

***We Have Always Lived in the Castle* by Shirley Jackson**

Viking Press, 1962

Adult & Young Adult

Author Shirley Jackson is best known for her novel, *The Haunting of Hill House*, but she also has a number of short novels and stories with similar macabre themes lurking right below the surface. *We Have Always Lived in the Castle* recounts the story of two sisters and an elderly, disabled uncle living in their family home on the edges of a community. They live in relative isolation amid both intent interest and scorn from the townspeople due to a tragic poisoning years earlier which left multiple family members dead. The older sister, Constance, was tried and acquitted of the poisoning. Now she loves and cares for her younger sister and uncle, but doesn't travel farther than the garden. The younger sister, Mary Katherine or Merricat, also lives on the edge – between fantasy and reality. One day change arrives in the form of a domineering cousin who inserts himself into their world and tries to completely change their lives for his own selfish needs. What happens next lifts the veil on what actually happened the night of the poisoning as well as alters their lives forever.