

Shirley Jackson



Early Life

- Born in San Francisco in 1916
- Family moved to Rochester, NY when she was in high school
- Went to college at Syracuse University
- Worked on the literary magazine
- Met her future husband, Stanley Edgar Hyman



Marriage



- Married Stanley Hyman in 1940
- Hyman became a professor at Bennington College in Vermont
- Jackson became a faculty wife, but continued to write
- They had 4 children
- Friends with many important writers, critics—especially Ralph Ellison
- Marriage marked by Hyman's infidelities, often with students; insistence on an "open marriage"

The Lottery

- Published in 1948 in *The New Yorker*
- Still Jackson's most famous work; described as perhaps the best known American short story of the 20th C
- Garnered more mail than any previous *New Yorker* publication, much of it hate mail
- Jackson: "Explaining just what I had hoped the story to say is very difficult. I suppose, I hoped, by setting a particularly brutal ancient rite in the present and in my own village to shock the story's readers with a graphic dramatization of the pointless violence and general inhumanity in their own lives."
- Parodied in *The Simpsons*



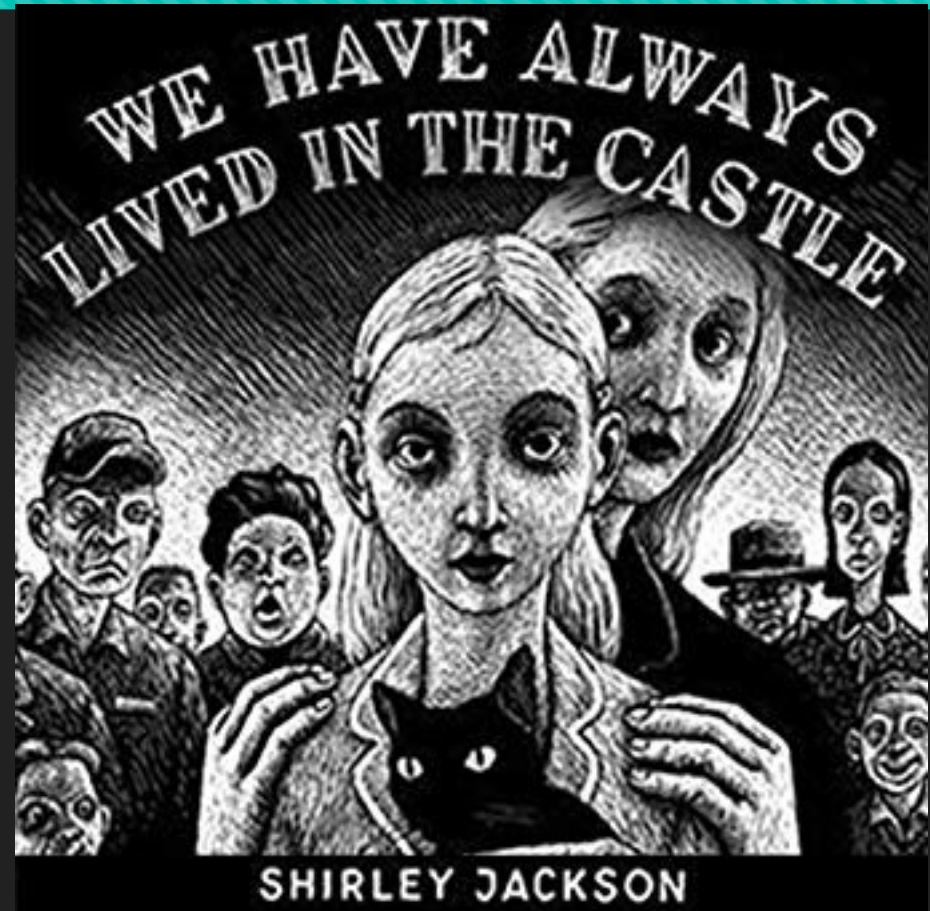
Other Work



- Published numerous short stories and several novels during the 1950s
- *The Haunting of Hill House*, her best-known novel, appeared in 1959
- Made into a Netflix original television series in 2018

We Have Always Lived in the Castle

- Published in 1962
- Named by *Time* magazine as one of the ten best novels of the year
- Today, generally considered by critics to be Jackson's masterwork



Sad End of Life



- By late 1950's Jackson had numerous health problems
- Was overweight and a heavy smoker
- Marriage problems and agoraphobia
- Prescribed barbiturates for anxiety and amphetamines for weight loss
- Died in 1965 at the age of 48 from cardiac arrest