

girls. "We cannot swim through such a sea as that."

"And no boat would dare put out, with all that ice afloat, even if anyone saw us," replied another, sadly.

31. So, as there was nothing else to be done, they sat at the edge of what had been the cavern floor, and watched the blocks of ice tossing with the waves. They were all feeling sad and very hungry, and several of the babies were crying lustily, when suddenly they were startled by the sound of a voice, though there was no one to be seen.

32. "Come now, what's all this noise about?" said the voice.

The children looked around them in all directions, but could not make out where the voice came from. At length, one of the girls, pointing to a rock just above the level of the water, cried, "See! Can it have been that seal?"

33. The others looked where she pointed; and, so nearly were the rock and the seal of the same colour, it was not strange that, until then, they had failed to notice the huge creature that was gazing up at them with almost human eyes of wonder. And, sure enough, it was the seal that had been talking to them!

34. "Well, what's the matter?" the seal enquired again, when he found that they had at last seen him.