

The Ike Riche Players  
Mealy Mountain Collegiate  
Present  
The Smoker Trilogy

- I. The Guide
- II. The Trickster
- III. For the Believer

Cast:

Howard, Joe.....Matthew Brown  
Hilda.....Sarah Caines  
Bern.....James Crawford  
Will.....Jeff Wall  
Alistair.....Micah Brown  
Ike.....Matthew Barrett  
Tom.....Chris Bisson  
Smoker.....Jamie Jackman

The Ensemble.....All of the above, plus  
Jenn Rice  
Jenn Hicks  
Scosha Diamond  
Bailey White  
Dayna Winters

Written by:.....The Cast  
Directed by.....Dorrie Brown

Smoker is a Labrador legend\_\_well, maybe not altogether. Apparently, he was a real person who lived in the Sandwich Bay area. He was, in real life (so the legend goes) a notorious character who, after he died, has continued to haunt lost travelers on snowy nights 'out on the bay'. Most of the accounts will tell you that he *helps* them find their way, to make amends for his past life; our accounts suggest he may be *more* than 'just helpful'.

**Mealy Mountain Collegiate  
Happy Valley-Goose Bay  
presents  
"The Smoker Trilogy"**

**Smoker 1: The Guide**

*Black stage. A group of actors lie on their backs in an S-curve diagonally across the stage. They are lying on top of a twisted white sheet (like a rope) placed under their behinds. Another actor lies behind them, parallel to the stage front. Actors on the stage begin to whisper, playing with the "S" sound, and building it into the word "Smoker". They continue, under, while individuals layer soft whistling through it. As they begin to actually speak, actors sit up, one at a time, domino fashion. Lights gradually up to very dim only enough to create silhouettes.*

**#1:** They say -

**#2:** S-s-say.....

**#3:** They say.....

**#4:** .....that if.....

**#5:** ..... if you are lost.....

**#6:** .....that's what they say.....

**#7:** .....that if you are lost.....

**#8:** .....SHHHHHHHHH

**#9:** SHH.....

**#10:** .....shhhhh.....

*(In the following, each actor exchanges with another, 'down the line'. Each new speaker picks up and 'passes' his/her comments to someone else: verbal volleyball)*

**#2:** (threatened) He'll get you!

**#7:** He comes out of thin air.

#4: If you're lost, so they say, he'll get you.....

#3: He'll guide you.....

#9: He'll show you the way.

#10: They say.....

#1: They say that if you're lost.....

#8: He'll show you the way.....

#7: Home!

#3: Home!

#1: Theysaythatifhetakesyouhome, he disappears again.

#2: .....you can never thank him.....

#5: .....he just disappears.....

#6: .....gone.....

#9: .....gone.....

#3: .....like the wind and the snow.....

#1: He's white.....

#4: .....all white.....

#6: .....dressed all in white.....

#7: .....white hat.....

#5: .....white beard.....

#9: .....dressed all in white.....

#10: Who was he?

#2: .Who?

**#8:** Who?

**#6:** .....Ssssssmoker.....

**#1-10:** (*overlapping: ad lib*) Ssssssmoker..... (#1 and #10 move to pick up the two ends of the twisted sheet)

**#6:** (*stand in place, to #3*) I saw him once.

**#8:** (*in place*) Down to Savage Cove.

**#1:** I saw him.

**#2:** Me too. Or at least, me grandfather.....

**#3:** (*standing, stepping forward, agreeing*) Mine too! Out on the bay.....

**#4:** (*joining #3*) .....on the ice outside of Old Man's Cove.....

**#10:** (*towards #5*).....in a storm. I was lost in a storm.....

**#5:** (*standing, stepping forward, moving to #10*) Blowin' a gale.....couldn't see the hand in front of yer face.....

**#7:** (*to join #5 & #10, agreeing*) .....an' he come outta nowhere.....

**#2:** .....just outta nowhere.....

**#3:** .....nothin' but wind and snow.....

**#8:** (*standing, stepping forward, gesturing*) s-s-snow.....

**#9:** .....He just come outta nowhere, and whisks right past you.....

**#4:** You can't hear the dogs, can't hear them at all, and then they're panting like it's right behind your ears.....

**#1:** And then.....they're gone!

**#7:** Sometimes he comes all by himself - without his dogs.

**#2:** My uncle.....

*(#1 and #10 pull the sheet taut, causing the actors to stand up; the actors stand forming a 'wall' around Hilda, still lying on the stage behind them. #3 and #8 help them, by taking the free ends. #5 runs forward to CS and crouches as the others lay their sheets over her and quickly over themselves, at the ends)*

**Hilda:** *(sitting up, clutching a sheet to her neck) HOWARD! (She pauses and looks around, having wakened from sleep. During the following, she slowly gets up, wraps the sheet around herself, fetches a lantern, lights it, and moves to the 'door' space left in the 'wall'. Once she lights the lantern, light increases slowly, and the 'wall' moves outward, in a semicircle, indicating Hilda's limit of vision. She mimes opening the door and looks out. Everything is very still.) Oh..... Good!.....I.....I only dreamt it. Where is that lamp? Oh here.....here it is. (Lights it) There. Howard's all right. There's no storm.....it wasn't even snowing when I went to bed. Just in the dream. I'm sure he's all right. It's certainly not the first time he's been late getting home. Could be the dogs got tangled .....could be he got bogged down in some slush.....could be he was longer at the Davises than.....Oh! (She stumbles on her way to the door) What time is it? (She mimes opening the door and looks out; silence; she looks up) Oh! That's not a good sign. Ring around the moon always means snow..... (she searches the darkness) Hurry up Howard. Hurry home. (Closes the door and goes back to lie down. A few snowflakes drift down onto the 'snowbanks' at SF)*

#1-10: Ssmk.....ker.....Ssmo...ker.....Ssmo.....ker.....

*(Actors stand up with sheet, move back into a straight line as Hilda blows out her lantern and goes back to bed.. She tosses and turns; the storm begins at SF and increases. Eventually, it (ie the sheets, manipulated by #3, #5, #8) surrounds the 'wall' and Hilda. Actors forming 'the wall' turn to face away from the audience, still leaving a 'doorway'. Hilda leaves, unseen; her sheet is caught u by 'the storm'. Howard takes her place behind 'the wall'. He is about to leave the Davises' house)*

**Howard:** *(calling back over his shoulder) No, it's not too bad yet. I can still make it - the dogs always know the way home.....but thanks anyways! The missus will be expecting me..... (he sets about transforming one sheet into a dogsled; lashes down his gear; harnesses dogs to his sled, talking to them as he does so) We've seen worse than this in our day, eh boys and girls? Get back there..... Here Lucy, hold still, you. You're anxious to get home, too, ain't ya, girl? Get over here, Java.....Mick! Get out of it. C'mon boy. There'll be some good meal for ya once we get back. That's the stuff, Hunter. You love the feel of those traces strainin' 'gainst your chest, eh boy! Just point yer nose toward home, now lad, and the rest of us'll follow ye. (He leaves, moving toward DSL. The 'wall' moves USL, to indicate Howard's increasing movement away from the house, kneeling down in a perspective line and then disperses to become part of the storm. Hilda reappears. Lantern in hand, where the doorway used to be, CS.)*

**Hilda:** *(Peering out) It's picking up. Howard, for goodness sake, either show up soon, or*

stay where you're to altogether. Surely the Davises would insist you stay the night - they wouldn't let you go out in this.....unless this only started blowin' after you left. *(Turns away and stops; then turns back again)* Ye're a strong, smart man, Howard, but ye're only a man. Keeps up like this, ye'll be needin more than just your wits and your stubborn self..... *(turns and disappears USC; Howard moves across stage to DSR. Mr. And Mrs. Davis appear CSR, stepping out of the 'storm'. Mr. Davis has his back to the audience, as if coming in from outside, brushing off snow.)*

**Mrs. Davis:** Everything all right out there?

**Mr. Davis:** Yeah, it was the shed door we was hearin'. It was bangin' in the wind. She's pickin' up fast now. The dogs is burrowin' in - you know that it's gonna be bad when they hunkers down like that before the snow even gets goin' good..

**Mrs. Davis:** Do you think Howard's goin' to be all right?

**Mr. Davis:** He'll have a go of it, but he's done this before. He's got a good team; they'll get him home..... and if they don't Smoker'll happen along.

**Mrs. Davis:** *(disgusted)* Smoker! Not before Hilda does a whole lot of worryin', I'll bet. You men have no idea.

**Mr. Davis:** *(Picking it up, mimicking her)* .....what it's like waiting. Yes we do. But we also know our dogs, and the weather, and the country. Howard'll be all right. He's probably halfway home by now and singin' down the homestretch. Where's my tea? *(They turn back into the 'storm', which gets louder, then dies down to allow Howard to speak)*

**Voices:** *(moving across stage)* It don't look too bad, now, do it, Old Salt?

I mean, it's nothin' like the time you and Henry was out there past back Bay, and that bad storm came up.....

You was caught out for three days - had to set up a snow shelter.....

Hilda really was worried that time.

Funny about the women, the way they worry. Guess it's cuz they have to sort of stand and look on from the sidelines - guess that's probably harder than doin' the doin'.....

Like you, now, Howard. You know what you're doin'.....

**Howard:** Does that look like the headland? I think that's it..... *(Hilda appears beside him, riding on the sled)*

**Hilda:** Where?

**Howard:** Right there. Ahead, on the left. Can't hardly make it out, but that's about where it should be.

**Hilda:** *(Disappears, then reappears atop a 'cliff')* You mean up here?

**Howard:** Hilda, is that you?

**Hilda:** Yes Howard. But it's cold up here. It's really cold.

**Howard:** What are you doing up there?

**Hilda:** I'm guiding you home.

**Howard:** I know the way.

**Hilda:** No, you don't. You're lost, Howard. Head for the lights, Howard. I've got a light set for you. *(She disappears)*

**Howard:** Hilda? *(Storm sounds come up; lights appear in the distance; first one then another, always moving)*

**Voices:** What's that up ahead?

Too soon to be seein' Uncle Josh's lights - that shouldn't be for another half hour or so.

Looks like more than one, now.

There's another one.

Must be the way snow is flying through the air, makes it look like many lights instead of one -

Like it bends the light, like.....sure, look at that!

There's lots of 'em dancing around out there! *(Voices start to sing "This Little Light of Mine". Howard joins in; Hilda appears DSL, joins in the singing, and places a lantern in a 'window'. Howard heads for it. Hilda disappears and stops singing. The other lights continue the*

*song, brokenly, teasingly. Hilda reappears. DSR where she places another lantern, singing once more. Howard heads for her there. The same thing happens. She reappears at CS, where the door was, and places a final lantern. He heads for home and when he is almost there, all the lights go out at once and the singing stops - it is overtaken by the sounds of the wind (glasses w 'wet fingers on rim)*

**Hilda:** You're cold, Howard.

**Voices:** Get off the sled and run beside the dogs. *(He does so)*

Warm yourself up.

You're seeing things.

Run. Get the blood flowing again.

Run. Get hold of your thoughts.

Run.

Hold.

On.

*(Smoker runs beside him, and jumps aboard the sled, taking over the driving)*

**Howard:** *(does a double take) Oh, no. You're not real. If Hilda wasn't real, then you're not real. (Smoker doffs his hat and says nothing, just continues driving the team) Are you? (Smoker puffs on his pipe but says nothing. He motions to Howard to join him on the sled.) Ohhh no! Nosir! Thanks very much but I'll just keep running out here, so's I can warm up my blood enough that you'll disappear. (Howard looks away and runs determinedly, eyes away from Smoker. After a bit, he check to see if Smoker is still there - and of course he is. He runs faster, and as Smoker veers the sled to one side, Howard plunges headlong through the decker into the water. He flails around, trying to get out. Smoker stops the sled, the dogs lie down, and Smoker reaches a hand to help him out of the water. He drags Howard out and settles him on the ice, where he lights Hilda's lantern, at CS. Howard's teeth chatter) That's it now. I'll never survive this - gotta keep talking, keep talking. Gotta..... (Smoker offers him a white dickie, which he has pulled over his own head, revealing another just like it underneath. Howard puts it on.) Thanks. Thanks. But I need to get out of these wet clothes, too. I'll freeze to death..... (Smoker indicates to him that he should lie down beside the lantern) That's crazy! I'm all wet, and you want me to lie down on the ice beside a tiny lantern - that's Hilda's lantern! (Voices begin to hum "This*



*Little Light of Mine” again, softly) which can only melt the ice around it and burn down through..... (insight) This must be death! That’s it! That’s it, isn’t it? If I lie down now, I’m giving in and I’ll fall asleep and then it will be all over! Nosir! Nosir! (Smoker ignores him and goes squats close to the lantern, playing with it; Howard steps closer to him) Do you hear me? I’m not doing it! I’m going to get on that sled and I’m going to drive these dogs home! (Smoker indicates: go ahead then. Suit yourself. Howard attempts to mush his dogs, but they won’t budge. He tries many times. Smoker just ignores him, smoking his pipe beside the lantern on the ice. The singing crescendos, then stops abruptly, when Howard drops, exhausted onto his sled. Smoker settles him aboard, and then signals the dogs to go, which they do. They cross the stage through the storm; the little lights appear one by one in the distance; the singing starts again softly; Smoker walks through the storm, to place the lantern in the hands of a tired Hilda, who has fallen asleep at the ‘window’ at CS. When the sled hauls up outside the house, the storm dies down to become snowdrifts on the ground; the wall forms again and Hilda awakens and rushes out to find Howard on the sled.*

**Hilda:** Howard! Howard! Thank God! I’ve been waiting all night.....I wasn’t sure.....I thought maybe you’d stayed at.....I even dreamt that you got lost somewhere near the headland.

**Howard:** I’m.....I’m.....What? I’m home? How? Hilda, where is that man?

**Hilda:** What man?

**Howard:** *(Not waiting for an answer spies the lantern in her hand)* Your lantern. It was on the ice.....

**Hilda:** That dickie - did Mac Davis loan you that?

**Howard:** No, Hilda. That’s what I’m trying to tell you. That man.....I guess I got a little lost, and then I went through the ice - well, the decker, at least, and then this man - must’ve been Old Smoker - *(Voices begin to build “Smoker, Smoker, Smoker”, overlapping and whispering, building to the end)* He was all in white. Look, I know you aren’t going to believe this, I don’t expect you to believe this, but.....

**Hilda:** *(Helping him out)* Come on, we’ve got to get you in where it’s warm. Good Lord, Howard! Your pants are still wet.....you’ll catch your death.....

**Howard:** No Hilda, that I will not. If I haven’t caught my death already, it’s not going to happen now. *(They move inside the wall. It disperses amidst the sounds of*

*“Smoker”; Smoker himself moves against the dogs to take them out of their traces and all form the S-curve once more seated across the stage. They lie back down in reverse order, domino fashion, whispering “Smoker” in a decrescendo; the sounds die down to silence; the lights fade to black during this sequence until only the lantern is left. In the stillness, one voice sings softly “This Little light of Mine”. The lantern goes out.*

**Bern:** Where's the cards? *(looks around for them)* Yeah, funny how some things stay with us and others don't..... me .....I always liked "Me an' Ockie an' Granpa" but I could never figure out what Hockey was doin' in a song about going to Kippekok River, 'cause I was pretty sure nobody ever played hockey there! I just liked the sounds of the words. *(He finds the cards and joins Bern at the table, both unzip parkas)*

**Will:** *(reaches for the crib board; they start the game)* "Me 'an' ockie an' Granpa" What's that? *(Bern sings a line of the song, sarcastically)* I can see why it's a fav! What else sticks in your head? From when you were a kid, like.

**Bern:** Huh? I dunno. I loved getting scared. Playing out at night.....getting spooked. I always used to beg Mom to let me and my friends sleep outdoors, and whenever we did - we were only about nine or ten years old - we'd always tell ghost stories and scare the shit out of each other, and end up running into the house for the rest of the night pretending we were cold, but we weren't; we were scared!

**Will:** Yeah. My dad used to scare me, tellin' me stories about superstitious stuff - and I loved it - proper loved it..like whistling to the northern lights - how they'd dance for you, and then I'd get really scared when I tried it, 'cause I thought they'd come down and grab me.

**Bern:** Yeah? What would they want you for? Not your singing, that's for sure. *(Kettle boils. Bern takes off parka, placing it on back of chair; gets up to make tea for both of them and brings it to the table during the following)*

**Will:** *(takes off parka and places it around the back of his chair; receives a cup of tea offered by Bern)* Take a hike.....he told me about the jack-o-lanterns that are supposed to lure you away from home when you're out on skidoo, and about the Tungajuuk, the Labrador yeti..... once, just after I'd heard about him for the first time, I had to go use the outhouse - this was when I was little and I never wanted to go out there at night, of course. But I wanted to prove that I was growing out of being afraid of the dark, so this one night, I went out there. It was like putting lead weights on each footstep so's I wouldn't let myself run, see, 'cause I kept telling myself "that's stupid, there's nothing there". I gets out there and does my business and doesn't my brother come up and thump a real good one on the side or the outhouse! Well, didn't I move! Up and out of there, my pants somewheres around my ankles and me trippin' and fallin' and tryin' to haul them up all in one move, and my brother just out of sight, crashing through the bush. The next day, I went back out to show my brother where Tungajuuk had been chasing me and he was all believing me and everything. "Wow, look at the size of those tracks!" when I saw his boot tracks in the footprint.

**Bern:** What ya do?

**Will:** Felt like a fool. Stopped believin' in any of it after that. Tried to beat him up, but he was bigger than me and he just laughed more.

**Bern:** What about the Smoker stories? They ever tell you any of them?

**Will:** Oh yeah. But you can't believe any of that stuff.

**Bern:** How come we don't hear any of them any more?

**Will:** They belonged to the dogsled days - that's my theory. Makes sense too. Think about it. Dogs were slower than skidoos. A man was out longer in those days - more time to let his mind wander and imagine all kinds of things in the snow and dark.

**Bern:** Yeah, but I've heard a few stories about Smoker and skidoos.

**Will:** That's just because some people really want to believe in him - I dunno - maybe they hold onto those stories to honour their grandparents or somethin'. Hell, as noisy as my 12 is, out there, I'd never even know if Smoker came whooshin' up silently beside me - it'd kind of be a waste, you know.

**Bern:** Well, maybe he comes roarin' up beside you on a really powerful machine. Then you'd take notice.

**Will:** Somethin's lost in the translation. You can't believe in that old stuff. People used to do that for their own entertainment - I'm convinced of that. They had nothing to do with their time - now they've got TV and everything. That's why you won't hear about Smoker anymore. He's a victim of technology.

**Bern:** Game! Wanna play another hand? Loser deals.

**Will:** Nah, boy. I've had me tea and me warm-up. I've got to get back tonight yet. You sure you don't want to come along?

**Bern:** You sure you don't want to stay? What are ya? Sore loser? You're not afraid of the dark out there?

**Will:** *(shoves him)* Get lost! *(Putting on parka)* You sure you don't want me to stay so Tungajuuk won't keep you awake? Or maybe you'll just invite him in, so's he can stoke the fire for you all night? Maybe thump out the rhythm of "Me Hockey's Granpa"? *(sings and thumps)*

**Bern:** Get on! No, I'd rather go in the morning when I can see what I'm doing and the goin' is better.

**Will:** Suit yourself. Have a good night, now. Give me a shout when you get into town.

**Bern:** I'll do that. Good luck to ya. Got room for Smoker there, on the seat behind you?

**Will:** He won't be riding with me - he'll have to bounce around back there on the komatik. See ya! *(Leaves. Bern goes back inside and beds down, humming "This Little Light of Mine" as he blows out the lamp)*

*Will checks his komatik. Will makes sure it is tied securely. Then he climbs aboard his trusty 12 and starts it - with difficulty. He pulls away from the cabin and "trees" appear and then move away as he travels. Will begins to hum "This Little Light of Mine". Singing increases in volume and improvisation as he weaves his way along. Actor trees provide sound of skidoo engine, throughout. Smoker appears amidst trees "thumbing". Will doesn't see him; as skidoo passes, Smoker boards the komatik and sits quietly on grub-box. He leans over to scoop up some snow and forms a snowball carefully, takes aim, throws, it just passes Will's head. Will does a double-take, stops singing, shrugs shoulders, assuming it to be just an unusually large chunk of snow thrown up from the track. He continues, humming weakly. Another snowball. He stops singing and looks around. Smoker waves benignly from the komatik. Will does a double-take and speeds up, signified by his renewed singing.*

**Will:** *(singing) Won't let S..... (stops singing) Who the hell is that? Who is that guy? (Singing again) Who's that guy on my komatik? Maybe no one's there.... (Smoker gets off and hides behind one of the trees - or sits in the branches) Nobody's on my komatik! Nothing only air..... (getting weaker, trying to convince himself)....only air.....only air.....only.....air? (He makes several false starts at looking around, working up his courage; he looks back; no one there!) OK then. All right! (Checks again to be sure) Nope! Nobody! (He speeds up again. Smoker leaps onto the skidoo seat behind Will. Will looks around abruptly) No! No, you're not there. Get off, man. Get off you! No free rides! Get off! What the hell's going on here? (He hits the kill button and hops off excitedly; talks and gestures directly to Smoker) LOOK! I said get off! Go! Now! You're not going anywhere with me. (Smoker just looks at him. It's a stand-off) OK. OK. Look. Why don't you just sit there, then? Why don't you just sit on this nice little skidoo here and have a nice ride right into town? Would you like that? Would that make you happy? Would you leave me alone then? (He pulls the rope to start the skidoo again. Nothing happens. Again, again. While he is looking down at the ropes action, Smoker gets off and disappears around the front of the skidoo. Will gives up on the rope and goes to flip up the hood. Smoker beats him to it, flipping it up just when he gets there. Smoker is already tinkering with the engine. He puts out his hand to ask for a wrench. Will fetches one from the little tool box at the back, bewildered that he is taking commands from this apparition. Smoker puts the hood down and motions to Will to start the engine again. One try. Bingo! Will resignedly motions Smoker to join him on the seat behind. Smoker bows and politely declines; the skidoo pulls away and Smoker disappears behind the trees. One by one in the distance, small lights begin to appear. Taunting humming of "This Little Light" - broken, teasing during the following)*

**#1:** I'm gettin'

**#4:** ..gettin' outta here, man!

#6: This is really weird.

#9: Play-ing.....

#3: .....ing-play.....

#5: .....Pling-ay.....

#6: pling-pling.....

#7: ....ay-ay.....

#2: ay-ay-ay-ay.....sssssssssssssssssssssssm

All: *(alternating)* SSMoker.....ssmoker..

Will: *(shaking his head to clear it)* Playing tricks on my mind. That happens....

#4: Happens

#5: Happens

#6: Happens

#7: Happens all the time.

#1: All the time.

#9: When men go out in the Labrador wild.

#10: When the wild men of Labrador go out!

#3: Out go the men of Labrador.....

#2: Eenie, meenie, minie, go!

#4: .....out go the men of Labrador!

#5: .....O.....U.....T spells out goes.....

Will: Me??? No .....no way. The lights - there.....just ahead for.....

#1: These lights?

**#5:** Please lights?

**#7:** Please, lights.

**#8:** Lights please.

**#9:** Plights lease.

**#8:** ights -play, ease, lay

**#2:** playing

**#3:** ing-play, ay-ay.....

**#4:** Pling-pling, ay-ay.

**#2:** ay-ay-ay-ay!

**#6:** Playing tricks..... on your mind!

**All:** *(Alternating, overtaking)* SSmoker.....ssmoker.....

**Will:** *(Agitated, shakes his head, closing eyes briefly to clear these voices from his head) Aaaagh! (The little lights go out and singing stops. Smoker steps out suddenly from behind a tree just ahead of the skidoo, which Will is about to hit. He is pointing away from the lights. Will brakes and swerves and continues past him. Smoker, unseen by Will, climbs once more aboard the komatik. Will looks around) You! I thought I got rid of you! (Smoker frowns and wags his finger to say "That's not good enough") Well, all right. Thanks! (Smoker cocks his head to one side to say "Keep it coming.....thanks for what?") Thanks for fixing the engine.....and saving me from hitting that tree.....and turning me away from the lights and towards home..... (Smoker doffs his hat) But.....(Smoker cocks his head to the other side, to say "Go on.....but what") Will you please get off my komatik and leave me alone now? (Smoker points to his wrist indicating "time") What? You have the nerve to hurry me up? What kind of.....? All right buddy, hang on! (He goes flat out, bumps and all, voices making speeding skidoo sounds. Smoker is calm throughout. Will ends up at his house and hops off the skidoo leaving it idling) You just wait right there! You just sit right where you are ! I want somebody else to see this! I'm gonna get my brother - ah-ah-ah! Stay there! (He turns to run into the house, but his brother opens the door and comes out to meet him)*

**Tom:** Where you been? I thought you said you'd be home in time to watch the game. Second period's already started and Montreal's ahead 3 to 2.

**Will:** *(running to the doorway, facing US)* C'mere! Tom, c'mere and look! I'll show you why I'm

late for the game. *(Smoker gets up and walks in through the open doorway behind Will, as Will turns back DS to show Tom the komatik - a very slick move. He waves a little Montreal pennant as he disappears through the doorway) There.....(he motions towards the now empty komatik)*

**Tom:** *(Taking Will by the shoulders and turning him round to usher him into the house) What does it take, man? I've told you a thousand times **Don't Drink And Drive!***

**Will:** *I didn't. I swear to you..... (Ad lib. His voice trails off as one voice sings out the hockey chant 'Da-tada-da-ta-dah! Scores' Overtaken by Ssmoker.....Ssmoker as #;s 1-10 collapse back onto the floor domino fashion.)*

### **Smoker 3: For The Believers**

*Actors in the S-curve are suitcases on an airport luggage belt. They roll towards USR, which takes all but one off stage and out of sight. As they move, they whisper "Ssmoker" as if it were the sound of the conveyor belt moving them along. A gangly tourist stands among them, waiting for his 'suitcase', which he picks up as it passes him. The an is dressed in expensive name-brand outdoor wear, colour coordinated and an enormous lynx hat. He waits, looking around for someone to meet him.*

**Joe:** *(hurrying in, offering his hand) Ah! You must be Mr. Gillis. Alistair, is it? I'm so sorry we've kept you waiting. We were held up in traffic. You know what Goose Bay can be like at 4:30!*

**Alistair:** *Call me Flash. Yes, yes, I've heard. Thank you. (They shake hands)*

**Ike:** *(Offering his hand) Hi, I'm Ike. Welcome here. You've come a long way.*

**Alistair:** *(shaking Ike's hand) Flash. So nice to meet you both. Yes, it's been a bit of a haul. Lovely, uh, lovely..... airport you have here.*

**Joe:** *So, your flight was good? You flew from Dublin?*

**Alistair:** *Yes, yes, Dublin. Oh, yes, it was a lovely, lovely flight. Lots of lovely things to do on the flight - lots of crayons - they were lovely. I'm really looking forward to my trip with you people. We don't get much snow in Iceland, as you must know, and snowmobiles are unheard of!*

**Ike:** *Well, no shortage of either of those things here, I can assure you. We'll get started first thing in the morning. Weather's promising to be good the next few days, so it should be a good ride to Makkovik.*



Joe: Yes, perfect! Couldn't ask for better goin'. Some nice country up that way - you're going to really enjoy it. (Noting the hat) You certainly seem ready for ..... adventure. Nice .....uhmm.....hat. And the suit..... the suit's.....uhm.....one-piece.....that's .....uhm.....that's very.....colourful. I guess if we were lost there'd be no trouble to find us, eh? You'd just..... show up against the snow, eh? (Laughs nervously) I understand you've done some wilderness trekking before?

Alistair: Oh yes. Been to Borneo, on safari in Kenya, across the outback in Australia; Tierra del Fuego, the Andes, and St. John's. That was, by far, the most challenging. You can't understand the people there - they have such a strong political accent, you can't seem to decipher the truth of what they're saying. But then, maybe they're not saying the truth at all.....

Ike: So, you've come to Labrador to see The Last Frontier! You say you saw our ad in Wilderness Trekking Magazine?

Alistair: Well, no not exactly. You see, I won an all-expense-paid trip to Goose Bay - luxury suites at the Aurora Hotel and all. Won it at a silent auction - it was a fundraiser for our poor brothers in the world that don't have proper roads, see.....and I was delighted when I won because it turns out I have some sort of family connection here.

Ike: You don't say! Gillis! Of course. Good Labradorian name. Lots of Gillises. (Nods knowingly, sarcastically to Joe)

Alistair: No, no. It was on my mother's side. I don't know al the ins and outs of it, but she was apparently related to some rather notorious fellow - did some bad things, they say - no one would talk much about the details. I guess every family has one of those.

(Joe and Ike exchange looks; they definitely have a 'live one' here)

Joe: Well, yes, then.....let's get going. We'd better get you settled in for the night. Morning will come soon enough. We'll be about three days on the trail, so you'll want to be rested.

(They head across stage, taking the 'suitcase on wheels' with them and cycle around SL, to return, heading back towards SR with Joe and Ike on skidoos and Alistair on the suitcase-cum-grub-box; each wears a backpack made of a sheet; engines are running; they dodge and bump along, pointing out different sights, yelling above the noise. Alistair often has to hold onto his hat. They change positions frequently. They come to a stop and set up camp. Joe lights a campfire, humming broken snatches of "This Little Light of Mine" as he does so. Ike sets about putting up the tent - back-pack sheets, a sheet held in place by two actors. Flash fetches whatever the other two tell him to. Eventually he walks over to join Joe at the fire.)

Joe: (Offering, pouring from kettle) Tea?

Alistair: (Sitting on grub-box near fire) Thank you. Oh, there's nothing like a cup of tea to warm the body up.....

Joe: I hear enormous fur hats help a lot too.

Alistair: (Studying the mug) Tetley.....you know, they don't have Red Rose in Europe. Only in Canada.

Joe: Yes, so I hear.

Ike: (Joining them) Well, the tent's all ready. You might have to duck through the doorway to get your hat inside, though, Flash by! Say, Joe, I noticed a lot of footprints in the snow just beyond the tent there.

Joe: Probably just your own, sure.

Ike: No, I don't think so. They were too big for mine - or Mr. Gillis's, here - and they were our past where we'd been walking.

Joe: (Teasing) Suppose it's the yeti - Tuungajuk. Or Old Smoker.

Ike: Can't be Old Smoker - he never leaves footprints.

Alistair: I take it these are local legends, these two? Toong -aaa.....and.....?

Joe: Tuungajuk. And Smoker. Yes.

Ike: Tuungajuk is a sort of a Labrador yeti, I suppose, or a Sasquatch, if you'd rather. A big hairy creature, half human, half animal. The stories I've heard about him took place closer to Goose Bay, at the Traverspine River and up on Northwest Point.

Alistair: And Smoker.....

Joe: Smoker was supposed to have actually lived. They say he was a real person who did some pretty bad things in his time, and after he died he couldn't rest because of the guilt, so he still spends his time helping people to find their way home when they're lost out in the country. He always wears white, and comes out of nowhere on a dogteam, then disappears without a sign.

Ike: Oh. Now, I've heard a different version: that sometimes Old Smoker likes to trick people a bit, showing up from nowhere, but just kind of playing with their minds

'cause they don't want to believe in him - but he's there in front of them - or behind them - or above them - and when they try to prove it to someone else, he disappears.

Alistair: A little more like our "little people" - the leprechauns.

Ike: I guess you could say.

Joe: Oh yes! Just like. Only ours is white and full size and yours are green midgets. Close similarity though.

Alistair: And have you ever seen either of those.....uhm?

Joe: Not personally. I had a grandfather who said he saw Smoker , but (takes out his pocket knife and begins to whittle some splits for tomorrow's fire)

Ike: No, that's just what the old people will tell you. I don't believe in that old nonsense - it's just something that makes a good story.

Alistair: And you don't believe stories?

Voices: Ssmoker.....ssmoker.....

(Smoker emerges from the woods just outside their circle of light and stands between Joe and Ike, visible to Flash. He pales, squirms and tries to get the guides' attention by pointing inconspicuously to Smoker. They don't notice nor do they see Smoker.)

Ike: Oh sure! But it depends what kind, that's all. (Stands up) Well boys, I'm hitting the sack. I'll see you in the morning. (Exits towards tent. Smoker has to take a step backward to let him pass)

Alistair: (grappling for words, eyes on Smoker) Uh, Joe, you've .....um, you say you've.....um.....you've never actually seen this person all dressed in white - white hat (Smoker doffs the hat), white beard, white coat.....and you say he always smokes a pipe? (Smoker puffs and smiles)

Joe: (Eyes down, whittling) Nope , never seen him. Don't believe in him.

Alistair: (eyeing his tea cup and looking back up at Smoker) Tetley?

Joe: Say what?

Alistair: Oh nothing. Nothing. I'll.....I guess I might be overtired - first day out on the trail and all. I'll be turning in now, Joe. (He heads for the tent. Smoker waves to him and

turns to leave; looks over his shoulder the whole way)

Joe: Yes, go on now. Have a good night's sleep. Mind you don't lose your hat while you're sleeping. Might be just the thing Smoker might want - nice hat like that! I'll just stay here and take care of the fire. Good night now.

(Lights down; tent is dismantled and reformed as backpacks; Joe, Flash and Ike all sweep around one side of stage and across on skidoo and komatik as before - the second day's journey. They roll up in sheets as sleeping bags and lie on their backs, with Alistair on the outside of the group. He wears his hat in bed. They are looking up at the Northern Lights.

Alistair: This is really somethin'. This is really somethin'. Oh, that's just beautiful - all that colour. Look there: the pinks and greens and yellows and, and, oh my goodness, it's just beautiful.

Joe: Yeah, you know what they say about the Northern lights, don't you?

Alistair: No, what is it, now?

Ike: Oh, that's just another one of our Labrador legends, I guess. They say that if you whistle at them, they'll dance for you.

Alistair: Oh, they say that, now do they? (He whistles and watches) Will you look at that? Look, they're fluttering like mad - they are. They're dancin' sure! Movin' like Aunt Maggie's laundry on the line! That's magnificent! (He whistles again)

Voices: Ssmoker.....smoker.....

(Smoker steps carefully between the bodies. As he passes Flash, he sits up, speechless and watches as Smoker continues past. Flash tries to shake Joe and Ike into attention during the following, but they are slow to respond.)

Alistair: (speaking very quickly, breathless, tense) Oh boys! IS it just those lights that respond to the whistlin'? Does that Smoker person, does he dance to the tune, too? Would you look here now! What's that passin' over us? Is that him? Is it.....? He's - he's walkin' over us.....and we're not even in the grave!

(Joe and Ike sit up slowly, grumbling, just in time to see the back of Smoker disappearing again into the woods)

Joe: What? I didn't feel anything walking over me. You're spooked that's all. Must be that hat's puttin' pressure on your brain. You're seein' things. But I tell you what - just to make you more comfortable for the night, I'll put my pocket knife right here under my pillow. How's

that?

Ike: (looking in the direction Smoker has gone.) I can't see anything. (He reaches for a flashlight under his pillow, shines it and returns it) Maybe you were staring at the northern lights too long.

Alistair: (Smoker turns back to doff his hat at Flash. Flash doffs his enormous fur hat in return, absently) Yes, that's certainly true. I am seeing things! (He quickly falls back down to his sleeping bag. The others roll over to sleep. Lights down)

Voices: Ssmoker.....Ssmoker..... (While the men sleep, Smoker quietly returns and takes the fur hat, the flashlight and the pocket knife. As the men are breaking camp, packing up the sleeping bags to turn them into back packs, they each notice that items are missing)

Joe: Either of you seen my pocket knife?

Ike: No, you put it under your pillow, didn't you?

Joe: I did, but now I can't find it.

Alistair: My hat! My hat's gone!

Joe: Good! Now maybe you'll stop seeing things.

Alistair: No, but it's gone. It was on my head and now it's nowhere to be seen.

Ike: Ah, you must have been tossing and turning in your sleep and it's just slipped down inside your sleeping bag.

Alistair: No, I can't seem to find it. Now, there's a great Labrador mystery for you! A great big enormous lynx hat like that disappearing into thin cold-as-crystal air!

Joe: (Studying him) It doesn't get more poetic than that.

Ike: Hey! My flashlight's missing, too.

Alistair: Ah, you must have been tossing and turning in your sleep and it's slipped down inside your sleeping bag.

Ike: Save it.

Joe: C'mon boys. Maybe these things are buried in the snow and someone will find them

in spring wondering how in blazes they turned up here. But for now, we've got to get going.

Voices: Ssmoker.....Ssmoker.....

(Again they cross the stage as skidoos. Trees carry in a table and place it at Sr. Aunt Susie stands in front of it, smoothing her apron. Remaining trees become children playing along the road into Makkovik. They wave at the strangers as they pass and then run to follow the skidoos to the boarding house.)

Joe: Hi there, Aunt Susie. Got room for three?

Ike: Hi Aunt Susie. We've got another feller with us this time. This is Alistair Gillis ...um...Flash...from Ireland. (Flash bows slightly to Aunt Susie)

Aunt Susie: (still in front of the table) Ye-es Joe, Ike, Mr. Gillis.....good to see you! Come on in. We were expectin' you.

Joe: How so?

Aunt Susie: Well, even if I didn't know it was exactly you three, I was expectin' three, just the same.

Ike: Why was that?

Aunt Susie: Well, earlier this morning, the children came tumblin' in here with these. (She steps aside, exposing the table where the hat, flashlight and pocket knife sit) They said they found them along the skidoo trail just outside of town. I figured someone would soon be along to claim them. That happens sometimes. I daresay the youngsters'll be all pouring in here to find out who the strangers in town are. Cup of tea?

Joe: Yes, thanks. (Susie turns to fix tea.)

Children: (Curious, arriving together, but shyly eyeing the men for a time before they speak to Flash) Are you.....are you.....Smoker?

Voices: Ssmoker.....Ssmoker.....

Alistair: Smoker? Me?

Children: Yeah, Smoker. (As they speak, Smoker passes by the open doorway, behind the children)

Alistair: (looking over the heads of the children at Smoker. ) No, no that I'm not. But I saw him once.....or twice. (He looks knowingly at Ike and Joe. The children clamour and press closer)

Children: (Seating themselves around the men in a circle) Did you? Tell us.....

Alistair: (His eyes still on Smoker) I think I might even be related to him. (His voice trails off as he mimes telling them a story. Joe and Ike look despairingly at one another. This man knows no limits. An Irish storyteller. They should have seen it coming. Children soon disperse the circle into the S-curve and do reverse sit-ups saying Ssmoker.....Smoker to return to original configuration. Joe, Ike and finally Flash are swallowed up in the S-curve as well. Smoker, with a small light and quietly humming "This Little light of Mine" moves along the length of the S-curve as it is going down and disappears offstage. Black.)