

2001

# Cillem Quellra

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## Recommended Citation

Smelcer, John E.. "Cillem Quellra." *The Iowa Review* 31.3 (2001): 163-163. Web.  
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.5472>

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CILLEM QUELLRA

*In December 1999, a Yup'ik man from Atmautluak, Alaska disappeared. Glimpses of his ghost were later seen by villagers.*

During an eternity of Alaskan winter  
an Eskimo hunter from Atmautluak

disappeared in the wild. Searchers  
discovered his snowmobile

and the rigid corpse of a friend,  
but he was never found. Later,

towards slow-thawing spring, villagers  
began to see him, feather-light

and wary as a small bird,  
standing on the tops of trees

or drifting on the wind. Elders say,  
“He was made cold by the universe,

*cillem quellra*. If you touch him  
his timid spirit will return.”

They say the same thing happened  
to a small boy thirty years ago,

who when chased by dogsled  
left no tracks in new snow. From

a quiet bank of the Kuskokwim, I hear him  
whistling from across the frozen river.