At the uttermost parts of the sea

A couple of large ships were sent up toward the North Pole, to discover the boundaries of land and sea and how far it would be possible for the human race to penetrate in that direction.

A year and a day had already passed, and with great difficulty they had traveled high up amid mist and ice. Now winter had set in again; the sun was gone, and one long night would last for many, many weeks. All around them was a vast, unbroken plain of ice, and ships were moored fast to the ice itself. The snow was piled high, and huts were made of it in shape of beehives, some as big as our barrows, others just large enough to give shelter for two or four men. However, it wasn't dark, for the northern lights flashed red and blue-it was like everlasting, splendid fireworks-and the snow glittered brightly; here the night was one long, blazing twilight.

At the time when it was brightest, troops of natives came, strange-looking figures, dressed in hairy skins and dragging sleighs made from ice blocks. They brought skins in large bundles, which served as warm rugs for the snow huts and were used as beds and bed blankets, upon which the sailors could rest, while outside the cold was more intense than we ever experience even in our severest winters.

And the sailors remembered that at home it was still autumn, and they thought of the warm sunbeams and the glorious crimson and gold of the leaves still clinging to the trees. The clock showed it was evening and time for going to bed, and in one of the snow huts two sailors had already lain down to rest.

The younger of these two had with him his most treasured possession from home, the Bible that his grandmother had given him at parting. From childhood he had known what was written in it; every night it was under his pillow, and every day he read a portion; and often as he lay on his couch he remembered those words of holy comfort, "If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

Under the influence of those sublime words of faith, he closed his eyes. Sleep came to him, and dreams came with sleep. He dreamed that, although the body may sleep, the soul must ever be awake. He felt this life, and he seemed to hear the old well-known songs so dear to him; a gentle summer breeze seemed to breathe upon him, and a light shone down upon his couch, as though the snowy dome above had become transparent. He lifted his head and lo! the dazzling white light did not come from the walls or the ceiling; it was the light of the great wings of an angel, into whose gentle, shining face he looked.

Rising up from out of the pages of the Bible, as from the mouth of a lily blossom, the angel extended its arms way out, and the walls of the snow hut sank back as if they were a light airy veil of fog. The green meadows and hills of his home lay about him, with the red-brown woods bathed in the gentle sunshine of a beautiful autumn day. The storks' nest was empty now, but the apples still clung to the wild apple trees; though leaves had fallen, the red hips glistened and the blackbird whistled in the little green cage over the window of the little farmhouse-his old home. The blackbird was whistling a tune that he himself had taught him, and the old grandmother twined chickweed about the bars of the cage, just as her grandson had always done.

The pretty young daughter of the blacksmith was standing at the well, drawing water, and as she waved to the grandmother, the latter beckoned to her and showed her a letter that had come that morning from the frigid lands of the North, far, far away, from the North Pole itself, where her grandson now was-safe beneath the protecting hand of God. They laughed and they cried; and all the while that young sailor whose body slept amid the ice and snow while his spirit roamed the world of dreams, under the angel's wings, saw and heard everything and laughed and cried with them.

Then from the letter they must read aloud these words from the Bible, "Even at the uttermost parts of the sea His right hand shall hold me fast"; and a beautiful psalm song sounded about him, and the angel folded its wings. Like a soft, protecting veil they fell close over the sleeper.

The dream was ended, and all was darkness in the snow hut; but the Bible lay beneath the sailor's head, while faith and hope dwelt in his heart. God was with him and his home was with him, "even at the uttermost

parts of the sea."

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