

Three weeks later you find yourself staring once again at the Bottomless Crevasse.

"It looks narrower than when I was here before," you remark.

"Yes," Bruckner says, "the glacier has been advancing about three feet a year. It won't be long before the crevasse is completely sealed."

While you and the other members of the party stand at a safe distance, the professor cautiously walks to the rim of the crevasse. In one hand he holds an oblong instrument that emits an increasingly rapid clicking.

"Don't get too close!" you cry.

"Indeed." Bruckner takes a few steps back. "I think I know what happened to Larsen, Sneed, and Vivaldi."

"What?"

"Gravity waves coming from the center of the earth have disrupted space-time enough to pull them in." The professor looks down into your puzzled face. "And you, as well," he adds. "I've always suspected that the laws of physics may be different in the vicinity of a black hole. Now we have proof!"

"What does this mean?"

The professor smiles. "It means that the interior of the earth—beginning about 800 miles deep—is hollow."