Hacettepe University Graduate School of Social Sciences

Department of American Culture and Literature

HAUNTED AND HAUNTING HEROINES WITHIN GOTHIC SETTINGS: ALIENATION, MADNESS, AND THE UNCANNY IN SHIRLEY JACKSON'S FEMALE GOTHIC

Gizem AKÇİL

Ph.D. Dissertation

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KABUL VE ONAY

Gizem Akçil tarafından hazırlanan "HAUNTED AND HAUNTING HEROINES WITHIN GOTHIC SETTINGS: ALIENATION, MADNESS, AND THE UNCANNY SHIRLEY JACKSON'S FEMALE GOTHIC" başlıklı bu çalışma, 13 Haziran 2019 tarihinde yapılan savunma sınavı sonucunda başarılı bulunarak jürimiz tarafından doktora tezi olarak kabul edilmiştir.

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Bu çalışmadaki bütün bilgi ve belgeleri akademik kurallar çerçevesinde elde ettiğimi, görsel, işitsel ve yazılı tüm bilgi ve sonuçları bilimsel ahlak kurallarına uygun olarak sunduğumu, kullandığım verilerde herhangi bir tahrifat yapmadığımı, yararlandığım kaynaklara bilimsel normlara uygun olarak atıfta bulunduğumu, tezimin kaynak gösterilen durumlar dışında özgün olduğunu, Prof. Dr. Tanfer Emin Tunç danışmanlığında tarafımdan üretildiğini ve Hacettepe Üniversitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü Tez Yazım Yönergesine göre yazıldığını beyan ederim.

Gizem Akçil

Gizem Akçil

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my supervisor Prof. Dr. Tanfer Emin TUNÇ for her invaluable encouragement, support, and guidance. I know that she will always be an inspiration for me.

I would like to thank Prof. Dr. Özlem UZUNDEMİR, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bilge MUTLUAY ÇETİNTAŞ, Dr. Berkem GÜRENCİ SAĞLAM, Dr. Özge ÖZBEK AKIMAN for their advice and comments on my dissertation, and the academic staff of Hacettepe University's Department of American Culture and Literature.

Finally, I would like to express my indebtedness to my family for their love and support, and priceless presence in my life.

ABSTRACT

AKÇİL, Gizem. *Haunted and Haunting Heroines within Gothic Settings: Alienation, Madness, and the Uncanny in Shirley Jackson's Female Gothic*, Ph.D. Dissertation, Ankara, 2019.

Known for her short story collection *The Lottery and Other Stories* (1948), the American author Shirley Jackson (1916–1965) has been an inspiration for subsequent Gothic-fantastic and horror fiction writers. This dissertation analyzes Shirley Jackson's novels—*Hangsaman* (1951), *The Bird's Nest* (1954), *The Sundial* (1958), *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962)— in light of the genre of the "Female Gothic," a term coined by Ellen Moers in *Literary Women* (1976) to refer to literary works written by women in the Gothic mode since the eighteenth century. Incorporating fear and horror into the stories of alienated female characters in uncanny Gothic settings, "Female Gothic" has articulated women's struggles to move outside the constrictive domestic sphere and beyond traditional, normative gender roles. Shirley Jackson's fiction blurs the boundaries between the self and Gothic space, and between the real and the fantastic, thereby shedding light on how the corruption of human society, bigotry, moral degradation, the patriarchal order, and the remnants of the nineteenth century cult of true womanhood in the mid-twentieth century America trigger the female protagonists' identity fragmentation, madness (mental turmoil/distress), and departure from "reality." The Gothic-fantastic elements in Shirley Jackson's novels, the uncanny motifs of Gothic doubles, fragmented/split identities, and Gothic mansions reflect personal traumas, and can either bring about self-infliction/destruction, or enable the resistance and subversion of social limitations and undesirable outside realities. Thus, Jackson's haunted, Gothic sanctuaries have a paradoxical quality as they appear both as symbols of domestic confinement and imprisonment, and as a sort of fantastic refuge in which female characters, as haunted and haunting heroines, can disrupt patriarchy from within and establish a new order based on sisterhood.

Key Words: Gothic, Female Gothic, Shirley Jackson, Uncanny, Split Identity, Alienation, Madness, Gothic Setting, Haunted House

ÖZET

AKÇİL, Gizem. *Gotik Mekânlardaki Kadın Kahramanlar: Shirley Jackson'ın Kadın Gotiğinde Yabancılaşma, Delilik ve Tekinsizlik Kavramları,* Doktora Tezi, Ankara, 2019.

The Lottery and Other Stories (Piyango) (1948) adlı kısa öykü derlemesiyle tanınan Amerikalı yazar Shirley Jackson (1916-1965) Gotik-fantastik ve korku türünde eserler üreten sonraki yazarlar için ilham kaynağı olmuştur. Bu çalışma Shirley Jackson'ın *Hangsaman* (1951), *The Bird's Nest* (1954), *The Sundial* (1958), *The Haunting of Hill House* (*Tepedeki Ev*) (1959) ve *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (*Biz Hep Şatoda Yaşadık)* (1962) adlı romanlarını "Kadın Gotiği" edebi türü kapsamında inceleyecektir. Ellen Moers'ın *Literary Women* (1976) başlıklı çalışmasında geçen "Kadın Gotiği" terimi on sekizinci yüzyıldan beri kadın yazarlar tarafından kaleme alınan Gotik eserleri kapsamaktadır. Korku ögeleri ve tekinsiz Gotik mekanlardaki yabancılaşmış kadın karakterlerin hikâyeleri aracılığıyla, "Kadın Gotiği" edebi türü kadınların kısıtlayıcı toplumsal cinsiyet rollerine karşı verdikleri mücadeleyi dile getirmiştir. Shirley Jackson'ın eserleri benlik ve Gotik mekân, gerçek ve hayali olan arasındaki ayrımı belirsizleştirerek kadın karakterlerin benlik bölünmesine, deliliğe (zihinsel karmaşaya) ve gerçeklikten uzaklaşmaya neden olan toplumsal yozlaşmayı, bağnazlığı, ahlaki çöküşü, yirminci yüzyıl Amerikan toplumundaki ataerkil düzeni ve "gerçek kadınlık" kültünü eleştirir. Shirley Jackson'ın romanlarındaki Gotik-fantastik unsurlar, "tekinsiz" ögeler, Gotik çift, bölünmüş benlik, Gotik malikane ve perili ev motifleri, kişisel travmaları yansıtmaktadır ve bireyin kendine zarar vermesine neden olabildiği gibi aynı zamanda toplumsal kısıtlamaların ve olumsuz dış gerçekliklerin ötesine geçmeye de olanak sağlar. Bu nedenle, romanlardaki perili, Gotik yapılar hem domestik semboller olarak hem de kadın kahramanların ataerkil düzeni bozup kız kardeşliğe dayanan yeni bir düzen kurdukları fantastik sığınaklar olarak temsil edildiğinden çelişkili bir özellik taşımaktadır.

Anahtar Sözcükler: Gotik, "Kadın Gotiği," Shirley Jackson, Tekinsizlik, Bölünmüş Benlik, Yabancılaşma, Delilik, Gotik Mekân, Perili Ev

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INTRODUCTION

This dissertation studies five novels by the American author Shirley Jackson (1916–1965), *Hangsaman* (1951), *The Bird's Nest* (1954), *The Sundial* (1958), *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959), and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962), in light of the Female Gothic tradition, which is comprised of literary works classified as "Gothic" and written by female authors since the eighteenth century. In order to analyze Shirley Jackson's novels, it is necessary to examine the characteristics and history of the variable and flexible Gothic genre and its sub-branch, the Female Gothic. In Gothic narratives, elements of fear, horror, gloom, death, decadence, mystery, suspense, fantasy, the supernatural and the unknown predominate, and settings include haunted landscapes like dark castles, decaying/dilapidated buildings, ruins, old mansions and houses, mysterious chambers, underground passages, and graveyards. In modern Gothic, the setting can be anywhere, such as a city or a town, that produces a feeling of anxiety in readers.

THE GOTHIC

The term "Gothic" was first coined during the Renaissance "to describe [pejoratively] a type of anti-classical architecture associated with barbarism, obscurity and excess" (Davison 25). Carol Margaret Davison explains that the Gothic "had wide cultural currency in Britain in the eighteenth century, where it conjured up images of medievalism" (25). The term is etymologically related to the name of the Germanic tribes, "the Goths," "who invaded and ultimately overthrew the Roman Empire in the fourth and fifth centuries" (Davison 25). Davison regards the emergence of the Gothic novel as "anachronistic" and "paradoxical": "anachronistic because it emerged during the Enlightenment when novels generally focused their lens on contemporary reality, and paradoxical because […] it registers a collision between the past and the present" (Davison 25). Thus, the Gothic, as a genre related to the Romantic Movement, provides a counterpoint to the Enlightenment ideals of reason, harmony, balance, order, unity and simplicity by focusing on the irrational, bizarre, chaotic and dark side of human existence. In other words, Gothic itself is the Other, the uncanny double of the Enlightenment. In Gothic narratives which make use of medieval folklore, legends, and myths, "imagination and emotional effects exceed reason. Passion, excitement, sensation transgress social proprieties and moral laws. Ambivalence and uncertainty obscure single meaning"

(Botting 2). In the nineteenth century, writers, including William Godwin and Henry James, focused on "isolated individuals" and "extreme experiences" by taking "the exceptional figures of heroes, villains, and victims from the eighteenth-century predecessors" and working them into "stories that turn on mysteries and secrets and the preternatural intrusions of ghosts and demons" (Garrett 3).

Rosemary Jackson defines the Gothic as a "literature of unreason and terror" (95), and argues that the Gothic should be "seen as a reaction to historical events, particularly to the spread of industrialism and urbanization" (96) as well as to science and all it produces and/or represents. Jackson traces the development of Gothic literature and its transformations by explaining how it "progressively turned inwards to concern itself with psychological problems, used to dramatize uncertainty and conflicts of the individual in relation to a difficult social situation" (97). Thus, in Gothic narratives,

> The subject is no longer confident about appropriating or perceiving a material world. Gothic narrates this epistemological confusion: it expresses and examines personal disorder, opposing fiction's classical unities (of time, space, unified character) with an apprehension of partiality and relativity of meaning. (Rosemary Jackson 97)

In *A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origins of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), Edmund Burke explores the subject's relationship to the external world by focusing on the difference between the concepts of sublimity and beauty. Burke's work is influential in Gothic studies, as "Gothic writers […] respond to his formulation of Terror, seeing in it a language for representing fear" (Smith 12). According to Burke, the sublime refers to the sense of awe inspired by incomprehension, while beauty is defined by decorum and our social existence. The sublime is related to the feeling of anxiety experienced in the face of vastness or infinity—the subject feels diminished or annihilated before the presence of a divine being. Burke states that

> Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible, or is conversant about terrible objects, or operates in a manner analogous to terror, is a source of *the sublime*; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of feeling. (36)

The protagonists of Gothic novels experience the sublime through imagination and fear, which enable them to move outside of ordinary reality and perceptions, and the conventional definitions of sanity and constraints of the society in which they live. Hence,

> In the expansive domain opened by the sublime, all sorts of imaginative objects and fears situated in or beyond nature could proliferate in a marvelous profusion of the supernatural or the ridiculous, the magical and the nightmarish, the fantastic and the absurd. (Botting 3)

In addition to Burke's notion of "the sublime," Freud's concept of the uncanny contributed to the study of the Gothic. Like "Burke's notion of terror," the uncanny "represents an attempt to account for fear" (Smith 13). Freud argues that the uncanny or *unheimlich* (unfamiliar) "is that class of the frightening which [eventually] leads back to what is known of old and long familiar," or the repressed and the unresolved (340). According to Freud, what is familiar or repressed can return to haunt the individual in the form of the unfamiliar or bizarre. In this respect, the supernatural phenomena, ghosts and haunted houses of Gothic works can be interpreted as representations of the uncanny or the return of repressed feelings, desires, and traumas. Even though "the uncanny" is mostly used as a psychoanalytical concept, Smith posits that in Gothic studies it "can also be used to bring to light historically contextualized anxieties" (15). Thus, "the uncanny" should be interpreted both as an expression of a character's (inner) state of mind and as the context within which historical and social issues are reflected.

Tzvetan Todorov uses the term "uncanny" to describe a literary mode of writing in which seemingly supernatural or bizarre events are the products of protagonists' deceptive minds. Todorov contrasts the uncanny with what he calls "the marvelous," which refers to the magical; that is, supernatural phenomena explained through supernatural causes. According to Todorov, "the fantastic" is situated between the uncanny and the marvelous; readers of fantastic works are left without any clues to determine whether the events described are supernatural. Thus, the fantastic is a "tale which introduces 'strange' events," yet provides "no internal explanation of the strangeness" (Rosemary Jackson 27). In Gothic literature, narratives can be realistic, uncanny, fantastic, and/or marvelous, depending on the authors' choice of mode. As this dissertation will illustrate, some of Shirley Jackson's works are closer to the fantastic.

Transcending the boundaries of the (un)real and (im)possible, the Gothic can undermine "physical laws with marvelous beings and fantastic events" creating an "unhallowed ground for necromancy and arcane ritual" and superstitious beliefs (Botting 4). Clive Bloom emphasizes the slipperiness of "the term 'gothic genre'" with its diverse

"incarnations": The Gothic can include "works of fiction that contain neither supernatural nor horror elements but which do contain similar attitudes to setting, atmosphere or style" (1). Thus, as an encompassing term, the Gothic has been an inspiration for other literary genres including science fiction and detective fiction. As Bloom maintains, in spite of the fact that horror is a usual component of Gothic fiction, it is "not necessarily the main ingredient," and the "link between horror and gothic was neither a necessary nor a permanent condition and by the time of Edgar Allan Poe the two were capable of separate existence" (2–3). In Shirley Jackson's works, horror combines with the Gothic to transgress constrictive realities, and personal and social limits.

Fred Botting focuses on the transgressive aspect of the Gothic by arguing that "Gothic signifies a writing of excess": "It appears in the awful obscurity that haunted eighteenth century rationality and morality. It shadows the despairing ecstasies of Romantic idealism and individualism and the uncanny dualities of Victorian realism and decadence" (1). Furthermore, since the Gothic has been regarded as "a genre of negativities, of the *un*-real, the *anti*-rational, the *im*moral," it has been positioned "as Other, and even as 'feminine' other to the dominant discourse" (Becker 23). In other words, "the traditional critical coding of the non-real, the popular and emotional as feminine has perpetuated […] binary oppositions, with all the hierarchies this entails" (Becker 23). Susanne Becker stressing that "the gothic as feminine form uses 'excesses' precisely to question this binary" (23). In short, blurring the boundaries between the conscious and the unconscious, reality and fantasy, and the past and the present, the Gothic transcends dualities as well as socially constructed gender roles and sexualities, enabling female characters to participate in subversive acts.

Susanne Becker explains that "Gothic fiction is closely related to [the] cultural developments [of] feminism and postmodernism" (1). Through its adoption of "anti-realism" and "excess," it expresses "radical skepticism concerning the universalizing humanist assumptions of modern thought and of classic realism" exploring "desire, terror and pleasure" (1–2). In contrast to Enlightenment and neoclassical values, Gothic condenses the "threats associated with supernatural and natural forces, imaginative excesses and delusions, religious and human evil, social transgression, mental disintegration and spiritual corruption" (Botting 1), all of which are also observed in

Shirley Jackson's fiction. Thus, Gothic excesses indicate a fascination with the transgression of socio-cultural norms. As Donna Heiland argues,

> The Goths did much to bring about the fall of the Roman empire (of which Britain had been a part), and while gothic fiction does not literally depict the Goths' repeated incursions into Roman territory, or the sack of Rome in A.D. 410, gothic fiction does tell stories of "invasions" of one sort or another. Gothic fiction at its core is about transgressions of all sorts: across national boundaries, social boundaries, sexual boundaries, the boundaries of one's own identity. (Heiland 3)

The twentieth-century and contemporary Gothic of transgression and horror is inspired by eighteenth and nineteenth-century Gothic. In the eighteenth century, "mysterious incidents, horrible images and life-threatening pursuits predominate […] Specters, monsters, demons, corpses, skeletons, evil aristocrats, monks and nuns, fainting heroines and bandits populate the Gothic landscapes as suggestive figures of imagined and realistic threats" (Botting 1). In the nineteenth century, however, "this list grew" with "the addition of scientists, fathers, husbands, madmen, criminals and the monstrous double signifying duplicity and evil nature" (Botting 1–2). In Shirley Jackson's novels, these Gothic motifs are applied to the familial and sociocultural setting of mid-twentieth century America to shed light on the female protagonists' traumatic experiences and to criticize the patriarchal order.

Botting describes Gothic settings as landscapes which are "desolate, alienating and full of menace":

> In the eighteenth century they were wild and mountainous locations. Later the modern city combined the natural and the architectural components of Gothic grandeur and wildnesss, its dark, labyrinthine streets suggesting the violence and menace of the Gothic castle or forest. The major focus of Gothic plots, the castle, was gloomily predominant in early Gothic fiction. Decaying, bleak and full of hidden passageways, the castle was related to other medieval edifices—abbeys, churches and graveyards especially—that, in their generally ruinous states, harked back to a feudal past associated with barbarity, superstition and fear. (2)

In later Gothic fiction, the castle is replaced by large old houses or mansions which are represented as sites for the "re-appearance of figures long gone," where the return of the repressed "fears and anxieties" of the past impinge on the present (Botting 2). In *The Rise of the Gothic Novel*, Maggie Kilgour conveys that "One of the powerful images conjured up by the words 'gothic novel' is that of a shadowy figure rising from a mysterious place: Frankenstein's monster rising from the laboratory table, Dracula creeping from his

coffin" (Kilgour 3). This imagery not only signifies the symbolic return of the past, but also "supports psychoanalytical critics' contention that the gothic reflects the return of the repressed" (Kilgour 3). In addition, its emergence in the eighteenth century is "read as a sign of the resurrection of the need for the sacred and transcendent in a modern enlightened secular world which denies the existence of supernatural forces or as the rebellion of the imagination against the tyranny of reason" (Kilgour 3).

Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) is considered to be the first Gothic novel. It narrates the story of Prince Manfred, the lord of the castle, and his family—his wife, Hippolita, and his children Conrad and Matilda. When Conrad, Manfred's only heir, is crushed to death by a mysterious, giant helmet on the day he was supposed to marry Princess Isabella, Manfred begins to suspect that a prophecy that foretold his family's loss of control over the castle is coming true. He tries to keep the castle in his name, and plans to divorce Hippolita and marry Isabella to have another male heir. Nevertheless, in the end, the prophecy comes true anyway. Manfred mistakenly kills his own daughter Matilda, and a young peasant named Theodore—whom, Manfred believes, has murdered his son, Conrad—is revealed to be the true heir of Otranto. Moreover, Theodore marries Isabella, sealing the prophecy (Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*). Walpole's novel subverted realistic representation, and initiated the Gothic form in Britain. As Jerrold E. Hogle explains, "The vogue that Walpole began was imitated only sporadically over the next few decades, both in prose fiction and theatrical drama. But it exploded in the 1790s (the decade Walpole died) throughout the British Isles, on the continent of Europe, and briefly in the new United States, particularly for a female readership" (*The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction*, 1).

Early Gothic fiction established the "rhetoric of fantasy to be developed by later writers" such as Sophia Lee, William Beckford, Matthew Lewis, Peter Teuthold, Maria Roche, Clara Reeve, and "a plethora of imitators [who] produced hundreds of Gothic novels" well "into the 1800s, at their most concentrated during the 1780s and 90s" (96 Rosemary Jackson). English author Ann Radcliffe wrote romances, the most prominent of which is *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), a Gothic romance that features an orphan named Emily St. Albert, who is left in charge of her aunt and her aunt's tyrannical husband, Montoni. Over the course of the novel, Emily witnesses many bizarre, uncanny events in Montoni's

castle di Udolpho. Montoni is also depicted as a patriarchal usurper who tries to gain the ownership of his wife's estate and deprive her of her economic self-reliance. When she refuses to sign her estate over to Montoni, he imprisons her. After her aunt's death, Emily becomes the heiress, and like her aunt, refuses to relinquish her inheritance to Montoni, who holds her captive in the castle (Radcliffe, *The Mysteries of Udolpho*). After Emily escapes from the castle and returns to France, she is reunited with her lover Valancourt. Thus, with this work, "Ann Radcliffe firmly set[s] the Gothic in one of the ways it would go ever after: a novel in which the central figure is a young woman who is simultaneously a persecuted victim and courageous heroine" (Moers 91). Along with Mary Shelley, Ann Radcliffe is regarded as a pioneer of the Female Gothic.

THE FEMALE GOTHIC

"The Female Gothic" is a term coined by Ellen Moers in *Literary Women* (1976) to describe "the work that women writers have done in the literary mode that, since the eighteenth century, we have called the gothic" (90). Moers argues that a definition of the Gothic, in which "fantasy predominates over reality, the strange over the commonplace, and the supernatural over the natural," "is not easily stated except that it has to do with fear" (90). By incorporating elements of horror and madness, and by situating characters within dark, haunted, gloomy and uncanny places, the Female Gothic has articulated women's sense of confinement and the desire to escape from social pressures and obligations in order to form a separate, self-ruling identity. According to Susanne Becker, the Gothic was considered to be a "women's genre" due to "its instant popularity with women both as writers and readers" (2). Yet, as Becker also contends, "Addressing the question of the 'feminine text' still means stepping on shifting ground," since the term "Female Gothic" has been called into question and has received differing interpretations (16).

In this dissertation, the term Female Gothic is not used to analyze Gothic narratives from an essentialist, biological perspective, but to emphasize women's experiences, or "the liberating effect of gothic horror" and "its feminist potential" (Becker 20). Disrespecting "the borderlines of the appropriate, the healthy, or the politically desirable" (Bruhm 94), the Female Gothic opens up a space in which socially-constructed genders and sexualities are called into question. As George E. Haggerty maintains, Gothic literature has "offered

a testing ground for many unauthorized genders and sexualities" (2). Consequently, "it offers a historical model of queer theory and politics: transgressive, sexually coded, and resistant to dominant ideology" (Haggerty 2).

Becker uses the term "feminine gothic" to refer to "women-centered novels" (16) and argues that feminine gothic "foreground[s] the gothic emphasis on body" through "the metaphor of the house," linking "the women's sphere to her body" (19–20). By presenting metaphors of enclosure, both "the *thematic* enclosure of the female subject within the house—mansion or castle" and "the *formal* enclosure of the text" (Becker 19), or the symbolic order of language, feminist Gothic fiction subverts the domestic ideology from within. In addition, the Female Gothic also reflects the emergence of the "typological conception of 'domestic happiness' […] distanced from the 'fallen' [outside] world of work," calling into question the notion of "the ideal home" by "focusing on crumbling castles and sites of terror" (Ellis ix). Thus, "it is the failed home that appears on its pages"—a home "which has lost its prelapsarian purity and in need of rectification" (Ellis ix).

Shirley Jackson's last two novels illustrate Ellis's argument. In *The Haunting of Hill House,* for example, the house is depicted as an unwelcoming, inherently malign Gothic monster that destroys the self of the female protagonist. Thus, in the Female Gothic, the home is a dangerous place of confinement: It is where "the heroine exposes the villain's usurpation and thus reclaims an enclosed space that should have been a refuge from evil but has become its opposite a prison" (Ellis x–xiii). In this case, the female protagonist struggles to purge the home, the private domain, of evil and patriarchal influence, and tries to establish a new order sustained by sisterhood. Yet, as observed in Shirley Jackson's last novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle,* she ends up experiencing domestic confinement.

In *Scare Tactics,* Jeffrey Weinstock focuses on American women's use of the Gothic and the popularity of supernatural tales in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Weinstock explains that supernatural fiction developed in the United States and England in the 1840s and 50s as "a response to or backlash against nineteenth century materialism and the legacy of Enlightenment rationalism" (7). It rose in tandem with Spiritualism, which suggested "the possibility of communication between the living and the dead"

(Weinstock 6). Women were active participants in the Spiritualist movement as well as the primary consumers of the literary output of Charles Dickens, who used supernatural elements in his works (Weinstock 10). According to Weinstock, American women deployed supernatural themes in their works due to the demands of the market place and the possibilities that Gothic writing offered them: "Gothic conventions could be used to reflect and comment on the status of (predominantly middle-class white) women in the United States" and to "express specifically female anxieties and desires" (14–15).

Weinstock offers a critique of the claim that women wrote ghost stories because they felt like invisible, "disempowered" ghosts within patriarchal society and culture. Far from being disempowered, Weinstock argues, the ghosts in literary works are powerful—they inspire fear and awe, and can bring about change in the material world (17). Furthermore, they can be of any sex or gender. These ghosts can therefore express alienation, desire, and wish-fulfilment in transgressive ways. Thus, "The supernatural provided a strategic means for American female authors to raise questions about marriage, motherhood, domesticity, and sexuality, as well as to frame debates about 'progress' and the moral vision of the developing American republic" (Weinstock 17–18). Furthermore, unlike mainstream Gothic, Female Gothic depicts ghosts as "far less frequently sinister or horrific figures," since "men and oppressive gender codes turn out to be scarier than ghosts" (Weinstock 19). Additionally, in Female Gothic, writers tend "to represent the relationship of the natural world to the supernatural one as a continuum rather than as a binary opposition" (Weinstock 19). In this context, the supernatural does not appear as a separate phenomenon divorced from the real world of social relations. Rather, it is deployed to reflect women's concerns.

From the late eighteenth century onward, female writers have used the Gothic to articulate the erasure of women in history and reinsert women into History with a capital H by exposing how patriarchal ideology shapes accounts of what occurred in the past (Wallace 1–3). Feminist theory and criticism revise historical accounts to bring to light women's experiences which have been rendered invisible. Lauren Fitzgerald explains that "the formulation of [Female Gothic] was the result of the rise of feminism and feminist literary criticism in the United States during the late 1960s and 1970s" (8). The coinage of the term Female Gothic was an outcome "of the 'second phase' of American feminist literary

criticism, which focused on uncovering the lost tradition of women's literature" (Fitzgerald 9). Reinstating "the centrality of property in Gothic fiction" (Fitzgerald 9), the Female Gothic emphasizes the need for women to reclaim ownership of their works, bodies, and identities, and to challenge gender codes.

Ellen Moers's work on the Female Gothic is augmented by the contributions of feminist critic Elaine Showalter, who coined the term gynocriticism in the late 1970s. Showalter's work, "Towards a Feminist Poetics" (1979), focuses on the history of the female literary tradition and argues for the existence of women's language and a specifically feminine mode of experience, perception, and subjectivity. As Fitzgerald explains, Showalter, "punned on Woolf's demand in her title for *A Literature of Their Own* (1977), which, along with Moers' *Literary Women* and Sandra M. Gilbert's and Susan Gubar's *The Mad Woman in the Attic* (1979) formed the core of the second phase of feminist criticism in the US" (10). In this dissertation, the word "madness" refers to both the haunted minds of the protagonists and to a strategy of resistance that enables the female characters' transgression.

The second wave of feminist literary criticism explored the Gothic works of female authors like Ann Radcliffe, Mary Shelley, and the Brontë sisters. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) is thematically linked to the Female Gothic. Moers explains that Mary Shelley's book "made the Gothic novel over into what today we call science fiction" (91). As a "birth myth" which is "lodged in the novelist's imagination," *Frankenstein* explores motherhood and its consequences, "the trauma of afterbirth," through the mad scientist's monster, and brings "birth to fiction not as realism but as Gothic fantasy" (Moers 92–93). Thus, as Ann C. Hall explains, "the novel highlights the perils of reproduction by its ambiguous presentation of the creator and monster" (212).

According to Rosemary Jackson, the monster in the novel is also depicted as Frankenstein's Gothic double or reflection. He represents "Frankenstein's lost selves, pieces of himself from which he has been severed, and with which he seeks re-unification" (100). Thus, through the metaphor of the monster, the novel focuses on the perspective of a social outcast or a rejected, alienated individual. The motifs of monstrosity, the divided/split self, dualism, and doppelgängers are also observed in other works such as Robert Louis Stevenson's *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr Hyde*

(1886) and Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1891) (*Fantasy: The Literature of Subversion* 99–122), and later, in the mid-twentieth century, in the Gothic novels of Shirley Jackson. According to Kelly Hurley, the Gothic super-naturalized the newly emergent scientific theories including the "Pre-Freudian modelings of the unconscious" and "the implications of Darwinism […] perceived as disastrous and traumatic—one might say 'gothic'—by a majority of the population" (6). Thus, "the topics pursued by nineteenth century science were as 'gothic' as those found within any novel—criminal hypnosis is a case in point, as is the criminal anthropological theory of the atavist, whose body was a compendium of human and nonhuman morphic traits" (Hurley 20). Alan Lloyd-Smith argues that while "science might be seen as pushing rationalism toward its limits," the Gothic "was often shown to include connections to occultist pre-scientific doctrines, as in Mary Shelley's account of the university education of Dr. Frankenstein" (6). The Gothic's treatment of the occult therefore reflects a fascination with the irrational or inexplainable, and a desire to subvert or transcend the limits of undesirable social realities.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* paved the way for subsequent Gothic novels by women, including Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847). *Wuthering Heights* focuses on the story of Heathcliff, an orphan raised at the manor house Wuthering Heights, and Catherine, the daughter of Mr. Earnshaw, who is the owner of Wuthering Heights, and Hindley's sister. The novel also depicts the relations between Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, where the Linton children, Edgar and Isabella, live. Heathcliff, who marries Isabella following Edgar and Catherine's wedding, tries to take revenge from Edgar, and desires to control both manors by forcing the young Catherine, Edgar's and Catherine's daughter, to marry his son Linton after the deaths of Catherine and Isabella. Ensuing the forced marriage of Catherine and Linton, both Edgar and Linton die, and Heathcliff gains the ownership of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Unable to forget the elder Catherine's memory, Heathcliff lives with her ghost, and after his death, the younger Catherine and Hareton, the son of Hindley and Frances, get married and inherit both manors (Brontë, *Wuthering Heights*). According to Moers, "Emily Brontë's acceptance of the cruel" as a "part of human life" (99) is what makes the novel distinctly Gothic and subversive. Stitching together violence, "mystical eloquence, metaphysical profundity, shrewd realism, and moral dignity," the novel

counters “Victorian clichés about women being by nature (and women writers, therefore, being by right) gentle, pious, conservative, loving and serene” (Moers 99–100).

Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, on the other hand, features a young heroine named Jane Eyre, an orphan girl who becomes a governess at Thornfield, where she is employed by Mr. Rochester, with whom she falls in love. Jane saves Rochester from a fire one night, and on their wedding day, Jane learns that Rochester already has a wife named Bertha, an insane woman who was the cause of the fire. Kept locked away on the third floor of Thornfield manor, Bertha resists confinement through violent acts by causing fires. At the end of Brontë’s novel, the Gothic Thornfield is burned to the ground in another fire caused by Bertha, who loses her life. Jane is the reunited with Rochester, who loses one of his hands and his sight in the fire, yet regains his sight in one eye after moving to Ferndean and marrying Jane. Shirley Jackson’s *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* makes references to the plot of *Jane Eyre*, which continues to be an influence on the genre of the Female Gothic with its focus on patriarchal domination and female oppression.

Charles Brockden Brown is considered to be the pioneer of the Gothic genre in American literature. His first novel, *The Wieland, or the Transformation* (1798), set in the late colonial era, deals with madness, religious dissent, and a family tragedy that involves supernatural elements. Washington Irving’s “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” (1820) is an early example of Gothic short fiction that features a ghost, the Headless Horseman, who lost his life during the Revolutionary War. Louisa May Alcott established the American Female Gothic with her suspense novel *A Long Fatal Love Chase* (1866/1995), which tells the story of a miserable young woman named Rosamond Vivian, who desires freedom through marriage to Philip Tempest, a Mephistopheles-like character. Like Alcott, Charlotte Perkins Gilman explores women’s concerns as well as the issue of domestic entrapment in her short story “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892) in which the setting—the room with the yellow wallpaper, where the female narrator, who is suffering from mental illness, is literally imprisoned—is represented as a Gothic reflection of the disturbed mind of the protagonist, whose mental condition deteriorates under the repressive medical scrutiny of her husband.

Jerrold E. Hogle explains that Gothic literature was viewed as “low culture” and was regarded as unworthy of study until the publication of Leslie A. Fiedler’s *Love and Death*

in the American Novel in 1960 (*A Companion to American Gothic* 1). In *Love and Death in the American Novel*, Fiedler emphasizes that horror has been essential to American literature: representing "the hidden blackness of the human soul and human society," the American Gothic focuses on the issues of racism, "the ambiguity of the encounter with nature," and "the guilt of the revolutionist who feels himself a parricide" (27). In *American Gothic Fiction: An Introduction*, Allan Lloyd-Smith explains

> certain unique cultural pressures led Americans to the Gothic as an expression of their very different conditions. Among these pressures were the frontier experience, with its solitude and potential violence; the Puritan inheritance; fear of European subversion and anxieties about popular democracy which was then a new experiment; the relative absence of developed "society;" and very significantly racial issues concerning both slavery and Native Americans. (4)

Nineteenth-century American writers like Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne contributed to American Gothic and the Female Gothic through Dark Romanticism, which emerged in reaction to eighteenth-century Enlightenment rationality and focused on human emotions, fallibility, guilt, sin, and self-destruction. Poe's poetry, *The Raven* (1945), *Annabel Lee* (1949), and short stories like "Ligeia" (1838), "The Fall of the House of Usher" (1839), "The Pit and the Pendulum" (1842), "The Masque of the Red Death" (1842), "The Tell-Tale Heart" (1843), "The Black Cat" (1843), "The Purloined Letter" (1844) and "The Cask of Amontillado" (1846) laid the foundation of American horror and detective fiction in exploring madness and death. Arguably, Poe's most significant contribution to the Female Gothic is "The Fall of the House of Usher," which narrates the story of an unnamed narrator's experiences within the gloomy, decaying, and mysterious house of his infirm friend Roderick Usher. In the story, the house is not only a location of physical and mental suffering for Usher and his twin sister/Gothic double, Madeline, but also a haunted site of horror and death. Madeline dies of a mysterious sickness (possibly a botched abortion, thus also suggesting incest), and is interred in the catacombs below the house by Roderick and the narrator, who notices that Madeline has rosy cheeks and might have even been buried alive. At the end of the story, Madeline rises from her tomb to haunt Roderick, who dies in fear. The narrator escapes in terror into the darkness of the night, and the house collapses, breaking along the crack on its front surface. The decaying house parallels the demise of its inhabitants, who are the last in the line of the Usher family, and like Hill House in *The Haunting of Hill House*, the Usher house has an

inimical quality. Specifically, it reflects the minds of those who reside within it and "the horror of the mind isolated with itself" (Bloom 3).

Nathaniel Hawthorne explores America's colonial past and religious history through the Puritan community's understanding of the concepts of "sin" and "inherent evil." Hawthorne's short story, "Young Goodman Brown," set in Massachusetts, reveals the religious anxieties of the Salem witch trials as it narrates the story of "Goodman Brown," who is led by a demonic figure to the witches' Sabbath in the woods where he discovers that he knows most of the attendees. Hawthorne's novels *The House of Seven Gables* (1851) and *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), on the other hand, are set in haunted houses. *The House of Seven Gables*, as a Gothic romance, mingles realism and fantasy, revealing how the house's unpleasant history—including the conviction of Matthew Maule for witchcraft—continues to haunt it, and its inhabitants, into the present. Likewise, in *The Scarlet Letter*, which focuses on the story of Hester Prynne, who is punished for adultery, "The Custom-House" appears to be "one of the most deeply haunted houses in American literature" (Savoy 177). Situated "somewhere between the real world and fairy-land," the custom house attic represents "history's power to stimulate the imagination" by revealing "past wrongs done to women" (Savoy 177). These works clearly helped establish the Gothic haunted house motif, which plays an important role in Shirley Jackson's fiction, particularly in *The Haunting of Hill House*.

Southern Gothic literature, as a sub-branch of American Gothic, also contributed to the development of the Female Gothic. Like mainstream Gothic, Southern Gothic dwells on the irrational and horrific, and is characterized by dark humor and a focus on mental illness, family secrets, homosexuality, alcoholism, mendacity, hypocrisy, love triangles, and grotesque characters. The genre explores the history of the American South, especially slavery, racism, the Civil War (1861–1865), and the conflict between the antebellum "Old South" and the postwar "New South." Instead of Gothic castles, Southern Gothic stories are set on plantations, in old slave quarters and in small, rural southern towns. Some of the most prominent Southern Gothic writers are William Faulkner, Truman Capote, Harper Lee, Tennessee Williams, Carson McCullers and Flannery O'Connor. The works of the latter two writers are particularly critical of the gender roles in the American South. As April D. Fallon explains, both McCullers and

O'Connor "shared disdain for […] the vision of the Southern Lady as an icon of purity, virtue, beauty, grace, fragility and obedience," a stereotypical image that "denies women complexity in their emotional and intellectual lives" (113–114). The female characters in Carson McCullers's fiction, the adolescent Mick Kelly in *The Heart is A Lonely Hunter* (1940) and Amelia Evans in *The Ballad of the Sad Café* (1951), are both masculine women/tomboys, who reject the southern lady ideal. Similarly, in Flannery O'Connor's short stories, the twelve-year-old protagonist in "A Temple of the Holy Ghost" (1954) and Hulga/Joy—an intellectual woman with a wooden leg and a PhD in philosophy—in "Good Country People" (1955) defy the gender expectations of their southern communities (Fallon 114–117).

SHIRLEY JACKSON'S FEMALE GOTHIC

Like the works of her predecessors and contemporaries, Shirley Jackson's novels and short fiction address women's concerns and reveal an underlying female desire to escape the familiar—in this case the constricting domestic environment of mid-twentieth-century America—and venture into unknown territories. Shirley Jackson was born in San Francisco on December 14, 1919 and grew up in the suburb of Burlingame, California, in a community whose prejudice, hypocrisy and wickedness Jackson explores in her first Gothic novel *The Road through the Wall* (1948). After she graduated from Syracuse University in 1940, she married a fellow student and future literary critic, Stanley Edgar Hyman, and settled in New York City. In 1945, Hyman became a faculty member at Bennington College, and Jackson and Hyman moved with their growing family to North Bennington, Vermont. In *Life among the Savages* (1953) and *Raising Demons* (1957), Jackson humorously chronicles her domestic life with her four children.

Jackson's first collection of short fiction, *The Lottery; or the Adventures of James Harris*, was published in 1949. The name of the title character James Harris, who is portrayed as a sinister presence, or a demon lover who haunts the female protagonists, alludes to the popular English ballad "The Demon Lover." In the ballad, Harris lures his former lover into embarking on a journey with him, promising an affluent life of happiness and love. In the middle of the journey, he reveals his true identity and confesses that their destination is hell, and destroys the ship. In Shirley Jackson's stories, Harris, who usually

wears a blue suit, signifies evil, insanity, the patriarchy, and the intrusion of the fantastic, unexplainable, and uncanny into reality. Jackson's short fiction explores subjects such as the moral decadence of society, hypocrisy, bigotry, jealousy, rivalry between individuals, hostility, hatred, violence, racism, and the interplay between reality and fantasy.

"The Lottery" examines mob mentality and cruelty of a rural community that adheres to corrupt traditions and superstitious beliefs that defy reason. The story begins on a bright June morning as the people of the village prepare for the lottery which takes place at noon in the town square. However, the peaceful atmosphere of the summer day gradually takes on a horrific quality. The lottery is conducted by Mr. Summers, who runs the coal business, and Mr. Graves, the postmaster, who provides assistance. The villagers use the same ancient, worn-out black box for the lottery each year, and slips of paper, equal in number to the village population, are prepared by Mr. Summers and Mr. Graves, and placed into the black box the night before the lottery. The person who draws the slip of paper marked by a black dot becomes that year's sacrificial victim.

The black box—even though it is not the original black box of the older days—symbolizes the community's bigotry and reluctance to give up harmful and meaningless traditions. According to Nebeker, the black box signifies "the dead hand of the past codified in religion, mores, government, and the rest of culture," and "the three-legged stool—as old as the tripod of Delphic oracle" on which it rests, emblematizes how "the present day box of meaningless and perverted superstition" is supported by "the body of unexamined tradition of at least six thousand years of man's history" (172–173). Tessie Hutchinson, whose last name immediately evokes the story of Anne Hutchinson (1591–1643), the Puritan female preacher who was banished from Massachusetts Bay Colony for her unorthodox beliefs, selects the slip with the black dot and is stoned to death. When Mr. Adams says to Old Man Warner that in the north village, people are talking of quitting the lottery, Old Man Warner dismisses the idea, thereby representing the danger of blind adherence to old conventions and the patriarchal fear of change and female resistance.

In addition to her short stories, Jackson wrote children's books and "enhanced her reputation as a literary sorceress" (*The Lottery and Other Stories,* Introduction vi) with her subsequent Gothic novels *Hangsaman*, *The Bird's Nest*, *The Sundial*, *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. Jackson died of heart failure on

August 8, 1965, and Hyman subsequently edited two collections of her previous works, *The Magic of Shirley Jackson* (1966) and *Come Along with Me* (1968). Jackson has influenced writers such as Stephen King, Neil Gaiman, Joanne Harris, Donna Tartt, and Joyce Carol Oates.

In "Experience and Fiction," Shirley Jackson explains her ideas and techniques regarding story writing. According to Jackson, "all experience is good for something […] a potential structure of words" (117). Turning experiences into stories involves "the practical application of magic" (117), or fusing the real experience with imagination. Jackson argues that even though stories are inspired by experiences, "There is certainly no need to worry about whether [the plot of a story] is true, or actually happened; it is as true as you make it. The important thing is that it be true in the story, and actually happen *there*" (122). Jackson emphasizes three points/guidelines that should be followed in the writing of a story. The first point is to avoid including characters and/or details that do not contribute to the story: "there must be some furthering of the story in every sentence, and even the most fleeting background characters must partake in the story in some way; they must be characters peculiar to *this* story and no other" (120). The second point is to be aware of the fact that the figures in fictional stories are characters, and not real people. For this reason, the author, she claims, must avoid lengthy descriptions of characters: "A person in a story is identified through small things—little gestures, turns of speech, automatic reactions" (120). The last point is to reject the notion that a particular, real event cannot be improved upon or turned into a story "because that is the way it really happened" (121). As Jackson states, "The only way to turn something that really happened into something that happens on paper is to attack it in the beginning the way a puppy attacks an old shoe" (121). For Jackson, there is always a way of turning a real incident into fiction by shaking and stretching it, or by turning it inside out, or outside in.

In Shirley Jackson's fiction, the female protagonists' haunted minds merge with the haunting of the Gothic settings. This uncanny dynamic governs not only the characters' actions, but also exposes the anxieties of 1950s and 60s white, middle-class, suburban American women who were discontent with the new cult of domesticity and who struggled to seek individual fulfillment outside of family obligations. As Betty Friedan expresses in *The Feminine Mystique* (1963), which marks the beginning of the Second

Wave of Feminism, the dissatisfaction that most middle-class women felt during this period was an outcome of their confinement to the domestic sphere, what they perceived as their limited options in life, and internalized gender biases.

Shirley Jackson's domestic humor writings, *Life Among the Savages* (1953) and *Raising Demons* (1957), illustrate Friedan's observations, focusing on housekeeping and childrearing as key female obligations, as well as "the disciplining gaze" (Shotwell 120) of the community as the root of suburban female discontent. *Life Among the Savages* is a semi-autobiographical collection of vignettes that comment on being a wife and mother in the late 1940s and early 1950s, and focus on the author's life with her husband and four children. Ruth Franklin explains that

> Like virtually all humor writing, *Savages* straddles the line between fiction and fact; it is autobiographical but not necessarily true. Shirley listened closely to her children's talk—she and Stanley loved to repeat their latest hilarities, and notes in her files show that she jotted down the children's best lines as inspiration. (*Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life*, epub)

The vignettes/short stories in *Life Among the Savages* depict how Jackson, her husband, their three-year-old son Laurie, and their infant daughter Jannie move to a small town in Vermont and turn their decrepit house into a home. The stories illustrate Jackson's role as a mother, a wife, and a woman by exploring the cult of true womanhood, and focusing on subjects such as the children's school and health problems, accidents, injuries, and their active imaginations. Jackson also describes seeking household help, and the competition among women to fulfill gender expectations as wives and mothers (Jackson, *Life Among the Savages*). In the first paragraph of *Life Among the Savages*, Jackson portrays the domestic sphere she inhabits by making use of Gothic imagery:

> Our house is old, and noisy, and full. When we moved into it we had two children and about five thousand books; I expect that when we finally overflow and move out again we will have perhaps twenty children and easily half a million books, we also own assorted beds and tables and chairs and rocking horses and lamps and doll dresses and ship models and paint brushes and literally thousands of socks. This is the way of life we have fallen into, inadvertently as though we have fallen into a well and decided that since there was no way out we might as well stay there and set up a chair and a desk and a light of some kind. (1)

As Dale Bailey explains, "Jackson depicts her domestic life as a metaphorical plunge into a well, a gloomy underworld illuminated solely by the desk and chair she associates with

her other self, the Shirley Jackson who finds spiritual sustenance in the movable feast of letters" (27). Thus, the opening paragraph reveals Jackson's struggle to reconcile the abyss of domestic chores with her literary aspirations. The sequel to *Life among the Savages*, *Raising Demons*, similarly focuses on constraining domestic and social circumstances, including the constant social scrutiny by neighbors and the push towards conformity. Each of the stories in *Raising Demons* is told by a first-person narrator who stands for the author and her (now) four children—Laurie (the oldest), Jannie, Sally, and Barry (the youngest child)—and describes the events that shape the family's decision to purchase and move into a new house. Jackson's domestic humor writings demonstrate that as a faculty wife, she is "presumed to have pressing and wholly absorbing interests at home, to which, when out, she is always anxious to return and, when at home, reluctant to leave" (147). Thus, in both her domestic humor writing and fiction, Jackson addresses "the problem that has no name" as articulated in Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, since domestic ideology and entrapment are the sources of the discontentment felt by the female characters she depicts. In these works, the patriarchy is the root of the haunted Gothic settings where the past and present, and the actual and imaginary co-exist, each imbuing itself with the qualities of the other.

In her novels, Shirley Jackson depicts female protagonists whose isolation and fragmentation are caused by past traumas as well as the conflict between communal demands and an individual desire to believe in magic or fantasy, and the yearning for freedom and romance. The characters' fragmented, haunted mental states, which are connected to the desire to seek refuge within a Gothic landscape or setting, emerge out of encounters with the hypocrisy, corruption, violence, and greed of patriarchal and materialistic communities. Thus, Gothic motifs appear as representations of both psychological (inner) and socio-cultural realities, and horror is employed both as a means of mystification and as a vehicle to convey facts. In Jackson's novels, the placement of the female characters in Gothic settings in which the protagonists try to transcend the limits imposed on them through transgressive tactics, is ultimately linked to social relations and gender issues. Perceiving the disparity between expected roles and what they desire to become, Jackson's heroines resist the predominant social and cultural order through subversive madness and Gothic fantasy.

As this dissertation will argue, some uncanny incidents related to madness and Gothic fantasy illustrate Julia Kristeva's theory of abjection, explored in *The Powers of Horror* (1982), which deals with the loss of the distinction between the self and the m/other, and leads to a breakdown in meaning that causes the human reaction of "horror" (1). The meaning of the word "abjection" is "throwing off"—expunging conflicting feelings that result from a condition of being in-between—occupying a liminal space of existence—or the contradictory sense of being same, yet different from the m/other. The individual wants to have a separate identity or existence "in order to be" (Kristeva 10) but, at the same time, s/he is both repulsed and lured by the thought of being engulfed by the mother or a Gothic other, and thus returning back to his or her origins of being. In the novels examined in this dissertation, "the abject" appears both as a Gothic double (an uncanny character/self that haunts the female protagonist) and as Gothic mansions which mirror the protagonists' selves and function as the abject of small-town America.

In line with aforementioned perspectives, this dissertation examines Shirley Jackson's contributions to the genre of Female Gothic and the function of Gothic landscapes and settings in stimulating or curtailing female characters' search for identity, and analyzes Jackson's deployment of Gothic tropes as vehicles for social criticism, especially in terms of the oppression of women within the domestic sphere and the stifling results of gender inequality. It will express how seemingly "normal" and familiar settings, such as the home, can become bizarre and grotesque by elucidating the way Gothic sites of horror can lead to madness and a loss of self. According to James Egan, "a substantial part of [Shirley Jackson's] work may be interpreted as either the expression of an idyllic domestic vision or the inversion of that vision into the fantastic and Gothic" ("Sanctuary: Shirley Jackson's Domestic and Fantastic Parables," 157). As this dissertation will exemplify, the domestic and the familiar eventually lead Jackson's characters to enter the "realm of the fantastic," in this context, her Gothic sanctuaries, or homes, are always "nihilistic, denials of escape from the Gothic maze, or endless processions of destructive illusions" (Egan, "Sanctuary: Shirley Jackson's Domestic and Fantastic Parables," 159–161). Moreover, by analyzing the function and meaning of the Gothic motifs in Shirley Jackson's novels, this study asserts the powerful social messages behind Jackson's works: Patriarchal ideology, violence, hatred, materialism, hypocrisy, malignance, and bigoted

social values of American dystopia are the source of female isolation, discontent, and demise.

Shirley Jackson's first novel, *The Road through the Wall*, focuses on a middle-class community in a fictional suburb called Cabrillo in San Francisco during the summer of 1936. Through a series of vignettes, the novel provides a glimpse into the daily lives of the families living on Pepper Street and gradually exposes the ills afflicting this community: bigotry, prejudice, racism, classism, anti-Semitism, jealousy, infidelity, selfishness, hatred, and violence. Unlike Jackson's subsequent novels, *The Road through the Wall* does not consist of a single story or plot, but is rather comprised of a number of stories about a multitude of characters including an old woman named Mrs. Mack, who lives in isolation in a cottage-like house, the well-to-do Desmonds, the Byrnes, the Roberts, the Jewish Perlmans, the Ransom-Jones family, the Donalds, the Merriams, the Martins, the Williams family, who live in a rented, ramshackle house, and Miss Fielding, an old single woman. Without any central character, the novel concentrates on the "the story of a group of people too self-centered to perceive the steadily growing evil in their midst, an allegory of the events leading to the rise of Hitler" and World War II (Nardacci 37). Even though *The Road through the Wall* is Shirley Jackson's most realistic novel, it deals with the subjects explored in her later psychological, Gothic-horror novels and in her short stories by focusing on the failure of the families, moral decadence, hypocrisy, betrayal, loveless lives, hostility and brutality. Thus, an exploration of the degradation of the human soul is what lies beneath the novel's social commentary.

In this novel, the demonic resides within the society; it brings about destruction and the tragic ending—the murder of a three-year-old girl named Caroline Desmond by a thirteen-year-old, dismayed, lonely, ostracized, and bullied boy named Tod Donald. Caroline Desmond dies by stoning, like Tessie Hutchinson does in a pointless, superstitious, cold-blooded ritual performed by the rural community in Shirley Jackson's short story "The Lottery" (1948), and Tod commits suicide by hanging himself in his room after he is interrogated by a policeman. Even though Tod is the murderer, a victim who transforms into a victimizer, the ending suggests that everyone is responsible for the deaths of the two children and that the hateful Pepper Street residents are the real guilty party.

The title of the novel, *The Road through the Wall*, refers to the breaking down of the brick wall which has separated the middle-class neighborhood from the wealthier district and the outside world. The destruction of the wall symbolizes the collapse of society, which shatters the illusion that Pepper Street is a refuge or safe haven. The series of vignettes provide glimpses into the houses and the people who live next to each other, and in many ways, the motifs, themes, and characters—e.g., the domineering, patriarchal mother Mrs. Merriam, who tries to control her daughter Harriet's personal life—of these realistic vignettes reappear in different guises in Jackson's later Gothic-horror novels. Like Tod Donald, the female protagonists of Jackson's later works, are social outcasts or alienated individuals with haunted minds who occupy haunted Gothic settings with which they identify themselves. In short, *The Road through the Wall* reveals the bias and dishonesty rampant in the morally bankrupt community and the characters' empty lives, and in American society at large. Her subsequent novels continue to explore the moral decay of human society and the aforementioned themes, yet unlike this first novel, the later works have a fantastic quality and unified plots that focus on central female characters.

The first chapter of this dissertation, "The Confrontation with Uncanny Selves and Initiation through Madness: Shirley Jackson's *Hangsaman* (1951) and *The Bird's Nest* (1954)," focuses on Jackson's psychological Gothic horror novels *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest* as a way to explore the impact of patriarchal oppression on the female protagonists' sense of self. *Hangsaman* traces the adolescent protagonist Natalie Waite's gradual descent into madness when she leaves home for the first time to study at college. The novel, which derives its title from a fifteenth-century folk ballad, "The Gallows Tree," and a Tarot card (the Hanged Man), is classified as a Gothic narrative of trauma that deals with the intermingling of the real and the imaginary. It narrates the story of seventeen-year-old Natalie, who attends a liberal arts college. At the beginning of the novel, Natalie is sexually assaulted by a visitor in the woods beyond her house during one of her father's literary cocktail parties. This tragic incident results in long-lasting trauma that she tries to repress; however, it returns to haunt her. After the incident, Natalie begins to feel lost, and becomes confused about her real identity and dissatisfied with the mundane reality around her. Jackson portrays Natalie as a girl who is out of touch with reality. Her mental confusion is intensified by her relationship with her mysterious girlfriend, Tony, who is implied to be an imaginary ghost or a demon lover that haunts

her and tries to seduce her in the dark woods outside the town. Tony gradually takes on the characteristics of Natalie's assaulter towards the end of the novel. Natalie's damaging relationships with her domineering egocentric father, who is portrayed as a snobbish literary critic and writer, her disillusioned mother, who is trapped in a loveless, unhappy marriage, and her dishonest English teacher and insincere peers at college add to her sense of alienation, and cause her to seek shelter within a fantasy world of her own making.

The Bird's Nest deals with the dissociative personality/identity fragmentation of the protagonist Elizabeth Richmond, a twenty-three-year-old young woman who lives with her domineering Aunt Morgen and works as a clerk at a local museum. Since her mother's death, Elizabeth has lived a routine, isolated life which culminates in her self-disintegration. The Owenstown Museum where she is employed is depicted as a Gothic setting with rotten foundations. Like Natalie in *Hangsaman*, Elizabeth struggles with the trauma of sexual assault: It is suggested in the novel that she was assaulted by her deceased mother's boyfriend, Robin, when she was a child. Her authoritative aunt, Morgen Jones, and her psychiatrist, Dr. Victor Wright, who is reminiscent of Dr. Victor Frankenstein, remain oblivious to the real nature of Elizabeth's pain, and try to make her domesticated and docile.

Elizabeth's tedious job at the disintegrating Owenstown Museum, which functions as a Gothic personification of her psychological collapse, catalyzes the dissolution of her identity. Elizabeth gradually becomes divided between the diverse aspects of her schizophrenic self, or her four distinct personalities. The bird's nest metaphor alludes to the question of whether or not Elizabeth and her personalities will be able to find a nest in which they can all dwell harmoniously. While Elizabeth is under hypnosis, Dr. Wright, who represents patriarchal medical authority, discovers and names each of Elizabeth's personalities with numbers: Elizabeth, the main personality, is named R1, while Beth, Elizabeth's kind, friendly, feminine and obedient side, Betsy, the tricky and childish alter-ego, and the money-obsessed Bess, are named R2, R3, and R4, respectively. Aunt Morgen and the doctor are critical of the Betsy and Bess personalities since they pose a challenge to their authority and refuse to conform to their rules. The personality named as Betsy or R3 tries to re-establish a connection with her deceased mother, or the mother archetype (home) to which most of Jackson's characters desire to return. At the end of the novel,

Elizabeth, re-named as Victoria Morgen, re-covers from her fragmented identity under the scrutiny of Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright. In the end, both Natalie and Elizabeth eventually return to sanity by re-deeming a unified sense of self and choosing to emerge out of darkness. Through uncanny selves and fantasy, they have resisted patriarchal domination, repression and coercion.

Chapter Two, "The Encounter with the Uncanny Leads to Isolation within the Gothic Mansion: Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial* (1958)," focuses on Shirley Jackson's fourth novel, *The Sundial*, which is a Gothic parody of "the apocalyptic imagination" (Parks, "Waiting for the End: Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial*," 75). It narrates the story of twelve desperate characters who are confined within the borders of the Halloran estate, waiting for the end of the world, or the apocalypse, as prophesied by a ghost. In the novel, Jackson not only offers a critique of the apocalyptic mindset "that sees only itself as being worthy of survival and salvation" (Parks, "Waiting for the End: Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial*," 87), but also depicts the Gothic house as a site where narcissistic struggles for power and authority parallel the major female characters' desire to possess a house of their own.

Orianna, the matriarch of the Halloran family, tries to exert control over the Halloran household after the funeral of her son, Lionel Halloran, who, according to his wife Maryjane, was pushed down the stairs by Orianna. Orianna tries to dismiss everyone from the house except her disabled husband, Richard Halloran, her granddaughter and heir, Fancy, and Aunt Fanny (Richard's sister), whose father's ghost warns her about the impending apocalypse, and informs her that only those sheltered by the Halloran house will survive. The occupants of the house eventually choose to believe Aunt Fanny's visions, and Aunt Fanny and Orianna enter into a power struggle that involves everyone in their immediate circle: the wheelchair-bound Richard Halloran, Essex, a young man hired to catalogue the library and Orianna's companion, Miss Ogilvie, who is Fancy's governess, a seventeen-year-old girl named Gloria, the daughter of Mrs. Halloran's cousin, and a stranger that Aunt Fanny picks up in the village and calls "Captain Scarabombardon." According to John G. Parks, "Most of these people share several important qualities. They fear and hate the world, and are unable to function independently within it. They have no clear sense of their future and grasp eagerly at Aunt Fanny's visions" ("Waiting for the End: Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial*," 80). At the end

of the novel, as the characters prepare for the expected apocalypse, Orianna's body is discovered dead on the landing, and Fancy, dashing down the stairs, takes the crown from Orianna's head to indicate that she is the new queen of the house, and does not need her doll house anymore. Thus, in this novel, the matrilineal order established by women appears as a replica of the patriarchal order; it is authoritarian and does not support equality or freedom.

The last chapter of this dissertation, "The End of the Journey: Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* (1959) and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* (1962)," explores the depiction of female characters whose isolation, loneliness, and inability to relate to an outside reality turn them into haunting heroines. Like in *The Sundial*, here the Gothic mansion functions as an illusionary or fantastic alternative to the hostile or dysfunctional outside world. In *The Haunting of Hill House*, Eleanor Vance, a thirty-two-year-old woman, embarks on a journey to the haunted Hill House after receiving an invitation letter from Dr. John Montague, an anthropologist who investigates supernatural phenomena. Dr. Montague's letter strengthens Eleanor's courage to leave the home she has shared with her unwelcoming older sister Carrie and Carrie's husband since her mother's death, and her tedious, isolated life. Eleanor is depicted as a lonely, alienated, and loveless young woman in search of affection and a sense of belonging. The narrator explains that Eleanor cared for her ailing mother for eleven years, and is feeling guilty about her death. Her journey to Hill House, where she meets with Dr. Montague, Luke Sanderson, the young heir of the house, and Theodora, a queer, young libertine woman, marks a new beginning in her life. Built by a patriarch named Hugh Crain, Hill House eventually subsumes Eleanor, who is still haunted by the memory of her dead mother. The house, which has an uncanny maternal quality, also responds to/mirrors Eleanor's mental confusion by means of haunting incidents that gradually lead Eleanor to lose touch with reality.

Together with Theodora, who is portrayed as Eleanor's double, Eleanor enjoys her time in Hill House, where she and Theodora create a subversive "queer" female bond and witness the same uncanny events. Yet, the house singles out Eleanor as the sole subject of its haunting through the mysterious writings on its walls, first written in chalk, and then written in blood, that urge Eleanor to "COME HOME," or become a part of the house. In the end, when Eleanor loses her sanity and begins to act like a ghost wandering

madly inside the hallways of the house, pounding on the doors, dancing, and climbing up the iron staircase inside the library in the middle of the night, Dr. Montague decides to send her away. Yet, she is reluctant or unable to leave Hill House and escape her unresolved feelings for Luke and Theodora. In the end, she crashes her car into a tree, thereby ending her life. In spite of the fact that Eleanor seems to have found resolution through death, it is unclear if her suicide is the result of her own will or supernatural causes. Hence, the incidents that haunt the characters eventually lead Eleanor to become a part of Hill House forever, as a ghost. Thus, ultimately, "Domestic ideology makes her believe she is free when in fact she is trapped" (Hattenhauer 160–161).

Shirley Jackson's last completed novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* focuses on the story of sisters Merricat and Constance Blackwood, who shelter themselves inside Blackwood Castle, which is a barricade against a biased and antagonistic society. Merricat is an eighteen-year-old witch-like, non-conformist girl who performs self-made spells to protect herself and her sister from outside intruders and the hostile village beyond the borders of the Blackwood estate. She enjoys the presence and company of her cat Jonas, buries objects around the house for protection, and makes up magic words. Unlike Constance, who is portrayed as the angel of the house, Merricat openly defies gender roles: she wears dirty and torn clothes, spends time in the woods, and dreams of settling on the moon with her sister where the locals cannot taunt her. The townsfolk have been hostile to the Blackwood family since the time Constance was accused of poisoning her parents, an aunt, and a younger brother with an arsenic-sugar mixture at dinner. They believe Constance has gotten away with murder, which was actually committed by Merricat, who resented her censuring parents and patriarchal family.

The Blackwood house, detached from the rest of the world and protected by Merricat's magic, is depicted as a Gothic mansion just like the Halloran house in *The Sundial* and Hill House in *The Haunting of Hill House*. Merricat becomes the sisters' sole contact with the outside world, as she goes to town twice a week for food supplies and library books. The two sisters live with their elderly and senile Uncle Julian, who has been confined to a wheelchair since the time of the poisoning, which caused his disability. They lead an isolated, peaceful life in the house until their Cousin Charles, a con-artist, appears with the intention of taking over the family mansion and fortune. Merricat is disturbed by

Charles's presence, and calls him a demon and ghost when he begins to court Constance in order to gain her confidence. In short, Charles, a patriarchal intruder, disrupts the female space Merricat has constructed with her sister.

When Uncle Julian dies in a fire caused by Merricat to dispel Charles, Merricat and Constance are forced to escape into the woods by the hateful villagers who loot and destroy the house during the fire scene. In the woods, the sisters find shelter under a tree where Merricat reveals that she poisoned the family twelve years ago. At the end of the novel, the sisters return to the destroyed Blackwood mansion and restore what little is left. The townsfolk, feeling guilty and afraid of the pain and destruction they have caused, begin to leave food on their doorstep. With Cousin Charles finally gone, Merricat and Constance live an isolated and invisible life within the Gothic house, which is turned into a fortress or a castle that represents the realm of the imagination (Merricat's imaginary house on the moon), and becomes a hideaway.

This dissertation will examine Shirley Jackson's neglected novels, which blur the boundaries between the self and the Gothic other, and the fantastic and the real, in order to emphasize her contributions to the Female Gothic and to illuminate women's struggles to transcend social roles, expectations, and conformity in the 1950s and early 1960s. In Jackson's fiction, Gothic landscapes, settings, and houses are depicted both as inescapable, enclosed, haunted structures, and as symbols of refuge within fantasy. In the end, not every character is able to leave the home (domesticity); most of Jackson's protagonists return to, or seek refuge in, the Gothic house in one way or another. However, in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, they eventually succeed in transforming the home into a castle ruled by women by dispelling the intrusion of the patriarchy and the hostile, hateful, malignant external world. Moreover, they subvert and destroy the patriarchal order from within. Hence, in Jackson's fiction, the real horror is not only within haunted Gothic settings or haunted minds, but also within the dystopic, predominant sociocultural order, or in the outside world (reality), at large.

CHAPTER 1
THE CONFRONTATION WITH UNCANNY SELVES AND INITIATION THROUGH MADNESS: SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *HANGSAMAN* (1951) AND *THE BIRD'S NEST* (1954)

After the publication of her first novel, *The Road through the Wall*, and the short story collection, *The Lottery and Other Stories*, Shirley Jackson focused on female protagonists who strive to escape the constricting, patriarchal institutions, the family, and the limited educational system. In particular, they seek refuge from the pervading sense of cultural conformity of mid-twentieth century America. In her second and third novels, *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest*, Jackson moves away from the narrative style of *The Road through the Wall* by employing Gothic and fantastic motifs to focus on the confused, fragmented heroines Natalie Waite and Elizabeth Richmond—both of whom descend into madness or move away from reality—in order to escape from their oppressive, stifling environments, unpleasant memories, and traumas (e.g., sexual assault).

Both Natalie and Elizabeth are haunted protagonists, who are pursued by their Gothic doubles: Natalie has an uncanny (most probably imaginary) and sinister girlfriend, who is like her alter-ego, or dark double, while Elizabeth is troubled by her multiple personalities. This chapter examines how the female protagonists in these two novels counter oppression and refuse to conform to the degenerate, degraded values that dictate the lives of the majority of characters around them, first through schizophrenia and fantasy, and then by emerging out of haunted minds or settings in their struggle to recover from split identities and become strong, independent, mature women.

1.1. SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *HANGSAMAN*

Shirley Jackson's second novel *Hangsaman* portrays the coming of age of the seventeen-year-old protagonist Natalie Waite, who leaves her home for the first time to attend an all-girls' liberal arts college. Like Jackson's other Gothic novels, *Hangsaman* blurs the line between reality and fantasy, and the conscious and the unconscious, in depicting Natalie's disillusionment with her patriarchal family and disorienting college, and her gradual mental breakdown and eventual recovery in her quest for freedom and her self. By confronting the source of her mental distress, Natalie eventually succeeds in

overcoming darkness and enlightening her path through her life as she makes the transition from adolescence into adulthood. Thus, as a psychological Gothic narrative of a young female protagonist's initiation, *Hangsaman* depicts Natalie's past traumas as inner demons that must be defeated in the course of her struggle to become an independent individual.

The novel is divided into three sections that trace Natalie's maturation. The first section describes the Waite household and Natalie's relationship with her family, particularly with her domineering, hypocritical father, writer and book reviewer Arnold Waite, and her mother Charity, who is trapped in a crumbling, loveless marriage. This section ends after Natalie is sexually assaulted in the woods near the house by a guest during one of her father's literary parties. The second section takes place at Natalie's college where Natalie becomes alienated from the phoniness and dishonesty of her peers and her English professor Arthur Langdon—Arnold's double—who is married to a former student named Elizabeth, a disillusioned and lonely girl who reminds Natalie of her mother. In order to alleviate her sense of isolation and loneliness, Natalie meets and becomes friends with a strange girl named Tony. In the final section of the novel, Tony appears as a fantasy character, straight out of Natalie's imagination, and eventually transforms into an antagonistic, sinister, demon lover who attempts to seduce Natalie in the dark woods outside an amusement park outside the city. Through Tony, Natalie relives the trauma of the sexual assault. However, at the end of the novel, she is able to defeat her antagonist/dark double Tony, who disappears into the dark woods. Natalie attains her personal integrity and independence by leaving Tony behind and returning to her college after a failed suicide attempt. In line with the genre of Female Gothic, *Hangsaman* documents the failure of institutionalized patriarchy as Natalie seeks self-fulfillment and self-expression, which counters the efforts of the characters who attempt to dominate her.

The title of the novel, *Hangsaman*, alludes to an American ballad, "The Maid Freed from the Gallows." As Wyatt Bonikowski explains, in the ballad, "a young woman about to be executed for an unknown crime" asks her family whether or not they have brought a ransom to buy her freedom from the hangman/the executioner (82). Neither her parents nor her siblings bring a ransom; they "only come to see her hanged" (Bonikowski 82). In the end, she finally notices her true love arriving with the ransom to free her. A stanza

from the ballad appears as an epigraph at the beginning of the first section of the novel: "Slack your rope, Hangsaman, / O slack it for a while, / I think I see my true love coming, / Coming many a mile" (*Hangsaman* 2). Like the young woman in the ballad, Natalie feels abandoned and lost until she creates Tony, her lover, who she thinks will free her. However, Tony eventually turns into a hideous, evil, entrapping seductress.

The first section of the novel introduces the members of the Waite family and begins with a scene in which the Waite household is having breakfast during a late summer Sunday morning. Mr. Arnold Waite, Natalie's father, is portrayed as the displeased patriarch and the indifferent, domineering intellectual authority of the family. As the novel begins, Arnold, sitting back in his chair, ridicules Mrs. Waite's religious beliefs. He alludes to a past conversation between Mrs. Waite and a three-year-old Natalie regarding God and creation. In it, Mrs. Waite explained to Natalie that "'God made the world, the people in it, and the weather'" (3). Arnold Waite makes fun of this statement with an air of superiority and hubris: "'Your God,' he customarily remarked to Mrs. Waite down the length of the breakfast table, 'has seen fit to give us a glorious day.' Or, 'Your God has seen fit to give us rain,' or 'snow,' or 'has seen fit to visit us with thunderstorms.' […] 'God,' Mr. Waite said this morning, and laughed. '*I* am God,' he added" (3).

Arnold Waite's profane remarks indicate that he is the first antagonistic, demonic character in a line of similar malevolent, deceitful antagonists from whose influence and domination Natalie desires to free herself. Rejecting faith, Arnold introduces himself as a self-proclaimed "deity," a patriarch who tries to dominate the household. Natalie creates a fantasy world of her own to escape from her father's dominion or the oppressive, undesirable reality around her, by living inside her mind. The narrator explains that

> Natalie Waite […] lived in an odd corner of a world of sound and sight past the daily voices of her father and mother and their incomprehensible actions. For the past two years […] she had lived completely by herself, allowing not even her father access to the farther places of her mind. She visited strange counties, and the voices of their inhabitants were constantly in her ear; when her father spoke he was accompanied by a sound of distant laughter, unheard probably by anyone except his daughter. (3–4)

Natalie creates an imaginary world within her mind as an alternative to the real world in which she lives. As Ruth Franklin explains, "Natalie escapes from this poisonous environment the only way she can—mentally" (*Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life,*

epub). She retreats from the outer reality to such an extent that the voices and actions of those around her appear indecipherable. The "distant laughter" she hears when her father speaks is suggestive of her increasing disagreement and conflict with him. Since she is still dependent on her father, she does not oppose him, but disobeys him in her imagination through the sound of the laughter heard only by her. As her father speaks, Natalie thinks of the days that await her—after three weeks, she will be at the college her father has chosen for her and she is worried about how she will adjust to her new home:

> Natalie was leaving for her first year in college a week after her [fifteen-year-old] brother went back to high-school; sometimes twenty-one days resolved itself into three weeks, and seemed endless; sometimes it seemed a matter of minutes slipping by so swiftly that there would never be time to approach college with appropriate consideration, to form a workable personality to take along. (4)

Natalie's fear of the college and her concern to form "a workable personality" reveal her insecurity regarding her identity, which culminates in her mental breakdown towards the end of the novel. She eventually becomes unsure of who she really is and even unsure of her name when she starts college. The gap between her actual self and how others perceive her results in her isolation from her family, her peers, and society. It also causes her to depend solely on her mind and the power of fancy.

Natalie also has an imaginary detective that lives inside her head, fading in and out of her consciousness throughout the first section of the novel. This head-detective first appears in Natalie's mind as Arnold and Charity argue about the details of a cocktail party Arnold will host in the garden to discuss literary works with his friends and neighbors. During the breakfast, Natalie's younger brother, Bud, refuses to attend the party and Natalie listens "to the secret voice" following her as her father and mother discuss the details of the preparations (5). She fantasizes that the detective is interrogating her about a murder that she imagines she has committed: "'How,' he asked pointedly, 'Miss Waite, how do you account for the gap in time between your visit to the rose garden and your discovery of the body?'" (5). The detective mirrors Arnold in that he constantly interrogates Natalie just like the way Arnold criticizes Natalie's writings in his study. Darryl Hattenhauer argues that the detective "is a double of her father the inquisitor" (104). He symbolizes both her father's domineering attitude and her desire for escape through fantasy. Natalie hears the voice of the detective whenever she gets disinterested and her environment becomes oppressive. Yet, her imaginative faculty does not provide the relief she seeks,

since her detective is an oppressive presence in her mind, like her family. Therefore, Natalie's imagination reflects the reality of her life even when it seeks to disregard or push aside reality.

As the family leaves the breakfast table, Arnold slides his napkin into a ring which is "composed of two snakes curiously and obscenely entwined" (7). The napkin ring represents Arnold's untrustworthy character and foreshadows the sinister events that will occur during and after his literary party. Before meeting her father in the study which has become her morning routine, Natalie wanders in the garden among the roses. The narrator explains that

> She did not prefer the garden to several other spots in the world; she would rather, for instance, have been alone in her room with the door locked, or sitting on the grass by the brook at midnight, or, given an absolutely free choice, standing motionless against a pillar in a Greek temple or on a tumbril in Paris or on a great lonely rock over the sea, but the garden was closest, and it pleased her father to see her wandering morning wise among the roses. (7)

The garden is a kind of private sanctuary for Natalie, fulfilling the function of the "several other spots in the world" she dreams about. Furthermore, Natalie's desire to please her father by walking in the garden indicates that her connection to her father is still strong at this point in the novel. During her walk, the detective's voice asks her, "'Do you think that you alone can stand against the force of the police, the might and weight of duly constituted authority, against *me*?'" (8). The detective's inquiry discloses Natalie's sense that patriarchy and all of humanity are conspiring against her to thwart her self-development and destroy her individuality. Natalie tries to assure herself: "I may be in danger every moment of my life, but I am strong within myself" (8). Her acknowledgement of inner strength enables her to avoid becoming like everyone else and heal her mental distress in the end, yet fails to protect her from the danger she foresees.

When Natalie greets her father in the study, she remarks that she has been thinking a great deal and Arnold answers, "'seventeen years behind you, the infinite sorrows of growing up on your shoulders—one *must* think'" (9). Natalie becomes puzzled by her father's statement, since she is unable to decide whether it is a sarcastic joke or not: "It was difficult, usually, to tell if his remark was a joke because it was a point of conduct with him not to laugh at his own jokes, and with herself the only audience Natalie had only her own reactions to depend on" (9). Thus, the narrator reveals Natalie's hesitation and

discomfort, as she is unsure about how to respond to her father's witty comments and endeavors to make a good impression. According to Hattenhauer, Arnold "is so concerned with wit, irony and complexity that he leaves his daughter confused as to whether or not he means what he says" (102). Arnold's answer makes Natalie ponder the nature of time and her past. She thinks to herself that "Seventeen years" is "a very long time to have been alive," and wonders what her life will be like "in seventeen years more": "She would be thirty-four, and old. Married probably. Perhaps—and the thought was nauseating—senselessly afflicted with children of her own. Worn, and tired" (9).

Natalie becomes horrified at the thought of her future, since she does not want to disappear into the cult of true womanhood and motherhood and the gender roles expected of her. In order to discard "the clinging thought," Natalie consults her "usual method" of "imagining the sweet sharp sensation of being burned alive" (10). Natalie's vision of self-destruction indicates her suicidal tendencies and the psychological despair caused by her isolated life and the lack of understanding in her family. After Natalie passes her notebook across the desk to her father, he peruses Natalie's writing, which he assigned her "to develop her talents as a writer" (Parks 71), and in which Natalie describes him as follows: "'He seems perpetually surprised at the world's never being quite so intelligent as he is, although he would be even more surprised if he found out that perhaps he is himself not so intelligent as he thinks'" (11). For Natalie, her father's preoccupation with intellectual subjects and logic makes him substitute "words for actions" (13). Arnold's intellectual snobbery repels his daughter and tries to diminish her self-confidence. Nardacci explains that his intention is "to make Natalie into an intellectual and emotional copy of himself" (57). Natalie desires to find her own voice, yet her father finds a fault in her almost every endeavor, and acts as if he knows the best.

When Arnold resumes reading the pages of Natalie's notebook after commenting on her writing, Natalie imagines that she has committed a murder in the study and left the corpse of the victim, possibly her father, "between the bookcase with the books on demonology and the window, which had heavy drapes that could be pulled to hide any nefarious work" (12): "She would be found at the desk, not five feet away from the corpse […] She would be unable to account for the blood on her hands, on the front of her dress, on her shoes

and the blood soaking through the carpet at her feet, the blood under her hand on the desk, leaving a smeared mark on the papers there" (12).

Natalie's visualization of the study as the Gothic scene of an imaginary murder not only reveals her rage against her father's interrogation and domineering, snobbish attitude, but also provides a means of escape. Criticizing her writing, Arnold remarks, "In the first place, I'm going to quarrel with your whole attack in regard to the problem of description. No description can be said to describe anything—and I have told you this before—if it is in mid-air, so to speak, unattached. It's got to be tied on to something, to be *useful*. You have apparently neglected this in today's work" (12).

According to John G. Parks, Arnold is "egocentric in the way he has created dependency in Natalie, evaluating her work, her thoughts and feelings, explaining and intellectualizing everything that happens to her, each stage she reaches" (71). After Arnold finishes his comments, he gives a lengthy speech about himself, accounting for the unbridgeable gap between himself and Natalie by explaining that a "'child, growing normally, passes through a stage when hatred of the parents is inevitable'" (14). Arnold acknowledges that since Natalie is at the peak of adolescence, a stage in which children defy and disobey their parents, he and Natalie cannot be honest to each other as they were before. Yet, Arnold fails to acknowledge his own failure to understand his daughter, who is left alone to deal with life's disillusionments.

Natalie's relationship with her desperate mother is also impaired by a lack of mutual support—they are unable to help each other and express what they want to articulate. On Sundays, after meeting with her father in the study, Natalie helps her mother in the kitchen to prepare food for her father's guests. In the first section of the novel, Jackson draws attention to the gender dynamics within the family: while Natalie is expected to help her mother with the party preparations and serve the guests, her brother Bud is free from any responsibility. Yet, the kitchen is the only place in which the mother and the daughter can communicate effectively and where Natalie learns from her mother's experiences. As the narrator explains,

> The kitchen was, in fact, the only place in the house that Mrs. Waite possessed utterly; even her bedroom was not her own, since her husband magnanimously insisted upon sharing it. He shared also the dinner table and the services of the radio in the living room; he felt himself privileged to sit on the porch and to use a bathtub.

> In the kitchen, however, Mr. Waite amusedly confessed himself "inadequate," and so Mrs. Waite, one day a week, was allowed a length of time unmolested except for the company of her daughter […] At any rate the kitchen alone with Natalie was the only place where Mrs. Waite talked at all, and probably because she talked so little elsewhere she made her conversation in the kitchen into a sort of weekly chant. (16)

In the excerpt above, the narrator clarifies that the gender roles within the family have separated women and men into two different spheres: while Arnold occupies the study and shares the other rooms, Mrs. Waite occupies the kitchen, the only room in the house that belongs totally to her, and in which she conveys her knowledge and experiences to her daughter. In the kitchen, Mrs. Waite and Natalie "are associated in some sort of mother-daughter relationship that might communicate womanly knowledge from one to the other" and Natalie thinks that her mother makes "the kitchen like a room with a sign saying 'Ladies' on the door" (16). During the kitchen conversations, Mrs. Waite talks about her past, and reveals her regrets and frustrations regarding her marriage to her daughter. She says to Natalie, "'See that your marriage is happy, child. Don't ever let your husband know what you are thinking or doing, that's the way'" (18). Mrs. Waite's advice to Natalie suggests that "Natalie has been absorbed into a system in which she, like her mother, denies her own voice and refrains from saying what she wants to say" (Hattenhauer 101). Even though Natalie learns from her mother, she is still trained within the discourse of patriarchy.

During lunch when her mother and father start "bickering" in the kitchen—her father infiltrates her mother's space—Natalie imagines that "she has been transplanted […] to an archeological expedition some thousand years from now coming unexpectedly upon this kitchen" (21). After the archeologists excavate the teakettle and the cook pot, Natalie ponders that on the third or fourth day of the excavation, someone among them may come across her own skull. In a scene reminiscent of Hamlet's discovery of Yorick's skull, the archeologist who finds Natalie's skull holds it in his hands and remarks: "'Look, here, at the teeth; they knew something of dentistry, at any rate—see, here's one filled, with gold, it appears. Had they any knowledge of gold, do you remember? Male, I should say from the frontal development'" (21–22). The archeologist in Natalie's imagination speaks using sexist language, since he thinks of "frontal [mental] development" as a male asset. As Hattenhauer argues, Natalie thereby "distances herself from her own intellectuality, which she has been conditioned into regarding as male" (107). She is so estranged from

reality and herself that she imagines herself as “an other” (the archeologist) who is examining Natalie (her own self) as “an other” (Hattenhauer 107). Natalie’s alienation is accompanied by existential questions signified by the thought of a skull as she searches for true direction, meaning, and love in her life.

Using the power of her imagination, Natalie also seeks solace in nature, particularly in the abovementioned garden, in front of the house, which is an external manifestation of the private sphere. The narrator mentions that Natalie regarded the garden “as a functioning part of her personality, and she felt that she was refreshed by ten minutes in the garden between the arbitrary pleasures assigned her by other people” (22). The merging of the character and the setting is a common Gothic technique that Jackson employs in her novels. In *Hangsaman*, Natalie thinks of the garden as a reflection of her own self. The scenery surrounding the garden, the view of the road and the fields below a cliff, and the mountains beyond stimulate a “poetic impulse” in Natalie, and make her recognize “her own capacity for creation” as she cries out silently, “‘Let me take, let me create’” (23).

According to Stephanie Patnychuk Bowers, Natalie has a “burgeoning desire to take on the role of self-creator” (52). She recognizes that “the gap between the poetry she wrote and the poetry she contained was […] something unsolvable” (23) and desires to bridge that gap by expressing herself fully and truthfully, without any restrictions or limits imposed on her creativity. Lying on the grass “with her cheek on her arm” (23) during a Sunday afternoon, Natalie fantasizes that she runs across the world with long legs, and imagines she is the first person to walk through an uninhabited country, “going up the mountains, and touching the still-wet grass with her hands” (24). She searches for a sister in the mountains, for someone who can understand her:

> The mountains, full-bosomed and rich, extended themselves to her in a surge of emotion, turning silently as she came, receiving her, and Natalie, her mouth against the grass and her eyes tearful from looking into the sun, took the mountains to herself and whispered, “Sister, sister.” “Sister, sister,” she said, and the mountains stirred and answered. (24)

Bowers argues that “the mountains, ‘full-bosomed and rich,’ provide Natalie that which her own mother cannot, welcoming her with an echo of ‘Sister, sister,’ they usher her into the mysteries of womanhood” (54). The mountains, thus, like the garden, mirror Natalie’s

personality and symbolize her desire to seek a companion who can understand her. Furthermore, the mountains represent Natalie's encounter with the sublime. Donna Heiland posits that "from their origin in the eighteenth century, gothic novels explored the workings of patriarchal politics through an aesthetic based in the subjective realities of sensibility and the sublime" (5). Contemplating on the sublime image of the mountains in the distance, Natalie desires to create her own female, gynocentric space through the sublime. Thinking of the mountains as a sister, she "femaleizes nature," yet, "female nature is already the territory of rape and killing" (Hattenhauer 114). The narrator mentions that when she was a child, she "delighted in playing pirate and cowboy and knight in armor among the trees" (22), which foreshadows violence and indicates that nature is not such an "innocent refuge" in *Hangsaman* (Hattenhauer 114).

Natalie's reverie is interrupted by her brother Bud, who informs her that her mother wants her to get dressed. Bud asks Natalie whether or not she really wants to join the literary party in the afternoon, and reluctantly offers to take her swimming instead. Natalie realizes that it is not possible for her to accept Bud's offer, since her father wants her to stay and her mother needs her help. Unlike Bud, Natalie's freedom to choose is limited by gender expectations. In spite of the fact that Natalie does not like her father's guests, about whom Bud speaks "contemptuously" (25), she is forced to greet and serve them.

After Natalie's parents make the last preparations for the afternoon—her father sets the books to be discussed in the small bookcase beside the window in the living room, and her mother prepares the food—the doorbell rings. The first guests are Verna Henson and her brother Arthur, the Waites's nearest neighbors. Arnold seats the guests on the lawn and introduces Natalie to Verna before he disappears to fetch a drink. During their conversation, Verna reveals that she changed her name, which used to be Edith, and urges Natalie to do the same in order to make a change in her life: "'You will be amazed at the difference a new name will make for you. Take Edith, for instance. Now, when I was Edith, I was coarse, and ugly, and thoughtless. I used to laugh very loudly. I used to accept people at their face value. […] But that was Edith, not Verna'" (29).

The dialogue between Verna and Natalie is pivotal to the central theme of the novel which is the discovery of one's essential self and self-realization. Verna encourages Natalie to unmask her true self by changing her name and defining herself on her own terms rather

than allowing others to define her: "'Little Natalie, never rest until you have uncovered your essential self. Remember that. Somewhere, deep inside you, hidden by all sorts of fears and worries and petty little thoughts, is a clean pure being made of radiant colors'" (29). With this statement, Verna advises Natalie not to act like somebody she is not, and suggests that Natalie should make her own decisions as she steps into adulthood.

After her conversation with Verna, Natalie, standing in the doorway beside her mother, hears the voice of the detective telling her that she "'must be very foolish to suppose that [she] can rely upon the generosity of strangers'" (31). The detective's interrogation foreshadows the danger or the traumatic incident of sexual assault Natalie will experience in the woods.

As more guests arrive and meet on the lawn, Natalie decides to help her mother to prepare and serve the refreshments. When she goes out onto the lawn to pass the plate of crackers with cream cheese, a man in a big chair intentionally causes her to trip over his feet and apologizes to Natalie that it is his fault. Her father, who notices this, asks her "'Daughter mine has anyone yet corrupted you?'" and introduces her to the man in the big chair by telling him "'*This* one is my daughter'" (33). Arnold's speech not only foreshadows Natalie's sexual assault but also indicates his dishonesty, unreliability, and the corruption of the crowd on the lawn, including her father, who seems to be an active participant in her loss of innocence. As Bowers argues, Jackson here gives

> a concisely disturbing portrayal of the group's social dynamics. That the corruption of young girls by Mr. Waite and his literary cronies seems to be a recurring theme of these gatherings is more than implied in the addition of the word "one" to Mr. Waite's introduction of Natalie. […] Mr. Waite seems to be offering her up as the evening's entertainment to his exalted guest, whose status is implied by the seat he has been accorded. (58)

The party scene illustrates Jackson's criticism of the corruption in human society and mob mentality explored in her other novels and short fiction. The man in the big chair is just another representative of patriarchy; he is one among many who are conspiring against Natalie. As a demonic antagonist, he plans to drive Natalie to self-destruction, rob her of happiness, joy, and her self.

Seeking relief from the crowd on the lawn, Natalie returns to the house and tries to console her crying mother in the bedroom. Mrs. Waite reveals her unhappiness to Natalie once

more and advises Natalie to be careful about whom she marries and warns her not to marry a man like her father. Furthermore, reminiscent of Verna's statements about uncovering one's true self, Mrs. Waite remarks, "'Everyone knows only one 'I,' and that's the 'I' they call themselves, and there is no one else that can be 'I' to anyone except that one person'" (35). Mrs. Waite wants Natalie to know the value of her own self and to be aware of her self-worth. When she promises to protect her daughter from "'the bad ones'" (36), the voice of her father intrudes in the background, coming from the foot of the stairs, asking Natalie to come down. Hearing Arnold's voice—the voice of a "bad one"—Mrs. Waite buries her head in the pillow and continues crying. Her father's voice makes Natalie sense "the preliminary faint stirrings of something about to happen": "The idea once born, she knew it was true; something incredible was going to happen, […] this afternoon, today; this was going to be a day she would remember and look back upon, thinking" (37). Absorbed in her own sorrow and helplessness, her mother is unable to help or protect her daughter.

Back on the lawn, Natalie sees her imaginary detective unbuttoning his jacket and telling her to go over the sequence of events once more (37). The detective begins to sound like a rapist foreshadowing the danger of the untrustworthy crowd and the man sitting on the big chair on the lawn. Seeing him "more clearly than she saw the people on the lawn" (37), Natalie realizes that the detective will continue questioning her till he gets an answer. Like the young woman in the ballad, "The Maid Freed from the Gallows," Natalie seems to be abandoned by her family. Thus, in the end, she "stands alone to meet her fate" (Bowers 61). When Natalie informs the detective that she has told him all she knows, she notices her father in the distance "leaning forward and smiling" as he spoke, "his arm carelessly around the waist of the pretty, dark girl" (37), who was sitting next to him. As Natalie witnesses her father's dishonesty and betrayal, a guest spontaneously begins to sing a song, and soon the others join in on the refrain "'*One is one and all alone and evermore will be so*'" (37). The refrain echoes Natalie's loneliness and her choice to remain an isolated individual. The entire scene gradually "takes on an otherworldly texture" (Bowers 61) and the crowd's singing creates a ritualistic atmosphere which hints at the climax of this section and Natalie's initiation at the end of the novel. According to Raymond R. Miller, the song is "another element of ritual Jackson is fond of employing along with action and dialogue in her fiction" (125). As this dissertation will illustrate,

Jackson makes use of ritualistic scenes to reveal the violence and moral degradation of mobs who follow unquestioningly and accept damaging mainstream beliefs and values.

As the people on the lawn continue to sing, Natalie suddenly finds herself stepping on the foot of the man in the big chair. He invites Natalie to sit in the empty chair next to him. Sitting next to the man, who appears to be much older than her, Natalie hears the detective's voice saying she is "very close to being in serious trouble" (38). Bowers explains that "voices both imaginary and real [reach] her simultaneously and at equal volume, and the repeated choruses of the 'one is one' song [provides] further distraction" (61–62). The detective alerts Natalie to the dangerous situation she is in as she talks with the stranger. The man remarks that he has heard from her father that she is "'quite the little writer'" (39). In response to this sarcastic comment, to "hurt him back" (39), Natalie replies, "'I suppose you probably want to write too?'" (39).

After a moment of self-contemplation, Natalie adds how wonderful she is—a self-affirming statement the man finds outrageous and wants to destroy. Just as Natalie starts to get up and walk away, he takes hold of her arm, finds another drink for both of them and leads her away from the crowd towards the dark woods. As they move across the grass, he takes on a demonic quality changing "so rapidly from one shadow, on the lighted lawn, to another shadow, in the dark garden," and asks Natalie what she thinks is so wonderful about herself (41). He sounds like the detective in her mind as he demands an answer from Natalie—another male antagonist seeking to dominate her. Natalie recalls playing "knights in armor" (42) among the trees as a child when they arrive in the darkness of the forest, where her childhood dreams are now shattered as the man tells her to sit on a fallen trunk. At that moment she wonders "'is he going to *touch* me?'" (43).

The next morning, when Natalie wakes up in her bedroom, she tries to forget the incident, promising herself not to think and talk about it, even though she is deeply affected by the event. Natalie buries her head in the pillow saying "half-loud, 'No, please no'" (43). She constantly says to herself that "'Nothing happened'" and thinks that eventually, it will not matter anymore: "Someday, she thought, it will be gone. Someday she will be sixty years old, sixty-seven, eighty, and, remembering, will perhaps recall that something of this sort did happen once (where? when? who?) and will perhaps smile nostalgically thinking, What a sad silly girl I was to be sure" (44).

Clearly, she represses the trauma and sinks into deep psychological despair. Looking at "her bruised face and her pitiful, erring body" in the mirror, Natalie realizes it is "the most horrible moment" of "any morning in her life" (44). Thus, in all likelihood, she will never be able to forget this attack on her body, her personhood, and her Self, and her painful memory will continue to haunt her for the rest of the novel. At breakfast, her family does not notice Natalie's pain and Natalie avoids telling them what happened. Her mother, father, and brother all look tired, lifeless, and aloof. Receiving no understanding or support from her dysfunctional family, she remains alone and seeks shelter in her inner world, where she retreats during her most difficult moments.

Natalie's college is not much different from the cold, dismal atmosphere of her home. A private women's college, "probably modeled after Bennington College where Stanley Edgar Hyman taught English" (Parks 73), the institution's educational philosophy provokes the narrator's criticism:

> The college to which Arnold Waite, after much discussion, had decided to send his only daughter was one of those intensely distressing organizations which had been formed on precisely the same lofty and advanced principles as hoarier seats of learning, but which applied them with slight differences in detail; education, the youthful founders of the college had told the world blandly, was a matter of attitude than of learning. Learning, they had remarked in addition, was strictly a process of accustoming oneself to live maturely in a world of adults. (47)

Yet, "the world of adults" the narrator mentions, is hypocritical and degenerated. Natalie feels out of place in this new world and is unable to relate to her insincere peers and fake friends. However, her square little dorm room with a bare bulb on the ceiling and only one window on the third floor provides her with the shelter and isolation she needs. Natalie thinks that she can do whatever she pleases in her room, write whatever she wants, draw pictures on paper, or even entertain herself, to "privately, [work] out her own salvation" (51). She alternately thinks of locking the door, moving the furniture, closing and opening the window, or going into the closet and hiding. The dormitory becomes a Gothic haunted house, almost alive in its own right, representing the "anthropomorphic treatment of physical surroundings," "a common trait in Jackson's writing" (Bowers 71)—In *The Haunting of Hill House*, for example, Hill House is also depicted as a living creature or Gothic monster.

Natalie feels “smothered by the room and her companions” (53) and, when asked her name by the other students, she wonders “Is it my name?” (55). Her feelings of insecurity about her name reveal her insecurity about her identity, which she is beginning to lose along with her hold on the dull reality around her. It also suggests that Verna’s advice—to recreate herself and her identity by changing her name—is increasingly becoming a possibility. When faced with groups of students, Natalie desperately wants to go to her room, her own private space where she is free from the phony people around her. Yet the room is also anything but a safe and peaceful refuge.

On her second night at the college, Natalie is awakened by a knock on her door at three o‘clock in the morning, and hears a voice calling “‘initiation’” down the hallway. When she opens the door, she finds the hall lights on and the hall full of other “nervous, curious” girls wearing bathrobes (57). She soon realizes that all the freshmen will undergo some sort of initiation ritual by older students wearing masks. The girl leads Natalie to a room where she is forced to take her place among the other freshmen sitting in a semi-circle on the floor. The narrator then describes the nonsensical “initiation” ceremony which, much like the yearly sacrifice in “The Lottery,” is a “ritual gone to seed” (60), practiced without any real interest or purpose, unquestioningly performed out of an obligation to comply with tradition, rather than out of necessity. The older students ask the freshmen questions like “‘Are you a virgin?’” and want them to tell “‘a dirty joke’” (60). When it is Natalie’s turn, she assumes the stool and says her name wondering once more if Natalie is her real name. Refusing to give an answer to the question of whether she is a virgin or not, she courageously resists being defined by the others around her and conforming to their values.

Here, the girls’ questioning reveals their internalization of patriarchal ideology and degradation. In this context, Natalie’s resistance and her rejection of “the pointless ritual,” becomes a mature response and “a moral victory” (Bowers 75). As she leaves the room, Natalie wants the other girls to do the same and “prays to the girls still sitting in the ring,” “follow me, stand up, and a new world is made” (63). Hence, for Natalie, real initiation requires disobeying the faceless crowd wearing masks and what they represent: senseless mob mentality, violence, corruption, hostility, and hatred.

Following the meaningless initiation ritual, Natalie returns to her room, her own private sanctuary, alone. She writes a letter to her father, informing him about her life at college, her classes and peers, and her first impressions—the letters to and from her father intercut the narrative in the middle section of the novel. After she writes the letter, Natalie is lost in her own thoughts, her hand resting on the English textbook before her as she contemplates the dark outside:

> [T]he one window of Natalie's room showed black when she had the light on, and pale when she had the light off. When the light was off the room was beautiful and shadowy, with the light from the window moving gently onto the bright bedspread, touching slightly the paper on the desk, coming to rest on Natalie's own hands and the page of the open book before her. When reluctantly, she turned the light on again—feeling that to seem to be abed at this hour was somehow disgraceful, and indicated perhaps guilty conscience or perhaps even loneliness—the window fell back and the bed became square and neatly made, and the corners of things became then apparent, from the corners of the room to the corners of the book, and the feet of the desk on the floor were somehow obscene. (65–66)

While the dark room represents romance, the faculty of imagination and fancy, the lighted room represents mathematical precision or rationality. The contrast between the light and the dark also symbolizes the increased blurring of the boundaries between reality and imagination/illusion within Natalie's haunted mind.

A knock on her door prompts Natalie to contemplate the function of doors. She stumbles off her bed in haste and finally remembers how to open the door by turning the key. Here, Natalie's thoughts and delayed actions reveal her inner turmoil and confusion, all of which will culminate in her mental decline. Opening the door, she comes face to face with Rosalind and the sinister hallway or "the world outside," appearing as if "it had not been prepared tonight for Natalie to open her door again" (67). The depiction of the hallway as ominous appears as "another example of Jackson's unbridled delight in attributing sinister motives to the inanimate world" (Bowers 81). Rosalind reveals that the other girls think Natalie, a non-conformist, is crazy, since she prefers to stay in her room all the time rather than join the group. Natalie remarks, "'What they think is actually not at all important'" (69), because unlike her peers, she does not care about the opinions of others. Rosalind gossips about the more popular girls in the dormitory and what she considers to be their "loose" sexual morals. She talks about a girl who had an abortion, and tries to become friends with Natalie by telling her that "'I know about *me*, and I guess about *you*'" (70). Natalie becomes disturbed by Rosalind's statements, thinking to herself that

"here was this hideous girl attempting an alliance on the grounds that Natalie was—what? Was there a word? (Innocent? Who was innocent—this girl with her nasty eyes? Chaste? Chaste meant no impure thoughts" (70). She spurns the friendship of this seemingly insincere, untrustworthy person by bravely choosing to remain alone. In this way, Natalie begins to form her own moral code, yet becomes increasingly alienated and dependent on "her own sweet dear home of a mind, where she was safe, protected, priceless" (69). Her solution to trauma and alienation is to seek shelter within her imagination or her mind; eventually, she will have no one to trust but herself.

After Rosalind's departure, Natalie writes in her secret journal addressing herself. Her writing reveals the gradual fragmentation of her identity and mental distress. In her journal, she writes,

> Don't worry, please, please don't, because worrying might spoil it, because if you worry it might not come true. Somewhere there is something waiting for you, and you can smile a little perhaps now when you are so unhappy, because how well we both know that you will be happy very very very very soon. Somewhere someone is waiting for you, and loves you, and thinks you are beautiful […] you will come there, someday, and the gates will open and you will pass through, and no one will be able to come unless you let them, and no one can even see you. Someday, someone, somewhere. Natalie please. (72)

In her journal, Natalie speaks to herself in the third person, as if she were speaking to someone else, which indicates not only her loneliness, but also the fact that she is her only true companion. Yet, she is still hopeful about the future when she will finally emerge out of her darkness and become a strong and independent woman. Her dream of passing through a gate symbolizes her rite of passage into adulthood. Furthermore, it represents her desire for freedom, attained by entering a personal, magical place/landscape of her own where no one can find her.

Without any real friends, Natalie tries to focus on her course materials for her intellectual development. In her philosophy class, the lecturer Mr. Desmond, a PhD candidate, delivers a speech about perfection. When he declares "'*nothing* in the world exists in a perfect form,'" to explain Plato's Theory of Forms. The girl next to Natalie asks, "'How about a vacuum? […] I mean that's perfect isn't it?'" (73). As the discussion continues, Natalie hears the voice of philosophers in her head, like she heard the voice of her imaginary detective: "Plato leant to Descartes, Dewey asked Berkeley, '*What* did she say?

What *was* it?' the learned teachers of philosophy all raising their eyebrows and smiling at one another, telling one another perhaps, 'Science…science'" (73). Whenever she becomes bored or loses interest, she creates fictitious, amusing mental scenes to entertain herself. In a history of music class, she becomes disappointed by her teacher's response to her question about his interpretation of a musical composition, and in the end, her frustrations cause her to seek fulfilment elsewhere, even if it is only in her mind.

Soon after, Natalie meets Elizabeth, the wife of her English professor Arthur Langdon, whose name sounds like her father's name, Arnold. Elizabeth invites her to their faculty home on campus and as they are sipping cocktails, Natalie learns that Elizabeth, who is a few years older than her, is Langdon's former student. She quit school to get married and is unhappy in her marriage, just like Natalie's mother. Shunned by the other faculty wives and students, she is lonely and in need of a companion. Like Natalie's mother, Elizabeth is trapped in a loveless marriage, and their conversations resemble the intimate kitchen conversations Natalie had with her mother. After Arthur Langdon arrives, Natalie mentions that in class that morning, he reminded her of her father, who is regarded as an accomplished critic and writer even though he has written only one book. "With a modest laugh," he tells Natalie to inform her father that he has used some of "'his stuff in [his] advanced classes'" (84). Arthur's statements, language, and demeanor are so reminiscent of Arnold that, eventually, they appear not as two distinct characters, but as copies of one another. Like her father, Arthur is followed by two female students named Vicki and Anne, who intend to seduce him. Natalie discovers that, like her father, Arthur's real interest is flirting with women, not writing, research and teaching. Vicki and Anne, who seem to hate Elizabeth, make Natalie uneasy and she begins to feel sorry for Elizabeth, who, like her own mother, needs Natalie's support. As disillusioned young women, they eventually form powerful bonds of sisterhood. While Natalie seeks to escape from the ugly reality around her through fantasy, Elizabeth seeks solace in alcohol (Bowers 100).

Even though Natalie, like a naive adolescent, initially admires Arthur Langdon, she later becomes disenchanted after she visits him in his office. Standing timidly in the doorway to his office with her lipstick on and hair combed, he at first acts aloof, as if he does not notice her. Natalie finds her ensuing conversation with him about her existential fears of death and writing uninspiring. When Arthur asks her what she is thinking, Natalie answers

that she has been thinking about death and reveals her fear of losing her conscious mind at the time of death. As Bowers explains, “it is not the loss of physical body she dreads, but the sudden decline of that which is far more valuable to her, the seat of her ‘essential self’” (90). Arthur remarks that Natalie has a very original mind, yet he does not truly understand her concerns, but is just humoring her until he gets what he wants. Like the man sitting on the big chair at her father’s party, he asks if she wants to become a writer like her father. The question irritates Natalie who responds: “‘Look,’” “‘why does everyone say they’re going to be writers? When they’re not? I mean, why do you and my father and everybody say ‘to be a writer’ as though it were something different? Not like anything else? Is there something special about writers?’” (103). Arthur mentions the “creative” aspect of writing, and Natalie asks: “‘But why is it so important, this creating?’” (103). Unable to provide an answer, Arthur ends the conversation telling Natalie that “some other time, we can sit in the darkness under an oak tree and tell one another vast truths” (103). Thus, Arthur Langdon eventually sounds like Arnold Waite speaking to Natalie in his study, and the man in the chair who led her to the dark woods.

Natalie soon discovers that Elizabeth almost killed herself with her cigarette, which had fallen from her hand onto the couch in her sleep. Even though Elizabeth acts like it was an accident adding that it has happened before, it is evident that she has suicidal tendencies that resemble Natalie’s vision of being burned alive. Natalie becomes disillusioned with the pretentious Arthur once more when she, Arthur, and Elizabeth meet for cocktails one afternoon in Vicki’s and Anne’s shared dorm room. Natalie acts like an assistant hostess to Vicki and Anne, and prepares crackers with cream cheese as she did for her father’s party. As Arthur and Elizabeth enter the room, Arthur remarks to Anne that she has “‘changed things around,’” “thus committing with a grand unconsciousness his first magnificent blunder of the afternoon” (122–123) giving away “the secret that he has been there before” (Hattenhauer 105). At one point in their conversation, they talk about Natalie’s letters to her father and her writing talent. Elizabeth says “‘I suppose that sort of thing is all right to do until you’re married,’” and Anne adds that Natalie will be “‘too busy doing housework’” (126) and will not have enough time to write after she gets married. Both Elizabeth and Anne reveal their internalization of sexism and gender roles, which is the source of Elizabeth’s dissatisfaction with her life and the root of her unhappy marriage.

Identifying with the now drunk Elizabeth, Natalie thinks, "I suppose that any mind like mine, which is so close, actually to the irrational, and so tempted by it, is able to pass the dividing line between rational and irrational and communicate with someone drunk, or insane, or asleep" (130). As they get Elizabeth out of the door and down the stairs, Natalie, feeling Elizabeth's arms around her, thinks of Elizabeth as her unconscious self: "how dreadful and horrifying it is to have no choice at all about the swinging arms and legs that enwrap you, how sickening to be aware and to know that the unconscious one does not even see that it is you she is embracing" (131). Walking across the campus in the darkness alone, Natalie and Elizabeth are like two sisters embracing each other. When Elizabeth confides to Natalie that she wants to die, Natalie, "For some reason she never knew," begins to think of "the trees ahead, of how she and Elizabeth could go from tree to tree across the campus, holding onto each other until they have recovered themselves" (133). Hattenhauer argues that "The reason why she thinks of trees while embracing Elizabeth is that Natalie associates trees [and the darkness] with her sexual assault" (106). Thus the embrace could represent the desire for safety and shelter, or even latent lesbian desire. Furthermore, her dream of playing among the trees with Elizabeth could also reveal her longing for the childhood, or innocence, she has left behind.

Approaching the Langdon house, Natalie suddenly imagines that she is Arthur holding Elizabeth:

> Suppose I were Arthur, she thought, unwillingly, and suppose I *wanted* to do this […] And suppose she were one of my students and I wanted badly to marry her […] And suppose, suppose, only suppose, that in the darkness and in the night and all alone and under the trees, suppose that here, together, without anyone ever to know, without even so much as a warning, suppose in the darkness under the trees . . . (134)

Hattenhauer argues that "Natalie thereby identifies with the assaulter, a not uncommon response by victims of sexual abuse" (106). For a moment, by imagining herself as sexual abusers—the man in the chair and Arthur—she removes herself from her own victimized position and dominance by others. When they arrive at the house, Natalie puts Elizabeth to bed, kissing her on her forehead, adding "'Good night darling'" (135). Here, there is also an oblique suggestion of queer love between Natalie and Elizabeth, a subject which also emerges in *The Haunting of Hill House*.

This theme of victims/victimizers and the sexual domination of younger women by older men is also apparent in a letter Natalie reads from her father, who refers to her as "My dear captive princess," and himself as her "knight," inviting her to spend a week at home (136):

> It is as much as any knight can do, these days, to keep in touch with his captive princesses, let alone rescue them. For one thing, I find my armor much too tight; it has rusted since I last wore it in combat, and cannot for the life of me remember where I last saw my sword. I think of you, princess, languishing in your tower, peering anxiously forth from the narrow windows […] I am not quite sure, moreover, how to attack the dragon which guards your towers; does he ever sleep? Can he be bribed? Drugged? Enticed away? Or must I fight him, after all? Or, worse still, *is* there a dragon? You are surely not confined only by magic? I positively will *not* battle a sorcerer. (136–137)

Arnold's analogies disclose his desire for domination, which Natalie rejects. Instead of being the princess waiting to be rescued by a male knight, she wants to become her own rescuer as a strong and independent woman. As Helene Meyers explains, in contemporary Female Gothic, "the passively feminine woman who expects a man to save her is, most likely, a goner […] Relatedly, the heroic capabilities of men are undercut or altogether destroyed" (23). To attain her freedom and heal her psyche, Natalie must free herself from Arnold, Arthur, and the man sitting on the big chair.

In his letters, Arnold Waite also informs Natalie that she has "a double responsibility" for his existence and for her own existence (118), a comment that connects them through a grotesque, if not incestuous, umbilical cord. Angered by his godlike tone, making proclamations for his daughter, Natalie rejects his invitation to spend a few days at home on the grounds that she has to write papers for her classes. By declining her father's offer, Natalie rejects patriarchal authority and Arnold's influence as she steps into adulthood. At the end of her letter, Natalie mentions Tony for the first time, and her desire to meet and become friends with this strange girl she thinks she has seen around the campus. Thus, in her journal, Natalie creates Tony, a (most likely imaged) personality in her life, and possibly a piece of her increasingly fragmented identity, whom she expects to meet soon. It is clearly stated that Tony is a girl, indicating her underlying queer desires; however, the androgynous name "Tony" also suggests her wish to subvert gender roles and male domination.

In the middle of the night, Natalie is awakened by the soft whispering voice of an unidentifiable figure that urges her to wake up and hurry. She hears a giggle in the room as she searches for her bathrobe and slippers in the dark. The figure tells her "'You don't need your *bath*robe, come *any* old way. I'm naked—but hurry'" (139). Grabbing Natalie's hand, and "pulling her firmly" (139), she leads Natalie out of the door into the dark hall with all the lights turned off and down the stairs. She talks about nameless fantastic creatures that come to her, and wants Natalie to hear them from behind the walls in her room; and speaks of a little girl who visits her with her "'lovely, little [toy] animals'" "'like birds, or squirrels'" (140), and who sleeps in her bed and draws lovely pictures on the wall. Once they are in the dark hall downstairs, the figure leads Natalie to a door showing light as she calls "'Little girl? Little girl?'" (141). Inside the room, she searches for the little girl and tells Natalie to sit on the floor next to the wall and listen to the elf-like creatures. Natalie notices the stolen items of her peers inside the lighted room, and it seems to be the implication that if the naked ghost figure is a product of hallucination, Natalie herself may have stolen the items while sleepwalking or dreaming.

As the naked figure looks for the little girl in the room, Natalie escapes and shuts the door behind her. Yet, she continues to follow Natalie in the hall until Natalie reaches the front door of the house and escapes into the darkness of the night outside. Running barefoot on the grass with her pajamas under the trees, Natalie notices a figure in the moonlight approaching her, and soon realizes that it is the girl Tony. Natalie's uncanny experience reveals the confusion she feels as an adolescent entering adulthood and her longing for her lost childhood, as the nameless figure in her vision searches for a little girl, possibly, the suppressed inner child within Natalie. The nakedness of the figure, reminiscent of the Biblical Eve before the fall, represents childhood innocence, yet it is also suggestive of Natalie's sexual initiation as she steps into womanhood.

Natalie meets Tony on the porch of the Langdons' house, having escaped for a moment from a talk given by Arthur at a literary gathering hosted. Sitting on the porch, she thinks of the trees again and ponders that she would not be surprised if one of the trees demonstrated that it was not rooted and came towards her, "it was an odd night, anyway, and the day after tomorrow she should be going home for a while [for Thanksgiving]" (148). All of a sudden, she sees Tony, and asks her if she too is invited to the literary

gathering. When Tony answers that she is not, Natalie asks, "'Would you go if you were invited?'" Tony responds, "'That depends on where I was invited to go'" (148). Tony appears to be saying the words Natalie wants to say herself, thereby revealing her inner feelings and thoughts. After Tony leaves, Elizabeth arrives to look for Natalie and remarks that she thought she saw Natalie with someone. In this way, Jackson confuses readers by making Tony's existence ambiguous. The reason why Elizabeth is able to sense the presence of someone talking with Natalie is that she is the only one who can understand Natalie, just as Natalie is the only one who can understand her, as the two seem to have access to one another's unconscious. In accordance with Todorov's terminology, Tony can be called "fantastic," since she can neither be described as totally "uncanny" nor "marvelous" at this point in the novel.

Natalie speculates that her whole life and the world in which she lives may be a dream. She believes that she might be someone else who is seeing a dream about being a college girl named Natalie Waite, thus, as Bowers argues, she "finds herself questioning her very existence" (104). She is not sure about who she really is or whether or not she has an identity. Suspecting the reality of her life as a college girl named Natalie Waite and the present world in which she lives, Natalie wonders,

> this particular portion of her dream might be condensed, only a fleeting shorthand scrap of words to be remembered later as a whole conversation; it was this which brought her abruptly to a perception that if she were dreaming her room and her words, she might well be dreaming her world, and so when she awoke she might say, amused to the nurse, to the girl in the room next door, to the police, "Listen to what I dreamed; I dreamed there was war; I dreamed there was a thing called television; I dreamed—listen to this—that there was something called an atom bomb—I don't know; I tell you I *dreamed* it." (151)

Natalie's existential crisis and her suspicion that her whole life might be a dream is reminiscent of the theme of Edgar Allan Poe's poem "A Dream within a Dream" (1849), at the end of which the poet ponders, "Is *all* that we see or seem / But a dream within a dream?" (20). The poem ponders the question of human existence, time, perception, and reality, much like Natalie does. Natalie is afraid that if her life is a dream dreamed by somebody else's mind, and that she has no control over it. Her obsession to write her name crazily on her books, clothes and on sheets of paper is an outcome of her fear of losing her Self, as well as her fear that "Natalie Waite" will be gone when she awakens from the dream. She is stunned at "the sound of her own name" (152) whenever it is said

aloud. Her confusion about her name represents her struggle to define herself as she tries to cope with her anguish and inner turmoil.

Natalie's brief visit to her family for Thanksgiving turns out disappointing. On the bus, she thinks about how to greet her father, who meets her at the bus stop. On Friday morning, Natalie meets her father in the study as she always has before. When Natalie mentions that she is not doing very well at school, thereby revealing her mental distress, Arnold advises,

> "This attitude of yours is one requiring only a slight, although basic, change in viewpoint to become a valuable and constructive state of mind, and the sooner you adopt this change in viewpoint, the sooner you may become a profitable member of society. There is—and *please* believe me—no vital change in personality involved. There is, as a matter of fact, not even any pain. You have only to shift perhaps a quarter turn to the northeast, and your problems will be gone. […] perhaps you feel that you are doing badly these days because you do not perceive that you are, in fact, doing very well indeed, and only lack the perception of your own worth to know exactly *how* well. Perhaps, Natalie, if I remind you what a worthwhile person you *are*, it will give you the quarter turn you need. (159-160)

Even though Arnold's advice appears to be encouraging on the surface, his language is vague, distant, and full of abstractions. He reminds his daughter of her own self-worth, recommending that she change her perspective, yet takes Natalie's despair lightly as he mentions that he does not think "'two months [the time Natalie has spent at college] out of seventeen years could destroy'" her (160). Natalie feels an instant urge to defy her father, pounding on the desk before him and shouting "'What do *you* know?'" (160) to counter his patriarchal intellectual authority, yet avoids doing so.

Natalie and her mother are also unable to communicate properly as they sit in the living room on the Friday afternoon before Natalie's departure. Her mother asks, "'So you're not staying for dinner,'" Natalie, sitting before the fireplace, answers, "'I'd better get on back'" (162):

> She knew that behind her, her mother had set her needle down soundlessly in the cloth and was resting her hands on the arms of the chair, staring over Natalie's head into the fire; Natalie felt rather than heard her mother draw breath to speak, and then resign it. […] Her mother had almost said "Natalie, are you happy?" and Natalie had almost said, "No;" her mother had almost said, "Everything seems somehow to go badly," and Natalie had almost said, "I know it and I can't help it;" her mother had almost said "Let me help you," and Natalie had almost said "What can *you* do?" and that had been the nervous movement of her head that her mother had recognized and which had silenced her before she ever spoke. (163)

As Natalie bids farewell to her family, it is implied that Natalie wants to return to college "not for studies, but for Tony" (Nardacci 78). Taking her still-wet raincoat, which symbolizes her desire to be on her way, she leaves home. Natalie is glad to leave behind her father's domain and dominance, and falls asleep on the bus, cherishing her individuality, and reflecting on the nature of time.

Rejected by Rosalind, Natalie decides to go to Tony's dormitory. On the way, she encounters Arthur Langdon, who informs her about the so-called happy news of Elizabeth's pregnancy. At this point, Natalie engages in a daydream. She imagines that she is a giant and the owner/creator of the land and people, with the power to order the landscape as she pleases:

> She stopped for a minute, surveying her country with interest and with tolerance; she was infinitely tall and these tiny buildings—although scaled to exact measurements: a tenth of an inch, perhaps to a foot—had been set up by her own hands, furnished, and peopled with the small moveable dolls she had herself created, planning with care and perhaps not entirely wisely the numbers of their arms and legs and the location of their heads. Perhaps tomorrow she thought, when it is light, I shall consider moving all the trees together to make a real forest at one end of the campus. […] Perhaps tomorrow I shall pick up one of the houses, any one, and holding it gently in one hand, pull it carefully apart with my other hand, with great delicacy taking the pieces of it off one after another […] and I shall eat the room in one mouthful, chewing ruthlessly on the boards and the small sweet bones. (173–174)

Natalie's reverie discloses her desire for empowerment and her disdain for the world as it is. Jackson's female heroines tend to regard the outside world and the people who live in it as fake, preferring instead the sanctuary of the imagination. Natalie's urge to destroy the houses and the people (the dolls) inside is similar to the characters' belief in an imminent apocalypse in *The Sundial*, which will be studied later in this dissertation.

The building in which Tony resides is designed in an embellished rococo style which contrasts with the classical architectural style of Natalie's undecorated dormitory (Bowers 111). The rococo style stands for the color and enthusiasm Tony brings into Natalie's life, since Tony represents Natalie's search for freedom and love. As Natalie walks along the corridor to Tony's room, the girls on the floor talk behind her back and make fun of her. When Natalie finally enters the room and shuts the door safely behind her, she still hears their voices as they gather behind the door to listen to them. Nardacci explains that the girls represent the "symbolic, self-righteous group [appearing] in several guises in Shirley Jackson's work, but is always searching for a scapegoat to hide its own sins" (81).

Moreover, Tony's and Natalie's friendship disrupts the heteronormative, conformist values of the other girls. Once Natalie is inside Tony's room, she and Tony talk about Natalie's brief visit to her family:

> Natalie said, "I'm sorry, I really am. I came to say I was really, terribly sorry. I shouldn't have gone, and I'm sorry."
> "I'm never *really* angry with you anyway," Tony said.
> "It was horrible," Natalie said.
> "I told you they would be. Did they hang on you?"
> "They were all there. Even my brother."
> "They fed me," Natalie said "They didn't do anything else *except* feed me, I think. May I come in?" (177)

Thinking of Tony as a true sister, the only one who can understand her, Natalie initially fails to perceive Tony's sinister motive to control and possess her. She confides in Tony, articulating her disillusionment with her dysfunctional family; her family feeds or looks after her, yet, there is no love involved in their relations, actions and language. The starvation thus is not physical but spiritual. Her question "'May I come in?'" indicates her desire to enter Tony's world by leaving the outside world behind her.

Tony is portrayed as a witch-like girl living in isolation. Inside the room, Natalie finds Tony playing with Tarot cards on her bed. Natalie likes the card named "the Magician" and thinks that the face on the card resembles her own face. According to Hattenhauer, Natalie is attracted to the card, because the Magician "is a figure common in the empowerment fantasies of the disempowered" (109). The picture on the Magician Tarot card depicts a figure with one hand pointing to the sky and one hand pointing to the earth, and a symbol of infinity above his head. The card's meaning is that the earth is a reflection of heaven or God, matter reflects thought, and the outside world reflects the inner world. The magician acts as a communicator between these two worlds standing in-between and symbolizing Natalie's desire for self-fulfillment. When reversed, the card stands for illusions and deceit, signifying the trickery of Tony, who manipulates Natalie for selfish gains.

Natalie gets into Tony's bed to sleep, a homoerotic occupation of her space, and opening the door Tony makes "a large, menacing gesture" (180) towards the girls outside, like a witch. Later Tony slips into bed, beside Natalie, and the two sleep "Side by side, like two big cats" (180) till the morning. They wake up very early the next day, bathe together,

"washing one another's backs and trying to splash without a sound" (181), while everyone else is sleeping. Through Tony, her double, Natalie escapes from the cold, materialistic, loveless, insincere, and hostile heteronormative environment.

Natalie and Tony head towards the town center after they get dressed. As they walk along the streets, they dream about travelling to fascinating cities around the world and meeting new friends. They comment on the people and the objects they see on their way by comparing them to Tarot cards with symbolic meanings. They pass by a movie house that advertises the movies *The Blood of a Poet*, *The Cabinet of Doctor Calighari*, and *M*. These movies represent their phantasmagorical journey into a haunted landscape. *The Blood of a Poet* (1930), directed by Jean Cocteau, begins with an image of a collapsing chimney followed by a series of expressions declaring that poetry should be understood in the same way that works of prominent painters are deciphered. The movie consists of surrealistic visual imagery that illustrates Cocteau's idea that poetry is the foundation of all forms of art. Using semi-autobiographical elements from his life, it depicts a young poet's journey into a mysterious hotel where, looking through a key hole, he witnesses a series of horrifying scenes in which violence and suicide are the recurring motifs. Hence, the poster of the movie evinces both Natalie's irrational mind and her suicidal tendencies. Likewise, *The Cabinet of Dr. Calighari* (1920), an expressionistic silent horror film, indicates madness. It focuses on a conniving carnival magician, Dr. Calighari (Tony), who has created a somnambulist murderer, Cesare, through whom he performs his nefarious schemes. Finally, the 1931 German drama-thriller film *M* features a child murderer named Hans Beckert, who kills little girls by attracting them with his whistling of Edvard Grieg's "In the Hall of the Mountain King" from the "Peer Gynt" Suite I, Opera 46. According to Bowers, the movie signifies the end of Natalie's "childhood illusions" (113), and her search for her inner self.

Near the train station, Natalie and Tony are surrounded by a flock of birds. Natalie runs away laughing, but the birds follow her and then return to Tony. As Tony comes running, Natalie utters a stanza from Lewis Carroll's "A Boat beneath a Sunny Sky," a poem that closes *Through the Looking Glass* (1865): "'*Still she haunts me phantomwise, Alice moving under the skies Never seen by waking eyes*'" (190). The poem is about the passage of time and lost childhood. It focuses on children, with Alice among them, eager to hear

the story told by the narrator in a boat on a summer evening. Time passes by, the summer ends and autumn arrives, and the children grow up and the boat trip down the stream remains only a fleeting memory. The memory of the child Alice still haunts the narrator, who fancies that the children are now in a wonderland dreaming of the passing days. He ponders "Life, what is it but a dream?" (209)

The ending of the poem resonates with Natalie's fear that she might be dreaming her life away. Her childhood, the little girl, still haunts her, just like Alice haunts the narrator of the poem. Natalie compares Tony surrounded by all the birds to the Page of Swords Tarot card, on which there is a picture of a male figure holding a sword and standing on a rocky precipice against the background of a blue sky filled with clouds and a flock of birds. The upright Page of Swords card represents mental force, or the presence of someone with a curious, restless mind, whereas the reversed Page of Swords card symbolizes deception and manipulation. Therefore, the Page of Swords indicates the unreliability of Tony, who is haunting and following Natalie like a ghost. Tony seems to be a part of Natalie's mind, her alter-ego materializing before her. As Joseph Andriano argues, when a character is haunted by a demon or ghost, s/he still can be encountering himself/herself; "The haunting Other may be a projection of the haunted self: outer demon is inner demon, a psychic entity" (3).

After they leave the train station, Tony notices a toy in a shop window, "a tiny figure on a trapeze which turned and swung" (193), and comments that it looks like the Hanged Man Tarot card. The card depicts a man suspended upside down from a T-shaped tree. His red pants represent passion and blue vest symbolizes feelings. His arms are bent behind his back and his head is surrounded by a halo. The hanged man is suspended from the tree through his own free will; he is suspending action or making a sacrifice to renew his life and move on. Responding to Tony, Natalie supplies the meaning of the card: "'Life in death. Joy of constructive death'" (193). Parks explains that "The Tarot card is one of the sources for the title […] and suggests the novel's theme: initiation into life" (70). For Natalie, "the Hanged Man" represents regeneration or rebirth, which foreshadows her healing and initiation. Thus, as Bonikowski explains, "Natalie is no longer under the gaze of the Hangs-a-man; her true love has freed her from the gallows. Hangsaman has become the Hanged Man, who represents new life arising out of death,

the joy of living outside of the restrictive, deathly conventions represented by the institutions of family, marriage and college" (82).

By refusing to adhere to old habits and ways of thinking, Natalie eventually makes the decision to move out of both self-imposed and social limits. Thus, the Tarot cards are symbolic on numerous levels, all of which foreshadow and shed light on Natalie's experiences and thought processes.

Leaving the toyshop behind, Natalie and Tony pass by a popular theater—which is contrasted to the previous movie house—and observe the pictures on the untitled posters. One of the posters features "a glorious scene between a man in a cowboy hat and uncomfortable pistols, who backed against a door to face a darker, equally weaponful villain, in the background a damsel wrung her hands and all three seemed to turn anxiously toward the camera" (191). The other poster shows a monster with "horns and blood and black cloak" (191). Tony assumes that it is a vampire, whereas Natalie thinks that it is a werewolf with a tail. At this point, the narrator comments that it is a machine that "creates heartless villainy while sparing its patronizing public any sense of immediacy ("It's only a movie; don't be afraid to look)" (191) and the kind of machine that will possibly take over the whole world (193). The association of monstrosity with "heartless, villainous, unimaginative" (193) machinery emphasizes the idea that machine-technology is the Gothic other. Monsters and machines are similar in that both are created by humans, the former through imagination, the latter through technology, and both represent a threat, or deviance, from nature. David Punter explains that

> Gothic represents a cultural knot: […] a textual and psychic *chiaroscuro* where plain sight is continually menaced by flickerings from other worlds. This is not […] a phenomenon which is going to go away as technology goes about its apparent work of delating uncertainties, producing monsters of accuracy and detail; on the contrary the ghost is already in the machine, there would be no machine without a ghost, and the question of quite *whose* powers […] technology is extending remains central to our imaginings and fears. (3–4)

The narrator's comment in *Hangsaman* illustrates Punter's argument that far from erasing obscurities, the machine reinstates the ambivalence and horror of the Gothic within the contemporary scene. Tony comments that the monster is probably "'one of those hidden personalities'" (192), an antagonist that Natalie should confront and demolish. Tony herself is the hidden personality; she is the enemy intending to possess Natalie.

On their way to a cafeteria, Natalie and Tony start playing verbal games inspired by the words, “vampire” and “werewolf.” Tony says, “‘I love my love with a V, because he is a vampire. His name is Vestis and he lives in Verakovia,’” and Natalie answers, “‘I love my love with a W, because he is a werewolf. His name is William and he lives in Williamstown’” (193). The fact that “W” is a letter made by a doubling of “V” signifies Natalie and Tony’s depiction as Gothic doubles. In addition, “vampire” and “werewolf” are signs of male power in Gothic fairy tales, and represent the domineering male figures who have left traces in Natalie’s mind. Inside the cafeteria, they choose cinnamon buns, ice-cream, pie and cake for their lunch, and a long table situated far back with a marble top where they set their silver trays. They are like small kids, like Hansel and Gretel, fond of sweets and desserts in a fairy tale. All of a sudden, a grotesque one-armed man with a checkered jacket joins them, putting down his “meat loaf,” which is “checkered like his jacket,” “string beans and mashed potatoes,” and “vanilla ice cream and coffee” (195) on the table. As he places his tray down, his head touches Natalie’s shoulder, and Tony likens him to the Five of Pentacles Tarot card (195).

The Five of Pentacles card shows two individuals, a man and a woman, walking in the snow. On the background, there is a church window embellished with five pentacles or coins. The individuals look sick, exhausted, impoverished and hungry. One of them has crutches and the other one is wearing a shawl over her head. The upright card signifies poverty, insecurity or a bad omen, indicated by the one-armed man, who resembles the figure with crutches in the card. When reversed, the card represents charity and recovery, hinting at the possibility of renewal. For Tony, the grotesque man is a threat to her own existence whereas for Natalie, he is a warning, a sign for improvement. The man asks for Natalie’s help to butter his bread rolls, yet Tony does not allow Natalie to help the man, and offers to do it herself instead. Later, he wants Natalie, who is disturbed by his feigned neediness, to pass the saltcellar to him. After the man finishes his lunch, he offers Natalie a cigarette, and wants her to light his cigarette with the matches he takes out of his pocket. Yet, Tony again abruptly prevents Natalie from helping him, and lights his cigarette from across the table, and the man asks, “‘Matter with your girlfriend? She helpless?’” (197). Tony is jealous and seems to be afraid that the man will replace her and become Natalie’s companion. According to Hattenhauer, “As a figure of castration,” the one-armed man “is Tony with her lack” (111). Furthermore, as Bowers explains, his disability reminds

Natalie of her own crippled, helpless state, since her "reliance on Tony […] proves a much greater disability than the physical inconvenience suffered by the man" (116). As the man leaves, he says to Natalie: "'Come back again, when you haven't got your friend'" (197), urging Natalie to free herself from Tony's influence.

When Natalie and Tony come out of the cafeteria, it becomes "unusually dark for early afternoon" (197). The weather signals the trouble awaiting Natalie. Tony offers to take Natalie somewhere away from the town where no one can bother them:

> "You see" she said […] as though trying to moderate her words and explain, "they want to pull us back, and start us all over again just like them and doing the things they want to do and acting the way they want to act and saying and wanting and doing all the things they live with everyday. And," she added her voice dropping still lower, "I know a place where we can go and no one can trouble us." (199)

In the excerpt above, Tony voices Natalie's desire for escape, her desire to be true to who she is and discover her real self by refusing to conform. It resembles the advice that Verna gave Tony at the beginning of the novel. Yet, Natalie does not recognize that Tony is her antagonist, whose intention is to tempt her into the dark woods, far away, in a way that is reminiscent of the tale of "Little Red Riding Hood."

After Natalie willingly accepts Tony's offer, the two take a bus heading out of town into the deserted countryside. Inside the crowded bus, Natalie, with her wet raincoat on, feels confined and imprisoned by the passengers around her and cannot see Tony until the bus empties. The bus trip seems to be a continuation of her previous Thanksgiving journey, since she is still wearing "the same wet raincoat" (Bowers 118), and the people on the bus represent the unsympathetic, conspiring crowd that Natalie finds suffocating. When the bus stops at a corner and most of the passengers disembark, Tony suddenly reappears in the seat next to her. Natalie, speaking of the antagonistic crowd (humanity), says to Tony, "'I don't think they've estimated us correctly,'" "'They seem to think we're weaker than we really are. I personally feel that I have talents for resistance they don't even suspect'" (203). Tony responds by saying "'Perhaps,'" "'they have antagonists you have not yet experienced'" (203). Natalie thinks of society as an antagonist trying to destroy her, and finds in herself the courage to resist and disobey. Tony's answer is a hint that she is also Natalie's foe. Hence, in order to complete her initiation, Natalie must demolish the demon haunting her mind by confronting herself. As Natalie and Tony talk to each other

and the bus nears the last stop (before Hell), Natalie observes the desolate winter landscape from the window. She notices a frozen lake, and "a skeletal roller-coaster" presiding "ghoulishly over the remains of a merry-go-round" (205). Tony mentions that the frozen lake is the site of an amusement park which is popular in the summer but dead in winter. Natalie suddenly becomes startled by a sign that reads "'Paradise Park,'" "pointing with one imperative arm at the lake" (205). The sign is reminiscent of the one-armed man, who warned Natalie about Tony in the cafeteria (Hattenhauer 111).

As Tony and Natalie get off the bus, the curious driver, wondering what the girls will be doing in the deserted playground in this late, cold evening, asks, "'Carnival spirit? Big night on the beach? See the sights, take a swim, win a kewpie doll, take a chance?'" (206). Closing the bus door, he mockingly calls after them, "'Take a turn on the merry-go-round for me,'" and shouts from the window, "'Change your mind?,'" "'Last chance?'" (206) before he drives away. Natalie stands beside the road and watches the distancing lights of the bus as it picks up speed, "going back […] to the lights of the town, to the sounds and the lights and people" (206). In the darkness of the evening, she observes the glittering lake and then moves towards the shore. Her arm is immediately grasped by Tony, who takes Natalie to an isolated pathway between the trees that stand on either side leaning towards each other. The path leads to a dark forest, similar to the woods in which Natalie was assaulted. As they walk in the rain on the soft ground covered with moss and mud, they both feel the urge to move further along, and Natalie likens the path surrounded by the trees to a vacuum that has taken them in. Tony then begins to talk about desire, "a desire so strong that the world, all of the world, has got to bend itself and forget itself and break out of its circles and rock itself crazy" (208). It is a longing for the queer, the surreal, the bizarre or the inexplainable—a desire to shatter reality and conformity. Tony speaks of faraway, exotic, fantastic places they can occupy once their desire destroys the world:

> Far away from here […] the sun comes down on us, and there is moving blue water and hot hot sand under our feet. Or we might be lying on a curved green hill with our heads in the grass and nothing overhead but clouds or riding on an elephant with strange clashing bells calling us or dancing in the streets of a city where no one is alive but us and the houses are round and red and blue and yellow in moonlight and the streets are crooked and hung with lanterns […] or we can have a world completely flat in all directions and us with our chins resting on the edge […] Or, if you like, we can be on a cloud, sound asleep in that hot rolling softness close to the sun, or we can be on a mountaintop where the sky is bright blue […] Or we can say we want to live forever in a palace of blue marble with fountains that flow with

> purple wine, and flowers growing through the open windows, and hangings of pale-green satin and ceilings of gold […] Or choose perhaps a throne higher than the moon, on a black rock, where […] the stars are around our feet […]. (209)

Tony's descriptions are colorful, fascinating, and pure fantasy. Yet, it becomes increasingly evident that Tony's vision is dark, and that she is trying to push Natalie into darkness and mental despair by taking over her mind and self; thus, her imagination is a trap. Moreover, in accordance with Julia Kristeva's concept of "the abject," Tony is similar to the repressed abject within Natalie's mind, that erupts into her real life. According to Kristeva, the abject is neither a subject nor an object, but a non-object or "pseudo object" within one's psyche, the result of what she calls "primal repression" (*Powers* 12) before the entrance into the symbolic order. As a Gothic other/double, Tony represents Natalie's buried fears, and threatens to absorb Natalie's self, therefore blurring the boundary between the self and the other. Despite the fact that Natalie is initially lured by Tony and is drawn into her world, she eventually finds her repulsive and hideous, and revolts against her by rejecting her. Thus, Natalie needs to cast aside Tony in order to exist.

The narrator's depiction of the forest into which Natalie is drawn by Tony is also suggestive of Tony's sinister, dark nature or underside:

> The trees were waiting in the darkness ahead, quietly expectant. A tree is not a human thing, with its feet in the ground and its back hard against the sky; it cannot tolerate the small human tenderness moving beneath, and, not obeying the whims of moveable creatures, can hardly have more pity for a Natalie than for a field mouse or a pheasant, moving with private pride but falling easily. Beneath the trees it was not dark as a room is dark when the lights are put out, the artificial darkness which comes when an artificial light is gone; it was the deep natural darkness which comes with a forsaking of natural light. (209)

The narrator's description depicts the forest as a place "void of all human compassion and virtue, a place of primordial evil" (Bowers 119–120). As Bowers argues, Tony urges Natalie "to remember back to the time before time, before the ignominious era of rational existence" (120) when she asks: "'do you remember the glory? The wonder of dancing and seeing in the firelight the others dancing?'" (210). Tony tries to lure Natalie with images of romance, with the promise of a primitive, yet fanciful, way of life away from civilization and beyond the limits of reason. Tony's words reveal a desire to revive "a suppressed primitive and barbaric imaginative freedom" associated with the Gothic genre (Kilgour 3). By embracing "escapist imagination [which] was denounced as corruptive

of family values" (Kilgour 7), she enacts her rebellion against social norms and imitations and symbolizes what Maggie Kilgour calls "unlicensed desire" (8). Yet, since she has the intention to dominate Natalie, she is like a devil in disguise, leading Natalie to an evil ritual, like the witches' ceremony that takes in Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown."

Natalie loses sight of Tony for a while and feels an acute fear in the darkness underneath the trees which seem to be leaning forward to watch her. She finally arrives in a "small clearing among the trees" (212), where she sits on a fallen tree trunk to rest, as she was also instructed to do by the man in the chair. She notices a dark shadow coming towards her, "seeming not to put her feet down on the soundless moss" (212), and soon realizes that it is Tony with her blue raincoat. Natalie senses that Tony is indeed her nemesis and says to Tony, "'Only one antagonist…only one enemy,'" and Tony confirms: "'That's very true'" (212). In an attempt to seduce her, Tony begins to speak and act like her assaulter. She puts her hand on Natalie's arm, holding her and saying "'Wait a while,'" "'I am almost ready. It won't take long. What are you afraid of?'" (213). When she feels Tony's hands on her face and back, she remembers the song with the refrain "*One is one and all alone and evermore will be so*" sung by the guests at her father's literary party. Natalie finally rips herself away from her as she thinks "'She *wants* me,'" and says aloud, "'I will *not*'" (214). Tony answers laughing, "'If you want to run home nobody's going to keep you *here*'" (214). Leaving Tony behind, Natalie runs down the path leading to the main road. Rejected by Natalie, Tony disappears in the darkness among the trees. Hence, Natalie confronts the trauma of sexual assault through Tony. Within her mind, she finally defeats her assaulter/antagonist, emerging out of her own darkness and despair.

A middle-aged couple give Natalie a ride out of Hell, back to town, leaving her on Main Street, which is decorated with wreaths and "strings of light" (217) for Christmas. She crosses the bridge nearby, and thinks of suicide for a moment, looking down at the water below. As she leans over the bridge, a passerby who reminds Natalie of the one-armed man at the restaurant asks her if she is "'Going swimming?'" (217). Natalie comes down quickly, dispelling the thought of suicide and choosing life. In the end, she decides to return to college feeling "now alone, and grown-up and powerful, and not at all afraid" (218). Thus, she experiences the rebirth and initiation symbolized by the Hanged Man. The bridge represents the crossroads where Natalie makes her vital decision to be alive,

strong, brave, and dependent on no one but herself. As Parks argues, Natalie "has rejected the childhood world of fantasy and dream, and [has] dared to encounter a world more ambiguous yet somehow also more tangible and real. [She] fell into the garden of experience, of the knowledge of good-and-evil" (79). In conclusion, Natalie eventually succeeds in dispelling Tony from her mind, and chooses to return to her normal life to continue her studies. Yet, despite the fact she leaves the haunted landscape behind, it is evident that she will still encounter difficulties, both in real life and in her mental world, especially in terms of adjusting to the uninspiring, oppressive, and phony environment around her.

1.2. SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *THE BIRD'S NEST*

Shirley Jackson's psychological Gothic horror novel *The Bird's Nest* deals with the disintegrated personality of the young adult protagonist Elizabeth Richmond, whose mother passed away four years before the start of the novel. She lives with her deceased mother's sister, Aunt Morgen/Miss Jones, and works at a local museum in Owenstown. In this third book, Jackson makes use of the fictional case of Elizabeth to address gender issues and criticize patriarchal ideology. According to Raymond Russell Miller, Jr., the novel's "ironies, working against the idea of formalized psychotherapy, and social implications prevent it from becoming a 'narrow' psychological novel" (155–156).

John G. Parks explains that "Shirley Jackson's fiction is filled with lonely, desperate women who reflect the disintegrations of modern life. This is seen quite clearly in Elizabeth Richmond, the disintegrating protagonist of *The Bird's Nest*" (20). In the novel, Elizabeth suffers both from the trauma of her mother's death, and, like Natalie Waite in *Hangsaman*, from the trauma of sexual assault: It is suggested that she was assaulted by her mother's boyfriend, Robin, when she was a child (Hattenhauer 126). Elizabeth's dull clerical job at the museum office and her repressive upbringing by Aunt Morgen—who calls her niece by the nickname, "kiddo"—catalyze her mental breakdown, eventually causing the emergence of four distinct personalities named Elizabeth (the dominant personality), Beth, Betsy, and Bess. Elizabeth's therapist, Dr. Victor Wright, discovers and names each of Elizabeth's personalities through hypnosis. Throughout the novel, in his attempt to bring Elizabeth's personalities together to create a new unified personality, he is represented as a mad scientist similar to Victor Frankenstein. Like Arnold Waite and

Arthur Langdon in *Hangsaman*, Dr. Wright is the intellectual authority; he is the patriarch who dislikes the rebellious and strong personalities—Betsy and Bess—he discovers in Elizabeth, and favors the docile Beth. Along with Aunt Morgen, Dr. Wright behaves like a scrutinizing parent trying to control Elizabeth's behavior. At the end of the novel, after Elizabeth recovers from her split personality condition, Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright give her a new name, "Victoria Morgen," as they return from a visit to Aunt Morgen's friends, Mr. and Mrs. Arrow. Yet, Jackson indicates that Elizabeth's new identity contains traces of her previous personalities, and the wild and childlike Betsy is still a part of her. Ultimately, Elizabeth tells herself that she knows who she is no matter what Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright and others call her.

The title of the novel derives from an old English nursery rhyme: "Elizabeth, Elspeth, Betsy and Bess, /They all went together to seek a bird's nest. /They found a bird's nest with five eggs in, /They all took one and left four in." In the nursery rhyme, the four names refer to one person, since the last three names are diminutives of the main name, Elizabeth. Thus, all are able take one egg, and leave four in the bird's nest. The title is also symbolic of Elizabeth's struggle to find common ground for all her personalities. The egg signifies (re)birth or the buried/unborn potential within Elizabeth. Similar to Humpty Dumpty in another popular nursery rhyme, Elizabeth's sense of identity is fragile and about to crack, just like the disintegrating grounds of the Owenstown Museum. Thus, the egg within the bird's nest is a kaleidoscope of Elizabeth's multiple selves and symbolizes her desire for self-fulfillment. The stolen egg is an embodiment of all four eggs within the bird's nest, just as Elizabeth, Elspeth, Betsy and Bess are actually one. Here, the uncanny theft of the egg also signifies a desire to escape from home.

During a conversation with Dr. Wright, in her hypnotized state, Betsy (who Dr. Wright initially labels R3) utters the lines from the nursery rhyme, and Elizabeth's personalities are consequently renamed after the names in the rhyme. Parks describes Elizabeth Richmond's story as "the story of the struggle for recovery of selfhood," and argues that Elizabeth's "inner warfare may in a real sense be seen as a microcosm of the society as a whole" (85). Thus, through the metaphor of the bird's nest, the novel illustrates how "the Gothic situates itself in areas of liminality, of transition, at first staged literally in liminal spaces and between opposing individuals, but subsequently appearing more and more as

divisions between opposing aspects within the self" (Lloyd–Smith 6). According to Ruth Franklin,

> Elizabeth's splintering, as we are meant to understand it, is an exaggerated form of a universal condition: Who, Aunt Morgen wonders late in the novel, does not have "a chameleon personality," starting the day wise and calm and ending it in a more cynical mood? This was the condition of the American housewife in the 1950s, pressured by the media and the commercial culture to deny her personal and intellectual interests and subsume her identity into her husband's—to fill in "Occupation: Housewife" on the census form and be glad to be doing so. This pressure, Betty Friedan wrote less than a decade after *The Bird's Nest* appeared, forced American women to "deny reality, as a woman in a mental hospital must deny reality to believe she is a queen." Women of the 1950s, as Friedan put it, were "virtual schizophrenics" (*Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life*, epub).

Elizabeth tries to escape from her repressive environment through her emerging fragmented and disintegrated self.

Elizabeth works at a museum of natural arts and sciences, which is housed in a crumbling Gothic building: "Its foundations had begun to sag," which "produced in the building an odd, and disturbingly apparent list to the west" (1). The building, thus, represents Elizabeth's mental state, and "allegorizes the archeology of the protagonist's multiple selves": "As the building consists of four floors (a basement and three stories), so the protagonist consists of four personalities" (Hattenhauer 123). Hence, the building mirrors Elizabeth's psychological collapse and dissolution. As the narrator notes, "It is not proven that Elizabeth's personal equilibrium was set off balance by the slant of the office floor, nor could it be proven that it was Elizabeth who pushed the building off its foundations, but it is undeniable that they began to slip at about the same time" (2). The narrator mentions that to reconstruct and repair the building, the carpenters "had found it necessary to drive a hole in the height of the building, from the roof to the cellar, and had chosen Elizabeth's corner of the third floor to affect an entrance to their shaft" (2–3). According to Hattenhauer, "the effort to rebuild the museum […] by sinking a vertical shaft from the top floor to the basement," symbolizes Dr. Wright's effort to "drill down through the layers of [Elizabeth's] personalities" (Hattenhauer 123).

Elizabeth is twenty-three years old; she is isolated and lonely with "no friends, no parents, no associates, and no plans beyond that of enduring the necessary interval before her departure [from the museum] with as little pain as possible" (3–4). Elizabeth is alienated from her clerical job; she remains nameless and unrecognized, and constantly has intense

headaches and backaches—symptoms of her mental breakdown. She finds hostile letters addressed to her on her desk, written by Betsy: "'dear lizzie,'" one of the letters reads, "'your fools paradise is gone now for good watch out for me lizzie watch out for me and dont do anything bad because I am going to catch you and you will be sorry and don't think I wont know lizzie because I do—dirty thoughts lizzie dirty lizzie'" (3). In *Hangsaman,* Natalie also writes to herself; however, for consolation. In *The Bird's Nest,* Elizabeth writes to herself through her clashing personalities. Even though Elizabeth is unaware of the presence of other personalities, Betsy is aware of her. Unlike Elizabeth, who is reserved, sensitive, and inarticulate, Betsy is witch-like, childish, disobedient and outspoken, and is always trying to sabotage Elizabeth in order to become the dominant personality. According to Hattenhauer, the dark basement of the museum represents Betsy while the first, second, and the third floors represent Bess, Beth, and Elizabeth, respectively (123). Thus, the floors of the museum reflect the layering of Elizabeth's self in terms of id, ego, and superego.

Elizabeth reads the letter again in a drugstore while she is having lunch and the letter strikes her as odd in that its language has a sense of "lingering familiarity" (5). When Elizabeth arrives home, she puts the letter inside her cardboard keepsake box. She takes out another letter belonging to her dead mother, and it reveals her mother's relationship with her boyfriend, Robin: "'Robin, don't write again, caught my Betsy at the letters yesterday, she is a devil and you know how smart! Will write when I can and see you Sat. if possible. Hastily, L.'" (6). Her mother's letter exposes Elizabeth's trauma, and foreshadows the revelation that, like Eleanor in the fifth novel *The Haunting of Hill House* and Merricat in the sixth novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle,* she was instrumental in her mother's death.

Aunt Morgen is Elizabeth's only companion in her life, yet she is a domineering woman who tries to limit her niece's freedom in order to prevent her from becoming like her mother whom she disliked and despised. The narrator notes that Aunt Morgen has "the personality of the gruff, loud-voiced woman so invariably described as 'masculine'" (8). Even though she is represented as a strong woman, Aunt Morgen is not a Gothic heroine, since she adheres to patriarchal, Puritanical values. She hates her dead sister whose income she lives on. As she speaks incessantly to Elizabeth about her sister at the table

after dinner, she says to her that she was "'up to her neck in mud'" (10). After dinner, Elizabeth begins to have her intense headaches and backaches, and Aunt Morgen helps her get undressed, prepares a hot water bottle for her, and gives her a sleeping pill. Lying in her bed and listening to her aunt's movements downstairs, Elizabeth thinks her aunt is a "'Bad old woman'" (12), and becomes surprised at her own thoughts soon realizing that she has said it aloud. She sings a tune of "nursery rhymes, of faded popular songs" (12) as she falls asleep. Her shouting and singing foreshadow the emergence of the personality of Betsy. Thus, Elizabeth's metamorphoses occur against her will; she constantly and involuntarily undergoes transformations from one personality to another. Reminiscent of Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll,* Elizabeth is torn between her "civilized" and "primitive" selves; Betsy in Elizabeth is like Hyde in *Dr. Jekyll*. Just as Dr. Wright describes Betsy's face as demonic, the lawyer Utterson in *Dr. Jekyll* "reads into Hyde's face 'Satan's signature'" (Rosemary Jackson 115). Both Hyde and Betsy are thought of as "fiendish," as they fulfill the repressed desires of their parent selves in which they are hiding. According to Rosemary Jackson "Hyde is able to fulfill Jekyll's desires to steal, love and be violent" (114). Likewise, Betsy desires to free herself (Elizabeth) from the constrains of "civilized" society as represented by her aunt and Dr. Wright.

As Elizabeth lies in her bed during the night, Betsy takes over and goes outside, and Aunt Morgen notices her descending the stairs with her shoes in her hand. The next morning, she displays her anger at her niece by reprimanding her for her escaping in the middle of the night without letting her know. She slams her hand down on the table, jarring Elizabeth's glass of milk, which begins dripping onto the floor (14). Aunt Morgen's anger startles Elizabeth, since she is unaware of Betsy's escapade. As Ruth Franklin explains, "Aunt Morgen accuses her of sneaking off to meet a man in the middle of the night, but she has no memory of leaving the house" (*Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life,* epub). Aunt Morgen tells Elizabeth that she is her "'mother's own daughter, mud up to the neck'" (16)—morally "corrupt," sexually initiated—in response to Elizabeth's insistence that she has not done anything wrong. Aunt Morgen is portrayed as a domineering, patriarchal woman—a figure who reappears in Jackson's later novels.

In the museum, Elizabeth continues to find hostile letters written to her as she works at her desk in her office, "with the gaping hole" situated "beyond her left elbow" (17), and

puts all her letters into her cardboard box. One evening, when they visit Aunt Morgen's friends Mr. and Mrs. Arrow, Elizabeth begins to suffer from her headaches again. Like Aunt Morgen, Mr. and Mrs. Arrow hold conservative views and believe that Elizabeth has been allowed too much freedom. When Mr. Arrow, who likes singing songs like "The Road to Mandalay," is about to sing to entertain them, Betsy utters something improper causing Mr. Arrow to apologize and close the music book on the piano before he starts singing. Even though Elizabeth is unaware of what Betsy has said, Aunt Morgen feels humiliated by Elizabeth's behavior. She takes Elizabeth to Dr. Ryan, who eventually suggests that she should send her niece to Dr. Victor Wright.

Unlike the third person-omniscient narration in the first chapter, the second chapter, titled "Doctor Wright," is told from the perspective of Dr. Wright, who introduces himself to readers and conveys his observations regarding Elizabeth's case. He distinguishes himself from other psychiatrists by describing himself as an honest man and criticizing Freudian psychoanalysts, yet Jackson implies that he is not as honest as he claims to be. Even though he tries to sound like a literary and learned man, he uses misogynistic language in his descriptions of Elizabeth Richmond whom he calls "Miss R." "for reasons of discretion" (33). He alludes to Thackeray's *Esmond* (1852) when he states that "a good writer is much the same as a good doctor; honest, decent, self-respecting men, with no use for fads or foibles, going on trying to make our sensible best of the material we get" (32). Referring to Thackeray's statements, he mentions that "a man's vanity is stronger than any other passion in him," and adds, "I have my prides and my little passions, and perhaps fancying myself Author is not the least of them." (32). His style of speech is similar to Arnold Waite and Arthur Langdon in *Hangsaman*, and like them, he snobbishly brags about his literacy. He sounds like a woman-hater when he recounts that after Elizabeth sat down smiling "timidly," she "looked about her almost stupidly, but showed, at least no immediate signs of hysterical terror" (33–34). He dehumanizes her when he says her eyes have "the mute appeal of an animal […] longing for help" (36), and ridicules her demeanor, noting her avoidance of eye contact and obtuse gaze.

After Elizabeth's first visit to his office, Dr. Wright concludes that her "symptoms—dizzy spells, occasional *aboulia*, periods of forgetfulness, panic, fears and weaknesses […], listlessness, insomnia" are all indications "of a highly nervous condition" (32). In a

footnote, he explains the meaning of the term “aboulia”: “a state” which he describes as “an inhibition of will, preventing a desired action” (32). Dr. Wright figures out that Elizabeth’s “aboulia” prevents her from being articulate, yet Elizabeth’s other personalities soon voice what Elizabeth has not dared to utter and compensate for her silence. Similar to Natalie Waite in *Hangsaman*, Elizabeth is an isolated young woman who struggles with oppression and trauma, and tries to overcome her silence and obtain her freedom through madness.

Initially, Elizabeth hesitates, thinking that she does not need any treatment, and says to Dr. Wright, “‘It’s just wasting your time’” (34). When Dr. Wright asks her about her headaches and sleeping difficulty, she mentions that she is frightened and denies having any of the symptoms. Elizabeth becomes nervous and too uncommunicative to talk about her ailments, so Dr. Wright decides to use hypnosis for the next appointments. On her ensuing visits to his office, she avoids being hypnotized by telling him the falsehood that she has another appointment and that her aunt is opposed to hypnotism. Yet, Dr. Wright is finally able to persuade her to agree to a brief hypnotic experiment on the condition that she will not be asked “‘embarrassing’ questions” and will not “remain under hypnosis for more than a minute or so” (40).

In her next appointment, Elizabeth undergoes her first hypnosis, and Dr. Wright becomes startled at and pleased by her relaxed, friendly appearance when she is under the hypnotic trance. He asks her about her name, address and whether or not she is afraid of him, and she answers “‘Of course not’” (41). He notes down the brief dialogue he has with her before awakening her, and shows her the notes when she awakens. After she takes her leave, Dr. Wright distinguishes between “the personality awake and the personality in hypnotic trance by the use of numerical symbols” (43). He names Elizabeth/Miss R., who is the personality on the surface, as R1, and the hypnotized Elizabeth as R2, and compares Elizabeth’s mental illness to “a stoppage in a water main” (42) caused by a traumatic incident which has “prevented all but the merest trickle of Miss R.’s actual personality from getting through” (43). He prefers the kind, amiable, calm, obedient and helpful personality displayed by R2, whom he later describes as sweet Beth, and dislikes the sullen, nervous, uncooperative and shy Elizabeth/R1, and the other two uninhibited, strong, and confrontational personalities—Betsy (R3) and Bess (R4).

By using numbers to name her personalities, Dr. Wright sets up Elizabeth as an arithmetic problem, waiting to be solved, rather than as a human being, objectively detaching himself from all the women. When Elizabeth/Miss R. visits Dr. Wright's office two days later, she is hypnotized again. Whenever he converses with her in her hypnotic state, she is not allowed to open her eyes until she is told to do so. Thus, Dr. Wright denies her the right to have her own view/perspective; he is depicted as a coercive "eye closer" (74), as Betsy later calls him. During one of the hypnotic sessions, after conversing with R2/Beth, Dr. Wright encounters R3/Betsy for the first time as he sits on a stool next to Miss R.'s chair. Observing her pale face in the dim light, he notices the change of expression in her facial features and watches "in horror" when "the smile upon her lips coarsen[s] and become[s] sensual and gross, her eyelids flutter in an attempt to open, […] and she laugh[s], evilly and roughly, throwing her head back and shouting" (49). Dr. Wright thinks that she cannot be the Miss R. he knows, for her complexion is "a devil's mask" and "the grinning face of a fiend" (49–50). In his review of *The Bird's Nest*, William Peden argues that the novel is like "a twentieth-century morality play" (12) in which allegorical good and evil forces are in competition for the possession of a protagonist's soul. Yet, in *The Bird's Nest*, it is Dr. Wright ("Right") who attributes an evil and sinister quality to R3/Betsy. In reality, she is the most courageous and truthful personality of all, articulating Elizabeth/Miss R.'s repressed desire for freedom and revealing the traumas she experienced.

One day, Elizabeth arrives at Dr. Wright's office in tears and shows him a letter that contains Betsy's writing. Holding the letter under the lamp, Dr. Wright reads,

> Dear Mr. Althrop, The Museum of Natural Arts and Sciences of the City of Owenstown, although it would be pleased to display your interesting collection of matchbook folders, is nevertheless a non-profit, endowed organization, and as such is not in a position to pay for donated exhibits. Therefore, with great regret, I must inform you that you are a silly silly silly foolish girl and you are going to be sorry when I catch you. (51)

The note at the bottom of the letter which Elizabeth has typed belongs to Betsy, who dislikes and threatens Elizabeth. Elizabeth, however, does not know that the note is written by one of her personalities.

In the course of her subsequent visit, Dr. Wright interrogates R2/Beth about the letter, but she has no clues to offer about the note at the bottom of the page, so he decides to try a

"deeper hypnotic trance" (53) which summons R3/Betsy. When Betsy appears, Dr. Wright asks her about the letter and Betsy wants to open her eyes, just like Beth. She calls him "'Dr. Wrong,'" and he describes Betsy as a "demon" (56). Comparing Betsy's appearance to "demonic possession" (57), like Arnold Waite in *Hangsaman*, he thinks of himself as a knight trying to save princess Elizabeth and bring her home, and Aunt Morgen as a dragon guarding the castle. The novel, thus, illustrates Montague Summers' argument in *The Gothic Quest* in which Summers explains that conventional Gothic-fantastic tropes (e.g. witches, giants, knights, castles, dragons, and ghosts) appear in different guises in more realistic literary works. According to Summers' list, in contemporary works, a castle usually appears as a house, a giant as a father, a knight as "a gentleman without whiskers," "a gliding ghost" as "a usurer or an attorney" and a witch as "an old housekeeper" (35). In Jackson's novels, the Gothic castle appears as a crumbling museum, or an old mansion/house. The giant and the knight appear as fathers or male characters with intellectual, patriarchal authority, and witches appear as free-spirited, isolated, and non-conformist Gothic heroines or as housekeepers.

In line with Summers' explanation, Dr. Wright thinks of himself as "the heroic healer" (Hattenhauer 130) or a chivalric knight, and tries to restore his patient by "resisting the irrational female" and trying "to put the pieces back together by throwing away most of them" (Hattenhauer 130-131). The reason why Betsy calls Dr. Wright "'Dr. Wrong'" is that she knows Dr. Wright has the intention of eliminating or erasing her, and is not aware of the true nature of her trauma. Like Victor Frankenstein, he wants to create his own monster out of the pieces he chooses. Betsy, who laments that she has always been a prisoner inside Elizabeth, asks Dr. Wright "'Do you suppose I could learn to love you, Dr. Wrong? When you wish me evil?'" (60). Rejecting R3 as a name, she speaks the line from the nursery rhyme about the bird's nest, and wants Dr. Wright to rename the personalities accordingly. She chooses to be called "Betsy" and assume an identity of her own, and rejects being named with a number.

Dr. Wright tries to investigate the cause of Elizabeth's fragmented identity just like a detective investigates a case, and he sounds like Natalie's imaginary detective in *Hangsaman*. Even though he is right in concluding that only a severe emotional shock—the death of her mother—could have caused her fragmentation, he fails to comprehend

Robin's role in Elizabeth's psychological collapse and Elizabeth's role in her mother's death. He interrogates Elizabeth's personalities about the mother's death one by one by means of his hypnotic trance technique. Elizabeth mentions that she was upstairs during her mother's death, and Beth says she was "'Inside. Hidden'" (65). When he summons Betsy, she tells him "'you have no place for me in your pretty little world'" (67), and reveals that she frightened her mother and was locked in her room by Aunt Morgen as her mother was dying.

The morning after Elizabeth's last appointment, Dr. Wright learns that Elizabeth has "a touch of the influenza" (70) and will not able to visit him for about a week or so, and decides to use his time to read Thackeray. On Thursday evening, he receives an emergency call from Aunt Morgen, who urges him to hurry to the house, telling him that her niece wants to see him immediately. He hears Betsy shouting as Aunt Morgen opens the door for him. Brushing past the aunt, he goes upstairs and comes to Elizabeth's locked door, behind which Betsy's voice is singing a song. Betsy agrees to open the door only when Dr. Wright introduces himself as "Dr. Wrong." It is the first time Dr. Wright converses with Betsy without hypnosis, and wants her to cooperate with him and help him heal Elizabeth/Miss R. by explaining to her that Elizabeth's physical health is important for her existence too. When he puts Betsy to bed, Elizabeth comes back and is stunned to see Dr. Wright in her room beside her bed. Dr. Wright puts her under hypnosis and thinks he is conversing with Beth while in reality, he is talking to Betsy pretending to be Beth and promising to do whatever he tells her to do. Betsy dislikes both Elizabeth and Beth, and she later hates the materialistic and blunt Bess, who begins to be the dominant personality. After the defeated departure of Dr. Wright, Betsy escapes during the night with her packed suitcase and the money she has taken from Aunt Morgen's wallet.

Betsy is unaware of or in denial of the fact that her mother died four years ago. She lives in the past representing the childhood state, and decides to take a bus to New York to find her mother without telling anyone where she is going. She puts a dictionary in her suitcase in case, as a child, she needs any help speaking or writing. Thus, Betsy is like Eleanor Vance in *The Haunting of Hill House*, the fifth novel, in her desire for escape by embarking on a journey. Before boarding the bus, she buys two postcards and writes to

her aunt and Dr. Wright. She does not specify where she is going and tells her aunt that she will never see her again. To Dr. Wright, she writes that she wants to escape from a loveless environment: "'Dear Dr. Wrong, never try to find me. I will never come back. I am going somewhere where people love me, and not like you'" (83). Elizabeth is unconscious of what Betsy and her other personalities are doing or saying, and believes she is asleep when they appear. As the narrator explains,

> Although Betsy did not sleep, and did not think she ever had, it was of course necessary for Elizabeth to sleep; ever since Betsy had been a prisoner she had watched while Elizabeth slept, lying far back in her own hidden corner of the mind, inert and almost helpless, looking as though up through a dizzying fog at the world of Elizabeth's dreams, seeing the dim figures of Elizabeth's world when Elizabeth's eyes were open, and the screaming phantoms of Elizabeth's nightmares when Elizabeth's eyes were shut; she had lain there crying out, soundless or numb, helpless to move Elizabeth's hands and feet, frantic for motion, for sight, for speech, paralyzed and wrapped in agonizing silence; now, riding the surface of Elizabeth's mind, she indulgently permitted Elizabeth to dream, […] Betsy lay back against the soft cushion of Elizabeth's dreams, planning what she was going to do now that she was free. (86-87)

Betsy wants to reconstruct and consolidate her "identity," and suppress Elizabeth forever, and tries to convince herself that "'I am Betsy Richmond. I was born in New York. And my mother's name is Elizabeth Richmond, Elizabeth Jones before she was married'" (88). Observing Elizabeth in her sleep, she begins to think of her past, her mother and her mother's boyfriend, Robin. She nervously thinks about what to do if she sees Robin in New York while looking for her mother and ponders that "Robin did everything bad," "he can't get out of it as easily as that" (90).

Betsy desires to escape from an undesirable reality through imagination, just like Jackson's other female protagonists. The bus, in this context, is a vehicle of escape into a world of fantasy. It can be "seen as fitting accompaniment to the story-driving visualizations of her characters" (Bowers 108). In *Hangsaman*, Natalie and Tony take a bus to the deserted countryside on the outskirts of the town, and she eventually ends up in the dark forest (symbol of the unconscious) away from civilization and everyday reality. Similarly, in Jackson's short story "The Tooth," a housewife named Clara Spencer embarks on a night-time bus trip to New York to have an aching tooth extracted. Under the influence of whisky and a sleeping pill, she dreams of a man, in a blue suit, named Jim (a demon lover figure very similar to Tony in *Hangsaman*) who talks about exotic places and his travels. Despite the sense of freedom she enjoys on the bus and later in the

city, in the course of the story, she gradually loses her grip on reality, converses with Jim, who intermittently disappears and reappears to tell her about a distant land farther than Samarkand and to give her pearls. After her tooth is extracted, Clara loses her sense of identity, since she believes that her tooth was the only part of her with an identity. In the bathroom, she looks into the mirror and sees many faces (the faces of other women), but cannot recognize which one is hers. The story ends with Clara's reverie of running through hot sand on a beach with Jim by her side, but in reality, she is running down the streets of New York amidst the odd glances of passersby.

Like Clara in "The Tooth," Betsy in *The Bird's Nest* is lost in a reverie; she has three other faces/personalities with which she is in constant conflict, and tries to recreate and preserve an identity. Likewise, in Jackson's story "The Bus," Old Miss Harper, a spinster, falls asleep on the bus on her way back home from a visit and dreams that she is forced to get off at the wrong stop in the darkness and spends the night at a boarding house, a Gothic building that reminds her of her past. At the end of the story, she is awakened by the driver when they reach her stop and finds herself once more at the spot in her dream (Bowers 108–109). Thus, Jackson makes use of bus trips as narrating devices to convey female protagonists' nightmarish dreams and their desire for escape. Moreover, according to Susan Wolstenholme, "the Gothic use of visions [dreams] is centrally implicated in the preoccupation with gender issues" (1), since dream narratives have the power to convey the feminist perspective of an author as they go beyond the limitations of socially constructed realities.

In *The Bird's Nest*, Betsy awakens from her childhood dream, in which she fantasizes that she is the daughter of a sea-king, saying "'No'" (92) in a loud voice when Robin wants her mother to "'Leave the damn kid with Morgen the next time'" (92) in her nightmare. Since everyone on the bus is asleep, no one notices that it was she who spoke. In the morning, the bus finally arrives in New York, and Betsy, rising from her seat, hurries down the aisle to take her suitcase. Yet, a woman in black gloves lifts Betsy's suitcase down and takes hold of it pretending to be helping her. As Betsy says "'I want my suitcase'" several times down the aisle, the bus driver interferes by saying "'if the kid don't want your help, you can't make her'" (94). After the woman, who claims that she was just trying to help the girl "alone in a strange city" (94), gets off the bus with a proud

expression, the driver warns Betsy "'You want to watch out about getting into some kind of real trouble'" (94). The woman appears to be a witch-like character, a representative of the strange and dangerous world into which Betsy is venturing.

When Betsy arrives in the Drewe Hotel, she feels glad that she has attained her freedom and has a room of her own: "Betsy was to perform all the most private acts of her life for a space of time depending upon herself, in whatever order she chose, at her own expense, carefully and securely hidden away" (95). Similar to Natalie's room in the dormitory, the hotel room provides Betsy with the isolation she needs. As she leans against the windowsill of her room and observes the buildings and the sight of a river below in the distance, she imagines the sights and sounds of the "people living around her, singing, dancing," and "laughing" (95), and wants to join them. She notices a man on the narrow ledge far below her between the river and the buildings, trying to make his way, and ponders that perhaps someday he can befriend her. Like the man, Betsy, too, is trying to edge her way among her different faces, to be somebody in her own life and in "this great world of the city" (95). According to Michael L. Nardacci, "The fragmenting of her personality seems to be her unconscious attempt to meet each chaotic event in her life with a different face" (118). As a result, she becomes trapped in her multiple personalities. As Nardacci argues, "It seems to be the author's point that the playing of various roles—which is after all an aspect of every human's experience—is simply too much for Elizabeth. Instead of playing the roles, she at times becomes the character, and in trying to deal with the chaos around her, she creates chaos within" (118).

As one of Elizabeth's faces, Betsy is "the embodiment of much of what Elizabeth represses" (Miller 168). She dislikes the other personalities, since they are not as free-spirited and deviant as her. Unlike Elizabeth and Beth, Betsy does not refrain from doing what she wants to do and saying what she wants to say. She is also the personality through whom the readers learn about Elizabeth's past. She reminds herself that she is in New York to find her mother and to seek clues that will lead her to her. Her denial of her mother's death reveals how deeply she is affected by it. She thinks of the city as a maze at the center of which her mother stands "radiating out" "signals and clues" (96) for Betsy.

Betsy's search for her mother reveals a part within Elizabeth's self that desires to return to the pre-linguistic union with the mother, as described by Kristeva. According to

Kristeva, who revises Lacan's psychoanalytic theory, the abject is marked by the moment the individual separates himself/herself from the mother, and thus begins to realize a distinction between his/her self and his/her m/other fulfilling "the pre-condition of narcissism" (13). Before this stage of development, within the earliest, pre-linguistic stage which Kristeva calls the "chora, a receptacle" (14), one does not distinguish his/her own self from the self of his/her mother or the world around him/her. Kristeva describes the chora as "a modality of significance in which the linguistic sign is not yet articulated" ("Revolution in Poetic Language" 94). Thus, Betsy seems to be the one who is connected to, or desires to return to, the *chora*. The possibility that she represents the pre-linguistic, pre-symbolic stage is also reinforced by the fact that she feels the need for a dictionary. Betsy and Elizabeth's other personalities illustrate Kristeva's argument that "On close inspection, all literature is probably a version of the apocalypse […] rooted […] on the fragile border (borderline cases) where identities (subject/object etc.) do not exist or only barely so—double, fuzzy, heterogenous, animal, metamorphosed, altered, abject" (207). Like Natalie's sense of a fragile, obscure identity or non-identity in the previous novel, Elizabeth's sense of identity cracks like an egg taken from a nest, and becomes disunified and unpredictable.

The city in which Betsy searches for her mother is depicted as a labyrinthian Gothic space, much like the decaying Owenstown museum, and as the stage for Elizabeth's disintegration. Similarly, in Jackson's short story "The Pillar of Salt," New York City is depicted as a crumbling, disintegrating Gothic setting like the way in which the city, where Betsy wanders in search of her mother, is portrayed in *The Bird's Nest*. In the story, Margaret and her husband, Brad, take a vacation in New York. They plan to visit some of their friends, go to parties, wander around the city, and shop. In the course of their stay, Margaret gradually becomes nervous and uneasy, feeling unsafe within the new urban environment. At a crowded party in a confined apartment, when she leans out of the window, she hears the news of a fire several blocks down which is eventually put out.

After the incident, her feelings of fear and panic increase, and she begins to see New York as a dangerous and ominous place. While shopping for toys for her children, she thinks that the toys in the toyshops look sinister, and not suitable for kids. In addition, she is afraid to take the bus, and even afraid of the buildings which seem to be crumbling, and

about to collapse. As she and Brad walk on the beach on Long Island, they come across a girl who informs them that she has seen a leg washed up on the shore. The girl's statement is confirmed by Margaret's hostess, who mentions that an arm was found washed up in another town in the vicinity. Thus, the story depicts the city as a haunted, fragmented, decaying Gothic environment in which Margaret eventually becomes paralyzed by fear, reluctant to go outside, and even unable to cross the street. In a way, the city mirrors Margaret's mental breakdown and disintegration. Likewise, another story entitled "A Day in the Jungle" centers on the protagonist Elsa's desire to leave her constrictive marriage and embark on a journey to an "urban kaleidoscope of violence and destruction" (Hague 77). Similar to the depiction of the city in the short stories, in *The Bird's Nest*, New York is portrayed as the Gothic background for Elizabeth's fragmentation, and as a setting of wild adventure for Betsy.

Betsy appears as a prototype of the protagonist Eleanor Vance, in *The Haunting of Hill House*, who assumes that her deceased mother is calling for her in the haunted mansion. Betsy tries to recall her mother's voice and evoke the words she said years ago when she was a toddler to use them as clues. The narrator mentions that Betsy was born in New York, and she and her mother left the city when she was two years old. She remembers that her mother once told Aunt Morgen about a little dress shop named Abigail's, and decides to go there sometime hoping to find her.

During her first morning in the hotel room, Betsy unpacks her suitcase, and takes a bath before going to lunch. When she comes out of the tub, she looks at herself in the mirror and wonders where Elizabeth/Lizzie has gone or where she is hiding inside her body. Since she does not want to be disturbed by Elizabeth any more, she "wants to rip herself apart, and give half to Lizzie and never be troubled again" (99). She feels like she is in a contest with the other personalities over the possession of her body. As she looks at herself in the mirror, Elizabeth comes out for a moment, and looks with horror at her reflection and around the strange room she is in. She has no idea about Betsy and her escape. The mirror functions as a symbol of haunting, and as a symbol of the protagonist haunted by herself or her self-image. Betsy pushes Elizabeth down at once, telling her that she is "'a poor silly thing'" (99). She wishes that she had a real sister instead of Elizabeth. Like the other female protagonists in Jackson's novels, she feels lonely and

isolated. She hears her mother and Robin talking within her mind as she recalls her mother's voice. Her mother says "'No, I want the child with me. I won't give up my Betsy,'" and Robin answers "'Get rid of the little pest. Leave her with Morgen. What good is she to us?'" (99–100). Robin is the patriarchal intruder, who tries to separate the daughter from the mother—much like Charles, who dislikes Merricat and tries to separate her and her sister Constance in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*.

After Elizabeth takes a nap, Betsy, taking Elizabeth's pocketbook with her, goes downstairs to the dining room to have lunch. In the dining room, she invites a man to sit at her table as a companion. The man acts friendly towards Betsy, chooses from the menu, written in French, and offers to pay for her lunch. The narrator mentions that despite the fact that Elizabeth knows French, Betsy does not understand and speak the language. Unlike the learned Elizabeth, Betsy is the child of the pre-linguistic order seeking reconnection with her mother. During lunch, Betsy talks about Elizabeth/Lizzie whom she has brought along with her and mentions her plan to get rid of her, just like she got rid of Robin, Aunt Morgen and "Dr. Wrong," and compares herself to the gingerbread boy in the children's fairy tale "The Gingerbread Man." Like the gingerbread boy who escapes from the old man and the old woman who has baked him, Betsy has escaped from Aunt Morgen and "Dr. Wrong," and now she is trying to escape from Lizzie. As Betsy orders a cake, the headwaiter interrupts her to inform the man that he has a phone call from somebody and calls him "Doctor" (106). When Betsy learns that the man she has been conversing with is a doctor, she thinks that he is "Dr. Wrong" in disguise and immediately leaves the dining room escaping outside to take a bus. As Nardacci explains, in the city, Betsy "begins to see every kind stranger as an emissary of the hated 'Dr. Wrong,' waiting to trap her" (120). Thus, the city, as a Gothic setting, replicates Betsy's life in Owenstown. Even though she thinks that she has escaped, she is enclosed within her own chaos.

Hurrying down the street, Betsy thinks, "A bus […] always take a bus to get away" (107). Thus, the bus appears as a means of illusory escape once more. Hoping to see her mother again, Betsy tries to remember and find the place where she and her mother lived years ago. In her mind, there is the mental image of lots of stairs, pink walls, a view of the river from the window, and a picture on the wall. Betsy gets off the bus to look for her mother

and crossing the street, she enters the foyer of a white apartment house decorated with “a mural of orange fish against a black sea” (109–110). The narrator explains that although the fish may have been alive when they were painted, they are dead now floating on the surface of the sea. The fish represent Betsy’s futile attempt to find her mother, who lives only in her memory. In the street, Betsy notices someone coming toward her in the shadows and asks him whether or not he has seen her mother. Then she thinks that he must be Robin and immediately escapes into the safety of the lights. Thus, Robin and the doctor (“Doctor Wrong”) are the patriarchal characters within Betsy’s mind and in her life, and they appear in various disguises during the course of Betsy’s quest in the city.

Upon her return, after finding her hotel room in a mess with her suitcase lying open on the floor, clothes ripped apart, the sheets pulled from her bed and the curtains pulled down, Betsy initially assumes that Elizabeth is the cause of the mess, yet upon noticing that the dictionary is torn apart too, she concludes that the bookish and learned Elizabeth could not have destroyed it. In anger, Betsy throws the dictionary at the mirror in an attempt to destroy the image of her self composed of the other personalities. Hence, she recognizes that the Gothic other resides within her, and that she is the Gothic other of her other selves/personalities.

In the dining room, Betsy suddenly finds herself talking with the man, who has asked Bess (R3)—the personality that ransacked the hotel room and tore apart the dictionary—why Robin ran away; Bess has answered “‘Because I said I’d tell my mother what we did’” (115). Hattenhauer argues that “Typical of children who have suffered sexual abuse, her comment places the blame equally on her and Robin; she says the event was ‘what we did’ rather than what Robin did to her” (126). In a panic, Betsy runs out and enters the foyer of another hotel, and asks the man at the reception desk about her mother, noting that she is hiding with someone (Robin). The man suggests that what she is looking for is probably “‘the rose room,’” which is now occupied by a newly-wed couple. Betsy goes upstairs led by a Miss Williams to the rose room where she sees a man named Mr. Harris “grinning hideously from across the room” (125). Betsy assumes that he is Robin and immediately runs down the hall and the stairs with the sense that she is being followed by Robin.

Once again, the name "Harris" is associated with the sinister (patriarchal) demon lover, who also appears in Jackson's short fiction, usually dressed in a blue suit, pursuing or haunting the female protagonist to drive her to madness. He is a ghostly presence that tries to tempt the female protagonist with a false promise of love and happiness, and an unknown, fantastic escape to destroy her by robbing her of her sense of self and sanity. Robin is the demon lover inside Betsy's mind; she futilely tries to find her mother by following his traces while at the same time escaping from him and trying to get rid of him or her memory of him.

Throughout the novel, Betsy is hateful of Bess, because Bess is a dominant personality just like her and therefore threatens her existence. In addition, they represent clashing values: while Betsy is child-like, imaginative, wild and free, Bess is blunt, materialistic, and looks for safety and wealth, yet both of them are outspoken personalities—unlike the sensitive, nervous Elizabeth and the kind, obedient Beth. When Bess hurries out of the hotel room with the key in her hand, Betsy tries to come out and take the key. The two personalities struggle over the possession of Elizabeth's body as Bess endeavors to suppress Betsy:

> Just as she touched the key to the keyhole Betsy found her and with a furious shout snatched at her hand and bit it until she dropped the key and Betsy grabbed for it as it fell. If Betsy once got a hand on the key there was no hope of escape; wildly, she got a hand in Betsy's hair and pulled, and dragged her back away from the key, and it lay there on the floor, while both of them, panting, stood back and waited for one another like two cats circling. Then, with unbelievable speed Betsy went for the key again, the tips of her fingers just touching it, and she put her foot down hard on Betsy's hand and held it there. Nothing could pain Betsy, she knew; no kind of hurt could register on that black mind, so she could only try to overpower her physically, and force her down; with quiet slow strength she put her hand almost gently around Betsy's throat and tightened her fingers as slowly and surely as she could; she made no sound, because she needed all her breath, but Betsy screamed, and gasped, and then ripped at her hand with sharp cutting nails, […] She felt Betsy's nails rake the side of her face, and then Betsy called out "Mother!" and was vanquished. She took her hand from Betsy's throat and, sobbing for breath, rolled over on the floor and got the key in her hands. Then, moving slowly and with pain, she stood up, got the key into the door, and turned it. (128)

After this incident, she awakens in a hospital room to find herself under the care of an amiable nurse tending her bruises. Both the nurse and the doctor in her room assume that she was attacked by someone at the hotel. The doctor mentions the note Beth wrote with Aunt Morgen's and Dr. Wright's addresses, and explains that they were able to find her

because of it. Dr. Wright arrives in the room as Aunt Morgen is waiting downstairs, and Bess, who has not met Dr. Wright before, wonders who this little man is as both doctors stand by each side of her bed.

Dr. Wright conveys his anger at "Miss R.'s abduction at the hands of Betsy" (131), and his prejudice against Betsy and Bess reveal his lack of objectivity and his insincerity. During his first interview with "Miss R." after her return, Elizabeth mentions she has had bad dreams and is not aware of what has passed in New York. She reveals her hidden anger at Aunt Morgen, who locks her door at night as if she were still a child, and explains that in one of her dreams she was looking at her own image in a mirror—she does not know that it happened when Betsy was looking at herself in the mirror after having a bath in the hotel room. Then, Dr. Wright talks with Beth, who appears without hypnosis. With her eyes open, she talks about how frightened she was and how she tried to telephone him, and Dr. Wright explains if she had not written the note, they would not have been able to find and rescue her. Betsy appears after Beth and admits that she ran away, because he "'wouldn't let her be free and happy'" (137). As Betsy's speech indicates, both Dr. Wright and Aunt Morgen are representatives of patriarchal society and are confining her freedom by crushing her individuality and self-autonomy. Betsy refuses to talk to Dr. Wright, and, like Beth, she tries to remain before Bess appears.

Dr. Wright notes that since Elizabeth's last appointment, her personalities have grown to be more distinct from each other, and have claimed individual identities of their own, which is observed in their struggle to remain on the surface as long as possible, "each in hope of finally establishing dominance" (139). When Bess begins to be dominant, the conflict between her and Betsy intensifies. While Betsy believes that her mother is alive, Bess thinks she died a few weeks ago. Thus, Betsy represents the part of Elizabeth's life, or her childhood consciousness, before her mother's death, and Bess represents the part of her life, or her early adolescent consciousness, just after her mother's death. Bess apologizes to Dr. Wright for having been rude before, and mentions that she has not been herself since the death of her mother and has been very nervous ever since. Of all the personalities, the materialist Bess is the one most obsessed with money and belongings, since she thinks that both Dr. Wright and Aunt Morgen are conspiring against her to take away her fortune. At the end of her first interview, Bess says to Dr. Wright, "'I have told

you already that I am sorry for being rude before, but just because I apologized to you, you needn't expect to send me a bill and get paid for this short conversation. I may be rich, but I am not going to be taken in by every . . ."—quack, we are to assume (142). Dr. Wright is antagonized by Bess's rudeness and obsession with money and uses misogynist language to express his anger when he says, "'if I had my way, Miss, you would be soundly whipped and taught to mind your manners'" (146).

Betsy is furious with Dr. Wright after she learns that he has been talking to Bess, who dislikes spending her money on anything except herself, and wants to dominate all the other personalities. Betsy's dislike of Elizabeth and Beth diminishes when the stronger Bess appears on the scene, and Betsy begins to favor and protect Elizabeth. In order to preserve all her strength to struggle against Bess, Betsy eventually gives up "her unkind practical jokes upon Elizabeth and Beth" such as "taking them too far away to get home, and abandoning them" (168). Dr. Wright finds out that Betsy and Bess are able to communicate with each other and that Betsy plays tricks on Bess, like pushing a heavy desk before the front door to prevent her from going shopping and giving away some of Bess's possessions to random people in the street.

The rivalry between Betsy and Bess becomes all the more visible in the course of "Miss R.'s" ensuing interviews with Dr. Wright. In a striking scene with Gothic overtones, as Bess talks about financial matters, her right hand grabs a pencil and begins to write a note on a pad of paper. Bess is not aware that her right hand is writing on the paper while she is talking. The note is written by Betsy, who addresses Dr. Wright, as it reads: "'doctor wrong, aunt m lawyers stop money poor bess ask her ask her where is mother what aunt morgen says ask her ask her she is not saying true ask her i am here and i am here and she is not no money poor bess laughing betsy'" (154). When Dr. Wright asks what she did to her mother, Beth comes out and asks, "'You're angry again, Dr. Wright; what have I done?'" (154). Whenever Dr. Wright asks a crucial question, Betsy and Bess evade him by withdrawing and sending Beth. Betsy admits that she has played another prank on Bess, which causes Aunt Morgen to plan to tell the lawyers that Bess "'can't have the money because she has been so *very* nervous since her mother died'" by hinting to her "'of some irrational behavior over expenditures'" (155–156). For the first time, Betsy mentions Robin to Dr. Wright when she reproachfully states that if he had left her alone,

she would be with him, yet she refuses to tell anything more. Dr. Wright decides to talk to Aunt Morgen about "Miss R.'s" case in order to obtain the information Betsy and Bess do not reveal, and to inform the aunt about the nature of her niece's mental illness. He initially avoids making a phone call to Aunt Morgen to arrange a meeting, since he dislikes and is afraid of her dominant character. Instead, he wants Betsy to take his note to her, yet, as he soon discovers, Betsy betrays him not giving the note to Aunt Morgen.

In her next interview, Bess notices her hand moving by itself and writing on the pad of paper when she catches Dr. Wright's glance at her hand. Dr. Wright describes the communication between Betsy, who writes, and Bess, who answers by speaking, as "a ghostly kind of conversation" (160). Thus, the Gothic specter of this novel appears not as a real ghost, but instead as the ghostly presence of Elizabeth's other personalities within herself. Bess becomes amazed at her own right hand's writing and decides to try it again in her following interview. Yet, she denies the existence of Betsy, who is hiding inside Elizabeth beside her, and claims that the writing must be a part of a joke played on her by Dr. Wright or an effect of the hypnotic treatment.

Dr. Wright unwillingly makes a phone call to Aunt Morgen, who agrees to discuss her niece's health and invites him to her house. Dr. Wright views Aunt Morgen as a witch-like, frightening, disagreeable woman due to the unpleasant airplane journey he had with her to New York to bring Betsy back, during which she mocked his discomfort on the airplane and reproached him for "'letting the child escape'" (132). Dr. Wright describes the house where the aunt and her niece live as "ugly," "hideous" and depressing (172). The house is Gothic, with its heavy embellishments, stunning turrets, narrow windows, bright colors and oversized furniture. Dr. Wright mentions that since he is a lover of classic architecture, the embellished house does not appeal to his aesthetic sense. He snobbishly pretends to be an enlightened, rational individual, who is repelled by the dark romantic, the strange and the irrational.

In the front hall of the house stands a statue (a Nigerian ancestor figure) made of dark wood with an outstretched black hand which makes Dr. Wright feel uneasy and unwelcome, and the wall supporting the staircase is decorated with a series of large paintings. As Dr. Wright sits in a chair, "covered over with orange peacocks" (173) which appear to be live creatures in the living room, he hesitates to breathe and does not put his

pipe in the ashtray in the shape of a porcelain hand. He observes that the house "seems to have an air of seizing at a person"—just like Hill House in the fifth novel—and feels like he is "thoroughly wound about with spider webs" (174) when Aunt Morgen, the spinster witch, appears with a glass of brandy. Dr. Wright asks for the aunt's assistance with curing her niece, and explains Elizabeth's case by explaining the psychiatric term "dissociated personality." He asks about Elizabeth's past, the death of her mother, and why she locked Elizabeth in her room while her mother was dying. Aunt Morgen answers that she locked her in her room because she was "'scared of the effect her mother's dangerous state might have on a girl of Elizabeth's delicacy'" (178). She digresses from the subject by criticizing her dead sister whom she describes as a pretty yet a "'brutal, unprincipled, drunken, vice-ridden'" (178) woman, and concludes that she had to take care of her niece, who was like her own child (182). As Aunt Morgen speaks, the readers learn that Elizabeth and her mother left New York to come to live with the aunt when Elizabeth's father, Ernest, died, and that he left a fortune which Elizabeth will inherit when she is twenty-five. The aunt says when her niece "'gets it she won't find a penny of it wasted'" (180), which reveals her plan—confirming Bess's suspicions—that she wants to manage her niece's inheritance.

As the evening wears on, Aunt Morgen becomes drunk and irritated by Dr. Wright's questions, and raises her voice. While Aunt Morgen is shouting, her niece, who has been at a concert under the supervision of friends, arrives and sees the doctor. She transforms into Bess, and eventually challenges and confronts both Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright, saying "'I do not need anything from either of you. I am going to get along very much better without you two'" (186). Dr. Wright, his authority and dominance challenged, feels insulted professionally and as a man, and furiously threatens Bess that she "'will cease to exist'" (186–187). Linking his occupation to his manhood, he falsely assumes that a man's identity is predominantly defined by his job and that being a physician is an exclusively male profession. When he goes outside in anger, he thinks to himself that he knows he will be repentant very soon, and likens himself to Victor Frankenstein as he explains:

> We are all measured, good or evil, by the wrong we do to others; I had made a monster and turned it loose upon the world and—since, recognition is, after all the cruelest pain—had seen it clearly and with understanding; Elizabeth R. was gone, I had corrupted her beyond redemption and in the cool eyes which now belong entirely

> to Bess I read my own vanity and my own arrogance. I reveal myself, then, at last: I am a villain, for I created wantonly, and a blackguard, for I destroyed without compassion; I have no excuse. (188)

Like Victor Frankenstein, who creates new life out of the dead by creating his monster out of old body parts, Dr. Wright thinks that he has transgressed acceptable human limits, committed hubris and done harm to Elizabeth in attempting to forge a new personality for her by merging Elizabeth, Beth, Betsy, and Bess.

Recalling Aunt Morgen's description of her mother as a woman with "mud up to the neck," Betsy fills the refrigerator with mud and later puts mud into her sandwich, onto her toothbrush and the telephone receiver. Yet, in spite of the fact that the mud in the house is revealed to be Betsy's trick, Aunt Morgen's discovery of it is depicted in a way that suggests it can be a part of the aunt's hallucinations, as if it were a supernatural event:

> The refrigerator was full of mud. Morgen stood for a minute staring at it, not at all comprehending the ugly slimy mess where she had expected to find white and shining shelves, with eggs and butter and cheeses neatly arranged; the inside of the door was smeared and the ice trays were oozing, and somewhere within, where the cold meats were kept, a worm stirred, almost frozen yet still moving, turning blindly toward the light. Morgen stepped back, her stomach turning, and then without closing the door fled. She could not dress, could not wash; when she looked at her hands she thought there were worms on her fingers […] she put her hands under the pillow and closed her eyes and held her mouth tight shut to keep the worms out, and screamed silently in her bed. I am alone and I am an old woman and I will die without love, she thought, with her face hidden in the pillow, and at last slept again. (196)

The mud and the worm are symbolic of the aunt's existential fears emanating from her feelings of insecurity, loneliness, and her loveless life. After she awakens, she goes into a spotless kitchen and opens the refrigerator and finds it clean, yet when she opens it again some time later, she finds it muddy once more. She becomes paranoid and imagines, or perhaps actually sees, that almost every object she touches contains mud—Jackson blurs the line between the imaginary and the real in this part of the novel as she does in the "Betsy" chapter. Thus, the aunt begins to picture herself, not her sister, as the woman with mud up to her neck. The refrigerator represents spiritual hunger and her search for meaning in her life. Since her niece seems to be the only one she can hold onto in life, in spite of her annoyance, she endures the chaos her niece creates, and waits by her side patiently in the bathroom as Elizabeth, Beth, Betsy, and Bess take a bath one by one using up all of her bath salts. While taking her bath, Elizabeth conveys her fear that if Dr. Wright cures her, the Elizabeth she knows and everyone else knows will cease to exist, and she

will be a different person when all of her selves come together. She has an existential fear like Aunt Morgen, and it links them together.

The next morning, sipping her coffee in the kitchen, Aunt Morgen utters Macbeth's words "'—that struts and frets his little hour upon the stage; it is a tale—'" (Jackson 212). She reflects on her fleeting life, and compares herself to an actor on stage playing her role. She decides that she needs Dr. Wright's assistance as her niece's condition deteriorates, and persuades him to come. Upon his arrival, Dr. Wright learns the truth about the death of Elizabeth's mother, which was caused by the shaking she received from her daughter when she came home in the morning exhausted and faint. Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright hold Elizabeth down tight as Betsy and Bess begin to battle each other, and, in the end, Elizabeth comes back to her senses and recovers from her split personality saying "'I'm back, I never went away,'" "'I'm the real one'" (232). She integrates all of her selves into one self, and awakens from the nightmare of her multiple personalities. Like Natalie, who rids herself of Tony in *Hangsaman*, Elizabeth eventually realizes that she is one rather than four. Thus, both *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest* have optimistic endings that contrast with the endings of Jackson's other three novels. While Natalie Waite in *Hangsaman* and Elizabeth Richmond in *The Bird's Nest* emerge as strong heroines out of their chaos, ready to assume their place within society, the chief female characters in the other three novels explored in this dissertation withdraw totally from the outside world, seeking shelter in a world of fantasy.

Thus, Elizabeth assumes a new identity composed of her previous selves, and has her hair cut short countering Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright, who do not like short hairstyles for women. By having short hair like a boy's, Elizabeth not only gets rid of the remnants of her painful past symbolized by her previous longer hair, but also challenges the limitations imposed on her, especially gender roles. She pays a visit to Dr. Wright's office, makes a joke by calling him "'Dr. Wrong'" and describes herself as "'the gingerbread man'" whom no one can catch (238). Even though she is joking, it is clear that Betsy has become a part of her identity. After her visit to Dr. Wright's office, she visits the museum—and the office on the third floor where she once worked—which is restored like the way she is restored to a unified self. However, she is not recognized by the people at the museum; it is now a place that will remain in her memories.

At the end of the novel, Elizabeth, Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright visit the Arrows one summer evening. Mrs. Arrow inquiries about Elizabeth's health, and Aunt Morgen answers that her niece was just having a nervous fever. As Aunt Morgen, Dr. Wright and the Arrows talk to each other, Elizabeth goes out into the garden to observe the flowers and breathe the evening air after asking for permission. Dr. Wright makes a little speech with a theme that is reminiscent of the short story "The Lottery." Reflecting on Elizabeth's case, he says, "'Each life, I think, asks the devouring of other lives for its continuance; the radical aspect of ritual sacrifice, the performance of a group, its great step ahead, was in organization; *sharing* the victim was so eminently practical'" (254). As Harold Bloom argues, in "The Lottery," "the stoning to death of Mrs. Hutchinson has no relation to morality or to explicit religion" (9). Through Dr. Wright's speech, Jackson refers to this story which emphasizes the danger and destruction brought about by the unquestioning acceptance of traditions or sets of beliefs. Like a Social Darwinist, Dr. Wright mistakenly speculates that in order for his patient to continue her life and become a unified person again, it was necessary for her to kill or sacrifice her other personalities ("survival of the fittest"). Yet, the protagonist of *The Bird's Nest* is not the victim; she does not sacrifice the four different aspects of her self, but rather comes to realize that each of them is herself and not someone else or someone other than herself.

In the end, Elizabeth begins to see the world around her in a new light, understand the value of her individuality, and recognize her self-worth. As they are walking home at night, she puts "one hand through Morgen's arm and one hand through the doctor's arm" (255) to walk in between them. She reveals that as she was looking at the flowers in the garden and the stars in the sky, she was "'thinking of their names'" as if she was "'naming them'" (256). She mentions how she tried to be careful in naming each of the flowers and how she wanted to find the right name for each of them. In response, Dr. Wright suggests finding a new name for her too, and just like parents giving a name to their child, he and Aunt Morgen rename her "Victoria Morgen," a combination of their own names. Thus, at the end of the novel, Elizabeth Richmond is born again out of Aunt Morgen's and Dr. Wright's actions, and is like a new Eve, who is given a new name and is naming the world around her by discovering who she is. Like Natalie in *Hangsaman*, Elizabeth emerges from her struggle with her self (or selves) as a strong, confident heroine. However, as the ending indicates, her personalities have left marks on her, and she returns to her restricted

way of life with Aunt Morgen and Dr. Wright, albeit as a woman with self-awareness. Thus, the egg which is taken from the bird's nest by Elizabeth in the nursery rhyme eventually turns into the bird flying back to the nest.

1.3. CONCLUSION

In both *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest*, Shirley Jackson explores the mental breakdown and identity fragmentation of the alienated female protagonists Natalie Waite and Elizabeth Richmond by deploying psychological, Gothic horror. The two novels focus on character psychology and make use of Gothic elements of horror to explore larger social issues including the moral decay of society, dysfunctional (patriarchal) families, the failure of educational institutions, and the medical profession. Both Natalie and Elizabeth try to cope with the dishonesty and corruption around them, past traumas, oppression, loneliness, and the lack of inspiration in their lives by seeking refuge in their world of fantasy or imagination. Natalie creates the witch-like girl, Tony, who becomes her sole companion, and Elizabeth finds an outlet from her confined, dull, and tedious way of life by means of her multiple selves/personalities, particularly through her child-like, unrestrained personality Betsy, who escapes from home and Aunt Morgen's dominion. Both Tony and Betsy enable Natalie and Elizabeth to escape from their familiar, confining domains, and venture into unknown, dangerous Gothic territories.

In conclusion, by confronting unresolved traumas—sexual assault and the death of Elizabeth's mother—through their Gothic doubles—Natalie's Tony, and Elizabeth's other selves, Beth, Betsy, and Bess—Natalie leaves Tony behind in the dark woods where she disappears, and Elizabeth re-unites her split self. Both characters discover who they really are and resolve to return to their lives as courageous women, albeit with the influence of the ordeals, trials and confrontations they have gone through. Unlike Natalie Waite and Elizabeth Richmond, the protagonists of Shirley Jackson's next novels do not return to outside reality, and instead, isolate themselves within Gothic settings.

CHAPTER 2

THE ENCOUNTER WITH THE UNCANNY LEADS TO ISOLATION WITHIN THE GOTHIC MANSION: SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *THE SUNDIAL* (1958)

Shirley Jackson's fourth novel *The Sundial* represents a thematic break from the author's previous novels. The novel's focus on place, particularly the trope of the Gothic mansion and landscape, and its de-emphasis on character psychology contrast with the preceding psychological Gothic novels in which the female protagonists, Natalie Waite and Elizabeth Richmond, appear in all their inner complexity. *The Sundial* is a Gothic fantasy about twelve characters who await the end of the world in a gigantic family mansion believing that they are the chosen few who will survive an upcoming apocalypse and be the inheritors of a new, clean, pastoral world. The novel takes place "in a small town that is figured as an anachronistic relic of a largely bygone America" and is "concerned with the struggles of a rich family and its hangers-on over an inheritance of redoubtable proportions" (Pascal 83). The twelve main characters in the novel are archetypes, a microcosm of the human society they look down on and from which they isolate themselves. In the novel, Jackson not only satirizes the class system but also depicts the house as a site of narcissistic struggles for power and authority that reveal the major characters' hypocrisy, self-interest, materialism and hollowness.

Like Jackson's ensuing novels, *The Sundial* offers a pessimistic portrayal of humanity, and cherishes imagination as an escape from an undesirable, mundane reality and moral decadence. According to Michael L. Nardacci, in Jackson's last three novels there is a misanthropic tone (134). Yet, as Darryl Hattenhauer argues, the novel can also be interpreted as "an allegorical satire on the central myths of America's dominant culture" (137):

> That America is God's favorite nation (a city upon a hill, a beacon to all humankind); that America is a new world, an exception to the limits God placed on other civilizations; and that America is where the mission of God's chosen people (the new Elect, the new saving remnant) is to take the virgin land (the new Eden, the new promised land) and create nature's nation (a new garden, a new frontier, a paradise). (137)

In the novel, like the first settlers of America, the Halloran household believe that they will build a new world after the apocalypse. The mansion, which belongs to the Halloran

family, and its surrounding landscape are portrayed as a miniature world separated from the village and the outside world by a stone wall that goes around the estate. The third person/omniscient narrator mentions that the first Mr. Halloran—father of Richard and Frances Halloran—who became suddenly very wealthy thought of establishing a private world of his own with his money. The founding patriarch conveyed his belief that the house should include all the needs of its inhabitants: "The other world, the one the Hallorans were leaving behind, was to be plundered ruthlessly for objects of beauty to go in and around Mr. Halloran's house; infinite were the delights to be prepared for its inhabitants. The house must be endlessly decorated and adorned, the grounds constructed and tended with exquisite care" (11).

Thus, the house represents alienation from the outside world and reality, and stands for "the realm of the imagination" (Miller 182–184). Raymond Russell Miller, Jr. explains that with the apocalypse "the 'real world' of outer reality is to be destroyed, and only the house, symbol of retreat [into an imaginary realm] is to be left" (184). The house in its mathematical precision symbolizes order, perfection, and abundance with twenty windows to the left and right wings and a central double door on the first floor, forty two windows on each of the second and third floors, a roof edge which is embellished with carvings of plentiful horns and flowers, a terrace, and a hundred and six pillars on either side of the front door as well as a balustrade made of marble. Inside the house, the walls which are painted in pastel, soft colors depict scenes in which mythological creatures like satires and nymphs play amongst trees and flowers. The library within the house is filled with thousands of volumes and marble busts. The drawing room holds a portrait of the first Mr. Halloran hung over the mantel. The narrator states that the wife of the first Mr. Halloran, Anna, died in the house within three months after they moved in. Thus, Jackson sets the Gothic tone of the novel from the beginning through the tragic and patriarchal history of the house. Like the haunted Hill House in the ensuing novel, the Halloran mansion contains traces of death and is haunted by the ghost of its founder.

The landscape around the house contains a square-shape blue pool, a summerhouse which looks like a temple with six thin pillars on either side, a rose garden, a maze, and a grotto that houses a lake. The only object that is off-center within the orderly universe of the Halloran estate is the sundial, from which the book derives its title, on one side of the

lawn. The sundial, made by a firm in Philadelphia, has an inscription that reads, “WHAT IS THIS WORLD?” (12). Even though the narrator notes that the first Mr. Halloran thought it was a statement about time, the motto on the sundial indicates “the questioning of reality” (Miller 184), as observed throughout the novel. “Set badly off center” (Jackson 3), the sundial thus contrasts with the geometrical, mathematical precision of the Halloran mansion, and symbolizes “the inevitable imperfection of the timeful world” (Hattenhauer 152), which is contrasted to the idealized, orderly realm of the Halloran mansion. Yet, as will be explained, paradoxically, the characters’ belief in this “otherworldly” mansion is tied to observable manifestations and material objects. The inscription is taken from Chaucer’s “the Knight’s Tale” in *The Canterbury Tales* (1387) and reads as “What is this world? What asks man to have? Now with his love, now in his cold dark grave, alone, with never any company” (Chaucer 77). This writing on the sundial foreshadows the ending of the novel: the death of the domineering matriarch Orianna Halloran—the wheelchair-bound and senile Richard Halloran’s wife—who dislikes and fails to understand the true meaning of the sundial beside which her dead body is placed before the expected night of the disaster. Orianna’s death is foreshadowed in the novel by a photograph of her with a hatpin pushed through it and Fancy’s grandmother doll “stuck full of pins” (Jackson 117) lying on the sundial.

The novel’s plot makes use of Gothic-fantastic elements to expose the hypocritical, selfish motives of the characters and to criticize the current world order or human condition. From the outset, Orianna/Mrs. Halloran tries to gain dominance over the household and the ownership of the mansion. Her search for authority is related to her desire to possess a house of her own. It is suggested that Mrs. Halloran murdered her son Lionel by pushing him down the stairs so that the house will belong to her. Soon after the funeral, she tries to dismiss almost everyone from the house, including Maryjane (Lionel’s wife), a thirty-two-year-old young man named Essex (Mrs. Halloran’s companion and spy hired to catalogue the library), and Miss Ogilvie (the governess of a ten-year-old child, Fancy, who is Maryjane and the deceased Lionel’s daughter). The only characters who are to remain within the house, according to Mrs. Halloran’s plan, are Mrs. Halloran’s disabled husband, Richard Halloran, her granddaughter, Fancy, and her sister-in-law, the forty-eight-year-old Frances Halloran/Aunt Fanny (Richard’s sister), who is told to stay in the tower of the mansion.

One morning before sunrise, as Aunt Fanny wanders with Fancy in the garden, a dense, ominous fog surrounds them. It is not a coincidence that Aunt Fanny and Fancy begin wandering when the sundial does not work, and are plunged into a haunted setting that blurs the concepts of time and place. Fancy mischievously runs out of sight, and Aunt Fanny is led though the fog into and out of a strange garden with warm marble statues. On the lawn near the sundial, Aunt Fanny sees her father's ghost (the ghost of the first Mr. Halloran) who informs her that the whole world will meet its demise, and only those sheltered by the Halloran mansion will survive. At first, no one believes Aunt Fanny's visions, until a brightly colored, ghostly snake suddenly appears out of the fireplace in the living room, moves across the carpet, and mysteriously disappears behind a bookcase never to be seen again. Interpreting the snake as a manifestation that affirms the revelation Aunt Fanny has received, the household chooses to believe Aunt Fanny, who becomes the spiritual medium through whom her deceased father conveys the messages.

Aunt Fanny and Mrs. Halloran enter into a long-lasting rivalry over control of the mansion. Mrs. Halloran allows everyone to stay in the house, and soon other characters join them: Mrs. Willow, who is Mrs. Halloran's con-artist, materialistic former school friend, and her two daughters named Julia and Arabella, a seventeen-year-old girl named Gloria, who is the daughter of Mrs. Halloran's cousin, and a stranger that Aunt Fanny picks up during her shopping trip in the village for survival items and calls "Captain Scarabombardon." Mrs. Willow makes Gloria, who is the only virgin, look into a mirror coated with olive oil to see their future. Thus, throughout the novel, clear vision is obstructed either by the fog or by the oil coated mirror. Gloria conveys her vision of a night of chaos followed by images of a new Edenic world, a land of plenty, which they believe they will inherit and where they will "breed a new race of mankind" (41) after the apocalypse annihilates the present world in which they live. Through Gloria's visions, the inhabitants of the house eventually determine that the devastation will occur on the night of August thirtieth. Aunt Fanny receives her ensuing revelations near the maze in the center of which a marble statue of her mother, Anna, stands, and later inside the grotto.

The village outside the Halloran estate is the site of a murder reminiscent of the Lizzie Borden case. The narrator mentions that years ago an adolescent girl named Harriet Stuart killed her father, mother, and two brothers with a hammer. The murder story has attracted

tourists to the now unoccupied Stuart house: “The villagers tried valiantly to pretend that the house was haunted” (81). Thus, the Halloran estate and the village are depicted as Gothic settings in Jackson’s apocalyptic novel. As the characters await the end of the world, they meet another group of people who call themselves the “True Believers” and share the Halloran household’s belief about the apocalypse. Yet, the True Believers maintain that before the night of the catastrophe, spacemen will arrive to take them to Saturn on flying saucers, and that they should abstain from drinking alcoholic beverages and using metal accessories. Mrs. Halloran, unwilling to relinquish her material possessions and fancy wines, rejects and dismisses the True Believers by indicating their intention to stay on earth in the house. Some of the characters, such as Julia and the Captain, do not believe Aunt Fanny, and attempt to escape from the house and the authoritarian rule of Mrs. Halloran. However, their attempts to leave the house are thwarted. Mrs. Halloran eventually convinces the Captain to stay, and Julia is caught in a dense fog which takes her body back to the house.

During the summer, the Hallorans turn the library into a storage room by burning the books and placing cartons of canned food, coffee, anti-histamines, bars of soap, napkins, first-aid kits, hunting weapons, folders of matches, tool boxes and other indispensable items on the shelves (156). The burning of the books is a symbolic act of destroying the knowledge of the old world. The only books they keep are Aunt Fanny’s Boy Scout Handbook, an encyclopedia, Fancy’s French grammar book and a World Almanac (157). To the dismay of Aunt Fanny and others, Mrs. Halloran, like a God, issues a list of instructions that sound like commandments regarding “proper” behavior and conduct before and after the apocalyptic holocaust. Mrs. Halloran’s list of instructions contrasts with Aunt Fanny’s vision of the new world as an Edenic garden of liberty, peace and joy. Aunt Fanny, who yearns for her childhood years, envisions an unrestrained world of childhood innocence without the limits of the “civilized” adult world.

The day before the supposed apocalypse, Mrs. Halloran hosts a farewell garden party for the villagers. Minor characters also attend, including the Inverness sisters, who own the village gift shop and the lending library, Mr. Peabody, who is the keeper of the local restaurant called the Carriage Stop Inn, Mr. Straus, who is the butcher, the school teacher, and Mr. Armstrong, the postmaster. Mrs. Halloran sits under a golden canopy on the

terrace wearing a crown to indicate her position in the next world. The next day, awakening to stormy weather, they barricade the front door with furniture and cover the windows downstairs and the windows of the drawing room, where they will gather to wait. The electricity goes off when the characters go to dress for the occasion, and Mrs. Halloran's body is discovered dead on the landing. Fancy, dashing down the stairs, takes her crown, exclaiming "'My crown, now'" (239). It is suggested that Fancy has pushed her grandmother down the stairs, like her grandmother pushed her father, to be the new queen, and owner of the house.

After Essex and the Captain place Mrs. Halloran's body beside the sundial, the characters await the apocalypse in the drawing room. The novel ends as they drink and converse while listening to the stormy weather outside. As Fancy indicates, if there is a new world to come, it will be no different from the present world, since it will contain the same hypocritical people represented by the Halloran household. Ruth Franklin observes that "these inheritors of the [new] world are petty and self-indulgent, preoccupied with social class […] and their interfamilial squabbles" (*Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life,* epub). Both Aunt Fanny and Mrs. Halloran assume that they are a superior class of people. Aunt Fanny claims superiority due to her connection to the supernormal and aristocratic upbringing. They separate and isolate themselves from the villagers, and Fancy is not allowed to play with the other children. As Nardacci argues, "they see the outside world hopelessly banal, and perceive within themselves true aristocracy" (143). Yet, their delusions of "nobility" are a façade that hides their moral corruption and narcissism; they are not (much) different from the rest of the humanity they despise. Thus, the novel parodies the apocalyptic imagination, explores the combination of belief and madness (Parks 75), and comments on the absurd situation of the characters who "long for a revelation without […] renewal" (Parks, "Waiting for the End: Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial*," 87). They hope for a new world, lovely and green, free of disease, jealousy and avarice, without recognizing their own faults and renewing themselves. Thus, the idea of a sterile world appears to be impossible and problematic, paradoxically breeding or perpetuating sickness.

Like this novel, Jackson's short story "The Intoxicated" explores the belief in an apocalypse through the eyes of a seventeen-year-old girl, a high-school student named

Eileen. The story takes place in a suburban house where Eileen's parents are hosting a party. In order to become sober, an intoxicated male guest escapes to the kitchen where he meets Eileen drinking her coffee at the table. As the two are sitting in the kitchen, Eileen mentions that she has been completing a paper about the future of the world. She explains her vision of the apocalypse to the indifferent and impatient guest, who mocks and fails to understand her. For Eileen, the world is a place of decadence, full of fake, empty lives. She says to the guest, "'If people had been really, honestly scared when you were young, we wouldn't be so badly off today'" (6).

The guest regards Eileen's prophecy as morbid trash, yet Eileen continues to convey her vision of an apocalypse, at the end of which a new world without any houses, schools or buildings will emerge and they will "'have new rules and new ways of living'" (7). When the guest returns to the living room where the other guests are singing by the piano, he tells Eileen's father about the interesting conversation he has had with her, and the father just comments, "'Kids nowadays'" (8). Both the guest and Eileen's father do not take Eileen seriously. Thinking of her as a fanciful child, they are unable to see the wisdom of her statements. Thus, "The Intoxicated" seems to be an inspiration for *The Sundial*, which carries Eileen's vision of the future of the world into the lives of the novel's characters.

According to Hattenhauer, the names of some of the characters in the have intertextual meanings. Hattenhauer explains that "Orianna" or "Gloriana" is the name Spenser uses to refer to Queen Elizabeth I, likewise, the name "Essex" alludes to the second Earl of Essex, one of Queen Elizabeth's close companions, the "Captain" "suggests John Smith, whose promotion of America as a land of plenty resonates with the Hallorans' belief that nature will supply all they want," and "Arabella" is the name of "the ship on which John Winthrop began the metaphor of 'the city upon a hill'" (Hattenhauer 142–147). The name of the child, "Fancy," is suggestive of her desire to take her grandmother's place and become the new queen and owner of the house. The word "Fancy" also connotes the characters' longing for the new world of Aunt Fanny's visions and the faculty of imagination symbolized by the Halloran estate. Fancy's governess, Miss Ogilvie, is another character "whose name implies much of her significance": she "is a very repressed, classical 'old maid,' secretly, platonically in love with the invalid Richard

Halloran" (Miller 191), and the "Halloran" surname "may be intended to suggest 'hallowed' for irony" (Nardacci 137).

The Halloran house is depicted as a symbol of the female struggle for empowerment. Marilyn DeAngelis Boyer argues that through her struggle to be the owner and ruler of the house, Orianna Halloran "has managed to challenge the traditional postwar ideology of the primacy of marriage and family, by not only defying the status quo in not being a subordinate helpmate or nurturing parent but also by possibly crippling her husband and murdering her son" (113). The fact that Aunt Fanny's father's ghost appears to tell them to stay within the safety of the house reveals the patriarchal ideology's reinforcement of the cult of domesticity in the 1950s. As Richard Pascal explains, "the ideology of domesticity" was "haunted by father worship" (91). Nonetheless, Orianna/Mrs. Halloran cripples the power of patriarchy from within. She becomes the matriarch, who "is hardly the submissive type" (Boyer 117) and is similar to her granddaughter Fancy, who plays with her doll house hoping to own the real house when her grandmother dies, and performs witchcraft rituals like pinning a framed picture of her grandmother and impaling her grandmother doll "with many pins" in order to curse Mrs. Halloran (Miller 194).

Fancy's doll house and the dolls within it are artificial doubles of the Halloran mansion and the characters living inside. The doll house reflects the phoniness, emptiness as well as the unreality of the outside world Gloria talks about in one of her conversations with Fancy. Thus, as Pascal explains, Fancy "regards her exquisitely equipped doll house as a toy version of the Halloran household to which she is the heiress apparent" (86–87). Like Fancy, who owns the doll house and governs the dolls, Mrs. Halloran governs the Halloran household. Additionally, Aunt Fanny has a private, unoccupied four-room apartment within the Halloran mansion that stores her and Richard's childhood belongings, her deceased mother's and father's furniture, mementos, and old photographs.

Aunt Fanny's apartment on the third floor, right wing of the mansion, is a replica of the apartment where she and Richard spent their childhood before their father (the first Mr. Halloran) moved the family to the present big house. The four rooms of the apartment—the living room, the kitchen, the parental bedroom, and the bedroom she and Richard shared when they were small children—remind Aunt Fanny of her childhood and her

mother, who died shortly after they moved into the mansion. Both Fancy's doll house and Aunt Fanny's private apartment are isolated houses within a house that represents isolation. Thus, both the real house (the Halloran mansion), and miniature houses (Aunt Fanny's replica-apartment and Fancy's doll house) appear as symbols of the female characters' desire to have or live within a secluded, even minimalistic, domain where they can act freely, indulge in memories, and lead a fanciful way of living.

The female characters' interest in houses is reinforced by the author's portrayal of the domineering matriarch, Mrs. Halloran, who sees a dream which is evocative of the fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel." Mrs. Halloran dreams about living alone as a witch in a little cottage in the woods. In her dream, two children who look like Gloria and Essex, arrive and begin eating pieces from her house, which at first appears to be made of chocolate and candy. She locks the girl into a cupboard in the kitchen and the boy into a closet. They remain imprisoned until a woman who looks like Mrs. Willow comes and rescues them. As they hurry off into the forest shouting "'Witch! Witch!'" at Mrs. Halloran, she "look[s] hopelessly at her little house where she [has] lived alone, with one cup and one plate and one spoon, her little house which was not made of candy at all" (116). Mrs. Halloran's dream reveals her insecurities about losing her possession of the Halloran house as well as her authority. Thus, as Pascal expresses, Mrs. Halloran, Aunt Fanny and Fancy have a "tendency to fashion for themselves […] personal miniatures in which solipsistic control is absolute" (86).

Boyer argues that the Halloran mansion reflects "post-war nuclear fear" and the concern for building "bomb shelters" (102–103): "What Americans lacked in this postwar era of conformity […] is a feeling of safety from the bomb, allegedly to be found in domesticity" (103). According to Boyer, the revelation Aunt Fanny has received about staying within the "safety" of the house reveals the fact that "The actual homes occupied in suburbia and on some wealthy country estates in the 1950s, that were constructed or clung to for safety's sake, were like bomb shelters" (103). However, the enclosed domesticity of house-shelters "became explosive from within in that those inside became suffocated by the strictures imposed upon them by the society" (Boyer 103). In line with Boyer's argument, the characters in *The Sundial* are literally imprisoned within the Halloran estate. Most of the characters, particularly Mrs. Halloran, engage in a totalitarian way of

thinking as they have a thirst for authority and power. Since they believe that they are the "chosen ones," or the select few who are destined to survive (or deserve surviving), they appear to be bigots. They are critical of the moral corruption of the outside world, yet are reluctant to confront themselves and recognize their own corrupt values.

At the beginning of the novel, having returned from Lionel's funeral, the characters gather in the entrance hall of the house. The deceased Lionel's wife, Maryjane, wishes to see Mrs. Halloran dropping dead on the doorstep of the house (3). Maryjane hints that Mrs. Halloran killed her own son, Lionel, since she "'couldn't *stand* if the house belonged to anyone else'" (4). In reality, Maryjane wishes for Mrs. Halloran's death because she wants her daughter Fancy to inherit the estate. In response to her mother's statement, Fancy, who plays with her long black dress, a pretentious symbol of mourning, suggests pushing her grandmother, like she pushed her father, down the stairs. As Maryjane and Fancy go upstairs to their room on the upper left wing to rest, they pass an arched window, which is embellished with black words decorated with gold and that read as "WHEN SHALL WE LIVE IF NOT NOW?" (4).

Along with the motto on the sundial, the statement on the arched window refers to the passage of time and the significance of the moment lived whereas the question on the sundial, "WHAT IS THIS WORLD," refers to the insignificance or transience of earthly and material pursuits. In the context of Chaucer's "the Knight's Tale," the motto refers to the inevitability of death, the instability of humankind's features, and the intricate relationship between victory, death, defeat and love. Inside the grotto, on a rock wall is written a line from Shakespeare. In blue letters with gilt, it reads, "Fear no more the heat of the sun," which reinforces the motto on the sundial by evoking death and the transience of life on earth. As Nardacci observes, the inscriptions suggest that "Indulgence in the luxuries of [the] estate may serve to divert the thoughts of its occupants, but fatalism lurks beneath the gilt surfaces" (138). They are traces left by the first Mr. Halloran, who had "a passion for the reassuring presence of a line of good advice" and lived by maxims (Jackson 187). The maxims transform the Halloran estate into a textual space in which the characters become the protagonists of their own narrative.

After Lionel's funeral, Essex and Miss Ogilvie talk about the upcoming dinner, and Aunt Fanny complains about being ignored. They seem to be indifferent to and ignorant of

Lionel's death. Mrs. Halloran, standing behind Richard's wheelchair informs him without concealing her boredom that Lionel's funeral is over. Like the other characters, she, too, has selfish, petty concerns, and does not feel any grief over the death of her own son. The narrator notes that before Richard Halloran became confined to his wheelchair, "Mrs. Halloran had frequently found it difficult to restrain her face, or the small withdrawing gestures of her hands, but now that Mr. Halloran was in the wheelchair, and could not turn quickly, Mrs. Halloran was always graceful with him" (6). The narrator's statement reveals Mrs. Halloran's "previous discontent with her marital relationship" (Boyer 116) and her life as a housewife. According to Boyer, Richard's wheelchair has enabled Mrs. Halloran to free herself from Richard's male gaze at a time when "men dominated the home front" (116). Thus, Richard's disability "stands in for the broken domesticity," and the broken patriarchy of the 1950s, as "women became more and more discontent, bored and unfulfilled," suffering from what Friedan would call "The Problem that has No Name" (Boyer 106–107). As Mitchell and Snyder argue, a disabled character in a literary work is "a metaphorical signifier of social and individual collapse" (47). Richard Halloran, with his disability and senility, represents the moral collapse of society and of the Halloran household who futilely wait for a change to occur without recognizing their own hollowness.

As Mrs. Halloran converses with Richard about the death of their son, Richard sorrowfully remembers the time they rang the bells over the carriage house at his birth. When Mrs. Halloran proposes to ring the bells again, Richard rejects her offer, indicating the community's callousness and lack of sympathy or understanding: "I think not, I think not. They might not understand, down in the village, and we must not indulge our own sentimental memories at the expense of public opinion. I think not. In any case, the bells are not loud enough to reach Lionel now" (6). Richard's crippled, senile condition not only empowers Mrs. Halloran in her plan to establish dominance, but also alters the others' attitude towards him and his perspective of reality. He mentions how at one time, he was able to see the rose garden from the window, but now he only sees the untrimmed hedges (Boyer 118). His conception of time is blurred, as he forgets what has been said or done a few minutes ago, and confuses the past and the present. Thus, he is the embodiment of the chaos that surrounds the characters and the idea of the end of the world.

The revelation Aunt Fanny has received disrupts the usual, ordinary life of the characters. Similarly, Richard Halloran "causes a disruption to himself and others," as "he is not like the rest" and "poses an outstanding difference that causes others confusion" (Boyer 112). Of all the characters, Richard Halloran, even though he is ineffectual, is the most truthful, and honest character—he is a prototype of the disabled and senile Uncle Julian in Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. Both Richard Halloran and Uncle Julian remain outside the self-indulgence and hollowness that surround them. Their physical and mental impairment emblematize the descent of the family and the society at large.

Essex complicates Richard's past by mentioning that years ago, Richard, before he became disabled, wrote notes to Miss Ogilvie, who was in love with him. The "scandalous" story exposes Mrs. Halloran's insecure position as well, for if she had ended her marriage, she would have lost her possession of the house. Mrs. Halloran reveals her insincerity, selfishness and hypocrisy when she complains that Lionel's funeral proceedings have disrupted her schedule, and admits that she married Richard for his father's money and the house.

That evening, Mrs. Halloran and Essex stand by the sundial on the lawn reflecting on the meaning of the inscription, "WHAT IS THIS WORLD?" Touching the sundial and moving "her finger along a W" (14), Mrs. Halloran remarks that she dislikes the words. As Hattenhauer observes, "her body language contradicts her oral language" (138). She is both attracted to and repulsed by the sundial: she is attracted to it because of its physical presence and worldliness; set off center, the sundial represents the only imperfection amidst the mathematical order of the Halloran estate. Mrs. Halloran thinks to herself that

> without it the lawn would be empty. It is a point of human wickedness; it is a statement that the human eye is unable to look unblinded upon mathematical perfection. I am earthly, Mrs. Halloran reminded herself conscientiously, I must look at the sundial like anyone else. I am not inhuman; if the sundial were taken away I, too, would have to avert my eyes until I saw imperfection, a substitute sundial—perhaps a star. (14–15)

However, Mrs. Halloran is also disturbed by its conceptual presence—the inscription, which foreshadows her demise, is a counterpoint to her quest for material possessions, reminding her of her humanness, and imperfections, both her own flaws as a human being and the imperfections of the material world.

As Richard sits by the fire in his wheelchair reminiscing about his dead son, Mrs. Halloran mentions her plan to help Essex start on a "small scholarly pursuit" (18), send Miss Ogilvie to a "genteel" boarding house and Maryjane back to her home, and ask Aunt Fanny to move into the tower which was intended to be an observatory. Only Richard and Fancy, their granddaughter, are to stay. Fancy, on the other hand, wishes to see her grandmother dead so that the house will belong to her: "'When my grandmother dies,' she said, 'I am going to smash my doll house. I won't need it any more'" (22). Thus, Fancy, heiress to Mrs. Halloran's throne, is similar to her grandmother in her desire to become the matriarch and owner of the house, thereby attaining authority.

The next morning, before daybreak, Aunt Fanny and Fancy take a walk in the garden on a darkened path with hedges that meet overhead. When Fancy runs ahead towards an eerie gardener—who is clipping the branches of the hedges on a ladder—leaving Aunt Fanny behind, it begins to grow foggy as the morning mist encircles the path "curling around the tips of leaves through the branches and even almost hiding Fancy's feet as she ran" (25). Fancy impishly runs away from Aunt Fanny "running ankle deep through the mist, turning and even laughing as she ran between the hedges" (25). The darkened path, the wild hedges, the mist, the strange gardener, and Fancy's mischievous behavior all contribute to the Gothic feeling and horror of the ominous setting, representing Aunt Fanny's mental confusion and imminent danger or chaos.

Searching for Fancy, Aunt Fanny ends up in a strange part of the garden which she has not seen before. The garden is full of marble statues depicted as sinister, Gothic objects that entrap Aunt Fanny and look as if they were alive. Aunt Fanny thinks to herself that she "must have strayed from the path and come into [the secret] garden by another [unfamiliar] way" (27), and that the house Fancy mentions must be the summerhouse with marble pillars on the lawn. Walking towards a bench, she stumbles and takes hold of a pillar which turns out to be the thigh of a statue looking down on her, and draws her hand back from the warm marble immediately, calling Fancy's name. She begins to run "madly, putting her feet down on flowers and catching herself against ornamental bushes" (28). Fancy answers, notifying her that she is inside the house. Thus, both Fancy and the garden seem to be conspiring against Aunt Fanny, who is haunted by the patriarchal ghosts of the Halloran estate.

Aunt Fanny eventually runs into the summerhouse, where she hears a voice calling her name: “It was huge, not Fancy at all, echoing and sounding around and in and out of her head: FRANCES HALLORAN, it came to her, FRANCES, FRANCES HALLORAN” (31). All of a sudden, she sees a dark silhouette, “not a statue, not Essex” (31), standing by the sundial. With sudden acute fear, she realizes that what she is seeing must be real and that it is the ghost of her father, the first Mr. Halloran, speaking to her. Her father’s ghost warns that “‘there is danger’” and only “‘in the house it is safe’” (31): “‘From the sky and from the ground and from the sea there is danger; tell them in the house. There will be black fire and red water and the earth turning and screaming; this will come’” (32). Before he disappears, the ghost notes that after the disaster, the sky will be fair again and his children “will be saved” (32).

The moment Aunt Fanny puts her hand on the warm stone of the sundial, the ghost disappears, dissipating into the darkness. Aunt Fanny’s vision illustrates how a character can “undo the death of another by mediating on his visionary form,” “a compelling way of negating one’s own death” (Castle 135). If the uncanny ghost Aunt Fanny sees is a character of her imagination or hallucination, then Aunt Fanny may be negating the death of her parents by visualizing her father’s spirit. Furthermore, whether it is real or not, a marvelous presence is a clear manifestation of the estate’s patriarchal past, since it wants Aunt Fanny to remain within the house, or domestic sphere.

In the drawing room, as Aunt Fanny rests on the couch surrounded by the others, she tries to explain to them what she has gone through in the garden and conveys her deceased father’s message. Fancy denies having been with Aunt Fanny, who resents her for leaving her alone, and Mrs. Halloran does not believe Aunt Fanny’s story on the grounds that gardeners were not told to work on the hedges at that hour of the day. As she comments, “‘You may very well have seen your father; I would not dream of disputing a private apparition. But you could not have seen a gardener trimming a hedge. Not here, not today’” (34). Hattenhauer argues that “what is peculiar for the reader is normative for the characters” (142): Mrs. Halloran views a seemingly supernatural event—the appearance of the ghost of Aunt Fanny’s father—as possible while she regards a possible event—a gardener clipping the hedges—as impossible.

As Mrs. Halloran mocks Aunt Fanny's story and the others disbelieve her, "a brightly-banded snake" begins to watch them from the fireplace paying attention to their conversation, "and then [it] slip[s] from the fireplace across the heavy carpet, within a foot of Mrs. Halloran's shoe, and without hesitation, angle[s] behind a bookcase and disappear[s]" (37). Essex calls it "'blasphemy,'" and speculates that the snake has probably been "'sent by the noble ghost [Mrs. Halloran was] mocking'" (37). Maryjane takes it as "'a warning'" (37), and refuses to leave the house. Thus, the appearance of the devil in the form of a snake convinces everyone to accept the message Aunt Fanny has conveyed and impedes Mrs. Halloran's plan to banish them from the house.

Evaluating the characters' responses to the revelation Aunt Fanny claims to have received and the appearance of the snake, the narrator comments,

> The question of belief is a curious one, partaking of the wonders of childhood and the blind hopefulness of the very old; in all the world there is not someone who does not believe something. It might be suggested, and not easily disproven that anything, no matter how exotic, can be believed by someone. On the other hand, abstract belief is largely impossible; it is the concrete, the actuality of the cup, the candle, the sacrificial stone, which hardens belief; the statue is nothing until it cries, the philosophy is nothing until the philosopher is martyred. (38)

The characters in *The Sundial* discredit Aunt Fanny's vision until they witness the appearance and disappearance of the snake-apparition inside the drawing room, and choose to regard it as a solid manifestation that confirms what Aunt Fanny has recounted. The narrator explains that even though the inhabitants of Mrs. Halloran's house have "faith," it is a "faith in agreeably concrete things like good food and the best beds and the most weather tight shelter and in themselves as suitable recipients of the world's best" (38). Thus, as Miller argues, "With the actual, real intrusion of what could be called 'the spirit world,'" "the question of the sundial takes on added, important meaning in the story": "The novel turns on" the issue of belief (200), and explores belief as an attempt to define and question "reality" and create a surrogate "reality" to the outside world.

Even though the characters have faith in material belongings, they superimpose their materialism on Aunt Fanny's other-worldly visions, which border on the fantastic. For instance, Mrs. Halloran claims that in the next world, the house, which will stand as a sanctuary, will still belong to her. During a conversation with Essex, Mrs. Halloran, standing near the sundial, says to Essex "'I agree that I would not be so willing to believe

in Aunt Fanny if her messages dictated that I give away all my earthly possessions'" (47). Here, it is evident that Mrs. Halloran's motive is to establish herself as the matriarchal queen of the new world, presiding over her material possessions and the Halloran mansion. Thus, she seeks to take advantage of Aunt Fanny's visions for her own benefit, and sees in the revelation the promise to finally achieve her dream of possessing a house.

After her strange experiences in the garden and on the lawn, Aunt Fanny becomes the family's spiritual medium, and articulates her father's messages in a trance with "her head on the breakfast table" and "a smile on her face" repeating to them what the ghost speaks to her (40):

> With a happy smile on her face and her eyes shut, she listened with a child's care, and spoke slowly, word for word. Aunt Fanny's father had come to tell these people that the world outside was ending. Neither Aunt Fanny nor her father expressed any apprehension, but the world which had seemed so unassailable to the rest of them, the usual, daily world of houses and cities and people and all the small fragments of living, was to be destroyed in one night of utter disaster. Aunt Fanny smiled, and nodded, and listened, and told them about the end of the world […] The house would be guarded during the night of destruction and at its end they would emerge safe and pure. They were charged with the future of humanity; when they came forth from the house it would be into a world clean and silent, their inheritance. (40–41)

Here, Jackson conveys disdain for the corruption of human civilization by calling into question the everyday reality, and articulating a wish to destroy it. After this revelation, Aunt Fanny, awakening from her trance, drinks some brandy and falls asleep till late afternoon. When she wakes up, she puts on her mother's diamonds and goes upstairs to Maryjane's and Fancy's room to inform them about the end of the world. She informs Maryjane, who has been suffering from asthma, and Fancy that "'Humanity, as an experiment, has failed,'" and after the apocalypse, evil, jealously, fear and disease will all disappear (42). As Aunt Fanny speaks, Maryjane, who notices Aunt Fanny's diamonds, claims that "'by right they should have come'" to her, since "'Lionel always said so'" (44). Maryjane's profane concern contrasts with Aunt Fanny's statements about her visions, revealing the characters' pettiness.

Aunt Fanny also proclaims that with the coming of the apocalypse "'The imbalance of the universe is being corrected. Dislocations have been adjusted. Harmony is to be restored, imperfections erased'" (45). Her new position as the messenger of the spirit world challenges the authority of Mrs. Halloran, who is disturbed by what she calls Aunt

Fanny's "'prophetic lunacy'" (46). As she touches the words on the sundial, Mrs. Halloran explains to Essex that she has no choice other than believing in Aunt Fanny's father's ghost: "'Authority is of some importance to me. I will not be left behind when creatures like Aunt Fanny and her brother are introduced into a new world. I must plan to be there'" (47). Likewise, Essex also reveals his desire to believe:

> When we believe, we must do so wholly. I am prepared to follow Aunt Fanny because I agree with you: it is the only positive statement about our futures we have ever heard, but once I have taken her side I will not be shaken. If I can bring myself to believe in Aunt Fanny's golden world, nothing else will ever do for me; I want it too badly. (48)

Thus, both Mrs. Halloran and Essex willingly decide to follow Aunt Fanny in her apocalyptic visions, choosing to play roles in what they consider to be Aunt Fanny's fiction. As Parks explains, the novel is "concerned with the nature of belief, with the way desperate people grasp a belief and make it their truth, with how belief and madness combine and lead to desperate behavior […] making people into grotesques" ("Waiting for the End: Shirley Jackson's *The Sundial*," 75). The inhabitants of the Halloran mansion eagerly isolate themselves within the house through a thwarted mob mentality of their own, which embodies their longing for a new world and new selves.

Aunt Fanny continues to wear her diamonds with "a look of quiet satisfaction particularly irritating to Mrs. Halloran" (49). As Maryjane's asthma improves, Fancy plays with her doll house, and Essex carves a tiny totem pole for Fancy's house to pass the day. Richard, on the other hand, wants his nurse to read *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) to him instead of weekly magazines, and Mrs. Halloran makes a plan for a small "amphitheater to be constructed on a little hill beyond the orchard, without announcing any particular design for its possible use" (49). In this context, the nurse's reading of *Robinson Crusoe* provides an intertextual background for the characters' vision of living alone in a new, deserted world as its only inheritors.

One morning, Mrs. Halloran receives a visit from one of her old friends, Augusta Willow, who arrives with her two daughters, Julia and Arabella. Aunt Fanny immediately dislikes Mrs. Willow and reminds her that she has come to a house of mourning. When Mrs. Willow learns about the ghost's prediction, she asks to remain in the house with Julia and Arabella so they can survive the apocalypse. Julia, who is about thirty years old, is the

older sister, and Arabella, who is past twenty-five, is the younger of the sisters. Mrs. Willow introduces her daughters as if she was introducing dolls. She calls Arabella "'the pretty one'" (42) and Julia as the "'clever'" one (58). Both Julia and Arabella have no plans for the future except getting married. Arabella begins to flirt with Essex, and Julia, who does not believe Aunt Fanny, plans to escape with Captain Scarabombardon.

As she converses with Mrs. Halloran, Mrs. Willow states that her only hope is to get rid of her daughters, and that she has come to ask for financial assistance for herself and Julia and Arabella. Mrs. Willow's speech reveals both the patriarchal ideology she has adopted and internalized, and her materialism. She does not think of her daughters' future, for "'it's money [they] need'" (58). Mrs. Willow finds a framed photograph of Mrs. Halloran, who has been working on the household accounts with a pen in her hand, and notices a hatpin stuck through its throat. Mrs. Halloran thinks Fancy must have done it since "'she's been told not to come in'" the room (61). Fancy appears to be a prototype of the female protagonist Merricat in the sixth novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*: both Fancy and Merricat perform "witchcraft" to destroy their antagonists. The photograph of Mrs. Halloran with the hatpin is one of Fancy's witchcraft rituals and foreshadows Mrs. Halloran's demise at the end of the novel.

Essex realizes that like Vladimir and Estragon in Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953) they "'have no function beyond waiting'" (65), which does not seem to be real to him, as he says: "'Nothing is actually quite concrete. We cannot concern ourselves with anything of this world, and we are far from achieving the next'" (66). In response, Aunt Fanny remarks that they are like people who are waiting for the end of their vacations at a summer resort, and Essex asks her "'Reality, Reality. What is real, Aunt Fanny?'" (66). Aunt Fanny answers that reality is the truth, Mrs. Willow says reality means comfort, Miss Ogilvie hesitatingly remarks that reality is perhaps food, Maryjane ponders that reality can be something that is not seen in the movies, and Arabella thinks of reality as a kind of dream world (66). Julia mockingly asks the same question back to Essex, who answers, "'I am real. I am not at all sure about the rest of you'" (66). Julia wonders how Essex can know anything about her, and Essex refers to some lucid tests. When Miss Ogilvie asks Essex if he actually has "'a *test* for reality,'" Essex says, "'Observation, perhaps,'" "'Recollection. Intention, desire, mystic perception of the absence of

nothingness. I am going to be sorry that I ever named the subject'" (66). For Mrs. Willow, "reality" means money, shelter, food, drink, and clothes, for Mrs. Halloran "reality" is the house and her possessions, for Aunt Fanny it is "the truth" of the message she has heard from her father's ghost, and for the others "reality" is a vague, elusive word without a definite meaning. They try to define reality in terms of what they are mentally preoccupied with on a daily basis as they wait for the end of the world. Through Essex's query and Aunt Fanny's apocalyptic visions, Jackson calls into question the everyday reality of the outside world and what people consider to be real.

Seventeen-year-old Gloria Desmond's sudden appearance and strange voice startle everyone in the room causing Miss Ogilvie, who gasps and covers her eyes, to assume that Mrs. Willow, who has been talking about the ghost, has "successfully raised an apparition" (68–69). Gloria explains that she is the daughter of one of Mrs. Halloran's cousins and asks if she can stay in the house till her father, who is in Africa "'To shoot lions,'" comes home (69–70). When Aunt Fanny asks Gloria how she came, Gloria says she came by plane from Massachusetts, took a two-hour bus trip and a taxi from the village, and then climbed over the locked gate of the house, walked a thousand miles up the drive and banged on the front door till she became exhausted and finally walked in the library (70). Essex wonders if she really climbed over the gate, and Gloria states she does not "'like being locked out'" (71). Gloria's determination to reach the house indicates her desire to isolate herself from the outside world. For Gloria the world outside and the people in it are phony, artificial and hopelessly banal. Moreover, the details of her journey to the Halloran mansion appear as an early example of Eleanor's journey to Hill House in the fifth novel, in which Eleanor struggles to reach the haunted house in spite of the obstacle of the locked gate and the gatekeeper Mr. Dudley's unwelcoming presence. Both the Halloran mansion and Hill House are thus portrayed as separate, barricaded Gothic-fantastic realms, areas of trial and adventure for the female characters.

Gloria is portrayed as the virtuous seer of the group with her insightful wisdom. Mrs. Willow has Gloria look into a mirror covered with olive oil to learn when and how the devastation will occur, and what will happen afterwards. She pulls a small table away from the wall, sets it near the fire, and places an uncomfortable, slippery, green satin chair with carved legs before the table. Essex brings the mirror embellished with a heavy gilded

frame from the wall, and Mrs. Willow sets it on the table. The mirror reflects the carved cupids and painted clouds of the ceiling, and a wave-shaped fault in the glass alters the cupid faces as Mrs. Willow pours the oil from a small can. She instructs Gloria, who sits on the chair, to rest her arms on the table and look closely at the mirror as if it were a window: "'Try not to blink. Try not to think. We will all be very quiet, and in a little while you'll see through the window to what is on the other side. When you see something there, just tell us simply what you see'" (73).

As Gloria looks into the mirror, Mrs. Halloran, who regards Mrs. Willow's practice as "'Low comedy'" (72), Essex, Julia and Arabella sit nearby the fire, and the nervous Miss Ogilvie sits in a far corner of the room. Mrs. Willow and Aunt Fanny stand behind Gloria. Mrs. Willow hypnotically instructs Gloria to imagine that she is looking through a strange window into a world she has not seen before and that she will receive a significant message when the specters find the window from the other side. Gloria begins to convey what she sees or imagines: at first, she talks about a white rock which looks like the sundial with the sea around it; then the sea turns into grass, the white rock is transformed into a mountain with a waterfall running down it, and the grass become trees. Gloria's visions change very rapidly: the bright sun turns into a white fire, which transforms into red and black fire. She covers her eyes with her hands, and when she leans forward again, she reports that she is seeing circles of color becoming blacker and blacker, and strange, peering eyes that try to get out wanting something; the eyes then turn into the windows of the house and a brightly colored bird begins hopping down the terrace, the colors of the bird look like jewels "'red, blue and green'" (75).

Gloria relates that the bird with its red eyes and sharp nose is walking fast, down the lawn towards her window, and wrenches herself away from the mirror covering her eyes. Aunt Fanny remarks that the bird must have been her father, who has "'come to see if [they] are mindful of his instructions,'" and Gloria should "'at least made some gesture to show [she] recognized him'" (75). Aunt Fanny describes her father as "'a strict man,'" "'but good to his children'" (75), and her description reveals his patriarchal dominion in the past and her adherence to the notion that "father knows best." Thus, Aunt Fanny's father, who is the founder of the house, is a prototype of the deceased patriarch Hugh Crain in the ensuing novel *The Haunting of Hill House*.

The mirror into which Gloria looks is a symbol of what the characters desire to believe and a representation of the self. Even though Gloria possibly imagines what she sees in the mirror, her visions open into a world that is different from, yet similar to, their own, as the mirror reflects the characters' situation of waiting inside the house as well as their longing for a revelation to come true. Before Gloria looks into the mirror, Essex, who refuses to look into it, mentions that he has "'an antipathy to mirrors'" (72). Essex avoids looking into the mirror as he does not want to confront his own face/self or his intense desire for the next world as promised by Aunt Fanny.

In a conversation with Arabella, Essex adds depth to his thoughts on this matter: "'You are not familiar, I think, with a kind of unholy, unspeakable longing? I mention it to you because I think you may be the only person who is capable of recognizing such an emotion. It is not a pretty thing to feel'" (76). When Arabella tells him that "'perhaps [he] can teach [her],'" Essex explains, "'It is a longing so intense that it creates what it desires, it cannot endure any touch of correction; it is, as I say, unspeakable'" (76). In response, Arabella, who does not comprehend Essex's comments, replies that she does not remember if she "'ever felt anything like that'" (76). Essex remarks, "'It is unholy because it is heretic. It is foul. It is abominable to need something so badly that you cannot picture living without it. It is a contradiction to the condition of mankind'" (76).

Arabella interprets Essex's statement on a superficial level and adds that her mother "'has made a particular point of seeing that [she] lacked for nothing'" (76). Essex continues: "'I dread that it may be only a longing for annihilation. No person who has seen his own face plain can want to live any longer'" (76). Arabella falsely assumes that Essex is talking about real faces and physical beauty: "'I can understand a person's not liking his own face, but people can't help their faces after all. I know I always feel sorry for girls who are not nice-looking. And I'm sure I think you've got a very pleasant face'" (76). Lost in his inner thoughts, Essex indicates that he is talking about his soul when he says, "'The sight of one's own heart is degrading; people are not meant to look inward—that's why they have been given bodies, to hide their souls'" (77). Essex dislikes mirrors and reflections that show his face and soul plainly, as he thinks that he is "'filthy, sickened, beastly'" and "'rotten'" (77) due to his hypocrisy, moral corruption and desperate need to believe Aunt Fanny, who has instilled in him hope for a new life. When Essex mentions

Aunt Fanny's name, Arabella says, "'you're talking about *Aunt Fanny*? But I thought all your unspeakable thoughts were about *me*'" (77). The disconnected dialogue between Arabella and Essex discloses Arabella's shallow preoccupation with appearances and Essex's feeling of guilt for concealing his degradation. Essex's thoughts, which focuses on the dichotomy between body and soul, can also be interpreted as a reference to Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray,* in which the obsession with youth and beauty, and a life devoted to the pursuit of pleasure, drive the young protagonist, Dorian Gray, to self-destruction as his portrait, which mirrors his soul, records his "sins." Essex desires Aunt Fanny's Edenic golden world free of sin, since he sees in it the promise of a new self and untainted face, and the possibility of leaving behind his aimless life.

Passing the gates to go to the village to shop, Julia states that she does not care about what Mrs. Halloran says, since her only wish is to be outside the house where she feels imprisoned. Unlike the other alienated female characters, Julia does not want to retreat into the house, but rather desires to escape it and Mrs. Halloran's domination. While the others are alienated from the outside world, Julia is alienated from the inside, like Betsy in *The Bird's Nest*, who escapes from Aunt Morgen's house to go to New York to seek her deceased mother. Unlike Julia, Aunt Fanny notes that she prefers to stay at home, and adds, "'Your modern automobiles […] particularly this one; Julia, do you mind moving just a *little* more slowly? Automobiles, and noise and dust and strange people […] I prefer a somewhat less feverish life, thank you'" (77).

Here, the narrator intervenes to describe the neighborhood, "which had been very much the subject of sensational publicity" (78). The narrator explains that one morning a fifteen-year-old girl named Harriet Stuart picked up a hammer "with which she murdered her father, her mother, and her two younger brothers putting an abrupt end to the Stuart family tree" (78). According to the village story, which has attracted tourists to the spot of the murder, Harriet was acquitted of the crime, since the villagers could not prove her guilt and no one understood why she would kill her family: "They said at the time it was a crazy idea she was even put on trial, because no jury in their right minds could see her sitting there, quiet and sad and looking like any young kid, and *really* believe she did it" (78–79). As the narrator explains, after murdering her family members, Harriet ran outside and all the way down to Parker's bakery in her unblemished nightgown yelling

for help and awakening Bill Parker, who eventually awoke Mr. Straus, the butcher, and old Watkins. When Mrs. Parker took Harriet in, Harriet was "barefoot and all cut and scratched from the bushes," yet there "was no blood on her" (80). According to the story told by the narrator, a hammer was found near the bushes by the road, and Harriet claimed that a tramp got in the house through the cellar and dropped the hammer as he was chasing her.

Even though the prosecution tried to prove that Harriet was the murderer, and probably had burned her bloody clothes in the stove, the defense "got in an expert" and claimed that "it wasn't nothing but old rags in the stove" and "there were clear signs someone had been walking around the cellar near the window" (79–80). As the narrator explains, after she was acquitted, Harriet lived alone in the house for years with her housekeeper and aunt till she died in her sleep about ten years after the first Mr. Halloran had built the Halloran estate. Eventually, Mr. Straus took possession of the Stuart property when the mortgage lapsed. Since Harriet's death, the house has stayed empty due to "its lack of sanitary accommodations," and has been maintained only because of the daily groups of tourists who get off the bus in front of the Carriage Stop Inn to visit the house half a mile away (78–81).

The story of Harriet Stuart is reminiscent of the case of Lizzie Borden, who murdered her father and stepmother with an axe in 1862 in Fall River, Massachusetts and was put on trial. The village is haunted by the memory of Harriet Stuart and has become a Gothic place with the presence of the empty house. Furthermore, Harriet Stuart's story inspires the plot of the next novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, as the Stuart house, which attracts not only tourists but also scholars who plan to write articles on it, appears as a precursor to Hill House in which the scholar, Dr. Montague, aims to write a "scientific" article about the haunted house by inviting guests to investigate the supernatural phenomena inside. In addition, Harriet Stuart is a prototype of the eighteen-year-old protagonist Merricat Blackwood in the last novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. Like Harriet, Merricat murders everyone in her family except her older sister, Constance, with arsenic, and lives in isolation in her house with her sister. Harriet is spurned by the community like Merricat and Constance. The narrator even mentions that the village children threw rocks through the windows, and the people who came to look at the house sometimes stayed until late

at night “to catch sight of a tall figure dressed in black, moving past the upper windows of the house” (78). Thus, like most Jackson’s Gothic characters, she evades the community by hiding within the house.

After Harriet died and her aunt moved away, Mr. Straus began receiving “letters from scholarly folk who wanted to the visit the house” (81). The house, which attracted a number of tourists, was also good for the local economy, as the tourists also dined at Mr. Peabody’s Carriage Stop Inn, and purchased goods from the village shops. This allowed women, such as Caroline and Deborah Inverness, to become self-sufficient, bypassing the patriarchy by remaining unmarried and childless out of choice. Like Harriet Stuart, Caroline and Deborah Inverness subvert the cult of domesticity. Nevertheless, the Inverness sisters, who think of “the entire Harriet Stuart affair as uncouth and criminally unfilial” do not include any mementos, pamphlets or books about the murder in their gift shop and library (81–82), yet profit from it just the same. On the other hand, for the rest of the village, Harriet Stuart is “their enshrined murderess” (78).

The Harriet Stuart story haunts the village as it is passed down from person to person. The narrator notes that “the present Mr. Straus”— “son of the original Mr. Straus”— repeats the Harriet Stuart story told to him by his father to the customers who come by the butcher shop which he inherited (81). The Hallorans avoid talking about the story, since old Mr. Straus refused to sell the Stuart property to the first Mr. Halloran, “who had once made an offer to buy the Stuart house” (83). Even though the Hallorans provide financial support to the villagers by purchasing their products, they remain separate, maintaining the class system that is based on the socio-economic gap between the Hallorans, who represent the upper class, and the villagers. As the narrator reveals, “the first Mr. Halloran had made an unbreakable law: the servants in the big house came, without exception, from the city. Villagers, Mr. Halloran maintained, belonged in the village, and not within the walls of the big house” (83). Thus, the Halloran estate is enclosed within itself and is separated from the neighborhood that surrounds it on numerous levels.

To the surprise of the Inverness sisters, Aunt Fanny asks for books about surviving in the wilderness, presumably after the apocalypse—“‘A book which would tell how to build a fire and how to catch animals for food’” with “‘a certain amount of information [on] first-

aid,'" and "'a fairly elementary book on engineering, and chemicals'" and "'the various uses of herbs'" (89). Miss Ogilvie clarifies that what Aunt Fanny needs is a "'A Boy Scout Handbook'" (89) like the kind her brother used to have. Miss Ogilvie suggests including Caroline and Deborah Inverness, who have been very kind to them, in their future, yet, Aunt Fanny decides to reject Miss Ogilvie's offer on the grounds that they will "'need more sturdy, more *rugged* personalities'" who can be employed as workers and builders, and can breed "'future generations'" (90). Miss Caroline, who has no idea what Aunt Fanny and Miss Ogilvie are talking about, resentfully responds: "'I am sure that neither my sister nor myself has any desire to be looked upon as a worker, and it is long since we gave up any notion of breeding children. I am astonished Mrs. Halloran to hear you talk so coarsely'" (90). Clearly, despite their unconventional lives, both Aunt Fanny and Caroline Inverness refuse to give up their class privilege. As Hattenhauer argues, "class exploitation" is "one of the first features of the old world" that Aunt Fanny plans to maintain in the new world (150). Aunt Fanny and others' vision of the new world contains traces from their old world, and it appears to be the author's point that the new world they are expecting will not be much different from the "civilized" world in which they live, as they are unwilling to recognize their own flaws and selfishness, and transform themselves by giving up old privileges.

At the drug store, Miss Ogilvie sits on a high stool at a soda fountain where there is no one else except the clerk, who is a young man with thinning hair and pimples, leaning against a sign that advertises a "chicken salad sandwich" (92). She orders a peach pie with chocolate ice cream, and when the young man sets the pie in front of her, she confides that she will miss the "'fancy food'" (92). As they talk about desserts, Miss Ogilvie begins to describe to him the expected apocalypse and the ghost's message. When the young man figures out that Miss Ogilvie is actually referring to "'the day of Armageddon,'" he reveals that his mother, who is a member of a club called "'the True Believers'" (94) also speaks like that. He mentions that his mother has got a medium, a spirit of a former Egyptian queen named Liliokawani, who delivers her revelations. The young man and his brother, who supervises the electricity lines, do not believe their mother, since the brother thinks that the apocalypse is not possible scientifically. Nevertheless, the clerk plans to arrange a meeting between the True Believers and the Halloran household by telling his mother what Miss Ogilvie has told him. Since she does

not want any strangers to join their group, Miss Ogilvie is disturbed by the fact that there may be others who are like them, and slides off the stool to go and explain to Aunt Fanny what the soda fountain clerk has told her.

Aunt Fanny does not take the True Believers seriously, since she cannot "'picture'" the ghost of her father "'visiting [the] young man's mother'" (95). Looking across the street, Aunt Fanny spots Mr. Denvers, the postman, talking with a stranger, and decides to invite the stranger to stay with them in their big house. The description of the stranger is evocative of Jackson's demon lover trope, "Harris," who comes from a far-away, exotic land, and follows the female protagonist like a ghost, or whom the female protagonist uses to escape from reality. The presence of a malicious demon lover also indicates the presence of evil or insanity. For example, Tony in *Hangsaman* and Robin in *The Bird's Nest* are demon lover figures who intend to destroy the female protagonists and represent painful memories or the dark corners of the protagonists' minds. In *The Sundial*, the stranger Aunt Fanny spots, is a real stranger and not a demon lover, yet he is described in a way that reminds the readers of the other Harrises in Jackson's fiction.

The narrator emphasizes the stranger's alien, transient status, and endows him with fantastic Gothic qualities. He is almost depicted as a sorcerer with a robe or a cloak, wandering the face of the earth like a ghost. Aunt Fanny names the bewildered stranger "Captain Scarabombardon," and he agrees to become a resident of the Halloran mansion. Aunt Fanny chooses Captain Scarabombardon as he fits into her definition of a "rugged, sturdy" personality who can help to build a new world and breed future generations. For Aunt Fanny, he is an embodiment of the "masculine" ideal and the workforce she envisions.

Soon after the village trip, Mrs. Halloran receives a letter from the secretary of the True Believers, Hazel Ossman, who notifies her of their plan to visit them. In the letter, the secretary describes the True Believers as a "humble society" of "genuine faith," "chosen to carry the torch of mankind" by following "the path of true teaching and never [turning] aside" (98). Despite the fact that the True Believers regard themselves as a "humble" group of people, they assume that unlike the rest of humanity, they are the only ones who "truly deserve the higher levels" (98). Inside Mrs. Halloran's ballroom, the residents of the house meet the True Believers: Edna, who is the leader of the group, wears a purple

dress and “a fur boa of color and fluff,” Hazel, is a “lady” with red hair, whose dress is purple like Edna’s, Arthur has “magnificent hair” and is dressed in a “white waistcoat,” while Mrs. Peterson is “a withered little lady” who is always “peering” (99–100).

Edna introduces herself and the other members of the committee mentioning that they have come to discuss the Hallorans’ “‘present position’” with regard to the “‘supernatural visitations’” prophesizing the end of the world (100). As Edna speaks, Mrs. Peterson utters doomsday prophecies about the bleak future of humankind: “‘Dreadful are the hopes of man,’” “‘Everlasting darkness is the end of mortal life,’” “‘The time is near at hand, and vengeance is swift,’” “‘All hope is hopeless’” (100–102). Edna claims that according to the message they have received, on the day of the apocalypse, flying saucers will land on earth to take them to Saturn. For this to materialize, they have to abstain from meat, alcohol and using metal; on Saturn, Edna remarks, ambrosia is what they drink—Similarly, in last novel *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, the female protagonist, Merricat, fantasizes about living in a house on the moon. Mrs. Halloran refuses to believe Edna and the rest of the True Believers. Nevertheless, the True Believers and the residents of the Halloran house are equally grotesque in their belief in the apocalypse, and in their claim that they are the chosen few. Hence, for the characters in *The Sundial*, belief fulfills the function of fantasy through the promise of a new world. However, there is competition between the two groups over what this vision will entail.

Aunt Fanny sees her father’s ghost for the second time as she returns from her trip to the maze in the garden. Inside the maze, Aunt Fanny gets lost in spite of the fact that she played there as a child. The shape of the maze corresponds to the shape of the letters of Aunt Fanny’s mother’s name, Anna. Knowing the secret of the maze, Aunt Fanny had tried in vain to lose herself, but was never able to do so. Yet, this time, Aunt Fanny gets lost, as the familiar labyrinths of her childhood suddenly take on a bizarre, sinister quality with the untrimmed hedges growing over her head and hiding the turns, and branches that cut her way entrapping her within the maze. The maze is depicted as an uncanny place that represents Aunt Fanny’s longing for her childhood and her mother.

The maze as a symbol of Aunt Fanny’s inner turmoil and maternal womb is significant in the context of Kristeva’s concept of the semiotic, which refers both to the pre-linguistic sense of unity with the mother, as well as biological/bodily drives, sounds, smells, colors,

and rhythms that re-appear within the symbolic realm of language (Kristeva *New Maladies of Soul* 104). Like Betsy, who searches for her deceased mother in New York in *The Bird's Nest*, Aunt Fanny searches for her mother in the maze in trying to reach the center and find her mother's/Anna's statue and thus return to a pre-symbolic, imaginary union with her mother. In this case, Aunt Fanny feels both the same as, yet different from, her mother. The maze and the statues which she encounters in the foggy garden represent the abject, as they threaten, or try to detain/negate, her self by blurring boundaries. The statues inspire horror; at first, she finds them threatening, yet in the end, she is drawn to, and lured by, Anna's statue. In the ensuing novel *The Haunting of Hill House*, Eleanor Vance associates the haunted house with her dead mother, and imagines that her mother/the house/the maternal womb is calling her name, urging Eleanor to return to her and come home. Both the maze in *The Sundial* and the haunted house in *The Haunting of Hill House*, are bizarre, strange, yet familiar, speaking to the characters' inner realities and reminding them of their mothers.

Wandering madly inside the maze, Aunt Fanny tries to find her way among the twigs, which catch her dress and scratch her skin, and calls her mother's name. The maze with its untrimmed hedges and twigs contributes to the horror of the Gothic setting, reflecting Aunt Fanny's fears. All of a sudden, the hedges retreat, and she ends up in the center of the maze. The forgotten statue with the name "Anna" stands alone "leaning down" "to caress an empty place," and Aunt Fanny reluctantly walks toward the bench falling against it and putting her face down among the dried leaves on the marble surface (109). Moved by the statue leaning over her with "arms of tenderness and love," Aunt Fanny thinks to herself: "well I am here, I am at the heart, I have come through the maze—where is the secret I am to learn from my many agonies? Here I am, here I am, where is my reward? What have I earned, learned, spurned? Mother, mother" (110).

Aunt Fanny's reunion with her mother compel her to reflect on the meaning of her life and her miseries. Thomas Fahy argues that the horror genre, causing feelings "of anxiety, fear, relief, and mastery," "raises questions about fear and suffering": "Is the world a just place? Does our suffering have meaning? Is there justice and accountability?" (1). In line with Fahy's argument, Aunt Fanny encounters the horrific which reminds her of the real horrors of her life. The maze also appears as a symbol of inner turmoil, the hardships she

has experienced, and her desire to seek refuge. As she calls for her mother and finds her way out of the maze, she hears a voice calling her name and sees a silhouette that looks like Essex, yet turns out to be the ghost of her father. This second revelation is recorded by Mrs. Willow in the drawing room where the characters meet to listen to what Aunt Fanny, as a medium, is saying. At the end of Aunt Fanny's story, "the glass of the great picture window," which looks out to the sundial, shatters "soundlessly from top to bottom" (112), confirming her statements. Thus, the Halloran house, much like a haunted mansion, responds to its inhabitants, warning them of the danger ahead, first through the ghostly snake, and then through the cracking of one of its windows.

After Aunt Fanny's second revelation, Mrs. Halloran sees a dream about living alone in a little house of her own in the woods. Thus, Mrs. Halloran's desire to have a house is related to her desire for autonomy which transforms into a desire for authority and domination. She dreams that she owns the house in the fairy tale "Hansel and Gretel" in which the two children arrive in the old witch's house made of candy. In her dream, a little boy with the face of Essex and a little girl with the face of Gloria find her house as they wander in the woods. Upon discovering that the house is made of gingerbread, candy and chocolate, they tear pieces away, destroying the roof, the walls, and the frames. Mrs. Halloran, fearing that she will lose the house, lures the children inside. She locks the boy into a little closet beside the door and the girl into a cupboard, and holds them captive till a woman who speaks like Mrs. Willow arrives and frees them. The woman and the children accuse Mrs. Halloran of being a witch as they head into the forest leaving the house behind. The dream reveals Mrs. Halloran's insecurity and her fear of losing her authority and ownership of the Halloran mansion, and foreshadows her death in the end. In Mrs. Halloran's dream, the little house appears as an entity to be consumed. For her, the house and her self are identical; she fears that if the house is consumed, she will lose her identity, and perhaps, will even face death. Thus, the consumed house is actually a consuming house/domestic space, much like Hill House in the next novel.

As Maryjane and Arabella walk down the lawn, they notice Fancy's grandmother doll lying on the sundial with pins stuck on it, like a voodoo doll. The doll, taken from Fancy's doll house, is part of one of Fancy's witchcraft rituals and represents Mrs. Halloran and her situation. It forebodes her death, possibly at her granddaughter Fancy's hands, and

the placement of her dead body beside the sundial where she is eventually left alone, without any company, on the evening of the expected apocalypse.

Waiting for the apocalypse, the characters turn the Halloran mansion into a barricaded fortress which stores all their needs. They put the cartons of food supplies and survival items on the shelves of the library and burn the books—except the Boy Scout Handbook, Fancy's French grammar book, and an encyclopedia—in the barbecue pit eliminating the knowledge of the old world. In Essex's words, they are the modern day "'gods, sitting on the front porch of Olympus, regarding the doings of men'" (125) and responsible for building and creating a new world. The Halloran mansion is their temple, the sacred sanctuary which will survive the end of the old world. Aunt Fanny and Gloria imagine that in the new green world, the house will stand as a kind of shrine or an altar for their descendants, who will come to worship and look at "'the furniture and walls and floors the way [people] look at cave paintings or catacombs or ancient palaces,'" and will tell stories about this ancient holy place and their ancestors—the Halloran household (122–123). Thus, the characters inscribe themselves into future narratives as they play the roles ascribed to them by the revelation.

In Gloria's vision of the new world, which, much like Alice in Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking Glass* (1871), she sees through a mirror, Essex is the new Adam within this Edenic world, which contrasts with the present world of civilization and class distinctions that Mrs. Halloran and Aunt Fanny desperately try to maintain. Gloria describes the little moving pictures she sees in the mirror: the images on the other side of the mirror depict the inhabitants of the house as they are having breakfast at the table with pink roses in the dining room towards the end of June. Essex, wearing a white shirt, is telling stories, and Gloria wears her "'blue and white cotton dress'" (128). The details of these images are significant in that they will reappear as the characters are waiting within the walls of the Halloran estate. When Mrs. Willow asks Gloria to see the end of July, Gloria answers that Julia and the Captain are playing tennis, while Arabella, and the rest of them sit outside "'on white chairs and benches'" under "'a green and orange and yellow umbrella,'" wearing "'light dresses and shorts'" and drinking (128). Here, it is not clear whether the mirror opens into the future or a parallel world on the other side, since the fantastic mode of writing, as explained by Todorov, blurs the line between the uncanny

and the marvelous. Mrs. Willow wants Gloria to see the end of August, and Gloria says they are inside the darkness of the house and barricading the door by pushing a chest against it. The windows are closed and only the candles are burning, Fancy is laughing near a lighted candle (129). Based on Gloria's visions, the characters conclude that the apocalypse will occur at the end of the summer, on August thirtieth.

Just as Gloria is reminiscent of Lewis Carroll's Alice, Mrs. Halloran is similar to the Red Queen. Towards the end of the novel, Mrs. Halloran, who is wearing a crown and sitting under a golden canopy on the terrace during the farewell party she hosts for the villagers, compares herself to the Red Queen, and remarks that what the scene lacks is a "'Cheshire cat'" looking down upon them and upon the crowd of the villagers from the sky (207). The reference to Alice's wonderland, and the symbolism of Gloria's mirror, lead readers to wonder which world is real, and question the nature of socially-constructed reality like the characters do in *The Sundial*.

Gloria converses with Fancy about the new world she saw in the mirror, and the two play with the doll house and the dolls inside it. Fancy spies on Gloria and Essex talking about the possibility of escaping, and the promise of a new world. Essex, who reveals his love for Gloria, admits that even though he is fascinated by the idea of living an ordinary life with her outside the Halloran mansion, he prefers to stay in the house, since he does not want to die. When Essex leaves Gloria to see Mrs. Halloran, Fancy suddenly appears behind Gloria, and informs her that Essex, who has been working as Mrs. Halloran's spy, has gone to tell Mrs. Halloran "'every word'" both of them have said (163). As Fancy and Gloria sit together on the bench, Fancy discredits Gloria's visions assuming that Gloria must have made up what she saw in the mirror.

For Fancy, it does not matter which world they are in, since the new world will contain people like her grandmother, Essex, and Aunt Fanny. Fancy does not wish for a new world, and does not want to remain safe within the house, but rather desires to experience the present world "'full of other people'" (184), learn what she has to learn by herself, and grow up with other kids. In other words, she rejects domestic confinement. She laments her situation, and wishes that what Aunt Fanny has told them will not come true. She does not want to be the only child growing up in the new world alone. She asks Gloria, "'Gloria, won't you miss things like dancing, and boys, and going to parties, and

pretty dresses, and movies, and football games?'" and notes that she "'has been waiting a long time for all the things like that'" (184), to live her life to the fullest. In response, Gloria urges Fancy to question "the reality" of the world outside the walls of the Halloran estate, emphasizing its fakeness and corruption by stating that nothing in the outside world is real.

Fancy compares the outside world to her doll house in which her dolls have artificial food like the tiny roasts and cakes made of painted wood (186). Gloria reminds Fancy of the fact that she wouldn't like being like a doll in a toy house or a fake person living in a fake world as she explains that "'the outside is like it's made of cardboard, or plastic, or something,'" the people are phony and are "'like endless copies of each other […] like paper dolls,'" and that "'there's no heart to anything anymore'" (185-186). Thus, Gloria thinks of the world as a false, artificial place like a doll house, yet she fails to perceive that the Halloran mansion, too, is similar to Fancy's doll house.

Tired of the prophecies, Julia and the Captain plan to escape from the Halloran estate and go to the city to free themselves from the mansion. Julia regards Aunt Fanny's revelation as a fake promise designed to imprison them within the house. Mrs. Halloran persuades Captain Scarabombardon to stay just before he is about to leave by handing him a check for a large sum, indicating that she will not need the money when the world ends. The Captain becomes convinced that the revelation must be true, since otherwise Mrs. Halloran would not give him the check, and decides not to the leave the house. Julia embarks on her journey into the city alone in an old, shabby car full of junk with a strange, sinister and hostile driver. With her suitcase beside her on the ground, Julia meets the driver as she waits at the gate inscribed by "a scrolled H which centered each half of the gates" (141). The driver, who appears to take her in, looks "like a ruffian" (142) and resembles Mr. Dudley, the gatekeeper, in the next novel *The Haunting of Hill House*. During their ride through the pouring rain, the driver makes Julia feel uneasy, talking about a rabbit he ran over, and the little puppies and kittens he killed once, and asking for more money on their way. To escape from the driver, Julia slides out of the car into the dense fog which covers the hills. She loses sight of the driver on the road, tries to find her way amidst the mist moving blindly, stumbling over the tree roots and rocks, and rolling downhill until she magically ends up at the front gate of the Halloran mansion. Thus, the

house as a symbol of domestic entrapment prevents Julia's escape leading her back to itself; in addition, it reinforces its own version of reality as opposed to external reality.

Within the house, Aunt Fanny has a private four-room apartment which replicates her childhood home on the third floor of the right wing. The apartment, referred to as the big room, stores her deceased mother's and father's belongings, her and Richard's childhood possessions—baby clothes and toys—and old photographs. The furniture is arranged in a way that resembles the order of the former flat. The four rooms of the big room—the living room, the kitchen, the parental bedroom, and the children's room—are exactly like the rooms of their previous apartment, where the family had lived, before they moved into the Halloran mansion. One day, taking Fancy's hand, Aunt Fanny invites her to see her private apartment, remarking that it is like the doll house. Sitting on the chairs in the living room inside the apartment, Aunt Fanny wants Fancy to role-play; while Aunt Fanny becomes her mother, she urges Fancy to play her. Aunt Fanny's desire to play is linked to her longing for her childhood years; she tries to retrieve the past by keeping the big room intact. Thus, Aunt Fanny's apartment is similar to Fancy's doll house in that it provides a private Gothic domestic space where she can use her imagination to reflect on her memories.

Aunt Fanny encounters the ghost of her father for the third and last time inside the grotto, which is built near the lake. The line from Shakespeare's poem, "Fear no more the heat of the sun," on the rock wall inside the grotto underscores the novel's emphasis on the ephemeral nature of the world (life on earth) outside the Halloran estate. Aunt Fanny seeks refuge within the grotto out of anger at Mrs. Halloran, who has issued a list of instructions to be obeyed in the new world. Mrs. Halloran's list of instructions includes orders that forbid anyone from leaving the house after four o'clock in the afternoon on August thirtieth, and any outsider from entering the house after that time. The list also instructs the inhabitants of the house to barricade and cover the windows and doors before August thirtieth, and gather in the drawing room, dressed in suitable clothes, to wait for the destruction. Mrs. Halloran demands that no one except her should wear a crown, and after the apocalypse, tasks and mates will be assigned by her in the new world where "wanton running, racing, swimming, play of various kinds, and such manifestations of irresponsibility" (192) will not be permitted. On "The First Day," Mrs. Halloran notes,

she “will lead the way to the door, everyone following in sober procession,” and “she will be the first to step outside” (192). Thus, Mrs. Halloran, like a god, tries to determine the rules of the new world and the lives of those who will live in it. In the end, her lust for power and hubris lead her to her demise, since her conception of the new world contrasts with the new world of Aunt Fanny’s revelation. Sitting inside the grotto with the list in her hand, Aunt Fanny says “‘Father, what have you done to me?’” (192), and hears the voice of her father’s ghost, who calls her name as he stands by the doorway.

Towards the end of the novel, the Hallorans host a garden party for the villagers on the twenty-ninth of August as a sort of farewell. The villagers, who do not know about the expected doomsday, have a good time as they converse, dine and drink around the barbecue pit and champagne tent. During the evening, Richard Halloran remains inside the house and Mrs. Halloran sits under a gold canopy with her crown on her head on the terrace of the house overlooking the crowd, indicating that she is the queen of both the present village and the new world. The Inverness sisters, Mrs. Otis, Mr. Straus, Mr. Peabody, Mr. Atkins, Mr. Armstrong, and the school teacher are among the villagers who attend the party. The conversations among the villagers reveal the community’s willingness to believe and spread gossip. At the end of the party, the crowd moves in circles on the lawn dancing, laughing and singing. The entire scene is ritualistic in that it is the last celebration before the catastrophe.

After the garden party, the weather turns strange and stormy. The characters wake up and have breakfast on August thirtieth, preparing for the evening. They barricade the front door with the great chest and cover the windows downstairs with “blankets, bedspreads, tablecloths, sheets, and the huge canvas cover from the barbecue pit” (234). As Boyer explains, the blankets, like the blanket covering the feet of the disabled Richard Halloran, represent an end (102–104). The sound of the strong wind increases the characters’ anxiety as they wait. Julia remarks that the end is “‘too soon’” and “‘there is so much’” she wants “‘to see again, and do again,’” and Gloria feels sad for not being able to say goodbye to her father (231). Mrs. Halloran commands everyone to be in the drawing room by four o’clock in the evening dressed in their best clothes. As the characters leave the room to get dressed, the electricity goes off and the candles are lighted. Thus, the vision Gloria saw in the mirror eventually comes true.

Returning from their rooms with candles in their hands, they discover Mrs. Halloran's body lying dead on the landing with her golden gown and crown. Fancy dashes down the stairs to take the crown, and puts it on, saying, "'My crown, now'" (239). It is implied that Fancy has pushed her grandmother down the stairs, like her grandmother pushed her son, Lionel, so she could be the new queen and owner of the house. Aunt Fanny reprimands Fancy as she says, "'vanity is out of place in a young girl. Try to remember Fancy that earthly possessions do not make a noble soul; just because you have a crown you are not any better than other girls your age'" (240). Fancy dances around the hall with the crown on her head carrying her candle as the other characters decide to take Mrs. Halloran's body outside. Essex and the captain venture into the storm carrying Mrs. Halloran's dead body, and place her beside the sundial inscribed with the words "WHAT IS THIS WORLD?" When they return into the house, leaving Mrs. Halloran alone, they put the blankets back over the great door barricading it with the chest. All the characters await the apocalypse in the drawing room where they pass the time drinking and conversing, and hearing, in apprehension, the violent storm outside, and the crashing sound of the trees brought down by the wind. Maryjane and Arabella talk about a movie, Mrs. Willow complains that "'It's going to be a long wait,'" and Essex promises Gloria to make her "'a crown of flowers'" in the new world (245). Thus, without a conclusion, the novel leaves them (and us) waiting, like the characters in Beckett's *Waiting for Godot*. In the end, Mrs. Halloran is left outside of the house without any company, since her materialistic philosophy and desire for authority did not fit into Aunt Fanny's vision of an Edenic world of freedom.

To conclude, Jackson's *The Sundial*, as a doomsday novel, examines the question of belief and reality, shifting the focus to the Gothic setting or the house as a site isolated from the world outside, or external reality. The novel offers a critique of moral degradation, both within the boundaries of the Halloran estate and of the outside world. The Halloran house appears as a fantastic, barricaded realm ruled by women, particularly Mrs. Halloran and later Fancy, who have a thirst for wealth and authority, and are similar to the domineering, authoritarian patriarchs whose power they have dispelled. Hence, in *The Sundial*, the women succeed in crippling the patriarchy, as represented by the disabled Richard Halloran, yet try to replace it with an equally oppressive and totalitarian order. Through Mrs. Halloran, who is similar to Elizabeth Richmond's aunt in *The Bird's*

Nest, *The Sundial* criticizes patriarchal women who replicate the patriarchal order. The death of Mrs. Halloran emphasizes the author's point that self-righteousness, hubris, the desire to dominate, hypocrisy, and greed bring about the pre-dominant rottenness/depravity, the downfall of the individual and the civilization.

CHAPTER 3

THE END OF THE JOURNEY: SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE* (1959) AND *WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE* (1962)

In Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, the Gothic house appears as a private sanctuary—separated from the neighborhood and community—similar to the Halloran mansion in *The Sundial*. Yet, unlike *The Sundial*, which focuses on the strange experiences of twelve main characters who shelter themselves within the mansion awaiting the end of the world or the apocalypse, having been informed by the ghost of the founder of the house that the house will be safe, these novels focus on female protagonists, Eleanor Vance and Merricat Blackwood, who not only find refuge within a Gothic mansion that represents a realm of fantasy isolated from a corrupt and hostile society, but also become heroines (ghosts or witches) haunting the houses they inhabit.

Even though the house is a conventional symbol of domesticity, Jackson's protagonists unsettle the cult of domesticity, and subvert or eliminate the patriarchal order from within. This chapter will examine the ways in which Eleanor Vance and Merricat Blackwood (and Merricat's older sister, Constance) identify, or even merge, with the houses that become extensions of their selves, and will focus on how the Gothic mansion becomes a stage for the battle between looming patriarchs and haunting heroines, between mundane reality, crushing conformity, and the decadence of the world outside, and the protagonists' insistence on fantasy, imagination, and hope.

3.1. SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *THE HAUNTING OF HILL HOUSE*

The Haunting of Hill House focuses on the story of a thirty-two-year-old woman named Eleanor Vance, who seeks an outlet from patriarchal limits and a home of her own by joining the investigatory party of Dr. John Montague, a scholar of anthropology, at an allegedly haunted Gothic mansion. Throughout the novel, Jackson conflates and blurs the boundaries between the self and the Gothic space, which functions as an extension of the

main character whose self gradually disintegrates into and merges with Hill House. Hill House represents both Eleanor's inner world, the realm of imagination which is contrasted to the reality of the outside world, and the domestic ideology of the 1950s. In *The Landscape of Nightmare*, Jonathan Baumbach describes the modern American novel as "cosmic," explaining that "its view of the world [is] hallucinatory rather than objective" (5). Baumbach's statement is descriptive of Jackson's novels, particularly *The Haunting of Hill House*. In the novel, the house stands for not only Eleanor's desire to retreat into this inner world by becoming a part of the haunting but also her need to confront her trauma of loss and longing for a reunion with her deceased mother. Thus, Hill House is depicted as an uncanny place where Eleanor confronts the bizarre and seemingly supernatural events that speak to her inner self and remind her of her mother by transforming the bizarre into the familiar.

Like Jackson's other novels, *The Haunting of Hill House* fits into Claire Kahane's definition of Female Gothic. The novel depicts an incarcerating architectural structure inside which a young female protagonist whose mother has passed away tries to find out "the center of a mystery, while vague and usually sexual threats to her person from some powerful male figure hover on the periphery of her consciousness. […] she penetrates the obscure recesses of a vast labyrinthian space and discovers a secret room sealed off by its association with death" (Kahane 334). Eleanor Vance, haunted by the memory of her dead mother, seeks out the mystery of Hill House after she receives an invitation letter from Dr. Montague, and eventually loses herself within its dark labyrinths. John G. Parks argues that the novel depicts the journey of a lonely, splintered soul seeking love (122). According to Bernice M. Murphy, Hill House is among the few supernatural stories Jackson wrote and the supernatural phenomena "in the novel is as likely to have a psychological as a ghostly cause: neurotic outsider Eleanor Vance is the focus of the novel and the likely catalyst for the many incidents that take place within its pages" (1).

At the beginning of the novel, the narrator articulates Eleanor's urge to abandon her dull, isolated and restrained way of life with her older sister Carrie, and Carrie's domineering husband. Eleanor cared for her ailing mother for eleven years before moving in with her sister ensuing her mother's death, and since that time, Eleanor has lacked the opportunity to live an independent life. Both Eleanor's mother and her sister are portrayed as male-

identified, patriarchal women who have forced Eleanor to conform to expected gender roles, repressed her individual needs, and have taken no notice of her aspiration to become a self-sufficient woman.

Eleanor's life before her mother's death is dominated by concurrent domestic errands that incarcerate her within the boundaries of her mother's house. According to Ruth Franklin, in caring for her mother, "Eleanor reversed roles with her invalid mother, she the caretaker and her mother the dependent" (*Shirley Jackson: A Rather Haunted Life*, epub). As a result of her isolation and entrapment within the house, Eleanor is left with no friends or love interests, and is unable to face the sun without blinking. The narrator explains that when Eleanor was twelve years old, about a month after her father's death, a stone shower fell on their house, breaking windows and damaging the roof. Even though her mother blamed the neighbors for the incident, the narrator suggests that it was an externalization of Eleanor's desire to revolt against her imprisonment within the domestic space of the house represented by her mother. As Anna Marie Kneale expresses, the bizarre stone showers symbolize Eleanor's anger at being enclosed within the boundaries of her mother's house after the death of her father (87–88). Through Eleanor's connection to supernatural phenomena that manifest Eleanor's resistance, the novel indulges in a criticism of patriarchy maintained not only by men, but also by women, like Eleanor's mother and sister.

Dr. Montague searches the records of psychic societies, newspapers, and the reports of parapsychologists to track down individuals who have taken part in unusual, inexplicable events (5). After investigating the supernatural events at Hill House, he includes Eleanor's name on his list due to her childhood experience with the strange stone shower incident. Eleanor accepts Dr. Montague's invitation, which she regards as a chance to end her confinement and embark on an adventure that can change her unfulfilling life. Both this novel and the ensuing, sixth novel "celebrate madness, presenting an unyielding defense of fantasy as the inevitable, eventually preferable, alternative to harsh reality" (Nardacci 158).

The first paragraph emphasizes the contrast between the reality of the outside world and imagination as an outlet through which the individual seeks to transcend reality. As the narrator comments, "No live organism can continue for long to exist sanely under

conditions of absolute reality […] Hill House, not sane, stood by itself against its hills, holding darkness within; it had stood for eighty years and might stand for eighty more. Within, walls continued upright, bricks met neatly, floors were firm, and doors were sensibly shut; silence lay steadily against the wood and stone of Hill House, and whatever walked there, walked alone" (3).

Clearly, Hill House, as a symbol of insanity, mirrors the unilluminated corners of the characters' minds and separates them from society and the world by urging alienated individuals to walk alone. Similar to the Halloran mansion in the previous novel, Hill House represents a separate, sheltered realm of existence barricaded against the intrusion of the outside reality. The house is depicted as a living, breathing creature that feels the movements of those who live inside it like a maternal womb, and observes its inhabitants like a panopticon. It seduces Eleanor to "come home" or to become a part of it forever as a ghost in order to achieve immortality. It is Eleanor's Gothic (m)/other whom Eleanor confronts and who destroys Eleanor in the end with the promise of an eternal life and a spiritual home secluded from the corruption and banality of the world.

Eleanor's journey to Hill House is portrayed as an intrepid venture to attain self-autonomy, fulfillment, and companionship. In spite of Carrie's and her brother-in-law's objections, Eleanor decides to take the car, which she half-owns, in secret, telling herself that there must "be a first time for everything" (12). Carrie and her husband are almost like censuring parents and "infantilize [Eleanor] when [she] asks permission to use the car" (Kneale 88). Unlike Carrie who, as a married woman and mother, fits society's definitions of womanhood, Eleanor is out of place. Driven by the desire to belong somewhere, she goes to the city garage where the car is kept, "steals" it, and crashes into a little old lady who is carrying packages on her way. The old woman is depicted as a "parody of a witch" (Hattenhauer 172), who reprimands Eleanor and smiles at her wickedly for causing her to spill her lunch on the sidewalk. She promises to pray for Eleanor after Eleanor apologizes and pays for her taxi ride as compensation. The woman's sudden appearance foreshadows Eleanor's entry into the Gothic realm where the external and internal overlap and create a dystopia of the domestic entrapment she tries to evade.

On her way to Hill House, by following the directions in the letter written by Dr. Montague and leaving the city behind, Eleanor imagines an alternative reality and creates

a fantasy world in which she feels unconstrained. It is the first time that Eleanor drives alone to go to a faraway place and makes a choice for herself. Savoring each passing moment of her journey, she makes the transition that takes her to the threshold of Hill House, a house not of this world, where she will walk alone. The narrator describes the day Eleanor embarks on her journey as the first bright day of summer, reminiscent of her early childhood—the years before her father's death: Eleanor assures herself that "Time is beginning this morning in June" (18). She regards the road as an intimate friend and embraces the thrilling freedom of the journey: she is now rootless, yet in search of magic. On the main road of a village, when she passes a large house with pillars, shuttered windows, and two stone lions which guard the steps, she imagines living there and cleaning the lion statues every day.

Eleanor's daydream about living in the house protected by the stone lions reveals her desire to become a courageous, empowered woman with a room of her own, a woman who does not obey the rules and dictates of others and rejects the limits imposed on her. In her fantasy, she is the queen living in her palace-house. The light protects her from the darkness of the hall, the darkness which she will confront in the haunted house where she is led by means of the routes she takes. Beside the road, she encounters an old, worn-out road sign for an old fair of motorcycle races that originally read "DAREDEVIL," but now with the second D missing it reads "DARE EVIL" (19). The road sign symbolizes Eleanor's increasing confidence and functions as a harbinger of the events that await her in Hill House.

As she passes a row of pink and white oleanders, Eleanor stops by the road to admire their beauty. She comes to the gateway, which consists of two stone pillars, to look at the oleander trees that form a square–shaped garden at the farther end of which a river is flowing. The oleander square beyond the gate is empty, with no houses or buildings but only a little road going across it. Eleanor imagines that the oleanders are guarding a fairyland made invisible under a spell. Yet, she refuses to break the spell of the oleanders, choosing to leave her imaginary place invisible and protected from the gaze of the passersby, and starts her car to resume her journey.

When she stops for lunch, she encounters a family with two small children, a boy and a girl, on a balcony situated above a sparkling stream. Eleanor sits on the balcony, looking

down at the wet rocks and the sparkle of the moving water below her. Eleanor and the little girl appear as reflections of each other in this magical moment; they telepathically understand one another, and communicate through a silent, hidden language. The little girl is depicted almost like a younger Eleanor; she represents a part of her Self that she has carried along inside herself so far. The girl refuses to drink her milk from the glass the waitress offers, wanting, instead, her special cup at home with "stars in the bottom" (21) so that she can see the stars while drinking her milk. When she slides back in her chair, refusing her milk, her brother giggles and her father frowns. Both her brother and father represent the patriarchal authority she is resisting. Eleanor identifies with the little girl's resistance and urges her not to conform to her parents' demands: "Don't do it, Eleanor [silently] told the little girl; insist on your cup of stars; once they have trapped you into being like everyone else you will never see your cup of stars again" (22).

"The cup of stars" represents the independence and individuality both Eleanor and the little girl try to preserve by countering coercion and suppression of any kind. The stars stand for hope, the dreams they wish to realize and the refusal of conformity. Eleanor wishes for a cup of stars for herself just like the little girl does; it symbolizes the change Eleanor seeks in her life by making her own decisions. Regarding this novel, Shirley Jackson mentions that "the cup of stars" is used "as a shorthand phrase for all [Eleanor's] daydreams" ("Notes for a Young Writer," 135). In addition, according to Rubenstein, for Eleanor, the cup of stars also signifies "the mother's absent and idealized nourishment" (136). During her journey, Eleanor seeks her "lost stars" and delights in her newfound freedom. When she catches a glimpse of a tiny cottage, she thinks of living there alone, behind the roses, telling people their fortunes and "brewing love potions for sad maidens" (22–23). Her inner reflections reveal a need to have a house of her own, a private place where she can be herself and reject becoming like everyone else.

Both in this novel and in the former novel, the house appears as a symbol of alienation from the human society. In the apocalyptic narrative of the previous novel, the supernatural visitations of Aunt Fanny's father's ghost, Mrs. Halloran's control over the Halloran mansion and her dream about owning the witch's cottage in "Hansel and Gretel," and Fancy's doll house all indicate an underlying desire to escape from the outer reality. Likewise, Eleanor's desire to live alone in a hidden house, and Hill House itself,

fulfill the same function in providing a refuge or shelter. However, while Hill House marks a major turning point in Eleanor's life, it also blinds her to the fact that it is an embodiment of domestic entrapment and patriarchal ideology, and as such, it can never be a true home for her.

When Eleanor arrives in the village of Hillsdale, she decides to stop at a diner for coffee to prolong her journey. The narrator describes Hillsdale, Hill House's location, as an unattractive gloomy town. The hostile ambience foreshadows the bizarre events in Hill House. Hillsdale is ugly, dark, gloomy, and sinister, and makes Eleanor feel unwelcome, insecure, and like a transient. Inside the diner, she meets a strange, tired and chinless girl who works at the counter and a mysterious man sitting at the end with his lunch. The girl and the man act in a distant, mocking manner expressing bewilderment at Eleanor's eagerness to spend time in the malignant town. When the girl sets Eleanor's cup of coffee down, she glances and smiles at the man; the man shrugs and the girl laughs. As a result of the joke between the man and the girl, Eleanor suspects that her coffee might be poisoned. Eleanor's naiveté and her lack of knowledge about notorious Hillsdale astound them. The man tells Eleanor that people leave Hillsdale and do not choose to come to the village, and then he leaves the diner closing the door behind him. The man's and the girl's statements about Hillsdale depict the village as the hideous setting of the haunted house Eleanor is seeking. As Eleanor leaves, the girl, with her back to the protagonist, wishes her good luck expressing her "hope" that Eleanor will find her house soon. Eleanor's dialogue with the girl and the man during her short break indicates that unlike the other people who escape from Hillsdale, Eleanor confronts and overcomes her fear of the unknown, of the unexplainable, and, in the end, her fear of self, in trying to reach and stay in Hill House.

According to Hattenhauer, the novel parodies the hero's journey explained by Joseph Campbell (172). For Campbell, the hero's journey consists of several stages, including separation from the innocent world of childhood, trials, and an eventual return to the familiar. At the end of the journey, the hero becomes a "master of the two worlds"—the familiar world and the alien world into which the hero has been transported (9). Having endured a series of tests and ordeals as well as psychological dissolution, s/he usually achieves a unity of identity and spiritual fulfillment. Eleanor, true to the archetype,

receives her first call to adventure by means of Dr. Montague's letter. In spite of obstacles, such as Carrie's and her husband's opposition, Eleanor crosses the threshold during her journey in her car, and eventually enters the "belly of the whale," the uncanny Hill House, which is portrayed as Eleanor's mirror image and the confining maternal womb (representing Eleanor's domineering mother) Eleanor has desired to escape from. However, contrary to the archetypal "belly of the whale," Hill House does not initiate the process of rebirth; rather, it brings about Eleanor's demise. Hence, Jackson's novel illustrates how "The Female Gothic has been variously read as being about the fear of sameness (engulfment by the mother) or the fear of difference either of the male (violence) or of the mother (separation)" (*The Female Gothic Histories* 129).

During Eleanor' ride, the road leading to Hill House becomes increasingly dark, treacherous, and rocky. Eleanor feels as if Hill House is making an "entrance" as the branches of the trees sweep against the windshield (27). Thus, the house takes Eleanor into itself even when Eleanor is outside its boundaries inside her car. When she arrives at the clearing in front of the gate, Eleanor begins to wonder why she is there. The locked gate, which is described as tall and heavy with a padlock and a twisting chain, looks ominous. Just after she blows the horn, Eleanor meets Mr. Dudley, the hostile and unwelcoming guardian. He tries to discourage Eleanor by initially refusing to open the gate, acting as "the figure [in horror fiction and fantasy] who tries to prevent the questioning hero from entering the kingdom or arena of trial" (Hattenhauer 173). Mr. Dudley, with his grinning face and an air of superiority, questions Eleanor, who answers that she is one of Dr. Montague's guests invited to stay in the house. Eleanor likens him to a Cheshire cat that pops up at her along the driveway (32). After she is finally allowed to enter through the gate, Mr. Dudley mimics Eleanor when she asks whether or not he is Mr. Dudley, the caretaker Dr. Montague mentioned in the letter. Eleanor feels like Alice in an alien, intriguing, yet inhospitable wonderland. Similar to Alice, who dreams up the wonderland, Eleanor ventures into Hill House, which represents the inner life of the protagonist.

When Eleanor first sees Hill House, its unwholesome appearance petrifies her; she thinks to herself that the house is evil and diseased. Nevertheless, she resolves to enter her personal Hades. Like Alice, who tries to gain access to the wonderland through the small

door in the hall down the White Rabbit's hole by changing her size, Eleanor finally enters Hill House and tries to solve its puzzle along with the other characters. Similar to Alice's wonderland where everyone including Alice is mad or crazy, Hill House is "not sane" (3). Within Hill House, Eleanor loses her sanity and her touch with the reality outside the house's boundaries as she confronts her unconscious.

The narrator personifies Hill House as a character that—along with Dr. Montague and his assistants Theodora (a young libertine woman) and Luke Sanderson (heir to the house)—shapes Eleanor's journey of self-discovery. Dr. Montague, who regards himself as a man of science, rents Hill House for three summer months to study the causes and effects of psychic disturbances with the intention of publishing a book. As the narrator describes, Montague tries to gain respectability and recognition by making use of his scholarly authority, which hides the irrationality of his "unscientific" investigations (4). He is represented as a patriarch who deploys his education to legitimize his decisions and dominate the inhabitants of the house. Dr. Montague mentions that before going to sleep, he likes reading Samuel Richardson, particularly *Pamela: Or Virtue Rewarded* (1740), an epistolary, psychological novel which tells the story of a young maidservant named Pamela who rejects the seduction of her landowner master Mr. B., whom she later marries to become a member of upper-class society. Just as Richardson's work reinforces the constrictive roles expected of women in the mid-eighteenth century, Dr. Montague's admiration of the novel discloses his internalizations of oppressive notions of womanhood.

Like Dr. Montague, Luke Sanderson is portrayed as an untrustworthy, womanizing, and lying young man. Unlike Luke and Dr. Montague, Theodora is the only character to whom Eleanor feels connected; Theodora is Eleanor's reflection or double and personifies Eleanor's alter-ego. According to Raymond Russell Miller, Jr., "Eleanor finds in the poise and beauty of Theodora a person to be loved and followed" (222). Theodora is like Tony in *Hangsaman*, a witch-like, non-conformist woman, who might also be a lesbian. She is chosen by Dr. Montague because of her mysterious ability to identify playing cards when they are out of sight. Together, acting like twins, Eleanor and Theodora create a subversive, non-heteronormative queer space within the foreboding patriarchal order of Hill House. Paulina Palmer argues that in the Queer Gothic, lesbian and gay sexual

identities are like invisible ghosts that haunt heteronormative spaces (23). Thus, Jackson's work exemplifies the ways in which "Spectrality and the haunted house" assume "a major role in queer Gothic fiction" (Palmer 59).

As will be discussed later, much like Edgar Allan Poe's House of Usher, Hill House seems to be alive and endowed with anthropomorphic characteristics. The narrator describes the house as a Gothic creature with an evil face that is alive and watchful, and with windows that look like eyes. The house is depicted as a place of desperation, and the narrator notes that it is not a suitable place for love and for human habitation. It is believed that Hill House has formed its own structure or "powerful pattern under the hands of its builders" (35). Moreover, the Gothic feature of the house is described in a way that is suggestive of an inherent life force that unfolds itself from within. The narrator notes that the house lacks any sense of hope, yet Eleanor is unable to escape since the house lures her with its magnetic power. She seeks love, companionship, and a sense of belonging inside the house which feeds on her hopes.

Even though the house, with its phallic tower, is connected architecturally to patriarchal culture, it contains an uncanny maternal quality which is revealed through Eleanor's disturbed mind. As Eleanor approaches the veranda and the door, which has "a heavy iron knocker that has a child's face" (36), she feels as if the house comes around her in a rush, encircling her and casting a shadow over her, much like a womb. At the doorway, Eleanor meets the dispiriting housekeeper Mrs. Dudley, standing at the threshold like a gatekeeper with a white apron and sullen face. Inside the dark hall, which is covered with heavy woodwork and carvings, the floor absorbs the reflected image of Eleanor's hand. Here, "the gothic house, the haunted house, becomes in the end a distorted mirror of the self, reflecting the danger of self-absorption," symbolized by the Greek myth of Narcissus, who is "enchanted by the beauty of his reflected image in a still pool" (Bailey 34). Eleanor's voice is also drowned by silence when she makes an attempt to speak. Her first impression of the distorted house is that it subsumes her and watches every move she makes.

In one of his speeches, Dr. Montague explains to the guests that the angles of Hill House are not right angles but distorted angles. As a result, everything—including the house and its inhabitants—is constantly shifting, and a particular route or passageway can lead to an

unforeseen place. The house is thus an embodiment of the grotesque, similar to a distorted Gothic monster. The rooms on the first floor of the house are arranged in concentric circles: outer rooms open into inner rooms, the inmost room has no windows, and doors always remain closed, even when one leaves them open. Once again, a Gothic house *is* the female protagonist: its first floor represents Eleanor's self since "she cannot see the inner self (the windowless inner room) from the outside; she must go there" (Hattenhauer 160). Furthermore, after Eleanor settles in the blue room upstairs, she observes: "I am like a small creature swallowed whole by a monster," a monster which is able to feel her slightest motions within its interiors (42). She feels like she has "returned to a monstrous womb" (Kneale 80), which is symbolically reminiscent of her mother's domination.

Throughout the novel, Eleanor, like other Jackson protagonists, feels guilty about her mother's death. She blames herself for having slept through her mother's pleas for help the night of her death. In addition, her guilty conscience and inner turmoil suggest that Eleanor might have been a victim of child abuse (Hattenhauer 159). In the fifth chapter, Eleanor has a dream in which she hears a child crying and desires to intervene to save him/her. In this context, the Gothic house correlates with Eleanor's eerie recollections, unacknowledged desires, guilty conscience, potentially repressed abuse, and urges the desperate, lonely heroine to participate in its haunting.

Hill House limits the female characters' free will and self-expression, and curtails Eleanor's attempt to form an individual identity in spite of the inspiration she receives from Theodora. Like Eleanor, Mrs. Dudley is trapped by domestic confinement and is obsessed with performing the mechanical, ritualized tasks and housework imposed by Hill House, to the point where it becomes her identity. As Downey argues, "Not her home, the house demands her labors, leaving little room for her own volition" (296). Over the course of the novel, Mrs. Dudley repeatedly explains the house's inconsequential rules, the exact timing of the meals she serves, and the chores she performs. James Egan explains that "the obsessive Mrs. Dudley, whose robotic, mechanical repetitiveness sounds like a dull refrain throughout the novel" is one of the "comic and satiric narrative strands" ("Comic-Satiric-Fantastic-Gothic: Interactive Modes in Shirley Jackson's Narratives," 48). When she leads Eleanor to the blue room, she bleakly describes the strict schedule she is expected to follow each day and conveys her fear of the house: "'I don't

stay after I set out dinner. Not after it begins to get dark. I leave before dark comes. We live over in the town, six miles away. So there won't be anyone around if you need help. We couldn't even hear you, in the night. No one could. No one lives any nearer than the town. No one else will come any nearer than that. In the night, in the dark'" (38–39). Mrs. Dudley repeats the same words to Theodora, who arrives after Eleanor, when she settles in the green room next door to Eleanor's room. A common bathroom connects Eleanor's and Theodora's rooms, which look exactly alike, suggesting that "the house allegorizes Theodora as Eleanor's double" (Hattenhauer 162), and that they are like twin sisters in a queer coupling.

Until Theodora's arrival, Eleanor feels dismayed in her dim, depressing room. She speculates about the kind of nightmares that might be waiting, concealed around every corner. When she hears the sound of a car door slamming below, she delights in the thought that she will not be alone. She amiably welcomes Theodora, and the two decide to explore the countryside around the house. They wear bright clothes which contrast with the dullness that surrounds them. Eleanor dresses in a red sweater and matching sandals while Theodora appears in a bright yellow shirt, which Eleanor believes sheds more lights in the room than the window does. Revolting against the darkness, they are surrounded by an aura of color and vigor.

Once outside, Eleanor follows the veranda and encounters the hills behind the house. For Theodora, the scenery of the house buried amongst the velvet and purple hills looks Victorian (50), and Eleanor ponders that Theodora is much braver than she is. Like a twin, Theodora instantly predicts what Eleanor is thinking, as if she were living inside her mind, and unexpectedly says to her that they can never know where their courage comes from. As Hattenhauer argues, "Like many of Jackson's de-centered subjects, Eleanor experiences motivation as arising from without": Eleanor receives courage from Theodora, who projects her "denied self" (163). Thus, Theodora seems to have an extraordinary ability to read Eleanor's mind, and sense her feelings and thoughts. She urges Eleanor to cast aside her fear and follow a path leading to a brook. On the banks of the brook, they notice a moving spot going through the grass in the distance, interrupting their random conversation. Even though Theodora claims it must be a rabbit, Eleanor decides they should return to the house before it becomes dark.

When Eleanor and Theodora come up the path to the veranda, the house seems to be concealing its mad face in the increasing darkness, just like Eleanor conceals her haunted mind. They meet Luke Sanderson, the heir of the house and the nephew of the present owner of Hill House, who introduces himself as one of Dr. Montague's guests. Dr. Montague genially welcomes them at the doorway and leads them through a narrow passage to a small inner room of the house—the parlor where they spend their evenings. The parlor is a room in purple with a high ceiling, a fire place which looks chilly in spite the of the fire lighted by Luke, and round and slippery chairs. Despite its ominous air, the parlor is where the characters feel most comfortable compared to the rest of the house. During this initial meeting, Dr. Montague provides the guests with some general information about the house and explains the purpose of his investigation. During their stay, he expects them to take notes about their observations and unusual experiences. As the guests become acquainted with each other, Eleanor lies and says that she has lived an independent, abandoned life, like a professional artist. By concealing her background, Eleanor creates the impression that she is a self-sufficient, independent and bohemian woman—the complete opposite of what she actually is. Later in the novel, she self-delusively tells Theodora about an imaginary little place of her own with white curtains, a white cat, books, pictures, records and stone lions on each corner of the mantel—a private apartment where she lives alone. She also makes a reference to "the cup of stars" by saying she once had a cup with painted stars on the inside and that she wants a cup like that again. Thus, she articulates her desire to reach her hopes by manipulating reality and creates an alternative, desirable reality for herself, which ultimately triggers her madness.

After dinner, Dr. Montague, assuming the pose of a school teacher in a classroom, informs the guests about the history of Hill House. He is reminiscent of Arnold Waite and Arthur Langdon in *Hangsaman* and Dr. Victor Wright in *The Bird's Nest* in his academic stance. The history of Hill House also illustrates Jerrold E. Hogle's argument that the Gothic house is usually an ancient place where the secrets of the past continue to haunt the characters in the present both physically and psychologically (*The Cambridge Companion to Gothic Fiction* 2). The doctor begins his lecture by explaining that some houses are born evil and calls Hill House deranged, leprous and sick. He mentions that

the people who rented Hill House in the past did not stay more than a few days and left the house without supplying a logical reason (71–72).

The house was built eighty years ago by a patriarch named Hugh Crain. Over the years, Hill House witnessed a number of tragic events including the death of Hugh Crain's young wife, whose carriage overturned in the driveway. Hugh Crain was left alone with his two small daughters until he married again. The second Mrs. Crain died of a fall and the third Mrs. Crain died of consumption somewhere in Europe. After the death of their father, the two Crain sisters disagreed over who will inherit Hill House, which, by this point seems cursed at best, and murderous at worst. When the younger sister got married, they decided that the house should be the property of the older sister. The older sister, as the new owner of Hill House, took in a village girl as a companion with whom she spent her days. Yet, she continued to be in constant disagreement with her younger sister, who insisted that she gave up her claim to Hill House in exchange for a number of antiques—several pieces of old furniture, some jewels, and gold-rimmed dishes.

After the older sister died of pneumonia in the house, the ownership of Hill House, in accordance with a will, passed on to the companion, who was accused of murder, in court, by the younger sister. In spite of the fact that the companion won the case, the villagers sided with the younger sister, since they believed that she had been tricked out of her inheritance by "a scheming young woman" (80). Unable to find a means of escape from the younger sister's continuous threats and haunting, the companion committed suicide by hanging herself from a turret on the top of the iron staircase of the library in Hill House. The story of the older sister and the companion is replete with homoerotic overtones, whereas the relationship between the two Crain sisters indicates sibling rivalry and greed centered on the haunted mansion.

After the companion's suicide, the Sanderson family, the companion's cousins, inherited the house. However, the shadows of the past are projected onto the present. As Hattenhauer conveys, the historical Crain sisters are doubles of Eleanor and her older sister Carrie, who disagree over sharing their mother's estate, and of Eleanor and Theodora, who are almost like twins (162–163). Thus, the present characters who inhabit Hill House are like reflections of its residents in the past. Ashwathy argues that even

though the characters do not see a physical ghost inside the house, they have to deal with its unpleasant history (112).

Hill House, like the Halloran mansion in the previous novel and the Blackwood castle in the next novel, is the chronotope of Shirley Jackson's Gothic tale which brings together the stories and experiences of the characters, both in the past and in the present, who inhabit it. However, as a dismal, haunted, patriarchal Gothic mansion, Hill House is "unhomely" (Ashwathy 111), and limits women's ability to survive within its boundaries.

The house embodies the Puritanical, patriarchal mindset of Hugh Crain, whose life-size, unnerving marble statue—which disturbs Eleanor and Theodora—stands in the drawing room, "huge and grotesque and […] whitely naked" (108). In addition, the library houses a grotesque scrapbook prepared by Hugh Crain for one of his daughters. The scrapbook consists of Crain's illustrations and writing, which instruct the daughter to remain pure, pious, docile, and domestic in order to attain eternal salvation. It shares themes with Dr. Montague's favorite work, *Pamela: Or Virtue Rewarded* (1740). Crain tried to instill in his daughter a fear of the fires of Hell by burning away a corner of the page and informing her about the seven deadly sins. It is evident that, like Arnold Waite in *Hangsaman*, he was a domineering father who desired to exert control over his daughter's life.

The library where Luke finds Crain's book is situated within the tower of the house and portrayed as the place where the insidious Gothic mechanism of Hill House is most visible. Eleanor, Theodora, and Luke explore the house with Dr. Montague, who opens the small library door, which is beside the tall front door. Eleanor refuses to enter and observes them from a distance. She notices the iron staircase ascending into the library and states that she cannot enter. The dark, womb-like, suffocating library reminds Eleanor of her mother. Moreover, the smell of earth and mold—of rotting death and musty soil—the narrator mentions is sensed only by her; none of the other characters are able to smell it. Here, "Faced with these aggressive signifiers of death, Eleanor cannot speak—or even think about her association with the mother" (Hattenhauer 161). Like Betsy in *The Bird's Nest*, she is haunted by the memory of her dead mother and has a guilt-ridden conscience.

The nursery with windows that look out to the gray stone of the tower is described as the most haunted room of the house, and has a peculiar and inexplicably chilling cold spot in

its doorway. Like the library, the nursery smells “musty” (119), causing Eleanor to recall “her un-mothering mother” and her cold memories. The painted animals along the walls of the nursery room do not appear to be cheerful, but look as though they are grotesquely trapped, like the way Eleanor has felt for most of her adult life, and like the female narrator in Charlotte Perkins Gilman’s “The Yellow Wallpaper” (1892).

In “The Yellow Wallpaper,” the narrator, who is suffering from a nervous disorder, is imprisoned inside her bedroom within the Gothic house which her husband John, who is a physician, has chosen for their summer vacation. The narrator is confined within her room whose walls are covered with a strangely patterned yellow wallpaper. Her medical treatment, the “rest cure,” as supervised by John (a domineering patriarch), forbids her to engage in any activity, including reading and writing; yet, she continues to write in her hidden diary describing the strange house and the yellow wallpaper of her bedroom to pass the time. John’s “rational,” “scientific” outlook is similar to Dr. Montague’s attitude in Hill House. During the summer, Jennie, John’s sister, pays a visit to look after the narrator and do the housework. The narrator gradually becomes more and more obsessed with the wallpaper, and begins to see a peculiar pattern beneath the surface design: the shape of a woman whom the narrator sees shaking bars to get out and moving on her hands and knees around the room. The figure of the woman inside the wallpaper is depicted as a projection of the narrator’s entrapped, confined Self, symbolizing her rage. In other words, it is her Gothic double. In addition, at one point in the story, the narrator figures out that the room must have been used as a nursery room, like the nursery room in Hill House, before they moved in. At the end of the story, believing that she herself is actually the crawling woman inside the wallpaper, she begins to destroy the paper tearing it apart in a frenzy to free the woman or her own self from confinement. In the end, John faints out of fear when he sees the narrator crawling around and notices the state of her room.

Thus, the mental decline of Gilman’s narrator shares similarities with Eleanor’s psychological pain. Yet, unlike the narrator of “The Yellow Wallpaper,” Eleanor enjoys her time in Hill House, and the company of Theodora and Luke. As Dale Bailey explains, “What makes Shirley Jackson’s novel more horrific still is that the novel’s protagonist, unlike the narrator of ‘The Yellow Wallpaper,’ is not the victim of external forces which

imprison her against her will […] Instead, Eleanor Vance […] has internalized the oppressive ideology of her culture" (33).

Thus, contrary to the narrator of "The Yellow Wallpaper," Eleanor does not feel imprisoned within the Gothic setting. As the characters investigate the nursery room in Hill House, Luke discovers two grinning heads placed in each corner of the nursery doorway. Their sinister laughter and stares meet at the cold spot on the threshold of the room. Luke explains that much like the mythological Medusa, the faces freeze onlookers. As the doctor decides to investigate using a measuring tape and thermometer, Eleanor says that coldness feels *deliberate*. The cold locks Eleanor within the house's gaze, brings to the surface Eleanor's repressed childhood recollections, and revives her self-destructive, self-annihilating connection to her mother and eventually to the house. Furthermore, the cold signifies death, foreshadowing Eleanor's future suicide.

Despite the fact that Eleanor initially arrives at an instant recognition of her individuality as she tells herself that she is a separate being from her feet to the top of her head, she is unable to separate herself from Hill House, which provides her with a false sense of belonging. The gradual blurring of the boundary between Eleanor's self and the Gothic house (mother) illustrates Kristeva's notion of horror as a breakdown in meaning, or a breakdown of the boundaries of the self. Eleanor finds herself within a psychic border where she feels in-between: As she tries to think of herself as a separate individual (separate from the mother), the house's call poses a threat to her self-integrity. She endeavors to oppose the house, yet is seduced by it, and the house eventually absorbs her self. As Kristeva argues, "there looms within abjection, one of those violent, dark revolts of being, directed against a threat that seems to emanate from an exorbitant outside or inside" (1). Eleanor, haunted by her domineering mother's memory, tries to revolt not only against the patriarchy, but also against the "exorbitant" house's (mother's) influence on her. Yet, she eventually succumbs to its lure as a fantastic refuge. Thus, Hill House appears as the abject in Shirley Jackson's writing.

Moreover, the protagonist's relation to the house illustrates the "two fears [that] dominate the Gothic world, the fear of terrible separateness and the fear of unity with some terrible Other. […] Transferred to a psychological, religious, and epistemological context, the terrors of unity and separateness revolve around a question central to Romanticism: What

distinguishes the “me” from the “not-me”? Where if they exist at all the boundaries of the self?” (DeLamotte 22–23). DeLamotte’s argument sheds light on Eleanor’s dilemma in Hill House. She both desires to attain an autonomous, self-ruling identity, and seeks union with the uncanny maternal quality of her Gothic surroundings.

In terms of setting, Hill House is similar to the Usher house in Edgar Allan Poe’s short story, “The Fall of the House of Usher” (1839). In the story, an unnamed narrator visits his infirm friend, Roderick Usher, within his gloomy, mysterious, possibly haunted Gothic mansion, having received a letter in which Roderick requests his companionship and mentions his physical and mental suffering. At the beginning of the story, the narrator notices that the Usher house seems to have taken in a sinister, evil, and diseased quality from the dismal landscape, with its dark, shadowy trees and bleak ponds. Much like Hill House, the house of Usher looks sick, leprous, and appears to have been “born bad.” There is a tiny crack on the front surface of the house, signifying decay. The narrator first sees the mansion as a reflection in a tarn; the reflection of the building (upside down) is presented as a doubling motif observed throughout the story, particularly in Roderick’s relationship to his twin sister Madeline. Madeline suffers from and eventually dies of a strange illness. The narrator helps Roderick entomb the body of Madeline inside a catacomb below the house, but as they bury Madeline, the narrator realizes that she has rosy cheeks which suggest that she may have been buried alive.

During his stay, the narrator tries to entertain Roderick and calm him down by listening to his music and reading stories to him, to no avail. He eventually concludes that the house itself must be malign and unfit for human habitation. The narrator’s speculation is confirmed by the luminous gas which surrounds the house one night, yet he avoids interpreting it as a supernatural phenomenon. Towards the end of the story, the narrator reads a medieval romance, referred to as “Mad Trist” by Sir Lancelot Canning, to Roderick. However, Roderick becomes increasingly nervous and hysterical. They hear strange sounds that closely match the events of the story the narrator is reading. In “Mad Trist,” a character named Ethelred tries to enter the residence of a hermit by force. Thus, the story foreshows Madeline’s resurrection from her tomb below the house, confirming Roderick’s fears.

In the end, Madeline enters the room to attack her brother; she advances on Roderick, who dies in fear. The narrator escapes into the night leaving the house behind, and the house eventually breaks along the crack, collapsing. Thus, when its owners—the only survivors of the Usher family—die, the house, too, dies, and it is evident that just as Madeline is the Gothic double of Roderick, the house is a double of both Madeline and Roderick (or the Usher clan), drawing life force from its inhabitants. Madeline cannot die when her twin (double) is alive, and the decaying house cannot collapse when the Ushers are living in it. The Usher house, thus, is depicted as a living Gothic monster just like Hill House. Both the House of Usher and Hill House are claustrophobic, haunted settings determining the lives and destinies of its inhabitants. Thus, similar to the House of Usher, which brings about the death of Roderick, Hill House limits Eleanor's self-autonomy and eventually causes her to commit suicide.

In the drawing room, Eleanor, Theodora, Luke, and Dr. Montague observe "a marble statuary piece," a family portrait which depicts the Crain family—Hugh Crain, his daughters, and the companion standing on a dining room carpet that looks like a grotesque Eden with grass and an apple tree in the background (108–109). The life-size statue of the founder, Hugh Crain—a symbol of the threatening presence of the patriarchy—arouses fear in both Eleanor, who covers her eyes, and Theodora, who clings to Eleanor. Theodora comments that Hugh Crain must have used the statue to scare his children, and says that without it, the room could be a pretty dancing room "'for ladies in full skirts, and [with] room enough for a full country dance'" (109). Theodora touches the marble hand of the statue, which seems to be almost alive, expecting "'to feel skin,'" (109) yet becomes stunned at its lifelessness. She likes dancing, and begins waltzing in the room bowing to the statue. Later, she invites Eleanor to race with her around the veranda just outside the doors of the drawing room, behind the heavy blue draperies pulled aside by Dr. Montague to disrupt the patriarchal gloom of the house. Her dancing is a subversive act, and it is a contradiction to the dullness of the room and the blandness of the cold, gruesome, marble statues, which appear and reappear in Jackson's works as stock Gothic characters. What Theodora is looking for is passion or feeling, and she temporarily finds it in Eleanor.

Running wildly and laughing, Theodora and Eleanor end up in the kitchen where they find Mrs. Dudley working at the sink. Mrs. Dudley, trapped by mechanical domestic chores, watches them silently; her mind is pre-occupied with her strict schedule, and her eyes move to the clock on the shelf above the stove. She eventually leaves the two alone in the kitchen, and exits from one the doors that lead to the back stairs. When Mrs. Dudley exits, Eleanor jokes she has probably gone up to hang herself from the turret—alluding to the companion's suicide years before, while suggesting her own suicidal tendencies. She likes the kitchen and the food Mrs. Dudley cooks, and contrasts this kitchen with her deceased mother's kitchen, which was dark and narrow, and where food was colorless and tasteless. Eleanor's speech discloses her problematic relationship with her mother, and the lack of love in her family's house (she associates food with love, color, and spirituality). She assumes that she has found the colorful life and affection she has been seeking in Hill House, especially in its kitchen, the heart of the domestic sphere.

However, Hill House's kitchen is likewise illusionary. It has many doors, three of which open out onto the veranda. The others lead to the stairs, "'to the butler's pantry,'" to "'the dining room,'" or into the house (111–112). Theodora figures out that Mrs. Dudley must like the doors, since they provide a means of escape. Thus, the doors provide a way out of the domestic confinement of the kitchen; they are the means of escape from the expected haunting specters supposed to be lurking in the corners, and are also a part of the haunted house itself.

Eleanor and Theodora continue to play around the veranda, which surrounds the house like a belt, until Eleanor comes across the ominous sight of the gray stone tower, which suddenly rises before her. She observes the narrow windows, imagines the iron staircase going up inside the circular wall, the "conical wooden roof, topped by a wooden spire" (113). She thinks that if the house burns away someday in the future, the tower will probably still stand amidst the ruins of Hill House, and owls and bats may fly around, and nest among the library books below. The sight makes Eleanor feel dizzy, and she loses her balance as she tries to see a clearer view of the tower, the ultimate phallic symbol, like in Henry James's *The Turn of the Screw* (1898), in which the governess of the two children, Flora and Miles, sees a strange figure, the ghost of Peter Quint (a former valet), standing in the tower of Bly manor.

Eleanor soon recognizes that she is holding the railing of the veranda and is leaning backwards when Luke arrives and warns her that she is about to fall. During the afternoon of rest after the incident, Theodora proposes painting Eleanor's toe nails with red nail polish which Eleanor finds "'wicked'" (117) and repellent. She says to Theodora, "'I hate having things done to me. […] It's wicked, I mean—on my feet. It makes me feel like I look like a fool'" (117). At this point in the novel, Eleanor becomes disturbed by Theodora's offer because of its sexual implications: not only does it suggest homoeroticism, especially since the offer comes from a sexually libertine woman, but it also has sinister undertones, with the red polish evoking the presence of horror, blood, pain, and death within the Gothic setting. Furthermore, Eleanor does not want to look like a doll with the nail polish, or to be a passive woman.

Eleanor experiences her first haunted night in a dreamy state. Mumbling to herself, she says "'Coming, mother, coming. It's all right, I'm coming […] just a *minute*, I'm *coming*'" (127), and suddenly awakens to a sound of pounding. She thinks that her mother is knocking on the wall until she recognizes with a shock that she is in Hill House. She enters Theodora's room through the connecting bathroom to find her sitting up in bed in shock, as she is hearing the same sound. They soon realize that something is pounding on the doors across the hall—the doors of both Eleanor's room and Theodora's room are locked. Chilling coldness flows into Theodora's room, and soon patting sounds come from the doorframe as the unknown specter feels around the frame of the door with little "sticky," "seeking sounds" (131) trying to enter the room, and the doorknob is handled. When it resumes crashing against the door, Eleanor shouts at the apparition, yelling wildly that it cannot get in, and after a moment of silence, after Eleanor's outcry, a sound of laughter, a giggle, comes through the blowing air, and Eleanor hears and feels it like a chill of horror. When Luke and Dr. Montague arrive, the crashing sound ceases at once and the coldness leaves the room. To Eleanor's and Theodora's amazement, Luke and Dr. Montague mention that they were outside chasing a dog which Dr. Montague saw run past his door. They did not hear any strange sounds and came up the stairs in response to Eleanor's and Theodora's cries. The doctor speculates that the house's intention might have been to separate them by urging the men to go outside, while the women remain inside. The haunting of the house detains the women, especially Eleanor, within the home

(private, domestic sphere), while the two male characters are left free to explore the world outside.

The fact that both Eleanor and Theodora heard the strange sounds indicates that they are able to communicate telepathically as twin sisters, or as reflections of one another. Theodora's extrasensory skills enable her to discern or feel what Eleanor senses. As Michael T. Wilson argues, "Theodora's psychic ability includes her ability to sense Eleanor's thoughts and emotions, to be able to see and know what Eleanor sees, thinks, and feels. Both women are thus seeing the same thing, but the house is not interested in seducing and then destroying Theodora, and Theodora lacks Eleanor's wounded gift for self-deceptive illusions that the House goes to pains to reinforce" (117). Thus, despite the fact that Eleanor and Theodora witness the same supernatural phenomena, Theodora—even though she feels the horror—remains unaffected while Eleanor gradually loses her sanity. Eleanor's desperate need to seek shelter in fantasy or delusions, her guilt over her mother's death, and her homeless, lonely state make her more susceptible to the house's haunting.

The next morning, Eleanor looks and smiles at herself in the mirror in her blue room refreshed by the bright morning sunlight. In spite of the sleepless night she has spent, she feels joyful and happy; she is glad that she is in Hill House, a place of romance and adventure which she has been seeking for a long time. Theodora enters the room complementing Eleanor on her pretty look, she says that "'this curious life'" (137) seems to agree with Eleanor, and Eleanor thinks the same about Theodora. Both of them run down the staircase laughing, like two small children; they find their way through the game room into the dining room.

During breakfast, Dr. Montague explains his ideas regarding the nature of supernatural manifestations. Referring to famous haunted mansions, he notes that how unbelievable it is to experience the same phenomena. His scientific outlook makes him speculate that the haunting of the house may be "'caused by subterranean waters'" (139). He assures his guests that the ghosts do not harm anyone physically (it is the victim who harms himself/herself), but rather the danger exists "'where modern minds are weakest'" (140), in other words, when one loses his/her rational, conscious mind, and surrenders to the power of the irrational or insane. He also contrasts ghosts to poltergeists, who act without

free will. Thus, Dr. Montague's speech reveals that his scientific, rational mindset is only a facade that hides his belief in the fantastic or supernatural. He talks about a haunted manor in Scotland where seventeen fires broke out simultaneously just in one day, and about mischievous poltergeists who like to turn people violently out of their beds, and another poltergeist who threw stolen hymn books at the head of a minister (141).

Eleanor finds Dr. Montague's stories funny; she has an irresistible urge to laugh and hug Dr. Montague. She thinks to herself that she is lucky because she is in Hill House. All of a sudden, Mrs. Dudley enters providing comic relief, saying "'It's ten o'clock. I clear—[…] I clear at ten o'clock. […] I clear breakfast at ten o'clock. I set lunch at one. Dinner I set on at six. It's ten o'clock'" (142). In response to Mrs. Dudley's Gothic intrusion, and her comical, robotic statements, they laugh for a long time, and continue laughing in the parlor where they rest. Dr. Montague sends Luke to ask Mrs. Dudley for more coffee, and on the way, he comes across a portentous, hideous inscription written in chalk on the wall of the dark, long hallway. As the doctor holds a flashlight, they discover that the inscription reads: "HELP ELEANOR COME HOME" (146). The writing on the wall indicates that Hill House has singled out Eleanor as the subject of its haunting. When Eleanor frantically asks whether or not somebody has written it as a joke, the doctor replies that she knows none of them wrote it, and Theodora thinks that Eleanor may have written it herself. Eleanor vehemently rejects Theodora's accusation, which she finds selfish and annoying. The same inscription appears once more on the wallpaper over Theodora's bed, this time written in blood. Opening her wardrobe hysterically, Theodora is aghast at the sight of her clothes, lying heaped on the floor of her wardrobe, soaked in blood.

The blood reminds Eleanor of Theodora's red nail polish; Eleanor was marked by Theodora's red nail polish in the same way that the wall is marked in blood. Through this mental association, Jackson links the house to Eleanor's self-image. Even though, "at first [Eleanor] resists the siren call of the house," she "finally gives in to [its] seduction" (Hattenhauer 164). She "takes on the role of the ghost haunting Hill House" (Downey 20) when she faces rejection from the other characters, especially Theodora and Luke.

Theodora moves into Eleanor's room and begins to share Eleanor's clothes, which will, in Theodora's words, make them almost like twins. During another haunted night,

Eleanor hears a babbling voice, laughter and the cry of a hurt child. She reaches out for Theodora's hand to hold it firmly in the darkness. As she hears the child's crying, she makes a promise that she will not allow anyone to hurt a child. The moment she shouts "'STOP IT'" (163), the lights in the room turn on and she sees Theodora sitting up in bed. Once she realizes that Theodora is far away and they are not holding hands, she leaps out of bed, crosses the room and asks shudderingly, "'Whose hand was I holding?'" (163). According to Hattenhauer, if Eleanor "was actually holding someone's hand, it had to be her own," since "It is impossible that she could have been holding anyone else's" (162–163). If Eleanor was holding her own hand, then the connection of her right hand to her left hand signifies the connection of her rational mind to her unconscious (Hattenheauer 163). Another option is that Eleanor fantasized about holding Theodora's hand, and that her unexpected homoerotic feelings for her companion caused her to jump out of bed and shudder in the corner out of fear, shame, and guilt.

To come to terms with her confused feelings and learn "the pathways of the heart" (164), Eleanor seeks the companionship of Luke to whom she is romantically attracted. She wants to actualize her dream of "Journeys [that] end in lovers meeting" (36)—which is a line from a song that echoes in her mind often. The refrain reveals "Eleanor's great hope to be someone somewhere, to belong, to be valued, to love" (Parks 122). Sitting on the steps of the summerhouse on the lawn, Luke asks her what she wants to know about him and his gaze drifts away, as he stares at a leaf in his hands in contemplation. After a brief pause, he tells Eleanor that he never had a mother. Eleanor becomes shaken and deeply disturbed by Luke's revelation. Even though she does not express her reaction openly, she instantly rejects the gender role of mother-wife that Luke speaks of. In the evening, unable to contain her discomfort any longer, she abruptly leaves the parlor and flees this confining space by escaping into the haunted night with Theodora. Together, they silently follow the path leading to the brook, walking side by side, like a couple, in understanding. However, all of a sudden, the scenery around Eleanor and Theodora begins to metamorphose, assuming a phantasmal quality with white trees and white grass on each side, and a black, shiny, wide path. As they move on underneath the black sky, holding hands tightly, Eleanor senses the presence of something beside them, following them invisibly across the white grass. Instantly, the path unwinds into an Edenic, yet ghostly, picnic which includes playing children, a puppy, parents, a blue sky, and colorful flowers.

When Theodora cries out "'Don't look back'" (177), they begin running across the garden, which disappears instantly under their feet. Theodora stumbles over stones and a broken cup which is reminiscent of the little girl's cup of stars at the country restaurant. The ghostly scene appears as an idyllic representation of a conventional family life, from which both women are escaping, with the broken cup functioning as a sign of the danger of succumbing to patriarchal influence and traditions. Even though the house seems to warn them against this danger, it does not allow escape from its ghosts and from confinement, haunting them wherever they go. In the end, Eleanor is forced to return to the house, and her dream of possessing "a cup of stars" is shattered once again, like the broken cup itself.

Mrs. Montague, Dr. Montague's wife, and her companion Arthur, the headmaster of a boys' school, arrive in Hill House to provide help and support for the investigations. Unlike Dr. Montague, Mrs. Montague "makes no pretense of academic rationality" (Hattenhauer 156), and claims that she is able to communicate with the spirit world through a device called a *planchette* (Jackson 187). Like a Ouija board, when two people place their fingers on the device and ask questions, it is allegedly moved by the spirits, conveying messages from the netherworld (187). Mrs. Montague and Arthur decide to carry out their first session with the *planchette* in the library; Mrs. Montague states that materializations are produced best in rooms with books. Thus, she links textuality, or narratives, to the paranormal. Mrs. Montague also provides comic relief as she criticizes Dr. Montague's disbelief in the *planchette*, and insists that what the device says about a monk and a nun walled up alive is true.

Hattenhauer argues that Mrs. Montague is one of Jackson's domineering female characters who are portrayed as patriarchal mothers: "more self-important and cocksure than Dr. Montague," she defeats "Dr. Montague's erudition at every turn" (156). She is like the domineering matriarch Mrs. Halloran in the previous novel and Aunt Morgen in *The Bird's Nest*. She is portrayed as an intrusive, dominating woman, and "a compulsive babbler" (Egan, "Comic-Satiric-Fantastic-Gothic: Interactive Modes in Shirley Jackson's Narratives," 48). Even though most of what Mrs. Montague claims to have discovered through communication with ghosts is a product of her imagination, the eventual message that she and Arthur read aloud contains her name along with the words "'Home,'"

"'Waiting,'" "'Mother,'" "'Lost'" (191–192), which certainly makes sense in the context of Eleanor's experiences in Hill House. Eleanor helplessly thinks to herself that Hill House has singled her out again, this time not through the writing on the walls, but by means of Mrs. Montague's *planchette*. Through the *planchette*, "Mrs. Montague reports that a 'Nell' is lost and seeks a home" (Parks 131), which summarizes Eleanor's condition.

At night, Mrs. Montague settles into the nursery, and Arthur promises to patrol the house regularly with his revolver. Dr. Montague, suspecting that something is going to happen, assembles Luke, Theodora and Eleanor in the room down the hall. After a short while, the door of the room swings open and slams shut. An "unreal cold" (199) overtakes them as they hear the sound of a very strong wind blowing through the length of the hall, followed by a knocking sound on the doors downstairs and a pounding coming from the stairs. It is the first time that the four of them experience the same haunting together, yet Eleanor is the one who is the most affected. It is suggested that Eleanor is connected to the supernatural manifestations in a way that separates her from the other characters, and may even be the cause of the haunting incidents. As the door of their room shakes, Eleanor feels as if the pounding was inside her head. She thinks that the voice is coming from her own head when she says to herself, "I am disappearing inch by inch into this house, I'm falling apart a little bit at a time because all this noise is breaking me; why are the *others* frightened?" (201–202).

Hill House, cajoling Eleanor to come home, literally begins to crumble and collapse under its own weight: It shakes and shivers, the furniture sways, the pictures in the hall fall with a crashing sound, and the floor moves under their feet. Eleanor sees Luke, Dr. Montague, and Theodora in the distance and feels like she is falling through turbulent darkness in which she can only see her own white hands. She then hears a loud crash as a huge object comes down headlong. She thinks that it must be the tower collapsing and her inner voice says, "I will relinquish my possession of this self of mine, abdicate, give over willingly what I never wanted at all; whatever it wants of me it can have" (203–204).

With the collapse of the phallic tower, the house, as the archetypal mother image, forces Eleanor to abandon herself and become one with it. When Eleanor accepts the house's call and shouts "'I will come,'" she awakens in a quiet room, and sees Theodora leaning

over her, saying "'She's all right I think'" (204). In response to Eleanor's question about what happened, Theodora states that Hill House was dancing taking them along in its midnight hurl. In the morning, at the breakfast table, Mrs. Montague complains about the lack of air and dustiness in the nursery, and Arthur remarks that he sat all night with his revolver for something to happen, yet the only noise he heard was the sound of a branch tapping against his window. Clearly, Hill House did not choose to haunt them that night.

Eleanor asks Theodora whether she would like to live with her after they leave Hill House. Theodora rejects Eleanor's offer and looks down on her as she says, in a mocking manner, that she does not take home "stray cats" (208–209). It is evident that both Luke and Theodora think of Eleanor as a naïve young woman, and they fail to understand how lonely she feels. In a way, they are ignorant and unable to see Eleanor's distress. She is rejected and made invisible just like a ghost, and becomes the ultimate outcast.

When Theodora dismisses her offer of companionship, Eleanor feels heartbroken, homeless, lost, and unwanted, and desperately wants to stay at Hill House to prolong a sense of belonging somewhere, even if that somewhere is a haunted Gothic mansion. Luke shares Eleanor's impression of the house as a motherless orphan; however, unlike Eleanor, his identity never becomes linked to the house. Luke states that although everything within the house looks "'all so motherly'" at first glance, the soft sofas and chairs immediately turn out to be unwelcoming and hard when one sits upon them (209). Luke's speech points out the paradoxical, uncanny maternal quality of Hill House: it is both a home and not a home, both a mother and not a mother; it is an embodiment of domestic confinement, yet it also provides freedom in that it is an insane refuge from the absolute, undesirable outside reality—just like the Halloran mansion in *The Sundial* and the Blackwood mansion in the ensuing novel.

Ultimately, Eleanor, the haunted, becomes the haunter. She merges with the house in a grotesque union and starts haunting Hill House, just as the mansion once haunted her. She sneaks out of her room with bare feet while Theodora is sleeping, slowly walks on the soft carpet and goes down the stairs to get a book from the library. Yet, the smell of decay, which reminds her of her mother, makes her hesitate at the doorway. She hears a voice coming from upstairs, urging her to "'Come along'" (228). Eleanor thinks it is her mother calling her, and heads towards the iron staircase before she begins running through

the hall and knocking on the doors, awakening Mrs. Montague, Arthur, and Theodora, who calls out to Dr. Montague and Luke when she realizes that Eleanor is not in the room. As they search for Eleanor, she enters the drawing room where she dances with Hugh Crain's statue, engaging in a symbolic marriage with the house's original owner. The mansion has driven her insane and by this point, she believes she is a ghost haunting Hill House, singing "Go in and out the windows" (231).

Thus, "Eleanor's final crescendo of insanity transforms her into a child of the house, dancing and playing in its rooms" (Franklin). She dances euphorically around the veranda, enters the house again from the front door, and finally decides to go into the library with the iron staircase. On the stone floor of the library, she dances and thinks to herself "I am home, I am home" (232). She climbs the stairway inside the tower where the older Crain sister's companion hanged herself and, standing on the top platform, notices Luke, who is climbing the stairs slowly. She unsuccessfully tries to open the locked trapdoor, which leads out to the turret, to get out. Luke uses reverse psychology and misogynist language to convince a frantic Eleanor not to jump and to come off the ledge by threatening to push her off. Eleanor is left with no choice but to retreat down the steps. For the moment, she once again feels trapped by the will of others.

At the end of the novel, Dr. Montague decides that Eleanor, who has been overtaken by the house and is teetering on the edge of insanity, should return home for her own good. Dr. Montague's "irrational fear of irrationality and fear" makes him feel justified in sending Eleanor away with "a punishing alacrity" and "dutiful insensitivity" (Hattenhauer 156). Having become a part of the house, Eleanor is unable to leave it or escape her unresolved feelings. She thinks of her stay at Hill House as the only time anything has ever happened to her. As she has nowhere else to go apart from her unwelcoming sister's home and no one else to care for, or no one to care for her, she crashes her car into a tree in order to remain within Hill House, as a ghost, forever:

> "Good-by," Eleanor said, and slid into the car […] With what she perceived as quick cleverness she pressed her foot down hard on the accelerator; they can't run fast enough to catch me this time she thought, but by now they must be beginning to realize; I wonder who notices first? Luke, almost certainly. I can hear them calling now, she thought, and the little footsteps running through Hill House and the soft sound of the hills pressing closer. I am really doing it she thought, turning the wheel to send the car directly at the great tree at the curve of the driveway, I am really doing

> it, I am doing this all by myself, now, at least; this is me, I am really really really doing it by myself. (244-245)

Just before the car hurls into the tree, Eleanor asks to herself: "Why am I doing this? Why am I doing this? Why don't they stop me?" (246) According to Jodey Castricano, Eleanor's thoughts in her final moments are confusing because her last question, "Why am I doing this?" contradicts her previous, self-assured thought that she is "doing it" all by herself (87). Thus, Eleanor's final question indicates that she indeed "does not know the ground, the reason, or the purpose of her apparent suicide" (Castricano 87). Her will is actually the will of Hill House which prevents Eleanor from going back to the outside world. In the end, she is literally consumed by the house. Although the other three characters leave the house to return to their ordinary lives, Eleanor's suicide renders her a permanent resident or specter of Hill House, "which had stood so for eighty years and might stand for eighty more," "holding darkness within" (246). According to Parks, "Eleanor's whole experience is like a whirlpool, moving from the outer rims of the house to its depths, which corresponds with her move from the lonely and loveless girl to her ego-fusion with the house" (134). Furthermore, the title of the novel indicates Eleanor's transformation into a ghost that haunts the house: "It is the 'haunting' of Hill House, not the 'haunted,'" which suggests that the haunting events may not only be caused by the house but also by the minds or "imaginations" of its "overly receptive occupants" (Parks 135).

To conclude, through the fantastic mode of writing, Shirley Jackson blends reality and fantasy to convey the protagonist's inner turmoil, and does not provide enough clues for the reader to determine whether the strange events in Hill House are supernatural or not. The house eventually assumes an "uncanny" quality for Eleanor, blurring the line between the actual and perceived. Even though, at first, Hill House appears to be unfamiliar and bizarre, in the end, it reminds her of her mother and turns out to be so familiar that her Self merges with the Gothic mechanism of the house. In the next novel, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, the Gothic house appears once more as a symbol of fantasy or imagination, and as a kind of protected shelter for the main characters, Merricat and Constance Blackwood, who isolate themselves from a nearby malignant village.

3.2. SHIRLEY JACKSON'S *WE HAVE ALWAYS LIVED IN THE CASTLE*

Shirley Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* tells the story of two sisters, the eighteen-year-old protagonist and first-person unreliable narrator Merricat (Mary Katherine) Blackwood and her twenty-eight-year-old sister Constance, who live an isolated life in the Blackwood mansion with their wheelchair-bound Uncle Julian on the outskirts of a small, gloomy village. The sisters and their uncle are the only survivors of a family tragedy caused by Merricat six years before the start of the novel. The sisters' parents, a brother and Uncle Julian's wife died at the dinner table after eating arsenic covered blackberries, an event which left Uncle Julian senile and an invalid. Merricat discloses that since she knew her sister Constance never took sugar, she put the arsenic into a sugar bowl before dinner. Even though Merricat—who had been sent to her room without dinner for being a disobedient child at the time the tragedy occurred—is the actual culprit, Constance, who cooked the dinner, was accused of the crime. Despite her exoneration, the villagers continue to believe that Constance is the murderer.

Since the time Merricat poisoned the members of the patriarchal Blackwood family, she, Constance, and Uncle Julian have lived secluded within the mansion, avoiding contact with the hateful villagers whose prejudice against the sisters is related not only to the crime, but also to the Blackwoods' privileged upper-class status (Silver 666). Merricat tries to protect the homosocial, matrilineal space she has established with her sister by minimizing contact with the hostile village; she only ventures out twice a week for supplies and library books. Even though a deceitful, greedy, patriarchal cousin named Charles attempts to intrude in their world, the Blackwood sisters are able to convert their mansion into a private, enclosed Gothic castle—the only place where they remain away from social judgement. As Lynette Carpenter argues, female self-sufficiency can threaten a society in which men hold power. Merricat's crime subverts the patriarchal order of her family and the society, since "the poisoning has resulted in a transfer of power from Blackwood men to Blackwood women" (Carpenter 32). Thus, Merricat's murder of her family is a symbolic act of demolishing the male dominated structure of power which has limited her freedom and posed a threat to her Self.

Merricat articulates her unique sense of self and her estrangement from the community in the introductory paragraph at the beginning of Chapter One:

> My name is Mary Katherine Blackwood. I am eighteen years old, and I live with my sister Constance. I have often thought that with any luck at all I could have been born a werewolf, because the two middle fingers on both my hands are the same length, but I have had to be content with what I had. I dislike washing myself, and dogs, and noise. I like my sister Constance, and Richard Plantagenet, and *Amanita phalloides*, the death-cup mushroom. Everyone else in my family is dead. (1)

As the name "Merricat" suggests, Mary Katherine is a wild, unruly, witch-like girl who enjoys spending time in the wilderness. She knows the names of poisonous plants, communicates with her cat Jonas, and is fascinated by the idea of magic. By articulating her wish to be a werewolf, she reveals the fact that she is a social outcast. Like the narrators in Edgar Allan Poe's short story "The Black Cat" and poem "The Raven," Merricat relates to animals and enjoys the company of Jonas in times of crisis.

In "The Black Cat," the narrator of the story, an alcohol addict with self-hatred, transforms from being a pet lover into a wicked and perverse murderer, killing both his black cat named Pluto, and his wife. After he kills Pluto, he is haunted by his guilty conscience or by the ghost of the animal, which reappears in the form of another cat with a white dot on its fur. The white spot on the new, mysterious cat gradually takes on a shape that resembles the gallows, reminding the narrator of Pluto whom he hanged from the branch of a tree, and the potential fate that awaits him for murdering his wife. One day in the cellar, he stumbles over the cat and attempts to kill it with an axe, when his wife interferes to protect the animal. The narrator kills his wife, instead, with the axe, and entombs her corpse behind one of the damp walls of the basement. When the police arrive to investigate the house, he unwittingly reveals his crime by tapping on the wall behind which his wife is buried. A mysterious entity hiding inside the wall responds to the tapping with a loud cry. The moment the police dismantle the wall, they come cross the dead body of the narrator's wife with the cat sitting on the top of her head. Thus, the cat appears as a haunting presence, as an uncanny animal which embodies the souls of the dead, or the alter-ego of the protagonist reminding him of his guilt.

Similarly, in the poem "The Raven," the anonymous narrator relives his grief over the death of his beloved Lenore as he converses with and asks questions to the raven, which suddenly appears at his window, and lands on a bust of Pallas, interrupting his reading in his chamber on a cold December evening with a knocking sound. When the narrator asks the raven its name, he is surprised to hear an answer. The bird responds by saying

"Nevermore" to every question, including the narrator's query about whether or not he will be able to see Lenore in heaven.

In both Poe's fiction and Jackson's novel, animals appear to be magical in their capacity to understand, contribute to the dark irrationality of Gothic settings, and reveal the hidden feelings or motives of human characters, who seem to be in touch with or fascinated by the "supernatural." Throughout the novel, Merricat not only seeks solace in the presence of her cat, but also indulges in self-made witchcraft rituals by burying objects such as silver coins, a doll, and little blue stones around the estate, uttering magical incantations to protect the Blackwood home and ward off any outside threats.

According to Darryl Hattenhauer, Merricat's rituals reveal her obsessive-compulsive tendencies and the fear of entrapment (178). When Merricat discovers that cousin Charles has looked at her father's jewelry, she mentions her fear of rings as entrapping objects. Merricat's rejection of confinement of any kind—especially the prospect of marriage as implied by Cousin Charles' presence and her fear of rings—contrasts with Constance's conformity to the cult of domesticity. The names of the sisters are suggestive of their personalities: the nickname "Merricat," with the word "cat," signifies her witch-like character, whereas the name "Constance" indicates her unchanging adherence to the female gender role of homemaker. Never leaving home, she does all the gardening, cooking and cleaning, and takes care of Merricat and Uncle Julian. As Hattenhauer explains, Constance Blackwood "is agoraphobic (as was Jackson at the time she wrote this novel). But strictly speaking, Constance does not have pure agoraphobia because her fear of the town is not wholly unreasonable (and neither was Jackson's)" (176).

While Merricat carries out traditionally male duties, like carpentry and shopping downtown, Constance assumes her dead mother's role by doing the domestic chores (Hattenhauer 176–177). Cleaning the house, raising plants, and preparing the meals, Constance represents the cult of true womanhood and domesticity. Constance's interest in cooking and cookbooks symbolizes the "maternal affection" and "nurturance" that Merricat seeks and the "emotional resonances between love (or its withholding) and food" (Rubenstein 321–323). Merricat remarks that any kind of food is invaluable to Constance, who touches "foodstuffs with quiet respect" (29). By preparing and preserving food,

Constance maintains the family; she is portrayed as a kind of Mother Goddess who protects and keeps the home.

Like Eleanor and Theodora in the previous novel, the Blackwood sisters complement one another despite the fact that the relationship between Merricat and Constance is a relationship between opposite roles: Constance is "the domestic, traditional and even unimaginative sister" whereas Merricat is "the unrestrained, creative, imaginative one" (Carpenter 33). Like Theodora, who represents the repressed desires of Eleanor, Merricat mirrors the rebellious girl hiding within the docile Constance. Yet, although she appears to be selfless and humble, she is depicted a strong female character due to her similarity to a benevolent, mythological female deity. Stuart C. Woodruff argues that Constance "epitomizes the regenerative power of love and selfless devotion; [...] [She] is further defined through her love of cooking and gardening—her marvelous skill at making things grow and flourish [...]. Indeed, we are hardly surprised to learn that Constance is a skillful musician as well" (154–155). Far from being a disempowered woman, Constance is the head of the remaining Blackwood family till the arrival of Cousin Charles. Furthermore, as Hattenhauer notes, she "is a passive-aggressive enabler," since "she is the one who taught Merricat about poisons" (177). In spite of the fact that Constance is depicted as a gentle and caring woman, in reality, she is the inspiration for Merricat's dissent. Thus, both Constance and Merricat are defiant women who refuse to become the members of a corrupt and patriarchal society.

Throughout the novel, Merricat externalizes Constance's concealed yearning to transcend her self-imposed and socially constructed limits. Merricat's observation of Constance indicates Constance's buried desire to break free from her constrained way of life. Merricat takes excursions to the village, but Constance dares not go. The dull and grey village is marked by a sense of stifling, oppressive conformity and decadence. Except for the unusual Rochester house—the house where Merricat's mother was born, and interestingly named after a character in Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre*—and the junkyard of the Harlers, the entire "village was of a piece, a time, and a style; […] whatever planned to be colorful lost its heart quickly in the village" (8–9).

Merricat reveals that the ownership of the Rochester house should have rightfully passed to Constance. Merricat's statement indicates that society denies women the right to own

property which is “passed from father to son rather than from mother to daughter” (Carpenter 33). Carpenter argues that “it was no accident that Thomas [Merricat’s brother] used the most sugar” at dinner, since he was the “heir to the Blackwood property” (33) as the only male child. Hence, Merricat and Constance, who becomes her sister’s accomplice by washing the sugar bowl and not calling a doctor, not only establish a new order by demolishing the old one but also reclaim the property rights denied to them in owning the Blackwood house, and thus distancing themselves from the village where the men gossiped and the women waited for them to come home.

According to Dara Downey, the village is an allegory of the crushing conformity of mid-twentieth century suburban America. By depicting the village as a place of dull uniformity, and hatred and violence, Jackson employs “Gothic tropes” and “otherworldly horror” to draw attention to “darker aspects of everyday life” and to expose how the hostile external world causes women to be entrapped within the domestic sphere (291–292). As a whole, the Gothic domesticity of Jackson’s novels reflect what Friedan called “The Problem That Has No Name” and the dissatisfaction that most middle-class women felt in the 1950s as a result of their confinement to the domestic sphere, what they perceived as their limited options in life, and internalized gender roles. This novel is no exception. As Dale Bailey explains, the house appears as a marker of class and as a symbol of domesticity (8). This sheds light on the symbolism attached to the Blackwood mansion which, in the novel, stands not only as a fantastic refuge, but also as a marker of class, broken family life, or more accurately the broken patriarchy and domesticity. Even though the Gothic house stands as a symbol of domestic entrapment, Merricat and Constance eventually subvert the patriarchal, domestic ideology from within as witch-like female characters who succeed in creating a matriarchal order within the house.

Hiding inside the isolated mansion, the Blackwood sisters reject being a part of the crushing conformity, decay, and gloom of the surrounding village. Merricat becomes the target of the villagers’ hatred, rage, and ostracism, and faces the social stigma attached to her family since the poisoning incident. Each time she walks past the row of stores, Merricat thinks of rot, “burning black painful rot that [eats] away from inside” (9), destroying the village. She retreats into herself, trying to act as if the villagers do not exist. She fancies living on the moon until she arrives at the black rock marking the entrance to

the path that leads to the Blackwood estate. While shopping, she always imagines that she is playing a board game, and thinks of the whole village as the game board itself.

Filtering reality through her imagination, Merricat finds refuge in fantasy which "moves into or opens up a space without outside cultural order" (Rosemary Jackson 320). For Merricat, the fantastic holds a subversive quality; it enables her to retain her own sense of self and create an inner protective shelter as she wanders through the village. As Parks notes, "It is against 'the ugly people with their evil faces' (15) that she must steel herself to endure the shopping trip. And nearly always she is heckled and laughed at" (142). At the grocery store where Merricat is served by Mr. Elbert and his insipid greedy wife, and at Stella's where she reluctantly stops for a cup of coffee in order not to look afraid, she tries to disregard the malignant gaze and taunting to which she is subjected. At Stella's, Jim Donell, a villager who enters the store, attempts to humiliate Merricat by mentioning a rumor that the Blackwoods are planning on moving away. As he talks, sitting on the stool next to Merricat, she observes him stirring his coffee from the corner of her eye; his spoon goes around and around and around, which Merricat finds funny. He says the same words over and over again demonstrating that he has very few ideas and wrings "each one dry": "'Can't even tell how gossip gets around,'" . . . "'A village loses a lot of style when the fine old people go. Anyone would think that they wasn't wanted'" (17–20). Joe Dunham, the carpenter, states that he was not paid when he fixed the Blackwoods' broken step, and Jim Donell mentions he was never invited to dinner by the Blackwoods. Even though Stella warns the two to stop taunting Merricat, they continue to mock her. Jim Donell sits with his legs stretched out to prevent Merricat getting past him, and says: "'I was saying to people only this morning it's too bad when the old families go. Although you could rightly say a good number of the Blackwoods are gone already'" and slaps his hand on the counter laughing (19). He is a representative of the townspeople who search for scapegoats to conceal their own immorality and deliberately hate the Blackwood sisters, not only because of the poisoning incident, but also because of their wealth.

Merricat and Constance, as self-sufficient, single women who own property, do not fit society's notions regarding women's economic and social status. Merricat tries not to listen to Jim Donell by imagining having lunch with Uncle Julian and Constance on the lawn; putting her hands in her lap, she envisions life on the moon. Merricat finally runs

outside, leaving the laughing trio, Stella, Jim Donell, and Joe Dunham, behind her, and immediately thinks of her house on the moon: “I liked my house on the moon, and I put a fireplace in it and a garden outside […] and I was going to have lunch outside in my garden on the moon. Things on the moon were very bright and odd colors; my little house would be blue” (21).

As she dreams of catching scarlet fish in the rivers on the moon, she encounters the Harris boys who are quarreling with the other boys playing in their front yard. The children taunt her by calling her names and reciting a made-up rhyming verse that refers to the poisoning of the Blackwood family: “‘Merricat, said Connie, would you like a cup of tea? Oh no, said Merricat, you’ll poison me. Merricat, said Connie, would you like to go to sleep? Down in the boneyard ten feet deep!’” (23). The children’s singing indicates that the villagers still believe Constance poisoned her family, and that it is such common knowledge that the children have internalized it into their play. Merricat pretends not to hear the children, whose behavior mirror the adults who teach them. Thus, Merricat’s journey into the village is a journey into a haunted, Gothic place which is inhabited by demonic characters, as suggested by the name “Harris.”

According to Hattenhauer, Merricat’s village excursion is marked by “textuality” which “suffuses the setting” and “leads the reader on a trail” based on Merricat’s imaginary board game (180). The description of the Blackwood home and the town center illustrate “Jackson’s writing about writing” (180): the library books remain on the kitchen shelf and the father’s books cover two walls. Uncle Julian spends most of his time obsessively arranging his notes and newspaper clippings about the poisoning to complete writing his nonfiction book. He is pleased to see Merricat with a book and remarks that it is “‘A pretty sight’” to see “‘a lady with a book’” (3). “Even the family name Blackwood suggests the source of paper” and “the origins of writing” (Hattenhauer 180), albeit in the Gothic fashion. Marks are inscribed on the neighborhood buildings, such as the crack in the sidewalk in front of Stella’s café and Johnny Harris’s handprint on the surface of the town hall. The prints and the sinister character Johnny Harris—a motif in Jackson’s writing—reinforce the Gothic feeling of the scene while emphasizing the presence of malevolence in the village.

In contrast, the Gothic qualities of the Blackwood home provide the sisters with a sense of belonging, safety, and self-determination. Merricat feels at home when she opens the padlock of the gate on which there is a sign reading "PRIVATE NO TRESPASSING" (25). Merricat's recollections reveal how once, the Blackwoods considered themselves "superior" to the villagers. As Merricat mentions, her father erected signs, gates, and locks to enclose the entire Blackwood estate, and closed off the path the villagers used as a shortcut to the bus stop on the highway four corners. Her mother also disliked the sight of anyone passing in front of their door and told Merricat that "'The highway is built for common people and my front door is private'" (26). Since the time of the enclosure, no one has used the path, which is now dark with overgrown trees, bushes, and flowers. Merricat is the only one who knows the secrets of the great meadow, the heavily wooded gardens that provide refuge. Her secluded hiding place by the creek is encased by tree branches, bushes, and leaves—a private place of her own where she feels secure and beyond the hostility of the outside world. Thus, the novel emphasizes the conflict between "the lovely, pastoral Blackwood" estate and "the hostile, resentful village wasteland" (Parks 142). Similar to the Halloran mansion in *The Sundial*, the Blackwood mansion represents a separate world, a retreat into fantasy and privacy in the face of ugly reality. Like Hill House, the Blackwood mansion becomes a castle haunted by the heroines who resist patriarchy.

Merricat, Constance, and Uncle Julian spend most of their time in the back of the house, on the lawn, and in the garden where no one can see them. Constance enjoys tending the flowers and vegetables, and preparing the food in the kitchen. Merricat mentions that when she was small, she thought Constance was a fairy princess and used to draw her with long golden hair and blue eyes. According to Rubenstein, in describing her older sister as a fairy princess, Merricat idealizes Constance like a small child idolizes her mother, and tries to compensate for the lack or "withdrawal" of "maternal affection" in her life (321–322), just like Eleanor Vance, Aunt Fanny, and Betsy in Jackson's previous novels.

Like Eleanor in the previous novel, Merricat "remake[s] reality by representing it as a fairy tale" (Hattenhauer 182). The fairytale-like, peaceful life Merricat envisions is occasionally disrupted when acquaintances come to visit. On Fridays, Helen Clarke takes

her tea with the Blackwoods, and on Sundays, women stop by after church to tell them about the sermon. Mr. and Mrs. Carrington drive to the front step of the house and, never entering inside, they ask about how the sisters are doing. However, Helen Clarke's and Mrs. Wright's visit has a chilling impact on Merricat, who becomes perturbed by Clarke's advice that Constance should "'Come back into the world'" (38). As John G. Parks explains, "Merricat's greatest fear is that Constance will break her self-imposed exile and imprisonment and return to the outside world. Whenever Constance speaks of leaving 'the castle,' Merricat is chilled and terrified" (143). Merricat asks Constance, "'Where could we go? […] What place would be better for us than this? Who wants us outside? The world is full of terrible people'" (78). Merricat's view is similar to that of Gloria's in *The Sundial* in which Gloria mentions that the outside world is a "'make-believe world, with nothing in it but cardboard and trouble,'" where "'there aren't any *good* people,'" and everyone is "'tired, ugly and mean'" (186–187). Merricat presumes that if Constance decides to leave behind her isolated life within the borders of the Blackwood estate to return to the community, their private fortress will be destroyed and they will be vulnerable to the patriarchal, hostile, and evil forces of the outside world.

Helen Clarke appears as a representative of the patriarchal society which threatens to undermine the sisters' interdependence and self-sufficiency. Helen's visit, foreshadowing the arrival of other intruders, aims to disrupt homosocial female bonding. She opposes Merricat and Constance's substitution "of heterosexual romance with sisterhood," and "assumes that Constance is not happy living with her sister, indeed could not be happy living with a woman when she is young and lovely enough to attract a man" (Carpenter 34). In addition, Helen remarks that she "would never have tolerated the child's [Merricat's] wildness" (49) and thinks of Uncle Julian as an "eccentric" old man, who deviates "*from [the] regularity*" (37) of her conventional values. Thus, she is a representative of the bigoted society from which Merricat and Constance distance themselves.

Like Helen, the inquisitive Mrs. Wright, to whom Uncle Julian explains the details of the murder in the dining room, arouses antagonistic feelings in Merricat. She dislikes Mrs. Wright's fearful, uneasy demeanor and her plain black dress, which contrasts with the shiny drawing room with golden-legged chairs, sparkling mirrors, her mother's harp,

Dresden figurines on the mantel, and her mother's portrait on the wall. When Constance later reprimands Merricat for teasing Mrs. Wright, Merricat says, "'I can't help when people are frightened; I always want to frighten them more'" (55). Merricat's courage to counter patriarchy and the hypocrisy and greed of the people outside, prompt others to associate her feminist audacity with subversive "witchcraft."

Merricat mentions that when she was small, she used to wish that someday she would be tall enough to touch the tops of the two tall windows in the drawing room. She and Constance delight in cleaning the room, which is full of memories. They dust the figurines on the mantel and polish the floors. Merricat imagines herself as a witch as she cleans the drawing room with Constance, dusting with a cloth attached to the end of a broom, and fantasizing that the ceiling is the sky. In the act of cleaning the house, she becomes a witch performing the magic of purifying the castle of evil influences. As Downey argues, "Merricat's figurative language associates housework with witchcraft" (300) allowing Jackson to mobilize it as an oppositional category" (294). Merricat's housework is a symbolic act of using domesticity to create a protective barrier and ward off patriarchal intruders, particularly the ruinous influence of Cousin Charles, who will arrive to dominate and steal.

Merricat senses the forthcoming arrival of Charles and the imminent destructive change that will alter the sisters' peaceful pattern of days in the mansion. Her cat Jonas begins to engage in a peculiar habit: running around the house, racing up the stairs, running across the beds, going in and out of doors, down the stairs, and finally across the hall and out into the garden where he slows down and pauses to lick his paws and flick his ears. Merricat regularly checks the wires of the fence and the locks on the gates, and warily examines her "magical" safeguards, which include buried silver dollars nearby the creek, a buried doll in the field and a book that she has nailed to a tree, to ensure that her enchantments are not broken and the house is protected.

Furthermore, as Hattenhauer argues, "Merricat's witchcraft rituals often involve textuality;" "she believes that to say something three times is to make it real" (183). Selecting three magical words, "*Melody, Gloucester* and *Pegasus*," as a safety measure, she tries to create a wall of protection and believes that so long as these words are not uttered aloud by anyone no harmful change will come upon them (63). According to

Carpenter, Merricat's magic performances are an attempt to empower herself first within her patriarchal family, and then within the society at large (34). Thus, like Natalie, who is attracted to Tony's Tarot card "the Magician" in *Hangsaman*, Merricat desires to empower herself through her belief in magic spells.

Merricat decides on and ritualistically whispers the third magic word, *Pegasus*, into a glass she takes from the cabinet to seal her spells guarding the house. The word "Pegasus," referring to the winged horse in Greek mythology, symbolizes Merricat's desire for flight and freedom or living on the moon. As Merricat whispers the word, Dr. Levy visits Uncle Julian whose health is deteriorating day by day. Uncle Julian becomes increasingly senile and obsessed with his notes on the details of the arsenic poisoning. He asks Dr. Levy why Dr. Mason, the doctor whom Constance called at the time the family was dying, has not come instead. In response to Constance's advice that he should rest in his room till the dinner time, Uncle Julian exclaims that he does not have enough time and has to note down every detail to complete his book.

Hattenhauer argues that through the confused, meticulous mind of Uncle Julian, Jackson both celebrates writing and criticizes it particularly nonfiction (181). Moreover, she "undermines the alleged nonfictional aspect of scholarship by having Julian [finally] say" (Hattenhauer 181): "'I shall be forced to invent, to fictionalize, to imagine'" (95). Uncle Julian's dependence on details, intellect, and rationality recalls the academic domination of patriarchal figures like Arnold Waite, who criticizes Natalie's writing, and Arthur Langdon, the English professor, in Jackson's second novel, Dr. Wright in *The Bird's Nest*, and Dr. Montague in the previous novel. He desires to become the "perfect" writer, yet his obsessions hinder the completion of his work. Likewise, Arnold Waite, who is thought of as a successful writer and literary critic, has written only one book. Despite the fact that Uncle Julian seems to adhere to logic in his notes, he actually has an irrational, failing mind. He is like the anthropologist Dr. Montague, who tries to solve the mystery of the haunting in Hill House through "scientific" means, yet depends on his belief in the supernatural and poltergeists to apply science to the unscientific, logic to the illogical and insane. Hence, the male academics in Jackson's novels are either patriarchs or mad scientists (or both) in the tradition of Victor Frankenstein.

However, Uncle Julian is not the typical patriarch. He is an honest, sympathetic, aging man whose disability signifies his failure to fulfill the expectations placed on men and to fit into the conventional definitions of masculinity. Unlike the other domineering male characters, Uncle Julian, as a disabled man, does not disrupt the female bonding created and sustained by Merricat and Constance. As Carpenter explains, Uncle Julian is a "financial failure" who did not fulfill the socially expected male gender role of the breadwinner or accumulator of wealth (33). Thus, "Uncle Julian was twice victimized by expectations he could not fulfill. […] His invalid state no doubt confirms the general belief that financial failure for men leads to powerlessness" (Carpenter 33).

Furthermore, like Richard Halloran in *The Sundial*, Uncle Julian, with his disability, symbolizes the moral decay of the community and dysfunctional family life, as well as the destruction brought about by the patriarchal power structure. Merricat and Constance seek refuge from that structure by barricading themselves inside their private castle. Thus, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* is similar to *The Sundial* in that the enclosed Gothic house is where the characters shelter themselves away from the evil of the outside, transforming the home into "a self-contained community of women" (Carpenter 38) or a community ruled by women. Uncle Julian's disability, since the time Merricat poisoned her parents, brother, and Uncle Julian's wife, remains as a reminder of the shattered and crippled patriarchy of the Blackwood family.

The first signs which foretell the return of the haunting patriarchal order Merricat had destroyed years ago are sensed as Merricat wanders through the wilderness with Jonas, who follows her, dancing in and out of shadows, on a Sunday morning. The weather turns uneasy with clouds moving across the sky, and a sharp breeze blowing through the kitchen door foreshadows the inevitable change Merricat tries to impede. Together, they go into a field of tall grass and in the middle of the field, Merricat encounters the rock marking the spot where she buried her doll, which remains safe. After she leaves the field, she passes between the orchard's four apple trees and follows the path to her hiding place where she chats with Jonas and listens to his cat stories. On her way back home, she notices that her book, which was nailed to a tree, has fallen down and interprets it as "a very bad omen" (77) that breaks her protective magic. Rubenstein argues that by means of her self-invented witchcraft, Merricat struggles to preserve the wavering boundary

between the outside and inside: “The Blackwood mansion is her fortress, and she repeatedly attempts to secure her boundaries” (Rubenstein 321).

Rubenstein posits that in spite of Merricat’s endeavors to protect the boundary, Cousin Charles, who soon arrives, “penetrates the barrier and enters the house,” which is suggestive of “male sexual penetration of female space” (321). On the rainy afternoon, after Merricat and Constance have their lunch in the kitchen where they spend most of their time, Cousin Charles appears at the front door. Charles is the dishonest Gothic intruder who threatens to reestablish the original Blackwood family by becoming the patriarchal father, reducing Constance to the role of the “submissive wife/mother,” and punishing the child Merricat (Rubenstein 321). Moreover, he is a womanizer, a thief and a liar similar to Luke Sanderson in the previous novel. Merricat first sees him through the dining room window as she enters the hall to go upstairs to fetch Constance’s sweater. Charles knocks on the door and calls Constance’s name several times, and Merricat tries to hide herself with the hope that he will leave. When he looks at the shaded upstairs windows, Merricat runs up the stairs, snatches Constance’s sweater from the chair in Constance’s room, and runs downstairs to the kitchen where she finds him sitting at the table. Noticing the kitchen door wide open behind him, Merricat discerns that Constance, deluded by his phony amiability, has let him in.

Merricat feels cold and breathless as Charles greets her. Throwing the sweater on the floor, she runs outside to her hiding place. Sheltered from the rain by the trees meeting overhead, she falls asleep listening to the sound of the rain and Jonas’s stories. Thus, she struggles to maintain her own private world against the intrusion of both the villagers and Cousin Charles. Jonas is her sole companion with whom she communicates telepathically—she prefers the company of the cat to a human friend. The cat is almost similar to a fantastic creature in that it has extraordinary comprehension and intuition skills. Along with the Blackwood sisters, who eventually become the hiding “witches,” Jonas, as a Gothic animal, haunts the Blackwood estate.

When Merricat returns to the house and enters the kitchen, she tries to make herself believe that Cousin Charles was just a silly dream. She resumes envisioning her life on the moon telling herself that “On the moon we wore feathers in our hair, and rubies on our hands. On the moon we had gold spoons” (87). She constantly reminds herself that

she must be kinder to the ailing Uncle Julian, and considers putting a feather for him on the lawn on the spot where his chair will go. Upon hearing that Charles is asleep in their father's bed upstairs, thereby symbolically assuming the role of the new patriarch, Merricat feels as if her dream-world has come apart around her. It is shattered into pieces, just like the glass she drops on the floor. She thinks of Charles as "a ghost" (89) and a demon (lover) that hides behind a human face, and contrives a number of magic rituals to exorcise him from the house.

Unlike Constance, Merricat is able to discern the dishonesty of Charles, who tries to seduce Constance and make her leave behind her isolated life so that he can seize the family's fortune. Parks explains that as the novel progresses "Constance cannot see the real nature of Cousin Charles that even the senile Uncle Julian can see" (144). In addition, Merricat dislikes Charles's unkind attitude towards Uncle Julian. At dinner, as Constance helps Uncle Julian cut up his chicken, Charles asks, "'Does he always eat with you?'" (102). He stares at Uncle Julian for a lengthy minute and mockingly shakes his head when Uncle Julian confuses him with his dead brother, John Blackwood. Towards the end of the evening, deciding to take on the task of shopping in the village at Constance's suggestion, Charles asks whether or not they keep money in the house and learns about their father's safe in the study. In an attempt to threaten Charles, Merricat mentions the names and properties of local poisonous plants, and the *Amanita phalloides* and other mushrooms within reach by the creek and in the fields.

After Charles leaves for the village, Merricat talks to Constance, who has given him one of the keys of the house. As Constance prepares to make some gingerbread for Charles, Merricat, playing with the books on the table and trying to make a miniature house, jokes that she can name the gingerbread man "Charles," and then eat him. Merricat is like Betsy, who describes herself as the fairy-tale gingerbread man in *The Bird's Nest*, articulating her desire for escape. Furthermore, the house she makes out of the library books on the table is reminiscent of Fancy's doll house in *The Sundial*, and indicates her plan to recreate her own house. Merricat goes upstairs to have a look at her father's room and wants to remove the traces of Charles's presence first from the room and then from the entire house. The moment she pushes the door and looks in, she notices Charles's possessions, his suitcase on a chair, his pipe and handkerchief, "dirtying [her] father's

room" (110). Walking slowly across the room in order not to be heard by Constance downstairs, she looks into the drawer Charles has left open and finds her father's leather jewelry box, which holds a watch with a gold chain, cuff links, and a signet ring. In order to drive Charles away, she nails the watch chain to the tree where the book—a symbol of their private, insular world—once hung. Charles finds the chain on his way back, removes it from the tree and brings it back to the house. As he holds out the chain in his shaking hand, he cries out to Uncle Julian and Constance in amazement and desperation that he has found it nailed to a tree, and exclaims, "What kind of a house is this?" (111–112). When Constance tries to assure him that it is not a significant matter, Charles says, "'Not important? Connie, this thing is made of *gold.* […] One of the links is smashed. I could have worn it; what a hell of a way to treat a valuable thing. We could have sold it'" (112).

Clearly, Charles "is interested in the family heirlooms not as mementos but as commodities" (Hattenhauer 176). Charles's materialistic attitude, which represents American capitalist society, clashes with the moral values of the Blackwood sisters' private world. The antagonism between Charles and Merricat increases as Constance explains to Charles that Merricat nailed the watch chain to the tree: "'Merricat put it there, please do come to lunch. She always does'" (112). In the afternoon, as Constance is putting Uncle Julian to bed, Charles threatens to exclude and dislodge Merricat from the house. Sarcastically, in Merricat's presence, Charles asks Jonas where would Merricat go if they expelled her from the house. Merricat wants Charles to go away and plans to force him to leave the house before he takes over the entire mansion and can never be removed.

However, the damage has already been done. Charles has made Constance feel dissatisfied with the isolated life they live and she starts blaming herself for allowing Uncle Julian to "spend all his life time living in the past and re-living that dreadful day," and letting Merricat "run wild" (114). Constance becomes torn between the patriarchal order Charles represents and the detached, autonomous, independent life Merricat endeavors to protect. In an Edenic scene reminiscent of the Biblical story of the fall of humankind, Merricat confronts Charles (the serpent), who stands beneath crooked apple trees wearing John Blackwood's gold watch chain, and asks him to go away. He refuses to go by saying "'No'" (116). When she warns him to stay away from her cat Jonas, Charles tries to intimidate her once again: "'As a matter of fact, come about a month from

now, I wonder who *will* still be here? You or me?'" (116). He threatens to dismiss Merricat from the Blackwood mansion, marry Constance, and consolidate his power as the new patriarch presiding over the estate. Running back into the house, Merricat goes upstairs to her father's room and furiously strikes the mirror over the dresser with a shoe until it cracks. Merricat's reaction is similar to that of Betsy's in *The Bird's Nest*. Betsy throws a dictionary shattering the mirror in the hotel room when she discovers that there is some other personality—within the main character, Elizabeth Richmond—who is almost as powerful as she is and who threatens her existence. Both Merricat and Betsy are similar in that they are both childlike and unrestrained characters.

Uncle Julian is also able to see Charles's deceitfulness. He does not want him to replace his brother as master of the house, or to touch his notes, and wants Constance to put his papers in a box for safekeeping. As Charles becomes increasingly rude to Uncle Julian, mocks his inability to eat by himself, Merricat thinks of ways to be kinder to him and places a leaf from the chestnut tree in the garden on his window sill. She displays her compassion for Uncle Julian through her own "magical" means. In Chapter Seven, Merricat begins implementing her "witchcraft" to drive Charles from the house. She twists the winding knob of her father's watch until it stops tickling to "release Charles' spell" and to break "through his tight skin of invulnerability" (126). Both Uncle Julian's name, which alludes to "the Julian calendar" (Hattenhauer 183), and John Blackwood's watch symbolize the desire to freeze or control time. Uncle Julian is stuck in the past and constantly rearranges his notes about the day the members of the Blackwood family were poisoned by arsenic-coated blackberries, whereas Merricat has the wish to do away with time all together, and eternally live on the moon.

In the middle of the night, Merricat goes out into the darkness to gather pieces of wood, broken sticks, leaves, and scraps of glass and metal. She takes the books from her father's desk and the blankets from the bed, and puts the glass, metal, wood, sticks and leaves into the empty spots. She also pours a pitcher of water on the bed and tears down the curtains. On the way home, Charles finds Merricat's buried silver dollars by the creek shouting "'It's not her money, she has no right to hide it'" (128). Thus, he reveals once more his motive to rob the sisters of their own property. As Constance tries to explain to Charles that Merricat likes burying objects, an angry Merricat thinks of ways to destroy Charles,

going to the spot where her box of silver dollars was buried. Like a witch, she imagines turning Charles into a fly and dropping him into a spider's web.

Merricat's ruminations reveal her violent tendencies and the extent of her hatred of Charles and what he represents: fraudulence, deceit, greed, the desire to dominate, and the search for wealth and power. Charles shares similarities with the scheming Essex in *The Sundial*, and Luke Sanderson, who is described as a thief and a liar in *The Haunting of Hill House*. Looking down at the hole poked by Charles on the ground, Merricat imagines burying Charles's head there. She picks up a stone, draws Charles's face on it, and buries it saying "'Goodbye, Charles'" (130), which recalls Fancy's urge to harm her grandmother by pushing a hatpin through the throat of her grandmother's framed photograph, and sticking pins into her grandmother doll in *The Sundial*.

Having discovered the state of his room, Charles starts showing more hostility towards Merricat, proclaiming "'I haven't quite decided what I'm going to do with you. But whatever I do you'll remember it'" (131). Meanwhile, Uncle Julian complains that he is unable to work since Charles talks all the time. He starts confusing Charles with his deceased brother John Blackwood, and slams his hand down on the desk scattering his papers. Charles exclaims, "'It's a crazy house, Constance, this is a crazy house'" (134). The Blackwood house, as Merricat's (the witch's) castle, is deranged, just like Hill House. It does not fit into Charles's notion of order or the paternal law. Blurring time and reality, the house becomes a stage where Merricat acts out her revolt.

Once Uncle Julian realizes that he is speaking not to John but to his nephew Charles, he remembers the time Charles' parents—his brother Arthur and Arthur's wife—severed their connection to the Blackwood family after the poisoning incident, just like the village people ostracized Merricat and Constance. Uncle Julian's recollection reinforces the conviction that Charles is insincere in his attempt to make amends. Charles becomes bewildered and puzzled when Uncle Julian confusedly states that his niece Mary Katherine (Merricat) has long been dead. Uncle Julian's mental confusion and senility reveal the "continual denial of Merricat's existence" and serve "as a reminder of her former status in the Blackwood family and of her especial invisibility to the Blackwood men" (Carpenter 33).

Charles endangers Merricat's visibility and dignity when he asks Constance "'Aren't you even going to punish her?'" (137). Charles's inquiry reminds Merricat of her punishment by her parents: "Shivering against the door frame," Merricat inquiries, "'Punish me? You mean send me to bed without my dinner?'" (137). Charles threatens to revive Merricat's life with her domineering parents and her imprisonment inside her room. Merricat runs outside and, followed by Jonas, takes the path leading to the dark, possibly haunted summerhouse where no one dares going. Even Jonas stops following her as Merricat turns on to the ominous path. As Merricat recounts, their father had planned to build the summerhouse near the creek, but the house was "born bad," having taken in a malignant quality from the local environment and the materials out of which it was made.

The description of the summerhouse is similar to Dr. Montague's description of Hill House as "born bad" and "leprous." In addition, the uncanny quality of the summerhouse is reminiscent of not only Hill House, but also the summerhouse with pillars where Aunt Fanny gets lost surrounded by a strange, thick mist before she sees her father's ghost in *The Sundial*. The rat Merricat's mother spotted in the doorway of the summerhouse is reminiscent of the rat in Jackson's short story "The Daemon Lover," in which the female protagonist searches for her absent or imaginary (demon) lover, Harris, with whom she hopes to get married, yet eventually ends up in a bizarre, empty apartment where she hears strange voices coming from behind the door and sees a rat. Her unfilled hope of escape through marriage and complying with society's expectations by becoming a wife leads her to madness, and to an insane and haunted place. Thus, the rat, as a Gothic animal, signifies the female protagonist's expedition into an uncanny Gothic setting, but also signifies the malevolence (the patriarchal demon lover) lurking in her immediate environment.

Merricat sits on the stone floor where there once was a low table with chairs. She relives the memory of her family and imagines them all sitting in a circle, around the dining room table, talking to each other. Hattenhauer argues that "Looking back on the night she killed her parents, brother and aunt, she imagines not that they resist her but that they obey her" (178). She imagines her mother telling her father that Merricat can have anything she wants. In her reverie, when the father says, "'Lucy, you are to see to it that our most loved daughter Mary Katherine is never punished,'" the mother answers, "'Mary Katherine

would never allow herself to do anything wrong; there is never any need to punish her'" (139). Through her daydream, Merricat tries to reverse or resolve the distressing experiences of her childhood. According to Parks, "the remarks can be seen to be wishful projections of a mind burdened with guilt and longing for love": "They are exaggerated fantasies of a […] mind trying to create for herself a self that is loved, respected and so good that punishment will never be necessary" (153). Here, she compensates for the lack of love and affection in her childhood by reinventing the conversation between her mother and father. Thus, "Merricat rehearses her delusions of grandeur […] re-inscribing the murder scene from six years ago" (Hattenhauer 178). She resolves to cleanse her world, which Charles has "blackened" (137), and regain the strength and courage to strive for the freedom of her sanctuary.

Raymond Russell Miller, Jr. argues that the novel is "analogous in rhythm to the siege of a castle, the 'castle' being the Blackwood mansion" (235). Merricat causes a fire by brushing Charles's burning pipe off the table and into a wastebasket full of newspapers. In this scene, Merricat is reminiscent of Bertha, the insane wife of Mr. Rochester, who causes fires at Thornfield manor in Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. Both Betha, who is kept imprisoned on the third floor of Thornfield manor, and Merricat revolt against patriarchal domination by causing fires. Thus, Merricat's act exemplifies Donna Heiland's argument regarding the transgressive quality of the Gothic genre: "The transgressive acts at the heart of gothic fiction generally focus on corruption in, or resistance to, the patriarchal structures […]. Further, and importantly, these acts are often violent, and always frightening. For gothic novels are above all about the creation of fear—fear in the characters represented, fear in the reader" (5).

Merricat's transgressive witchcraft eventually culminates in the horrific scene of the fire, which, suggestive of an apocalypse, makes use of fear and horror to disrupt the existing patriarchal order and to create a new one based on sisterhood. The flames from Charles's pipe engulf Merricat's father's room, and the subsequent fire—caused by the burning pipe—destroys the second floor and the attic of the house. Observing the flames, Merricat reflects on the nature of her perceptions and thinks about her eyes, which were seeing different colors. She adds, "If everyone in the world saw different colors from different eyes there might be a great many new colors still to be invented" (145).

Merricat superimposes her fantastic visions upon reality, and defies the grayness and narrowmindedness around her by multiplying colors and sights within her mind. In a way, she thinks of herself as a girl with superhuman capabilities. When Charles notices the smoke, he runs down the stairs panic-stricken, screaming that "'the whole damn house is on fire'" (147). As he hurries to the village to ask for help, he wants the sisters to put the money kept in the safe into a bag, revealing his true motive: to steal their fortune. Ignoring Charles's orders, Merricat takes Constance outside to the porch where they stand behind the vines, Uncle Julian gathers his papers, and Jonas escapes into the woods. As the villagers begin to arrive, Merricat and Constance "watch the great feet of the men stepping across [the] doorsill, dragging their hoses, bringing filth and confusion and danger into [the] house" (149). Thus, Merricat's spells are broken completely, and the villagers begin to invade the castle.

The scene represents a symbolic battle between the Blackwood sisters and the hostile community. Merricat constantly hears Charles telling the men to "'Get the safe in the study'" (150). As more and more cars come into the driveway, the villagers watch the top of the house burning with frightened, yet mocking, faces. A woman among them calls out, "'Why not let it burn?'" (152). According to Parks, "The scene of the fire at the Blackwood house is one of the most horrifying in all of Shirley Jackson's fiction," equaling "in horror the climax to her story 'The Lottery'" and summoning "up the nightmarish dimensions of the witches' Sabbath at the heart of Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown'" (145). The hatred and violence of the villagers illustrate Jackson's criticism of mob mentality, and the rottenness and malice of bigoted, greedy, callous crowds.

After the men put out the fire, in a scene reminiscent of the ending of "The Lottery," Jim Donell, takes a rock from the fire engine and smashes it through the drawing room window of the house. Having found an "outlet" to display "their dislike and fear" (Downey 299), the villagers move "like a wave at [the] house" (Jackson 154) to destroy and plunder it. They shatter the windows, smash the chairs and furniture, and throw kitchen utensils, teacups, and plates on the floor. One of the Dresden figurines is thrown out of the drawing room window and rolls on the grass unbroken, and Constance's harp lets out a "musical cry" (154). Helen and Jim Clarke arrive and try to persuade the

villagers to leave the house, to no avail. In the midst of the confusion, Merricat takes Constance by the arm and as they run stumbling towards the woods, and the townspeople block their way, chanting: "'Merricat, said Connie, would you like a cup of tea? Oh no, said Merricat, you'll poison me. Merricat, said Connie, would you like to go to sleep? Down in the boneyard ten feet deep!'" (157–159). The crow's sounds create a ritualistic atmosphere and allude to the meaningless, bigoted, cruel ritual of stoning in "The Lottery." It is also reminiscent of the initiation ritual designed by the older students at Natalie's college in *Hangsaman*, Dr. Wright's speech about a community's sharing victims in *The Bird's Nest*, and the Hallorans' ritualistic farewell party to the villagers before the expected apocalypse in *The Sundial*.

The crowd stops taunting Merricat, and Constance—who covers her eyes the entire time as she is being led by Merricat—only when Jim Clarke proclaims that Uncle Julian is dead. They withdraw slowly and Merricat takes Constance to her hiding place, a new Eden where they find Jonas waiting for them. Thus, during the fire scene in which the villagers try to purge the village of the two "witches" through violence, "a kind of role reversal occurs": "The usually dependent Merricat becomes the guide and protector of Constance," who has been looking after Merricat (Parks 146). Before falling asleep, Merricat watches the stars—a sign of hope, innocence, and renewal like in *The Haunting of Hill House*— "shining from far away between the leaves and the branches and down onto [her] head" (161). Merricat confesses her guilt and the readers learn that it was not Constance, but Merricat who poisoned the family when she was twelve.

The next morning, Merricat and Constance discover that only the bottom floor of their home is intact, but in ruins with broken objects, furniture, and food scattered all over the place. Merricat imagines they "have somehow not found [their] way back correctly in the night," that they have "lost themselves and come back through the wrong gap in time, or the wrong door or the wrong fairy tale" (167–168). Thus, she returns to her usual method of denying reality, and looking through the lens of fantasy. Miraculously, Constance discovers that the preserves of food, "colored rows of jellies and pickles and bottled vegetables and fruit" (Jackson 61) prepared by generations of Blackwood women, in the cellar below the kitchen are undisturbed remaining as "emblems of the sisters' survival" (Carpenter 36), and Merricat realizes the library books are untouched.

The untouched preserved food, representing love and survival, indicates that they will be able to recreate a loving, blissful atmosphere outside the boundaries of patriarchy, and achieve spiritual fulfillment, a rebirth out of the remnants of the past. Together they clean the house and take everything—including two unbroken teacups—they can use from the mess, and reconstruct the house, sustained by sisterhood, that Charles and the villagers have ruined. The unbroken tea cups, as delicate objects, refer to "the cup of stars" in *The Haunting of Hill House,* and Eleanor Vance's advice to the little girl at the diner that she should insist on it, and should refuse to become like everyone else. Both Merricat and Constance have insisted on their cup of stars by preserving their individuality. Hence, the sisters' entrapment within the Blackwood castle paradoxically provide them with the independence and joy they seek.

Merricat finds her mother's Dresden figurine on the lawn and Constance returns it to the mantel putting it beneath their mother's portrait in the drawing room. They close the drawing room behind them, never to open it again, and "To keep time at bay, they agree never to mention the murder again" (Hattenhauer 183), reinforcing their commitment to a fresh start. Moreover, Merricat believes that she has made Uncle Julian immortal when she buries his gold pencil by the creek so that the creek will always speak his name (Jackson 201). She kills a nest of baby snakes she finds nearby, and notes that she killed them because she does not like snakes, associating them with evil.

Like the characters who barricade themselves in the Halloran mansion before the expected apocalypse in *The Sundial*, Merricat barricades the house to protect it from the evil outside: she closes the shutters and locks the front door. The Clarkes unsuccessfully try to persuade the sisters to come out of hiding, and Merricat reacts by covering the kitchen windows and the tiny glass window in the kitchen door with cardboard and later with wooden planks. Standing at the foot of the stairs, she looks up and wonders "where [the top of] the house has gone;" she feels "a breath of air on her cheek coming from the sky" and realizes that their house is now "a castle turreted and open to the sky" (177). As Downey argues, the novel brings together "the home's dual status as fairy tale refuge and Gothic prison," and "far from dispelling the Gothic gloom of earlier work," the novel claims the Gothic house "as a site of independence and empowerment" (291). The fact

that the top of the house is now open to the sky indicates the fulfilment of Merricat's desire for flight.

Ultimately, Merricat and Constance adjust to living like Robinson Crusoe stranded on a deserted island. They are restored to Edenic bliss through "regeneration" after Merricat destroys their corrupt Eden (ruined by Charles) with her apocalyptic fire in order to save it (Hattenhauer 185–186). After the fire scene, which becomes a sort of awakening for Constance, "Constance can see more clearly—she can see Cousin Charles for what he is" (Parks 153). They spend their time in the kitchen, where they eat and sleep, along with Jonas. Since their clothes were destroyed in the fire, Constance decides to wear Uncle Julian's clothes and uses tablecloths to make dresses for Merricat. Not only does this suggest a gender role reversal—Constance is now the masculine half of the couple, whereas Merricat is literally domesticated through tablecloths—but it also signals the rebuilding of civilization out of mere scraps. As Merricat notes, "'Robinson Crusoe dressed in the skins of animals, he had no gay clothes with a gold belt'" (200). Out of guilt for the pain and destruction they have caused, some of the villagers begin leaving food in baskets on their doorstep. Carpenter explains that "the offerings of food" is reminiscent of the offerings to mythological deities in ancient times (36). Thus, "food becomes a means of communication" between the inside and the world outside (Carpenter 36), and a means of connection between the past and the present symbolized by the preserves, prepared by their ancestors, in the cellar.

The sisters' reclusiveness in the Blackwood castle reinforces the villagers' belief that they are witches. They become haunting heroines like Eleanor Vance, who eventually haunts Hill House. As Downey argues, the sisters transform the devastated mansion into a protected fortress and turn themselves into supernatural specters that scare conventional heroines (291). One day, a group of people consisting of two women, a man, and two children come by bicycle. They sit on the grass in front of the ruined house, and the two children, a little boy and a little girl, begin to play running up and down the driveway, and around the bushes and trees (Jackson 205). Sitting on each side of the front door, Merricat and Constance watch the people through the narrow glass panels that Merricat has covered with cardboard. They watch and listen to the people on the front lawn and learn that their house is now covered with vines and looks like a tomb from the outside.

When the little boy approaches the footsteps, one of the women warns him to stay away from the house. The woman says the ladies hiding inside the haunted house do not like little boys whom they force to eat poisonous candy, and devour the little girls. Merricat describes the woman as one of the "bad people" with the mouth of a snake. The woman frightens the children by making up stories about Merricat and Constance, saying that they hate little boys and girls, eat them, and haunt and abduct the children at night (206–207).

Hence, Blackwood Castle, and the sisters hiding within it, are depicted as the abject of the small town/village; in other words, they are cast aside and not wanted. The abject is thus not only a psychological concept but also a sociological one: it is that which threatens not only the self's boundaries but also the boundaries of society, and its dominant norms, traditions, and moral values. Since Merricat, through her acts of resistance, threatens the prevalent order of society and the power structure, she becomes an outcast along with her sister Constance. Thus, they become the Gothic other of small-town, suburban America and its values, and are thought of as monstrous, witch-like beings. The villagers are both drawn to the sisters out of curiosity and repulsed by them. Likewise, in *The Haunting of Hill House*, Hill House is the abject of not only Eleanor's self but also the village of Hillsdale whose residents are afraid of approaching the house. In *The Sundial*, there is the reverse situation: the villagers are not repelled by the Halloran house, but the occupants of the Halloran estate view the outside world as abject. In an attempt to cover up their own faults and corruption, they label the outside world as the corrupt other and expect an apocalypse. They are the same with outsiders, yet they try to separate themselves from the rest of the world by establishing and preserving boundaries, and feel threatened by any possibility of a breakdown.

On the other hand, in the last novel, the villagers are openly violent, hateful and hostile against Merricat and Constance, who become reclusive witchlike women who never venture out in daylight, arousing fear and horror in the villagers. They "finally achieve the privacy that has been compromised as a result of that very fear": "Never seen again by anyone, the sisters rapidly gain a reputation [as] 'ladies' who live in darkness, who see and hear everything, evoked by parents to frighten children into obedience" (Downey 299–300). By conveying their rage against the misogynistic and hostile world in which

they live, Merricat and Constance consciously reject the role of angel, and instead, choose to live as non-conformist, isolated women inside the barricaded Blackwood castle, drawing strength from sisterhood.

According to Angela Hague, the novel depicts the home as a vulnerable place, on both the physical and psychological levels (85). At the end of the novel, the castle is threatened once more when Cousin Charles returns—with a stranger, who wants to take photos for his magazine—trying to capitalize on the trauma. He even tells the stranger about the money that the sisters kept in the safe which he was unable to take during the fire because of the confusion. As Charles drives away, Merricat and Constance start laughing, holding each other in the dark hall. When Constance proclaims that "'she is so happy,'" Merricat answers, "'I told you that you will like it on the moon'" (211). As Rubenstein explains, in the end, Merricat "succeeds in sustaining her regressive fantasy incorporating Constance into her emotionally primitive magical world" (325). Hence, for Merricat, the Blackwood castle becomes her imaginary blue house where she lives alone on the moon. It is similar to the cottage in the woods Mrs. Halloran sees in her dream, Aunt Fanny's private apartment, and the enclosed Halloran mansion in *The Sundial*, albeit in a restored ruined state.

Thus, "The novel closes with the image of ruin nearly completely covered with vines with two sisters huddled in fragile happiness within it" (Parks 147). The sisters eventually have a house and a room of their own, protected against the intrusion of patriarchy. According to Devendra P. Varma, "a ruin is not only a thing of loveliness but also an expression of Nature's power over the creations of man": "Ruins are proud effigies of sinking greatness, the visual and static representations of tragic mystery" (20). The ruin of the Blackwood castle stands as a symbol of the tragedies the sisters have gone through, yet, at the same time, it represents their strength to rise out of tragedy, and reclaim what is theirs: their house, selves, bodies, and identities. The castle and the identities of the sisters become one, and mirror one another, similar to the way Eleanor Vance's self merges into Hill House. Parks argues that the ruin of the Blackwood mansion "can be seen as nature covering and protecting her own against the assaults of a vengeful and violent world. In a very real sense, the Blackwood sisters are children of nature, though not in perfect harmony with it because of the lingering guilt-burden of the murders" (148).

To conclude, in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, the Blackwood mansion functions as a private sanctuary for Merricat and Constance, who are able to convert their ruined house into a private castle. The Blackwood castle's hostility is directed not towards the two reclusive sisters who inhabit it, but towards outsiders who regard the sisters as witches haunting a dilapidated Gothic house. The Gothic "sneer" of the house, thus, "is turned outwards towards the intruders, rather than, as in the case with Hill House, inwards," therefore, Merricat and Constance appear not "as helpless victims of the villagers' persecution," but as courageous, haunting heroines "who tidy what they can of their burnt and vandalized home" (Downey 299–300). Above all, they refuse to conform to the values of patriarchal society and the dominant culture, which is trapped in its own hostility and moral decadence.

3.3. CONCLUSION

Both *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* articulate the female protagonists' desire to belong to or have a house of their own, an individual, uncorrupted space, where they can indulge in romantic adventures in a world of fantasy. Eleanor Vance and Merricat Blackwood take part in subversive acts of resistance to turn the Gothic mansions they inhabit into sanctuaries sustained by female bonding, or sisterhood. In *The Haunting of Hill House*, Eleanor and her companion Theodora, a libertine, queer woman, are like twin sisters, much like Merricat and her older sister Constance in the ensuing novel. Eleanor and Theodora experience the same incidents of haunting inside Hill House, and their minds seem to be connected to each other just like their rooms. Wearing bright clothes, and dancing and running around the house, they counter oppression, confinement, and the dullness and gloom that surround them. Yet, the house eventually singles out Eleanor, who is haunted by the memory of her dead mother, as the sole subject of its haunting, and in the end, Eleanor becomes one of its haunting specters. She gradually loses touch with reality as the Gothic domesticity of Hill House makes her assume that she is finally at home and has somewhere to belong to. She desires to remain in Hill House forever through death. Thus, the self-delusions stimulated by the house eventually bring about her demise.

On the other hand, *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* presents a more optimistic vision of the Gothic house as a symbol of fantasy, and creates an enduring female bond through

Merricat's and Constance's mutual affection and support. In the end, Merricat succeeds in dispelling the dishonest patriarch Cousin Charles from their castle (the Blackwood mansion) by means of her feminist witchcraft. Along with Constance, she saves a ruined house from the attack of the nefarious, hateful, and greedy mob. Thus, in her last completed novel, Shirley Jackson conveys the message that powerful bonds between women is a crucial factor in the struggle against oppression and violence.

Like Eleanor, who becomes a ghost by haunting Hill House, Merricat and Constance turn into agoraphobic witches hiding happily within the reordered, and barricaded, Blackwood castle. The castle—Merricat's house on the moon—as a symbol of fantasy and imagination, brings about spiritual freedom, whereas as material homes represent physical, domestic confinement. Thus, in the act of restoring damage or loss and creating a female-defined castle, which is depicted like a mythical phoenix that burns and is reborn out of its own ashes, the Blackwood sisters engage in soul seeking. Yet, they ultimately return to the enclosed Gothic house and a haunted state of mind.

CONCLUSION

Shirley Jackson's notable remark, "I delight in what I fear," emphasizes her exploration of fear and horror as an outlet from both social and self-imposed limits. In Jackson's fiction, fear is the means of confronting the unknown, one's own Self, and the traumas haunting the individual. Overcoming fear is necessary to explore uncharted territories outside the boundaries of the dominant socio-cultural order, resist patriarchal domination, and the malignance, cruelty, violence, bigotry, and greed of unquestioning, hypocritical masses who conceal their moral degradation underneath the self-righteous facade of corrupt traditions and superstitions.

In both her novels and short fiction, Jackson probes into the human heart like her nineteenth-century Gothic predecessors Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne. She exposes the depravity within the individual and society, and the alienating forces of the material, outside world. Her protagonists are mostly isolated, ostracized, lonely young women on the verge of mental breakdown, who are haunted by past traumas or tragic memories. They embark on journeys into haunted Gothic settings in search of love, freedom, and adventure, and seek refuge in their own fantastic, imaginary worlds. In Jackson's second and third novels, the female protagonists eventually return to the outside reality and sanity, yet in her later novels, they completely withdraw from society.

This dissertation explored Shirley Jackson's contribution to the genre of the Female Gothic, a term coined by Ellen Moers in *Literary Women* to refer to the works produced by women writers (e.g. Ann Radcliffe, Mary Shelley, and the Brontë sisters) in the Gothic mode in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Unlike the "Male Gothic," the Female Gothic, which was recognized as a literary category during the second wave of feminism, focuses on issues central to women's experiences, and conveys feminist concerns. The term has been used to refer to Gothic narratives which feature distressed female protagonists, domineering patriarchs, and monstrous (oppressive)/patriarchal mothers or absent mothers. It focuses on the issues of domestic confinement, constricting gender roles, the cult of true womanhood, mothering and childbirth (e.g. in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*), sexual assault, violence, and mental illness.

Ellen Moers' study of the Female Gothic paved the way for subsequent feminist critics, including Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, who explored the aforementioned subjects in nineteenth century Gothic works by British and American female authors. In *The Madwoman in the Attic,* Gilbert and Gubar address the struggles these women writers experienced while determining their identities as female writers outside the male-defined literary canon, which depicted female characters either as angels of the home (nurturing, gentle, and obedient) or as monsters (unruly and witch-like). Countering such stereotypical images produced by male authors, Gilbert and Gubar shift their focus to examine the depiction of female characters in the works of nineteenth-century women writers and poets such as Jane Austen, Mary Shelley, Emily Brontë, Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, Mary Elizabeth Coleridge, and Emily Dickinson.

Gilbert and Gubar focus on two prevalent figures in women's writing: the compliant heroine and the mad woman. This doubling motif (the conventional/obedient heroine and the mad woman) in the writing of women authors who hold a mirror "up both to their own natures and to their own visions of nature" (Gilbert and Gubar 77), is deployed in Jackson's Gothic novels, which are filled with haunted, haunting heroines with dark (Gothic) doubles. Jackson's fiction contains what Gilbert and Gubar describe as the "images of enclosure and escape, fantasies in which maddened doubles function as asocial surrogates for docile selves," and "depictions of diseases like […] agoraphobia, and claustrophobia" (xi). In this dissertation, the word "madness" was used not only to refer to mental turmoil or inner confusion, which is tied to the uncanny, but also to signify female resistance. Thus, in the analysis of the novels, insanity has a dual meaning: apart from its usual meaning, it can also be a form of empowerment that allows women to transgress gender roles, and challenge familial and sociocultural limits. Thus, madness is reinterpreted in the context of Female Gothic. Natalie Waite escapes her constricting environment through her disturbed mind. Elizabeth's multiple personalities enable her to reject fitting into a mold: Betsy encourages her to leave the house dominated by her patriarchal aunt and to oppose Dr. Wright. Like Tony, Betsy and Bess, and the non-conformist Theodora, Merricat is the mad, Gothic double of her sister Constance, and she succeeds in subverting the patriarchal order within the Blackwood mansion.

Thus, the argument of this dissertation was that Gothic doubles, madness, the uncanny, and the enclosed Gothic settings in Shirley Jackson's novels illustrate how Gothic motifs can be employed to reflect women's struggles to escape the cult of true womanhood, gender roles, and prevailing patriarchal sociocultural power structures. In Jackson's works, the haunted Gothic landscapes, buildings, and houses, which mirror the haunted minds of the female protagonists, are depicted both as sites of domestic entrapment and as sites of female resistance against the dystopia of a violent, hateful society. Hence, the blurring of the boundary between fantasy and reality and Gothic-fantastic motifs convey the powerful social message of Shirley Jackson's works: that the external world is a contrived construction, and "reality" is a socially-constructed term. The sustenance of the gruesome social realities—gender roles, sexism, racism, classism, materialism, bigoted social norms, superstitions, and traditions—only perpetuates dishonesty, violence, and hatred. Jackson's Female Gothic subverts these realities, and destabilizes the conventional assumptions about what constitutes "reality" by depicting isolated, haunted and haunting heroines who desire to transgress and shatter the boundaries of what is socially acceptable or normative through fantasy.

The three chapters of this dissertation examined five novels by Shirley Jackson—*Hangsaman*, *The Bird's Nest*, *The Sundial*, *The Haunting of Hill House*, and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*—in the light of the genre of the Female Gothic. The novels incorporate elements of fantasy, horror, madness, and situate the female characters within dark, haunted, gloomy, uncanny places to articulate their disillusionment with the uninspiring, dull "reality" or malignance that surrounds them; express women's dissatisfactions with patriarchal society; and to expose an underlying desire to form a separate, self-ruling identity.

The first chapter focused on *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest*, which explore mental illness and the Gothic motif of the fragmented Self as composed of clashing personalities. The chapter discussed how both novels deploy Gothic doubles (the obedient, conformist self and the insane, rebellious self) to disclose the female protagonists' desire for freedom and self-autonomy. *Hangsaman*, which derives its title from a fifteenth-century folk ballad, "The Gallows Tree" and a Tarot card, is classified as a Gothic narrative of trauma that deals with the intermingling of the real and the imaginary. It narrates the story of a

seventeen-year-old girl named Natalie Waite, who leaves home to start her studies at a liberal arts college. At the beginning of the novel, Natalie is sexually assaulted by a guest nearby her home, which results in a long-lasting trauma that she constantly tries to repress. She becomes lost and confused over her new subject position as a college girl, and disappointed not only by the dysfunctional family she has left behind, but also with the dishonest, phony, and insincere people around her. Natalie's injurious relations to her distant, censuring father, her neurotic mother, and her English teacher, add to her sense of isolation and madness. Towards the end of the novel, Jackson portrays Natalie's loss of touch with reality through her uncanny girlfriend Tony (a Gothic double), a witch-like girl who plays with Tarot cards. Through Natalie's derangement and outsider status, Jackson emphasizes the idea that identity is not a stable, but a composite construct composed of contradictions.

Likewise, *The Bird's Nest* deals with the dissociative personality of the female protagonist Elizabeth Richmond, a twenty-three-year-old woman who lives with her Aunt Morgen and works in a local museum. Since her mother's death, Elizabeth has lived a routine, isolated life which culminates in her self-disintegration. The Owenstown Museum, with its rotten foundation, is depicted as a Gothic place that functions as a reflection of the main character, who is torn between multiple contradictory selves that emerge when she is placed under patriarchal medical scrutiny. In the novel, it is suggested that Elizabeth was sexually assaulted by her mother's boyfriend Robin when she was a young girl, and that she unwittingly caused her mother's death, which also triggers her mental decline. Unlike Elizabeth's multiple selves named Elizabeth (the main personality on the surface), Beth, Betsy and Bess in *The Bird's Nest*, in *Hangsaman*, Tony does not become a part of Natalie's personality but remains outside her identity, even though, as an asocial, dark double she mirrors Natalie's self. Like Tony, Elizabeth's personalities, particularly Betsy, who is child-like and rebellious, and Bess, who is money obsessed and blunt, reflect the protagonist's repressed desire to be independent and self-sufficient, as they refuse to conform to the values of the patriarchy represented by Elizabeth's domineering Aunt Morgen and Dr. Victor Wright, the mad scientist who resembles Victor Frankenstein.

Like Dr. Jekyll, Elizabeth is torn between her "civilized" and "primitive" selves. Betsy in Elizabeth is like Hyde in Dr. Jekyll: both are described as "fiendish" beings, and fulfill the repressed desires of their parent selves in which they hide. Elizabeth eventually brings together/binds her multiple selves, chooses to become mentally sound like Natalie, who leaves the sinister Tony—who is reminiscent of her assaulter—in the dark woods where she was led, and returns to the town and to her college as a woman who is determined to be courageous and strong. Hence, both Natalie Waite and Elizabeth Richmond experience initiation, and make a decision to take on the responsibilities of the outside world after they confront past traumas and split identities. However, it is clear that they will still encounter challenges on the path on which they have chosen to walk, and the haunting specters/uncanny selves within their minds will still remain beneath the surface of their consciousness.

The second chapter of this dissertation analyzed how the Gothic mansion in Jackson's fourth novel signifies a retreat into the realm of imagination and female characters' struggle for authority. In *Hangsaman* and *The Bird's Nest*, Natalie Waite and Elizabeth Richmond oppose patriarchal authority through madness. In *The Sundial*, the main female characters, Mrs./Orianna Halloran and Frances Halloran/Aunt Fanny, who become rivals, try to exert control over the Halloran mansion and its inhabitants, thereby transforming the house, a conventional symbol of domestic ideology, into a female-defined space or fortress where women become the ruling matriarchs. Unlike the two novels from Chapter One which focus on the self of the female protagonists through an exploration of mental illness, *The Sundial* as an apocalyptic narrative focuses on the trope of the Gothic house both as a symbol of domestic entrapment, and as a refuge from the corruption of the outside world. Thus, *The Sundial* represents a divergence from the author's previous novels in its shift of focus and its accentuated emphasis on Gothic-fantastic elements.

The Sundial narrates the story of twelve desperate characters who are confined within the borders of the Halloran estate waiting for the apocalypse. The chapter argued that in the novel, Jackson not only examines the question of belief but also depicts the Gothic house as a site where narcissistic struggles for authority reveal the major female characters' desire to possess a house of their own. Orianna, the matriarch of the Halloran family, tries to own the estate and dominate the Halloran household after the funeral of her son, Lionel

Halloran, who, according to his wife Maryjane, was pushed down the stairs by Orianna. Moreover, Orianna's plan to dismiss everyone from the house except her disabled husband Richard Halloran, her granddaughter and heiress Fancy, and Aunt Fanny (Richard's sister) is impeded when the ghost of Aunt Fanny and Richard Halloran's father warns Aunt Fanny about an impending apocalypse and informs her that only those sheltered by the Halloran house will survive and be the inheritors of a new, Edenic world after the apocalypse. The occupants of the house including Essex, who is a young man hired to catalogue the library and Orianna's companion, Miss Ogilvie, who is Fancy's governess, a seventeen-year-old girl named Gloria, who is the daughter of Orianna's cousin, and a stranger that Aunt Fanny picks up in the village and names "Captain Scarabombardon" choose to believe Aunt Fanny and remain in the house.

This chapter also discussed how the female characters appear as the prototypes of the female protagonists Eleanor Vance and Merricat Blackwood in Jackson's last two novels. Towards the end of *The Sundial*, as the characters prepare for the expected apocalypse, Orianna's body is discovered dead on the landing, and Fancy, dashing down the stairs, takes Orianna's crown from her head to indicate that she is the new queen of the house. After Essex and the Captain place Orianna's body beside the sundial, the characters await the apocalypse in the drawing room. The novel ends as they drink and converse hearing the stormy weather outside bringing down the trees. Even though it is unclear whether or not the apocalypse is actually occurring, Jackson hints, through the uncertain future of the characters, that their belief in a new world may not bring change at all.

This chapter emphasized how the Halloran mansion (the Gothic house) and the idea of the apocalypse (external), created a contrast between the world of the imagination or fantasy and the outside world. The novel emphasizes not only the banality and fakeness of the external world, but also the fakeness and hypocrisy of the characters who live within the Halloran mansion. The characters' belief that they are the chosen few who will be the only survivors also reveals their totalitarianism, bigotry, and hubris, as they are unwilling to realize or confront their own degradation, greed, and dishonesty. The question inscribed on the sundial "What is this world?" stresses the novel's questioning of reality, both the material reality of human-made constructs and the current human condition, or world order.

In this novel, the establishment of a matriarchal order within the Gothic house appears as an imitation of the power hierarchy of the patriarchal order. Like Aunt Morgen in *The Bird's Nest*, Mrs. Halloran is depicted as a patriarchal woman who has the desire to be a monarch, to rule over the inhabitants of the Halloran estate and the new world of Aunt Fanny's visions. Thus, unlike the other novels, the isolation of the characters within the borders of the Halloran estate and the characters' visions of the future are authoritarian. Hence, the novel exposes the corruption of the outside (public) and inside (private) worlds.

The third chapter of this dissertation analyzed Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, which *portray* Gothic heroines who reject gender norms and defy the conformism of 1950s and early 1960s America. The first part of the chapter discussed how Eleanor Vance, the thirty-two-year-old protagonist of *The Haunting of Hill House*, resolves to leave behind her dull, confined way of life with her sister Carrie and her sister's husband to seek self-fulfillment, romance, adventure, and independence in haunted Hill House after she receives an invitation letter from Dr. Montague, an anthropologist who has rented Hill House for the summer to investigate supernatural phenomena or the haunting inside the house. Eleanor enters the grounds of Hill House, built by a patriarch named Hugh Crain, only to find its ambience stunningly horrifying, yet strangely familiar. Jackson ascribes to the uncanny Gothic house anthropomorphic qualities, including the archaic mother image, in order to reveal Eleanor's un-severed ties to her own mother. Inside the house, Eleanor feels as if she has returned to the maternal womb. Thus, the uncanny monstrosity of Hill House reminds Eleanor of her deceased domineering mother, whose memory continuously haunts her. In the end, Eleanor's haunted mind merges with the haunting of Hill House, which eventually leads Eleanor to her demise by incorporating Eleanor's self into itself.

The chapter also examined the blurring of the boundary between Eleanor's self and the gothic setting through a reference to the loss of the distinction between subject and object or between the self and other/mother, and to a breakdown in meaning that causes the human reaction of horror/fear. Throughout the novel, Hill House gradually subsumes Eleanor's self and singles out Eleanor as the subject of its haunting. By means of bizarre

and inexplicable writings that appear on the walls twice, the house urges Eleanor to "COME HOME."

During her stay in Hill House, Eleanor vacillates between clashing desires for Luke Sanderson, the future master of the house and a misogynistic representative of heterosexual romance, and Theodora—a queer, libertine woman who is depicted almost like her twin sister, or her Gothic double—for whom she feels an unspoken love. At the end of the novel, when the other characters reject Eleanor, she feels like a ghost haunting Hill House. Dr. Montague decides that since Eleanor appears to be overtaken by the house, she should return home for her own "good." Having become a part of Hill House, Eleanor is unable to leave and crashes her car into a tree in order to remain at Hill House, as a ghost, forever. Thus, her alienation and loneliness eventually bring about her demise. Having nowhere else to go, without a true home, and no one to care about her, she eventually becomes the haunting heroine merging with Hill House.

The second part of the third chapter studied Jackson's *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, which depicts the Gothic house as a site of empowerment, rather than as a place of demise. The protagonist of the last novel is the eighteen-year-old Merricat Blackwood, an unruly, witch-like girl who poisoned her patriarchal, domineering family (her father, mother, brother, and Uncle Julian's wife) with arsenic mixed with sugar when she was twelve. Even though she is a murderer, the narrator portrays Merricat as a sympathetic character. Since the poisoning incident, Merricat and her twenty-eight-year old sister Constance live an isolated life inside the Blackwood mansion along with their disabled and senile Uncle Julian. The sisters are ostracized from society and endure the hostility of the hateful villagers who assume that Constance is the murderer, and are resentful of the sisters' wealth.

Merricat and Constance are represented as Gothic doubles in this novel: While Constance is depicted as a domestic woman who does the housework, prepares the food, and looks after Merricat and Uncle Julian, Merricat is portrayed as the disobedient witch. Throughout the novel, she invents her own witchcraft rituals like burying objects (a doll and silver dollars) around the house, nailing a book to a tree, and making up magical words (Melody, Gloucester, Pegasus) to protect their home from outside intruders. When the patriarchal, dishonest Cousin Charles arrives with the intention to dominate the

household and steal the sisters' property, Merricat devises a plan to remove the influence of the malignant and greedy Charles from the house with her feminist witchcraft. After a tragic fire which kills Uncle Julian and the looting of the house by the townspeople, Merricat and Constance convert the ruined Blackwood mansion into a private, enclosed, and barricaded Gothic fortress, a castle sustained by sisterhood in which they lead an independent, autonomous life away from the gaze of the hateful mob, which represents malevolence and the crushing conformity of mid-twentieth century America.

By conveying their rage about the misogynistic and hostile world they live in, Merricat and Constance choose to live as mad witches inside the Blackwood castle and to reject the roles expected of them. Thus, in *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, Gothic houses are depicted both as fantastic realms where female protagonists seek refuge through imagination, thereby countering the corrupt, fake reality of the outside world, and as a means of comprehending the sources of women's oppression and conflict. Both Hill House and the Blackwood mansion symbolize the characters' desire to occupy a private (female) space of their own away from the domineering, patriarchal figures in their lives and separate from their crooked, decaying societies. Even though the companionship between Eleanor and Theodora eventually breaks up in *The Haunting of Hill House*, in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, the sisterhood between Merricat and Constance Blackwood proves to be permanent, inspiring, and rejuvenating. Thus, the Gothic uncanny doubles of the previous novels—Natalie and Tony in *Hangsaman*, Elizabeth and her other selves (Beth, Betsy, and Bess) in *The Bird's Nest*—gradually take on a more tangible form with Eleanor and Theodora in *The Haunting of Hill House*, and culminate in the strong female bonding between Merricat and Constance in *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*. Hence, as the haunting heroines (witches) of the Blackwood castle, Merricat and Constance eventually destroy the influence and intrusion of the patriarchy and dismiss the rottenness of the world outside. Even though the Blackwood mansion stands as a ruined castle—fortified and covered with vines—in this novel, unlike *The Sundial*, Jackson's point is that the real decadence is not within the Gothic mansion, but within the community surrounding the sisters' barricaded domain.

Shirley Jackson was working on a novel entitled *Come Along with Me* (1968) at the time of her death, which was left incomplete with only six chapters. It narrates the story of a forty-four-year-old woman, a recent widow who calls herself "Mrs. Angela Motorman" and leaves her home in the country to travel to a rooming house in a big city to become a medium. The novel offers a humorous treatment of supernatural themes through a first-person narrative. The protagonist seems to be endowed with a sixth sense and an extraordinary ability to be in contact with the dead. Thus, the unfinished novel departs from her previous novels that focus on the dark house metaphor, and younger female protagonists such as Eleanor Vance and Merricat Blackwood.

Recently, Jackson's novels *The Haunting of Hill House* and *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* have been an inspiration for movie adaptations and television series. In the 1963 film titled *The Haunting*, which is directed by Robert Wise, the name of the protagonist is Eleanor Lance. The plot of the movie is very similar to the novel's plot: Eleanor leaves her older, married sister's home by taking the car, which she half-owns, from the city garage to go to Hill House, a haunted mansion, after having received an invitation from a scholar of anthropology named Dr. John Markway, who plans to conduct a "scientific" investigation regarding supernatural phenomena. Eleanor regards Dr. Markway's letter as a chance to escape from her restricted way of life, or the limitations imposed on her by her sister and her sister's husband. She has cared for her sick mother for eleven years, and blames herself for her mother's death: she feels guilty about having slept through her mother's pleas for help (her knocking on the wall) while she was dying.

Like the depiction of Hill House in the novel, in the 1963 movie, the house is portrayed as a living organism, a creature that is alive and that watches those who live inside it—Eleanor, for example, has the sense of being watched by the house. Moreover, it reminds Eleanor of her mother's death, and in this respect, a womb. The house, built by the tyrannical patriarch Hugh Crain, has a tragic history which includes the deaths of both his first and second wives, and the death of Hugh Crain himself in an accident in Europe. Abigail, Hugh Crain's daughter, grows up in the house, but does not leave her nursery room. She takes in a female companion, who ignores her at the time of her death, and who later becomes so distressed and insane inside Hill House that she hangs herself from the balcony, next to the iron staircase, within the library tower.

During her stay in Hill House Eleanor gets acquainted with Theodora, a nonconformist, single woman who has psychometric abilities, and Luke, a materialistic young man who will inherit Hill House in the future. Theodora is able to read Eleanor's mind, and the two become almost like sisters—their rooms are connected by a bathroom, and they eventually stay in the same room as a sort of safety measure against the haunting they witness at night. Eleanor becomes romantically attracted to Dr. Markway, who seems to be in love with her, yet is disappointed to learn that he has a wife, Mrs. Grace Markway, who arrives to stay in the nursery, or the haunted, cold, rotten heart of Hill House. Towards the end of the movie, Eleanor, Theodora, Dr. Markway and Luke experience the haunting together, in a parlor downstairs, while Mrs. Grace is in the nursery upstairs. Eleanor escapes from the room to participate in the haunting of the house, dancing and climbing up the iron staircase, at the top of which she sees the face of Mrs. Grace behind the trapdoor as the others, Dr. Markway in particular, try to rescue her. In the end, when Eleanor is forced to leave the house, her car crashes into a tree on the same spot where the first Mrs. Crain died. In short, its main subject resembles the novel's subject: Hill House seduces Eleanor, who is lonely, loveless and without a true home, with a self-destructive sense of belonging.

The 1999 film *The Haunting*, directed by Jan de Bont, re-makes the 1963 movie. At the beginning of the 1999 version, Eleanor/Nell quarrels with her older sister and her sister's husband about the house the older sister has inherited from their dead mother, for whom Nell cared for eleven years. When her sister, her sister's husband, and her nephew leave, she finds an advertisement in a newspaper about an experiment on insomnia that will be conducted by Dr. Marrow in a mansion called Hill House, and for which she volunteers. The experiment turns out to be a study of fear in a haunted house, and Hill House is depicted as claustrophobic place of violence, death, and decay; a vile house—haunted by vile specters—that prevents the characters from running away. Moreover, the history of Hill House is full of tragic incidents, such as the suicide of Mrs. Crain and the still births of all the Crain children, since nothing can grow and flourish in a deadly Gothic setting. Nell figures out that Hugh Crain exploited and abused children by forcing them to work at his mills until they died from exhaustion. In the end, Nell dies during her attempt to rescue the spirits of these lost children.

In addition to the afore-mentioned movies, the ten-episode horror series, *The Haunting of Hill House*, created by Mike Flanagan and released in October 2018, has offered a reinterpretation of Shirley Jackson's work and introduced her to a new generation of readers. The series focus on the story of the Crain family composed of five siblings—Nell (Eleanor) and Luke, who are twins and the youngest children of the family, Theodora, Shirley, and Steven (the oldest son)—and their parents, Hugh and Olivia Crain. The story is told through two timelines: in the present, the adult Crain siblings struggle with past traumas, depression, self-doubt, grief, loss, and the unresolved feelings which have been troubling them since the time they spent together as children at Hill House, a haunted Gothic mansion. Like the depiction of the house in Shirley Jackson's novel, in the series, Hill House is portrayed as a living organism, a Gothic monster or creature that feeds on its inhabitants. There is a mysterious room called "The Red Room," with a locked red door within the house. The red door cannot be opened by any key, and the room, which appears in different guises to the siblings, represents the heart or, in Nell's words, the stomach of the house. It takes hold of the characters' minds by speaking to their inner desires, fears, traumas, and guilt, driving its victims to insanity and death.

The flashbacks from the continuing present depict the Crain siblings' childhood experiences, and Olivia and Hugh Crain's time at Hill House. In the 1990s, the family moves into Hill House to start their house flipping project and to make use of the profit to build their "forever home" in the future. The Dudleys are the caretakers of Hill House and have experience with the incidents of haunting at the mansion, but always leave the house after it gets dark. At night, Nell is haunted by a grotesque, shadowy ghost with a twisted head whom she calls "the Bent Neck Lady." In later episodes, it is revealed that "the Bent Neck Lady" is the ghost of Nell herself: the grown-up Nell commits suicide by hanging herself (with a rope tied to her neck) from the top of the iron, spiral staircase of Hill House, and her ghost appears to her own childhood state (*The Haunting of Hill House*, *Netflix*). Thus, inside Hill House, the boundaries between the past, present, and future, and the boundary between the living and the dead, seem to be broken and blurred.

Shirley Jackson's last completed novel has also been recently adapted into a movie entitled *We Have Always Lived in the Castle*, directed by Stacie Passon with an expected release date of May 17, 2019. These adaptations prove that Shirley Jackson has been, and

will continue to be, an inspiration for readers, viewers, writers, literary and cultural critics, and film makers. A noteworthy American author, Shirley Jackson discovered the power of the Gothic to articulate women's voices. In "Notes for a Young Writer," Jackson proclaims that "In the country of the story, the writer is king" (131), meaning that by writing stories, one can overcome silence. By making use of the elements of horror and madness, and by placing her characters within haunted landscapes, buildings, and houses, she bridged fantasy and reality to explore not only the inner world of female protagonists through Gothic motifs and symbols, but also to comment on oppressive familial and social relations, and to expose the moral decadence of individual characters as well as society as a whole.

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APPENDIX 1: ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
Ph.D. DISSERTATION ORIGINALITY REPORT

HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE

Date: 4/7/2019

Thesis Title: Haunted and Haunting Heroines within Gothic Settings: Alienation, Madness, and the Uncanny in Shirley Jackson's Female Gothic

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Gizem Akçil
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Date and Signature

Name Surname:	Gizem Akçil
Student No:	N12249037
Department:	American Culture and Literature
Program:	American Culture and Literature
Status:	X Ph.D. ☐ Combined MA/ Ph.D.

ADVISOR APPROVAL

APPROVED

Prof. Dr. Tanfer Emin Tunç

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HACETTEPE ÜNİVERSİTESİ
SOSYAL BİLİMLER ENSTİTÜSÜ
AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 04/07/2019

Tez Başlığı: Gotik Mekânlardaki Kadın Kahramanlar: Shirley Jackson'ın Kadın Gotiğinde Yabancılaşma, Delilik ve Tekinsizlik Kavramları

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmamın a) Kapak sayfası, b) Giriş, c) Ana bölümler ve d) Sonuç kısımlarından oluşan toplam 195 sayfalık kısmına ilişkin, 01/07/2019 tarihinde şahsım/tez danışmanım tarafından Turnitin adlı intihal tespit programından aşağıda işaretlenmiş filtrelemeler uygulanarak alınmış olan orijinallik raporuna göre, tezimin benzerlik oranı % 8'dir.

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Gizem Akçil
04/07/2019
Tarih ve İmza

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Öğrenci No:	N12249037
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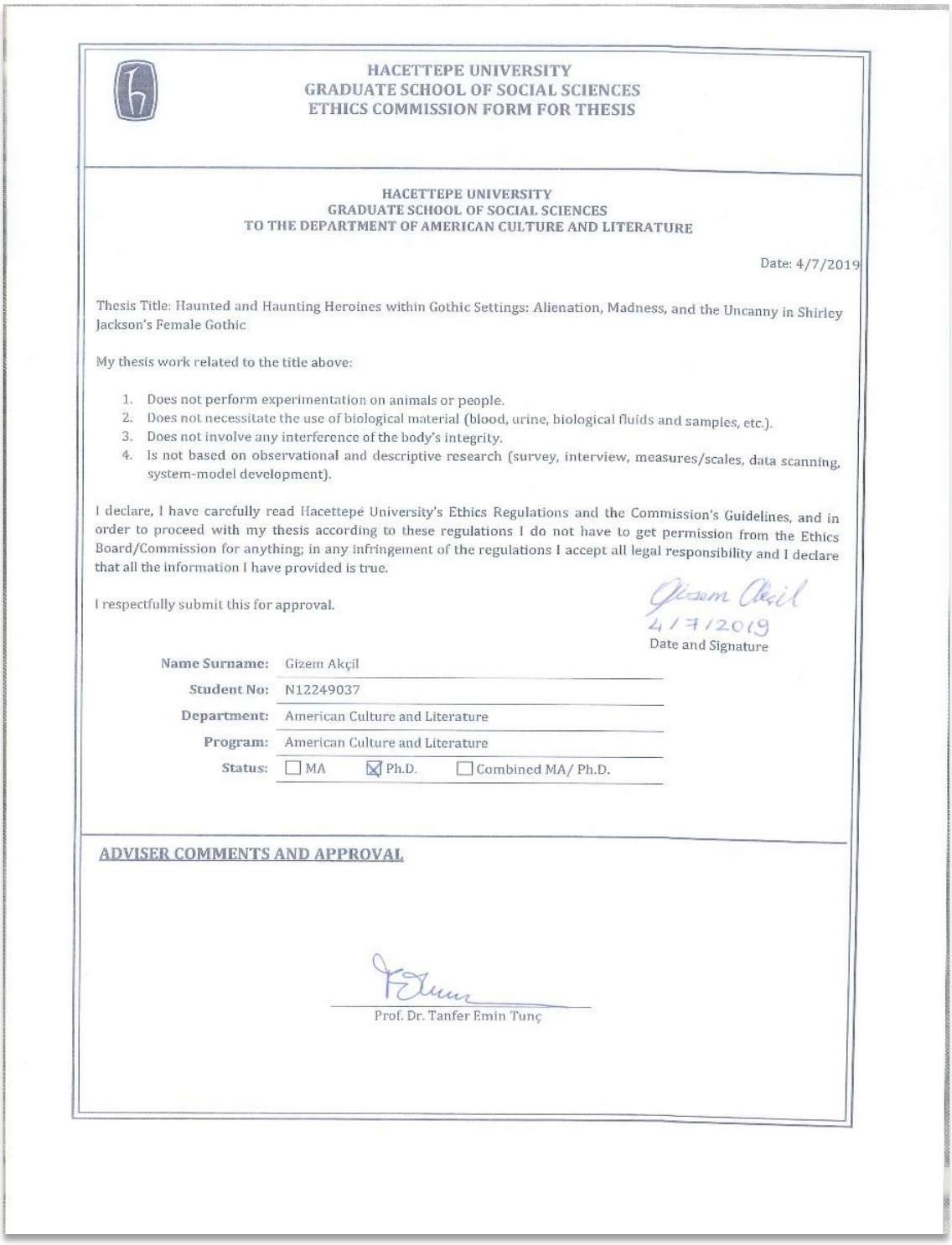
APPENDIX 2: ETHICS BOARD WAIVER FORM



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HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
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TO THE DEPARTMENT OF AMERICAN CULTURE AND LITERATURE

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Thesis Title: Haunted and Haunting Heroines within Gothic Settings: Alienation, Madness, and the Uncanny in Shirley Jackson's Female Gothic

My thesis work related to the title above:

1. Does not perform experimentation on animals or people.
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Gizem Akçil
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Date and Signature

Name Surname: Gizem Akçil
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Program: American Culture and Literature
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ADVISER COMMENTS AND APPROVAL

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AMERİKAN KÜLTÜRÜ VE EDEBİYATI ANABİLİM DALI BAŞKANLIĞI'NA

Tarih: 04/07/2019

Tez Başlığı: Gotik Mekânlardaki Kadın Kahramanlar: Shirley Jackson'ın Kadın Gotiğinde Yabancılaşma, Delilik ve Tekinsizlik Kavramları

Yukarıda başlığı gösterilen tez çalışmam:

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04/07/2019
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Programı: Amerikan Kültürü ve Edebiyatı
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