



The top 10 Stephen King short-story adaptations



Stephen King short story adaptations

[Stephen King](#) 's "Bad Little Kid" has been optioned to become a new feature-length movie by Laurent Bouzereau, a first-time feature-film director who has directed some of the biggest making-of documentaries in DVD history. His filmography includes making-of features on "Jaws" and "Jurassic Park." If King's fans seem a bit confused at the name of the story, it is because the short story has only been released in Germany and France.

According to Ain't It Cool News, "[Bad Little Kid](#)" is about a young boy who inadvertently causes the deaths of many people around him. The story is told in flashback by a man on trial for murdering the boy to stop the deaths. The site lists the King short story as 68 pages in length and says it has not received an English translation yet. With this new movie based on one of the horror master's short stories, here is a look at the top 10 Stephen King short-story adaptations.

"The Woman in the Room"

Interestingly, the first two known King short-story adaptations were not made for major studios, but were instead made in what King refers to as his "dollar baby" deal. The dollar-baby program allows a student filmmaker to make a short film based on one of King's short stories and then enter it in festivals or use it on their product reel to get a filmmaking job. "The Woman in the Room" was the second dollar-baby film known (following Jeff Schiro's "Boogeyman") and was directed by none other than future Oscar nominee [Frank Darabont](#) . The story is about a man's mother dying of cancer and the man trying to decide whether to help her finally move on.

"Children of the Corn"

The first major studio release of a King short-story adaptation came in 1984 with Fritz Kiersch's "Children of the Corn." Peter Horton and [Linda Hamilton](#) star as the vacationers who end up stranded in a small Midwestern town where the children have slaughtered all adults and now operate in a cult led by the villain Isaac. The movie received seven sequels.

"Maximum Overdrive"

While it is clearly not a great movie, "Maximum Overdrive" remains a solid cult classic. [Emilio Estevez](#) stars in this film about all vehicles coming to life and seeking to eradicate their former human controllers. This movie has the distinction of being the only movie that King ever directed. One of the highlights remains the fact that it sports a fantastic soundtrack with only songs by AC/DC.

"Stand by Me"

[Rob Reiner](#) developed a production company called Castle Rock, which was also the name of the town that most of King's stories took place in. He also directed two King adaptations, with "Misery" and "Stand by Me" standing the test of time as the cream of the crop of King adaptations. "Stand by Me" is based on the short novella called "The Body" from "Different Seasons" and features a group of four young friends who set out to find a dead body rumored to be by the railroad tracks. There is little to no horror, nearly unique among King tales.

"The Shawshank Redemption"

Also coming from the "Different Seasons" book is "The Shawshank Redemption." The story here is interesting as Frank Darabont directed the dollar baby for "The Woman in the Room" and then developed a close friendship with King after that. He received permission to shop around "The Shawshank Redemption" and made it his first feature-length movie. While it lost out at the Oscars to "Forrest Gump," it remains considered one of cinema's most beloved movies.

"Paranoid"

In 2000, another dollar baby took the world by storm, Jay Holben's "Paranoid," based on King's short poem titled "Paranoid: A Chant." The story is about a person in an apartment who believes the government is hiding something and is watching them. Holben received permission to show the movie online for a short time, the only dollar-baby film to ever receive that permission.

"Umney's Last Case"

There was a version of "Umney's Last Case" that appeared in the television miniseries "Nightmares and Dreamscapes." However, a few years before that, an NYU film student picked up the rights to make a dollar baby out of the story and raised \$50,000 to shoot his movie. Rodney Altman ended up creating one of the most impressive dollar-baby films ever made, even more impressive than the televised version.

"Grey Matter"

Another very impressive dollar-baby film came in 2012 with James Cox's "Grey Matter." The original story was about a man wasting away due to contaminated alcohol. However, for his short film, Cox focused on the son of the man in the story and showed how the horrors affected the boy. Tyler Chase, who played Ben in "The Walking Dead," stars as the boy.

"1408"

Back to Hollywood, [John Cusack](#) and [Samuel L. Jackson](#) starred in the very scary short-story adaptation of "1408." Cusack plays a paranormal writer who travels to haunted locations to debunk them. He also suffers from depression after the death of his daughter and secretly wants to find a real haunted location to prove the existence of the afterlife. When he checks into room 1408, he gets more than he ever could have hoped for.

"The Mist"

We are back to Frank Darabont for this last entry. In his fourth attempt, Darabont directed the short-story

adaptation of "The Mist," a terrifying tale about a group of survivors stuck in a supermarket while giant insect-styled creatures try to get in to kill them. [Thomas Jane](#) stars as a father who tries to protect his son while the evil in the survivors' hearts is almost worse than the monsters outside. In one of the most shocking finales in movie history, Darabont went even darker than Stephen King dared.

Reference:

All dollar-baby information obtained in [personal interviews with the filmmakers](#).

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