

THE MONKEY'S PAW

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 1 - Checkmate

A chess king stands trapped beneath HERBERT WHITE'S hovering hand.

Wind rattles the window behind the drawn blind.

HERBERT WHITE

Mate.

MR. WHITE, older, thin grey beard twitching, stares at the board.

Firelight warms the small parlour; knitting rests beside the hearth.

MR. WHITE

That's the worst of living so far out! Pathway's a bog. Road's a torrent.

White-haired MRS. WHITE sits beside the knitting. She looks from the defeated king to her husband.

MRS. WHITE

Never mind, dear. Perhaps you'll win the next one.

Herbert meets his mother's glance.

Mr. White catches it and hides a grin in his beard.

The garden gate BANGS.

Herbert turns toward the sound of heavy footsteps.

HERBERT WHITE

There he is.

Mr. White hurries out through the parlour doorway.

His greeting carries back from the passage.

MR. WHITE (O.S.)

Come in, come in!

SERGEANT-MAJOR MORRIS enters behind him: tall, burly, beady-eyed, ruddy-faced.

Mr. White ushers him toward the fire.

MR. WHITE

Sergeant-Major Morris.

Whiskey and tumblers stand beside a small copper kettle.

Mr. White fills Morris's glass.

LATER

Morris holds a replenished glass by the fire.
The family lean toward his chair.

MORRIS
Wars. Plagues. Strange peoples.

MR. WHITE
Twenty-one years! I'd like to see
India myself.

MORRIS
Better where you are.

MR. WHITE
Those temples. Fakirs. What was
that you mentioned? A monkey's paw?

Morris lowers his glass.
His broad shoulders settle back against the chair.

MORRIS
Nothing. Nothing worth hearing.

MRS. WHITE
A monkey's paw?

Morris keeps his eyes on the empty glass.
No one speaks over the wind.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 2 - The Third Was Death

SERGEANT-MAJOR MORRIS draws a small, dirty, shrivelled paw
from his pocket.
Beside the fire, MRS. WHITE recoils from his outstretched
hand.

MORRIS
Just an ordinary little paw. Dried
to a mummy.

HERBERT WHITE takes it between finger and thumb.
He turns it toward the firelight.

HERBERT WHITE
What's special about it?

MR. WHITE waits beside Herbert with his hand extended.
Herbert passes the paw into it.

Morris watches Mr. White examine the object.
His own empty hand closes against his knee.

MORRIS

An old fakir put a spell on it. A
very holy man.

Mr. White lays the paw on the table.
His fingers withdraw slowly from its shrivelled toes.

MORRIS

He wanted to show that fate ruled
people's lives. Those who
interfered did so to their sorrow.

Herbert glances at his father.
The corner of his mouth lifts.

MORRIS

Three separate men. Three wishes
each.

HERBERT WHITE

Why don't you have three, sir?

Morris fixes his eyes on Herbert.
The colour drains from his ruddy face.

MORRIS

I have.

MRS. WHITE

And they were really granted?

A tumbler stands beside Morris's chair.
He raises it; its rim taps against his teeth.

MORRIS

They were.

MRS. WHITE

Has anybody else wished?

MORRIS

The first man had three. I don't
know the first two.

Morris lowers the tumbler into his lap.
Both hands remain wrapped around it.

MORRIS

The third was for death. That's how
I got the paw.

Mr. White looks from the paw to Morris.
Morris offers nothing more.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 3 - Better Let It Burn

SERGEANT-MAJOR MORRIS lifts the paw from the table.
He dangles it over the open fire; MR. WHITE leans forward
beside him.

MR. WHITE
Why keep it?

MORRIS
Fancy. I thought of selling it.
It's caused enough mischief.

MR. WHITE
Would you take another three
wishes?

MORRIS
I don't know.

Morris drops the paw into the flames.
Mr. White lunges from his chair and snatches it out.

MORRIS
Better let it burn.

MR. WHITE
If you don't want it, give it to
me.

MORRIS
I won't. Keep it, and don't blame
me. Throw it back.

Mr. White closes his hand around the paw.
He draws it away from the hearth.

MR. WHITE
How do you do it?

MORRIS
Hold it up in your right hand. Wish
aloud. I warn you of the
consequences.

MRS. WHITE stands at the supper table with a stack of
plates.
HERBERT WHITE watches from his chair.

MRS. WHITE
Wish for four pairs of hands for
me.

Mr. White lifts the paw in his right hand.
Morris catches his arm before he can speak.

MORRIS
If you must wish, wish for
something sensible.

Mr. White pockets the paw.
Mrs. White lowers a plate onto the table without another
joke.

LATER

Supper dishes stand empty between the four of them.
Morris speaks while Herbert listens with his chin propped on
his hand.

MORRIS
Better here than India.

Mr. White offers Morris a few coins beside the table.
Morris pushes them back; White presses them into his palm.

At the parlour doorway, Morris turns to his host.
The coins remain clenched in his hand.

MORRIS
Throw it away.

Morris leaves through the passage.
The front door closes offscreen.

MRS. WHITE
Did you give him anything?

MR. WHITE
A trifle. I made him take it.

Mr. White retrieves the paw from his pocket.
He studies it beneath the lamplight.

MR. WHITE
I don't know what to wish for. I've
got all I want.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 4 - Two Hundred Pounds

MR. WHITE studies the dried paw in his hand, his thin grey
beard lowered against his chest.

MR. WHITE

It seems to me I've got all I want.

Firelight warms the small parlour. Drawn blinds shut out the wet night; a piano stands beyond the supper table.

HERBERT WHITE rests a hand on his father's shoulder.
White-haired MRS. WHITE watches from beside the table.

HERBERT WHITE

Wish to be an emperor. Then you
can't be henpecked.

Mrs. White flicks an antimacassar at him. Herbert ducks behind his father's chair, grinning.

HERBERT WHITE

If you cleared the house, you'd be
quite happy. Wish for two hundred
pounds. That'll just do it.

Herbert settles at the piano. He straightens his back with exaggerated solemnity and strikes a stately chord.

Mr. White raises the small, shrivelled paw in his right hand. A smile catches beneath his beard.

MR. WHITE

I wish for two hundred pounds.

A crashing piano chord collides with Mr. White's cry. His hand opens; the paw drops to the floor.

Mrs. White reaches him first. He holds his empty hand away from his body.

MR. WHITE

It moved. It twisted in my hand
like a snake.

Herbert retrieves the motionless paw and places it on the table.

HERBERT WHITE

Well, I don't see the money. And I
bet I never shall.

Mr. White stares at the paw. His smile does not return.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 5 - Faces in the Fire

An upstairs door BANGS. MR. WHITE flinches in his fireside chair, his pipe arrested beneath his thin grey beard.

MRS. WHITE sits beside the fire. HERBERT WHITE faces the dwindling flames; his pipe rests against his knee.

MRS. WHITE
It must have been your fancy,
father.

MR. WHITE
There's no harm done. It gave me a
shock, that's all.

Wind presses against the drawn blinds. None of them speaks.

The dirty paw lies on the table beside a glass containing a little water. Mr. White keeps his eyes on it.

Mrs. White rises. Her husband follows her toward the parlour doorway.

HERBERT WHITE
You'll find the cash in a big bag
on your bed.

His parents pause at the doorway. Herbert gives them a broad smile.

HERBERT WHITE
And something horrible on the
wardrobe, watching you pocket your
ill-gotten gains.

Mrs. White shakes her white head. The couple leave; their footsteps recede upstairs.

Herbert sits alone. The light across his face dwindles as he watches the coals.

From his eyeline, ember hollows suggest eyes above a simian muzzle. A coal settles; the arrangement breaks apart.

Herbert gives a small, uneven laugh. Without looking away, he reaches toward the water glass.

His fingers close around the paw instead. His hand stops.

He releases it onto the table and wipes his palm along his coat.

Herbert leaves through the dark doorway. The glass remains untouched beside the paw.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - MORNING

TITLE: EPISODE 6 - Only a Tailor's Bill

MRS. WHITE faces her husband across the breakfast table, white hair bright in the wintry sunlight.

MRS. WHITE
How could two hundred pounds hurt
you?

MR. WHITE sits with his breakfast. HERBERT WHITE laughs beside him.

HERBERT WHITE
Might drop on his head from the
sky.

The paw rests beside the water glass on the table. Mrs. White transfers it carelessly to the sideboard.

MR. WHITE
Morris said things happened so
naturally, you might call it
coincidence.

Herbert rises from the table, smiling down at his father.

HERBERT WHITE
Don't break into the money before I
come back. It'll make you mean and
avaricious. We'll have to disown
you.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - MORNING

The narrow passage ends at a front door fitted with a chain and two bolts, one high above the other. Stairs rise beside it.

Mrs. White follows Herbert to the open door.

EXT. LABURNAM VILLA - ROAD - MORNING

Herbert walks away along the wet road. The house gate stands behind him.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - MORNING

Mrs. White watches from the doorway until Herbert passes out of view.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - LATER

A brisk KNOCK. Mrs. White turns sharply from the breakfast table.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - CONTINUOUS

At the open door, a POSTMAN hands Mrs. White an envelope. She opens it as his footsteps retreat.

The paper reads: TAILOR'S BILL.

Her smile vanishes.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - DINNER

Mr. White holds a beer jug above his glass. Mrs. White sits opposite him.

MRS. WHITE
Herbert will have more funny
remarks when he comes home.

MR. WHITE
For all that, it moved in my hand.

MRS. WHITE
You thought it did.

MR. WHITE
I say it did.

His glass overfills. He rights the jug, staring past it.

EXT. LABURNAM VILLA - GATE - DAY

TITLE: EPISODE 7 - Not in Any Pain

The MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE reaches toward the gate, then withdraws his hand. His glossy new silk hat catches the light as he turns away.

The gate opens onto a wet path leading to the front door. He walks past it without entering.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - CONTINUOUS

MRS. WHITE watches through the window. MR. WHITE sits at the dinner table in his gardening coat.

Beyond the glass, the representative returns to the gate. He pauses a second time, then walks on.

Mrs. White leans closer to the window.

The representative stops a third time. His gloved hand hovers over the gate before falling to his side.

Mr. White lowers his glass, watching his wife.

The representative returns once more. This time he pushes the gate open and approaches the house.

Mrs. White unfastens her apron and stuffs it beneath her chair cushion.

She leaves the room. After a brief pause, she returns with the representative, his hat held against his waist.

MRS. WHITE

Excuse the room. And my husband's coat. It's for the garden.

The representative picks a piece of cotton from his trousers. Neither parent interrupts the silence.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE

I was asked to call. I come from Maw and Meggins.

MRS. WHITE

Has anything happened to Herbert?

MR. WHITE

There, mother. Don't jump to conclusions.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE

I'm sorry—

MRS. WHITE

Is he hurt?

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE

Badly hurt. But he is not in any pain.

Mrs. White clasps her hands beneath her chin.

MRS. WHITE

Thank God. Thank God for that. Thank—

The representative turns his face away. Mrs. White's hands slowly part.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - DAY

TITLE: EPISODE 8 - The Only One Left

The MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE stands with his silk hat clamped against his waist.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE
He was caught in the machinery.

MRS. WHITE reaches for MR. WHITE beside the dinner table. Her trembling hand settles on his.

MR. WHITE
Caught in the machinery. Yes.

He stares through the window. His wife's hand remains on his, unanswered.

The representative lowers his gaze. The clock ticks through a long silence.

Mr. White turns his hand beneath his wife's and encloses it with his other hand. His thumb moves gently across her knuckles.

MR. WHITE
He was the only one left to us.

He looks up at the representative. His mouth works before the next words emerge.

MR. WHITE
It is hard.

The representative coughs. He moves to the window and stands with his back partly turned.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE
The firm wished me to convey their
sincere sympathy in your great
loss.

Mrs. White sits motionless. Her eyes stay fixed on the place where he stood.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE
Please understand. I am only their
servant. Merely obeying orders.

Mr. White holds his wife's hand. Neither answers.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE
Maw and Meggins disclaim all
responsibility. They admit no
liability.

He turns from the window, keeping his eyes lowered.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE
But in consideration of your son's
services, they wish to offer a sum
as compensation.

Mr. White releases his wife's hand and rises. His lips part
above his thin grey beard.

MR. WHITE
How much?

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - DAY

TITLE: EPISODE 9 - The Exact Amount

The MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE stands by the window, his
glossy silk hat held against his well-dressed chest.
His fingers tighten around its brim.

MAW AND MEGGINS REPRESENTATIVE
Two hundred pounds.

MR. WHITE stands opposite him, thin grey beard motionless
above parted lips.
Beside the table, white-haired MRS. WHITE opens her mouth
and shrieks.

A faint smile crosses Mr. White's face.
He stretches both hands into the space before him, touching
nothing.

His knees buckle. He drops beside his chair.
The representative's hat slips down against his thigh.

Mrs. White bends over her husband.
Her shriek breaks into short, breathless sounds.

The dinner dishes remain on the table. The dirty, shrivelled
paw lies untouched on the sideboard.
Hold on the empty chair beyond them.

EXT. HUGE NEW CEMETERY - DAY

A closed coffin descends below the edge of an open grave.
Fresh burial plots extend behind Mr. White and Mrs. White;
no one else enters the frame.

Mrs. White watches the coffin disappear.
Mr. White's hand hangs beside hers without touching it.

CUT TO:

Fresh earth fills the grave.
The couple remain beside it, their shoes close to the mound.

Mr. White offers his hand.
Mrs. White takes it, but keeps looking down.

He takes one step away. Their joined hands draw taut.
She remains still for a moment, then follows.

They walk along the narrow cemetery path.
Mrs. White turns back once; Mr. White stops with her.

Hold on their joined hands before they continue out of
frame.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - DAY

TITLE: EPISODE 10 - The Other Two

MR. WHITE and MRS. WHITE sit opposite each other at the
table.
Between their untouched cups, Herbert's chair stands empty.
The clock ticks.

Mrs. White lifts her eyes toward the doorway.
Mr. White follows her gaze. Neither speaks.

The small, dried paw lies on the sideboard.
Mr. White carries it to the bracket beside the mantelpiece
and leaves it there.

DISSOLVE TO:

Grey daylight replaces sunlight across the same table.
Mrs. White sits with both hands around a cup. Mr. White's
cup remains untouched.

DISSOLVE TO:

Evening shadows cover Herbert's chair.
Neither parent looks toward the doorway now.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

SUPER: ABOUT A WEEK AFTER THE BURIAL

A bed faces a window with a lowered blind. A chair stands beside it; a candle in a china holder and a matchbox rest near the bed.

The bedroom door opens toward the landing and stairs.

Mr. White reaches across the bed.
His palm settles on the empty sheet.

Mrs. White sits at the window, white hair faintly outlined against the blind.
Her shoulders shake with quiet sobs.

MR. WHITE
Come back. You will be cold.

MRS. WHITE
It is colder for my son.

Mr. White keeps his hand on the empty sheet.
His eyelids close as her sobbing continues.

MRS. WHITE
The paw! The monkey's paw!

He jerks upright.
She stumbles from the window toward him.

MR. WHITE
What's the matter?

MRS. WHITE
You've not destroyed it?

MR. WHITE
It's in the parlour. On the
bracket.

She catches his hand between both of hers.
Her grip tightens.

MRS. WHITE
The other two wishes. We've only
had one.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 11 - By His Clothing

MRS. WHITE bends over MR. WHITE, both hands still gripping his.
Her white hair falls against his cheek.

MRS. WHITE
Wish our boy alive again.

He pulls his hand free and throws back the bedclothes.
His bare feet stop short of the floor.

MR. WHITE
Good God, you are mad!

MRS. WHITE
Go down. Get it.

The matchbox and china candlestick stand beside the bed.
Mr. White takes a match and strikes it; its light trembles against his thin grey beard.

He touches the flame to the candle wick.
Mrs. White waits directly behind the small flame.

MR. WHITE
Get back to bed. You don't know
what you are saying.

MRS. WHITE
We had the first wish granted. Why
not the second?

MR. WHITE
A coincidence.

MRS. WHITE
Go and get it. Wish.

Mr. White looks up at her.
His mouth opens, then closes. The candle burns between them.

MR. WHITE
He has been dead ten days.

She holds out her hand toward the door.
He does not move.

MR. WHITE
I could only recognize him by his
clothing.

Her outstretched hand remains steady.
His fingers clutch the edge of the mattress.

MR. WHITE

If he was too terrible for you to
see then—how now?

MRS. WHITE

Bring him back.

She seizes his arm and pulls him upright.
He braces a hand against the bed.

MRS. WHITE

Do you think I fear the child I
have nursed?

She draws him toward the open bedroom door.
He catches the doorframe with his free hand.

Below the landing, the staircase disappears into darkness.
His fingers slowly loosen from the frame.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - PARLOUR - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 12 - Alive Again

The shrivelled paw rests on the bracket beside the
mantelpiece.

MR. WHITE's hand closes around it; he turns abruptly toward
a blank stretch of wall.

He stops with his free palm against the plaster.
His breath catches. He turns his head toward the darkness
behind him.

Nothing moves in the room.
He presses the paw against his chest.

The table edge catches his hip.
He grips it and feels along its edge, one careful step at a
time.

His outstretched hand finds the wall again.
He follows it until his fingers curl around the doorway.

Beyond the threshold, the staircase rises through the
passage.
White crosses out of the parlour, still clutching the paw.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

MRS. WHITE waits beside the burning candle.
Mr. White appears in the doorway and stops when she turns
her face toward him.

Her eyes drop to his closed hand.
She holds out her own, but he keeps the paw against his body.

MRS. WHITE

Wish!

MR. WHITE

It is foolish and wicked.

She steps closer.
He backs against the doorframe.

MRS. WHITE

Wish!

He opens his right hand. The small, dirty paw lies across his palm.
He raises it beside his face.

MR. WHITE

I wish my son alive again.

His fingers open.
The paw drops to the bedroom floor beside the chair.

White lowers himself into the chair, watching the fallen object.
His hands tremble against his knees.

Mrs. White crosses to the window and raises the blind.
She leans toward the glass.

The clock ticks through the silence.
Hold on her face, close to the dark pane.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 13 - Three Knocks

The candle gutters inside its china holder and goes out.
MRS. WHITE remains at the raised blind, her face turned toward the road.

MR. WHITE sits beside the paw on the floor.
He watches the window. No knock comes.

Hold through the ticking of the clock.
Mrs. White keeps her forehead close to the glass.

White releases a long breath and rises from the chair.
He crosses to the bed and pulls the covers over himself.

After another interval, Mrs. White leaves the window.
She lies beside him without speaking.

Their eyes remain open in the darkness.
The clock continues its steady ticking.

A stair creaks outside the bedroom.
White lifts his head from the pillow.

A mouse squeaks and scurries inside the wall.
He lowers his head, then sits up again.

The matchbox rests beside the spent candle.
White takes it, strikes a match and cups the flame.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - STAIRCASE AND FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

White descends toward the front door.
In the matchlight, its chain, lower bolt and high upper bolt
remain fastened; a chair stands against the passage wall.

At the foot of the stairs, the match dies.
He pauses with the box open in his hand.

A nearly inaudible knock sounds at the door.
The box falls. Matches scatter across the passage floor.

White stands without moving.
His lips part, but no breath is audible.

A second knock.
He turns and scrambles upstairs.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

Mrs. White lies in bed as White slips inside.
He closes the door and keeps one hand pressed against it.

A third knock sounds through the house.
Mrs. White's head lifts from the pillow.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 14 - Let Me Go

MR. WHITE stands against the closed door, his thin grey
beard trembling.
White-haired MRS. WHITE sits upright in bed.

MR. WHITE

A rat.

A loud KNOCK resounds through the room.
Mrs. White throws back the bedclothes.

MRS. WHITE
It's Herbert!

She runs toward the door.
White catches her arm before she reaches it.

MR. WHITE
What are you going to do?

MRS. WHITE
It's my boy! It's Herbert!

She pulls against his grip.
His bare feet slide across the floorboards.

MRS. WHITE
I forgot it was two miles away.
What are you holding me for? Let
go. I must open the door.

MR. WHITE
For God's sake don't let it in.

Mrs. White stops pulling and looks directly at him.
His hand remains locked around her arm.

MRS. WHITE
You're afraid of your own son.

Another KNOCK. She twists toward the door.
White clings to her arm with both hands.

MRS. WHITE
Let me go. I'm coming, Herbert; I'm
coming.

Another KNOCK breaks across her words.
She wrenches free and pulls the bedroom door open.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS LANDING - NIGHT

Mrs. White hurries down the narrow staircase.
White follows only to the landing rail.

MR. WHITE
For God's sake!

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

Mrs. White reaches the front door beneath the stairs.
The chain and two stacked bolts remain secured; a chair
stands nearby.

She pulls the chain free.
Its loose end rattles against the door.

Bent low, she works the stiff bottom bolt.
It slowly scrapes clear of its socket.

She stretches upward on tiptoe.
Her fingers fall short of the upper bolt.

MRS. WHITE

The bolt! Come down. I can't reach
it.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS LANDING - NIGHT

White's fingers tighten around the rail.
He turns his head toward the dark bedroom.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

TITLE: EPISODE 15 - The Deserted Road

MRS. WHITE drags the passage chair against the front door.
Its legs SCREECH beneath the still-fastened upper bolt.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

MR. WHITE drops to his knees beside the bedroom chair.
His hands sweep the floorboards where the paw fell.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

Mrs. White plants one foot on the chair seat.
A rapid volley of KNOCKS fills the passage.

She grips the chair back and pulls herself up.
Her white hair brushes the door as she straightens.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

White reaches beneath the bedroom chair.
His fingertips scrape bare wood.

He lowers his face almost to the floor.
His thin grey beard grazes the boards as he reaches farther.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

Mrs. White closes both hands around the upper bolt.
She pulls; the metal stays lodged in its socket.

The knocks become a continuous fusillade.
She braces against the door and pulls again.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

The small, dirty, shrivelled paw lies beside a chair leg.
White's searching right hand closes around it.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

The upper bolt begins to slide.
Its long creak cuts through the pounding.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - UPSTAIRS BEDROOM - NIGHT

White raises the paw in his right hand.
His lips move in a frantic, audible whisper; no words are
intelligible.

The knocking stops abruptly.
Its last echoes fade around his kneeling figure.

INT. LABURNAM VILLA - FRONT PASSAGE - NIGHT

Mrs. White steps down and draws the chair back.
She opens the door; cold wind rushes up the stairs.

She stares through the opening.
A long, loud wail escapes her.

White runs downstairs to her side.
He passes through the open doorway.

EXT. LABURNAM VILLA - GATE - NIGHT

White reaches the gate and stops.
His wife's wail carries from the house behind him.

Across the road, a street lamp flickers.
Beneath it, the road lies quiet and deserted.

Hold on the empty road.
Only the wind remains.