

I thought my last moments were come, I found myself rapidly rising, a gleam of light appeared above me, it grew brighter and brighter, and in a few seconds I was on the surface of the water, striking out for my life. I soon managed to reach the large raft, to which, as I said before, nearly seventy persons were clinging.

"The sea, though not high, was somewhat rough, and the waves constantly dashed over us, each time bearing away some of those who were too exhausted to hold on firmly to the raft. The poor women were the first to go; and one after another they relaxed their hold and sank into their watery graves. It was almost impossible to help one another, for those who for a moment relaxed their hold were almost certain to be washed away. It was awful to see the bodies of those who were drowned, but prevented from sinking by the life-belts that encircled them, floating around us or washed to and fro by the waves, sometimes under and sometimes over the raft.

"Presently night came on; it was a night of agony and suffering, such as it is to be hoped few have had to endure. As hour after hour passed by, numbers of my fellow-sufferers became wearied out and let go their hold, and were immediately swallowed up by the hungry waves. When at last morning dawned there were only three on the raft besides myself, and in the course of a few hours they too were washed away; and, out of the numbers that had sought refuge on that frail bark, I alone survived.

"All through that day I supported myself as best I could, hoping against hope that I might yet be picked up. As night came on again, however, I gave myself up to despair. Worn out as I was by want of food and by the unceasing attention I had to give to prevent myself being washed away, I felt that I could not endure another night. My strength was failing, my sight was becoming dim, so that I could scarcely perceive objects only a few feet from me. Even the ghastly faces of the dead that seemed to be looking up at me from under the raft were hardly discernible.