

## WEALDMOUNT HOUSE

By  
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### LOGLINE

After surviving a near fatal car accident, a university art student is reluctantly whisked away to a remote and desolate house by her overprotective father - who's harboring a terrible secret she must never discover.

### TREATMENT

The opening night of a new contemporary art show in an affluent, New Delhi exhibit hall. SWATI, early 20's, shy and unassuming, is standing alone, away from the crowd. Her boyfriend arrives - AKEEM, early 20's, a charming bohemian with a 'fuck the man' attitude and a heart of gold. They're in the same university art class. He's late because his hunk of junk car wouldn't start. Swati's nervous, feeling her art work on display is undeserving.

Akeem takes her to a toilet cubicle and offers her cocaine. Swati is very reluctant, her father would not approve, but she's swayed by Akeem's charm.

Back in the hall, Swati overhears MALIKA KOHLI, 60's, a pompous vixen and notorious harsh critic, destroying her as an artist.

Swati storms off in tears, and smokes a cigarette outside. She gets in a argument with Akeem, blaming him for making her eavesdrop. She never wants to see him again and walks off alone.

Swati drives home, still emotional. She's gets distracted by the cigarette she drops in her lap, and crashes straight through a roadwork site, and into the side of a parked car.

Some time later, Swati wakes in a private hospital room. Her father is by her bedside. GYAN, 50s, a no nonsense, stiff upper lip, man's man, dressed in a I.B officer's uniform. He had Swati transferred to a government facility to receive the best possible care. Her airbag failed to deploy and she received a heavy blow to the head and a wound to her thigh. She's lucky to be alive.

Gyan knows she was on drugs. He's very disappointed with her, and thinks she needs some time away to recuperate - away from her new university friends, who are clearly a bad influence.

Gyan takes Swati to a remote and desolate old colonial house in the mountainous north - WEALDMOUNT HOUSE.

Swati is not impressed. She thinks Gyan's over reacting. He hasn't even allowed her to contact anyone since the crash, and worse still - he won't buy her any cigarettes.

Gyan has a surprise. He's taken early retirement and purchased the property, to fulfill his late wife's dream to one day live in a mountainous woodland home - and he wants Swati to join him - permanently.

She flat out refuses, but agrees to stay until she recovers. Gyan had no expectations only hopes.

They go inside the dingy, fully-furnished house. Swati doesn't think it's the type of place her Mum had in mind. Swati's beeping watch alarm reminds her to take the medication her Doctor has prescribed her.

That night, Swati has a nightmare. She dreams she writes the words 'Evoke Lurking Echos' on the fogged up mirror in the steamy bathroom - then violently headbutts the glass, causing a cascade of blood to gush from the wound on her forehead.

Swati wakes at 3:33 A.M, relieved it was just a dream.

The next day, Swati finds a photograph of a man, woman and young boy behind her bedside table - the family who used to live there.

Gyan goes for a hike, taking his rifle for protection against wild mountain animals. Swati stays to read a bunch of her old books, because there's nothing else to do. She gets bored and goes down to the basement where she discovers a portable radio.

The reception's terrible at the property. The only place she can pick up a weak signal, is beside her open bedroom window. Swati listens to a crackly radio station until the batteries die. Fed up, Swati decides to take her father's earlier advice, and paints a picture of Wealdmount House, using the art equipment Gyan brought along for her.

While painting, Swati freezes and stares blankly at her bedroom window in a trance-like state. Her hand independently resumes painting with rapid, precious brush strokes - against her will.

She snaps out of it and is shocked to see that she's painted a young boy in a black hat, stood behind the window, with one hand pressed up against the pane of glass.

That night, Gyan comes to Swati's room to say goodnight. He spots the painting in the corner of the room - Swati didn't mention anything about it. Gyan's impressed. He takes a closer look, noticing the boy in the window. Swati tells him it isn't finished, and covers it with a sheet.

That night, Swati's nightmare continues from where it left off. Blood gushes from the wound on her forehead. There's furious banging on the bathroom door. Swati's scared, arming herself with a shard of broken mirror. Then she calmly sits beneath the flowing steamy shower and peacefully slashes both her wrists.

Swati wakes at 3:33 A.M, relived it was just a dream. A song suddenly plays on the radio. Swati can't make it stop, nothing works - until she removes the dead batteries.

The next morning, Gyan leaves early to go to town for supplies. Swati decides to write a heart-felt letter to Akeem, but she trances out again and unconsciously draws several skull and cross-bones across the page.

Swati's unnerved, but doesn't mention what happened when Gyan returns. He has a surprise for her - a second hand portable DVD player and a selection of films - but no cigarettes.

That night Swati watches a film on the sofa, with Gyan snoring beside her. A car pulls up outside and there's a knock at the front door.

Swati wakes Gyan and they answer the door. FARROUK, mid 30's, a well-educated, mild-mannered gentleman with geeky glasses, stands on the doorstep. He's a wildlife photographer looking for a home-stay in the area. After a bit of pleading, Gyan reluctantly agrees to let him stay the night.

That night, Swati's nightmare continues. She's peacefully sat beneath the shower with her wrists cut. The bathroom door bursts open and two masked men in black storm in. One man forcefully pins Swati down. She screams but he covers her mouth with his hand. The other masked man pulls out a bloody rag and ties it around Swati's eyes - blindfolding her.

Swati wakes at 3:33 A.M, relived it was just a dream. The same song suddenly plays on the radio. Swati's spooked, there's no batteries in it. She frantically tries to make it stop but nothing works again. The music fades and the voice of a weeping child, pleading for their Mummy's help, tunes in.

A hand suddenly grabs hold of Swati's shoulder. It's Gyan. He didn't hear the song or the voice, just her stomping around her room. Swati tells him everything that's been going on. She thinks the house is haunted. Gyan thinks she's being ridiculous. He suspects it's all related to her head injury. Perhaps her road to recovery will take longer than they thought. Swati knew he'd think that, that's why she didn't tell him before. She didn't want to stay here any longer than she needed to.

The next morning, Swati watches Farrouk from her bedroom window as he collects his camera bag from his car - and a cigarette from the glove box.

Swati stealthily collects Farrouk's car keys and sneaks out to his vehicle. She rummages through the glove-box, finding a whole packet of cigarettes, and more importantly - a mobile phone. She instantly tries to make a call but there's no signal. Swati has an idea.

Swati leans out her open bedroom window, phone aloft. A signal bar appears. She puts it on loud-speaker and makes a call. Akeem answers his phone in his apartment. The connections poor, but it's Swati. Akeem questions where she is, he's been trying to reach her for days.

Swati explains her Father took her away to recuperate and hasn't allowed her to contact anyone since the crash.

Akeem knew nothing about her accident, neither does anyone else at university. All they know is she unexpectedly quit her studies, permanently, with no explanation.

Swati is furious, realizing her father lied. She tells Akeem to come and get her but she's not sure where she is. She gives Akeem the name of the house just as Gyan comes into her room.

Swati's startled, she loses her balance and falls out the window. Gyan grabs hold of her injured leg just in time, but the phone and radio smash on the ground below.

Swati confronts Gyan. She knows he didn't defer her studies, he terminated them because he does expect her to stay here with him. Gyan's apologetic, he was only doing what he thought was best for her. Why does he care now? Where was he when Swati really needed him? Where was he after her Mum was murdered? He just buried himself in his work, failing to find her killer.

Swati's thigh is bleeding, her stitches have torn - but she refuses Gyan's help and throws him out of her room.

Farrouk comes with a first aid kit. Gyan told him what happened before leaving in his truck. Farrouk has some suturing experience and he's here to help. While re-stitching the wound on her thigh, Swati tells Farrouk how her mother died in a hit and run accident a couple years ago, and they never caught who was responsible.

Farrouk asks Swati about the boy in her painting. He confesses to overhearing her conversation with Gyan last night. Farrouk agrees it's probably related to her head injury, but he's open-minded to the supernatural. He suggests she finish the painting with him by her side, to witness what happens - if anything.

Swati continues the painting. Farrouk watches on as she trances out again and unconsciously covers the whole painting with a rudimentary picture of two harrowing, shadowy figures - encompassed in a blaze of hellish fire. Swati's afraid. Farrouk agrees to stay with her until Gyan returns.

That evening, Akeem learns the location of Wealdmount House. He's ready to come and save Swati - but his car won't start.

Gyan returns to the house and turns in for the night. Swati's fallen asleep on the sofa watching DVD's with Farrouk.

It's 3:32 A.M. Swati's nightmare continues. The masked men in black pin her down, blindfold her and whisper to one another. Swati fights back, savagely biting a finger off the hand covering her mouth. She rips the blindfold off, head-butts the other man and stabs him in the forearm with a shard of mirror.

Swati wakes, striking Farrouk in fear. She hears the same song coming from the DVD player. The music morphs into the child, sobbing for his Mummy's help. Swati suddenly smells burning. Farrouk can't hear or smell anything - only her. The child's whimpering abruptly turns into a blood curdling Shriek of excruciating agony. He's burning to death.

Swati can't cope, she needs it to stop. She hurls the DVD player against the wall, smashing it, making it silent. Gyan comforts her and takes Swati to her bedroom. She's scared. Gyan promises to stay by her bedside for the rest of the night.

Swati wakes a little later. Gyan has gone. She goes to his room but overhears him talking to Farrouk in the kitchen. He tells Gyan that he's never seen anything like this before, but if they do what he's suggested, it will hopefully work - but whatever happens, Swati can not be allowed to leave this place.

The next morning, Swati wakes with Gyan at her bedside. She keeps quiet about what she overheard last night. Gyan has good news. He made a couple of calls in town yesterday, and got her re-enrolled in university, she's expected back in a few weeks. He also called her Doctor, who assured him that the things Swati's been experiencing is perfectly normal for her type of head injury. Doubling her medication should take care of it. Swati plays along and pretends to take two pills in front of Gyan.

Akeem's car's been fixed at the garage, and he's on his way.

Swati sneaks into Farrouk's room to find his camera bag. It's empty, apart from a small case containing a hypodermic needle.

Swati's freaked. She dumps all her pills down the bathroom drain. She knows she has to get the hell out of there.

Akeem's getting close, but his car can't handle the long journey and breaks down again. He abandons the vehicle and continues on foot.

Swati waits to 3 A.M to make her stealthy escape, but the car keys have been moved. She sneaks into Gyan's room while he sleeps and finds them.

Swati hurries to the car with the keys. Before she opens the door, she spots a black hat with a skull and cross-bone motif, at her feet.

The song suddenly plays on the car stereo - it's 3:33 A.M. A child's palm suddenly slaps up against car door window. Swati stumbles over, tearing her stitches again.

Two black figures appear out of the darkness and rush towards her. Swati agonizingly limps back into the house, slamming the door behind her.

There's ferocious banging on the door. Swati collects Gyan's rifle and aims at the door, but everything falls silent. There's a knock on the door, and BANG, Swati pulls the trigger.

Gyan and Farrouk are awoken by the shoot and rush down stairs. Swati skittishly aims at them both, demanding answers.

Swati spots the two shadowy figures at the top of the staircase. It's a badly burnt man and woman, their bodies hideously charred and blackened - but only Swati can see them. She shoots at the unflinching figures, clipping Gyans's shoulder. Swati stumbles back against the door, out of her wits.

Farrouk realizes she's seeing things as well now. He figures out she didn't double her medication, she stopped taking it entirely. He assures Swati that whatever she's seeing can't hurt her.

The boy in the black hat steps out of the shadows, sobbing for his Mummy's help. He looks Swati in the eye, swiftly raises his palm to her and spontaneously bursts into flames - shrieking in excruciating agony. Swati shrills in terror - watching him burn.

Farrouk tells Gyan he has to undone it. He speaks the phrase 'Evoke Lurking Echos' and clicks his finger. Swati instantly falls silent and her head droops.

Swati remembers the truth.

She remembers the the song that was playing on the stereo after she crashed, and the family she killed in the parked car she hit.

The little boy in the black hat sat in the back, pleading for his unconscious Mummy's help, and the moment he looked Swati in the eye and pressed his hand against the window, just before the vehicle exploded in a blaze of fire.

She remembers the guilt of what she'd done and how Gyan used his position to get her off with murder. She was no better than the killer responsible for her mothers death.

She remembers her suicide attempt. How she tried to take a overdose of pills beneath the shower in her hospital room, but how Gyan kicked the door down and saved her just in time.

She remembers Gyan transferring her to a government facility where she meet Doctor Farrouk Bedi. A PTSD psychiatrist, who has developed a groundbreaking new treatment which doesn't merely help patients cope with their traumatic memories - it takes them away entirely. Using a combination of hypnosis, and a follow on course of medication, she would be free from the crippling pain of her own memories, and have a second chance at a new life.

She remembers refusing the treatment. Swati doesn't think she deserves a second chance, she's a murder, she deserves to die.

She remembers waking at 3:33 A.M to find Farrouk and Gyan whispering over her, and how Gyan pinned her down and muffled her screams with his hand while Farrouk forced the hypnosis treatment upon her, by injecting a drug into her forearm using a hypodermic needle, putting her in a compliant trance like state.

Swati remembers everything now. She aims the rifle at Farrouk, but suddenly turns it on herself, BANG! - she pulls the trigger.

Gyan pulls the rifle away just in time, saving her once more. Swati can't live with what she's done, she pleads to him to let her die.

Farrouk explains the treatment can still work, but it has to be done by her own free will. He theorizes that's why she experienced all the sensory manifestations. Her subconscious was fighting back - forcing her to remember memories she unwillingly forget.

Swati can bear the guilt no longer and reluctantly yields to the treatment. A pool of blood seeps from beneath the front door. Akeem lays dead on the doorstep with a bullet hole in his temple. Swati shoot him.

Swati's hysterical, she only wants to die. Gyan restrains her. He wants to cover up Akeem's death and force the treatment on her again, doubling the medication may still work.

Farrouk wants no part of it, but Gyan pleads and threatens him into complying.

Farrouk collects his hypodermic needle, injects the drugs into Swati's forearm and she falls into a compliant trance like state.

Swati wakes in the truck - Gyan's driving. They're both wearing the exact same clothes they wore on the day they first arrived. Gyan pretends this is the day they drove to the house after leaving hospital. Swati can't remember anything that happened.

When they arrive at the house, they meet Farrouk, the owner of the Wealdmount House. He welcomes them both to his home-stay. It's the perfect place for Swati to recuperate - nobody will be disturbing them here.

**THE END**