

SIDE #1 – MRS. DUDLEY / ELEANOR / THEODORA

ELEANOR and THEODORA arrived moments ago to Hill House and are thinking about looking around. They have already met and interacted with MRS. DUDLEY upon immediate arrival, but as THEODORA is feeling especially creeped out by everything, MRS. DUDLEY re-enters and lurks before speaking up to try and get them settled and warn them about the nighttime.

THEODORA : (to Eleanor) Let's explore. Maybe we'll find the secret of Hill House—or the place where Dr. Montague conducts his weird experiments. (she reaches for a door, it's locked, peers into keyhole and pulls back. In low voice..) Dark as night. Dark as those black hills that surround Hill House. Did you notice them? It seemed as though they wanted to fall on me when I arrived.

ELEANOR : They won't fall on you. They'll just slide down, silently and secretly, rolling over you if you try to run away.

THEODORA : (with feigned annoyance) Thank you. What Mrs. Dudley (MRS. DUDLEY enter unnoticed) has started you have completed nicely. I shall pack and go home at once.

ELEANOR : (suddenly serious) Please don't say that. I couldn't stay here alone. Not now.

THEODORA : (sensing her fear) Poor Eleanor, I was only teasing. I think you're afraid. I think you've been afraid all the time, ever since I came into this room. You mustn't be afraid all the time. We'll be all right together.

MRS. DUDLEY : You'd better come now. I'll show you your rooms. I set dinner on the sideboard at six o'clock sharp and then I go. I don't stay around after that.

THEODORA : (archly) Not when it's dark.

MRS. DUDLEY : That's right. I'm gone before it's dark.

ELEANOR : (light mood restored) So you won't hear us if we scream in the night.

MRS. DUDLEY : (face set) Nobody will. You'll see. Nobody will hear you.

SIDE #2 – ELEANOR / THEODORA

ELEANOR and THEODORA are having girl time before bed – talking, getting to know each other...very sister-like

ELEANOR : I'm tired. I'm not used to driving as far as I did today.

THEODORA : You do look pale. You should be in bed. I'll go to my room.

ELEANOR : Don't go, not yet. Couldn't we talk awhile? I think I'm too restless to sleep right away.

THEODORA : (smiling) Of course. Matter of fact I think we'll all have lots of chance for rest while we're here. Just between us, I think it's going to be pretty dull.

ELEANOR : We'll find plenty to do in the morning.

THEODORA : At home there would be people around, with lots of talk and laughter. Lights and excitement-- that's for me. I worry about there being nothing to amuse me. Tell me how horrible I am.

ELEANOR : (obediently) You're horrible.

THEODORA : (amused) What nonsense. Now I want to know more about you. Do you have a job?

ELEANOR : No, no job right now.

THEODORA : What about when you go back?

ELEANOR : No, I don't quite know what I'll do..

THEODORA : I know what *I'm* going to do. I'm going to turn on every light in the apartment and just bask. It's an old place, but we fixed it up ourselves, my roommate and I. We made over a lot of old furniture we dug up in junk shops. We both love doing over old things.

ELEANOR : I have a little place like yours, only I live alone. I'm still furnishing it, buying things one at a time so they'll be just right. Everything has to be exactly the way I want it, because there's only me to use it. Right now I'm looking for a blue cup with stars painted on the inside. I had one when I was a little girl. When you looked into it, after the milk was all gone, it seemed full of stars. I want a cup like that again.

THEODORA : Maybe I'll find one for you. Then I can send it to you in a little package saying, "To Eleanor, with love from her friend Theodora." But right now, Theodora is sleepy. What do you say to bed time?

SIDE #3 – ELEANOR / THEODORA / DR. MONTAGUE / LUKE

The four have survived several nights at Hill House so far. They converse – about things that have happened so far, things to come, etc. There is a bit of stir craze setting in.

ELEANOR : Is there still a world out there? I'm sure Mrs. Dudley goes somewhere else at night, and it must be that our food comes from a place with stores, and lights, and people, but as far as I can clearly remember there is no other place than this.

LUKE : (to Eleanor with a smile) We are on a desert island.

ELEANOR : (ignoring him) I can't picture any other world but Hill House.

THEODORA : Perhaps we should make notches on a stick, or pile pebbles in a heap so we'll know how long we've been marooned.

LUKE (to others) Actually, I find it quite pleasant not having any word from outside... no letters, no newspapers. *Think* what might be happening out there.

DR. MONTAGUE : We'll soon know what's going on. As I mentioned to you, Mrs. Montague will be here this morning.

THEODORA : I imagine she's holding high hopes of things going bump in the night. Maybe Hill House will outdo itself and greet her with a volley of psychic experiences.

DR. MONTAGUE : Mrs. Montague will be more than ready to receive them, I assure you.

ELEANOR : (to Dr. M) I've been trying to remember more about the other night. I can recall *knowing* that I was frightened—but I can't imagine actually *being* frightened.

THEODORA : (shivering) I remember the cold.

LUKE : This morning I had to convince myself again that it all happened. Almost the reverse of a bad dream, where you keep telling yourself that it *didn't* really happen. And yet, if the other night is a true measure of Hill House, we aren't going to have any real trouble. We *were* frightened, of course, but I can't remember that I sensed any *physical* danger. Even when Theodora said that whatever was outside her door was coming to eat her.

DR. MONTAGUE : (positively) No physical danger exists, I can assure you of that. The menace of the supernatural is that it attacks where modern minds are weakest, where we have abandoned our protective armor of superstition, without developing a substitute defense. Not one of us thinks rationally that what knocked on the door was a ghost, and yet there was certainly something going on in Hill House. But the mind's instinctive refuge—self doubt—is eliminated, and neither can we say that it was "imagination." After all, three others were there, too.

ELEANOR : I *could* say that all three of you are in my imagination—that none of this is real.

SIDE #4 – DR. MONTAGUE / MRS. MONTAGUE

The DR. and MRS. have a spat as they are searching for clues after speaking to someone from “beyond” (Helen is a spirit). It doesn’t take much for them to create tension, especially at the mention of MRS. MONTAGUE’s man friend, Arthur.

DR. MONTAGUE : Helen wants us to search the cellar for an old well.

MRS. MONTAGUE : Likely we’ll find evidence of the missing nun.

DR. MONTAGUE : More likely we’ll find eighty years of rubbish.

MRS. MONTAGUE : John, I *cannot* understand this skepticism in you, of all people. After all you *did* come to this house to collect evidence of supernatural activity. But now, when I bring you a full account of the causes—and an indication of where to start looking—you are positively scornful.

DR. MONTAGUE : We have no authority to dig up the cellar.

MRS. MONTAGUE : Arthur could—

DR. MONTAGUE : (breaking in firmly) *No*. My lease specifically forbids any tampering. We are students—not vandals.

MRS. MONTAGUE : (innocently) I should think you’d want to know the truth, John.

DR. MONTAGUE : There is *nothing* I should like to know more.

MRS. MONTAGUE : (sighing) Dear me, how patient one must be sometimes.

SIDE #5 – MRS. MONTAGUE / ARTHUR

MRS. MONTAGUE and ARTHUR are reading a passage they received from the Planchette (Ouija board) that they brought with them.

MRS. MONTAGUE : (flirty) Here it is. Arthur, you read the questions and I'll read the answers.

ARTHUR : (brightly) Off we go. (studying the page) Now—let me see—start right about here?

MRS. MONTAGUE : With "Who are you?"

ARTHUR : Check. (clears his throat) "Who are you?"

MRS. MONTAGUE : "Nell."

ARTHUR : Wait, hmm.... Nell who?

MRS. MONTAGUE : (casually) Eleanor Nellie Nell Nell. They sometimes do that. Repeat a word over and over to make sure it comes across all right. Go on.

ARTHUR : "What do you want?"

MRS. MONTAGUE : "Home."

ARTHUR : "Do you want to go home?"

MRS. MONTAGUE : "Want to be home."

ARTHUR : "What are you doing here?"

MRS. MONTAGUE : "Waiting for Home."

ARTHUR : "Is Hill House your home?"

MRS. MONTAGUE : "Home."

ARTHUR : There it is again. If they like a word they use it over and over, just for the sound of it.

SIDE #6 – ELEANOR / THEODORA / DR. MONTAGUE / LUKE

Mrs. Montague and Arthur have just gone to bed. The four are about to follow when they suddenly hear a door slam loudly somewhere deep in the house, followed by the sound of rising wind blowing through the halls and eventually pounding. They are scared and cold.

DR. MONTAGUE : Steady now, be calm.

ELEANOR : It's so *cold*. It's coming again. (THEODORA tries to help warm her)

LUKE : It's nowhere near the nursery, that's for sure.

THEODORA : *Really*. Next summer I must go somewhere else.

LUKE : There are disadvantages everywhere. In the mountains you get mosquitoes.

DR. MONTAGUE : (anxiously) I'm going to have to go out there. She might be frightened.

LUKE : It never hurt *us*. It won't hurt *them*.

DR. MONTAGUE : I only hope she doesn't try to *do* anything about it.

THEODORA : I feel like an old hand at this. (to Eleanor) Warm enough?

(ELEANOR nods. Suddenly there is silence, they all look at each other anxiously)

LUKE : (trying to disguise his nervousness) More brandy, anyone? My passion for spirits—

THEODORA : (wildly) Oh lord! Not *that* pun!

LUKE : Sorry.... But I no longer think of it as a pun.

THEODORA : (to Eleanor) Here. Drink.

(Pounding again, now on their door)

THEODORA : It can't get in, it can't get it. (looking to Luke and Dr.) Don't let it get in.

(Suddenly pounding stops, the doorknob begins to turn—slowly first then violently)

ELEANOR : It knows we're here.

SIDE #7 – ELEANOR

ELEANOR is sleeping. She begins to dream aloud. She is led out of bed in a dreamy state. She is under the control of Hill House, which is leading her to danger.

For this side, please take into account the stage directions provided, or feel free to express your own ideas. Where it states she begins or stops doing something due to a noise, just imagine that you are hearing it (as if the sounds are all in your head). However you choose to perform this side, it is simply preferred that you do not just read it, but act it out physically

ELEANOR : (eyes closed, dreaming) Mother? Mother? Where? (opens her eyes and sits up, speaks in level voice) Mother? (looks around) You're here somewhere. Aren't you, Mother? (she hears a moan, frozen in attention, then a smile creeps across her face) I'll come, Mother. I *do* hear you... this time. (gets up, goes to door) Are you out there? Tell me where. (opens door, rushes out) In here? Is this where you are? I want to come, Mother. (she begins to twirl about like a dancer, singing to herself. She stops abruptly as she hears laughter followed by a gasp.) Mother, Mother, *dear*. I'm sorry for what happened. I won't leave you again, I promise.

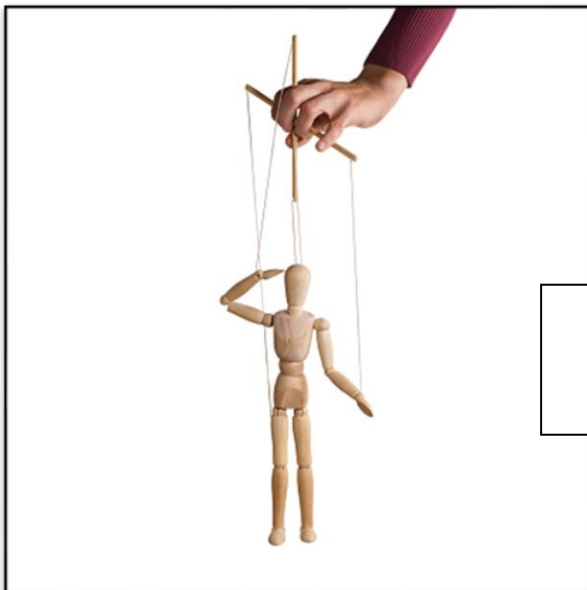
SIDE #8 – MARIONETTES

In addition to the seven named characters in the script, there will be an added ensemble of people who will help add creepy elements to the show, including some puppeteers.

Familiarize yourself with this very short snippet of (a version of) Little Red Riding Hood. If called for this side, you will come in and do your best to tell this story with two marionette puppets. One of the people on the audition panel will read the story, and you will act it out as it is being read (meaning you will not speak the story, only act out with the puppets as it is being told)

Once upon a time, a girl named Little Red was walking through the woods. She was dancing and twirling and skipping, and having a good time. She stopped to pick some flowers. She didn't realize the Big Bad Wolf was lurking nearby. He crept up behind her, got real close, and took a big sniff. He jumped up and down at the thought of her being his next meal. Little Red stood up, bumping into him. She was startled and quickly jumped backwards. They stared a moment, then the Big Bad Wolf began chasing her. He chased her all around until he finally gave up. He stopped, then fell over dead from exhaustion.

The End.



This is the style of marionette that will be used.