

BH CLIP

Cathy's bangle-covered wrists stopped their clattering. She looked up sharply. "Do you think that's wise?"

Belinda smiled. "Why not? It'll be dawn soon. The sky's already getting light in the east. I'll just stroll along the towpath by the river –"

Agitated bangles jangled even more violently as Cathy's hand shot out and grasped hold of Belinda's shoulder. Belinda flinched and tried to brush the woman away. But the hairdresser's fingers held firm.

"Not the towpath," she said. "Never the towpath at night."

"Why not?" said Belinda, eventually breaking free. She rubbed her shoulder. The woman's grip had hurt her.

"Why the ghost, of course."

Belinda gave a sigh. She was too tired to put up with Cathy's warnings of doom. "Not another ghost?"

Cathy nodded violently, eyes wide with alarm. "He walks there at night."

"Who?"

"They call him the Cavalier. Some say his appearance is the harbinger of death. They believe him to be someone from the house, one of the Duke's servants. They say he got drunk and fell into the river and drowned. He walks the towpath searching for the way back to the house."

"If he opened his eyes, it's right in front of him," said Belinda rather sharply. She was tired and wanted to go to bed and was not in the mood for a spook story. She turned to go.

"But now's the time they walk. The spirits. Just before dawn." Cathy was becoming agitated.

"I'll be well home before they start their performance," said Belinda, as she stepped out into the shadows.

Cathy, fingering a talisman she wore on a chain around her neck, stood at the caravan steps and watched as Belinda made her way diagonally across the knot garden towards the front of the house and the river.