

THE HAUNTING

Screenplay

by

NELSON GIDDING

(1963)

From the Novel

"The Haunting of Hill House"

by

Shirley Jackson

- missing p. 12 -

Producer-Director

ROBERT WISE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. A LARGE VICTORIAN HOUSE - EVENING

All is SILENCE. Completely silhouetted against the late afternoon sky, the house is photographed in an abstract style. It seems to be watching and waiting, a house holding darkness within.

A moment of foreboding, then from the silence comes:

A MALE VOICE

No live organism can continue for long to exist sanely under conditions of absolute reality. Hill House, not sane, had stood for ninety years and might stand for ninety more. Silence lay steadily against the wood and stone of Hill House, and whatever walked there, walked alone.

Music starts to build and a formless shape emanates from the house, gradually drifting forward and turning into our MAIN TITLE:

THE HAUNTING

Now the rest of the credits are SUPERIMPOSED on the house which becomes little more than a menacing bulk in the growing darkness.

As the last credit FADES we hold for a beat on the house sitting there in the shadows, then:

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

I inherited Hill House in nineteen-forty, but it was built ninety-odd years ago by a man named Hugh Crain.

Two staring windows take on a malevolent gleam as gas lamps are lit within.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

He hoped to see his children and grandchildren live there in comfort and expected to end his days peacefully in that quiet corner of New England.

CUT TO:

2 EXT. THE DRIVEWAY OF HILL HOUSE - DUSK

The estate is surrounded by a stifling mass of hills that are perhaps responsible for the strangely muffled quality of the twilight.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

Unfortunately Hill House was a sad house almost from the beginning...

Through the trees along the curving driveway we now see a carriage approaching, pulled by two white horses.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

... an evil house, the local people will tell you. A house that was born bad.

3 BIG CLOSEUP OF THE WHITE HORSES

wild-eyed, rearing into SHOT, the MUSIC suggesting their terrorized whinnying as they bolt.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

Hugh Crain's young wife died seconds before she first was to set eyes on the house.

4 CLOSE SHOT ON A BIG TREE TRUNK

with a wagon wheel gouged into the bark and Mrs. Crain's hand flung up against the spokes.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

She was killed at the turn in the driveway where the horses bolted, crushing the carriage against a big tree -- which, by the way, is still there.

The hand drops lifelessly below FRAME.

5 INT. PURPLE PARLOR - NIGHT - MOVING SHOT FROM POV OF THE DEAD WOMAN BEING CARRIED

We see the strangely carved lintel of the door, ODD ANGLES on the purple and gilt wallpaper, the gaslight fixture on the ceiling, a stuffed bird in a glass bell on the mantle.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

Mrs. Crain was carried -- ah,
lifeless, I believe is the phrase
they use -- into the home her
 husband had built for her.

There's an ABRUPT DIP as the body is placed on the couch.

6 TWO SHOT - HUGH CRAIN AND ABIGAIL

Backs to CAMERA, a man and a six-year-old girl loom into SHOT and look down at the body, blocking the face. Hugh Crain opens a Bible and starts to read.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

He was a sad and bitter man,
 Hugh Crain, left with his small
 daughter, Abigail, to bring up...

7 CLOSE TWO SHOT - HUGH CRAIN AND ABIGAIL

Now the child turns her face away from her mother. Hugh Crain's big hand reaches out and turns Abigail's head back, forcing her to look at the body O.S. on the couch.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

... but he did not leave Hill House.

CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOOT PAST MRS. CRAIN'S PROFILE, eyes closed in death. The injured side of her face is covered by her black veil.

DISSOLVE TO:

8 INT. SECOND FLOOR CORRIDOR AND STAIRCASE - NIGHT

A handsome, stern woman in her thirties, glides down the corridor carrying a bunch of keys. We are SHOOTING UP through the balustrade. In passing, she pulls shut one of the many doors along the hallway.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

Hugh Crain married again. He
 seems to have been-- unlucky in
 his wives.

As Mrs. Crain continues down the hall, the door opens silently behind her.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

The second Mrs. Crain's death
 seems to have been as tragically
 unexpected as her predecessor's.

9 ANOTHER ANGLE ON MRS. CRAIN

At the head of the stairs she glances back and notices, with annoyance, that the door is open again. She turns and suddenly seems to be flung forward, off balance.

10 CLOSE SHOT ON MRS. CRAIN

falling into CAMERA. Her mouth is open wide in a scream, indicated by the MUSIC; her eyes bulge in fright, her hair streams behind her.

11 MONTAGE

which takes us with her on the long fall down the stairs. In tumbling, topsy-turvy SHOTS, we see flashes of bannister, her clawing hands, the ceiling, the steps, a shoe flying off. Then, in stillness, as violent as the chaotic motion, we see:

12 CLOSE SHOT - THE SECOND MRS. CRAIN'S FACE IN DEATH

Her head dangles backwards over the last step in a peculiar attitude, her neck broken. The scream still frozen onto her mouth, her eyes wide open, she stares up into CAMERA. The long staircase stretches out above her, disappearing into the darkness of the house.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

She died of a fall although I have been unable to find out how or why.

The bunch of keys, precariously balancing on the first step, drops with a dead plunk beside her.

13 INT. THE NURSERY - FAVORING ABIGAIL - NIGHT

Abigail lies in a small canopied bed with her doll beside her. A woman's form appears at the side of the bed. Her head, as though severed, remains above the canopy. A pair of female hands removes the doll and sets the open Bible in its place. Leaving the oil lamp burning, the woman goes away.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

The day after the funeral, Hugh Crain left Abigail with a nurse and went to Europe where he died a few months later -- a drowning accident, I believe.

Now, right before our eyes, with SPECIAL EFFECTS and music, Abigail transmutes from an innocent child to a withered, old woman. What we see -- so frightening only because it is in speeded-up form -- is the aging process that happens to us all.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

Always keeping the same nursery room, Abigail grew up in Hill House, and there she remained until she was an old woman. In her later years she became a bed-ridden invalid with a heart condition.

14 ANOTHER ANGLE PAST ABIGAIL

The aged Abigail is being read to from the Bible by a young woman sitting in a rocker beside the bed. In her late twenties, the young woman is a washed-out blonde, but not unattractive except for an occasional nervous twitch to her mouth.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

She took a girl from the village to live with her, as a kind of companion.

The companion looks up, sees Miss Abby has fallen asleep, glances at her watch pinned to her waist, and hurriedly tiptoes out.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

But it is with this young companion that the evil reputation of Hill House begins.

14 CLOSE SHOT - A CANE BANGING THE WALL

The gold-headed cane is grasped in Abigail's boney, delicately-veined old hand, banging, banging the wall, frantically summoning help.

CUT TO:

15 EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

SHOOTING from INSIDE the house, we see the companion and a man, mere silhouettes in the moonlight, embracing on the veranda.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

There are stories of the old lady dying and calling for help upstairs while the companion dallied on the veranda with a farmhand, but I suspect these are only scandalous inventions.

CUT TO:

16 INT. NURSERY - NIGHT - CLOSE ON CANE

in Abigail's hand now striking the wall with increasingly feeble strokes. The cane hits the wall for the last time, then, CAMERA MOVING with it, arches slowly backward, and hangs motionlessly, in Abigail's dead grip, over the side of the bed.

CUT TO:

17. INT. HILL HOUSE - LIBRARY - NIGHT

Situated in the tower, it has an iron spiral staircase that climbs for three stories past the rows of books to a small balcony at the top.

SHOOTING almost straight down, we see the companion dressed in a flowing white nightgown, winding round and round as she slowly makes her way up the stairs. She carries a tray with a silver Revere tea service and coiled length of rope on it.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

At any rate, the companion inherited Hill House and the local people believe, one way or another, she murdered her benefactor. Her own friends in the village turned against her. She lived a life of complete solitude in the empty house. Some say the house was not empty, and never has been since the night old Miss Abby died.

Now the companion, her face blank, and eyes fixed straight ahead, passes the CAMERA and disappears O.S. above us.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

They say that whatever there was -- and still is -- in the house drove the companion mad.

With jolting suddenness, the companion's legs drop into the SHOT and sway beside the spiral staircase.

OLD WOMAN'S VOICE

We do know the companion hanged herself from the small balcony at the top of the spiral staircase in the library.

With a downward spiraling motion

EFFECT DISSOLVE TO:

18 INT. MRS. SANDERSON'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

It is a darkly panelled room in a shadowy house on Beacon Hill, Boston. MRS. SANDERSON, the old lady whose voice we have been hearing, sits behind the same tea service we saw the companion carrying up the spiral staircase. Leaning against Mrs. Sanderson's chair is old Miss Abby's gold-headed cane.

MRS. SANDERSON

After her death the house passed legally into the hands of my mother's family who were cousins of hers.

(sitting back
with a sigh)

Well, Dr. Montague, you have been very patient. That was a long story. I hope it has discouraged you from wanting to rent Hill House.

DR. JOHN MONTAGUE sits across the tea table from Mrs. Sanderson. In his late thirties, a professor of Anthropology at Brandywine College, he has about him the alert eagerness of the questing scientist.

In the dim background, behind a massive desk, is another man, a lawyer, ELDRIDGE HARPER, of whom all we can make out is a shock of white hair, as he bends over some papers.

Unable to contain his excitement, Montague gets to his feet.

MONTAGUE

On the contrary, Mrs. Sanderson. All my life I've been looking for an honestly haunted house. In the interests of psychic research, you must let me have it for the summer.

HARPER

As your attorney, I recommend you lease the house to Dr. Montague. After all, a house can hardly stand for ninety years without seeing some of its inhabitants die within its walls.

MRS. SANDERSON

(a knowing smile)

But the dead are not quiet in Hill House.

There's an uneasy silence broken by Harper clearing his throat.

HARPER

I don't believe it. Dr. Montague is a trained anthropologist, a respected member of a university faculty. We should welcome such a man to investigate Hill House.

MRS. SANDERSON

Perhaps. As an old woman due shortly to enter the next world, I should like to know if there is one.

HARPER

I'm sure his report will give Hill House a clean bill of health.

MRS. SANDERSON

How will you go about conducting your investigation, Dr. Montague?

MONTAGUE

I'll occupy the house with a group of trained assistants and --

MRS. SANDERSON

Assistants?

MONTAGUE

My dear Mrs. Sanderson, I am a scientist conducting an unusual experiment. A haunted house. Everyone laughs. I need highly qualified help to take notes and document whatever evidence of the supernatural I find.

HARPER

Who are these assistants?

MONTAGUE

I haven't made my final choice yet, but they'll come from a list of names I've been assembling over many years.

HARPER

(quickly)

We don't want any publicity-seekers.

MONTAGUE

Of course not. These people have been carefully selected after painstaking research. They are all of superior intelligence and have been involved before, one way or another, in the abnormal.

MRS. SANDERSON

Abnormal? ...I don't like the sound of that. Are any of the people on your list women?

MONTAGUE

Some.

MRS. SANDERSON

Are you a married man?

MONTAGUE

Yes.

HARPER

(for Mrs. Sanderson's benefit)

Then your wife will be accompanying you.

MONTAGUE

I'm afraid not. She disapproves of my experiments with the supernatural. She wants no part of Hill House.

MRS. SANDERSON

I've heard of those experiments you scientists do - with women.

MONTAGUE

(appealing to Harper)

Mr. Harper....

HARPER

Suppose your nephew Luke goes along with Dr. Montague to make sure everything is -- as it should be.

MRS. SANDERSON

(given pause)

That's the best suggestion so far.

(chuckling)

Luke expects to inherit Hill House, but he never dreamed to find himself living in it. Very well, Harper. Give Dr. Montague his lease.

MONTAGUE

Thank you, Mrs. Sanderson.

MRS. SANDERSON

Don't play gin with Luke, Dr. Montague. He's a card sharp.

MONTAGUE

Good. That indicates a strong instinct for self-preservation.

MRS. SANDERSON

Exactly what do you and your assistants expect to find at Hill House?

MONTAGUE

(smiling)

Maybe just some loose floorboards, and maybe - I only say maybe - the key to another world.

DISSOLVE TO:

19

EXT. A GREENWICH VILLAGE APARTMENT - UP ANGLE AT THE WINDOW - DAY

THEODORA leans from the second floor window shouting down at CAMERA.

THEODORA

Okay, okay, so take your precious week-end. I won't be here when you get back.

The cloud of rage across her face contrasts with the delicacy of her features framed in a halo of blonde hair. She wears tight levis and a black turtle-neck sweater.

20 INT. THEODORA'S APARTMENT - DAY

She marches over to the open door. Artistically lettered across it a sign reads:

China - Ceramics - Objets d'Art

Lovingly Repaired by Theodora

She slams the door so hard a china figure bounces off a work table and shatters. She glares around, breathing hard. There are sketches on the walls, a half-finished mosaic cocktail table, an old espresso machine in the process of being rehabilitated. Now she goes to work on the room in earnest. She kicks over a potter's wheel, and smashes a clay nude of herself which her friend has in work. From the table she grabs up a framed photograph and bitterly contemplates the inscription across the bottom.

21 INSERT - THE PHOTOGRAPH

It is of an attractive girl also wearing a turtle-neck sweater. The inscription reads: To Theo, All of whose special gifts I admire, L.C.

22 BACK TO THEODORA

She smashes the frame and rips the picture to shreds. Then she scrawls across the mirror in lipstick: "I hate you." As she catches sight of herself in the mirror, she takes a long look, deflates, and adds, slowly: "You too." There's a KNOCK on the door. She stops still, pauses only the briefest instant for a thought, goes to her purse, takes out some change, and opens the door.

23 ANGLE PAST THEODORA

The landlady thrusts a letter at her.

LANDLADY

Special Delivery, Theodora. I signed for you and there was --

THEODORA

(dropping the coins
in the landlady's hand)

Three cents postage due.

LANDLADY

(gaping)

How'd you know?

DORA

Auntie Nell is blinking, Auntie
Nell is blinking.

Eleanor covers her eyes.

BUD

Quiet, Dora.

(to Eleanor)

Let's just talk this over without
anybody getting emotional or
nervous.

ELEANOR

(flaring)

Why shouldn't I be nervous? My
first chance for a vacation in
all my life and you won't let me
take it.

CARRIE

There's a very good reason
Mother was afraid for you to
go anywhere, and it still
applies.

BUD

We're not going to dig up the
family skeleton again, are we?

(turning to
Eleanor)

I think you should have a
vacation, Nell. Nobody knows
better than me what you went
through during your mother's
illness. The dirty laundry, the
smell of that sick room -- and
talk about mean old ladies --

CARRIE

Bud!

(returning placidly
to her knitting)

Let the dead rest in peace.

Bud sighs and turns back to Eleanor.

ELEANOR

It's half my car. I helped pay
for it. I mean to take it.

CARRIE

We don't know where you're going,
do we? You haven't seen fit to
tell us anything, have you?

(as Eleanor
clams up)

No, you may not have the car.

BUD

(giving a
bemused laugh)

What beats me, Nell, is why
you're playing the whole thing
so cozy, like this was a jail
break or something.

CARRIE

In any case, Eleanor, I'm sure I'm
doing what mother would have
thought best -- although I don't
suppose poor mother's wishes
mean very much to you.

ELEANOR

(her voice is low
and shaking)

Get out. Get out, both of you.

Carrie rises from her chair and advances on her.

CARRIE

Now just a minute, young lady.
You happen to be in my living
room.

ELEANOR

(rising)

I happen to be in my bedroom and
I pay a good part of your rent
for it. Now get out before I
show you what my nerves can
really do.

Carrie starts to answer, but Bud nudges her and steers
her firmly from the room, gathering Dora as they go.

CARRIE

(turning)

Besides, how do I know you'd
bring back my car in good
condition.

Bud tugs her across the threshold.

Eleanor stands very still for a moment, gaining control
of herself.

DISSOLVE TO:

26 EXT. CITY STREET - CLOSE ON A LAMP-POST - DAY

A welter of signs is clustered around the lamp post.

27 EXT. DRIVEWAY OF A GARAGE - DAY

A Hillman Minx drives out onto the apron.

28 INT. CAR - CLOSE ON ELEANOR

behind the wheel, studying in confusion the signs on the lamp post. A cardboard carton is beside her. Her suitcase is on the back seat. She takes a letter from her purse. CAMERA MOVES IN for a CLOSEUP as she reads, hurrying over the first part:

ELEANOR

... very happy that you will be joining us in Hill House...

(reading slowly with emphasis now)

Take U.S. 9 from Boston and watch for the turnoff onto Route 38.

(as her eyes raise from the letter)

U.S. 9.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(expressing her thoughts which will be in italics throughout)

At last I am going someplace where I am expected and where I am being given shelter; and I shall never have to come back. I hope I hope I hope this is what I've been waiting for all my life.

Her lips compress with determination, she darts the car forward. Unconscious of anything around her, her face glows with victory. We hear her think triumphantly:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

I'm going. I am really going. I have finally taken a step.

QUICK DISSOLVE TO:

29 EXT. HIGHWAY - LONG SHOT - DAY

The signpost marking the turn-off for Route 38 stands large in f.g. A car approaches.

30 INT. CAR - DAY (PROCESS)

Eleanor is behind the wheel, thinking.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*By now they know the car is gone,
but they don't know where.*

(smiling)

*They would never have suspected it
of me. I would never have suspected
it of myself. I am a new person.*

She slows down to read the sign. Abruptly at the last minute, she makes the turn.

31 ELEANOR'S POV - PANORAMIC SHOT

We hear her gasp with pleasure. The white ribbon of road unwinds limitlessly before her into a picturesque valley.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Route 38, Route 38. The magic thread
of road life has chosen for you, to
bring you safely to Hill House on a
shining summer day. What have you
done, what have you done with all
those wasted summer days?*

32 INT. CAR - CLOSE ON ELEANOR (PROCESS)

She shakes her head disgustedly.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*For pity sake, Eleanor, stop with
that drivel. Pollyanna was a
beatnik compared to you.*

33 ANOTHER ANGLE (PROCESS)

past Eleanor, who bites her lip in the effort to keep a rein on her thoughts. CAMERA MOVES IN and HOLDS for an instant on a shuttered house with a TO LET sign and a pair of stone lions guarding the entrance.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Someday someday someday I'll have
an apartment of my own.*

CAMERA FOLLOWS the stone lions from Eleanor's POV.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*In a house with a pair of stone
lions guarding the steps...*

34 CLOSE ON ELEANOR (PROCESS)

as she turns from the lions back to the road. Enclosed in her thoughts, she dreams through the windshield.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

...I might just stop anywhere and never leave again. Or I might drive on and on until the wheels of the car are worn to nothing and I have come to the end of the world. I wonder if all homeless people feel that way. I wonder what Dr. Montague is like. I wonder who else will be there. I wonder what Hill House is like...

With a CLAP of MUSIC.

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

35 THE GATES OF HILL HOUSE - FULL SHOT - DAY

It is a place of despair. The gates are tall and ominous, All that can be seen beyond the gate is the road continuing for some distance, then turning from view.

The gloom deepens, perhaps the result of a passing cloud, as Eleanor's car appears from under CAMERA and creeps reluctantly forward.

36 INT. CAR - CLOSE ON ELEANOR (PROCESS)

leaning forward to peer through the windshield.

ELEANOR

(curiously)

Well --

(brings the car
to a gentle stop)

Well.

37 CLOSER SHOT ON THE GATE

It is clearly locked with a padlock and chain that twists around and through the bars.

38 FULL SHOT ON CAR

It stands in a clearing by the gate, with the gloomy, tangled approach behind it. Eleanor blows the horn. It sounds with a stifled effect. She sticks her head from the window and looks at the encircling hills piled around in great pillowy masses.

39 ANGLE PAST THE CAR TOWARD THE GATE

After a moment a man comes toward it from inside the gate. Dark and surly, he scowls through the bars at Eleanor.

MAN

(sharp, mean)

What do you want?

ELEANOR

I want to come in, please.
Please unlock the gate.

MAN

Who says?

ELEANOR

Why.... I'm supposed to come
in. I'm expected.

MAN

Who by?

ELEANOR

Dr. Montague.

MAN

(turning away)

You better come back later.

ELEANOR

Listen, I am one of Dr. Montague's
guests. He's expecting me in
the house - please listen to me.

His mouth twists in a crooked smile.

MAN

He couldn't rightly be expecting
you, seeing as you're the only
one's come, so far.

ELEANOR

Do you mean that there's no one
in the house?

MAN

No one you'd want to see.

She sits back in the car seat and closes her eyes.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Hill House, you're as hard to get
into as heaven.*

MAN

What'd you say your name was?

Eleanor
Eleanor Vance, and I am
expected in Hill House. Unlock
those gates at once.

MAN
All right, all right.

CAMERA MOVING WITH HIM, he makes a big production of
opening the padlock and loosening the chain.

MAN
I suppose you know what you're
asking for, coming here?
(opening the gate
just wide enough
for the car)
I suppose they told you, back
in the city?

Although Eleanor moves the car slowly, he leaps to one
side as though she were trying to run him down.

40 INT. CAR - ANGLE ON ELEANOR

She stops the car and laughs.

ELEANOR
You seem to be the one who's
afraid.

He grasps the open window and leans close enough to breathe
on her.

MAN
You'll be sorry I ever opened
the gate.

ELEANOR
Out of the way, please. You've
held me up long enough. Are
you the caretaker?

MAN
(mimicking her)
Yes, I'm Dudley the caretaker.

ELEANOR
I shall report you.

He snickers disagreeably.

DUDLEY

You think they could get anyone else to stay here? You think we can't have things just about the way we want them, me and the wife, long as we stay around here and see to the house for all you city people think you know everything?

41 ANGLE ON CAR

including Eleanor's angry face by the window. She sends the car lurching forward, forcing Dudley to jump back.

42 INT. CAR - SHOOTING FROM BEHIND HER (PROCESS)

Eleanor glances back INTO CAMERA to see if he's all right, shivers and rolls up the window. Always the inexperienced driver, she comes upon a sudden turn and makes it just in time. The tree tops careen past the windshield against the sky. Then, with a jolt that quakes her brain, she sees it, HILL HOUSE, looking down her throat.

43 FLASH SHOT - HER FOOT

jamming on the brake.

44 FLASH - THE CAR - LOW ANGLE

skidding to a stop.

45 FLASH - HER FACE - UP ANGLE

staring in horror.

SHOCK CUT TO:

46 EXT. HILL HOUSE - FULL SHOT - DAY

It is a monstrous building. No one can say exactly what suggests evil in the face of a house, yet Hill House is overwhelmingly evil. Enormous and dark, it is so covered with decoration as to appear diseased.

47 DOWN ANGLE AT ELEANOR

staring rigidly through the car window at the house.

48 UP ANGLE AT TWO BLANK WINDOWS

The house seems awake, watching her.

49 INT. CAR - CLOSE ON ELEANOR

She starts to blink rapidly.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

Vile. Vile.

*(cringing as a spasm
of fear clutches
her stomach)*

*Get away from here. Get away at
once.*

She tries not to look at the house, fumbles for a cigarette, then pauses, thinking:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*It's my chance. I'm being given a
last chance. I could turn my car
around and go away from here and no
one would blame me. Anyone has a right
to run away. But you are running away,
Eleanor, and there is nowhere else to go.*

50 HIGH ANGLE DOWN SHOT

The small car starts up the last bit of driveway. Arrogant, hating, the house glowers down as the car stops before the veranda steps. Eleanor emerges carrying her suitcase. She hesitates at the stairs and forces her head up for a long, sweeping look at the building. She closes her eyes, then makes them open. It is an act of real moral strength for her to lift her foot and set it on the bottom step where she hesitates again, listening to the heavy silence.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*It's waiting for me...Evel, patient...
waiting.*

She forces herself up the steps and on to the front door.

51 ANGLE PAST ELEANOR ON THE DOOR

The heavy iron knocker has a child's face. As she reaches for it, the door opens without warning and she is looking at a woman.

ELEANOR

*(catching her
breath)*

Mrs. Dudley?

Her appearance is neat, yet the sullenness of her face is a good match for her husband's malicious petulance.

ELEANOR

I... I'm Eleanor Vance. I'm expected.

Silently the woman stands back and Eleanor enters.

52 INT. FRONT HALL - HIGH ANGLE SHOT - DAY

The small figure of Eleanor is immediately engulfed in shadow as Mrs. Dudley shuts the great carved door behind her. Eleanor sets her suitcase on the floor and roves her eyes round the room.

53 HER POV - PANNING SHOT

The room is overfull of darkwood and weighty carving, polished and kept up, but murky in the dull obscurity of the house. CAMERA GOES with her gaze up the stairs, across the wide landing, and up the staircase well again to a hallway that seems to run the width of the house. All the doors here, as everywhere else, are closed.

54 TWO SHOT

Mrs. Dudley has stationed herself beside Eleanor, observing her disinterestedly.

ELEANOR

(finding her voice)

Can you take me to my room?

She reaches for her suitcase at her feet.

55 ANGLE ON THE WAVERING REFLECTION

of her hand, going down and down into the deep shadows of the polished wood floor. Mrs. Dudley turns and moves toward the stairs. Eleanor follows, hurrying after anything else alive in the house. She sticks close behind Mrs. Dudley on the stairs, shies as the white face of a marble cupid comes thrusting out at them from the shadows on the landing. She starts to chatter.

ELEANOR

I gather I'm the first one here, Mrs. Dudley. You did say you were Mrs. Dudley? I met your hus --

She cuts herself off abruptly and stares down at something.

56 POV - MRS. DUDLEY'S FEET

They do not make a sound as they mount the stairs.

57 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

confused, unbelieving, she glances down at her own feet.

58 POV - HER OWN FEET

also moving without a sound. She stamps one foot experimentally, and there is NO SOUND.

59 ANOTHER ANGLE ON MRS. DUDLEY'S FEET

now walking down the upstairs hallway. Just before they stop Mrs. Dudley's VOICE, startlingly loud, breaks the impossible silence:

MRS. DUDLEY'S VOICE

Here!

60 CLOSE ON MRS. DUDLEY

thrusting open a door.

MRS. DUDLEY

This is your room, the blue room.

61 TWO SHOT

Eleanor's eyes remain riveted on Mrs. Dudley's feet.

ELEANOR

(automatically,
without looking up)

How nice.

Mrs. Dudley surveys the room from the hall.

MRS. DUDLEY

I can't keep the rooms the way I'd like, but there's no one else they could get that would help me.

She turns aside to let Eleanor enter. Eleanor remains uncertainly in the doorway.

62 ANGLE PAST ELEANOR

The room is hideously, overwhelmingly blue. She takes a breath and steps inside.

ELEANOR

How very nice.

But she seems unwilling to move farther into the room and Mrs. Dudley has to crowd in past her.

MRS. DUDLEY

I set dinner on the dining room sideboard at six. I clear up in the morning. I have breakfast for you at nine. I don't wait on people.

Eleanor nods vaguely.

MRS. DUDLEY

I don't stay after I set out dinner. Not after it begins to get dark. I leave before dark comes.

ELEANOR

Your husband told me.

MRS. DUDLEY

We live over in town -- miles away.

ELEANOR

Yes.

MRS. DUDLEY

So there won't be anyone around if you need help.

ELEANOR

I understand.

MRS. DUDLEY

We couldn't even hear you, in the night.

ELEANOR

Do you have any idea when Dr. -

MRS. DUDLEY

No one could. No one lives any nearer than town. No one else will come any nearer than that.

ELEANOR

(tiredly)

I know.

MRS. DUDLEY

In the night.

(showing for the
first time her
surprisingly
pleasant smile)

In the dark.

She walks from the room, closing the door behind her.

63 DOWN ANGLE ON ELEANOR

standing motionless and alone now, still holding her suitcase. She shivers and turns to see the room complete.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I am like a small creature swallowed
whole by a monster and the monster feels
my tiny movements inside... Now Eleanor
Vance, you just stop it.*

She sets the suitcase on the bed, opens it, and starts to unpack. She lays out her new clothes before putting them away.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*You know perfectly well heights always
affect your hearing - even in elevators.*

She taps her ear as though it might be clogged, then removes the price tag from a sunback dress and holds it up, admiring it.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

What mother wouldn't say about this.

She sets it contentedly on the bed. Somewhat cheered by the display of her new clothes, she glances around the room with more assurance.

She goes to the window and pushes back the curtains, but the sunlight comes only palely through the thick glass. Coming back toward the bed, she stops dead in the center of the room, holding herself motionless, listening. She taps her ear again, listens intently, and looks nervously around.

64 ANGLE ON THE BATHROOM DOOR

Eleanor appears from under CAMERA and opens this door even more warily than the first one. It reveals an old-fashioned bathroom with a connecting door on the other side. There is some kind of faint sound on the other side. Steeling herself, she puts both hands on the knob, and forcefully shoves it open.

65 INT. GREEN ROOM - SHOOTING PAST ELEANOR

Except for the color the room is exactly like Eleanor's. Theodora stands in the center looking around. Mrs. Dudley stationed in the doorway with the dim polished hall stretching behind her, stops mid-sentence.

MRS. DUDLEY

I set dinner on the --

Eleanor laughs with relief and runs up to Theodora.

ELEANOR

Thank heavens somebody's here.
My name's Eleanor Vance, and
I'm so glad you're here.

THEODORA

I'm Theodora. Just Theodora.
(glancing around
apprehensively)
What about this crazy house?

ELEANOR

I'm right next door. We have
a connecting bath.

THEODORA

This used to be the embalming
room, I bet.

ELEANOR

It was terrible being here alone.

MRS. DUDLEY

I set dinner on the dining room
sideboard at six.

Theodora strolls around the room examining things.

THEODORA

Where's Montague? I thought
he'd be here before anyone else.

MRS. DUDLEY

You serve yourselves. I clear
up in the morning.

ELEANOR

Have you known Dr. Montague long?

MRS. DUDLEY

I have breakfast ready at nine.

THEODORA

Never met him.

MRS. DUDLEY

I don't stay after six. Not after it begins to get dark.

THEODORA

My only contact with him is our correspondence about the, quote, experiment, unquote.

MRS. DUDLEY

I leave before dark comes. So there won't be anyone around if you need help.

Eleanor glances down and realizes she is cracking her knuckles. To cover her embarrassment, she walks to the window.

ELEANOR

(failing to keep the intended lightness in her voice)

No one can hear you if you scream in the night, isn't that so, Mrs. Dudley?

MRS. DUDLEY

No one lives any nearer than town. No one will come any nearer than that. In the night.

(breaking out her lovely smile)

In the dark.

She turns and goes, closing the door. Eleanor and Theodora look after her for a long moment.

ELEANOR

She also walks without making a sound.

THEODORA

You're frightened, Nell.

ELEANOR

(nonchalantly)

No more. Just when I thought I was all alone.

(with pleasure)

But how did you know my nickname is Nell?

THEODORA

That's the affectionate term for Eleanor, isn't it?

ELEANOR
 (glowing)
 Yes, I suppose it is. And what
 a nice way of putting it.

THEODORA
 (going to her at
 the window)
 The affectionate term for
 Theodora is Theo.

ELEANOR
 (savoring the word)
 Theo.
 (warmly)
 We're going to be great friends,
 Theo.

THEO
 Sisters under the skin. Look,
 we don't have to hang around our
 rooms. Let's go exploring.

ELEANOR
 I'd like to.

THEO
 Then change into one of your
 new things. Something loud and
 snappy. Strikes me as a good
 idea around this place to always
 remain thoroughly visible.

ELEANOR
 Be ready in a jiffy.

Eleanor starts off, turns and comes back.

ELEANOR
 How did you know I brought new
 clothes?

THEO
 (lightly)
 You wear your thoughts on your
 sleeve.

ELEANOR
 (laughing)
 Anyway, that's better than my
 heart.

Theo glances at Eleanor quickly, then notices her room.

THEO

God, your room's as ugly as mine!
 You know, until I got to the
 gates I never thought there would
 be a Hill House. You don't go
 around expecting things like this
 to happen.

ELEANOR

(smiling)

But some of us can hope.

She disappears into her room.

DISSOLVE TO:

66 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR'S FACE

shadowed, panicky.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*How did I get into this? Why am I
 here? What nightmares are waiting?*

ANGLE WIDENS to show both girls lost in a murky HALLWAY
 DOWNSTAIRS. It is now NIGHT. Eleanor has changed into
 a colorful skirt and peasant blouse. Theo wears slacks
 and a yellow turtle-neck sweater. She is trying to get
 a door open and cursing.

THEO

Dammit, I still say one of these
 doors should lead into the main
 hall. Any lights near you, Nell?
 ... Nell?

Eleanor pulls herself together and turns. When she
 speaks, there is only the faintest tremor in her voice.

ELEANOR

It helps if you make a game of
 it. Pretend this is hide and
 seek.

THEO

But we're still lost.

ELEANOR

Yes...

THEO

That door. We haven't tried that
 one yet.

Suddenly Eleanor stiffens. Theo darts her a nervous
 glance and hurries to her side.

THEO
(whispering)
What is it?

ELEANOR
(very low)
There's something with us.

THEO
(looking around
shakily)
Where? I don't see anything.

ELEANOR
Can't you feel it?

THEO
(huddling her arms)
I feel ...
(shivering)
a chill.

They move closer together. Around them in the darkness
small eddies of air and sound and movement begin to stir.

ELEANOR
(tensely)
It's moving.

A soft insistent HISSING, edged with malice, encircles them.

THEO
(staring with fear
into the darkness)
That's just air rushing past our
ears.

ELEANOR
No.

THEO
Then who ... what?

ELEANOR
The house. It's alive.

The thought leaves Eleanor speechless. Then there's a
tiny SIGH against her cheek, and something brushes her
hair, and her trembling hand goes up to touch the spot.
She turns in dismay toward the invisible presence.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*She didn't hear that. Nobody heard
it but me.*

THEO

It wants you, Nell. The house
is calling you.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I have waited such a long time. Is
this what I came so far to find?*

She begins to drift backwards, pulled by some unseen force away from Theo into the darkness, gradually BLACKING OUT from the feet up. The VISUAL EFFECT is as though the heavy shadows obliterating her were an actual substance like quicksand. She cries out in terror, her voice already sounding lost and far away:

ELEANOR

Don't let me go. Theo, stay
with me.

67 LONG SHOT - DOWN CORRIDOR AT ELEANOR

There's a startling flash of light and, as a pair of doors near her is thrown open, Eleanor appears whole again.

68 ANGLE ON THE OPEN DOORS

A figure silhouetted here calls to them.

FIGURE

(enthusiastically)

You wouldn't believe this, but
five minutes ago I left these
doors wide open so you could
find your way. They closed by
themselves.

(turning, his face
becomes recognizable
in the light)

Welcome to Hill House. I'm Dr.
Montague.

ELEANOR

(hurrying forward)

Thank goodness, thank goodness.
I thought you might be a ghost.

MONTAGUE

(twinkling at her)

How do you know I'm not?

THEO

Enough of that. Get us out
of here. Fast.

MONTAGUE
 (immediately alert)
 What's the matter?

Theo and Eleanor exchange quick looks, and Eleanor drops her eyes, afraid of making a fool of herself.

THEO
 Let's just say we're scared of
 the dark.

MONTAGUE
 (flicking on light
 switch)
 I too go in mortal terror of the
 dark.

THEO
 I'm Theodora.

MONTAGUE
 (turning politely)
 Then you must be Eleanor.

ELEANOR
 I'm unsure at the moment.

MONTAGUE
 If it turns out you're not, I'll
 be disappointed.

ELEANOR
 (smiling back)
 All right. It's Theo who's
 wearing slacks, so I must be
 Eleanor in the skirt.

MONTAGUE
 Good. Follow me and I'll lead
 you through the uncharted wastes
 of Hill House. Dinner's waiting.

He holds the door for them and they pass into a dark room.

69 INT. PURPLE PARLOR - NIGHT

The overwhelming sense of this room is purple. It has a disproportionately high ceiling and a narrow tiled fireplace. The walls are papered in purple and gilt. The couch on which the first Mrs. Crain was laid out is in the same place with the same two candlesticks on the end tables.

THEO
 What do you call this room?

MONTAGUE

The purple parlor. I'm going to use it as our center of operations.

ELEANOR

Not very cheerful.

THEO

Of course it's cheerful. Nothing jollier than an old sedan chair, except maybe a whipping post or two.

She plumps down in a sedan chair in the corner. Montague turns at the far door and looks back at her.

MONTAGUE

The house does have its little oddities. The man who built it was a misfit who hated people and their conventional ideas. He designed his house to suit his mind.

(opening the door behind him)

He even hung the doors off center. Probably explains why they keep swinging shut by themselves. Watch.

He releases the door and they watch expectantly for it to close by itself. Nothing happens.

MONTAGUE

(wryly)

What'd I tell you? Anyhow all the angles in the house are slightly off. Not a square corner in the place.

ELEANOR

No wonder it's impossible to find your way around. Add up all these, these wrong angles and you get one big distortion in the house as a whole.

MONTAGUE

(beaming down at her)

Clever Eleanor. You catch on fast.

Eleanor flushes with pleasure. Theo, seated in the sedan chair, frowns with annoyance.

THEO

I'm hungry. Let's go.

MONTAGUE

Sorry. In the psychic world we forget that food is still the main concern of poor old homo sapiens.

He almost walks into the door that has closed silently behind him.

MONTAGUE

(delighted, as he opens door)

You see! Closed by itself.

70 INT. ANOTHER PASSAGEWAY - MOVING SHOT ON GROUP

This hall is also dark and flanked by many doors. Montague halts, considering the various doorways.

MONTAGUE

Now, which one?

THEO

(promptly, pointing)

That one?

MONTAGUE

Wrong. I've studied a map of the house. It's this one.

He confidently opens another door and steps into darkness. There's a CLATTER, a gasp from Eleanor, and Montague emerges glaring at a broom in his hand.

MONTAGUE

This proves it. One of you is a witch.

THEO

(chortling, as Montague tosses the broom inside)

A broom closet.

ELEANOR

If you can't find your way around, how will we ever? All these doors -- I feel like the lady and the tiger.

Montague opens a door to the left of the closet.

MONTAGUE

Let's see if there's a tiger in here.

71 INT. DINING ROOM - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

It's the pleasantest room they have seen so far, largely because of the lights and a sideboard with a warming oven and an impressive number of covered dishes. The table is set with a lavish display of candles, damask, and heavy silver.

MONTAGUE
(looking around)

That's funny.

THEO

No tiger?

72 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

tensing, suddenly alert.

ELEANOR

Listen!

Her eyes fix on a door opposite them.

73 ANGLE PAST GROUP

They strain toward the swinging door on the far side behind which they hear a small, insistent SOUND. A shadow stretches into the room, followed by a man, stirring a shaker of martinis. He is LUKE SANDERSON, Mrs. Sanderson's nephew, a charming ne'er-do-well. He sees their staring faces and glances down at the shaker in his hand.

LUKE

Too much vermouth?

MONTAGUE

Nothing that serious.
(turning to the girls)
And please, please, no cracks
about my passion for spirits.

Luke steps forward eagerly.

LUKE

Ladies, if you are the ghostly inhabitants of Hill House, I am here forever.

MONTAGUE

Eleanor, Theo... It's taken sixty million years to develop the carnivorous biped before you, Luke Sanderson.

THEO

Let's see what kind of a martini
it makes.

LUKE

(handing drinks around)
Should be pretty good. I majored
in them at college.

ELEANOR

Are we to expect any more
"carniverous bipeds," Dr. Montague?

MONTAGUE

I originally had six committed to
the experiment, but one by one the
others backed out. I suppose they
were frightened by the various
unsavory stories about the house.
We're the only ones left.

THEO

What stories?

MONTAGUE

(mildly surprised)
Didn't you bother to investigate
before coming?

Theo shakes her head uneasily, as does Eleanor.

MONTAGUE

So much the better. You should be
innocent and receptive.
(raising his glass)
To our success.

LUKE

How do you reckon success, exactly,
in a junket like this?

ELEANOR

I'd like to drink to... to just us,
good companions.

(now lowering her
eyes self-consciously)

Except, except I don't drink.

They all break out into affectionate laughter.

DISSOLVE TO:

74

CLOSE UP - AN EYE

fishy, glinting, enormous. HOLD, then:

LUKE'S VOICE

Please pass the salmon.

CAMERA PULLS BACK as Theo passes him the platter with the remains of a whole salmon on it. Montague sits at the head of the table with Eleanor and Theo on either side and Luke at the foot.

THEO

(observing the
platter; impressed)

Palissy China.

LUKE

(promptly)

How much is it worth?

THEO

Plenty. The only Palissy I've seen is in museums. Mrs. Dudley is giving us the best.

MONTAGUE

I'm a simple fellow, myself, easily satisfied by the best of everything, including, I hope, some startling events to come.

ELEANOR

Exactly what do you expect to happen, Dr. Montague?

MONTAGUE

John.

THEO

Yes, what's wrong with Hill House? What's going to happen? Why are we here?

MONTAGUE

Well, I'm here to find out whether or not the supernatural really exists. You're here to help keep track of what happens and take notes for an authenticated record.

THEO

Okay, but why us?

MONTAGUE

It's no accident. You're what's left of a select company chosen with great care. I combed the records of psychic societies, the back files of newspapers, and the reports of parapsychologists for
(more)

MONTAGUE (cont'd)
 people who have been touched in
 some way by the supernatural. It's
 my belief the very presence of such
 people will stimulate the strange
 forces at work in this house.

THEO
 Oh fine. Charming thought to be
 used as live bait.

LUKE
 And a very tasty morsel, too.

MONTAGUE
 I'm not really running a psychic
 beauty contest. You ranked high
 on my list, Theo, because of your
 remarkable powers of extrasensory
 perception.

LUKE
 ESP, huh? Don't believe in it.

MONTAGUE
 Theo's a champ. Her name shines
 in the annals of the Duke University
 Psychic Lab where she identified
 nineteen of twenty cards held up
 out of sight and hearing.

Eleanor, who has been watching Theo with admiration, now
 turns worriedly to Montague.

ELEANOR
 But I've never had anything to
 do with the supernatural.

MONTAGUE
 (puzzled)
 Yes, you have, Eleanor. Your
 poltergeist experience?

LUKE
 What's a poltergeist?

THEO
 (regarding Eleanor
 Thoughtfully)
 A playful ghost, right Nell?

ELEANOR
 (vaguely)
 I wouldn't know.

MONTAGUE

According to the records of the International Psychic Society, showers of stones fell on your house for three days when you were ten years old.

ELEANOR

(upset)

That's ridiculous.

MONTAGUE

It was witnessed by your family, the neighbors, sightseers, and the police. In fact it's the only such case ever officially recorded by the police.

ELEANOR

(flatly)

It never happened.

MONTAGUE

(smiling)

Perhaps not, if you say so. I only mentioned it because that's why I wanted you in Hill House.

LUKE

I'd like to know what you really think is wrong with Hill House. I mean you're a college prof, a man with a Ph.D -- you can't believe there's any such thing as a haunted house.

MONTAGUE

There's that word haunted again.

(helping himself to
the gravy boat)

Makes me expect to find a disembodied hand in the sauce. No one knows, even, why some houses are called haunted.

THEO

Then what would you call this place -- funorama?

MONTAGUE

(frowning as he
removes a fishbone)

Well...disturbed, sick -- crazy if you like. A deranged house isn't a bad way of describing it. Your aunt thinks that perhaps Hill House was born bad.

(more)

MONTAGUE (cont'd)

(smiling)

Such houses are described in the Bible as leprous; or before that in Homer's phrase for the underworld: a house of Hades.

LUKE

Come off it, Doc. The local mayor makes more sense to me. He doesn't think Hill House is mysterious at all. He claims the disturbances are caused by subterranean waters, or electric currents, atmospheric pressure, sunspots, earth tremors, et cetera.

MONTAGUE

Sure, people always want to put an easy label on things, even if it's meaningless.

(satirically)

The trouble with Hill House is sunspots -- now there's an explanation you don't have to think twice about, and it has a scientific ring.

Staring at her plate, Eleanor suddenly raises her head and blurts, apropos of nothing:

ELEANOR

That was the neighbors. They threw the rocks. Mother says they were always against us because she wouldn't mix with them. Mother says --

She cuts herself off. The others stare at her in embarrassment. Eleanor fidgets with the salt.

ELEANOR

Oh, dear.

MONTAGUE

(kindly)

That's all right, Eleanor. Go on.

(urging her gently)

What does your mother say?

ELEANOR

(shaking her head)

Nothing. I must be more tired than I thought. My mother died two months ago.

THEO
 You weren't sorry when it happened.
 (as Eleanor stares
 at her)
 Well, were you?

ELEANOR
 (hanging her head)
 No. She wasn't very happy.

THEO
 Then I won't say I'm sorry now.

MONTAGUE
 (sympathetically)
 Eleanor, if I'd known, I never
 would've asked you to come here.

ELEANOR
 (quickly)
 I'm grateful you did. I had to
 get away.

MONTAGUE
 Perhaps you should --

ELEANOR
 Please. Let's talk about
 something else.

In her nervousness she upsets the salt, quickly tosses
 some over her shoulder.

LUKE
 What about that, Doc? Does salt
 work against the supernatural?

MONTAGUE
 The Montoosi bushmen thought so...
 but they're extinct.

Theo regards Eleanor with heavy mock seriousness.

THEO
 You see, you haven't got the
 ghost of a chance.

Eleanor smiles back thinly.

DISSOLVE TO:

75 INT. PURPLE PARLOR - NIGHT

Luke and Theo are playing gin. Montague is writing up
 his notes at a table. Eleanor sits on the couch sipping
 coffee and staring into the fireplace. The intense quiet
 of the house presses into the room. Eleanor looks slowly
 around the room.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

I have a place in this room. These people are my friends. I am one of them. I belong....

A sudden SHOUT from Luke startles Eleanor into spilling her coffee. Angrily he jumps up from the table.

LUKE

That's the fifth time. Five times in a row.

THEO

(smiling complacently
and holding out her
hand)

Twelve dollars please.

Montague hurries over and starts mopping at her stained dress with his handkerchief.

MONTAGUE

Hope your dress isn't ruined.

LUKE

(in b.g.)

Nuts.

ELEANOR

No, no. It can be washed, but the upholstery on the couch ---

THEO

(in b.g.)

Pay up, Luke. Come on.

ELEANOR

(continuing)

I have some cleaning fluid upstairs.

She hurries from the room.

LUKE

Over my dead body. You knew every card in my hand.

MONTAGUE

Of course she did.

LUKE

There's a word for that, you know.

THEO

If you mean cheating, I don't have to.

LUKE

Okay, Miss ESP, so go dream
yourself up the twelve bucks.

THEO

Let's have it, you welcher. I
won fair and --

She breaks off at the SOUND of a cry of alarm from o.s.
Instantly Montague heads for the door, the others swiftly
following him.

CUT TO:

76 FULL SHOT - ELEANOR

Pale and shaken, she stands half-way up the stairs,
listening tensely. Montague appears from UNDER CAMERA
and vaults up the steps to her side.

MONTAGUE

(anxiously)

What was it?

ELEANOR

(vaguely)

I had a feeling --

(shaking her head)

No, I'm sure it was my imagination.

Luke and Theo join them on the stairs.

THEO

(promptly)

You had a feeling you were being
watched.

ELEANOR

Yes...yes, I did.

THEO

The house. It watches. It watches
every move we make.

LUKE

That's your imagination.

MONTAGUE

Don't be so cocksure of everything,
Luke. A closed mind is the worst
defense against the supernatural.
Even prehistoric man had a dozen
satisfactory methods of warding off
evil spirits, but we're much too
civilized to protect ourselves like
that.

A P P E N D I X

(Theo's argument with Luke over
the card game.)

THEO

(showing him
the score)

Add it up yourself. Twelve
bucks. Schneidered you twice.

LUKE

What kind of a sucker do you
take me for?

THEO

Let's have it. Cash on the line.

(Luke's and Montague's voices
in the hall.)

LUKE

A wild-goose chase, Doc.

MONTAGUE

One thing I'm sure of, we
weren't chasing a goose.

LUKE

Anyway, it's an excuse for a
drink. Join me, Doc?

MONTAGUE

Thanks. I'll drown my sorrow.
You know something? I've never
seen a manifestation first hand.
I thought for a while tonight
was my night.

LUKE

Some of your theories strike me
as prehistoric.

MONTAGUE

Look, I know the supernatural is
something that isn't supposed to
happen. But it does happen.
Ghosts make the papers along with
celebrities every day. And if it
happens to you, it's liable to rip
that shut door in your mind right
off its hinges.

LUKE

Doc, we're buddies, okay, but
don't try to convert me.

MONTAGUE

I'm trying to prepare you. I
think there's something going on
in this house or I wouldn't be here.

ELEANOR

What?

MONTAGUE

Don't ask me to give a name to
something that hasn't got a name.
I don't know.

(moving upstairs)

Well, tomorrow you'll see all the
place. Now let's go to bed --

(turning)

Unless anyone wants to clear out
tonight and not have anything
more to do with Hill House.

LUKE

I hope to have plenty to do with
it someday --

(knocking on wood)

-- moneywise.

THEO

I don't think we could leave now
if we wanted to.

MONTAGUE

(with a twinkle)

You mean I'm holding you a
prisoner?

THEO

(cool contempt)

I meant Dudley keeps the gates
locked.

ELEANOR

(joking)

We could always break out.

Montague turns to look at Eleanor.

MONTAGUE

(quietly)

I have a key to the gate any time
you want it.

ELEANOR

(quickly)

I wouldn't dream of leaving.

MONTAGUE

Thank you.

(regarding them
happily)

Adventurers all.

(leading them
upstairs)

But you mustn't expect every night
to be Halloween. Psychic phenomena
are subject to certain laws.

They turn at the landing and go down the hall.

LUKE

What are the laws?

MONTAGUE

You won't know until you break
them.

LUKE

(a kidding gesture)

Goodnight, Doc.

He steps into his room. The girls now continue down the
hall in uneasy silence. Eleanor hesitates at her door.

ELEANOR

I just thought of something.
Nobody locked the front door.

MONTAGUE

(glancing quickly
at Eleanor, then
away)

Won't make any difference.

ELEANOR

I see.

(not sure that
she does)

Well...goodnight, Dr. Montague.

MONTAGUE

John. Goodnight, Theo.

(warmly)

Get a good rest, Eleanor. Sleep well.

He enters his room. Theo catches Eleanor as she opens the door to the blue room.

THEO

If you feel the least bit nervous, run right into my room, Nell.

She touches Eleanor's hand reassuringly.

ELEANOR

(vaguely embarrassed)

Thanks. Goodnight...

THEO

I'll come in for a second. You've been thinking about changing your hair and I know just the style for you.

ELEANOR

(touching her hair wonderingly)

Why yes I was...but I'm awfully tired. Thanks anyhow.

THEO

Okay. But we have a date for breakfast.

ELEANOR

Goodnight...

(adding lamely as she closes the door)

Theo...

77

INT. BLUE ROOM - FULL ON ELEANOR

She turns from the door and shivers at the oppressive blueness of her room. Sitting on the bed to slip off her shoes, she finds the mattress luxuriously soft, bounces on it experimentally several times, and yawns, thinking:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

Funny; everything's so ugly and yet so comfortable...

(stretching out lazily)

Like drowning, I guess...

(several beats)

(more)

ELEANOR'S VOICE (cont'd)

*Now I can think about them. I am
all alone.*

*(her eyes slanting
around)*

Alone...

She runs barefoot and silent across the room. She turns the key in the lock. On the way back she thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

He won't know I locked it.

She stops in the middle of the room.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

Against what, Eleanor?
(looking around)

Against what?

CUT TO:

78 INT. MAIN HALL - UP ANGLE ON THE GREAT CARVED DOORS

Shut, waiting, keeping their vigil among the shadows and the history of the house. A VAST SILENCE enshrouds the world. Then, faintly at first, but gradually increasing, a KNOCKING SOUND begins and CAMERA MOVES IN as we

SLOW DISSOLVE THROUGH TO:

79 BLACKNESS

HOLD an instant while the KNOCKING becomes quite loud. Then a blue tasseled lampshade flares in the darkness.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(over; irritably)

All right, mother, all right!

80 ANGLE ON ELEANOR

She leans from her bed and bangs on the wall.

ELEANOR

Just a minute, I'm coming.

She sighs, starts to get out of bed wearily. Then she remembers something that sends her leaping up, staring around the room, cold and shivering, and wide-eyed awake.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(her mind shouting at her)

I am in Hill House!

ELEANOR
 (crying out)
 What? What, Theo?

From the other room:

THEO'S VOICE
 (faintly)
 Nell? In here.

Eleanor sends a chair crashing from her path, struggles frantically with the connecting door to the bathroom, gets it open, and plunges through.

81 INT. GREEN ROOM - FULL ON THEO - NIGHT

She sits up in bed, the green shaded night lamp burning by her shoulder. Her hair is tousled from sleep and her eyes wide with the shock of being suddenly awakened. Eleanor rushes to her bedside.

ELEANOR
 I'm here, what is it?

Freezing, she now hears, clearly for the first time, although she has been hearing it ever since she awakened, THE POUNDING she first took for granted was her mother, then attributed to Theo. Eleanor looks at Theo to make sure she also hears it, then whispers:

ELEANOR
 What is it?

THEO
 I thought it was you pounding.

ELEANOR
 (settling slowly
 on the bed)
 It was. I mean, I did. But now
 it's down near the other end of
 the hall.

They listen to the NOISE, a hollow banging as though something were hitting the doors with an iron kettle. Eleanor shivers with cold and thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*It's not at all like mother knocking
 on the wall. It's only a noise and
 the room is terribly cold, terribly,
 terribly cold.*

ELEANOR
 (aloud to Theo)
 Must be Luke and Dr. Montague.

THEO

Why should they be knocking on
the walls?

ELEANOR

Well, something is. Anyway it's
only a noise.

THEO

(managing a smile)

Subterranean waters.

The smile changes into an expression of gaping fear as the
pounding now smashes at the doors with a terrible
regularity, GREAT, SHATTERING, MEASURED STROKES, as though
there might be a mind behind it.

82 BIG CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

Her face holds a thoughtful, almost detached expression.
She thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Is this what they mean by cold
chills going up and down your back?
Because it's not pleasant. It starts
in your stomach and feels like
something alive. Yes, like something
alive.*

She closes her eyes and clenches her teeth, wrapping her
arms around herself.

ELEANOR

(aloud)

It's getting closer.

Theo shifts on the bed to press right up against Eleanor.

THEO

(whispering)

Maybe it will go on down the
other side of the hall.

It pounds more softly now and then in a quick flurry
seems to go past the door and begin methodically, still
soft, on the other side. Eleanor's eyes follow the
movement of whatever it is out there in the hall as she
thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Does it go on feet along the carpet?
(eyes lifting)*

Does it lift a hand to the doors?

Does it really move or..

*(eyes holding and
staring straight ahead)*

.. is it just there?

There's a terrible CRASH against the door. Theo clings to her, moaning.

THEO

No!

It is louder, it is deafening, it strikes against the door with relentless fury.

ELEANOR
(throwing herself
away from the bed)

Go away!

83 MOVING SHOT ON ELEANOR

She runs across the room to the door, shouting wildly:

ELEANOR
Go away, go away!
(pounding the door)
Dr. Montague!

Suddenly there is complete silence. She holds both hands against the door and presses her face against the panel and thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*Now I've done it, it was looking for
the room with someone inside.*

Then she hears a new NOISE, right in the room with them and jerks around to warn Theo. The NOISE comes from Theo who, pinched with cold, sits bolt upright against the headboard, her eyes panicked and her teeth chattering. Eleanor forces herself to move slowly, calmly, a good nurse in a crisis.

ELEANOR
You big baby. Whatever it is,
it's just a noise.

Reassured by Eleanor's tone, Theo loses her petrified look but her teeth continue to chatter.

THEO

I'm cold.

ELEANOR
(matter-of-factly)

So am I.

She takes the green quilt and throws it around Theo, then puts on Theo's dressing gown.

THEO
Where's Luke? Where's Montague?

ELEANOR
I don't know. Warmer now?

THEO
(shivering)
No.

ELEANOR
In a minute I'll go out in the
hall and call them are you --

The IRON CRASH starts again, so suddenly that Eleanor
leaps back against the bed.

THEO
Oh, God, Nell! It's against the
upper edge of the door.

Eleanor shoots her glance immediately to the top of the
door and sees that Theo is right.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*Higher than either of us could reach,
higher than Luke or Dr. Montague
could reach.*

The NOISE FADES and then something happens that makes
Eleanor's eyes fix in horror on:

84 THE DOOR KNOB

A gorgon's head similar to the one in Eleanor's room.
The door knob rattles so slightly it is almost a ticking
sound, and seems, just a fraction, to move, as though
it were being fondled.

85 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

her face a blank mask.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
(distantly)
*It's found us. Now I know why
people scream, because I think I'm
going to.*

She turns, opens her mouth, but instead of a scream a
whispered question comes out.

ELEANOR
Is the door locked?

Theo groans and shakes her head no.

86 ANGLE ON DOOR

Little pattings come from around the door frame, small seeking SOUNDS, feeling the edges of the door, trying to find a way in. A sudden fury comes over whatever is outside, the CRASHING begins again.

87 FULL SHOT ON ELEANOR

She throws herself back on the bed, calling wildly:

ELEANOR

You can't get in!

Theo clutches Eleanor. Utter SILENCE follows Eleanor's voice. Now a thin little GIGGLE comes into the room, a little mad, rising laugh, moving past the door and away around the house. Then they hear the VOICES of Montague and Luke coming up the stairs. Theo raises her head, sits up.

THEO

(weakly)

It's over.

ELEANOR

(whispering
uncertainly)

How do you know?

THEO

Can't you tell? Aren't you warm again? That sickening cold is gone.

ELEANOR

(wonderingly)

Why yes...Intense cold is one of the symptoms of shock. My mother --

She stops abruptly. Luke and Montague's VOICES grow louder coming up the hall.

THEO

(making no move to
release Eleanor)

Intense shock is one of the symptoms I've got.

ELEANOR
 (untwining Theo's
 arms from her with
 a self-conscious
 laugh)

We've been clutching each other
 like a couple of lost children.

Eleanor jumps from the bed and flings open the door.

ELEANOR
Where have you two been?

Fully dressed, Luke steps into the room.

LUKE
 What's the matter? You look as
 though you'd seen a ghost.

MONTAGUE
 (also fully dressed,
 hurrying in behind him)
 Did anything happen?

The girls look at each other blankly; still tense, they start to giggle. Then, at last, the release comes. They laugh outright, long and hard. Luke and Montague watch them in amazement, smiling foolishly and wondering what they said that's so funny.

ELEANOR
 (finally)
 No, nothing in particular
 happened. Just something knocked
 on the door with a cannon ball
 and then tried to get in and eat
 us.

Montague frowns and looks inquiringly at Theo.

THEO
 (shrugging)
 I'm with Nell.

LUKE
 Miss ESP and Bridey Murphy -
 some combination.

Montague goes to the door and inspects it.

MONTAGUE
 Not even a scratch on the wood.

LUKE
 (peering past him)
 Or any of the other doors.

ELEANOR

How nice it didn't mar the
woodwork. Where were you, Dr.
Montague?

MONTAGUE

(walking over to her)
Chasing a dog.
(as she gives him
a peculiar look)
At least we assumed it was a dog.
We followed it outside.

THEO

You mean it was inside?

MONTAGUE

I thought I heard something run
past my door. I woke Luke and we
went looking for it all over the
house and then out in the garden.

LUKE

(accusingly)
But let's face it, girls, we never
got very far from the house.

ELEANOR

(puzzled)
Then you must've heard that ungodly
noise.

MONTAGUE

(after checking Luke
with a glance)
No. There wasn't a sound from the
house. That is, nothing audible to
us.

(studying Eleanor
worriedly)

We'll have to take precautions.

ELEANOR

(frowning)
Against what?

MONTAGUE

When Luke and I are...are decoyed
outside, and you two are bottled
up inside, wouldn't you say --
(his voice
very quiet)
-- wouldn't you say that something
somehow, is trying to separate us?

They give each other quick, furtive little glances, each wondering what lies in the other's mind.

DISSOLVE TO:

88 INT. DINING ROOM - DAY - CLOSE MOVING SHOT ON A BLUEPRINT OF HILL HOUSE - SHOOTING THROUGH A MAGNIFYING GLASS

The crumpled old document beneath the glass undulates like a sea. HOLD on the NURSERY, so marked.

89 ANGLE ON MONTAGUE

Alone at the breakfast table, he peers intently through the glass. Bright morning sunshine streams into the room.

He is concentrating so hard he doesn't notice Eleanor enter. Wearing a sundress, her hair in a new style, she stands watching him affectionately a moment, and thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(sudden fright)

I wonder if my fingernails are clean.

(glances down)

I thought of everything but that.

(seeing they are)

Thank goodness. I want him so much to

like me. You want him to love you.

(shocked)

Eleanor Vance, you're horrible!

She frowns in disapproval of herself and approaches the table.

ELEANOR

Good morning, Dr. Montague.

He looks up, smiles, and rises.

MONTAGUE

Good morning, and please call me John.

ELEANOR

John.

He looks at her closely, observing the change in her appearance. She goes self-consciously to the sideboard.

MONTAGUE

This curious life seems to agree with you.

ELEANOR

(tugging at her bodice)

You don't think this dress is too.... too....?

MONTAGUE

Un un.

(twinkling)

What I want to know is, where do you get off looking so pretty after last night?

Montague takes the plate from her hand and carries it over to her place at the table.

ELEANOR

That was last night. There may have been a little noise but one has to expect that in these old houses.

90 TWO SHOT

He seats her, then takes his own place. She attacks her food with gusto.

MONTAGUE

(shaking his head)

I give up. I was sure you'd be packed and on your way this morning.

ELEANOR

Not likely. This is my first vacation in years and I'm going to enjoy it.

MONTAGUE

That's the point. You need a real vacation and this isn't the place for one.

ELEANOR

(stubbornly)

I mean to stay. Period.

(wavering)

Unless, unless you want to get rid of me.

MONTAGUE

No, no. Please, you mustn't think that. I'm glad we're alone. I want to get to know Eleanor Vance.

ELEANOR

(setting down her knife and fork)

She's horrible.

MONTAGUE

(laughing)

Don't make fun of me. You're sweet and pleasant and everyone likes you very much. I want to know more about you.

ELEANOR

I dislike lobster, crack my knuckles when I'm nervous, save buttons, and sleep on my left side.

MONTUAGE

(chuckling)

Why on the left side?

ELEANOR

I read some place it wears out the heart quicker.

MONTAGUE

(frowning)

That's a depressing thought.

ELEANOR

For the past eleven years I've been walled up alive on a desert island.

MONTAGUE

(good-humoredly)

I suspected you might be hiding some dark romantic secret in your past.

ELEANOR

Romantic? I've spent all my adult life taking care of my invalid mother, until she died.

(shaking her head)

No, it wasn't romantic.

MONTAGUE

(sympathetically)

Now that you're free at last, you shouldn't be wasting your time in Hill House. It's a mistake.

ELEANOR

But it isn't. Don't you see? The only thing that kept me going was I knew someday something would happen, something truly extraordinary like Hill House.

MONTAGUE

(worriedly)

Yes, it's extraordinary. What will you do when you go back? Do you have a job?

ELEANOR

No job, nothing. I don't know what I'm going to do.

(anxiously)

You wouldn't send me back, would you?

MONTAGUE

That depends on what happens. We'll see. We might all have to go back. But I won't give up easily.

ELEANOR

How did you get so interested in the supernatural?

MONTAGUE

I didn't want to become what my father called a "practical man". Everything had to be practical - and conventional. Those two things went together in his mind. So naturally my reaction as a kid was to search for something useless and unconventional.

ELEANOR

But you're an anthropologist now.

MONTAGUE

It's an easy step from the study of dead souls to the study of dead civilizations and dead men.

ELEANOR

I'm not very practical either.

MONTAGUE

Ah, but it didn't occur to me until I was hocked that my combined knowledge of anthropology and psychic phenomena had led me on to something very practical. If ghosts, which are pure spirit, come from man, then it is possible someday to have individuals whose spiritual caliber surpasses anything that humanity has so far known.

ELEANOR

(following him
closely)

Human nature could certainly stand some improvements.

MONTAGUE

However, my idea remains pure theory until someone proves definitely that the supernatural really exists.

ELEANOR

(looking at him)

You're a wonderful man.

MONTAGUE

(modestly)

Nonsense. It's the selfish dream of every scholar to pass along some bit of knowledge he himself has discovered.

(seizing the
bread basket)

Now, have a popover, and tell me about last night.

ELEANOR

(taking one)

Thanks.

(thoughtfully)

I've been trying to remember. I can remember knowing I was frightened, but I can't remember actually being frightened, how I felt. I think it's because it was so unreal.

MONTAGUE

Still could be subterranean waters, you know.

ELEANOR

I hope not. That wouldn't be nearly so exciting.

MONTAGUE

(frowning)

No good, this feeling of excitement. It's the first sign you've fallen under the spell of the house.

ELEANOR

Maybe it isn't just the house?

MONTAGUE

Then what else?

Eleanor pauses, looking into his eyes. He smiles back blandly, and at this moment, to her he seems very obtuse. She turns away with a sigh.

ELEANOR

Let's blame it on sunspots.

He looks at her quizzically.

THEO'S VOICE

That wasn't sunspots last night.

Eleanor and Montague turn.

91 ANGLE AT DOOR

Theo enters in a foul mood and walks up to the table.

THEO

If someone gets hurt, it's
your fault, Montague.

MONTAGUE

(soberly)

No ghost in all the long
histories of ghosts ever hurt
anyone physically.

ELEANOR

(staunchly)

You see, we weren't in any
actual danger at all, isn't
that right, John?

MONTAGUE

Not entirely. Damage can be
done by the fear of the victim
to himself. Prehistoric man,
for instance, could die of
fright during an eclipse.

THEO

Poor sap.

MONTAGUE

You mean poor homo sapiens. A
modern man can react with the
same unreasonable terror to a
supernatural event... especially
if he doesn't believe the
supernatural exists.

ELEANOR

(upset)

Bother it. I've always been
more afraid of being left alone,
or left out, than of things that
go bump in the night.

(as Theo returns
to the table)

What are you afraid of, Theo?

THEO
 (looking at
 Eleanor)
 Of knowing what I really want.

Luke enters, brisk and cheerful.

LUKE
 Good morning, fellow earthlings.

Eleanor immediately turns away from Theo who has kept her gaze steadily on her.

ELEANOR
 Luke, what are you afraid of?

LUKE
 (making his hands
 tremble)
 What I just saw in the hall.

MONTAGUE
 (alertly)
 Is there something?

LUKE
 Didn't you see it?
 (as they shake
 their heads)
 The show's just getting good.
 Come on.

92 INT. A DOWNSTAIRS HALLWAY - HEAD-ON SHOT

Luke leads them down the dim passageway walking into CAMERA. The others stretch out behind him in the gloom.

LUKE
 Here.

He strikes a match passing it in front of CAMERA as he holds it up to the wall. They all press closer to see.

ELEANOR
 (uncertainly)
 It's -- writing?

LUKE
 Writing.

Montague touches the wall with his finger, then examines his finger tip, tasting it.

MONTAGUE
 Like chalk.

He takes a flashlight from his pocket, turns it on.

93 PANNING SHOT - WITH THE FLASHLIGHT BEAM

It moves slowly along the broken chalk lines that run the length of the wall. The letters stand out clearly but are too large and straggling to decipher.

94 GROUP SHOT

Their eyes follow the undulating course of the beam. Eleanor stands back for a better view.

LUKE
(softly to her)
Can you read it?

MONTAGUE
(moving his
flashlight)
HELP...ELEANOR...COME...HOME.

ELEANOR
(cringing)
No!

95 ZOOM SHOT - ON THE WORD "ELEANOR" - HER POV

Then CAMERA PULLS BACK to reveal the writing complete from one end of the hallway to the other.

ELEANOR
(bewildered)
Wipe it off, please. It's crazy.

They all stare at the writing.

THEO
Crazy is the word, all right.

MONTAGUE
Get something and wipe it off,
Luke.

Luke takes out his handkerchief and attacks the first letter. Montague guides Eleanor down the hall. She hangs back to see her name on the wall.

ELEANOR
But it's crazy. Why -- ?

Firmly Montague puts her through a door.

96 INT. THE DINING ROOM - DAY

Montague brings her across the room to a chair.

ELEANOR

(dazedly)

Those letters spelled out my
name.

(looking at him)

You don't know what that feels
like.

Montague sits her in the chair.

MONTAGUE

Now you listen to me...

ELEANOR

(gesturing, vaguely)

It's my name, it belongs to me,
and something is using it and
writing it and calling me with
my own name and --

MONTAGUE

Just because your name --

ELEANOR

(staring at him)

That's it. It knows my name,
doesn't it? It knows my name.

THEO

(entering)

Simmer down, Nell. It could have
said any of us; it knows all our
names.

ELEANOR

(turning to Theo)

Did you write it? Please tell me,
I won't be angry or anything,
just so I can know that -- maybe
it was only a joke? To frighten
me?

She looks appealingly at Theo.

THEO

(sympathetically)

You know none of us wrote it,
baby.

Eleanor snaps her head around to Montague.

ELEANOR

She's lying. I could swear she
did it.

MONTAGUE

Easy, Eleanor, easy.

Mrs. Dudley comes through the swinging door and stands holding it open.

MRS. DUDLEY

I clear breakfast at ten o'clock.

THEO

Why should I want to write your name anywhere, Nell?

MRS. DUDLEY

I set on lunch at one.

ELEANOR

Because I didn't wait to have breakfast with you, that's why.

MRS. DUDLEY

That's the way I agreed to.

THEO

You are way out, sweetie.

ELEANOR

(turning to
Montague)

You don't know Theo as I'm beginning to.

MRS. DUDLEY

I clear up at ten.

MONTAGUE

(shouting)

Mrs. Dudley - please!

(turning)

No one blames you for being upset, Eleanor, but -

MRS. DUDLEY

(finishing stubbornly)

It's ten o'clock.

She retreats to her kitchen with outraged dignity.

ELEANOR

(defiantly)

Why me? Why should I be the one chosen?

THEO

Maybe something in the house
finds you a kindred soul; maybe it
thinks you might have more
sympathy and understanding than
the rest of us --

(still smiling)

-- and maybe, of course, you
wrote it yourself.

ELEANOR

(heavy sarcasm)

Oh, sure, I'm just the type to
want to see my name scribbled
all over this foul house.

THEO

(smoothly)

It's one way to attract attention.

ELEANOR

You think I like the idea I'm
the center of attention?

THEO

(unruffled)

That's the reason you're done
up in that dress and new hair-do,
isn't it?

Eleanor is so stunned and furious she can hardly choke
out a reply.

ELEANOR

You...you were the one who
suggested I change my hair.

Montague holds her back.

MONTAGUE

That's enough, Eleanor.

ELEANOR

(flinging off
his hands)

How dare you? How dare you?

Montague starts to laugh pleasantly and she stares at
him in disbelief.

MONTAGUE

Don't you see, Eleanor? Theo's
just trying to get a rise out of
you, so you won't be frightened
any more.

Utterly bewildered, she looks from one to the other. They smile back at her benignly, and Theo nods. She covers her face with her hand.

MONTAGUE

Take Eleanor to her room, Theo.
We'll postpone the tour of the
house until this afternoon.

THEO

(guiding Eleanor
out)

Okay, but I don't want to spend
another night wondering what's
over my head or under me.

ELEANOR

(looking back
worriedly)

You wouldn't leave me behind,
would you?

MONTAGUE

No one will leave you behind.

She smiles at him gratefully and goes out with Theo.

DISSOLVE TO:

97 INT. THE CONSERVATORY - DAY

FEATURING A GROTESQUELY ENORMOUS PIECE OF MARBLE STATUARY. Just entering, Eleanor, Luke and Theo pull up short, staring aghast and incredulous. Montague closes the door softly behind them. Eleanor puts her hand over her eyes. The statue fills one entire end of the room. Against the profusion of strangely shaped plants, the statue appears all the more horrible, huge and monstrous and somehow whitely naked. The weather has turned gray and windy with rustling leaves and branches tapping erratically on the glass above.

LUKE

My God, Mt. Rushmore.

THEO

It's not there. I don't believe
it's there.

ELEANOR

(helplessly)

How...?

MONTAGUE

(smiling proudly)

Thought you'd get a kick out of it.

(walking toward statue)

It's supposed to be Saint Francis curing the lepers.

They approach reluctantly. Eleanor stands next to him.

ELEANOR

No, no. Surely one of them is a dragon.

LUKE

I say it's a family portrait. Composite. The tall, undraped -
(clears his throat)

- masculine type, that's old Hugh, patting himself on the back because he built this creep house. The three wailing women are his wives and daughter, Abigail. The dog -

THEO

Maybe that's the dog you were chasing last night.

LUKE

Yeah.

(pause)

The girl on the end is the companion, the one who is supposed to have murdered Abigail, or something.

MONTAGUE

That was much later when Abigail was an old lady.

LUKE

(shrugging)

Nobody knows when the statue got here. It isn't on the original inventory.

THEO

The companion looks like you, Eleanor.

ELEANOR

(upset)

No.

MONTAGUE

She does at that. A natural beauty, I'd call her.

Montague walks around the statue. Eleanor watches him and thinks:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*What does he think of me, really?
Am I being a fool? Don't let
me know too surely what he thinks
of me.*

Theo moves up closer to the statue.

THEO

You know something? It could be a family portrait of us.

ELEANOR

(increasingly upset)
Don't be ridiculous.

THEO

You're the companion. I'm Abigail, and Montague is ole Hugh.

LUKE

Where do I fit in?

THEO

The dog.

LUKE

That wasn't nice.

As she turns he grins and runs his finger down her back where the zipper has opened.

LUKE

Your ESP is showing.

THEO

(furiously)
Keep your hands to yourself.

MONTAGUE

(coming around
the statue)
What goes on?

LUKE

(grinning at Eleanor
and Theo)
More than meets the eye.

There's an uneasy pause. Eleanor nervously changes the subject.

ELEANOR

You know, this wouldn't be such a bad room without the statue.

THEO

Ideal for the zombies' annual ball. Go on, dance with him, Nell, I believe he has his eye on you.

ELEANOR

That's not funny.

THEO

Don't be such a 'fraidy cat.

MONTAGUE

Let Eleanor alone.

LUKE

I bet Eleanor doesn't know how to dance.

ELEANOR

(looking daggers
at him)

I do too.

She steps forward and curtsies to the statue.

ELEANOR

Hugh Crain, will you dance with me?

THEO

(stepping back)

I believe he's going to accept.

Eleanor reaches out timidly and puts her finger against Hugh Crain's outstretched hand. Then, turning and shimmering in the dim, intensely quiet room, she waltzes around the statue. Suddenly the glass doors slam open and a rush of air whistles into the room, rippling the plants with an angry whispering sound. She stops still, shuddering, and stares at the statue.

ELEANOR

He moved!

Theo comes to her side smiling mischievously.

THEO

I know. I'm surprised you haven't noticed it before. I mean how nothing in this house moves until you look away and then you just catch something from the corner of your eye.

They hold still shifting their eyes around the room.

LUKE

(holding one foot
and hopping)

Ouch! He moved again. Stepped on my toe this time.

MONTAGUE

(examining the glass
doors, then beckoning)

May as well go out this way since these doors have been opened for us.

Eleanor and Theo look at Montague uncertainly, then start. As they exit by the glass doors behind the statue, CAMERA MOVES IN on the end figure who bears a likeness to Eleanor. When we are so close the screen BLURS

CUT TO:

98 INT. MAIN HALL - DAY - MOVING SHOT ON A CAST IRON DOOR
PORTER

In the form of a cupid with a bow and arrow, it is set in place to hold open the carved front door.

99 GROUP SHOT - FAVORING LUKE

He sniffs the breeze sweeping into the hall.

LUKE

Let's just keep the front door open until we find a room with windows.

ELEANOR

(peering out)

When I woke up this morning, I thought it was going to be a nice day.

THEO

Foul house, foul weather.

Montague opens a small door tucked into a corner of the main hall.

MONTAGUE

Now here's something you wouldn't expect.

(gesturing for them to enter)

The library. In the tower.

ELEANOR

(backing away)

I can't go in there!

Overwhelmed with the cold air of mold and earth which rushes at her, she retreats until she's against the wall.

MONTAGUE

(hurrying over to her)

Eleanor?

ELEANOR

My mother --

She stops, not knowing what she was going to say.

MONTAGUE

Yes?

Eleanor shivers and looks at him vacantly.

ELEANOR

That smell --

MONTAGUE

(reasonably)

Just stale air, Eleanor.

ELEANOR

No, no. That other smell. Awful.

Luke and Theo come over, looking at her oddly.

ELEANOR

(trying to speak lightly)

I don't think I'll do much reading while I'm here. Not if the books smell like the library.

MONTAGUE

I didn't notice it.

(glances at
Luke; then)

Good work, Eleanor. Just the kind of thing we're after. Write it up in your notes tonight and try to describe the smell exactly.

ELEANOR

(brittle)

That's what I'm here for, only do you mind if I skip the library now?

MONTAGUE

Do just as you like. We'll only be a minute... Theo?

Theo shrugs and heads for the library. Luke has already entered. Montague turns in the small doorway.

MONTAGUE

Sure you're okay?

Eleanor smiles wanly and nods. From where she stands she can see part of the circular wall of the library.

MONTAGUE'S VOICE

(drifting out to her)

See the little balcony up there in the shadows? That's where the companion hanged herself.

Eleanor turns INTO CAMERA, her back on the library door, screws her eyes closed, and shakes her head as though to deny what she sees in her mind.

CUT TO:

100 INT. LIBRARY - UP ANGLE TOWARD BALCONY

FEATURING the iron spiral staircase that climbs the wall three stories into the tower. There are thousands of moldy, dung-colored books on the other three walls. The heads of Luke, Theo and Montague are in the f.g.

THEO

It would've been simpler to jump.

LUKE

Book lover's leap, eh?

MONTAGUE

They say she tied the rope onto the railing and then --

THEO
 (testily)
 Thanks. We get it.

Luke starts up the iron stairs.

LUKE
 Someday I'll make this room
 into a nightclub. Put the
 band up there on the balcony
 and chorus girls will come down
 these -- whoops!

Suddenly the stairs start to rock and sway, scraping the walls and sending clanging REVERBERATIONS through the house. For an instant he hangs on grimly, then comes to a split-second decision and vaults over the rail to the floor a good ten feet below.

MONTAGUE
 (rushing over to him)
 You all right?

LUKE
 Guess so.

THEO
 (as Montague helps
 Luke up)
 That was quick thinking.

LUKE
 Instinct.
 (grinning at
 Montague)
 My strong instinct for self-
 preservation, and it's telling
 me now, loud and clear, head for
 the hills.

Montague looks worriedly toward the stairs which stop swaying gradually and come to rest.

CUT TO:

- 101 EXT. THE VERANDA - UP ANGLE ON TOWER
 jammed grotesquely against the wooden side of the house.
- 102 DOWN ANGLE ON ELEANOR'S UPTURNED FACE
 The wind blowing her hair, she stares at the tower.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
(under her breath)

Vile, hideous.

103 ODD ANGLE ON ELEANOR

She leans back against the veranda rail and forces her eyes, gripped almost hypnotically by the tower, down to the ground. Then, despite herself, her eyes start climbing the tower again.

104 HER POV - SLOW PAN UP TOWER

Halfway windows begin, thin angled slits in the stone. CAMERA hesitates here.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I wonder what it would be like,
looking down from there.*

The ANGLE becomes very steep. Now CAMERA MOVES from the window, GOES A SHORT DISTANCE along the roof, TILTS toward the spire, acting out the thoughts in her mind.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*That's where she did it. From
that little window, creeping onto
the roof, reaching up to the spire,
knotting a rope...*

105 STEEP POV - FROM TOWER AT ELEANOR

She looks very small, pathetically exposed, vulnerable, leaning far backward, gripping the veranda rail. HOLD briefly, then, with a crashing dissonance of MUSIC:

106 CAMERA PLUNGES

A fraction before the fatal impact:

CUT TO:

107 EFFECT SHOT

The world seems to rock. The trees and the grass and the lawn tilt sideways.

MONTAGUE'S VOICE

Eleanor! You'll fall!

The whole sky turns and swings, obliterating her.

108 CLOSE TWO SHOT - ELEANOR, MONTAGUE

He has his arms around her, and pulls her back from her outflung position beyond the veranda.

MONTAGUE

Didn't you hear me calling?

ELEANOR

(shakily)

This house. You have to watch it every minute.

She brings her arms up and clings to him, her cheek brushing against his.

MONTAGUE

(reluctantly)

Eleanor, I didn't realize you were so...so nervous. I really think I'd better send you home.

ELEANOR

(gripping him tighter)

No! Please! I can't go home.

MONTAGUE

(soothingly)

It's no reflection on you. An atmosphere like this might break anyone down.

ELEANOR

(angrily)

I'm not breaking down. I did hear noises last night. Something was trying to get into the room.

Montague looks at her closely and she stares back defiantly.

MONTAGUE

You realize, don't you, that if even one, one event is proved to be an hallucination, then this whole experiment will be questioned?

ELEANOR

(with a self-conscious laugh)

I'm not batty, you know. After all, Theo was there too. Is it my fault it just didn't make sense?

MONTAGUE

(a long beat)

Okay, we'll let it go for now.

(worriedly)

I suppose I'm being selfish.

ELEANOR

(hopefully)

Selfish?

MONTAGUE

Keeping you here for the sake
of the experiment.

ELEANOR

(disappointed)

Of course. For the sake of the
experiment.

MONTAGUE

You do seem to be the main
attraction for whatever's in
the house, but I'll send you
away the minute I think --

ELEANOR

I'm all right. Really I am.

She turns and retreats into silence. Montague sighs and
starts to turn her around. Luke and Theo come running up.

THEO

(stopping dead)

Well! Don't the two of you
look cozy.

She regards them with cold anger. Montague turns calmly.

MONTAGUE

She was half off the veranda
when I caught her.

Embarrassed, Eleanor moves away from him.

ELEANOR

(to the others)

I was leaning back to see the
top of the tower and I got dizzy.

LUKE

(grinning)

Dizzy like a fox.

He turns his grin on Theo. She glares back, then walks
over to Eleanor and puts an arm around her waist.

THEO
 Poor Nell. You're like ice.
 I'll take you back inside.

She guides Eleanor away from Montague toward the door.

MONTAGUE
 Theo...
 (as she turns)
 I think you should move in with
 Eleanor.

Theo's face brightens.

THEO
 You're the doctor.

ELEANOR
 (protecting)
 But that's my room, my very own
 room!

MONTAGUE
 (tactfully)
 I wouldn't want to run the risk
 of either of you spending another
 night alone.

THEO
 Anyway, it's nothing to get all
 hung up about, Nell. We'll have
 fun - like sisters.

Eleanor looks at Montague resentfully, puts off Theo's
 arm and goes inside.

DISSOLVE TO:

109 INT. BLUE ROOM - CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR'S BARE FOOT - NIGHT

Her toenails are being painted.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
 (laughing)
 It tickles.

She sneezes.

110 TWO SHOT - ELEANOR AND THEO

A drink in her hand, her foot in Theo's lap, Eleanor lies
 back against the headboard. She's high, and more relaxed
 than we've ever seen her. She wears a nightgown and Theo
 is in pajamas.

THEO
Have another drink. Keep the
chill out.

ELEANOR
Just a teensy one. To keep the
chill out.
(sipping the drink)
Don't really like whiskey.

THEO
That's brandy.

ELEANOR
Oh.

THEO
(concentrating)
By the time I'm through with
you, Nell, you'll be a different
person.
(regarding Eleanor's
foot)
I love decorating things.

ELEANOR
(looking at her
toenails)
It's wicked.
(as Theo darts
her a look)
I mean - on my foot.

THEO
You've got foolishness and
wickedness mixed up.

ELEANOR
Maybe. Haven't had much chance
to learn the difference...
What's your apartment like?

THEO
(shifting Eleanor's
other foot to her
lap)
It's an old place we furnished
with a lot of stuff we found in
junk shops. We both love doing
over old things.

ELEANOR
(giggling)
Like me. You married?

After a little silence, Theo laughs.

THEO

No.

ELEANOR

Sorry. I'm stupid and wicked
and untrustworthy and not good
for anything at all.

THEO

I wouldn't say that. Maybe just
a little tight at the moment...
Tell me about where you live.

Anxiety darts onto Eleanor's face. She stalls by sipping
the drink. Relaxing completely, she lies all the way
back with her head over the edge of the bed.

ELEANOR

I haven't had it long enough to
believe it's my own.

(smiling dreamily)

A little apartment, smaller than
yours, I'm sure. I live alone.
I'm still furnishing it, buying
one thing at a time, you know,
to make sure I get everything
absolutely right. Had to look
two weeks before I found the
little stone lions I keep on the
mantel. Brush their teeth every
night.

THEO

I have a hunch I ought to take
you back to your apartment as
fast as I can.

ELEANOR

(sitting up)

Don't say that!

THEO

(surprised)

Honey, I only meant --

ELEANOR

Why do you all pick on me? Am
I the public dump or something
for everyone's fear?

(vehemently)

Don't want to leave Hill House
ever, ever. Been waiting all
my life for something like this
to happen.

She is interrupted by Montague's voice in the hall.

MONTAGUE'S VOICE
 Hey, everybody! C'mere. I've
 found something.

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

111 INT. UPSTAIRS HALL - NIGHT

A pair of double doors facing down the hall are directly behind Montague. Wearing a dressing gown, he keeps stepping in and out of the area in front of the doors. Eleanor, Theo and Luke rush from their rooms into the hall.

LUKE

What?

Montague points at the section of carpet in front of the doors.

MONTAGUE

Stand there.

The three of them take up the indicated position and instantly show the effect of extreme cold.

MONTAGUE

(delightedly)

A cold spot! A genuine cold spot. I guarantee you it won't register on any thermometer.

LUKE

(looking around)

Bunk. Where does the draft come from?

MONTAGUE

(chortling)

A draft? In Hill House? Not unless you could manage to make one of the doors stay open. I've found it. The heart of Hill House.

LUKE

(stepping back quickly)

You mean where we're standing?

MONTAGUE

(turning around)

On the other side of these doors.

The doors take on an air of foreboding. A grinning gargoyle head has been set in the corner on either side of them.

ELEANOR

What's in there?

MONTAGUE

The nursery. Abigail Crain
grew up and died there.

LUKE

(grasping the
doorknob)

Just the place to chill our beer.

MONTAGUE

(reaching out to
stop him)

No!

(quietly)

We'll keep the lid on the
pressure cooker a while longer...

(grimly)

Then...

LUKE

Don't give me that, Doc.

But he withdraws his hand slowly.

THEO

It's like the doorway of a tomb.

Eleanor sneezes.

MONTAGUE

Bless you. That's enough, girls.
Go back to bed before you catch
cold.

ELEANOR

Yes, teacher.

(smiling)

Bless you.

Theo scowls and hurries her along.

THEO

Come on.

MONTAGUE

(calling after them)

Lock your door tonight.

Turning angrily from Montague, Luke starts pounding the
wall, searching for a hollow spot.

LUKE

It's got to be a draft from
somewhere.

MONTAGUE

(quietly)

The walls are solid.

LUKE

Don't give me any supernatural jazz, doc.

(extends his hands
over the cold spot)

This is something I can feel -

(his breath clouds
in the cold air)

- and see.

MONTAGUE

Maybe there's a pipeline to the North Pole, eh? Why won't you accept it for what it is: a supernatural phenomenon. You knock on wood, don't you?

LUKE

What's that got to do with it?

MONTAGUE

It shows that even you, despite yourself, feel there are forces beyond nature able to help or hurt us.

LUKE

Are you trying to tell me a belief in a superstition is the same as a belief in the supernatural?

MONTAGUE

(smiling)

It's food for thought -

(deliberately steaming
his breath over cold
spot)

Frozen food for thought.

He goes down the hallway, Luke stares after him.

CUT TO:

112 INT. BLUE ROOM - NIGHT

Theo sits up in the big double bed idly leafing through a book. Eleanor locks the door, then removes her bathrobe.

THEO

You know what I think it was?
Montague has us all so edgy
we're getting the cold sweats.
Temperature doesn't have to
drop to make you break out in
one of those.

ELEANOR

(getting into bed)
That's right. Music gives me
goose bumps. Still, there was
that same smell....

THEO

Here we go again. That's what
you thought you smelled in the
library - the sickroom smell.

ELEANOR

Let's discuss it some other
time. Turn out the light, huh?

THEO

I want the light on.
(offering the book)
Have you seen this?

ELEANOR

(rolling over)
Just wanna go to sleep.

THEO

Why be mad at me? I don't
think you killed your mother.

113 ZOOM INTO ELEANOR'S STARTLED FACE

114 CLOSE TWO SHOT

Seething, Eleanor turns on Theo.

ELEANOR

Darn you! Go to sleep.

THEO

(touching Eleanor's
hair)
Okay. Goodnight, Nellie my Nell.

Eleanor squirms as far away from Theo as she can. Theo
sets the book on the night table and burrows under the
covers. CAMERA CLOSES on the book, which has embossed
on the leather cover, "Holy Bible," and on the lower right
corner, "Abigail Crain."

CUT TO:

115 EXT. THE TOWER - NIGHT

Silhouetted against the moon behind it. A peculiarly shaped cloud starts to cover the moon.

DISSOLVE TO:

116 INT. BLUE ROOM - ANGLE ON THE WALL - NIGHT

The effect of shadows and moonlight on a section of wallpaper here turns the pattern into the aspect of a not quite human head. From behind it comes the steady SOUND OF A VOICE BABBLING. The words are too low to be understood.

117 BIG CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

Her face rigid with fear and white as the pillow, she stares at the babbling place on the wall.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Why is it dark? She left the light
on so why is it dark?*

Without moving her head she sidles her eyes toward Theo and tries to whisper something. Her lips move but no sound comes out. On her second effort she makes herself heard.

ELEANOR

Are you awake?

(adding immediately)

Don't say a word, Theo, not a word. Don't let it know you're in my room.

From o.s. behind the wall a new SOUND COMES. As Eleanor's eyes snap back to the wall, she clamps her hand to her mouth.

118 HER ANGLE AT THE OUTLINED SHAPE ON THE WALL

From behind it comes a little LAUGH, a small gurgling laugh that breaks through the babbling, and rises. It laughs on and on up the scale, and breaks off suddenly in a little painful gasp, and the babbling voice goes on.

119 BIG CLOSE UP ELEANOR - STRAIGHT DOWN SHOT

She stares directly up INTO CAMERA, at the ceiling rather than the wall in an effort to hang onto reality.

ELEANOR
 (lowering her hand)
 Hold my hand, Theo.

O.s. below FRAME Theo evidently takes her hand.

ELEANOR
 All right. Now for God's sake
 don't scream.

120 CLOSE SHOT - THE OUTLINE IN THE WALLPAPER

The VOICE continues babbling but the rising mad sound of the LAUGH drowns it out. Then, abruptly, absolute SILENCE.

121 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

Still not daring to move her head, she slants her eyes way over toward Theo and whispers:

ELEANOR
 Is it over? Do you think it's
 over?

(her eyes flinching
 with pain)
 Theo, you're breaking my hand!

But something new again makes Eleanor forget the pressure on her hand. Her eyes dart back to the wall as she hears a SOFT LITTLE CRY, infinitely sad, heart-breaking. The terror leaves her face to be replaced by a look of agonizing pity. For the first time she has the courage to move her head, TURNING IT FULL TOWARD THE WALL.

122 HER ANGLE ON THE WALL

At this instant the moon passes behind a cloud and the half-human head disappears in the creeping darkness. A thin CRYING begins and then the SHRIEK OF A CHILD, followed by a whimper of pain and frightened, childish sobbing.

123 ODD ANGLE BIG CLOSE UP ON ELEANOR

Her eyes blink rapidly. She gains control of the blinking and thinks, very concretely, very rationally:

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*This is monstrous. This is cruel.
 It is hurting a child and I will not
 let anyone - anything - hurt a
 child.*

The babbling VOICE starts up, low and steady, on and on. She picks up her thoughts with the same cool rationality as before.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

I will not endure this. It thinks to scare me. Well, it has. And poor Theo too.

(wincing)

I honestly think she must be breaking my hand. No matter.

(strong emotion
creeping into
her voice)

I will take a lot from this filthy house for his sake, but I will not go along with hurting a child. No, I will not.

A look of determination comes onto her face.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(continuing)

I will, by God, get my mouth to open right now and I will yell I will yell I will yell

124 CAMERA JUMPS TO A TIGHT CLOSE UP OF HER MOUTH

ELEANOR

STOP IT!

125 FULL SHOT ON ELEANOR

sitting bolt upright, all alone, on the blue chaise longue. A light flashes on o.s. The blanket she must have dragged over during the night is around her hips, the pillow at her back. She looks in consternation to one side.

126 FLASH SHOT - HER HAND

white, clenched around nothing, held out rigidly.

127 BIG CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

Terror looks out of her eyes.

128 LONG LONG LONG TRAVEL SHOT

CAMERA GOES for an eternity with her gaze across an endless expanse of blue wallpaper and carpet, occasionally broken by a familiar object. Our MUSIC builds uneasily to a jangling NOTE OF ALARM. Finally we reach and HOLD ON:

129 CLOSE SHOT - THEO

CAMERA JIGGLING as with the impact of an explosion. Appalled and disheveled, she sits up alone on her side of the big double bed.

THEO

What? What, Nell? What?

CAMERA WHIPS BACK very fast to:

130 ELEANOR

She remains frozen an instant, then flings herself off the chaise longue to her feet.

ELEANOR

Good God!

(bringing her shaking
hand in toward her
chest and slowly
opening the fingers)

God, whose hand was I holding?

CUT TO:

131 EXT. TOWER - NIGHT

The moon is just sinking behind the house. In dead
SILENCE

DISSOLVE TO:

132 INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY - CLOSE SHOT - A GILDED ANGEL

Sunlight flashes on her wings. CAMERA PANS DOWN and we see that the angel is the top decoration on the frame of a harp. HOLD, SHOOTING THROUGH THE HARP STRINGS, ON MONTAGUE, seated a few feet back on a love seat by the window reading. The strings of the harp, untouched by anything around, vibrate in a MYSTERIOUS TREMOLO.

He glances at his watch.

133 ANGLE PAST MONTAGUE

Eleanor enters and approaches, looking pale and tired.

MONTAGUE

(rising; cordially)

Eleanor. Too bad. You just missed it.

ELEANOR
(listlessly)

What?

MONTAGUE
(indicating the harp)
The Hill House concerto for harp.

ELEANOR
Were you playing the harp?

MONTAGUE
It was playing itself.

ELEANOR
(sarcastically)
Naturally. How do you explain
it? Subterranean waters?
Earth tremors?

She settles in the love seat and stares into space.
Montague sits beside her.

MONTAGUE
I doubt if it's anything
supernatural --
(wryly)
The self-starting music. More
likely it's in the realm of the
preternatural.

ELEANOR
Preternatural?

MONTAGUE
Something we don't have any
natural explanation for now, but
probably will have someday.
D'you know scientists not so long
ago laughed at magnetic attraction?
Said it was just a superstition.
They couldn't explain it so they
refused to admit it existed.

ELEANOR
(vaguely)
Life is still full of the
preternatural. My mother --

MONTAGUE
Go on, say it. You've been
trying to ever since you arrived.

ELEANOR
I don't know what I was going to
say. I'm still so terrified from
last night.

MONTAGUE

You shouldn't be. It's silly to be frightened of --

ELEANOR

(heatedly)

Silly! You haven't been through it. This horrible unknown thing --

MONTAGUE

Unknown! That's the key word. Unknown. When we become involved in a supernatural event we're scared out of our wits mostly because it's unknown. The nightcry of a child, a face on the wall, knockings, bangings -- what's that to be afraid of? You weren't threatened, it was harmless -- like a joke that doesn't come off.

ELEANOR

But the child --

MONTAGUE

There was no child, remember? -- Only a voice.

ELEANOR

Worse.

MONTAGUE

(calmly)

Let me put it this way. When people believed the earth was flat, the idea of a round world scared 'em silly. Then they discovered how the round world works. That's how it is with the world of the supernatural. Until we know how it works, we'll continue to carry around this unnecessary burden of fear.

ELEANOR

All right, but supposing it's all in my imagination?

MONTAGUE

You can't say that because three other people are here too. We all resist the idea that what ran through the garden the first night was a ghost or what knocked

(MORE)

MONTAGUE (cont'd)

on the door was a ghost, or what held your hand was a ghost, and yet there is certainly something going on in Hill House.

ELEANOR

I could say, "All three of you are in my imagination. None of this is real."

MONTAGUE

Sure you could. That's the easiest way to dismiss the supernatural -- by pleading insanity or accusing others of it.

ELEANOR

(thoughtfully)

Maybe I am insane. My mother...

She stops, then starts again, quietly but determined, sending the words at him relentlessly while he paces in front of her.

ELEANOR

The night my mother died she knocked on the wall and I didn't come. Eleven years of looking in on her after every small noise, but that night... my back hurt... my hands...

(putting them
out of sight)

It wasn't fair; we couldn't have afforded a laundress. I ought to have brought her the medicine. I always did before, but this time she called me and I never answered.

(raising her voice)

Is that how a normal person acts?

MONTAGUE

(spinning around)

Yes!

(sitting beside her)

You were tired and disgusted - eleven years tired and disgusted. You're human. Stop trying to be either a saint or a martyr. You probably like thinking it was your fault.

ELEANOR

My sister says I wanted Mother
to die. I've wondered ever
since if I did wake up and hear
her and just went back to sleep.
It would have been easy, and
I've wondered about it.

MONTAGUE

You're not capable of that.
You're a fine person, Eleanor,
sensitive and honest and
thoroughly good.

Eleanor looks up at him with a glow on her face.

ELEANOR

Do you really think so, John?

MONTAGUE

I do indeed.

Eleanor drops her eyes and seems absorbed in rubbing her
arm.

ELEANOR

(with a self-
conscious laugh)

Goose bumps. There isn't by
any chance a cold spot in this
room too, is there?

MONTAGUE

(touched)

No, there isn't.

(starting to tell
her something that
is not easy)

Eleanor --

The harp SOUNDS. Montague turns toward it quickly.
Eleanor sighs.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*All I want is to be cherished
and here we are listening to that
ridiculous harp.*

The strange tremolo dies away leaving behind it unbroken
silence.

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

134 INT. PURPLE PARLOR - NIGHT - CLOSE SHOT - UP ANGLE ON
LUKE'S FACE

He leers down at CAMERA.

LUKE

Lust. Daughter preserve thyself.

135 INSERT - AN ILLUSTRATION

Lust, depicted by a woman, is undergoing hideously ingenious tortures at the hands of the devil.

LUKE'S VOICE (Over)

Hold apart from this world, that
its lusts corrupt thee not.

136 ANGLE ON LUKE

He stands over a very large black scrap book on a table, reading from it. Theo is curled up like a cat in a big arm chair near him.

LUKE

(reading)

Could you but hear for a moment,
the agony, the screaming...

137 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

Sitting at a table, she works over her notes. Upset, she stops writing.

LUKE'S VOICE

(continuing over)

... the dreadful crying out of
the lustful, damned for eternity
in everlasting flame.

Her glance moves nervously o.s.

138 WHAT SHE SEES

Tongues of flame lick at Montague. He is poking up the fire. ANGLE WIDENS as he turns.

MONTAGUE

What have you got there, Luke?

LUKE

I found it in the library. He
made it himself.

(turning back
some pages)

The title's been lettered in ink.

(MORE)

LUKE (cont'd)

(reading)

Memories for Abigail Lester
Crain, a Legacy for Her
Education and Enlightenment
from her Devoted Father, Hugh
Desmond Lester Crain: Hill
House, twenty-first June 1872.
Have a look.

Eleanor rises slowly. Montague and Theo move over toward
the book.

ELEANOR

But that's today.

MONTAGUE

(darting her
a glance)

Tomorrow - and ninety years
later.

They press around while Luke leafs through the pages.

LUKE

Some nursery book, huh?

139 INSERT - THE PAGE

The illustration shows a snake pit with vividly painted
snakes writhing and twisting over agonized sinners. The
moral lesson is written below.

THEO'S VOICE

(reading)

Honor the Authors of Thy Being.
Daughter, Thy Father and Thy
Mother.

140 TWO SHOT

Eleanor's eyes flick up to Theo who looks back just long
enough to make sure the innuendo hasn't been lost.

THEO

Just the thing to read to a child
every night before she goes to
bed. No family should be without
one.

Eleanor moves away, sickened, her face seething.

ELEANOR

I can see him now, leaning over her and spitting out the words so they take root in her little mind.

They look at her surprised by the shaking anger in her voice. She sweeps the room as though searching for someone.

ELEANOR

(continuing)

Hugh Crain, you were a dirty man and you made a dirty house - and if you can hear me from anywhere I am telling you to your face that I hope you spend eternity in that foul horrible book and never stop burning for a minute.

She makes a wild gesture around the room. There's a long uneasy pause, as the others, remembering where they are and whom she cursed, seem to be waiting for the answer. Then the coals in the fire fall with a little crash and Theo hurries over to Eleanor.

THEO

Don't be a bore, Nell.

(pushing back a strand of Eleanor's hair)

Now sit down and we'll --

ELEANOR

(drawing back)

Get away from me.

For an instant Theo's face is bleak with anger.

THEO

You are a bore.

Theo walks over to the big chair and curls up in it again. Eleanor pretends to return to her notes.

MONTAGUE

Close up that book, Luke. It's enough to set anyone's nerves on edge.

THEO

The book isn't what's making our Nell nervous. She's worried about her apartment.

Montague turns toward Eleanor with concern.

MONTAGUE

You should've told me. If I
can help in any way...

ELEANOR

(looking irritably
toward Theo)

She thinks she's being funny.

THEO

Tell us, dear Dr. Montague, are
you fond of stone lions; the
kind you keep on the mantel?

ELEANOR

(getting to
her feet)

Shut up, Theo.

THEO

(to Montague with
angelic innocence)

Have you been longing for a
tiny home, something smaller,
of course, than Hill House?

(to Eleanor)

There's room enough for two,
isn't there, Nell?

ELEANOR

(very low)

You're a monster, Theo. You,
you're the monster of Hill
House.

She turns blindly and rushes from the room. Theo shrugs.

MONTAGUE

(in a hard voice)

You'd better go upstairs with
her.

THEO

(purring)

Wouldn't you rather?

Montague pulls her from the chair.

MONTAGUE

I said go with her. She
shouldn't be in that room alone.

Surprised at his violence, Theo obediently goes.

CUT TO:

141 EXT. VERANDA - NIGHT

Eleanor walks up and down, agitatedly smoking a cigarette.
Theo comes out the front door.

THEO
(irritably)
Here you are. Okay, Isolde,
Tristan wants you inside.

ELEANOR
Leave me alone.

THEO
Stop trying to be the center
of attention.
(taking her arm)
Come inside.

ELEANOR
(shaking her off)
You revolt me.

She moves away down the veranda.

THEO
(following her)
Can't you take a joke? I
didn't know you were serious
about Montague.

ELEANOR
Of course you did.

THEO
All right. But he shouldn't be
allowed to get away with it.

ELEANOR
Get away with what?

THEO
You're making a fool of yourself
over him.

ELEANOR
Suppose I'm not, though? You'd
mind terribly if you turned out
to be wrong for once, wouldn't
you?

THEO
You poor, stupid innocent.

ELEANOR
I'd rather be innocent than like
you.

THEO

Meaning?

ELEANOR

Now who's being stupid and innocent. You know perfectly well what I mean.

THEO

Is this another of your crazy hallucinations?

ELEANOR

(angrily)

I'm not crazy, darn you.

THEO

Crazy as a loon. How can you expect anyone to believe you're sane, but the rest of the world is mad?

Eleanor turns on her, exploding.

ELEANOR

Why not? The world is full of inconsistencies, unnatural things; nature's mistakes, they're called -- you, for instance!

Theo's head whips around as though she's been slapped. Simultaneously, a glaring white light floods onto the veranda.

142 FULL SHOT ON A CAR

coming up the driveway. It stops. Then GRACE MONTAGUE emerges from the local taxi, and walks to the veranda. She's a spruce, well-turned out woman in her thirties with an orderly mind and practical nature. Montague and Luke come hurrying from the house.

MONTAGUE

Grace...?

GRACE

A reporter's been phoning the house all day. He's on your track. He's heard about your renting this place.

MONTAGUE

How? Who told him?

LUKE

The Dudleys, I bet. They
must've blabbed in town.

GRACE

Come back with me now, John,
please. If they find out why
you're here the papers will have
a field day with you.

Theo and Eleanor have been approaching silently, Theo
amused, and Eleanor in dismay. Now Eleanor steps
uncertainly over to Grace.

ELEANOR

Who are you?

GRACE

Grace Montague.
(a beat;
then quietly)
Didn't John tell you he's
married?

Eleanor starts to blink, shakes her head, and turns away.

THEO

(smugly)
I tried to warn you.

GRACE

(facing them)
Who are you?

LUKE

(grandly)
We are researchers in the field
of psychic phenomena.

MONTAGUE

Grace, please go. You couldn't
have arrived at a worse time.

The cab HONKS impatiently.

GRACE

Stop this insanity and come
home, I beg you.

MONTAGUE

I can't. Not now. I'm
convinced we're on the verge of
a break-through.

She sighs resignedly, then goes quickly to the cab.

GRACE

(paying)

I won't be needing you any more tonight, driver.

The cab takes off like a shot.

143 CLOSE ON ELEANOR

standing alone by the rail.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

But I had to come. I had to. I've waited such a long time. I've earned my happiness.

144 ANGLE ON GRACE

She returns to Montague.

GRACE

I'm not leaving until you get some sense and leave with me. I hope no one minds if I join the ghost-hunt.

MONTAGUE

(wearily)

You'll stay in my room.

GRACE

I'll be disappointed if I don't see a ghost, John. Hadn't you better put me in the ghastly dungeon, or the mysterious secret chamber?

MONTAGUE

(with finality)

There are no dungeons, no secret chambers in Hill House - in fact, nothing romantic at all. It's a deadly serious place.

GRACE

Not even a treasure buried in the cellar?

She clucks.

ELEANOR

(blurting it out)

There's the nursery -

MONTAGUE

Eleanor!

GRACE

Thank you, my dear. The nursery it is.

She walks to the front door. Still gaping at Eleanor, Luke holds the door open for Grace.

MONTAGUE

(hurrying after her)

Grace...

Luke and Theo follow them inside.

145 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

She appears lost, dazed. Then she realizes what she's said and runs into the house.

CUT TO:

146 INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT - FULL SHOT

Montague argues with his wife on the stairs.

MONTAGUE

Grace, you must listen to me. Certain things have happened here --

ELEANOR

(catching up to the group)

Please, Mrs. Montague. Don't sleep in the nursery. I didn't realize what I was saying.

GRACE

You insult my intelligence. You don't think I believe anything you ghost-hunters might tell me.

MONTAGUE

You still shouldn't sleep in that room. It hasn't been opened since we arrived.

LUKE

(over his shoulder)

I agree with you about the spook bit, Mrs. M., but it's true, the air might be bad.

THEO
 (mischievously)
 Poisonous.

Grace shoots her a poisonous glance. Montague stops on the landing, suddenly calm, and smiles with relief.

MONTAGUE
 No problem. Just remembered I don't have a key to the nursery and the Dudleys have gone for the night.
 (frowning)
 Incidentally, how'd you get through the gate?

GRACE
 Very supernatural. With a key. Your Mr. Dudley is quite human, I assure you, and not averse to a five dollar bill.

Luke stands at the top of the stairs, and points down the hall.

LUKE
 Look!

147 ZOOM IN ON NURSERY DOORS

wide open, the room a dark pool behind them.

148 LOW ANGLE DOWN THE HALL

Grace moves INTO CAMERA, glancing from the group behind her to the room ahead.

GRACE
 From your expressions, that,
 I gather, is the dreaded nursery.

She reacts to the frigid air as she crosses the cold spot and stops.

GRACE
 As for the bad air, it's just the opposite. There seems to be a draft.

She goes o.s. PAST CAMERA into the room. The others hang back an instant, then, led by Montague, follow her inside.

149 INT. NURSERY - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

As Montague switches on the light they stand in the center of the room, looking around. The nursery is bigger than the bedrooms, dark, with a frieze of distorted nursery animals. There is an atmosphere of neglect found nowhere else in Hill House. Having been converted for the use of an invalid, it is furnished with a combination of children's things and old fashioned sick-room comforts.

GRACE

Now I know who your fiend of Hill House is -- the interior decorator.

THEO

(rubbing her finger
along the woodwork)
Evidently Mrs. Dudley doesn't get in here very often.

LUKE

I can't see it's so different from the rest of the house.

Instinctively Eleanor fluffs the pillow on the invalid's chair and straightens the lap robe.

MONTAGUE

(sniffing)
No good, Grace. The air is stale.

By way of an answer, Grace opens a window.

LUKE

There's only one way to argue with a lady, Doc. Grab your hat and run.
(leaving)
Goodnight. Sleep tight.

Eleanor appears increasingly withdrawn. Theo takes her by the arm.

THEO

(fluffing the
invalid's pillow
again)
My mother --

She stops, smiles vaguely and goes with Theo. Montague remains, pleading urgently with his wife.

MONTAGUE

Grace, this room is the cold,
rotten heart of the house.
Since you're being so foolish,
I'll stay here with you, but
you must not stay in this room
alone tonight.

GRACE

For years now this supernatural
nonsense has stood between us.
I love you, John, but I can't
go on watching you waste your
life. If there is such a thing
as a haunted house, this is my
chance to find out.

MONTAGUE

(sardonically)

All right ... all right.

He walks from the room, but turns as she starts to close
the door.

MONTAGUE

At least leave the door open.

GRACE

I'm from Missouri.

She winks and closes the door.

CUT TO:

150 INT. BLUE ROOM - CLOSE UP - ELEANOR - NIGHT

lost in thought.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*What if he does have a wife? I
still have a place in this house.
I belong.*

151 LONG SHOT AT DOOR

One side of FRAME shows half Eleanor's face staring
vacantly INTO CAMERA. In b.g. Theo opens the door for
Montague who has evidently knocked. He talks urgently
at both girls. All we hear are Eleanor's thoughts which
continue over:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I want to stay here. It's the only
time anything's ever happened to me.
He can't make me leave, not if Hill
House means me to stay.*

(Montague talks to Theo at the door)

MONTAGUE

I don't want anyone else to stay on this floor tonight. Take a blanket and come down to the purple parlor. Got that, Eleanor?

No response.

THEO

She's in a daze.

MONTAGUE

I don't like it. Luke and I will take turns up here and keep an eye on things. Something's going to happen.

THEO

Something has happened to Nell.

MONTAGUE

She shouldn't be staying here at all. I don't like it. Okay, hurry up and get her downstairs.

In b.g. Montague turns and leaves. Theo approaches Eleanor talking to her:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

Go away, Eleanor, go away, we don't want you anymore. You can't stay: but I can, I can. He doesn't make the rules around here.

Now she hears her name called, hears it both inside and outside her head, sharp and loud:

THEO'S VOICE

Nell!

Theo confronts her.

THEO

I'm talking to you!

ELEANOR

I'm sorry.

THEO

What's the matter with you?
Didn't you hear Montague?

Eleanor smiles apologetically.

THEO

(continues)

He doesn't want us to stay here. He wants us to spend the night downstairs in the parlor. He and Luke will take turns watching on this floor.

Theo pulls the quilt from the bed and goes to the door where she waits for Eleanor.

THEO

(irritably)

Nell! For Pete's sake, snap out of it. Come on.

She turns off the light. Eleanor follows her out. The room falls into silence. CAMERA SLOWLY CLOSES ON the wall where we can discern, faintly in the moonlight, the outline of the half-human head.

DISSOLVE TO:

152 INT. THE PURPLE PARLOR - CLOSE ON THE FIREPLACE - NIGHT

The coals flicker feebly in the grate. CAMERA PULLS BACK, for a WIDE, WIDE ANGLE on the room.

Eleanor and Theo are bedded down under the quilt. Montague dozes with his head in his arms at the table. A flashlight beam prowls into the room. We see dimly that the flashlight is held by Luke. He's looking for something. The light picks out a bottle on the mantelpiece. He lifts the Scotch and takes a long slug. Thus fortified he has the courage to take another slug. Suddenly, the door behind him swings wide and CRASHES SHUT.

153 FLASH - LUKE

whirling, bottle to his lips.

154 FLASH - MONTAGUE

his head snapping up.

155 FLASH - ELEANOR AND THEO

jolting to a sitting position.

156 STRAIGHT DOWN FULL SHOT ON ROOM

including all four walls. They hold still, waiting, listening in the churning SILENCE to something they hear with the mind's ear. And then we begin to hear it too -- the slow rushing movements outside as though a steady wind were blowing the length of the hall. Theo clings to Eleanor. Glancing at one another, they try to look courageous under the coming of the unreal cold. Eleanor takes up the quilt and wraps it around them. Now through the NOISE of the wind, the KNOCKING on the doors in the hall begins. Montague goes cautiously to the door. Luke comes up beside him, lacing himself with Scotch.

MONTAGUE

(low, angry)

Why aren't you upstairs?

LUKE

It's nowhere near the nursery.
It's down here.

The CRASHING SOUND starts, and Luke puts his hand out to stop Montague from opening the door.

157 TWO SHOT - ELEANOR AND THEO

Theo looks at Eleanor for encouragement.

THEO
 (her voice shaking)
 Seems we've been on this kick
 before.

ELEANOR
 (bravely)
 Next summer, I must really go
 somewhere else.

158 CLOSE ON MONTAGUE

alertly keeping his eyes on the door.

MONTAGUE
 (grimly)
 At a lake you get mosquitoes.
 The CRASHING echoes along the hall and Montague tenses.

159 CLOSE ON ELEANOR

She gets to her knees, doubled over in fear.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*It knows my name. This time it knows
 my name.*

160 CLOSE ON MONTAGUE

He shakes his head as the CRASHING gets louder.

MONTAGUE
 I'll have to go out there.

161 ANGLE ON ELEANOR

She throws him a frightened look.

ELEANOR
 No!
 (running over to him)
 It hasn't hurt me. Why should
 it hurt her?

MONTAGUE
 She might try to do
 something about it.

Suddenly SILENCE. Montague puts his hand on the door knob. Luke gets a grip on his bottle. If necessary he'll slug Montague to keep him from opening the door. Her face white, Eleanor turns INTO CAMERA.

ELEANOR
 (voice trembling)
 Is it over, Theo; is it?

162 CLOSE ON THEO

hugging the blanket around her, chattering with cold.

THEO
 No. I'm so cold. It's going
 to start everything all over
 again.

163 STRAIGHT DOWN SHOT ON ROOM

The NOISE of the next attack on the door hits with such
 fury the three of them seem forced back by the concussion.

ELEANOR
 (whispering)
 It can't get in. It can't get
 in, don't let it get in.

Abruptly the door is quiet. The door knob rattles under
 a little caressing touch. Montague steps close to the
 door again, pressing his head against it, listening.
 Luke grips his arm to keep him inside, and holds the
 bottle in readiness. Now the door is attacked without a
 sound, seeming almost to be pulling away from its hinges,
 ready to buckle and go down.

164 CLOSE UP - LUKE

unmanned, staring.

165 CLOSE SHOT - THE BOTTLE

sliding, unnoticed, from his hand to the floor.

166 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR'S EYES

darting around, for an avenue of escape.

ELEANOR
 (whispering)
 Oh, God, it knows I'm here.

167 ANGLE PAST THEM ON DOOR

Luke gestures furiously for her to be quiet. Once more
 there is the slow rushing SOUND of wind in the hall and
 then another SOUND from above.

Their heads instantly tilt upwards. It is a SOUND of swift movement, like an animal pacing back and forth with unbelievable impatience. Eleanor presses her hands to her eyes.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

It will go on and on and come back again until it finds me; on and on and on until it finds me.

MONTAGUE

(straining his head upwards)

Upstairs...

The pounding now SOUNDS from the end of the hall above.

MONTAGUE

(locating the sound)

It's at the nursery.

Montague puts his hand on the knob.

LUKE

(stopping him)

Don't be crazy.

MONTAGUE

(pushing his hands away)

I'm going up there.

LUKE

We'll all be in danger.

ELEANOR

(pulling at Luke)

We have to, Luke. She's there.

LUKE

(barring the way)

No. Don't open this door.

Montague tries to push him out of the way and they struggle.

MONTAGUE

Cut it out, Luke.

Eleanor is wedged between them and the door. They wrestle around in front of her. She bounces forward a little with each crash from upstairs.

168 ODD ANGLE CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

her head back, eyes closed.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*I'll come, I'll come. Whatever it
 wants of me it can have.*

169 HEAD CLOSE UP - THEO

horrified.

THEO
 Nell!

170 THEO'S POV

A frozen instant: the open door with a roaring blackness beyond, Luke and Montague staring at it, still in each other's grip. Then Montague flings Luke off and plunges after Eleanor.

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

171 BLACKNESS

A pitch dark corridor and Eleanor rushing INTO CAMERA, a greatly amplified seashell-like roaring all around her. Her eyes widen in fear. She throws a hand in front of her face and veers off.

172 FLASH - A BULL'S-EYE MIRROR

on the wall, glinting with dark reflections and seeming to be a face where it has become unsilvered with age.

173 INSERT - ELEANOR'S HANDS

gripped white around a door knob, twisting (it won't turn), pushing and pulling (the door won't budge).

174 FULL ON ELEANOR

She leans forward, putting out her hand to brace herself as the wall leans forward.

175 CLOSER

She turns sideways as the door turns sideways. It swings open and she reels inside. The door sways, bangs shut.

176 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

engulfed, struggling in streaming white muslin.

177 FLASH - A BROWN CLAW

178 LOW ANGLE ON ELEANOR

She fights off a curtain billowing wildly from the window. A table beside her has claws for legs. The other curtain dashes against the other side of the window.

She is in the MUSIC ROOM. She gets a grip on the curtain, wrenches it violently. Rod and all, it comes down with a crash, an UNENDING CRASH that carried over to:

179 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

awed, staring down, the SOUND of the crash going on and on.

180 HER POV - LONG DOWNSHOT ON HERSELF

standing far below in the room that now shivers and shakes, the great chandelier swaying, pictures tumbling from the wall, and the NOISE of breaking glass, cracking timbers, echoing everywhere.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*The house is coming down around me.
The house is destroying itself.*

181 CLOSE ON ELEANOR - CAMERA MOVING IN

Her head goes back, teeth clenched, eyes closing.

182 MOVING CLOSE SHOT ON HER FEET

running, running.

183 STAIRS

sliding by underfoot.

184 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

racing up the stairs. Somewhere there is a great shaking SOUND as some huge thing goes headlong into the nursery.

ELEANOR

(aloud)

God Almighty, it's in the
nursery!

And with the SOUND of her VOICE CAMERA TILTS CRAZILY and
her eyes side way over.

185 POV - THE MAIN HALL

at a violently COCKED ANGLE below.

186 EYE CLOSE UP

her eyes diagonally across FRAME staring INTO CAMERA.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

The house is trying to stop me.

187 SLANTED ANGLE ON ELEANOR

The stairs are on a steep slant. Eleanor hauls herself
the rest of the way by the bannister. She reaches the
top landing and turns o.s.

188 FLASH - THE DOUBLE NURSERY DOORS

cracked open a few inches, swaying a little.

189 HEAD ON SHOT - ELEANOR

She comes running full tilt INTO CAMERA. CAMERA PIVOTS
SWIFTLY to catch her slamming through the doors.

190 BIG CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

On her face a look of blank astonishment. Then she begins
slowly to turn, her gaze making a full circle of the room.
When she comes around again, she stops, staring transfixed
into CAMERA. Her mouth trembles and she calls quaveringly,
scarcely audible, a tiny, tiny sound:

ELEANOR

Mrs. Montague...

191 FULL DOWN SHOT ON ROOM

Eleanor standing in the middle of it. There is NOTHING...
absolutely nothing -- no sign of Grace, no evidence of a
struggle, not one thing out of place.

192 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

a piteous look on her face.

ELEANOR

Please, please... Mrs. Montague.

193 ANOTHER ANGLE

Montague comes running into the room.

MONTAGUE

Grace, are you --
(gaping)
Where is she?

Eleanor goes up to him, tries to speak, but all she can do is put her head down and shake it.

MONTAGUE

(gripping her
shoulders)
Eleanor, where is she? What'd
you see?

ELEANOR

(wrenching away,
trying to hold
herself this side
of sanity)
Nothing, nothing. She...she...
wasn't...here!

Montague stares at her. Luke and Theo come hurrying in.

LUKE

What happened?

MONTAGUE

Gone!

THEO

Where? How?

LUKE

(in a long-drawn-
out whisper)
Good God.

THEO

(shrilly)
Montague, if this is your idea
of a joke, if this is what living
in a haunted house does to your
sense of humor --

(Lines as Montague, Luke and
Theo search the room)

MONTAGUE (cont'd)
... tear the place apart.

LUKE
Now wait a minute. It's against
your lease to do any damage.
You can't tamper with the house
itself.

MONTAGUE
If we don't find her, the police
will be around quick enough and
they'll tamper plenty.

THEO
(checking the closet)
I'd say call the cops right now
if I didn't think they'd send us
to the booby-hatch instead of
jail.

LUKE
(looking under
the bed)
She's gotta be around somewhere.
Maybe she's just trying to give
us a thrill.

MONTAGUE
(checking outside
the window)
And all the other stuff, was
that Grace trying to give us a
thrill?

MONTAGUE

Shut up.

(turning)

We'll start with this room...
plank by plank...

His voice takes on a peculiar timbre and starts to fade.

MONTAGUE

(continues)

...and then the whole house.
Even if we have to...

194 FULL SHOT PAST ELEANOR

She stays in FOCUS, large in foreground, but everything around her starts to blur, Montague's VOICE fading simultaneously on the speech above. We HEAR Luke's, Theo's and Montague's voices dimly, a kind of toneless, unintelligible scrambled speech, and see them vaguely as muffled shapes in a grey blur.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(over the above)

*I am coming apart a little at a
time...*

She turns and starts to walk through the blurred room.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*...a little at a time. Now I know
where I am going.*

CAMERA GOES WITH HER, CLOSING steadily on her face, then her eyes, DEEPER, DEEPER until we are in BLACKNESS. Over we HEAR the shuddering whisper of:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I am disappearing inch by inch into
this house.*

OUT OF THE BLACKNESS CUT TO:

195 INT. CONSERVATORY - NIGHT - HEAD CLOSE UP - HUGH CRAIN

leaning INTO CAMERA, his marble eyes glinting.

196 REVERSE DOWN SHOT

including the huge statue and Eleanor looking up at it.
She smiles secretively.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*We killed her, you and I, Hugh Crain.
You and I ... you and I*

She dances gravely before Hugh Crain, who watches her, gleaming.

CUT TO:

197 MOVING SHOT - MONTAGUE

Pulling open a closet door, searching desperately for Grace, thrusting aside the clothes, some of which fall.

198 INT. GREEN ROOM - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

Luke and Theo are also in the room looking for Grace.

THEO

Hey, those are our clothes.

MONTAGUE

(snapping)

Never mind the clothes. Grace has got to be found.

THEO

(exploding)

You find her. She's your wife. I'm clearing out -- now. I'm taking Nell and --

MONTAGUE

(sudden dread)

Eleanor! Where is Eleanor?

STRAIGHT CUT TO:

199 EXT. VERANDA - MOVING SHOT ON ELEANOR - NIGHT

dancing soundlessly along the veranda.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

I want to stay here. I want to stay here always.

She stops and looks up with her back against the rail, smiles, nodding agreement.

200 POV - THE TOWER - UP ANGLE

moonlight highlighting the slanted roof, the spire.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(over)

*I will not be frightened or alone
any more.*

CUT TO:

201 INT. THE PURPLE PARLOR - NIGHT

The scrapbook, opened to an ugly picture, lies on the table, firelight flickering across it. From o.s.:

LUKE'S VOICE

Eleanor? Eleanor?

202 INT. MUSIC ROOM - NIGHT

A small lamp is switched on o.s. and instantly the enormous shadow of the harp jumps onto the wall.

MONTAGUE'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Eleanor? Has anyone checked
outside?

203 INT. MAIN HALL - NIGHT - ANGLE ON A DARK SHAPE

pressed into a dark corner near the stairs.

VOICES

(echoing through
the house)

Eleanor? ... Nell! ... Please,
Eleanor, where are you?

FOOTSTEPS on the stairs. The dark shape moves, becoming Eleanor, darting across the hall, and, without stopping, into the library.

204 INT. LIBRARY - FULL SHOT - NIGHT

Eleanor is well inside before she realizes where she is. She comes to an awed standstill.

205 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

slowly turning for a 360° view of the room.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*Here I am. Here I am inside. It's
not cold at all and the smell is
gone.*

206 RISING SPIRAL SHOT

The CAMERA GOING ROUND AND ROUND the iron stairway that curves upwards into the tower.

207 DOWN ANGLE ON ELEANOR

dancing in circles to the stairway.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I have broken the spell of Hill House.
I am home. I am home.*

She stops at the foot of the steps and gazes up.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

No stone lions for me. I am home.

208 UP ANGLE LONG SHOT TO THE BALCONY

far, far away; far away as heaven.

209 CLOSE MOVING SHOT ON HER FEET

lifting slowly to the first step, going caressingly to the second, the third, mounting steadily now. Over her feet SUPERIMPOSE A SEQUENCE OF SHOTS that epitomizes her Hill House adventure: the ribbon of white road winding into the green hills at the turn off onto Route 38; the front door that first day, with the child's-face iron knocker on it, swinging open to reveal Mrs. Dudley. Now the images come quicker: her first sight of Montague, the tower against the sky, the gargoyles over the cold spot, the handwriting on the wall, the harp, the scrapbook, and finally Grace emerging from the dab -- the MUSIC building to a pitch -- then suddenly cutting OFF, as, in the CLEAR we go to:

210 FLASH - ELEANOR'S FEET

stumbling.

211 A WILD SWIFT MONTAGE

THRU
214

The stone floor where the walls should be, the ceiling swaying and tilted to one side, the hand rail wavering under her grip, and Eleanor's face, eyes closed, awaiting the fatal plunge.

215 FULL SHOT - ELEANOR

thrown to the stairway as it rocks against the wall and sends great CLANGING reverberations through the tower. She presses her head against the metal and passively submits to the buffeting until it stops.

216 POV - THE DIZZYING DROP

217 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

She opens her eyes, smiles knowingly, pulls herself to her feet, and continues up the stairs.

218 POV - THE BALCONY

her destination; closer, closer.

219 LOW ANGLE PAST HER FEET

toward a stairway support dangerously loose in the wall.

MONTAGUE'S VOICE

Eleanor!

Her feet stop opposite the precarious support.

220 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

holding her eyes rigidly toward the balcony.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I will not look back because then
they will know what I am thinking.*

221 LONG DOWN SHOT TO THE STONE FLOOR

Montague, Luke and Theo stand there watching her fearfully. They seem very small and ineffectual. Montague's VOICE floats upward, distant but urgent.

MONTAGUE

Eleanor, turn around and come down. Be very, very careful. Now come down.

222 CLOSE ON ELEANOR

now turning to look back serenely.

223 THREE SHOT - MONTAGUE, LUKE AND THEO

under enormous tension.

THEO
(breaking)
Eleanor, for God's sake --

Montague's hand shoots out to silence her.

224 ANGLE ON ELEANOR

dispassionately turning her head away from them.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
All that is gone and left behind.

She continues her calm ascent to the balcony.

225 THREE SHOT - FAVORING MONTAGUE

He springs toward the stairway. Luke grabs his arm.

LUKE
Don't try it. The thing is
rotted away from the wall.

THEO
It can't possibly hold both of
you.

226 ANGLE ON ELEANOR

climbing, not far from the balcony now. Suddenly the
stairs begin to sway again and she stops, gripping the
rail. She turns and looks down, her eyes vacant.

227 POV - ON MONTAGUE

halted on the swaying stairway.

MONTAGUE
(quietly)
Just turn around, Eleanor. Keep
hold of the rail, and start down
slowly.

228 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

Her eyes go from him to the balcony ahead, measuring
the distance.

229 ANGLE ON ELEANOR

SHOOTING through the open spaces between the steps. She flickers light and dark as she scrambles in a sudden sprint the rest of the way to the balcony.

230 HEAD-ON SHOT - MONTAGUE

He keeps coming grimly, the stairs swaying violently and clanking against the wall. As his face looms INTO CLOSE UP he unclenches his teeth and says softly:

MONTAGUE

Stand still. Don't move.

231 FULL SHOT - ELEANOR

poised on the narrow balcony, gripping the rail, looking down.

232 STRAIGHT DOWN SHOT - TO LUKE AND THEO

a long way down, their faces upturned.

LUKE

(angrily)

Stay perfectly still, you little fool.

THEO

Nell, do what they say, please.

233 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR

her eyes glazed. Montague's VOICE sounds so close this time it sends her head whipping around.

MONTAGUE'S VOICE

(soothingly)

Eleanor, don't be frightened.

234 ANGLE ON MONTAGUE

head and shoulders at the level of the balcony. He hangs onto the railing, unable to come any farther because the stairs are swaying too violently. She backs away to the end of the balcony, grips the rail behind her. He rises the rest of the way and hesitates, only a step from the balcony.

MONTAGUE

I'm coming on the platform,
Eleanor. Hang on.

He takes a cautious step onto the balcony. She deliberately releases her grip on the rail and brings her hands in front of her. He stops where he is. His face is wet.

MONTAGUE

(gently)

Come along.

She pushes back, into the rail, actually arching over it. Even if she doesn't jump, she will fall. He stretches out his hand with infinite patience until it is an inch from her face. Her eyes side to it, and she half turns, preparing to jump. His hand is close enough to grab her shoulder, but he doesn't. He simply strokes her cheek with two fingers, a small gesture of affection, and smiles.

235 CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

Her eyes waver. She lays her hand wonderingly on his fingers. A long, long moment. Then she smiles back thinly.

236 CLOSE UP - MONTAGUE

immense relief.

237 CLOSE TWO SHOT

He places her hand on the rail, holds her other. He turns to lead her down. The iron stairway shakes and groans under his first step. Another small, strangulated SOUND, which he does not hear, makes Eleanor glance up.

SHOCK CUT TO:

238 A FACE

wild-looking, frightful, distorted, a hideous creature from another world. It is GRACE MONTAGUE, her clothes matted and stained, staring down like a death's-head from the trap door over the balcony.

239 BIG CLOSE UP - ELEANOR

fear-crazed, screaming, SCREAMING the house down.

BLACKOUT

FADE IN:

240 INT. THE BLUE ROOM - NIGHT

In CLOSE, we see a ghostly garment fluttering across the room. As the CAMERA PULLS BACK we realize it is only Eleanor's nightgown being carried by Theo across the room and packed in Eleanor's suitcase which lies open on the bed.

Eleanor stands staring out the window, watched by Montague who shows the strain of the night's events that have culminated in his wife's disappearance. Miserably he runs his hand across his eyes.

MONTAGUE

Are you sure, Eleanor?

Eleanor turns to him.

ELEANOR

It was Grace. Just before I fainted I looked up and there she was above the trap door.

Montague makes a helpless gesture.

THEO

(casually)

What's more, she's still around.

ELEANOR

(emphatically)

She's joined the house - she's become one of them.

MONTAGUE

Eleanor!

ELEANOR

(defiantly)

That's what the house wants, isn't it?

(faltering)

Only...only I hoped it would take me.

MONTAGUE

And that's why you are leaving right now.

ELEANOR

But I can't leave now.

Luke comes into the room.

LUKE

I've brought her car round front. Ready?

THEO

She's all packed. Take the suitcase, Luke.

Luke lifts the suitcase from the bed.

ELEANOR

I can't leave, I tell you.

MONTAGUE

I can't take any more chances. I know now what a terrible thing I was asking of you all. You're leaving as fast as you can and then we'll find Grace or -- or go to the police.

ELEANOR

It isn't fair. I am the one who is supposed to stay here. She's taken my place.

MONTAGUE

(firmly)

Come along, Eleanor. Luke will see you get there safely.

ELEANOR

Get where?

(smiling)

Get where?

MONTAGUE

Why home, of course.

THEO

To your own little apartment where all your things are.

ELEANOR

I haven't any home. I made it up. No apartment, no things. Everything in all the world that belongs to me is in a carton in my car.

(regarding them
hopefully)

So you see there's no place you can send me. I have to stay here.

MONTAGUE

(puzzled)

You lived somewhere before you came to Hill House. You had an address where I wrote you.

ELEANOR

My sister's. I sleep on a couch in the living room. I'd be much happier here. I can't go back to my sister's.

MONTAGUE

Yes, you can, and immediately.

ELEANOR

(urgently to Theo)

Take me home with you, Theo. I'll get a job, I won't be in your way.

THEO

(laughing)

Nellie, my Nell, you're the limit. I'm not in the habit of taking home stray cats.

ELEANOR

I am a kind of stray cat, aren't I? Maybe that's the trouble with this house. It's full of stray cats. Was your wife a stray cat, John?

Deeply disturbed, Montague takes her by the arm and steers her from the room.

MONTAGUE

Please. We have a lot to do. You must go now.

241 INT. CORRIDOR, STAIRCASE AND FRONT HALL - NIGHT

They go down the polished hallway toward the staircase descending into darkness.

ELEANOR

This is a mistake. Don't you understand? - the house wants me. Grace can't satisfy it. No one else can.

MONTAGUE

Forget everything about this house as soon as you can.

Eleanor stops on the staircase and sweeps her eyes back along the upper hall past the closed doors.

ELEANOR

I'm not afraid. I'm fine now.
I was happy here. I don't think
Grace will be.

LUKE

(staring at her)

The way she talks, I swear I
expect to see Grace turn up
any minute in a sheet rattling
her chains.

THEO

(slanting her eyes
around)

Nell is right though. One way
or another, Grace is around
somewhere.

Montague hurries across the dim hallway and pulls open one of the great double doors.

MONTAGUE

Please, Eleanor. There's no
time to waste.

Eleanor hesitates in front of the door, turning around to stare into the deep shadows.

ELEANOR

Let me stay. I'm the only one
who can call Grace back.

Luke hurries past her.

LUKE

I want to be a long way from
here when it happens.

Montague, followed by Theo, escorts Eleanor outside.

MONTAGUE

I was so wrong. There are some
things we shouldn't meddle in.

He pulls the door shut behind them.

242 EXT. THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Luke puts Eleanor's suitcase on the back seat of the Hillman next to her carton. Montague leads her down the veranda steps to the car.

ELEANOR

It's the only time anything's
ever happened to me. I liked it.

MONTAGUE

That's why you're leaving in
such a hurry.

Eleanor stares up at the house. The windows, blind eyes
in the night, look sightlessly down on her. Theo remains
on the veranda.

ELEANOR

I am the one it really wants.
(closing her eyes)
Can't you feel it? It's alive...
watching... waiting ... waiting
for me.

Unobserved by any of them, the front door silently opens.
An eddy of wind sweeps along the veranda stirring Theo's
dress. Theo huddles her arms about herself.

ELEANOR

(opening her eyes)
I won't go away.

MONTAGUE

(impatient at last)
You will go away. Right now.

He helps her into the car. She slides over quickly behind
the driver's seat pre-empting the place Luke was about to
take.

LUKE

Hey....

ELEANOR

I'll drive. It's my car -- at
least half mine.

Luke looks questioningly to Montague. The house stares
down, arrogant, patient, waiting.

MONTAGUE

All right. Let her. I can't
stand here arguing.

Luke comes around to get in the other side. Through
the open car window, Eleanor offers her hand to Montague.

ELEANOR

Thank you for rescuing me in
the library. That was wrong of
me, I know, but I'm all right
now, honestly.

MONTAGUE
 (shaking his head)
 I'm sorry. I'm terribly sorry,
 really. Goodbye.

Luke gets in beside her and closes the door.

LUKE
 Let's get moving.

Eleanor starts the car, then, instead of releasing the hand-brake, leans from the window.

ELEANOR
 Theo...

Theo runs down the veranda steps to her.

THEO
 I thought you weren't going to say goodbye to me. Oh, Nellie, my Nell -- be happy; please be happy. Things will be all right again. I'm sure Grace is here. We'll find her. So don't worry.

ELEANOR
 She has my place. It isn't fair.

MONTAGUE
 (firmly)
 Goodbye, Eleanor.
 (softening)
 I'll write you. Drive carefully.

ELEANOR
 Goodbye, goodbye.
 (her eyes on
 the house)
 Who do I thank for a lovely time?

As she goes to release the safety brake, Luke stops her.

LUKE
 Hold it.
 (steps from car,
 leaving door open)
 Montague, the key.

243 ANGLE PAST ELEANOR

Luke hurries up to Montague who turns at the veranda steps.

MONTAGUE
Key?

LUKE
To the gate.

MONTAGUE
(going through
his pockets)
Yes, yes, of course.

244 CLOSE ON ELEANOR

She looks off and smiles.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*What fools they are. The house
tricks them so easily.*
(releasing brake
below FRAME)
*Just by telling me to go away, they
can't make me leave.*

245 MOVING SHOT THROUGH WINDSHIELD

Evidently the car has begun to move.

ELEANOR'S VOICE
*They can't shut me out. Not if
Hill House means me to stay.*

246 EXT. HILL HOUSE - NIGHT

Theo steps forward in dismay.

THEO
Nell!

Montague and Luke whirl.

MONTAGUE
Eleanor, no!

LUKE
Wait!

Montague starts to run.

247 FULL SHOT ON CAR

heading down the driveway and picking up speed.

248 INT. CAR - NIGHT (PROCESS)

Eleanor stares vacantly ahead, scarcely holding the wheel as though something else were guiding the car.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*So now I am going. But I won't go.
Hill House belongs to me.*

The wheel seems to wrench under her hands and she quickly straightens it. It wrenches again and she straightens it.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*I knew it. I knew it. Hill House
doesn't want me to go.*

249 LONG DOWN SHOT ON CAR - FROM POV OF HILL HOUSE

The car steers an erratic course down the driveway.

250 INT. CAR - NIGHT (PROCESS)

Eleanor seems to be fighting desperately to keep the wheel straight.

ELEANOR

*No. Stop it, please. What are
you doing?*

251 ANGLE PAST ELEANOR THROUGH WINDSHIELD

The driveway veers crazily before her. Just as the car is about to hit a tree, she forces the wheel over.

ELEANOR

Let go. What are you doing?

252 FLASH - TWO WINDOWS OF HILL HOUSE

shining maliciously in the dark as they watch the struggle

253 CLOSE SHOT - ELEANOR'S EYES

panicky, incredulous.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

*This is awful. Why don't they stop
me? Can't they see what is happening?
But it's happening to you, Eleanor.*

254 CLOSE ON ELEANOR

She stops struggling with the wheel, relaxes, and lifts her hands from it.

ELEANOR'S VOICE

(awed)

Yes... Something at last is really really really happening to me.

The wheel twists heading the car directly at the great tree at the curve of the driveway. Perhaps it is the headlight but the tree, as seen through the windshield, rises white and ghostly against the night.

And something whiter than the white tree stands beside it. In the unending second before the car hurls itself into the tree, we see, looming before us, the terrifying, dehumanized face of Grace Montague.

Eleanor flings her hands before her face, screaming:

ELEANOR

No!

Then there is the impact of the CRASH and Eleanor is obliterated in a chaotic MONTAGE of white trees and lawn tilted sideways, the sky and stars upside down, the rocking tower of Hill House, the staring windows, jagged fragments of windshield, car wheels spinning in air.

255 FULL SHOT ON CAR

demolished against the tree. Montague, Luke, and Theo race toward the wreck.

Eleanor's legs and body lie sprawled half-out the unhinged door.

The first to arrive, Montague bends o.s. into the front seat where he examines Eleanor. Theo takes a quick look and turns away.

Montague withdraws slowly and turns to face them, anguish on his face.

MONTAGUE

He's dead.

At the SOUND of a low moan behind them, they turn fearfully.

Grace stands by the tree trunk, swaying on her feet, her hair awry, her white nightgown soiled and torn in places, her eyes feverish and terrified. She cups her face in her shaking hands.

MONTAGUE

Grace!

GRACE

I didn't want this, John. You must believe me.

MONTAGUE

(going to her)

What were you doing? What happened?

She leans against him for support and he holds her.

GRACE

That terrible house. I woke up... I was frightened. I started for your room and... and got lost as though the house were doing it on purpose. I ended up in the attic.
(pathetically)

I was only looking for a way out when I opened the trap door. I wasn't trying to frighten her. Didn't you see me?

MONTAGUE

No, but Eleanor did. You almost killed her.

THEO

(glancing at the wrecked car)

She did kill her. The shock of seeing her the second time is what made Eleanor lose control of the car.

Grace draws back and looks down at her hands, scratched and bleeding and shaking.

GRACE

No...no. She only saw me the very last instant, the same time I saw her. I don't even know how I got into the garden.

LUKE

It wasn't your fault. Eleanor did it to herself. It looked to me like she deliberately aimed the car at this tree --

MONTAGUE

Where the first Mrs. Crain also
was killed in an --

(skeptically)

"accident." Here's the mark.

He shows them the old scar where Mrs. Crain's carriage struck the tree. Below is the new wound made by the Hillman.

MONTAGUE

(shaking his head)

There was something in the car
with her, I'm sure of it.

(turning to glare
at the house)

Call it what you like, but Hill
House is haunted. It didn't
want her to leave and her poor
bedeviled mind wasn't strong
enough to fight it.

(turning back)

Poor Eleanor.

He takes off his coat and gently drapes it over the body
o.s. in the car.

THEO

Why "poor Eleanor"? After all,
it's what she wanted -- to stay
here. She had no place else to
go.

She looks off toward the house and the others watch her
uneasily. The unbroken silence and the dark, suffocating
weight of the hills press down from all around them.

THEO

(continuing)

The house belongs to her now, too.
Maybe she's happier.

Grace shudders. A breeze, like a long sigh, stirs the
tree tops.

MONTAGUE

(to group)

You wait here. I'll phone the
police and bring out your things.

GRACE

No, John. None of us should
ever go in there again.
Whatever is there might...
might - Don't go back.

MONTAGUE

I'll be all right. The house
has what it wants - for a
while.

As Montague walks to the front door, Luke stares up at
the house, which still seems to be watching and waiting,
never off guard, but now with a touch of glee across its
mad face.

LUKE

(angrily)

It ought to be burned down and
the ground sowed with salt.

DISSOLVE TO:

256 EXT. HILL HOUSE - NIGHT

The same as our abstract OPENING SHOT, except that it is
night. From the darkness around the house, we hear:

ELEANOR'S VOICE

Hill House has stood for ninety
years and might stand for ninety
more. Within, walls continue
upright, bricks meet, floors are
firm, and doors are sensibly shut.

(voice and house
begin to fade)

Silence lies steadily against the
wood and stone of Hill House...

(fainter, fainter)

... and we who walk here, walk
alone.

ALL SOUND DIES...

SILENCE...

Then, from somewhere against the dark outline of the house
a small white shape, at first no bigger than a dot, creeps
forward. Suddenly, with a scary burst of MUSIC, it leaps
at us becoming a sign: TO LET

And it FLIPS to read:

THE END