



The Circle Squared

Ida Jones

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The Circle Squared - achieving the seemingly impossible. Women's fiction for all.

This intriguing novella, placed firmly in the women's fiction genre, combines historical fiction, a friendly ghost story and, after researching family history, provides a happy ending for all.

When you decide to 'Look Inside' this literary work you will see that it opens in 2004 when Margaret Bentley, tired of commuting to the city to work from the small town where she lived, applied and got the job of assistant to a local estate agent. When attending the interview she was drawn to their advert for a cottage for sale in a nearby village and subsequently bought it having quickly sold her flat near the station. She was pleased she had chosen the little cottage although she sometimes wondered if the cottage had chosen her. When she took a shortcut to it across the old graveyard next to a disused chapel she felt as if she was being watched. She didn't realise then that it was a friendly presence guiding her.

Margaret decided to clean out and paint the walls of the cellar and found a tin box in a hole in the wall. It contained old papers from 1879 which showed there had been another Margaret Bentley...

In 1879 Margaret Bentley started to work as a housemaid for Sir Henry and Lady Julia Bakerville and, because the lady's maid was also called Margaret, it was decided by the butler, Blanchett, and the housekeeper, Mrs Mopson, that the new housemaid would be called Meg. She was given more information about the family by Ivy, the other housemaid who had worked at the manor house for five years and loved to chatter.

Sir Henry and Lady Julia had been married for ten years without a resultant heir and that disappointment caused Lady Julia to withdraw into herself and their relationship became a distant one leaving Sir Henry feeling lonely. At Christmas he gets drunk and, when the house is quiet, goes to Meg's bedroom and rapes her, remembering little of the event the next morning. When Meg realises she is pregnant she tells Sir Henry who is mortified at his actions. He is a kindly man at heart and hatches a plan, with Lady Julia's consent, to adopt the baby and Meg is found a new home in Chapel Row in a cottage owned by Sir Henry and a job cleaning and looking after the chapel opposite.

Meg had little choice but to accept the situation and realised her baby would have a better chance in life than she would have been able to offer her and lived near enough to be able to see her child grow up. Meg named her baby Megan but Lady Julia had decided to call her Penelope.

With Meg settled, we follow the story of the Bakerville family from 1879 to 2005. As the years unfold, we discover the background story to the family history, with each generation playing its part until we reach 2004 and discover what Margaret Bentley does with the information she uncovers.

This is a compelling and absorbing tale with a delightfully pleasant 'ghostly' element, sure to be of interest to all those who enjoy a gentle women's mystery well told.

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