

The Stanley Hotel's Nearly Empty Night

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Stephen King described arriving at the Stanley just before it closed for winter. The nearly empty hotel and a disturbing dream became the beginning of a famous fictional haunting.

STATUS	A recorded story, with its history attached
CLASSIFICATION	STR
MATERIAL	Estes Park, Colorado, United States
DISPOSITION	PUBLIC / SOURCED STORY
CATEGORY	Strange Files
RECORD TYPE	Ghosts & hauntings
STORY HISTORY	Stephen King's stay in September 1974; later hotel traditions

THE ACCOUNT

The Stanley's best-documented strange night belongs to a writer's imagination. Stephen King says he and Tabitha stayed there in late September 1974, when they were the only guests and the hotel was about to close for winter. Its corridors suggested a ghost story. That night he dreamed of his young son running from a fire hose, woke alarmed and began shaping the book that became *The Shining*. The empty hotel offered the conditions; the nightmare supplied the movement. The resulting fictional building, the Overlook, grew larger and more dangerous than the place that prompted it.

FOLLOWING THE TRAIL

King recounts this himself on his official website. He describes a dream and inspiration, not a verified apparition. The Stanley now interprets its own ghost traditions alongside that literary history. Its tour material also distinguishes Kubrick's film, which was not filmed there, from the later television miniseries, which was.

WHY IT STAYS WITH US

The story works because its boundaries remain visible. A real overnight stay becomes an imagined haunting, and the imagined haunting changes how later guests experience the real hotel. The corridor is carrying several kinds of memory.

WHERE THIS TELLING COMES FROM

The Shining: Inspiration

Stephen King

<https://stephenking.com/works/novel/shining.html>

The Stanley Hotel tours

The Stanley Hotel

<https://www.stanleyhotel.com/tours/>

RETURN TO THE STORY

The Stanley Hotel's Nearly Empty Night

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<https://u225x.com/record/STR-GHOST-032>