

Pieces of Eight

Darkness cloaked me as I walked deep in the belly of the ship, and not one of the men who were with me stirred from their sleep. If it were not for the occasional snore or restless shudder, I would not have known they were there at all.

The boat, rocked gently by the watery hands that held her, seemed to be singing to her bairns, the creaking lullaby of a true Pirate Queen.

I remember chuckling to myself and thinking how funny it would be if I lay down beside the men and joined them in their dreams. How their faces would look as they awoke to find me in their midst, a boy amongst murderers and thieves.

Then, all of a sudden, a shrill voice broke forth out of the darkness.

'Pieces of eight... Pieces of eight. Pieces of eight... Pieces of eight.'

Captain Flint! Silver's green parrot had given me away.

My heart pressed against my chest and I dared not breathe in case I did let out a scream.

The dark shapes that surrounded me began to stir from their slumber like shadowy bears awakening from their winter's hibernation. And yet so petrified was I that I myself was frozen to the very timbers I was standing upon.

'Who goes?' came the voice of Silver.

I dared not answer.

'A light!' cried the voice of Silver once more. And as the footsteps and the voices of the crew grew even louder, I knew I was doomed to be discovered.