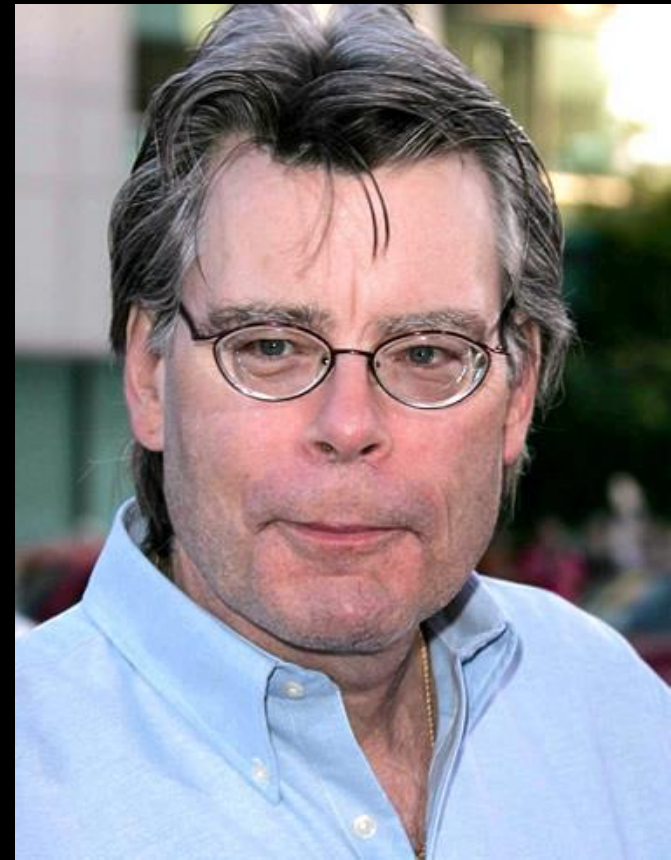


Strawberry Spring

Stephen King

‘Horror stories
make us
children again!’

‘What scares
me? Bugs...the
dark..everything
scares me.’

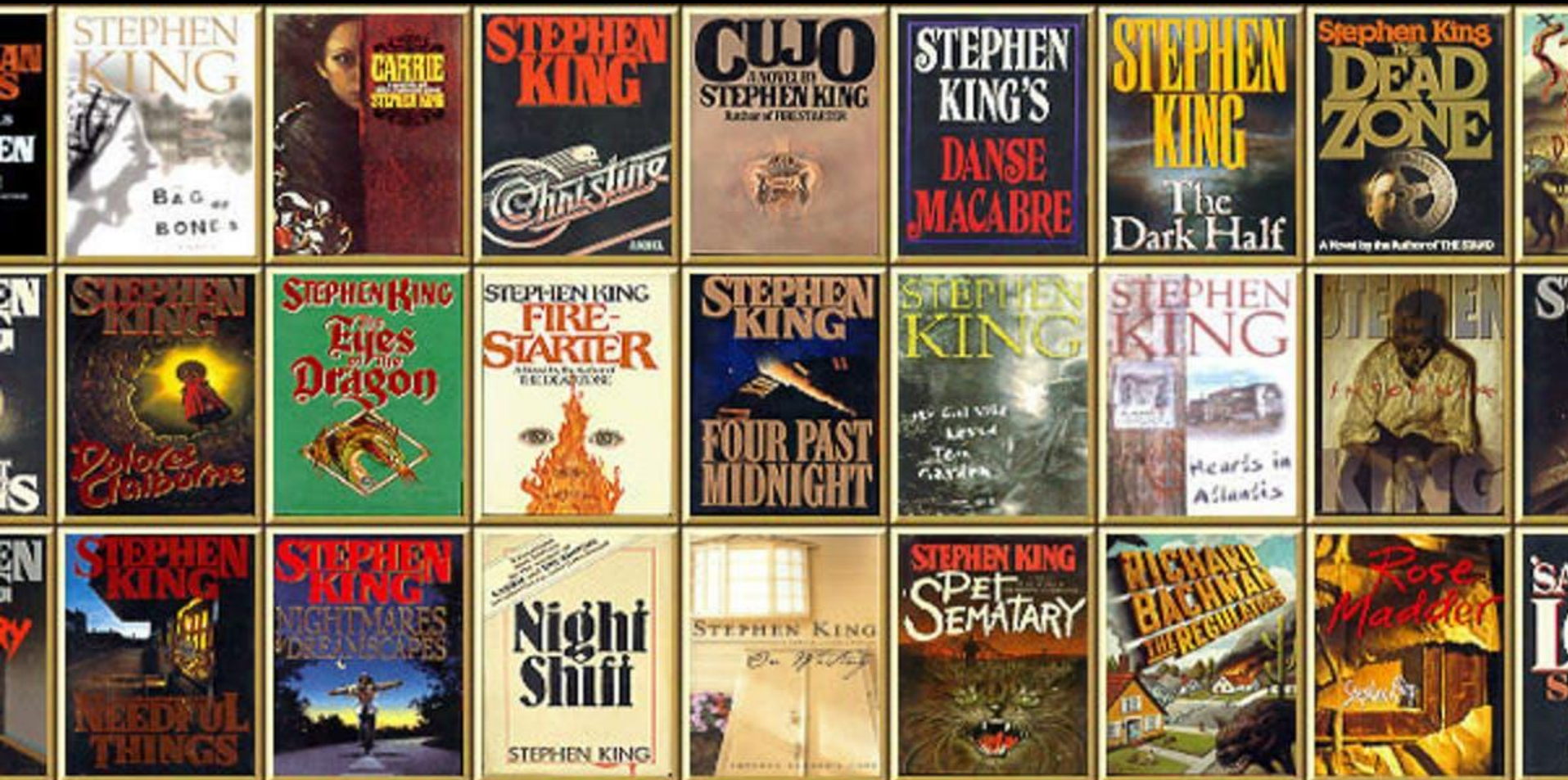


Background

- Born in Portland, Maine September 1947
- His father left when he was young but left behind many fantasy-horror fiction books
- Grew up loving to listen to horror stories on the radio, reading scary books, and watching science fiction movies
- In high school, he wrote short stories influenced by the books he had read
- He sent his stories to science fiction magazines and won first prize in an essay contest
- He went onto college in Maine and majored in English
- By the time he graduated, he published two of his short stories-received a total of \$70.

Background

- Received an English teaching job at a private school
- Wrote fiction in his spare time and sold his short stories to a magazine
- His first novel, *Carrie* was sold for \$400,000 and eventually was created into a movie
- King was able to stop teaching and devote his time to writing
- Today, his novels and short stories sell millions of copies internationally
- Many of his novels have been turned into films



Why do people love **Stephen King**?

- *Good storyteller*
- *Uses horrifying details*
- *Creates the unexpected*
- *Provides insights into the darker side of humanity*
- *Often combat between forces of good and evil*



Strawberry Spring

"**Strawberry Spring**" is the eleventh short story in Stephen King's *Night Shift*. While its plot is similar to many other works of horror (a serial killer strikes at a college campus) it features many elements that make it unique.

- There is little gore
- No chase scenes
- No defeat and unveiling of the murderer.
- There is a *mystical element* to the writing that makes it very different from many of King's other works.

As you read, keep track of all of
the *mystical* elements of the
setting:

*“And when night came the fog
came with it, moving silent and
white along the narrow college
avenues and thoroughfares.”*

The story begins with the unnamed narrator seeing the words "Springheel Jack" in a newspaper, which leads him to recount a time, about eight years ago, when he was at New Sharon College. His recollections are nostalgic, almost melancholy.

It was 1968 when the *strawberry spring*, a ‘false’ spring, much like Indian summer, broke. It brought a *thick fog*, which covered the campus at nighttime, providing perfect cover for ‘Springheel Jack.’ It was a good time for the narrator, as he recalls the things that they did and the music they listened to. This innocent façade was shattered when the body of a girl was found in a parking lot.



Spring Heeled Jack

- **An Urban Legend**
- **A character from English folklore**
- **Able to jump extraordinarily high**
- **Alleged sightings reported from all over England,**
- **prevalent in suburban London**
- **A phenomenon that remains unexplained**
- **Urban legend gained immense popularity in its time due to the tales of his bizarre appearance**
- **Has the capacity to perform extraordinary leaps to the point of much speculation about possible paranormal origins**

After reading...

1. What is “strawberry spring”? How does this become a part of the story?
2. Who is “Springheel Jack”?
3. What is your reaction to the ending of the story?

