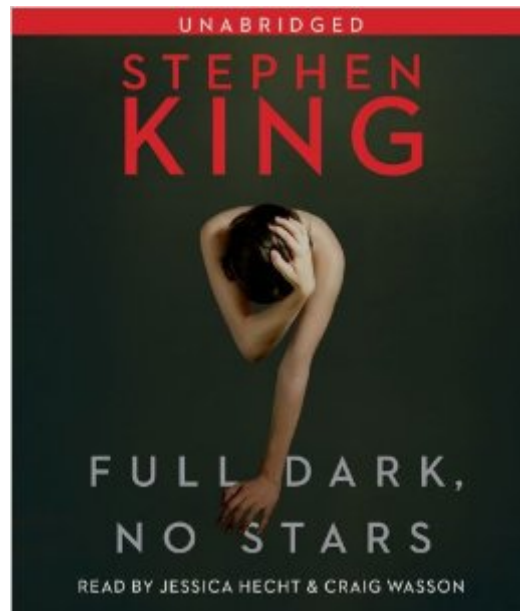


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Full Dark, No Stars



Synopsis

The acclaimed #1 New York Times and undisputed King of Horror Stephen King delivers five unforgettable short works, two of which will soon be adapted for film, and which Booklist called "a raw look at the limits of greed, revenge, and self-deception." Like *Different Seasons* and *Four Past Midnight*, which generated such enduring hit films as *The Shawshank Redemption* and *Stand by Me*, *Full Dark, No Stars* proves Stephen King a master of the long story form. "I believe there is another man inside every man, a stranger," writes Wilfred Leland James in the early pages of the riveting confession that makes up "1922," the first in this pitch-black quartet of mesmerizing tales from Stephen King. For James, that stranger is awakened when his wife Arlette proposes selling off the family homestead and moving to Omaha, setting in motion a gruesome train of murder and madness. In "Big Driver," soon to be a major Lifetime movie starring Maria Bello, a cozy-mystery writer named Tess encounters the stranger along a back road in Massachusetts when she takes a shortcut home after a book club engagement. Violated and left for dead, Tess plots a revenge that will bring her face to face with another stranger: the one inside herself. "Fair Extension," the shortest of these tales, is perhaps the nastiest and certainly the funniest. Making a deal with the devil not only saves Harry Streeter from a fatal cancer but provides rich recompense for a lifetime of resentment. In the last of the tales, soon to be a major motion picture, Darcy Anderson's husband of more than twenty years is away on one of his business trips and his unsuspecting wife looks for batteries in the garage. Her toe knocks up against a box under a worktable and she discovers the stranger inside her husband. It's a horrifying discovery, rendered with bristling intensity, and it definitively ends "A Good Marriage."

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Full Dark, No Stars is a collection of 4 novellas that envelope the dark side in us all. The collection gets you started with...1922 - This first person POV story is a confession of a farmer detailing his deeds which lead to the worst year of his life during the year 1922 in Nebraska. It is written with Mr. King's normal grab your attention right away and then bog the story down for a while throwing in those little blurbs to keep the plot moving. The majority of the story is predictable leading right up to an easily drawn conclusion. However, Mr. King does a nice job of ending the story on anything but relative to typical and in doing so saved it from being a low rating story. I would rate this one in the 3.5 stars range. Big Driver - Another tale of rape and revenge. Even though this one was really predictable yet I still found it an engaging read, especially at the end. Mr. King does a great job of giving just enough details to get his vision across and at the same time leaves out enough so the reader can fill in the rest. I do feel he could have added more to the characters in this one. I wish he would have added more to the antagonist, but it seems he just let the deeds that were done to be enough to invoke a hatred for the antagonist and it just wasn't enough. The protagonist had her high and low points, but it was actually one of the side characters that seemed to have more to them in just their short scenes. The pacing and flow of the story was well done and so I will give this one a 4 out of 5 stars. Fair Extension - How remorseless can a person be? Read this story and find out. To me, this one portrayed hatred in its purest form. This one was a really quick read as it is the shortest story in the collection. This story doesn't beat around the bush.

I was looking forward to reading 'Full Dark', especially as it is a collection of stories rather than a novel. The short story suits King perfectly; far less room for the sagging middle section, the proliferation of thumbnail-sketched characters, predictable plot-turns, etc. The writing tends to be both more concentrated AND more pacey; it gathers its wits and gets down to what King does best: telling a great story. At his worst, he coasts along on automatic, happy to let the characters, plots and effects from earlier stories reappear in different guises, and he pads, so that dreary middle section becomes pendulous and plodding. Since three of the four stories in Full Dark are longish ones (or novellas), there is room for quite a bit of 'automatic' writing. The first story, simply titled '1922' is, essentially, a ghost story, in the form of a prolonged confession by a man who murdered his wife. The murderer is a poor and desperate Nebraska farmer. King establishes the man's voice (contrite but not above self-deception) quite beautifully in the first few pages. Here's a sample: 'I

believe that there is another man inside of every man, a stranger, a Conniving Man. And I believe that by March of 1922, when the Hemingford County skies were white and every field was a snow-scrimmed mudsuck, the Conniving Man inside Farmer Wilfred James had already passed judgement on my wife and decided her fate.' But the story has a middle which sags and then some, and by the time the ghost makes its appearance the encounter has been so over-prepared that it is, inevitably, a non-event. And there are rats. Anyone find rats scary? If you do, you may find this tale engrossing, but in my experience an abundance of these critters usually indicates that the fiction will be seriously dilapidated.

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