

“Miss Hannah Comes Back”

Side #4 –Delilah, Paula, and Cathy

DELILAH. My granny used to tell stories about this place. Well, everybody’s granny tells stories, and everybody’s granny tells stories about this place. My granny said, and she swore this was the truth – but everybody’s granny says that, too – she said, that Miss Eudalia Hampton, the last Hampton, when her lover parted from her for the last time, she took and made herself a doll out of the leaves of that tree. I think your granny said it was a cape, but my granny said a doll. And she took that doll and she dressed it in some of her dead daddy’s clothes. Then she stuck that doll out here in the yard, and that’s what grew into the Hampton Oak. My granny didn’t think I knew that that was old folks’ way of saying she stuck *him* in the ground, and he just starved and died right there.

PAULA. My granny never told that story. Not about him dying.

DELILAH. The stories other people tell, she made the doll out of leaves and he turned into her dead lover, and they lived here happily ever after. That people could see them out here, strolling around of a fine night.

CATHY. That explains plants moving around!

PAULA. Oh, sweetie, plants don’t move, how could they?

DELILAH. Of course they do. I’ve seen them. In this yard, right here.

CATHY. You have? I’m not the only one?

DELILAH. Oh, no. Not everyone can see them, but you and I can. Apparently.

CATHY. Wait. She couldn’t have taken leaves from the Hampton Oak and made something that *became* the Hampton Oak.

DELILAH. You know, I pointed that out to my granny and she just waved her hand and said that’s how it happened.

(To PAULA.) Could I trouble you for just a little more iced tea?

PAULA. Of course.

*(PAULA and DELILAH go up to the porch. CATHY remains by the tree stump.)*

DELILAH. You know, I was thinking about Miss Alice the other day. She came from Cincinnati, you know that. You remember when she tried to plant her first garden here? You might not. Well, she cut down and took out a whole bunch of lovely old bushes and things, and then she stopped eating and was wandering around the yard all the time.

She snapped out of it somehow. I don't know how.

But Mr. Nelson would know.