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The Importance and Meaning of the Character of the Writer in Stephen King's
Works

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King, Stephen. *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft*. New York: Scribner, 2000.

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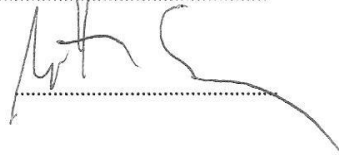
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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto diplomovou práci vypracovala samostatně pod odborným dohledem vedoucího práce a uvedla jsem předepsaným způsobem všechny použité podklady a literaturu.

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Poděkování

Děkuji vedoucímu práce za odborné vedení práce, poskytování rad a materiálových podkladů k práci.

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Introduction

There are only a few writers in the history of horror fiction whose names are known all over the world. Probably, the title of the most favourite horror writer of contemporary literature is labelled to Stephen Edwin King. There are the many who believe Stephen King can write only horror. King is, however, all-round author who is able to create in various genres of fiction, but also in non-fiction. His range of specialization is broad. Except horror fiction his production include mainstream fiction, science fiction, fantasy, crime fiction and comics. What I have found interesting is the fact that his characters represent people from today's world in all genres he writes. Their main role is to be identifiable with real people. If the reader reads about ordinary human and his mundane life, he can simply imagine himself as the protagonist. Thanks to this fact even the horror story is close to the reader. Characters of Stephen King's works that create the impression of reality make the aim of my research. I will focus on the character of the writer and try to prove that he is at least partly based on Stephen King himself. The first chapter of the thesis is meant not only as an introduction to the work of Stephen King, but also as a guide to the reader to realize what field is discussed.

Stephen King's inspiration comes from his experience as a man, husband, parent and, of course, as a writer. King, influenced by the authors of different genres and styles from different periods of time and of different nationalities, has found his own style of writing. His life has brought him joys but also sorrows that have stimulated him to write stories about real people and primarily, but unintentionally, about himself. Thus the idea that his writer characters could be partly patterned on him seems to be reasonable. There is need to elucidate what gave rise to King's interest in writing. The second chapter will look at what had impact on Stephen King's writing from the time he was a boy, through his first attempts to publish stories till the time he became popular.

Stephen King's stories possess idiosyncratic nature. At first, King likes to repeat his favourite setting in the books. Be it existing or fictional place it is usually place in Maine, King's native land. He can be rightly considered regional writer. Secondly, there are themes that are used repeatedly: children's fears, fight between good and evil, supernatural ability, alcoholism, small community life, writing etc. King's constant readers are familiar with the fact that his novels, novellas and short stories contain his

own criticism. Stephen King is introduced as a social and political critic. Moreover, King's delight in recurrent characters is described in the third chapter. The recurrence of the character of the writer is thus no exception.

The fourth chapter concentrates on detailed analysis of particular novels, novellas and short stories of Stephen King concerning the character of the writer. The chapter is divided into two parts. The first part consists of the analysis of six basic Stephen King's stories in which the character of the writer is important: *The Shining*, "The Body," *Misery*, *The Dark Half*, "Secret Window, Secret Garden," and *Bag of Bones*. The second part comments on the stories in which the writer occurs as one of the main characters but is not of the same importance as the stories in the first part. The stories are: *Salem's Lot*, *The Plant*, *The Tommyknockers*, "Umney's Last Case," *Desperation*, "The Road Virus Heads North" and *Lisey's Story*. The meaning of the character is conveyed. Results of the analysis are given to summarize King's possible purpose of placing the writer character into his stories.

1. Genres of Stephen King's Works

Stephen King can be classified as a representative of the modern horror story, nevertheless, I disapprove the idea of pigeon-holing Stephen King into horror genre only. His abilities in storytelling enable him to write in more than one genre. This chapter tries to find out which genres in the literature of Stephen King do prevail and which are only minor in his production. I will propose a brief definition of each genre to point out its crucial features. The first forerunners of the genre are mentioned. The example of King's work in the particular genre is given. The character of the writer is presented and the possibility of his occurrence in each genre is described.

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the work of Stephen King and to categorize it according to the forms and genres. It is necessary to understand what kind of literature I am dealing with and that the borders between the genres are sometimes not so clear. General division into fiction and nonfiction is clearer, however, I will try to prove in the following chapters that they are mingling as well, especially that King's fiction contains non-fiction elements thanks to the character of the writer.

1.1. Fiction

Fiction is "a general term for an imaginative work, usually in prose."¹ J. A. Cuddon admits that also remaining two forms of literary work, poetry and drama, can be categorized within fiction because they are usually faking the truth.²

On one hand, there stands mainstream fiction. I will give the readers a brief look at King's output in this fiction at first. On the other hand, the term fiction covers many subsidiary genres. I will try to outline only these: horror fiction, science fiction, fantasy, crime fiction and comics. These are the genres in which Stephen King has written his novels, novellas, short stories, screenplays, e-books and even poems.³ I decided to introduce the genres of fiction according to the number of pieces written by Stephen

¹ John Anthony Cuddon, *A Dictionary of Literary Terms*, 2nd ed., (1977; Chatham: W & J Mackay, 1979), 270.

² See Cuddon, *A Dictionary*, 270 - 271.

³ See Stephen J. Spignesi, *The Essential Stephen King: A Ranking of the Greatest Novels, Short Stories, Movies, and Other Creations of the World's Most Popular Writer* (Franklin Lakes, NJ: New Page Books, 2001), 10.

King, from the genre with the highest number of commitments to that with the lowest number.

1.1.1. Mainstream fiction

At first, I would like to point out the fact that Stephen King is not only genre writer. He, as the reader of classic authors from all over the world, also contributes to mainstream fiction. His university professor Carroll F. Terrell in his book *Stephen King: Man and Artist* compares King to many great authors (Dante, Shakespeare, Pushkin, Balzac, Whitman, Hardy, Joyce, Pound etc.) and highlights the fact that he chooses the same major themes as they chose and that his knowledge of technique is identical to the knowledge of all of them.⁴ I agree with an opinion that Stephen King possesses the qualities of a great writer. However, he does not share all of his attitudes with other writers. Terrell states: “The main difference is Dante’s vitality comes from hate, while King’s comes from love and compassion.”⁵

It is obvious that Stephen King does like to write. His collection of four novellas, *Different Seasons* (1982), proves that he does not write only horror fiction. Only one of them is horror. The most known is novella “Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption,” the story of an innocent banker who is arrested for double murder and who is sentenced to spend the rest of his life in Shawshank Prison. The story was made a film and many readers decided to read the novella after seeing the adaptation because they knew it was great and non-horror.⁶ “The Body,” novella from the same collection experienced the same course of events. Being non-genre the story attained appreciation after the release of the film adaptation called *Stand By Me*.⁷ The last novella from the collection *Different Seasons* that could be considered mainstream fiction is “Apt Pupil.” King’s very first non-horror story was published as early as in 1977, the story originally titled *Getting It On* was available to the public under the title *Rage* but with the name

⁴ See Carroll F. Terrell, *Stephen King: Man and Artist*. rev. ed. (1990; Orono, ME: Northern Lights, 1991), 12.

⁵ Terrell, *Stephen King*, 14.

⁶ See Spignesi, *The Essential Stephen King*, 112.

⁷ See Spignesi, *The Essential Stephen King*, 106.

Richard Bachman on its cover.⁸ At that time there were hardly any readers who knew Bachman was King's pseudonym.

Mainstream fiction offers an opportunity to place the character of the writer on the character list with no obstruction. The above mentioned novella "The Body" plays an important role in determining autobiographical features thanks to the presence of the character of the writer.

1.1.2. Horror fiction

Horror story is as old as civilization because "the oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear."⁹ Howard Phillips Lovecraft claims in his study called *Supernatural Horror in Literature* that people remember bad experience and pain more than pleasure.¹⁰ Fear that evokes the feeling of horror strongly is the fear of unknown.¹¹ Uncertainty is associated with danger so an unknown world can be seen as a world of evil.¹² This does not necessarily mean that the unknown is something supernatural.

I would divide horror into two different categories: a horror with supernatural and a realistic horror. Supernatural, something what cannot be explained in our world, makes part of majority of horror stories. However, I do not hold the view that it is indispensable in characteristics of horror. The audience can be scared more by the tale which could become real, could happen to them—ordinary people—in their mundane lives. What I call realistic horror, Sharon A. Russel calls "suspense fiction" and separates this kind of genre from horror.¹³ Nevertheless, I think that suspense is present in horror as well. Even events from our reality can be horrific and stories that recount those events should definitely not lack suspense.

It would be wrong to define the genre according to its characters because horror stories are not based only on vampires, werewolves and monsters.¹⁴ Stephen King in

⁸ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King* (1985; La Vergne, TN: Wildside Press, 2006), 27-28.

⁹ Howard Phillips Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror in Literature*, ed. E.F. Bleiler, Dover Edition (1927; Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1973), 12.

¹⁰ See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 14.

¹¹ See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 12.

¹² See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 12-14.

¹³ See Sharon A. Russel, *Revisiting Stephen King: A Critical Companion* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), 29.

¹⁴ See Russel, *Revisiting Stephen King*, 21.

Danse Macabre presents his definition: “A good horror story is one that functions on a symbolic level, using fictional (and sometimes supernatural) events to help us understand our own deepest fears.”¹⁵ In my view it works for both, the reader and the author. If I take into consideration the fact that each story with the character of the writer deals with at least one of King’s fears, I have to state that horror story helps the writer to come to terms with his fears too.

The word *horror* comes from latin expression *horrere* which can be translated as ‘to bristle’ or ‘to shiver.’¹⁶ That is what was first captured by Dante, later Shakespeare and what started to be popular in literature from the time Horace Walpole published *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), the time of the arrival of Gothic fiction.¹⁷ The beginning of the modern horror story comes with Edgar Allan Poe in the nineteenth century.¹⁸ The weird tradition in Great Britain is represented by Bram Stoker, whose Count Dracula became the most known vampire in the history of horror story, Arthur Machen with his famous “The Great God Pan” (1894) and Algernon Blackwood.¹⁹ I would emphasize Nathaniel Hawthorne, who wrote *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851) still in Gothic tradition but set in New England Puritan community of Salem, and Ambrose Bierce as the writers of horror in the United States.²⁰ I must not forget H. P. Lovecraft who not only wrote essays about horror but also tried his hand at wierd tales.²¹

Among these world-renowned names can be found the name with no less importance—Stephen King. He has dominated the world of horror since his first novel was published until today. His reputation is primarily based on the supernatural horror. Majority of his works contain characters with abnormal abilities, things or visions that come alive, various people’s fears including death, darkness and loneliness as well as traditional evil representants such as vampires and werewolves. King’s horror masterpiece dealing with childhood fears is called *It* (1986). Then there is the range of horror novels, mainly bestsellers, that are inseparable from King’s name: *Carrie* (1974), *Salem’s Lot* (1976), *The Shining* (1977), *Pet Sematary* (1983), *The Dark Half* (1989),

¹⁵ Stephen King, *Danse Macabre* (1981; London: Hodder, 2012), xi.

¹⁶ See Dani Cavallaro, *The Gothic Vision: Three Centuries of Horror, Terror and Fear* (London; New York: Continuum, 2002), 2.

¹⁷ See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 20-24.

¹⁸ See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 53.

¹⁹ See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 78-95.

²⁰ See Lovecraft, *Supernatural Horror*, 61-66.

²¹ See Nancy Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams: The Story of Stephen King* (Greensboro, NC: Morgan Reynolds, 2006), 23.

Needful Things (1991), *Desperation* (1996), *Bag of Bones* (1998), etc. It is interesting that *Cycle of the Werewolf*, King's novel of a shorter length originally conceived as a calendar, was published in 1983 with illustrations by Berni Wrightson.²²

There exist also horror stories in the production of Stephen King that really could happen. A beast in the form of a fierce dog plays major role in *Cujo* (1981), the story of never-ending terror is *Misery* (1987), novel *Gerald's Game* (1992) and novella "Secret Window, Secret Garden" (1990) are both horrors that are partly played out in their protagonists' minds. Psychology creates horror also in *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon* (1999), the story of a girl who is facing her fears lost in the woods.

Horror is a field that is not unknown for King. That is probably why he is not scared to write in this genre. The fact that the majority of his works was created in horror genre gives a hint that the character of the writer occurs mostly in horror stories. The most faithful copies of Stephen King can be found in his most favourite genre. The writer character which resembles King in horror stories is male, usually main or one of the main characters with many autobiographical features.

1.1.3. Science fiction

As the title presents, the science forms the basis of this genre and that is why some critics consider science fiction to be very didactic type of fiction.²³ Many definitions of science fiction were provided. David Seed demonstrates some of them: science fiction is "a combination of romance, science and prophecy" or "realistic speculation about future events."²⁴ Science fiction and fantasy are two genres that intersect, it is not easy to find the boundaries between the two.²⁵ The comparison between fantasy and science fiction is clearly presented by Wuckel and Cassidy: "Whereas in the fairy tale the witch can simply ride away on a broomstick, or rub a

²² See Stephen King, "Would You Buy a Haunted Car from This Man?" by Edwin Pouncey, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1983; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 58.

²³ See David Seed, *A Companion to Science Fiction* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 4.

²⁴ David Seed, *Science fiction: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 1.

²⁵ See Dieter Wuckel and Bruce Cassidy, *The Illustrated History of Science Fiction*, trans. by Jenny Vowles (Leipzig: Edition Leipzig, 1989), 5.

magic ring to fulfil a wish, in science fiction the author must attempt to provide adequate cause for such effects and give for them rational explanation.”²⁶

Science fiction has much in common with Gothic fiction as well. Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (1818) is considered one of the first pieces of science fiction mingled with Gothic elements.²⁷ Author’s intention was not to evoke horror and fear, moreover, she discovered the archetype of science fiction—the restless scientist.²⁸ Many people, nevertheless, find *Frankenstein* horrific because of the monster.

The beginning of science fiction is not clear. Utopia from Renaissance is considered to be the precursor of science fiction writing, for instance Thomas More’s *Utopia* (1516).²⁹ *Frankenstein* serves as a proto-science fiction, but science fiction as we know it now started to emerge in the late nineteenth century.³⁰ Jules Verne is generally believed to be the father of science fiction who allowed the reader to delve into the voyages in his imagination.³¹ Another significant figure H.G. Wells termed his *The Time Machine* (1895) “Scientific Romance.”³² Hugo Gernsback coined the term science fiction three years after he began to publish *Amazing Stories*, first magazine devoted purely to science fiction (first issue dated 1926).³³

Stephen King’s first stories that have never been published were written in the genre of science fiction.³⁴ King published two novels—*The Long Walk* (1979) and *The Running Man* (1982)—as Richard Bachman. They are set in a near future and new technologies are necessary elements for the stories.³⁵ His purest science fiction story is called *The Tommyknockers* (1987). Even though Stephen King admits that he, as a student, got C’s in chemistry and B-minuses in physics, he was able to give detailed description of people’s inventions concerning the use of the energy coming from the inside of an unknown object.³⁶ In *Dreamcatcher* (2001) readers experience a visit of the

²⁶ Wuckel and Cassiday, *History of Science Fiction*, 5.

²⁷ See Seed, *A Companion to Science Fiction*, 3.

²⁸ See Wuckel and Cassiday, *History of Science Fiction*, 32.

²⁹ See Wuckel and Cassiday, *History of Science Fiction*, 9.

³⁰ See Seed, *Science fiction: A Very Short Introduction*, 3.

³¹ See Michael Ashley, *The Time Machines: The Story of the Science-Fiction Pulp Magazines from the Beginning to 1950* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), 7.

³² Wuckel and Cassiday, *History of Science Fiction*, 53.

³³ See Seed, *A Companion to Science Fiction*, 62-63.

³⁴ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King*, 17.

³⁵ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King*, 109.

³⁶ See Lisa Rogak, *Haunted Heart: The Life and Times of Stephen King* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2010), 31.

extraterrestrials on the Earth. The most recent sci-fi novels are *Under the Dome* (2009), the story of small-town inhabitants isolated from an outside world by an unknown barrier and *11/22/63* (2011), time travel story.

Somewhere between science fiction and fantasy stands *The Stand* (1978). The story of a world after the super-flu virus infestation has a science-fictional framework, but at the same time resembles fantastic Tolkien's epic quest stories.³⁷ Novella "The Mist" (1980) could be termed sci-fi horror for its failed scientific experiment accompanied by frightening atmosphere.

This genre also provides the opportunity to place various characters into the story. It depends on the writer. He has a chance to experiment with his imagination and to come-up with characters in the occupation yet unknown to the reader or he can stay loyal to the time-tested character that can make the story more credible. Stephen King supports the latter, he applies the writer character in his science fiction. In spite of the fact that the focus on the character of the writer is not so big as in horror fiction King persists in writing without missing this character.

1.1.4. Fantasy

The first who used the word "fantasye" was Geoffrey Chaucer when he was referring "to strange and bizarre notions that have no basis in everyday experience."³⁸ One of the best researches on the definition of the fantastic was made by Tzvetan Todorov. He claims that the fantastic text presents a world which can be the world we know, and that the reader, who identifies with the character, hesitates whether the events in this world have natural or supernatural explanation, whether they are real or only imaginary.³⁹ More attention is usually paid to the imaginary.⁴⁰ Before Todorov's study appeared people believed that fantasy is correspondent with children's fiction only and that adults are not supposed to read it.⁴¹

³⁷ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King*, 109-110.

³⁸ Brian Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2009), xxxvii.

³⁹ See Tzvetan Todorov, *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre*, trans. by Richard Howard (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1975), 25-33.

⁴⁰ See Todorov, *The Fantastic*, 25.

⁴¹ See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xxxvii.

Fantasy is one of the oldest genres because fantastic stories were told even before people acquired writing.⁴² Such stories that make part of history of all nations are called myths and legends and one of their originators was Homer.⁴³ Fantasy developed through Old English epic poems such as *Beowulf* (c725), chivalric romances about King Arthur during the Middle Ages to the predecessor of the modern fantasy—*Gulliver's Travels* (1726) by Jonathan Swift.⁴⁴ American fantasy is represented by Washington Irving, Mark Twain, L. Frank Baum with his *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz* (1900).⁴⁵ Hans Christian Andersen's tales from the first half of the nineteenth century are also world-known.⁴⁶ Great Britain can be proud of Lewis Carroll for his *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865), J. M. Barrie who came up with the character of Peter Pan, J. R. R. Tolkien for three volume novel *The Lord of The Rings* (1954-55), C. S. Lewis for Narnia stories and J. K. Rowling for stories about magician Harry Potter.⁴⁷

There is no doubt about rising popularity of fantasy. Stephen King contributes to this genre as well. *The Eyes of the Dragon* (1987) is the novel written for his daughter Naomi who preferred fantasy to horror.⁴⁸ Robert Browning's epic poem "Childe Roland to the Dark Tower Came" was inspiring for King to write *The Dark Tower* series (1982-2012), comprising eight novels.⁴⁹ It is one story about Roland Deschain of Gilead's quest to find the Dark Tower. The world of *The Dark Tower* stories is connected with the worlds of the novels *Insomnia* (1994), *Hearts in Atlantis* (1999), and two novels written by Stephen King in collaboration with Peter Straub, i.e. *Talisman* (1984) and *Black House* (2001).

This genre has stricter rules concerning its characters than the preceding two. Fantastic are nonexisting creatures (e.g. dwarfs) as well as creatures that can potentially exist (e.g. two-headed animals).⁵⁰ Ordinary people can be part of the fantasy as well. Nevertheless, people in the fantastic world do not solve the same problems as those in horror or science fiction. Everything is possible in fantasy and readers who search for

⁴² See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xxxviii.

⁴³ See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xxxviii-xliii.

⁴⁴ See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xv-xix.

⁴⁵ See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xxi-xxvii.

⁴⁶ See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xxiii.

⁴⁷ See Stableford, *The A to Z of Fantasy Literature*, xxiv-xxxv, 71.

⁴⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 151.

⁴⁹ See Stanley Wiater, Christopher Golden and Hank Wagner, *The Complete Stephen King Universe: A Guide to the Worlds of Stephen King* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2006), 9.

⁵⁰ Wuckel and Cassiday, *History of Science Fiction*, 4.

this genre probably like it because they want to leave reality of our world. The possibility of occurrence of the character of the writer in the fantastic literature is low, but this character makes part of King's fantasy writing though.

1.1.5. Crime fiction

John Scaggs claims that there has always been a focus on crime in this genre, but not always there is a place for investigation.⁵¹ There are several sub-genres that create the whole genre of crime fiction: "tales of ratiocination" of Poe, the mystery, detective fiction, the whodunnit, and later on the hard-boiled fiction, the police procedural, the crime thriller and historical crime fiction.⁵²

There is an opinion that the first crime story is the story of Cain and Abel from the Bible, afterwards revenge tragedies from late Elizabethan period are regarded as crime fiction.⁵³ The first crime novel, in which the punishment for the crimes is not involved, is Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722).⁵⁴ Edgar Allan Poe is considered to be the father of the detective fiction with his "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841).⁵⁵ The history of crime fiction in Great Britain was changed after Arthur Conan Doyle's creation of the detective Sherlock Holmes in the late nineteenth century, but the "Golden Age" of crime fiction came with Agatha Christie in the inter-war period.⁵⁶ In the United States excelled writers of private-eye fiction Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, and there is no doubt about the popularity of the pulp fiction character Nick Carter.⁵⁷

Crime fiction is not represented much in Stephen King's work. *Hard Case Crime* published *The Colorado Kid* (2005) as the first crime novel by Stephen King.⁵⁸ *Blaze* (2007) published as Richard Bachman's novel is the story of a slowly thinking criminal

⁵¹ John Scaggs, *Crime Fiction* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), 1.

⁵² See Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 1-4.

⁵³ See Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 9-11.

⁵⁴ See Ian A. Bell, "Eighteenth-century crime writing," *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, ed. Martin Priestman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 10.

⁵⁵ Scaggs, *Crime Fiction*, 19.

⁵⁶ See Martin Priestman, "Introduction," *The Cambridge Companion to Crime Fiction*, ed. Martin Priestman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 2.

⁵⁷ See Priestman, "Introduction," 2-4.

⁵⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 229.

that owes its creation to John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (1937).⁵⁹ In recent times King pays more attention to this genre than ever. King said about writing *Joyland* (2013), mystery coming-of-age story: "I wanted to try my hand at the whodunit format."⁶⁰ His first hard-boiled detective story *Mr. Mercedes* will be released in 2014.⁶¹

It is obvious that Stephen King is experienced in horror, science fiction and fantasy. It does not mean that he is not able to experiment, but even his crime fiction is interfered by the genre of horror. However, the writer character in crime fiction is not so significant for Stephen King as in horror, his favourite genre.

1.1.6. Comics

When one says the word "comics," most people imagine an illustrated magazine that describes by drawings and a short text an entertaining story. Nevertheless, comic book is what we now call graphic novel and it depicts not only humorous scenes.⁶² There are adventure and science fiction comics, there are comics that deal with serious issues as for instance Art Spiegelman's *Maus* (1986-1991), a comic book telling the true story of the Holocaust survivors.⁶³ Duncan and Smith define the term comics as a "general term for designating the phenomenon of juxtaposing images in a sequence," and that it tells a "story by presenting carefully selected moments of varying length within panels."⁶⁴ They introduced cave paintings, tapestries, comic strips, comic books and other sequential art as forms of comics.⁶⁵

The roots of comics date back to the era between 10,000 and 25,000 years ago when the sequences of images were painted on the cave walls.⁶⁶ As a forerunner of the comic strip can be considered William Hogarth's paintings from the eighteenth century

⁵⁹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 236-237.

⁶⁰ Stephen King, "A Rare Interview with Master Storyteller Stephen King," by Ken Tucker, *Parade*, May 25, 2013, accessed April 25, 2014, <http://www.parade.com/15671/kentucker/summers-best-books-starring-stephen-king/>.

⁶¹ See Frank Barron, "Shining On: Stephen King comes to Toronto festival of authors," *Forever Young Information*, October 06, 2013, accessed April 25, 2014, <http://foreveryoungnews.com/posts/2345-shining-on-stephen-king-comes-to-toronto-festival-of-authors>.

⁶² See Randy Duncan and Matthew J. Smith, *The Power of Comics: History, Form and Culture* (New York: Continuum, 2009), 4.

⁶³ See Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics*, 1-4.

⁶⁴ Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics*, 3.

⁶⁵ See Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics*, 3.

⁶⁶ See Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics*, 21.

and the father of the comic book is considered to be Rodolphe Töpffer creating in the first half of the nineteenth century.⁶⁷ The first comics in its purest form—with continuing character, with sequence of pictures and with speech in the drawing—was created in 1896 by Richard Felton Outcault for the newspaper *New York Sunday World* and his Yellow Kid brought attention of hundreds of thousands of readers.⁶⁸ What deserves more attention is the birth of Educational Comics (later called Entertaining Comics), generally known as E.C. Comics.⁶⁹ E.C. Comics, specializing in horror fiction, crime fiction, satire, military and science fiction became popular in 1940s.⁷⁰

Stephen King with help of an illustrator Berni Wrightson created *Creepshow* (1982), a comic book adaptation of the eponymous horror film directed by George Romero which has a form of an E.C. Comics.⁷¹ Stephen King has also a share in creation of a comic book *American Vampire* (2010).

Needless to say, thanks to comics Stephen King started to write. King admits: “Imitation preceded creation; I would copy *Combat Casey* comics word for word in my Blue Horse tablet, sometimes adding my own descriptions where they seemed appropriate.”⁷² It was his hobby when he was six years old and was not able to go to school because of the health reasons.⁷³

Although Stephen King contributed to this genre, I cannot draw a comparison between a comic book and a full-length novel. Even if the character of the writer was present in comics, his meaning would be speculative because of the lack of description applied in a novel.

⁶⁷ See Duncan and Smith, *The Power of Comics*, 20 - 25.

⁶⁸ See Coulton Waugh, *The Comics* (1947; Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1991), 1-14.

⁶⁹ See George Beahm, *The Stephen King Companion* (1989; repr., London: Macdonald & Co, 1990), 179.

⁷⁰ See “History of EC Comics,” *EC Comics*, accessed November 04, 2013, <http://www.eccomics.com/#history>.

⁷¹ See Beahm, *The Stephen King Companion*, 179.

⁷² Stephen King, *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* (New York: Scribner, 2000), 16.

⁷³ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 13-14.

1.2. Nonfiction

Nonfiction, defined as a “factual writing, based on the real world and experiences,” should serve as the opposite term to fiction because of the negative prefix.⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the reader does not know for sure whether the author is telling him the truth because people in general tend to mix the facts with opinions and thus the outcome can be distorted.⁷⁵ Nonfiction has also genres, they are: life stories (autobiography, biography), travel narratives, true adventure, crime, science and history, environmental, academic and investigative writing (political, social), cookbooks and many other.⁷⁶ Writers of nonfiction use different writing styles, from traditional narrative, investigative journalism, New Journalism to New New Journalism, known as “creative nonfiction”—the term refers to the use of fiction writing techniques to tell a true story.⁷⁷

Stephen King is one of the writers who prefer to write fiction. He, however, decided to comment on his writing and life, so nonfiction makes a part of his production too. His first editor Bill Thompson asked him to write about his life, influences and the horror genre and the result was *Danse Macabre* (1981).⁷⁸ *On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft* (2000) is a nonfiction book comprising an autobiographical part and a part giving advice on writing. Stephen King also wrote several essays and introductions to other writer’s books, they are collected together with King’s early short stories and interviews in *Secret Windows: Essays and Fiction on the Craft of Writing* (2000).

King’s nonfiction books are definitely helpful in the analysis of his work not only because they concern the details about his life but also because they involve some of King’s views. All of the above mentioned nonfiction by Stephen King is used to support my ideas in this thesis.

⁷⁴ Peter Auger, *The Anthem Dictionary of Literary Terms and Theory* (London: Anthem Press, 2010), 202.

⁷⁵ See Steve Bowkett, *Countdown to Non-Fiction Writing: Step by Step Approach to Writing Techniques for 7-12 Years* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 1.

⁷⁶ See Bernard Alger Drew, *100 Most Popular Nonfiction Authors: Biographical Sketches and Bibliographies* (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2008), ix.

⁷⁷ See Drew, *100 Most Popular Nonfiction Authors*, ix, 138.

⁷⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 112.

2. Stephen King's Inspiration

What genre the author likes to read depends on his personal choice. What he likes to write about is closely related to his favourite reading. I do not intend to make a chronological biography of King mentioning the list of his favourite authors he used to read, but it is necessary to take into account his experience with reading literature by authors of different kinds of fiction because it influenced him a lot. There are several facts that cannot be omitted when discussing such a prolific contemporary writer: his life experience and experience as a writer.

Life often prepares surprises for people and that is what influences them somehow. The first of King's experiences that supposedly influenced his positive attitude to horror is from the time King was a little boy.⁷⁹ He does not remember what exactly happened but his mother told him that the kid he was playing with was run over by a train and that he probably saw it.⁸⁰

When he was about seven years old he first saw a horror movie that he loved and was scared of at the same time.⁸¹ This passion of Stephen King for horror films was preserved till his adulthood. At approximately the same time Stephen was not allowed to listen to radio broadcasts of Ray Bradbury's stories because they were too scary for kids but he eavesdropped anyway.⁸² When he was able to read he started with E.C. Comics (e.g. *Tales from the Crypt*) and because they often started with salutation "Dear Reader," Stephen later became with his own "Constant Reader" beginning in his stories.⁸³

Stephen also remembers attending Methodist church and Sunday school whose terrifying stories about God gave him the moral and the inspiration for future writing.⁸⁴ More importantly, Stephen was influenced by the storytelling of Uncle Clayton who had in his repertoire Indian stories, ghost stories, legends and family stories.⁸⁵

Real treasure was found on the attic of Aunt Ethelyn and Uncle Oren's house in Durham, Maine—Stephen King's father's own writing and a collection of H. P.

⁷⁹ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 103.

⁸⁰ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 103.

⁸¹ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 118-120.

⁸² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 15.

⁸³ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 15.

⁸⁴ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 16.

⁸⁵ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 106.

Lovecraft tales.⁸⁶ Knowing such facts I can state that one possible explanation of Stephen's talent to write is that he inherited it. But a lot of hard work still waits for him.

His effort in writing was repaid by rejection slips till 1965 when his first short story was published.⁸⁷ What is important is his perseverance in submitting the stories. Such an experience can destroy dreams of more than one child who wants to be a writer but King really stood behind his dream and it definitely paid him off. He uses this motif in the stories about unsuccessful beginnings of a writer.

The fact that young Stephen King was able to write a novel during his university studies was a merit of his everyday reading.⁸⁸ He preferred to read naturalist writers as Jack London and Theodor Dreiser but also read Gothic romances by Bram Stoker and Mary Shelley.⁸⁹ Stephen complained that there were no classes of popular literature where he could read his favourite Shirley Jackson, John MacDonald or Robert Bloch, so he proposed himself to teach it.⁹⁰ He was the first undergraduate to teach at the University of Maine at Orono.⁹¹

His experience as a journalist cannot be ignored. He wrote a column called "King's Garbage Truck" for *Maine Campus*, a university newspaper.⁹² King also took a poetry workshop which motivated him in writing his own poems not only for himself but also for Tabitha, impressing young girl who he met there.⁹³

From that time on Tabitha was part of his life and his inspiration. In short period of time Stephen King became husband and parent, he gained new experience and could conceive new stories based on it.⁹⁴ He successfully graduated from the university but his first working years were not so optimistic with jobs like gas station attendant or laundry worker.⁹⁵ Living in a trailer was not very satisfying as well, so Stephen decided to work more on his writing even though he was rejected many times.⁹⁶ Fortunately, he was offered a job of a teacher at Hampden Academy, it meant bigger income but less

⁸⁶ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 114-117.

⁸⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 32-33.

⁸⁸ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 38-42.

⁸⁹ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 42.

⁹⁰ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 43-44.

⁹¹ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 46.

⁹² See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 45.

⁹³ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 44.

⁹⁴ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 48-50.

⁹⁵ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 48.

⁹⁶ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 49.

time for writing.⁹⁷ Writing is King's love, so he did not stop with it. He tried to publish the novels he wrote but was unsuccessful and finally everything changed when *Carrie* was accepted.⁹⁸

It was the beginning of his career but also the beginning of his addiction to alcohol, and the reason was primarily the death of his mother.⁹⁹ This part of life affected him very much as the readers can see in his production. Problems with drinking, however, were not the only problems Stephen King has ever had. His drug addiction put another strain on his body in 1980s.¹⁰⁰ Thanks to the support of his family, he decided to quit drinking and taking drugs and again became sober.¹⁰¹

The fact that his early novels were still not published stimulated King's decision for pseudonym Richard Bachman.¹⁰² He has also written novels together with another horror writer and friend of him, Peter Straub.¹⁰³ Time to time Stephen King plays his favourite rock 'n' roll with a band of writers called Rock Bottom Remainers.¹⁰⁴

In 1999, Stephen King was hit by a van when he was walking along the road, it was an accident during which he was almost killed.¹⁰⁵ Stephen was afraid very much that he will not be able to write again, but as the pain passed he started to write nonfiction about this harsh experience.¹⁰⁶ This is important turning point in his life, he was born again. Readers can distinguish his production made before and after the accident.

Every story by King was inspired by something in his life, something what brought his attention, something he has experience with. He was inspired by a lonely hotel, a dog he saw when he went to repair his motorcycle, his popularity connected with fans, his daughter's cat's death, deserted community in the middle of Nevada etc.¹⁰⁷ There are also so many what-if questions that Stephen King asked before the creation of his stories that I can hardly mention them all. Examples will be given in the analysis of the character of the writer.

⁹⁷ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 51.

⁹⁸ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 52-56.

⁹⁹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 76-77.

¹⁰⁰ See King, *On Writing*, 106.

¹⁰¹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 154-158.

¹⁰² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 83-84.

¹⁰³ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 139, 201.

¹⁰⁴ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 96.

¹⁰⁵ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 202-205.

¹⁰⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 206.

¹⁰⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 77-78, 112, 108-109, 93-94, 188.

3. Recurrence of Themes, Characters and Setting in Stephen King's Works

Stephen King's interest in repeating themes, characters and setting are understandable. In such an amount of stories Stephen King came up with there must be some similarity. There are plenty of authors that do the same thing. Writers who mock contemporary society or politics are called satirists, those who criticize it are called critics, author's using the same setting in their works are regional writers etc. Stephen King is usually connected with the title horror writer. He is, however, political and social critic as well as regional writer.

Fight between good and evil is the theme used in almost all of his stories. King tends to write them with an optimistic ending where evil is defeated by good. There are stories in Stephen King's production which involve political themes. They are sometimes not the major themes but they occur for example in the novels *The Stand* (1978), *The Dead Zone* (1979) and *Firestarter* (1980). Stephen King's social criticism makes part of the novels *'Salem's Lot* and *The Tommyknockers* in which he describes the life of small community people. Children's fears are describes in *The Shining*, *Cujo*, *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon* and especially in *It*. Supernatural ability stories are also King's favourite, among the most known belong *Carrie*, *The Shining*, *The Dead Zone* and *Firestarter*. Alcoholism is the theme that occurs mostly with the theme of writing as you will see in the following chapter because it is nearly connected with Stephen King himself. Theme of domestic violence is part of his *Dolores Claiborne* (1992) and *Rose Madder* (1995). This is only to exemplify some of the themes he uses more than once, there exist, of course, a lot more.

Children are King's favourite characters because they perceive the world differently than adults.¹⁰⁸ The connection of an innocent children with horror makes the reader identify with the character and at the same time he is scared more. Some of his children characters survive some of them die. Some of his readers think that King could let the kid character in *Cujo* stay alive but King claims that even in reality children sometimes die, so he wrote it how he felt it should be.¹⁰⁹ Stephen King also likes to

¹⁰⁸ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 121.

¹⁰⁹ See Stephen King, "Interview with Stephen King," by Mat Schaffer, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1983; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 114.

place strong woman characters into his stories. They are both positive (Dolores Claiborne in *Dolores Claiborne*, Lisey Landon in *Lisey's Story*) and negative characters (Annie Wilkes in *Misery*). I would say that even things that are endowed with life can be considered characters and they are really abundant in King's stories. A car that has personality typical for human can be found in *Christina*, a short story "The Monkey" tells a story of an evil living monkey toy, a vehicle revolt is evoked in "Trucks" etc.¹¹⁰

When talking about setting, Maine is King's. George Beahm says: "Stephen King had laid claim to Maine the same way that Steinbeck claimed Salinas Valley, in the same way that Faulkner claimed Yoknapatawpha County."¹¹¹ First of all, King's stories take place in King's fictional towns of Maine—mostly in Castle Rock and Derry, then also in Haven and Jerusalem's Lot.¹¹² But he likes to place them also into real towns and cities of Maine as for example Bangor, city where Stephen King lives.¹¹³ Majority of King's stories with the character of the writer takes place in Maine as well. So Stephen King can be rightly called regional writer.

¹¹⁰ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King*, 95.

¹¹¹ George Beahm, *Stephen King Country: The Illustrated Guide to the Sites and Sights That Inspired the Modern Master of Horror* (Philadelphia, PA: Running Press, 1999), 135.

¹¹² See Beahm, *Stephen King Country*, 99-115.

¹¹³ See Beahm, *Stephen King Country*, 62.

4. The Character of the Writer

One of the most visible recurrences in Stephen King's works is the recurrence of certain character. I will focus on the character of the writer, regardless the genre of the work. Needless to say, it concerns mostly horror fiction even though Stephen King can produce literature of different genres. I asked myself several questions: "What is the meaning of the character of the writer?" and, "Is this character important in King's stories?," "Why it could not work with a different character?." The answers are given in my analysis.

I chose to analyze six of Stephen King's stories in which the character of the writer is the main protagonist and is the most important of all characters: *The Shining*, "The Body," *Misery*, *The Dark Half*, "Secret Window, Secret Garden," and *Bag of Bones*. There is a plenty of other works by King where the writer occurs as one of the main characters or as a minor character. It is obvious that in those stories less attention is paid to this character because the writing process or storytelling is not the crucial subject matter. Nevertheless, I decided to include to the analysis those cases as well. I will briefly comment on: *Salem's Lot*, *The Plant*, *The Tommyknockers*, "Umney's Last Case," *Desperation*, "The Road Virus Heads North" and *Lisey's Story*.

4.1 Major works with the character of the writer

There are six stories that deal with the theme of writing. Because of the theme the character of the writer is one of the requirements for the story. What is not the demand is the similarity of the character with the author of the story. Five of these stories are horror fiction. *Misery* and "Secret Window, Secret Garden" are of the realistic kind, whereas *The Shining*, *The Dark Half* and *Bag of Bones* deal with the supernatural. The only story, "The Body," is from the category of mainstream fiction.

What I found interesting in Stephen King's novels, novellas and short stories is their plausibility. Especially works in which the main character is the writer seems to me very real even though they are horrors. I tried to look closer to this character and discovered that there is conspicuous correspondence between the character of the writer and Stephen King himself. I will prove that there are autobiographical features in the stories. The character of male writer with habits and rituals identical to those of his

creator makes the story closer to the reader. If I substituted the character by a different one the story would not make a sense. The fact that there is significant number of works by Stephen King in which the character of the writer occurs proves that this character is indispensable for King. Without this character tens of King's stories would not come into being. The importance of the character of the writer is thus indisputable. Let the fact be first stated, and later examined.

The meaning of the character of the writer is to bring real into fiction. In case of Stephen King, his characters are "ordinary people in extraordinary situations."¹¹⁴ As he considers himself an ordinary man, he admits he is the perfect model for his stories.¹¹⁵ He little bit patterns his characters after people he knows.¹¹⁶ Who else Stephen King should know better than himself. He always writes about the places he know, he also writes about the things he has experience with, as for example writing. Once he wanted to write about New York City abandoned subway tunnel, but he did not know the city well so he decided not to write about it at all.¹¹⁷ I dare to say that all of his stories are based on something real that influenced him. However, when he tried to write a story completely according to the real events, he failed. The kidnapping of the girl Patricia Hearst was planned to be the theme of his nonfiction book *The House on Value Street* but the story has never been written.¹¹⁸ He has never completed the work because he is conscious of the fact that nobody wants to read about something what happened in our life.¹¹⁹ On one hand there must be something real in fiction to make it a believable story. On the other hand readers do not want to read a hundred percent true story. They want to know that they are safer in our world than in the world of fiction. They have the opportunity to visit the world where there is supernatural but they have to identify with

¹¹⁴ Stephen King, "Stephen King Is Cashing In," by Randi Henderson, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1980; New York: Mcgraw-Hill, 1988), 191-192.

¹¹⁵ See Stephen King, "An Evening with Stephen King at the Billerica Library, Massachussets Public Library," *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1983; New York: Mcgraw-Hill, 1988), 1-2.

¹¹⁶ See Stephen King, "Shine of the Times," by Marty Ketchum, Pat Cadigan, Lewis Shiner, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1979; New York: Mcgraw-Hill, 1988), 123.

¹¹⁷ See Stephen King, "The Dark Beyond the Door: Walking (Nervously) into Stephen King's World," by Freff, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1980; New York: Mcgraw-Hill, 1988), 137-138.

¹¹⁸ See Douglas E. Winter, *The Art of Darkness: The Life and Fiction of the Master of the Macabre: Stephen King* (1984; Sevenoaks, Kent: Hodder, 1989), 53, 65.

¹¹⁹ See King, "Billerica Library," *Bare Bones*, 17.

the character. They should not be scared of the monster but they should be scared for the character.¹²⁰ Aristotle already expressed his thought on characters and feelings that accompany them in his *Poetics*. According to Aristotle the audience should feel pity and fear for the character.¹²¹ Only through this stage of identification with the character it can lead to catharsis, the only right ending of the tragedy.¹²²

When there is the character of the writer in Stephen King's works readers are assured that the character could be real because he was modeled on the real author. Readers thus feel fear for the character and the story is more believable. So the presence of Stephen King in Stephen King's stories is necessary especially when the theme of the story is connected with writing.

4.1.1. The analysis of *The Shining*

I decided to start with the analysis from the oldest piece of fiction by Stephen King with the main character of the writer and the theme concerning the process of writing—*The Shining*. Jack Torrance, an ex-teacher of creative writing, applies for a new job as a housekeeper of the Overlook Hotel in Colorado. Owner of the hotel, Al Shockley, used to drink alcohol together with Jack and offered him this position. Jack's task is to keep the hotel in control during winter when the hotel is closed. He is accepted for the job and he moves there together with Wendy, his wife, and Danny, his five-year-old son. The family has no other choice because they need the money. In the Overlook Hotel Jack wants to finish his play he is working on. He is acknowledged with the fact that his predecessor Mr Delbert Grady became crazy during winter in Overlook and killed his two daughters, his wife and himself. Jack discovers whole gloomy past of the hotel from the articles he finds in the cellar. He plans to write a novel about it. Danny is an extraordinary kid who has inherited a special God's gift—the shining. He is able to see future or to visit people's minds. However, he is not the only one who feels that there is something wrong with the place they live in now. Jack as an ex-alcoholic feels

¹²⁰ See Stephen King, "An Interview with Stephen King," by Paul Janeczko, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1980; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 79.

¹²¹ See Aristotle, "Poetics," *Aristotle's Poetics*, trans. S. H. Butcher, ed. Francis Fergusson (New York: Hill & Wang, 1961), 61.

¹²² See Francis Fergusson, "Introduction," *Aristotle's Poetics*, ed. Francis Fergusson, (New York: Hill & Wang, 1961), 35.

the need of drinking more and more. Wendy thinks her husband has changed during their stay in the hotel. Danny encounters the worst appearance of evil in the room 217. The snow is too high to leave the place, phone does not function, only Danny's sixth sense can help them to get out of this situation.

The Shining is the first story Stephen King has written in his career in which the character of the writer plays an important role. At first, I hesitated which character is the major one. Both, Jack and Danny, are indispensable for the story and both of them possess autobiographical features.

The book is called *The Shining* so I propose Danny as a major character about whom the readers know he is shined on. The first thing that points out that Danny Torrance could be Stephen King is Danny's favour in watching horror films. When Torrance family is shown their room in Overlook Hotel by Mr Ullman, the director of the hotel, Danny compares a dumbwaiter shaft to a secret passage from Abbott and Costello movie.¹²³ "*Abbott and Costello Meet...*" films are horror comedies which introduce classic monsters as the Frankenstein Monster, the Wolf Man, Dracula, the Invisible Man etc.¹²⁴ Though these films consist of comic elements, horror enthusiasts enjoy them, especially the one called *Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein*.¹²⁵ In my view this movie is enough scary for a five-year-old boy, if we take into consideration dead monsters coming back to life and a man transforming into the Wolf Man. In 1954 Abbott and Costello hosted NBC's *Colgate Comedy Hour* and they met the Creature from *Creature from the Black Lagoon* which was to be released soon.¹²⁶ Exactly this movie was the first horror movie Stephen King saw when he was six or seven years old.¹²⁷

Danny is eager to know how to read and write even though he is too young for schooling yet.¹²⁸ Whereas Jack is working on his play, Wendy, Danny's mother, teaches Danny. King's experience with the first reading and writing comes during his first grade.¹²⁹ However, because of his problems with health, he was at home and his mother

¹²³ See Stephen King, *The Shining* (1977; London: Hodder, 2011), 105.

¹²⁴ See Dan Johnson, "A&C meet The Creature," *Monster Kid Online Magazine*, no. 3 (2002): 1, accessed February 19, 2014, http://gammillustrations.bizland.com/monsterkid3/html/ac_cre1.html.

¹²⁵ See Johnson, "A&C meet The Creature," 1.

¹²⁶ See Johnson, "A&C meet The Creature," 1.

¹²⁷ See Winter, *The Art of Darkness*, 18.

¹²⁸ See King, *The Shining*, 132-133.

¹²⁹ See Winter, *The Art of Darkness*, 18.

Ruth taught him by reading him books.¹³⁰ At the age of six when he was able to read for himself he also started to write.¹³¹

There is a sameness between Danny Torrance and Stephen King even in the act of sleeping. They like to sleep with the light on. Danny sleeps with the lamp on in his bedroom in *Hotel Overlook*.¹³² Stephen likes to have a light on in the bathroom when he is in a hotel so there is not full dark in the bedroom.¹³³

After reading King's dedication to his son Joe I realized that Danny could rather be the representation of his son Joseph Hillstrom King. Twenty-two years after King first saw *Creature from the Black Lagoon* his son Joe experienced it too.¹³⁴ It is the evidence that Joe was interested in horror movies as well as his father Stephen. Lisa Rogak states: "Joe, nine years old at the time, was turning into miniature version of his father. They loved to go to horror movies together, and Joe said that when he grew up, he wanted to be a writer like his dad."¹³⁵ If I take into consideration the fact that Joe is today successful writer, publishing under the name Joe Hill,¹³⁶ I am not far from the idea that Danny was conceived on the basis of a want-to-be-writer child. It is hard to say whether Danny is like Stephen King because there is information only about Danny's childhood in the book. Danny's future is clarified in *Doctor Sleep* (2013), sequel to *The Shining*, and I can say that his profession has nothing to do with writing at all. Danny in *The Shining* desires to read because he is given messages by Tony, his older ego, and do not know what they mean. Danny does not wish to be a writer as his father, therefore I would say he is not the character of the writer. He definitely is important for the story and one of the main characters.

Stephen King admits that when he was writing *The Shining* in Boulder, Colorado, he felt that he was more impatient with his own kids and that he could hurt them, especially Joe.¹³⁷ Little Joe—three years old—thought he could write like his dad, so he took one of Stephen's manuscripts and drew little cartoons all over one of them with his coloured pencils.¹³⁸ There is evidence in the book of Jack breaking Danny's

¹³⁰ See Winter, *The Art of Darkness*, 18.

¹³¹ See Winter, *The Art of Darkness*, 18.

¹³² See King, *The Shining*, 139.

¹³³ See King, "Billerica Library," *Bare Bones*, 12.

¹³⁴ See King, *Danse Macabre*, 127.

¹³⁵ Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 115.

¹³⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 226.

¹³⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 77-79.

¹³⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 79.

arm when Danny destroyed his papers by spilling beer on it.¹³⁹ Nevertheless, I would not say that Jack is a brute. Jack searches his conscience and readers know he did not want to do it, it was an accident and he is not inwardly violent person according to my opinion. In *The Shining* Danny's dependence on father is bigger than that on his mother, he is even more 'connected' with his father Jack. "He [Danny] loved his mother, but he was his father's boy."¹⁴⁰ Readers of literature about Stephen King know that King has always had a good relationship with his children. There is no piece of information about King as a bad or even violent father. Stephen did not hurt Joe when he devalued his work, he was a bit annoyed as parents sometimes are.¹⁴¹ Joe, as an adult and experienced writer, warns his fans against referring to his own father when he writes about bad fathers.¹⁴²

It is the matter of alcoholism that makes them both, Jack Torrance and Stephen King, worse persons. At the beginning of the story Jack is already abstainer. He used to drink with Al Shockley, his friend and the owner of the Overlook Hotel. He had taken his first drink when he was at his sophomore year in high school.¹⁴³ When Jack drinks he is like his father, he breaks Danny's arm, he goes berserk easy. It was not him when he drank, that is probably why the hotel tries to persuade him to drink again—to become a cruel and merciless person. Jack was not intentionally cruel when he was sober.¹⁴⁴ I am indeed far from thinking that Stephen King is just like Jack Torrance. King has not gone mad and vicious. I can only prove that King has had problems with alcohol just like him. He had his first experience with drinking when he studied at high school and probably was not of the drinking age, at the time eighteen.¹⁴⁵ Later when he and Tabitha lived together, they had already two children and he was still unsuccessful in publishing any of his novels, he sometimes spent the money, family needed for food, on drinking.¹⁴⁶ The problem of drinking out of control came along with the death of his mother, it was even before *Carrie* was published, in 1973.¹⁴⁷ When he was writing *The*

¹³⁹ See King, *The Shining*, 18.

¹⁴⁰ King, *The Shining*, 58.

¹⁴¹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 79.

¹⁴² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 234.

¹⁴³ See King, *The Shining*, 117.

¹⁴⁴ See King, *The Shining*, 255.

¹⁴⁵ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 36.

¹⁴⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 69.

¹⁴⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 76-77.

Shining he was already heavy drinker.¹⁴⁸ It is interesting that he modeled Jack on the real man. The purpose for drinking is the same for both of them—inability to publish what they have written. Nancy Whitelaw writes about the fact aptly: “It took King many years to realize he was also depicting his own personal dysfunction as a drinker and failing parent and husband.”¹⁴⁹

Stephen King used to be as unsuccessful writer as Jack Torrance. He also sent short stories to various magazines and raised some money thanks to their publication. King’s perseverance in submitting short stories to magazines brought him the money he urgently needed, for example for pills when their daughter Naomi was getting ill.¹⁵⁰ The act of celebration takes place when one of Jack Torrance’s short stories is sold to *Esquire* magazine.¹⁵¹

Jack Torrance is a writer who used to be a teacher of creative writing until he had incident with one of his students. He writes at night usually after he has done all of his duties.¹⁵² In 1971, Stephen, Tabitha and their daughter Naomi were living in a rented trailer in Hermon, Maine, and Stephen started to teach English at Hampden Academy.¹⁵³ After teaching, spending time with his family, King continued to write.¹⁵⁴ Having little space in a trailer (Kings shared it with Stephen’s friend Chris Chesley), Stephen was still able to find a place for his writing, furnace room, where he spent about two hours every night.¹⁵⁵

King was not always popular, he went through several odd jobs—one of them being at gas station.¹⁵⁶ When Jack thinks about leaving Overlook, he tries to imagine what else he could do: “A man with his sterling record of alcoholism, student-beating, and ghost-chasing would undoubtedly be able to write his own ticket. Anything you like. [...] The culinary arts, perhaps, washing the dishes in a diner. Or possibly a more responsible position, such as pumping gas.”¹⁵⁷ What a coincidence!

¹⁴⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 79.

¹⁴⁹ Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 60.

¹⁵⁰ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 68.

¹⁵¹ See King, *The Shining*, 52.

¹⁵² See King, *The Shining*, 51.

¹⁵³ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 62.

¹⁵⁴ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 63.

¹⁵⁵ See Amy Keyishian and Marjorie Keyishian, *Stephen King* (New York: Chelsea House, 1995), 53-54.

¹⁵⁶ See Suzan Wilson, *Stephen King: King of Thrillers and Horror* (Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow, 2000), 45.

¹⁵⁷ King, *The Shining*, 295.

Jack and Wendy have met in college.¹⁵⁸ Now, they are married and have a child, they still do not have enough money to support themselves, so Jack hopes to earn money from publication of his play which he plans to finish in Overlook. Stephen and Tabitha King were in similar situation. After they met at the University of Maine at Orono, they married and had a child even though their income was unsatisfactory.¹⁵⁹

Jack's play *Little School* serves as another link between him and the author. Jack's plan is to write a play of five acts.¹⁶⁰ Stephen King said that the novel *The Shining* is conceived as a play: "Originally I set the book in form of Shakespearean tragedy, [...]. It was going to be in five acts, which finally translated themselves into parts [...]."¹⁶¹ *The Shining* contains epilogue, also typical element of drama.

As King proceeds to the end of the novel, Jack tries to finish his play. The fact that they both like their characters cannot be omitted. Jack normally likes both positive and negative characters on the same level.¹⁶² Stephen likes them too, regardless of their qualities.¹⁶³ Jack's failure to finish his play and his inability to accept his characters and like them as they are is caused by the place where he is writing—the Overlook Hotel.

Jack's play comprises of autobiographical elements as well as King includes them in his own writing. Narrator of *The Shining* gives readers a piece of information about one of Jack's favourite stories he has written—"The Monkey Is Here, Paul DeLong." Some of the characters in the story resemble Jack's parents: the father is aggressive alcoholic and beats his wife who is silent about it.¹⁶⁴ Jack writes about people he knows, people who are close to him. If I compare Jack Torrence to Stephen King in respect of including his relatives in his writing, the result is they are the same. Stephen and his older brother David have gone through difficult times during their childhood staying only with their mother, Nellie Ruth King, who took several jobs to support them.¹⁶⁵ The readers of the novel know Jack was his father's favourite child, but they do not know his attitude toward him. This is how King probably perceives his own father.

¹⁵⁸ See King, *The Shining*, 49.

¹⁵⁹ See Keyishian and Keyishian, *Stephen King*, 50-53.

¹⁶⁰ See King, *The Shining*, 282.

¹⁶¹ Stephen King, "An Interview with Stephen King," by Joyce Lynch Dewes Moore, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1981; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 74-75.

¹⁶² See King, *The Shining*, 283-284.

¹⁶³ See Winter, *The Art of Darkness*, 18.

¹⁶⁴ See King, *The Shining*, 283.

¹⁶⁵ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 9-12.

He has neutral relationship with him because he did not have a chance to get to know him. Donald Edwin King, Stephen's father, left the family when Stephen was two years old and has never returned.¹⁶⁶ It is because of the lack of information about Stephen's father that I cannot prove he was like that of Jack. I can only speculate, as Stephen King probably did, that his father tended to alcoholism and it is the thing Stephen inherited from him. The idea that the character of Jack Torrance inherited some of his father's bad habits would be correct if I considered him based on the real person, the author of the book—Stephen King.

This story is the least dependent on the character of the writer. Writing seems not to be so important as the fact that the hotel is haunted. So I tried to find out whether the story would work with a different character. Jack as a writer has a chance to work on his writing after he finishes the work in the hotel. It is a lonely place, there is no disturbance. It is the advantage for a writer, that is what King is well aware of. He can also organize his time, there is nobody who tells him what to do right now, he only has to complete the tasks before new season begins. Jack is interested in hotel's past and wants to write a novel about it. If Jack was not a writer he would not have a conflict with Al Shockley who is against the revelation of what happened there, he would not be searching for more information about the hotel in local library and thus the readers would not be informed about hotel's past. The hotel does not need a writer to be inside, it can kill anybody. However, writer's imagination is more extensive and more pliant than imagination of anyone else. Moreover, it gives Jack the power to write. It is similar to *Bag of Bones*, the book King has written more than two decades after *The Shining*. The writer suffers writer's block but as soon as he enters the haunted place his ability to write comes back. It is the thing King experienced a bit too. He visited Stanley Hotel in Estes Park, Colorado, to relax and gain some inspiration.¹⁶⁷ And that is exactly what happened. He and Tabitha spent one night in the hotel, they were the only guests because the next day hotel closed for winter.¹⁶⁸ It was a silent place, one could get lost in the corridors, perfect place to be haunted.¹⁶⁹ After such experience King could not come out with the story without the character of the writer.

¹⁶⁶ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 9.

¹⁶⁷ See Wilson, *Stephen King*, 7.

¹⁶⁸ See Wilson, *Stephen King*, 7-8.

¹⁶⁹ See Wilson, *Stephen King*, 9-10.

4.1.2. The analysis of “The Body”

The only mainstream story important for the analysis of the character of the writer is “The Body.” Gordon Lachance, a writer, tells a story from his childhood about his and his friend’s adventurous journey to find a dead boy. The boys want to become famous as the discoverers of the body of a boy, who was of approximately the same age as they were. During the journey they risk their lives several times. They are almost run over by a train, they compete with a group of older boys and receive a few wounds. By the end of the story readers are acquainted with the fact that the only survivor of the four friends is Gordon, the rest of them having experienced miserable lives, died miserable deaths.

Even though it seems that it is Stephen King’s most truthful story, the opposite is the truth. King borrowed the story by George MacLeod, his friend from the university who wanted but has never written about his childhood experience, and dedicated it to him.¹⁷⁰ The story, however, contains many autobiographical features.

Gordon Lachance’s mother got pregnant five years after she was told by the doctor that she would never have a baby.¹⁷¹ Stephen King’s mother Ruth was established the same diagnosis, so she and her husband decided to adopt David Victor, but soon she discovered she was pregnant.¹⁷²

One of Gordie’s stories introduced in “The Body” is about a boy mourning for his dead brother.¹⁷³ He partly writes about one of his life experiences—death of his brother Dennis.¹⁷⁴ As this study proves Stephen King is the author who tends to put details about his personality into his fiction. I can only speculate, whether King writes about himself intentionally or not, but it is the fact that he does it quite often.

On the way to the body Gordie is asked to tell a story because he is really good at storytelling. He, boy influenced first by comics, admits that his dream is to become a writer one day.¹⁷⁵ All about Stephen King and the beginning of his production was already described in chapter 1.1.6. where I stress the importance of comics. Gordie’s

¹⁷⁰ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 119-120.

¹⁷¹ See Stephen King, “The Body,” *Different Seasons* (1982; London: Futura Publications, 1983), 339.

¹⁷² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 8.

¹⁷³ See King, “The Body,” 343-344.

¹⁷⁴ See King, “The Body,” 327.

¹⁷⁵ See King, “The Body,” 399.

attitude to writing is the same as Stephen's, and the presence of comics strengthens the fact that King writes about himself.

Gordon Lachance was accepted at the University of Maine at Orono.¹⁷⁶ Stephen King was good enough in high school to be offered a partial scholarship to a university in New Jersey but his mother could not afford it though, so Stephen decided to apply to the University of Maine at Orono.¹⁷⁷

At the end of the story Gordon says he is a writer, he is married and has three children. His first three books were made into movies and they had good reviews, better than the books themselves.¹⁷⁸ Stephen King perfectly described his own life in this final part. Novella "The Body" was published in 1982 in the collection of four novellas *Different Seasons* and at that time King was eleven years married, had three children and *Carrie*, *'Salem's Lot* and *The Shining* already had their film adaptations.¹⁷⁹

The word "stressaches" is used in the connection with Gordon Lachance.¹⁸⁰ Stephen Spignesi points out that it is a word Stephen King "used to describe his own headaches."¹⁸¹

Being the only analysed non-horror story "The Body" can be considered one of the most autobiographical stories. The story needs someone to narrate it and who else could do it better than a writer. Moreover, three of four possible storytellers are not alive yet. King probably wanted to be sure there is no other way of telling the story because in the presentation of someone else it could lost its glamour. It is thus nonsensical to change main protagonist's occupation.

4.1.3. The analysis of *Misery*

Next novel, which is centred on the theme of writing, more realistic and touching the author himself, is called *Misery*. Paul Sheldon, the acclaimed author known for his bestsellers with the main character Misery Chastain, finished a new book. He decided to put an end to Misery stories and his new novel *Fast Cars* will probably

¹⁷⁶ See King, "The Body," 478.

¹⁷⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 38.

¹⁷⁸ See King, "The Body," 480.

¹⁷⁹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 61 - 107.

¹⁸⁰ See King, "The Body," 480.

¹⁸¹ See Spignesi, *The Essential Stephen King*, 107.

not be attractive for his existing devoted readers, generally women. He is on his way out of Boulder, Colorado, (he is used to write and finish his novels in Boulderado Hotel) but the snow storm caused his automobile an accident. Fortunately, and unfortunately at the same time, his fan number one, Annie Wilkes, saves his life. Paul awakes in an environment he does not know, he is near Sidewinder, still in Colorado. He is at Annie's home far from the civilization. She takes care of him, it is not problem for an ex-nurse. Paul suffers unbearable pain because his legs got smashed during the accident. He wonders why he is not in the hospital. He later understands that it is not a good idea to discuss or even disagree with Annie. If he did, it would have fatal results.

First of all, Paul is used to smoke. He also does not disdain alcohol. Both, smoking and drinking, caused Paul's present situation. He was acquainted with the fact that storm is coming, he decided to leave hotel Boulderado though. The storm changed its direction, coming right at Paul and Paul was "just drunk enough to think he could drive his way out of it. [...] He could remember leaning forward to get his cigarettes off the dashboard and that was when the last skid began [...]." ¹⁸² When he is in Annie's care he is deprived of all these bad habits. Not only because of the lack of addictives he feels misery. Stephen King himself told that when he was writing the novel he really felt in the state which is identical with the title of the book. ¹⁸³ By 1985 he was in deep trouble with alcohol as well as with drugs. ¹⁸⁴ He took cocaine, was addicted to Valium and Xanax and sometimes drank Listerine for oral hygiene when there was no alcohol available at the moment. ¹⁸⁵ Ten days after Paul came to consciousness he realizes that he starts to be dependent on pain-killer he is given by Annie. ¹⁸⁶ Instead of breaking the habits of smoking and drinking, his addiction was extended by drugs. I cannot judge whether Paul's state was worse than that of Stephen King or vice versa, I can only mention the fact that the state of mind of both of them was not well and they, both, were still able to work on a novel. Paul was forced by Annie to write a new sequel to Misery Chastain novels to be given his drug, Novril. Stephen was writing the novel *Misery* because writing is his primary drug. ¹⁸⁷

Paul is an experienced writer when he meets Annie. In 1974, he started with the

¹⁸² Stephen King, *Misery* (1987; London: Hodder, 2011), 18.

¹⁸³ See King, *On Writing*, 106-107.

¹⁸⁴ See King, *On Writing*, 106.

¹⁸⁵ See King, *On Writing*, 107-108.

¹⁸⁶ See King, *Misery*, 10.

¹⁸⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 222.

habit of finishing his novels in Boulder, Colorado.¹⁸⁸ Stephen King is rightfully proud when his first novel *Carrie* is published in 1974, but this year is also known for King's moving to Boulder, Colorado.¹⁸⁹ Overlook Hotel, a haunted place from his previous novel *The Shining*, is mentioned in the book: "It was a famous old hotel called the Overlook. It burned down ten years ago. The caretaker burned it down. He was crazy. Everybody in town said so. But never mind; he's dead."¹⁹⁰ It seems as if the worlds of *The Shining* and *Misery* were connected. It is not only the place they have in common, it is the character of the writer which conspicuously resembles their author.

Paul's traditional finishing of the novels has its process. The last step is to celebrate the finished first draft of the novel—he prefers to drink champagne.¹⁹¹ In Stephen King's manual *On Writing* I found the recommendation from the author to those who finished their first drafts: "Congratulations! Good job! Have a glass of champagne, [...]"¹⁹² I am not sure of the author's celebratory finishing of the novel but this was definitely the first thing which came to his mind when he advised on the theme. The same issue is included in *Bag of Bones*, the book written when King was already an ex-alcoholic. If I take into consideration the fact that some features typical of King repeat in his works with the character of the writer, I have to state that it is probable King used to drink champagne to celebrate a new work because he has written about it at least twice.

What I found interesting was the matter of typewriter. Annie buys Paul an old Royal typewriter where the key "n" is missing.¹⁹³ He has to fulfil all n's to the manuscript by hand when he is writing a new *Misery* novel for Annie. As the time goes and Paul writes, the typewriter's keys start to break one after another. Stephen King got his first typewriter, Royal typewriter, when he was eleven from his mother.¹⁹⁴ "The missing n key on his typewriter did not bother him. After he took the paper out of the typewriter, he pencilled in an n in each space left by the missing key."¹⁹⁵ The typewriter was used by King very often so its damage was unavoidable.

¹⁸⁸ See King, *Misery*, 16.

¹⁸⁹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 77.

¹⁹⁰ King, *Misery*, 232.

¹⁹¹ See King, *Misery*, 16.

¹⁹² King, *On Writing*, 251.

¹⁹³ See King, *Misery*, 67.

¹⁹⁴ See King, *On Writing*, 27.

¹⁹⁵ Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 25-26.

By the end of the story Paul decides he will not write a nonfiction book because he does not want to think about his past connected with Annie Wilkes anymore and moreover because “[h]is job was writing novels.”¹⁹⁶ This opinion is as Paul’s as Stephen’s. Even though King has already written two nonfiction books, he does not intend to proceed in writing factual works. He claims that working on the book *On Writing* was more as a punishment than for fun.¹⁹⁷ King in interview about “The Body,” story considered autobiographical, claims that fiction is more beckoning for the readers than the story from real life, that the author has to embellish the story to be gripping.¹⁹⁸ He does research, of course, when it is necessary for the story but he prefers to write the book first and then to do the research because he does not want to be confused with so many facts.¹⁹⁹ The most important in writing is for Stephen King the story and the characters, he does not care much about what is true or not because true facts do not mean a good story.²⁰⁰

As in *The Shining* and “The Body,” the character of the writer works well in *Misery*. This is probably because the subject matter of the novel is connected with writing—crazy fan. King has already experienced literally mad admirers and their opposites. Whole buses of tourists come to Bangor to make a photo of his house.²⁰¹ I believe he has many devotees who consider themselves fan number one. I thought who else the story could be about if not about the writer. There are sport fans, music fans, film fans etc. Baseball is King’s favourite sport,²⁰² so he could use this theme as well. What would do a baseball fan to his favourite baseball player if he did not meet his expectations? He could do the same as Annie but with his legs broken he could hardly move, thus he would hardly improve. The only thing a captive can do is to kill time with reading or writing. Paul Sheldon, well-read person, thinks about *The Collector* by John Fowles.²⁰³ The girl who is hold against her will by a man in the underground room resorts to writing a diary. The writing was keeping her alive. Paul relied on writing, as Miranda did in *The Collector*. Writing is significant in the book and it is also important for Stephen King. It is the sole drug he has now and it is what keeps him alive.

¹⁹⁶ King, *Misery*, 362.

¹⁹⁷ See King, *On Writing*, 321.

¹⁹⁸ See King, “Billerica Library,” *Bare Bones*, 17.

¹⁹⁹ See King, “Interview” by Moore, *Bare Bones*, 70.

²⁰⁰ See King, *On Writing*, 273.

²⁰¹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 3.

²⁰² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 150.

²⁰³ See King, *Misery*, 177.

4.1.4. The analysis of *The Dark Half*

The Dark Half is another story to which Stephen King inserted his self. Main protagonist, Thad Beaumont, started a new life when he was eleven years old. At first, his short story was awarded an Honorable Mention and it means it is the beginning of his success as a writer. Secondly, he underwent a brain operation during which the doctor discovered that Thad absorbed his twin brother and the rests were still in his head. It happens sometimes to identical twins that the stronger absorbs the weaker. Doctor, however, has never said Thad or his parents that it was not tumor he removed from Thad's head. A long time later Thad is married to Liz and has two kids—twins William and Wendy. As a writer he does not catch so much attention of readers as George Stark. Stark is actually part of Thad, it is his pseudonym. Thad was more prolific when he wrote as Stark, nevertheless, he and his wife decided to reveal his secret to the public after the pressure of Frederick Clawson. Thad and Liz buried Stark as if he was really alive. Stark's stories were full of violence and gore so Thad does not regret it. They made a few photos with a fake tombstone of George Stark and placed it in the magazine. Shortly after the magazine was published, Allan Pangborn, Sheriff of Castle Rock, comes to arrest Thad for murder. Thad's fingerprints were found at the crime scene. Thad has a summer house in Castle Rock, but he is sure that he did not kill anybody. Thad continually discovers that he who committed the murder and finally many other murders is George Stark who came back from the dead.

One of the first tokens of the similarity between the main character Thad Beaumont and Stephen King is in Thad's sending short stories to magazines when he was a kid. "He continued to write, gaining confidence and polishing his emerging style, and he sold his first story - to *American Teen* - six years after his real life began."²⁰⁴ Stephen King as a boy tried to contribute to various magazines, he started to submit when he was twelve, but he was rejected many times.²⁰⁵ His first story "I Was a Teenage Grave Robber" was published in *Comics Review* in 1965, it was when King was eighteen years old.²⁰⁶ He did not receive any money for the first time, he was given only a couple of magazines, but he was finally published.²⁰⁷ Thad were approximately

²⁰⁴ Stephen King, *The Dark Half* (1989; London: Hodder, 2011), 11.

²⁰⁵ See King, "Billerica Library," *Bare Bones*, 21.

²⁰⁶ See Winter, *The Art of Darkness*, 23.

²⁰⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 33-34.

of the same age when he published his first short story and his father reproaches him the uselessness of his writing when it is not for money.²⁰⁸ Thad's and Stephen's attitude to writing is the same—they continue to write even though they do not have a profit from it. Stephen King claims that without writing his life would be aimless and that he definitely does not write for money.²⁰⁹

Thad Beaumont is not only a writer, he is also a teacher at the university. Stephen King decided to quit teaching at Hampden Academy when he knew his first novel *Carrie* is going to be published.²¹⁰ Later in 1978 he was offered an opportunity to teach for a year at the University of Maine at Orono where he graduated so he accepted and experienced the role of a university teacher.²¹¹ Knowing the routine of a university teacher, his character can occupy this position without problems. It is another thing which is close to King, except writing.

The most evident issue which needs to be introduced is the issue of pseudonym. Thad Beaumont is not as popular writer as George Stark, even though Stark does not exist, it is Thad's pen name. Thad, writing as Stark, is completely different from 'normal' Thad: he uses pencils for writing, he was drinking alcohol and smoking, he used vulgar expressions and language that was too violent. Thad made him up, his life, his qualities and then buried him. Stark, nevertheless, really came to life because he did not want to be buried when he was so successful and popular. Stephen King also came up with detailed description of Richard Bachman, his own pseudonym. Richard Bachman is a New Hampshire "chicken farmer with a cancer-ravaged face," too shy to give an interview.²¹² Stephen admits that writing like Bachman was different; he says that King's books usually ends happily whereas Bachman's novels have not always involved happy endings.²¹³ Even though there are some victims that succumb in King's stories, the evil is defeated by the good. *Rage*, the first Bachman book, contained a lot of violence and because King thought it was giving a blueprint for committing violence

²⁰⁸ See King, *The Dark Half*, 3.

²⁰⁹ See Stephen King, "Playboy Interview: Stephen King," by Eric Norden, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1983; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 54.

²¹⁰ See Keyishian and Keyishian, *Stephen King*, 56.

²¹¹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 91.

²¹² Stephen P. Brown, "The Life and Death of Richard Bachman: Stephen King's Doppelganger," in *Kingdom of Fear: The World of Stephen King*, ed. by Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1986; Sevenoaks, Kent: Hodder and Stoughton Paperbacks, 1987), 111.

²¹³ See Brown, "The Life and Death of Richard Bachman," 119.

he himself forbade to publish any more copies of it.²¹⁴ *The Long Walk* and *The Running Man* were also dealing with brutality of mankind but also these two novels are rather considered science fiction than horror.²¹⁵ Stephen King was connected only with horror fiction so writing sci-fi was aberrant for him. There are some differences in the conception of the stories by King and by Bachman but the style is still the same.²¹⁶ The most loyal King's readers gradually revealed his secret and it was officially announced in 1985 that Richard Bachman is Stephen King.²¹⁷

When Thad was interviewed by a magazine he admits that he does not use a typewriter when he is writing Stark's novels but only pencils. Thad says about his writing: "I flipped back through the notebook and saw I'd written sixteen pages without a single scratch-out."²¹⁸ It reminds me King's experience with writing *Misery*. When King has an idea, he has to put it down. When he and Tabitha flew to London, he got the idea in an aeroplane during sleeping. When they lodged at Brown's Hotel he had to put it on the paper. He worked longhand and "filled sixteen pages of a steno notebook."²¹⁹ Originally, the story called "The Annie Wilkes Edition" was intended to have an unhappy ending—Paul being eaten by Annie's pig Misery and his skin being used as a binding for a new *Misery* book in Annie Wilkes Edition.²²⁰ This fact makes me think that King was writing as Bachman. The story is really scary because the readers have feeling that it can really happen. It would be even more horrific if Paul Sheldon did not survive because it would pose violence and downbeat ending typical of Richard Bachman writing.

King mentions Earnest Hemingway three times in the text. With or without ironic meaning it concerns Thad in all cases. That is not only unintentional remark, in my view it has a symbolic meaning. Hemingway, except for being one of the greatest authors ever, was a heavy drinker. King made defenses as an alcoholic and was not able to admit that he is addict. He compares his defenses to those of Hemingway.²²¹ Thad have obviously had problems with drinking too. When Sheriff Pangborn comes to see

²¹⁴ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 103.

²¹⁵ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King*, 29.

²¹⁶ See Brown, "The Life and Death of Richard Bachman," 119.

²¹⁷ See Brown, "The Life and Death of Richard Bachman," 118.

²¹⁸ King, *The Dark Half*, 28.

²¹⁹ King, *On Writing*, 192.

²²⁰ See King, *On Writing*, 192-194.

²²¹ See King, *On Writing*, 104.

Liz and Thad, he brings beer with him. Thad is the only one who drinks Pepsi.²²² Finally, both of them, Stephen King and Thad Beaumont, stopped continue with this bad habit than it was too serious.

Before King has written *The Dark Half* he quitted drinking alcohol and smoking too.²²³ This fact and the fact that he used to smoke his favourite Pall Mall cigarettes moves me to another point of the analysis.²²⁴ Readers discover that Thad is a nonsmoker now, but when he was smoking he preffered Pall Malls too.²²⁵ Thad has noticeably the same tastes as Stephen King. And what is evident is King's longing for cigarettes even after quitting it. He, however, cannot lay the blame for it on Richard Bachman, his pen name, because he "died of cancer of pseudonym" already in 1985.²²⁶ Thad also thought his pseudonym George Stark has already died. In the present his imagination, George Stark, lives and causes Thad new temptations to smoking but also drinking.

As in *The Shining* the relationship between an adult and a child is important issue. Thad takes care of his two children, he is a good father, even though he is not as experienced as Liz, his wife. When George Stark, in the stadium of decomposition, encounters the children, he acts as father as well. Though being only Thad's alter-ego which is alive he gives William and Wendy the same amount of love as Thad. The children are not scared of him at all, Wendy even does not protest to be cradled by repulsive Stark.²²⁷ As Thad sometimes feels Stark in himself, there is something from Thad in Stark. Something good. Good relationship with children is the only good thing about Stark. King admits that one of his darkest fears is to find his kid dead.²²⁸ King as a full-time writer has a chance to spend more time with his children and he does because he is appalled by the fact that fathers spend an average of twenty-two minutes with each of their kids per week.²²⁹ It proves that King, no matter under which name he is writing, possesses possitive relationship to children like to his characters.

²²² See King, *The Dark Half*, 100.

²²³ See King, *On Writing*, 175.

²²⁴ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 36.

²²⁵ See King, *The Dark Half*, 107-108.

²²⁶ Stephen King, "King of Horror," by Stefan Kanfer, *Time* (October 6, 1986): 78, quoted in George Beahm, *Stephen King: America's Best-Loved Boogeyman* (Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 1998), 97.

²²⁷ See King, *The Dark Half*, 344.

²²⁸ See Stephen King, "Playboy Interview," by Norden, *Bare Bones*, 42-43.

²²⁹ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 115.

Rawlie DeLesseps is Thad's colleague at the university who helps Thad to get to Castle Rock to save his family. He lends him his car and some other stuff that will help him to disguise. "He handed the bag to Thad, who looked in and saw a pair of sunglasses and a Boston Red Sox baseball cap which would cover his hair quite nicely."²³⁰ This is the only sign in this story that gives readers the evidence about King's favourite baseball team.²³¹ Thad wears a baseball fan cap as King probably does as an avid fan when he goes to support his loved team.

This chapter proved that as King receives more experience as a writer in the course of time his characters are more complicated and especially the character of the writer. More attention is paid to this character in comparison with the first stories with the writer as, for instance, in *The Shining*. That is also the reason why it is necessary to maintain this character in *The Dark Half*. The subject matter of the novel is close to writing, it is about what belongs to writer's life. It is the same as for *Misery*, fans are part of writer's life, but there are lots of different stories that can happen to a writer. King's experience with pseudonym added another terrifying story to his list of stories about a writer and there is no way how to substitute the character for a different one. The credibility of the character strengthens the suspense and the readers have to stand by him and hope that the real will win over the supernatural.

4.1.5. The analysis of "Secret Window, Secret Garden"

Novella "Secret Window, Secret Garden," from *Four Past Midnight*, collection of four novellas, introduces Morton Rainey, a writer who is just after the divorce. He lives in his summer house in Tashmore Glen and without any doubts suffers a writer's block. His favourite activity is sleeping, he cannot do anything else because he thinks on Amy's cheating all the time. One day a man with a significant cap blames Mort of plagiarism. John Shooter, an unknown man from Mississippi, claims that Mort stole his story "Secret Window, Secret Garden." Mort knows that he did not steal his story but is unable to give Shooter an evidence that his story was published earlier than Shooter wrote his. It starts with dead cat, proceeds with the house in Derry, now Amy's house, burnt down and ends with dead people.

²³⁰ King, *The Dark Half*, 364.

²³¹ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 98.

In a note on “Secret Window, Secret Garden” Stephen King reveals that he discovered in his house a room in a laundry with small window and that when he looked out of this window, he saw his wife’s plants in pots—a little garden.²³² Similar image has Mort Rainey in his mind when he remembers looking out of the window from his and Amy’s house in Derry: “It was the window in the little room next to the laundry. [...] She [Amy] liked to look out of the window every now and then, at her flowers growing in the deep corner formed by the house and the study well.”²³³ It seems that both, Kings and Rainey, possess a secret window to a secret garden. The title also works on a symbolic level. “Secret Window, Secret Garden” is the story of a writer. What writers usually do is to look out of an imaginary window to the world of fantasy and to put down what they see. When the window breaks the reality and fantasy mix together and it is difficult to distinguish one from another.²³⁴ Stephen King delved into very many different fantastic worlds. He integrates the elements of reality into his writing, including his own ego. That is exactly what I try to achieve by this thesis—to show that King’s self is present in his work. He is mingling natural with supernatural, ordinary with extraordinary, reality and unreality. King in his life deals with both sides of the window. That is why I suppose that King has much in common with this story than it seems for the first sight.

“He sat in front of the word processor every day from nine to eleven [...].”²³⁵ It is Mort Rainey’s daily routine as a writer. The best time for writing according to King is morning, in the afternoon one should do revising and of course reading.²³⁶ Every single author has a daily routine according to his needs. Mort shares his writer’s plan of the day with King, even though he is not able to create anything worthy.

When Mort searches for his short story “Sowing Season,” the story Shooter claims is his “Secret Window, Secret Garden,” he finds the short story collection. He also remembers that most of his stories were published earlier in the men’s magazines.²³⁷ That is exactly as King’s biography. Some of King’s early short stories,

²³² See Stephen King, “Two Past Midnight: A Note on ‘Secret Window, Secret Garden,’” *Secret Windows: Essays and Fiction on the Craft of Writing* (New York, NY: Book of the Month Club, 2000), 362-363.

²³³ Stephen King, “Secret Window, Secret Garden,” *Four Past Midnight* (1990; London: Hodder, 2008), 403.

²³⁴ See King, “Secret Window, Secret Garden,” 323.

²³⁵ King, “Secret Window, Secret Garden,” 331.

²³⁶ See King, *On Writing*, 174.

²³⁷ See King, “Secret Window, Secret Garden,” 336.

which were later published in short story collections, were published in men's magazines as for instance in *Cavalier*.²³⁸

As a student Mort submitted stories to a magazine, *Aspen Quarterly*. He was rejected by the magazine and none of his stories were published until he decided to submit schoolmate's story with his name on it.²³⁹ Stephen King have not copied anyone's story but he underwent the same process of rejections. He knew his early stories were not good enough for publication, so he decided to polish his style and has been sending the stories to various magazines and persevered till they published the first one.²⁴⁰ As Jack Torrance in *The Shining*, Thad Beaumont in *The Dark Half*, also Morton Rainey in "Secret Window, Secret Garden" underwent the process of rejection as an unexperienced writer.

The issue that never lost its attraction is bad habit of smoking and drinking. Mort Rainey stopped smoking four years ago but he starts again when he is blamed for plagiarism.²⁴¹ As in the previous story, *The Dark Half*, Thad has a strong temptation of smoking when he feels Stark is back again and it is the same with Mort. He succumbs the cigarettes again and it means he has got in trouble. Hemingway is mentioned in the novella as well to depict the problem of addiction on alcohol. Writing about things Stephen King used to have problems with is maybe a part of the therapy for him. It was very hard for him to stop. In 1988 King was abstaining, going to Alcoholics Anonymous meetings and it was the year he have not published anything.²⁴² When he connects drinking and smoking with horror it is more probable that he will not return to it because he is afraid for himself. King is a bit superstitious and has very many fears including number thirteen and the dark.²⁴³ So the characters undergo some kind of a test, when they hold on with the abstinence, the evil cannot hurt them.

Stephen King places the story in his favourite setting—Maine.²⁴⁴ It is not the first time when the character of the writer possess a summer house. The part of the *The Dark Half* sets in Castle Rock, Maine, where Thad Beaumont has his summer house. The story of "Secret Window, Secret Garden" takes place most of all in Mort's summer

²³⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 55.

²³⁹ See King, "Secret Window, Secret Garden," 474-475.

²⁴⁰ See King, "Billerica Library," *Bare Bones*, 21.

²⁴¹ See King, "Secret Window, Secret Garden," 338-340.

²⁴² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 159-160.

²⁴³ See King, "Playboy Interview," by Norden, *Bare Bones*, 37-38.

²⁴⁴ See George Beahm, *Stephen King Country*, 135.

house in Tashmore Glen, Maine, and its surroundings. It seems that it is a must for a writer to stay in a house where he has good conditions for writing—quiet, privacy and nature around himself. Stephen King has a weakness for summer homes. At first he rented a house near Sebago Lake in North Windham, Maine.²⁴⁵ Later he purchased a lakefront home in Center Lovell, Maine.²⁴⁶ He has spent most of his life with his family in Bangor, Maine, where he still lives, but he still keeps his summer house in Center Lovell too.²⁴⁷

It is obvious that several features are repeated in works of Stephen King. It is maybe a tradition. With “Secret Window, Secret Garden” the reasons for using a writer as a main character are the same as in *Misery* and *The Dark Half*—main subject matter concerns writing. Plagiarism poses a threat to writers. Especially writers of nonfiction that work with many sources should be aware of it. When they do not cite the sources correctly, they can unintentionally plagiarize. It is a different case to be blamed of copying someone’s piece of fiction. When Stephen King was finishing *The Stand* (1978), Terry Nation’s novel *Survivors* appeared in his hands and after he went through the book, he realized that the story is almost the same as his *The Stand*.²⁴⁸ He had not read Terry Nation’s novel before he started to write his own on the identical topic. It is possible for two or even more authors to come up with the same ideas for the story without knowing about each other’s plans. The only experience Stephen King has with copying is from the time when he has not published yet. As a six-year-old boy, he started writing—he copied stories from comics.²⁴⁹ However, he was advised by his mother that he should write stories of his own and he did from this point on.²⁵⁰ He did borrow a story spoken or published when it was a good story but he did not copy it word for word. As Sandy Phippen, friend of Stephen King, says: “[...] Shakespeare did the same thing; I mean, the story belongs to him who tells it best.”²⁵¹ King was inspired by a story by cousin of Rod Sterling, the author of the *Twilight Zone* anthologies, for his

²⁴⁵ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 75.

²⁴⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 90.

²⁴⁷ See Tabitha King and Marsha DeFilippo, “The Author,” StephenKing.com, accessed March 05, 2014. http://www.stephenking.com/the_author.html.

²⁴⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 80.

²⁴⁹ See King, *On Writing*, 16.

²⁵⁰ See King, *On Writing*, 17-18.

²⁵¹ Sandy Phippen, quoted in Lisa Rogak, *Haunted Heart: The Life and Times of Stephen King* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2010), 120.

Christine.²⁵² He also borrowed the story “The Body.”²⁵³ He did not plagiarize but he was blamed for it several times. In 1991, when Tabitha King was at home alone, a man got into the house and claimed that Stephen King has stolen his aunt’s story—*Misery*.²⁵⁴ After that a New Jersey woman, Anne Hiltner, who had sent many unpleasant letters to King, sued him for plagiarism.²⁵⁵ She claimed King has stolen *Misery* from her, basing the character of Annie Wilkes on her but the suit was dismissed, even though Hiltner accused King of other wierd offences.²⁵⁶ This was not an inspiration for King because it happened a year after the publication of the novella. It inspired the perpetrator. Sometimes the stories are too believable that they can really become true. So Stephen King should be more aware of what he is writing about, especially in the stories with the character of the writer.

4.1.6. The analysis of *Bag of Bones*

The novel *Bag of Bones* (1998) is narrated by Mike Noonan, the writer of successful novels, but never number one in top ten or top fifteen bestsellers. He tells the audience the story that just happened. After his wife’s death he finishes his last novel and then suffers writer’s block. He, however, publishes the books he has written when he had more prolific period. When there is no book to publish he decides to move to their lake house in western Maine to gain new inspiration. He meets Kyra and Mattie Devore. Mattie, a young destitute widow who loves her daughter Kyra more than anything else, is in battle for her with her father-in-law, Max Devore. Max is a snobbish, egoist and dangerous millionaire in his eighties. Mike enters the battle while revealing the gloomy past of the town. He discovers the secrets his wife let for herself about the house called Sara Laughs (named after Sara Tidwell, a negro singer), the house he lives in now. The house, though inanimate, lives its own life and even endangers the life of Mike himself. His task is to help Mattie and Kyra, reveal the secrets of his dead wife and find out what is wrong with the house and whole town.

²⁵² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 120.

²⁵³ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 120.

²⁵⁴ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 166.

²⁵⁵ See Rebecca Stefoff, *Stephen King* (Tarrytown, NY: Marshall Cavendish, 2011), 72.

²⁵⁶ See Stefoff, *Stephen King*, 72.

This is a novel where I found the highest number of autobiographical features of all the works I have analysed. It is the longest one and the character of the writer is more elaborated.

Mike Noonan is not able to write during his writer's block so he finds a new hobby to kill the time—playing the guitar.²⁵⁷ In almost every biography of Stephen King we are acknowledged of the fact that King is a member of Rock Bottom Remainers, an amateur group of writers who supported charities with what they earned during their concerts.²⁵⁸ King plays the guitar.²⁵⁹ He actually started playing this musical instrument when he was at high school: “[...] Steve managed to retrieve a guitar he had hocked earlier at a Lewiston pawnshop. He, Chris [Chesley] and a few others formed a ragtag band and played together.”²⁶⁰ King admits that even though he is playing the guitar for such a long time he is not good enough.

Mike is also acquainted with the fact that it is impossible to publish more than one book a year even though he has written more.²⁶¹ So he leaves his finished works for later. This is a practice Stephen King knows very well. He has also written more than one piece a year and he knew that publishers did not want to publish more because it would cut into the sales of others.²⁶² He came up with the idea of pseudonym.²⁶³ To use a pen name of Richard Bachman was the only way how to publish all the works he has written in one time.²⁶⁴

An interesting fact about Mike Noonan is that he was writing after being inspired by something he experienced and then asked himself what-if question. Mike states about his ideas: “Most were glimmers, little ‘what-ifs’ that came and went like shooting stars while I was driving or walking or just lying in the bed at night and waiting to go to sleep.”²⁶⁵ We, Constant Readers of Stephen King, know well that he used to walk a few miles a day and it became his routine.²⁶⁶ We also know that most of his ideas came to his mind when he was in an ordinary situation and asked himself

²⁵⁷ See Stephen King, *Bag of Bones* (1998; London: Hodder, 2011), 60.

²⁵⁸ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 96.

²⁵⁹ See Whitelaw, *Dark Dreams*, 97.

²⁶⁰ Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 36.

²⁶¹ See King, *Bag of Bones*, 34.

²⁶² See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 83.

²⁶³ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 83.

²⁶⁴ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 83-84.

²⁶⁵ King, *Bag of Bones*, 295.

²⁶⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 23.

what-if question.²⁶⁷ King was inspired to write *Thinner* when he had started to lose some weight on his doctor's advice and he did not really want to.²⁶⁸ King comments on it: "Then I began to think about what would happen if somebody started to lose weight and could not stop."²⁶⁹

The readers of *Bag of Bones* are given a piece of information about Mike and Johanna Noonan, his wife: "Certainly Jo and I had cast a shadow in the area; we had made significant contributions to the little library [...]."²⁷⁰ It is another similarity with King's life. Stephen and Tabitha King family contributed, besides other things, to The Bangor Public Library, Maine, and their names are inscribed on one of the tiles on the library wall.²⁷¹

Mike reads a lot. He is a writer, so he should. There are many references to other authors: Thomas Hardy, Herman Melville, Daphne du Maurier. As the story is narrated by Mike it is obvious that he is well-read. There is no doubt about King's erudition. He recommends to those who want to be writers the Prime Rule: "Write a lot and read a lot."²⁷² King reads every day and reads everything so it is obvious that he has a large overview of authors of contemporary literature as well as of literature of preceding periods.²⁷³ This is one of King's books that I would not recommend to beginners in reading. It should be read by readers who are familiar with American and English literature.

Many issues that were present in preceding works can be found in *Bag of Bones* as well. First of all, Mike Noonan starts drinking too much when he spends his vacation on Key Largo. Mike admits: "[...] I'd been drinking too much even before I left. The kind of drinking that could get out of hand in no time at all. The kind that could get a man in trouble."²⁷⁴ Alcoholism is again made part of the writer's experience. This time the character wanted to get out of the situation of a widower with writer's block. The alcohol is not a good solution. Stephen King knows it, he decided to stop drinking with

²⁶⁷ See King, *On Writing*, 196.

²⁶⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 121-122.

²⁶⁹ Stephen King, quoted in Lisa Rogak, *Haunted Heart: The Life and Times of Stephen King* (New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 2010), 122.

²⁷⁰ King, *Bag of Bones*, 84.

²⁷¹ See Beahm, *Stephen King Country*, 81-82.

²⁷² King, *On Writing*, 347.

²⁷³ See Stephen King, "An Interview with Stephen King," by Charles L. Grant, *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror With Stephen King*, ed. Tim Underwood and Chuck Miller, (1985; New York: McGraw-Hill, 1988), 83.

²⁷⁴ King, *Bag of Bones*, 79.

the help of his family and friends.²⁷⁵ In the time of publication of *Bag of Bones*, in 1998, he was almost ten years sober. Mike handles his excessive drinking in good time too.

Mike's attachment to Kyra is formed during the course of events. They, Mike and Jo, were planning to have a baby. Jo was pregnant when she died.²⁷⁶ At the end of the story Mike takes care of Kyra as if she was his own daughter. He is so caring that "[he] came back from checking Kyra for the third time" during the night.²⁷⁷ He has had feeling that he could hurt her.²⁷⁸ It is similar as in *The Shining*. The relationship between Jack and Danny is good, except the moments he was drinking, till the time they went to the haunted hotel. When Mike spends some time in Sara Laughs, his summer house near Dark Score Lake, he feels that a part of his personality is changing. His writer's block disappeared, he was even writing in a different genre. Though Mike's and Jack's relationship to children does not differ, their fates are not the same. Mike, probably because of his refusal of drinking alcohol, is not absorbed by the haunted place so much as Jack Torrance and that is why he never hurts Kyra.

Before the death of his wife Johanna, Mike has a little ritual when he finishes a book—he and Jo drinks champagne.²⁷⁹ The same way as Paul Sheldon did in *Misery*. Mike and Johanna met at the university²⁸⁰ as Jack and Wendy Torrance in *The Shining*. Noonans rent a summer house near Dark Score Lake, the story is set in western Maine.²⁸¹

I tried to give you an evidence that there certainly is correspondance between the character of the writer in *Bag of Bones* and Stephen King himself. The character of Mike Noonan is important in the story. I tried to substitute a male writer for a female writer and it does not work. If Mike was not the main protagonist and the role was on Jo, there would not be any love story, thus any conflict with Max Devore, Kyra's grandfather. She would help Mattie if she wanted to. Jo was pregnant so she would rather need the money for her own baby. By the way she and her baby would be endangered more in the house Sara Laughs because of the baby's name was supposed to begin with "K". All of the descendants of the murderers of Sara Tidwell and her son

²⁷⁵ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 157.

²⁷⁶ See King, *Bag of Bones*, 10.

²⁷⁷ King, *Bag of Bones*, 645.

²⁷⁸ See King, *Bag of Bones*, 595-596.

²⁷⁹ See King, *Bag of Bones*, 27.

²⁸⁰ See King, *Bag of Bones*, 16.

²⁸¹ See King, *Bag of Bones*, 140.

Kito, whose names begin with the same letter as the name of Sara's son, died. Mike Noonan is a relative of one of the murderers and that is why his unborn daughter Kia died. If there was not any reason for what her husband was killed by the haunted house he would die in vain. It does not make a sense to have a woman the main protagonist if the story works well with the male character. If Mike was not a writer, it would not work as well. Providing he was a plumber, he would not have so much money to help Mattie. If Mike was a lottery winner, he would have the possibility to help Mattie. Nevertheless, he would not decipher what Jo as a ghost tried to tell him. It was to be found in his writing. The story is dependent on the character of the writer. Without Mike Noonan, indispensable main protagonist, the story would lost its brilliance.

4.1.7. Results of the Analysis of Major Works with the Character of the Writer

I noticed that all of these stories involving as a main character (or one of the main characters in case of *The Shining*) the character of the writer represent their author's fears. I mean Stephen King identifies with the character but he puts the character in a difficult situation which he would not like to experience in reality. King once said about writing horror: "[I]t's a kind of psychological protection. It's like drawing a magic circle around myself and my family. [...] I've always believed that if you think the very worst, then, no matter how bad things get, [...] they'll never get as bad as that."²⁸² Except of being afraid for his kids, one of his biggest fears is writer's block.²⁸³ As I explained writing is his only addiction now, so he cannot live without it. If I look at the six stories I find out that four of them deal with the fact that the writer is not able to write. Jack Torrance in *The Shining* is not able to conceive his play. Thad Beaumont in *The Dark Half* comes up with the idea of pseudonym because he himself writes nothing worthy. Mort Rainey in "Secret Window, Secret Garden" sits in front of his word processor and no story comes to his mind. And finally Mike Noonan in *Bag of Bones* suffers writer's block shortly after his wife's death. But it is not King's only fear. He is afraid of crazy fans that could be dangerous for him and his family. He express his fear in *Misery*. He is probably afraid of lonely places, especially large lonely buildings, where he could become mad as Jack Torrance. Schizophrenia makes a threat for King as

²⁸² King, "Billerica Library," *Bare Bones*, 3.

²⁸³ See King, "Playboy Interview," by Norden, *Bare Bones*, 43-44.

well. If he had split personality he could hurt people he knows and loves. It scares him as John Shooter scares Mort Rainey's world. These are fears that, fortunately, have not happened to Stephen King.

It is interesting that King in his writing deals with an evil he has experienced. I mean his addiction on alcohol, drugs and smoking. Almost all of these stories involve drinker writer, in one story the writer even takes drugs in the form of painkillers. It perfectly copies Stephen King's life. In *The Shining* King expresses his feelings of a writer unsuccessful in publishing his stories and the beginning of drinking problems. When writing *Misery* King added drugs to his addiction list. In *The Dark Half* King shows that he is already abstainer but also that he has temptations to have a drink. "Secret Window, Secret Garden" depicts that King is unable to stay without cigarettes so he smokes a bit again. Later, when he was writing *Bag of Bones*, he wholly refused the idea of drinking, he was almost a decade sober. The addiction was a test for King. Now, King tests his own characters. Characters that are so close to him win or fail the battle with evil according to their own attitude to drinking. If they manage to quit it they are safe (as in *Misery*, *The Dark Half*, *Bag of Bones*), if not their fate is to lose everything (as in *The Shining*, "Secret Window, Secret Garden"). It is like hidden King's advice to readers. Message that says what not to do.

Stephen King writes repetitively about things he likes, about things nearly connected to him. The character of the writer is often connected with Boston Red Sox, King's favourite baseball team (*The Shining*, *The Dark Half*, *Bag of Bones*). As a boy he likes to read comics ("The Body") and watch horror movies (*The Shining*). The character lives in or rents a summer home (*The Dark Half*, "Secret Window, Secret Garden," *Bag of Bones*). The writer is or used to be a teacher (*The Shining*, *The Dark Half*). His character of the writer shares the same daily routine and habits as King: writing in the morning ("Secret Window, Secret Garden"), using Royal typewriter (*Misery*). His writers read a lot, there are references to real authors and their works (*Misery*, *Bag of Bones*). The writer shares the tastes with King, with regard to the brand of cigarettes (*The Dark Half*, "Secret Window, Secret Garden"). The writer finds his love at the university (*The Shining*, *Bag of Bones*). Stephen King gives the readers a chance to discover his life—nonfictional—in his fictional stories. He brings, intentionally or not, reality into fiction.

Another interesting fact is the genre in which his characters write. All of the characters from these six stories have their own favourite genre. In horror stories writers choose genre which is different from horror fiction. In “The Body” the writer by contrast writes “about people who can do such exotic things as read minds and precognit the future,” as King writes in his horror stories.²⁸⁴ There is at least a piece of work, in almost all cases, that does not fit their genre. The last of Misery novels Paul Sheldon is forced to write in *Misery* seems rather like a gothic romance than a love story for women. In *The Dark Half* Thad Beaumont writes about violent acts only as George Stark. In “Secret Window, Secret Garden” Mort Rainey wrote a horror short story “Sowing Season,” the story John Shooter claims is his “Secret Window, Secret Garden.” It is not genre typical of Mort. *Bag of Bones* represents the best example: Mike Noonan, whose readers are in majority women, writes a story in Sara Laughs which is totally different from his preceding works. It is King who tells that there is not necessarily one genre for one author. It is obvious that a writer usually tends to write in his favourite genre but he should not be pigeon-holed. His writer characters are in majority writers of genre different from that of King. And when they write something like horror, it seems like they are warped. However, they are not. The exception makes the rule, so even mainstream writer can produce horror fiction as well.

I would like to say that King leaves us his opinions, his own attitudes to different issues in his writing. On one hand he shows his fears and on the other what he likes. Moreover, plausibility of the character of the writer enables the reader to identify with the character, and thus the character is more attractive and the story more gripping. Michael R. Collings says that King introduces all of this so realistic that even element of supernatural is believable.²⁸⁵ It is true. If I read about the character whom I think can really be my favourite author then I can hesitate whether the supernatural is not closer to my reality than I originally thought.

I brought into consideration also the narrative point of view of the stories. Majority of them are narrated in the third-person point of view. Two stories (“The Body,” *Bag of Bones*) are narrated by their main protagonists. King’s choice of the first-person point of view can be explained simply as a sympathy for the main character. Nevertheless, it is not an accident that these two stories are preferred by King. They are

²⁸⁴ King, “The Body,” 393.

²⁸⁵ See Collings, *The Many Facets of Stephen King*, 27.

the two most autobiographical pieces of his work and it is possible that King shares his opinions and attitudes with both main protagonists, Gordon Lachance and Mike Noonan.

Finally, the stories with autobiographical features are with no doubt King's own. I try to say that thanks to them the stories cannot be plagiarisms. All of the similarities attest the origin of the stories—Stephen King's mind.

4.2. Other Stephen King's Works with the Character of the Writer

There are many stories which in comparison to the six preceding stories are not so important although they involve the character of the writer. They are stories with a female writer character as one of the main protagonists and a male writer character as one of the main protagonists. The works are of horror genre, science fiction as well as fantasy. They are novels and short stories. What makes the major difference from the preceding works is the theme of the stories. Themes differ story to story. *'Salem's Lot* renews Bram Stoker's tradition of vampirism. In *The Plant* the revenge of an unsuccessful writer is evoked. *The Tommyknockers* solves a problem of the existence of extraterrestrial life. "Umney's Last Case" shows transition from our world to the literary world. *Desperation* deals with an evil supernatural entity, different from an evil which is part of people's character. "The Road Virus Heads North" is about a piece of art coming to life. Finally *Lisey's Story* has its power in memories of the main character trying to come to terms with the death of a loved person.

4.2.1. Female Writer as one of the Main Characters

The only piece of fiction where the readers can find a female writer character is *The Tommyknockers*. It is the story in which the main attention is paid to an unidentifiable object who was found by Roberta Anderson, famous western writer. This object is causing gradual destruction of the small community in Maine called Haven.

The character of the writer which is not of the same sex as the author of the book is unusual for Stephen King. I have to state that the only thing Bobbi Anderson has in common with King is the fact that she lives in Maine. In such an extensive work I could not find any link between her and Stephen King. Bobbi is not his first woman character, he is able to describe daily routine of a woman or a girl. His wife Tabitha King helped him with description of the girl's world in his first novel *Carrie* and from that time his perception of woman has developed.²⁸⁶ Bobbi is, however, his first woman writer character, so it is different case. Writing is what he knows well, but conceiving Bobbi was difficult. He was not able to identify with Bobbi and pass on his qualities to her. It

²⁸⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 66-67.

could be also caused by King's excessive drug use and alcohol drinking when he was writing *The Tommyknockers*.²⁸⁷

The fact that Bobbi Anderson does not resemble Stephen King in any point does not mean that the character is not believable. But as King did not identify with this character, it is more difficult for the reader to identify with her as well. The question of female writer character is thus for Stephen King still open.

4.2.2. Male Writer as one of the Main Characters

In *The Tommyknockers* there is another character of the writer, he is male and his name is Jim Gardener. Maybe because of the presence of this character, King did not develop his female writer character. Jim is a poet and has problems with alcohol. Jim has a steel plate in his skull and sometimes he is able to hear radio broadcasting in his head, one of the radio stations is WZON.²⁸⁸ WZON is radio station in Bangor, Maine, that Stephen King bought because there was no rock 'n' roll radio station in the surroundings.²⁸⁹ Jim Gardener is definitely the character that is closer to King than Roberta Anderson.

'*Salem's Lot* is the very first story where the character of the writer occurs. I decided not to include this story to the major works with the character of the writer because the writing of Ben Mears, one of the main characters, is not the most important of the themes present in the story. He wanted to write about his childhood fear—apparition of a hanged man in Marsten House, the most scary house in the community of Jerusalem's Lot. However, he is interrupted and in the centre of the action suddenly stands night-living creatures. Ben Mears likes rock 'n' roll like Stephen King.²⁹⁰ Unlike Stephen King Ben writes for money and does research before he writes.²⁹¹ King does the research after he writes the story, his attitude is: "don't confuse me with facts."²⁹²

²⁸⁷ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 154.

²⁸⁸ See Stephen King, *The Tommyknockers* (1987; Sevenoaks, Kent: Hodder, 1988), 45-46.

²⁸⁹ See Beahm, *Stephen King Country*, 73-74.

²⁹⁰ See Stephen King, '*Salem's Lot* (1975; London: Hodder, 1982), 183.

²⁹¹ See King, '*Salem's Lot*, 184, 312.

²⁹² King, "Interview" by Moore, *Bare Bones*, 70.

King also claims that he definitely does not write for money, it has nothing to do with his writing.²⁹³

The Plant is an epistolary novel that has never been printed, but its six parts are available for downloading on the official Stephen King's website. Carlos Detweiller, a worker in a greenhouse, has written a book and wants it to be published. The publishers, however, reject his novel. This decision is the starting point of Detweiller's revenge. I would say that Carlos is so called wannabe writer because there is no piece of information about his previous efforts in writing or publishing. He tries to publish his first novel but he is not successful, it probably means he is not writer at all. It is hard to say because readers are given description only through the letters and in the synopsis on the beginning of new part. Any similarity between Stephen King and Carlos Detweiller can be excluded for the lack of info in the story.

"Umney's Last Case" is a fantastic short story about writer Samuel D. Landry who is not satisfied with his life in our world and decides to change his place with one his characters from his books, detective Clyde Umney. Regarding the writer's life there is nothing similar with Stephen King, except the name of his agent—Verrill.²⁹⁴ Chuck Verrill was Stephen King's editor.²⁹⁵ So there is at least a little a sign that it has something common with Stephen King.

In *Desperation* the writer character John Edward Marinville goes through Nevada on his Harley-Davidson but, unfortunately, encounters strange police officer and visits deserted community called Desperation. John shares his passion for motorcycle with King. When *Insomnia* was published Stephen did promotional book tour on his motorcycle throughout the country.²⁹⁶ John's wife was his sharpest critic.²⁹⁷ Tabitha King is Stephen King's first reader and, of course, critic.²⁹⁸ John Marinville was an alcoholic and drug addict but it is all over.²⁹⁹ It is the last trace of King's autobiography because otherwise there is nothing in John what resembles Stephen. John is divorced and his children are not in contact with him, it is complete opposite of Stephen King.

²⁹³ See King, "Playboy Interview," by Norden, *Bare Bones*, 54.

²⁹⁴ See Stephen King, *Umney's Last Case* (1993; New York: Penguin Books, 1995), 85.

²⁹⁵ See Spignesi, *The Essential Stephen King*, 225.

²⁹⁶ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 180.

²⁹⁷ See Stephen King, *Desperation* (New York: Viking Press, 1996), 77.

²⁹⁸ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 66.

²⁹⁹ See King, *Desperation*, 92.

“The Road Virus Heads North” is the story about Richard Kinnell, successful horror writer, who experiences the worst horror in his life due to strange painting coming to life. The fact that Richard is writing in horror genre and that he prefers driving the automobile to flying proves that he is like King.³⁰⁰ Stephen King definitely does not like planes, it is one of plenty of his fears.³⁰¹ Short story does not provide so much space for the description as novel so there are only few facts about the character of the writer. It is possible that Stephen King identified with Richard Kinnell.

Lisey’s Story is, as the title presents, more about Lisey Landon, wife of a deceased writer Scott Landon. It is true that there would not be any story without the writer character but Scott is not so much “Kingish” in his behaviour. Scott Landon did not mind turbulences in an airplane and Boston Red Sox caps were unwanted for him.³⁰² Even Stephen King himself admits that this story is not about him and his wife.³⁰³ The last story with the character of the writer did not prove any autobiographical features. It was probably King’s intention to omit the features to avoid labeling *Lisey’s Story* autobiographical novel.

4.2.3. Results of the Analysis of Other Stephen King’s Works

The writer character in the stories in which the attention is not paid much to writing or storytelling are not indispensable. If I substituted the character of the writer in the stories *The Tommyknockers*, *Salem’s Lot*, *Desperation* and “The Road Virus Heads North” for a different one the story would make a sense though. However, *The Plant*, “Umney’s Last Case” and *Lisey’s Story* are the stories where to change the character of the writer means to change whole storyline. The stories are not full of autobiographical features as those in the analysis above and sometimes there are none. There are not so much information about the character in some cases to find out whether the character and Stephen King are of the same type. One reason is the length of the stories, some of them are too short to develop the character. One of the stories is composed of letters so

³⁰⁰ See Stephen King, “The Road Virus Heads North,” *Everything’s Eventual* (London: Hodder, 2002), 329-332.

³⁰¹ See King, “Billerica Library,” *Bare Bones*, 2.

³⁰² See Stephen King, *Lisey’s Story* (London: Hodder, 2006), 36, 48.

³⁰³ See Rogak, *Haunted Heart*, 231.

detailed description is missing as well. Some of the writer characters are King's opposites in some points.

In my view the character of the writer in these stories does not make an impression of Stephen King's copy. They are different because it would be useful to write about the characters that are still same.

What remains the same is King's expression of fears in the stories. Stephen is worried for his children and wife and he definitely would not like to be in the situation of Samuel D. Landry from "Umney's Last Case" story who lost his loved family. These fears, nevertheless, concerns him as a husband and parent not as a writer.

Stephen King definitely leaves the message in every of these stories but the difference is whether he leaves it via the character of the writer or via the story itself.

Conclusion

Knowing King's life, his daily routine as a writer, his habits, his hobbies in free time, I was able to prove that there are similarities between King's character of the writer and King himself. There are six fundamental stories in which the character of the writer is indispensable: *The Shining*, "The Body," *Misery*, *The Dark Half*, "Secret Window, Secret Garden," and *Bag of Bones*. His presence in these stories is important because they share the theme of writing. The omission of all autobiographical features would make the stories void of credibility. The more the character resembles Stephen King, real person, the more plausible the fictional story, even horror, is.

King is playing with the character of the writer quite a lot. Seven other stories contain writer as one of the main protagonists or as a minor character: *Salem's Lot*, *The Plant*, *The Tommyknockers*, "Umney's Last Case," *Desperation*, "The Road Virus Heads North" and *Lisey's Story*. Their themes, nevertheless, differ and therefore the presence of the character of the writer is not necessarily important. These stories do not have so much in common with Stephen King's life in comparison to those about writing.

The character of the writer's meaning is primarily to bring reality into fiction. This character enables the reader to identify with him. It is necessary to believe that it is possible that the story he is reading could really happen to him. The writer character also gives the reader at least a small evidence that Stephen King's opinions are hidden in the story, especially thanks to the first-person point of view.

The fact that writer character can be part of the stories of different genres indicates that this character is indispensable and that Stephen King is able to write not only horror fiction. However, horror genre is the most important in King's production and thus the character of the writer occurs mostly in horror.

Thanks to the research of all the autobiographical features that make part of the stories about the character of the writer I can state that the stories are with no doubt King's own products. There is the possibility that he borrowed some stories but they are definitely not plagiarisms because all the facts about King are usually involved.

There exist also stories by Stephen King without the character of the writer that contain autobiographical features. Not only the writer character is so similar to King. I dare to say that all of his stories possess at least one sign that shows that the author is

Stephen King. His favourite baseball team, the name of the character that resembles real person from King's surroundings, the setting in his native land, these are things that interweave King's work. This statement would deserve more attention but it should be the part of a different study.

To conclude I would like to say that even if all of King's stories involve signs typical for him, the most autobiographical are those with the character of the writer. On one hand autobiography is a nonfiction genre, on the other hand horror, science-fiction and fantasy are genres of fiction. Together they can make something supernatural but still believable, something what the readers can find in Stephen King's stories with the character of the writer.

Resumé

V historii hororové fikce existuje pouze několik málo jmen, která jsou známá po celém světě. Titul nejoblíbenějšího hororového spisovatele současné literatury je s největší pravděpodobností připisován Stephenu Edwinu Kingovi. Mnoho lidí si myslí, že Stephen King umí psát pouze horor. King je ale všestranný autor, schopný tvořit fikci různého žánru, ale též literaturu faktu. Jeho specializace je široká. Kromě hororové fikce jeho tvorba zahrnuje literaturu hlavního proudu, science fiction, fantasy, kriminální fikci a komiks. Co shledávám zajímavým je fakt, že jeho postavy představují lidi z dnešního světa a to ve všech žánrech, ve kterých píše. Jejich hlavní rolí je ztotožnit se skutečnými lidmi. Když čtenář čte o obyčejných lidech a jejich každodenních životech, může si jednoduše představit sebe jako protagonistu. Díky této skutečnosti může být i hororový příběh blízký čtenáři. Postavy z děl Stephen Kinga, které vytváří dojem skutečnosti, jsou účelem mého zkoumání. Zaměřím se na postavu spisovatele a zkusím dokázat, že je alespoň z části založena na Stephenu Kingovi samotném.

Je zřejmé, že Stephen King rád píše a to nejenom v hororovém žánru. Tři ze čtyř novel z jeho sbírky *Čtyři roční doby* jsou napsány v nehororovém žánru. Jednou z nich je novela "Tělo," známá je i její filmová adaptace *Stůj při mě*. Literatura hlavního proudu napsaná Stephenem Kingem má díky této novele zastoupení v analýze postavy spisovatele.

Postavu spisovatele však nejvíce obsahují díla hororového žánru, jelikož v tomto žánru Stephen King tvořil nejvíce. Rozhodla jsem se tento žánr rozdělit na dvě skupiny: horor s nadpřirozenem a reálný horor. Hororové příběhy Stephen Kinga, kde se vyskytuje něco nadpřirozeného, jsou většinou příběhy o lidech s abnormálními schopnostmi, o věcech či přeludech, které ožívají, o různých lidských fobiích zahrnujících strach ze smrti, tmy a samoty, stejně jako klasické příběhy o upírech či vlkodlacích. Mezi nejznámější patří: *Carrie*, *Prokletí Salemu*, *Osvícení*, *Řbitov zvířátek*, *To*, *Temná půle*, *Nezbytné věci*, *Beznaděj*, *Pytel kostí* a další. Druhou skupinu tvoří horory reálného charakteru, které děsí mnohem víc při pomyslení, že se nám mohou ve skutečnosti opravdu stát. Jsou to příběhy: *Cujo*, *Misery*, "Skryté okno do skryté zahrady," ale také psychologické horory jako *Geraldova hra* nebo *Holčička, která měla ráda Toma Gordona*.

Stephen King také vytvořil řadu děl v žánru science fiction, i přestože ve škole nijak nevyčníval v přírodních vědách, jako je například fyzika a chemie. Jeho tvorba začínala psaním sci-fi příběhů, nebyly však nikdy publikovány. Romány *Dlouhý Pochod* a *Running Man* vydané pod pseudonymem Richard Bachman, jsou Kingovi příběhy z blízké budoucnosti a nové technologie jsou nezbytnou součástí těchto příběhů. Pod svým jménem pak vydal science fiction: *Tommyknockeři*, *Pavučina snů*, *Pod kupolí* a *Dallas 63*. I v tomto žánru se nachází postava spisovatele, ne už však v takové míře jako v žánru hororovém.

Fantastická literatura je také hojně zastoupena v produkci Stephena Kinga. Jeho dceři Naomi, která preferovala fantasy před hororem, napsal *Dračí oči*. Inspirován básní Roberta Browninga napsal sérii osmi knih pod názvem *Temná věž*. S *Temnou věží* jsou úzce spjaty i příběhy *Nespavost*, *Srdce v Atlantidě* a dva romány napsané ve spolupráci s Peterem Straubem *Talisman* a *Černý dům*. I v tomto žánru můžeme najít příběh pojednávající o postavě spisovatele.

Stephen King také experimentuje s kriminální fikcí. Jako Bachman publikoval knihu o postiženém kriminálníkovi s názvem *Blaze*. První kriminálka pod jeho vlastním jménem, *The Colorado Kid*, zatím nebyla přeložena do češtiny. V nedávné době se věnuje psaní kriminální fikce mnohem více. Jeho *Lunapark* byl vydán minulý rok a letos má vyjít detektivka *Mr. Mercedes*. Tento žánr je nejméně významný pro moji analýzu postavy spisovatele, který se v tomto žánru nevyskytuje.

Komiksy se také nachází v produkci Stephena Kinga. Byl ovlivněn zejména tzv. E.C. komiksy, které byly zaměřeny na horor, sci-fi a vojenské příběhy. V tomto duchu byl vytvořen komiks *Creepshow*. King se také podílel na vzniku komiksové knihy *Americký upír*. Komiksy hrají v životě Stephena Kinga důležitou roli, protože díky nim začal psát. Jako malý chlapec opisoval komiksové příběhy a občas si přidával svoje vlastní popisky.

Literatura faktu je oproti jeho fikci v menšině, avšak napsal něco málo o svém životě, o hororovém žánru v literatuře a o psaní knih. Jsou to *Danse Macabre* a *O psaní*, knihy velmi užitečné pro můj výzkum v této práci.

Inspirace Stephena Kinga pochází z jeho zkušeností jakožto muže, manžela, otce a samozřejmě spisovatele. Život občas lidem připravuje překvapení a ta je nějakým způsobem ovlivňují. Jako malý chlapec byl Stephen svědkem nehody, při které byl jeho kamarád sražen vlakem. Stephenovo první setkání se smrtí údajně ovlivnilo jeho

pozitivní přístup k hororovému žánru. Asi v sedmi letech viděl svůj první hororový film, který ho děsil a který miloval zároveň. Když už uměl číst, začal s E.C. komiksy. V nedělní škole byl inspirován strašlivými biblickými příběhy. Jeho strýc Clayton byl výborným vypravěčem různých historek a legend a tak se Stephen nechal inspirovat i jimi. Zjistil také, že i jeho otec se pokoušel psát a tak si zanechal jeho sbírku H. P. Lovecrafta. Kingovi povídky byly mnohokrát zamítnuty editory různých magazínů, ale díky jeho vytrvalosti se to změnilo. Jako student univerzity byl schopen napsat svůj první román. Četl každý den, měl rád naturalistické autory, autory gotických románů, ale také měl oblíbence v populární literatuře. Ti, ale nebyli součástí žádného z kurzů a tak se rozhodl tuto literaturu vyučovat sám. Na krátkou dobu působil jako žurnalista, psal do univerzitního plátku zvaného *Maine Campus* a měl tam pro vyhrazené místo svůj sloupek. Má zkušenost i s psaním poezie. Další velkou část jeho života tvoří život s Tabithou, jeho ženou. Stal se manželem a zanedlouho i otcem. Než však publikoval svůj první román *Carrie*, prošel si různými zaměstnáními od obsluhy benzinové pumpy, přes pracovníka prádelny až po učitele na střední škole. Začátek jeho kariéry spisovatele však doprovází nepříliš šťastné události. Zemřela jeho matka a on začal být závislým alkoholikem. K problémům s pitím však v 80. letech přibyla ještě závislost na drogách. Díky podpoře jeho rodiny dokázal přestat s obojím a stát se znovu střízlivým. Skutečnost, že nemohl vydat své dřívější romány, vedla ke Kingovu rozhodnutí pro pseudonym Richard Bachman. Psal také ve spolupráci s hororovým autorem a přítelem Peterem Straubem. Nehoda, při které byl King téměř zabit, ho též hodně ovlivnila. Každý jeho příběh je založen na nějaké jeho zkušenosti či zážitku. Pokaždé si položil otázku začínající "co kdyby" a je jich opravdu nespočet.

Stephen King rád opakuje ve svých dílech stejná témata, postavy i prostředí. Některá jeho díla obsahují prvky politické kritiky (např. *Svědectví*, *Mrtvá Zóna*, *Žhářka*). Kritizuje také společnost, život lidí v malých městech (např. *Prokletí Salemu*, *Tommyknockeri*). Lze tedy prohlásit, že Stephen King může být právem považován za politického a sociálního kritika. Děti jsou postavy, které King často používá ve svých příbězích, protože vnímají svět jinak než dospělí. Opakujícími se postavami jsou také silné ženské protagonistky, ať už v negativním (např. Annie Wilkesová v *Misery*) tak i v pozitivním smyslu slova (např. Dolores Claiborneová v *Dolores Claiborneové*, Lisey Landonová v *Lisey a jejím příběhu*). Pověstné je zejména prostředí, do kterého King zasazuje své příběhy. Ve velké většině je to Maine, Kingův rodný stát. King příběhy

umist'uje jak do fiktivních měst (Castle Rock, Derry, Jerusalem's Lot a Haven) tak i do měst skutečných (např. Bangor - město současného Kingova pobytu). Většina příběhů s postavou spisovatele je též zasazena do prostředí Maine.

Samotná analýza postavy spisovatele sestává ze dvou částí. Nejprve to jsou díla, která obsahují postavu spisovatele jakožto postavu hlavní nebo jednu z hlavních. Tato díla mají společným tématem téma psaní či vyprávění příběhu. Je to šest základních děl: *Osvícení*, "Tělo," *Misery*, *Temná půle*, "Skryté okno do skryté zahrady" a *Pytel kostí*. Pro vznik těchto příběhů je spisovatel nezbytnou součástí obsazení. Nutno říci, že všechna tato díla s výjimkou jediného jsou hororového žánru. Druhá část obsahuje krátký komentář ostatních děl, ve kterých se postava spisovatele vyskytuje. Tato postava není již nepostradatelná pro příběhy: *Prokletí Salemu*, *Rostlina*, *Tommyknockeři*, "Poslední Umneyho případ," *Beznaděj*, "Silniční virus míří na sever" a *Lisey a její příběh*. Tyto romány a povídky jsou směsí různých žánrů, od science fiction, přes fantasy až k hororové fikci.

Co shledávám zajímavým na Kingových dílech je jejich věrohodnost. Zejména ta, která pojednávají o postavě spisovatele, mi připadají velice reálná, i když se jedná o horory. Snažila jsem se podívat pozorněji na tuto postavu a zjistila jsem, že je tu nápadná podobnost mezi postavou spisovatele a Stephenem Kingem samotným. Kdybych tuto postavu nahradila jinou, příběh by nedával smysl. Také fakt, že existuje výrazné množství děl od Stephena Kinga, ve kterých se postava spisovatele vyskytuje, dokazuje, že je tato postava pro Kinga nepostradatelná. Důležitost postavy spisovatele je tudíž nepopiratelná.

Význam postavy spisovatele je přinést do fikce reálno. V případě Stephena Kinga jsou postavami obyčejní lidé v neobyčejných situacích. Tím, že sebe považuje za obyčejného člověka, přiznává, že je perfektním modelem pro jeho příběhy. Lidé, které zná, mu slouží často jako předloha. Koho jiného by měl Stephen King znát lépe než sám sebe. Píše o místech, která zná moc dobře a také píše o věcech, se kterými má zkušenosti, jako například psaní. Troufám si říci, že všechny jeho příběhy jsou založeny na něčem reálném, co ho ovlivnilo. Nicméně, když se snažil napsat příběh zcela podle pravdy, tak se mu to nepodařilo. Na jedné straně tu ve fikci musí být něco reálného, aby byla věrohodná. Na straně druhé čtenáři nechtějí číst stoprocentně pravdivý příběh. Chtějí si být jistí, že jsou v bezpečí v našem světě než ve světě fikce. Mají možnost uniknout do světa, kde je něco nadpřirozeného, ale musí se ztotožnit s představitelem.

Neměli by být vystrašeni monstrem, ale měli by se bát o představitele. Už Aristotelés vyjádřil své myšlenky ohledně postav a pocitů, které je doprovází, v *Poetice*. Podle Aristotela by mělo publikum cítit soucit a zároveň strach o představitele. Jedině díky této fázi identifikace s postavou to může vést ke katarzi, jedinému správnému ukončení tragédie.

První román Stephena Kinga, jehož tématem je psaní a výskyt postavy spisovatele je nezbytný pro příběh, je *Osvícení*. Jack Torrance je bývalý učitel, který se uchází o post hlídače hotelu Overlook v Coloradu. Společně se svou ženou Wendy a pětiletým synem Dannym se přestěhují do hotelu, kde by měli zůstat sami až do jara. Danny je neobyčejné dítě, které bylo obdarováno osvícením. To je schopnost vidět do budoucnosti nebo do myslí lidí. Jack plánuje, že v průběhu zimy napíše novou hru, která by zahájila jeho kariéru spisovatele. Něco je však s hotelem v nepořádku a tato trojice okusí jeho záludnosti.

Jack i Danny Torranceovi jsou nepostradatelní pro příběh a oba vlastní autobiografické prvky. Nejprve jsem si myslela, že Danny je tím hlavním představitelem, jelikož název knihy poukazuje na jeho schopnosti. Danny má stejné zájmy, jako měl Stephen King, když byl chlapec. Rád sleduje hororové filmy a snaží se co nejdříve se naučit číst. Avšak po přečtení věnování knihy jsem si uvědomila, že Danny je podobný Kingovu synovi Josephu Hillstromu Kingovi, který též jako malý chlapec rád sleduje horory a chce se stát spisovatelem jako jeho otec. Celkově máme jen málo informací o Dannyho budoucnosti. Ta je součástí knihy *Doktor spánek*, pokračování *Osvícení*. Danny se však nestane spisovatelem a tudíž jeho postava není důležitá pro tento rozbor. Zůstává však důležitým pro tento příběh.

Jack Torrance je ten, kterému by měla být věnována pozornost. Je tu podobnost mezi Kingem a Torrancem v tom, že když psali svá díla, byli dost netrpěliví se svými dětmi. V domnění, že pomáhají svým otcům v psaní, jejich synové zničili některé rukopisy děl. Jack nechtěně zlomí Dannymu ruku, ale tím neztrácí Dannyho náklonnost. Stephen má neskutečně dobré vztahy se svými dětmi, nikdy by jim neublížil a není o něm nikde ani zmínka jako o špatném otci. Jack a Stephen mají společnou vášeň v pití alkoholu. Jack je už ex-alkoholik, ale ve svých představách stále pije. Stephen je zrovna ve stádiu, kdy se jeho pití stalo nezvladatelným. Stephen King byl z počátku neúspěšný v publikování svých povídek, stejně je na tom Jack Torrance. Je zde podobnost mezi Kingem a Torrancem i v jejich dřívějším povolání, povolání učitele. Jack i Stephen

potkali své budoucí manželky na univerzitě. Jack píše divadelní hru o pěti jednáních. Samotná Kingova kniha *Osvícení* je rozdělena do pěti částí, tudíž má formu Shakespearovské tragédie. Jack zahrnuje do svých děl autobiografické prvky stejně jako King do těch svých.

Tento příběh by se mohl zdát nejméně závislým na postavě spisovatele oproti ostatním, avšak psaní je tu dosti významným tématem. Zdá se, že nejvíce pozornosti je věnováno faktu, že v hotelu straší, ale není tomu tak. Kdyby Jack nebyl spisovatelem, nechtěl by napsat knihu o tom, co zvláštního se dělo v hotelu, ve kterém pobývá, nehledal by další informace v místní knihovně a tudíž by ani čtenáři nebyli seznámeni s pochmurnou minulostí tohoto hotelu. Spisovatelova fantazie je mnohem rozsáhlejší a přizpůsobivější než fantazie kohokoli jiného, tudíž si s ním hotel může pohrávat mnohem více než s jinými.

Jediným příběhem v analýze hlavních děl, který nespadá do hororového žánru, je "Tělo." Gordon Lachance je spisovatelem, vyprávějící příběh ze svého dětství o dobrodružství, které podnikl on a jeho tři kamarádi aby našli tělo mrtvého chlapce. Během cesty riskují své životy, avšak vyvážnou bez větší újmy. Nakonci novely jsou čtenáři obeznámeni s faktem, že v přítomnosti je jediným přeživším z těchto přátel právě Gordon.

Gordie se vždycky chtěl stát spisovatelem. Mezi jeho oblíbenou četbu a také inspirací k pozdějšímu psaní mu byly komiksy, stejně jako pro Stephena Kinga. Jeho první příběhy obsahují též autobiografické prvky. Gordon studoval na Mainské univerzitě v Oronu, oženil se, má tři děti, a jeho první tři knihy byly úspěšně zfilmovány. Tato fakta se přesně shodují s Kingovým vlastním životem.

Nahrazení vypravěče příběhy je v tomto případě nemožné. Jedním důvodem je to, že už tu vlastně kromě Gordona není naživu nikdo další z účastníků dobrodružství. Zadržte, neexistuje lepší vypravěč než právě spisovatel.

Příběh *Misery* vypráví o nešťastné nehodě spisovatele Paula Sheldona a ještě nešťastnějším utrpení, které zažívá poté v péči bývalé zdravotní sestry Annie Wilkesové. Annie je jeho fanynkou číslo jedna. Když zjistí, že hrdinka Paulových románů *Misery Chastainová* v posledním románu zemře, donutí ho napsat pokračování, ve kterém *Misery* život vrátí. Kdyby se Paul rozhodl nesplnit její podmínky, zemřel by on sám.

Paul Sheldon je zvyklý pít i kouřit. To se mu však stane osudným a kvůli těmto zlozvykům si způsobí nehodu. Když je však v péči Annie, nemá jinou možnost než spokojit se s prášky mírnící bolest, jelikož nic jiného mu není povoleno. Začíná však na nich být závislý. Přesně jako Paul Sheldon se cítil i Stephen King. Román *Misery* byl napsán v době, kdy byl King již plně závislý na drogách. Zajímavým faktem je pak psací stroj, který Annie koupí Paulovi, aby mohl napsat nový román. Nejenomže byl značky Royal, ale chyběla mu klávesa “n,” takže Paul musel všechna tato písmena později doplnit tužkou. Když byl Stephen King začínajícím spisovatelem, matka mu koupila naprosto identický stroj, jaký měl Paul Sheldon, protože si jiný nemohli dovolit. Paul sdílí s Kingem také svou nechuť k psaní literatury faktu.

I v tomto příběhu je přítomnost postavy spisovatele nezbytná, jelikož je hlavní téma úzce spojeno s psaním. Šílení fanoušci, to je něco co Stephen King poznal na vlastní kůži, i když ne tak jako Paul Sheldon. V *Misery* je zmíněn román Johna Fowlese *Sběratel*, jehož obsah dosti odpovídá situaci v tomto příběhu. Jediným způsobem jak se může unesený zabavit je čtení a psaní, to dělá jak Paul v *Misery*, tak Miranda ve *Sběrateli*.

Dalším příběhem spisovatele je *Temná půle*. Hlavní představitel, Thad Beaumont, začal svůj nový život, když mu bylo jedenáct let. Jeho první povídka byla oceněna, což značilo začátek jeho spisovatelského úspěchu, a také podstoupil operaci mozku, ze kterého mu odstranili zbytky identického dvojčete, které absorboval. Po letech se Thad ožení a má dvě děti - dvojčata. Mezi čtenáři nebyl příliš oblíbený a tak přišel s nápadem psát v jiném žánru a pod pseudonymem George Stark. Jeho nejvěrnější čtenáři však odhalili Thadovo tajemství a tak se Thad veřejně přiznal a současně symbolicky pohřbil George Starka. Zanedlouho se stala vražda a šerif z ní obvinil Thada, jelikož se na místě činu našli jeho otisky. On však ví, že nic neudělal a tak se společně se šerifem rozhodnou vyšetřit, co se to tu děje. Jedinou správnou odpovědí je, že George Stark se opět vrátil k životu.

Thad Beaumont posílal své první příběhy do magazínů, stejně jako to kdysi dělal Stephen King, když chtěl, aby je publikovali. Stephen King si také na jeden rok vyzkoušel práci univerzitního profesora, tudíž mohl dát vznik Thadovu povolání. Tím nejdůležitějším je však pseudonym. Stephen King s tímto nápadem přišel ne proto, že by se jeho jméno dostávalo málo pozornosti, ale právě naopak - nemohl totiž publikovat pod svým jménem více než jednu knihu ročně, protože by byl trh zahlcen. A tak vznikl

Richard Bachman. Ten ovšem musel zemřít na rakovinu pseudonymu, jelikož byl v roce 1985 odhalen. Kingův pseudonym našťástí z mrtvých nevstal. Sám Stephen King přiznává, že knihy Richarda Bachmana jsou v určitých ohledech jiné než ty vydané pod jménem King. King je znám psaním hororových příběhů avšak končí přemožením zla. Bachmanovi knihy obsahují násilí a teror, ale zároveň pesimistické konce. Tento fakt je dosti podobný skutečností v *Temné půli*, kde Thadovi knihy napsané pod jménem Stark mají větší sklon k násilí než ty vydané pod jeho vlastním jménem. Zmínka o Ernestu Hemingwayovi by neměli být přehlížena. Mohlo by to být symbolické vyjádření sklonu k alkoholismu, jak u Stephena Kinga tak u Thada Beaumonta, i když oba dva už abstinují. Oba dva též přestali kouřit, alespoň tedy prozatím. Avšak v dobách, kdy holdovali této vášni, preferovali stejnou značku cigaret. Postava spisovatele nosí též čepici Stephenova oblíbeného baseballového týmu Red Sox.

Vynechání postavy spisovatele v tomto příběhu by znamenalo jeho úpný zánik. Součástí spisovatelova života bývají fanoušci stejně jako pseudonymy. Díky tomu, že King má s tímto zkušenosti, mohl je použít jako předlohu pro svou knihu. Postava spisovatele je věrohodná, jelikož si můžeme představit Kinga samotného v hlavní úloze tohoto příběhu.

Předposlední příběh s názvem “Skryté okno do skryté zahrady” nám vypráví o Morton Rainey, spisovateli, který je právě po rozvodu. Žije ve svém letním domě u jezera a má zrovna spisovatelský blok. Jeho oblíbenou činností je spánek, když zrovna nemyslí na to, jak ho jeho žena Amy podvedla. Jednoho dne ho navštíví muž z Mississippi jménem John Shooter, který ho obviní z plagiátorství. Mort se mu bude snažit dokázat, že on byl první, kdo příběh vydal, ale nebude to jednoduché. Začíná to mrtvou kočkou, pokračuje vypáleným domem a končí mrtvými lidmi.

Nejprve je nutné říci, že oba dva Morton Rainey i Stephen King vlastní takové malé skryté okno, které vede do skryté zahrady. Dozvídáme se, že Mort sedí u svého počítače každý den od devíti do jedenácti hodin za účelem něco napsat. Stephen King tvoří nové příběhy výhradně dopoledne, odpoledne pak slouží k revizi toho, co už napsal nebo ke čtení. Mort stejně jako Stephen publikovali své povídky v pánských časopisech, jedním z nich je magazín *Cavalier*. Stejně jako Jack Torrance v *Osvícení* a Thad Beaumont v *Temné půli* i Mort Rainey ve “Skrytém oknu do skryté zahrady” posílal své první povídky do různých časopisů a byl mnohokrát odmítnut. Mort nyní žije ve svém letní domě u jezera v západním Maine. Je známo, že King rád pobýval ve

svých letních domech, ať už poblíž jezera Sebago, nebo v Center Lovell, obojí to bylo v Maine.

Je vidět, že King dokáže přijít s několika různými příběhy, ve kterých se sice shoduje obsazení, ale obsahově jsou velmi rozdílné. V tomto příběhu, kde se vyskytuje téma plagiátorství, je nezbytné si zachovat postavu spisovatele. King sám nikdy žádný příběh neukradl, i když z toho byl párkrát obviněn. Rád si příběhy půjčoval a upravil si je podle svého. Jeden Kingův přítel řekl, že příběh je toho, kdo ho umí nejlépe vyprávět. A v tom má pravdu. Kingovy příběhy se zdají tak reálné, že by si měl dát pozor, o čem píše, zejména v případě použití postavy spisovatele.

Velmi důležitou součástí rozboru je román *Pytel kostí*. Mike Noonan nám vypráví o tom, jak se mu změnil život, když mu náhle odešla jeho milovaná žena. Nemůže psát, a tak se rozhodne, že se na čas přestěhuje do svého letního domu u jezera Dark Score. Tam potkává Kyru a Mattie Devorovi a zaplétá se do sporu o péči o dítě. Mattie žije s Kyrou sama, poté co jí zemřel manžel. Její tchán, dědeček Kyry, milionář Max Devore tvrdí, že Mattie není schopna se o dítě sama starat a tak proti ní zahájí řízení. Mike Mattie pomůže soud vyhrát, to ale zdaleka není konec bitvy. Zároveň také zjišťuje, že s jeho domem, který nese jméno Smějící se Sára, není něco v pořádku, stejně jako s celým městečkem. K rozluštění záhady bude potřebovat pomoc své ženy Jo, která už na mnohé přišla před svou smrtí.

Toto je příběh, ve kterém se vyskytuje úplně nejvíc autobiografických prvků. Mike se snaží zapomenout na smrt jeho ženy, ale psát se mu nedaří, tak se učí hrát na kytaru. Stephen King hraje na kytaru v amatérské skupině spisovatelů s názvem Rock Bottom Remainers. Mike je seznámen s faktem, že nemůže publikovat víc než jednu knihu za rok, přesně jako King. Mike a jeho žena přispěli místní knihovně významnou částkou. Kingovi tak udělali ve městě svého současného pobytu - v Bangoru. Problematika alkoholu je zde také lehce dotčena, ale spisovatel mu tentokrát nepropadá, protože v době psaní románu *Pytel kostí* je King už skoro deset let vyléčen z alkoholismu. Dalším důkazem podobnosti mezi Noonanem a Kingem je jejich kladný vztah k dětem. Mike se potkal se svou životní láskou na univerzitě jako King. Mike obývá letní dům u jezera jako King. Zkrátka dalo by se říci, že Mike Noonan a Stephen King jsou ve svých postojích a chování jedna a tatáž osoba.

Postavu spisovatele nelze nahradit a to ani tak, že bychom místo spisovatele muže umístili do příběhu ženu. Kdyby byla hlavní postavou spisovatelka, nevznikla by

tu žádná love story s Mattie Devorovou. Kdyby byla hlavní postava instalatér, neměla by dostatek peněz, aby mohla pomoci Mattie a co je nejdůležitější nezjistila by tajemství jezera Dark Score, které je skryto v psaní Mikea Noonana. Příběh je tudíž závislý na postavě spisovatele stejně jako příběhy předešlé.

Jsou tu ale také příběhy, které obsahují postavu spisovatele, ale jejich přítomnost v příběhu není tak důležitá. Tyto příběhy mají téma odlišné od psaní a tak se ani postava spisovatele moc nepodobá Kingovi samotnému. V příběhu *Tommyknockeři* se setkáváme hned se dvěma spisovateli - ženou a mužem. Co se týče Roberty Andersonové, neshledala jsem žádnou podobnost mezi ní a Kingem. Usoudila jsem, že proto je výskyt spisovatelek v jeho knihách tak nízký. Jim Gardener je básník alkoholik. Má alespoň něco společného s Kingem, ale v tomto sci-fi příběhu je jeho psaní zanedbatelné. *Prokletí Salemu* je vůbec prvním příběhem, ve kterém King používá postavu spisovatele. Názory hlavního představitele Bena Mearse jsou však odlišné od Kinga v tom, že on píše pro peníze. *Rostlina* je Kingův dvojitý experiment. Je to kniha psaná ve formě dopisů a navíc vydávaná na pokračování v elektronické formě. Právě kvůli její formě zde chybí potřebné popisy hlavních postav včetně postavy Carlose Detweillera, neúspěšného spisovatele. "Poslední Umneyho případ" je fantastická povídka, ve které spisovatel Samuel D. Landry touží žít život své postavy. V povídce má King opět omezený prostor pro popis postav, ale přesto tam vkusně umístí jméno spisovatelova agenta, které se shoduje se jménem jeho dlouholetého editora. Román *Beznaděj* vypráví příběh několika postav, ale obsahuje též postavu spisovatele. John Edward Marinville má slabost pro motorky, stejně jako Stephen King. Byl závislý na drogách a alkoholu, to už také pominulo jako u Kinga. Vztah postavy spisovatele s jeho vlastními potomky však není dobrý a tak se neshoduje se základní Kingovou vlastností. "Silniční virus míří na sever" je příběh hororového spisovatele Richarda Kinnella, který nemá moc v lásce létání. Tato fakta mohou svědčit o tom, že postavou spisovatele je skutečně Stephen King, ale je tu pramálo informací než abychom mohli dělat takovéto závěry. Na posledním místě je *Lisey a její příběh*, příběh spíše o Lisey Landonové, než o jejím zemřelém muži, spisovateli Scottu Landonovi. Díky faktům jako je odmítání Red Soxu a libování si v létání i při turbulencích, jsem zamítla možnost, že by tato postava mohla mít něco společného se Stephenem Kingem. King sám přiznává, že to není příběh o něm a jeho ženě Tabithě.

Postava spisovatele v dílech Stephena Kinga je nepostradatelná v případě, že se jedná o příběh, kde je jedním z témat psaní nebo vyprávění příběhů. V ostatních případech, se jedná o příběhy, ve kterých se postava spisovatele dá nahradit postavou jinou. Čím více autobiografických prvků postava spisovatele obsahuje, tím více se podobá jeho autorovi, tudíž reálnému člověku. Tím nejdůležitějším je totiž věrohodnost příběhu, ať už se jedná o jakýkoli žánr literatury. Díky podobnosti mezi Stephenem Kingem a postavou spisovatele můžeme konstatovat, že schopnost čtenáře vcítit se do postavy je mnohem vyšší. King do příběhů vsazuje své zkušenosti spisovatele, své oblíbené zájmy, ale také různé druhy obav a strachu. Můžeme tedy s jistotou tvrdit, že jeho příběhy nejsou plagiáty, jelikož obsahují mnoho informací z jeho osobního života. Autobiografie je sice žánrem literatury faktu, ale její prvky mohou být použity i ve fikci. Díky nim pak může horor, science fiction i fantasy nabýt neskutečné vlastnosti naprostého pohlcení čtenáře do děje příběhu.

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Anotace

Příjmení a jméno autora:	Glaserová Veronika
Katedra:	Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky
Fakulta:	Filozofická fakulta
Název práce v češtině:	Důležitost a význam postavy spisovatele v dílech Stephenha Kinga
Vedoucí diplomové práce:	PhDr. Matthew Sweney, Ph.D.
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Anotace: Tato diplomová práce pojednává v anglickém jazyce o důležitosti a významu postavy spisovatele v dílech amerického spisovatele současné literatury Stephenha Kinga. Jeho jméno bývá často spojováno výhradně s hororovou fikcí. První kapitola odhalí, že King je schopen tvořit v různých žánrech fikce, v literatuře hlavního proudu a také v literatuře faktu. U jednotlivých žánrů je popsána četnost výskytu postavy spisovatele. Druhá kapitola se věnuje autorově inspiraci, kterou získal svými zkušenostmi muže, manžela, otce a především spisovatele. Třetí kapitola informuje o Kingově zálibě v opakování stejných témat, postav, ale i prostředí, ve kterém se jeho příběhy odehrávají. Jednou z postav vyskytujících se v jeho dílech často je postava spisovatele. Tato postava je podrobně analyzována v poslední kapitole. Jeho důležitost závisí na množství autobiografických prvků, které daný román, novela nebo povídka obsahuje. Je zde uvedena příčina umístění této postavy do příběhů, její nahraditelnost a také význam, který tato postava vlastní.

Annotation

Surname and Name of the Author:	Glaserová Veronika
Department:	Department of English and American Studies
Faculty:	Philosophical Faculty
Title of the Thesis:	The Importance and Meaning of the Character of the Writer in Stephen King's Works
Thesis Supervisor:	PhDr. Matthew Sweney, Ph.D.
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Key words: American literature, Stephen King, contemporary literature, character of the writer, genre literature, horror fiction, science fiction, fantasy, crime fiction, comics, nonfiction

Annotation: The diploma thesis deals in English language with the importance and meaning of the character of the writer in works of American writer of contemporary literature Stephen King. His name is often connected with horror fiction only. The first chapter reveals that King is able to create in different genres of fiction, in mainstream fiction as well as in nonfiction. The possibility of occurrence of the character of the writer is presented with every genre. The second chapter pays attention to author's inspiration that he gained thanks to his experience as a man, husband, father and primarily writer. The third chapter informs about King's interest in the repetition of identical themes, characters, but also setting in which the story takes place. One of the characters that occurs frequently in his works is the character of the writer. This character is analyzed in detail in the last chapter. His importance depends on the number of autobiographical features of the particular novel, novella or short story. The reason for placing the character into the stories, his replaceability and the meaning of the character is stated.