

A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET 7: THE ASCENSION

Written By

Wes Craven

FADE IN:

INT. BOILER ROOM

DEEP, GRIM MUSIC in ULTRA-STEREO, SUPERSATURATED COLORS,
CAMERA MOVES SLICK AND OMINOUS, as we BEGIN A SERIES OF CLOSE
SHOTS OF GRIMY HANDS. BUILDING --

A STEEL HAND, shining dully in the dark shadows of a filthy
boiler room - being assembled slowly over --

METAL FINGERS -- COMPOSITE SINEW -- the SPARK of hammer on
metal -- then -- the thing suddenly flexes as if alive --

CLOSE ON REMOTE CONTROL DEVICE -- clean hands manipulating
levers --

THE STEEL HAND -- forms into a heavy fist -- thumps on table -
- then the GRIMY HANDS of the CREATOR thrust in again --
begin affixing long, shining blades to the end of the steel
fingers --

CLOSER ON BLADES -- gleaming, dangerously long.

CUTAWAYS TO FURNACES -- belching FIRE and SMOKE.

STEAM PIPES -- hissing and dripping into endless depths of
this hellish place.

THE HAND -- fitted with the final claw -- now a super-modern,
almost futuristic version of Freddy's glove -- flexing and
trembling.

THE MAKER'S RIGHT HAND -- caresses it -- then retracts and
lays itself on the filthy work bench -- the MAKER'S LEFT HAND
ENTERS FRAME WITH A HUGE CLEAVER and raises it over the wrist
of the right hand -- then strikes down hard!

CUT TO A CAMERA AND DOLLY -- BEHIND, IN THE SHADOWS -- A
SHADOWY CREW GASPS -- we hear a muffled EEUWWW --

THE STUMP OF THE MAKER'S RIGHT ARM -- now spurting blood --
raises --

VOICE (O.S.)
More blood, more blood!

Nearby, CHUCK and TERRY, two young SPFX assistants, pump fake
blood through tubing, using large plastic syringes. It's a
messy job, they're covered with fake blood themselves, as
their boss, CHASE PORTER, good-looking, early 30's, tweaks
the levers of a remote control device.

BEHIND THEM, at the edge of the set, Chase's wife, HEATHER
LANGENKAMP, 30, dressed in woman's pajamas, and his son
DYLAN, 5, watch from their chairs. Heather, appalled by the
scene's violence, puts her hand over Dylan's startled eyes.

THE STUMP OF THE MAKER'S ARM thrusts now into the cuff of the steel hand, synthetic tendons snake out of the steel hand and bury themselves in the maker's wrists, and the unseen actor flexes the razor-sharp steel blades, wheels and SLASHES INTO CAMERA as we hear

VOICE (cont'd) (O.S.)
CUT! Fantastic!

BUZZER. THE FURNACES STOP BELCHING FIRE. SMOKE, STEAM and WATER stop dead. Instead there's CHATTER, LIGHTS and movement as the crew bustles in to reset for the next take. The director, WES CRAVEN, rushes over to Chase and thumps him on the back.

CRAVEN
Chase, you're a genius! This makes his old claw look like Mother Theresa's!

Chase waves a 'them too' hand towards his assistants.

CRAVEN (cont'd)
You, too, Terry, Chuck. Great blood!

CHUCK
Thank you.

TERRY
It's some of our best work.

Laughter. Craven cracks a bottle of Lipovitan. Chuck walks by with dripping steel hand as Chase rumples Dylan's hair.

CHASE
Want to see some neat stuff?

Dylan looks up wide-eyed.

HEATHER
Chase, no.

Chase laughs.

CHASE
Come on, it's only make believe!

And lifts Dylan, leading Heather away. STEADICAM WITH THEM as they move off-set through crew and equipment into a work area behind the boiler room flats.

He sets Dylan on a workbench. The kid's surrounded by SNARLING MONSTER HEADS, LON WITHERED ARMS, EVISCERATED TORSOS, propped in corners and peering off temporary shelves. The handiwork of Chase's SPFX MAKEUP wizardry.

CHASE (cont'd)
You hungry, Dylan?

He give Dylan a large Chinese food takeout container. Dylan opens it and a reptilian head jumps out. Dylan gives a start as Chase laughs.

CHASE (cont'd)
Gotcha!

HEATHER
Chase!

Chase takes it back from Dylan. Shows it's only a hand puppet. Meanwhile Chuck's brought the claw back from the set and placed it on a work armature.

CHUCK
It should have flexed more. I think the servos got shorted out with blood.

CHASE
Insulate 'em with some styro. It wasn't designed to be submerged, for Petesakes.

Heather looks at it eerily.

HEATHER
I don't like that thing.

He turns, a funny gleam in his eye.

CHASE
This thing puts bread on our table.

DYLAN
Is it alive, Daddy?

A.D. (O.S.)
Heather, you're in the next shot!

Heather turns, a little confused.

CHASE
(putting Dylan on again)
Might as well be, Dylan. State of the art animatronics enhanced with bio-organic grafting. Bull tendons, nerve bundles from a Doberman, even half the brain of a homicidal primate was...

HEATHER
Chase...

heather is looking at the hand again, but now her expression is growing more alarmed. Chase looks over, reacts to

THE HAND

flexing. Trembling.

CHASE

Hey...

Chase reaches out to steady the hand, but with incredible speed it contorts. The claws flick and Chase reels back with a cry, staring at his own bloody fingers.

CHASE (cont'd)

Shit!

Chase grabs the remote and switches it off. THE CLAW falls still. The other assistant, CHUCK, peers down at it in curiosity.

CHUCK

Must've picked up something from an AD's walkie-talkie...

He flops it over with a screwdriver and pokes at it. The hand lets out a LITTLE SOUND, half machine, half animal. Terry puts his hand near it, palm down, then looks at Chase.

TERRY

You sure it's turned off?

CHASE

It's off.

TERRY

Funny. It's warm. Like a real hand.

Chuck leans down and peers more closely at it. Goes to poke it again. But before his finger touches it the clawed steel hand leaps up and glues itself to his neck. Its gleaming talons sinking into his throat!

Chuck jerks back. Clawing the thing away. Clutching his throat as blood spurts from between his fingers.

THE HAND

smacks back on the table and scrambles out of sight with a clatter of steel. Into the warren of tools and equipment. Fast as some spiny creature from a thousand fathoms!

Heather screams. Dylan draws back, pale and frightened as Chase grabs the remote controller and smashes it. Pulls out the batteries and flings them away. Every furnace in the place suddenly ROARS BACK TO LIFE!

CRAVEN (O.S.)

What the hell's going on?! Kill the

effects!

FIRE, SMOKE AND STEAM HOWLING as Chuck crashes blindly into Chase and both go down. Terry claws cursing through the jumble atop the toolbench, trying to find where the damn thing went.

ANGLE ON THE FLOOR - THE CLAW skitters down on one leg of the bench fast as a wharf rat and attacks Terry's foot, slicing through his Achilles tendon!

TERRY shrieks and falls hard, and the instant he slams into the floor, the claw drives straight into his heart! Terry screams as the claw wheels and scrambles straight for the sprawl of Chase and Chuck's convulsing body!

CU CHASE

reacting in horror.

CHASE'S POV TO CHUCK'S BODY as the CLAW APPEARS over the rim of Chuck's shoulder, inches from Chase's face, spreading its talons wide!

CHASE
Heather!

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Heather convulses in bed. Terror elevated by...

CHASE
Heather!! Earthquake!!

Chase's already half out of bed, clawing at her.

CHASE (cont'd)
Get in the doorway

DYLAN (O.S.)
Mommmeeee!

That voice jolts her fully awake.

HEATHER
Dylan!

A framed picture falls with a deafening crash, its glass shattering, narrowly missing Chase. Heather sprawls out of the room.

INT. STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS

HAND-HELD and rough, CAMERA grabbing the action as best it can. Heather half runs, half braces against bucking walls while pictures and china shatter. Chase staggering behind her into

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - DAY

The child sits upright among his twisted bedclothes staring at the toys swinging wildly from his ceiling. Then it's over.

CAMERA STABILIZES, but remains HANDHELD. There has not been nor will there be any MUSIC CUES.

The house has fallen still. The swimming pool, seen outside the window, slaps against its walls. There's a weird ELECTRONIC ULULATION outside, up and down the street, like spaceships landing. Heather looks at Chase.

CHASE

Car alarms. You okay?

She nods, scrambles up and lifts Dylan, who's begun to cry. Hugs him. He's full of jagged energy, soaked with sweat.

CHASE (cont'd)

You okay, chief?

DYLAN

no.

HEATHER

(feels his forehead)

You have a fever, sweetie?

Dylan shakes his head. Heather kisses him.

CHASE

Just an earthquake, Dylan. Every once in a while we get a few.

HEATHER

No biggie, really.

Chase rumples the kid's hair. Then Dylan says solemnly.

DYLAN

Daddy, blood.

Heather follows Dylan's eyes to Chase, to his bloody hand. Chase notices with a start, grabbing one of Dylan's T-shirts and wrapping it, saying a bit too quickly.

CHASE

Nothing, guys, just a scratch.

But it's already been dripping through the cotton.

HEATHER

Where'd you...get that?

Chase shrugs.

CHASE

The picture, I guess. When it fell.
It's nothing, really.

He gives her a look, like 'cool it in front of the kid, at least', and turns.

CHASE (cont'd)

I'll put a bandage on it. Don't worry
about it.

And he goes out. Heather looks at Dylan and he looks at her.
It's hard to say which is more frightened.

INT. KITCHEN/DEN - DAY

Heather, keeping to herself, tries to make order from the mess in the cabinets. Chase, hand bandaged, brooms broken crockery until the kettle whistles, then abandons the cleanup to make instant coffee.

HEATHER

One of mom's cups got broken.

CHASE

I'm sorry. At least we're in on piece.

She says nothing. In the living room, the TV NEWSCASTER drones on about the morning's 5.5 quake, ('...latest of what Seismologists are calling a swarm').

HEATHER

Do we have to watch that?

Chase, washing down a fast piece of toast, yawns and blinks.

CHASE

I thought you turned it on.

He zaps it off. Heather eyes him, then turns on Dylan who's making a face in his oatmeal. Scary eyes. Gape of mouth.

HEATHER

Dylan, it's breakfast. Not arts and
crafts

(feels Chase watching)

What?

CHASE

You get any sleep last night?

HEATHER

More or less.

(swipes hair from eyes)

Dylan, time to get dressed. I'm late.

DYLAN
You going away?

HEATHER
Just for a few hours. Julie'll be with
you.

He sighs, then goes into his room.

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - LATER - DAY

The two dress, Heather rather smartly. Chase, in jeans and
sweatshirt, is packing a small overnighter. Chase again
notes Heather's withdrawal.

CHASE
Anything other than the obvious bothering
you?

HEATHER
Five earthquakes in three weeks is
enough.

CHASE
Hasn't been another call, has there?

She shakes her head. Chase looks relieved.

CHASE (cont'd)
Two full weeks without him. Maybe he got
run over by a truck.

Heather doesn't seem to take any comfort in this.

HEATHER
He feels closer, if anything.
(low)
It's giving me nightmares.

He looks at her more closely.

CHASE
You have one last night?

She finally nods yes. He softens his voice.

CHASE (cont'd)
It's just a reaction to the earthquake,
Heather.

HEATHER
Maybe.
(beat)
Or maybe I shouldn't do this interview
today.

CHASE

You've got to get back on the horse some time.

(off her look)

Look, you've had a nutcase making harassing phone calls. I know how scary that feels.

HEATHER

No, you don't.

CHASE

(kind)

Okay, but it still doesn't mean it can't be over with.

She turns away.

HEATHER

What if it isn't over?

CHASE

(beat)

Maybe you should tell me your dream.

She gives a shrug, like it's silly to even talk about it.

HEATHER

It was nothing. We were both working on some movie, and a special effects thing went horribly wrong. Terry and Chuck were...hurt. You were almost...

(at his bandaged hand)

You were even cut.

CHASE

(uneasy)

You probably were half awake and saw me get nicked by that picture glass. Dreams work like that.

(beat)

You want me not to go on this job?

HEATHER

Just be careful, okay?

CHASE

I should survive two days in Palmdale supplying soap bubbles for a detergent commercial, don't you think?

HEATHER

(reluctant smile)

Guess so.

CHASE

48 hours. Back before you know it.

He kisses her and she kisses back, holding on a moment. Then he grabs his suitcase and exits. Heather closes her eyes. Hears him say goodbye to Dylan downstairs, hears the front door close.

Then a brittle BREAKING SOUND. Heather looks up and sees FOUR THIN CRACKS snaking down her bedroom wall. A moment later the TV can be heard again.

INT. DEN - DAY

Heather races down to find Chase, but is stopped when she sees Dylan directly in front of the TV screen, impassively watching her. As Nancy in NIGHTMARE I, looking in horror to

INSERT TV (FROM NIGHTMARE I)

Tina in the bloody bodybag standing in the doorway to Nancy's schoolroom.

TINA (TV)
Naaancyyyy....

CU NANCY

reacting in terror.

HEATHER (O.S.)
Dylan, I don't want you watching that.

BACK TO HEATHER

as she snaps off the TV. Then in fury pulls out the plug as well. The instant she does, the silent child lets out an ear-piercing howl.

HEATHER (cont'd)
Dylan, stop it! What in the world's gotten in to you?

THE PHONE RINGS. Dylan instantly falls silent. Heather looks at him. He's eerily still now, just watching her. The phone RINGS a second time and she snatches it up, still distracted by her son's eyes.

HEATHER (cont'd)
Hello?

Through a deep ROARING OF BOILERS we HEAR a strange garbled VOICE sing

VOICE (FILTER)
One two...

She reacts, then slams it down. Stares at it. That sound -

and the voice - deep, murderous, mocking. A flawless imitation of...Freddy.

Scared now, she runs to the front door just in time to see

EXT. HEATHER'S POV THE STREET

CHASE'S PICKUP TRUCK giving a honk as it drives off.

INT. KITCHEN/FRONT DOOR

HEATHER

Chase!

But he hasn't heard her, and soon is out of sight. Heather closes the door, turns and sees Dylan, still staring at her.

DYLAN

Someone's coming.

HEATHER

What?

An instant later, something gives the whole house a subtle SHAKE, rattling everything in it. Heather grabs Dylan, but there's nothing more.

Then the DOORBELL rings.

Heather freezes, paralyzed by unspeakable fear. Then

VOICE (O.S.)

(through door)

Heather?

Heather opens the door to JULIE, a direct, open-faced young woman. She blinks at Heather's pale face.

JULIE

Everything okay?

Heather nods sheepishly.

HEATHER

Yeah, Julie, I'm sorry. I just thought...there was an earthquake, I think. Little one, but...

JULIE

Big truck went right by before you opened the door.

(grins)

Life on the Fault Line.

She looks past Heather. Gives Dylan a smile.

JULIE (cont'd)

Hey, tiger!

She lifts him with a laugh. Heather watches the two, fighting a wave of vertigo.

HEATHER
You think he has a fever? He felt warm
to me this morning.

Julie feels his forehead.

JULIE
Seems okay.
(eyes Heather)
That all that's wrong? You seem...

The telephone RINGS again. Heather snatches it up.

HEATHER
Leave us alone, you creep!

VOICE (FILTER)
(beat)
LA Limousine, ma'am. Just wanted you to
know I'm out front.

Julie looks at her with surprise. Heather walks to the front door and checks.

EXT. HEATHER'S POV THE STREET

A BLACK LIMO idles in the driveway.

INT. KITCHEN/FRONT DOOR

HEATHER
Uh, sorry. Hang on a minute.

HEATHER closes the door, returns to the kitchen and hangs up the phone.

JULIE
Heather, what is it?

HEATHER
(low)
Dunno. Just have this feeling today...

She bites her lip, then Dylan speaks, soberly, quietly.

DYLAN
Mommy stay home, then.

He turns and walks into his room. Julie looks at Heather.

JULIE
He'll be fine, don't worry.

She goes in the bedroom after Dylan. Heater takes a long breath...then grabs the phone and dials.

MAN'S VOICE (FILTER)
Studio B.

HEATHER
Hi. This is Heather Langenkamp.

MAN'S VOICE (FILTER)
The car's no there yet?

HEATHER
No. I...listen, I can't make it in today.

MAN'S VOICE (FILTER)
(beat)
You're kidding, right?

Heather shakes her head.

HEATHER
I'm sorry, I can't.

MAN'S VOICE (FILTER)
Listen, dammit.

HEATHER
I just can't.

She hangs up. Starts for Dylan's room, then the PHONE RINGS. Heather comes back and picks it up, fully expecting it to be the studio and dreading it.

HEATHER (cont'd)
Yes?

She reacts, realizing too late she's listening to the HISS OF STEAM.

VOICE (FILTER)
One two...

She slams the phone down. Stares at the thing like it was a snake. It RINGS AGAIN. She hesitates. Picks it up finally. Holds it at a distance for a moment. Then puts it to her ear.

HEATHER
Hello?

VOICE (FILTER)
Freddy's coming for yooooouuuu.

She recoils and slams it down! Turns and kicks a chair.

CRASH! Senses someone behind her and whirls to see Julie standing in Dylan's doorway.

JULIE
What is it, Heather?

Heather blinks.

HEATHER
Damn caller.

Julie crosses to her, lowering her voice so Dylan can't hear.

JULIE
He's started again?

Heather just nods.

JULIE (cont'd)
Sick bastard
(puts her hand over her mouth)
Sorry.
(brighter)
Dylan. He doesn't have a fever like you thought. Probably just your nerves.

Heather gives her a funny look.

HEATHER
Nerves?

Julie blushes.

JULIE
I just meant form the shaker this morning. I mean, everyone's freaked out at how many we've been having. Then the calls.

Heather starts to say something, then the PHONE RINGS again. She snatches it up and shouts.

HEATHER
Stop calling me, you sonuvabitch!

VOICE #2 (FILTER)
(beat)
You talk to your agent this way?
(Heather blanches)
And you try to cancel an appearance on AM/LA at the last damn minute. What the hell's with you?

Heather sags in dismay.

HEATHER
I'm sorry, Jerry. I just...can't leave

the house right now.

JERRY (FILTER)

What, you wanna single-handedly bury your career?! Lose your house, put your husband and kid out on the street? Or just give your old agent a heart attack?

Heather slumps.

HEATHER

Okay, fine, I'll be there. It's just, the calls started again.

Jerry switches to his commiserative voice.

JERRY (FILTER)

Unfortunately, this kinda crap is part of the business these days, Heather. Have you thought of buying a good handgun?

HEATHER

I've got a five-year old in the house, Jerry!

JERRY (FILTER)

He's an L.A. kid, probably already has one.

(laughs)

Call me after the interview, okay?

And he hangs up. Heather looks, sees Dylan staring at her from his doorway.

HEATHER

Dylan, I gotta go. Forgive me?

DYLAN

Bye.

She crosses and gives him a big hug. We see his face over her shoulder. Lost.

EXT. THE HOUSE - DAY

Heather and Julie exit an attractive house in an affluent neighborhood.

JULIE

I'll call the cops for you. You've got the number on the fridge, right?

HEATHER

Thanks. Just give them the time he called. They're keeping a list, supposedly.

(gives a hug)

Sorry. My nerves are so raw these days.

JULIE

'S okay.

Julie gives a wave as Heather heads down the walk.

CLOSER ON HEATHER

now eyeing the dark car in the drive, slowing as she sees.

The DRIVER, waiting, holding the back door. A big man, faced away, head distinctively bald. It could almost be...Freddy.

He turns. It's just a driver, pale-faced and antsy. Heather gets in.

INT. LIMO/EXT. TV STUDIO - MOVING - DAY

HEATHER

staring out the window, lost in thought.

THE DRIVER

studies her intently in his mirror.

DRIVER

You played that girl...in that
movie...with the guy with the
(claws his hand; Heather gives
an uneasy smile)

Yeah, sure, that's you.

(smiles darkly)

That's what I love about this job, I get
to meet the stars.

HEATHER

I'm hardly a star.

DRIVER

You kidding? I love your stuff. First
was the best. Where your girl friend's
cut open and dragged across the ceiling?
Awesome!

(missing Heather's flinch)

And when all that blood comes out of your
boyfriend's bed? Thought I'd shi...

Heather finds the switch for the window between them. He gives a nasty look as the gap closes.

DRIVER (cont'd)

But they should never've killed off
Freddy!

Heather sinks back into the leather. A moment later the limo

lurches to a stop and her door is jerked open. A YOUNG MAN leans in and grabs her arm.

P.A.

Heather? We're gonna have to run!

EXT. TV STATION PARKING LOT - DAY

And he nearly yanks her out of the car.

INT. TV STUDIO

LIGHTS BLINDING INTO LENS. CAMERA TIPS DOWN TO REVEAL HEATHER and a smiling TALKSHOW HOST.

HOST

So, Heather, we're coming up on the 10th anniversary of the first Nightmare on Elm Street. It's five sequels later. Tell us how this amazing series has affected your life personally.

Heather strains for a smile. Shrugs.

HEATHER

I don't know if it has, really. With the exception of One and Three, I've pretty much kept out of it. I'm working in television now. The hours let me spend more time with my husband and little boy.

HOST

Now that you have a child, is it possible you've decided horror is bad for children?

HEATHER

No, not really. I...

HOST

Do you let your child watch your movies?

HEATHER

My child? No...but...

The host cocks his head.

HOST

What about another sequel? Is Freddy really dead?

Heather twitches, responding a little too quickly.

HEATHER

Of course he is.

(then, softer)

Freddy's dead and gone.

HOST
(setting it up)
And how about your co-star in NIGHTMARE
I. Would you trust him alone with your
child?

HEATHER
(a little lost now)
Robert? I...

HOST
(big smile)
Maybe we should ask him, hmmm? We've got
a surprised, Heather. A great big
surprise for you and our audience.

A discernible rustle goes through the place. Heather smiles gamely. Not knowing what the hell they're pulling. The host stands and yells.

HOST (cont'd)
Ladies and gentlemen, put your hands
together for the best of the bad. Ro-
bert Ennn-gluuuuund!!!!

And ROBERT ENGLUND strolls out with a good-natured wave in full Freddy MAKE-UP! His fans erupt with thunderous applause and cheers. After deafening WHISTLES the boys (many dressed in Freddy customs, complete with plastic claws) settle into a chant of FRED-DY! FRED-DY! FRED-DY!

Englund stalks into the spotlight, hooks his claw through the air and growls.

ROBERT ENGLUND
You're all my children now!

The place goes wild.

HOLD ON HEATHER

looking at that red and green back cavorting against the blinding light. The steel claws waving and poking as Englund milks it for all it's worth, reminded of a nightmare she'd much rather forget.

INT. GREEN ROOMS/EXT. WALKWAYS OUTSIDE - DAY

Heather gathers her things. In an adjoining room, Robert stands in the doorway to the outside, casually elegant now in civilian, signing autographs for a throng of kids. He glances at her out of the corner of his eye, sensing her mood.

ROBERT ENGLUND
You okay?

HEATHER

I'm fine.

ROBERT ENGLUND

Everything went great, I thought. We really got you, didn't we?

HEATHER

I don't know why you didn't tell me, that's all.

He waves off the last of the kids and closes his outside door, crossing into her room and exiting with her. CAMERA FOLLOWS as they walk, KIDS blockaded BG by STUDIO SECURITY heading away.

ROBERT ENGLUND

Hey, they loved the expression on your face. I think they'd love to see us together again!

Heather glances back at the kids yelling after him.

HEATHER

In what, a romantic comedy?

ROBERT ENGLUND

(devilish)

Just because it's a love story doesn't mean it can't have a decapitation or two.

The P.A. reappears with a cellular phone.

MAN

Heather? Call for you!

Heather looks at the phone. Puts it to her ear.

HEATHER

Yes?

SARA (O.S.)

Heather, this is Sara Risher over at New Line. How are you?

HEATHER

Oh, hi. I'm fine, Sara. My God, a voice from the past!

SARA (FILTER)

Really! Listen, Heather, I won't take but a minute of your time. It's just that we have something to propose to you, and wonder if you'd stop by the offices. Bob'd love to talk to you.

HEATHER
Uh...sure...when?

SARA (FILTER)
No time like the present. The car will
bring you.

HEATHER
Now?

SARA (FILTER)
Just take a minute. You'll be glad you
did, I bet.

EXT. INTERNATIONAL OFFICES OF NEW LINE CINEMA - DAY

Heather exits the limo and starts in to a MODERN OFFICE
BUILDING with a SIGN reading NEW LINE CINEMA.

INT. OUTER OFFICE - NEW LINE CINEMA - DAY

A sprawling space with a maze of buff-colored file cases
defining dozens of work spaces populated by smart-looking
twenty-something people. Heather stops at the machined-steel
front desk. A RECEPTIONIST with dark purple lipstick and Doc
Martins peers up.

RECEPTIONIST
Help you?

HEATHER
I'm here to see Bob Shaye.

The receptionist checks her out causally.

RECEPTIONIST
Was Bob expecting you?

VOICE (O.S.)
Heather!

Heather turns as SARA RISHER crosses to give her a maternal
hug.

SARA
Bob's dying to see you.

WIDER. MOVING WITH THEM as Sara leads Heather farther back
into the place grabbing a young man by the elbow.

SARA (cont'd)
Heather this is Mike De Luca. Mike,
Heather Langenkamp, our little Nancy's
come back home!

MIKE DE LUCA
Hey, I'm a fan! Great meeting you.

He ducks into someone else's office, giving a hi-five and closing the door. Sara smiles at Heather.

SARA
Can I get you something to drink?

HEATHER
Coffee'd be nice.

SARA
(to the nearest)
Sounds good. Kim, would you get Heather
and me a coffee? How you like it, Hon?

HEATHER
Black's fine.

SARA
Me too.

They've reached a huge stainless steel door. Sara raps twice and pushes it open, gesturing Heather inside.

INT. BOB SHAYE'S OFFICE - DAY

Heather finds herself in a bright post-industrial workspace. There's an unadorned desk and behind, a Warhol of Freddy times four. Double doors are thrown open to the terrace, and out there, cordless telephone pressed to his ear, is BOB SHAYE. He gives a wave and starts inside.

BOB
(into phone)
Gotta go. Call me when you get to Milan.
And don't forget risotto con tarfutti.
Fantastico! Have fun.

He tosses it down and gives Heather a two-handed shake.

BOB (cont'd)
Great seeing you, Heather - how're
things?

HEATHER
Fine. I don't have to ask how you're
doing.

He shrugs, admitting.

BOB
So far so good. Maybe we can send a
little your way, too, if you're up for
it.

He gestures to an area of Italian leather and gleaming glass and sits as the assistant brings coffee. There are two cups,

and he immediately drinks from one, watching her gulp hers, then

BOB (cont'd)

I'll cut to the chase, Heather. You interested in making the definitive Nightmare with us?

Heather lowers her cup, taken off-guard.

HEATHER

I thought you'd killed Freddy off.

BOB

We did. Bad mistake. The fans are clamoring for more. So, Evil never dies, right?

(grins shakily)

Anyway, a while back we got a call from Wes. He's got this idea. And who better to resurrect Freddy than his creator?

HEATHER

I thought he'd stopped doing horror.

BOB

Believe it or not, he told me I hadn't heard from him in ten years because he hasn't had any good nightmare. They're his inspiration. But now he's got a new script in the works.

She notes Bob biting his thumbnail.

HEATHER

Which means he's having nightmares again?

BOB

He's very excited about it.

HEATHER

The nightmares.

BOB

He's excited about the script. You should be too. It stars you.

HEATHER

(reacts)

Can I read it?

BOB

He's not showing it until it's done. But it sounds hot, and we wanted to get all our stars lined up in case it is. You and Robert got great ratings today. Which is the first thing we needed to

know.

HEATHER
You mean that was a...

BOB
Sort of a trial balloon.

Heather blinks.

HEATHER
I don't know, Bob. I'm flattered and
all, but I've got a kid, now.

BOB
So?

HEATHER
So I don't know about horror.

BOB
Come on. Kids love horror.

HEATHER
And I...I've got other things happening.

BOB
I'm sure we can match any offer.

She stands.

HEATHER
It's not that. I've got a fan.

He gets up too.

BOB
Sweetie, you've got lots of fans, we've
done market studies. You rate right up
there.

(puts arm around her, guides
her to door)
We've already got Chase working on a
prototype for the glove.

HEATHER
What?

BOB
I know. We asked him to keep it kind of
surprise until we talked. Look, how
about we get in touch your agent. You
still with Jerry?

HEATHER
Yes, but...

BOB
We'll work something out. I'm sure
you'll be happy with it.

Heather turns in the door.

HEATHER
Bob, how long has Wes been working on
this script?

BOB
I don't know. A couple months. Why?

HEATHER
And since you've been thinking of making
it. Has anything funny happened?

BOB
I don't follow.

HEATHER
Like weird calls, by any chance?

His phone RINGS behind him. He makes no move to pick it up.
The phone RINGS again.

HEATHER (cont'd)
Or nightmares?

The phone rings again.

HEATHER (cont'd)
Why don't you pick up your phone, Bob?

Shaye shrugs.

BOB
That's what people get paid for around
here.

An assistant picks up the phone. Straightens.

KIM
It's Ted in New York. He wants to know
how the glove is coming.

Bob gives a nervous laugh.

BOB
Gotta take that. Keep in touch.

Heather nods, and says quietly.

HEATHER
You too, Bob.

She turns and starts to go. Then stops.

IN HER POV

for the first time she notices everyone in the outer office has a cup of steaming coffee on his or her desk.

HEATHER

gets the hell out of there.

EXT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

The limo pulls up and stops. The driver opens the door and Heather exits and walks to the house. Halfway there she starts to hear the SCREAMS.

INT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Heather bursts in and stops cold. From Dylan's room comes terrible SCREAMING.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - DAY

Heather runs in and finds Julie by the bed with Dylan. The boy convulsing and screaming with terrifying intensity. She rushes over and holds him, terrified. Strange and alien words are spilling from his mouth. A language ripped from another world not connected with our reality at all. Until suddenly it's English, and he says in a clear and terrifyingly deep voice

DYLAN

Never sleep again, never sleep again!

Then he starts sobbing as if his heart will break. Heather looks at Julie in shock.

HEATHER

What's going on? Was he watching the movie on TV again?

Julie blinks.

JULIE

Movie? He hasn't been watching any TV at all. He was taking his nap when I heard screaming.

Julie stops, shaken herself. Heather looks at the child. Dylan turns, catches her eye with his own, and says through his tears.

DYLAN

Rex saved me.

HEATHER

Rex? Who's Rex?

Dylan pulls a stuffed dinosaur out from beneath the covers, and gives it to Heather. And it nearly falls apart in her hands, its body torn by four deep cuts, its stuffing pouring out.

Heather looks at Dylan.

DYLAN
Is Rex gonna die?

Heather shakes her head.

HEATHER
No, Rex is not going to die.
(to Julie)
Julie, you know where the sewing stuff
is, don't you?

JULIE
Sure.
(Dylan)
We'll do an operation, Doctor Dylan and
Doctor Julie. We'll fix him good as new.

Julie takes the thing, grabs Dylan and heads to the kitchen. Heather glances back at Dylan's bed.

INT. KITCHEN

Heather in hushed conversation with Chase. B.G. Julie sews on Rex, accompanied by a worried Dylan. Then Chase's voice:

CHASE
Heather?

HEATHER
Chase. Hi...

INT. CHASE'S SPFX TRAILER - DAY

Chase, on a cellular, is in the back of his SPFX trailer working on frothing up a tub of soap suds. B.G., set aside in mid-construction, is something shiny and sharp. Something we instantly recognize as FREDDY'S NEW GLOVE.

CHASE
(yawning)
What's up?

HEATHER (FILTER)
Chase, you'd better come home.

CHASE
Heather, I'm stuck here. Neither Chuck
or Terry came in today. I can't get
away!

HEATHER (FILTER)
Chase, it's Dylan!

He stands, forgetting his emergency, holding his breath.

CHASE
What?

BACK TO KITCHEN

Heather nearly crying.

HEATHER
He's had some sort of...episode.

CHASE (FILTER)
What? What kind of episode?

HEATHER
He was just acting very strange. He
thinks somebody's after him, Chase. It's
scary, it scared me. He was acting
like...

CHASE (FILTER)
Like what?

HEATHER
(hardly able to say it)
Like Freddy.

CHASE (FILTER)
(beat)
Heather, has there been another call?

Heather just closes her eyes, fear suppressing an answer.
Demanding another question instead.

HEATHER
Chase. Why didn't Chuck or Terry show
up?

CHASE (FILTER)
Forget those two clowns, Heather. Answer
me, did you get another call from that
guy or not?

Heather bites her lip and nods.

HEATHER
Yes.

CHASE (FILTER)
(instantly)
I'll be there in three hours.

HEATHER

Don't speed, Chase. It's not...

He's already hung up.

CUTTING TO CHASE

jumping off the tailgate and running for his pickup. CAMERA HOLDS ON HIM A BEAT, THEN MOVES UP AND INTO THE BACK OF THE TRUCK AGAIN.

And the place on the workbench where the glove was is now empty.

EXT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Storybook peaceful.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heather sits next to the bed, one elbow on the quilt, reading from the age-old fable of Hansel and Gretel. Dylan's scrunched under the blankets, only his head visible. Calm as you please. The sole light comes from the child's bedside lamp.

HEATHER

"...as soon as the sun was up the witch made Gretel fetch the wood and kindle a fire. 'We will bake cookies first,' she said. 'I have heated the oven and kneaded the dough. Crawl in and see if the fire is blazing high enough now.' And she pushed Gretel toward the oven. The witch meant to shut the door and bake her once she was inside."

(makes face)

Dylan, this is too violent. I don't know why you like these stupid old tales.

DYLAN

Finish, please!

HEATHER

This is going to give you nightmares.

DYLAN

I like this story.

Heather sighs. Picks the book back up.

HEATHER

"But Gretel guessed what the witch was planning. 'I don't know how to get in,' Gretel said. 'How am I to manage it?' 'Stupid girl!' shouted the witch, rushing up to the oven. 'The opening is

big enough. See, I can fit myself.'
Then quickly Gretel came behind and
pushed with all her might. Plunging the
wicked old woman headlong into the
flames, banging the door shut and bolting
it tight. The witch howled..."
(shakes her head)
That's enough.

Dylan stares off into the night.

DYLAN
"The witch howled like a scalded cat, but
Gretel ran away and left her there to
perish nonetheless."

Heather looks at Dylan in surprise, then at the page.
EXACTLY as Dylan said, the words are there. He turns and
says the rest straight to her, eyes glittering, almost
entranced.

DYLAN (cont'd)
"She ran to her brother as fast as she
could and flung open the door. 'Hansel!
Hansel!' she cried. 'We are saved. The
witch is dead!'"

His face is lit with a fierce radiance. Heather licks her
lips.

HEATHER
Time for sleep.

DYLAN
Say how they find their way back home.

She turns out the light.

HEATHER
Tomorrow night.

DYLAN
No. Tonight. It's important!

Heather looks at him in the moonlight. Wide awake, tugging
at her sleeve. She has to laugh.

HEATHER
Dylan, you know as well as I do, they
follow the trail of bread crumbs back to
their house.

Dylan sinks back with a smile.

DYLAN
"Then their father covered them with
kisses and they were safe."

HEATHER

They were safe and could sleep.

She tucks him in. Then notices something. A bump under the covers, down by Dylan's feet. She pats it, curious.

DYLAN

Rex.

He picks a flashlight off his night stand, pokes his head under the comforter and motions for her to follow. She smiles curiously and sticks her head under too.

UNDER THE COMFORTER, a colorful tent. Dylan aiming the beam towards the bottom of the bed and the large stuffed T-Rex there. Snarling in the center of the sheet, its back turned to them. It's been sewn together again, but the body looks much worse for the wear.

DYLAN (cont'd)

Rex keeps him from coming up.

HEATHER

Who?

DYLAN

The mean old man with the claws.

He points past the creature to the bottom edge of the 'tent'.

DYLAN (cont'd)

(matter-of-factly)

He wants to come up from down there.

While we sleep. I keep my feet up here...

(indicates 'safe' area)

Rex keeps him down there. He's my guard.

(looks at her solemnly)

You should have a guard, too.

Heather inexplicably feels light-headed.

HEATHER

Dylan, there's nothing down there.

Look...

She reaches past the dinosaur and lifts the blankets, exposing the bottom edge of the bed and the floor beyond.

HEATHER (cont'd)

See?

Dylan stares at it a long moment, then shrugs.

DYLAN

It's different when you're gone.

OUTSIDE THE BLANKETS AGAIN

Heather tucks him in, turns off his night light.

DYLAN (cont'd)
On, please?

HEATHER
(turns it back on)
Okay, sweetie, night, night, sleep tight.

DYLAN
(with her)
Don't let the bedbugs bite.

She kisses him gently and leaves the room. But not before his voice catches her in the doorway.

DYLAN (cont'd)
Daddy coming home?

HEATHER
He's on his way.

DYLAN
He can follow the breadcrumbs, right?

HEATHER
Right.

She leaves, closing the door, and Dylan says quietly to the night.

DYLAN
It the birds don't eat them first.

EXT. CHASE'S PICKUP - NIGHT

As it roars down a highway cutting through a bleak desert moonscape.

INT. CHASE'S PICKUP - NIGHT

Chase, face marked by concern and fatigue, picks up his mobile phone and dials. Gets nothing but STATIC. Swears and tosses it down. Squints his eyes against oncoming brights and shakes his head, suppressing a yawn.

HIS POV

the road. White lines strobing hypnotically.

CLOSER ON HIS FACE

eyes bloodshot and drooping.

WIDER

he shakes his head again. Turns on the radio. STATIC.
Pushes SEARCH. One HORRIBLE BLAST OF STATIC after ANOTHER.
Then a distant station.

NEWSCASTER (FILTER)
...tectonic nightmare...fault line
hitherto unknown seems to be spread
(STATIC) so extensive that (STATIC)...

RADIO

Chases hand punches it off.

SILENCE. Just the PLOC, PLOC of rubber over expansion
joints.

CHASE'S EYES

drooping further.

EXT. ROAD AND PICKUP'S WHEELS - CONTINUOUS

LOW ON THE TIRES. Oh so gradually crossing the flash of
white line. OMINOUS MUSIC creeps in.

INT. CHASE'S PICKUP - NIGHT

CHASE

snapping awake again, shaking his head. The MUSIC disappears.

CLOSE ON HIS HAND

scratching his leg, rubbing sore muscles.

REFOCUS TO SEAT BETWEEN HIS LEGS.

Music sneaks back, and with a barely audible RIP, something
shiny and sharp pokes up through the fabric. Then another
and another, bright spikes of steel. At first just tips,
then longer and longer. Until four long claws are thrusting
up. Straining to break out of the fabric.

ON CHASE'S FACE

singing somberly to himself to stay awake.

CHASE
This is meeee, losing myyyy religion.
Look at meee, losing myyyy...

Reaches down.

HIS HAND

enters FRAME AT CROTCH LEVEL. Rearranging things with a quick adjustment, and the claws weave just out of the way until the hand is gone.

CHASE (cont'd) (O.S.)
Religion...

CU CHASE

taking deep breaths. Rubbing his face. Then noticing there's a torn piece of upholstery clinging to one finger. He tosses it away. Stares blearily back to the road.

And as he slides deeper and deeper towards sleep. The clawed steel hand from Heather's opening nightmare RISES INTO FRAME. Just beneath his chin now. By his jugular.

Until Chase falls asleep. His eyes closing for good. Head falling forward on a slack neck.

Instantly the claws strike upwards, hard and jerk down through his body. His shirt flies open. The claw buries itself into his crotch as CHASE'S DEAFENING SHRIEK CARRIES OVER INTO

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Heather wakes up screaming! MUSIC VANISHES. Heather bolts upright on the couch. Staring around. Seeing

DYLAN

watching her solemnly from the doorway near his room.

DYLAN
Mommy scared?

Heather's still half asleep and disoriented. Tries to put calm into her voice.

HEATHER
Mommy's fine, Dylan. Just had a bad dream. What're you doing out of bed?

DYLAN
Rex woke me up. He was fighting.

Before she can respond, the DOORBELL rings. Heather shrugs off the last of the dream. Stares at the door. Who the hell at this hour?

HEATHER
Dylan, you go back to sleep now.

DYLAN
Not sleepy.

She looks through the peep hole. Reacts. Turns to Dylan, her voice suddenly flat.

HEATHER

Dylan, go back to bed. I mean it.

Dylan looks at her a moment longer, then obediently goes into his room. By now Heather's shaking so hard she can hardly work the bolt on the front door.

When she opens it to face TWO HIGHWAY PATROL OFFICERS.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #1

Heather Langenkamp?

HEATHER

Yes?

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #1

Is Chase Porter your husband?

HEATHER

Yes.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #1

I'm afraid there was an accident. It appears he fell asleep while driving, ma'am.

She reaches out, steadies herself with a hand to a wall. For the first time she notices the patrol car parked in her drive.

HEATHER

Is he...I mean, was he hurt?

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #2

I'm afraid it's worse than that, ma'am.

Heather weaves in the night air. Her voice hardly perceptible.

HEATHER

Is he dead?

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #2

Yes ma'am.

HEATHER

Are you sure it's him? I...

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #2

We have his effects, you can confirm from that.

He hands over a clear plastic bag with a wallet, watch and some money. Heather doesn't even take them.

HEATHER

I want to see the body.

HIGHWAY PATROLMAN #1

No, you don't, ma'am, it's not necessary.

HEATHER

I want to see for myself.

And the way she says it rules out any possibility that she will not do exactly that.

INT. LA COUNTY MORGUE/BASEMENT CORRIDOR

HEATHER

her feet echo on the cold marble walking down a hall lined with gurneys holding bodies under sheets. From O.S. one direction can be heard the distant sound of a WOMAN's single, gut-deep WAIL. Then from the other, male laughter, chat and the SOUND of an ELECTRIC TOOL whizzing away at something.

INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

Heather ENTERS. At the rear of this very large room two MEN are eating lunch out of paper bags. A THIRD is working at a body, lifting something dark and wet onto a scale.

THIRD MAN

Help you?

HEATHER

Porter. Chase Porter.

He peers at her, a bloody rubber glove poised mid-air.

THIRD MAN

That a new one?

One of the men eating lunch points.

LUNCH EATER

Over there, third from the sink.

Heather goes over, CAMERA MOVING WITH HER HAND-HELD. The lunch-eater follows with her, wiping his hands on his apron, checking the toe tag. A thing very much like a pale blue credit card.

LUNCH EATER (cont'd)

You say Chase?

Heather just nods, her heart in her throat. The man's voice is surprisingly compassionate.

LUNCH EATER (cont'd)

Sorry.

He lifts the sheet carefully, just offering a peak at the face. Heather forces herself to look.

It's Chase, and something about the sweet sleep-like quality to his face hits Heather harder than the bloodless pallor, or the slightly broken-egg misshaping of his head.

The man lowers the sheet and fetches a clipboard hanging at the foot of the stainless steel table.

LUNCH EATER (cont'd)

Just sign at the bottom, that's all we need.

But Heather is just staring at the sheet, head ever so slightly tilted, as if there's one thing she saw under there she's not yet quite through with.

HEATHER

Let me see once more.

LUNCH EATER

I'm sorry.

HEATHER

Lift the sheet again.

He looks, sees she's serious, and lifts it.

HEATHER (cont'd)

More.

He lifts it a little more. Still it's only down to Chase's chin. But it's enough, and in a deadly still voice Heather asks...

HEATHER (cont'd)

What's that?

She's pointing to a flap of whitish skin beneath Chase's chin.

LUNCH EATER

Uh, well, this was a bad wreck, ma'am.
I mean, his head's gonna be okay for the funeral and all, but...

Heather reaches out suddenly and pulls the sheet back much farther. For one horrendous instant we glimpse a torso sewn back together with rough mortician's stitches along four deep, savage slashes.

The lunch eater pulls the sheet back over Chase as Heather spins and vomits.

LUNCH EATER (cont'd)

Oh, now, there. You okay, lady?

He offers her a piece of white muslin to wipe her mouth. She does so with shaking hands, then asks with a shaken, terrified whisper.

HEATHER

What did that?

The man blinks a moment.

LUNCH EATER

Ma'am, it was head-on. I heard the truck was torn up something awful. You can imagine how he'd, well, not be exactly in top shape.

Heather, still crouched, looks back at the gurney looming above her.

HEATHER

It looks like...he was clawed.

LUNCH EATER

Yeah, well, that's why we don't lift the sheet past the face, ma'am. Sometimes what you don't see is what gets you through the night.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Surrounded by her friends, Heather buries her husband. There are several recognizable faces here in addition to Bob and Sara, especially to Elm Street fans - Robert Englund, JOHNNY DEPP, WES CRAVEN, JOHN SAXON among others. There is no media or fans - the funeral has been kept from the press.

Heather stands apart from the rest, holding Dylan's hand. On his other side is Julie, touching his shoulder. Only a slight twitching of the boy's hand betrays emotion as he solemnly watches the casket lowered. As it disappears beneath the brink, a sudden WIND moves through the trees.

A moment later a SHARP JOLT ROLLS THROUGH THE PLACE. Instantly there are cries of EARTHQUAKE! and the SHOCK CONTINUES - THE GROUND HEAVING - and the men winching the coffin fall backwards. Several grave stones and monuments tumble. The coffin itself tilts wickedly, then falls end-first into the pit, hitting with a sickening crack. Heather lurches forward instinctively. Loses balance. Falls and hits hard, head against the framework over the grave.

Mass confusion for the rest of the people, ducking, stumbling over gravestones, generally grabbing for something solid. Then that eerie still again. Just DOGS and CAR ALARMS.

Heather shakes herself, twists round looking for Dylan. Sees he's not with Julie. Hisses desperately at the girl.

HEATHER

Julie. Where's Dylan?!

Julie looks around, dazed. Everyone nearby looks for the child. And for god knows what reason, Heather checks the grave and reacts in horror.

HER POV

In the merest fraction of a second we see the coffin has split open. The lid ajar. And incredibly, the leering face of someone who looks a lot like FREDDY KRUEGER - darker, even harder, but definitely in that mode, ducks back deeper into the dark of the coffin after a split second of eye-contact with Heather. And he's dragging Dylan after him!

Without hesitation Heather jumps into the pit. Amid gasps of astonishment from the dazed onlookers, even as Dylan disappears into the coffin with a terrible yank!

IN THE PIT WITH HEATER

wrenching back the coffin lid, seeing Dylan about to vanish down the dark slot at the foot of the coffin. Just like the danger area beneath the blankets!

INSIDE THE COFFIN

Heather diving under the winding sheets and grabbing Dylan's hand. Hauling back. For the briefest instant she glimpses the long arm of Freddy's red and green-striped sweater. The wicked glove and blades. All snaking down out of sight into darkness. As his mocking laughter echoes over her, Heather hauls up with all her might. Pulling the child back and over the bloody remains of her husband. Dylan screaming in fright! And at the sight of Chase's face, his dead eyes staring in horror into her own. Heather passes out!

CLOSE ON HER FACE

rolling to the side. And now gentler HANDS are touching her. Trying to rouse her.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL

Heather on the ground at the graveside. Robert Englund, Wes Craven and John Saxon hovering over her in concern. She looks around in panic.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Dylan!?

JOHN SAXON

He's right here. It's okay!

Saxon points. Heather turns, sees Dylan watching down at her with that intense, eerie look. Held by the frightened Julie. A terrible dizziness sweeps over Heather.

HEATHER

What...happened?

JOHN SAXON

Quake knocked you off your feet. You got bumped pretty good, actually.

(dabs blood from her forehead)

Heather turns and sees men already have the coffin back level. The lid is not open - the coffin isn't split.

WIDER NOW

Sirens and a faint hubbub from the surrounding city. Those gathered are clearly shaken, and the MINISTER raises his hands as a subtle but ominous AFTERSHOCK rolls by.

MINISTER

May he rest in peace, children. And my you all get home safely!

Immediately several head for their cars.

CLOSER ON HEATHER

shivering. She stands, turns to go and bumps right into Robert Englund. She gives a start. He puts his hand on her shoulder. And moving in CLOSER, we can just hear him murmur.

ROBERT ENGLUND

If there's anything I can do, Heater.
Anything...

And he moves off, pulling a wide-brimmed, not-quite Freddy hat over his head. Heather watches him go as John Saxon puts a big arm around her. Behind, Wes Craven looks up at the sky. It's getting late in the day and the wind is picking up.

EXT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

The cottage huddled against strong Santa Ana's. A streetlight nearby throws eerie shadows on the roof.

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM

Heather lies in bed wide awake, listening to the wind howl. She pulls the blankets closer and tries to close her eyes.

Then she becomes aware of another sound, this one from downstairs. A MUFFLED SING-SONG, and a PAD OF SMALL FEET.

HEATHER

stands, listening. Grabs a robe and rushes down to

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Heather peeks around the corner of the stairwell, and to her dismay sees Dylan circling in the den, eyes closed, mouth slurring something.

Sleepwalking.

Heather crosses, not knowing whether to wake him or not. He hovers by the TV for a moment. It's also on, this one running silent images of

TV

Heather as NANCY in the boiler room for the first time (again from NIGHTMARE I) seeing Freddy step out from behind the furnace, backlit, dark, clawed.

CLOSE ON HEATHER

reacting. Scared now.

Dylan, still asleep, veers away blindly, bumps into the coffee table, then heads for the kitchen.

Heather's had enough. She catches up with him. Softly encircles him in her arms.

CLOSER ON THE TWO

as she shakes him gently.

HEATHER

Dylan. Sweetie. Wake up, baby...

Awakening, Dylan's eyes snap wide in fear. His mouth gapes open in a startled cry and he flails out of her arms onto the floor. Heather desperately trying to gather him back up...

And then he seems to recognize her, and falls still. Only his labored breathing breaks the stunned silence, his eyes staring wide at Heather.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Dylan, baby, we're gonna get you back to bed now.

The child shakes his head violently, tears springing.

DYLAN

I can't sleep there, Mommy. Please!

HEATHER

You've got to sleep, Dylan, you...

She never finishes the sentence because Dylan suddenly sings a thin, plaintive voice

DYLAN

One two, Freddy's coming for you...

Heather, feeling her head swim through an unexpected wash of vertigo, can barely find her voice.

HEATHER

Dylan, did you hear that in that move?

Dylan looks at her, confused.

DYLAN

What movie?

Heather looks at the TV. There's nothing there. The set is off. And not only that, it's still unplugged from that morning. She looks back at the child.

HEATHER

Then...where did you hear that song? Did you answer the phone?

Dylan shakes his head.

DYLAN

In my bed.

HEATHER

Your bed?

DYLAN

Under my covers.

(off her look)

Kids singing, and way down there, the man...the mean man...

And he makes the sign of the claw.

HEATHER

And...what's the man doing?

DYLAN

Trying to get up...trying to get into our world.

Then Dylan stops, startled by the warm run of liquid over his upper lip. His nose has started to ooze dark, red blood.

HEATHER

Oh, shit. Dylan.

He touches his hand to it, stares at the bright surprise, then Heather snatches him up. Rushes him into the bathroom.

FRAMED IN THAT DISTANT DOORWAY she daubs his face, soothes his silent tears.

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Heather, back in bed and listening to the wind HOWL. Dylan is curled against her side. Peaceful as a baby now. Breath deep and regular. But if Heather thinks he's asleep, she's wrong.

DYLAN
Where's Daddy now?

Heather gives a start. Looks down. Dylan's looking up at her, waiting for the answer.

HEATHER
Daddy's...in Heaven, Dylan. He's with God now.

Dylan thinks a moment.

DYLAN
Do you have to die to see God?

HEATHER
No, I don't think so. You just have to...pray, or reach...

He curls against her, tighter.

DYLAN
Why does God let there be bad things?

HEATHER
I honestly don't know. Try to sleep, baby.

DYLAN
Can you come with me in my dreams?

Heather pulls the cover over him farther.

HEATHER
I think that only happens in movies. But I'll always be here when you get back.
(looks under covers)
And I'll make sure nobody grabs your toes, either.

She tickles his toes. He lets out a giggle and closes his eyes. Heather does not close hers. In fact, she reaches over and finds a still steaming cup of coffee stashed on her bedside table and takes a long gulp.

UNDER THE COVERS

we see Dylan's HAND reach down and touch REX. He turns the snarling beast to face the darkness at the bottom of the bed.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY

Sun a warm yellow, CHILDREN playing under the watchful eyes of MOTHERS. Nearby, Dylan runs a stick around the palings of a playground rocket, somber and tentative.

PAN TO FIND HEATHER AND JOHN SAXON. The man in immaculate sweats, tan and fit. A reassuring presence if ever there was one, listening intently as Heather speaks.

HEATHER

I know what he's doing is bizarre, but most of the time he seems so normal, so well adjusted. I just can't believe it's him. I mean, and not something outside, influencing him.

(scared)

Or is that how denial works?

JOHN SAXON

When it is denial. I don't think that's the case here, but if you're really worried, have a doctor check him out. You'll see, everything's fine.

Heather looks back at him.

HEATHER

You're not just saying that to help a crazy friend cope, are you?

Saxon shakes his head.

JOHN SAXON

All of Dylan's behavior is understandable for a kid dealing with a parent's death. How can a child process such a thing?

Heather shakes her head, saying low.

HEATHER

Don't know. Haven't been able to process it very well myself.

Saxon looks at her.

JOHN SAXON

You're not crazy, by the way.

HEATHER

Thinking I saw Freddy in the grave feels

pretty crazy. And jumping in...

JOHN SAXON
You didn't jump in.

HEATHER
That's my memory. And it seemed
absolutely real.

JOHN SAXON
Seemed, not was.

HEATHER
(looks off, lower)
It's in my family, you know. My
grandmother died in an institution...

JOHN SAXON
Really?
(unfazed)
Hell, if having a screwy family made you
crazy, the world'd be one colossal
nuthouse.

She looks at him, well? He laughs and she does, too.

JOHN SAXON (cont'd)
Look, you've got a crazed fan after you.
That's what's making you crazy, and
probably Dylan, too.

HEATHER
I've never mentioned it to him.

JOHN SAXON
Kids know when something's bugging a
parent.
(focusing on it)
You've got no idea who this is calling?

She turns and watches Dylan.

HEATHER
Freddy, for all I know.

JOHN SAXON
Steady...

Heather tries to smile.

HEATHER
A man, or a boy with a deep, y'know,
Freddy voice.

JOHN SAXON
Six weeks of this, and you're surprised
you've got Freddy in your dreams? Hell,

Sonny Bono says after a while he was seeing his stalker everywhere. Even at Mass.

HEATHER

Really?

JOHN SAXON

Absolutely. And how many times has Letterman called the cops thinking that woman was down in his kitchen again? It gets under your skin if you let it.

HEATHER

You really think Dylan's okay?

Saxon gives her a paternal look.

JOHN SAXON

Dylan's fine. You're fine. Hurting, but fine. Definitely not crazy.

CUT TO THE PLAYGROUND ROCKET

a tall structure standing over 25 feet high. Dylan has unexpectedly made his way all the way to its top level, and has squeezed out through a broken guard band. Right now he's climbing up the outside of the rocket towards its nose cone!

BACK ON HEATHER

not seeing any of this.

HEATHER

It's my worst fear, that whatever my mother had, I'll have. And I'll pass it along to...

Heather shakes her head and smiles, then looks up and gives a start, seeing

DYLAN

who's climbed to the pinnacle of the rocket and is standing fully upright on its nose cone, way the hell up there, arms stretched to the heavens!

Heather stands, afraid to move. And now several other parents, even kids are seeing him, pointing, as

ANGLE PAST DYLAN

stretches up impossibly far, fingers straining. Heather far below, leaping off the bench and starting to run!

UP ANGLE TO DYLAN

as he stretches even harder, and then with a cry loses his balance and falls.

HEATHER

running at top speed.

DYLAN

falling through space.

HEATHER

barely making it to him. The boy and her meeting with a bone-jarring impact. Heather driven to the sand hard, with Dylan atop her!

By the time Saxon gets to them, Heather's finding out that though she's dazed and bruised, amazingly, Dylan is not only okay, but serenely unconcerned with his close call. He simply looks up at her and says solemnly.

DYLAN

God wouldn't take me.

EXT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - DAY

Peaceful, sun-drenched. Never know anything was going wrong. Heather, limping noticeably, fetches her mail.

INT. DEN - DAY

Heather wipes the sweat off her face with her T-shirt and shuffles through the pile. There's a newspaper with headlines of the earthquake, the usual load of junk mail - and then something that stops her cold.

CLOSER

as she singles out one letter in particular. Grimy, no address, smeared with soot. She opens it with shaking fingers. We see a sheet of filthy paper holding a single cut-out "E" pasted on its center.

HEATHER

stuffs the letter in a drawer, and as she does we glimpse dozens of other filthy ENVELOPES.

Heather crosses to the phone and dials.

VOICE #2 (FILTER)

Hello?

HEATHER

Robert?

INTERCUTTING WITH:

INT. ROBERT ENGLUND'S HOUSE/STUDIO - DAY

TIGHT ON ENGLUND, intense, quick, stalking back from the cordless phone's base through the living room of a large, Mediterranean mansion. He talks as he walks, soon ending back where he evidently was when the call came, in a sun-room off the larger room, which features a large easel. Clearly an avid amateur painter, he's surrounded here by jars of brushes, rags and palettes. The large canvas he's working on is seen only from behind.

ROBERT ENGLUND
Heather? You doing okay?

HEATHER
Holding my own. You know that guy who was calling me all the time? He's started again. He's been putting stuff in my mail.

ROBERT ENGLUND
Must've read about the funeral. Sick mother. That's the last thing you need right now, I'm sure.

HEATHER
(almost embarrassed)
It's actually been giving me Freddy nightmares.

Line noise for a second, then...

ROBERT ENGLUND
Freddy as in me?

Heather shakes her head.

HEATHER
It isn't you. He's scarier. He's...
(searching for words)

Robert puts down his brush, takes the portable phone to the window and looks out as if he could see her.

ROBERT ENGLUND
Darker. More...evil?

HEATHER
Yeah...how'd you know?

ROBERT ENGLUND
Call it a guess...

He starts painting again, as if he saw something in the canvas he had to capture instantly or it would vanish. His

face twists and flinches with the effort; we get the feeling this is no mere hobby at all. But we still don't see the picture.

HEATHER

Anyway, what I was calling about was...have you seen any of the script, by any chance?

ROBERT ENGLUND

We won't show it until it's finished. That's what he told me, at least. I asked him at the funeral.

HEATHER

When do you think it'll be done?

ROBERT ENGLUND

The way he's writing is so weird, who knows? I asked him how far he'd gotten at the funeral, and what was it he said...? Oh yeah, as far as Dylan trying to reach God. Weird, huh, that he'd have your kid in it?

Heather can't find her breath for a moment. Fighting a perception of fear so stifling it's like a pillow pressed to her face. She barely manages.

HEATHER

Robert? Have you been having any nightmares?

Just the line noise.

ON ROBERT

painting, the phone held away from his head as if it contains something he doesn't want to acknowledge.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Robert, I think we should talk. And not over the phone. Could I come over?

He shakes his head.

ROBERT ENGLUND

Uh, actually today's not good. There's something I've got to finish. How's tomorrow?

BACK NOW WITH HEATHER

pale, turning to look at Dylan's door.

HEATHER

Tomorrow, then. First thing in the

morning. Meanwhile take care, Robert,
okay?

She hangs up.

ROBERT

hangs up, too, just staring at the painting. As if it held
his salvation or his doom.

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Heather, deep in sleep, tossing as if her bed were floating
on a stormy sea. In fact, this time very, very subtly,
another EARTHQUAKE has begun rocking the house. Lamps sway,
the whole bed rises and falls, as we

MOVE IN ON HEATHER

INT. DEN - NIGHT

CAMERA AT CARPET LEVEL as two little FEET pad INTO FRAME.
MOVE WITH THEM, TILTING UP the cowboy PJ's TO DYLAN'S FACE.
Ghostlike in the moonlight. Eyes vacant, moving through the
living room as in a dream.

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Heather gasps out something in her sleep, the tone deeply
distressed. PAN OFF HER, ACROSS THE SHEET FLUNG OVER HER, TO
THE FOOT OF THE BED. There's movement there. The sheet
rising at four salients. Pressed up from beneath. Then the
glint of steel pokes through with a subtle rip-rip-rip, the
claws of finely-honed steel rise into moonlight. Moving.

PAST HEATHER'S FACE TO THE CLAWS cleanly parting the sheet as
they pull their way closer to her. The only sound a soft
RRRIIIIIIPPPPP.

THEY STOP IN CU and with practiced SNICK cut the tatters
between them, leaving only a single hole. Then the lethal
steel hand rises fully into sight.

Then there's a CRASH from downstairs, as if a silverware
drawer were dumped on a tile floor.

Heather JOLTS as if prodded with an electric wire, twists
around and stares wide-eyed at

NOTHING. OUR WIDE ANGLE FROM DIRECTLY ABOVE SHOWS twisted
blankets, nothing more.

Chilled, Heather pulls the sheet around her. Then pulls it
back open. Realizes it's cut into ribbons along its entire
length.

She jumps out of bed, breath caught in her throat. Then

there's a METALLIC SCRRRIIIITCH from the kitchen.

DYLAN (O.S.)

(distant)

One two, Freddy's coming for you. Three
four, better lock your door...

INT. STAIRWELL/DEN/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Heather appears at the foot of the stairs, heart in her throat. Twenty feet away, advancing slowly from the kitchen, Dylan is chanting the old refrain

DYLAN

Five six, grab your crucifix...

Heather starts for him.

REVERSE ANGLE PAST DYLAN TO HEATHER, and from this vantage point, we can see the cluster of steak knives he's taped to his fingers, making a serious-looking claw, hidden behind his back. Heather shakes her head, almost to him.

HEATHER

Sweetie, don't sing that...

She reaches for him, and he strikes like lightning, slashing, barely missing. Advances again, breath coming in little asthmatic rasps. Heather backs away.

DYLAN

Seven eight, better stay up late!

She bangs up against a wall, he's too near for her to dodge away. They grapple, the boy suddenly with the strength of a feral animal. He raises the blades, hissing at her

DYLAN (cont'd)

Nine ten!

Heather lurches backwards as he strikes, and

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - DAWN

CRASH! she falls out of bed, now truly awake.

DYLAN (O.S.)

Never sleep again.

Pad, pad, pad.

INT. DEN - DAWN

Heather enters, limping. Looks. Sees her child circling in the center of the room before the lit TV, crying softly...

DYLAN

Never sleep again, never sleep again...

And scattered all around him on the floor are the filthy pages of letters.

HEATHER

Dylan...

Then she stops, staring more closely at the letters on the carpet. For the first time she sees that using the single letter from each page, Dylan has spelled out:

A*N*S*W*E*R

T*H*E

P*H*O*N*E

Then the phone RINGS.

Heather stares at Dylan, stunned. The phone RINGS again, and without even thinking about it, she picks it up.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Yes?

FREDDY (FILTER)

I touched him.

Before she can react the telephone suddenly thrusts a long, fleshy tongue into her mouth in an appallingly obscene lick. She flails backwards, flinging it away, and as she does, Dylan lets out a piercing scream and falls gasping on his side, legs kicking like an animal struck by a car.

Heather grabs him and runs for the door.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

EYES, PEERING FROM BEHIND THE FLARE OF LIGHT

CLOSER STILL ON DYLAN'S EYES - WIDE - UNBLINKING.

DOCTOR HEFNER, a tall, powerful looking woman in her 40's and Chief of Pediatric Medicine, clicks off the light and looks at Heather.

DR. HEFNER

Any history of epilepsy in your family?

HEATHER

No.

DR. HEFNER

Diabetes?

HEATHER

No.

DR. HEFNER

Was there any trigger event? A trauma, shock or...

(looks at her more carefully)

You haven't shown him any of the films you make, have you? The horror stuff?

HEATHER

(not sure she imagined it or not)

No...

Hefner nods, scowling.

DR. HEFNER

Good. I'm convinced they can tip an unstable child over the edge.

Heather swallows, hardly able to find her voice.

HEATHER

Unstable? Dylan's not unstable, he's... just...upset.

The doctor's looks at her, as if wondering if Heather's competent enough to handle a painful truth. Then she just scrawls something on a prescription sheet.

DR. HEFNER

We'll run a battery of tests and know in a few days.

Heather looks at Dylan, eyes haunted by a terrible vulnerability.

Dylan is stone silent. No evil behavior. Just exhausted and withdrawn, like some small creature escaped from a predator by the skin of his teeth, now just following core instinct: stay in hiding. Do not make a sound.

HEATHER

Does he have to stay here over night?

DR. HEFNER

Absolutely.

The doctor draws her out into

HALLWAY OUTSIDE DYLAN'S ROOM

She holds Heather's eye and speaks low, so Dylan can't hear.

DR. HEFNER (cont'd)

Anything more happen we should know about?

Heather tenses ever-so-slightly.

HEATHER

Like what?

DR. HEFNER

Sometimes what a child says or fantasizes will give a clue to what ails him. Did he say anything while he was still lucid?

Heather looks to Dylan. He's looking at her with trusting eyes.

HEATHER

(low)

No. Dylan didn't say anything.

She goes into the room. Dr. Hefner watches her carefully. A nurse walks by and Hefner hands her the X-rays.

NURSE

What have we here?

DR. HEFNER

(low)

It's too soon to know for sure, but the early symptoms point towards childhood schizophrenia.

INT. DYLAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

TIGHT ON HEATHER AND DYLAN. Heather has heard the above exchange. Near tears, she looks down to Dylan curled against her, eyes open but unseeing. Staring not so much at her as past her, out the window.

HEATHER

Dylan, can you hear me?

Just barely perceptibly, the terrified boy shakes his head 'no'.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Dylan, you've got to fight it, whatever it is that's after you. And you've got to come back to me. You can't make it alone. Do you hear?

ON DYLAN

No response to this. But then a single tear courses down his cheek. And then he nods 'yes'.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Yes. And if you can hear me, you can tell me what you need to feel safe.

He says nothing. But then Heather is aware of movement. She looks down and sees Dylan's hand moving under the covers, reaching, reaching down towards the bottom of the bed, for something that clearly is not there.

HEATHER (cont'd)
(realizing)
Rex? Is that what you want? Rex is home, Dylan. That's where you should be, too. You've got to get better so they'll let you come home, understand?!

DYLAN
(very, very quietly)
Home.

HEATHER
Home, that's right.

She points out the window.

HEATHER (cont'd)
That's where I want you, Dylan. You know we're not that far. Right out there past the freeway is our home. But to get there you've got to come out from where you are. Then they'll let you come back home to Rex...and to me.

She kisses him gently on his forehead, crying herself now. Then a NURSE ENTERS with a paper cup.

NURSE
Time for your medicine, cowboy.

Dylan looks at it solemnly.

HEATHER
What is that?

NURSE
(quietly)
Just something to help him sleep.

Heather looks at Dylan and nods. Then as if he were a thousand years old, Dylan puts it in his mouth. The nurse gives him water and he swallows.

NURSE (cont'd)
Attaboy. Now take a little nap.
(to Heather)
You'll have to leave now. He'll be fine. We'll run tests tonight. You can visit again in the morning.

The nurse leaves. Heather turns to Dylan.

HEATHER

Okay, Dylan. I'll be back here first thing tomorrow. I love you.

Heather kisses him again, gives a little wave, and leaves. Dylan closes his eyes.

But when Heather disappears through the doorway behind, he brings his hand to his mouth and spits the sleeping pill into his palm. A moment later he's hidden it deep in his bed covers, and his eyes are wide open, staring out through the window again, to his home over there, so near yet so far away.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - DAY

Heather, in her Volvo, starts to back out, lost in thought. Instantly there's a BLARE OF HORN and CURSES from the car she's almost backed into. Heather pulls back into the parking place and kills the engine.

She just sits there and sobs, for one moment all the confusion and dread surging out of her. Then she forces herself to breathe. Swipes away the tears. Swears to herself. And starts the engine.

INT/EXT. HEATHER'S VOLVO - DAY

Heather drives and drinks 7/11 coffee. She's got the RADIO on loud to fight drooping eyes.

RADIO NEWSCASTER

Seismologists at CalTech have counted over 300 of the temblors so far. Though most were too faint for us to feel, seven have shaken our community in the last two weeks. And now scientists are speculating there might be an unknown fault running beneath Los Angeles, a fault that could...

Heather turns it OFF. Thinks a moment, then punches numbers on the carphone and listens to it cycle and RING. Somebody picks up immediately.

PATRICE (SPEAKER)

Robert?

HEATHER

This is Heather, Patrice. I was calling for Robert. He's not there?

INT. ROBERT ENGLUND'S HOUSE/STUDIO - DAY

PATRICE, Robert's wife, 33, a face of great strength and beauty, looking a bit dazed and edgy right now, moves through

the living room with a suitcase. She puts it down with two others, then starts for the studio.

PATRICE
He's...out of the house, Heather.

HEATHER (FILTER)
Will he be back any time soon?

PATRICE
Uh...actually, we're ducking out of town for a while.

ON HEATHER

sensing the woman's near panic.

PATRICE (cont'd)
(on speaker)
And you should get away, too, Heather.
You really should.

CUTTING BACK TO ENGLUND'S

Patrice has stopped in the studio to grab Robert's glasses. She stuffs them into a pocket, turns and looks off

PATRICE (cont'd)
Just a little break away from L.A.

CUT TO WHAT SHE'S LOOKING AT

The IMPRESSIONISTIC PAINTING Englund was working on. A LARGE, FRIGHTENING PORTRAIT OF FREDDY HIMSELF. A being far more dark and ominous than the usual version. The one we (and Heather) glimpsed in Chase's coffin. As different in kind as the film Batman was from the TV version. He's larger, quick and feral, yet at the same time imbued with enormous strength and intelligence. A truly primal threat from the lowest ring of hell. And the large gleaming steel hand and claws, cocked and ready to strike, grow right out of the end of his arm.

PATRICE (cont'd)
We could all use a break right about now, don't you think?

BACK ON HEATHER

as the line goes dead.

EXT. WES'S HOUSE - DAY

A modern home high above MALIBU. PAN ACROSS A POOL to a PATIO, where we DISCOVER WES and HEATHER walking together.

WES

I wish I could tell you where this script is going. I don't know. Look, I dream a scene, I write it down the next morning. Your guess is as good as mine as to how it ends.

He ducks inside, Heather running to catch up.

INT. WES'S HOUSE - DAY

HEATHER

Well at least tell me what it's about so far.

Wes stops as his HOUSEKEEPER emerges from the kitchen with a steaming cup of coffee. Heather drinks immediately, despite the scalding heat. When the housekeeper disappears, Craven continues.

WES

I can tell you what the nightmares are about. They're about this...entity. Whatever you want to call it. It's old, very old, and it's taken different forms in different times. The only thing that stays the same about it is what it lives for.

HEATHER

What's that?

WES

Killing innocence, one way or the other.

She notices the haunted eyes.

HEATHER

This is still a script we're talking about, right?

WES

I think of it as sort of a nightmare in progress.

She looks at him, he stares back, revealing nothing.

HEATHER

Then, in this nightmare in progress, does this thing have any weaknesses?

WES

It can be captured, sometimes.

HEATHER

Captured? How?

WES

By storytellers, of all things. Every so often, they imagine a story good enough to catch its essence. Then it's held prisoner for a while. In the story.

She looks at him.

HEATHER

Like the Genie in the bottle.

WES

Exactly.

(beat)

The problem comes when the story dies. It happens a lot of different ways, the story gets too familiar, or too watered down by people trying to make it easier to sell, or it's labeled a threat to society and just plain banned. However it happens, when the story dies, the evil is set free.

Heather blinks as it hits her.

HEATHER

You saying Freddy's this ancient thing?

WES

Current version. For ten years he's been imprisoned as Freddy by the story of Nightmare on Elm Street. But now that the films have stopped-

(looks at her)

The genie's out of the bottle, Heather, that's what the nightmares are about. That's what I'm writing.

She looks at him, fear creeping up her spine.

HEATHER

If Freddy's loose, I mean, in your script, where's he going to go? Another age? Another form?

WES

That's not what the dreams say he's doing.

HEATHER

Then what is he doing?

WES

Well, see, he's gotten used to being Freddy now. And kinda likes it here in our time and space, too. So...he's trying to cross over, from film into our reality.

Heather looks like she might pass out.

HEATHER

Isn't there anyone that can stop him?

WES

Interestingly enough, in the dreams there is one person. A gatekeeper, so to speak. Someone Freddy's got to get by before he can enter our world.

(looks at her)

It's you, Heather.

HEATHER

Me? Why me?

WES

Dramatically speaking it makes perfect sense. You played Nancy, after all, the first to humiliate and defeat him.

HEATHER

That was Nancy, not me!

WES

But it was you that gave Nancy her strength. So to get out he has to come through you. And it's inevitable that he'll hit you at your most vulnerable points...

Heater pales.

HEATHER

Dylan. And...

(realizes)

Chase. My God, Wes, did you know?

WES

Heather, it's just a movie, a dream, really...

HEATHER

You know damn well it's more than that now!

(lower)

How can we stop him?

He stops in the doorway to his studio. Heather sees this room is draped against the light. In its center glows a computer, a half-finished page of script on its screen. Next to the computer, a narrow cot, its sheets twisted.

WES

The way to stop him is to make another movie. And I swear to you I'll stay at

my computer and keep writing until I finish the script. But when that time comes...

(quietly)

You're gonna have to make a choice.

HEATHER

Choice? What kind of choice?

WES

Whether or not you're willing to play Nancy one last time.

FADE TO BLACK.

FADE UP ON:

INT. CHASE AND HEATHER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Heather studies long into the night, a host of books spread around her. Yellow pads for notes, and she's brought the coffee-maker right into the bedroom now. It sits prominently on her bedside table.

CLOCK 12:30AM

CU PAN OF BOOKS

Chilton on Childhood Diseases, Barton & O'Neil's text on Pediatric Schizophrenia; Xeroxes from Scientific American, the Journal of the AMA, Lancet, Journal of the American Psychological Institute.

CU HER FINGERS

tracing complex paragraphs.

XCU OF TEXTUAL FRAGMENTS

SARA

...incipience of aphasia commonly preceded by periods of acute irritability...delusional accounts of shadow figures... hearing of voices... seizures, nausea and emesis...

INTERCUT WITH CU OF HEATHER'S EYES

reading, reacting subtly as the fear and awful doubts mount.

Then she loses her grip momentarily on the book, and several pages turn. She tries to find her place. Then straightens.

XCU NEW TEXT

under a heading of SLEEP DISORDERS, the words 'many of the symptoms of schizophrenia are duplicated in children

suffering from sleep deprivation.'

XXCU THE WORDS "SLEEP DEPRIVATION"

CU OF HER HAND REACHING FOR HER CUP OF COFFEE, stopping inches from the cup.

XCU HEATHER'S EYE, shifting to the cup.

XCU COFFEE CUP, the black surface of the coffee radiating concentric rings, subtle at first, then larger and larger until the fluid is sloshing over the brim.

HEATHER

goes rigid, braces looking around. There's a distinct LOW RUMBLE BUILDING now, with a responding CREAKING COMPLAINT from the timbers of the house.

Then the TV IN HER ROOM BLINKS ON, at first silently, so that she's not even sure she's heard its subtle 'blink'. Then the volume comes up, and she finds herself watching a newstory on the days earthquake, FOOTAGE (STOCK) of brick walls atop smashed cars, freeway overpasses cracked and closed off.

ANNOUNCER (TV/VO)

A six-point quake on the Richter Scale,
bringing scattered destruction throughout
L.A. Basin...

HEATHER fumbles in the drawer of her bedtable and finds the remote, aims and fires and the

TV BLINKS OFF. BEAT. THEN BLINKS BACK ON.

HEATHER

just stares at it. What is going on, here?

She's about to beep it off again when she stops, the story is segueing to:

ANNOUNCER (TV/VO cont'd)

The world of horror films suffered its
own terror today, as two of Hollywood's
best-known special effects technicians
were found dead in a vacant field.

THE TV SWITCHES to a late-night NEWSCASTER with the SUPER-IMPOSED LOGO of FREDDY'S CLAW and the TEXT: REAL-LIFE HORROR.

ANNOUNCER (TV/VO cont'd)

Terrance Feinstein and Charles Wilson,
two special effects artists reputedly
working on a top-secret project for the
makers of the Freddy Krueger films, were
found brutally slashed to death early

this.

Heather beeps it off, and the TV stays black. She breathes a sigh of relief, badly shaken. Then it comes back on.

ANNOUNCER (TV/VO cont'd)
Freddy's glove was missing, and police
are speculating whether the murders were
the result of a botched theft of...

GZZZTTT!!! The picture contorts, goes to snow and dies.
There's an interior, bluish flare inside the TV, and a wisp
of smoke. Then silence.

Then the phone rings. Heather just stares at it.

IT RINGS AGAIN. Then her answering machine picks up
downstairs.

SARA (FILTER)
Heather? This is Sara. Um, sorry to
call so late, but...this is kinda hard...
I don't know if you've seen the news,
but... we just are thinking we might
shelf this new Nightmare project for a
while, and wanted you to know. Call.
Bye.

CLICK.

Heather leans back against her pillows. Closes her eyes and
takes a deep breath. Just the sound of the WIND now. Her
head falls slowly sideways.

Then the first plate falls in the kitchen, then another, a
sharp, harrowing CRASHING of crockery. And Heather dives out
of bed, stumbling for the doorway as the full force of the
earthquake hits!

KABLAM! Heather braces in the doorway, gritting her teeth as
things throughout the house topple now, something big in the
living room, both lamps off the bedside tables, this is the
worst quake yet!

Then the LIGHTS GO OUT. Heather lets out a cry of terror and
adrenaline. At last, it's over.

A moment's silence. Then one final CRASH. Glass from the
sound of it. Then utter, preternatural silence.

Heather holds, waiting for the aftershock. But there is
none. Then she starts to wonder about that last crash.
There's enough moonlight to tell the direction of it, the
closet.

She looks. The rest she can guess, but what the hell was in
the closet? She crosses and opens the door, looking down to

see

The broken remains of her coffee pot. She looks back to her bedside table. The coffee pot is gone.

The merest sound brings her head around, and she finds herself looking into a face not ten inches from her own, a dark, scarred figure, face contorted with menace, eyes catching the scant light just enough to glint incredible hatred and energy.

Heather lets out the scream at the same second he strikes, lunging forward and driving her backwards over the bed, landing atop and pressing his ugly face right into hers. Now there's enough of the moonlight to glimpse the pocked and crisped skull.

FREDDY

Naaaaancy!

XCU TWO SHOT

and he drives down hard, but as he does, the bed suddenly twists up and over at the same instant, and the AFTERSHOCK HITS! Heather is thrown to the side at the last possible second. The blades slashing past her throat and hitting her up-thrust arm, a split second before she careens out of bed entirely.

Hitting the floor hard, knocking herself out cold. As the quake's last RUMBLES shake the room, then fall away.

CLOSE ON HEATHER

on the deck. Shaking herself back to consciousness. Looking around in shock.

The room is normal. Only her bed seems affected, so askew half the mattress touches the floor.

She raises herself painfully. Her bedside clock radio is blinking "12:00...12:00". She realizes she's clutching her arm, that there's blood oozing between her fingers.

Then she remembers.

HEATHER

Dylan!

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - NIGHT

CAMERA MOVING HANDHELD WITH HEATHER as she runs down the corridor towards Dylan's room. Then she sees

JULIE

staring back at her, stopped by a nurse.

HEATHER

Julie, what're you doing here?

Julie gives a funny shrug.

JULIE

I don't know. I just...had this terrible dream...that Dylan was in danger. I had to come over to see...

(laughs nervously)

You must think I'm crazy.

Heather shakes her head.

HEATHER

No, I don't think that at all. How is he?

JULIE

They wouldn't let me...

At that moment Dr. Hefner strides into sight. She looks at Heather with a slightly pained smile.

DR. HEFNER

Ms. Langenkamp. I'm afraid there are no evening visiting hours in Intensive Care.

HEATHER

Is he all right?

DR. HEFNER

Dylan? He's holding well. Earlier he had some problems, he's in an oxygen tent just now...

HEATHER

Oh my God...

She goes to pass but the doctor stops her, looking down at her sleeve.

DR. HEFNER

It seems we've had an accident, Mrs. Langekamp. May I?

Heather looks down. She's forgotten entirely about her bloodied arm. The doctor lifts the sleeve. Sees the four slashes across the forearm.

DR. HEFNER (cont'd)

Those are nasty cuts. How...

HEATHER

It happened during the earthquake. I fell. I want to see Dylan...

But the doctor doesn't move out of the way. She looks from the cuts to Heather's face, seeing the fear and stress.

DR. HEFNER

In a moment, first let's see about you.

She takes Heather's elbow. Heather glances towards Julie, then goes with her to...

INT. DISPENSARY

Heather sits while the doctor treats the cuts. Heather's obviously uneasy and wishing to be with her son, but the Doctor isn't taking the cuts lightly, and is increasingly alert to Heather's highly agitated state.

DR. HEFNER

If these had been a few inches nearer to the wrist... What did you say you cut yourself on?

HEATHER

It was an earthquake and it was dark. I have no idea.

DR. HEFNER

These look quite fresh.

HEATHER

They are...it happened in tonight's quake.

(off her blank look)

It happened just fifteen minutes ago. You must've felt it.

The doctor has no idea what she's talking about.

DR. HEFNER

(smiles faintly)

Guess we lucked out over here.

Heather swallows. The doctor begins bandaging.

DR. HEFNER (cont'd)

Your son, apparently, is terrified of a man. Someone he thinks is going to come out of his bed.

(off her look)

One of the nurses heard him talking in his sleep. You have any idea who that man might be, Mrs. Langenkamp?

Heather winces as the woman binds the gauze with a clip.

HEATHER

I meant to bring him his dinosaur, Rex.

Rex keeps Freddy from...

Heather realizes what she's said, but too late.

DR. HEFNER

The man from your films? Freddy Krueger with the claws? Is that who he's afraid of?

(eyes flick to Heather's arm)

You have let your child see your films, haven't you?

Heather turns and faces the woman, furious.

HEATHER

Every kid knows about Freddy. He's like Santa Claus or King Kong.

Dr. Hefner just eyes her, too appalled to take it further.

DR. HEFNER

I see. Well. Interesting talking to you, Ms. Langenkamp. I hope you understand, my concerns are simply for the welfare of your son.

She smiles thinly and leaves the room.

INT. DYLAN'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Dylan, now visible only through the plastic of an oxygen tent.

Heather sits next to her son's bed, exhausted. Just watching his slow breathing. Trying to piece it all together.

A nurse passes, glances at Heather and exchanges a whispered word with a SECOND NURSE.

Heather, despite her best efforts, is nodding. Suddenly there's a shrill ALARM from a monitor and Dylan twists sharply inside his tent, suffering what looks like the full cardiac arrest. Arched across the bed, fingers clawing the air in silent agony.

Heather jerks awake as several NURSES rush in, looks back to Dylan, sees he's half sitting up now, his eyes open, peering back at her with incredible intensity as he unzips the oxygen tent.

It stops her short. She leans closer.

HEATHER

Dylan, honey. You shouldn't do that!

Dylan's face twists slowly into an uncanny imitation of an old man, and the voice that comes out of this child's mouth

is absolutely recognizable, absolutely Freddy Krueger's.

DYLAN/FREDDY

Too late. I'm almost there, Heather, I'm almost there.

And with that Dylan vomits. A huge involuntary convulsion that sends green/black effluvia straight into her eyes!

Heather lurches back, clawing at the stinging globs clinging to her face, her hair. We glimpse insects, worms and worse:

QUICK CUTS

Emergency machinery flying in. Heather pushed back. Nurses scurrying. The SOUND of Dylan CRYING in a daze for his mother.

Then Dr. Hefner strides in and roughly shoves the nurses away.

HEATHER

Doctor...

DR. HEFNER

(to nurses)

Get her back! I've got to go in! Get me a full anesthetic, STAT!

NURSE

We don't have any here, doctor.

The doctor, grim-faced and furious, wheels back to Dylan, clawing the oxygen tent away.

DR. HEFNER

Screw it, then. I'm going in!

She rips the terrified child's gown away from his chest.

DR. HEFNER (cont'd)

Cut this evil out of him!

And with that, she pulls her hand out of her bag and we see the grim glove. A medicalized version of the gleaming, TINGING scalpel-sharp claws. Dr. Hefner raises them to plunge into the child.

Heather lurches forward.

HEATHER

Nooooo!

STILL IN THE ROOM

the crazed Dr. Hefner is not there. But Heather has dived right onto Dylan's bed. Now several NURSES struggle to

subdue her. Heather fights one last second, then realizes what's happened.

NURSE

Now what have you done to yourself, Miss?

Heather looks down and sees the blood seeping out from under the bandage on her arm. Then she looks back

DYLAN'S BED. The oxygen tent shredded. And Dylan gone. Heather loses it.

HEATHER

He's got him. He's got my Dylan!

The nurses wheel and stare at her. Wild, trembling, and now with a stark streak of gray slashed through her auburn hair!

NURSE

Who? Who's got him?

Heather sees the looks of people clearly thinking she's nuts. But she doesn't give a shit. She realizes now what's happened in the brief moment she was asleep.

HEATHER

(low)

Freddy...

NURSE #2

Freddy...?

(laughs)

Who, Freddy Krueger or something?

Just at that point the real Dr. Hefner comes in. Takes in the situation in an instant and asks

HEATHER

My baby. Freddy's got my baby! He's got my Dylan!

The doctor seizes Heather roughly by the arms and shakes her until she looks at him.

DR. HEFNER

Ms. Langenkamp. I suggest you go home and get some rest. Your son is fine. He's been taken downstairs for further testing.

HEATHER

He was just here!

DR. HEFNER

(as to a retarded child)

He was here. You fell asleep. We took him. You looked so exhausted, frankly,

we didn't wake you. Besides, the young woman, Julie, is with him. Believe me, everything is fine.

HEATHER
Everything is not fine!

And she bolts out of the room. Hefner swears under her breath and snaps to a nurse.

DR. HEFNER
Call security.

INT. TESTING AREA CORRIDOR

MOVING WITH HEATHER HAND-HELD. The woman in mid-argument with several nurses as she charges down the corridor.

HEATHER
Where is he?

TESTING NURSE #1
This is a restricted area. Do you have a pass?!

The nurse tries to grab Heather. Heather shoves her away with a warning look.

HEATHER
Screw your pass!

Just then Dr. Hefner catches up.

DR. HEFNER
It's all right, now...Ms. Langenkamp,
just remain calm.
(glance to nurse)
Tell us how our boy is doing.

The nurse flicks a look at Heather.

NEEDLE NURSE
He's fine, actually. He came out of coma ten minutes ago.
(just to Hefner, lower)
It's looking like acute sleep deprivation. I don't think she ever lets the kid get a night's sleep.

DR. HEFNER
(more to herself)
Munchausen syndrome...?

Heather pushes over.

HEATHER
What're you saying? Where is he?

The door behind them opens and two SECURITY GUARDS appear. Hefner stops them with a hand signal, hearing...

JULIE (O.S.)
Over here, Heather.

Heather turns to see Julie, motioning from a door. Beaming.

JULIE (cont'd)
Got someone here who wants to see you!

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

Heather runs into

INT. TESTING ROOM

Dylan's wide awake on a small examination table, and the moment he sees Heather he holds out his arms.

CLOSE ON THEM

as they embrace, both speaking in whispers, affording themselves the only privacy they can.

HEATHER
You okay, champ?

DYLAN
Can we go get Rex, now? The bad man's getting awful close.

HEATHER
I know he is, sweetie. We'll both go get Rex right now.

She starts to pick up Dylan, then stops. Dylan's looking over her shoulder. She turns and sees Dr. Hefner.

DR. HEFNER
I'm afraid Dylan really should stay with us until we know what's causing these episodes, Ms. Langenkamp. I'm sure you understand.

Heather looks back to Dylan. Motions for Julie to come in close with them.

HEATHER
Tell you what. I'm gonna go get Rex for you right now. You know home isn't far from here, right?

DYLAN
(remembering)
Right 'cross the freeway.

HEATHER

That's right. So I won't be long.
Meanwhile Julie's gonna be right here
with you.

JULIE

You bet.

Julie takes his hand. Dylan seems to take comfort in that,
but still he leans closer to Heather and begs.

DYLAN

Hurry back, please. I'm sleepy.

HEATHER

Promise. Cross my heart.
(kisses him)
But until Mommy gets back, Dylan,
whatever you do, don't fall asleep.

She turns to Julie.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Don't let him out of your sight, Julie.
And keep him awake!

Julie, thank God, accepts this at face value.

JULIE

I'll stick to him like glue, Heather.
Swear to God.

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

Heather comes out and starts for the exit. But she doesn't
get more than a few steps before the two Security Guards come
out of nowhere and take her by each elbow.

HEATHER

Hey!

And before she knows it, Heather is hustled into the same
dispensary where Dr. Hefner patched her up earlier. And
there the good doctor waits now.

INT. TREATMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Heather is pressed into a chair by the guards.

HEATHER

DO you mind...

DR. HEFNER

Just a quick word, Ms. Langenkamp. For
Dylan's sake.

The security men post themselves at the door. Dr. Hefner exchanges a glance with the nurses, and they vanish from the room. Heather has no choice right now.

DR. HEFNER (cont'd)
Well, it's been an exciting few days for you, hasn't it, Ms. Langenkamp?

HEATHER
If you don't mind, I've got something more important to do than to make small talk.

She starts to rise but the doctor presses her back down with a look that means business.

DR. HEFNER
Won't you please be patient. All of this is just routine.

INT. TESTING ROOM

Julie and Dylan look up to see...

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

the two nurses enter.

INT. TESTING ROOM

DYLAN
Uh-oh...

Julie stands. One nurse goes directly to a cabinet and begins rummaging inside. The second walks past Julie to stand by Dylan. Julie, instantly alert, crosses to the nurse at the cabinet as the woman pulls out a very large needle and vial.

NURSE AT CABINET
Would you mind stepping outside for just one moment, miss?

JULIE
As a matter of fact, I would. What do you think you're doing?

The nurse has already filled the syringe and now squirts out the air bubble.

NURSE AT CABINET
Just a little shot to see that he gets some sleep.

JULIE
No way. His mother specifically said...

The nurse moves for Dylan. Julie grabs her. The nurse just stops and looks at her with a strange smirk of a smile.

NURSE AT CABINET

Do it.

DYLAN (O.S.)

Ow!

Julie spins around. The second nurse is just withdrawing a needle of her own from Dylan's arm, having caught both of them off-guard.

NURSE #2

(childlike)

All done.

Dylan lets out a little wail of despair.

NURSE AT CABINET (cont'd)

He'll be asleep in no time. Mind letting go of my arm.

Julie goes red.

JULIE

Bitch!

And she brings around a left hook that sends the nurse reeling backwards...

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

and out the door. The woman lands flat on her back in the hall!

INT. TESTING ROOM

Julie stares in shock, hardly believing she's done that. As the second nurse rears up behind her...

NURSE #2

Hey! You can't do that!

Julie grabs the large syringe dropped by the KO'd nurse and levels it at the other. Nurse #2 holds her own a moment, the two facing each other needle to needle.

JULIE

I know what's in that one. Do you know what's in this one?

(nurse #2 wavers)

Or what it'll do when I stick you with it? And I will...

She faints. Nurse #2 drops her syringe like a hot potato and

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

runs out the room! Julie slams the door and locks it.
Then...

INT. TESTING ROOM

she runs to Dylan.

JULIE

Dylan. Don't fall asleep! Dylan!

INT. TREATMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Hefner pulls up a stool and sits directly before Heather,
leaning in closer still.

DR. HEFNER

Ms. Langenkamp, has...there been any use
of recreational drugs in your family? Or
any history of mental disturbance?

Heather's eyes flash with barely suppressed rage.

HEATHER

What the hell are you asking?

The woman raises her hands in a practiced non-threatening
gesture.

DR. HEFNER

Please don't take this wrong. But if
there was, there's a good chance Dylan
could be suffering from something passed
down to him.

(leaning closer)

Have you been suffering from any
delusional events, Ms. Langenkamp?

Heather starts to stand again, but this time the security
guards push her back down. Heather looks back to Dr. Hefner,
a cold snake of fear now coiling up her spine.

DR. HEFNER (cont'd)

This man from your films...Freddy
Krueger... Have you been seeing him?

HEATHER

No!

Heather looks down. The bandage on her arm is seeping blood.
She looks back to Hefner, a flick of desperation in her eyes.

DR. HEFNER

There are drugs and treatments, Ms.
Langenkamp. We could place Dylan in
foster care for a short while. Run some

tests on you...

Heather cuts Hefner off with a deadly cold wave of her hand.
Gets up. Bumps against the guards.

HEATHER

I want my kid out of here now!

DR. HEFNER

Very well. As soon as we gather the
appropriate papers...

HEATHER

You don't understand. If Dylan falls
asleep, then...

Heather turns at an O.S. SOUND

INT. TESTING ROOM

POUNING ON THE DOOR FROM THE NURSES OUTSIDE, and Julie is
shaking Dylan as hard as she can without hurting him. But
despite all this, the injection is having its way. Dylan is
sagging before her very eyes. Eyelids fluttering, words
slurring...

DYLAN

Where's mommy? Where's...

Then his head lolls onto his shoulders.

CLOSE ON HIS EYE. CLOSING. Then opening just a crack,
seeing

SOMETHING BIG AND DARK AND AWFUL rising behind Julie.
Something with long, vicious claws at the ends of his
gleaming steel fingers.

DYLAN (cont'd)

(faint)

Julie, behind you!

She turns. There's nothing there for her to see.

But DYLAN SEES THE CLAWS RAISE OVER JULIE, then fall onto her
like the scythe of the Grim Reaper himself.

FROM OUR POV, JULIE lets out a scream and is hauled up into
mid-air by an invisible but horrible force just as

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

The door behind bursts open. The two nurses barge in, then
freeze, seeing

INT. TESTING ROOM

A SCREAMING, WRITHING JULIE lifted into the air by invisible hands, then flung to the floor. Next moment she's being dragged bodily up the wall, leaving a scarlet trail of life's blood. Dylan jerks suddenly up into amulatory sleep. Eyes glazed, face rigid and pale. And Julie smashes to the floor behind him. The nurses scream at a terror they could never in a million years imagine

INT. TESTING ROOM DOORWAY

and Dylan runs out of the room and is gone!

INT. TREATMENT ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Heather, as the security guards react to the screams and race from the room, gives one look to Dr. Hefner. The woman frozen in fear. She then turns and bolts from the room.

INT. CORRIDOR

HEATHER RACES BY CAMERA as a nurse running from Julie's room stops the security guards.

NURSE ABBOTT

Forget it. Nothing you can do there.
Call the cops. Now!

The guards tear off in another direction. Heather races down to the testing room and looks inside.

HEATHER'S POV

Blood everywhere. But no Dylan.

INT. CORRIDOR

She turns to Nurse #2.

HEATHER

My son. Did you see my son?

NURSE #2

(in shock)

I...thought he was here...I thought...

Then Dr. Hefner's there. Not seeing yet into the room.

DR. HEFNER

No way he's going anywhere. He's been well sedated.

HEATHER

He doesn't have to be awake to be on his feet.

DR. HEFNER

What?

HEATHER

He sleepwalks, you idiot! He's fully capable of walking out of this hospital.
(swallows, realizing)
Oh my God...He thinks I've gone home...

Without another word she turns and runs out.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

HEATHER'S VOLVO roars down the ramp and onto the street, narrowly missing a collision, screaming off into the night.

INT. HEATHER'S VOLVO

Heather drives as fast as she can, scans the streets while she's punching up a number on her carphone. It rings and is picked up by a sleepy

JOHN SAXON

John Saxon. Do you have any idea what time it is?

HEATHER

John. It's Heather. I need help!

JOHN SAXON

(instantly alert)
You got it. What's happening?

HEATHER

Dylan's run away from the hospital. I don't know whether he's wandering around or heading for the house. But I think Freddy's after him. I know it sounds crazy!

JOHN SAXON

You're right. That sounds crazy!

HEATHER

John. Will you please just look for him around the hospital? I'm gonna go right to the house.
(near tears)
Will you help me, John? Please!

There's a beat. Then.

JOHN SAXON

I'm on my way. You go home, Heather. That's the smart thing to do. I'll call you there!

Now Heather is crying.

HEATHER

Thank you, John. I'll never forget...

She doesn't get anything else. She sees something so chilling through her windshield, she just slams on the brakes and stares in disbelief.

INT/EXT. HEATHER'S VOLVO

WE ZOOM ACROSS THE STREET TO AN EMBANKMENT. UP THE EMBANKMENT. TO THE TINY FIGURE up there in cowboy pajamas. Doggedly clawing his way up through the weeds and cresting the hill. There, lit now by the flare of a thousand headlights, is Dylan, staring across either lanes of high-speed traffic. Trying to see his home!

EXT. STREET/EMBANKMENT - NIGHT

Heather leaps out of the car and screams at the top of her lungs.

HEATHER

Dylannnnnnn!!!!

ANGLE WITH DYLAN

on the edge of the freeway. Traffic roaring by, wind ripping through his hair. Somehow in all this din he still hears his mother and turns.

SEEING HER RUNNING ACROSS THE STREET

starting up the steep embankment after him.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Dylan! Stay right there!

But then he looks up and reacts.

AND IN HIS POV WE SEE

the night sky. A giant bank of clouds, moving, twisting, changing into a huge, DARK FIGURE in a wide-brimmed hat, peering out from behind the clouds in frightening silhouette. It looks down on him with glowing, leering eyes. And then the huge steel claws poke through the very fabric of the night, rendering it asunder as the light of the full moon catches in their wicked curves.

Without another choice, Dylan turns and runs into traffic.

Instantly, there's a BLARE OF AIRHORNS and semi-tractor trailer is screaming down on him. Momentarily blinded by its headlights, Dylan barely manages to dance sideways enough, and the truck misses him by inches! But this puts Dylan directly in the path of a SPEEDING CAR coming up in the next lane. He freezes, the car swerves and screams around him so

close his clothes are ruffled by the wind!

ON HEATHER

hearing the BRAKES AND HORNS. She convulses in horror and lets out a scream of her own. Then redoubles her efforts, clawing her way over the fence and up the hill!

WITH DYLAN

staggering for the median strip, three howling lanes away!

WITH HEATHER

topping the embankment.

IN HER POV

seeing in horror her son, missed and missed again by inches, unable to cross the last two lanes.

CUTTING WITH DYLAN

as a huge CLAWED HAND stabs into FRAME, plucking him up and swinging him with merciless sport, in and out of the path of oncoming cars!

BACK TO HEATHER

about to start after him, then, to her amazement, SEEING

DYLAN

no claw visible whatsoever, just lifting into the air against all laws of physics, nearly dashed to oblivion time and time again.

HEATHER (cont'd)

Freddy! You bastard! Take me!

And she runs straight for him!

A TANKER TRUCK

slams on all brakes, hews sideways. Heather sees it coming, turns and runs for her life. But it's coming too fast. She dives, tucks and looks up just in time to see the whole massive tanker sweep right over her head! Cars are slewing every which way, but she stumbles back up and presses on. Her terror surpassed only by her utter resolve to get to

DYLAN

the blade of the claw cuts clear through his PJ's. He drops hard. He jumps up and darts through a gap in the median fence.

HEATHER

leaps for her life as a station wagon blurs past her without even seeing her. Then she looks up to see a second car, brakes smoking and screaming, coming right at her! She's too paralyzed by fear to move, and the car hits her just before it stops, knocking her flying. A moment later the freeway on her side grinds to a halt.

Already people are out of their cars and running to her aid. But on the other side of the median strip, the brakes are still SCREAMING!

WITH DYLAN

looking back to his mother's side. Then seeing dozens and dozens of FREDDYS suddenly peering at him over the brink of the median wall. Dylan turns and runs, and somehow, by absolute miracle, makes it to the far side, plunging down the embankment!

WITH HEATHER

dazed, but fighting her way up. She pulls away from the helping arms and staggers after her son!

EXT. HEATHER'S STREET - NIGHT

Heather stumbles and limps down the street, bloodied and bruised, but moving. She stops in front of her house.

The front door is open. She runs in

INT. KITCHEN/DEN

HEATHER

Dylan!!!

She listens, hears something, then sees the shadow of a man ease out from the dark kitchen! She gives a scream and shrinks back. Then sees it's

JOHN SAXON

JOHN SAXON

Holy...

HEATHER

Where's Dylan?! Have you seen him?

Saxon tries to soothe her.

JOHN SAXON

Relax, Nancy. Relax!

He points. Heather, not knowing what the hell's going on with him using Nancy's name, turns and looks:

DYLAN

toddling out of his room, holding his guard dinosaur, Rex. The child's eyes are still glazed, and he's definitely not awake, but he's singing softly...

DYLAN

One two, Freddy's coming...Freddy's coming...

Heather races over and hugs him. So hard Saxon's afraid she'll hurt the kid.

JOHN SAXON

What in the world happened?

Heather just hugs Dylan, trying not to cry.

HEATHER

I know how Chase really died.

JOHN SAXON

What are you talking about?

HEATHER

Fred Krueger did it.

JOHN SAXON

Yeah, sure.

Heather looks at Dylan.

HEATHER

You saw him, didn't you, Dylan!?

DYLAN

(in deep trance)
Coming for you...

Saxon gently pulls Heather away.

JOHN SAXON

Hey, come outside a minute. I need to talk to you.

He pulls her up and marches her towards the front door.

HEATHER

Dylan!

Dylan, sucking his thumb now, has turned to stare back at his bedroom, apparently not hearing her.

JOHN SAXON

Jesus, what the hell's going on, Nancy?

heather looks at him, dazed. Saxon pulls her outside and closes the door.

EXT. HEATHER'S FRONT YARD

Something is different. Heather registers it subconsciously the moment they're through the door, but she's too focused on Saxon's strange misnomer for her...

HEATHER
John, why are you calling me Nancy?

Saxon looks at her.

JOHN SAXON
Why are you calling me John?

She glances back at the house, trying to see Dylan. Can't. She looks back at Saxon, and reacts in shock!

He's staring back at her from in front of an UNMARKED POLICE CAR with its magnetic dome light flashing. Those of us with a good memory might even realize that it's the identical car that LT. THOMPSON drove in NIGHTMARE I. And even more mind-boggling, he's now dressed in the wardrobe of Lt. Thompson from the same film!

JOHN SAXON/LT. THOMPSON
Nancy, you gotta get hold of yourself
before you make both yourself and that
kid nuts.

Heather weaves slightly, not knowing what kind of sick joke this is but determined to wrestle it back into a reality she can deal with.

HEATHER
John...
(Saxon stops, looks at her
pained and confused)
Would you call Robert?

He stares at her.

JOHN SAXON/LT. THOMPSON
Robert?

HEATHER
Robert Englund. You know. The actor who
plays Freddy?

Saxon/Lt. Thompson grows instantly guarded.

JOHN SAXON/LT. THOMPSON
Freddy who?

HEATHER

You know who. Freddy Krueger.

Saxon/Lt. Thompson colors, then, struggling to keep his voice controlled.

JOHN SAXON/LT. THOMPSON
Freddy's dead, Nancy. Now don't lose it
like your mother.

Heather steps back, stung. Saxon/Lt. Thompson instantly regrets having said that. Comes back and hugs Heather fiercely.

JOHN SAXON/LT. THOMPSON
I love you, sweetheart. Don't ever
forget that.

He turns and gets in the car.

HEATHER
I love you too, Daddy...

Tears spring to her eyes and for some reason she gives a deep shudder, as we...

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

DYLAN'S BED, as something starts to rise from under its blankets. Something big and powerful. Rising to a full man's height and still coming. And then the claws are poking through, breaking out. And we SEE FREDDY, a hulking, dark silhouette of pure evil.

EXT. OUTSIDE ELM STREET HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON SAXON/LT. THOMPSON AND HEATHER/HEATHER, Saxon leaning out of the car.

JOHN SAXON/LT. THOMPSON
Now get yourself some rest, Nancy...
please?

He starts the engine and siren. Then the dome lights. He roars away. Heather stares after him in shock a moment, then realizes that everything is different. This isn't her front yard at all. Even her wardrobe has changed. She's now wearing the same pajamas she wore in our opening boiler room nightmare. She feels the cold chill up her spine. Turns around and looks at her house.

THE HOUSE ON ELM STREET

stares back at her. Its windows barred. Its front door swinging open in the wind.

Then she hears her child's SCREAM.

HEATHER

Dylan!

She races inside and the iron reinforced door slams shut behind her!

INT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Interestingly, it's still Heather's house inside. She shakes herself to make sure she's not dreaming...

HEATHER

Dylan?

No answer. She crosses to the kitchen and picks up the largest kitchen knife she can find. Then she becomes aware of the television set. She reacts in shock.

HER POV OF TV SCREEN

Nancy and Lt. Thompson (Heather and John Saxon) mid-dialogue from the final moments of NIGHTMARE I, and what they say on-screen matches exactly what they've just said in the previous scene.

NANCY (TV)

Fred Krueger did it, Daddy.

LT. THOMPSON (TV)

Yeah, sure...

The transformation is complete.

INT. HEATHER'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Then she notices something on the floor. She stops and picks it up.

HEATHER

(seeing what it is)

Dylan's sleeping pills...

She looks again. There's another. And farther on, another. A trail, leading towards Dylan's room.

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Heather enters. Knife ready, turning on the light and picking up another capsule. Then she notices two things: the disemboweled remains of Rex flung on the floor near the foot of the bed, and then still another pill, on the blanket near the pillows.

She picks this pill up. Then, on impulse, lifts the blanket and looks under. Two more pills, one in the middle, one far down towards the bottom. She pulls the blanket all the way back. Nothing but bed, then floor.

Then Heather realizes...

HEATHER

He's given me the only way I can join
him.

She closes her eyes and takes the pills. All of them.
Swallows. Turns back to the bed, lifts the cover again.

IN HER POV UNDER THE COVERS

There's another pill there now, so far down she has to get
under the blanket to reach it. She tucks the knife in her
belt and crawls under.

UNDER THE BLANKETS

Heather picks up the capsule, starts to squiggle back out,
then, again on impulse, lifts the blanket at the very bottom
of the bed.

INT. TRICK BED/CHUTE

And this time, instead of the edge of the mattress and floor
beyond, only more sheet is revealed. Going on another five
or six feet. And sloping downwards. And down there, near
the place where sheet and blanket come together, is another
pill. Heather starts down for it.

WITH HER DOWN THERE

now completely within the softly glowing tent of blanket,
pitched downward awkwardly, she picks up the pill and takes
it and the other. And just...has to lift the blanket and
check if there's one more.

What is revealed is a steep slope of sheet dropping away
sharply into what could be infinity, it goes so far. Heather
draws back, intimidated. Yawns and starts to crawl back out.
Then hears the VOICE from down there.

DYLAN

(distant)
Mommmeeee!

And then the unmistakable LAUGHTER OF FREDDY. Heather closes
her eyes and dives forward without hesitation.

MOVING WITH HER

a wild, half OVER-HER-SHOULDER, HALF POV SHOT plunging down a
well of bedding into darkness and then

RUDDY LIGHT

wet stone walls shooting by at great speed, then

AN ANCIENT STONE FACADE

Heather flies out of a stone flume in this wall amid coursing water, pitching out into thin air and out of frame!

INT. FREDDY'S BOILER ROOM

UP ANGLE to a toothed rectangle in some ancient ceiling. Above is darkness, out of which falls Heather/Nancy.

She plunges down into the deep, fetid water of some horrendous catch of basin. She surfaces, gasping and half drowned, looking around.

She finds herself lit in hellish hues by the flames licking through a monumental wall of furnaces behind her. Galleries of stone and vistas of a city of Night stretch out in all directions. The heavy drizzle of condensed steam is everywhere. And there is a palpable feeling of...Evil

HEATHER

D...Dylan?

Her only answer is the horrific SOUND OF STEEL NAILS SCRATCHING ALONG STEEL. A sound a thousand times worse than fingernails on a chalkboard!

She reaches under the red water, coming up with the butcher knife. Then turns and splashes towards the last sound.

She searches the vast room, then stops, hearing the faintest...

DYLAN (O.S.)

Mommy?

She races across the chamber towards the wall of flame, and there at its base is DYLAN. Crouched alone in front of a huge furnace, backlit by the angry flames. And he's holding something. A sheaf of papers. And the whole dimension falls quiet as he holds it out to her...

Heather starts for him, then warily stops, alert for a trap.

HEATHER

Dylan, where's the man?

DYLAN

(indicating the sheaf of papers)

Here.

She splashes to him. Drops the knife on a sill of a furnace and takes him in her arms.

CLOSE ON THE TWO

a long, tender embrace. Heather looks at his face. He seems alright. Then she looks at the papers in his hand.

HEATHER
What...what is that?

DYLAN
A story?

Heather finds herself seized by the strangest compulsion to look, despite where she is. She opens a page towards the back at random. And smiles grimly.

HEATHER
Yes. It's a story. A story for a movie.

DYLAN
Read me some?

Heather just shakes her head, incredulous at the eerie accuracy of the writing...

HEATHER
(reading)
"At last his mother finds him. She gives him a long, happy hug. And then looks at the pages. 'Story?' the little boy asks. 'Yes,' says his mother. 'A story of us.' And the mother takes the book and begins to read."
(Heather looks at him and laughs' reads more)
"And as she begins to read, from behind her there comes...There comes..."

She stiffens, realizing, twists around and at the same split second he strikes. The true FREDDY, huge and dark and incredibly fast. Slamming into her and lifting her up in his clawed hands. Snatching away the script and flinging it into the fire.

FREDDY
Meet your maker!

He lifts his arm to strike, then lets out the most GOD AWFUL SCREAM IMAGINABLE!

LOW ANGLE ON DYLAN

down there on the deck with the big knife jammed into the back of Freddy's right knee!

FREDDY

goes down like a fallen Sequoia clawing for the child.

DYLAN springs backwards barely out of reach of the monster
Heather leaps onto the monster's back, pulling him off. And
Dylan is free.

HEATHER

Run, Dylan!

And run he does. Freddy twists Heather around and flings her
across the room into a stone pillar. Heather hits hard and
doesn't move. Freddy turns and SEES

DYLAN

dodging through an archway and disappearing.

FREDDY

pulls out the knife and flings it away. Takes off after him
like a tiger after a fawn.

MOVING WITH DYLAN

through this lowest level of hell. Fire and steam and
gushing water the only elements, splashing through to a low
staircase, turning to see

FREDDY

huge and fierce, splashing after him, claws flashing!

DYLAN

turns and runs deeper into the light of fire, reaching.

A FINAL CHAMBER

a huge furnace ending the passage. With one last look over
his shoulder telling him he must do something fast. Dylan
climbs like a little monkey and disappears into the maw of
the huge furnace. This one not fired up but still lit from
within by a huge PILOT FLAME.

INT. FURNACE

Dylan jumps the flame and lands singed but safe on the far
side of the fire pit, safe for the moment as Freddy slams
into the opening of the furnace, reaching for him. And
though he's too big to get in fast, his claws are inching
closer and closer, inches now from the boy's body!

INT. FIRST ROOM

Heather drags herself up, half dead, but hearing the SCREAMS
OF DYLAN turning to see Freddy head and shoulders inside the
distant furnace. She races back and retrieves the knife.

INT. FURNACE

Dylan looks behind, spies an access port barely larger than his head, leading outside the furnace. Knowing it's his only chance, he instantly squeezes himself into it just as FREDDY'S CLAW SNAGS HIS PAJAMAS, pulling him back.

INT. MIDDLE CHAMBER

Heather splashes through the ankle deep water, coming fast with blood in her eye! She reaches the stairs and suddenly sinks to her knees in sticky goo, flailing and clawing to pull herself free!

INT. FURNACE

Freddy, lit like a demon in hell by the flame of the pilot, reeling the kid in inch by inch.

FREDDY
Gonna eat you up...

He has Dylan now, pulling him up to his face, opening his mouth wider and wider, unhinging his jaw like some horrendous snake, when suddenly he

CONVULSES and drops Dylan then lets out a WAIL.

OUTSIDE FURNACE

Heather has made it there in time and has the knife buried deep between Freddy's legs, her body blocking sight of exactly where. But we get the idea. She shoves it hard and twists. Freddy HOWLS and fills the world.

INSIDE FURNACE

Dylan squeezes through a tiny aperture!

VENT PASSAGE JUST OUTSIDE FURNACE

Dylan looks and sees

HIS POV

down this narrow passage and through a grill to Heather, pushing at Freddy's kicking feet!

Dylan rushes to help

OUTSIDE THE FURNACE

the side vent grill pops and Dylan jumps out, and at the same instant Freddy pulls his legs fully inside in terrified panic. Together, HEATHER AND DYLAN SLAM the main furnace door and bolt it.

The screams are deafening. Heather backs away, horrified.

But Dylan climbs right up on the furnace, reaching for the rusted iron lever just above the door and pulls down hard!

Instantly there's a DEEP RUMBLE and the furnace fills with a huge GOUT OF FLAME! The child falls back amid deafening screams from inside the furnace. Heather sweeps Dylan up and staggers off!

INSIDE THE FURNACE

INSIDE THE FLAMES, as Freddy's screams roar and a huge, gargantuan Freddy starts to outglow the flames themselves! Flame sprouts from his arms and claws. His head blossoms with light and then he's blindingly brilliant, rising, WHITING OUT THE SCREEN, and his screams turn to terrifying laughter. The we...

INT. DYLAN'S ROOM - FIRST LIGHT

His bed, as the blanket bumps up yet again, and Dylan and Heather fall out onto the floor. Heather, wet, shivering and bloodied, turns and pulls the blanket completely off the bed, wrapping it around herself and her child. And of course there is nothing behind them now but...bed.

Heather turns to Dylan and pulls his head against her breast. She looks to the clock. It changes from 6:59AM to 7:00. Then she looks to the floor.

There's something there, bound loosely with three brads.

She picks it up and opens it. A script. Finished now. She looks at its top page

CU OF TITLE PAGE

NE7 - THE ASCENSION

starring:

Heather Langenkamp.....as herself

Robert Englund.....as himself

CONTINUE ROLLING CREDITS...