

years old. I said at the dinner-table that if a year ago we were unanimous in believing that the *Fram* was a good ship, we had much better grounds for that belief to-day, for safely and surely she is carrying us onward, even if the speed be not excessive, and so we drank the *Fram's* good health and good progress. I did not say too much. Had I said all that was in my heart, my words would not have been so measured; for, to say the truth, we all of us dearly love the ship, as much as it is possible to love any impersonal thing. And why should we not love her? No mother can give her young more warmth and safety under her wings than she affords to us. She is indeed like a home to us. We all rejoice to return to her from out on the icy plains, and when I have been far away and have seen her masts rising over the everlasting mantle of snow, how often has my heart glowed with warmth towards her! To the builder of this home grateful thoughts often travel during the still nights. He, I feel certain, sits yonder at home often thinking of us; but he knows not where his thought can seek the *Fram* in the great white tract around the Pole. But he knows his child; and though all else lose faith in her, he will believe that she will hold out. Yes, Colin Archer, could you see us now, you would know that your faith in her is not misplaced.

“I am sitting alone in my berth, and my thoughts glide back over the two years that have passed. What demon is it that weaves the threads of our lives, that