

CHAPTER IX.

In a heartbeat I was once more in the grounds of that old gable house. The servant who went before me went through the wicket gate, up the stairs, and into the private entrance; that way was the best. So again I passed by the circling glade and the monastic well, the sward, trees, and ruins all suffused in the limpet moonlight.

And then I was in the house; the servant took the note I was charged with upstairs. A minute or two afterward, he returned and conducted me to the corridor above, in which Mrs. Ashleigh received me. I was the first to speak.

"Your daughter is... is not seriously ill, I hope. What is it?" I said.

"Hush!" she said under her breath. "Will you step this way for but a moment?" She passed through a doorway to the right, I followed her, and as she placed the light she had been holding on the table, I looked round with a chill in my heart—it was the room in which Dr. Lloyd had died. Impossible to mistake. The furniture indeed was changed—there was no bed in the chamber—but the shape of the room, the position of the high casement, which was now wide open and through which the moonlight streamed more softly than on that dreary winter night, and the great square beams on the low ceiling were all impressed vividly on my memory. The chair Mrs. Ashleigh beckoned me to was placed exactly on the spot where I stood by the bedhead of the dying man. I shrank backward. I could not seat myself there. So I remained leaning against the chimney piece while Mrs. Ashleigh told her story. She set down the light she'd been holding and began her tale.

She said that on Lilian and her arrival the day before, Lilian had been in more than unusually good health and spirits, delighted with the old house, the grounds, and especially the nook by the Monk's Well. Mrs. Ashleigh had left her at the well that evening to make some purchases in the town in company with Mr. Vigors. When Mrs. Ashleigh returned, she and Mr. Vigors had sought Lilian in that nook, and Mrs. Ashleigh then detected with a mother's eye some change in her, which alarmed her. Lilian seemed listless and dejected and was very pale, but she denied that she felt unwell. On regaining the house, she had sat down in the room we then were currently in. "Which," said Mrs. Ashleigh, "as it is not required for a sleeping room, my daughter, who is fond of reading, wished to fit up as her own morning room or study. I left her here and went into the drawing room below with Mr. Vigors. When he left me, which he did very soon, I remained for nearly an hour giving directions about the placing of furniture, which had just arrived from our late residence. I then went upstairs to join my daughter, and to my fear I found her looking dead in her chair. She had fainted away."

I interrupted Mrs. Ashleigh here. "Has Miss Ashleigh been subject to fainting fits?"

"No, never. When she recovered, she seemed bewildered and disinclined to talk with me. I got her to bed, and because she then fell quietly to sleep, my mind was relieved. I thought it only a passing effect of excitement, because of our change of abode or caused by something like malaria in the walls of the Monk's Well."

- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:03 PM  
**Deleted:** very few moments of a ...;...t...entered by...the wicket-gate of ... [1]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:06 PM  
**Comment:** Edit OK? Previous text indicates that the wicket gate is outside the front stairs, so I revised to include the correct sequence of events.
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:06 PM  
**Deleted:** --
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:07 PM  
**Deleted:** now ...o... the note with which I was charged,...and a...s... [2]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:09 PM  
**Comment:** Edit OK? To avoid sounding repetitious, two "is"s represent the stammer well.
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:09 PM  
**Deleted:** -----is-- [3]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:08 PM  
**Deleted:** spoke
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- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:11 PM  
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- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:11 PM  
**Deleted:** , .....s... intersecting .....were ies...to which ...just ...s... have ...ed... [5]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:13 PM  
**Comment:** Consider replacing this with "fireplace" to make this image stand out more clearly for your readers.
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:15 PM  
**Comment:** Consider deleting for continuity. Mrs. Ashleigh set down the light in the third sentence of this paragraph.
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:13 PM  
**Deleted:** ,
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:14 PM  
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- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:16 PM  
**Deleted:** their .....at which ...in order .....her ....She .....in which .....w...- [6]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:20 PM  
**Comment:** For clarity and slightly more modern wording, consider replacing with "fix up" or "decorate."
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:19 PM  
**Deleted:** -.....quitted .....dead- [7]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:21 PM  
**Comment:** Edit OK for clarity?
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:22 PM  
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- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:24 PM  
**Comment:** Revision OK? For simplicity an [9]
- Copy Editor 11/9/07 4:26 PM  
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