

"That is strange," I remarked. "Did he not live at Redpost House?"

"He did live there. At least, so I believe, sir; but never a one about the place except the old squire, to the best of my belief, ever saw the present Mr. Brabazon so long as the family resided in the house."

"That is an unlikely story, Mrs. Chilcomb. Think now. Are you not forgetting?"

"Perhaps I am, perhaps I am," she murmured, folding her arms and leaning her head on one side in an attitude of thought. "No one, we used to say, but a young man, a kind of steward on the estate. And I believe," she added, lifting her head, "a gentleman like yourself—a doctor, I mean—a great friend of the dead Mr. Brabazon, used to be constantly in the house, and it was said he could tell a queer tale of the young one—of the whole family, father and son, for the mother, poor young woman, died in childbirth."

"You said a while ago she had been killed."

"So I did, so I did; and so maybe it was. They brought it out childbirth, sir. Ah, there were dark deeds done in that house," continued the old lady, shaking her forefinger in the direction of the window. "Dark deeds, dark deeds!"

"You are somewhat vague," I observed. "What sort of dark deeds do you mean?"

"Oh, Doctor," she cried, "you must not ask me any more, and indeed it is little I know only from hearsay, and hearsay isn't of much value, particularly after half a lifetime."