

XIII -The woman in the Alcove

Chapter XIII of "The Woman in the Alcove" describes a restless and anxious night for the narrator, who is heavily burdened with worries about Mr. Durand's fate and the effect of a halted plan intended to prove his innocence. Despite her patient's recovery, her thoughts are not with the patient but with the unfolding mystery and Mr. Durand's precarious situation. The morning brings a conversation with Miss Grey, revealing her heart's secret and adding to the narrator's emotional load. An interaction with Mr. Grey leads to a hint of news in the papers concerning the Fairbrother case, but the details remain elusive until a meeting with Inspector Dalzell at the police headquarters.

Inspector Dalzell shares information about a new witness connected to the case, stemming from a missing recommendation for a waiter named Wellgood, who disappeared after leaving his job suddenly. The investigation reveals that Wellgood was recommended by Hiram Sears, a steward for Mr. Fairbrother, sparking a new direction in the case. Sears, who is now missing, and his peculiar devotion to Mrs. Fairbrother come under scrutiny, suggesting a more complex motive behind the crime. The chapter ends with a nuanced view of Sears, hinting at his past and leaving the narrator and reader with more questions about his involvement in the murder.

This chapter amplifies the suspense and deepens the mystery with new evidence pointing to Hiram Sears and highlighting the intricate relationships within the Fairbrother household. The emotional strain on the narrator and her dedication to uncovering the truth are evident, as she navigates the delicate balance between professional duty and personal involvement in the case.