

The Great Melting

The year is 2085. The “Great Melting” was not a gradual change, but a tipping point that occurred in 2034. When the last bit of the Greenland Ice Sheet melted, billions of fresh water poured into the North Atlantic. Watering down the oceans river, or Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation aka the (AMOC) and its famous Gulf Stream branch. The river shut down, no longer working. That same important river current is what brought all the hot air from the equator to the northern hemisphere. Now cold air circulates from the north. While the south is trapped in a heat wave now that the heat has nowhere left to go. The world is in a paradox as one half is a hot humid desert while the other is trapped in an ice age. In London, the Thames is frozen solid, a treacherous highway of jagged ice that extends down to the coast of France. Canada becomes even more a frozen waste land with most people moving to the south.

The city is a muted and bleak white. No more mild winters. Instead the people now have to endure harsh winters that stay dropping to the negatives often for months on end. No one ever goes outside unless they have to. The air has now lost most of its moisture when no more hot humid air came up for the south. A thick frost loaded fog hangs over the abandoned cities. Most of the population has moved to the south while the rest huddle up in their homes. Trying to survive for another day.

Massive, icy storms move in from the north, bringing not just snow, but freezing rain that coats buildings in inches of heavy ice and snow. Across the Atlantic, the Eastern side of the United States, already dealing with a sea level rise of nearly three feet, faces an even more treacherous reality. Coastal cities, half-submerged by melting ice and snow, are now subjected to

a permanent, icy breeze from the north freezing most of the water and encasing the buildings in ice. The winter never truly leaves, even in June, the weather is cold, windy, and damp.

The great cities of New York and Boston are partly abandoned, their buildings failing under the pressures of corrosion from saltwater and snap-freezing in the winter. Most pipes have failed and now water is a valuable resource that no one wants to waste. Agriculture has entirely collapsed in the northern hemisphere. The Breadbasket of Europe is frozen; the prairies of North America, once lukewarm, are now cold grasslands where nothing can be grown without immense energy use. Food supplies have moved south, causing massive geopolitical shifts as the population migrates toward the equator.

The irony is not lost to the few scientists remaining in the northern hemisphere. The southern hemisphere is experiencing rapid warming, with sea ice at the South Pole vanishing, but the Atlantic ocean below 4,000 meters has stopped moving entirely—a stagnant, dead abyss. The once dark, heat-absorbing water of the high north has been replaced by cold, reflecting sea ice, which magnifies the cooling effect. The winter of 2085 is quiet. The only sound is the persistent, howling wind and the cracking of ice.

Humans in the north have adapted and changed, living in heavily insulated, sealed environments, wearing thermal gear to step outside if forced to. Pipelines now have special insulated pipes. Humans adapting to the disaster that they brought onto themselves.