

The Room in the Dragon Volant

Joseph Sheridan LeFanu



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For fans of gothic tales and especially for fans of Joseph Sheridan LeFanu, The Room in the Dragon Volant is an absolute must-read - a real masterpiece, though not all that typically LeFanu.

Though this lesser known story by LeFanu comes with lots of horror elements, it is not a typical supernatural tale. There are lots of gothic elements that make the readers hold their breath while reading, but you don't actually encounter any revenants or other typical characters of gothic stories. What is really scary, though - and the element that shows LeFanu's real talent - is the general atmosphere of gloom and darkness that pervades the story.

The story starts in an innocent manner: a wealthy young gentleman named Richard Beckett sets out to travel and to seek adventure. He gets to travel some, but after his journey begins, the young man eventually falls in love and becomes first infatuated, then completely enslaved by a mysterious lady. The two meet when the carriage of the lady breaks and Beckett catches a glimpse of her under her veil.

The Dragon Volant - a haunted inn where the protagonist takes a cursed room and which gives the story its title - is the site of many mysterious events and disappearances, LeFanu proving to be once again the master of mystery and atmosphere. The room occupied by Beckett has seen the disappearance of several lodgers before him and they disappeared while the door was locked.

LeFanu's story has everything you need for a chilling and thrilling read. There is a naive young hero, a beautiful and unhappy mysterious woman, an old and evil husband, locked rooms, mysterious disappearances, intrigue and political plotting. The language is very readable, the storytelling free-flowing, giving the reader a sample of LeFanu at his best.

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