

It was bitter cold outside, and Susan bundled up in her warmest clothes before she picked up her backpack. She shivered a bit as she contemplated the long walk to the bus stop, several blocks away. Winter in the Midwest was nothing at all like the weather she was used to, and every trip to school and back was like a miniature adventure. At least, that's what she told herself as she prepared to venture out into the cold yet again. Somehow, making it into an adventure helped her force herself out the door and into the winter wind.

On this particular morning, she swung her backpack over her right arm. She hunched her shoulders against the blast she was sure would hit her, and pushed the door open. The blast of ice-laden wind almost knocked her breath away, but Susan was determined not to let it get the best of her. Her father had always talked about the generations of strong ancestors who had explored the Atlantic, and she pretended now that she was one of them. "I am strong, I am courageous, I am worthy of my history," she chanted to herself with each step.

Suddenly, the icy wind carried with it more excitement than painful discomfort. Susan found herself enjoying the battle to get to the bus stop without being blown right off the sidewalk. "If the Vikings could make it all the way across the ocean in those little boats," she thought, "certainly I can make it a few blocks!" She forced her way up the hill, fighting the push of the wind the whole way. By the time she got to the corner where the bus shelter offered protection from the blasts, Susan was exhausted but grinning widely. The victory might be insignificant, but it was a victory nonetheless!