

## **Polar Bare**

(Pitch)

A lone igloo sits against a frozen landscape of rolling white hills and swirling snow flurries. Huddled inside, breath curling in the air, an Eskimo feverishly rubs his hands before a small fire crackling on the ice floor.

Outside the entrance to the igloo, a pair of furry snow bunnies pause to snuggle against each other before dashing playfully out of view. Spying this, the Eskimo imagines himself in a pair of bunny slippers, a moment's warmth before the reality of the cold sets upon him again. Sniffing, he grunts to himself and adds a few twigs to the meager flames.

Next, a snow fox pauses before the entrance, warming itself with its plush white tail before dashing out of view. The Eskimo imagines a fox stole warming his neck until a flurry blows in, chilling away his fantasy. Shivering, he pulls his tattered furs closer around him and fights a sudden urge to sneeze. He gathers the last remaining kindling and heaps it on to the flames, finally bringing enough warmth to satisfy him.

But as the flames lick higher, and smoke presses against the dome, a block of ice slips loose from the ceiling and crashes into the fire, extinguishing it in a hissing cloud of steam. A drifting column of powder gathers on the stunned Eskimo's beard.

Growling, he grabs a spear from the wall and charges outside. The animals scatter underfoot as the Eskimo screams in his nonsensical language, charging them through the snow. His voice echoes across the barren landscape like a chorus until the pristine white ground is a littered maze of footprints.

The Eskimo stands alone against the snow, his breath puffing with every wheeze and curse. Suddenly another sneeze approaches. Holding his breath, he contorts himself violently to fight it, and in that moment of silence he hears another sound of breathing replace his own.

He stalks over a small rise and there finds a great white polar bear, soundly asleep in a snow cave, hibernating through the winter's harsh cold. Ecstatic, the Eskimo imagines himself sitting on a throne of ice, feet kicked up before a raging

fire, and draped over him like a royal mantle, the great white coat of the polar bear. Excitement shines from his face, melting the frost away and he charges the slumbering beast.

But his charge ends in abysmal failure. His ill-planned attack results in the loss of his spear and leaves him colder than before. A sneeze comes on again, this time overpowering his resistance, leaving him with a frozen spray of ice issuing from his nose. Chipping it off with resign, he goes back to the igloo to gather another prop for his new line of attack.

And so he fails again and again, each attack more growing desperate than the last. Losing prop after prop, succumbing to the relentless fury and disgust of his frozen sneezes, he succeeds only in robbing the bear of its precious sleep. The Eskimo's final assault is so desperate that when at last he seems to have achieved his goal, the bear's ice cave topples down on him. The bear itself, unable to sleep, wanders off to find another place to settle down for his long winter's nap.

Frozen and exhausted, the defeated Eskimo finally gives in and goes back to the relative warmth of his igloo--the only thing he has left. But there blocking the entrance to his home is a solid wall of polar bear fur. The bear has moved in! Freezing in the harsh wind, the shrieking Eskimo pulls madly at the furry bulk but is unable to move it. Remembering the roof, he scrambles on top of the igloo and drops through the hole. In a blind, uncontrollable fit, the Eskimo pushes, pulls, kicks and shoves, until he finally collapses on the bear's back a wheezing, miserable wreck.

As he catches his breath he notices the unusual warmth in the igloo, and the sweat he has broken, while beneath him, the polar bear's coat so plush and comfortable against his back. Slowly, unbelieving, he reaches out to pet the warm mound around him and settles in, nuzzling deeper into the coat until he falls into a state of total relaxation. He sighs and smiles a wide, toothless grin.

After the credits roll, the lone igloo sits against an arctic landscape. Inside, nestled deep in the fur of the snoring polar bear lies the snoring Eskimo, in blissful sleep, while on his feet, cuddle two dozing snow bunnies and curled up around his neck, the white bushy tail of the sleeping arctic fox.