

The wind rustled the leaves beneath my feet. The full moon was showing with a grim glow. I had driven all the way from Los Angeles, California to see what was standing just in front of me. I could see that old courthouse, in all its eeriness. But yours truly, Annabel Hyde, was determined to see for herself if the rumors were true; if Eureka really was haunted.

The courthouse was as old as time itself, but only last month had the people in this town started to get worried, saying they can hear the wails and sobs of someone in the night at the courthouse. I came straight here, seeing this a prime opportunity to finally get a story that will get my name out there. That was my motivation as I confidently opened the door with a long creak and I was inside the solemn courthouse.

I immediately had second thoughts about my decision. The deafening silence was beginning to scare me. Then I heard it: a small, faint sob sound coming from right above me. I shivered from head to toe, but I pressed on. After a while, I passed the lobby and found the court. I made it to the edge of the courtroom, where red drapes were covering something. The sound of the cry had become silent. I froze. I slowly removed the curtains with my camera ready. I saw a tall, willowy figure on a platform. I screamed and blindly took a picture. Then I saw a woman.

“Wait...you’re not a ghost,” I said. I took a good look at her and saw that she was merely a middle-aged woman whose her hair was as grey as the clouds above. Her face was expressionless.

“Who are you?” she asked me.

“I’m a journalist,” I replied. “I’ve been hearing of a ghost who has been haunting the town. I guess that’s you.”

The woman sighed. “Great. You’ve caught me.”

“Why? Why are you haunting this town?” I inquired.

The woman sat down on her chair, which was next to a table with a microphone on it. On the table, a microphone was situated, which made her sorrowful crying able to be heard throughout the town. “I guess there’s no turning back now,” said the woman.

“Could you tell me your story?” I asked her, bringing out my notebook and pen.

The ghost quietly sat back down in her seat. “My name was Leanne Lockwood, proud owner of Lockwood Industries, alongside my husband, Christopher.”

“Lockwood! I remember hearing a story about you. You’re Leanne Lockwood?”

“Yes, indeed I am,” answered Leanne.

“Mrs. Lockwood, weren’t you arrested?” I asked her.

“We were just married for a couple months when my husband was killed,” Leanne told me. “After that, I just became so angry. I don’t know what came over myself. I...I knew who killed my husband, and I knew the court would never find him guilty. So, I put matters into my own hands and avenged my husband.”

“That’s malicious,” I told her.

“People didn’t seem to think that it was a good thing to do, so they sentenced me to prison for life. Now see, I didn’t like that. I soon escaped, but I made it seem like I died in prison. Just now, I have decided to haunt the living daylights out of this town, shrieking words of unjust and sorrow. So,” Leanne continued. The maniacal woman grinned at me. I trembled with fear. “They’re not going to find out about this, are they? But how do I know you won’t go tell everyone what’s really going on here?”

“I’m getting out of here with that story,” I said, mostly to myself, and punched her in the jaw. Without a second thought, I jumped off the platform and started running towards the exit. She quickly followed me, chasing me as fast as she could run.

“Come back here, you!” she yelled. “Now you deserve what you’ll get!”

I could barely see since I had turned off my flashlight, but I found my way towards the exit, following every twist and turn, trying to lose her. Finally, I was in the lobby and reached the exit. I was a couple seconds ahead, so I opened the door and quickly closed it on her. I could hear the sound of her banging against the wood, and relief flushed through me.

Then, with a quick sound of a siren, I realized the police had come. The police siren buzzed in my ear. A tall officer with sunglasses ran up to me and started questioning me. “Who are you, young lady?” he asked me.

“Um, Annabel Hyde, sir,” I replied.

“Can you tell me why, Ms. Hyde, you were coming out of that building right there?” he inquired. “That building is certainly not for tourists.”

“I’m a journalist, sir. I just heard some news that there was a haunting, so I wanted to see it for myself,” I told him. “Sir, I have the news. It’s not a real ghost. It’s Leanne Lockwood, a criminal. Look inside and see for yourself.”

The officer looked at me hesitantly, but ultimately opened the door. He found a groaning body lying there: Leanne Lockwood. He pulled her up and asked the other officer to get out the handcuffs, which they promptly put on her. I began taking photos for my story. “Sorry, Mrs., but I’m afraid you’re under arrest.”

“No!” Leanne yelled, glaring at me as they took her away. “You... you’ll pay for this, I promise you!” She screamed and yelled with all her might but nothing could stop her from meeting her fate. They loaded her into a police car and started the car.

“That was an awful brave thing you did there,” said the officer. “I’ll bet your name will be on the front page by tomorrow. Everyone will call you a hero.”

“A hero?” I replied, pondering this thought. “That does sound pretty nice, I must say.”