

'Oh, right off. We'll get the boys together and have the initiation to-night, maybe.'

'Have the which?'

'Have the initiation.'

'What's that?'

'It's to swear to stand by one another, and never tell the gang's secrets, even if you're chopped all to flinders, and kill anybody and all his family that hurts one of the gang.'

'That's gay—that's mighty gay, Tom, I tell you.'

'Well, I bet it is. And all that swearing's got to be done at midnight, in the lonesomest, awfulest place you can find—a ha'nted house is the best, but they're all ripped up, now.'

'Well, midnight's good, anyway, Tom.'

'Yes, so it is. And you've got to swear on a coffin, and sign it with blood.'

'Now that's something like! Why, it's a million times bullier than pirating. I'll stick to the widdler till I rot, Tom! and if I git to be a reg'lar ripper of a robber, and everybody talking 'bout it, I reckon she'll be proud she snaked me in out of the wet.'