

savoonga /3/ funny story

I was looking at this place **that** few Americans **even know exists** and it **gave me an idea for** a funny story. In the dead of winter, I would **pack up and head to** Savoonga, **unannounced** and unprepared. **There was going to be** no research at all, and no planning, **either**. I **was going to** book a room, if there was one **to be had**. But **beyond** that, nothing. We journalists **believe** that a good reporter can find a great story anywhere. **That is how I found myself** in a small plane in late February, **looking out** onto a beautiful white **landscape** below.

savoonga /4/ eskimos & refrigerators

I'm back now from Savoonga, trying to **make sense of what** I saw, trying to **figure out** how to tell the story. Let me begin by **putting to rest** one cliché. **You can** sell refrigerators to Eskimos. You **may be laughing** now but refrigerator salesmen actually **do a fairly good business among** Eskimos. The people of Savoonga are Yupiks, and they are closer to Siberians than American Eskimos in their **appearance**, their **customs** and their language. And **they all have** refrigerators. In the winter, food gets freezer burn if **it is left** out. Now, what I'm going to say **may** sound funny but **it is the truth**: Eskimos need refrigerators to **keep their food warm**.