

**Secret tunnel extract:**

What discovery? Leaves you wondering what might be found.

I had almost given up when one of the bricks finally shifted under my touch. Drawing my hand back in surprise, I looked more closely; a grey brick with a small swirl. No wonder I’d overlooked it up until now – I’d been looking for something more interesting and unusual. Now I came to think about it, this made more sense. If this was an entrance to a secret tunnel below the garden, of course it wouldn’t stand out. It would be small, plain, nothing to catch the eye. Placing my palm directly on the brick, I took a deep breath to still my racing heart. So far, I hadn’t discussed my discovery with anyone – it was my secret and would remain so until I knew what was down there. I looked back, through the darkness, the way I had come. All quiet and still, the light of the full-moon illuminating the fountain. No-one could possibly have seen me, hidden as I was from the main road – so why did I get the feeling that someone, or something, was watching me?

It must be the faces in the bricks, I thought. Nothing to worry about. No-one there. I turned back to the wall and began to push more firmly. Slowly, at first, the brick began to move. A faint click and it stopped. Nothing more. I pushed again, harder. Still nothing. Lowering my hand, I stepped back and waited. Disappointment welled in me. I hadn’t found a secret entrance to the tunnels below; the old, crumbling map I had found was wrong.

With a sigh, I turned to leave. Was that a movement I saw out of my eye? I snapped my attention back to the wall but it was as still as the night air around me, as if the whole gardens were holding their breath and watching. Suddenly, everything changed. A sudden, icy blast of wind hit me, growing stronger as bricks began to move, their positions in the wall changing quicker and quicker until they became a blur. With a blinding flash, as though the side of the wall had been struck by lightning, the movement stopped. Where the section of wall had been, there were now steps leading down from a dark entrance to an underground tunnel. Wind howled around me, snatching stones from the gravel path and hurling them against me. The only shelter was to go forward. I took two steps in to the tunnel before the darkness swallowed me.

With a snap, the mouth of the tunnel had slammed shut behind me. Desperately I ran both hands around where the entrance had been. The wall was smooth to my touch. I could find no way out. There was nothing for it – I had to go on. Deeper in to the darkness.

Feeling my way down the corridor, I became aware of a faint, flickering light ahead of me. At first, I thought it must be my imagination, but it grew stronger with every step I took until I reached the corner of the passage I was in and stepped in to a longer tunnel lit sparsely with candles. The ghostly blue light they gave was barely enough to light even the rock on the wall opposite them, but they gave me some courage to explore further. Two more steps and the thought struck me: what were lit candles doing here? Was there someone else here with me? My eye was drawn to a lighter patch of the wall, where something appeared to have been scratched in to its surface. I moved nearer, stepping on the covering of dust on the floor below. Peering closely, the marks looked clean and fresh. I could just make out the words ‘John Bond, 1571’ scraped in to the wall. If they were as newly made as they looked,

what did they mean?

Perhaps he wants to turn back now, but he can’t. He’s trapped. What will he find in the tunnel? Will he manage to get out?

It’s late at night. He hasn’t told anyone and is alone. That makes it more dangerous for him if something goes wrong. Helps add some suspense.

More personification, adding to the feeling that the garden is acting against him and possibly means him harm.

Another mystery to end the extract. What do the marks mean? Who has been there? Are they still there? How will he get out?

Danger building from wind, to strong icy blast, then lightning.

Personification. Making the garden sound somehow alive, watching, possibly malevolent towards him.

Probably just him worrying, but adds the element that someone might have followed him. Does someone know about his discovery?

We now know that it was a map that he had found, but what does it lead to? How old is it? Why has no-one found it before?