yourself, you must let me see you safely home. I think it isn't safe for you to be out alone so late in this lonely road."

"Thank you," said the lady, drawing herself up; "I am not at all afraid, and I prefer to go alone."

She drew her light wrap more closely about her and was moving away, when a strange noise, like a succession of gasping sobs, issued from the haunted chamber. The color fled from the haughty maiden's face, and with a scream of terror she clung trembling to my arm. I took her hand, which was cold with fright, and tried to comfort her, with the assurance that the noise was only the hooting of an owl. But it was some time before she regained her composure. Then she meekly submitted when I drew her hand through my arm, and pointed out the direction in which she wished to go.

I felt very triumphant, and exerted myself to be entertaining as we walked on through the woods, but my companion was very silent. The charm of her presence, however, was enough for me, and the light touch of her little hand upon my arm thrilled me with delight. Suddenly she paused, and withdrew her hand.

"Thank you for your protection," she said. "Good-night;" and turning away from me, she vanished in the hazel copse on the right of the path.

I stood petrified with astonishment for a moment. Had I been the subject of an hallucination, or the victim of a practical joke? A whip-poor-will called out mockingly from a distant wall, "Where is she now? where is she now?" I searched the copse for traces of a path, but the thick growth of bushes and the increasing darkness baffled all my efforts, and I had to give up the quest, and turned my steps unwillingly homeward.

At the hotel, that night, I made inquiries in regard to the guests staying in town. No Miss Armstrong had been heard of, and my landlady said she knew the names of every one who lived in the place. Judging from the interest which she took in my investigations, I thought it quite likely that she did.

During the week that followed I was like one distraught. I could think of nothing but my yellow-haired ghost, and pondered deeply over the mystery that invested her. Every day I made pilgrimages down the turnpike; I visited the old tavern at morning, noon, and night. I searched carefully for the path by which the girl had disappeared, but was unable ever to discover the hazel copse. I lost my appetite, was unable to sleep, and was so absent-minded that my friends remarked upon my altered demeanor.

One afternoon, in a melancholy and discouraged frame of mind, I wandered down the old road, still with the faint hope that the ghost would appear to me again. All was silent in and around the ruin. A few more bricks had fallen from one of the toppling chimneys, but there was no trace of ghostly or human visitant.

As I stood looking into one of the dismantled rooms, my attention was attracted by a pewee's nest, built above the door. Impelled by the old boyish spirit of discovery, I piled up some bricks, and climbed up to look into the nest. My footing was insecure, and I slipped, falling back heavily upon the floor. The rotten planks gave way, and there was a sudden crash and sinking. When I came to myself, I was lying in the cellar of the tavern with two heavy beams across my ankle, which was aching horribly. I tried to move the rubbish, but my wrist had been injured by the fall, so that I could not help myself in the least. The outlook was frightful. The pain grew worse every moment, and the chances of any one coming to my rescue were very few. How long I lay in this agony of body and mind I do not know. Sunset was fast coming on, when I heard a light step and a clear, flute-like whistle just outside the door. I thought it was some farmer's boy after the cows, but the whistle charmed me into silence, and I listened spellbound as the sounds came nearer. I heard a step on the door-stone; then a shadow darkened the entrance, and I looked up to see my ghost standing there, her hat in her hand, the last rays of the setting sun shining on her crown of golden hair, and the pale draperies floating around her like a mist.