How Ice Was Made

There is no attempt to refine a still harsh and primitive existence in the Eskimo legend which follows. The creation myth, with overtones of the supernatural, explains one of the phenomena of nature.

Once in the Far North lived the Totaliks, who were half man and half seal.

One day some Eskimos caught one of the Totaliks, which, of course, made his wife very, very angry.

The wife thought for a long time about what she could do. Then she took the skin of a young seal and made a magic seal. She took a big pot of water, and every day she taught the seal to swim. Then when the seal was full grown, she put it to sea.

Kivioq and his men, the ones who had caught the Totalik, were out hunting one day when they saw the magic seal. At once the men began to chase it.

The magic seal led them further and further out to sea. When they were very far from the land of the Totaliks, the wife said some magic words and the wind began to change and to blow. All the men except Kivioq were lost.

Kivioq and his men, the ones who had caught the Totalik, were out hunting one day when they saw the magic seal. At once the men began to chase it.

The magic seal led them further and further out to sea. When they were very far from the land of the Totaliks, the witch lived. Kivioq was invited to go into the house. He took off his clothes to dry them above the lamp, and then he had something to eat. Strangely, he thought he heard a voice coming from the corner of the house: “If you don’t go away the woman will eat you!”

He tried to grab his clothes but Ivitajuk was too quick. So, without his clothes, Kivioq ran down to his kayak, jumped into it and left the island. Ivitajuk was very angry, and seizing her ubi, she cut right through a rock saying, “I could have cut you in two like that!”
“And I could have harpooned you like that!” answered Kivioq, throwing his harpoon into a rock.

Now Ivitajuk was so angry that she threw her ubi at him. It skimmed across the water, and before it reached the kayak, it changed into a huge piece of ice.

At once Kivioq felt very cold. This was the first time that ice had been made in the Far North. Soon many other pieces were floating around the kayak and, because he had left his clothes in the house, he felt colder and colder.

Quickly Kivioq paddled his kayak until he was a long way from the island. As he paddled, more ice came up from the sea in front of him, and he had to paddle very carefully. At last, though, he left the ice far behind and was not cold any more.

Back on the island, Ivitajuk was shouting and jumping up and down. She was very angry because Kivioq had got away, but he was too far away to hear her.

And that is how Ivitajuk made the ice in the Northland.