9

The Escaped Prisoner

Mr Stapleton came to the Hall and met Sir Henry that same afternoon. The next morning he took us to the place where the evil Sir Hugo died. Then we had lunch at Pen House. Sir Henry clearly thought Miss Stapleton was very beautiful. His eyes followed her everywhere. He liked her very much, and I was sure that she felt the same about him. He spoke about her again and again as we walked home. After the first meeting, we met the Stapletons almost every day.

After a short time it was clear that Sir Henry had fallen deeply in love with the beautiful Miss Stapleton. At first I thought that Stapleton would be very pleased if his sister married Sir Henry. However, I soon realized that he did not want their friendship to grow into love. He did everything he could to make sure that they were never alone. On one or two occasions they did manage to meet alone, but Stapleton followed them and was not pleased to see them together.

I soon met another neighbour of Sir Henry's. His name was Mr Frankland, and he lived about four miles to the south of the Hall. He was an old man with a red face and white hair. He had two hobbies. The first was arguing. He argued with everybody. The second hobby was studying the stars. For this he had a very big telescope. For several

days he had been watching the moor through the telescope. He wanted to find Selden, the escaped murderer. Nobody had seen the prisoner for a fortnight, and we all thought that he had probably left the moor.

A few nights later I was woken by a noise at about two in the morning. I heard someone walking softly outside my door. I got up, opened the door and looked out. I saw Barrymore moving carefully and quietly away from me. I followed him, as quietly as I could. He went into one of the empty bedrooms and left the door open. I went quietly up to the door and looked inside.

Barrymore was standing at the window. He was holding a light in his hand and looking out on to the moor. He stood without moving for a few minutes and then he put out the light.

I went quickly back to my room. A few minutes later I heard Barrymore go softly by.

The next morning I told Sir Henry what I had seen.

'We must follow him and find out what he is doing,' said Sir Henry. 'He won't hear us if we move carefully.'

That night we sat in Sir Henry's room and waited. At about three o'clock in the morning we heard the sound of footsteps outside the bedroom. We looked out and saw Barrymore. We followed him as quietly as we could. He went into the same room as before. We reached the door and looked in. There was Barrymore, with the light in his hand, looking out across the moor, exactly as I had seen him on the night before.