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OF RED MANSIONS

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红楼梦

A Dream of Red Mansions

VI



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2957



第九十八回

苦绛珠魂归离恨天 病神瑛泪洒相思地

话说宝玉见了贾政，回至房中，更觉头昏脑闷，懒怠动弹，连饭也没吃，便昏沉睡去。仍旧延医诊治，服药不效，索性连人也认不明白了。大家扶着他坐起来，还是象个好人。一连闹了几天。那日恰是回九之期，说是若过不去，薛姨妈脸上过不去；若说去呢，宝玉这般光景，明知是为黛玉而起，欲要告诉明白，又恐气急生变。宝钗是新媳妇，又难劝慰，必得姨妈过来才好。若不回九，姨妈嗔怪。便与王夫人凤姐商议道：“我看宝玉竟是魂不守舍，起动是不怕的。用两乘小轿，叫人扶着，从园里过去，应了回九的吉期；以后请姨妈过来安慰宝钗，咱们一心一计的调治宝玉，可不两全？”王夫人答应了，即刻预备。幸亏宝钗是新媳妇，宝玉是个疯傻的，由人搬弄过去了，宝钗也明知其事，心里只怨母亲办得糊涂，事已至此，不肯多言。独有薛姨妈看见宝玉这般光景，心里懊悔，只得草草完事。

回家，宝玉越加沉重，次日连起坐都不能了；日重一

Chapter 98

Unhappy Vermilion Pearl's Spirit Returns in Sorrow to Heaven Deranged Shen Ying¹ Sheds Tears in the Lodge of His Loved One

Baoyu returned to his room after seeing his father more dizzy, confused and listless than before. Without even eating his meal he drifted off to sleep. Doctors were called in again but their remedies proved ineffectual — he could not even recognize those around him, although when helped to sit up he looked normal enough. And this state of affairs continued for several days.

The ninth day after the wedding had now come — the day on which newly-weds should visit the bride's family. If they stayed away, Aunt Xue might well feel slighted; but how could they go with Baoyu so distraught on account of Daiyu? On the other hand, they feared that if told of her death he might die himself of chagrin. His bride could hardly reason with him either — for that, her mother was needed there. Yet if they neglected to pay this courtesy call, Aunt Xue would take offence.

The Lady Dowager consulted Lady Wang and Xifeng and proposed, "Baoyu may have lost his mind, but I can't see that going out would hurt him. Let's order two small sedan-chairs and have them escorted over through the Garden to keep up appearances; then we can invite Aunt Xue here to comfort Baochai, while we give our whole minds to curing Baoyu. Wouldn't that be best on both scores?"

Lady Wang agreed and had preparations made without delay. As Baochai was a new bride and Baoyu was crazed, neither objected to being taken over; for although Baochai knew how things stood and at heart blamed her mother for this injudicious match, it was too late now to protest. True, Aunt Xue reproached herself bitterly when she saw Baoyu's condition; still, they had to go through with the ceremonies in a perfunctory way.

On their return Baoyu took a turn for the worse. The next morning he

日，甚至汤水不进。薛姨妈等忙了手脚，各处遍请名医，皆不识病源。只有城外破寺中住着个穷医姓毕别号知庵的，诊得病源是悲喜激射，冷暖失调，饮食失时，忧忿滞中，正气壅闭：此内伤外感之症。于是度量用药。至晚服了，二更后，果然省些人事，便要喝水。贾母王夫人等才放了心，请了薛姨妈带了宝钗，都到贾母那里，暂且歇息。

宝玉片时清楚，自料难保，见诸人散后，房中只有袭人，因唤袭人至跟前，拉着手哭道：“我问你：宝姐姐怎么来的？我记得老爷给我娶了林妹妹过来，怎么叫宝姐姐赶出去了？他为什么霸占住在这里？我要说呢，又恐怕得罪了他。你们听见林妹妹哭的怎么样了？”袭人不敢明说，只得说道：“林姑娘病着呢。”宝玉又道：“我瞧瞧他去。”说着，要起来，那知连日饮食不进，身子岂能动转，便哭道：“我要死了！我有一句心里的话，只求你回明老太太：横竖林妹妹也是要死的，我如今也不能保，两处两个病人，都要死的！死了越发难张罗，不如腾一处空房子，趁早把我和林妹妹两个抬在那里，治着也好一处医治、伏侍，死了也好一处停放。你依我这话，不枉了几年的情分。”袭人听了这些话，又急，又笑，又痛。

宝钗恰好同着莺儿过来，也听见了，便说道：“你放着病不保养，何苦说这些不吉利的话呢？老太太才安慰了些，你

could not sit up, and he wasted away day by day until he could not even take liquid nourishment. In panic Aunt Xue and the others searched everywhere for good doctors, but not one was able to diagnose his illness until a certain Bi Zhan, a poor physician who lived in a ruined temple outside town, ascribed it to both internal and external factors: sudden transports of joy and grief depriving him of his senses and appetite and pent-up indignation resulting in congestion. He made out his prescription accordingly, and Baoyu took the first dose that evening. After the second watch, sure enough, he came to and asked for a drink of water. Their Ladyships in relief invited Aunt Xue and Baochai to the old lady's room to rest.

Baoyu, now that his mind had cleared, was convinced that he was dying. As the others had gone, leaving only Xiren there, he called her over to him and clasped her hand.

"Tell me," he sobbed, "what is Cousin Baochai doing here? I remember my father choosing Cousin Lin to marry me, so how did she get driven out by Cousin Baochai? Why should she force her way in here? I don't like to ask her for fear of offending her. And what news have you of Cousin Lin? Is she crying her heart out?"

Xiren prevaricated, "Miss Lin is ill."

"I'll go and see her then."

He tried to get up, but after several days without nourishment of any kind he was too weak to move.

"I'm dying!" he exclaimed. "But I've one request which I beg you to pass on to the old lady. Cousin Lin will be sobbing herself to death too and I'm done for now anyway, so that's two of us mortally ill in different places. If we die apart that'll make more trouble for you, so why not turn out a spare room and move the two of us there? You can nurse us both together while we're still living, and when we're dead you can lay us out together. For the sake of our friendship these years, please do this for me!"

Xiren was so affected by his words that she sobbed convulsively. And Baochai, coming back then with Yinger, heard him too.

"Why talk in that unlucky way instead of resting well so as to recover?" she asked. "The old lady's just feeling a bit easier in her mind,

又生出事来。老太太一生疼你一个，如今八十多岁的人了，虽不图你的诰封，将来你成了人，老太太也看着乐一天，也不枉了老人家的苦心。太太更是不必说了，一生的心血精神，抚养了你这一个儿子，若是半途死了，太太将来怎么样呢？我虽是薄命，也不至于此：据此三件看来，你就要死，那天也不容你死的，所以你是不能死的。只管安稳着养个四五天后，风邪散了，太和正气一足，自然这些邪病都没有了。”宝玉听了，竟是无言可答，半晌，方才嘻嘻的笑道：“你是好些时不和我说话了，这会子说这些大道理的话给谁听？”宝钗听了这话，便又说道：“实告诉你说罢：那两日你不知人事的时候，林妹妹已经亡故了。”宝玉忽然坐起，大声咤异道：“果真死了吗？”宝钗道：“果真死了。岂有红口白舌咒人死的呢！老太太、太太知道你姐妹和睦，你听见他死了，自然你也要死，所以不肯告诉你。”

宝玉听了，不禁放声大哭，倒在床上，忽然眼前漆黑，辨不出方向，心中正自恍惚，只见眼前好象有人走来。宝玉茫然问道：“借问此是何处？”那人道：“此阴司泉路。你寿未终，何故至此？”宝玉道：“适闻有一故人已死，遂寻访至此，不觉迷途。”那人道：“故人是誰？”宝玉道：“姑苏林黛玉。”那人冷笑道：“林黛玉生不同人，死不同鬼，无魂无魄，何处寻访？凡人魂魄，聚而成形，散而为气，生前聚之，死则散焉。常人尚无可寻访，何况林黛玉呢？汝快回去

yet here you are starting fresh trouble. You've always been the old lady's favourite, and now she's over eighty. Though she's not expecting you to win her honours, if you turn out well that will please her and the pains she's taken over you won't be wasted. As for your mother, it goes without saying she's given her heart's blood to bring you up, and if you die young what's to become of her? And I, though I may be ill-fated, don't deserve this. Because of the three of us, even if you want to die Heaven won't allow it! So just rest quietly for four or five days till you're over this chill and your vital forces are restored; then this disorder will naturally disappear."

This silenced Baoyu for some minutes. Then he sniggered, "You stopped talking to me for so long, why start haranguing me now?"

"Let me tell you the truth," she continued. "While you were in a coma for two days Cousin Lin died."

He sat up abruptly.

"Is that true?" he demanded.

"Of course it is. I wouldn't say such a fearful thing if it wasn't. The old lady and your mother, knowing how fond of her you were, were afraid the news would kill you too. That's why they didn't tell you."

Baoyu burst out sobbing and fell back on his pillows. All before him was black and he could not make out where he was. He was feeling lost when he saw a figure approaching.

"Excuse me," he blurted out. "What is this place?"

"The way to Hell," was the answer. "But what are *you* doing here? Your span of life has not ended."

"I just heard that a friend had died, and looking for her here I lost my way."

"What friend?"

"Lin Daiyu of Suzhou."

"Lin Daiyu in life was no ordinary mortal; in death she is no ordinary ghost," said the apparition with a scornful laugh. "As she has no ghost, where can you find her? The spirits of men assume a form only when concentrated; when dissipated they change into vapour. In life they have a form; after death they scatter. So even ordinary mortals cannot be traced after death, let alone Lin Daiyu. You had better go back at once."

罢。”宝玉听了，呆了半晌，道：“既云死者散也，又如何有这个‘阴司’呢？”那人冷笑道：“那‘阴司’说有便有，说无就无。皆为世俗溺于生死之说，设言以警世，便道上天深怒愚人——或不守分安常；或生禄未终，自行夭折；或嗜淫欲，尚气逞凶，无故自殒者：特设此地狱，囚其魂魄，受无边的苦，以偿生前之罪。汝寻黛玉，是无故自陷也。且黛玉已归太虚幻境，汝若有心寻访，潜心修养，自然有时相见；如不安生，即以自行夭折之罪，囚禁阴司，除父母之外，图一见黛玉，终不能矣。”那人说毕，袖中取出一石，向宝玉心口掷来。宝玉听了这话，又被这石子打着心窝，吓的即欲回家，只恨迷了道路。正在踌躇，忽听那边有人唤他。回首看时，不是别人，正是贾母、王夫人、宝钗、袭人等围绕哭泣叫着，自己仍旧躺在床上。见案上红灯，窗前皓月，依然锦绣丛中，繁华世界。定神一想，原来竟是一场大梦。浑身冷汗，觉得心内清爽。仔细一想，真正无可奈何，不过长叹数声。

起初宝钗早知黛玉已死，因贾母等不许众人告诉宝玉知道，恐添病难治，自己却深知宝玉之病实因黛玉而起，失玉次之，故趁势说明，使其一痛决绝，神魂一归，庶可疗治。贾母王夫人等不知宝钗的用意，深怪他造次，后来见宝玉醒了过来，方才放心，立刻到外书房请了毕大夫进来诊视。那大夫进来诊了脉，便道：“奇怪！这回脉气沉静，神安郁散，

Nonplussed by this Baoyu asked, "If you say the spirit is dissipated after death, why should there be a Hell?"

"Hell exists for those who believe in it," was the disdainful answer. "Because the vulgar herd are afraid of death they tell cautionary tales about the wrath that Heaven visits on fools who are not content with their lot or senselessly cut short their lives by indulging in lust or running amok, making away with themselves for no good reason. So Hell has been dreamed up as a prison where such ghosts will suffer endless torments to expiate their crimes during their lifetime. By searching for Daiyu, you are courting death unjustifiably. The more so, as she has already returned to the Illusory Land of Great Void. If you want to find her, you must cultivate virtue and you will have occasion to meet again. If you chafe at your lot and commit the crime of cutting short your life, you may see your parents again — but never Daiyu!" This said, he took a stone from his sleeve and aimed it at Baoyu's heart.

Terrified by this warning and a pain in the region of his heart, Baoyu longed to go home but did not know the way. He was hesitating when he heard his name and turned to find that the old lady, Lady Wang, Baochai and Xiren had gathered round, tearfully calling him, and he himself was still lying in his bed. The red lamp on his desk, the bright moon outside the window showed that he was still in this vain world, in the lap of luxury. Calming down, he realized that he had been dreaming. Though drenched with cold sweat he felt refreshed and clear-headed. Reflecting that there was in truth no way out for him, he heaved sigh after sigh.

Now Baochai had known from the start of Daiyu's death, but the Lady Dowager forbade any mention of it to Baoyu for fear of making his illness worse, though she herself knew that his breakdown was due to his longing for Daiyu, the loss of his jade being only secondary. She had taken her opportunity to tell him to end his torment and bring him back to his senses, so that he could be cured. The old lady and Lady Wang not knowing her motive, blamed her for her impetuosity; but when Baoyu came to they felt relieved and at once summoned Doctor Bi from the outer study to examine him.

"Strange!" observed the physician after feeling his pulse. "His pulse is steady and there is no sign now of melancholia. We'll give him a re-

明日进调理的药，就可以望好了。”说着出去。众人各自安心散去。

袭人起初深怨宝钗不该告诉，惟是口中不好说出。莺儿背地也说宝钗道：“姑娘忒性急了。”宝钗道：“你知道什么！好歹横竖有我呢。”那宝钗任人诽谤，并不介意，只窥察宝玉心病，暗下针砭。

一日，宝玉渐觉神志安定。虽一时想起黛玉，尚有糊涂。更有袭人缓缓的将“老爷选定的宝姑娘为人和厚，嫌林姑娘秉性古怪，原恐早夭。老太太恐你不知好歹，病中着急，所以叫雪雁过来哄你”的话，时常劝解。宝玉终是心酸落泪。欲待寻死，又想着梦中之言，又恐老太太、太太生气，又不得撩开。又想黛玉已死，宝钗又是第一等人物，方信“金石姻缘”有定，自己也解了好些。宝钗看来不妨大事，于是自己心也安了，只在贾母王夫人等前尽行过家庭之礼后，便设法以释宝玉之忧。宝玉虽不能时常坐起，亦常见宝钗坐在床前，禁不住生来旧病。宝钗每以正言解劝，以“养身要紧，你我既为夫妇，岂在一时”之语安慰他。那宝玉心里虽不顺遂，无奈日里贾母王夫人及薛姨妈等轮流相伴，夜间宝钗独去安寝，贾母又派人服侍，只得安心静养。又见宝钗举动温柔，就也渐渐的将爱慕黛玉的心肠略移在宝钗身上。此是后话。