

It had rummaged about in every hole and corner where there seemed to be any chance of finding food, and had rooted in the snow after anything the dogs had left, or whatever else it might be. It had then gone to the lanes in the ice, and skirted them carefully, no doubt in the hope of finding a seal or two, and after that it had gone off between the hummocks and over floes, with a surface of nothing but slush and water. Had the surface been good I should no doubt have overtaken Master Bruin, but he had too long a start in the slushy snow.

“A dismal, dispiriting landscape—nothing but white and gray. No shadows—merely half-obliterated forms melting into the fog and slush. Everything is in a state of disintegration, and one’s foothold gives way at every step. It is hard work for the poor snow-shoer who stamps along through the slush and fog after bear-tracks that wind in and out among the hummocks, or over them. The snow-shoes sink deep in, and the water often reaches up to the ankles, so that it is hard work to get them up or to force them forward; but without them one would be still worse off.

“Every here and there this monotonous grayish whiteness is broken by the coal-black water, which winds, in narrower or broader lanes, in between the high hummocks. White, snow-laden floes and lumps of ice float on the dark surface, looking like white marble on a black ground. Occasionally there is a larger dark-colored pool, where the wind gets a hold of the water and