

The King of Horror

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Weekly Contributor: Writing Scene

The first time I ever read a Stephen King book was in my junior year of high school. I didn't realize I liked horror until I began reading his work. It was *Pet Semetary*, which King describes as his scariest novel. Non-readers are familiar with him, mostly for his movies based on his books, but also for his title as "The King of Horror."

"The soil of a man's heart is stonier... A man grows what he can and he tends it" (King, 1983).

"Dead fields under a November sky, scattered rose petals brown and turning up at the edges, empty pools scummed with algae, rot, decomposition, dust..." (King, 1983).

These two quotes are from *Pet Semetary*, written in 1983. It's a story about a family who experiences a series of deaths starting with their cat. The father buries the cat in a cursed burial ground where the land brings them back to life. His toddler son dies, then he brings him back by burying him in the same burial as the cat. Then he does it to his wife. The undead in this story turn evil once they come back to life. Readers learn that sometimes... dead is better.

Why is He So Good?

His skill is evident on every page of his books, as shown by the two quotes mentioned above. The first quote is a metaphor that many readers debate on what the exact meaning is. The general idea is that a man's heart is harder to get into but once he allows someone/something in, he will tend/nurture it. It's one of the themes of the book! A unique metaphor is what makes a writer good. However, that's just a sliver of his talent. His story-telling is immaculate. He spaces out his foreshadowing which I found effective when I reread it, I found those little moments and realized, "Oh that was a hint."

How to Imagery/Foreshadow: Lesson One

The second quote from above is a perfect example of imagery and foreshadowing. King goes to describe a scene in detail. It's November, the weather is changing along with the whole world. Except the change that is happening is a gross, unwanted, inevitable change—the grass is dying, the roses are dying, the pools are growing algae and all sorts of nasty things... the way life is. We die and we rot away.

Of course, I can't give a lesson on how to write like Stephen King, but I can give the basic advice: be original. This statement is unique but not because of the words, because of the

placement and the story. This whole book is about death so it makes sense for death to surround the main characters.

Final Note

It was about time I switched it up and talked about a good author this week. I chose Stephen King because he inspires me. He treated writing like a job. He wrote and wrote, even when he didn't feel like it. *Pet Sematary* was my favorite of his and I highly recommend it.

Editors

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