A STRANGER AT HOME: Novel Study

Chapter 2

1. Do you think the residential school was effective in educating Olemaun? (Recall the purpose of these schools).

2. Why would Agnes’s mother forbid her to speak English and play with Olemaun?

3. How was Olemaun beginning to see herself? Why?

Chapter 3

1. Why is it upsetting to Olemaun when she has trouble fishing? Why is this skill important to her?

2. Why do you think she begins to talk about herself as two different people - Olemaun and Margaret?

3. “See? I told you, when she is hungry enough she will eat," my father said to my mother in Inuvialuktun on his way out the door to find out what was going on with dark stranger. Somehow, I understood every word. What is important about this?

Chapter 4

1. "My tears fell in the ocean, and I wished my spirit was in those tears, because then I could follow the current back to a place where I belonged." Where does Olemaun belong? What would belonging look like and feel for her?

2. Why do you think Olemaun is not as afraid of Dubilak as everyone else is? What does she think of him? What does he represent to her?
Chapter 5

1. Olemaun had a strange nightmare that she was back at residential school. What do you think parts of the dream meant?

2. Olemaun feels the pain of her tender feet through her soft Kamiks. She feels the pain of not knowing her language and making mistakes. What do you think it means when she says, "The first time I had put my feet in outsiders' shoes they had pinched and felt awkward. Now they were a barrier, protection against the hard earth."

Chapter 6

1. How is Olemaun feeling now? She says, "And I only had to remember how to be Olemaun Pokiak, an Inuvialuit girl." What does she mean by that? Why is that important?

2. Why do you think Olemaun thinks so much about the Dubilak? What do they have in common?

3. When the outsider's boat came to collect the children, Agnes disappeared. She faced great danger out in the tundra alone. Did she make the right decision? Explain.

Chapter 7

1. Olemaun's language slowly came back to her. How did her father help her with this? Why is it important for her to reconnect with her language?

2. Her father had her manage the dog sled on her own and told the family about her accomplishments. She felt "Olemaun grow large inside her". What does this mean? Why is it happening?

3. What made Olemaun's 'best day of her life!' so special? Why do you think that would be?

Chapter 8

1. Olemaun's father regretted letting her go to residential school before. Now all three daughters had to go back.

2. What would you do in this situation? Go along with your siblings or run like Agnes, knowing what you know?

3. How is this time going to be different? What will Olemaun teach her sisters?

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