

His smile was darkened by his laughter: calculated, sure and cold; he spoke the lines that she expected, always measured and controlled.

But past the door and in her chamber he was hungry in her bed; his private void was drawing, calling, growing louder as it fed,

retreating as the night grew heavy up the stairs to rooms unknown; and leaving her to solve the mystery, forced--that night--to sleep alone.

Downstairs once more, his second visit: he's aloof and insincere, while playing cool to hide the burning that consumes him when she's near.

It's skillful how he keeps his distance, careful to avoid her glance; he reaches for the door and safety, fleeing so he won't advance.

His final trip will never happen: he no longer lives alone: upstairs, a wife with no suspicions works her charms and keeps him home.