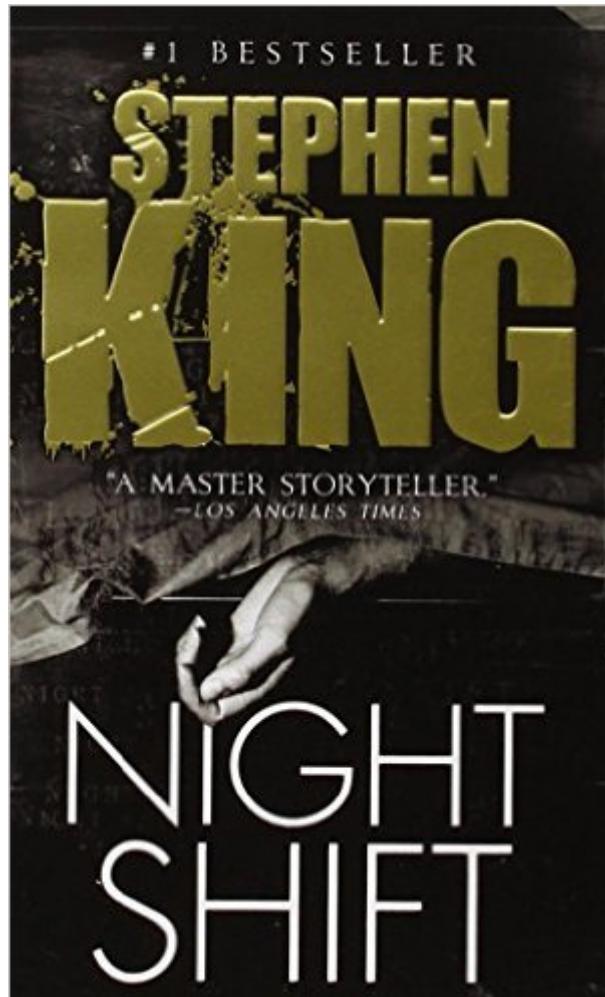


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Night Shift



Synopsis

Night Shiftâ "Stephen Kingâ ™s first collection of storiesâ "is an early showcase of the depths that Kingâ ™s wicked imagination could plumb.â In these 20 tales, we see mutated rats gone bad (â œGraveyard Shiftâ •); a cataclysmic virus that threatens humanity (â œNight Surf,â • the basis for The Stand); a smoker who will try anything to stop (â œQuitters, Inc.â •); a reclusive alcoholic who begins a gruesome transformation (â œGray Matterâ •); and many more.â This is Stephen King at his horrifying best.

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsâ See all reviewsâ (514 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

Of King's 4 collection of short stories, I'd have to say that I like 'Night Shift' the best. It's definitely the most consistently horror oriented of them, and the non-horror stories are particularly compelling. Also his tendency to overwrite hasn't displayed itself yet. It's got a few weaker stories, such as 'Gray Matter', 'I Know What You Need' and 'The Lawnmower Man', in particular, but the good ones more than make up for these few short comings. (It's too bad that 'Suffer the Children' got cut instead of 'Gray Matter'. 'Suffer the Children' would've been one of the better stories here, while 'Gray Matter' is probably the worst.) The tales also tend to be more straight forward and conventional than his later ones, but sometimes the older stories really are the best ones. (It still get pretty damn weird at times, no doubt about it, but it's got nothin' on the level of 'You Know They've Gotta Helluva Band' or 'The Moving Finger'.) 'Jerusalem's Lot' is unabashed Lovecraft homage. It can't quite match his best work, but it's excellent and manages not to be too utterly derivative. 'The Mangler' is a strange one, as it's about a possessed industrial dryer/folder thing. It's got an unintentionally black-comic

vibe to it, along with perhaps the most gruesome, disturbing violence in anything I've read from him. (Being killed by one of those things would involve being crushed and scalded to death simultaneously. Not pleasant, I'm sure) 'The Graveyard Shift' which was made into an amusingly bad movie, is surprisingly effective. The story focuses more on the conflict between Hall and his supervisor, Warwick, and keeps the rat stuff in relatively small, if still fatal, doses. 'Sometimes They Come Back' is probably my favorite story here.

This was King's first collection of short stories. Man, was I happy I read this! This was the first of several books by King that I read. It really introduced me to the rest of his works, so, if you are wanting to try reading the stuff he writes, then this book serves as a great first stepping stone into his freaky world of imagination. Here's a brief overview of the short stories included in *Night Shift*:
Jerusalem's Lot: Classic King, here. A great Vampire thriller.
Graveyard Shift: Employees at a hotel (or apartment building, I can't remember) work in the basement. To their surprise, they find a tunnel that has been completely left alone for years...left alone by humans, that is...
Night Surf: Look at one of the spotlight reviews, and you'll receive what the deal is with this short story; it is there for descriptive purposes.
I am the Doorway: A handicapped man's hands go out of control...or, better yet, they are in control of themselves.
The Mangler: Clothes machine that has gone out of control and is possessed by none other than an evil spirit, and starts looking for PEOPLE to fold? Now that's the kind of stuff I like to read...one of my personal favorites in *Night Shift*.
Battleground: Toy Soldiers begin hunting their buyer...and if you thought they were just unarmed plastic figures, ya might wanna think again.
The Man Who Loved Flowers: Some crazy guy with a small hammer...yes, we do get a great description of the surroundings: not too much, nor too little. But this character is on the insane side.
The Lawnmower Man: Another favorite. A grass-cutter is hired to trim a lawn. Little does the lawn-owner realize that the machine isn't the only one cutting the grass...

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