

STEPHEN KING ON SCREEN



Week Three

Night Shifts and Dollar Babies

Welcome to *Stephen King On Screen*

Week Three

This week, unlike the previous two, we are concentrating on a single volume of King's bibliography – the short story collection *Night Shift*, originally published in 1978.

Being a collection, however, the sheer number of films, franchises, television movies and series, not to mention short films (although we will mention them) is enormous. We could easily do an entire course based around the stories, for better or worse, drawn from *Night Shift*.

While the novels and adaptations thereof may have made Stephen King's name, in some ways it is the short stories that truly established King on Screen, if only due to the number and variety of properties that erupted from them.

In some cases, the short stories are expanded upon massively, the shards of narrative set up by King fleshed out – at times successfully, at others not so much – to feature length. In other cases, the shorter plots and lesser number of characters with which to content made the short stories and novellas prime candidates for adaptation, without the challenges of encompassing the scope of a *Salem's Lot* or *The Stand*.

And then we have the 'Dollar Babies'. Beginning in 1977 and ending in December 2023, King began to grant permission to student and otherwise aspiring filmmakers to make films of any story whose rights were not already assigned elsewhere. These could not be released commercially without approval and King had to receive a copy for his collection.

He charged \$1 for this consideration. Needless to say, many of the films were of poor and amateurish quality.

But not all. Indeed, one filmmaker later to be closely associated with Stephen King adaptations began, at age 20, with a Dollar Baby entitled *The Woman in the Room*, from... the *Night Shift* collection.

FILMS WEEK THREE

From 'Night Shift'

Professional Features/TV

Children of the Corn (1984) – Dir. Fritz Kiersch

Cat's Eye (1985) – Dir. Lewis Teague

Maximum Overdrive (1986) – Dir. Stephen King

Graveyard Shift (1990) – Dir. Ralph S. Singleton

Sometimes They Come Back (1991) – Dir. Tom McLoughlin

The Mangler (1995) – Dir. Tobe Hooper

Chapelwaite (2021) – Dir. Burr Steers, et al (based on Jerusalem's Lot)

The Boogeyman (2023) – Dir. Rob Savage

Dollar Babies

The Boogeyman (1982) – Dir. Jeff Schiro

Disciples of the Crow (1983) – Dir. John Woodward

The Woman in the Room (1983) – Dir. Frank Darabont

The Lawnmower Man (1987) – Dir. Jim Gonis