

holes. While walking cautiously round it, my mind grew somewhat composed, and I resolved not to advance any farther, until I had fixed upon some way of regulating my course; but I found this to be impossible. I vainly endeavoured to discern land, and the moaning of the wind among the distant forests alone indicated that there was any at all near me. Strong and irregular blasts, loaded with snow and sleet, swept wildly along, involving every thing in obscurity, and bewildering my steps with malignant influence. I sometimes fancied I saw the spot where our post was situated, and even the trees and houses upon it; but the next moment a gust of wind would whirl away the fantastic shaped fogs that had produced the agreeable illusion, and reduce me to actionless despair. I fired my gun repeatedly, in the hope that the report would bring some one to my assistance; however, the shores alone acknowledged, by feeble echoes, that the sound had reached them.

The storm increased in violence, and at intervals the sound of the ice breaking up, rolled upon my ear like distant thunder, and seemed to mutter appalling threats. Alarm and fatigue made me dizzy, and I threw down my gun and rushed forwards in the face of the drifting showers, which were now so thick as to affect my respiration. I soon lost all sense of fear, and began to feel a sort of frantic delight in struggling against the careering blasts. I hurried on, sometimes running along the brink of a circular opening in the ice, and sometimes leaping across frightful chasms—all the while unconscious of having any object in view. The ice every where creaked under my feet, and I knew that death awaited me, whether I fled away or remained on the same spot. I felt as one would do, if forced by some persecuting fiend to range over the surface of a black and shoreless ocean; and aware, that whenever his tormentor withdrew his sustaining power, he would sink down and be suffocated among the billows that struggled beneath him.

At last night came on, and, exhausted by fatigue and mental excitement, I wrapped myself in my cloak, and lay down upon the ice. It was so dark that I could not have moved one step without running the risk of falling into the lake. I almost wished that the

drowsiness, produced by intense cold, would begin to affect me; but I did not feel in the slightest degree chilled, and the temperature of the air was in reality above freezing. I had lain only a few minutes when I heard the howl of a wolf. The sound was indescribably delightful to my ear, and I started up with the intention of hastening to the spot from whence it seemed to proceed; but hopeless as my situation then was, my heart shrunk within me when I contemplated the dangers I would encounter in making such an attempt. My courage failed, and I resumed my former position, and listened to the undulations of the water as they undermined, and beat against the lower part of the ice on which I lay.

About midnight the storm ceased, and most of the clouds gradually forsook the sky, while the rising moon dispelled the darkness that had previously prevailed. However, a thick haze covered the heavens, and rendered her light dim and ghastly, and similar to that shed during an eclipse. A succession of noises had continued with little interruption for several hours, and at last the ice beneath me began to move. I started up, and, on looking around, saw that the whole surface of the lake was in a state of agitation. My eyes became dim, and I stretched out my arms to catch hold of some object, and felt as if all created things were passing away. The hissing, grinding, and crashing, produced by the different masses of ice coming into collision, were tremendous. Large fragments sometimes got wedged together, and impeded the progress of those behind them, which being pushed forward by others still farther back, were forced upon the top of the first, and fantastic-shaped pyramids and towers could be indistinctly seen rising among the mists of night, and momentarily changing their forms, and finally disorganizing themselves with magical rapidity and fearful tumult. At other times, an immense mass of ice would start up into a perpendicular position, and continue gleaming in the moonshine for a little period, and then vanish like a spectre among the abyss of waters beneath it. The piece of ice on which I had first taken my position, happened to be very large and thick, but other fragments were soon forced above it, and

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It was n neither saw Vol. X.