

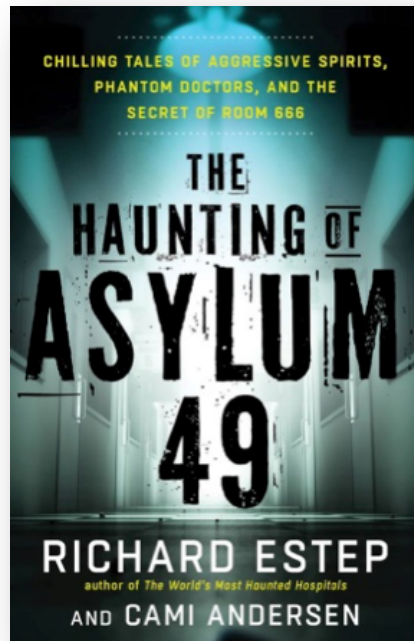
EXCERPT FROM

The Haunting of Asylum 49

By Richard Estep and Cami Andersen

Chapter 13: Confronting the Guardian

(350 words)



The investigators reached the black maze, which slowed their pace even further as even the tiniest vestiges of light were now gone, leaving them totally and utterly blind except for the flashlights each one carried. Each halting step forward required them to “swim” with their arms, slowly pushing aside the hanging trash bags with a wince-inducing rustle.

Pushing through the black plastic maze, the investigators made their way through more dimly-lit corridors that were decked out like a forest trail, complete with a huge werewolf that was gnawing on the guts of a disemboweled deer. They had to tread carefully, for fear of accidentally stepping on the pressure pad trigger that would cause the werewolf to lunge at them, powered by a pneumatic piston.

Navigating their way gingerly through the woodland-themed corridors, the trio decided to hold their investigative session in a room that was decorated in the style of Grandmother’s house from the Little Red Riding Hood fairytale. The room’s centerpiece was a large bed occupied by a little old lady (in the form of a mannequin) who, unbeknownst to first-time visitors, was actually laying on top of a hollow mattress concealing another mechanical werewolf. When the correct switch was thrown, the top of the bed would be hurled upwards, and a growling lycanthrope would rush up from the dark pit below.

Fortunately for the three already-wary paranormal investigators, their furry roommate was currently switched off, and they only had to contend with the rather smug smirk of Grandmother, who seemed to be staring at them expectantly over the tops of her wire-framed spectacles.

Suddenly, Misty stopped dead in her tracks, followed seconds later by Sean and Richard.

“Do you hear that?” she asked.

They all did. Somewhere, not so far away from them, they heard the heavy, measured tread of footsteps. They seemed to be coming from behind them, following the path that the investigators had taken already.

Oh crap, Richard thought to himself, his heart suddenly racing. Something really is following us. It has to be the Guardian...

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