

THE INFANT SPIRITS

(Haunting Clarisse Book Four)

by Janice Tremayne

EXCERPT

WHAT EVIL LURKS BENEATH

Lindsay looked on as Father O'Connor tried desperately to control his emotions. He thrust the old skeleton key into the mortice lock of the basement door, fixated on one thing only—to confront his deepest fears that lived in that room. Just being in Ward C of Willow Court Asylum was enough to set off an emotional reaction—to get even with the devil in there.

“The demon knows we’re here,” Father O'Connor said. He was holding his cross in one hand and a small bottle of holy water in the other. Although he was composed, the sacred water rattled in his hand.

Lindsay looked back at him as his eyes filled with sadness for all the victims who had lost their lives to the wicked Dr. Pendergrass. “The demon mustn’t sense any fear, or it will take advantage. We come armed with God’s word, filled with the Holy Spirit. We’re strong, Father. Don’t fear the evil that has tormented us for over a century.”

Father O'Connor didn’t respond. He knew Lindsay was right, because the only way to defeat a demon was not to expose your worst fears. Demons had an uncanny way of measuring your apprehension and using it to their advantage.

Lindsay turned the key quickly until he heard the click of the mortice lock disengaging. Then he raised his foot and kicked the door open as he shone his lantern into the room.

He placed his hands over his mouth. The room smelled like it had been untouched for a hundred years; a putrid stench that was not from this time and had carried over from generations.

“Is this what spirits smell like?” Father O'Connor asked.

“It’s the signature of evil you are smelling, Father. They all have a different odor. It’s how we identify them.”

Father O’Connor sensed the evil in the air—the rotting moisture of death and the blood curdling screams of babies and their mothers who had died in this den of horrors.

“So, now you hide from us, demon? Behind the pitch-black curtains of your own hell!” Lindsay called out. “Show yourself, you scum of the Earth and murderer of mothers and children!”