

NIGHT TIME

[The "POLTERGEIST" Treatment]

Written by

Steven Spielberg

March 31, 1980

Steven Freeling is a successful husband, father and provider. His innate practicality and above average intelligence have made him a successful real estate salesman for a large agency in a nearby community. He is well liked, and respected by his boss and co-workers, and is considered an upstanding member of his community.

Nora Freeling, now 34, was married at 17 and pregnant at 18. She, with active help from Steven, is in the process of raising 4 children, ranging in age from 6 to 16. During this time she has also managed to juggle her family life well enough to earn a degree in teaching and is active in the community as a substitute teacher.

Nora and Steven are close enough in age to their own children that the experiences of a strict upbringing (whippings, edicts and traditions) are still fresh memories. Thus has the generational pendulum swung. They govern their domain with chummy lenience, and serious, but good-natured discipline. They treat their children with respect and humanity, and are afforded the courtesy of being treated the same. They are a close, open and loving family, fairly typical of this neighborhood.

The children, Sweeny, age 16, Angel, age 14, Lawrence, age 12, and Carol Ann, age 6, are children of the 80's. They watch more TV than they should, see all the "PG" movies at the local six-plex, and do just enough homework to get by in school. They participate in a "healthy" amount of sibling teasing and fighting, with subjects ranging from which TV show should be aired to who stole who's toys. They are gregarious children who all have "best friends," "2nd

best friends," "3rd best friends".....

Carol Ann is typically precocious for a child with much older brothers and sisters.

They family generally spends quiet evenings together with bed time dictated at 10:00.

Elmer, the last member of the Freeling family, is a silver-buff Cocker Spaniel who has been a member of the family almost as long as the oldest child.

TAGINA BARRINS is a 65 year old medium. She has studied under some of the well known psychics of the times and is a regular contributor to the National Enquirer; this being the only accepting outlet for her communications with "the other side." She is eccentric in her manner of dress and speech, but is sincere in her beliefs and very probably a true psychic.

Why must all tales of ghosts and hauntings find their settings in gothic cobwebbed mansions, miles away from civilization? Where does an audience draw the line between what is real and what is fantastic?

NIGHT TIME is the story of a frightening occurrence; not in a haunted house on a hill, but in the center of middle class suburbia.

The Freelings, a middle class family, live at 3443 Wanda; a four bedroom, three and one half bath, ranch style house. It is a typical tract house located at the end of one of the several hundred cul-de-sacs in a shopping mall district called Vista. As its name implies, the center of activity is a large modern shopping center complex. This large, child infested community holds five schools: two elementary, two junior high, and one high school. On the neatly manicured rolling hill fringes of town are a well used, man-made lake and the community's "rec-center." This Chicago suburb is one of many similar communities springing up every day. Its planners' goal: to bring families and the conveniences of life closer together.

It is a quiet evening. The children have gone to bed allowing Nora and Steven their cherished hours alone. They go to their bedroom, turn the TV on to THE TONIGHT SHOW, (Something they

do almost every night) and prepare for a well deserved evening of rest and relaxation. They are lulled to sleep by the voices on the television set. The rest of the evening's programming, the late-late movie, the broadcast of the local news, the sign-off consisting of the Blue Angels performing to strains of the Star Spangled Banner, color bars and test patterns, the local sign off....and finally, static, or white noise. It is through this blizzard of static snow, and beyond the slumbered breathing of Nora and Steven, that the first flash of paranormal communication occurs. The television moans something chillingly audible and the static non-picture rearranges into something indistinguishable. Steven turns over in his sleep, but does not awaken. The days that follow bring a stream of odd but not necessarily suspicious occurrences. Periodic phantom phone calls break the silence in the middle of the night. On the other end, nothing but static noise; similar to the static of the blank night television.

Food disappears from the cupboards and refrigerator, and a special lemon meringue pie is marred by nibbling fingers. But with children in the house, and the children's friends, the blame is not easily fixed. The furniture, slightly at first, is rearranged. Just enough to annoy a meticulous mother; not enough to cause suspicion. Elmer, the family dog, begins wandering to a certain alcove in the house. He then sits there, facing the wall, occasionally whimpering toward it, reaching out his paw and scratching at the air. But, well, he's getting old, and if people can get senile, so can dogs.

Angel, their 14 year old daughter, while cleaning out the garage, finds an old record of 19th century songs supposedly sung by pioneers as they crossed the country. It becomes her favorite album and is played all the time. She finds it soothing and somehow familiar. The songs become a part of her life; humming them as she studies, walks to school and does her daily chores. But then "things" start happening. Annoying things, inexplicable things, nerve fraying things.

The television starts to change channels by itself; to news station and cartoons, specifically. The children, bright and inventive, are at first blamed for creating some gadget to "annoy and frighten your mother." Having proven innocence or at least protested enough, Steven goes next door to see if the neighbors are playing tricks with their remote controls. But the neighbors aren't home. And a phone call to a friend assures Steven that a friend's remote control wouldn't work on his set anyhow.

The Freelings are bird lovers. They have built a beautiful aviary which has become the home of many different kinds, colors and sizes of birds. The aviary is located on a patio that is attached to the house. Steven and Nora awaken one early morning to find birds flying all over the house. At first, angry at the children for not closing the cage, Steve wakes them and takes them all downstairs for a lecture on closing and locking the bird cage. But upon entering the porch, everyone is silenced by something: the sight of the aviary torn open, a feat accomplished by something beyond human strength. But no noise had awakened them..."what is going on?"

Windows and doors open and close, seemingly by themselves. In the middle of the night someone has to go downstairs to re-bolt a window or re-lock a door. Furniture is being moved around more obviously now.

Nora, preparing a meal in the kitchen, hears someone swimming in the pool. She calls outside for whoever it is to get out and get ready for dinner. Her calls are ignored. She goes outside to the sight of something invisible doing what looks like laps in the pool (Or perhaps we, the audience, see something doing laps, but when Nora gets out there, it is gone). This could make her even more nervous, thinking that there is something wrong with her, or that it is someone playing tricks.

One evening, as Angel is getting ready for bed, she takes off her clothes and moves to the bed when she is startled and almost screams. There is a lump in her bed, a lump shaped like a body. Recovering, she starts to scold her sister for scaring her, and turns back the covers to discover that there is nothing there. She turns to her sister's bed across the room. She is fast asleep. The usual bluish of the household lights turn different colors and hues, both day and night. Sometimes not enough to cause any more than squinting, or rubbing of the viewing party's eyes.

Steve and Nora prepare to leave for a dinner with their friends. They have called a babysitter because the older children are going to a movie. As Steven is shaving, the 19th Century Music album is turned on full volume. This startles him and causes him to cut himself. He storms out of the bedroom, goes to the stereo, takes off the album and breaks it. He then yells for Angel and reprimands her for turning it on so loud. She hasn't done it. The other children deny it also. Steven accuses one of them of lying. "Record players don't just turn themselves on, you know."

Angel, upset with her father for breaking her album, and for accusing her unjustly, goes to her room upset. She has to prepare for her date.

She sits at her vanity looking at herself, and being angry with her father. She starts to put on lipstick. Looking into the mirror, she is putting her lipstick on someone else's face. She screams. This brings her image back to the mirror. She is frightened to look into mirrors from this point on.

Anxious to get out of the house, Angel hurries her older brother, with whom she and several other friends are going to the movies, out of the house. The babysitter, a 15 year old teenager,

arrives allowing Nora and Steven to be on their way.

As she puts the children to bed, they talk her into telling them a story. She concedes, and tells them a ghost story. As she tells her story, actual events in the house upstage the fictional story she is telling them, adding to and punctuating the higher points. Terrified, the babysitter, negligent of her duties, runs screaming from the house into the night. Neighbors' lights go on, obviously disturbed by the screaming.

The older children get home to find the little ones sitting together on the steps, no babysitter in sight. The parents return to a story of a deserting babysitter who says their house is haunted.

The evening's events have everyone on edge, especially Steven and Nora.

Nora sits at her vanity brushing out her long auburn tresses. As she brushes her hair somewhat mindlessly past her right shoulder, an invisible wind lifts her hair out from her brush and her hand. It arches her hair slowly over her head and lays it to rest on her left shoulder. She sits frozen, unable to speak, the empty brush in her hand, her wide eyes locked on her image in the mirror. At that moment, she feels something touching her cheek. We see two indentations, such as fingers would make, as her cheek gently caves in, opening her lips, and her face is tilted upward by an invisible hand. She then receives a "ghost kiss," a long, forced, passionate kiss, from which she cannot free herself. As she is released, there is a noise from the living /dining area. Steven bolts from their bathroom, sees the wide-eyed, almost panicked, expression on his wife's face. He grabs her hand, and together they walk down the hall to check the house. The furniture in the dining room has been totally rearranged. The chairs are on top of the furniture. Some of the furniture has been moved from room to room. They wake the children, pack lightly, pick up the dog and leave to spend the night at the local Holiday Inn. They will stay there for the evening, then move into Nora's sister's house within a day or so.

The next day, unable to work because of the events of his home life, and not knowing what to do, he calls the Parapsychological organization within the University of Chicago. They all decide that the best idea for the Freelings is to spend another night at the hotel, while some of their experts spend an evening at their home with test equipment.

That evening in the hotel room, feeling things are getting better, Nora and Steven make love.

However, something happens. A spirit enters Steven's body, causing his personality and actions to be altered a bit. He does and says things to her that are obviously not of his doing. Things which Nora would find baroque, to say the least. His manner of love-making is altered, but rather than Nora being turned off, she is somehow excited by this change. What in essence is happening, is that she is making love to two men at the same time. Steven, and another spirit.

Some of the things which he says harp back to an old time, long, long ago.

The next morning at breakfast, things are a bit strained. A normal breakfast conversation is changed into a frightening experience when the six-year-old, Carol Ann, is talking about what she is going to do at school when all of a sudden, for no more than three or four words, her voice changes, slips two octaves, and a man's voice continues telling the story in the child's own words, but only for a few seconds before the young girl's voice returns. The whole family stops eating, and stares. It is obvious that the child is not aware of what has just occurred. Nora gets up. Puts her hand over her mouth, stares at Steven with a realization of the night before, and runs back up to their room.

They come to grips with the fact that it might not be the house, but themselves that are "haunted." The desire for familiar surroundings, and the realization that no one's been hurt, causes them to go back home.

On arriving home, they realize that their house has been invaded by an entourage of young, long-haired parapsychologists. Between their visit and the horrifying experience of the babysitter, the entire neighborhood realizes that something terrible is happening in their neighborhood.

Also taking place at this time is a major archeological dig. This is going on not from from the Freeling's home (Perhaps instead of a dig, it should be just the building of some new homes in a tract, nearby). The excavators discover bones. Human bones. Thousands of them. It is discovered that what has been unearthed is an extremely large grave site. The results of a massive massacre of white settlers, perhaps 150 years ago. The bones had been shoveled into shallow graves in approximately a 100 acre perimeter. Children, babies, pioneer men and their women. Arrow heads, scalping knives-a horrible way to die.

This discovery, along with the disclosure of the events at the Freeling household, cause experts to hypothesize that perhaps through a rift in the barrier between "now" and "then," and through one of the members of the Freeling family, as a mortal host, the spirits have found a gateway into the 1980's and American suburbia. Some hypothesize that they are looking for help to the next world, the world that they belong in, and the world that has been denied them.

The Freelings are instantly descended upon by professional, pseudo-professional and crack-pot ghost hunters who all want to spend an evening in the house with the ghosts and their new-fangled equipment for recording spirits on film and tape. A psychologist informs the family that perhaps the spirits are attracted to one member of the family, and that a battery of tests could be run to determine who it was. Not wanting to place any kind of "blame" or ostracization

upon any member of the family , they refuse the testing.
Besides, what would they do with the
"guilty" party?

As the Freelings and their house become unwitting
celebrities, the children are saddled with a
barrage of torment from schoolmates. They are avoided. They
are "the haunted people."

One of the people who comes to help the Freelings is TAGINA
BARRINS, a psychic, and regular
contributor to the National Enquirer. She is a comic
character who, though she comes off as a
crazy old lady seeking attention, is probably the most
helpful and authentic psychic of them all.
She spends a lot of time just walking around talking to the
house. At one point, TAGINA is
awakened in the dead of night, and in a somnambulistic
state, drives to the Freeling's home, is
admitted by our unseen visitors, and walks into Nora and
Steven's bedroom. They wake with a
start, finding her talking to the television set static.

The Freeling's neighbors, once very friendly, have been
almost hostile. A petition has been
started by the Eisenhowers to force them to leave the
neighborhood. It is what Steven and his
family want more than anything. They look for a home in the
area in which Steven works, but
are informed by his boss that if they think about bringing
their bizarre ghostly rumors and cultist
rituals to his 400 acres of suburban tranquility, he will be
fired and will never work in real estate
again.

Within a short period of time, the Freeling neighbors have
problems of their own. Screams and
panic indicate that like a contagious virus, the haunting
has spread: first to the Eisenhower
home, then across the street to other neighbors; then down
the block. Beyond causing
frightened residents to harm themselves while fleeing
ghostly manifestations, ghost fires are
set. (A ghost fire is a phenomenon which can take place in
any room of a house. Perhaps in the
cold center of the haunting in that home. The fire will
devastate everything in a specific area,

but will not spread to other rooms or other floors.) Each haunting, in each home, is signaled by the television. Where there is a remote control device, the TV will flip on by itself in the early hours of the morning to a station that is broadcasting static noise. The manifestations originate there.

Other items for possible incorporation would be:

The manifestations love to materialize (not in humanoid form such as ghosts), and occasionally we will see ectoplasmic displays, perhaps emanating from the toaster in the house. (Ectoplasm is a spermatozoa-like substance that originates often from the fingers of mediums trying to contact spirits from the other side). But yet these ectoplasm manifestations could come from the family toaster, or from the microwave oven, or from anything naturally uncommon.

Occasionally there is a manifestation of a whisp-like type of smoke in basic humanoid form that keeps changing shape and travels from one room to the next, until it finds the recipient it has been looking for. When found, the smoke will dissipate into the sleeping person. We will see their hair blow from their ear, as if a ghostly breath is whispering something privately, and chillingly. We might even hear mournful crying of "help me, help me" from perhaps a poltergeist. Beyond the toaster and the microwave oven, the ectoplasmic manifestations will finally develop first and foremost from the television sets that are on during static hours, as if a form is trying to climb out of the TV set and into your home to haunt you. This could be the climax of the story.

Another aspect of the dog's being affected by the Haunting, could be for the family to see it roll over on its back, as if it is being tickled on the tummy; and without anything obviously petting it,

he wags his right leg, the common reaction of most dogs when being tickled above the abdomen.

One possible ending for NIGHT TIME could be the evacuation of the town by the townspeople.

As we slowly pan through the empty town and its deserted homes, we see ghost fires being lit.

The town burns, TV sets imploding; the burial ground has not been consecrated, and the souls are set to rest in peace.

Addition to treatment dated July 31, 1980

A petition has been started by the Eisenhowers to force the Freelings to move from the neighborhood. Following various threatening telephone calls throughout dinner, Steven angrily calls the police and asks for someone to come out and investigate the situation. A call from the Freeling home or other families on this community suburb, protesting unusual occurrences.

A policeman arrives approximately 8pm. He asks Steven and his family questions about recent threats, etc. And then falls into a serious discussion about the Freelings moving from the neighborhood all together. At least consider a temporary move. Growing hostility has been evident through periodic vandalism. Several windows over the last week with broken windows in their house and automobile along with other assorted mischief. Steven loses his temper at one point during their conversation and questions whether the local police department has really made a concerted effort to do anything to protect his family let alone control this mounting violence. As the conversation heightens almost to hysteria, an iron comes hurling through the living room plate glass window followed by the loud chanting of an angry mob outside, "Free us from the Freelings." Steven grabs the police man and screams, "What are you

going to do about that?" pointing hysterically out the window. Flustered, the policeman frees himself from Steven's grasp and takes control by ordering Nora and the children into the living room on the floor out of the way of the windows. Things settle for a bit and the policeman and Steven move toward the front door. He reaches over to pull it open, gun drawn, he jumps back just as a frying pan flies by catching the corner of the door jamb. Out of sight, but with the door still ajar, the policeman yells orders for the crowd to disperse. Footsteps and scurrying can now be heard on the roof, Nora attempting to calm the children. Lightheartedly (on the surface), she heads to the kitchen to get the children some milk and cookies. It's obvious the crowd, laden with guns, frying pans, kitchen knives, crow bars, etc., are paying little attention to the policeman's demands. He reaches over to shut the door, the chanting continues, several octaves higher now. As the door slams, he yells to Steven to get on the phone for some backup units. As he says this, a huge gush of water pours out of the fireplace, sending a cloud of ashes and soot into the living room. The children jump up running and screaming. Nora, in the kitchen, sends a glass pitcher crashing to the floor, she screams and runs to the living room. Steven, angry and frightened, grabs the phone to call for reinforcements but the phone lines have been cut and the phone is dead. Nora and the children begin bolting the doors and windows frantically. The chanting outside continues. The youngest of the Freelings, Carol Ann, silently sobs in the corner of the couch holding snugly to a white stuffed bunny rabbit. In the midst of the terror, she suddenly stands and makes her way toward the window, a very content look on her face as she gazes outside at the angry faces. Her bunny drops and dangles from her hand as she slowly looks toward the sky. Slowly at first, then like locusts, real rocks begin descending from the sky, pummeling the mob. People begin screaming and running in all directions. Slowly various members of the family stop what they're doing and move toward the living room window. Within a few minutes, the yard is cleared of people and rocks cover what was a lawn. The family, relieved but uncomfortable, stare silently at Carol Ann, who softly giggles and caresses her bunny-off in a world of her own.

IT'S NIGHT TIME story by Steven Spielberg. Amendments-August
18, 1980
August 8, 1980

**A SUBURBAN HAUNTING WHERE A TYPICAL FAMILY IS MOLESTED BY
GHOSTLY
MANIFESTATIONS THAT FIND ACCESS TO OUR WORLD FROM THEIRS
THROUGH THE TELEVISION
SET AFTER BROADCASTING HAS CEASED.**

It further concerns the epidemic spread through the suburban neighborhood of this malevolent haunting. The carrier is the youngest daughter, (Carol Ann). Wherever she goes, "it" follows. The film aims to trace the mental disintegration of this American nuclear family unit as well as the psychological effects on an entire community, that ultimately sets off a vigil-anti action against the Freeling family.

August 7, 1980

Nora is feeling very uneasy and tired from little sleep during the night. Steven has headed off for work and the children, except for Carol Ann, are all off to school. Jim and Joannie Bender live next door and are really the only close neighborhood friends the Freelings have. When the housing tract was announced, they were the first two families on the list after camping out in line for almost a week. A feat Nora now tends to regret. She telephones Joannie and asks if she'd like to come by for a morning cup of coffee. Joannie indicates that it's a pretty busy time for her, but before she finishes, Nora cuts in, edging on hysteria, almost begging. A little alarmed, Joannie quickly agrees and the Freeling doorbell is ringing within minutes. Nora, straining to be relaxed, gives her a big hug and talking a mile-a-minute heads for the kitchen

with Joannie in tow. Certain things in the house are still disheveled from all the activity during the night. Joannie takes notice of this as she follows Nora to the kitchen. A concerned look crosses her face as she knows Nora is a meticulous house keeper. Nora hands Joannie a cup of coffee, and blurts out, almost in tears, "Joannie, could Steve and the kids stay with you and Jim tonight?" Joannie immediately assumes that Nora and Steven are separating, hence the frantic call. Nora immediately straightens that out but still avoids any discussion about ghosts. She reveals that they believe there have been burglars in the area and they're all feeling a bit uncomfortable staying there knowing they haven't been caught. Without hesitation from Joannie, everything is arranged. Steven arrives home after picking up the kids and finds Nora and Carol Ann patiently waiting in the living room with bags packed. She then announces she has made arrangements with Joannie and Jim for the family to spend the night at their house. Steven gets slightly irritated, feeling that Nora is over reacting but quickly agrees to have dinner, but not necessarily spend the night. All the kids are delighted because the Bender children are close in age and they look forward to one big party.

Following dinner, Lawrence suggests a game of charades. Nora and Joannie are in agreement but set the bed time hour at 10:00 pm. After a mass flurry of stacking dishes and clearing the table all the kids head to the living room, leaving the adults with coffee in the dining room. The kids choose sides and begin acting out various movie idols, etc. We're aware of the adults engaged in a loud political discussion and kids screaming clues, guesses, etc. We then focus our attention to Angel Freeling as she begins giving her clues. A couple of periodic wisecracks from her brother Sweeny and then out of nowhere, Angel freezes and glares into the fireplace with an absolutely horrified expression on her face.

The laughter from the children stops instantly and we visibly see two of the children shudder

and slowly turn and look in the direction Angel is staring. The fire wavers slightly as if there was a breeze. Then from upstairs in the bedroom the 19th Century music album can be heard full blast as Angel screams and throws her arms back outstretched and fighting as if being tired to a stake. Her face contorts in agony. She throws her head back and forth violently. All the children in the living room are stunned and just stare, mesmerized. Angel cries out several times, "No more fire! No more fire!" The violent jerking subsides for a moment as her eyes rise, still a horrific look on her face, her hair slowly rises as if someone has hold of it and is going to scalp her. Again she screams violently and her head drops limply in front of her. Her arms are still outstretched but she's become more resolved to the pain now, almost unconscious. We are aware that it has become a freezing temperature inside the room, frost has gathered on the windows even though it is the middle of July outside. We then become aware of very faint imprints of faces in the windows. Then writing starts to appear on the filmy condensation, like finger painting. All the screaming has brought Steven and Jim into the living room. Steven enters with an angry tone, "What the Hell..." his voice trails off as he sees Sweeny huddled in the middle of the floor rocking Angel, trying to comfort and calm her. The other children, with teeth chattering, still stare as if in shock. Steven and Jim's arrival breaks the silence. Carol Ann jumps up and runs hysterically to her father. Steven scoops her into his arms at the same time that one of the Bender children becomes aware of the faces in the windows, she screams, which sets off a chain of reaction screaming. Then as quickly as it happened, it ends. The blaring music stops, the frost runs off the windows. All the children are obviously shook. Joannie and Nora run in with a flurry of questions. None of which has an audible answer from the children. Nora looks at Steven, they realize the ghosts have followed them. Everyone has gathered with the kids in the kitchen to have warm milk and cookies to calm everyone's nerves. Angel is back to normal with little sign of her ordeal. All the kids decide they'll sleep in the living room except for the two youngest. Nora and Joannie are in fair agreement to this as they head up the stairs with the little ones. The other kids get the sleeping

bags out and start rearranging the furniture for space. Lawrence Freeling is really impressed with the Bender's new Advent TV screen. Johnny Bender runs through the remote control with him and they loudly discuss how great the football games can be seen and they can't wait for the season to start. Soon things settle down, the kids are set and the grown-ups head upstairs. Half way up, Nora says "Ok, everyone quiet, it's way past bed time, lights out, no talking and no watching television." After the "good-nights" and the periodic giggling subsides, the room gets very quiet except for the usual night time creaks. About 30 minutes go by and we hear Lawrence, "psst...Johnny, are you awake?" There's a moaning sound, then "yeah...what'd ya want?" (Lawrence) "What time is it?" Johnny looks over at the big Grandfather clock on the far wall. "It's 2:00 in the morning. Why are you still awake?" Lawrence ignores the question and says "How do you turn on the TV...and make sure there's no sound." (Johnny) whispering, "You're nuts, go to sleep, there's nothing on at this hour." (Lawrence) "Wanna bet? We've got to get it just as it signs off." (Johnny) "You mean to tell me you like to sit and watch the snow or something?" (Lawrence) "Something like that, you'll see." Reluctantly Johnny crawls out of his sleeping bag and over to the set; flips it on just in time to see the jets go by on the sign off. (Lawrence), "Great, perfect timing." (Johnny) "Don't you think there's been enough weird shit tonight?" (Lawrence) "Oh come on be a sport, just watch." The two boys crawl back into their sleeping bags and with their chins resting on folded arms, they stare in great anticipation at the Advent screen and the mass of static snow. Shortly we see both of the boys drift off to sleep trying as hard as they can to fight staying awake with no luck. Just as they drift off, the images that began to appear in the Freeling home begin to slowly take shape at the Benders. It's 3:00 am, the Grandfather clock chimes on deaf ears.

August 8, 1980

Carol Anne and her best friend, Jeanette are playing house upstairs in Carol Ann's bedroom.

They have dressed up in various old clothes of Nora's and some of her jewelry and hats. Tea has

been served though a miniature little tea set which Carol Ann has obviously used often with all

the chips and cracks, etc. Both girls are talking a mile a minute to their dolls. Although this is make believe, like any little girls six years old, they're playing very seriously.

Carol Ann wear an old hat of her mother's. On the left side holding up the netting is an antique stick pin which Nora found at one of the local antique shops. The hat is obviously too big for Carol Ann and as she bends down to serve her doll some tea, the hat tumbles off onto the table.

Jeanette giggles, grabs the hat and puts it on her doll. Carol Anne, at that point, becomes very serious, rises from the table and moves over to the record player. She then puts on the 19th

Century record; at exactly this moment, Jeanette begins gazing at the stick pin in the hat and in slow motion she reaches out and removes it from the hat.

Carol Ann, standing sternly and motionless by the record player in the background. In the foreground, Jeanette takes the pin, as if it were a buck knife and drives it slowly into the chest of her doll. She then removes her hand leaving the pin embedded. At the head of the pin we reveal a carving of an Indian Fire God

(something to be established earlier in the story possibly). Then instantly, Carol Ann reels around, confronts Jeanette and begins speaking like an adult (or perhaps in an Indian language),

all signs of being six years old are gone except for her physical appearance. Then looking straight at Jeanette says "She must die." Jeanette turns from Carol Ann, pulls this pin from the chest of

the doll and with ferocity, drives the pin into the chest a second time. Carol Ann, still gazing in a trance, looks at Jeanette, then the doll and the doll bursts into flames. Jeanette, as if snapping

out of a dream, jumps back, startled and runs for the door. The door then bursts into flames.

Jeanette, terribly frightened now, begins to scream and cry. The door and the doll blazing away

brings Nora frantically up the stairs. Carol Ann up to this point has not moved. At the sound of

her mother's voice, she returns to her normal voice, "Mommy, mommy make the fire stop!" By

now, the neighbors have called the fire department. Fire trucks roar up to the house and a

ladder is quickly thrust up to the 2nd floor, bringing the girls to safety. As the fireman descends,

he says under his breath, "oddest thing, only burned a doll and a door, didn't spread to any

other part of the house. Darndest thing I ever saw."

August 14, 1980

Toward the end of the picture, we should reveal that Carol Ann is beginning to "get to" Nora.

Nora has already felt trapped over the past few years. She married at a very young age. She's

bright and enthusiastic and has begun to voice her discontent to Steven. It's obvious that Carol

Ann was not a planned baby as noted by the ages of the other children.

NIGHT-NORA'S BEDROOM

Nora is sound asleep; it's her first night alone in their new house. Steven is on a three day

business trip. Even with the kids and the dog, Nora has always been a bit nervous without him

there. Carol Ann comes in after Nora has finally drifted off to sleep. She stands quietly by the

bed, then softly at first, "Mommy" pause..."Mommy"....pause. Nora wakes up. Groggily, "What

is it honey?" Carol Ann, "I got somethin' to tell you." Nora, "What honey?" Carol Ann, "I got

somethin' to say." Nora (getting a little irritated), "Then say it honey, I want to go back to sleep."

Carol Ann, "Can I get up on the bed to say it?" Nora, "Sure..." she pats the side of the bed, "Now

what is it you have to tell me?" Carol Ann climbs up and looking straight into her mother's face

but with a distant stare, she says "It's Night Time, It's Night Time...." Nora is visibly unnerved and

then windows above Nora's bed fly open; she screams. Sweeny comes running into the room.

Nora, slightly embarrassed but obviously feeling very distant to Carol Ann. "It's nothing," she

says, "Carol Ann just startled me, that's all." Sweeny, not quite sure what to make of the

situation, leads Carol Ann out of the bedroom. He looks in the door, after he's tucked Carol Ann

in, at his mother, smiles and says "You gonna be alright?" Nora, still a little unsettled, "Just fine,

see you in the morning. Just the jitters with your dad gone."

The next day, Nora tries to observe Carol Ann from a distance. Too many unexplained things

have been happening and Nora is beginning to doubt her own children. While doing relatively routine chores, a thought comes to mind. She goes to the phone and calls information for a locksmith. "Would it be possible to install a lock on a bedroom door today?" pause..."Oh thank you. 3:00 this afternoon. Great." She hangs up. A look of relief crosses her face.

[the next page is missing]

Sweeny has fallen asleep in the rocking chair next to the bed. A thoughtful look crosses her [Nora's] face as she grabs her robe and heads for the door. A huge back-hoe can be seen past the gentleman at the door. "We've come to start diggin' the pool area, ma'am." Nora, with a slight look of embarrassment, "Oh, I'm so sorry, I completely forgot it was Saturday-I'll show you around to the back yard." The door closes. As she comes back in, the rest of the family has come to life, the record player is already full blast up stairs, Carol Ann transfixed herself in front of Saturday morning cartoons. Nora exits the kitchen, where Angel has already started breakfast. "Hi mom, I didn't know they were going to start digging the swimming pool today?" Nora, "I totally forgot. I even forgot what day it was. God, I wish your father would come home." Angel, "I can't wait for a pool." She can tell that Nora isn't really listening, her head buried in the refrigerator. Angle (while turning the bacon), "Mom, what happened last night? I heard screaming. Sweeny said you'd had a nightmare. It must have been terrible. Do you remember any of it?" As she is saying this with her head still buried in the refrigerator, Carol Ann wanders in, bunny in tow, and slides unnoticed under Nora's arm to peer in the refrigerator. Nora goes to close the refrigerator, catches a glimpse of Carol Ann and lets out a blood-curdling scream. Carol Ann, obviously frightened, drops to the floor and bursts into tears. Angel at this point also screams and sends the spatula and bacon grease flying everywhere. Nora, more embarrassed than anything, bends down to comfort Carol Ann, she looks up at Angel. A big grin spreads

across her face and they burst into hysterics. Nora:" I guess I'm still a little shook from last night."

Later that afternoon, nerves still a little frazzled, Nora mentions to Sweeny that it might not be a bad idea for him to take the other kids to a movie that night. Sweeny is not overly thrilled about the idea, but also senses the urgency in his mother's voice. He agrees and they all head off that evening to see "Fantasia" at the local theater, leaving Nora and Elmer home for a quiet evening. Nora is obviously relieved. She settles into a good book and a warm fire and we're aware that it has begun to rain. She calls Steven and gives him a run down on the events of the day but doesn't mention the series of events with Carol Ann. They discuss the new pool, Nora "With all this rain, I hope we don't end up with too much mud for the cement to set in...when are you due home? I really miss you. You know I hate staying in this house when you're not here." We hear him mumble a response. Nora, "I know the kids are here and Elmer's right here keeping me company but it's not the same...." They both say goodbye at the same time a deafening clap of thunder goes off, startling Nora. It's now pouring rain. Nora flips on the television for some company and heads to the kitchen for a cup of tea. Then Elmer begins to act very strange. He sits staring at the wall as he's been known to do on occasion. At this point though, it makes Nora nervous. She calls his name several times with no reaction. He then suddenly bolts for the backdoor. She follows him and looks out into the pouring rain. She tries the outside light but the bulb is burned out. Leaving the door slightly ajar, she grabs her tea and heads for the living room. Very shortly afterward she doses off. She wakes with a jerking motion. She sits up, some sitcom is blaring away with canned laughter, we still hear the pouring rain, she looks at her watch, the kids will come home in an hour or two. Nora rises to stretch and suddenly out of nowhere the 19th Century record album begins blaring away from Carol Ann's and Angel's room. Noticeably disturbed and turning lights on as she goes, Nora heads upstairs to check. As she slowly enters the bedroom, the arm of the stereo ejects over to the side and the stereo

shuts itself off. Nora nervously cases the room. Satisfied that it was nothing overly unusual as the girls have left the stereo on before, she heads for her bedroom and gets ready for bed. She stares at herself in the bathroom mirror. Slowly she reaches up and touches the dark circles that have begun to appear under her eyes, she then pulls slightly at the corners as if remembering what it was like without the little wrinkles that now appear there. Then she opens the cabinet, pulls out the jar of cold cream and begins slowly removing the makeup from her eyes and face, staring lethargically in the mirror. The tap water goes on and she begins rinsing her face with several handfuls of water. As the splashing continues we see at the far left corner of the mirror a very small trickle of blood begin to spread in very fine lines along the natural ridges in the glass of the mirror. Her face covered with water she swings around with her eyes closed to grab a towel. Dries her face and reaches over to turn on the facets in the bathtub. Still not noticing the trickling blood on the mirror, she reaches underneath the sink for her favorite bubble bath. She then climbs in the tub, pours plenty in for lots of bubbles. She then adjusts the force of water from the taps, settles back, eyes closed and totally relaxed. As the bubbles begin to rise in the tub (and for the first time in our frame) we see that they are pink in color. Nora, eyes still closed, sees nothing. Moments later we hear Elmer barking up a storm. This rouses Nora. She opens her eyes, sees blood now pouring from the faucet instead of water, screams and flies out of the bath. As she grabs a towel she sees the mirror-hysterical, she runs to the bedroom and grabs her bathrobe. By now Elmer is not only barking but whining as if hurt. Nora goes tearing downstairs out the back door yelling "Elmer, Elmer.." It's raining so hard that Nora is soaked within seconds. She hesitates for a moment and almost heads back inside, but Elmer cries again and she strains to make out his shape in the distance. It's pitch black as she edges her way out onto the patio. Suddenly the ground gives way and she plunges into the freshly dug pit for the new swimming pool. She attempts to grab the side but the freshly tilled soil is now thick and gooey muck. Nora sinks quickly up to her waist in the quick-sand-like mud. She sees one of the pool lights hanging by a wire and struggling, tries to grab it. It has now begun to rain even harder and panic is

definitely beginning to set in with Nora. Desperately she grabs at the light wire, catches it and pulls as hard as she can. At that moment, a wagon wheel comes tumbling through the mud along with a sea of skeletons and mummies. One after the other she tries to push off them off of her as they bob up and down out of the thick gooey mud falling in all directions. Many of the skeletons have severed limbs, old bullet holes through the chest and head. Nora is beyond the terror that allows you to scream and is consumed with panic. A bolt of lightning strikes very close to the pool area and suddenly all the pool lights (just hanging by wires, no covers) go on, illuminating this sea of decay. Nora finally gets out a loud scream which dissolves into sobs....we

CUT TO:

The kids coming out of the theater. Carol Ann is sound asleep in Sweeny's arms. Lawrence is beside himself about the film. As they make their way back to the house, we hear bits and pieces being reenacted by Lawrence. They all clamor inside the house, whispering and giggling "Shh...Don't wake Mom." As a few houselights go on, we are faintly aware of streaked mud on the carpet and hand prints on the wall. The children stare stunned and frightened. Sweeny directs everyone into the living room. Carol Ann, who remains sound asleep, he stretches out on the sofa. He motions to Lawrence and Angel to stay with Carol Ann. He then makes his way up the stairs, following the trail of mud along the banister, hand smudges on the wall, mud covering the door knob and light switch into Nora's room. Dresser drawers are thrown open, a bathrobe covered in mud is draped on the bed. Sweeny then follows the trail into the bathroom. Horrified by the bathtub full of blood, he jumps back and turns to run out of the bathroom. He just catches a glimpse of the mirror as he smashes right into Angel (who had wandered up the stairs in search of Sweeny), they both scream. Lawrence yells from down below. "What's wrong?" Sweeny and Angel grab each other, Sweeny shudders and Angel begins to cry, "Oh Sweeny, what's happened to Mom?" Comforting as best he can he leads her down the stairs back to the living room. Carol Ann still sleeps soundly. Sweeny moves over to the picture

window and realizes Nora's car is gone. A bit relieved, he turns back to Angel. "The car is gone...Mom should be alright. We gotta call Dad." He rushes to the phone and dials. Steven answers the phone. Sweeny with a slight loss of control in his voice now, "Dad, oh God Dad, you've gotta come home tonight!" pause, "No, Mom's gone." Pause, "I don't know but there mud everywhere and blood," (he chokes a little bit), "It's awful, and we can't go to the neighbors, they all think we're possessed." Long pause while Steven talks, Sweeny, "Ok Dad, yeah they're all fine, we're in the living room, Carol Ann is sleeping," pause..."Bye...please hurry." Sweeny hangs up the phone and looks into Lawrence and Angel's frightened faces, "He's on his way. Everything's going to be OK. Dad said about an hour and a half, he'll try to call the police but I'm sure they won't come..." Under his breath "they never believe us anyway."

CUT TO:

Nora driving in a transfixed stare, headlights lighting her face from ongoing cars. We see that her hair is caked with mud along with her arms and face. She pulls into a Motel 6 about 30 miles outside of town, checks in, and immediately goes to call Steven. There's no answer. She dials again, still no answer. She looks at her watch, it's 11pm. Frustrated, she grabs her bag and heads across the street to a little local dive cafe called Indian Palms. She fumbles around with the menu. Nothing looks very good, the page flips back revealing a historical overview of Indian history in the area with a map and pictures from the early 1800's. Nora barely pays attention to what she's looking at until she sees a small picture of a ghastly massacre, an artist's conception of the actual event. She continues reading and realizes that the massacre took place at the exact location of their sub-division. She stuffs the menu in her purse and peels out of the parking area back toward town. We cut to the children at the house. All the younger children have dosed off, Sweeny lies wide awake cocking his head at every sound. Finally he gets up and walks into the kitchen. He opens the refrigerator and the light from inside spills onto the floor in front of him. The storm front seems to be moving on and the pounding rain has turned into a howling wind.

He reaches in to grab some milk just as the wind gusts through the back door, then slams it shut causing Sweeny to jump and drop the carton of milk. Sweeny moves toward the back door, tries the light switch, nothing happens. He slowly opens the door, "Elmer, hey boy...where are you?" He then sees pool lights, or rather an eerie glow emanating from the freshly dug hole in the back yard. As he steps out onto the patio, cautiously moving toward the illuminated pit, he gets within a few feet and a skeletal head emerges slowly over the edge. Horrified, Sweeny loses his balance and falls backward into the mud along the edge. He quickly scrambles to his feet, sliding across the patio and into the house, never looks back. He then slams the door shut and locks it. He runs to the living room. He sees Carol Ann sitting up, her back to him. All we hear is a humming lullaby. He moves around to the front of her. She doesn't look at him, only stares out the window, singing to her bunny, "It's night time, it's night time..." Still panicked, he wakes the other two kids, "C'mon we gotta go!" He looks at Carol Ann, hesitant at first, "You too, let's go." He reaches out to grab her hand. She looks at him sternly and says, "No." Sweeny stares for just an instant and then reaches over to pick her up. Angel steps in and says, "Here Carol Ann, I'll hold your bunny." Carol Ann turns to both of them and in a low rumbling male voice says, "NO," then pulls the head off her bunny, stuffing flying everywhere. From Carol Ann's POV looking at the shocked faces of Sweeny and Angel, we see a ghost fire burst into flames in the neighbor's house and Jim and Joannie Bender come running out into the street. Then headlights come through the living room window playing across the wall and over to Carol Ann's face. Sweeny, Angel, and Lawrence turn to run toward the door and it too bursts into flame, just as we hear Steven's voice from outside the door, "Sweeny, are you in there?" Sweeny terrified, "Dad, we've got to get out of here. She'll burn the place down." His voice trails off as we hear a chair come crashing through the picture window. Quickly Steve helps all the kids outside. He yells for Carol Ann, Sweeny grabs his arm, "No!" he screams. "She should stay." Steven looks at Sweeny dumbfounded. Just then, Nora drives up and comes running to the four of them. Steven starts to go in after Carol Anne, Sweeny practically tackles him, "No Dad, please." Nora rushes over, "Oh

God, believe him he's right..."she buries her head in his chest. We look up and see Carol Ann get up and walk slowly, still humming, toward the back door and out into the yard, moving toward the pit. Steven and Nora grab the kids and head for the car. We then realize that ghost fires have started throughout the neighborhood, even in those houses that have not yet completed construction. People are running with few belongings to their cars, some screams and crying can be heard.

CUT TO:

Morning. We pan past a "No Trespassing" sign and reveal a huge digging site in progress. To end similar to "The Birds," with no real answer in sight.

"It's Night Time:" Final Set of Revisions

These final revisions to the treatment, dated August 23, 1980, change the "white settlers killed by Indians" buried under the neighborhood to simply a regular grave yard that Steven's company decided to build on top of. It also amps up the danger to Nora in the scene where she is attacked by the ghost in her bedroom before running outside and falling into the newly dug pool. Finally, it adds an early scene showing the changing of the TV set channels by unseen forces (and also renames "Lawrence" to "Robbie").

August 23, 1980

Steven Freeling comes from a family of real estate brokers. His father was selling houses when they were going for a thousand to five thousand dollars. Both of his brothers are still in business with their Dad and Steven went out on his own. His reputation locally is one of the best. He now

heads up a huge firm responsible for the last five or six major land development in the area. The newest being a housing development designed to handle at least 30,000 people. Ground was broken on the area little over two years ago and families started to move in about 6 months ago. Steven is in charge of showing the houses, clearing escrow, arrangements for personal kitchen designs, etc. Approximately all the houses have been filled-it sits in the middle of several other housing development and is separated by rows of poplar trees. A grave yard had stood here for years which accounts for the delay in developing the area. Through a lot of underhanded payoff with the Planning Commission, etc., Steven's company had gotten the ok to build provided they moved the graves to another location. Realizing this would be wildly expensive, they had publicized transferring the grave yard when in fact they simply moved the grave stones to another location but covered the existing grave site with about seven feet of fill and about a foot of dirt, quickly got the foundations laid and before anyone really knew what happened, installed housing tract. Steven was never involved in the negotiations but served as a representative in the community for the company, therefore becoming a target for the ghosts' retaliation.

This sequence will begin with Nora combing her hair at the vanity-however, no one else is home, Steven is on a business trip and the kids have gone to the movies to give Nora a little peace and quiet.

Fairly deep in thought, Nora combs through her hair in long slow strokes. Then without warning, the brush lifts her hair from one side of her head and lays it down on the other. Nora stares in a state of shock. Indentations from fingers can then be seen as if a hand is grabbing her face and turning. Nora is still in a state of shock, unable to move. We then see her lips press in, her nose shift off to the side a bit and we realize she is being kissed by a ghost. The indentations leave her face and she sits shocked for a few minutes. Then in the mirror, she sees a human form take

shape from a smoke and gaseous material. Nora slowly rises from her chair and begins to move toward the door. Staring at the smoke-like shape which is now dissipating, she reaches up to turn on the bedroom light. Just as she switches it on, it immediately goes off. Quickly she turns it on again and again something switches it off. She gasps a little and turns to run down the hall and the stairs to the living room turning lights on as she goes but they go off as quickly as she turns them on. She then turns on the television set which immediately goes off. She runs for the phone, which is invisibly taken out of her hand and hung up. Truly frightened, she runs upstairs again, half way up the stairs as if someone stepped on the back of her dress, she falls. We then see a hand print as if something were gripping her ankle and it begins moving up her leg. Nora stares for a moment in horror and then begins to resist, trying to pull herself up the stairs, reaching desperately for the banister. As she breaks free she runs into the bedroom, the door slams shut moments later and the smokey, gaseous form begins to appear again. We can only see it with the moonlight streaming through the window. Nora sits shivering on the corner of the bed with her hands crossed over her chest holding onto her shoulders. We're then aware of the hand indentations again which grab her wrists and slowly but forcefully uncross her arms and drop them to her side. Nora, under her breath, on the verge of tears says, "No, no please don't hurt me..." As she says this, her night gown is slowly ripped off her shoulders and she is pushed down on the bed. We then see the hand indentations grasp her breast with a strong massaging effect and move down to her underwear which is gradually slipped back on the bed. Not able to grab at any human form she takes hold of the sheets for leverage to try and get out of the ghost's grasp. In the struggle she rolls off the bed, but we're aware that she still can't get up. Her arms are suddenly thrown back straight over the top of her head and then her legs are pulled apart forcefully, we can see on Nora's face sheer terror beyond the ability to cry. Then the sheet over the top of them begins to rise up and down rhythmically, and several times we see her face being kissed. Then the sheet falls away from her as if someone rolled over and took the sheet with them. Nora, for an instant, stares at the sheet, then jumps up and runs for the

door grabbing her robe on the way out. She gets downstairs, grabs her purse and heads for the front door. She takes hold of the handle and finds that she can't turn it. She pulls frantically to no avail. She then runs for the back door, quickly switches on the outside light and runs out on the patio. Finding it difficult to see, she runs into the patio table, and knocks a chair over just as the outside light goes off. Now, truly horrified she starts backing out onto the lawn. A clap of thunder goes off startling her, she turns and steps right into the freshly dug pit for the new swimming pool. Another clap of thunder, a bolt of lightning and a huge downpour starts. The freshly tilled soil turns into a gooey quick sand like mud very quickly. One end of the pool is very steep and as Nora tries desperately to climb out the grade is so steep she slides back each time. After the second or third slide, the mud is now up around her waist, another clap of thunder and suddenly the pool lights come on. Nora looks around for a moment and suddenly we see areas in the mud that start to rise up and then shafts of mud as the pouring rain hits these, we realize they are skeletons, more and more bobbing to the surface, then again a bolt of lightening strikes and short circuits the pool lights, causing a strobe effect. In sheer terror, eyes shut, Nora begins screaming, clawing frantically trying to make her way to the shallow end of the pool. Just as she nears the edge a hand reaches out to help her. With one hand resting on the pools edge and the other in this hand, she looks up into the eyes of her ghost, a smoke like apparition. For the first time, we can make out a human like face. Nora screams and goes sliding down back into the sea of skeletons only to come face to face with the corpse of the ghost she just saw. The last image we see is Nora huddled in the corner of the pool, strobe lights going and a sea of bobbing skeletons, rain pouring down and occasional lightening and thunder.

Another revision page dated August 23, 1980

Steven sits in the living room one evening after a hard day's work watching Monday Night

Football with his two boys, Sweeny and Robbie (change name from Lawrence in previous treatment). Just as the touchdown pass is thrown, the television goes to snow. Steven jumps up furious and starts screaming at the neighbors. He runs over to Jim Bender's house, who is also furious and finds that he thinks that Steven's remote control changed the channel on his set. They argue fervently for a few minutes and Steven heads back to the house convinced now that he will just move the TV somewhere else in the house as to avoid the neighbor's remote control. During the night the television set clicks on and starts racing through the channels till it comes to snow. This wakes Steven with a start. He jumps out of bed, throws on a robe and races over to the neighbor's house. After pounding on the door, Jim Bender answers. Steven immediately flies off the handle accusing him of disrupting the household. Jim seems a bit flustered saying he was just about to head over to his house because his set went on voluntarily.

Steven sees this as just an excuse but concedes. This remote control duel continues for a few days, until, one evening while the family is watching a late movie, the channels begin racing around until they come to snow. Steven jumps up and races outside over to their neighbor's house. Peeking through the window, he realizes they are gone. He tries the door several times and walks around to the back of the house. He finds this a bit disquieting and heads back to his house. As he turns his back, we are aware that the TV set in the neighbor's house clicks on, just as we hear a scream from the Freeling home. Nora seems a little more unnerved as Steven enters the house, insisting that some form came out of the television set. Steven passes this off as her imagination, but doesn't let on that the neighbors weren't home to cause the channel changing....thus begins the silent invasion of the Freeling home through the static snow of their television sets.