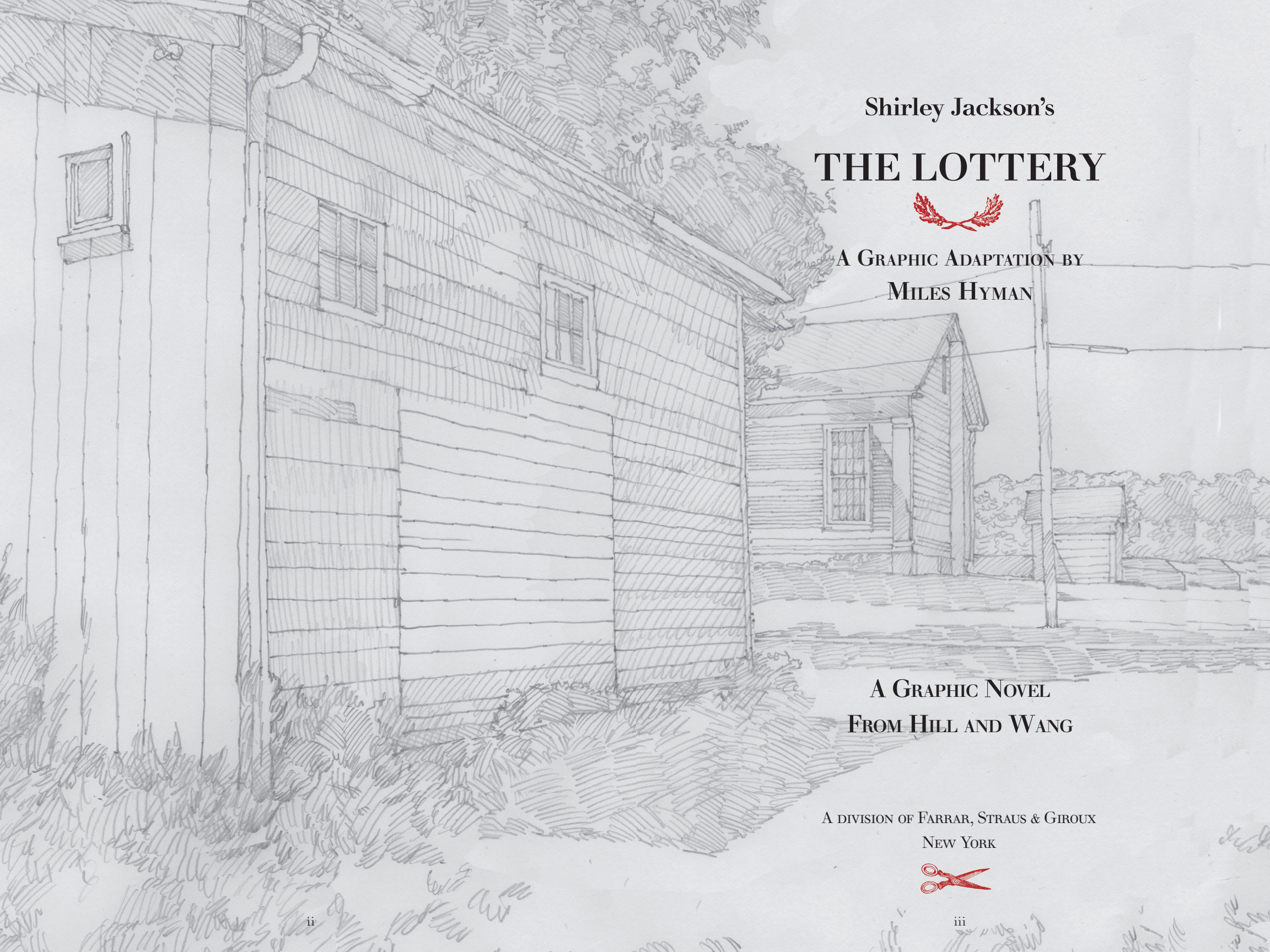


Shirley Jackson's

THE LOTTERY





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A GRAPHIC ADAPTATION BY

MILES HYMAN

A GRAPHIC NOVEL
FROM HILL AND WANG

A DIVISION OF FARRAR, STRAUS & GIROUX
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Hill and Wang

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For my sister Gretchen.

I would like to thank my wife Carole,
my parents Corinne and Laurence,
my children Juliette, Charlotte and Eliot.



PREFACE
BY MILES HYMAN



Visits with my father often include a ceremony, a unique sort of family *séance*. The tradition goes something like this: an ornate Victorian box is carefully carried from its corner resting place into the center of the living room. The box is placed on a table as my father and the rest of us—his children and grandchildren—gather around it.

By now even the youngest members of the family know what is afoot: we are about to listen to Grandma Shirley's music box. Etched with lace bunting and trim, roughly the size and shape of an old-fashioned gramophone that has lost its bell horn, the object we see resembles a relic from Hill House itself. Fashioned from dark exotic wood, the box has antique charm counterbalanced by a vaguely menacing quality that glows through years of dusting and varnish, making it inexplicably ageless—inanimate yet strangely alive.

After a careful winding up (which only my father is allowed to do), a metallic disk begins to rotate inside the box, a disk that is wider and thinner than a vinyl LP and riddled with an almost imperceptible stubble, the surface illustrated to the rim with the frolic of some long-lost Italian *festeggiamento*.

At that point, something magical happens: the room fills with music, surging from the wooden box into the space around us. The vast flow of sound is incommensurate with the modest object we're standing around. The music itself—a highly ornamental arrangement of the once-popular tune “The Carnival of Venice”—is hard to describe, as if someone had condensed the ephemeral charm of a thousand ancient carousels into one acoustic rush. The original melody is all but lost under layers of labyrinthine harmony and counterpoint—an auditory experience so rich as to create what I can describe only as a visual effect on the senses that is as arresting as the box itself.

The music box was probably already an antique during my grandmother Shirley's lifetime and may indeed have been handed down by her mother, Geraldine—we grandchildren knew her as Grandmom—or from someone even higher up the Bugbee family tree. Whatever the facts of this obscure transmission, the music box must have seemed a relic even to Grandma Shirley—an heirloom, both elegant and vaguely sinister.

Beyond the haunting nature of the music itself, playing the music box is moving for other reasons. It represents a curious bond to the person who is not there with us, the most notable absence in the room: Grandma Shirley. It is perhaps the music box's dual capacity to attract and to repel, to enchant and to terrify, that makes it so fascinating—such a fitting representation for an artist whose own work so deftly treads the line between light and darkness, between humor and horror! That paradox—the dual creative vision that allows contrasting qualities to coexist so comfortably, almost festively, mutually enhancing each other's potent charm—permeates so much of what both Shirley and her husband, the literary critic Stanley Edgar Hyman, left behind them. As Shirley herself put it in an unsent letter to the poet Howard Nemerov: “I delight in what I fear.” With time the mystery of her dual literary personae grew to be terribly vivid for me. How intriguing that the writer of “The

Lottery” and “Charles” were one and the same! How could the lighthearted *Raising Demons* and the dark *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* have sprung from the same creative mind?

My grandmother passed away unexpectedly during a nap on an August day in 1965. I was just shy of my third birthday. We really never got the chance to know each other in person and, to tell the truth, I have only one clear memory of her: I see her sitting on a chair or stool in her kitchen in what seemed to me like a palatial Victorian house on upper Main Street in North Bennington, Vermont. She seems to be onstage, framed by a doorway in the dim light as she talks to someone I can't see. Whenever I mention this image to my father or one of his siblings, they smile and nod in recognition. I've been told that typically, after a day spent writing, doing housework, and parenting, Shirley would repair to the kitchen to begin preparing the family dinner, always sitting on the same stool, relaxing with a cigarette and a glass of J. W. Dant bourbon. It's not much but it's one of my earliest, most vivid memories—of her or of anyone, I might add.

I grew up surrounded by the physical resonance of my grandparents' lives: stacks and stacks of books, mountains of mystery stories with harrowing covers, books on the occult, erudite studies on ancient civilizations and obscure scholars. There was a formidable collection of blues and jazz records that filled an entire wall of the house I grew up in and which my grandparents and father had put together with the help of their dear friend Ralph Ellison—a collection that included Child Ballads and old English folk songs that would have played a fitting role in Shirley's work.

Then there are those intangible things they left behind, including a ferocious love of Christmas, cats, cutthroat poker games, and spirited and intellectually rigorous (and sometimes stormy) dinner-table conversation. Most of the anecdotes are unverifiable—tainted evidence in the eyes of any seasoned researcher. But the

truth is there somewhere, barely audible in the echoes of songs and dinner-party laughter, those late-night conversations about literature, myth, and ritual, ragtime and bedtime stories, pressed between the pages of a coffee-stained literary review or swept under the rug of the bar at the Algonquin Hotel.

There were always so many wonderful stories that included so many intriguing people: games of catch in the backyard with my father and J. D. Salinger, all-night poker games with celebrated painters and sculptors (debts were settled up with works of art at a time when Bennington College was the haunt of many an auspicious contemporary artist). There were countless dinners and parties with their closest friends—writers such as Ellison, Nemerov, and Bernard Malamud, to name a few. Brendan Gill, in his 1975 memoir, *Here at the New Yorker*, describes an inebriated Dylan Thomas pursuing my grandmother through the house until Stanley, who had been trying to watch a baseball game on television, grew irritated by the spectacle and subdued the rowdy Welsh bard by grabbing hold of his suspenders.

No one knew it then, but these were members of a disappearing tribe, an endangered species in the American cultural ecosphere: smoking, drinking, hard-partying mid-century intellectuals who were passionate about politics and ideas, art and literature, sports and good food. Between trips to New York City, where Shirley met with her agent while Stanley, a staff writer for *The New Yorker*, turned in copy, their North Bennington home was filled with literary figures, artists, critics, musicians. Their dinners became legendary: arguments broke out about jazz, baseball, and books and were settled over dubious wagers. They threw outrageous, imaginative cocktail parties and generally lived large lives at a time when lives seemed larger across the board.

Of all the things left behind by my grandparents, Shirley's writing is particularly vivid. Her iconic masterpiece "The Lottery"

naturally stands out, one of the most enduring works in American literature. For me, as an artist who has spent much of his professional life adapting novels and stories into graphic form, it is only natural that my grandmother's harrowing tale should entice over the years—not only because, like the music box, it had become a sort of family heirloom but because of how precise and nuanced the adaptation of this powerful piece of fiction would have to be to succeed. The story is such a perfect apparatus that it leaves little room for meddling. Some books sprawl and dream and carry on in ways that seem to invite imagery in spades. "The Lottery" does none of that—it is a no-nonsense, largely hermetic structure, words joined with a jeweler's precision.

So for nearly three decades, I passed.

Then a few years ago, while working on a graphic novel adaptation of James Ellroy's *The Black Dahlia*, based on a masterful script by French comics writer Matz and the filmmaker David Fincher, I had a key insight into how I might adapt "The Lottery." The book you are about to read represents both a faithful rendering of the story and a complete visual restructuring of its delicate architecture, a meticulous visual retelling of the story in what is ultimately an entirely new language.

The experience has been daunting and immensely rewarding for me, both as a professional artist and as a grandson who has long grappled with this enigmatic, intangible inheritance. I waited thirty years to draw my grandmother's "The Lottery," but it was well worth the wait.





THE LOTTERY



Mr Joe Summers
Owner of the village coal business.
He runs the Lottery.



Mr Harry Graves
The Postmaster. He helps organize
and run the Lottery.



Old Man Warner
The village elder.
This is his seventy-seventh Lottery.



Steve Adams
First villager to be called
in the Lottery.



Jane Dunbar
Wife of Clyde,
mother of Horace.



Mrs Delacroix
Villager,
mother of Dickie.



THE CHARACTERS



Tessie Hutchinson
Wife of Bill, mother of the three
Hutchinson children.



Bill Hutchinson
Head of the Hutchinson
household, Tessie's husband.



Bill Hutchinson, Jr.
Eldest son of Bill and
Tessie Hutchinson.



Nancy Hutchinson
Daughter of Bill and
Tessie Hutchinson.



Dave Hutchinson
Youngest son
of Bill and Tessie Hutchinson.



Jack Watson
Eldest Watson son, drawing
this year as head of household.