

CHAPTER 13

IN SEARCH OF THE TRUTH

The story is continued by Walter Hartright.

I am **renting** two floors above a shop. I live on the top floor; Laura and Marian live on the floor below. I am selling my drawings to pay the rent. The world thinks that Laura, Lady Glyde, is dead and for the time being, we must let them believe that she is. I plan to prove that Laura is Lady Glyde, the **victim** of a terrible **fraud**. I believe that it was Anne Catherick who died in Fosco's house, and that the death was registered in the name of Lady Glyde. Count Fosco took Laura to the asylum, where she was, and still is, believed to be Anne Catherick. Sir Percival and Countess Fosco, who were to inherit Laura's money after her death, have received 30,000 pounds by this fraud.

Marian and I started to gather information that would help us prove that the fraud had taken place. Marian wrote to Mrs Michelson, the housekeeper at Blackwater Park. She asked her to write down everything she remembered about the events that took place before Laura left Blackwater Park. I also arranged a meeting with Mrs Pinhorn, the cook at Count Fosco's home. She told me everything she knew about the death of the person who she believed to be Lady Glyde.

I then went to see Mr Gilmore. He was very surprised when I told him Laura's story.

"I believe everything you've told me, but you haven't got any proof," he said. "Lady Glyde's aunt saw her die and the doctor signed her **death certificate**. Mr Fairlie insists that she is dead, even after seeing the person you say is Lady Glyde. I'm sorry, Mr Hartright, I can't help you."

"How can I get proof?" I asked.

"You must prove that Lady Glyde arrived in London after the date written on her death certificate."

"Neither Lady Glyde nor the servants remember the date," I said. "Only Sir Percival and Count Fosco know it."

"They will never help you," laughed Mr Gilmore.

"I will force them to **confess** it," I said. "Sir Percival has a secret. If I find out what that secret is, I can use it to force him to confess. Do you know if Sir Percival is still in France?"

"His solicitor told me that he has returned to London," said Mr Gilmore.

He gave me a letter. "This letter arrived a few days ago for Miss Halcombe. Will you please give it to her?"

"Of course," I said. I thanked Mr Gilmore and shook his hand.

When I left Mr Gilmore's office, I saw a man standing at the corner of the street. He looked at me, then started to follow me as I walked down the street. Sir Percival knew that Marian would ask Mr Gilmore for help. He may have sent someone to watch Mr Gilmore's office. I walked faster and turned into a side street, but the man turned into the street, too.



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