

# Steven Spielberg's Duel: A Masterpiece of Suspense and Symbolism

Steven Spielberg's *Duel* is a 1971 made-for-television movie that follows a mild-mannered businessman as he is relentlessly pursued by a menacing semi-truck driver. The film is a masterfully crafted thriller that explores themes of masculinity, paranoia, and the dangers of unchecked power.

*Duel* was Spielberg's first feature-length film, and it showcased his prodigious talent for suspense and action. The film was a critical and commercial success, and it helped to launch Spielberg's career as one of the most successful filmmakers in history.

*Duel* tells the story of David Mann (Dennis Weaver), a mild-mannered businessman who is driving home from a business trip when he is passed by a large semi-truck. Mann attempts to pass the truck, but the truck driver speeds up to block him. Mann tries to slow down and let the truck pass, but the truck driver continues to tailgate him.



## Steven Spielberg and *Duel*: The Making of a Film Career

by Steven Awalt

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

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Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
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Mann eventually pulls over to let the truck pass, but the truck driver stops behind him and begins to honk his horn. Mann gets out of his car to confront the truck driver, but the truck driver remains inside his cab. Mann gets back in his car and tries to drive away, but the truck driver follows him.

The truck driver begins to play a game of cat and mouse with Mann, repeatedly ramming his car and trying to run him off the road. Mann is terrified, but he refuses to give up. He leads the truck driver on a high-speed chase through the desert, and eventually the truck driver is killed when his truck crashes into a ravine.

Duel is a film that explores a number of complex themes, including masculinity, paranoia, and the dangers of unchecked power.

**Masculinity:** The film's protagonist, David Mann, is a mild-mannered businessman who is confronted by a symbol of unchecked masculinity in the form of the semi-truck driver. The truck driver is a large, powerful man who uses his truck to intimidate and terrorize Mann. Mann's journey throughout the film is a journey of self-discovery, as he learns to stand up for himself and fight back against the truck driver.

**Paranoia:** The film also explores the theme of paranoia. Mann is constantly second-guessing himself and wondering if he is doing the right thing. He is afraid of the truck driver, but he is also afraid of what will happen if he tries to fight back. Mann's paranoia is ultimately justified, as the truck driver is a dangerous and unstable man.

**The Dangers of Unchecked Power:** The film also warns of the dangers of unchecked power. The truck driver is a symbol of unchecked power, and he uses his truck to terrorize and control others. Mann is a symbol of the average person who is powerless against the forces of unchecked power. The film suggests that unchecked power is a dangerous thing, and that it can lead to violence and oppression.

Duel is a masterfully crafted thriller that showcases Spielberg's prodigious talent for suspense and action. The film is shot in aドキュメンタリースタイル, which gives it a realistic and immediate feel. The film's editing is also excellent, with Spielberg using a variety of techniques to create a sense of suspense and dread.

The film's score is also noteworthy. The score is composed by John Williams, and it is one of the most iconic scores in film history. The score is a mix of suspenseful strings and pounding drums, and it perfectly captures the film's mood of paranoia and terror.

Duel was a critical and commercial success, and it helped to launch Spielberg's career as one of the most successful filmmakers in history. The film has been praised for its suspenseful plot, its realistic characters, and its powerful themes. Duel is considered one of the greatest made-for-television movies ever made, and it is still studied by filmmakers today.

The film has also had a major impact on popular culture. The film's iconic chase scene has been parodied and referenced in countless other works of popular culture. The film has also been credited with inspiring a number of other films, including Spielberg's own Jaws and The Texas Chain Saw Massacre.

Duel is a masterpiece of suspense and symbolism. The film is a powerful allegory about the dangers of unchecked power, and it is a timeless classic that continues to be enjoyed by audiences today.



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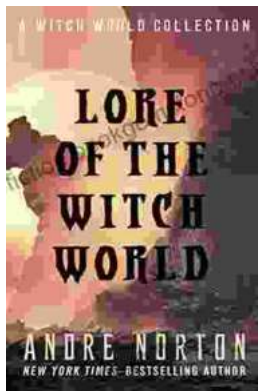
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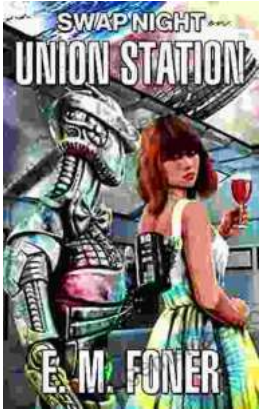
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