

Pusher Media Club: Crimson Peak

Transcriber: robotchangeling

Austin: Hello, and welcome to another episode of our Pusher Movie Club. I am hosting today. I'm Austin Walker. Joining me today, Sylvi Clare.

Sylvia: Hi, I'm Sylvi. You can follow me on Twitter at [@sylvibullet](#) and listen to my other show Emojidrome wherever you get your podcasts.

Austin: Jack de Quidt.

Jack: Hi. You can find me on Twitter at [@notquitereal](#) and buy any of the music featured on the show at [notquitereal.bandcamp.com](#).

Austin: And Janine Hawkins.

Janine: Hi. You can find me at [@bleatingheart](#) on Twitter, and I want to point out that Jack organically didn't say, "Hi, I'm Jack." *[Austin and Jack laugh]* That wasn't forced by me.

Austin: I don't know that'll make any sense to anybody yet. It depends on when this goes out. We'll see. I guess—

Janine: *[chuckles]* Well, it'll make sense to someone at some point, and I'll be vindicated, and it's fine.

Austin: Yeah, keep it in mind, ongoing. Yes. Fair enough. Today, we are going to talk about *Crimson Peak*, the 2015 gothic horror romance film directed by Guillermo del Toro, written by Guillermo del Toro and Matthew Robbins, and starring...hmm. I'm going to butcher this name, and I've looked at it eight times on the Wikipedia. Mia Wasikowska is apparently how you pronounce her last name, which I would never do.

Jack: Wow.

Austin: Jessica Chastain, Tom Hiddleston, Charlie Hunnam, and Jim Beaver. I'm going to do my best. Or, actually, pause. What I should say is: check our description for content warnings. There is a lot of stuff in this movie that I think probably bears that, and if you haven't seen the movie yet, go ahead and check that description before you go watch it. But we will necessarily end up digging into some heavy stuff here because of the content of the film, so check those content warnings in the description before we continue. I'm going to do my best to do a summary. I don't think I'm going to do a five second— five sentence summary. I'm certainly not going to do a five second summary. If someone starts doing a five second summary as a way to one-up Just King Things, *[Jack laughs]* that would be a ridiculous amount of...a sort of summary arms race. I don't know that I'm ready for it. God, what would the five second summary of this movie be?

Sylvia: There's not.

Austin: You can't. You can't. You could do it, but it would take like an hour of work, you know what I mean? Five seconds is surprisingly long is what I'll say. You could say more in five seconds than you think you can, but not enough to just do this off the top of the dome. So I'm going to do the longer summary if I can, and then we'll dive into thinking about some particular topics, scenes, themes, et cetera. The film opens with a statement. The statement is that "Ghosts are real. This much I know to be true," and it is an image of our bloody heroine Edith, played by Mia Wasikowska, remembering the death of her own mother and remembering the time at which a ghost of her mother visited her in her youth to warn her that she must avoid a place called Crimson Peak. This ghost does not give her much in the way of detail besides that. It is startlingly rendered in this kind of oily smoky form that we will see briefly again in a little bit. And then we jump ahead, a few years later, where she is living in Buffalo, New York, upstate New York; the daughter of a successful architect, and herself a budding writer. The opening act of the film kind of situates her in Buffalo and her life in Buffalo, the difficulties she hits trying to get her work published, and the introduction of the Sharpe family, played again by Tom Hiddleston and Jessica Chastain, Thomas and Lucille respectively. Thomas is here in Buffalo to ask the industrialists of the town for money. He and his sister own a lovely distant estate in North England called...does anyone remember what it's called? Allerdale? Allerdale Hall?

Janine: Allerdale.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: That once was an extremely wealthy piece of land because of the red clay mines there. The mines have gotten drier and drier over time, largely I guess because they've dug already, and now what the Sharpes are looking for is investment in them so they can finish this piece of technology, this automated digging device that can pick up the pace, make the mine more efficient, dig deeper more effectively. And again, the opening act is kind of the social situation here, the ways in which Edith, our main character, does not want to engage in local society; and then her slowly falling in love with Tom Hiddleston's character, as he continues to kind of pry into her life and into the dealings here. I guess we're also introduced to and we should mention a doctor and an optometrist or an ophthalmologist? There's another word.

Sylvia: I think it's ophthalmologist.

Austin: Is it ophthalmologist? Okay.

Sylvia: Yeah. There's like a line about Sherlock Holmes in there, at one point.

Austin: There is that line. Yes, you're totally right. Named Alan McMichael, who is also the town's doctor, and they also have a sort of...they flirt a little bit and talk about ghosts, and I'm sure we'll talk about that scene in detail later. But before he can win her heart, the baronet

Thomas Sharpe—and, honestly, Lucille—put their plan into action. The father, suspicious of them, has discovered some dark secrets, but before he can oust them—or actually, in the ways in which he seeks to oust them—he triggers a series of events that leads to his death and his daughter becoming betrothed to and then married to Thomas and whisked away, back to Allerdale Hall in England. Also, in the middle of all this, the ghost mom shows up again to warn her not to go to Crimson Peak. She cannot put it together, *[quiet laughter]* and she goes to Crimson Peak. And the rest of the film is there in Allerdale Hall, AKA Crimson Peak.

Janine: She doesn't know it's called Crimson Peak.

Austin: She doesn't. She did some research.

Janine: I think it's important to point out that that's...she did research, but that book doesn't call it Crimson— that book would be...

Austin: For some reason. Because later—

Janine: It's like an ancestral— it's like that book about the peerage or something?

Austin: I say just don't date people who have houses in encyclopedias. *[Sylvia and Jack laugh]* If your paramour has a house that's written about in an encyclopedia, find a different paramour.

Sylvia: It's good to have rules like that.

Janine: But that's the thing. Like, all English nobility were in a book, because you wanted to be able to check that the person who was telling you that they were a noble was actually a noble.

Austin: Yeah. Read through the lines. Don't date nobles.

Janine: But Crimson Peak seems to be just a local nickname for it.

Austin: Yes.

Janine: That didn't have access to until she was already there.

Austin: But it's a red clay mine house, and I feel like if my dead mom was telling me, "Don't go to Crimson Peak," I'd read that as broadly as possible.

Janine: Could have been a valley.

Austin: I guess. I guess it could have been a valley. Eh, it's a mine. It's going to be near mountains. I guess that could be in the valley of the mountains.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Anyway, the point is...she is also, to be clear, deep in sadness and mourning because of the death of her father who is murdered brutally in the bathroom of his, like, country club?

Janine: Gentleman's club? Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, his gentleman's club, basically?

Janine: Gentleman's club before that meant what it means now.

Austin: Yes. Correct.

Jack: He's murdered by one of those classic black-gloved, black-coated, faceless murderers.

Austin: Yes. Yes. Badly made me wish for an early 1900s *Hitman* game.

Jack: Oh, that'd be great.

Austin: So, Janine, if you can pass that word along, that'd be great. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Janine: Well, now we can't do it, so.

Austin: Okay, well, delete this from the podcast. *[Janine laughs]* In Allerdale Hall, we get the kind of classic haunted house, gothic horror thing of this being a decrepit mansion falling into the clay below, drifting ever slowly into ruin. The kind of steeple of the front of the house has been totally destroyed, so snow and leaves and stuff are always kind of drifting downward into the home, into the foyer. And the back half of the movie is Edith slowly coming to realize all the skeletons in the closet and also the skeletons in the clay wells in the basement, *[Sylvia laughs]* trying to piece together what's happened here, and discovering the horrible truth of the situation, which is that she is the latest in a line of wives that Thomas Sharpe has brought back to Allerdale Hall, used for their money, and then discarded of—and also, underneath that, that Lucille and he killed their mother and also have been living in an incestuous relationship for decades now—and that she is next on the chopping block. Complicating this is the fact that it seems as if Thomas is truly falling in love with her and that he has made his machine work. There is, you know, the possibility that this family—this, you know, falling family—could see the light of day, could recover its wealth, but the ghosts of those who have been killed by the Sharpes kind of make it clear that once the wealth is secured, Edith will be disposed of. And, in fact, she learns she is being disposed of as we speak, because she is being poisoned. There's lots of great scenes with ghosts, lots of great scenes with ghosts suggested with wisps of smoke, and then some direct confrontations with them. Also, there's a little dog. And it all spirals to a final, you know, dramatic conclusion where the truth is put out there. Alan arrives after investigating stuff back in America and coming—Alan McMichael, the doctor, shows up. Big fight sequences, lots of chasing people through the hallways with dresses trailing behind and blood spattered. Lucille kills her brother for his betrayal and his true love for Edith. At some point, I

guess, before that, Thomas had stabbed Alan but done it in a way that let him live instead of die, requesting from the doctor, dramatically, “Tell me how to do it,” because you're a doctor and you can tell me how to stab you and make it look realistic without killing you. And then a big final confrontation in and around the machinery that Thomas had built, between Lucille and Edith, where Edith kills her with a shovel and escapes with Alan. I've summarized a lot here, so I'm happy to slow down as we go back through and talk through big scenes, but I'm curious, just at the top: what did people think of *Crimson Peak*?

Sylvia: I loved it.

Janine: I really liked it, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: It's really good. I've...this is like my...so, I watched it twice for this, so I've seen it like three times total now.

Austin: Okay.

Sylvia: I saw it in theaters when it came out, but I had forgotten so much about it. [*Sylvia and Austin laugh quietly*] It's so much fun. It's like...

Jack: It's so much fun.

Sylvia: It is such a good like...I don't know. I like when genre movies really lean into being genre movies, you know?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And like...just everything about this really just got me.

Austin: Yeah, and a ghost bursts through a wooden door like twelve minutes into this movie [*Sylvia: “It's so good”*] and grabs her by the collar and yells, “Don't go to Crimson Peak!” at her. Like, it's going all the way there.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, like, I think the first time— oh, sorry Sylvi.

Sylvia: No, go ahead, go ahead.

Jack: The first time— so, we see a ghost in this movie almost immediately. Like you said, Austin,

it wastes no time showing us a ghost. And right away, the way this ghost looks and moves communicates that the film is going to be trying to do something...I don't want to necessarily say "different" with ghosts, but like, distinct. The ghosts are like transparent, for the most part, in the classic old-school ghost sense, and also they have this air about them of being like projected onto the set. They have like real Haunted Mansion, Pepper's ghost type vibes.

Janine: I wrote the exact same thing down. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Austin: Mm.

Janine: Where it's like, it feels like a combo of Haunted Mansion practical effects and...

Austin: Yep.

Janine: Oh, god, there was something else. It's like a stage effect.

Austin: Oh, it totally is.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Well, and I think that they emphasize that in a really great way early on, where there's a shot with Lucille framed by a doorway, where we just see her silhouette, and there's a really great doubling effect there where it looks like the way the mother's ghost looks for the first time *[Jack: "Yeah"]* appearing through Edith's doorway as a kid, and the way it's like, okay, yeah, this is fundamentally about light and shadow, and that's a big part of the presence that they have, which also makes sense with the photograph plate stuff of ghosts, right?

Sylvia: Yeah, I was going to say. That whole scene sort of feels like a nod to that.

Austin: Totally.

Jack: The ghosts in this movie are played by the great Doug Jones and Javier Botet.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Who are like classic performance capture— not even performance capture. Like, I think prosthetics and stage makeup performers.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Doug Jones plays the faun in *Pan's Labyrinth*.

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: And plays Abe Sapien in *Hellboy*. He plays the creature in *The Shape of Water*. He plays the Pale Man in *Pan's Labyrinth*. And Javier Botet plays...god, I'm trying to think of some...

Sylvia: Slender Man?

Jack: The Slender Man and the ghosts in *Mama*.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: In *The Conjuring* and *It*, *Insidious*, *Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*. These are like very skilled physical performers who...I think del Toro and his crew get a lot of work from these people in this movie, in terms of the way the ghosts move and emote.

Austin: A hundred percent.

Jack: They're all like...oh, there's this great shot at the beginning. I keep coming back to this first ghost appearance. So, the ghost kind of comes through the door and leans over this child in bed, and you can see through the ghost, and the ghost has this like thin, bony, black skeleton, almost.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: That is clearly like makeup or is clearly like a hand or something, and there's blurring between...oh, and if there's blood surrounding the ghost, it's always moving upwards like it's in water.

[0:15:04]

Austin: You might remember– or, not you might remember. The thing I kept thinking about was I cannot believe how flagrantly Kojima stole this for BTs in *Death Stranding*.

Jack: Oh, god, yeah.

Austin: Where they're constantly this oily mass lifting up into the sky, and it's just beat for– like, bro, you put Guillermo del Toro in that game, and you also ripped him off so hard. Maybe there was a discussion about it.

Sylvia: Ripped off two of his movies, because this was also–

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: They also do this in *The Devil's Backbone*.

Austin: Right!

Sylvia: Which is another really good ghost movie that he's done.

Austin: Right.

Sylvia: And the second I saw that, I was like, "Oh, he's doing that— that's cool." [*Austin laughs quietly*] Because this is like so much...so much time has passed between that movie and this [*Austin: "Right"*] that like the production levels both available to his team and also just like techniques in general have come so far ahead that it was really fun to contrast the two.

Austin: Mm-hmm. It's funny you mention production techniques, because one of the quotes that I read today about it was that one of del Toro's goals was to...I don't think in a way that was like dismissive of found footage horror [*Jack: "Oh, yeah"*] or like budget horror films, but explicitly, he wanted this to be a lush and expensive-looking film in a very strict to the genre, you know, gothic horror story, because he'd seen the kind of overwhelming rise of the found footage horror film in the last couple of decades. And I think that the way this film is, from the jump, so...like, the way color works in this film. Buffalo is so brown and dusty and saturated with that stuff in a way that *Crimson Peak* itself turns so this other way with these like deep magentas and emeralds and all these other kind of jewel tones is really fun, and I think that comes from investing in set design and, you know, going this other direction when it comes to the way the film is colored, you know? So.

Sylvia: The costuming, I think, really adds to that too.

Jack: Oh.

Sylvia: There's a lot of like, Edith—

Janine: I have a lot of notes about the costuming.

Austin: I bet.

Sylvia: Edith wearing like gold mostly or like white with her evening gown sometimes, and then like...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: It's really good.

Janine: It's a very deliberate shift, right?

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Like, she starts out almost always wearing super, super bright saturated yellows.

Austin: Yep.

Janine: And then, by the end, she's in these creams and whites and beiges, because the sort of color—

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: There's a really good— I don't want to just say all of this stuff, because there's a really good video that talks about this stuff by Kaz Rowe who's like a cartoonist and also like a history costume youtuber kind of person.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: It's called "Crimson Peak's Costumes, and How Tuberculosis Shaped Victorian Fashion".

Austin: Interesting.

Janine: And they do a really interesting dive into both sort of a basic primer of Victorian fashion, like how the fashionability, the "consumptive chic" it tends to be called, how that sort of affected clothing design and things like that, and they also talk about how that sort of plays into the costumes in *Crimson Peak* with some good comments from the costume director? designer? the head costume— I'm not sure what her official title is, but Kate Hawley who was in charge of the costumes had a lot of really interesting ideas about like focusing on the silhouette but playing with the stuff within the silhouette?

Austin: Right. Interesting.

Janine: And there's so many like amazing little touches there. So there's, you know, with Edith, there's the color. There's the yellow to beige sort of shift. But also, as the movie progresses, her clothing gets more and more bulky. Like, it sort of swallows her.

Austin: Oh.

Janine: Like, it's bulky, but also the fabrics are very light and very like gauzy, because she's...the quote about it is she's like a chrysalis now. She's delicate.

Austin: Sure.

Janine: You know, and Guillermo del Toro had told her that line about, you know, the movie's about a house that breathes, so they chose these super light fabrics for the end.

Austin: Interesting.

Janine: But at the same time, that nightgown at the end is, as Kaz Rowe says in their video, is like the Victorian equivalent of being naked, basically.

Austin: Mm.

Janine: But there's also, just to go back to colors and also ghosts, Lucille often has these like touches of red in her costume.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: She'll have like a corsage, or the thing that Kaz points out in their video is the belt that she wears at the end when she's in her nightgown, and it's like that sort of tint of blood, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: But it's also...the thing that del Toro said about it is that any flashes of red in the movie are to demonstrate a connection between whatever that thing is and the bodies that are in the clay.

Austin: Sure.

Janine: So, you know, Lucille having that all red dress.

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Janine: Things like that.

Austin: When she's playing the piano early on, that thing. It's like stunning [*Janine: "Yeah"*] because of, again, how earthy everything in Buffalo is.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And then to see her on the piano when you come in, and it's like, oh, this is a person from another world.

Janine: But also...

Austin: And there's more color in those scenes in general, but she just absolutely stands out like a flame.

Janine: Yeah. But also, if you compare her dress to Edith's and everyone else's, [*Austin:*

"Mm-hmm"] Edith is wearing very like on point of the moment Edwardian fashion, and Lucille is—much like, you know, Edith points out that Thomas's suit is like *[Austin: "Right"]* 10 years old or 20 years old or something, Lucille's dresses are also from sort of the end of the Victorian period and are like extremely dated by, you know, the standards that the fashion would be at the time. Like, she has all these long bustles and trains and super high collars and all that stuff.

Austin: Right. Which also, I think, ends up connecting to one of the core... I don't know if it's a theme of the film in the sense that it has a particular message, but it is a playground, it is a thematic playground for the film, which is the relationship between the emerging American aristocracy and the established old money of Europe. The ways in which the Sharpes have already moved through the great hubs of Europe to find various brides to take their money and now finally they've come to America, where Edith's father is especially skeptical of Sharpe because of where his money originally came from: something inherited, not something that fits this particular model of American machismo mythology, that he used to work on skyscrapers, and now he designs them, and that's where he got his money, and his hands are dirty. And then, doubling—

Janine: Rough.

Austin: Hmm?

Janine: Rough.

Austin: Rough, yes. Yeah, not dirty. Sorry, I think about dirty because of how Sharpe won't get his hands dirty, right?

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: This ends up being a point of difference between Thomas and Lucille, because she is happy to consistently get her hands dirty, to the degree that there's a little bit of— I mean, there's a lot of power dynamics here about who's willing to do the dirty work of keeping this lie going, but also there is a little bit of resentment that she has to be the one. But also then it loops back around to this thing of like, his big Hail Mary play is about leapfrogging the laborer, the person who can work hard their whole life to earn the money to become the new, you know, aristocratic class by inventing something that will remove that class position and replace it with automation, which will reinvigorate his estate, which is this really fascinating thing, where like, again, I don't think there's like a big labor message at the heart of this, but there's a lot of interesting stuff happening with technology in this film, between the stuff that her father says about a builder knowing good tools and giving her the pen, which of course becomes a weapon; the elevator that reveals the truth in so many ways; the invention of the digging machine; the stuff with the photographic plates; the toymaking workshop being the kind of place of power for Thomas and the inevitable place of downfall. It's all through this film, that relationship is there, and it all comes back to that thing with the 10 years back. Like, there's an anxiety at the heart of the Sharpe family that is about being left behind, and the ways in which that intersects with

technology is so fascinating to me.

Jack: I was watching this with KB, and it was the first time that both of us had seen this movie, and I think, you know, in conversation with what you're talking about, about, you know, like American and British class position and the rise of this automation, you know, KB kept picking up on this sort of being, in some level, the last dregs of European aristocracy kind of clawing its way...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know. The incestuous relationship at the center of their family is in some way speaking to just like the sort of the last tortured gasps of European dynastic families.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: It's weird, you know, that we talk about the machine being sort of his way to leapfrog the labor, when, you know, the fact that the machine starts working is in some way a potential sign of hope for Edith, right?

Austin: Is it, though? *[sighs]*

Jack: It's like, "Oh, they're not going to need her." I don't know.

Austin: Well, I guess it's hope in his...it's hope if we associate it with...if it would have provided for the world in which he could have stayed with her, right? Like, I guess it provides the vision to him that there's an alternative to killing her, right? Because if we can get the family's wealth back...

Jack: Which is no great reason at all, right? Like...

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: There is something...so, I like this movie a lot, but at the same time, I feel like there is something weird happening here, in that there is...I get the sense that there was stuff going on in this movie that got cut.

Austin: Hmm.

Jack: Or got changed or got moved about. Based on, you know, like...I found Thomas exclusively repulsive.

Austin: Same.

Jack: From the start. And there were a lot of particular moments where I felt that they were

really trying to emphasize his repulsiveness. And I never for a moment bought that there was some...that we, the viewer, were supposed to buy into the relationship that they were having. And yet, clearly, we were, in some respect. There was an English playwright was brought on to work on this movie called Lucinda Coxon.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: She “was enlisted to rewrite the script with del Toro,” says Wikipedia, “in hopes of bringing it a, quote, ‘proper degree of perversity and intelligence’, but she is not credited on the finished film”? And this, in combination with the repeated references to the house sinking into the mines and never actually sinking.

Austin: It never sinks! I was so sure we would see it sink at the end.

Jack: And the ghosts who we know have this...you know, there’s this fantastic scene where she puts in these wax tapes and listens to the voice of the murdered wives.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And also Tom Hiddleston singing a song. *[laughs quietly]*

Sylvia: Oh my god.

Jack: In which it’s clear that the ghosts have some...they’re mad.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But the house never sinks, and the ghosts never move directly against the— there was a version, there was an ending of this I expected to see, where Tom Hiddleston and Jessica Chastain get ripped apart by ghosts.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: And they don’t. There’s also weird stuff like...I’m going to put it in the chat. There’s a mural that appears in, I think, the nursery.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: It is. Yes. Which is the attic, right? Or it’s part of the attic, I want to say?

Jack: Uh, yeah. This house—and I love this—this house doesn’t hook together very clearly at all, *[Austin laughs]* and I think it is— this is all a set, right? Start to finish?

Austin: I imagine. I imagine it is. I don’t imagine— you know, I’m not sure.

Sylvia: I know it was filmed in Ontario.

Jack: Oh, I was wondering about this.

Janine: Okay, then it has to be a set.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Because that's like a...I want to say like a 12th or 13th century looking ass. Like, that house looks like it's a reclaimed monastery from like pre-Tudor or whatever or something like that.

Sylvia: Yeah, it was at a studio.

Janine: That shit does not exist here.

Sylvia: It was at Pinewood Toronto Studios.

Austin: Okay. That makes sense, then. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Janine: Unless they took a hammer to Castle Loma, we don't have anything even close to this.
[laughs quietly]

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Jack, I paused on this exact same moment.

Jack: I remember watching— so, it is a glancing shot. The camera hovers on it long enough that we're supposed to recognize it, and on the left, we can see a young boy in Edwardian— Janine, is that Edwardian child's dress?

Janine: Uh, no. I want to say— well. *[sighs]* I am not an expert. I would say that it's earlier, though, based on what the girl is wearing. I don't know boy clothes well.

Jack: He's got his arms raised.

Austin: He looks like a little clown. He looks like a little French clown. *[Sylvia and Janine laugh]*

Jack: Yeah. Like a Little Lord Fauntleroy, which is actually what someone calls him earlier in the movie. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: Which is what—

Janine: Yeah. Yeah.

Austin: Yes. Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: He's got his arms raised in triumph or in anger. On the other side of the picture is a woman who looks close enough— a girl who looks close enough to Jessica Chastain's Lucille that I was straight away like, "Oh, these aren't just two children. These are these people." She's bending down and looking sort of sadly at a burning *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* figure that looks almost like a matchstick. Maybe better to say this is a blackened matchstick that has raised arms like a person, behind a pyre. Above the figure is what looks like the red ball that we see the dog playing with.

Austin: It super does. Yep.

Jack: This, to me, is specific enough and weird enough that it feels like it is directly referencing something that we aren't getting.

Austin: This was originally going to be a movie about like a little match Cthulhu in the basement.

Jack: Okay. All right. Here's my question.

Austin: Or like a folkloric, like, a Wicker Man.

Jack: Was this film what you thought it was going to be about?

Austin: So, I saw this movie five years ago.

Jack: Uh, same question.

Austin: So, it's hard.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Um... *[sighs]* I didn't expect— hoo. I remember coming home from the theater and telling Janine that I really wanted her to see it because of the way it was more about this particular genre of literature than I thought it would be.

[0:30:13]

Jack: Right.

Janine: Oh yeah.

Austin: I thought it would be more haunted house, ghosts out to get you.

Jack: Yeah. Me too.

Austin: The mother is trying to kill and get revenge on— you know, whatever, right? When, in fact, it was more...god, Janine, what did we just watch a couple weeks ago? God, no, that's not true. Months ago?

Janine: Um, are you thinking of the *Rebecca* remake?

Austin: The *Rebecca* remake. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Janine: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Oh, sure.

Austin: Where it's...

Jack: The Ben Wheatley one?

Austin: Uh, yes, yes, yes.

Janine: Armie Hammer's in it.

Austin: Yeah, unfortunately. *[laughs]* But in that space, more than what I thought it would be, right? So I think maybe that's true, yeah. I thought it would be...not ghostier. It's plenty ghostly. I didn't—

Jack: There's a great— oh, sorry, go on.

Austin: The last thing I'll say on this, before I hand it back, is that like, a thing I really appreciated this time through—and I think this was surprising to me to the point that I didn't recognize it the first time I watched it—is the speed with which Edith recognizes and considers making allies of the ghosts.

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Which makes perfect sense, because she's only known one ghost previous—it's her mother—and she understands as a writer that ghosts are like metaphors and mediums of truth fundamentally here, and she shares a kinship with them. And I did not expect that at all, the first time through, this idea that the ghosts would be telling the true story of the house.

Sylvia: So good.

Austin: I mean, obviously that's what happens with ghost stories, but that the protagonist would be aware that that's what was happening and that she could be on their side was not what I expected at all. Normally, I expect from something like this that the ghosts might be a voice of truth, a violent voice of truth, but that they're so consumed by a desire for revenge or so broken by the trauma caused to them that they lash out and hurt even our protagonists, even if what is at root is some, you know, misjustice or, you know, injustice caused to—injustice; that's the word—caused to them, that our hero gets hurt also, you know? And that's not what this is, so.

Janine: No. It's...yeah, it kind of goes back to the thing that Jack was saying about like expecting it to end with the ghosts tearing the Sharpes apart and stuff.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: And like, you know, I never— this is my first time watching *Crimson Peak*. I did not watch it after you told me to watch it, *[laughter]* even as like, for years, I was like, “I should watch *Crimson Peak* soon.”

Jack: I was in the same place.

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[laughs quietly]*

Janine: Yeah. So, and you know, when I was in university, a not insignificant amount of my degree was spent on the books that this is tracking back to. Not by choice; I think I just had a series of professors that really had a thing for the period. And this movie was exactly what I thought it was. *[laughs]*

Austin: Huh. Interesting.

Jack: *[laughs]* Ah.

Janine: Like, it was...I wrote down a pre-watching summary, because that was a— of like, here's my one sentence summary of what I think this movie is about, because I did that for *There Will Be Blood*, and it was not entirely wrong, but it was right in worse ways. My pre-watching summary for this was, “Bluebeard, but there's a hot sister, and more people are sad about it.”

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, sure. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Janine: And that's, fundamentally, yes. It is that.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: But, you know, the thing about a story like that— I'm thinking a lot about like some of the ghost stories that I studied too. The ghosts...the whole like, “and then the ghosts tear you apart” feels like a thing from both before and after that kind of period of writing.

Jack: Ha!

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: In that kind of period, the thing that you get more often— again, I didn't study this closely or deliberately, so I could be wrong, but, you know, from what I remember. The thing that you get more often is the idea of the ghost as a warning. Or, you know, so the idea that they don't attack the Sharpes, that only she really engages with them, is more about them trying to get her to leave because they know what's going to happen, and I think the closest you kind of get away from that is at the end, *[Austin: “Yeah”]* where Thomas is the ghost. And like, you know, even then, she says, “Help me,” and he just stands there.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: She helps herself.

Austin: Provides the distraction to let her...

Janine: Yeah, he provides a distraction, but like, you know, there's no action there. It is so much more about just like what the presence of a ghost means and does.

Austin: Right. The earlier conversation around being colorblind to ghosts or only seeing them when it's time to see them comes to bear there.

Janine: Yes.

Austin: Briefly, going back, Jack. Is part of the subtext of what you're saying here—and let me know if I'm reading between the lines correctly—do you think that there were rewrites or reshoots or just changes in the draft at some point to make Tom Hiddleston a goodie by the end?

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Oh, man. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: I think there's a moment that I could see this pretty clearly, which is...this is absolute speculation, you know? *[Austin laughs quietly]* We're just working from what we have in the text here.

Austin: I mean, we can get to a more generic thing, which is that I'm certain that at some point there were internal deliberations about how this movie ended, and...

Jack: Yes.

Austin: Right. Internal inside of just the writers' minds, I'm saying. Not even internal as in like the whole crew. You know what I mean. Anyway.

Jack: Yeah, yeah, yeah. A hundred percent. When Tom Hiddleston goes to stab the doctor...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And he says, "You're a doctor. Show me how to do it," my first read of that scene was that he was offering the doctor a mercy kill.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: And that's not what happens. You know, what it becomes clear that he's offering the doctor is, oh, I'm going to injure you in a way that— which is weird, *[Austin laughs quietly]* because the doctor limps off, and Lucille is just— Lucille, who has been very pro "kill the doctor," is just like, "Okay, right, time to continue with this." I wonder if there was some point where that was a mercy kill, and it was designed to *[Austin: "Huh"]* soften Tom Hiddleston's character but make some sort of a dichotomy between him as the smooth talker, the not necessarily bloodying his hands—we can get back to this power dynamic between them later—and her, the one who, by the end, opens a floor tile and reveals an absolutely enormous cleaver that she uses to chase them through. So like, I wonder if there's a version of this where they are played as the couple of villains and we are supposed to spend the whole movie in the head of Edith, you know, slowly coming to her realization of what's going on. Early in the movie, he is offering her tea, and he is unpacking the tea set when they arrive in the house. You know, he has that great line about the dog, where he's like, "I thought I'd leave it out there to die." And, you know, one version of this is, oh, he's just gradually coming to love her. But another version of this...I can't help watch this movie and go, did they— I think it was always a gothic romance, but did they try and make us buy it more?

Sylvia: *[sighs]* There's definitely that moment where it feels like he is pretending to be on her side, when she has discovered that the tea is the poison, and he like comes in immediately and is like, "No, don't drink that," or whatever.

Jack: "Don't drink that." Never.

Sylvia: Yeah. But then, right after, there's a scene with him talking about Lucille, and like, they're just talking about shit right out in the open, and it— I mean, I guess he does end up going

along with what Lucille says regardless, but it feels a lot more like we are going to play this from both sides until stuff gets signed or whatever.

Janine: I didn't...I didn't feel that. Am I the sucker in the room? I totally did not...

Sylvia: No, I...that was the only time I really got that vibe, I should say. I thought everything else was pretty above board.

Austin: I mostly...I don't think I go as far Jack, in terms of thinking that there was an explicit rewrite or change, but I do...I felt that there...the only scene where they have chemistry to me in this entire movie is when he yells at her and says her writing is trash and she slaps him.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Austin: That is the only scene in which I felt any energy between them at all, and because of that, it was hard for me to not be skeptical, not about his intentions as a character, but that the story was modeled so that you could have the romance be true for the audience who wants that romance to be true, that his love can be true. It was so strange to see them try to play him as in love with her when I felt none of it.

Jack: Do you know who they—

Austin: And I think that's just how it's written. I don't know that it's false. Like, I don't know that he was faking it or anything. I read him very much as a deeply like traumatized person who doesn't know how to love because of how he's killed or helped kill four other women and has been in a strange abusive relationship his whole life, since he was a 12-year-old.

Janine: Yeah. I mean...

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: But I—

Janine: Yeah, that's the thing. She's older than him, and there was a— it's very clear that she kind of led the murder of the mother.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: And it's unclear how much she led their relationship, and it seems like...I think that's why maybe I do read him very sympathetically is because it feels like he is trying to break away from that.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: But he doesn't really know how.

Austin: I could do that if it was—

Janine: We get that when he's like, he almost hadn't even considered that he could stay in town or at the place overnight, like until Edith suggests, like, "Let's just stay here overnight."

Austin: *[sighs]* I could get there if it happened once, but the fact that it happened four times and that the bodies are in the pits downstairs. *[Jack laughs]*

Janine: Eh.

Sylvia: Eh.

Austin: And that, at any point, they could have sold the house and left, is like...

Janine: No, I...

Austin: They could have. They could have. Like, and I'm not— in other words, my point there isn't...I don't think he is a cynical killer the way that his sister is, but his sister has also been traumatized through a life of abuse, a childhood of abuse from both parents, right? Like, it's very—

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: She describes the father as a brute. She describes trying to protect him from physical beatings from the mother. Both of them have been badly damaged by the people who were supposed to protect them.

Janine: And being institutionalized, and...

Austin: And being institutionalized at a time when we know—

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Not that "the institution," quote, unquote, is good now, *[Jack: "Ha"]* but we know what the situation was like then, right? So we know that these are people who have been through it, and I'm sympathetic to their trauma and the harm that was done to them, and I do think that there is a degree to which he is seeing— we talk about the machine working and him seeing a spark that there's another life possible, but it comes after pursuing this plan four times in a row that, at any point, they could have used the wealth of any of those previous wives.

Jack: Yeah, successfully, right?

Austin: Successfully to escape and start a life somewhere else that was not a sinkhole, and instead invested in continuing in the sinkhole so they could continue the Sharpe name, which feels like both an albatross around their neck and like a thing that they desire to maintain, right? Like, they don't want to give up the name Sharpe. They don't feel like they can give up Crimson Peak.

Janine: That's an anxiety of the period, though, right? Like, that's...

Austin: Yeah, totally. But I'm not going to feel bad for him because he has it.

Janine: Sure, sure, sure. But, to me, that's less about the characters and more about like the role they're playing in terms of telling the story of the time and the class and all that, which is like, if you're the generation that lets the family land go, you are a failure, and it's a tremendous—you know.

Austin: Right. I'm not saying that his motivations don't make sense.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: I'm saying I can't be sympathetic because of these reasons, you know? I can understand why people are monsters, but...

Janine: Also, Sylvi, did you have something that...?

Sylvia: No, I was just going to say like I think that...they are very explicit about the fact that they're just like very tied to making sure that they keep their home and their family name going, and I think that actually plays into the whole like trauma storyline stuff going on.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Like, they do a very good job of like...I'm trying to figure out how I want to word this. They do a very good job of making—especially towards the end—it clear that Lucille wants the cycle to continue and is kind of using— it felt to me, at least, was kind of using the family stuff as an excuse to keep it going. There's like the stuff where she's got the braids of hair from all the different wives.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Oh, that's so good.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah. Like, there's a lot of signs that this is just like a thing that she gets a modicum of joy out of, and I think that that...I don't know. I think that helped me not be like, "Why the fuck don't they just move?" when I finished watching it.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: It's interesting, because there's a moment when he suggests it, and you can see that even Lucille might accept it, until he...he says like, "We could go anywhere. We can start over," and she's like, there's a glimmer that like, oh, maybe. And then he says, "All of us," which is a pipe dream at that point.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: But that is what sets Lucille off to closing that is that it will eliminate her singular relationship with him in a way that— again, not that that's even on the table at that point, actually!

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: But she can't go down that dream with him, because he wouldn't be hers alone, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Do you know who they originally planned to cast in this movie?

Sylvia: Oh, I do.

Austin: I did see that.

Jack: This, for me, fits with... *[Sylvia laughs]* So, their original plan was to cast Benedict Cumberbatch and Emma Stone.

[0:45:04]

Janine: Oh.

Jack: And they end up casting Tom Hiddleston and Mia Wasikowska.

Sylvia: Great. Much better, I think. Just putting that out there.

Jack: I think it's much better, but it is clear to me that the casting directors or del Toro wanted a leading man who looks like a haunted Victorian doll. *[Austin and Sylvia laugh]*

Janine: Mm.

Jack: And, you know, they knew what kind of guy they were getting. They took one crack at getting that guy, and they couldn't get him, so they got another guy who looks like that.

Janine: I'm surprised you didn't say Jessica Chastain was originally supposed to be Eva Green, because she's basically playing Eva Green.

Sylvia: Oh my god. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: I did not realize this was Jessica Chastain, I think in part because she was a brunette for this.

Janine: In my memory, she's Eva Green.

Jack: Yeah!

Sylvia: Yeah. *[laughs]*

Janine: When I replay scenes in my mind, *[Austin laughs]* it's not Jessica Chastain there, and I recognize that that's wrong, but that's how it is.

Sylvia: I keep getting wires crossed with *Penny Dreadful* when I'm watching this.

Austin: Oh my god.

Sylvia: It's like, oh yeah, no, it's her.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, sure.

Jack: Oh, also, Burn Gorman shows up.

Austin: Yeah, he sure does. He rules.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: Burn Gorman is great. Burn Gorman, who...

Janine: Friends at the Table's favorite character actor.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: We keep casting him in stuff. He most recently, I think, played William Blick in Sapodilla.

Austin: He did. I wish I had William Blick eating peanuts out of a little paper bag, *[Sylvia sighs]* because that's a thing he's doing in one of the like three scenes he's in in this, and it's incredible.

Jack: God, he's playing a character called—

Janine: There's a really good shot of him too that I screenshotted, because it's just really...it's why you hire Burn Gorman is so you can get this shot.

Jack: Yes! Incredible.

Austin: Yeah, 100%.

Jack: So, he is playing a man called Mr. Holly. He is a detective hired by Mr. Cushing. I think it's a Peter Cushing reference, like a Hammer horror reference, the fact that Edith's family are called the Cushings.

Austin: Oh, sure.

Jack: He is hired to figure out what the hell is going on with the Sharpes, and this is Burn Gorman playing an American?

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: I think he's...he's British.

Janine: Yes. Sure is.

Jack: This is very funny, because they do this backwards a couple of times, right? I think...is Mia Wasikowska British? She's Australian. What the fuck is going on?

Sylvia: Charlie Hunnam is British, the guy who plays Alan.

Austin: The guy who plays Alan, who's, yeah.

Jack: I felt like there was a swap happening in this.

Austin: Broad-shouldered American cowboy hero coming to the rescue.

Sylvia: Ugh.

Jack: But Mr. Holly's great.

Sylvia: Did not do much for me, that guy.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: No. No.

Janine: I like that, in the end, it didn't matter that he showed up.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: It was like, he was coming into a situation he was not prepared for. *[Austin laughs]*

Jack: Right.

Janine: And that bore out.

Jack: He's doing a sort of—

Janine: And the person who knew what was going on was the one who had to pull his ass out of it.

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Like an inverse, um...oh, what's the guy in *The Shining* who shows up?

Austin: Oh. Uh, fuck. What is his name?

Sylvia: Dick Hallorann? I think that's a different...

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, I think that's right.

Jack: It is. It's Hallorann.

Sylvia: That's the right one?

Austin: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: Right, yeah, shows up towards the end and is like, "Oh, Christ, something bad is happening here."

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: He talked about— so, del Toro has talked about he's been heavily inspired by other films, such as *The Haunting*; *The Innocents*, which is an adaptation of *The Turn of the Screw*; and *The Shining*. How do you think this movie kind of sits alongside those? *[Sylvia sighs thoughtfully]*

Austin: I've only seen one of those. I've not seen *The Innocents*.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Janine: No.

Austin: So I'm like not particularly poised to...

Janine: Wait, is that the one with, um, Nicole Kidman?

Austin: No.

Jack: No, that's *The Others*.

Janine: Oh. Yeah, okay.

Jack: Although there are bits to this that have a real *The Others* vibe to it, actually.

Austin: Sure, sure.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: There's...I think something that is distinctive to me about those films that he is talking about is that they are all explicitly haunted house movies.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And this is a haunted house movie, in a sense, and we get some real— early in the movie, Edith says about her book, "It's not a ghost story; it's a story with ghosts in it."

Austin: Right, yeah.

Jack: And if ever— like, del Toro was working at his fucking word processors that day and was like, "Yep. This is the movie. *[laughter]* I'm making *Crimson Peak*." And as such, I don't know if it's a haunted house story so much as a story that takes place in a haunted house. She moves around with a candelabra a lot, but we don't ever get a sense of how these places interrelate. The house is so bizarre in its— I mean, the house is fantastic. There's leaves piled in every

corner. You come in through the front door, and the first thing Tom Hiddleston says is like, "Please be careful of the roof," and we tilt up to the roof, where there's just a hole in it, and snow is coming through.

Austin: Ugh. Oh, it's so good.

Sylvia: I love that.

Austin: The fucking—

Janine: I have a screencap from my notes that I have to link of like a— this is directly from my notes on the movie. *[Sylvia laughs]*

Jack: Yeah! Right! Yes!

Austin: Uh huh. Yeah, 100%.

Janine: Damn, bitch, you live like this?

Austin: Yeah, 100%. *[Sylvia sighs]*

Jack: My first reaction on seeing this was: this can't be it, right? This can't be the house. Because the living situation in here seems so colossally fucked.

Austin: This is it. It's miserable. Just rugs thrown various places to, presumably, one, make it a little bit warmer; and, two, stop the red clay from coming up from the ground like blood.

Jack: He presses the ground, and it comes—

Austin: Oh, it's so good.

Jack: Blood is coming through the walls of this house. Yeah, so, we get a lot of the like...we get a lot of the sort of classic scare sequences associated with horror houses, where, you know, you wake up in the middle of the night, and you hear a sound, and then you go and interact with the sound. Or, you know, something spooky happens. There's a great classic horror bit where she throws a ball for the dog, and then the dog comes back without the ball, and then the ball just gets rolled towards her out of the shadows, that I love.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: But it's much more—

Austin: Also the dog fakeout, where she's like, "Oh, something is scratching on the other side of this door. It must be a dog."

Jack: It's wonderful. I love it.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: And then the dog barks from down the hall instead. Love it.

Jack: But most of these happen sort of in a vacuum. They're not really related to each other. One scare doesn't really lead to the next or speak to much about the state of the world. She just has these kind of discrete encounters with frightening things, which I think—

Austin: Well, they're like a ping leading her to the clues that she's like—

Jack: Yes. That's exactly...

Austin: The ghost is in the closet, and inside the closet are the gramophone cylinders that will eventually break this thing open. You know what I mean?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Janine: But also—

Austin: She is in the room being like, *Phasmophobia*, "Enola Sciotti, are you here with us now? How old are you?"

Jack: [*chuckles*] Yes, she is.

Austin: Like, she's just going for it.

Jack: [*imitating Phasmophobia*] Enola. Enola. Enola. Enola Sciotti. Enola.

Austin: [*laughs*] Janine, what were you going to say?

Janine: But also, sometimes they're just in the background.

Austin: Yes.

Jack: Yeah, mm-hmm.

Janine: Like, sometimes there is a moment where Edith leaves the scene of ghost stuff, and her attention is on something else, and you still hear ghost stuff happening in the background.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: You'll still hear those sounds, and it makes them—

Austin: Or see them.

Janine: Yeah. But often, it's just this thing that's like...sometimes when you see it, it's like a thing that's there to build suspense.

Austin: Mm, mm-hmm.

Janine: But when you...I'm thinking specifically of the scene when she goes down the elevator for the first time, and you hear the ghost upstairs like screaming.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Mm.

Janine: And it's like, her attention has— you know, she's not paying attention to that ghost anymore. She's paying attention to this space. We're paying attention to the ghost, but the ghost kind of just feels like a fact of the house.

Austin: Right.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Right.

Janine: It just feels environmental. It just feels like these, you know, the ghosts are part of the house. They're part of the environment, and they're not just there in the traditional ghost way of like, here is a thing that's going to lead to you getting startled or here is a thing that's going to lead to a scary thing happening directly to this character because of this ghost.

Austin: Right, right.

Janine: It's just like, you know, it's that line again of like, "the house breathes."

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: It's the way the house breathes. There is just that stuff also existing there.

Austin: Well, and the...there's a piece on *Gizmodo* from when this movie came out by Charlie Jane Anders that I...I don't love the headline. The headline is "Did Everybody Miss the Twist at the End of *Crimson Peak*?"

Jack: What?

Austin: And the answer is...I don't think the thing that she is writing is a twist, but the argument is that no one else sees ghosts in this house ever.

Jack: Oh! I was going to talk about this.

Austin: And that the first ghost that Lucille ever sees is her brother, which is to say that she is finally aligned to the costs— she feels a death for the first time. She's killed someone, and it haunts her, for the first time ever. None of those other kills have ever made her feel bad enough to haunt the house for her; but here, having killed her brother and her lover, she feels it and is moved by it in a way that upsets her. And I think the fact that like...that's part of why I like what you're saying, Janine, of the like, they're just background. They're wallpaper in the house.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And just like wallpaper, if you're not especially attuned to it, it will disappear for you. You're just in that space. You're just walking to and fro. It doesn't necessarily— or, you know, like the sound of a house settling, where if you're new to the house, you're like, "Uh, this is the creepiest shit I've ever heard," but if you've lived there for your whole life, you're like, you know, that's just a thing that happens here.

Jack: Oh, just the house.

Austin: It's the house.

Jack: Yeah, so like, there's this great scene where Lucille... *[laughs quietly]* A lot of fun conversations— as this movie keeps going, we keep going from these staged conversations where people are standing or sitting and talking to each other to people like walking or moving from room to room and communicating with each other as the pace of the movie cranks up. And there's a great bit with Lucille and Tom walking together through the house, and Lucille just says, "She knows about Mother!" Like, she's figuring this out somehow! And I loved that, because it gave me a window into what this movie looks like for Lucille, which is: you're right, there are no ghosts in this. You know, they've got a murder plot. The murder plot is in action. Her brother seems to be getting more and more distant from her, and the person they're planning to murder seems to be figuring out—for reasons that she can't begin to understand—that they have killed or that there was a killing or something. Like, she spends a lot of this movie suspended in this kind of weird isolation of not really knowing what's happening or why it's happening.

Sylvia: There's like a bit of stuff with the like Enola key.

Austin: The key. Ugh!

Jack: Oh, the key!

Sylvia: There's a bit of that like thing where Lucille kind of has a suspicion of what's going on.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Which, one of my favorite little stretches of the movie was that stuff.

Jack: Oh, it's so good.

Austin: Do you want to explain what that beat is?

Sylvia: Yeah. So, when Edith goes down to the like basement level, she finds some luggage with the name Enola on it, and then, later, when she comes back up, she sees— I think there's also a ghost encounter down there, but just relating to this plot point. *[Austin laughs quietly]* She sees the key on Lucille's like keyring that she's been like very protective of the whole movie that says Enola on it, and so there's this whole thing where Edith is— I think, is it after they get back from the storm, or is it...?

Jack: I think so.

Janine: Yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, because she sees it...

Janine: When they're in the kitchen.

Austin: Yeah, when she almost hits her with the boiling pot of eggs.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: Oh, such a good scene.

Sylvia: Also a good scene.

Jack: Picks up the eggs *[Austin: "God"]* and puts them back in the pan with her bare hands.

Austin: Ugh!

Sylvia: But yeah, so she uses like— the part I really like about this was she uses the creaking of the house to cover up the noise of the keys jingling [*Austin: “Ooh”*] while she’s trying to take the one key off the keyring, Edith does.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: And basically what happens is she takes that down, goes down one night, and that basically is what lets her find out about Enola and— like, Enola being the wife from Italy.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: That was the most recent one. I think she also gets a letter addressed to her, at some point.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: And also, there’s like—

Austin: That’s like on the way back. That’s while she’s at the depot and they spend the night.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: She gets the letter that is addressed to Ms. Lady Sharpe or Mrs. Lady or—

Sylvia: E. Sharpe, I think.

Austin: Yeah, whatever. Yeah, it’s E. Sharpe.

Janine: E. Sharpe. Yeah.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: Because there’s a thing where she comments on E.S., [*Austin: “Mm-hmm”*] because she finds out about Enola’s name being Enola Sciotti.

Austin: Right.

Sylvia: And then I think she’s given something to be like, Edith Sharpe.

Austin: Right.

Sylvia: But I don't remember specifically the thing.

Austin: Yeah, yeah. But then the second half of that is that Lucille realizes the key is missing and then basically sets a trap for her where she goes into the room, purposely— I read it this way, anyway. Maybe I'm wrong here, but...

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Leaves the keys with Edith.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And then, when Edith asks her to go get her a glass of cold water, Edith's like hiding her muddy boots or her red clay boots, because she was just down in the basement, and Edith thinks like, "Aha, I can put the key back on, and no one will notice," but of course, at this point, Lucille already noticed the key was missing, and so now she knows exactly when the key got put back on the ring, and so she has now figured out— so there is a little bit of detective work happening on the other side of it, with Lucille trying to figure out how much Edith knows, right?

Jack: She doesn't quite know how she's getting this information though, right?

Austin: Right, right.

Jack: Like, for us, it's very clear. You know, you talk about the pings drawing her from place to place.

Austin: Right. You're right.

Jack: But it's presumably baffling for Lucille.

Austin: *[laughs]* She does not think like, "Ah, the ghosts are on her side and helping her piece this all together!" Right.

Jack: It's a lovely moment. To what Janine was saying about the ghosts, you know, both being wallpaper and also being actively positive entities for Edith, there's a scene I love where she just goes out onto the mezzanine at the top of the stairs, and there's snow falling through the figure of a ghost holding a baby that's just like floating in the shaft of light and snow.

Austin: Oh, it's so good.

Jack: And she just has this— she has a really sort of intimate conversation with this ghost, right? She's like, I think she says like, "What are you trying to tell me?" or like, "How can I help you?" or something, which is such a great version of that scene—when, you know, earlier, we had a

ghost that like tries to pull her through the floor or something—as, I think, the ghosts realize that she is receptive to them and she is beginning to put the pieces together.

Austin: There's a— speaking of ghost shots that I really love, I just want to call out the one where she sees— and I think this is strictly in a dream. I think it is. Maybe I'm misremembering. But she looks out to the fields and sees one of the big red blood ghosts.

Jack: Oh, it's so good.

Austin: Just in, you know, among the kind of dry grass, pointing out, you know, the left side of the screen, this incredible overwhelming figure. And like, there are images...this movie, you know, put me in my feelings as a storyteller, to some degree. Not in my feelings, but like made me think a lot about the limits of what we do on *Friends at the Table* and how we can emulate and evoke things in this method, that like, we can do...I think we have successfully done the startling figure against the horizon pointing at a distance. That's in the lexicon and in the toolbox for us, because we can describe a striking image. Jack, you can support it with music. Characters, you know, players can say really great things in response. But there is something that this film has that's very hard for us to achieve, given both, for me, the style of prep I do and the style of pacing we play at with a game, which is this is such a— we just recorded an arc of this game where we play in desolate places, right? The Desolate domain was nonstop. But I never got to evoke— I don't think that any of those places evoked anything like the desolation of this space, because so much of what happens here is given over to passive visual back— not passive in the sense that no one worked on it, but for the viewer, it does not need to be in the foreground. It can be in the background and have this sense of being immersed in it, you know, being just surrounded by the sense of this terrible house and then having that lifted when they go into town and they're just in a little warehouse for a little bit, and it's just like, oh, wow, this is like a regular place where things are just like— *[Jack chuckles]* it's still an old place, but it's not an old place like this is. And like, it's very hard to evoke that stuff outside of me doing very specific and repeated narration about something, trying to stay inside of a certain set of words and really hammer those words again and again and again. But it's just not— you know, in prose, you can also do this, because prose is edited in such a way where like you could write the book or write a chapter and then go back to that chapter and be like, “I really want to make sure that the reader's attention is on the qualities of this house, and so I'll return to describing it more often or I'll return to a big description early on and give that more time and more space.” But with what we do, it's so hard to evoke the sense of like the way that Buffalo feels different from the Hall here, you know? And it is...that's just part of what the form is, and it's part of how we do it, but it was front of mind for me to start turning that around in my head as we continue Sangfielle and thinking about like, how do I get that? Because like, Roseroot Hall...we've gotten the fields of yellow at Yellowfield, obviously, at the candle factory. We've got the great images of like Roseroot Hall being kind of oblique in the hills of, you know, north Blackwick County. We've had big moments like that, but in terms of that sense of like, I'm in this space that is creepy and upsetting to be in, it's really hard to do. I'm curious if any of you had any like Sangfielle or roleplaying horror thoughts or roleplaying romance thoughts as we watched this, or as you watched this.

[1:02:54]

Sylvia: Uh, I think like the thing that I more took away from as something that I want to do more is just like playing a character that's got that sort of really natural curiosity that Edith has, *[Austin: "Mm"]* because I think it leads to a lot of very fun situations in this. In general, I think she's a really good protagonist, but like, her constantly trying to like pick at things in a way that like...just like made things move, I guess, *[Austin: "Mm"]* in ways that like weren't– I wasn't always seeing coming. But yeah, I don't know.

Austin: Sylvia, let me tell you: I think you have a character who makes moves, at this point. *[Jack laughs]*

Sylvia: Yeah, no. *[Austin laughs]* Bit of a different alignment situation.

Austin: I get– yeah, uh huh. *[laughs]*

Sylvia: I mean, also speaking to that: Lucille in this, fucking huge Virtue vibes for a lot of it.

Austin: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Especially her outfits. Like, damn.

Austin: For sure.

Jack: I think that there were some moments where...you know how– I might have this wrong, right? But as I understand bits of professional wrestling, the way matches are structured, there are like specific spots that the wrestlers will ensure that they fall into, right? Where it's like, we're sort of working on something approaching improv for these moments, like especially trained, but we're gonna make sure that we do this at this time. We sort of arrange our bodies into this image in sequence to act in this way. Is that right?

Austin: That's my understanding, that there's like, you have spots, and you're kind of tying those spots together with stuff that maybe you've talked about, like, "Oh, maybe then between this and this we could do this sort of thing, but like then I'm going to do this really good German suplex–"

Jack: That we have rehearsed, and...

Austin: "And then you're gonna whip me over here, and–" right, exactly. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Jack: There was some moments in this movie where it felt like it was speaking so clearly to, you know, gothic history and history of gothic imagery and drawings and paintings and like '60s and '70s movies. It felt like the frame kind of just like snapped in place in those moments, where it

was so specifically— like a lot of the exterior shots of *Crimson Peak* itself as just this like tumbling pile, but then those great latter images of Jessica Chastain in this incredible nightgown that is now stained with blood, you know, just like tearing shrieking through the halls of this house.

Austin: Oh, it's so good.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: Holding a cleaver. Just the way that the camera and the costume design and her physical performance—and also Edith's towards the end of this movie—just evoke gothic terror was really spectacular. There's another image that really felt like it was doing this for me which is when Tom is wrestling with the doctor in the doorway, and we get this shot of them framed by the door with snow kind of pouring into the house behind them, and it's these two men, you know, fighting frozen in a sort of wrestling stance in this doorway. It felt like these really hyper clear, almost deliberately over-clear images of the genre that the film was interested in working with.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And I think, you know, coming...talking about the ways we're blending genres in *Sangfielle* and the ways we've especially tried to blend genres before. You know, we do a lot of talking about like, how do we want to bring out the sensation of these different genres? But I think the way that this film just threw itself into these sort of like hyper stylized moments of conveying these specific feelings was something that was really interesting to me.

Janine: The...

Austin: Janine, did you have something? Yeah, go ahead.

Janine: I was just going to say the...this came up again in that Kaz Rowe video that I cannot recommend highly enough. It's really good.

Austin: What was the name of it again? Just so we get it again.

Janine: The name of it is "Crimson Peak's Costumes, and How Tuberculosis Shaped Victorian Fashion". The first chunk of it is sort of a primer on Victorian fashion—and, like I said before, consumptive chic—and the second half is focused on *Crimson Peak*. Lot of good trivia in there, like the belt that Edith wears at the picnic is made of woven human hair.

Jack: Oh!

Janine: Which is really interesting when you contrast it with the braided hair at the end.

Jack: Yeah.

Janine: Anyway. But the thing I was going to say is that the nightgowns are really fascinating to me at the end, because both of them are in these billowy, very ghostly nightgowns, right? And Edith's is this sort of diaphanous fabric. It's like swallowing her up. She looks really tiny, and like this is to emphasize that she's ill and has been poisoned and et cetera. But she also tends to move...like, the camera follows her more closely. She moves a lot more deliberately. She's often kind of walking backwards or walking very slowly, considering the situation. And then you compare that to Lucille, [*Jack chuckles*] who is dressed like she's in a renaissance painting of Judith beheading Holofernes.

Jack: Yes!

Janine: I think that's it.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: She's dressed very, very much like she does not look Victorian at that point. She looks like she is something out of, you know, a piece of art from centuries before.

Austin: Right.

Janine: But also, for the entire movie, she's been in really restrictive, you know, as I mentioned earlier, like old-school Victorian, like true Victorian garments and moving very deliberately and slowly, which is part of why it's so jarring when she throws the pot, because that's not how she has moved at that point.

Austin: Right, right.

Janine: Up till then. But then, at the end, she's in this nightgown, and her movement is completely free, and she's tearing around.

Austin: It's so good.

Janine: The camera doesn't follow her the same way, and, you know, in this video, Kaz rightly points out—I'm sure a lot of people have pointed this out—that she's, at that point, she's become one of the ghosts, right?

Austin: Mm. Mm-hmm.

Janine: The way she's treated by the camera.

Jack: She's terrifying.

Janine: The way that her clothing moves. Like, she is one of the ghosts, except she does actually mean harm. She's not trying to chase Edith away necessarily. She wants Edith dead.

Austin: Right. Right.

Janine: And she's sort of already become one of the ghosts at that point. It's a really...it's neat.

Austin: I love how that—

Janine: Again, I love the costumes in this movie.

Austin: That sequence echoes and accelerates a previous sequence, which is, to go back— it's the key sequence. It's when, after opening the Enola trunk and coming back upstairs, Edith—her feet, you know, with the red clay on them—is trying to quickly get back into her room and pretend to be asleep, and Lucille is right behind her but just around the corner, over and over again, and the camera rises up the kind of central elevator shaft of the house. Not the elevator shaft, but the kind of central hobby—er, 'hobby'—lobby space that kind of branches off to all the different wings of the house, and we see Lucille, you know, a few steps behind, coming up the stairs, turning the corner just so, and there, she's still in that other costuming, and she's restrained in that way and unable to close the distance in time. But by the end, freed from that, she is just a whirling terror and is able to get down there with enough time that Edith and Alan cannot just like get out the back door of the clay pit, which is really great, so. Also, when she digs up the huge butcher knife.

Jack: It's so good.

Austin: And is like, ah, yes, my, you know, relic weapon is here. *[Sylvia laughs]* The weapon I killed my mother with that's been imbued with this thing. I read it as the weapon she killed the mother with. I think that's what she says, sort of? It's interesting because this is a family obsessed with the past. Lucille is obsessed with the past. Thomas is obsessed with the past. You know, Edith says, at one point, like, "I'm not in the past," to him, right? Like, stop obsessing over it.

Sylvia: "Stop looking at the past. You're not going to find me there."

Austin: "You're not going to find me there."

Sylvia: Which I really liked.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Right. And so to see— I love the bit where Lucille then literally tries to find a weapon from her own past to use against Edith. This movie can be on the nose in a way that bugs me sometimes, but I didn't mind it there so much. There's— yeah, go ahead.

Jack: You know, in line with the way the wheels of this film just turn faster and faster and faster, I love that without fail the weaponry used in the film gets larger and larger.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* It does. Yep.

Jack: In the early scenes of violence, we start with like this very long thin knife or a pen, a fountain pen.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And then, as we progress—

Janine: Technically, we start with nothing.

Austin: We start with nothing. We start with a bathroom.

Janine: We start with a head meeting the environment, yeah.

Jack: Yeah, someone's—

Austin: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Right, yeah, someone bashing.

Janine: No knife, nothing.

Austin: Which is brutal. All of the violence in this film.

Jack: Horrible.

Austin: There is no holding back, in terms of the way it's depicted.

Janine: Yeah. It reminds me of the...uh, it reminds me of Dark Pictures...

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Yeah, Supermassive.

Janine: And *Until Dawn*, the way where it's like, *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* we're just going to show this to you, and this nose is on the wrong way now.

Austin: Yeah. Uh huh.

Janine: And like, we're just— here it is! It's brutal.

Austin: Me clutching my nose. You can hear me do it out of like sympathetic fear. *[laughs quietly]*

Janine: Yeah. Yeah.

Jack: Just that very particular grimace steels over my face of like, eeugh, you know?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: But yeah, from literally empty hands to...

Jack: Empty hands, thin knives and a pen, and then Edith finds...I think it's like a long kitchen knife?

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And then— so it's like an arms race, at this point.

Austin: It is. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: Then, Lucille finds an absolutely gigantic cleaver, and the only thing that Edith can figure out how to beat her with is a gigantic shovel that she picks up at the end of the movie.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I just want to say: if I was part of a well-practiced incest murder conspiracy... *[Sylvia and Jack laugh]* I would own a revolver. I would own one gun.

Jack: Yeah, there's no guns in this movie.

Austin: I would own a gun, just in case, for when they come for me, because I believe they will, *[Jack laughs]* and I would be ready to shoot them.

Jack: Talking of the on-the-nose stuff that you mentioned earlier, Austin.

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: There are two beats in this film that are so on-the-nose that I wrapped back around and I loved them so much. We have Edith and Lucille having a conversation about, you know, the moths back in England eating the butterflies.

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: Butterflies. Yeah.

Jack: And then we pan in on a dying butterfly on the floor *[Austin laughs]* and see—you know, it's a closeup; it's just a regular closeup—that it is being approached and teemed over by a lot of ants. And then, suddenly, we get a tight, macro closeup. *[laughs]*

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: Of the ants crawling over and eating this butterfly, and then, we get a third, even further closeup.

Austin: It's wild.

Jack: I was just— I was hooting and hollering. It's so great.

Austin: That line is also the funniest shit in the world, because it starts by saying, “We don't have butterflies back home. We only have moths.”

Janine: Yeah, it's like, then what are the moths eating?

Sylvia: *[laughs]* Yeah.

Jack: Yeah, what the fuck?

Austin: And then she's like, “They eat butterflies.” Shut the fuck up!

Janine: So you have butterflies.

Austin: Yes. Well, until you kill them and take their money, presumably, right?

Jack: Ah. The other—

Austin: The two lines— oh, go ahead. You tell me your other line or your other one.

Jack: Oh, the other on-the-nose bit that I just loved so much is Tom, you know, jollily saying, you know, “I'm going to run you a bath. When you turn the water on, it's going to come out red for a bit because of the clay, but it'll clear up soon enough,” and I'm like, I have lived in places where there's clay, *[Austin laughs]* and I know what that looks like.

[1:15:00]

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: You know, the water's kind of brown. Up she goes. She turns the tap on, and what can only be described as blood pours from the tap. *[laughter]*

Sylvia: Oh!

Austin: Oh, it's so good.

Jack: It was so good.

Janine: It's very high in iron oxide. *[Austin and Sylvia laugh]*

Austin: That has like a really weird effect, because by the time real blood starts to show up in this movie...I guess real blood shows up first in the killing of her father, right? But then you—

Jack: Which also specifically has blood-colored water, as like a recurring image.

Austin: It does. It does. But by the time you get to the end of the movie, you've seen the blood clay oozing from so much of the house that, for me, at least, I was like, "All right, yeah, it's blood time now." Like, I'm used to seeing gooey red stuff come out of places. I'm kind of...not immune to it, but I've been living in it in such a way that it doesn't bother me, and like, yo, okay, I get how Lucille and Thomas could get here. *[laughs quietly]*

Jack: I wish someone had gone in the clay.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: We get some skeletal humans come out of the clay, *[Austin: "Yeah"]* but just in terms of the stupid on-the-nose imagery of this movie, I wish we had had someone having to hide in the clay.

Austin: And this is why "The Candle Factory" is a better arc.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: There's a scene where you see— where it seems like she's going to do it, *[Jack and Austin: "Yeah"]* when she like checks on Alan.

Jack: He fucking doesn't.

Sylvia: Yeah. It's a bit of a bummer.

Jack: And it's clear that that's a practical prop. It would have been a great spooky scene.

Austin: Yeah.

Sylvia: I wonder if they were like hesitant because they already had the skeleton coming out of the clay, but...

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah. Presumably, that's where they put all the other bodies, right?

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: So.

Jack: Yeah. That's why they're red.

Austin: That's why they're red. There you go. The line that was like too on-the-nose for me that can't wrap around and like it, but there's another example of them doing the same thing but better towards the end of the film. Early on, there is a brief C-plot, where it's about Edith not fitting into high society of Buffalo, and there's like a rival family that wants to marry Alan.

Jack: Oh, yeah. *[laughs quietly]*

Austin: And she shows up to the dance, and the like matriarch of that family—

Janine: They want to marry Thomas.

Austin: Is that who it is?

Janine: Because they're Alan— they're related to Alan. It's Alan's family.

Austin: Oh, that's what it is. It's Alan's family.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: You're right. It is not— yeah, okay. Right, right, right, right, right. Well, I guess there's two of these. First is they call her— they're like, "Our very own Jane Austen," and then there's some bickering back and forth, and she says, "I prefer Mary Shelley. She died a widow."

Janine: Died a spinster.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: Right? And I was like, *[unimpressed]* “All right. Okay.” And then a little bit later than that, there is the line, “Everybody has their place. I’ll make sure you find yours.”

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: And it’s too the thing it is. It’s too that thing. I actually think “Everybody has their place,” period is pretty good, but “Everybody has their place. I’ll make sure you find yours,” where it’s like very clearly the open threat felt like a step too far. And I want to contrast this with this great line towards the end of the film when Lucille is, quote, unquote, “treating” Edith, who has been getting sicker and sicker because of the poison. Edith says to her, “You’ll be out of this bed soon, I promise.” *[Jack chuckles]* And that is fantastic, because what she means is: you’re going to die and get out of my brother’s bed. And it’s just subtle and poisonous enough to work for me in a way that the earlier line fell flat, so.

Janine: So, I can tell you why the earlier lines worked for me, and this is also why...you know, I want to— in case there are people listening to this who are like, “Oh, but I thought Thomas was hot. I was into it.” The first part of this movie, the part of this movie that’s in Buffalo is a different movie in a different genre.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: The part that’s in Buffalo, this is pure historical romance. Like, this is— I have read so many of these in the past few years, you know, where someone loudly proclaims, “It seems he’s a baronet! Ooh!”

Austin: Right, right, right. Yeah, yeah, yeah. *[Jack laughs]*

Janine: And, “Oh, he’s come from the continent!” or like whatever, or from the— not the continent. I forget the word that people would use in America for someone who’s over from England. But all of that stuff feels so classically like— it’s the classic like bottom of the barrel rivalry and pettiness, *[Austin: “Mm-hmm”]* and “Oh, but she’s different,” and all of that stuff. And, you know, I found that stuff really kind of fun, because I knew it wouldn’t last.

Austin: Mm. That makes sense.

Janine: Because I knew like, okay, we’re doing something here, and I get it, and then this is going to swing really hard in the other direction, but for this moment, we’re kind of in this fantasy where like, you know, the first time we see Edith is like the first time you see Belle in *Beauty and the Beast*. There’s like this plucky music of like *[imitating]* dun-DUN-dun-DUN-dun.

Austin: Uh huh.

Janine: And she’s like walking through the street, and she’s got her big yellow dress, and she’s on a mission. She likes books and reading and writing.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: And, you know. It's like this whole other world, and there's so much life, and a bit of it is ridiculous, but like, she's...it's interesting. I also appreciate that in that she participates. Like, she's participating in society. Even though she doesn't want to go to the party, when she does go to the party, she wears a nice dress.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: They don't make a big deal about her getting dressed. They don't make a big— like, she never once...there's another good YouTube video by Abby Cox that I watched recently called "The 'not like other girls' syndrome in costume dramas" that sort of talks about how a lot of costume dramas from sort of the mid-2000s to the mid-2010s did a lot of the stuff where the heroine's like, "I hate wearing this corset. I can't breathe."

Austin: Uh huh. Right.

Janine: "I'm not like other girls. I want to wear pants and read books," and a lot of that stuff, especially by the period where this movie takes place, doesn't make sense. You could buy a lot of that stuff, and it would have been that weird, and the fact that she's wearing a dress with like thin straps is also not super duper weird. It's like, it stands out. No one else in that room is wearing that dress. But she's also, you know, she's participating.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: She isn't sort of shrugging off the mores. She is a part of that society, even if she is a part of it in a slightly different way than her rivals and stuff like that. So, even though a lot of that stuff is kind of corny...like, I also hate romantic rival plots. I think they're stupid. I tend to just feel bad for the rival, even if they're like impossibly mean. Like, no one would be that openly mean, but even when they are, I just kind of feel bad, because like, you know, a thing Lucille says is that they find women whose dreams have been broken, so that just leaves me thinking like, "Well, what dream did Eunice have that was broken?"

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Janine: But yeah. So, a lot of that stuff, it was chasing a slightly different genre, and for me, it worked.

Austin: There's a really big formal piece of punctuation that separates that part of the film from the rest of the film, and I'm curious where anyone else picked it up. There's a technique that's used for the first 45 minutes of this movie that then never gets used again.

Janine: The vignettes?

Austin: It's not just vignettes. It's particularly the iris shot. Like, the iris transition.

Janine: Yes. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Austin: The iris wipe.

Janine: They used it like two or three times or something.

Austin: They use it like maybe three or four times.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: They use it constantly in that first 40 minutes and never again.

Janine: It's so— *[laughs]* yeah.

Austin: I mean, it literally ends on that. Like, the funeral ends on an iris wipe in *[Janine: "Yeah"]* on her wedding ring, on the red ruby ring.

Jack: Yeah, what's going on?

Austin: And then, from then on— I think it's a transition. It's the thing Janine is saying. It's a different movie up until that point, right?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: It's like...I don't want to— there's a *Mulholland Drive* thing happening here *[laughs]* is what I will say, in which there is a particular reality to which she belongs in Buffalo and a different reality that she belongs in in *Crimson Peak*, and the genre of the film adjusts for that. To which I say, like, that rules. This is a thing you know we love here at Friends at the Table is that like, if the world changes, the rules of the world should change too. It's why we change systems so often. And I think you've hit this really well, Janine, that like from the way the script is written, the way the costuming works, the way the acting is done in the first half of this—or the first act of this, I guess—to the way it's shot, we're talking about a different...like, even think about those shots of like downtown Buffalo early on, these kind of like, "wow, you're about town," and there's a wide shot of people moving through the streets, and like you said, she's on her way, and it's boisterous music, and it's like, that is a different set of genre rules being put to work, not just narratively, but formally, in terms of how stories are told visually. And they jettison all of that for this other thing, where like, there's still openness out in the other set, but it's a much less bustling and a much quieter openness that feels like the haunted house film, you know? It is big open areas.

Janine: You cannot go wherever you want when you get to Allerdale Hall.

Austin: Right. Yes, absolutely. You are constrained.

Janine: There are restrictions, not just social restrictions, but restrictions geographically, of just, you will sometimes just be stuck up there or stuck down here.

Austin: Right. There's that— *[sighs]*

Janine: There is no freedom of movement in the town, the way there is in Buffalo.

Austin: Right. She chooses not to go to the party in Buffalo. She is not being forced not to go.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: And, in fact, we have that great line where Thomas says like, "What's so great about being here alone?" and, you know, the exchange that she makes is then being in a place where she can never be alone, where literally they have to go to the city, they have to go to a nearby town, to go to the depot and rent a room underneath the warehouse to sleep together for the first time, so impossible is it for them to find a moment alone, you know?

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: So yeah, I think that that makes me appreciate the stuff in the first half of the movie a lot more. That reading is good.

Jack: There's a really brief scene with some of the only normal people in the movie when the doctor goes and tries to rent a horse to get him to Allerdale Hall in the snowstorm.

Austin: *[laughs quietly]* Yes.

Jack: And we get, you know, some of the few characters in this movie that aren't either upper class aristocrats or very upper middle class, you know, successful people, in the people who just run this stable. And they are very clear about the rules of the world, unlike all the other characters in this movie. *[Austin laughs quietly]* You know, they're like, "Look, in Allerdale Hall, there might be ghosts. You know, there might be shrieking figures. There might not be a hole in the ceiling— you know, there might not be a ceiling. But here, we are not renting you a horse, because we're not doing that. It is too cold. You can't talk me into it." And the guy's like, "Well, then, I'm going to walk to the hall," *[Austin laughs]* and our normal man is like, "That will take you four hours," and the doctor is like, "I'll do anything for love," basically, to which— *[Austin laughs]*

Sylvia: "I better get going," I think is his line.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Yeah, uh huh.

Jack: To which our normal man just absolutely deadpans him and is like, "...okay!"

Austin: *[laughs]* It's so good.

Jack: We had this brief scene of just like regular people showing up in the middle of *Crimson Peak*, and I thought it was great.

Austin: Mm-hmm. It's really good. I really love that bit a lot. God, I did have another— oof, I think I've lost the thing I was going to say that was related to that, but...I'm curious: is the hair thing too obviously?

Janine: No.

Austin: She arrives there, and her hair is down, and she is like clutching on Thomas for support because she is deeply traumatized by the death of her father and also scared of this house, and then the second things start coming together again, she starts wearing her hair up and putting her glasses back on. Does that work?

Sylvia: Uh...

Janine: Mm...

Sylvia: Does she, though? Like, is...I don't know if that tracks with the end of the movie.

Austin: She ends up wearing it down again because of the—

Sylvia: Yeah.

Austin: They put it back down after the big conflict.

Sylvia: Oh, okay. Yeah.

Austin: But when she goes downstairs and finds the— and like puts the stick in the well of clay, and basically once she figures out that some shit is up. I think it's right after she gets the Italy letter. It might even actually be...I think it actually might be after the love scene. She comes back, and her hair is up, for the first time in the second half of the movie. And I didn't know if that was me reading into it too much, or...

Sylvia: That sounds like something.

Austin: Or what, yeah.

Sylvia: Like, I'd believe that.

Janine: I have to check something.

Austin: Uh huh?

Janine: She's wearing it up in that bath scene.

Austin: Oh, is she?

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: In the bathtub. Interesting. Okay.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Well, that makes sense. Sure. Sure.

Jack: A real quick aside about the bathtub scene. I just loved what...playing fetch with a dog from the bath [*Austin: "Uh huh"*] communicates so much instantly about this house, not just in terms of this place has a big fucking bathroom, but in terms of like, all the general rules that govern the sort of intimacy or the ways in which a house functions are being broken here. You know, you sit in your bathtub, and you're able to play fetch with a dog.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which you definitely couldn't do in Buffalo.

Austin: No. And they had a nice house in Buffalo, so.

Jack: They do have a nice house. I think their house in—

Janine: But they had staff.

Jack: They had staff?

Janine: They had staff in Buffalo.

Austin: They had staff. Yeah.

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: Or they had some...

Janine: They don't have staff at— at Allerdale, they have one guy.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Who has—

Janine: And then maybe a couple other people who do the outside clay stuff, but the one guy they have also has a bad memory or...you know.

Austin: *[sighs]* Or something. Finlay.

Janine: Something like that.

Jack: That line is so good. It's so spooky.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: As they arrive at the house, he says something like, "You've been married for a while."

Austin: Uh huh.

Jack: And like, at that point in the movie, I thought...because I did not know what this movie was about, and at that point, I thought we were going for a real supernatural, like, she has always been the mistress of Allerdale Hall.

Austin: Ah.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: That's fun.

Jack: You know, like, she is...the ghosts are her. She's in some sort of, you know...

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Ghost hell.

Austin: I remember the other thing I was going to say. It's unrelated to everything, which is I really love that in this movie— you know what? There were no guns above the mantelpiece, but there was snow. All of the snow that is collecting throughout all of the second half of the film is

taken down from the mantle and turned into a little bed of snow so that she doesn't die instantly from falling from the third floor. *[laughs]*

Jack: From falling!

Austin: It's Chekov's snow bed. I love it so much.

[1:30:02]

Jack: *[laughs]* Yeah. It's great. Other things that I really liked is we get Edith looking up at a portrait, but we don't quite know what the portrait is of.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: And I think Edith says like, "Is that your mother?" and suddenly we get a shot over her shoulder to the most frightening looking woman. *[Austin laughs]* It's like, this portrait is a nightmare.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Which I thought was good.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Anyone got any strong opinions about the dog?

Sylvia: Uh, good dog. RIP.

Jack: RIP.

Janine: Yeah. Good dog, bad ending.

Austin: Ah, that dog. Yeah.

Jack: RIP in a brutal way.

Austin: That dog— the situation with that dog was the first signal that I had that they were going to try to make Thomas a viable fan favorite love interest, because he did not kill the dog and let it go instead. And who knows? Maybe—

Sylvia: That was the face turn for you?

Austin: Well, it wasn't the face turn for— *[Jack laughs]* I mean, it was the face turn for me as a smark. Do you know what I mean?

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah. No, yeah, for sure.

Austin: Like, “Oh, yeah, they’re trying to give him a face turn here.” Because he didn’t kill the dog. He was told to kill the dog, and he didn’t, and having seen the whole film now, I wonder, did he even tell Finlay, like, “Hey, make sure this dog gets food,” you know?

Sylvia: I wonder– like, my thing was I wonder if that was supposed to echo or like foreshadow the stuff with the doctor.

Austin: Yeah, totally. That’s exactly it.

Jack: Oh, yeah.

Sylvia: Right?

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Like, specifically, “I told you to kill it, but you just let it walk away.”

Austin: A hundred percent that, yeah.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: I’m totally with you, yeah.

Sylvia: Yeah.

Jack: But Lucille kills this dog just summarily. It’s not even the focus of the scene. You know, we’ve got all this drama in the doorway, which I don’t think is a coincidence.

Austin: Mm.

Jack: And the dog is barking, and Edith basically just goes, “Come here,” and then kills it.

Sylvia: Lucille, not Edith.

Jack: Edith. Edith!

Sylvia: Edith does not kill her own dog. *[laughter]*

Jack: There’s an awful switch that happens.

Austin: Oh, that would be— now, that's a horror film. Jeez. You bring this person in, and then suddenly you realize you've married the killer.

Sylvia: I believe that's called *I Married an Axe Murderer*.

Austin: It is.

Sylvia: Starring Mike Meyers.

Austin: Mike Meyers! Yeah, uh huh! *[Sylvia laughs]* A couple last things. Again, just talking about the violence in this film and the unflinching way it's depicted. The death of the father and then the knife in the face are both these—

Jack: Oh!

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: And also the knife in the armpit and the blood that spurts out when it's removed. But the knife in the face is an all-time gasp.

Janine: Especially when he's trying to pull it out, and it's like creaking against the bone.

Austin: Yep! Uh huh!

Sylvia: Ohh. Yes.

Jack: And we don't get a single cut away.

Austin: Nope.

Jack: I did like, just in terms of over-the-top gothic imagery, I liked his single tear of blood at the end of that scene.

Austin: Uh huh! *[laughs]*

Sylvia: It's so good.

Austin: It's so good.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: Fucking, like, if you're going to go for it, go for it, right?

Jack: But that was horrible. I mean, that stuff is very consistent with the way Guillermo del Toro shoots and conceives of violence, right?

Austin: Mm.

Jack: Like, in a lot of his movies, specifically the one— I mean, actually, I think in a lot of his movies—even, you know, the sort of *Hellboys* or whatever—the way he deploys violence is sort of consistent and unflinching when it happens.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Jack: I'm thinking of stuff in *Pan's Labyrinth* a lot.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Sylvia: Yeah, I think that's a pretty solid throughline with his stuff. I definitely see what you mean.

Austin: My last technology note is I love the gramophone sequence as the voices get distorted as it slows down, especially Thomas's as it slows down. *[Jack laughs]*

Sylvia: Ah.

Austin: But also, the ways in which technology is...I don't know that it's ambivalent, but like, in this moment, at least, we see it being used to record the crimes of the powerful. So, just as it might be the thing that leapfrogs the Sharpes back into relevance, it also is the living record of their crimes and what they did to people, and so that...I like seeing it deployed in both of those directions. That's a sharp use of it, I think. No pun intended. *[Sylvia laughs]* Because, in fact, it was not a Sharpe use. It was a Sciotti use of it. Not a shoddy use of it!

Jack: No.

Austin: A Sciotti use of it.

Jack: When she gets the wax cylinders out, and she's...KB pointed something out here, which was really fun, is that like, the fact that they're wax cylinders means that they have to be, you know, physically played through a speaker.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And in this house where you don't know...you know, presumably the Sharpes are just elsewhere in the house right now. There's something really scary about the fact that, you know, she's not like looking through a notebook or reading a letter. She's basically having to plug in the aux cable and play whatever's on these things. *[Austin and Sylvia laugh]*

Austin: Yeah, yeah. Totally.

Jack: As she was going to put them in, I was like, “Oh, I hope there’s something really fucked up and scary on these,” and there kind of– it’s just very cold, that scene. Not cold in the sense of– there’s a lot of emotion coming out of these tapes, but it’s played very straightforward.

Austin: Yeah.

Jack: Except for the song, which is just played to be scary.

Austin: Yeah. I–

Sylvia: I do like– oh, sorry.

Austin: Go ahead. No, you go ahead.

Sylvia: I do like the part in that scene where he’s like, “What do I say?” and she’s like, “Say you love me!”

Jack: Oh, it’s good!

Sylvia: And he like sighs and then goes into the little poem thing. I thought that was really good.

Austin: I was just going to say that, Jack, to your point of the risk of being heard, even on the cylinders, one of the women, one of the wives says like, “I have to be quiet now, or they’ll hear me.”

Jack: Yeah.

Austin: And so the thought of her recording into this thing as quietly as possible and like, and yet, it’s going to echo when it’s played, is really good. Not that that– you know, that doesn’t–

Jack: There’s a connection.

Austin: I don’t think that that actually happens. Like, I don’t think that anyone hears her listening.

Jack: No.

Austin: But anyway.

Jack: It intimately connects those two women in that moment, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Like, the woman recording it is afraid that she's going to be heard speaking it aloud, and Edith is afraid that this woman's testimony is going to be heard out of the wax cylinder.

Austin: Right, right. Right. Which, again, lines up with this sort of like the ghosts are metaphors, the past is haunting you, et cetera, et cetera, so. Good movie.

Jack: Yeah.

Sylvia: Mm.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Any other final thoughts here, before we wrap up?

Jack: We didn't need the monologue at the end. Oh, sorry, Sylvi.

Sylvia: No, I was just going to say I hate that I am the type of person who will see Jim Beaver in a movie and point and say, "Oh, it's Bobby from *Supernatural*." Still have that in me.

Austin: Oh, buddy.

Sylvia: Even though I have not watched that show in like a decade, easy. Just wanted to mention that.

Jack: He was giving me big Joel Edgerton vibes in this movie. Joel Edgerton plays like the risen duke in *Green Knight*.

Sylvia: Oh.

Austin: Right, right. Sure.

Jack: Definitely came across in that way for me.

Sylvia: Yeah, yeah.

Austin: I can see it.

Sylvia: Absolutely can see it.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: Uh, you don't like the final narration, Jack?

Jack: I...

Austin: The “ghosts are real” bit?

Jack: I thought it was really corny, and I think that sometimes you need that in a movie. I don’t know why it was there.

Austin: You like—

Janine: You know what’s interesting about the—

Austin: Do you like it in the beginning? Because it’s just echoing— er, it starts at the beginning. She doesn’t say the whole thing at the beginning. She only says the “Ghosts are real. This much I know.”

Jack: What were you going to say, Janine?

Austin: Sorry. Yeah, go ahead, Janine.

Janine: Well, so, the end of that, like the end of the credits, you see the cover close—

Jack: Oh, yeah, it’s her book.

Janine: And it’s like, “*Crimson Peak* by Edith—” yeah. But when I was watching that YouTube video, they showed the end scene, and in their version, it did not have her name on the cover of the book.

Austin: Oh.

Jack: Huh.

Austin: Huh. Weird.

Janine: Which is weird. Uh huh. I don’t know what the...maybe they— I don’t know. I don’t know what that change is.

Austin: I wonder if it’s a trailer cut.

Janine: Maybe.

Austin: I wonder if there’s a trailer that doesn’t include that element.

Janine: Right.

Austin: Because it would be...not a spoiler, but sort of a spoiler. You know.

Janine: That would be...

Jack: That's a really interesting distinction though, right?

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: Because in the one without her name, it gives the whole thing a sort of stagey, very Guillermo del Toro feeling of like, you know, "i'm wrapping this up in the story that you have been invited to see tonight."

Austin: Mm-hmm. *[laughs]*

Jack: But with her name on it, it has a much more sort of end of Greta Gerwig's *Little Women* feeling *[Sylvia chuckles]* of like, "and this is the story that I experienced."

Janine: And also, for me, that part of it changes the tone of the thing where he's trying to break her heart.

Jack: Huh.

Janine: Because it makes the things he's saying seem like they are truthful *[Austin: "Mm-hmm"]* and that he actually believes them to a degree but he was either protecting her from them or maybe playing up their severity when he was trying to hurt her. Because it is the real experience of all of these things that ends up being, you know, her breakthrough.

Austin: Right, right.

Janine: Which complicates that scene a lot.

Austin: Oh, yeah, totally.

Jack: Yeah. That's really interesting.

Austin: Well, it goes back to the thing you were saying before too, Janine, about the genre of the first act of this movie feeling different. The speed with which he reads and comprehends that it is fiction and that it is, quote, unquote, "good," when they first meet is the fastest speed. *[Jack laughs]* It is the fastest meet cute I've ever seen.

Janine: Mm-hmm.

Austin: He looks at the first page of it upside down as she's transcribing it [*Sylvia laughs*] on the typewriter—another piece of technology, which is interesting, because she prefers that to the pen—and immediately has feelings about it, which, you know.

Jack: I would just be like, "Is there someone in this story called...John?" Like, looking at it upside down. [*Austin and Sylvia laugh*] There's a...I want to look at it in the Netflix version, because I want to see if I like it as much as I did the first time. Tom Hiddleston has an absolutely fantastic reaction at one point in this movie, which is when he is shown the piece of paper that reveals that her father knows that he's been married before.

Austin: Mm-hmm.

Jack: And it is just an immaculate piece of reacting from Tom Hiddleston, because his whole demeanor changes as he looks up from the piece of paper, from this kind of foppish baronet to like, "Oh, shit, right." Her dad has the whole scheme unraveled at the beginning of the movie, pretty much.

Austin: Right.

Jack: And I guess he's realizing in that moment that they're going to have to kill him, but I just thought that was a really nice moment from Tom Hiddleston.

Sylvia: Mm-hmm.

Austin: I love the sort of tragedy of...there are those two moments in that part of the movie that lead her further in, in a way, or they give her...in both cases, it's people trying to protect her, and the actions end up leading her further in. The first is the mother warning her about Crimson Peak, which scares her so much that she does not feel like staying home that night and goes with him to the ball or to the event. Maybe she goes anyway, obviously, but she specifically looks back up the stairs after that sequence, [*Janine: "Mm-hmm, yeah"*] and is like, "Eeeh, I don't know. Going out is looking better and better every second." And then the kind of hard push that her father gives instead of playing this very cautiously, instead of telling her first. He's so eager to get them out of there to protect her [*Jack: "Yeah"*] and to stop the scheme that—indirectly, I'm not putting it all on him, obviously, but like—it sets things in motion so that he ends up dead and she ends up there. And the sort of horror of that is very interesting to me, these people who are trying to protect her and only end up stumbling, you know, in ways that push her further in.

Jack: KB had a fun question that I don't know...I don't think that this is the case, but do you think that she wasn't the only person who saw the ghost? Do you think that her mother visited him, her father?

Austin: Oh. Huh. That's fun.

Jack: I like that a lot. You know, we get these big distinct warnings from these two people. I just put the screengrab of Tom Hiddleston looking up from the piece of paper in the chat as well.

Austin: Yeah, it's good. It's very good. Yeah, I love that shot. Yeah, I don't know.

Janine: I mean, it's...mm.

Austin: It's tough, because the father is...he seems like he's written to be this particular type of father in the romance story who is supportive of the slightly askew lead, his daughter, in a way that's really positive, but I don't know that I see a lot of affinity for ghosts with him at the same—you know, the way that she has it.

Jack: Right.

Austin: But I don't think that he thinks it's like a foolish, girlish— you know what I— he's not the publisher, and he supports—

Jack: [*scoffs*] "Write a love story."

Austin: Exactly. Though he does have that line about...is it him who has the line of like, "Everyone falls in love eventually, even women"? Is that him?

Jack: I think so. I think that might be him.

Austin: So yeah, I don't know. I don't know if he's seen the mother's ghost. He seems too grounded. I don't know.

Janine: Yeah, my read is— this kind of goes back to, you know, the thing that was said about he's uncovered the whole scheme at the start. I don't think he has entirely uncovered the whole scheme at the start. Like, I think his read is that Thomas is a bigamist and is maybe doing the thing that like— you know, this is the time of the...there was like a whole wave of American heiresses that moved to England and married into the aristocracy so that they could get titles and so that the aristocracy could shore up their failing wealth. That was like a really...not like common common, but like, there are a lot of books about this. This is also the premise of *Downton Abbey* basically, right?

Austin: Yeah, yeah.

Janine: Like, this is the Lady and Lord Grantham. Like, this is their generation, was she came in from America and brought money, and he gave her family prestige by, you know, a connection to the aristocracy. So, you know, my read is more that the father is aware of that angle and is saying like, "Look, you're already married. This is not— you know, this is not going to work. This cannot be the thing you want it to be." I don't think he would think that it's a death thing. I don't think he's behaving in a way that's...

Austin: He knows about the mother, though.

Janine: Well...

Austin: Because that's the info that Alan gets later that's the copy of what the father got before.

Janine: He doesn't. I don't think he knows about that, though. I think—

Austin: Hmm.

Janine: So, the thing that Mr. Holly says is that he wished he could give him this, *[Austin: "Oh"]* but he only wanted official documentation.

Austin: I missed this. Okay. Good to know.

Janine: So he provided the documentation of the previous marriage, but he gives the newspaper clipping to Alan, saying, "but also, look at this salacious..."

Jack: Newspaper: "Grisly Murder."

Austin: Right, right.

Janine: Yeah, look at this salacious bullshit.

Austin: Right.

Janine: But like, you know, the salacious bullshit is not the thing that you would present to your high-paying client. It's not strong enough, necessarily.

Austin: Totally. That makes sense.

Sylvia: I think there's also a line where he talks about like having had trouble getting the newspaper thing or something?

[1:45:02]

Austin: Like, earlier on?

Janine: Mm?

Sylvia: No, he says it when he's going to meet Alan. Mr. Holly says something about...

Austin: No, I'm sorry, but in other words, Mr. Holly couldn't— didn't even have it earlier.

Sylvia: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Austin: Gotcha. Gotcha, gotcha, gotcha. So yeah, then yeah, he probably doesn't know.

Janine: Yeah.

Jack: I think the other— you know, the...I wonder if part of what KB's getting to with "did someone else..." Who in this movie is able to see ghosts and why? What is it about Mia's character that enables her to see the ghosts? Is it what we talked about earlier which is her curiosity and her receptiveness to a situation? Or is it simply that...well, is it that she is the one being endangered by the people who killed these ghosts in the first place?

Austin: I think it also potentially speaks to what ghosts can do in this world, which seems to be what Janine said earlier, which is warn and threaten but not enact harm. And so...or maybe not even threaten. Maybe it is literally only warn, which is to say: she is the one who needs warning, and so they are visible to her. And in that way, if that's the read, then it complicates Thomas's appearance at the end, because then, [*Jack: "Hmm!"*] is he showing up to warn Lucille?

Jack: To warn Lucille!

Austin: Moments before she dies.

Janine: He's also the only male ghost that we see.

Jack: He is.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: All the other ghosts we see are women. I think...it might be a tenuous connection, but I think another thing that might be worth considering in that vein is that if you look back into the practice of like Victorian spiritualism and seances, that was like very heavily...mm, a lot of the most famous sort of members of that were women, especially— you know, there were like— I forget the names of the sisters, but there were like a couple of sisters who did seances and kind of...so there's a whole thing about like women specifically talking to the dead. And also, you know, I think there's a lot of reasons for that, but one of the reasons you could give is that like women were at a higher risk of dying.

Austin: Sure.

Jack: Yeah.

Janine: In general. Like, the...this is the last time I'm going to go back to that YouTube video, I promise, but they mentioned a thing I've never heard of before but that makes total sense in terms of the culture of like morbidity in Victorian society was that young women would sew their own burial shrouds and keep them under their bed.

Jack: Wow.

Austin: Mm.

Janine: Just in case you—

Sylvia: God.

Janine: So, in case you die at any minute—

Austin: You're ready to go.

Janine: People would know exactly where to get your burial shroud.

Austin: Jeez.

Jack: Woof.

Janine: They could whip it out and throw it over you.

Sylvia: Wow.

Janine: So there's this association with, you know, the feminine and also death [*Austin:* "Mm-hmm"] that probably plays into that in a big way.

Austin: What I'm realizing now on this thing of the "What do the ghosts do and what do they see?" this goes back to, Jack, that final monologue, which is Edith separating out the categories of ghost, right?

Jack: Mm.

Austin: The thing that I just got caught on was like: but wait a second, Lucille's ghost is not warning anybody. She is just playing the piano at the end. And the two kind of categories of ghost that she lays down are: there are ghosts that are tied to places or things or land, things that are like physical things, times, dates, et cetera, particular things, like actions. And then there are ghosts that are tied to a desire for revenge or a big emotional thing, and the way the camera—the way it's shot, I think, and the way that like it ends on the image of Lucille indicates that she is one of these ghosts holding onto an emotion, stuck not to a place or the particular crime but to this desire to never fade away, to this sense of being stuck to the past or being in

love with Thomas and being in love with being a Sharpe and all of those things, and she says like, oh, "Those are the ghosts that never fade away," or something like that, right? And that's interesting, because if every other ghost in this entire film had some purpose, had some thing that they were trying to achieve when they show up, which tends to be warning Edith or leading her closer to the truth, to then doom Lucille to this other sort of ghastly existence [Jack: "Yeah"] is very distinct and an important note, right?

Janine: Well, that's her purpose, right? Is like, her...not warning purpose, but like, the entire thing with the clay overtaking the house is very much a like, the land— you know, that's one of the big things that caused the downfall of the aristocracy was the ways they could monetize their land changed, and, you know, the way that a lot of them— I believe that's true, anyway, and the thing that I know is true is that the way that a lot of them tried to kind of forestall their ruin was by selling off their land, and you would eventually have less and less land, and you had to use whatever money you had to maintain the house on the land that you had left, so there's like this big...there is this big struggle between the opulence of this decaying house and the land that is literally dragging it down, and, you know, everything she has done has been sort of in the pursuit of keeping the house above ground, you know? And also like, it ties into...when I look at her drawer full of hair braids and stuff and the marriages, I think of it more as like, yes, it's directly murder and stuff, but more broadly, it's the way that the aristocracy stayed afloat, which is like good marriages, and it's just a string of good marriages that keep a place like that above ground, and, you know, its death and its blood and its decay. So, like, that's the only place she can be, and that's also why I sort of knew from the start, like, this wasn't going to be a thing where she was going to get torn apart by ghosts. It couldn't be, right? It had to be...

Jack: Yeah.

Janine: It had to end like this.

Austin: Well, interestingly, also, the fact that it doesn't sink into the ground dooms her in this way. It would be freeing for her [laughs quietly] for the whole house to sink into the clay at the end. She does not get that.

Janine: Yeah.

Austin: She has to play the piano.

Janine: Well, it's going to be slow, right?

Austin: Right, exactly. This is going to be...

Janine: Like, it's going to be a stretched out thing over generations, where the house just gradually falls apart and, you know...

Austin: Right. Diminishes.

Janine: She's just stuck there.

Austin: Yeah.

Janine: No one goes there anymore. Like, there's, yeah.

Austin: All right. Well, I think that's going to do it for us and *Crimson Peak*. I hope you enjoyed this. As always, thank you, everybody, for your support. We'll be back with another one of these soon, so stay tuned for that. All right, let's Time.is.

Sylvia: Okay.

Jack: I am so excited to watch *Dracula*.

Austin: Same! Same.

Sylvia: Oh, god, that movie fucks. [*Austin laughs*]

Janine: One of my joke notes in this was: "Guy who's only ever seen Gary Oldman *Dracula*: I'm getting big Gary Oldman *Dracula* vibes from this." [*others laugh*]

Austin: Uh huh. For sure, for sure.

Jack: Oh, I'm so stoked.