

THE STORY OF NANUK THE BEAR

WHY THE STARS ARE IN THE SKY

To the Eskimos the stars are not just put in the sky to give light or guide the wandering traveller. They are living things, sent by some twist of fate to roam the heavens forever, never swerving from their paths. One of these creatures who left the earth and went to live in the sky was Nanuk the bear.

One day Nanuk was waylaid by a pack of fierce Eskimo hunting dogs. Nanuk knew only too well that Eskimo dogs are not to be trifled with, and he tried to give them the slip. Faster and faster he ran over the ice, but the dogs were still at his heels. For hours the chase went on, yet he could not shake them off.

In the fury and terror of the hunt, they had come very close to the edge of the world, but neither Nanuk or his pursuers noticed. When at last they reached it, they plunged straight over into the sky and turned into stars.

To this day, Nanuk and the hunters live in the night sky above, apart from one hunter. He had dropped his mitten in the hunt and went back to Earth to retrieve it. Once back he decided to remain, instead telling everyone about what had happened to his friends and the great bear.

