

Juell, and I set off. There seemed to be a slight breeze from the south, so we rowed to the north side of the floe, to get to leeward of the animals. From time to time their sentry raised his head, but apparently did not see us. We advanced slowly, and soon we were so near that we had to row very cautiously. Juell kept us going, while Henriksen was ready in the bow with a harpoon, and I behind him with a gun. The moment the sentry raised his head the oars stopped, and we stood motionless; when he sunk it again, a few more strokes brought us nearer.

Body to body they lay close-packed on a small floe, old and young ones mixed. Enormous masses of flesh they were! Now and again one of the ladies fanned herself by moving one of her flappers backward and forward over her body; then she lay quiet again on her back or side. "Good gracious! what a lot of meat!" said Juell, who was cook. More and more cautiously we drew near. While I sat ready with the gun, Henriksen took a good grip of the harpoon shaft, and as the boat touched the floe he rose, and off flew the harpoon. But it struck too high, glanced off the tough hide, and skipped over the backs of the animals. Now there was a pretty to do! Ten or twelve great weird faces glared upon us at once; the colossal creatures twisted themselves round with incredible celerity, and came waddling with lifted heads and hollow bellowings to the edge of the ice where we lay. It was undeniably an imposing