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**STEPHEN  
KING**

THE SHINING



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*Excerpt from Doctor Sleep*

*Acknowledgements*

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This is for Joe Hill King, who shines on.

My editor on this book, as on the previous two, was Mr. William G. Thompson, a man of wit and good sense. His contribution to this book has been large, and for it, my thanks.

S.K.



Some of the most beautiful  
resort hotels in the world  
are located in Colorado, but  
the hotel in these pages  
is based on none of them.

The Overlook and the people  
associated with it exist  
wholly within  
the author's  
imagination.

It was in this apartment, also, that there stood ... a gigantic clock of ebony. Its pendulum swung to and fro with a dull, heavy, monotonous clang; and when ... the hour was to be stricken, there came from the brazen lungs of the clock a sound which was clear and loud and deep and exceedingly musical, but of so peculiar a note and emphasis that, at each lapse of an hour, the musicians of the orchestra were constrained to pause ... to hearken to the sound; and thus the waltzers perforce ceased their evolutions; and there was a brief disconcert of the whole gay company; and, while the chimes of the clock yet rang, it was observed that the giddiest grew pale, and the more aged and sedate passed their hands over their brows as if in confused reverie or meditation. But when the echoes had fully ceased, a light laughter at once pervaded the assembly ... and [they] smiled as if at their own nervousness ... and made whispering vows, each to the other, that the next chiming of the clock should produce in them no similar emotion; and then, after the lapse of sixty minutes ... there came yet another chiming of the clock, and then were the same disconcert and tremulousness and meditation as before.

But in spite of these things, it was a gay and magnificent revel ...

E. A. Poe  
“The Masque of the Red Death”

The sleep of reason breeds monsters.

Goya

It'll shine when it shines.

Folk saying

# **PART ONE**

## PREFATORY MATTERS

# CHAPTER ONE

## JOB INTERVIEW

Jack Torrance thought: *Officious little prick.*

Ullman stood five-five, and when he moved, it was with the prissy speed that seems to be the exclusive domain of all small plump men. The part in his hair was exact, and his dark suit was sober but comforting. I am a man you can bring your problems to, that suit said to the paying customer. To the hired help it spoke more curtly: This had better be good, you. There was a red carnation in the lapel, perhaps so that no one on the street would mistake Stuart Ullman for the local undertaker.

As he listened to Ullman speak, Jack admitted to himself that he probably could not have liked any man on that side of the desk—under the circumstances.

Ullman had asked a question he hadn't caught. That was bad; Ullman was the type of man who would file such lapses away in a mental Rolodex for later consideration.

"I'm sorry?"

"I asked if your wife fully understood what you would be taking on here. And there's your son, of course." He glanced down at the application in front of him. "Daniel. Your wife isn't a bit intimidated by the idea?"

"Wendy is an extraordinary woman."

"And your son is also extraordinary?"

Jack smiled, a big wide PR smile. "We like to think so, I suppose. He's quite self-reliant for a five-year-old."

No returning smile from Ullman. He slipped Jack's application back into a file. The file went into a drawer. The desk top was now completely bare except for a blotter, a telephone, a Tensor lamp, and an in/out basket. Both sides of the in/out were empty, too.

Ullman stood up and went to the file cabinet in the corner. "Step around the desk, if you will, Mr. Torrance. We'll look at the hotel floor plans."

He brought back five large sheets and set them down on the glossy walnut plane of the desk. Jack stood by his shoulder, very much aware of the scent of Ullman's cologne. *All my men wear English Leather or they wear nothing at all* came into his mind for no reason at all, and he had to clamp his tongue between his teeth to keep in a bray of laughter. Beyond the wall, faintly, came the sounds of the Overlook Hotel's kitchen, gearing down from lunch.

"Top floor," Ullman said briskly. "The attic. Absolutely nothing up there now but bric-a-brac. The Overlook has changed hands several times since World War II and it seems that each successive manager has put everything they don't want up in the attic. I want rattraps and poison bait sowed around in it. Some of the third-floor chambermaids say they have heard rustling noises. I don't believe it, not for a moment, but there mustn't even be that one-in-a-hundred chance that a single rat inhabits the Overlook Hotel."

Jack, who suspected that every hotel in the world had a rat or two, held his tongue.

"Of course you wouldn't allow your son up in the attic under any circumstances."

"No," Jack said, and flashed the big PR smile again. Humiliating situation. Did this officious little prick actually think he would allow his son to goof around in a rattrap attic full of junk furniture and God knew what else?

Ullman whisked away the attic floor plan and put it on the bottom of the pile.

"The Overlook has one hundred and ten guest quarters," he said in a scholarly voice. "Thirty of them, all suites, are here on the third floor. Ten in the west wing (including the Presidential Suite), ten in the center, ten more in the east wing. All of them command magnificent views."

*Could you at least spare the salestalk?*

But he kept quiet. He needed the job.

Ullman put the third floor on the bottom of the pile and they studied the second floor.

"Forty rooms," Ullman said, "thirty doubles and ten singles. And on the first floor, twenty of each. Plus three linen closets on each floor, and a storeroom which is at the extreme east end of the hotel on the second floor and the extreme west end on the first. Questions?"

Jack shook his head. Ullman whisked the second and first floors away.

“Now. Lobby level. Here in the center is the registration desk. Behind it are the offices. The lobby runs for eighty feet in either direction from the desk. Over here in the west wing is the Overlook Dining Room and the Colorado Lounge. The banquet and ballroom facility is in the east wing. Questions?”

“Only about the basement,” Jack said. “For the winter caretaker, that’s the most important level of all. Where the action is, so to speak.”

“Watson will show you all that. The basement floor plan is on the boiler room wall.” He frowned impressively, perhaps to show that as manager, he did not concern himself with such mundane aspects of the Overlook’s operation as the boiler and the plumbing. “Might not be a bad idea to put some traps down there too. Just a minute ...”

He scrawled a note on a pad he took from his inner coat pocket (each sheet bore the legend *From the Desk of Stuart Ullman* in bold black script), tore it off, and dropped it into the out basket. It sat there looking lonesome. The pad disappeared back into Ullman’s jacket pocket like the conclusion of a magician’s trick. Now you see it, Jacky-boy, now you don’t. This guy is a real heavyweight.

They had resumed their original positions, Ullman behind the desk and Jack in front of it, interviewer and interviewee, supplicant and reluctant patron. Ullman folded his neat little hands on the desk blotter and looked directly at Jack, a small, balding man in a banker’s suit and a quiet gray tie. The flower in his lapel was balanced off by a small lapel pin on the other side. It read simply STAFF in small gold letters.

“I’ll be perfectly frank with you, Mr. Torrance. Albert Shockley is a powerful man with a large interest in the Overlook, which showed a profit this season for the first time in its history. Mr. Shockley also sits on the Board of Directors, but he is not a hotel man and he would be the first to admit this. But he has made his wishes in this caretaking matter quite obvious. He wants you hired. I will do so. But if I had been given a free hand in this matter, I would not have taken you on.”

Jack’s hands were clenched tightly in his lap, working against each other, sweating. *Officious little prick, officious little prick, officious—*

“I don’t believe you care much for me, Mr. Torrance. I don’t care. Certainly your feelings toward me play no part in my own belief that you are not right for the job. During the season that runs from May fifteenth to September thirtieth, the Overlook employs one hundred and ten people full-time; one for every room in the hotel, you might say. I don’t think many of them like me and I suspect that some of them think I’m a bit of a bastard. They would be correct in their judgment of my character. I have to be a bit of a bastard to run this hotel in the manner it deserves.”

He looked at Jack for comment, and Jack flashed the PR smile again, large and insultingly toothy.

Ullman said: “The Overlook was built in the years 1907 to 1909. The closest town is Sidewinder, forty miles east of here over roads that are closed from sometime in late October or November until sometime in April. A man named Robert Townley Watson built it, the grandfather of our present maintenance man. Vanderbilts have stayed here, and Rockefellers, and Astors, and Du Ponts. Four Presidents have stayed in the Presidential Suite. Wilson, Harding, Roosevelt, and Nixon.”

“I wouldn’t be too proud of Harding and Nixon,” Jack murmured.

Ullman frowned but went on regardless. “It proved too much for Mr. Watson, and he sold the hotel in 1915. It was sold again in 1922, in 1929, in 1936. It stood vacant until the end of World War II, when it was purchased and completely renovated by Horace Derwent, millionaire inventor, pilot, film producer, and entrepreneur.”

“I know the name,” Jack said.

“Yes. Everything he touched seemed to turn to gold ... except the Overlook. He funneled over a million dollars into it before the first postwar guest ever stepped through its doors, turning a decrepit relic into a showplace. It was Derwent who added the roque court I saw you admiring when you arrived.”

“Roque?”

“A British forebear of our croquet, Mr. Torrance. Croquet is bastardized roque. According to legend, Derwent learned the game from his social secretary and fell completely in love with it. Ours may be the finest roque court in America.”

“I wouldn’t doubt it,” Jack said gravely. A roque court, a topiary full of hedge animals out front, what next? A life-sized Uncle Wiggily game

behind the equipment shed? He was getting very tired of Mr. Stuart Ullman, but he could see that Ullman wasn't done. Ullman was going to have his say, every last word of it.

"When he had lost three million, Derwent sold it to a group of California investors. Their experience with the Overlook was equally bad. Just not hotel people.

"In 1970, Mr. Shockley and a group of his associates bought the hotel and turned its management over to me. We have also run in the red for several years, but I'm happy to say that the trust of the present owners in me has never wavered. Last year we broke even. And this year the Overlook's accounts were written in black ink for the first time in almost seven decades."

Jack supposed that this fussy little man's pride was justified, and then his original dislike washed over him again in a wave.

He said: "I see no connection between the Overlook's admittedly colorful history and your feeling that I'm wrong for the post, Mr. Ullman."

"One reason that the Overlook has lost so much money lies in the depreciation that occurs each winter. It shortens the profit margin a great deal more than you might believe, Mr. Torrance. The winters are fantastically cruel. In order to cope with the problem, I've installed a full-time winter caretaker to run the boiler and to heat different parts of the hotel on a daily rotating basis. To repair breakage as it occurs and to do repairs, so the elements can't get a foothold. To be constantly alert to any and every contingency. During our first winter I hired a family instead of a single man. There was a tragedy. A horrible tragedy."

Ullman looked at Jack coolly and appraisingly.

"I made a mistake. I admit it freely. The man was a drunk."

Jack felt a slow, hot grin—the total antithesis of the toothy PR grin—stretch across his mouth. "Is that it? I'm surprised Al didn't tell you. I've retired."

"Yes, Mr. Shockley told me you no longer drink. He also told me about your last job ... your last position of trust, shall we say? You were teaching English in a Vermont prep school. You lost your temper, I don't believe I need to be any more specific than that. But I do happen to believe that Grady's case has a bearing, and that is why I have brought the matter of your ... uh, previous history into the conversation. During the winter of



1970–71, after we had refurbished the Overlook but before our first season, I hired this ... this unfortunate named Delbert Grady. He moved into the quarters you and your wife and son will be sharing. He had a wife and two daughters. I had reservations, the main ones being the harshness of the winter season and the fact that the Gradys would be cut off from the outside world for five to six months.”

“But that’s not really true, is it? There are telephones here, and probably a citizen’s band radio as well. And the Rocky Mountain National Park is within helicopter range and surely a piece of ground that big must have a chopper or two.”

“I wouldn’t know about that,” Ullman said. “The hotel does have a two-way radio that Mr. Watson will show you, along with a list of the correct frequencies to broadcast on if you need help. The telephone lines between here and Sidewinder are still aboveground, and they go down almost every winter at some point or other and are apt to stay down for three weeks to a month and a half. There is a snowmobile in the equipment shed also.”

“Then the place really isn’t cut off.”

Mr. Ullman looked pained. “Suppose your son or your wife tripped on the stairs and fractured his or her skull, Mr. Torrance. Would you think the place was cut off then?”

Jack saw the point. A snowmobile running at top speed could get you down to Sidewinder in an hour and a half ... maybe. A helicopter from the Parks Rescue Service could get up here in three hours ... under optimum conditions. In a blizzard it would never even be able to lift off and you couldn’t hope to run a snowmobile at top speed, even if you dared take a seriously injured person out into temperatures that might be twenty-five below—or forty-five below, if you added in the wind chill factor.

“In the case of Grady,” Ullman said, “I reasoned much as Mr. Shockley seems to have done in your case. Solitude can be damaging in itself. Better for the man to have his family with him. If there was trouble, I thought, the odds were very high that it would be something less urgent than a fractured skull or an accident with one of the power tools or some sort of convulsion. A serious case of the flu, pneumonia, a broken arm, even appendicitis. Any of those things would have left enough time.

“I suspect that what happened came as a result of too much cheap whiskey, of which Grady had laid in a generous supply, unbeknownst to me,

and a curious condition which the old-timers call cabin fever. Do you know the term?" Ullman offered a patronizing little smile, ready to explain as soon as Jack admitted his ignorance, and Jack was happy to respond quickly and crisply.

"It's a slang term for the claustrophobic reaction that can occur when people are shut in together over long periods of time. The feeling of claustrophobia is externalized as dislike for the people you happen to be shut in with. In extreme cases it can result in hallucinations and violence—murder has been done over such minor things as a burned meal or an argument about whose turn it is to do the dishes."

Ullman looked rather nonplussed, which did Jack a world of good. He decided to press a little further, but silently promised Wendy he would stay cool.

"I suspect you did make a mistake at that. Did he hurt them?"

"He killed them, Mr. Torrance, and then committed suicide. He murdered the little girls with a hatchet, his wife with a shotgun, and himself the same way. His leg was broken. Undoubtedly so drunk he fell downstairs."

Ullman spread his hands and looked at Jack self-righteously.

"Was he a high school graduate?"

"As a matter of fact, he wasn't," Ullman said a little stiffly. "I thought a, shall we say, less imaginative individual would be less susceptible to the rigors, the loneliness—"

"That was your mistake," Jack said. "A stupid man is more prone to cabin fever just as he's more prone to shoot someone over a card game or commit a spur-of-the-moment robbery. He gets bored. When the snow comes, there's nothing to do but watch TV or play solitaire and cheat when he can't get all the aces out. Nothing to do but bitch at his wife and nag at the kids and drink. It gets hard to sleep because there's nothing to hear. So he drinks himself to sleep and wakes up with a hangover. He gets edgy. And maybe the telephone goes out and the TV aerial blows down and there's nothing to do but think and cheat at solitaire and get edgier and edgier. Finally ... boom, boom, boom."

"Whereas a more educated man, such as yourself?"

"My wife and I both like to read. I have a play to work on, as Al Shockley probably told you. Danny has his puzzles, his coloring books, and his crystal radio. I plan to teach him to read, and I also want to teach him to

snowshoe. Wendy would like to learn how, too. Oh yes, I think we can keep busy and out of each other's hair if the TV goes on the fritz." He paused. "And Al was telling the truth when he told you I no longer drink. I did once, and it got to be serious. But I haven't had so much as a glass of beer in the last fourteen months. I don't intend to bring any alcohol up here, and I don't think there will be an opportunity to get any after the snow flies."

"In that you would be quite correct," Ullman said. "But as long as the three of you are up here, the potential for problems is multiplied. I have told Mr. Shockley this, and he told me he would take the responsibility. Now I've told you, and apparently you are also willing to take the responsibility \_\_\_"

"I am."

"All right. I'll accept that, since I have little choice. But I would still rather have an unattached college boy taking a year off. Well, perhaps you'll do. Now I'll turn you over to Mr. Watson, who will take you through the basement and around the grounds. Unless you have further questions?"

"No. None at all."

Ullman stood. "I hope there are no hard feelings, Mr. Torrance. There is nothing personal in the things I have said to you. I only want what's best for the Overlook. It is a great hotel. I want it to stay that way."

"No. No hard feelings." Jack flashed the PR grin again, but he was glad Ullman didn't offer to shake hands. There were hard feelings. All kinds of them.

## CHAPTER TWO

### BOULDER

She looked out the kitchen window and saw him just sitting there on the curb, not playing with his trucks or the wagon or even the balsa glider that had pleased him so much all the last week since Jack had brought it home. He was just sitting there, watching for their shopworn VW, his elbows planted on his thighs and his chin propped in his hands, a five-year-old kid waiting for his daddy.

Wendy suddenly felt bad, almost crying bad.

She hung the dish towel over the bar by the sink and went downstairs, buttoning the top two buttons of her house dress. Jack and his pride! *Hey no, Al, I don't need an advance. I'm okay for a while.* The hallway walls were gouged and marked with crayons, grease pencil, spray paint. The stairs were steep and splintery. The whole building smelled of sour age, and what sort of place was this for Danny after the small neat brick house in Stovington? The people living above them on the third floor weren't married, and while that didn't bother her, their constant, rancorous fighting did. It scared her. The guy up there was Tom, and after the bars had closed and they had returned home, the fights would start in earnest—the rest of the week was just a prelim in comparison. The Friday Night Fights, Jack called them, but it wasn't funny. The woman—her name was Elaine—would at last be reduced to tears and to repeating over and over again: “Don't, Tom. Please don't. Please don't.” And he would shout at her. Once they had even awakened Danny, and Danny slept like a corpse. The next morning Jack caught Tom going out and had spoken to him on the sidewalk at some length. Tom started to bluster and Jack had said something else to him, too quietly for Wendy to hear, and Tom had only shaken his head sullenly and walked away. That had been a week ago and for a few days things had been better, but since the weekend things had been working back to normal—excuse me, abnormal. It was bad for the boy.

Her sense of grief washed over her again but she was on the walk now and she smothered it. Sweeping her dress under her and sitting down on the curb beside him, she said: "What's up, doc?"

He smiled at her but it was perfunctory. "Hi, Mom."

The glider was between his sneakered feet, and she saw that one of the wings had started to splinter.

"Want me to see what I can do with that, honey?"

Danny had gone back to staring up the street. "No. Dad will fix it."

"Your daddy may not be back until suppertime, doc. It's a long drive up into those mountains."

"Do you think the bug will break down?"

"No, I don't think so." But he had just given her something new to worry about. *Thanks, Danny. I needed that.*

"Dad said it might," Danny said in a matter-of-fact, almost bored manner. "He said the fuel pump was all shot to shit."

"Don't say that, Danny."

"Fuel pump?" he asked her with honest surprise.

She sighed. "No, 'All shot to shit.' Don't say that."

"Why?"

"It's vulgar."

"What's vulgar, Mom?"

"Like when you pick your nose at the table or pee with the bathroom door open. Or saying things like 'All shot to shit.' Shit is a vulgar word. Nice people don't say it."

"Dad says it. When he was looking at the bugmotor he said, 'Christ this fuel pump's all shot to shit.' Isn't Dad nice?"

*How do you get into these things, Winnifred? Do you practice?*

"He's nice, but he's also a grown-up. And he's very careful not to say things like that in front of people who wouldn't understand."

"You mean like Uncle Al?"

"Yes, that's right."

"Can I say it when I'm grown-up?"

"I suppose you will, whether I like it or not."

"How old?"

"How does twenty sound, doc?"

"That's a long time to have to wait."

“I guess it is, but will you try?”

“Hokay.”

He went back to staring up the street. He flexed a little, as if to rise, but the beetle coming was much newer, and much brighter red. He relaxed again. She wondered just how hard this move to Colorado had been on Danny. He was closemouthed about it, but it bothered her to see him spending so much time by himself. In Vermont three of Jack’s fellow faculty members had had children about Danny’s age—and there had been the preschool—but in this neighborhood there was no one for him to play with. Most of the apartments were occupied by students attending CU, and of the few married couples here on Arapahoe Street, only a tiny percentage had children. She had spotted perhaps a dozen of high school or junior high school age, three infants, and that was all.

“Mommy, why did Daddy lose his job?”

She was jolted out of her reverie and floundering for an answer. She and Jack had discussed ways they might handle just such a question from Danny, ways that had varied from evasion to the plain truth with no varnish on it. But Danny had never asked. Not until now, when she was feeling low and least prepared for such a question. Yet he was looking at her, maybe reading the confusion on her face and forming his own ideas about that. She thought that to children adult motives and actions must seem as bulking and ominous as dangerous animals seen in the shadows of a dark forest. They were jerked about like puppets, having only the vaguest notions why. The thought brought her dangerously close to tears again, and while she fought them off she leaned over, picked up the disabled glider, and turned it over in her hands.

“Your daddy was coaching the debate team, Danny. Do you remember that?”

“Sure,” he said. “Arguments for fun, right?”

“Right.” She turned the glider over and over, looking at the trade name (SPEEDOGLIDE) and the blue star decals on the wings, and found herself telling the exact truth to her son.

“There was a boy named George Hatfield that Daddy had to cut from the team. That means he wasn’t as good as some of the others. George said

your daddy cut him because he didn't like him and not because he wasn't good enough. Then George did a bad thing. I think you know about that."

"Was he the one who put holes in our bug's tires?"

"Yes, he was. It was after school and your daddy caught him doing it." Now she hesitated again, but there was no question of evasion now; it was reduced to tell the truth or tell a lie.

"Your daddy ... sometimes he does things he's sorry for later. Sometimes he doesn't think the way he should. That doesn't happen very often, but sometimes it does."

"Did he hurt George Haffield like the time I spilled all his papers?"

*Sometimes—*

(Danny with his arm in a cast)

*—he does things he's sorry for later.*

Wendy blinked her eyes savagely hard, driving her tears all the way back.

"Something like that, honey. Your daddy hit George to make him stop cutting the tires and George hit his head. Then the men who are in charge of the school said that George couldn't go there anymore and your daddy couldn't teach there anymore." She stopped, out of words, and waited in dread for the deluge of questions.

"Oh," Danny said, and went back to looking up the street. Apparently the subject was closed. If only it could be closed that easily for her—

She stood up. "I'm going upstairs for a cup of tea, doc. Want a couple of cookies and a glass of milk?"

"I think I'll watch for Dad."

"I don't think he'll be home much before five."

"Maybe he'll be early."

"Maybe," she agreed. "Maybe he will."

She was halfway up the walk when he called, "Mommy?"

"What, Danny?"

"Do you want to go and live in that hotel for the winter?"

Now, which of five thousand answers should she give to that one? The way she had felt yesterday or last night or this morning? They were all different, they crossed the spectrum from rosy pink to dead black.

She said: "If it's what your father wants, it's what I want." She paused. "What about you?"

"I guess I do," he said finally. "Nobody much to play with around here."

“You miss your friends, don’t you?”

“Sometimes I miss Scott and Andy. That’s about all.”

She went back to him and kissed him, ruffled his light-colored hair that was just losing its baby-fineness. He was such a solemn little boy, and sometimes she wondered just how he was supposed to survive with her and Jack for parents. The high hopes they had begun with came down to this unpleasant apartment building in a city they didn’t know. The image of Danny in his cast rose up before her again. Somebody in the Divine Placement Service had made a mistake, one she sometimes feared could never be corrected and which only the most innocent bystander could pay for.

“Stay out of the road, doc,” she said, and hugged him tight.

“Sure, Mom.”

She went upstairs and into the kitchen. She put on the teapot and laid a couple of Oreos on a plate for Danny in case he decided to come up while she was lying down. Sitting at the table with her big pottery cup in front of her, she looked out the window at him, still sitting on the curb in his bluejeans and his oversized dark green Stovington Prep sweatshirt, the glider now lying beside him. The tears which had threatened all day now came in a cloudburst and she leaned into the fragrant, curling steam of the tea and wept. In grief and loss for the past, and terror of the future.