



**Christopher Crown  
& the  
Immortal Signal**

Tricia Price

**1**

The thinking place, where Christopher always went when he most particularly wanted to be alone, was beside the beach path just where it started to curve down to the shore. There was a thorn-bush of splendid proportions, and behind that was a grassy space almost hidden from the passers-by. But the view over the little cove was uninterrupted. Christopher could stay there for hours at a time listening to the gulls and watching the ships passing to and fro on the horizon. There was nearly always something to be seen. Sometimes a slender white yacht made her way up channel with billowing sails: or a small coasting vessel caught in rough sea would seem to stand almost on her head and then reverse slowly until her stern dipped under and you felt seasick as you watched. Once, a school of porpoises had bounded across the mouth of the cove, gleaming black backs visible for an instant and then disappearing again under the rippling waves, while the gulls rode unconcernedly about them. It was a good place for swimming, too, with its gently shelving shore, though the water was always cold – too cold for bathing today, in September, although the lovely Indian summer weather was just perfect for lying in the thinking place with nothing in particular to do.

For some time now Christopher had had the cove to himself. It was getting late in the year for summer visitors, and sea traffic was scarce this afternoon. There was nothing to be heard but the screaming of the seabirds, nothing to be seen but the heaving grey-blue water, right out to the skyline. It was still heaving beyond that, Christopher knew, until it broke against the shore of France: and he wondered idly at just what point the water would start to break in the opposite direction, and if perhaps some boy in Brittany were lying by the shore and seeing the same sea wash home. Perhaps it was where the Channel opened out to the Atlantic and the huge rollers come surging in? A ship sailing beyond that again could go for

Be different: buy direct  
from the author or  
[tslbooks.uk](http://tslbooks.uk)