



## The Bazaar of Bad Dreams

*Stephen King*

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## **The Bazaar of Bad Dreams** Stephen King

A master storyteller at his best—the O. Henry Prize winner Stephen King delivers a generous collection of stories, several of them brand-new, featuring revelatory autobiographical comments on when, why, and how he came to write (or rewrite) each story.

Since his first collection, *Nightshift*, published thirty-five years ago, Stephen King has dazzled readers with his genius as a writer of short fiction. In this new collection he assembles, for the first time, recent stories that have never been published in a book. He introduces each with a passage about its origins or his motivations for writing it.

There are thrilling connections between stories; themes of morality, the afterlife, guilt, what we would do differently if we could see into the future or correct the mistakes of the past. “Afterlife” is about a man who died of colon cancer and keeps reliving the same life, repeating his mistakes over and over again. Several stories feature characters at the end of life, revisiting their crimes and misdemeanors. Other stories address what happens when someone discovers that he has supernatural powers—the columnist who kills people by writing their obituaries in “Obits;” the old judge in “The Dune” who, as a boy, canoed to a deserted island and saw names written in the sand, the names of people who then died in freak accidents. In “Morality,” King looks at how a marriage and two lives fall apart after the wife and husband enter into what seems, at first, a devil’s pact they can win.

Magnificent, eerie, utterly compelling, these stories comprise one of King’s finest gifts to his constant reader—“I made them especially for you,” says King. “Feel free to examine them, but please be careful. The best of them have teeth.”

## **The Bazaar of Bad Dreams Details**

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# From Reader Review *The Bazaar of Bad Dreams* for online ebook

## **Zoeytron says**

A goodly collection of short stories written by the master tale spinner, Stephen King. Not a single clinker in the batch, but as always, some with more of a bite than the others.

If you are one of those individuals who continues to drag your feet about getting an e-reader, you may have been right all along. **UR** certainly suggests it. This one was full of tasty Easter eggs, and speaks to the Paradox Law.

**Morality** is one of the yarns with embedded teeth. Disturbing.

Inside these pages you will come across an insomniac with the ironic name of Mrs. Reston, a sandbar like no other, a creepy abandoned rest stop, a bad little kid who sports one of those horrible beanie caps with the propeller on top, a remembrance of a Halloween from long ago.

Each offering is prefaced with a short word from Stephen King telling of how the idea of the story came to him. Thoroughly enjoyed every one of these little look-sees into his creative mind.

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## **Kemper says**

Hey, it's a collection of Stephen King stories out just in time for...Thanksgiving? Really, Scribner? You had a book from the master of modern horror in your pipeline and decided to release it three days *after* Halloween? I'm no marketing guru, but I think this may be a clue as to why the publishing industry is struggling so much these days.

On to the review...

Any long time Stephen King fan should be willing to admit that the man can shit the bed every once in awhile, and when he writes a real clunker of a novel then you're stuck with that bad taste in your mouth until the next, hopefully better, one comes out. The great thing about reading a bunch of short stories from Uncle Stevie is that even when there's a turd in the punch bowl you can just roll into the next one immediately and usually find something much better.

That's pretty much the case here in which the mixed bag of stories range from King at his wonky worst to some really strong character pieces on serious topics like aging, poverty, and morality. So while I might have been rolling my eyes at the ending of *Mile 81* or the general goofiness of the villain in *Bad Little Kid* the mood only lasted until I hit one of the better ones like *Afterlife* or *Herman Wouk Is Still Alive*.

A lot of the stories have echoes to other King works. *Ur* has a link to *The Dark Tower* series as well as more than a passing resemblance to *11/22/63*. The evil car concept in *Mile 81* is something else he's done before in *Christine* and *Trucks*, and there's a lot of *From A Buick 8* in there. *Obits* shares some DNA with the *Everything's Eventual* short story, too.

But King has been doing this a long, long time so coming up with something totally new is like asking *The*

*Simpsons* to find a job that Homer hasn't already held. Mostly these are comforting echoes with enough upgrades and twists that you still feel like you're getting something new in the guise of the familiar.

Overall, it's a solid collection, and there are as surprising number of stories with no supernatural elements. That may disappoint some King fans, but I found those to be the best ones.

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## **Shelby \*trains flying monkeys\* says**

This book is a big old chunk...and so worth the price of admission.

I've never thought of Stephen King as a straight up horror author. He is more than that, he scares the crud out of me with his remarkable ability to look at humanity. He seems to be getting to (for me anyways) to a point in his life where he is debating life and what happens to us after..these stories seem to have that theme to some of them.

These stories are mostly stories that have at some time or another been published somewhere else barring a few new ones that he slips in for our pleasure.

The best part of this book is not the stories for me though. It's the tidbits that King gives us before each story with a little bit of where the story came from that kept me flipping these pages.

I'm just going to barely touch on each story and add where they were published before. There are a lot of stories packed into this bad boy.

**Mile 81** Somewhat of a coming of age story..with a touch of unwordly. (Previously published as an ebook)  
*Jimmy Golding hadn't believed in monster cars since he saw that movie Christine as a kid, but he believed that sometimes monsters could lurk in cars.*

\*4 stars\*

**Premium Harmony** A couple that has been married over ten years arguing over simple life happenings. I'll make sure to pick the pink ball instead. (published in a copy of The New Yorker)

\*3 stars\*

**Batman and Robin Have an Altercation** A son and his father who is suffering from dementia have an outing to a favorite restaurant. They really should come back there sometime. (Harper's Magazine)

\*4 stars\*

**The Dune** An elderly man makes another trip to a Dune he discovered as a child that has a few secrets left to tell. (Granta)

\*3.5 stars\*

**Bad Little Kid** This was one of my favorites in the book. That kid from Sluggo/Nancy? The mean boy with the propeller hat? He comes to vivid life for one man. (new)

\*5 stars\*

**A Death** I had already read/reviewed this one here (The New Yorker)

\*4 stars\*

**The Bone Church** I'm not even counting this one because I am not a fan of poetry...not even when it's by Uncle Stevie. (Playboy)

\*not rating\*

**Morality** Wow, just wow. A couple is struggling in a down turned economy. What would you consider sin? And what would you do to pull yourself up out of debt? (Esquire)

\*5 stars\*

**Afterlife** What happens after we die? Is there an afterlife? This one resounded with Revival (Tin House)

\*3.5 stars\*

**Ur** This was that e-book that King did when Amazon first launched the kindle. Fun as far as memories go, I just didn't fawn over it as much as I had hoped too. (e-book)

\*3 stars\*

**Herman Wouk is Still Alive** A down on her luck single mom wins a small lottery win and decides on a road trip with her bestie. (The Atlantic)

\*4 stars\*

**Under the Weather** A sick wife and her husband's love for her. I can't say much about this one without giving anything away. (Full Dark, No Skies-paperback)

\*3.5 stars\*

**Blockade Billy** A farm boy shows up to serve as a temp catcher in the big leagues. He ends up being the catcher that can stop anything. I'm not even a big baseball fan and this one was one of my favorites in the book. (novella)

\*5 stars\*

**Mister Yummy** Another end of life tale as an elderly man in a nursing home tells his friend that he has been seeing Mr. Yummy. A gorgeous guy that he first saw back when being gay was a dirty little secret. (new)

\*3.5 stars\*

**Tommy** Another poem (Playboy)

\*not rating\*

**The Little Green God of Agony** A billionaire has been put to bed after a horrible plane crash. His nurse believes that if he tried to work through the pain after the accident that he would be healing faster. (A Book of Horrors)

\*5 stars\*

**That Bus is Another World** A quick peep into a passing strangers world as the bus goes by. (Esquire)

\*3 stars\*

**Obits** A nerdy writer for an internet magazine who writes "mean" obits after celebrities die discovers something unique about his column one day after getting angry at his boss. (new)

\*5 stars\*

**Drunken Fireworks** A mother and son team of alcoholics take on the Italian CONNECTED neighbors that live across the lake in a many year long battle of the fireworks. (audio book)

\*4 stars\*

**Summer Thunder** A fitting story for the end of the book as the world ends in a nuclear future. (Turn Down the Lights)

\*3.5 stars\*

I think I've said before, I'm not usually a fan of short stories. There just is never enough to sink my heart and teeth into with them. I do make exceptions for a few authors and Stephen King will always head that list.

Spotlight to come after a few more reviews come in for this one.

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## Councillor says

Stephen King's latest short story collection consists of twenty (more or less) original stories and novellas, once again proving that King's imagination has not yet ceased to create new horrifying and stunning scenarios which he is able to put so easily and fluently into words. However, there are quite a few reasons for why this collection generally rather disappointed me, even though King managed to hide some true gems in here.

I am going to talk about some of them in depth in the rest of this review (*without spoiling any plot elements*), but so long, as for my reading experience, I can only think of how this collection mildly disappointed and excited me at the same time - a feeling King seems to love to create with his very ambivalent stories. Be sure to read this only if you are used to King's writing style, as I don't think the collection works for non-King readers.

### 1) **Mile 81** (4/5 stars)

Pete, an eleven-year-old boy, explores a closed gas station and becomes drunk for the first time in his life. Julianne, a lesbian farmer caring for horses, drives up at the gas station and finds an old car - a car which hasn't been there when Pete arrived minutes ago, with no driver in sight ...

This novella displays a strong introduction to the collection by combining King's more recent writing style with classic Christine-like horror. For me, it was a case of being in the right mood to read this story, because any other day, it might have received only two stars or even one due to its hilarious ridiculousness. But, if you don't mind the ending - and it should have become obvious by now that if there is one thing Stephen King cannot write well, then that's endings - this is a strong story about some interesting characters. Even though King stole one of his own ideas, I can forgive him for that, because this entertaining story made up for a funny hour of reading.

### 2) **Premium Harmony** (3/5 stars)

A short and simple story which managed to stun me with the sadness it made me feel. Available online in a copy of the New Yorker here, and recommended for a short read - preferably in the hot summer, as that might add to the story's atmosphere. But don't expect it to be light-hearted ... it isn't. However, it was a very intriguing trip without any typical fantasy/horror elements.

### 3) **Batman and Robin Have an Altercation** (4/5 stars)

This is the way horror could well happen in real life. And the realistic feeling attached to it totally freaked me out, because one day, there is a possibility of us becoming the parents of our parents - and isn't this prospect fear-inducing? Don't be misled by the strange title; this is a very serious story about a man whose father is suffering from Alzheimer's disease.

**4) The Dune** (4,5/5 stars)

I usually enjoy protagonists who could be our grandparents, and it was the same with this short story. Featuring an astounding supernatural element and a surprise ending, this proves Stephen King's writing talent perfectly. One of my favorites from the collection.

**5) Bad Little Kid** (5/5 stars)

Reminiscent of *The Green Mile* and *Rita Hayworth and Shawshank Redemption: A Story from Different Seasons*, this prison story focuses on George Hallas, a murderer who is going to be convicted to death for killing a seven-year-old boy. He talks to his lawyer, Leonard Bradley, about his extraordinary story, and soon the tale drifts off into almost unbelievable tension.

My personal favorite out of the collection, and recommended whole-heartedly for every fan of a good horror story.

**6) A Death** (3,5/5 stars)

In this story, King didn't create characters you'd particularly care for, but he managed to write a thrilling story with an intriguing atmosphere, embedded in a question of morality about belief and faithlessness. "A Death" was the first story by King I've ever read, and for me personally, it was a perfect introduction to his works. This short story can be read for free here and is not even 5000 words long, so ... read this interesting little story. It is worth it.

**7) The Bone Church** (2/5 stars)

Stephen King should stick with short stories. King as a poet? That's like Pennywise as a nice guy. Just doesn't work.

**8) Morality** (3/5 stars)

A young married couple's life is turned into complete turmoil when an aging man offers something unexpected. A story about questions of morality unfolded, and while I appreciated the dark undertone King used to deal with the serious topic, this insane story made me feel sick for hours after reading it. The thought that characters like these could be living just across your street is what makes this so horrifying.

**9) Afterlife** (4/5 stars)

After his death, a man encounters a possible scenario of the afterlife. Shocking and thought-provoking - easily one of the better King stories.

**10) UR** (3/5 stars)

Originally published seven years ago as a Kindle eBook, this novella deals with a university teacher reading in his Kindle and soon figuring out that some aspects of his new purchase are not quite the way they should have been. In the beginning, I was intrigued by the very interesting premise, especially since King referred to a lot of well-known authors like Hemingway and Fitzgerald, but in the end, this drifted off into ridiculousness and left a lot of potential aside without having made use of it. I am mildly disappointed, yet it was definitely an enjoyable read - if you look for something entertaining.

**11) Herman Wouk Is Still Alive** (1/5 stars)

I simply didn't get the point of this story. The title is completely misleading, the characters are ... okay, let's

better not talk about them; the story is as thin as a sodden piece of water; the writing is close to the worst as it ever got with King. Definitely a story to be forgotten soon.

**12) Under the Weather** (3/5 stars)

Again, I felt like something else could have been added to the story to give it more layers. This story is about a man and his ill wife, but it is impossible to add anything else without spoiling the ending. King says himself in the introduction that the ending is easy to be predicted, and it was. The build-up of the tension was nicely done, yet also unsatisfying in the end.

**13) Blockade Billy** (1/5 stars)

I am no fan of baseball, and that pretty much sealed the deal for me with this story. There was nothing behind those words which was able to grab me. The baseball jargon doesn't interest me at all, the story was simply consisting of some random plot elements, and the characters were untypically uninteresting, considering how characters are usually King's strength. Not recommended.

**14) Mister Yummy** (3/5 stars)

Nothing extraordinary. A gay man in a retirement home reminisces his difficult life of dealing with his sexuality and talks to a friend about his experiences. Easy to forget again.

**15) Tommy**

Again: Please, Mr. King, I know those poems are only experiments, but if you ever managed to fail at one awfully, it is in these poems.

**16) The Green God of Agony** (3/5 stars)

Typical King horror mixed with interesting characterism and autobiographical experiences results in a disturbing tale which feels so far from being believable that it almost feels real again. The sixth-richest man of the world survives a plane crash in a similar way as King survived his car accident, and despite his nurse's warnings, he now tries to exorcise his pain - with horrible consequences. Interesting story, but not my favorite and difficult to get into.

**17) That Bus is Another World** (3/5 stars)

A story surrounding the question of what should I do when I suddenly witness a crime? What are my priorities? Well-done, but also a story which relies mostly on atmosphere and will be forgotten after only a few days.

**18) Obits** (4,5/5 stars)

One of my favorite King stories, this deals with a reporter and his way to deal with a supernatural power which enables him to kill people with grave consequences. This is Stephen King at his best.

**19) Drunken Fireworks** (2/5 stars)

An entertaining story about the feud of two families, but the entertainment rather lies in its ridiculousness.

**20) Summer Thunder** (3,5/5 stars)

An apocalyptic short story recommended to fans of The Stand. Very well-written and memorable.

In the end, this collection very much feels like another hit-or-miss gathering of stories, some of which were great, some of them annoying, most rather unconvincing, yet interesting. The most interesting part about this



consists of King's introductions he wrote for each and every single one of the short stories, offering a lot of insight into his usual writing process and autobiographical pieces of information.

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## **Bradley says**

I figure I'd better put a bit of effort into this review, so rather than just throwing out a few impressions from just a few of the stories, I'll throw out impressions for ALL the stories. :) Stephen King is still a POWER in the world, for good and ill, and more importantly, he's a damn great writer. I don't care too much for short stories in general, but I do tend to enjoy them when I finally get my arm twisted.

Overall impression: SK's characterizations are King. Memorable, conflicted, and above all, deeply interesting. You know the old adage, "Kill your darlings?" Yeah. He's a master at it.

Mile 81 -

Truly gorgeous characters, especially the ones that died in horrible and grotesque ways. I sit in awe at SK's ability to evoke the feels and connect us to his people right before we wonder if they'll survive. I kinda expected a Christine-ish story, but this was pretty near perfect as it was. Awesome. Kids rock.

Premium Harmony -

Carver-like story with deep characterization, immediacy, and sudden death. Quite beautiful.

Batman and Robin Have An Altercation-

Well crafted story of road rage, but it didn't really grab me quite as much as the others. It was mostly nostalgia and a brief moment of terror.

The Dune -

A bit magical, a bit odd. A bit forgettable.

Bad Little Kid -

Fascinating characters and creepy coincidences and a very cool build. Smooth as silk. Some kids DON'T rock.

A Death -

An old-tyme lynching... or is it a murder mystery? Kill-em kill-em anyway!

Bone Church -

A meh poem.

Morality -

Back to interesting characters and a rather hardcore fall from optimism to abject pessimism, including some rather memorable obsessions. It was like watching a train wreck. The ending also turned my stomach, but not for the usual horror-type reasons. It was an indictment of beliefs. Odd and disturbing tale.

Afterlife -

Let's get away from this mortal coil, eh? Nothing changes if you go back. All your same mistakes to do over and over... or you could choose utter oblivion. No one is sinless, and the best part is the... you guessed it... the characters. I actually liked the societal preachiness. :)

Ur -

Back to some cool horror and character development, featuring everyone's favorite Pink Kindle! Fuck the One Ring... this one's EVIL. ;) And yet, I found myself looking up the new models of Kindle and dreaming... and yeah, this story is a Dark Tower tie in. That part made it AWESOME.

Herman Wouk is Still Alive -

Pretty Classic King. Fall in love with the characters only to be shown how ephemeral they are while simultaneously immortalizing them quite consciously.

Under the Weather -

Damn uplifting story about someone who keeps things around well after their "Best Fresh Date". It's both sad and creepy as hell, too, but mostly very optimistic.

Blockade Billy -

Even as SK warns us that we don't have to like a particular pastime to enjoy a good story about it, I still don't care much for baseball yarns. Or any sports, for that matter. Still, I kept with it and by the end kinda wished I was given a "Bad News Bears" story with SK's twist from this little gem. Uplifting, quirky, full of hope in the middle of despair, and in the end... the fat kid we had been rooting for all along actually wound-up being six-year-old Michael Myers. And have the movie be billed as something meant for kids, too. Does that make me sick? Muahaha

Mister Yummy -

This was an oddball. I know there's a lot of magical realism meets retirement home stories out there, and SK likes to corner the field, but running to back to flashback the 50's and eighties as a wild gay man rummaging about Aids, who eventually winds up being one of the top 1% and an ultraconservative in his old age just tells me that way too many authors out there just aren't trying hard enough. Rock on.

Tommy -

Nostalgia poem. 'S ok. Kinda had to be there.

That Little Green God Of Agony -

A story about pain management done SK style. A lot of old tropes done with style and nice twists. SK hasn't lost his talent. Indeed, he's been sharpening his blades all along. Now, let's get that sucker out!

The Bus Is Another World -

Kinda thought this would be a great fantasy title, but no, it was more of a story about tight distraction. Do we all filter things that happen this much? "Murder? Oh well... I've got A VERY IMPORTANT MEETING...." The thing is, the character is so interesting that I sympathize. What does that make me? (Hint: that's likely the point.)

Obits -

Probably one of my most favorite stories in this collection. Think Death Note, Vol. 1: Boredom with a rather less tight rule system attached to it. Very creepy and rather effective. I'd probably give everything up and move to Wyoming, too.

Drunken Fireworks -

As a plain short story without anything supernatural, it was a fun drunken ride. Hatfields and McCoys with fireworks. :) Good \*somewhat clean\* fun.

Summer Thunder -

SF apocalypse, as only SK can do it. Definitely a more concise tale than *The Stand*, but this time with a nuclear option. I loved Gandalf, and watching that progression really broke my heart. SK proves that it's only the close-up that matters. \*sigh\*

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## Franco Santos says

### 3.5

Uno de los mejores libros de relatos que ha escrito King. Superior a *Just After Sunset*, *Everything's Eventual*, *Nightmares & Dreamscapes*, y le llega a los talones al insuperable —al menos por ahora— *Night Shift*. Cuentos muy sólidos y maduros que, al menos a mí, lograron atraparme entre sus redes. Hace mucho que no leía una antología de este autor que me gustara tanto; no soy muy fanático de este tipo de obras.

Desde historias conmovedoras que muestran la cara más sentimental de King hasta otras que son tan perturbadoras que recomiendo leerlas de día, *The Bazaar of Bad Dreams* se ha posicionado como un libro intenso y tormentoso de principio a fin.

Algo que debo mencionar es que King explica de dónde salieron las ideas para cada relato. Eso me encantó. Me hizo sentir más cerca de él. Como si me estuviese contando un secreto.

Estos son los trabajos presentes:

**Mile 81:** Hace rato que tenía ganas de leer este cuento. Había leído críticas muy buenas de él. Y no me decepcionó. Desde el inicio estuve a merced de lo que iba ocurriendo en la historia. Es algo repetitivo en la mitad y por eso se me hizo un poco pesado, sin embargo, el entretenimiento está asegurado. (3.5/5)

**Premium Harmony:** Este es uno de mis favoritos. Es una pequeña muestra de lo cruel que puede llegar a ser la vida. Relato corto pero que hierde con un final que desborda de miseria. (3.5/5)

**Batman and Robin Have an Altercation:** No me gustó tanto como los anteriores. No le vi nada de especial. Es entretenido, un poco tierno y con un buen cierre, no obstante, no logró causarme nada. Definitivamente esperaba algo distinto. (2.5/5)

**The Dune:** Buen relato. No es de los mejores ya que tiene demasiado relleno. Se lee rápido y que trate la publicidad fue un ingrediente que me hizo aumentarle la puntuación, puesto que, al yo estudiar eso, ese relleno me resultó interesante. (3/5)

**Bad Little Kid:** Otro de mis favoritos. Se podría decir que es una novela corta. Es de los más oscuros del libro. Lo negativo es que tiene una conclusión muy predecible. Se veía venir desde casi la primera página. (4/5)

**A Death:** Ameno, agradable, con un comienzo que me atrapó en el acto. Lamentablemente, una vez más me encontré con una terminación que veía a kilómetros de distancia. Aunque eso no quiere decir que no lo recomiende. Un cuento de misterio psicológico. (3/5)

**The Bone Church:** Es un poema que no disfruté. Este sí tiene un gran final, en mi opinión. Sin embargo, no veía motivaciones para seguir leyéndolo. Me tuve que esforzar. Tal vez en otra ocasión intente leerlo nuevamente para ver si tiene un efecto diferente en mí. (2/5)

**Marality:** Ya lo había leído, quizás por eso esta vez también se me hizo pesado además de insípido. Para mí esta historia no tiene sentido. No me parece creíble que una persona pueda llegar a tener semejante reacción ante un hecho no tan aberrante, y que encima tiene (un poco) justificación. Es muy entretenido y se lee rápido, solo eso rescato. (2.5/5)

**Afterlife:** Otro abordaje del autor a la vida después de la muerte. (Puedo mencionar a Willa como otro relato en el que trata el tema, presente en *Just After Sunset*). Me hizo acordar mucho a *Replay*, de Ken Grimwood, así que original no me parece. No obstante, es otra obra ligera que se disfruta desde la primera hasta la última oración. (3/5)

**Ur:** Mi segundo preferido de esta recopilación. Por culpa de esta historia me pasé dos estaciones en el tren. Sumamente entretenida, con la correcta dosis de misterio para lograr sumergirme de forma completa en sus páginas. A los que han leído la saga de La Torre Oscura, Ur les va a sacar una sonrisa, se los garantizo. (4/5)

**Herman Wouk Is Still Alive:** Está para ocupar espacio, para hacer más ancho el libro. No tiene nada de especial. Ni buen inicio ni buen final, nada. Es ameno, solamente eso. Puede que a algunos los deje compungidos, pero a mí no. (1.5/5)

**Under the Weather:** Gran trabajo de King. Este también está entre mis predilectos. Excelente desenlace, que, aunque sea predecible, impacta por su carácter. Plantea lo duro que puede llegar a ser cuando uno pierde lo que más ama en el mundo. Triste relato sobre la superación, con ese toque turbador inherente al autor. (4/5)

**Blockade Billy:** Pesado y aburrido. Es un homenaje al béisbol, deporte que ni entiendo ni soy admirador. Es de esa clase de relatos que se recuerdan con odio. Lo único que destaco son las últimas páginas; fue la parte en la que logró engancharme un poco. (2.5/5)

**Mister Yummy:** Está bueno, sin más. A medida que iba leyendo ya sabía lo que iba a suceder. Anticipar al autor no es una señal positiva. Pero valoro mucho la personificación de la Muerte y la relación de los dos protagonistas. (3/5)

**Tommy:** Otro poema. Por favor, señor King, ¡no vuelva a escribir algo como esto! No comprendo cuál es el sentido de publicarlo. No tiene nada que pueda admirar (que es corto, quizá). Espero que otros lectores sean capaces de localizar el oro que se esconde entre sus prosas, si es que hay. (1.5/5)

**The Little Green God of Agony:** Insólita representación del dolor. Esta es la clase de trabajos que quiero leer. Al principio no entendía mucho de qué iba, pero alrededor de la mitad ya se había robado toda mi

atención. (3.5/5)

**That Bus Is Another World:** Curiosa interpretación del interior de los colectivos (autobuses). Creo que está para traerle algo fresca a esta antología. No sé si lo recomendaría. Es para leer si estás muy aburrido y quieres algo corto para pasar el rato. (2.5/5)

**Obits:** Uno de los mejores, sin duda. Lo malo es que es bastante repetitivo y tiene un final plano. Asimismo, me parece como una variable del relato *Everything's Eventual*. Pero este es de los que más recomiendo. Imposible apartarse de la historia. (3.5/5)

**Drunken Fireworks:** Gracioso, extravagante, con personajes de lo más peculiares. Un cuento que trata la obsesión y el espíritu competitivo que todos tenemos ardiendo en nuestro interior. (3.5/5)

**Summer Thunder:** *What better place to end a collection than with a story about the end of the world?* King, ¿qué le has hecho a mi maltratado corazón? Exijo que lo devuelvas a su estado original. Un cuento sobre el amor y la pérdida, sobre adónde puede llegar la naturaleza autodestructiva del Hombre. Un relato muy conmovedor que explora en la angustia de la soledad y lo que es saber que casi todo lo que tenías ya no está y lo poco que te queda morirá. (4.5/5)

Nota promedio: 3. Pero ponderando la extensión de los malos y los buenos, y el impacto que tuvieron en mí, como excelente persona que soy subo la nota final a 4. (¡¡Te amo, Steve!!).

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## **Maria Bikaki says**

Πρ?το βιβλ?ο της χρονι?ς. Εξαιρετικ? ?κδοση, θελκτικ?τατο εξ?φυλλο και μια σειρ? διηγημ?των για κ?θε γο?στο απ? τον ?να και μοναδικ? Stephen King. Σ?γουρα ?χι το πιο αντιπροσωπευτικ? του ?ργο θα μπορο?σες να το χαρακτηρ?σεις με μια πρ?τη αν?γνωση ως αρπαχτ? παρ?λο που ο βασιλι?ς των ιστορ?ων τρ?μου και μυστηρ?ου ?χει αποδε?ξει ?τι μπορε? να γρ?ψει και να γρ?ψει καλ? ?σο και αν ?χει μεγαλ?σει. Πολ? ?ξυπνη η ιδ?α των εισαγωγικ?v σημειωμ?των απ? τον συγγραφ?α πριν απ? κ?θε ιστορ?α. Οσο αφορά τις ιστορ?ες αυτ?ς καθαυτ?ς με κ?ποιες βαρ?θηκα για να μια ειλικριν?ς, κ?ποιες ?λλες μου φ?νηκαν πολ? απλ?ς για να τις ?χει γρ?ψει ο Κινγκ, σε κ?ποιες ?λλες ?θελα κ?τι ακ?μα και κ?ποιες μου ?ρεσαν πολ? ειδικ? ο τρ?πος που επ?λεξε για να τις διηγηθε?. Πρ?σημο θετικ? αλλ? μ?χρι εκε?.

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## **Will M. says**

Here's to the only book I read this September, because I'm not considering "The Grownup" by Gillian Flynn as a novel read this month. I'm already lagging way behind on my reading goal but it's fine. I've come to realize that I seriously don't have time to read anymore nowadays. It's annoying when I choose a bad novel because I stop at some point and feel that a huge amount of my time has been wasted. I'm really glad that this collection of short stories made me feel fulfilled. I enjoyed most of the stories, and I really loved some of them. This is the thing with Stephen King, he can make me enjoy things that I normally don't (short stories), but there's one thing that he didn't change, and that's my dislike of poetry. I ended up skipping "The Bone Church" entirely because I really don't like reading poetry, at all. Ironic how I used to write a couple of them when I was younger, but these days I try my best to avoid it. I know plenty of people enjoy the genre, and

that's good for you. It's just unfortunate that I can't seem to grasp the essence of poetry itself nowadays. I'm hoping this would change in the future though.

Just like the last collection of short stories I've read, I'm not going to do an in depth review of every story. I'm just going to talk about the three stories that I enjoyed a lot, considering I gave this a 4-star rating.

### *Ur*

I know how used up this idea is to this date, but King can make anything feel new and entertaining. He added in a new element known as the revolution to ebooks. It's a topic that's been fought over a lot in the internet. There should be no clear winner considering it all boils down to personal preference. I myself love the real thing, but I don't hate my iPad especially when I read in public. It's way easier because my bag weighs a lot lighter with just my iPad Mini rather than a heavy ass hardback. King incorporated a recent issue to a post-apocalyptic theme. It's not just the topic that made me enjoy this a lot, but also the characters. They did seem genuine about every emotion they exude. It's obviously not forced, and it's written the best way possible. The pacing is perfect, and the climax happens just at the right time.

### *The Dune*

The beauty of a collection of short stories is that you have no idea what each story is about. In the case of *The Dune*, it was a terrific surprise for me. This is one of the many fast reads of this collection. I remember reading this around 1 am and even though I was already sleepy and needed to wake up in about 5 hours, I still finished this, and I was wide awake after reading it. It's a simple story but the execution is remarkable. It's one of those slap at the face ending, but it's a good slap. It's a slap for not seeing what happens in the end.

### *Afterlife*

This is also one of those stories that will be stuck with you for a very long time. It's an amazing concept of what could happen in the afterlife. I'm quite scared that Stevie King is talking about the afterlife more nowadays, but it's fine. I'm just taking it in as added substance to this work. I want to go full on in depth reviewer over this, but it's a short story. The moment I go berserk mode on this, I will spoil you guys. Just buy the damn book and read this, and comment below if you disagree about it being amazing. I would love to know why, because I see no flaw in this. One of King's best work to date.

### *Obits*

This is my favorite of all the stories here. It's everything that makes it amazing. The characters, the plot, the writing, the pacing, everything. The messed up characters makes this short story a lot better than it already is. The main character works as an obituary writer on an infamous website. He doesn't really enjoy what he does but he doesn't have much choice considering he studied journalism and doesn't seem to want to try the bigger online publishing sites. One day he decides to write an obituary of his coworker, who is still alive. He was pissed and tired from everything so out of a whim he decides to write one. What happens next brings nothing but catastrophe in his life.

That's all I can say about this without spoiling. It's an amazing piece of work by King, and I can't believe that this is just a short story. I wanted more after reading it, and quite frankly I still want more right now. This is the one that really stuck by me up to now. I know I won't find anything as good as this out there in the book world. It's caused a bit of a book hangover, but just a bit, considering it's just a short story.

The stories such as *Mortality*, *Premium Harmony*, and *Drunken Fireworks* are also really amazing. I don't want to do a review of them anymore because where is the joy in the possibility of spoiling, plus I don't want to prolong a review that needs to be straight to the point to begin with.

I need to note the bad ones though, so beware of these rotten things:

- The Bone Church (I already mentioned why)
- Blockade Billy (this is the WORST one in this collection)
- Mister Yummy

4.5/5 stars, Rounded down because some of the stories are forgettable and I did hate three of them. The ones that I mentioned above and did the best "in depth" review of obviously received 5 stars and made me rethink the rounded down decision I made. This is one of King's latest work, and this just proves that he is still amazing at what he does. All I can say is read the damn book already.

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## Brandon says

Lately I'd been going through a bit of a reading slump. I picked up and put down a number of novels before deciding on King's latest short story collection, *The Bazaar of Bad Dreams*. While I skipped Uncle Stevie's most recent release, "Finder's Keepers" – I wasn't big on its predecessor *Mr. Mercedes* – I trusted in King to snap me out of my funk. Luckily, my trust was not misplaced.

Within King's latest short fiction anthology are twenty tales featuring everything from a mystical Kindle that acts as a window to alternate dimensions (UR), to a man with the ability to kill people through writing obituaries (Obit), to a man who finds out what awaits us after death (Afterlife) as well as many other chilling stories. It should be worth noting that only two are previously unpublished (three if you count the fact that *Bad Little Kid* had yet to be published in English). Luckily for me, I'd only read three of them (*Blockade Billy* / *Mile 81* / *Morality*), so there was not a lot of overlap.

A few of my favourites include the above mentioned Kindle-centric story UR – which despite initially turning me off due to its blatant product tie-in (first published as a promotional story for the Kindle Singles brand) it managed to shine as a truly original bit of storytelling. I also loved *Bad Little Kid*, a tale about a bastard of a child who shows up at different points in the life of a man, causing psychological harm to those the man cares about. The final story, *Summer Thunder*, was a very difficult read as it detailed both the heartbreaking loss of a pet as well as the horror of nuclear war.

I was delighted to see *Drunken Fireworks* included as it was originally released as an audiobook exclusive this summer. I had downloaded it a few months back but could only stomach a little less than five minutes as I strongly disliked the narrator.

Overall, I was happy with the collection and I think King's introductions about how each story came to be, added quite a bit to the overall experience. If you're a fan of King's other short story collections, I can't see you walking away disappointed.

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## Navidad Thelamour says

I have to say, *The Bazaar* from Uncle Steve was a bit of a letdown. Stephen King is, obviously, one of the most-hyped authors of today, which is why the fall from so high can be so hard for his readers. This collection of previously published works, in itself, had a range like open arms – from eye-roll-warranting clunkers that never took off and seemed rather (dare I say it?) juvenile for such a master wordsmith to others that truly took my breath away and really explored the mental and emotional crevices of humanity in a way that was breathtakingly clear and surprising – similar to reaching the summit of a huge roller coaster and seeing the landscape around you for those vivid two seconds before being dragged back down again. "Blockade Billy", "Bad Little Kid" and "Under the Weather", I'm looking at you now.

Overall, I will remember this collection as a hodgepodge that had some really great highlights – and those highlights are what I will take from it. The short introductions to each story were a real treat. Those anecdotes and revelations were the extra seasoning that this collection needed to thread it all together. However, it would've been cool if the original place of publication had been added to those intro snippets; after all, we all knew that most of them were previously published anyway.

Mile 81 –

This story was surprisingly and glaringly amateur. I appreciate that he led us into that with the knowledge that it was one of his earliest works, but it left an awful taste in my mouth and a hesitation to continue on with the collection. Not the best choice for starting out; better to bury that one somewhere in the middle. No stars.

Premium Harmony –

Deliciously dry and sardonic. The dialogue hit the nail on the head in that matter-of-fact sort of way that makes you laugh out loud, and the title – fittingly ironic indeed – tied the humor and storyline all together. Great story! \*\*\*\* 4 stars

Batman and Robin Have an Altercation –

The father-son storyline warmed the heart, but there wasn't much else here. \* 1 star

The Dune –

This story had a setting and cadence that really made the story, but this one would've been more compelling if it had showcased action scenes (which King definitely seems to have shied away from in this collection on a whole). At minimum, it would have carried more resonance if the narrator hadn't described the deaths in such a half-removed-from-the-situation fashion. Nonetheless, the voice and pace were very steady and controlled, allowing me to trust both the author's hand and the narrator's voice. \*\*\*\* 4 stars

Bad Little Kid –

Awesome story! Sinister, slow and, at times, somber, but never too much. It was a true King story for his avid readers, his hand for the disturbing on full display here. \*\*\*\*\* 5 stars

A Death –

A great "period" piece mixed with a little "local color" – sorry King, I know you have "no use for that." This one was an excellent example of how dialogue and regional slang can really set the scene and shape a work! \*\*\*\* 4 stars

The Bone Church –



I'm all for contemporary poetry that doesn't follow the rules, but the two poetry selections presented here proved that I am not a fan of King's attempts at that particular form of art. Disjointed and confusing, this one gets no stars.

Morality –

This story was very well written, but anti-climactic for sure, particularly the ending. Sure – it was a real-world sort of ending, but it didn't live up to the hype at all, and the “crime” that was so central to the story's theme was so minor, I couldn't believe all the hyperventilation they were doing over it! Good story telling, but not much there to sink my teeth into. \*\* 2.5 stars

Afterlife –

This story had a biting humor, juxtaposed by the two main characters' past interactions with women, that added a new and unexpected layer to this story. The 50s setting and various decades referenced as they discuss the mistakes of their past gave this one body and made it more memorable and 3-D. Good story. \*\*\* 3.5 stars

Ur –

UGH! This story was great for the sort of Super Bowl celebrity selling out that we expect to see in commercials, but this one SERIOUSLY took away a lot of King's street cred! Great for Kindle/Amazon propaganda, but an otherwise ridiculous attempt with a cop-out, oh-this-story-is-getting-to-be-way-to-long-so-let's-just-end-it-now sort of finale. Definitely warranted more than a few eye rolls. One star for referencing the cool possibility of authors writing new and previously unexplored works in other dimensions, but that's about it. \* 1 star

Herman Wouk Is Still Alive –

I LOVED the blunt and unornamented examination of life that this one provided. It was so real, in fact, that it was almost pure. This look at real life aimed for the authentic and came from a character's POV who was really examining it all for the first time. Thought-provoking and funny, this one was a winner. The story would've really hit the mark if it hadn't been watered down by the elderly couple's POV. \*\*\*\* 4 stars

Under the Weather –

AWESOME story; definitely one of the best of the bunch! I felt a nod to “A Rose for Emily” in this one that I loved; it was macabre in a delectable way that resonated loudly at the end. It had all of the elements of a good short story and a King-worthy ending. The thread about the dream really tied this one together. \*\*\*\*\* easily 5 stars

Blockade Billy –

This one was another long one, but I truly did not mind it being long at all! The jargon here was thick as molasses, which I didn't always get, but it didn't take away from the story; in a lot of ways, it made the story. I felt like I was a part of their world, which is the whole reason that people read when they could just watch a movie. The ending was KILLER. Really. Killer. \*\*\*\*\* easily 5 stars

Mr. Yummy –

This one didn't live up to the intro that King wrote for it; it was neither about desire nor AIDS (for that matter), which made it a bit of a letdown. The irony and humor of the “grim reaper” aspect made the story unique, but this one seemed like a failed attempt overall because those topics were just mentioned in passing, not really explored as the intro seemed to promise. \*\*\* 3 stars

Tommy –

No comment is comment enough. Not a fan of Uncle Stevie's poetry in this collection.

The Little Green God of Agony –

Umm, not a winner for me. This was like R.L. Stine's Goosebumps on steroids (mild steroids that made it appropriate for an adult, not extreme steroids that made it King-like). Enough said. \*\* 2 stars for the humor added by the nurse's thoughts and the dynamic between she and her boss.

That Bus Is Another World –

Good little short with a surprise ending. I'll tip a nod here to King for putting his characteristic examination of humanity into this one. \*\*\* 3 stars

Obits –

Didn't live up to the phenomenal story I thought I was getting (because of its length and premise highlighted on the jacket flap). You'd think that only the best stories would be highlighted there, but, in my opinion, the opposite happened. This one also veered towards juvenile at times and the ending was...whhhhaaaat?... a letdown for sure. \*\* 2.5 stars for the premise

Drunken Fireworks –

This one had absolutely nothing to do with horror or even the vaguely macabre. Though King shared his distaste for the term, this one was definitely just an episode of "local color," which is likely why he felt the need to defend against that. \*\* 2 stars

Summer Thunder –

Sure, what better way to end the collection than with the apocalypse, I agree. This, however, showed again how King didn't jump in to tackle the big action scenes but settled for examining the aftermath, or 3rd person removed version of them. Other than that, it was a solid story, worthy of the King brand, with an ending that was foreshadowed but...comme si comme ça.

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**Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says**

MY BLOG: [Melissa Martin's Reading List](#)

I'm not going to go into each and every story, you can read that from some other reviews :) Although I liked most of the stories there are four that are my favorites and I will list those!

**THIS ONE WAS MY FAVORITE**

This one tells about the extremes a man that loves his wife will go and it's so... just ick.. and I love it so much! :-)

**NEXT**

I loved this one because I love the idea of a monster car and what that car did! I don't really care about the stupidity of some of the people, lol, I just love the whole idea!

## **NEXT**

I liked this one because the son goes and gets his dad each week to go out to eat, his dad is slowly losing his memory. They have a really nice time eating, but then something happens on the way back to the nursing home and it was just so cool what ole pops did when he knew his son was in trouble. And after all was said and done, pops just goes back to talking about something he remembers years ago :-)

## **AND LAST ON MY LIST**

I really wanted someone to end this bad little kid, but this little kid is not what he seems, like you didn't figure that out! What would you do if you have an evil little person following you all of your days.....

I very much enjoyed the book, there were a few I didn't care for but most of them, even the little stories I thought were good because they were really a bad dream for that person dealing with it.

Kudos, Mr. King! :-)

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## **Justin says**

I think every time I review a Stephen King book, I write something about how he is a much better writer when he isn't doing horror. Where this collection of short stories excels is when King introduces the next story to the reader. His introductions here and in all of his books make you feel like you're just hanging out at the bar with him, enjoying a delicious craft beer, while he breaks down his writing process for you. That stuff is great, but unfortunately, at least in this case, most of his actual stories just missed the mark for me.

I could go story by story and give you my thoughts, but I'd rather just say that there are some good stories here. Some stories that hit on relationships and death. A fun story about baseball that ultimately gets way outta control. Man, I love baseball, too. Isn't baseball the best sport there is? Forget the NFL. Sorry.

You get more cars destroying people, and there is seriously a story about a Kindle and an alternate universe. Boy, that one was way too long and way too ridiculous. In fact, many of these short stories felt longer than they needed to be.

Another issue I had at times, and I've found in other books is that the villains always come across as way too over the top. For example, in Mile 81, the first story, the way King tries to convince me that someone is the bad guy is having them throw out all kinds of disgusting insults that no one would ever really say in real life. It's like he has to use language and cartoon antics to develop the antagonist of the story. But, whatever.

King has some really awesome short stories and novellas out there, and a few are sprinkled into this collection. I don't think it's worth reading this from start to finish. Pick out a few and steer clear of the rest. I'll keep you in suspense on what those few are.

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## **Nicholas Sparks says**

Yet another wonderful collection of short stories, some with twists and turns you simply don't see coming. Plus, it features autobiographical comments on when, why and how he came to write (or rewrite) each story.

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## **Jonathan Janz says**

For some authors, creating a large body of work doesn't mean quality has to suffer. Unfortunately, there are readers and critics who make exactly that assumption. As a result, when you're as prolific as Stephen King, you're prone to the following dangers:

--Folks using verbs like "spewing," "spitting," "cranking out," or "vomiting" in reference to the frequency with which you're published.

--More books mean more opportunities for criticism. In that vein, many readers tend to forget ten great experiences with an author and fixate on a few bad ones and proclaim, "That's it! I'm done with him!" If an artist takes the James Cameron route of creating something new every five or six years, there are fewer opportunities for fans to repudiate him. King affords himself no such luxury. He keeps "cranking them out," which means he receives all the exasperation and faint praise associated with being prolific.

--The notion that you're somehow "grandstanding," and that the author who gazes moodily into the distance for six months without typing a single word is somehow more serious about his or her craft.

When you keep all this in mind, you begin to understand that for an artist who cares, producing work prolifically is actually a sign of great courage. And—though this should go without saying—the product of a stalwart work ethic. Stephen King refuses to coast on the reputation of his considerable body of work, and what's more, he refuses to stop growing.

If I had penny for every time I heard someone swearing off Stephen King because (Insert Title Here sucked), I'd have enough money to buy a masterpiece like THE BAZAAR OF BAD DREAMS.

And it is a masterpiece, friends.

You see, those who fell off the King Fan Wagon back in '83 or '96 or '09 are probably perfectly happy reading other authors, and I'm the last person to condemn someone else's taste.

But in this author's humble opinion, those who've forsaken or have not been reading King are missing some of the best work of his career.

I don't know if King has ever been better at crafting stories than he is now. For proof, just look at a few of the delights included in these pages:

"Ur," a surprisingly old-fashioned tale where you root for the good guys and fear the hand of Fate.

"Bad Little Kid," a nasty little chiller that had me avoiding windows in the fear I'd discover the sinister child staring back at me.

"Morality," a story that shook me with its casual monstrousness and its eerie plausibility. I wish I could forget it, but I can't.

"A Death," which left me stunned and a bit abashed because of the way I'd so thoroughly identified with the protagonist lawman.

"Summer Thunder," one of the best apocalyptic tales I've ever read, and certainly one of the saddest. My God, I hope we never suffer a nuclear holocaust.

"Cookie Jar," a yarn that moved me to tears and reminded me forcibly of my grandfather.

"Batman and Robin Have an Altercation," which veered into territory I did not expect and featured a perfect ending.

And "Drunken Fireworks," the sort of hilariously wild throwdown only King could pull off.

For those of you still reading King--for you Constant Readers--you've already experienced these stories or you someday will. You know exactly what a gift Stephen King is.

For the rest of you? There are many authors in the world, and I hope you find one who brings you the same kind of happiness Stephen King brings me.

Long days and pleasant nights to you all.

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## **Anne says**

I waited so, so long for this book, and while I cannot say I disliked it, I do feel that it wasn't as strong as some of Mr. King's other collections. There were some stories here I *loved*, and some that, as some of Mr. King's more colorful characters might say, "Sucked the big one." I don't want to bog you down in Reviewland, so I'll just give a sentence or two for each, and an individual rating. It may or may not average out to four stars, but I'm giving it one for the cover. Sue me.

Mile 81 - Yeah, no. This one dragged on too long by at least two devourings. Two stars, max.

Premium Harmony - ....not sure if I was meant to be scared or horrified or grossed out by this. I do have to say that I felt more for the dog than Mary. Does that make me a bad person? Three stars.

Batman and Robin Have an Altercation - This one was great. Extra love for the ending. Five stars.

The Dune - Glimmers of *Duma Key*. Liked but not loved. Characters not what I expect from King - too flat. Three stars.

Bad Little Kid - I actually liked this one a lot. Would've liked a better explanation on the transfer of the bad juju, but still. Four stars.

A Death - Very DT vibe to this one, without the fantasy aspect to the Westernishness. (No, that is not a word. I acknowledge that freely.) Four stars.

The Bone Church - I hate narrative poetry. Ew. This could have been fantastic as prose. One star.

Morality - Riveting and with fascinating characters. Four stars.

Afterlife - What a completely horrifying view of what happens when we die. Like a not funny but terrifying *Groundhog Day*. Four stars.

Ur - Another appearance by my least favorite King baddies. They sucked in *Hearts in Atlantis*, they sucked in *The Dark Tower* series, and they suck here. (view spoiler) Two stars.

Herman Wouk Is Still Alive - Not a fan of this one much. I think Brenda and Jasmine are caricatures of clichés of drunken fat moms. Shame on this story. One star.

Under the Weather - OMG the creep factor of this one. Undiminished by guessing the ending. Five stars.

Blockade Billy - I don't care if this was about baseball. It wasn't *just* about baseball, and I loved it. Five stars.

Mister Yummy - Weird, and not in a great way. Three stars.

Tommy - UGH. Shades of Allen Ginsberg. Please, no. One star.

The Little Green God of Agony - Very creepy and well characterized. "Monster" a little weird, but did like the ending. Four stars.

That Bus Is Another World - Sometimes neurotic MCs work, sometimes they don't. I didn't like this one very much. Two stars.

Obits - This one had a refreshingly original premise, and (despite warnings to the contrary) I thought the ending worked well. Four stars.

Drunken Fireworks - Meh. Reminded me of *Delores Claiborne*, but with none of DC's compelling characterizations and horror. Three stars.

Summer Thunder - Cannot compete with *The Stand*, obviously, since it's not 89879349871234098143 pages long, but a horrifying mini-apocalypse just the same. (view spoiler) Four stars.

TL;DR: Read this for the high points, but expect some low ones, as must be with any short story collection. You'll enjoy some of them, at least, because there's something for everyone here. Truly a bazaar.

\*\*\*\*\*

OMG OMG OMG IT'S IN THE MAIL IT WILL BE HERE SOON

\*breathes into paper bag

Okay. I'm okay. It's cool.

\*\*\*\*\*

OMG I CAN'T WAIT I CAN'T EVEN

I  
CAN'T  
EVEN

GASP

Gimmegimmegimmegimmegimmegimme

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### **Erin says**

I don't know how long this Stephen King binge is gonna last but I'm enjoying it. I thought I'd be sick of him by now but no I just keep right on reading, I already have the next book picked out. The Bazaar of Bad Dreams wasn't really on my radar but last Friday I was browsing Half Price Books and saw it for \$4 and bought it. I didn't even read what it was about until I got home (when I'm in a book buying frenzy I'm dangerous) I was very pleased to find out it was collection of stories. I've said it before and I'll say it again nobody writes a short story like Stephen King. As with all of his collections I have my favorites and my not favorites.

My Favorites: Under The Weather- I've read it before and its still one of my all time favorite short stories.  
The Dune - I love a story with a sick twist ending.

A Death - An unexpected favorite

Morality - My grandmother used to say that Greed was the death of morality

Afterlife- Should be a movie or a tv show

Ur- Has something to do with The Dark Tower series and inspired me to buy the first 3 books.

Obits- Should also be a movie or a tv show

Not Favorites: The Bone Church and Tommy- I don't like poetry not even poetry written by Stephen King.

Stephen King books dont need any recommendations but if you've never read him this collection is a good place to start.

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### **Char says**

Not exactly a thrilling collection is The Bazaar of Bad Dreams.

One of the main reasons why is because I have purchased a couple of these stories already, for \$3.00 or \$4.00, each. (UR and Mile 81, I'm looking at you.) I think it really sucks to be asked to pay for these again, along with a bunch of other stories that were already published elsewhere.

Aside from that gripe, I also wasn't impressed with the stories themselves. Yes, it's disappointing that most of them were not horror, but I'm okay with that. It's just- it's also disappointing that the stories were not all that good. I loved *The Little Green God of Agony* and a couple of the others, but not enough to make reading this entire collection worth the time or money.

I hate to say these things, because I love the King and have said in the past I would be happy to read his grocery list, but I guess now I'm rethinking even that. I'm bummed.

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## Carol says

**4+ Stars** Within the pages of the twenty stories presented in **THE BAZAAR OF BAD DREAMS**, there is some **really great** stuff and only four that I'd read previously, (*that I enjoyed again*) **but the very best part** of this collection (*for me*) were the secret tidbits of information SK discloses about himself and his life in the initial introduction and prior to each tale; for example, **Dam! Wouldn't you just love to run into STEPHEN KING in the grocery store.....well one lady does and the outcome is hilarious!**

**MILE 81 - 4 Stars** - No "paratroops from hell" for 10 year old Pete, but there **is** a "hell" of an adventure at an abandoned rest stop. Scary, Creepy and 'Sticky' little sci-fi story with a monster in disguise.

**PREMIUM HARMONY - 2 Stars** - The need for a purple kickball leads to two deaths. (*wish King would have skipped the second one*) **Dark** Humor.

**BATMAN AND ROBIN HAVE AN ALTERCATION - 4 Stars** - The sadness of dementia and road rage, but a memorable Halloween. Way to go Pop!

**THE DUNE - 4 Stars** - The last will and testament of Harvey L. Beecher....hehehe. You **do not** want to be the recipient of the mysterious tale told here.

**BAD LITTLE KID - 5 Stars** - A convicted child killer finally confesses the whole truth to his unsuspecting lawyer. **Creepy and Deadly** like **Pennywise** all the way to the **Twisty** end. (*My favorite*)

**A DEATH - 3 Stars** - (*re-read*) A murder out west....A missing cowboy hat....A missing silver dollar, and....A 'crappy' ending!

**A BONE CHURCH - 2 Stars** - Weird piece of poetry....didn't get it.

**MORALITY - 3 Stars** - (*re-read*) Would you commit a major sin for \$200k? Chad and Nora do.....with consequences.

**AFTERLIFE - 4 Stars** - Would you do it all again?.....**You bet your ass!** (*with a few changes*)

**Ur - 4 Stars** - Deadly headlines and a mysterious "pink" Kindle. "All things serve the tower." (*need to get back to Roland!*)

**HERMAN WOUK IS STILL ALIVE - 3 Stars** - Two friends...a fun



trip...worry...drinking...despair...speeding... **Very Dark!**

**UNDER THE WEATHER - 4 Stars** - The dream....The stink....Oh No!

**BLOCKADE BILLY - 5 Stars** - (*re-read*) Fun time at the "old" ballpark **if** you like revenge, murder, and the blade. "**Baseball is a good thing. Always was, always will be.**"

**MISTER YUMMY - 3 Stars** - Reliving life at Lakeview....premonitions, memories and an antique watch.

**TOMMY - 2 Stars** - Remembering the 1960's.

**THE LITTLE GREEN GOD OF AGONY - 4 Stars** - The mega rich....a plane crash....painful rehab, **AND.....** the extermination. **Ewwww.....Creepy!**

**THAT BUS IS ANOTHER WORLD - 3 Stars** - When things go wrong. A man, a woman, a scarf, and a knife.....Holy Crap!

**OBITS - 4 Stars** - The lethal power of the written word!

**DRUNKEN FIREWORKS - 5 Stars** - (*re-read*) We're in the money!!! A fireworks competition between **colorful** neighbors across the lake turns combative. **Super Funny!** (*so much better than the audio IMHO*)

**SUMMER THUNDER - 5 Stars** - So sad....No hope....Goodbye....**The End!**

**AND FINALLY.....**to answer your question Mr. King, **YES! It is certainly cool to still be here! Great Stories!**

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## Matthew says

After averaging out my ratings, this book came out at almost exactly 4 stars. Check out my story by story reviews below.

Mile 81 - 4 stars - I read this when it first came out by itself. Unique and creepy - I like when King writes about monster cars. I didn't care for the resolution - too quick and convenient. But, still a good Story

Premium Harmony - 2.5 Stars - Just a couple of hours in Ray's life with some seriously unfortunate developments - nothing too exciting. Not really a beginning, or a climax, or an end.

Batman and Robin Have an Altercation - 5 Stars -Fantastic little story - we get to know the characters fast and there is an unexpectedly touching (and gruesome) twist. And, I found the twist satisfying!

The Dune - 4.5 Stars - Dark, twisted, mysterious - just when you think you know where the story is headed, King gives you a bit of a shock and a wink.

Bad Little Kid - 4 Stars - Another creepy revenge story. In places, almost silly - but it wouldn't be silly if it was happening to you!"

A Death - 3 Stars I enjoyed the Western theme, the writing, and the majority of the story. Only three stars because the Western stuff was so cool, but it just kind of ended blah and I wanted more

The Bone Church - 3 Stars - A poem - some cool imagery and a dark, gruesome story. Very quick read.

Morality - 4 Stars - Partway through, I realized I had read this before. It is interesting to ponder what sort of darkness we have in side of us, what would it take to unleash it, and how far would we be willing to go?

Afterlife - 5 Stars - I really enjoyed this interpretation of what might be waiting for us when we die. I also like that it is another tough "what would you do?" situation (King likes to do those).

Ur - 5 Stars - This was a re-read for me. Great story with a unique concept. I am reading this on a Kindle - which seems appropriate. Which author would you look for if you had the parallel universe Kindle?

Herman Wouk Is Still Alive - 3 Stars - Interesting idea for a story, but the narrative felt forced. It was like King knew what he wanted to say, but not quite how to say it.

Under the Weather - 4 Stars - King mentions in the intro that you can kind of see where this one is headed the whole time, and that's true - but, it doesn't ruin the dark goodness of the story.

Blockade Billy - 5 Stars - This was the second time I read this - I will have to go back and check what I gave it last time I read it, but it was 5 stars this time. I love a good baseball story and I love King's dark twist. Also, the historical fiction aspect of it is nice.

Mister Yummy - 4 Stars - King touches on the boundary between life and afterlife again. This one is very unique.

Tommy - 4.5 Stars - I thought this was a really cool little poem. Makes you think about the fact that who we are when we die is who we are to the rest of the world forever.

The Little Green God of Agony - 4 Stars - Bizarre and dark. Lots left for the reader to conjecture. What is pain?

That Bus Is Another World - 4 Stars - A little existential journey about our encounters with others and how involved we would willing to be in other people's worlds. King is really hitting the "What would you do?" with this story collection.

Obits - 5 Stars - unique and creepy idea! Also, King mentions the town I grew up in and the place where I learned to downhill ski - so bonus points!

Drunken Fireworks - 4.5 Stars - A comedy, and I did LOL a few times. It reminded me of my last two 4th of Julys on a lake in rural Indiana.

Summer Thunder – 3.5 Stars – Melancholy, hopeless, and nostalgic; a pretty decent (but certainly not uplifting) way to end the collection

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## Edward Lorn says

There isn't much left to say about Stephen King that I haven't already said in the past 60+ reviews I've done of his work. I put this collection off as long as I felt possible. I wanted to finish it before Hill's *The Fireman* comes out tomorrow, and King's *End of Watch* drops next month. But to tell the truth, fellow Constant Readers, I procrastinated as long as I did because... I'm kinda scared. After *Revival*, I honestly doubt we'll see another standalone Stephen King novel. I will not repeat my reasoning, which I gave in my review of *Finders Keepers*, but I have a feeling King is saying goodbye. Mark my words, this will be the last collection we'll see from King. But believe me when I say, I will be thrilled if I am wrong.

I didn't like every story, but the ones I did like balanced the ones I didn't, even out the score of the overall book. No collection's perfect. Every good short story collection is an experiment meant to showcase an author's reach. It is a celebration of craft. And if every story is to everyone's liking, the author has gone terribly wrong somewhere.

This review will be long because I plan to spend a paragraph on every single story. So settle in or click away. If you're still here, let's rap.

"Mile 81" is the first tale and one of those rare King stories I did not read during its standalone release. I knew we had one final collection coming, and I didn't see the point in reading the few he'd scattered out over the market like seed in a bird sanctuary. Let everyone else gobble them up. I'll wait for the entire loaf of bread, thank you very much. Yes, this is another killer-car story. But what's really wrong with that? I didn't care much for *Christine* or *From a Buick 8*, but I liked this one very much.

"Premium Harmony" is one of my favorite stories in this collection. It is King at his literary best. I hear people bitching about how Stephen King is a bad writer or how he's a horror writer for people who don't like horror and I wanna staple their privates to a merry-go-round and spin, spin, spin... Stephen King might not be the best writer in the world but he is one of our greatest living storytellers, and many of his books are classics. This story is proof that he's not the one-trick pony so many people seem to think he is.

"Batman and Robin Have an Altercation" is another story that flexes King's literary muscle. Nothing horrifying about this story, other than how human beings sometimes treat each other. Loved the unfailing bond between father and son. Even with his mind half gone, pops took another stab at life.

"The Dune" is one of those stories that all King fans will find familiar. It deals with the foretelling of death. There is, at my last count, four stories that tackle this subject in this collection alone, but the theme is a strong one throughout King's career.

"Bad Little Kid" is likely my favorite story in the entire collection. Enough said.

"A Death" is one of only two stories in this collection which I'd previously read. You can read my review of it [HERE](#).

"The Bone Church" is poetry. Stephen King is not the best poet.

"Morality" is one of my favorite kinds of tales. What would you do for a life-changing amount of money? There was a time in my life when I would have done what the lady in this story does. Not anymore. But only because I no longer need the money.

"Afterlife" follows its title close enough that I don't think I need to discuss it any further. Although I must say, I really love the structure of this story. It just feels right. And this is coming from someone who doesn't believe in any form of life after death.

"Ur" is a Dark Tower story not set in Mid-World. All things follow the path of the beam, and my nerdy little heart dug every path this story took. Special nod to *Insomnia* in this one as well.

"Herman Wouk is Still Alive" feels like another author doing an impersonation of Stephen King. The little horrific details there at the end felt forced, and I liked the foreword more than the actual story.

"Under the Weather" is predictable but morbid fun. Even if I knew where it was going, it was still entertaining getting there.

"Blockade Billy" is a story about baseball. Not much else to say. King even says "give it a chance" in the foreword of this tale. I own the Cemetery Dance mini-hardcover of this one, but only because it was on clearance at B&N for \$3. The best part about that little hardcover? It has "Morality" as a special feature.

"Mister Yummy" is another "precursor of death" story in the vein of "The Dune" and "Obits", but I feel it's closer to "Bad Little Kid" side of things. It's odd, which sometimes means the opposite of good in King's hands (thinking of *The Tommyknockers* and *Dreamcatcher*), but here it works. Nice nod to Hemingford Home herein.

"Tommy" is probably the only poetry King has ever written that I didn't dislike. Drink to the motherfucker!

"The Little Green God of Agony" hits close to home for me. It made me think of my own battles with pain and pain medicine, and my mother's knee replacements. Pain you cannot see is usually written off or flat out ignored by the very people who you seek help from. But, I will admit that, sometimes, it's all in our heads.

"That Bus is Another World" is another instance of King being weird and good at the same time. It doesn't happen often, but it happens here.

"Obits" is the final "precursor to death" story. It is the longest and more original of the previous three like it, and my third favorite tale in the collection.

"Drunken Fireworks" is the second of the two stories I had previously read. I reviewed it [HERE](#).

"Summer Thunder" is the final story, and like the forthcoming *End of Watch*, could very well herald the end of King's multifaceted career. The story is about the end of the world, and is one hell of a heartbreaking tale. To end what could be his final collection with a story about the end of the world seems to be a sign of endings to come. Then again, I love reading too much into things.

In summation: Here we are, at the end. This review should be taken as an invitation to converse about all things Stephen King. If you stuck around, meet me in the comments and we'll share stories. What's your favorite King tale? Which novel is your favorite? Can you possibly pick just one?

**Final Judgment: A love letter to the short-story format.**

