

THE ORCADIAN - JOHN RAE

Alan Reid

THE WIND IS HOWLING FIERCER NOW AND THE DARK IS FALLING FAST
AND THE WILDERNESS A NEVER ENDING WHITE
JUST AS WELL YOU'VE ICED THE RUNNERS FOR IT'S STILL A MILE TO CAMP
AND THE COMFORT OF THE SNOW HOUSE IN THE BITTER ARCTIC NIGHT

IT'S A FAR, FAR CRY FROM STROMNESS AND THE SULLEN SOUND OF HOY
TO A STATION AT THE HEART OF HUDSON'S BAY
AND THE CAULDRON OF THE FIRTH WILL BE AS NOTHING TO THE STORM
THAT ERUPTS WHEN YOU REPORT THE THINGS THAT YOU HAVE HEARD TODAY

**JOHN RAE THE ORCADIAN INFORMS THE LEARNED GENTLEMEN
HE HAS NEWS OF ONE OF ENGLANDS'S FAMOUS SONS
JOHN RAE WHEN YOU SPEAK AGAIN TAKE HEED OF THESE SAME GENTLEMEN
LOOK AROUND YOU, SEE THE WHISPERS HAVE BEGUN
AND THE STORM AND THE ICE ARE CLOSING IN**

JOHN LEARNED TO BUILD AN IGLOO AND TO HUNT THE CARIBOU
AND MAKE SNOWSHOES TO TRAVERSE THE HARSH TERRAIN
HE DROVE THE SLEDGE OF INUIT, HE RODE THE CREE CANOE
AND THEY TRUSTED IN HIS SURGEON SKILLS TO TEND THEM IN RETURN

HE WAS CALLED TO LEAD THE SEARCH TO FIND LORD FRANKLIN AND HIS MEN
BUT THE NATIVES SAID NO SAILOR HAD SURVIVED
THERE WERE SAILORS LOST AND STARVING, THERE WERE SAILORS GONE INSANE
THERE WERE SEVERED BODIES IN THE SNOW AND NO ONE LEFT ALIVE

WHEN JOHN RAE ANNOUNCED IN LONDON HOW THESE BRITISH HEROES DIED
THERE WAS OUTRAGE AT THIS SLUR ON FRANKLIN'S NAME
AND THE TESTAMENT OF INUIT (WAS) REJECTED AND DENIED
BY THE FRIENDS OF FRANKLIN SWORN TO SAVE HIS HONOUR AND HIS FAME

FAR AWAY A WORLD IS STIRRING, ONCE AGAIN IT COMES ALIVE
AND THE SUN IS CLIMBING HIGHER DAY BY DAY
THE NORTHERN LIGHTS ARE PULSING ALL ACROSS THE ARCTIC SKY
AND THE VOICES OF THE WILDERNESS ARE CALLING TO JOHN RAE