



When The Ice Worms Nest Again

Traditional Canadian Folksong

arr. Margaret Benson

With Gusto ♩ = 92

S
A

There's a dus - ky, hus - ky - en in the Arc - tic, and she

T
B

"Uh - huh"

S
A

waits for it is not in vain, For some day I'll put my

T
B

"Ah!"

S
A

"Yes?"

T
B

muk - luks on and ask her If she'll wed me when the ice worms nest a -

2

16 **B**

S "You bet!" In the land of the pale blue snow, where it's nine - ty - nine be -

A "You bet!" In the land of the pale blue snow, where it's nine - ty - nine be -

T gain. In the land of the pale blue snow, where it's nine - ty - nine be -

21

S low, And the po - lar bears are roam - ing o'er the plain, In the

A low, And the po - lar bears are roam - ing o'er the plain, In the

T low, And the po - lar bears are roam - ing o'er the plain, o'er the plain, In the

26

S sha - dow of the Pole, I will clasp her to my soul; we'll be mar - ried when the

A sha - dow of the Pole, I will clasp her to my soul; we'll be mar - ried when the

T sha - dow of the Pole, I will clasp her to my soul; we'll be mar - ried when the

31 **C**

S ice worms nest a - gain. For our wed - ding feast we'll have seal oil and

A ice worms nest a - gain, nest a - gain. For our wed - ding feast we'll have seal oil and

T ice worms nest a - gain. For our wed - ding feast we'll have seal oil and

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36

S blub - ber, In our kay - ak we will roam the bound - ing main;

A blub - ber, In our kay - ak we will roam the bound - ing main;

T B blub - ber, In our kay - ak we will roam the ing main;

41

S — All the wal - rus - es will look at us - der, We'll be

A — All the wal - rus - es will look at in won - der, We'll be

T B — All the wal - rus - es will look at us in won - der, We'll be

46

S mar - ried when the ice worm a - gain. In the land of the pale blue

A mar - ried when the ice worms nest a - gain. In the land of the pale blue

T B mar - ried when the ice worms nest a - gain. In the land of the pale blue

51

S where it's nine - ty - nine be - low, And the po - lar bears are roam - ing o'er the

A snow, where it's nine - ty - nine be - low, And the po - lar bears are roam - ing o'er the

T B snow, where it's nine - ty - nine be - low, And the po - lar bears are roam - ing o'er the

56

S plain, In the sha - dow of the Pole, I will clasp her to my

A plain, o'er the plain, In the sha - dow of the Pole, I will clasp her to my

T B plain, o'er the plain, In the sha - dow of the Pole, I will clasp her to my

61 **molto rit.**

S soul, we'll be mar - ried when the ice worms nest a - gain.

A soul, we'll be mar - ried when the ice worms nest a - gain, nest a - gain.

T B soul, we'll be mar - ried when the ice worms nest a - gain.

In 1898, the Klondike Nugget reported that ice worms were appearing out of a nearby glacier. Journalist E.J. White created the hoax after receiving a direct order to increase newspaper sales. The hoax created a sensation--townspeople would search for the worms and listen for these creatures' unusual "chirping" sounds. Apparently, there is a festival for the ice worms in Dawson City, Yukon, Canada that continues to this day. *(photo on the cover)*

The song originated in northern British Columbia and the Yukon, possibly during the Klondike Gold Rush of 1898. It was first published in the Yukon Miner in 1939, which claimed that the song was written in 1919 by four men working in the Yukon. Scottish-Canadian poet Robert W. Service also published a ballad with this name in Twenty Bath-Tub Babies, claiming that he had written the song in 1911; however, Service's ballad is significantly different from the traditional lyrics. There are many other versions that exist. It has become the theme song for silver and cobalt, Ontario and fur trappers in The Pas, Manitoba.

The song tells a romance between the narrator and a "husky dusky maiden" in the Canadian Arctic. The "ice worms" mentioned are not actual ice worms (genus Mesenchytraeus), which the original authors probably would not have known existed. Instead, it refers to "ice worm cocktails", the practice of drawing eyes on pieces of spaghetti and putting them into a cocktail to frighten travellers. This practice was described by, and may have even originated with, Robert Service's poem "The Ballad of the Ice-worm Cocktail".

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