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# CAST

**Laurence Harvey** Rex  
**Lee Remick** Stella  
**Alan Bates** Stephen  
**Felix Aylmer** Parson  
**Eleanor Summerfield** Hilda Tanner  
**Allan Cuthbertson** Jenkins  
**Harold Goldblatt** Tom Webster  
**Noel Purcell** Miles Bleeker  
**Ramsay Ames** Madge Penderby  
**Fernando Rey** Police Official  
**Juanjo Menéndez** Roberto (as **Juan Jose Menendez**)  
**Eddie Byrne** Sam Crewdson  
**Colin Gordon** Solicitor  
**John Meillon** Jim Jerome  
**Roger Delgado** Spanish Doctor  
**Fortunio Bonanova** Spanish Bank Manager

# CREW

Directed and Produced by **Carol Reed**  
Screenplay by **John Mortimer**  
From the novel "The Ballad of the Running Man" by **Shelley Smith**  
Associate Producer **John R. Sloan**  
Cinematography by **Robert Krasker**  
Editor **Bert Bates**  
Music by **William Alwyn**  
Art Director **John Stoll**





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# PAGE TO SCREEN

## THE SCREENWRITER AND NOVELIST BEHIND *THE RUNNING MAN*

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by Barry Forshaw

### Battling the Bloody Censors: John Mortimer

“Bloody censors! Why should adults have to have their viewing or reading checked for ‘moral content’ by people with limited horizons?” When John Mortimer said this to me at a book launch at London’s Ivy restaurant, he had probably forgotten that we had had this conversation before – but I was, I admit, guilty of prompting him, as I knew how entertaining he was when attacking self-styled (or government-appointed) moral guardians. After all, his position as a defender of controversial censor-baiting causes was second to none. Mortimer was the go-to name when it became necessary to mount a defense of things which the censorious wanted to ban, and his frequent victories in that area consolidated his position. Warming to his theme at the book launch, he continued “I have no objection to parents protecting their children from material they don’t want them to see, but I certainly won’t have anyone telling me what I can see or read. In fact, although I’m always arguing for free speech for other people, it’s a personal thing for me; I just hate the notion that all art should be anodyne, with no capacity to shock and disturb.” I often think of these conversations with him in this new era of ‘trigger warnings’ (with campuses on American universities insisting on straplines on books warning that the contents might “disturb”) – Mortimer would have given such precious notions very short shrift.

John Mortimer (1923 – 2009) is most celebrated for his series of TV comedy dramas and books featuring Rumpole, an idiosyncratic, gruffly lovable lawyer who wins the kind of case that most of his colleagues spurn – rather like his creator, in fact. And while the novels are comedic, their subject matter often touches upon significant issues such as British politics in *Paradise Postponed* (1985) and modern attitudes towards infidelity in *Summer’s Lease* (1988). His battles as a solicitor did not include the Lady Chatterley trial (although there is no doubt that Mortimer would have relished taking on the prosecuting counsel who said “Is it a book that you would even wish your wife or servants to read?”), but he successfully defended the publishers Calder & Boyars in the 1968 appeal against the obscenity verdict on Hubert Selby Jr’s *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, was defense counsel in the *Oz*

conspiracy trial in 1971, and in 1976 defended the *Gay News* editor Denis Lemon against the Christian crusader Mary Whitehouse's charge of blasphemous libel. He also acted on behalf of the Sex Pistols in an obscenity hearing over their album *Never Mind the Bollocks, Here's the Sex Pistols*.

But whenever I met Mortimer, there was always more to talk about than his position as a doughty defender of free speech. There were his wonderfully entertaining novels, of course, and the perfectly cast television adaptations of his Rumpole books with Leo McKern impeccable as the bloody-minded Rumpole, clearly (as Mortimer admitted) a sharper version of the author himself, always ready to take on controversial causes. Mortimer's screenplays included an adaptation of his own novel *Paradise Postponed* (1986) and Franco Zeffirelli's 1999 film *Tea with Mussolini*. His work also included providing dialogue for *The Innocents* (1961), the Jack Clayton adaptation of Henry James' *The Turn of the Screw*, and a particularly well-wrought screenplay for Otto Preminger's *Bunny Lake Is Missing* (1965). From 2004 onwards, he worked as a consultant for the US TV show *Boston Legal*. His much-acclaimed autobiography *Clinging to the Wreckage* (1982) covered many aspects of his writing career, but in such a packed life, there were those who felt that a separate book entirely devoted to his writing would have been welcome.

I was always keen to chat to Mortimer about his experiences as a screenwriter. "In some ways," he told me, "the least control I have over what I write is when I'm working on a screenplay. If you're doing your job correctly, you are aware that you are no longer the principal creator (as on a novel) – to some degree, you are a cog in a machine. Your dialogue and your situations are grist to the mill of the director and – as they are what the viewers actually see – the actors. So if I permit myself a touch of ego as a novelist, I sideline it as a screenwriter, and trust such directors as Carol Reed to know what they're doing, whatever changes of emphasis they make when filming what I've written."

Mention of Carol Reed – who directed *The Running Man* – is a reminder that the urbane, well-read director was well aware of the importance of hiring the right screenwriter for his films; most famously, Graham Greene for *The Third Man*. While nobody would have the temerity to suggest that Reed's film of Shelley Smith's thriller *The Ballad of the Running Man* (1961) was in the same class, there is an elegance and intelligence to John Mortimer's screenplay which not only does justice to Smith's original novel but supplies idiomatic, persuasive dialogue for Lee Remick, Alan Bates and Laurence Harvey. And this is a rarer skill than one might imagine, when so many screenplays simply don't pass the speakability test. Mortimer's particular skill lay in his dialogue, honed in the sardonic and whip-smart prose of his *Rumpole of the Bailey* novels, and it's the dialogue as much as the persuasive performances of the three principals here that grants the characters verisimilitude, making

them more than just parts of a mechanical crime thriller. Mortimer was ruefully aware that much of his film work was not as successful as he had originally hoped, but almost everything that he wrote – either for the world of publishing or for the screen – displayed his effortless professionalism and that sharp ear for dialogue, qualities that never deserted him in a long and fruitful career.

### The Running Woman: Shelley Smith

While she may be largely forgotten today (except by the crime cognoscenti), the British writer Shelley Smith had a solid career and produced a series of well-turned thrillers, principally for the celebrated Collins Crime Club. While initially working within the parameters of the puzzle-based crime fiction genre, she nevertheless tried a variety of tropes to see which of them best suited her – and it might be said that like the title character of her best-known book, *The Ballad of the Running Man*, she was running against then-current trends to keep staleness at bay. By a process of reinvention – which involved a concentration on the psychology of her characters, avoiding perfunctory plots – Smith maintained a writing career which managed to stretch over three decades. Beginning with *Background for Murder* for the publisher Gerald Swan in 1942 (channelling more sexual frankness than was customary at the time), up to *A Game of Consequences* for Macmillan in 1978, Smith is one of the most underrated of British Golden Age writers.

Born Nancy Hermione Bodington in Surrey on 12 July 1912, Shelley Smith's writing career began to move away from the relatively uncomplicated crime formulas of the 1940s from the start. Such books as her *Death Stalks a Lady* (1945) and the same year's *This Is the House* demonstrated that Smith could deliver the goods within a relatively restricted field. The latter features the paralysed Julia Jacques, who is discovered dead with any malign motive discounted until her son Raoul is savagely killed. Smith supplies a standard detective figure – a crime fiction author with the unlikely name of Quentin Seal – to discover the murderer. Triumphant over some unlikely plotting here is Smith's already fully redeveloped narrative drive, ensuring the pages turn very quickly indeed. But like the best crime writers (such as Raymond Chandler in the United States and Dorothy L. Sayers in Britain), Smith became impatient with the constraints she felt were placed on her by both public expectation and her publisher, and sought to find ways to enrich and enlarge the possibilities of the genre – principally through a broadening of the characterization beyond the relatively simple strategies of the day, where the 'puzzle plot' was the norm.

With the more ambitious *Come and Be Killed* in 1946, Smith created in her protagonist Florence a more intriguing character than those she had previously attempted, making her a persuasive, damaged figure of the kind who might be found in more overtly 'literary'



novels. Florence, disturbed and unexciting, takes a decision to end her dull life, but her suicide attempt fails, as has so much else in her life. After being sent to a nursing home, she encounters the initially friendly and approachable Mrs Jolly. Smith is well aware that we won't trust the latter woman despite her companionable manner (and that too-cheerful name) and that readers will be expecting Florence to be placed in danger from which she will escape. But Smith is always cannily deceptive when it comes to reader expectations, and Mrs Jolly kills the luckless Florence. Rather like Alfred Hitchcock with *Psycho*, Smith makes the central subject here the murderer we encounter some way into the narrative rather than the doomed woman we assumed to be the heroine. Once again, Smith demonstrated her impatience with the clichés of the day.

Other excellent novels followed, such as *An Afternoon to Kill* in 1953, in which the conventions of the English detective novel were thrown up into the air to land as they may. It was an impressive piece, but better was to come with 1956's *The Lord Have Mercy*, once again exposing the strictures of middle-class English life as something freighted with dark and sinister undercurrents. We are shown the trappings of the 'well-made play' of the day – the outwardly placid English village in which various individuals have secrets to hide – but Smith has something more incendiary in mind for her cast. There is the lesbian couple – with one partner more than ready to ditch her smothering lover – and the wife of the local doctor, full of spleen and sexual frustration. After the death of the latter from a drug overdose, the cracks in the surface of quotidian existence become wider and wider until there is a final violent rupture.

*The Ballad of the Running Man* has a plot that was echoed in a much-publicized recent real-life event: the faking of a man's death for an insurance scam, with his wife part of the plot. By this stage of her career, Smith was the consummate professional, providing lean and efficient crime novels with nary a wasted word. In many ways, the book was a perfect blueprint for a film adaptation, and it's not hard to see why Carol Reed – a director always concerned with delivering strong linear narratives in all his films – was attracted to the piece. Sadly, though, the novel appeared to be almost the last gasp for Shelley Smith in terms of her career. From this point onwards, her writing life appeared to enter a kind of stasis, and there were to be no more successes of the kind that had distinguished her earlier life.

Perhaps Smith's happiest association with cinema was not, however, an adaption of one of her novels, but her own screenplay (written with John Hawkesworth) for a film adapted from a story by Noël Caley. A creative use of locale is crucial to the success of many a British crime film, and in few more so than J. Lee Thompson's Cardiff-set thriller *Tiger Bay* (1959). The director's inspired use of his port town locations has all the intelligence of his

later American work, such as 1962's *Cape Fear*. Smith's excellent screenplay describes a tomboyish young girl's pursuit by – and subsequent friendship with – a young sailor forced into manslaughter, and the film wears remarkably well, although the total avoidance of any paedophile associations (which will immediately spring to a modern viewer's mind in most of the situations where the young girl is menaced) either bespeaks a more innocent age – or a realization by Thompson that this is a story about trust and loyalty, not sexuality. While Horst Buchholz's desperate young Pole (guilty of the manslaughter of the bitter ex-mistress who has humiliated him) is constantly alone with latchkey kid Gilly in threatening situations, her most pressing danger is presented as one of murder rather than rape; it's self-evident that any re-make of the film would have to take our more jaundiced modern sensibilities on board.

Of course, Smith's screenplay aside, *Tiger Bay* is best remembered for its star-making debut turn by a very young Hayley Mills. Her performance has a still-astonishing naturalness, but the support from a sensitive Horst Buchholz and John Mills as the pursuing copper is impeccable. As an aside, it's interesting to note how much more convincing is Hayley Mills' transformation of her Home Counties vowels into Cockney glottal stops than she ever was at assuming an American accent in her subsequent career for Walt Disney.

The fact that Shelley Smith's name is known only to a few these days is a situation that may change. Admittedly, most of her work might be said to be dated, but a decent interval has passed and her writing can now be seen fruitfully in its context and era. There are publishers (including the British Library) who have begun to republish the work of neglected writers of an earlier era, and one can only hope that Shelley Smith's time may come again.

**Barry Forshaw's books include *Brit Noir* (Pocket Essentials, 2016) and *British Crime Film* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).**











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# NOWHERE TO RUN

## THE MAKING OF CAROL REED'S LAST THRILLER

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by Henry Blyth

By the time Carol Reed started work on adapting Shelley Smith's 1961 novel *The Ballad of the Running Man* to the big screen, the veteran director had something to prove. He had recently undergone the greatest setback of his career after being fired as director during shooting of *Mutiny on the Bounty* (ultimately finished by Lewis Milestone and released in 1962). On that film, he had been undermined repeatedly by star Marlon Brando, who deviated from the script and second-guessed Reed at every opportunity, effectively taking over as director and causing the film to go over-budget and over-schedule. Reed had returned to Hollywood and pleaded with Sol Siegel, the head of MGM, for Brando to be replaced. The gambit didn't work; Siegel figured the film would be a success because of Brando, not Reed, and immediately let the director go. According to Nicholas Wapshott in his biography of Reed, *The Man Between*:

The cost to Reed had been a personal crisis of confidence and an enormous blow to his prestige. To be sacked from any project is a humiliation, but to be so conclusively shown that Hollywood does not want your talent was a profound rejection. Reed appeared to have aged considerably.

Rejected, and suffering from acute kidney pain due to gallstones, Reed spent the rest of 1961 licking his wounds. Columbia, the studio that had produced Reed's previous film, *Our Man in Havana* (1959), finally offered him *The Ballad Of The Running Man*, and Reed quickly accepted. Though he never discussed the film in subsequent interviews, it is tempting to speculate the film represented a return to Reed's comfort zone: another international thriller, and yet another of Reed's "Man" films following *Odd Man Out* (1947), *The Third Man* (1949), *The Man Between* (1953) and *Our Man in Havana*. (Reed insisted that "Man" recurring in the titles was just a coincidence.) In retrospect, this aversion to risk-taking may have been Reed's undoing; comparisons to his earlier triumphs became his Achilles heel during production, and were the subject of many of the hostile reviews that greeted the film upon release.

Reed was first listed as prepping the project in the 25<sup>th</sup> January 1962 issue of *The Stage*, still under the novel's full title. (Articles reporting on the film's production continued to use the longer title until August, when the final, shorter title apparently became official.) Though Reed's producing the film for Columbia was confirmed by the *Los Angeles Times* in March that same year, an article in the same newspaper by Hedda Hopper on 16<sup>th</sup> April curiously lists Reed as soon directing *The Venture*, with Alec Guinness and Glenn Ford to respectively star as "a Scotland Yarder and an FBI man who round up a ring of Commies. They'll travel to London, Glasgow, New York, Chicago, New Orleans and San Francisco before they finally do the villains in."

For *The Running Man*, Reed would surround himself with trusted collaborators that had supported him on previous films. Robert Krasker was Reed's favourite cinematographer following their work together on *Odd Man Out*, *The Third Man* (for which Krasker won an Oscar<sup>®</sup>) and *Trapeze* (1956), and their work here would continue in the vein of the latter film, shooting in anamorphic Panavision and vivid color. William Alwyn had worked with Reed six times previously, composing memorable scores to *Odd Man Out* and *The Fallen Idol* (1948) among others. Bert Bates had been Reed's regular editor since *Outcast of The Islands* (1951). But for both Krasker and Bates, *The Running Man* would be their final collaboration with Reed; for Alwyn, it would be his final film score altogether.

Laurence Harvey signed on to play the lead role in March, while barrister-by-day/writer-by-night John Mortimer was confirmed to be writing the screenplay in June. Coincidentally, Mortimer and Krasker had both just worked on another suspense thriller by a venerable British director partially shot in Málaga – Anthony Asquith's *Guns of Darkness* (1962), starring David Niven and Leslie Caron. (In that film, Málaga stood in for war-torn South America.)

Alan Bates, who was hired the same week that filming started, reflected on his motivations for joining *The Running Man* in an interview with Gordon Gow for *Films & Filming* magazine in 1971:

That's the only time I've worked on a film for commercial reasons, because it seemed a good thing to be with a famous director and a famous actor and a famous actress. International promise of success, you know. It was set up as a big film. It's really the only time I've worked with that motive, and I didn't think it was going to be very good, although I hoped it would be. It was very strange – although the script was by John Mortimer, I didn't think it was good when I read it. And I didn't have a good feeling about it when I was doing it. Then, when I saw the final cut I didn't think it was good at all. I saw it years later on television, and was really rather impressed with it... But still, it seemed to me predictable. I'd read the novel by

Shelley Smith and I was very sorry that John Mortimer had cut out certain aspects. I think the film tried to follow a conventional line. No film should try to follow a trend, and do what film people think the public wants. There's no such thing as knowing what the public wants.

On playing the mercurial Stephen, whose motivations are unknown for much of the film, Bates said: "Actually, one consolation of doing it was that it was the mysterious part. It was the best part, because every time I came on they started wondering – and that's always good."

Lee Remick, fresh off filming both *Experiment in Terror* (1962) and her Academy Award<sup>®</sup>-nominated performance in *Days of Wine and Roses* (1962) for director Blake Edwards, almost didn't make it into the film. After initially agreeing to star as Stella in *The Running Man*, she was suddenly announced as the replacement for Marilyn Monroe on George Cukor's beleaguered *Something's Got to Give*, and got as far as costume fitting and being photographed working with Cukor before co-star Dean Martin refused to continue without Monroe. (Monroe was subsequently re-hired, but died of an overdose that August, while Remick was filming in Málaga; *Something's Got to Give* was never completed.) 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox allowed her to be released in June 1962, and she immediately re-joined the cast of *The Running Man* thereafter. (According to gossip columnist Erskine Johnson, Jean Simmons had already flown to Málaga to replace Remick before being let go.)

Studio filming was set to begin at Shepperton Studios in July, according to reports in *The Stage*; however, the working and spending habits of its leading man soon put paid to this. *The Running Man* could not have been a more apropos title for Laurence Harvey, whose intensely prolific output led one actor to joke, "Larry demands at least a half hour between films." Long shooting schedules usually meant actors only starred in one or two movies a year; Harvey starred in five films released in 1962 alone, and was already preparing his directorial debut *The Ceremony* (filmed after *The Running Man*, again in Spain, and released in 1963). He had earned so much money making films in Hollywood that he was unwilling to return to Britain, where he would be liable to pay substantial amounts of income tax. He placed a clause in his contract that stated all filming must take place outside the United Kingdom; the shooting schedule was changed to accommodate this, with 10 weeks of location shooting in Spain followed by another month in Ireland.

Production manager John Dark, in his 2007 tell-all memoir *Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, wrote that Reed recalled meeting Harvey for the first time when the latter was just a student. His apocryphal first words to the successful director: "Mr Reed, I am going to be a film star; what would you suggest is the best way I go about it?" Harvey's ambition was

evident not only in his hectic work schedule, but also in his on-off relationship with Joan Perry Cohn, the wealthy widow of Columbia head Harry Cohn (and inheritor of his company shares), who joined him for much of the shoot in Spain. (Harvey and Cohn would later marry in 1968.) When given a choice between staying in a hotel or villa while filming in San Roque, Harvey answered: "I only live in palaces." (He picked the hotel.)

Speaking to Erskine Johnson, Harvey bemoaned the blonde hair dye job necessary for his 'Jim Jerome' disguise, saying it gave him a "washed out" appearance, adding: "Just call me 'The Blob'." Harvey nonetheless sung Remick's praises to Johnson, telling Johnson after being asked about Dean Martin's rejection of Remick: "Thank him... for letting her come back to me. And the next time you see him, tell him the next time a blonde abandons him, I'll take over." In fact, Harvey was notorious for clashing with his leading ladies, and his abrasive attitude meant that he and Remick fought through most of the production. According to his sister-in-law Anne Sinai in her book *Reach For The Top: The Turbulent Life of Laurence Harvey*:

Harvey began dimly to realize that the movie was doomed to fail... everything about *The Running Man* was a disappointment to him. The locations were changed, causing delays. Between April, when he (first) arrived in Spain, and the end of June 1962 (when he returned following a break in filming), very little had yet been achieved, locations work was still going on. The constant postponements, delays and general confusion acutely depressed and irritated him. He was forced, he wrote to his parents, to sue the company, involving himself in an expensive lawsuit... "The people who run the companies today are no longer interested in films, but only in greed, lining their pockets and destroying what was once a great field of entertainment and sometimes even an art. In order to survive one had to be continually fighting their negativity and stupidity. Where one time we could spend all our efforts and energies on performance, we now have to watch every other aspect of the business..."

Reed initially intended to start shooting in Barcelona, gradually working up towards the mountains of Andorra, but became enchanted by the beauty of Spain's south coast, deciding to film there instead. So instead, the cast and crew headed to Málaga, with shooting also scheduled to take place in Algeciras, San Roque and finally at La Línea on the Costa del Sol, making the Rock of Gibraltar the cornerstone of the film's finale. As Wapshott points out, the latter was "not only a recognizable location but, to fit in with the ironies of the plot, the symbol of the Prudential insurance company." This last location was familiar to Harvey, too; he had married his first wife, Margaret Leighton, just off the Rock while filming WWII drama *The Silent Enemy* (1958) there.

Locations in Málaga included the local airport; the Santa Iglesia Catedral Basílica de la Encarnación, leading onto the Plaza del Obispo; and the Plaza de la Constitución by the Fuente de las Tres Gitanillas, where Stephen sees Stella driving a 1962 Lincoln Continental. Shooting then moved to San Roque, primarily at the Plaza de Andalucía, where the "Hotel Andelucia" that all three characters stay in was situated, as well as Calle San Felipe (the road heading upwards where bulls are run through the street). The scene where Rex plays with two young boys in the bullring was shot at the Plaza de Toros bullring located at the junction of Los Sargentos and Calle Velázquez. According to Nicholas Wapshott, the locals paid tribute to Reed by putting on a public screening of *Odd Man Out* in the bullring; however, being confronted with his past glories had the unintended effect of furthering Reed's insecurities about his current work.

The Spanish trajectory of the crew mirrored that of the film's protagonists; as Rex and Stella speed towards Gibraltar (following Rex's unsuccessful murder attempt towards Stephen), they drive into La Línea, first along Avenida de España, then onto Plaza de la Constitución, then Avenida Príncipe de Asturias (where Rex speeds towards Gibraltar). Production in Spain concluded in Gibraltar, on Winston Churchill Avenue and Gibraltar Airport.

The late Miles Kington, writing for *The Independent* in 2001, recalled observing the filming whilst working a summer job in Spain at the age of 21:

In the early 1960s, when I was a poor student, I got a vacation job playing double bass in a jazz piano trio in a night club in a small village in the Bay of Algeciras, in the south of Spain. It was one of those wonderful summers... It was also the year they made *The Running Man* in the country round there, and we made friends with the film crew, and even, if I remember correctly, played at one of their parties. We never met Laurence Harvey but we made friends with Roy, his stand-in, whose hair had been dyed a sort of orange, to tie in with Harvey's character. One day we saw Roy walking down Gibraltar Main Street. "Roy!" we shouted. We shouted again and again. Finally he turned round and scowled at us deeply. Unfortunately, it wasn't Roy. It was Laurence Harvey.

The exotic production proved irresistible not only to curious locals and tourists, but journalists. The *New York Times* dispatched Harvey Matofsky to write an on-set report from Málaga, published on 12<sup>th</sup> August; Matofsky was quick to note the circus troupe-like atmosphere while night shoots took place during fiesta week, as "scores of spectators lined Málaga's ancient cathedral square ... for nearly three hours they waited behind police barriers, six and seven deep, while Mr. Reed ... and a technical crew of some 150 British, Spanish and Americans set the scene ... Since the start of location filming here in July, *The*





*Running Man* has become a kind of traveling side-show for Málaga's fiesta-minded citizens ... Malageneans gathered by the hundreds, many of them hired on the spot to be movie actors in crowd scenes."

Night shoots at the square in San Roque would start at 9pm and finish around 5am. According to John L. Scott's report for the *Los Angeles Times*: "Nightly more than half the local population, some 2,500 men, women and children, gather at the church square to see the (filming) ... Enterprising merchants have established stands in the area to sell food, drink and sundry items; while residents in buildings with windows and balconies overlooking the location are cleaning up by renting vantage points. 'It's a real circus atmosphere,' Harvey declared. 'It beats anything I've ever seen.'" Speaking to Hedda Hopper a few weeks earlier, Remick outlined the challenges of filming in San Roque: "There's no running water and absolutely no plumbing ... Living in Gibraltar makes things doubly difficult as we have to pass through the frontier twice a day and they make the most of it. We shot one night and didn't finish until 3 in the morning; then had to sit until 6 at the frontier until things have opened up."

While filming in Spain, two unfortunate accidents occurred on set. On 4<sup>th</sup> August, a limousine carrying Remick collided with a truck on the narrow winding coastal road between Málaga and Marbella. The limo was wrecked, but Remick, despite suffering from shock, reported to work on set in Marbella an hour later. Later that same month, on 24<sup>th</sup> August, stunt pilot John Crewdson and camera operator John Harris were in a two-seater plane that crashed 400 feet off the Rock of Gibraltar while filming second unit shots for the climax of the film. While the plane sank, both men were treated at a local military hospital and found to not be seriously injured. The camera was also recovered, minus its lens.

Finally, in September, the production moved from Spain to Ardmore Studios in Bray, County Wicklow, Ireland, where many of the interiors and England-set exteriors were to be filmed. While cast and crew were relieved to be filming in regular studio hours again, the change in climate came as a shock to the system. Laurence Harvey wrote to his parents: "Every member of the cast and crew seemed to have come down with a bad cold and sinus trouble, but the principal sufferer is me." In addition to the studio work at Ardmore, the seafront on Strand Road in Bray doubled for Brighton in the scene where Rex makes his way ashore after faking his death.

A long, tumultuous shoot and poor health had taken their toll on Reed, leading to an equally difficult post-production. Bert Bates, Reed's regular editor, found "Reed's growing indecisiveness ... immensely frustrating," according to Nicholas Wapshott:

Bates attempted to goad him into action and grew increasingly impatient with Reed's by now genuine inability to make decisions. In the past Reed had always welcomed comments from anyone on set, but on *The Running Man* he started acting on the contradictory advice. It was as if all power of discrimination had left him... During the period of editing, Bates found Reed's dithering increasingly irritating and attempted to force him to be decisive. What had previously been an interest in others' opinions had become a fundamental lack of confidence in his own decisions. Bates would say to him, 'Well, I haven't got all day. I've got some roses to prune,' and would leave the cutting room to tend his rose garden. Reed was still paying the terrible toll of Brando's humiliation of him in *Mutiny on the Bounty*.

William Alwyn, who had composed what many considered to be his greatest scores for *Odd Man Out* and *The Fallen Idol*, would also encounter Reed's indecisiveness. After composing and recording his score in early 1963, his lush, orchestral opening theme was ultimately replaced, as recounted by Ian Johnson in his biography of Alwyn:

Reed's lack of confidence showed in his choice of title music. His original opening sequence was substituted by silhouetted graphics in imitation of the James Bond box-office success *Dr No* (1962). Alwyn's title score disappeared too, to be replaced by a jazzy composition by Ron Grainer, an Australian composer new to the film scene. The replacement gives every wrong signal about the nature of the ensuing drama. The film is destabilized from the first frame.

Alwyn would never score another film after *The Running Man*; Johnson speculated that the replacement of the theme was "the writing on the wall" for Alwyn; "pop, jazz and electronic underscores were proving that expensive orchestras could be dispensed with." Indeed, it seems fitting that in 1963, Ron Grainer would also compose (with Delia Derbyshire) his most enduring work: the electronically-realized theme from *Doctor Who*, which could not sound more different from Alwyn's more classical score. Alwyn's original theme would not be heard until it was included in a suite of music from *The Running Man* arranged by Philip Lane and performed by the BBC Philharmonic, released as part of the album *The Film Music of William Alwyn Volume 3* (2006) by Chandos Records.

The finished film opened on Screen "A" of London's Odeon Leicester Square on 1<sup>st</sup> August 1963, as part of an exclusive engagement; it would not roll out to the rest of the country until 7<sup>th</sup> October. From there, it played individually as well as on a double bill with quota quickie *Breath of Life* (1963), with which it played as the closing program at the original Trocadero Cinema in Elephant & Castle. Marketing materials boasted an array of histrionic

taglines attempting to convince the public of its credentials as a suspense thriller (“From the Four Corners of the Earth – to the Far Corners of Suspense – Director Carol Reed Focuses on Fear!” “Time is Running Out for the Running Man – and His Woman!”). Predictably, the official publicity materials glossed over any on-set animosity in favour of emphasising its international locations, among more trivial, light-hearted anecdotes such as the following:

Filming ... was done mainly on location in Málaga, Spain. However, afternoon temperatures soared well past 100 degrees and daytime photography was considerably hampered. Producer-director Carol Reed was forced to change the schedule from day to night, to the considerable relief of the stars.

Unable to find a satisfactory bikini for beach scenes in Carol Reed’s *The Running Man* ... lovely Lee Remick cabled a New York department store to send her a selection of five, on the first leaving for Spain. ... When the bikinis arrived, “all five were so cute it was hard to decide which to choose,” said Miss Remick. She finally wore a blue-and-white striped bikini for scenes on a raft off the beach at Málaga.

For a vital scene ... the property department had to supply 150 bras and girdles ... and regretted the fact they were not called upon to supply the girls to go with them! The items were needed as part of a cargo carried by Harvey in his plane, which crashes.

The film was a moderate box office success, but critical notices were on the whole less kind. Many critics accused the film of being “pedestrian” and “old-fashioned”, and compared it negatively to Reed’s earlier suspense works. The (anonymous) critic at the *Evening Standard* sneered that the film “has only two real surprises. One is the blond hair-do, ginger whiskers and Australian accent that Mr Harvey disguises himself with. That is very funny. The other is that Sir Carol Reed directed the film. That is not.” *The Sunday Telegraph* echoed the disappointment over the direction: “... something awful has happened to the cool professionalism of Carol Reed. The old theme of love and betrayal (magnificently explored in *The Third Man*) goes for nothing here. The style of the film is casual. The tension doggedly refuses to build. Fishing for compliments to pay, one latches thankfully on the fact that the color photography is splendid. But for a Carol Reed film, it isn’t much to say.” Many also compared it to Anatole Litvak’s *Five Miles to Midnight* (1962), which featured a similar insurance-fraud plot and opened in the UK just five months earlier. (Bert Bates also served as editor on Litvak’s film.)

The film was released in the USA and several other countries either simultaneously in October 1963 or over the next few months. Industry rag *Boxoffice* suggested “exploitips” for exhibitors to help promote the film (“arrange tie-ups with travel agencies for displays of posters of Málaga and Gibraltar with copy for the picture [and] stress Lee Remick’s Academy Award nomination for *Days of Wine and Roses*”). In Texas, the *Houston Post* posted large adverts for a “Running Man” contest, offering cash prizes to anyone who could identify the “Running Man (appearing) at various places around the city for an hour or so as announced in the ads... The contest cooked up by the Columbia exploitation department netted an unusual amount of news space.”

The film fared slightly better critically in America, enough for Columbia to release a newspaper ad on the week of release with the heading “THE *RUNAWAY* HIT!”, with quotes from critics like Judith Crist (“Devilishly clever! A lively assortment of suspense gimmicks!”) and Kate Cameron (“A good chase! Exciting and stunning! A high degree of suspense!”), though many of these quotes were in fact carefully selected from altogether mixed reviews.

In France and Germany, the title was tellingly changed to *Le Deuxieme Homme* and *Der Zweite Mann* – both translating as *The Second Man*, riding on the coattails on Reed’s earlier masterpiece.

A ghoulish association with real-life tragic events occurred the following year, when the FBI investigated a series of mysterious classified ads that appeared in two major Dallas daily newspapers in the weeks prior to the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The first, on 15<sup>th</sup> October 1963, appeared in the personal-ads section of the *Dallas Morning News* and *Dallas Times Herald*: “Running Man – Please call me. Please! Please! Lee.” The second, which ran the following day, read: “I want ‘Running Man.’ Please call me. LEE.” Finally, the day after that: “I’ve JUST got to see the ‘Running Man’ – Please call me. Lee.” The FBI suspected these ads could have been placed by Kennedy’s killer, Lee Harvey Oswald, and sought to verify this. According to an FBI report dated 6<sup>th</sup> April 1964, they soon discovered the innocuous (if no less bizarre) truth: the ads were actually placed by Robert Dent, assistant manager of a local cinema named the Capri Theater, as part of a ‘viral’ ad campaign to promote upcoming screenings of *The Running Man* (with “Lee” referring, of course, to Remick).







When Philip Shenon recounted these events in his exhaustively researched book, *A Cruel and Shocking Act: The Secret History of the Kennedy Assassination* (2013), he added as a footnote: “The film also starred the British actor Laurence Harvey, and it became Hollywood legend that the film was a commercial failure because it opened at about the time of the assassination and starred someone named Lee and someone named Harvey.”

Regardless of the reasons for its disappointing performance, the film was swiftly forgotten, and it was Reed's last work in the thriller genre. Robert Krasker was nominated for a BAFTA award the following year for Best British Cinematography (Color), but lost to Ted Moore's work on *From Russia With Love* (1963). Reed made four more films before his death from a heart attack in 1976, but despite winning the Academy Award® for Best Director on *Oliver!* (1968), none were felt to recapture the artistic heights of his golden era.

Largely glossed over, if not outright ignored, in retrospective analyses of Carol Reed's career – and indeed, the careers of its distinguished lead actors – *The Running Man*'s ignominious fate was further sealed by its total absence on home video in any format, with only a few scant television airings serving as reminders of its existence. This Blu-ray is the film's first official re-release to the public in over 55 years, and hopefully the end of its history of neglect.

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## THOSE WERE THE DAYS!

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*The following recollection from camera operator John Harris (1925-2012) on the plane crash that nearly claimed his life while filming The Running Man was originally published in issue 42 (November 2010) of British Cinematographer magazine. Many thanks to Barbara Pike at British Cinematographer and Dee Edwards at the Guild of British Camera Technicians for their invaluable assistance.*

A long time ago – 48 years, in fact – I was the camera operator on a film called *The Running Man*. Robert Krasker BSC was the director of photography and Carol Reed, the director. We were filming in Spain with locations from Málaga down to San Roque near the border with Gibraltar, working with artists such as Lee Remick, Laurence Harvey and Alan Bates. I had an apartment in a lovely little village called Quadaranque (in the Bay of Algeciras) so my wife Ursula and our three young sons were able to stay with me.

According to the schedule the 2nd Unit were due to do some aerial filming for a short period in Gibraltar and John Dark, the production manager, asked me to do a direct swap with the 2nd Unit camera operator because he wasn't allowed to work there as he was Spanish.

I'd done a lot of flying stuff – mainly helicopters – in the past, so was looking forward to working on a different camera plane – the EP9 – a single engine high wing monoplane with a fixed undercarriage. John Crewdson was the pilot and we were shooting mainly air to air stuff with the action plane, supposed to be flown by Laurence Harvey.

Our first day was mainly filming around the airfield, shooting in Panavision Anamorphic and fixing the Arriflex into the camera plane, taking the door off starboard side. What a lash-up that was with box, top-hat, masses of wood, a lot of clamps and several feet of rope! I was able to sit more or less next to John so that I could at least talk to him when we were zooming around the skies, shooting from various different angles.

I'll never forget basking in the warm August sun that day, having lunch and talking about what was left to do with the 2nd Unit director, Harold Haysom, who finally conceded that it was best he didn't come along on the next flight because there was nothing for him to do basically as he had to sit tightly in a corner at the back of the plane and couldn't even see what was being shot. An RAF Land Rover drove up and the Sergeant got out, wandered



over and casually asked if he could look at our plane “just in case I have to get anybody out if things go wrong.” Yes, sure!

On our last flight of the day we were turning back to land when the engine started to splutter and continued to splutter. John started to squeeze the ‘toggle’ pump furiously. For some inexplicable reason I wasn’t concerned, sitting there with one leg tucked underneath me and not even strapped in! Suddenly the plane just rolled over and plunged into the sea. There wasn’t time to think, let alone react. All I knew was that I was under water, with the camera on top of me. I remember feeling the wheel with my foot and kicking out so that I was propelled to the surface, choking and spluttering.

I did have a ‘Mae West’ on but I couldn’t find the toggle to pull and blow up although, thankfully, I did have a piece of the plane’s wing to hold on to. It must only have been a few seconds later that John popped up almost next to me. “F\*\*k me,” I said, but didn’t get much of an answer! John looked terrible, a nasty gash on his face (and a ruptured spleen we later discovered). Definitely NOT the best way to go for a dip in the sea!

To this day we can only guess how we managed to escape. We must have hit the water at a steep angle with the port wing hitting the sea first. The force of that must have thrown us violently out of the opening we’d created during prep by taking the door off. So there we were on a sunny Friday afternoon, floating in a lovely warm sea when an RAF chap came by towing a water skier. He stopped his boat and was looking at us very strangely, but I suppose we must have been an odd sight with blood all over our faces, bobbing up and down in the water. “Aren’t you going to rescue us?” I shouted.

It didn’t take us too long to reach shore only to be met by an entire grey-faced 2nd unit plus two police motor cyclists and an ambulance. I kept hearing that they’d had a pretty nasty shock seeing our plane dive into the sea! I wasn’t in shock, of course not, I was in pain! They kept trying to make me lie down on a stretcher but I didn’t want to, everything hurt too much. I think Stirling Moss was driving the ambulance that took us up to the Naval Hospital and I’m not sure which was more terrifying – the plane crash or the ride to the hospital. I was told that John Crewdson was in a serious condition and then John Dark came in to see me. He didn’t look too pleased – he had to tell my wife, Ursula, what happened.

“It’s John, isn’t it?” said Ursula when John arrived to speak to her. “Yes,” he said, “but he’s only slightly damaged.” Ursula had seen our two small planes flying about earlier and had a bad feeling about them, which got worse until she saw John. By the time she got to me in the hospital, I was propped up in bed – with a broken collarbone, multiple lacerations and a very bruised and painful stomach which made sitting up difficult.

We ended up in hospital for 10 days and two weeks respectively. And it was quite pleasant, actually, because as John ‘C’ got better, I used to wander down the corridor of an evening to share the odd bottle or two of Spanish champagne as we chatted about various things. Strangely enough, we never mentioned the crash.

The amazing thing was that the RAF managed to get what was left of the plane and the camera (minus the Panavision lens) out of the sea by 5pm that very evening. The camera was unloaded; the film dried off and sent to the labs in the UK. And it was alright! Roy Moores, our mechanic, stripped down the camera and washed out the salt water by standing in a shower.

The Spanish police found the lens in La Línea a few days later so that ended up being sent back to Panavision – completely seized up!

The Unit had moved to Ireland by the time I came out of hospital, but after a week of working on the film, I had to leave; my shoulder hurt too much. A pity, but in the circumstances I was very lucky to be alive. I think I got about £500 in compensation. I did better in my next accident some 26 years later – a double helicopter crash in Alaska. This time the compensation was \$5,000! But that’s another tale to be told another time.

There are two sorts of postscripts to this story.

A couple of months later I was working with Bob (Robert Krasker) again. This time on the Bronston super epic *Fall of the Roman Empire* (1964). Bob, Roy Moores, the director Tony Mann and I were flown out to Hollywood – first class – guests of Bob Gottschalk, the President of Panavision. We stayed at the Beverly Hills Hotel and were shown Panavision’s pride and joy – the Ultra Panavision – 65mm – (2.6-1). They wanted us to use the camera for the film – which we did. But I’m still not sure why because there were only about 10 cinemas in the world that were set up for the extra wide ratio. Now for the crunch bit. One day, Bob Gottschalk was complaining about the poor condition some people returned their equipment. For instance, he told us that one of his lenses had come back from a shoot in Spain, completely corroded and had to be sawn apart. Disgraceful,” he said. So I told him my story about the crash. And that was that.

And as for John Crewdson, I didn’t see him until many years later when we met again to do some helicopter shooting. As I got in I said: “John, I want a nice safe day’s flying please – it’s my birthday.” And he said: “It’s mine too!”







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## ABOUT THE TRANSFER

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*The Running Man* is presented in its original aspect ratio of 2.35:1 with mono sound. The HD master, transferred from the restored original film elements, was provided by Sony Pictures.

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## PRODUCTION CREDITS

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Disc and Booklet Produced by **James Flower**  
Executive Producers **Kevin Lambert, Francesco Simeoni**  
Technical Producer **James White**  
QC **Nora Mehenni, Alan Simmons**  
Production Assistant **Nick Mastrini**  
Blu-ray Mastering and Subtitling **The Engine House Media Services**  
Design **Obviously Creative**

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