

breakfast of seal's - flesh, seal - liver, blubber, and soup, here I lie dreaming dreams of brightness; life is all sunshine again. What a little incident is necessary to change the whole aspect of affairs! Yesterday and the last few days were dull and gloomy; everything seemed hopeless, the ice impassable, no game to be found; and then comes the incident of a seal rising near our kayaks and rolling about round us. Johansen has time to give it a ball just as it is disappearing, and it floats while I harpoon it—the first and only bearded seal (*Phoca barbata*) we have seen yet—and we have abundance of food and fuel for upward of a month. We need hurry no longer; we can settle down, adapt the kayaks and sledges better for ferrying over the lanes, capture seals if possible, and await a change in the state of the ice. We have eaten our fill both at supper and breakfast, after being ravenous for many days. The future seems bright and certain now; no clouds of darkness to be seen any longer.

“It was hardly with great expectations that we started off on Tuesday evening. A hard crust which had formed on the top of the soft snow did not improve matters; the sledges often cut through this, and were not to be moved before one lifted them forward again, and when it was a case of turning amid the uneven ice they stuck fast in the crust. The ice was uneven and bad, and the snow loose and water-soaked, so that, even with snow-shoes on, we sank deep into it ourselves. There were lanes besides, and though tolerably easy to