

[Vol. 3, Walton \(in continuation\), paragraphs 10-14](#)

[September 2d.](#)

MY BELOVED SISTER,

I write to you encompassed by peril and ignorant whether I am ever doomed to see again dear England, and the dearer friends that inhabit it. I am surrounded by mountains of ice, which admit of no escape and threaten every moment to crush my vessel. The brave fellows whom I have persuaded to be my companions look towards me for aid; but I have none to bestow. There is something terribly appalling in our situation, yet my courage and hopes do not desert me. We may survive; and if we do not, I will repeat [the lessons of my Seneca](#), and die with a good heart.

Yet what, Margaret, will be the state of your mind? [You will not hear](#) of my destruction, and you will anxiously await my return. Years will pass, and you will have visitings of despair, and yet be tortured by hope. Oh! my beloved sister, the sickening failings of your heart-felt expectations are, in prospect, more terrible to me than my own death. But you have [a husband, and lovely children](#); you may be happy: Heaven bless you, and make you so!

My unfortunate guest regards me with [the tenderest compassion](#). He endeavours to fill me with hope; and talks as if life were a possession which he valued. He reminds me how often the same accidents have happened to other navigators, who have attempted this sea, and, in spite of myself, he fills me with cheerful auguries. Even the sailors feel [the power of his eloquence](#): when he speaks, they no longer despair; he rouses their energies, and, while they hear his voice, they believe these vast mountains of ice are mole-hills, which will vanish before the resolutions of man. These feelings are transitory; each day's expectation delayed fills them with fear, and I almost dread a mutiny caused by this despair.

September 5th

A scene has just passed of such uncommon interest, that although it is highly probable that these papers may never reach you, yet [I cannot forbear recording it.](#)

We are still surrounded by mountains of ice, still in imminent danger of being crushed in their conflict. The cold is excessive, and [many of my unfortunate comrades have already found a grave](#) amidst this scene of desolation. Frankenstein has daily declined in health: [a feverish fire still glimmers in his eyes](#); but he is exhausted, and, when suddenly roused to any exertion, he speedily sinks again into apparent lifelessness.