



The Haunting of Hill House (Penguin Classics)

By Shirley Jackson

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The Haunting of Hill House (Penguin Classics) By Shirley Jackson

The classic supernatural thriller by an author who helped define the genre

First published in 1959, Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* has been hailed as a perfect work of unnerving terror. It is the story of four seekers who arrive at a notoriously unfriendly pile called Hill House: Dr. Montague, an occult scholar looking for solid evidence of a "haunting"; Theodora, his lighthearted assistant; Eleanor, a friendless, fragile young woman well acquainted with poltergeists; and Luke, the future heir of Hill House. At first, their stay seems destined to be merely a spooky encounter with inexplicable phenomena. But Hill House is gathering its powers—and soon it will choose one of them to make its own.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Shirley Jackson's *The Haunting of Hill House* has unnerved readers since its original publication in 1959. A tale of subtle, psychological terror, it has earned its place as one of the significant haunted house stories of the ages.

Eleanor Vance has always been a loner--shy, vulnerable, and bitterly resentful of the 11 years she lost while nursing her dying mother. "She had spent so long alone, with no one to love, that it was difficult for her to talk, even casually, to another person without self-consciousness and an awkward inability to find words." Eleanor has always sensed that one day something *big* would happen, and one day it does. She receives an unusual invitation from Dr. John Montague, a man fascinated by "supernatural manifestations." He organizes a ghost watch, inviting people who have been touched by otherworldly events. A paranormal incident from Eleanor's childhood qualifies her to be a part of Montague's bizarre study--along with headstrong Theodora, his assistant, and Luke, a well-to-do aristocrat. They meet at Hill House--a notorious estate in New England.

Hill House is a foreboding structure of towers, buttresses, Gothic spires, gargoyles, strange angles, and rooms within rooms--a place "without kindness, never meant to be lived in...."

Although Eleanor's initial reaction is to flee, the house has a mesmerizing effect, and she begins to feel a strange kind of bliss that entices her to stay. Eleanor is a magnet for the supernatural--she hears deathly wails, feels terrible chills, and sees ghostly apparitions. Once again she feels isolated and alone--neither Theo nor Luke attract so much eerie company. But the physical horror of Hill House is always subtle; more disturbing is the emotional torment Eleanor endures. Intense, literary, and harrowing, *The Haunting of Hill House* belongs in the same dark league as Henry James's classic ghost story, *The Turn of the Screw*. --Naomi Gesinger

Review

Praise for Penguin Horror Classics:

"The new Penguin Horror editions, selected by Guillermo del Toro, feature some of the best art-direction (by Paul Buckley) I've seen in a cover in quite some time." – Cory Doctorow, Boing Boing

"Each cover does a pretty spectacular job of evoking the mood of the title in bold, screenprint-style iconography." – Dan Solomon, Fast Company

About the Author

Shirley Jackson (1919–1965), a celebrated writer of horror, wrote many stories as well as six novels and two works of nonfiction.

Laura Miller, previously an editor at Salon.com, writes essays and reviews for the *New York Times*, the *New Yorker*, and other publications.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Richard Martinez:

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