

just such a night as those in which pillage and murder stalk abroad, hand in hand. Perhaps it was on account of such fears, or maybe it was due to the intense darkness, despite the flickering street lamps, but there were few travelers on the streets this night. Those who were obliged to be out in the pitiless storm hurried along with heads bent to the blast and with their faces so muffled in furs as to be unrecognizable in the gloom.

But yet, notwithstanding the merciless winds and piercing cold, there stood in the shadow of an old building near the wharf a single figure, gloomy and silent. And while he stood there other forms, dark and dumb as himself, glided from various quarters, passed him with a mysterious gesture, and were noiselessly swallowed up in the darkness of the alley behind him. With never a movement he held to his post until nearly a score of forms had vanished past him. Then, with a quick searching glance, which took in every inch of the scene, he, too, turned and disappeared.

With rapid steps he traversed the alley in the shadow of the ramshackle building until he reached a low door opening from the street toward the sea. At this he paused and glanced about cautiously. But, save for the screaming of the wind, all was silent. Then, taking advantage of a strong, sudden blast, which caused the loose clap-boards to rattle noisily, he pushed the door open quickly, entered, and as quickly closed it behind him.

The darkness which now engulfed him was much denser than before. Yet even this did not seem to give him the slightest annoyance. With the air of one who knows his ground thoroughly he advanced toward the sea side of the building. In a few steps his toe struck a projection in the floor which gave forth a dull, metallic clank. He stooped quickly, grasped an iron ring and pulled it up, disclosing a small, square, black opening in the floor, down which could be just faintly discerned the outlines of a ladder. Without any hesitancy he descended and pulled the trap-door into place above him. A few feet down he again stepped upon flooring, but a chill wind and the sound of lapping waves showed that he was under the wharf, at the sea level.

Then on through a perfect maze of damp, dark, ill-smelling passages stalked this mysterious sentinel, as calmly and serenely as though the path he traversed were an open street instead of a narrow plank, from which a misstep might at any moment send him hurtling into the icy waters of the sea. At length, after what