

# **STEPHEN KING ON SCREEN**



## **Week Four**

**Rabid Dogs, Running Men and Possessed Cars**

## Welcome to *Stephen King On Screen*

### Week Four

Here we are in Week Four of our exploration of Stephen King On Screen. I hope you've recovered from the short clip of *The Mangler* and haven't been attacked by any possessed industrial equipment since we last met.

We're back to the novels this week, after our detour into the short stories last week, with a mix of films that have become horror classics – for better or worse – and two modern attempts to capture some early King work.

We also come up hard against attempts to make sequels based on the core work – write-ups of which always seem to lead with notices regarding “commercial and critical disappointment.” It does seem, with one or two exceptions, mostly in television, that expansions upon the original King stories, without input from the author himself have fared poorly with audiences and critics alike.

Considering that faithful adaptations have not always met with praise and works like *The Shining* that have taken liberties have been feted, it makes you wonder why that is. Stephen King is nothing if not a world-builder, so why can't other writers seem to work within those worlds to better effect?

And why, oh why, did the multiple novels of *The Dark Tower* saga end up as one unloved 95-minute film.

The ways of the film industry are confusing at the best of times. In the 1980s, where a lot of the work we've looked at so far originated, it does feel as though Hollywood especially is still working out *why* people like Stephen King stories and how to replicate that on the big screen.

Things change as we move into the 90s – sometimes for better, sometimes for worse.

And a lot of stuff still needs to be possessed.

## FILMS WEEK FOUR

*Cujo (1983) – Dir. Lewis Teague*

*The Running Man (1987) – Dir. Paul Michael Glaser*

*The Dark Tower (2017) – Dir. Nikolaj Arcel*

*Christine (1983) – Dir. John Carpenter*

*Pet Sematary (1989) – Dir. Mary Lambert*

*Pet Sematary II (1992) – Dir. Mary Lambert*

*Pet Sematary (2019) – Dir. Dennis Widmyer & Kevin Kölsch*

*Pet Sematary: Bloodlines (2023) – Dir. Lindsay Anderson Beer*

*Silver Bullet (1985) – Dir. Dan Attias*