is heading for the club; Doris, my rather wild sister, is out looking for a good time. Mom and me are headed for Bingo, (And the jackpot looks good tonight, though we never win.). Left home are Nicky and our grandparents. (Narrator exits.)

TABEA: (knitting) Kailaugit Nicky. (Nicky, come here.)

JOSHUA: Come here a bit Nicky.

NICKY: (looking up from his homework) Wha--.

JOSHUA: See if you can remember the Eskimo we taught you last night.

NICKY: Ya-, okay.

JOSHUA: Say, snow.

NICKY: Akitik. (Pillow)

TABEA: (laughing) Okka Aputik (No, snow.)

NICKY: Oh, aputik.

TABEA: (nodding) Auh. (Yes)

JOSHUA: Try, tree.

NICKY: Napuk. (Komatik bars)

TABEA: (chukling) (no tree) OKKA, NAPATUK

NICKY: Ugly---, hard---.

NICKY: Napatok tree

GRANDPARENTS: Auh, (YES)

JOSHUA: We'll teach you a couple of new words and then maybe you can put it all in a sentence.

NICKY: Yea, okay.

JOSHUA: Let's see. Say rabbit for him TABEA

TABEA: Rabbit (in Eskimo)

NICKY: Woman's silipuk (in Eskimo)

General laughter. Nicky tries again and gets it right. Same thing when grandparents teach him tracks- he says beard by mistake. He then puts the sentence together: I saw the rabbit tracks in the snow by the trees. Later on that night. (Lights coming up) Sybella and Judy enter from the kitchen door.

NICKY: Mom, you win anything tonight?

SYBELLA: Na, but I had one number boy! Now, you get off to bed.

NICKY: Ugly-- . How come I gotta go to bed anyway?

TABEA: (In Eskimo) Nicky, You Shouldn't talk to your mother like that.

JOSHUA: In my time, when I was your age, I was in bed at 7 o'clock.

MOTHER: That's right- now get off to bed. Everyone says goodnight.

Sybella helps Tabea off to bed. Joshua is left listening to the news on the radio.

Lights Off SCENE 5

HENRY IS SITTING ALONE, DRINKING A BEER, THINKING ABOUT HIS LIFE
(his thoughts)

This is the pits. What am I doing in a place like this? Dad don't care for us. Mom wears the pants in the family. With a father who's in jail all the time, it's no wonder that I have one pregnant sister and one who stays out all night. Look at me, I'm turning into an alcoholic. Why did I have to be born into a family like mine? Why did I have to be born at all? Nobody cares for us. Nobody at all. Judy's boyfriend got her pregnant and then left her. Doris stays out all night on one night stands just sleeping around and I can't even get a girlfriend. People around here must think we're all fools. At least one of us could make something of ourselves. I think I will. I'll put down this drink, walk out of here and start to make something of myself.

SCENE 5

NARRATOR: As you can see the excessive use of alcohol has led to a breakdown in this family life, also in many others. Not only did it put my father in jail, but it has caused Henry to become a bum. Using the money he gets from unemployment cheques. Henry goes out drinking, instead of helping to pay the food bill. After a night out, he comes home to take his frustrations out on the family, as you see in the next scene. Joshua has gone to bed. Henry and Doris come in arguing.

HENRY: Oh, you're only another girl to him!

DORIS: You're just as bad yourself!

HENRY: You can say that about me, but if Mom ever finds out about you down at the shrimp boats---

DORIS: Shut-up!

HENRY: You'd better watch it, or you'll end up like your sister.

Doris slaps Henry, Henry cursing under his breath starts to shake her. Doris screams. Joshua enters the room to see what the noise is about.

JOSHUA: What's you doing?

They stop, surprised. Doris begins to cry.

JOSHUA: (Speaking mainly to Henry).

When your father went away, you changed. You drink all the time. You don't care what happens to yourself. You spend most of your time drinking. That will not help you. You have to help yourself. You won't hunt like we did, 'cause you don't need to. There's a store you go to. If you don't hunt, you have to do something to keep from so much drink. Look for work. There isn't so much but I hear that the people are trying to get a business of their own started. You say you don't like white man's ways,

have to try and use your own skills in a white man's world. This business by the people may be what you want. It will let you show what you can really do.

JOSHUA: And now, I am tired. I hope you will think about what I said
(Lights dim)

The family is again seated around the living room. Lights come up.

NARRATOR: Those words that Joshua spoke really affected Henry. Deep down he knew his grandfather was right. One month later the effects of his lecture are showing. Henry is now employed in the new hunting and fishing co-op. He has now accepted the fact that our father is gone for a long time and that he must look after and take responsibilities for this family.

NICKY: Grandma, Grandpa, let's sing the song that Sid Dicker taught us.
As slides are being shown in the background, the family sings
SONS OF LABRADOR: written by Sid Dicker of Nain.

JOSHUA: You know, that deer meat sure made this Sunday dinner taste good, Henry.

HENRY: Yea, not bad at all. I got my cheque yesterday from the co-op, so I think I'll gas up and go hunting partridges tomorrow 'cause the boys say that there's lots up around Pardy Island.

JOSHUA: Sounds good. Maybe we could go together and then next Saturday we'll go seal hunting and take Nicky.

NICKY: Yeah, I would like to go. So I could learn how to hunt seals with Henry.

NARRATOR: In ending this play, this typical family has solved many of the problems that they encountered. They stood the pressures of the hard times and came out on top. Judy had her baby and the family accepted it as their own. Nicky was able to attend North West and further his education, while our father returned home from prison to again take his place in the family.