

HAUNTED CANADA 7

CHILLING TRUE TALES

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WHEN DREAMS BECOME NIGHTMARES

Whitehorse, Yukon

When eight-year-old Keely Osland's family moved out of their mobile home and into a four-bedroom house in the Riverdale neighbourhood of Whitehorse, everything seemed too good to be true. Keely and her older brother, Nolan, each had their own room, and there was very little they wanted that they lacked. Riverdale, which is surrounded by three large mountains and the Yukon River, is situated in a beautiful part of the country with plenty of wilderness for adventurous young children to explore. The Osland siblings felt like they were living a dream come true, but the dream was about to become a nightmare.

It would be the family's pets that first noticed that something about the house wasn't quite right. The older

of their two cats, Puss, was a lazy animal who did nothing but lie around all day. But once they moved into the house in Riverdale, something upset him and he began to act very strangely. At seemingly random times throughout the day and night, Puss would jump in the air and race up and down the stairs. And the younger cat, Chucky, who Keely described as being too fat to get up when they put out his food, often raced up and down the stairs as if possessed. It made Keely and her family feel very uncomfortable. It was as if the cats could sense something the humans could not.

Two years after she moved in, Keely and her nine-year-old cousin, Lindsay, not only sensed, but saw, what had spooked Puss and Chucky. It was a cold winter night in January and the two girls were alone in the basement. It was late when they were playing with a Barbie dollhouse and some baby dolls Lindsay had received for Christmas. The girls were tired but having fun, when suddenly two of the dolls' bottles levitated above the ground and floated in mid-air. The girls stared at the floating toy bottles in transfixed horror. The bottles danced left to right and right to left in perfect unison. And then, as abruptly as they had risen off the carpet, they dropped to the floor. The girls screamed and ran up the stairs, leaving the creepy doll toys behind.

The bottles weren't the only objects that defied gravity in the basement of Keely's house. Window blinds often shot up on their own. And a few days after the bottle incident, a blanket lifted off the floor into the air, lingered for a few seconds, then dropped back down. Eventually Keely

refused to go down to the basement by herself.

One day, another young cousin named Ian was sleeping over and was in the Riverdale house alone. He made sure all the doors were locked and then settled on the couch in the upstairs family room to watch a television show. Unexpectedly, the back door on the main floor slammed shut. Ian was sure he had checked it on his rounds, and he hadn't even heard it open before it closed.

Summoning all his courage, he rose from the couch and crept through the hall and down the stairs. No one else was in the house — so far so good. But Ian made an unsettling discovery when he reached the back door. It was still locked. Confused and not wanting to give the matter any further thought, he returned to the family room and tried to get back into his television show.

But Ian wasn't going to watch any more TV that evening. Shortly after he sat back down on the couch, he heard another sound. Not a door slamming — something worse. The sound of heavy footsteps coming toward him — up the stairs and down the hall, closer, closer, closer . . .

Fortunately Keely's family returned at that exact moment, and the phantom footsteps stopped immediately. Ian rushed to meet the family, terror and relief fighting for dominance of his facial expression.

The Oslands moved to a new house some years later and their cats returned to their old habits. Puss spent more time dozing in sunbeams, while Chucky regained the weight he'd lost in Riverdale. Neither raced up and down the stairs ever again.