

Folk Song: The Snow, It Melts the Soonest

The origins of "The Snow, It Melts the Soonest" are unknown, but it dates back to at least 1821 when it was published in a collection of English folk songs in *Blackwell's Magazine*, contributed by 19th century English author and politician, Thomas Doubleday (under the pseudonym of Mr. Shufflebotham).

In the 1880s, the melody was again recorded in a book of English folk songs and music called, *Northumbrian Minstrelsy*. It was noted that Doubleday, "gave some verses adapted to the melody which he had heard from a street singer in Newcastle, and describes it as 'An air that has been familiar to me since I was penny can high.'"

Rich with the imagery and metaphor of the transition from winter to spring, the lyrics tell the story of a cheeky, self-assured fellow who is confident he can change the mind and win the heart of the lass he is wooing. Perhaps he thinks he can melt her iciness towards him just as the springtime melts the snow.

The Snow, It Melts the Soonest

English folk song / Traditionnel anglais

1. The snow it melts the soon-est when the winds be-gin to
sing, and the corn it rip - ens fast-est when the
frosts are set - ting in. And when a wo - man tells me
that my face she'll soon for - get be -
fore we part I'll wage a crown, she'll be fain to fol - low it yet.

The musical score is written in G major (one flat) and 4/4 time. It consists of five staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one flat. The melody is simple and folk-like. Chords are indicated above the notes: Dm, Am, Dm, Am. The second staff continues the melody with chords Dm, Dm, Am, Dm. The third staff features a change in time signature to 3/4, with chords G, C/G, G, Dm, Am. The fourth staff returns to 4/4 time with chords Dm, G, C, Bb. The fifth staff concludes with chords F, B, Am, Gm, Dm, Am, Dm. The piece ends with a double bar line and a 3/4 time signature.

2. The snow it melts the soonest when the winds begin to sing,
And the swallow flies without a thought as long as it is spring.
But when spring goes and winter blows, my love, then you'll be fain,
For all your pride to follow me across the stormy main.

3. The snow it melts the soonest when the winds begin to sing,
And the bee that flew when summer shone in winter cannot sting. And I've seen
a woman's anger melt between the night and morn, So it's surely not a harder
thing to melt a woman's scorn.

4. Oh, never say me me farewell here, no farewell I'll receive,
For you shall set me to the style, then kiss and take your leave.
And I'll stay here till the woodcock calls and the martin takes the wing, For the
snow it melts the soonest when the winds begin to sing.