

At last the bed fell back into place, collapsing firmly to the floor. A frightening hush fell over the room, amplifying the piercing beat of her heart, her ragged breaths, and Shawn's rhythmic, measured breathing coming from the other bed.

She clambered into a sitting position and crouched near the center of the mattress, clutching the sheet that had tangled up around her. A horrible feeling, a persistent nagging, gripped her. She didn't want to consider it—yet there it was, repeating inside her head.

*Look down beside the bed.*

Begrudgingly she obeyed, and what she found there terrified her.

A girl huddled on the hardwood floor. Her long, dark hair spilled over her pale shoulders and spread out in tendrils over her back. Lila could see the details in the old-time nightdress she wore—the small holes in the eyelet lace edging, the dull, frayed grey fabric. Even the fine lines on the bottom of the girl's dirt encrusted feet were visible while she rested on her knees.

But she wasn't made of the same stuff as Lila. This wasn't a real young woman. Just like the blonde girl clutching her paintbrush before the mural—she was something else. There, but not there. Was she hallucinating? But it seemed so real!