

## The King of Fiction

By Marilyn Reeves

Last Friday I made an emergency phone call to my son Tom. Without so much as a hello, the first words out of my mouth were: “What’s the location of Stephen King’s Castle Rock?”

His response was, “I think Maine. Except for ‘The Shining’ I believe nearly all of his books took place in Maine.”

And I replied indignantly, “I thought so! I just watched ‘Stand By Me’ – which I hadn’t seen in years – and Richard Dreyfuss as the narrator said something along the line of, ‘... a nice little town in *Oregon* called Castle Rock.’ It totally blew my mind, because like you, I always figured that Castle Rock, Portland, Derry ... all those towns he’s written about ... were in Maine!”

Old quick-fingered Tom had pulled up something on the Internet while I was blowing off steam and said, “Yeah, here it is, Mom. The Castle Rock that King wrote about *was* in Maine, but when Rob Reiner made the film ‘Stand By Me’ he changed the location to Oregon, and later took the name ‘Castle Rock Entertainment’ as the moniker for his production company.”

“Interesting,” I said, “that’s what I thought.”

Now, any sane person might question why such an insignificant piece of trivia would matter, but to die-hard Stephen King aficionados like Tom and myself, it matters a great deal. Thinking that I had been wrong about Castle Rock being in Maine gave me the same feeling I got when I took my female cat into the vet to be spayed and learned upon her return that she was not a *she* at all, but a *he*. Mind blowing!

Over the years I must have read a thousand books in all different genres written by hundreds of different authors. But if the criteria for naming my favorite writer is based on the sheer number of his books that I’ve read, that would have to be Stephen King.

King is best known for his horror stories, and I’ve read virtually every one, from ‘Salem’s Lot’ to ‘The Shining’. But my favorite Stephen King books – many of which have been made into movies – were not his tales of the supernatural, but those stories more closely resembling real life. A mother and young child being held hostage in a hot car by a monstrous, rabid dog called ‘Cujo’; the miserable ordeal of a writer held captive by a deranged female fan in ‘Misery’; and that intriguing, ingenious plot taking place behind prison bars in ‘Rita Hayworth and the Shawshank Redemption.’

And then there’s the tale of a group of young boys who set off into the wilderness in hopes of being the first to see the dead body that they heard was left there, in the nostalgic coming-of-age tale called ‘Stand By Me’ – which took place near the author’s imaginary little town of Castle Rock, Maine.

All great movies. All great books. All by that master story teller, Stephen King, my favorite writer.