

This is based directly on this episode:

<https://www.dailymotion.com/video/x176fd9>

1353, 14m

The movie is about a lost dollhouse. An old woman has lost her memories and can barely speak. She used to have a dollhouse neighborhood from long ago, one that resembles the neighborhood the characters are in. The old woman has built a new dollhouse.

The dollhouse neighborhood is empty and is a model toy neighborhood, like in Mr Rogers. It almost seems like a beautiful paradise compared to the horrible suburb the characters are in. In the real world, there is a lot of gossip and harmful rumors, causing people to fight. The old woman sees all the abuses, and knows things but cannot speak. She retreats into her own toy world with exact replicas of people from this small neighborhood- she builds her own dolls with the help of an assistant (her hands are too shaky to make them herself) and sews their clothes, too. The old woman has created a utopia-like neighborhood where everyone gets along. But not much is known about this neighborhood.

The main character is a young high school girl, Heather, who volunteers at the nursing home (as ordered by her parents) and is also a babysitter. The staff is paranoid and though they are not abusive, they do not care much for the patients. Their suspected abuse is a red herring in this mystery.

The characters are in 1980s America. music is slow, sad and dark synth. Like Still Corners. Also, story is like Blonde Redhead's Misery is a Butterfly album

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V5YOhcAof8I>

Characters begin to disappear, and it's thought that they're being killed by a neighborhood scapegoat (think of To Kill a Mockingbird). The old woman tries to protest the neighborhood's injustices, but she can't and can only throw terrifying, shrieking tantrums and say a few words, as she has trouble expressing her thoughts in words.

The old woman grew up with intellectual disabilities- suggested to resemble autism- and has seen a lot. (Think of the story "Silent to the Bone"). She knows things that others do not, and has given up trying to tell the truth. The old woman did not have children (due to her developmental disabilities).

In reality, the old woman has psychic powers that allow her to turn people into dolls. Her anger at people is manifested into the little girl doll, who forcibly wants everyone to get along and do as she says, as she's frustrated by the lack of control in her life. As a child, she was feared by the few who know about her psychic powers (like in Carrie). The old woman accidentally harms someone but can't tell people that she was the one who did it, and someone else is falsely accused. Her guilt at not telling anyone causes her to wish that she had more control in her life.

Characters are picked up by a giant child doll and grotesquely tortured when they disobey playtime and try to escape. The girl cannot reason, and does things based on how she was raised. She was always horribly punished by her step father for disobedience, so she does the same to her dolls, as she fears something bad will happen if she lets them do whatever they want. Her father, the only other one with psychic powers, was rarely present in her life.

Heather and her friends are helped by the girl's father, who regrets not helping his daughter when she was younger. The father dies during the movie (like how the psychic is killed in *The Shining*).

A detective/psychologist is on the case for the disappearances in the neighborhood. When she learns the truth of the dollhouse, she tries to reach out to the old woman. She is nearly killed, but is pushed out of the way by another old woman

The girl's step father abused the girl, whose name is Dorothy. The step father was praised as a model citizen by the neighborhood, an upper class man who helped many and was on local government boards, yet he was abusive towards Dorothy and her mother. Her mother was poor and thought she was in heaven when the step father showed interest in her. But later, he reveals his true colors.

The actual villain is dead; the 'criminal' who murdered the people does not exist. In reality, the people died in accidents, but this was not known, so people blamed one another, creating fake boogeymen. Dorothy is the only one whose doing anything. The townspeople do not commit crimes, but fabricate made up crimes that are spread with paranoia. This paranoia is due to their inherent distrust in one another, caused by covered up lies about things such as affairs and thefts. This causes households to split into arguing.

In one household, an only child feels abandoned by her parents, one of whom is having an affair. The father is suspected to be the true murderer, but was falsely accused by paranoid people who thought he must've killed a child (who died in an accident). Dorothy thinks she is 'helping' the child by putting her in a model world with dolls that are fakes of her parents. She thinks she can relate to her. There are other children, throughout the decades, who are kidnapped for similar reasons. They cannot speak, as Dorothy cannot hear them.

The town goes on a witch hunt against a troublemaker teenage boy who is suspected to be a serial killer. This causes tension with the boy's mother who works in the nursing home, and who feels persecuted by the town. This tension greatly affects Dorothy and she tries to lie and blame her step father; the staff believes the step father is dead so they think she's saying nonsense. Heather suspects the step father may still be alive. However, it is later revealed he DID die after being accidentally killed by Dorothy. The townspeople, against Dorothy's pleas, form a lynch mob to kill a burly scapegoat. They do not believe that Dorothy, a young girl, can cause such wounds, as they don't know she's a psychic.

Dorothy's doll is able to project itself and lure children towards it. When they touch it, they are transformed into dolls and placed in the model neighborhood. Thus, exorcising the doll would stop Dorothy's ability to turn people into dolls.

There is a scene where Dorothy's doll is nearly taken away, which would allow it to be exorcised. But this fails as Dorothy reacts violently and nearly kills the detective (Christine)

Heather tries to 'grow up' and not play with dolls. At the end, she is the only one left who can stop Dorothy. She tries to assume the role of a surrogate mother to the young girl. (Like how the mother becomes like a 'mother to the ghosts' in *The Orphanage*)

Dorothy is defeated when her mother doll is torn (like in *Carrie*). Saddened that she killed her mother, Dorothy tears apart of the toy neighborhood; before she does, Heather, who managed to calm Dorothy down for a moment to get to the dolls before Dorothy accidentally tore her mother, rescues the trapped

victims who are still alive. Dorothy effectively commits suicide because she's unable to keep up the appearances of her perfect world.

Children were kidnapped because Dorothy thought she was helping them by keeping them away from the abusive townspeople. She makes them clothes and treats them well.

There are no abusers or criminals, just paranoid townspeople. Dorothy cannot kidnap the whole town because she does not consciously control anything. In the real world, she is developmentally disabled and retreats into her toy world. As a doll, she is not some evil mastermind; instead, the children pray for a friend, and through the prayers, the doll is able to project itself to them. Another way to be turned into a doll is when the doll feels its toy world being threatened. It would then physically walk around and, in people's sleep, stroke their hair and turn them into dolls.

Dorothy is not a good person. She just wants the stress to end. She is also lonely and wants friends, and thinks the children can be her friends.

At the end, the teenage boy is exonerated by the detective's evidence

CHANGE IN STORY: Heather is saved by an old woman who has nothing to do with the kidnapped children, but wanted to help anyways. The detective's role is merged with Heather's? Maybe there is no detective. The role of the 'adult who believes' is present in stories like Stranger Things, but it doesn't have to be here. So still up in the air about whether there's a detective or not.

In the end, Heather is disgusted by the townspeople's praise of people who are actually bad (such as the kidnapped girl's vindictive mother and Dorothy's abusive step father) and reckless accusations of others. The townspeople continue to turn a blind eye to what happened with Dorothy's abusive father, and the girl's mother is not punished at all for what she did; she is seen as a good mother who tried to search for her daughter, despite her never doing much and being more focused on covering her affair. The girl's father is a former criminal who came from a bad family, so he was immediately blamed despite just being a careless drunk.

Heather wants to find a way to leave town. She gets her driver's license. She picks up her dolls again, and puts them in a car. At the beginning of the story, she hated volunteering and helping others. Now, she wants to use the dolls to help abused and abandoned children, whom the town falsely 'cares' about yet never really do anything to help. The town tries to present a good image, but it is actually hypocritical and thrives on hate and pushing the blame elsewhere. It builds up a false narrative of 'perfect, good citizens', despite those citizens having skeletons in their closet (though none of them are murderers or kidnappers).

There have been several children who, in the last 50 years, have disappeared. But this is not revealed until later in the movie. The suspects who kidnapped the young girl, whose name is Annabelle, are:

- The girl's father
- The girl's mother
- An angry and violent teenage boy
- An old, creepy man

But once it's revealed early on that Dorothy turned her into a doll, it's also revealed Dorothy didn't kill the other child. Now the suspects include all those listed above.

Heather and her teenage friends realize that to find the truth, and where the young girl is being held in the toy neighborhood, they have to dig around Dorothy's past. They later learn there are two neighborhoods, and that the girl is held in the old one, which is left in a house that is an exact replica of a model house. There are times where they are not sure if they are in the real world or doll house.

Heather is transported into the toy model world not as a doll. This is possible because Dorothy accidentally teleports her in, but Heather does not touch Dorothy's doll, so she is not transformed.

In the real world, the staff smile and even laugh when Dorothy and others mess with the people turned into dolls. Heather, standing beside them, is horrified and pleads to them to stop, but they do not listen to her because they see her as a stupid, reckless child who did not obey them in the past. Heather watches as Dorothy rips apart a doll who angered her by trying to take her dolls away. Later, Heather watches as the nursing aides tear apart the psychic father, whom they were unaware was turned into a doll. Heather is now alone and has no adult help. Dorothy had told the aides that the doll was troubling her.

The only way to turn people out of being dolls is to reach out to Dorothy. Heather does this to save the kidnapped child. After the child is turned from being a doll, an accident happens that causes Dorothy's mother to be ripped apart.

Only 3 people in the end know the truth: Heather and two of her teenage friends.

Not all the dolls used to be people. Most are created and placed into houses by Dorothy. The streets, however, are always empty, as Dorothy hated going outside and was only used to being indoors, hidden from the world that fear her when other children saw her using her powers. Her abusive step father also feared her and did not want anyone to know the truth about his daughter.

Dorothy's father did not reveal his psychic abilities to Dorothy's mother. When they separate, the mother learns she is pregnant, and is looked down upon as an unmarried pregnant woman. The step father takes advantage of her low status and the town believes the mother should be totally grateful to him for marrying such an 'unwanted woman'. Dorothy's father was not aware of the accidental pregnancy, and told the mother that he could not raise a child due to his mental issues with his psychic abilities. Dorothy's mother is angry at him for hiding his issues, and the father can only hope the child did not inherit the abilities (as some of his own siblings did not). The origin of these psychic abilities is hinted at as being some curse, but remain a mystery.

There are many scenes resembling the bathroom/mirror scene in that Abra episode, with long, atmospheric pauses and synth-like vibes. The setting looks like those houses in the Abra episode. Most of the movie takes place inside the doll-like neighborhood; it feels like an acid trip (see the neighborhood drive in 'footage of a bear', adult swim) and The Shining. Heather feels like she takes a trip into Wonderland, and most of the movie, she is alone and encounters strange creations of Dorothy. In fact, most of the movie is like a horror Alice in Wonderland- VERY bright colors, unsettling pauses and music, etc. Heather has to rescue people who have been turned into dolls, and some of these dolls are mobile, as it takes time for them to become frozen and unable to move.

The world of the dolls and the actual playhouse are separate. The world of the dolls takes place in some unknown other dimension, as if constructed within Dorothy's memories. The actual model neighborhood is like it's in a museum, in a silent room reserved for Dorothy's playtime. Or maybe

they're the same thing. Because the playhouse is isolated and no one except Dorothy ever visits it, it's left to its own devices. The toys inside do not dare move without Dorothy playing with them. But when Dorothy does not attend to them, they shamle around, having long lost their human self, like animatronics. It is a huge world- think of those large museums of model trains. Heather is alone and isolated, and is only pulled out of the world by Dorothy's father.

When Dorothy's father dies, Heather cannot find a way back in without staying there forever (only the father was able to transport her out). She could only go in through an accident with Dorothy. But she discovers one last thing he left behind that will let her take a one way trip into the world, and has a very risky way back.

The music is happy, ala Mr Roger's neighborhood. This contrasts greatly with the disturbing fact that people are trapped as dolls. There are also shrill sounds like in The Shining.

The horror comes in with the grotesque ways people have been turned into things- not all are dolls, some have their bodies ripped apart into becoming objects, and are unable to ever turn back as they've been there too long.

The father is unable to do anything because his daughter's powers are too strong. The only way to save the lost child (and the few others who were turned into dolls recently) is by finding parts of Dorothy's past that explain what happened to her, and to use that to try to reach her. The father regrets not being in Dorothy's life, as he was afraid of her and also did not trust himself to care for someone with horrific abilities similar to his.

The secrets to Dorothy's past are hidden throughout the toy neighborhood.

Edward scissorhands

CHANGES: It's always obvious when one is in toy world vs not in it. But this is to the audience. Those first transported into it are scared and confused.