

THE  
HOUSE OF  
LOST  
SOULS



*A Novel*

*There is an old house, full of secrets that have awaited discovery for generations.  
Behind closed doors echo whispers of the past, shadows flirt with the unknown,  
and every room holds a puzzle that is the key to forgotten stories.*

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## The Gate That Never Quite Closes



The old gate creaked softly in the evening wind, as if welcoming me and warning me at the same time. It was a gate that never fully closed — so it had always seemed to be, and that gave the house at the edge of the village its mysterious charm. I still remember how, as a child, I used to run past this gate, my imagination fleeing toward undiscovered worlds behind the wrought-iron fence that had once gleamed but was now covered with a thin layer of rust.

The House of Lost Souls, as it was called, hung like a veil above the village. Everyone knew the story, though no one had ever dared to verify it fully. The gate was the portal to secrets, to something that did not easily lend itself to words.

It was that gate which, every year when I returned, drew me back again. As though it called to me with a whisper only I could hear.

I leaned against the cold iron and felt a shiver run down my back — not from fear, but from curiosity and joy at what was to come. For this gate, half open and inviting, was the entrance to a very different story — the story that had to be told at last.

The village breathed differently since my last visit. The trees around the house seemed a little older, the leaves rustling differently under my feet. The air carried the promise of something unknown, yet warm and familiar. Here no ordinary silence reigned; it was a silence full of expectation. And it was precisely that expectation that made stepping over the threshold exciting once more.

Everyone spoke of the house and its inhabitants in the past tense, but when I looked at that gate, I felt that the past was not closed off. It seemed to hover in the twilight between here and there, between now and then. As if the gate marked a boundary behind which something remained in motion — something that never quite let go.

At the foot of the gate I still found the small inscription my grandfather had once made. A tangle of names and dates, secrets hidden in his elegant handwriting. I had never had the courage to examine them all, but now, with trembling fingers, I began to realise that this gate was not merely an entrance. It was also a key, an invitation to discover who we truly were.

The dark evening fell quickly as I pushed the gate closed behind me, even knowing it would never really shut. The house looked at me with its weathered windows and crooked roof, as if it were breathing — a living creature trapped in centuries-old stones. I felt a light excitement in my chest, almost as if the house was welcoming me like a lost family member finally returning.

Inside I felt the warmth of memories etched into the walls. The crackling of the hearth, the smell of yellowed wood and dust, sounds of the past mingling with my presence. Every sound seemed to want to tell me something. The gate that never fully closed kept not only the curious out — it also kept the past captive, waiting to be discovered again.

The stairs creaked under my feet as I climbed upward, each step a story in itself. My fingers trailed along the banister, cold and leathery as old skin. This house had seen so much, felt so much, and yet it always seemed to awaken anew the moment I stepped inside.

The gate had brought me where I needed to be, but now the real journey began.

Somewhere deep in my heart I knew that this gate, which never quite closed itself, was the metaphorical border between what had been and what could still be. Between loss and hope, between forgetting and remembering. The House of Lost Souls was more than a place; it was a living story, filled with shadows dancing in the half-dark, with voices whispering in the silence of the night.

With a smile on my lips I walked on, the gate behind me — as always, left ajar. Not to hold me fast, but to let me return time and again. For some doors are not meant to remain closed. They are there to open, again and again, for those who dare to listen to the stories hiding behind them.

And so my adventure began — at the gate that never quite closes, in the house where lost souls whisper, laugh and find hope. An adventure I welcomed with open

arms, full of joy and mystery. For sometimes, opening a door is the beginning of the greatest happiness.

## Shadows on the Upper Floor



The stairs creaked under my feet as I slowly climbed. It was as if the house itself sighed, warning me of what waited above. The upper floor of *The House of Last Souls* was known as the place where the past was most tangible. Today it was my turn to face those secrets, and strangely enough I felt no fear. Only an inexplicable excitement, as if I were on the verge of unravelling an old mystery.

When I reached the top step, the shadows immediately enveloped me like a soft blanket. The light from my flickering torch danced over the weathered walls and the worn wooden planks of the floor. It smelled of old paper, weathered wood and a hint of forgotten memories — exactly as I had imagined. Up here, time seemed to stand still for a moment; a place where every breath told a story.

Through the half-open door at the end of the corridor, weak moonlight peered inside. The room was surprisingly large, with a high ceiling and a dust-covered four-poster bed in the corner. It was as if someone had abandoned it — as if time had slowed here, or perhaps even stopped. Scattered objects lay everywhere: a broken picture frame, yellowed books whose covers were falling to pieces, and a broken mirror casting the faint light back in jagged patterns.

I walked on, letting my fingers caress the weathered wood of a dresser. Suddenly something seemed to move in the corner of my eye. A shadow that did not quite belong. My heart gave a little jump, but I focused on staying calm. Fear was not my companion on this journey. I breathed deeply and continued on my way, wondering whether the shadow of the past was now truly peering back at me.

Old portraits hung on the wall, their faces smiling as though they had expected my arrival. Their eyes seemed alive, gleaming in the dim light and radiating a strange friendliness. One portrait struck me particularly: a young woman with dark eyes and a gentle smile that seemed to fill the house with hope, despite the decayed state

around her. Someone who had lived here long ago, and whose spirit perhaps still watched over this place with gentle care.

I approached an open wardrobe and carefully lifted a stack of yellowed letters. With trembling hands but a smile on my lips, I opened the top one. The letters were written in elegant script, the paper brittle but carefully preserved. The words whispered stories of love, secrets and loss — pieces of a life that had once flourished here, now living only in memory. An intriguing sense of connection took hold of me, as if the inhabitants were inviting me to discover and preserve their story.

A soft wind came unexpectedly through the open window, the curtains swaying lightly and bringing the space to life. The shadows on the walls moved along like dancing memories, joyful and melancholy at once. For the first time since my arrival I felt not coldness or fear, but an intimate welcome. As if this house, with all its historical pain and joy, not only allowed me in, but was glad of the company.

I decided to search further and found under the bed a diary, half hidden under a heap of dust. The cover was cracked, the lettering nearly illegible, but I felt immediately the value of this found relic. What would be inside? Secrets? Messages? Warnings? My curiosity grew with every second. Carefully I opened it and began to read, while the shadows around me seemed to whisper that I was on the right track.

Suddenly I felt a light touch on my shoulder. I turned around, but there was no one. My laughter turned into a warm smile. The house was living with me, not against me. These were the shadows of memories, not ghosts wanting to harm. The energy was playful and hopeful, as if encouraging me to continue, to complete the story that had once begun here.

With new courage I cleared my throat and carefully closed the diary. It was time to dig deeper, to brave the shadows and worries above, for in this house nothing was as it seemed. Everything was a piece of the puzzle, part of a larger whole. And now more than ever I felt that I was exactly on the right path.

The shadows on the upper floor were not merely black and cold, but filled with warmth, history and even a spark of joy. Every corner, every creaking floorboard, told a story waiting to be heard. And I was here to discover it — the house of lost souls no longer abandoned, but filled with my presence and my story.