

**Man looking for Seal**

(for Jinnie P. Sugluk Inuit Community)

Kneeling on a hump of ice he  
 could be praying  
 but for the lift of the neck  
 the hunger of eyes and nose into weather.  
 And then the tuck of his legs  
 knees firm on the slope -  
 the body's need for seal.

Seal-skin, seal bone  
 seal-warm flesh and salty guts  
 seal-prey, seal provider, seal-god  
 seal-womb of the Northern lives.

Stone hunter

lifting you to the light  
 feeling the art we have  
 our palms tickled by the tail  
 of a fat, fed seal who idles  
 cosy in the lee of your ice  
 his ice beneath you, safe  
 surviving, out of sight.

We complete this carving, our palms  
 answering the need of the soapstone  
 which hungers for the oil of our skin  
 so that we are seal-giving, heat-touching  
 smiling, learning more of you  
 growing into more  
 of ourselves.

— Tony Curtis