

May 20

Here is Ms Bohnet's letter to our group. She says she is going to meet a friend in Moscow this summer. I wonder if it's that Russian guy we saw her with in Yakutsk? It would be great if they got together — a fine ending to our journey. Maybe we'll all be invited to a wedding!

# Epilogue

(Alice Bohnet's Letter)

May 14

Dear friends,

Thank you for getting your reports in on time. I think they're very good, and I'm sure our sponsors will think so too.

Together we've produced a fairly thorough account of life in the circumpolar world. Many things are left out, of course. There's just too much to cover. And I'm sure we haven't always satisfactorily captured the wonder, the excitement, or the "truth" of the northern circumpolar world. But I hope we've said enough to make our future readers want to travel and experience that world for themselves.

Reading your reports reminded me vividly of our journey. I thought of the magnificent landscapes we saw—landscapes that were similar in many locations. I thought too of the familiar plants and animals we saw as we travelled. These similarities in nature around the globe made me feel that it is quite appropriate to speak of the northern circumpolar world as though it were one.

Then I remembered the many differences we found among the societies—in government, language, and culture. They delighted and interested us to be sure, but they also sometimes confused us and challenged our understanding. Remembering this, my initial feeling began to change. There is not one circumpolar world, but many.

Then I thought of you. Each of you comes from a different country and different race or cultural background. Each of you is an individual, distinctly different from the others in our group. Yet in many important ways, I didn't find you very different from one another. You have essentially the same needs, interests, abilities, concerns, and aspirations. Your clothes, food, and homes are similar. You participate in many of the same activities. You enjoy life. You want to be happy, free, and to develop your potential. These many similarities among you make me feel there is one circumpolar world after all.

I want to compliment you on the way you behaved on the tour. You earned the admiration and respect of everyone you met. I am proud remembering your thoughtful questions, hard work, and courtesy.

I hope you'll keep in touch with me and with one another. Perhaps we'll all meet again some time. I hope so.

As a result of our journey, we are now in the fortunate position of having contacts around the globe. These will be useful for future travel. That reminds me—I'm going to rendezvous in Moscow this summer with a friend I met on our tour. I'm really looking forward to the trip!

Thank you for helping to make our circumpolar journey one of the most wonderful experiences of my life. If any of you should need a character reference in the future, don't hesitate to ask. I'd be happy to provide one for you.

Love,

Alice Bohnet

