An Antarctic Mystery

Jules Verne

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"An Antarctic Mystery" is based on the classic tale of horror "Arthur Gordon Pym" by Edgar Allen Poe and serves as a continuation of the story although it must be noted that this is not a work of horror. Rather, "An Antarctic mystery" begins in 1839 with the lead character and narrator, Jeorling, on the Kerguelen Islands to study wildlife. He is ready to depart and learns that a ship, the Halbrane, is coming into port shortly. Jeorling is done on the island and wants to depart on the Halbrane with no particular destination in mind. The captain of the Halbrane, Len Guy, at first refuses but finally relents on the night before the ship sets sail. Jeorling is uncertain as to why the strange captain had a change of heart but he wants to leave so he happily sets sail aboard the ship the next morning. Once the ship is underway, Joerling learns that he was invited along because he is an American from near where Arthur Pym was purported to live. While Joerling knows the Poe story, he believes it to be pure fiction. The captain presses him on the story and he begins to believe that the captain is insane. Then the boat happens upon a body on an iceberg that has a strange note that hints that the captain of the Jane, the boat in the story of Arthur Pym, may have survived the mutiny. This, along with the revelation that Len Guy is the brother of the captain of the Jane, William Guy, leads Joerling to believe that the story of Arthur Pym was true after all and he supports the Halbrane's quest to locate the missing mariners from the story. This is even supported further when a sailor, Hunt, that the ship brought on board in the Falkland Islands is revealed to be Dirk Peters, the first mate of the Jane. The boat then journeys on with all members working toward the same goal and several adventures ensue. These adventures include the boat running aground and the discovery of Captain William Guy and other crew members from the Jane.



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