

THE TERROR

Series Pilot "Go for Broke"

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Based on the book by Dan Simmons

Second Draft Polish
26 September 2013

Seconds-in-command are a fascinating if somewhat doleful bunch: their labor is often as great, or greater, than those under whom they serve, and their character is less often blemished by egoism and hubris--after all, if it had been, they'd never have lasted very long in such a nearly commanding position. Sometimes however, when the firsts are fallen, the story of the seconds takes on a grim and strange fascination; we yearn to see how they will perform when the mantle of responsibility is fitted to their shoulders."

Russell A. Potter from his review of
Michael Smith's Captain Francis Crozier: Last Man Standing?

A Note About the **SHIPS**:

Erebus and *Terror* are roughly the same size with the same basic layout. Each is a maze that takes a little time to learn, but for the purposes of the pilot, it is enough to know the names of the decks and the general purpose of each.

From top to bottom, they are:

The **UPPER DECK**. Three-masted and open to the weather. It is divided into the Foredeck with its Foremast near the bow, the "Waist" in the middle with its Main Mast, and the Quarterdeck aft with its Mizzen Mast. The Quarterdeck may only be walked by Officers as it is where the Wheel and Tiller sit at the stern for steerage. The main hatch with its ladderway down to lower decks is just aft of the main mast.

The **LOWER DECK**. One level down the main ladderway. The Senior Officers' Cabin and Messes are aft of the ladderway and the Fore-castle or "Fo's'cle" is forward where the rest of the men sleep and eat. As well, the Sick Bay is at the bow of the ship, forward of the Galley.

The **ORLOP DECK**. Two levels down the main ladderway. All the workshops are on this level, as well as the locked storerooms for victuals, spirits, heavy clothing, firearms, and sails, as well as and other supplies.

The **HOLD**. Three levels down the main ladderway and the bottom level of the ship. It sits under the water line and is where the Engine Room, boilers, and water supply tanks are, as well as most of the coal and many thousands of rats.

A Note About **CHAIN OF COMMAND**:

Some of the men's titles are a confusing. For our purposes, it is a character's position in the chain of command, rather than the title in front of his name, which is important, and breaks down on the ships as follows:

Sir John Franklin is **COMMANDER** of the expedition entire and has his berth aboard *Erebus*, the lead or "flagship" of the expedition.

Under him, each of the two ships has a **CAPTAIN**: Captain Francis Crozier is his Second-In-Command and captain of *Terror*, Commander James Fitzjames is Third-In-Command and captain of *Erebus*.

Under each captain are the other "Senior Wardroom Officers" which include three **LIEUTENANTS** per ship, and each vessel's two highest-ranking non-military sailors: the **ICE MASTER**, responsible for managing conditions specific to polar sailing; and the **SECOND MASTER**, in charge of the more general sailing of the vessel.

Lieutenants typically came into their commissions from lives of privilege, and therefore generally knew much less about actual sailing than the masters, if anything at all.

Under these officers are the "Junior Wardroom Officers" including the **MATES** and **SURGEONS**.

Under them are "Warrant Officers" and "Petty Officers" all tied to specific specialized jobs such as Engineer or Cook, or the assistants ('mates') to any of these jobs. Also included at this level are the 'Captains' (managers in this context) of specific parts of the ship such as the Hold or the Fo's'cle.

Under these officers are the **ROYAL MARINES**, tasked with security and discipline.

And under the Royal Marines are the **ABLE SEAMEN** (aka "ABs") and under them, the ships' **BOYS**.

TEASER

INT. LONDON'S ROYAL OPERA HOUSE, MAIN HALL -- DAY

A massive velvet curtain sways under its proscenium. HUSHED MOVEMENT can be heard behind it. Then the whole thing opens and an AUDIENCE lets out a COLLECTIVE GASP.

TITLE CARD: "1844. London."

It is a *tableaux vivant* on an epic scale. Before a river valley painted on backcloth, two Indian tribes war with bows and axes. British actors in redface, streaked with blood and war-paint, hold perfectly still in wide-eyed rictuses of murder.

PRESENTER

"Algonquian, Massacred by Mohawk."

The house is full to the rafters with Victorian Londoners out for an afternoon of theatre. They APPLAUD, amazed. In one of the best boxes sits SIR JOHN FRANKLIN (59) with his wife LADY JANE (53) and their niece SOPHIA CRAYCROFT (28).

FRANKLIN

Fear not. Jesuits saved them.

After a long moment, the curtain closes on this particular "window to the world." Movement begins again behind it.

Behind the Franklins sit two men in Royal Navy dress uniforms, the dashing SIR JAMES ROSS (44) with his wife LADY ANN (26), as well as CAPTAIN FRANCIS CROZIER (48).

Crozier is a man you'd forget upon passing in the street, except if he were looking at you. There's an impatient candor in his eyes, that of a horse waiting for his race. His energy is out of place here, amid all the gilt and leisure. He leans up to Sophia, revealing his Northern Irish accent:

CROZIER

Did that disturb you?

SOPHIA

Which part? The savages, or that they became Catholics?

Sophia is far lovelier than he is handsome, but their humors fit together somehow. He lowers his voice so only she hears.

CROZIER

I'm going to ask you a question tonight, Miss Craycroft. I want your answer to be "yes."

SOPHIA

No question is required, Francis.
You know that.

Lady Jane looks back, keeping tabs on their intimacy, to which she seems to have a cringing reaction.

CROZIER

But you'll hear me out.

Before Sophia can respond, the curtain opens to a new spectacle. The house SIGHS with pleasure. Lady Ann puts her hand on her husband's arm and whispers to Sir James:

LADY ANN

Darling, it's you!

A handsome actor depicting Ross stands on the quarterdeck of a triple-masted ship leading his men. The backcloth is painted with ice cliffs all bottle blue in the Antarctic night.

PRESENTER

"Sir James Ross at Furthest South."

On a scaffold above their heads is a mechanical *aurora australis*, made from snaking rows of glass beads reflecting hidden lamps of purple, green and gold. It undulates with color.

The audience CHEERS, as close by 10,000 miles to this strange locale as they will ever get. It may as well be the moon.

Behind the comely actor playing Ross stands a homely one depicting Crozier. The man has an under bite and thirty extra lbs. Crozier regards his double: Is this how he is seen?

ROSS

You've dropped a stone at least
since we've been back--

CROZIER

And seen a dentist, apparently.

Franklin turns and gives them a thin, but sincere smile.

FRANKLIN

Bravo, gentlemen.

Then the actor playing Ross breaks the *tableaux* by sweeping a hand toward the *real* Sir James Ross, the John Glenn of his age. People cheer and get to their feet forcing Ross to stand and take a bow. Ross gestures to Crozier, who doesn't budge.

ROSS

Get up, old man--!

Crozier gives Sophia a look and gets up, but not all the way, sort of half-crouching as if someone's pointing a gun at him.

In the Admiralty box opposite, SIR JOHN BARROW (80) applauds as well. Next to him are his son GEORGE BARROW (30s) and his son's friend, JAMES FITZJAMES (32), also in his Navy Uniform.

SIR JOHN BARROW
Come spring, the Admiralty is going
to make one of those men very
happy.

George turns to Fitzjames, looking at him meaningfully.

GEORGE BARROW
Father means the Passage. He thinks
it's time to try again--

SIR JOHN BARROW
It's high time. I want to see it
found while I still live.

The actors who were playing Indians come to the wings to see what the cheering is about. Some have already started wiping their makeup off, in limbo now between savage and Englishmen.

SIR JOHN BARROW (CONT'D)
I do not jest when I say the future
of Britain very likely sits some-
where up in that box.

THEIR POV: Now Franklin is taking a bow for the crowd, urged to his feet by Lady Jane.

END TEASER

The OPENING CREDITS incorporate a 1840's map which shows exactly what explorers of the period would have known about the topography of the Arctic. It reveals something completely foreign to modern eyes: A huge portion of its subject is entirely blank, a region thou-sands of miles across where no European has ever set foot.

ACT ONE

EXT. M'CLINTOCK CHANNEL -- DAY

The vast, existentially terrifying M'Clintock Channel. A hundred miles wide and choked with newly calved icebergs, it is a slow-driving train of ice grinding its way southeast under unimaginable factors of pressure. This is pack ice, aka "the pack." It QUAKES and DETONATES as it goes, a frozen hell.

Fifty miles to the east, on the *other* side of barren Prince of Wales Island, is a much calmer, narrower channel in which two flecks of brown appear. They are two ships cutting their way through thin, summer ice, and they are headed southwest.

It is clear that, at some point to the south, and in not very many miles, these two channels will converge.

EXT. *TERROR*, QUARTERDECK -- DAY

CLOSE ON: A brass and oak box compass. The needle is pointing north, but every few moments it twitches--east, then south.

Crozier is standing over the compass. He is a changed man from the teaser. Heavier. More melancholic. And perhaps hung-over. The urgency in his eyes has dimmed almost to nothing.

LITTLE (O.S.)
Captain Crozier--

TITLE CARD: **September, 1846.**

Crozier realizes someone is speaking to him and looks up. 1ST LIEUTENANT EDWARD LITTLE (40) is watching the compass also.

LITTLE (CONT'D)
Why does it pulse like that, Sir?

They are standing on the quarterdeck of *Terror*, a three-masted Vesuvius-class bomb vessel, 102 x 27 feet. Men are up in the riggings, hauling lines, trimming the topsails. They are under half sail, running. Low black cliffs can be seen to the west and east sheltering this unnamed straight.

CROZIER
Magnetic north wanders, miles every day. In circles, mainly.

LITTLE
We must be quite near to it, then!
Got the world in harness. We should raise a glass--

CROZIER

A glass?

LITTLE

To celebrate. For the men. It'll be tall headlines. --For the men.

CROZIER

Right. Double grog, then, Edward.

Little looks him over, confused why something as momentous is having no effect on him. *Terror's* boatswain calls back:

BOATSWAIN

Erebus is signalling, Captain.

Crozier can see a man flag-signalling to them from the mizzen-top of *Erebus*, the expedition flagship sailing a quarter mile ahead. Crozier reads the flags for himself.

CROZIER

I'm in the salt box tonight, gentlemen. Fucking hell.

(to Little)

Tell Cook Sir John and Capt. Fitzjames will be coming aboard for dinner. He can choose what he likes from my storeroom. I know he dreams about that. And let Jopson know.

Little nods and heads for the ladderway. Crozier calls after:

CROZIER (CONT'D)

Not the beef tongue. I won't spend what of it I have left, on anyone.

He sees his boatswain chuckling.

CROZIER (CONT'D)

It's the little things that get you through, Mr. Lane.

BOATSWAIN

Agreed, Sir.

EXT. *TERROR*, MAINMAST -- DAY

Above them, 40' up the mainmast--higher even the maintop platform where the ship's Ice Master is surveying the seas ahead with his scope--two ship's boys, DAVID YOUNG (20) and ROBERT GOLDING (21), practice their lashings with AB WILLIAM STRONG (24). The view from here is dizzying; they are nearly a 100' above the surface of the water.

While they work, Golding breaks off icicles from a shroud and drops them down through the rigging to where *Terror's* mascot NEPTUNE, a big black Newfoundland, catches them.

STRONG

Careful there. Captain sees you bombing Neptune, you'll be up to your nose in hold duty.

Young recreates the lashing for Strong.

STRONG (CONT'D)

Good. Do it again. Eyes closed now.

Young gets his footing and then shuts his eyes.

YOUNG

If we're that close to the pole, we're golden, right? We'll see King William Land any day--

GOLDING

Look who's an expert.

YOUNG

Mr. Farr showed me on a chart. Past King William Land it's west all the way to China. We'll be out this year. That's what Mr. Farr says.

Young is a good student, but the lashing is trickier with his eyes closed. Suddenly, he sees, subliminally quick:

FLASH ON: The massive head of a white bear, nose right in the camera, but with the eyes and stretched grin of a man.

Young nearly loses his balance. Strong has to grab his elbow. The SHIP'S BELL is RUNG TWICE. Half the men in the riggings begin climbing toward the ratlines.

STRONG

Liven up, Young! You'll go right over.

Young opens his eyes and looks around, a little dazed. Golding drops another icicle, but sees too late that one of the ship's Royal Marines is now giving the dog a scratch. He peers up and points at Golding.

GOLDING

Blast it--

YOUNG

Ha! You caught the monkey now.

INT. *TERROR*, LADDERWAY / FO'C'SLE -- DAY

The first shift of seamen streams down the ladderway to the lower deck for dinner. As they come down, the Mates hand them their daily drams of lemon juice. Each man knocks his back as he passes, wincing at its sourness.

INT. *TERROR*, CROZIER'S CABIN -- DAY

Crozier is dressing for dinner, putting on his formal blues. His Steward THOMAS JOPSON (29) is with him, and very precise in his job. He whisks a lint brush over Crozier's shoulders.

CROZIER

Of all the hardships of Discovery
Service this may be the most grim.

JOSPON

Turnip soup and calf's head. Then a
pippin pudding. It will be over be-
fore you know it, Sir.

CROZIER

It won't. We'll have to hear the
whole story of that massive guano
deposit off Namibia, or the Liver-
pool Silver Cup again. I'm inclined
to put the food in my ears.

(beat)

Sorry, Jopson. I suppose that's
some kind of treason.

JOSPON

I haven't settled the matter of spi-
rits for tonight, Sir. I know Sir
John abstains. Alsop's for the rest
Is there anything you require?

CROZIER

(with a hint of shame)

I'll take care of my requirements.

Jopson nods. Well practiced at discretion, neither man looks at the other. Jopson begins on Crozier's lapels.

INT. *TERROR*, FO'C'SLE -- DAY

The crew is preparing for dinner in the forecastle--the huge area amidships where all the seamen, Royal Marines, and Petty Officers live. The tables are being lowered from the ceiling by pulleys, and lidded seamen's chests do double duty as seating, illustrating how ingeniously the ships save space.

In the middle of the open forecastle stands the galley--four thin walls built around a massive iron cook stove. The cook stirs his pots and works the thing like a locomotive--making adjustments, opening and closing vents, and shoving in coal.

When all the tables are down, the cook rings a bell and the men start to line up, plates in hand.

EXT. *TERROR*, SHIP'S WAIST -- DAY

An open gig is rowing over from *Erebus*. *Terror's* crew makes ready to receive it. They expertly guide her up to the accommodation ladder where Franklin and Fitzjames board. (NOTE: This is the same Fitzjames who was with Sir John Barrow and his son in the teaser.)

Everyone who is not manning a sail knuckles a salute as Franklin and Fitzjames make their way to the hatch. Fitzjames greets Neptune warmly, Franklin the men.

INT. *TERROR*, FO'C'SLE -- NIGHT

Below, the seamen have sat down four to a table and are busy shoving salt pork into their mouths. Caulker's Mate CORNELIUS HICKEY (26) sits at a Petty Officers table. He's a Yorkshireman, wiry, with beautiful nervous eyes, like those of a caffeineated saint. He watches as:

Franklin and Fitzjames come down the ladderway. Neptune is carried down and follows them aft into "Officers' Country."

WILSON

That bloody dog whined all last night. Must be bears near. Right wind, he can smell 'em at a mile.

HICKEY

What's that dog's rank, anyway?
Ever wonder that?

The other men at the table--Captain of the Forecastle RUBEN MALE (29), Carpenter's Mate ALEXANDER WILSON (29) and Captain of the Hold WILLIAM GODDARD (41)--all look at him.

WILSON

He's on deck most nights. I guess you'd call that watch duty. That'd make him an AB, or a Marine.

GODDARD

He can walk the quarterdeck; that makes him a Petty Officer at least.

They are both being sarcastic. Hickey ignores their tone.

HICKEY

But some nights he's back there in Officer's Country. Petty Officers can't sleep aft, so is he considered a Wardroom Officer, then?

GODDARD

The dog?

HICKEY

It's of consequence. Puttin' a dog above a man. Who serves who in that arrangement?

Finally, the other men burst out laughing.

MALE

I heard you pulled double watch for givin' Mr. Hornby lip. Now you ask the bloody dog yourself?!

INT. *TERROR*, OFFICERS' MESS -- DAY

Franklin now sits at the head of Crozier's table. Crozier has been displaced to one side. Fitzjames sits on the other. Crozier's three lieutenants are there, as are Surgeon JOHN PEDDIE (40s) and the ship's Clerk. Fitzjames is holding court.

FITZJAMES

He was being pulled along with the ebbing tide, right out of the Mersey estuary. I dove in before I thought to remove my boots.

Jopson and a second steward clear away their soup course, stepping over the dog lying beside Crozier.

FITZJAMES (CONT'D)

They perished, as did my pocket watch. But the *man* was saved.

Everyone laughs. Everyone but Crozier, who looks plastered.

FITZJAMES (CONT'D)

I was given an inscribed cup, of silver. For bravery. More of a chalice, really.

CROZIER

Tell us about *shit island*, why don't you? That's a capital story--

FITZJAMES

Pardon?

Franklin steps in and shifts the conversation. Jopson tops off Crozier's water glass.

FRANKLIN

Mr. Reid and I chatted about the ice today. He tells me we've started sailing past slabs he thinks are not part of the summer break-up.

Crozier looks up.

CROZIER

Old ice?

FRANKLIN

He's not concerned. He thinks we're close to an intersection with some channel coming down from the north, bringing some bergy bits with it.

Beside him, Little discreetly palms something from his mouth, a bit perhaps, and deposits it next to his plate.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

It means our little summer straight is coming to an end. It has yet to be named so I was thinking Sir John Ross could be honored thusly.

FITZJAMES

Here here.

Franklin glances at Crozier, genuinely concerned for him.

FRANKLIN

Do you approve, Francis?

Crozier just keeps his eyes on his plate now and says:

CROZIER

He'll be very pleased.

INT. *TERROR*, FO'C'SLE -- NIGHT

The boys Young and Golding sit with another of the ship's boys, THOMAS EVANS (20) and Strong.

YOUNG

And how would that work?

STRONG

On account of all the energy here,
at the pole. I heard when Sir John
got as far as he got in '23, his
hair grew 2" in a week. And he were--
n't even close to where we are--

EVANS

Think what's happening to us right
now, being on top of it and all.

Golding gestures to Strong's prematurely receding hairline.

GOLDING

Is that why you signed on, then,
Strong? To get your two inches?

STRONG

You're bloody right I did!

They all laugh. Young's laugh turns into coughing, and then
he suddenly vomits up a gout of blood. He touches his mouth.

STRONG (CONT'D)

David--?

Young coughs up more. Men all around turn to look. Young gets
to his feet, grabbing Golding with one hand. But he pitches
onto the table and twists onto his back, gagging on it.

HICKEY

Turn him over! He can't breathe!

STRONG

SURGEONS!

INT. *TERROR*, GREAT CABIN -- DAY

Crozier has taken the officers into *Terror's* Great Cabin, a
private 12 x 24' cabin in the stern for the ship's senior of-
ficers to socialize or play draughts. A floor-to-ceiling book-
case takes up one wall, containing 1200 volumes. In a corner
is a hand organ with metal discs, a song punched on each.

Franklin is sitting at the table with Fitzjames and Crozier,
stoking a pipe. Crozier has sobered up some.

CROZIER

His a ship's boy. His name is David
Young.

FITZJAMES

That's apt. How young is he?

CROZIER

20 must be. Actually, he's yours.
We took him aboard after wintering
at Beechy, to even out our numbers.

At the mention of Beechy Island, Franklin narrows his eyes.

FRANKLIN

I buried three men at that place.
I'll not bury another on this expedi-
tion. Not even a ship's boy.

CROZIER

I don't want to be the first to say
the word, Sir John, but we're all
thinking of it.

FRANKLIN

None of the men who died on Beechy
showed any signs of it. And even if
that is the case here, we'll be in
the Pacific before it has a chance
to don its undertaker's weepers.

CROZIER

Your confidence is reassuring, of
course.

FITZJAMES

You're not confident, Francis? With
all our progress? I don't know why.
We aren't rowing *drakkars* after all

CROZIER

In this place, technology still
bends at the knee for luck, James.

There is a knock at the door and Dr. Peddie comes in. He
tries to address Franklin and Crozier equally.

DR. PEDDIE

Sirs. We've given the boy a Dover's
Powder and settled his spasms. He's
resting as he can.

CROZIER

And your examination?

DR. PEDDIE

There is for certain a respiratory
component, but the boy has blood in
his stool, bright *and* dark, which
tells us he's bleeding both below
and above his rectum.

FITZJAMES
A vivid description.

DR. PEDDIE
I apologize. I'm not certain which
information you'd find most useful.

FRANKLIN
(finally out of patience)
Is it scurvy?

A beat. Dr. Peddie chooses his words carefully.

DR. PEDDIE
Though I see nothing to mark it as
such, I would not rule it out. *Some-*
thing is acting as an accelerant to
the boy's consumption, but we can-
not finger a culprit, as yet.

Franklin surprises them by standing.

FRANKLIN
Dr. Stanley can examine him. Per-
haps he can discern something more.

CROZIER
I'll send a boat for him.

FRANKLIN
No need. We'll take him with us.

CROZIER
Young? In his condition?

FRANKLIN
Yes, wrap him up and have our gig
readied.

DR. PEDDIE
I would hesitate to move him, Sir
John. I don't frankly know how much
spirit the boy has left in him.

FRANKLIN
He'll be tucked in just the same in
half an hour's time.

EXT. UNNAMED STRAIGHT -- DUSK

The sun is near to setting. The dropping temperatures have
created a huge, bright flare around the sun called a "sun
dog," as if the sun is being examined under a massive lens.

A breeze has come up. *Terror* advances through the slithering frost smoke to take the lead so Franklin's gig can float back to *Erebus*. There are indeed larger slabs of ice now, some big as houses, with just their tips showing above the surface.

EXT. *TERROR*, DECK -- DUSK

Crozier follows Franklin and Fitzjames to the rail, noticing the sun dog. He reads it like a mildly troubling headline.

Young, wrapped in blankets, is handed down the accommodation ladder to Franklin's gig, which is being towed alongside. He whispers something to the mate the officers can't hear, looking tense. Crozier gives the mate an inquiring look.

MATE

He says he don't want to go down on the ice, Sirs.

FRANKLIN

Nonsense. A bit of cool air might freshen him.

(to Crozier)

Tell your cook "yes" to the beef head, "no" to the capers he cooked it with. For future visits.

Crozier nods. He glances at Young, hoping he can't hear this.

FITZJAMES

Good night, Francis. Try to shake your brown study. All is well!

Fitzjames descends. Crozier watches the gig cast off and head back toward *Erebus*. He breathes, his ship again his own.

EXT. FRANKLIN'S GIG -- DUSK

Erebus and *Terror* loom tall in the fog, slicing through the pancake ice, which crowds the surface like china plates from a giant's table. In the gig between them, Fitzjames glances back and sees Crozier still at the rail, a lone silhouette.

FITZJAMES

There's nothing worse than a man who's lost his joy. He's become insufferable. And a lusington to boot.

FRANKLIN

We should be better friends to him, James.

FITZJAMES

I can't work out why he's even here. He disdains glory--even the glory of a good pudding--and he looks down on *we of the wardroom*. One look from him and I have to remind myself I'm not a fraud.

FRANKLIN

It is difficult for Francis. He wanted more.

FITZJAMES

He was off pickling himself in France telling everyone he *didn't* want more, that he was finished with Discovery Service.

FRANKLIN

If you ask me, he's done well for the son of a Dublin solicitor. And the seamen are drawn to him.
(with a hint of envy)
They trust him. Even in his cups.

Franklin's boatswain THOMAS TERRY (30s) adjusts for the approaching *Erebus*, guiding the gig in. A mate waits for them at the bottom of *Erebus'* accommodation ladder, 200 yards ahead.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

Still, I'll not have you speak of him uncharitably, James. He is my second. If something were to happen to me, you'd be *his* second. You should cherish that man.

Fitzjames is about to reply when *Erebus* slams into submerged ice and jerks to a sudden, violent halt.

They watch as seamen up in the riggings are thrown forward. The men scramble to grab a shroud or yard in time, a few end up dangling a hair's breadth from falling. One man drops.

EXT. *EREBUS*, MAINTOP -- DUSK

WILLIAM ORREN (36) is shaken out of the futtocks above the maintop. Men try to catch on to him as he falls past, but he plummets 60' through the mist, breaking his shoulder on a starboard gunwale and careening end over end down to the ice.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. FRANKLIN'S GIG -- DUSK

Men on *Erebus* are yelling *MAN OVERBOARD!* pointing starboard. The AB in the gig, TOM HARTNELL (25), starts rowing for all he's worth. Terry steers to get around *Erebus'* bow.

EXT. *EREBUS*, STARBOARD SIDE -- DUSK

Orren surfaces in the slush between pancakes, his hair immediately freezing. He struggles to keep his head up.

EXT. *EREBUS*, WAIST -- DUSK

Erebus' Second Mate HENRY COLLINS (30s) runs to the crowded gunwale for a dock line. He swings the coil once, twice--his aim crucial--then he lets the line fly. It arcs out toward Orren and lands a meter from him. A great throw, but Orren is too numb to grab it. Collins grabs another line.

COLLINS

Give me room--!

EXT. FRANKLIN'S GIG -- DUSK

The gig clears the bow and Franklin and the others see Orren.

FRANKLIN

All you're worth, lad!

Fitzjames stands up, conflicted about diving in. Instead he readies a gaff hook and extends it out in Orren's direction. Collins' second line actually hits Orren, but he's helpless. Orren has seconds to live. He's gone blue and can no longer fight the weight of his slops. He goes under in the gloaming.

FITZJAMES

TEN YARDS, MAN!

They can see Orren's face for a moment, luminous under the dark water, as he sinks. And then he is gone.

Fitzjames jams the gaff between the plates of ice as they row up to the spot, but can't hook the man. He tries again. Hartnell stows the oars and whips off his coat in a flash to go in after Orren, but Mr. Terry holds him back.

HARTNELL

LET ME TRY--!

FRANKLIN

Son! Sit down--! You muscled this gig like a steed. That seaman wouldn't want you to risk more.

HARTNELL

Billy Orren, Sir. That's who it is. Friend to my brother. And to me.

FITZJAMES

We've no more light. He's gone--

Fitzjames stows the gaff, unable to look at Hartnell. Young has seen all this from his cocoon of blankets.

FRANKLIN

Take us in, Mr. Terry. *Erebus* has stumbled. We must check her at the knees.

EXT. *EREBUS* AND *TERROR* -- NIGHT

The ships bob at anchor in the fog. The breeze, now a WIND, blows a steady, MOURNFUL song through the riggings

INT. *EREBUS*, ORLOP DECK -- NIGHT

On the Orlop Deck, there is a frenzy of lifted lanterns as the men pull back the stacks of lashed down crates and sacks of coal, checking the hull inch by inch for breeches.

INT. *EREBUS*, LADDERWAY -- NIGHT

2ND LT. H.T.D. LE VESCONTE (30s), impatient and shrill, gathers a party of men to go down further into the hold.

But AB MAGNUS MANSON (20s), hesitates at the ladder. He is a hulk of a man, lumpy and pale, as if made from three tons of porridge. He has to stoop everywhere below decks.

LE VESCONTE

What is this, Manson?

When he speaks, Manson has the high, soft voice of a child, and with a mental life no further evolved.

MANSON

I don't go down in there, Sir.

LE VESCONTE

You fit, don't you?

MANSON

Bein' below the waterline-- in the dark-- I don't like it, Sir. And with Orren out there now--

LE VESCONTE

What do you mean "Out there"?! William Orren's dead and been carried off by bear or a right whale by now, so get on with it--

He takes Manson's elbow and tries to usher him forward, but he pulls away from Le Vesconte's hand, so massively strong he nearly yanks the officer down the ladderway.

Le Vesconte looks into Manson's glaring eyes and relents immediately. He glances around and sees, mortified, that 1ST LT. GRAHAM GORE (30s) has seen this. Gore, as tall--though nowhere near as strong--as Mason, says to him, mildly:

GORE

Stay here and search with Lt. Fairholme, then. He needs muscle in the sail room.

Manson smiles with relief, and all menace is instantly gone.

MANSON

Aye, Sir! Thank you, Sir!

LE VESCONTE

But you're on can duty until I release you, do you understand me?

He heads off. Gore heads down the ladder into the hold, calling up to Le Vesconte as he goes, ruffling him:

GORE

Title's no substitute for common sense, Dundy. You're the size of that lad's *thumb*.

INT. *EREBUS*, ENGINE ROOM -- NIGHT

Gore comes into the hellish engine room. It's gloomy with coal dust, almost entirely taken up by a spectacular 15-ton steam engine taken from a locomotive. Stokers keep its belly full. Boiler and exhaust pipes elbow away from it in every direction, like spider's legs.

Gore approaches *Erebus'* Engineer JOHN GREGORY (30s) who is standing at the retraction mechanism for the ship's big screw propeller. The soot-black stokers salute him as he passes.

GREGORY

We must've caught a growler, Sir.
Under the surface. Mr. Reid says
we've been sailing in bigger ice.
We can't spin the propeller. Nor
retract it.

GORE

It's blocked?

GREGORY

Could be ice wedged up in the well,
but we won't know 'til first light.

This is not good news. Fitzjames looks at the steam engine,
for the moment, powerless now except for heating the men.

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- NIGHT

Young is being examined by *Erebus'* Lead Surgeon, DR. SAMUEL
STANLEY (40s) and the Assistant Surgeon, HENRY GOODSIR (30s).

DR. STANLEY

Breathe. --Again.

Young tries, but he coughs, leaving a smear of blood on his
lips. He's in pain, his breathing ragged. Stanley listens to
his lungs and heart. Young winces at the cold stethoscope.

DR. STANLEY (CONT'D)

What I fail to understand is why
you chose not to tell a soul when
you began feeling this coming on.

YOUNG

I been getting headaches all me
life. I didn't think nothing of it.
And we been drinking that squeezed
lemon every night--

DR. STANLEY

Crew is under the strictest orders
to come forward if unwell. I would
think burying three of your mates
on Beechy Island was sufficient mo-
tivation.

Goodsir can see how scared Young is, doubly so in the face of
Dr. Stanley's brusqueness. He says, more gently:

GOODSIR

The lemon juice is not a cure all.
Are you cold?

Young shakes his head. Dr. Stanley starts packing his things.

YOUNG

I didn't want to disappoint Sir
John--

DR. STANLEY

Well. He can praise your loyalty as
he buries you.

INT. *EREBUS*, LADDERWAY -- NIGHT

Goodsir walks Stanley to the ladderway, troubled.

GOODSIR

He's frightened, that boy.

Stanley turns to him, his eyes flashing in the cold.

DR. STANLEY

And very well that he is. If even
one of us falls ill through his in-
attention, he'll have much to an-
swer for. Here *and* wherever he's
bound. --Let him ponder that.

Dr. Stanley heads to bed. Manson comes through on "can duty"
with sacks full of EMPTY FOOD TINS. He climbs out the ladder-
way and Goodsir hears him empty the sacks over the side. CANS
CLATTER DOWN TO THE ICE.

INT. *EREBUS*, FRANKLIN'S CABIN -- NIGHT

Franklin and Fitzjames sit in Franklin's cabin listening to
Gore's report. Where this same space on *Terror* serves as the
Great Cabin, on *Erebus* it is exclusively Franklin's. Its huge
stern windows are curtained against drafts. *Erebus'* mascot, a
capuchin monkey named JACKO, watches from atop a wardrobe.

GORE

He all but assured me once we clear
out the jam, we'll be underway.

Fitzjames sees: One of Gore's cuffs is smudged with grease.

FRANKLIN

Good. I think that's all for now,
then, Graham. Since we don't appear
to be sinking, that is. Please wake
me if that should change.

He's smiling when he says this. Gore salutes and leaves.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

We've been running wing and wing
much of the summer. Our streak of
fortune was bound to end.

Fitzjames is trying to get up the steam to say something.

FITZJAMES

I was thinking-- perhaps we might
send out a shore party. To leave a
cylinder with a position report. We
haven't yet and--

FRANKLIN

I wouldn't waste the copper they're
made of. They'd be no better than
bread crumbs out there, James.

(beat)

Besides: I cannot wait to see Sir
John Ross's face when we return to
Greenhith and I give them all back.
I'd consider it a private victory
to prove him wrong in that regard.

FITZJAMES

Very well. We'll prove him wrong.

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- NIGHT

Goodsir is sitting up with Young, reading beside a dim lamp.
The curtain is drawn, but men can be heard SNORING and FART-
ING on the other side. When he glances up, he sees Young is a-
wake and looking at him. His face is wan, his breathing odd.

YOUNG

I don't want you to do to me --what
you did to Tom Hartnell's brother.

Goodsir leans forward and thinks how to answer.

GOODSIR

That was for the good of the crew.
We needed to know if it was scurvy
killed John Hartnell.

YOUNG

I want to go to my grave like I am.
Don't cut me open. You promise?

GOODSIR

If Sir John orders it done, we must
do. You may be a warning of things
to come. Hold fast, David.

Young takes small breaths. He looks away, then back.

YOUNG

If Sir John orders it I will do it.

Goodsir studies the boy's face, the pathos of this verb tense. He puts his book aside, Darwin's *Journals and Remarks*.

GOODSIR

Sometimes, when people are near to passing, I've heard they speak of a radiance--like a million daybreaks all in one--in which loved ones are there to welcome them over.

(kindly)

Who would that be for you?

YOUNG

I didn't know me father. Or me mum.

GOODSIR

Then there will be the angels. With songs lovelier than you've heard.

Goodsir privately curses himself for making this even worse. Young closes his eyes. When he opens them again, he looks even more a boy.

YOUNG

Will I fly? Up to God?

GOODSIR

Yes! You'll see the Passage first, as you go. Try to call back and let us know where it is--

Young comes as close to smiling as he can.

YOUNG

I wanted to be here. When we found it.

Young begins to cry, his tears full of horrible confusion. Goodsir fights his own tears.

GOODSIR

Do not fear it, David. I have been there, when souls have passed. A great peace descends--

YOUNG

They are glass.

Goodsir leans forward, not sure he's understood.

Young extends his hand, weakly. On his pinky is a ring of dull gold, with a tidy vertical row of three stones.

YOUNG (CONT'D)

But the ring is plate. It won't fetch much, but my sister should have it. She's no one now. --It's a nasty jar, but I can't get it off to give it to you.

He tries, but his knuckles are too swollen.

GOODSIR

I can ask cook for some grease, or I have an oil of castor--

Young shakes his head the slightest bit. He's so tired, so frightened. He will not last the night.

YOUNG

When you're sure I'm gone-- Find a way. And don't tell Sir John I was afraid.

GOODSIR

You have my word. --There's nothing to be afraid of.

EXT. *EREBUS* AND *TERROR* -- NIGHT

The ships as seen from below, two black shapes in a moonlit mosaic of ice.

INT. *TERROR*, CROZIER'S BERTH / GREAT CABIN -- NIGHT

Crozier is sitting at his tiny desk, his ship's log open in front of him. He can't make himself add to it, he just stares at the blank page. Finally, he gets up, takes a whiskey, and goes into the Great Cabin. Everyone else has gone to bed.

He looks at all the books--most of them accounts of other explorations. The spines read "Sir John" this and "Sir James" that. All knighted, all heroes. Finally, he takes out one of the punched-metal disks, puts it on the hand organ and cranks it slowly. It is a Schubert melody, *Gute Nacht*. It sounds sad and lovelorn, like Crozier himself.

INT. *EREBUS*, FO'C'SLE -- NIGHT

The men sleep strung up in their hammocks. Only the sick bay is lit, the thin curtain aglow from Goodsir's lamp behind it.

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- NIGHT

Goodsir has nodded off in his chair at Young's bedside. Beside him, Young is stirring in his bed, no longer asleep, but caught in some hazy limbo.

A SOUND begins to command his attention: A distant DETONATING of ICE on ICE--the terrifying theme song of the Pack. Then he sees, down past the foot of his bed:

YOUNG'S POV: AN ESQUIMAUX MAN stands motionless between a stack of crates and the curtain. He is very old, 90 at least, and naked, but he stands unshivering in the cold. He is sagging with age, but it's clear he was once a physically powerful man. His hands are clasped together on one hip in a posture of waiting, and his eyes--which twinkle blackly in the lamplight--are on Young.

Young YELLS weakly, waking Goodsir beside him.

YOUNG'S POV: The Esquimaux Man begin moving slowly toward the bed. He opens up his mouth and intones a low note. He has no tongue. Young cowers back. Overhead, there is no ceiling now. The room is open to the sky and it is snowing onto the bed.

Young begins RAVING, staring in horror across the sick bay, but at nothing Goodsir can see.

YOUNG'S POV: For a brief flash, we see an endless God's-eye view of the foglit Arctic and then, even more briefly--almost subliminally quick--a massive white bear with a man's hands and facial features stooping to fit inside the sick bay.

YOUNG
 RUN! --RUN! IT WANTS US TO RUN!

INT. *EREBUS*, FO'C'SLE -- NIGHT

Men lie in their hammocks shocked from sleep, listening to Young's terrifying ravings.

INT. *EREBUS*, FRANKLIN'S CABIN -- NIGHT

Franklin lies awake in his cabin. The COMMOTION is faint back here, but clear enough. He recites a calm prayer.

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- NIGHT

Young has backed up as far as he can, clutching Goodsir's arm. His eyes are on the ceiling as if something massive is about to lunge on top of him.

He braces for the impact, and that is how he dies. His breath simply stops. His body relaxes, his eyes wide. His bladder empties out onto the bunk.

A stunned beat. Goodsir checks Young's pulse. Then he detaches his arm from Young's hand and sees the boy was clutching him so hard he left nail marks in his forearm.

Goodsir takes a step away from the bed when sees what looks like a lone set of wet footprints on the floorboards leading to the bed.

He can't believe he is seeing until he reaches down and touches one. His fingertip is wet. He shuts his eyes, his scientific mind trying to impeach this detail. He can't. It's there.

INT. *EREBUS*, FO'C'SLE/CORRIDOR/OFFICER'S MESS -- NIGHT

Goodsir comes out and closes the curtain behind him. A few of the men have gotten down from hammocks in alarm, including Hartnell. They watch Goodsir pass and head aft.

Goodsir goes into Officer's Country, through the Junior Officer's Mess, and knocks on a door. From inside he hears:

DR. STANLEY (O.S.)

Come.

Goodsir slides open the door and finds Stanley is in his bed.

GOODSIR

I'm sorry to wake you. Young has passed.

DR. STANLEY

As if that weren't plain.
Cover him and get some rest, Henry.
You can do the post-mortem in the morning when the men go up. Sir John will have no shouting at the curtain this time.

GOODSIR

Is it necessary?

DR. STANLEY

Sir John has a flea in his ear about scurvy. He will ask.

(pointedly)

I'd think you'd want a chance to improve your craft after last time.

He nods, closes the door, and stands there terrified.

EXT. *EREBUS*, FOREDECK -- NIGHT

Up on deck, the night has cleared and quieted, lit with a bright moon. An AB is on watch at the bow of *Erebus*. He stamps his boots to keep warm and nods to the Royal Marine on watch aft. In the distance, Neptune is BARKING on the deck of *Terror*.

Hartnell comes up with PVT. WILLIAM PILKINGTON (30) to take over the watch. Hartnell still looks shaken by Young's demise.

PILKINGTON
(re: Neptune)
What's with him?

AB
He's been going on like that since the wind died. Something's got him spooked.

Hartnell takes off his welsh wig and listens, hard.

HARTNELL
Take off your wigs-- Don't you hear that?

Both the AB and Pvt. Pilkington do. The Marine leaving watch sees them and comes over. He too removes his wig and listens. There, in the far distance, is a QUAKING, DETONATING, and SHATTERING.

MARINE
What is that?

HARTNELL
Give me your glass--

The Marine hands him a folded six-draw brass telescope. Hartnell goes to the foremast and begins climbing.

PILKINGTON
Don't drop that--

HARTNELL
Put a thumb in it.

He climbs to the foretop, then up the ratlines all the way to the fore topgallant mast, about as high as he can climb. He can hear the sound more clearly here. He gets his feet steady and opens up the scope, steadying it on the mast itself. He scans the horizon and then, breathless, he sees it.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. FRANKLIN HOUSE, LIBRARY -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The 1840s map of the Arctic, now under glass. Crozier stands before it, alone in Franklin's library. His reflection hovers in the blank region north of King William Land, which itself is just a tentative shape of dotted lines and question marks.

SOPHIA (O.S.)

Hobbes' rung the gong for dinner.

He turns to find Sophia standing in the doorway.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

Francis, I've been so glad for your company. It's been a lovely summer, truly--

CROZIER

You said you would hear me out.

SOPHIA

But nothing has changed.

CROZIER

You say it's been a lovely summer, but you neglect to mention its also been a hot one. *Much* has changed.

SOPHIA

Not in this. You know my mind. I have no intention of becoming a captain's wife. I have seen that life and it is not one I aspire to.

CROZIER

In Van Diemen's Land, I hardly knew you. I panicked that proposal, I admit it. I'm not a Byron.

SOPHIA

No.

CROZIER

But I know you now: I would make you happy. I do make you happy.

SOPHIA

You do; your station does not. As unkind as that may seem now, it is to spare you my resentment later. I know with you I can be plain.

Crozier is stunningly heartbroken. His Irish anger glows.

CROZIER

With me, you've never hesitated to be plain.

SOPHIA

I won't apologize for affection. It isn't in me.

CROZIER

You are nearly thirty. No doubt you have had more succulent offers, but you've taken none, which I feel is because you may be waiting to see what's to become of me--

SOPHIA

Are we going to lose a friendship over love, Francis?

She sighs, vexed by how poor a sport he is being.

SOPHIA (CONT'D)

When you are not here, it is because you are gone for years in the world's most perilous corners. When you are here, you are on 14-shilling Royal Navy half pay, and mourning every step on dry ground.

CROZIER

False. There is nowhere I would rather be than here, now.

SOPHIA

I have seen your rooms. You haven't been on a ship in nearly a year, but in your dresser of ten drawers you use only two. Why?

CROZIER

That is habit.

SOPHIA

Does one not bring their habits to marriage?

CROZIER

I will use as many drawers as you require.

(beat)

I will not always be a captain.

SOPHIA

Won't you? You're Irish. You're middle bred. The Church of England gives you hives. And you have no ear, or taste, for politics.

CROZIER

The Admiralty will not refuse me a third time. They'll give me a full command.

He really believes this. Sophia comes up to him.

SOPHIA

Will it be south again, or north, this command of yours?

CROZIER

I will go in whichever direction lies the altar, Miss Craycroft.
(considering)
But I expect it will be north. There is talk of trying to find the Passage again.

SOPHIA

I'll never understand this mania for the *Passage*. To go thousands of miles to a place that *wants* you dead--

CROZIER

Economics, simply. And you seem to understand quite a lot about that.

She looks at him, finally vulnerable herself.

CROZIER (CONT'D)

I will go to sea once more as a first and be knighted for it. Then I will retire in glory to live out my years with you and our children.

LADY JANE (O.S.)

It will not happen.

They both start. Lady Jane is at the door. She has been listening, and levels her gaze at Crozier. Sophia is a little shocked at her aunt's intrusion, but Crozier doesn't flinch, telling her:

CROZIER

It must happen. Nothing else will do.

LADY JANE

Then this will be the great tragedy
of your life, Francis.

Then she pretends a smile, giving Sophia an exit.

LADY JANE (CONT'D)

Dearest. You should dress. Your
uncle is already down.

Sophia nods and Lady Franklin goes. Sophia watches Crozier a long moment for his reaction. Finally, consolingly, she says:

SOPHIA

Francis, you should marry a pole,
not a woman.

CROZIER

Perhaps. Just now, women seem al-
together too cold for me.
(bitterly)
A "great tragedy" indeed.

SOPHIA

--Or pray that it is. I don't want
any of you going to the ice again.

She touches his face. He kisses her then, and, for a moment,
it becomes mutual.

INT. FRANKLIN HOUSE, CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

In the hall, Lady Jane listens from the top of the stairs.

INT. FRANKLIN HOUSE, LIBRARY -- NIGHT

Finally, Sophia breaks the kiss and says:

SOPHIA

Come to dinner Francis. But for Hea-
ven's sake change your expression--
and your jacket--before you do.

She goes. He looks unsure on his feet, dizzy from both the
heat of the kiss and the steel of her rejection.

CUT TO:

INT. *TERROR*, CROZIER'S CABIN -- NIGHT

Crozier starts awake in his tiny cabin.

Jopson is standing half inside the narrow sliding door, holding a lamp and pitcher of hot water. The Preston illuminator over the bunk is still black as night.

JOPSON

I beg your pardon, Sir. I knocked,
but I couldn't rouse you.

Crozier gets up. When he does, he knocks over an empty whiskey bottle on the floor. Jopson pours the pitcher in the basin and then puts aside the bottle with the utmost discretion. He helps Crozier into his robe, then he prepares Crozier's horsehair toothbrush with a pinch of bicarbonate of soda.

JOPSON (CONT'D)

Mr. Blanky asks to see you on deck
as soon as you're disposed. They've
sighted something, Sir.

CROZIER

King William Land?

JOPSON

Yes, Sir. And more.

Crozier looks at him. *More?*

CUT TO:

THROUGH BLANKY'S TELESCOPE: To the south, the straight they are sailing down empties into M'Clintock Channel. The Pack parades by low along the horizon. Icebergs caught in the jam are being turned slowly along. The sound echoes to them, the PRESSURE and the SHATTER of it.

EXT. *TERROR*, FORETOP -- FIRST LIGHT

Crozier studies it. The sight of it is awakening something in him. When he speaks now, it is with laser-bright focus.

CROZIER

Look at the snow on top of those
berg bits. This isn't the summer
break up. This is old ice coming
down from the north.

(beat)

This is the Pack, Blanky.

He says this with reverence, even fear. Beside him on the foretop is Ice Master THOMAS BLANKY (40s).

BLANKY

There are still leads. But--

CROZIER

What is the date today? I'm --off
my ship's log.

BLANKY

It's September the 10th, Sir.

CROZIER

And how was the cold last night?

BLANKY

It dropped to 20.

Crozier thinks this through. He nods to them and begins climbing back down. Little is at the bottom with Neptune.

CROZIER

Is *Erebus* aware?

LITTLE

I'd assume they are. No flags as
yet this morning.

CROZIER

If Sir John doesn't convene a
meeting of the officers by ten, do
it on my behalf. Understood?

CUT TO:

INT. *EREBUS*, ORLOP DECK, SLOP ROOM -- FIRST LIGHT

Deep in the slop room is a wardrobe cabinet. The ship's Purser unlocks it. Inside is hanging a waxed canvas and brass *sea diving suit*. Its massive breathing hose is curled and hung upon its chest like a wreath from the future.

FRANKLIN (O.S.)

You're about to surpass us all,
son. You're going somewhere no man
has ever been, not even a savage.

EXT. *EREBUS*, QUARTERDECK -- FIRST LIGHT

Franklin and a handful of officers have come up to watch the dive. Collins is donning the suit over heavy weather slops.

FITZJAMES

If it is ice wedged behind the
propeller, and you can pry it out,
you'll have grabbed the ring twice
in one morning.

Collins nods. The suit is snapped up tight and he is handed the big closed helmet with its brass-grilled portholes.

FRANKLIN

A pilgrim to the deeps. Remember:
God lies in all realms.

Terry is finishing rigging a trapeze-like sling for Collins.

COLLINS

Observe my signals. One pull on the tube for half a fathom's slack. Two means the tube is kinked, likely on the gunwale. Three to be pulled up.

(beat)

If water floods the suit it will be exponentially harder to lift me-- and exponentially more urgent--so all of you be ready on the line.

Behind them, ABS begins coming out of the forward hatch. Terry waves some over to help. He uncleats a line and ties the sling at the end. Collins climbs to the rail, realizing:

COLLINS (CONT'D)

There should be a surgeon here--

FITZJAMES

They're just below, Mr. Collins.
Proceed.

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- DAY

Goodsir sets out his tools and gathers his nerve. Dr. Stanley has drawn the curtain and is undressing Young's corpse.

DR. STANLEY

Whenever you're settled.

Goodsir turns around and sees that Young is naked now, his body almost spotlighted by the illuminator overhead, glassing in daylight from the upper deck above. He was barely yet a man.

He takes a level breath and, with a quick look at Young's closed eyes, cuts with his scalpel a Y-shaped incision reaching down from Young's shoulders, meeting just under his sternum, and continuing down to his pubis.

DR. STANLEY (CONT'D)

You are an anatomist. I see it now.

Goodsir ignores the jibe. When he looks at his handiwork, we see instead:

FLASHBACK: *The scene is now Goodsir's autopsy of Hartnell's brother, seven months before. The sick bay is the same, but it is dark, mid-winter, and he is performing by lamplight. The WIND outside is SHRIEKING. Goodsir's hands are shaking, actually. He's just made the Y-shaped incision upside down by accident. Dr. Stanley turns and sees this, not amused.*

DR. STANLEY (CONT'D)

What exactly do you call that?

There is a commotion, an ANGRY WEEPING beyond the curtain, at which Gore has stationed himself with two Royal Marines. Gore says sternly to someone out in the Crew's Berth:

GORE

Your bother's in good hands, lad!

HARTNELL

You didn't cut up John Torrington--

Honor my brother the same way--!

(in a furious sob)

For God's sake leave him be--!

Goodsir glances up and sees, over Gore's shoulder, Tom Hartnell trying to peer in at the proceedings, shattered.

It must be forty degrees colder as well. The men's breath fogs and they are all in their full wools. Their aggression suggests what winter here does to the men's nerves.

This time, Goodsir can work on Young in unhurried quiet. He peels back the skin of the boy's torso and takes up the rib spreader, which he fits into place and begins cranking open, slowly revealing Young's lungs and, between them, his heart.

EXT. EREBUS, RUDDER -- DAWN

Collins is lowered down on the sling. He inspects Erebus' rudder top to bottom as he goes. He's lowered past the huge windows of Franklin's cabin. Jacko hangs inside looking worried, watching him slowly drop past.

When Collins is about ten feet above the water, he looks down as if he's heard something, expecting a seal or narwhal, but there's nothing in the icy water. So he tugs for another half fathom, until the icy water is just a foot beneath his boots.

COLLINS

Halt!

They do, and he hangs like a carpenter's bob behind the ship.

Again, he hears something and looks, but there is nothing-- just ice plates nudging against one another. He takes a deep breath, then lifts the brass helmet over his head. Immediately, his BREATHING can be heard. Then he screws it into place with the two big brass keys on either side.

He gaffs aside some pancake ice until there's a patch of black water wide enough for him to slip into. Then yanks once on the hose. He is lowered into up to his waist and then in over his head.

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- DAY

Goodsir reaches into Young's chest cavity and gently cups his hand under the boy's heart. With several flicks of his knife, he cuts it loose with part of the trachea and examines it in the beam of daylight. He blots it with a rag and cuts it open revealing the ventricles. He peels both sides of the tough muscle back and they examine what's underneath.

GOODSIR

A good specimen. Sound.

DR. STANLEY

We'll find death in the lungs, no doubt.

Goodsir leans over and cuts loose the bottoms of the boy's lungs. They look them over thoroughly, puzzled now.

GOODSIR

Scarring, but only fairish. You wouldn't call this tubercular, or consumptive. Do you see anything amiss?

Dr. Stanley's response is to pry open Young's mouth and probe all inside it with his finger.

GOODSIR (CONT'D)

There is nothing there. I've gone over it. No sores-- Nothing.

Dr. Stanley is clearly growing more irritated by the second.

GOODSIR (CONT'D)

What the devil killed him?

DR. STANLEY

Hand me his liver. Then open up the bowels.

EXT. *EREBUS*, UNDER THE ICE -- DAY

Under the water, it is a different world. The ice is floating now above him. It glows like an overcast sky, but the light loses its strength and thickens into deep blue darkness within a few fathoms. Below him, it is black as outer space.

COLLINS' POV: In the limited view of his helmet, he sees *Erebus*' huge propeller is sitting at an odd angle, either from the accident or efforts to retract it. He BREATHES. In. Out.

He begins to feel there is something behind him in the water. He makes a slow, lumbering turn in his suit in order to see.

COLLINS' POV: There is nothing but the midnight blue deeps.

He turns back to the propeller and begins poking around the shadows behind it for ice. He leans into it, straining as far as he can on his trapeze. He dislodges a chunk of ice big as deer and it tumbles up past him to the surface.

But the feeling creeps in again and he makes the turn again to look behind him. His eyes go wide.

COLLINS' POV: At a distance, at the edge of what Collins can see in the Stygian deeps hangs William Orren. His drowned and pale body is floating like an astronaut, one arm turned backwards out of his dislocated shoulder. His eyes are open.

Collins sighs in horror and finds he cannot breathe. He looks up and sees his breathing tube has been pinched off between plates of ice.

He yanks hard as he can on the tube, but when nothing happens he panics and yanks again, now screaming:

COLLINS
HAUL ME UP! HAUL ME UP!

Finally, he begins to ascend. He turns to look back at Orren, but Orren is no longer there--either floated off, dragged away, or never there in the first place.

EXT. *EREBUS* -- FIRST LIGHT

Collins has to muscle his way up through the gap between ice plates and then he is back in the daylight, unable to see anything beneath him, which is somehow worse. He cranks the keys to the helmet, losing one in the water, and pulls it off.

COLLINS
HAUL ME UP!

EXT. *EREBUS*, QUARTERDECK -- FIRST LIGHT

By the time they men haul Collins back up, he has regained some of his composure. Fitzjames and Terry help him over the rail, Fitzjames careful not to get his uniform wet.

COLLINS

The propeller's bent. On its main shaft. But it's clear of the well.

FITZJAMES

Is there damage to the hull? Anything else?

A beat as he decides. He looks around at the men, then says:

COLLINS

No. I pried out some ice from behind. I think she'll spin now, Sir.

FRANKLIN

Capital job, Mr. Collins.

(to Fitzjames)

Let the engineers know. And signal *Terror*. Have Captain Crozier bring his lieutenants. We must confer.

Fitzjames nods and heads off. Collins is already unbuckling the suit, wanting it off of him.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

I envy you, Collins. I've long wanted to move below. What was it like?

Collins chooses his ambiguous word carefully.

MR. COLLINS

Like a dream, Sir.

CUT TO:

INT. *EREBUS*, FRANKLIN'S CABIN -- DAY

Franklin, Fitzjames, and their Lieutenants, as well as their Ice Master and Engineer Gregory, all stand when Crozier enters the cabin leading his own Lieutenants.

FRANKLIN

Francis, gentlemen, come in--

There is handshaking while Franklin's steward finishes lengthening the dining table to accommodate them all. Blanky also comes in and Crozier sees it is unexpected.

CROZIER

I thought it prudent to have both ice masters available to us.

FRANKLIN

Splendid. We can be certain of a consensus now.

They sit. Even here, there's an unspoken segregation: *Erebus'* officers take one side of the table, *Terror's* the other. The steward brings grape juice and biscuits. Sir John is upbeat.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

I think it not unfair to say the success or failure of this expedition may be determined by what is decided here.

(beat)

The news is in about *Erebus*. While she can still make headway under steam, the flagship's effectiveness has been compromised. Outside of a dry dock, it will not be repaired.

CROZIER

How badly compromised?

Jacko, who has been hiding on the wardrobe climbs down and selects a biscuit. Franklin looks to Gregory, who says:

GREGORY

She can still pull two knots, maybe three, with the boilers full up.

CROZIER

Half-power, more or less.

FRANKLIN

As well, we know the ice ahead is increasing dramatically, both in thickness and amount, but we are within sight of King William Land and it isn't but another 200 miles to pick up the western charts and draw in this last missing piece of the puzzle once and for all.

(beat)

We are close. It is almost certainly within our power to complete the Passage this very month.

Crozier looks at Fitzjames, who merely gives him a pleasant nod. So he jumps.

CROZIER

Our situation is more dire than you may understand.

FITZJAMES

A dramatic opening shot!

Erebus' officers smile at this, though none of them laughs.

CROZIER

That is not just ice ahead, it is *pack* ice. And you are proposing we cross it in September. Even with leads it could be weeks of picking our way through it.

FITZJAMES

At most.

CROZIER

At half speed, but not half coal.
(to Gore)
You've seen the sun dogs, Graham? There have been three now. It's already a colder year than last.

FRANKLIN

I've been to the Arctic, Francis--

CROZIER

On foot. And you nearly starved. Not all of your men returned. I say this with all due honor.

A shocked beat. Le Vesconte nearly chokes on his biscuit. Fitzjames is about to protest, but Franklin puts a hand on the table to silence him. To his credit, he is not defensive.

FRANKLIN

A captain is due his candor. But what do you propose instead? Drop anchor and wait out winter here?

CROZIER

No. The exact shape of King William Land is unknown. As we discovered with Cornwallis Land it could be King William *Island*, with a chance to sail around its *eastern* shore.

FRANKLIN

If we go 'round east, we add miles. We'd surely not be out this year.

CROZIER

But only because *Erebus* is lame.

A beat. The sailors at the table immediately understand the implications of what he is saying, and their eyebrows go up. The officers have no idea, and have to wait for more.

CROZIER (CONT'D)

If we consolidate our coal in the less-damaged ship we'd have enough to go for broke and get east of King William Land, possibly around it, before winter. It's our best, and only, chance.

BLANKY

Go for broke. Yes.

FITZJAMES

Abandon *Erebus*? Is that what you're saying?

Franklin watches Crozier, his eyes bright as an owl's.

CROZIER

It would take the men two days to transfer everything onto *Terror*.

GORE

And if you're wrong?

CROZIER

If it's a dead end, we can overwinter on its lee side in complete safety out of the pack and retrace our steps come spring--tired of one another, no doubt, but alive.

FITZJAMES

That is an interesting *speculation*, but of course we shall not be abandoning *Erebus*. Nor *Terror*, should it suffer some minor misfortune.

So Crozier leans up in his seat and addresses Franklin.

CROZIER

Then let us get east, Sir John, and away from the pack, as quickly as we can.

FITZJAMES

We are a mere 200 miles from--

Crozier slams his fist on the table, upsetting the cups. Jacko looks at him in alarm and climbs into Gore's arms, who is forced to hold it like a baby.

CROZIER

Hear me. It won't matter if we're 200 or 2,000 miles from safe water: If the leads close up and we are out there *in it*, we'll have no idea where the current will move the ice *of which we will be a part*. We could be forced to the shallows on the weather side of King William and crushed, if we're even upright by then.

(beat)

As a trusted friend once put it:
This place wants us dead.

FITZJAMES

And who is this friend--? Does he also write melodrama?

Crozier looks right at Fitzjames and holds up four fingers.

CROZIER

Sir John, myself, Mr. Blanky, and Mr. Reid. Only four of us at this table are Arctic veterans. There will be no silver cups here. Just live men, or dead men. --Mr. Blanky, tell them.

Fitzjames narrows his eyes at Crozier, his enmity cemented.

BLANKY

Captain Crozier is right to worry. Though it's open now, remember: Peel Sound did not thaw at all last summer, which is why we couldn't come south before this May. That could happen here summer next, and if it does we'd quickly come to the end of our rations and our welcome.

Franklin looks at Blanky, then back at Crozier. A long considered silence. Finally, he smiles, but uneasily.

FRANKLIN

It is certainly good to see color in your cheeks again, Francis. I was afraid we'd lost you.

Crozier does not look away.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

But we are two weeks from finding the Passage. The grail. And it is my belief that God and winter will find us in safe waters by year's end. Russia. Or even China.

Crozier says, with disarming sincerity:

CROZIER

If you're wrong, we are about to commit an act of hubris we may well not survive. You know what men are when they are desperate. We both do.

For a moment it is just the two of them, joined in understanding. But, just as sincerely, Franklin responds:

FRANKLIN

I will continue to command the expedition from *Erebus*, but due to her injuries I shall put *Terror* in lead position. She's not the better ice-breaker, but she's the more powerful ship now.

It is commanded and now, barring mutiny, it must be done. He waits for Crozier until, finally, he nods. Fitzjames smiles. Out the great windows, Crozier can see a fog is returning.

FRANKLIN (CONT'D)

We will bury the boy at sea and then be on our way. South to Cape Felix and then west around King William Land. As planned.

CROZIER

Bury?

FRANKLIN

Yes. A mercy. The boy Young is gone from us. It was a long night.

Crozier quickly thinks it through, forming a plan. He stands.

CROZIER

Young was with us all year. I am sure my men would like to help lay him to rest, properly. We can provide a party to bury him on land as we did the others.

Franklin hesitates, looks at Fitzjames. Crozier continues:

CROZIER (CONT'D)

David Young was a good and loyal servant to this expedition. I don't think he missed a Sunday of your sermons, Sir John.

FRANKLIN

Very well. I'll give a brief service, but from deck. I'd like this to be done by end of day, Francis, given the urgency with which you yourself have convinced me we need to move. Start within the hour.

INT. *EREBUS*, OFFICER'S COUNTRY CORRIDOR -- DAY

As soon as they are in the corridor and out of earshot, Crozier says to Little 3RD LT. GEORGE HODGESON (30s):

CROZIER

Explain to Mr. Honey: an *officer's* coffin.

LITTLE

For Young?

CROZIER

Do it. And get a shore party organized. Have them dig on the most prominent point of land visible from our bow. I'll handle the rest.

Crozier goes not up the ladderway, but into the fo'c'sle.

HODGESON

Whom do I send?

LITTLE

Anyone with disciplinary duty owing, I suppose. Mr. Hornby can tell us who.

The officers look at one another: *What's Crozier planning?*

INT. *EREBUS*, SICK BAY -- DAY

Goodsir is finishing stitching up the "Y" incision on Young. He has a deft hand at it, quick as a sailmaker.

GOODSIR

I'm sorry, David. Fly in peace.

When he turns, he sees the other ship's boy from *Erebus*, GEORGE CHAMBERS (20), and two friends of Young's are standing at the curtain waiting respectfully. He motions them forward.

GOODSIR (CONT'D)

Wash and dress him. If one of you would like to cut his hair, that would be a kindness. I've left a scissors by the basin.

Goodsir takes one final look at Young and then goes out.

INT. *EREBUS*, FO'C'SLE -- DAY

When he's out in the empty fo'c'sle, he sees Crozier coming.

GOODSIR

Captain Crozier--

CROZIER

I just heard about Young. I'm sorry. He was becoming a fine sailor.

GOODSIR

You're kind to acknowledge his service.

CROZIER

It may not be over quite yet.

GOODSIR

Sir?

Crozier looks him in the eye and says, deadly sober now:

CROZIER

I need your help. --And you must tell no one.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. GIG -- DAY

The digging party rows ashore in the fog, muscling through the pancake, which piles up as they come to land. In the gig are the episode's malcontents: Mr. Hickey, the boy Golding (who bombed Neptune), and the hulking Manson. Sgt. Tozer oversees the crew. He has a rifle for bears at his side.

TOZER

(singing as they go)

*As she vent along the Strand Oh /
She forgot as she'd got sprats on
her head--*

Hickey, gets the men laughing but grumbling:

HICKEY

You heave up song the way your pal
Young heaved up his lungs.

They get out and pull the gig up, realizing only then that the beach is littered with old weathered shapes in the fog-- all matted fur and sunbleached bone. It looks like an entire herd of elk was once slaughtered here and the slaughter was total. There are probably a dozen of the giants, their huge carcasses long since picked clean of meat. It is at once a lonesome, and unnerving sight. It silences even Hickey. *What did this?* Finally, it is Tozer who breaks the silence.

TOZER

Looks like Young won't be the only
one put up here. Plenty of company.

INT. TERROR, BOATSWAIN'S STOREROOM -- DAY

Crozier lets himself into the Boatswain's storeroom. He goes to a lidded bin in back and opens it revealing: rows of long copper "communication" cylinders. Each one is the size of a rolling pin. All of them are there, untouched and dusty.

INT. TERROR, CROZIER'S CABIN-- DAY

Crozier sits at the tiny desk in his cabin and fills out what looks to be an Admiralty form with the date, the ships' coordinates, and, finally, their direction of intention.

The copper cylinder lies on the bed beside him, its cap off and awaiting the message. When he's finished writing it, Crozier rolls up the form, slides it inside, and seals it up.

EXT. BOOTHIA PENINSULA -- DAY

From land, the ships are just visible in the fog out in the middle of the straight. The men have hiked to a gravel beach.

The grave is nearly finished, the men taking turns. Hickey is in it now sweating through his labor. It's almost as deep as he is tall. Hickey gripes, to no one in particular.

HICKEY

I can tell you this: it ain't a
Petty Officer's job to dig graves
for a Ship's Boy. He weren't even
from our *ship!*

The others stand away in the fog with their picks, smoking and ignoring him. Hickey hears out in the fog, a SNORTING BREATH. He stops. It was close, a distinctly animal sound.

HICKEY (CONT'D)

Boys--! You hear that?

Hickey can just see out of the top of the grave if he stands up straight. He does, and listens. There is a PANTING, and it is coming right up to the grave. Hickey ducks, nowhere to go.

HICKEY (CONT'D)

Bear-- BEAR--!

HICKEY'S POV: Suddenly, at the lip of the grave, a pair of black eyes and a nose appears in the fog.

HICKEY (CONT'D)

DAMN IT--! HELP! HELP ME--!

Gravel drops in on his head as he sees the shadow of the bear reach in at him, swatting down at him. He SCREAMS a high note and cowers in the slush at the bottom of the grave.

A SHOT is FIRED. Hickey opens his eyes and sees: the face of the bear is gone. There is LAUGHTER. He gets to his feet. He sees: the bear has been spooked by the warning shot. The reason for the laughter is that it is just a cub, no more than three feet high standing. It MEWS. The men laugh louder.

TOZER

You were about to be a gong-farmer
there! Shittin' in a grave. A nice
welcome for that croaker Young--!

Hickey cannot tolerate being belittled. His venom gathers.

HICKEY

Help me up--

Manson looks at the cub, like a kid at a zoo. It goes back over to the grave again, sniffing the turned sand. Hickey throws his shovel at it, driving it back.

HICKEY (CONT'D)
GOD DAMN IT, HELP ME UP--!

When Hickey looks up, Manson is there, sticking out a hand. He looks at the hulking man, unsure for a moment if he is about to be further humiliated, but he has no choice. The moment their hands touch, Manson smiles and lifts him up.

Hickey barely registers the man's unnatural strength, so enraged is he. He marches directly over to the Marine and--before Sgt. Tozer can react--grabs the rifle out of his hand.

TOZER
 Lad--

But Hickey marches over to the cub, raises the gun, and shoots it in the head. There's stunned silence as its brains spatter onto the gravel. Manson looks from the gun to the bear, and back to Hickey, his expression inscrutable.

TOZER (CONT'D)
 You're all right, then, Hickey. We was just having a dig at you while you was having a dig--

But no one laughs this time. Hickey tosses him the rifle.

HICKEY
 Digging's done. Now where in hell is Young?

Only Manson smiles. Hickey looks at him, ready for more abuse, but Manson simply says, delighted:

MANSON
 You made it rhyme!

INT. *EREBUS*, FO'C'SLE / SICK BAY -- DAY

Crozier and Little come through *Erebus'* fo'c'sle to the sick bay. Goodsir stands alone beside the coffin, its lid off.

Crozier nods to him. Little draws the curtain. From his sleeve, Crozier pulls the sealed copper cylinder. He lifts up Young's hands, which, like his feet, have been tied together with a strip of linen, and tucks the tube underneath them.

GOODSIR
 Would not a cairn suffice?

CROZIER

I do not know at how far north the Esquimaux come to hunt. But I do know them to be very curious, enough to disturb a cairn--though not, I think, a grave.

GOODSIR

You've met them?

CROZIER

I lived among them, for a time. In Igloolik, and Repulse Bay. With Sir William Parry.

Goodsir nods, entranced by the idea this man has met the Esquimax. They hear MEN coming down the ladderway, so they lift the coffin lid into place and start nailing it shut.

EXT. EREBUS, FOREDECK -- DAY

The coffin is brought up to the deck. The crew stands, caps off, as it is lowered to the waiting gig. It's covered with midnight blue wool, the edges tacked neatly with white tape. A small heart-shaped plaque has been nailed to the lid. Le Vesconte climbs in the gig to escort it to land.

Fitzjames stands by his Lieutenants, Crozier by his, as Franklin begins a service.

FRANKLIN

"Well done, you good and faithful servant! Come and share in your master's happiness!"

Crozier watches as the coffin, with its secret, is rowed away into the fog. He allows himself a single breath of relief.

EXT. BOOTHIA PENINSULA -- DAY

Le Vesconte directs his gig up next to the shore party's gig.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)

Jesus saith unto Thomas: "Because thou hast seen me, thou believed: but blessed are they that have not yet seen, but still believed.

Young's coffin is carried across the ice to the shore where Sgt. Tozer and the others are waiting. They loop lines around it and lower it into the hole.

FRANKLIN (V.O.)

For it is a special path to salvation that walks a line through the fog of uncertain days.

As soon as the coffin is in the hole, Le Vesconte marches his men back to the gig without so much as a farewell.

FRANKLIN

Sightless, without a chart or landmark to reassure--and trusting like children--we march on and we do not look back.

Hickey's party watches them go, hands on their hips. One of the men gives them a V-sign (the Victorian equivalent of the finger) behind their backs.

EXT. THE PACK -- DAY

A God's-eye view of the pack. We are flying over it now, fast and low, mile after mile. Nothing lives on it, nothing could, and it is into this chaos the ships are about to launch. We finally see *Erebus* and *Terror* ahead, anchored in their last few miles of easy ice. Franklin is on deck preaching to his men where they watch from the waist and lowest riggings. The grave party is rowing back from shore.

EXT. *EREBUS*, FOREDECK -- DAY

Franklin sees the shore party's gig also, out of the fog heading back to *Terror*, so he tells the men:

FRANKLIN

And just as David Young is at the gates, so too are we. And now is our moment to stride through them, to our glory and to our destiny.

(beat)

I have set a course south southwest. We will see the Canadian mainland within a fortnight, gentlemen. We must now begin our last and best efforts to reach her as we become the greatest heroes of our age.

The men CHEER, WILDLY. Franklin looks deeply moved by his own rhetoric, as does Fitzjames and the rest of their officers. The *Terror* crew has not been similarly lifted.

LITTLE

We're going through with this then?

Crozier gives him a small nod, his eyes pinned to Franklin.

FRANKLIN

Onward, ho!

The Mates CALL, and suddenly the deck is a frenzy of activity as they set about getting the ships underway.

EXT. *EREBUS* AND *TERROR* -- DAY

The top sails are lowered, the steam engines are stoked to full, and, on their respective decks, Franklin and Crozier give commands to proceed, with *Terror* now in the lead.

EXT. *TERROR*, QUARTERDECK -- DAY

Crozier steers the ship himself as they enter the pack. *Terror's* iron-reinforced bow makes its first contact with the pack and smashes through.

EXT. *EREBUS*, QUARTERDECK -- DAY

Goodsir is on deck getting his first up-close view of the pack as *Erebus* follows on the black-water trail *Terror* is carving out. Franklin's Coxswain is steering *Erebus*.

Goodsir looks back to Boothia as well, and only now does he remember. With a shocked gasp, he grabs his own fingers. His promise to Young: He never retrieved the boy's glass-and-plate ring. For his sister.

Cursing his stupidity, he looks back again toward Boothia, but it is gone now, lost for sight, only a few miles behind them, but utterly out of reach. It begins to snow.

EXT. BOOTHIA PENINSULA -- DAY

The same snow is falling on David Young's grave back on the ice-littered shore of Boothia. It gathers, beginning to cover over the men's footprints and dust the grave marker itself.

A few yards away from the grave, bright blood has frozen onto the gravel. The cub Hickey shot lies there, its brains blown out and its black eyes frozen open and filling up with snow.

Another adolescent bear comes up to it, maybe the cub's sibling. The bear nudges it with its nose, but the cub is lifeless. And fresh. The other bear begins to eat it.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

EXT. THE PACK -- DAY

A week or more out in the pack, the weather has deteriorated. Temperatures have plummeted, the wind has redoubled, and snow squalls have begun.

EXT. *TERROR*, FORETOP / FOREDECK -- DAY

Terror is making almost no progress now, full of steam with nowhere to go--a racehorse trapped in a pen, panic rising.

Crozier is on the foretop platform with Blanky. The view around them is of vast fields of ice. Very few leads are visible, like loose black threads. In the distance, about fifty miles ahead, the low tip of King William Land is visible to the southeast. Crozier climbs down and yells commands.

CROZIER

Have Mr. Helpman ready every cleat we've got. We need everyone on the ice with saws and as much coal powder as the stokers have to hand--

A mate nods and goes. Crozier checks the sun's position.

EXT. *EREBUS*, QUARTERDECK -- DAY

Franklin and Fitzjames stand on quarterdeck of *Erebus*, watching *Terror's* tiny progress. Behind them, the alley they have smashed through the ice trails back to the horizon, already starting to close up. Fitzjames watches in alarm.

FITZJAMES

We have three more hours of sun.

Franklin's countenance remains outwardly calm, but when he looks at Fitzjames, he betrays his first glimmers of doubt. Their Coxswain calls back to them.

COXSWAIN

Terror is signalling, Sirs.

EXT. *TERROR* -- DAY

Forty men are down on the ice in front of *Terror* trying to force open leads with the saws and powder. They are working near to exhaustion, YELLING to one another to keep the pace.

Crozier leans out on a cathead and watches, yelling them on.

The men saw through the ice in ragged surges. When a chunk is cut free, other men lodge picks into it and manhaul it out of the cut with long lines to which they are tied by the dozens.

Others go ahead of them in groups, powdering the ice before the cut with black coal powder and pouring it into the cracks where they light it with drip lanterns.

The ship tries to launch itself forward and smash through the ice. For every five feet it progresses, it has to back up four first, then launch ahead with as much force as it can gather in the small space.

The sun, however, is setting and the temperature is dropping quickly. Incredibly, they can see it as it falls:

1. The wet sides of *Terror's* hull go frost white every time it rises from the water.
2. The very leads they are opening begin to freeze over with wafer-thin ice right before their eyes. The men break it like Christmas glass.
3. SQUEALS begins coming from the ice around them--growlers and pressure ridges RUBBING AGAINST ONE ANOTHER. Every few moments, one CRACKS like a shot.

The men look around on all sides, as if being closed in upon by invading troops. Only Crozier's and his officers' yelling keeps them going.

It is getting harder and harder to see. One man slips into the narrow gap between the ship and the edge of the cut. Men YELL and haul him out in time, narrowly avoiding seeing him crushed before their eyes.

CUT TO:

Finally, it is too dark to continue. The snow falls more heavily now. Crozier shouts from the rail:

CROZIER
WELL DONE, MEN. ALL COME UP! WE CONTINUE AT FIRST LIGHT.

INT. *EREBUS*, OFFICERS' MESS -- NIGHT

The officers sit at dinner, ignoring the ICE SQUEALING against the hull. At one point, it seems to SCREAM. Franklin sees the worried looks on the men's faces and says:

FRANKLIN

Our Lord and Father will see us
through. Whatever morning brings--

Fitzjames raises his glass, prompting the other officers.

FITZJAMES

As routed through you, Sir John.

INT. *TERROR*, OFFICERS' MESS -- NIGHT

At Crozier's table, no one talks. The MOANING and SCRAPING of the ICE goes on and on. Neptune, who is down among them again BARKS once, unsettled by it. Crozier drains his ale.

Little eats forkful of tinned carrots. He absently fishes something out of his mouth and drops it next to his plate.

CLOSE ON: It's tear-shaped and lead-colored, a small bead of some kind of solder left in the food from the can it came in.

INT. *TERROR*, FO'C'SLE -- NIGHT

The men hang in their hammocks listening to the GLASSY SCREAMS of the ice hassling the ship. Some men PRAY, but most just keep their eyes on the hull, their thoughts racing.

INT. FRANKLIN HOUSE, TOP OF THE STAIRS -- NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Crozier comes to the landing, now changed into his dinner jacket. He has not, however, been able to change his expression. He looks sad and panicked and desperate. From the top of the stairs, he can see down to the dining room:

CROZIER'S POV: The others are waiting for him. Franklin sits at the head of the table laughing, enjoying a joke with Ross. He cannot see Sophia. Crystal gaslamps HISS in the chandelier, claret jugs shine on the table, servants wait along the wall. This is not Crozier's world, will never be his world, and until a few moments ago, he could not have cared less.

Crozier heads down the stairs and right out the front door, not even bothering to close it behind him.

INT. *TERROR*, CROZIER'S CABIN-- NIGHT

Crozier lies in his bunk, watching the illuminator over his head. When it shows the first sign of blue, he gets up.

INT./EXT. *TERROR*, LADDERWAY/DECK -- FIRST LIGHT

Crozier and his Lieutenants follow Blanky up the ladderway onto the deck. There is just light enough for them to see how their predicament has devolved in the night. They look around dumbstruck. Blanky scurries up the mainmast.

In every direction from the two ships, as far as the eye can see, there is a dynamic white mass of ice, pressing southeast in slow motion. And it is LOUD.

The two ships are only a hundred yards apart, but already volumes of ice the size of carriages are heaping up on top of one another forming pressure ridges. The ships are sealed in now, fragile as toys out in the open pack.

CROZIER

Get the anchors up if you can.
Otherwise we'll cut them free. We
are part of the pack now.

This is exactly the scenario Crozier was desperate to avoid. Blanky comes down from the main mast and removes his wig.

BLANKY

No leads. None at all.

CROZIER

Fix our position. With great care.
I want to know exactly where we are
in relation to King William Island.

LITTLE

Island? You're convinced then, Sir?

CROZIER

(gravely)
We're in for a world of shit, gentlemen.

Blanky starts unrolling his chart, but then stops and points to the box compass at their feet.

BLANKY

Look at that--

CLOSE ON: The compass is spinning now, like a top.

As if they needed any more proof that they've entered into a strange and desperate place.

LITTLE

How far we've come--

CROZIER

No. This is just beginning. We're already fighting for our lives.

He lets this sink in. Then he squares his shoulders for all that's coming.

CROZIER (CONT'D)

Once the men are fed, have them start bringing down the riggings and topmasts. We'll get the tarp up tomorrow. Mr. Thompson can draw down the boiler for winter.

(emphatically)

Your demeanor should be all cheer, you understand? All of you.

Little nods. They all do. But they look terrified. He shows them how to fake it, his eyes smiling like a showman.

CROZIER (CONT'D)

It's going to be tight and loud and cold as hell, boys, but it's going to be what we all signed up for: an adventure, for Queen and Country. An adventure of a lifetime.

Then he drops his smile as quickly as he took it up.

CROZIER (CONT'D)

That's how you tell them. Now go.

EXT. *EREBUS* AND *TERROR* -- DAY

Directly overhead, the ships appear helpless in the enormity of the pack, which is snow-dusted and translucent in the cold Arctic light.

Something huge passes under both ships, something massive and white. It is not a whale; it is jointed and muscular, half as big as a ship itself. Its image ripples beneath the fractured lens of the ice, which distorts its shape like carnival glass.

It lingers at the injured stern of *Erebus*, then swims away. For now.

END OF PILOT