

reared. Broad, low, built of brick, with two long irregular wings embedded in English ivy, and a rotting shingled roof that sloped over dormered windows, its most striking characteristic as he first perceived it under the moonlight was the sentiment which is inevitably associated with age and decay. Never imposing, the dwelling was now barely habitable, for the roof was sagging in places over the long wings, a chimney had fallen upon one of the moss-covered eaves, the stone steps of the porch were hollowed into dangerous channels, and the ground before the door was strewn with scattered chips from a neighbouring wood pile.

The air of desolation was so complete that at first Ordway supposed the place to be uninhabited, but discovering a light presently in one of the upper windows, he ascended the steps and beat with the rusted knocker on the panel of the door. For several minutes there was no answer to his knock. Then the sound of shuffling footsteps reached him from the distance, drawing gradually nearer until they stopped immediately beyond the threshold.

"I ain' gwine open dis yer do' ef'n hits oner dem ole hants," said a voice within, while a sharp point of light pierced through the keyhole.

An instant later, in response to Ordway's assurance of his bodily reality, the bolt creaked back with an effort and the door opened far enough to admit the slovenly head and shoulders of an aged negress.

"Miss Meely she 's laid up en she cyar'n see ner comp'ny, Marster," she announced with the evident

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