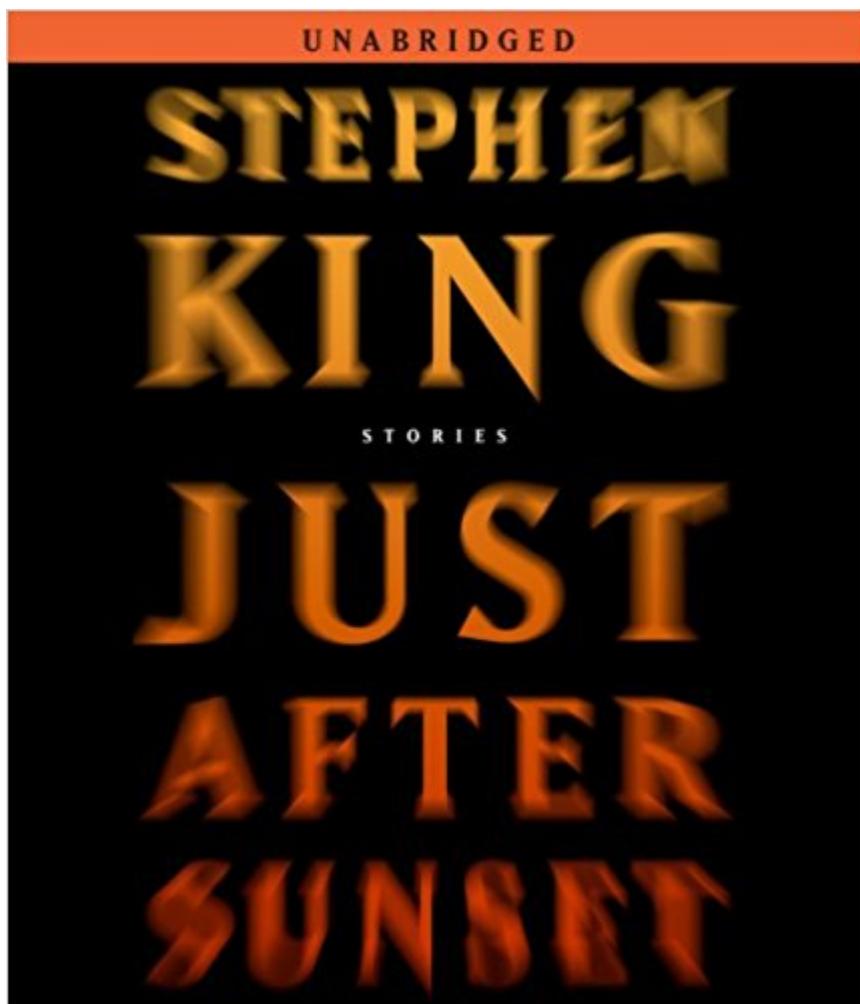


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# Just After Sunset: Stories



## Synopsis

Who but Stephen King would turn a Port-O-San into a slimy birth canal, or a roadside honky-tonk into a place for endless love? A book salesman with a grievance might pick up a mute hitchhiker, not knowing the silent man in the passenger seat listens altogether too well. Or an exercise routine on a stationary bicycle, begun to reduce bad cholesterol, might take its rider on a captivating -- and then terrifying-journey. Set on a remote key in Florida, "The Gingerbread Girl" is a riveting tale featuring a young woman as vulnerable -- and resourceful -- as Audrey Hepburn's character in *Wait Until Dark*. In "Ayana", a blind girl works a miracle with a kiss and the touch of her hand. For King, the line between the living and the dead is often blurry, and the seams that hold our reality intact might tear apart at any moment. In "N", which recently broke new ground when it was adapted as a graphic digital entertainment, a psychiatric patient's irrational thinking might create an apocalyptic threat in the Maine countryside -- or keep the world from falling victim to it. *Just After Sunset* -- call it dusk, call it twilight, it's a time when human intercourse takes on an unnatural cast, when nothing is quite as it appears, when the imagination begins to reach for shadows as they dissipate to darkness and living daylight can be scared right out of you. It's the perfect time for Stephen King.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. In the introduction to his first collection of short fiction since *Everything's Eventual* (2002), King credits editing *Best American Short Stories* (2007) with reigniting his interest in the short form and inducing some of this volume's contents. Most of these 13 tales show him at the top of his game, molding the themes and set pieces of horror and suspense fiction into richly nuanced

blends of fantasy and psychological realism. *The Things They Left Behind*, a powerful study of survivor guilt, is one of several supernatural disaster stories that evoke the horrors of 9/11. Like the crime thrillers *The Gingerbread Girl* and *A Very Tight Place*, both of which feature protagonists struggling with apparently insuperable threats to life, it is laced with moving ruminations on mortality that King attributes to his own well-publicized near-death experience. Even the smattering of genre-oriented works shows King trying out provocative new vehicles for his trademark thrills, notably *N.*, a creepy character study of an obsessive-compulsive that subtly blossoms into a tale of cosmic terror in the tradition of Arthur Machen and H.P. Lovecraft. Culled almost entirely from leading mainstream periodicals, these stories are a testament to the literary merits of the well-told macabre tale. (Nov.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In King's latest collection of short stories (following 2002's *Everything's Eventual*), he presents 14 tales that range from the philosophically themed, to one in which the author gleefully admits to playing with the gross-out factor ("A Very Tight Place"), to "The Cat from Hell," which makes its hardcover debut some 30 years after its original publication as part of a contest in *Cavalier*, one of the gentleman's magazines that put food on the table in King's early years as a writer. In his introduction, King cites his recent stint as guest editor for the 2007 edition of *Best American Short Stories* as an impetus to return to the form in his own writing. Several of the works included here were written following that experience. Finally, as King has done previously in his collections, at the end of the volume he provides the reader with brief insights into the inspirations for each tale. Recommended for all popular fiction collections. [See Prepub Alert, LJ 7/08.] © Nancy McNicol, Hamden P.L., CT Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

It goes without saying, though I'm going to say it because it's so obvious from all my King reviews, that I am definitely a fanboy of Mr. King. With the internet and the chance to post reviews ad nauseum, a lot of reviewers rip apart books and even write paragraph after paragraph, ruining the story and the plots. I think a lot of these people fancy themselves "authors" and feel the need to prove it by writing short stories about someone else's work. My review of this book like all my reviews of Mr. King's books is short and sweet. "Just After Sunset" is a collection of short stories and they all kept me interested from start to finish. I have never read anything from Mr. King that he didn't capture my attention and keep me coming back for more. He's done it from the time I was a

teenager and he continues to do it now that I'm 60. I couldn't imagine growing up without being frightened and entertained by The Master.

I somehow missed this collection while waiting for Under the Dome, and I'm so glad I found it just before the release of Mr. Mercedes. What a romp! Since Mr. King has provided us with a helpful tidbit of information on how each of the stories in this collection came about, I don't need to review each one. What would be the sense? Suffice it to say that all of these stories is a perfect example of his incredible talent. While he doesn't go quite to the level of horror, he does manage in every one to chill the bones, warm the heart and sometimes scare the bejesus out of the reader. In his notes, he states that Willa is the weakest, but he nevertheless liked it enough to include it. I disagree. I really enjoyed it as I did all of these. Perhaps, Stationary Bike was my favorite, but they're all great. And now, comes Mr. Mercedes. And, by the way, I think Lisey's Story is his best novel.

5 stars of course...its a collection of stories from the King! As always when I read anything from Stephen King...I can't put the book down... I read into the night until I fall asleep and then wake up in the morn wanting to read some more before I go to work. Love me some Stephen King and can't wait to until next time..thank you from one of your constant readers...

Great collection of short stories. Though I liked almost all of the stories, my sense was that they got better and better as I progressed through the book! Worth your time.

This is a collection of 13 previously published Stephen King stories running some 529 pages. We forget how gifted a short story writer King is because most recent attention has focused on his extremely popular novels (the bulk of his 50 plus books). In an Introduction, King recounts how he started writing stories while still teaching high school English in Maine. In "Full Dark, No Stairs," another collection of stories, he explains how he rediscovered writing stories when editing a best of the year collection. We should all be thankful that he has regained his interest in this format. One of the special features of this book is an essay "Sunset Notes" that concludes the volume. There King answers what is always the major question his fans have: "how do you come up with the idea for your stories?" For each of the stories in the collection, King explains exactly how he got the idea that led to the story. It is interesting to get a glimpse of how his mind "works." The stories themselves reflect King's unique mixture of fright, references to pop culture and music, all infused with King's enormous sense of humor. Almost all of the stories are outstanding and highly inventive in the King

fashion. Nobody writes like King and its pays off as this collection demonstrates. In "Willa," the subject is the confusion of being dead. "Gingerbread Girl" is the finest "evil man chasing helpless woman" story you will ever read. In "Reststop," King presents the classic issue: what should you do if you witness what appears to be a man about to inflict serious injury on his wife or girlfriend? "Stationary Bike" shows how far you can go on this piece of exercise equipment. In "The Cat from Hell," the question is whether a mob hitman can outwit his intended feline victim. "Mute" presents the strangest confession I am sure any priest has ever heard. My favorite story is "A Very Tight Place," which demonstrates King's inventiveness. Who else would build a story around the use of imprisonment in a porta-potty as a device to accomplish murder? For first-time King readers as well as those who have read large chunks of his writing, this collection will prove extremely enjoyable and even stimulating.

Reminded me all over again why I keep coming back for more SK! Sometimes it is just exploring a single, simple question. Other times it is the shocking turn you didn't see coming that leaves you with a visceral, "Sure got me there!" Other stories simply creep you out down to the bone and steal your sleep! Biggest question is, "How does he do it?" Seems that should be hard to do in short-story format, but Mr. King delivers with this one. I enjoyed it from front to back. I think you will too.

Fantastic storytelling! This is a must read for Stephen King fans. Wonderful collection of short stories.

This is a great collection of shorts. Typical King at work throughout that will keep long term fans very happy. I loved the inclusion of a rare gem that found its way into an 80's horror movie-no spoilers but fans will know what I mean. Several of the tales have to do with Cancer or mental health and I felt those took a toll on me. Two standouts are a tale inspired by HP Lovecraft type mythology and a beautiful tribute to 9/11. In all, it's a good collection. Not necessarily recommended for newbies but should keep die hards pleased.

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