

Like she's parked in the MIDDLE OF THE WOODS.

CUT TO:

INT. HUGH'S BEDROOM - INTERCUT

Hugh sighs.

HUGH

Okay, stay there. Listen... I want you to go to Steve and Shaye's. I can drive to Orlando, get a flight to L.A. in the morning. Steve's the closest, you go to him, and -  
(beat)  
I'll meet you there, sweetie.

Nell smiles a little. Sadly.

NELL

Okay. I love you, daddy.

Something about the way she says it doesn't sit right with Hugh.

HUGH

Are you okay?

INT. NELL'S CAR - INTERCUT

Nell smiles, sadly. Tears fall down her cheeks, but her voice doesn't betray her feelings.

NELL

I'm fine. I'm sorry to wake you.  
Good night, daddy.

She hangs up. Takes a deep breath. Looks forward, at something we can't see, in the darkness beyond the front of the car.

Then, she GETS OUT OF THE CAR, leaving the DOOR OPEN... and walks into the darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. HUGH'S BEDROOM - INTERCUT

Hugh stares at the phone in his hand. Looking around his room, taking deep breaths. THIS MAN IS AFRAID. He shakes his head, this isn't possible...

Finally, he gets up. Goes to his closet, pulling his bags down.

He QUICKLY PACKS HIS THINGS, throwing just what he needs in the suitcase.

Bag in hand, he PULLS THE BEDROOM DOOR OPEN -

CUT TO:

INT. STEVEN'S ROOM, HILL HOUSE, THEN - NIGHT

- YOUNG HUGH BURSTS through Young Steven's door, startling the boy.

YOUNG HUGH  
Get up. Stevie, get up.

YOUNG STEVEN  
Dad? What's -

YOUNG HUGH  
Get up, we have to get out of here.  
Right now.

YOUNG STEVEN  
Why? What's -

YOUNG HUGH  
Quietly.

He pulls Steven up by the arm, moving him toward the door.

YOUNG STEVEN  
My shoes -

YOUNG HUGH  
Shhh.

Hugh pokes his head out into the hallway -

AND QUICKLY PULLS IT BACK, as though he SAW SOMETHING.

Slowly, silently, he PULLS THE DOOR CLOSED.

He keeps one hand on the doorknob, and raising a finger to his lips with the other. "Shhhh."

Steven nods, confused.

He stares at his father. Hugh is SWEATING, PALE. PANICKED. Steven studies him, he doesn't know why his father is acting like this.

Then he hears -

FOOTSTEPS IN THE HALLWAY. Moving closer and closer. Slow, almost SHAMBLING.

Hugh holds the door knob, reaching up to gently PUSH THE BUTTON LOCK.

They wait in silence as the footsteps REACH THE DOOR.

Nothing for a few seconds...

AND THEN THE KNOB STARTS TO TURN. Softly, exploring.

Hugh RELEASES HIS GRIP but keeps his hand hovering around the door knob, watching it turn softly.

They wait, HOLDING THEIR BREATH...

And the footsteps BEGIN TO WALK AWAY.

Further and further down the hallway they go, until all is silent again.

Hugh turns to his son.

YOUNG HUGH (CONT'D)  
(whispering)  
We're going to run.

YOUNG STEVEN  
Dad, what's happening -

YOUNG HUGH  
Quiet.

He reaches down for the doorknob, and slowly -

TRYING NOT TO MAKE A SOUND -

URNS THE KNOB UNTIL THE LOCK DISENGAGES.

He takes a breath, and then silently PUSHES THE DOOR OPEN. He pokes his head into the hall, looking both ways.

After a moment, he STARTS BREATHING AGAIN. He turns to Steven.

YOUNG HUGH (CONT'D)  
I'm going to carry you.

YOUNG STEVEN  
What? I can -

YOUNG HUGH

Hold on to me, very tight. Keep your eyes closed. No matter what you hear, don't open them. Do you promise?

YOUNG STEVEN

I -

YOUNG HUGH

Do you promise?

YOUNG STEVEN

(beat)

I promise.

Hugh SCOOPS him up, which is tough. He's not a little kid anymore. Steven awkwardly wraps his arms around his dad's neck, hooking his legs around his hips.

Hugh WINCES from the weight, but manages to support him.

YOUNG HUGH

Eyes closed. No matter what. Eyes closed.

Steven shakes his head, rests his chin on his father's shoulder, and CLOSES HIS EYES.

YOUNG HUGH (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Okay. Okay... okay.

CUT TO:

INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY, HILL HOUSE, THEN - CONTINUOUS

He pushes the door open and starts moving FAST down the hallway.

WE STAY ON STEVEN'S CLOSED EYES. We hear -

HUGH'S FOOTSTEPS, heavy with the weight of both of them.

But then, something else -

BANGS. CREAKING WOOD.

As though the house around him is MOVING AS WELL.

HUGH

(desperate)

Eyes closed!

The BANGS GET LOUDER, and then -

AN EAR-SHATTERING SCREECH comes from the other end of the hall.

A woman SCREAMING, growing in volume and intensity -

Just as Hugh is about to round the corner, Steven OPENS HIS EYES -

YOUNG STEVEN'S POV: The hallway, dark, but for just a split second before we turn the corner we think we see -

A WOMAN, AT THE FAR END OF THE HALLWAY -

EITHER IN A NIGHTGOWN OR A LONG DRESS -

ADVANCING QUICKLY -

Hugh turns the corner, and we can't see any more.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER, HILL HOUSE, THEN - CONTINUOUS

Hugh's feet THUNDER down the stairs, clutching Steven to him. Sprinting toward the door.

Behind them, a HORRIBLE VOICE SHRIEKS:

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
BRING HIIMMM BAAAACCCCKKKK!

Hugh barrels toward the front door, WHICH IS ALREADY OPEN. Panting, gasping for air, he RUNS OUTSIDE, the boy in his arms.

CUT TO:

EXT. HILL HOUSE, THEN - CONTINUOUS

Hugh SPINS Steven in his arms, putting his FEET ON THE GROUND.

YOUNG HUGH  
The car!

Steven's eyes are open now, he starts RUNNING next to his father, panicked.

Behind them, the front door of Hill House SLAMS SHUT.