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KING



DREAMCATCHER

'Classic King' Mail on Sunday

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PRAISE FOR STEPHEN KING

'*Dreamcatcher* is yet another masterpiece from Stephen King . . . Not only does he write better than anyone else in this genre, he also produces a narrative that never loosens its grip' *Evening Standard*

'A slice of classic King . . . The characters here have a rare vitality and depth . . . anyone who loves King's earlier work will love *Dreamcatcher*. And anyone seduced by the more literary King of *The Green Mile* or *Hearts in Atlantis* may be surprised by the extraordinary and enduring fertility of his talent' *Mail on Sunday*

'King has inspired a whole generation to read. He's made them read good, witty prose . . . a fabulous teller of stories who can create an entire new world and make the reader live in it . . . *Dreamcatcher* must be one of his best . . . the plot and its interconnections are beautifully tailored . . . difficult to forget' *Express*

'He manages the mechanics of thrill, horror, surprise and climax expertly. King-readers will be wholly satisfied by *Dreamcatcher*' *The Sunday Times*

By Stephen King and available from New English Library

FICTION:

Carrie
'Salem's Lot
The Shining
Night Shift
The Stand
Christine
The Talisman (with Peter Straub)
Pet Sematary
It
Misery
The Tommyknockers
The Dark Half
Four Past Midnight
Needful Things
Gerald's Game
Dolores Claiborne
Nightmares and Dreamscapes
Insomnia
Rose Madder
Desperation
The Dark Tower I: The Gunslinger
The Dark Tower II: The Drawing of the Three
The Dark Tower III: The Waste Lands
The Dark Tower IV: Wizard and Glass
Bag of Bones
The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon
Hearts in Atlantis

By Stephen King as Richard Bachman

Thinner
The Bachman Books
The Regulators

NON-FICTION:

On Writing (A Memoir of the Craft)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen King was born in Portland, Maine, in 1947. He won a scholarship award to the University of Maine and later taught English, while his wife, Tabitha, got her degree.

It was the publication of his first novel *Carrie* and its subsequent film adaptation that set him on his way to his present position as perhaps the bestselling author in the world.

Carrie was followed by a string of bestsellers including *The Shining*, *It*, *Misery*, *Bag of Bones* and *On Writing* (A Memoir of the Craft).

He lives in Bangor, Maine, with his wife, novelist, Tabitha King.

First, the News

From the *East Oregonian*, June 25th, 1947

FIRE CONTROL OFFICER SPOTS 'FLYING SAUCERS' Kenneth Arnold Reports 9 Disc-Shaped Objects 'Shiny, Silvery, Moved Incredibly Fast'

From the *Roswell Daily Record*, July 8th, 1947

AIR FORCE CAPTURES 'FLYING SAUCER' ON RANCH IN ROSWELL REGION Intelligence Officers Recover Crashed Disc

From the *Roswell Daily Record*, July 9th, 1947

AIR FORCE DECLARES 'SAUCER' WEATHER BALLOON

From the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 1st, 1947

USAF SAYS 'CANNOT EXPLAIN' ARNOLD SIGHTING 850 Additional Sightings Since Original Report

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From the *Roswell Daily Record*, October 19th, 1947

**SO-CALLED 'SPACE WHEAT' A HOAX,
ANGRY FARMER DECLARES
Andrew Hoxon Denies 'Saucer Connection'
Red-Tinged Wheat 'Nothing But A Prank,' He
Insists**

From the *Courier Journal* (Ky), January 8th, 1948

**AIR FORCE CAPTAIN KILLED CHASING UFO
Mantell's Final Transmission:
'Metallic, Tremendous In Size'
Air Force Mum**

From the Brazilian *Nacional*, March 8th, 1957

**STRANGE RINGED CRAFT CRASHES IN MATO
GROSSO!
2 WOMEN MENACED NEAR PONTO PORAN!
'We Heard Squealing Sounds From Within,' They
Declare**

From the Brazilian *Nacional*, March 12th, 1957

**MATO GRASSO HORROR!
*Reports of Gray Men with Huge Black Eyes
Scientists Scoff! Reports Persist!*
VILLAGES IN TERROR!**

From the *Oklahoman*, May 12th, 1965

**STATE POLICEMAN FIRES AT UFO
Claims Saucer Was 40 Feet Above Highway 9
Tinker AFB Radar Confirms Sightings**

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From the *Oklahoman*, June 2nd, 1965

**'ALIEN GROWTH' A HOAX,
FARM BUREAU REP DECLARES
'Red Weeds' Said To Be Work Of Spray-Gun,
Teenagers**

From the Portland (Me.) *Press-Herald*, September 14th, 1965

**NEW HAMPSHIRE UFO SIGHTINGS MOUNT
Most Sightings in Exeter Area
Some Residents Express Fear of Alien Invasion**

From the Manchester *Union-Leader* (N.H.), September 19th, 1965

**ENORMOUS OBJECT SIGHTED NEAR EXETER
WAS OPTICAL ILLUSION
Air Force Investigators Refute State Police Sighting
Officer Cleland Adamant: 'I Know What I Saw'**

From the Manchester *Union-Leader* (N.H.), September 30th, 1965

**FOOD POISONING EPIDEMIC IN PLAISTOW
STILL UNEXPLAINED
Over 300 Affected, Most Recovering
FDA Officer Says May Have Been Contaminated Wells**

From the Michigan *Journal*, October 9th, 1965

**GERALD FORD CALLS FOR UFO INVESTIGATION
Republican House Leader Says 'Michigan Lights'
May Be Extraterrestrial In Origin**

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From the Los Angeles *Times*, November 19th, 1978

**CALTECH SCIENTISTS REPORT SIGHTING HUGE
DISC-SHAPED OBJECT IN MOJAVE**

**Tickman: 'Was Surrounded by Small Bright Lights'
Morales: 'Saw Red Growth Like Angel Hair'**

From the Los Angeles *Times*, November 24th, 1978

**STATE POLICE, USAF INVESTIGATORS FIND NO
'ANGEL HAIR' AT MOJAVE SITE**

**Tickman and Morales Take, Pass, Lie Tests
Possibility of Hoax Discounted**

From the New York *Times*, August 16th, 1980

**'ALIEN ABDUCTEES' REMAIN CONVINCED
Psychologists Question Drawings Of So-Called 'Gray Men'**

From the *Wall Street Journal*, February 9th, 1985

**CARL SAGAN: 'NO, WE ARE NOT ALONE'
Prominent Scientist Reaffirms Belief In ETs
Says, 'Odds Of Intelligent Life Are Enormous'**

From the Phoenix *Sun*, March 14th, 1997

**HUGE UFO SIGHTED NEAR PRESCOTT
DOZENS DESCRIBE 'BOOMERANG-SHAPED' OBJECT
Switchboard At Luke AFB Deluged With Reports**

From the Phoenix *Sun*, March 20th, 1997

**'PHOENIX LIGHTS' REMAIN UNEXPLAINED
Photos Not Doctored, Expert Says
Air Force Investigators Mum**

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From the Paulden *Weekly*, (Ariz.), April 9th, 1997

FOOD POISONING OUTBREAK UNEXPLAINED REPORTS OF 'RED GRASS' DISCOUNTED AS HOAX

From the Derry *Daily News* (Me.), May 15th, 2000

MYSTERY LIGHTS ONCE AGAIN REPORTED IN JEFFERSON TRACT Kineo Town Manager: 'I Don't Know What They Are, But They Keep Coming Back'

SSDD

It became their motto, and Jonesy couldn't for the life of him remember which of them started saying it first. *Payback's a bitch*, that was his. *Fuck me Freddy* and half a dozen even more colorful obscenities originated with Beaver. Henry was the one who taught them to say *What goes around comes around*, it was the kind of Zen shit Henry liked, even when they were kids. SSDD, though; what about SSDD? Whose brainstorm had that been?

Didn't matter. What mattered was that they believed the first half of it when they were a quartet and all of it when they were five and then the second half of it when they were a quartet again.

When it was just the four of them again, the days got darker. There were more fuck-me-Freddy days. They knew it, but not why. They knew something was wrong with them – different, at least – but not what. They knew they were caught, but not exactly how. And all this long before the lights in the sky. Before McCarthy and Becky Shue.

SSDD: Sometimes it's just what you say. And sometimes you believe in nothing but the darkness. And then how do you go along?

1988: Even Beaver Gets the Blues.

To say that Beaver's marriage didn't work would be like saying that the launch of the Challenger space shuttle went a little bit wrong. Joe 'Beaver' Clarendon and Laurie Sue Kenopensky make it through eight months and then *kapow*, there goes my baby, somebody help me pick up the fuckin pieces.

The Beav is basically a happy guy, any of his hang-out buddies would tell you that, but this is his dark time. He doesn't see any of his old friends (the ones he thinks of as his *real* friends) except for

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the one week in November when they are together every year, and last November he and Laurie Sue had still been hanging on. By a thread, granted, but still hanging on. Now he spends a lot of his time – too much, he knows – in the bars of Portland's Old Port district, The Porthole and The Seaman's Club and The Free Street Pub. He is drinking too much and smoking too much of the old rope-a-dope and come most mornings he doesn't like to look at himself in the bathroom mirror; his red-rimmed eyes skitter away from his reflection and he thinks *I ought to quit the clubs. Pretty soon I'm gonna have a problem the way Pete's got one. Jesus-Christ-bananas.*

Quit the clubs, quit the partying, good fuckin idea, and then he's back again, kiss my bender and how ya doin. This Thursday it's the Free Street, and damned if there isn't a beer in his hand, a joint in his pocket, and some old instrumental, sounds a little bit like The Ventures, pouring from the juke. He can't quite remember the name of this one, which was popular before his time. Still, he knows it; he listens a lot to the Portland oldies station since he got divorced. Oldies are soothing. A lot of the new stuff . . . Laurie Sue knew and liked a lot of it, but Beaver doesn't get it.

The Free Street is mostly empty, maybe half a dozen guys at the bar and another half a dozen shooting eightball in the back, Beaver and three of his hang-out buddies in one of the booths, drinking draft Millers and cutting a greasy deck of cards to see who pays for each round. What is that instrumental with all the burbling guitars? 'Out of Limits'? 'Telstar'? Nah, there's a synthesizer in 'Telstar' and no synth in this. And who gives a shit? The other guys are talking about Jackson Browne, who played the Civic Center last night and put on a kick-ass show, according to George Pelsen, who was there.

'I'll tell you something else that was kick-ass,' George says, looking at them impressively. He raises his undershot chin,

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showing them all a red mark on the side of his neck. 'You know what that is?'

'Hickey, ain't it?' Kent Astor asks, a bit timidly.

'You're fuckin-A,' George says. 'I was hangin around the stage door after the show, me and a bunch of other guys, hopin to get Jackson's autograph. Or maybe, I don't know, David Lindley. He's cool.'

Kent and Sean Robideau agree that Lindley is cool – not a guitar god, by any means (Mark Knopfler of Dire Straits is a guitar god; and Angus Young of AC/DC; and – of course – Clapton), but very cool just the same. Lindley has great licks; he has awesome dreads, as well. All down to his shoulders.

Beaver doesn't join in the talk. All at once he wants to get out of here, out of this stale going-nowhere bar, and cop some fresh air. He knows where George is going with this, and it's all a lie.

Her name wasn't Chantay, you don't know what her name was, she blew right past you like you weren't there, what would you be to a girl like her anyway, just another working-class longhair in another working-class New England town, into the band bus she went and out of your life. Your fuckin uninteresting life. The Chantays is the name of the group we're listening to, not the Mar-Kets or the BarKays but the Chantays, it's 'Pipeline' by the Chantays and that thing on your neck isn't a hickey it's a razor burn.

He thinks this, then he hears crying. Not in the Free Street but in his mind. Long-gone crying. It goes right into your head, that crying, goes in like splinters of glass, and oh fuck, fuck me Freddy, somebody make him stop crying.

I was the one who made him stop, Beaver thinks. *That was me. I was the one who made him stop. I took him in my arms and sang to him.*

Meanwhile George Pelsen is telling them about how the stage door finally opened, but it wasn't Jackson Browne who came out, not David Lindley, either; it was the trio of chick singers,

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one named Randi, one named Susi, and one named Chantay. Yummy ladies, oh so tall and tasty.

'Man,' Sean says, rolling his eyes. He's a chubby little fellow whose sexual exploits consist of occasional field-trips to Boston, where he eyes the strippers at the Foxy Lady and the waitresses at Hooters. 'Oh man, fuckin *Chantay*.' He makes jacking-off gestures in the air. At that, at least, Beav thinks, he looks like a pro.

'So I started talkin to them . . . to her, mostly, Chantay, and I ast her if she'd like to see some of the Portland night-life. So we . . .'

The Beav takes a toothpick from his pocket and slides it into his mouth, tuning the rest out. All at once the toothpick is just what he wants. Not the beer in front of him, not the joint in his pocket, certainly not George Pelsen's empty kahoot about how he and the mythical Chantay got it on in the back of his pickup, thank God for that camper cap, when George's Ram is rockin, don't come knockin.

It's all puff and blow, Beaver thinks, and suddenly he is desperately depressed, more depressed than he has been since Laurie Sue packed her stuff and moved back to her mother's. This is utterly unlike him, and suddenly the only thing he wants is to get the fuck out of here, fill his lungs with the cool, salt-tanged seaside air, and find a phone. He wants to do that and then to call Jonesy or Henry, it doesn't matter which, either one will do; he wants to say *Hey man, what's going on* and have one of them say back *Oh, you know, Beav, SSDD. No bounce, no play*.

He gets up.

'Hey, man,' George says. Beaver went to Westbrook Junior College with George, and then he seemed cool enough, but juco was many long beers ago. 'Where you goin?'

'Take a leak,' Beaver says, rolling his toothpick from one side of his mouth to the other.

'Well, you want to hurry your bad ass back, I'm just getting

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to the good part,' George says, and Beaver thinks *crotchless panties*. Oh boy, today that old weird vibe is strong, maybe it's the barometer or something.

Lowering his voice, George says, 'When I got her skirt up—'

'I know, she was wearin crotchless panties,' Beaver says. He registers the look of surprise – almost shock – in George's eyes but pays no attention. 'I sure want to hear that part.'

He walks away, walks toward the men's room with its yellow-pink smell of piss and disinfectant, walks past it, walks past the women's, walks past the door with OFFICE on it, and escapes into the alley. The sky overhead is white and rainy, but the air is good. So good. He breathes it in deep and thinks again. *No bounce, no play*. He grins a little.

He walks for ten minutes, just chewing toothpicks and clearing his head. At some point, he can't remember exactly when, he tosses away the joint that has been in his pocket. And then he calls Henry from the pay phone in Joe's Smoke Shop, up by Monument Square. He's expecting the answering machine – Henry is still in school – but Henry is actually there, he picks up on the second ring.

'How you doing, man?' Beaver asks.

'Oh, you know,' Henry says. 'Same shit, different day. How about you, Beav?'

Beav closes his eyes. For a moment everything is all right again; as right as it can be in such a piss-ache world, anyway.

'About the same, buddy,' he replies. 'Just about the same.'

1993: Pete Helps a Lady in Distress

Pete sits behind his desk just off the showroom of Macdonald Motors in Bridgton, twirling his keychain. The fob consists of four enameled blue letters: NASA.

Dreams age faster than dreamers, that is a fact of life Pete

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has discovered as the years pass. Yet the last ones often die surprisingly hard, screaming in low, miserable voices at the back of the brain. It's been a long time since Pete slept in a bedroom papered with pictures of Apollo and Saturn rockets and astronauts and space-walks (EVAs, to those in the know) and space capsules with their shields smoked and fused by the fabulous heat of re-entry and LEMs and Voyagers and one photograph of a shiny disc over Interstate 80, people standing in the breakdown lane and looking up with their hands shielding their eyes, the photo's caption reading **THIS OBJECT, PHOTOGRAPHED NEAR ARVADA, COLORADO IN 1971, HAS NEVER BEEN EXPLAINED. IT IS A GENUINE UFO.**

A long time.

Yet he still spent one of his two weeks of vacation this year in Washington DC, where he went to the Smithsonian every day and spent nearly all of his time wandering among the displays with a wondering grin on his face. And most of that time he spent looking at the moon rocks and thinking, *Those rocks came from a place where the skies are always black and the silence is everlasting. Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin took twenty kilograms of another world and now here it is.*

And here he is, sitting behind his desk on a day when he hasn't sold a single car (people don't like to buy cars when it's raining, and it has been drizzling in Pete's part of the world ever since first light), twirling his NASA key-chain and looking up at the clock. Time moves slowly in the afternoons, ever more slowly as the hour of five approaches. At five it will be time for that first beer. Not before five; no way. You drank during the day, maybe you had to look at how much you were drinking, because that's what alcoholics did. But if you could wait . . . just twirl your keychain and wait . . .

As well as that first beer of the day, Pete is waiting for November. Going to Washington in April had been good, and the moon rocks had been stunning (they *still* stun him, every