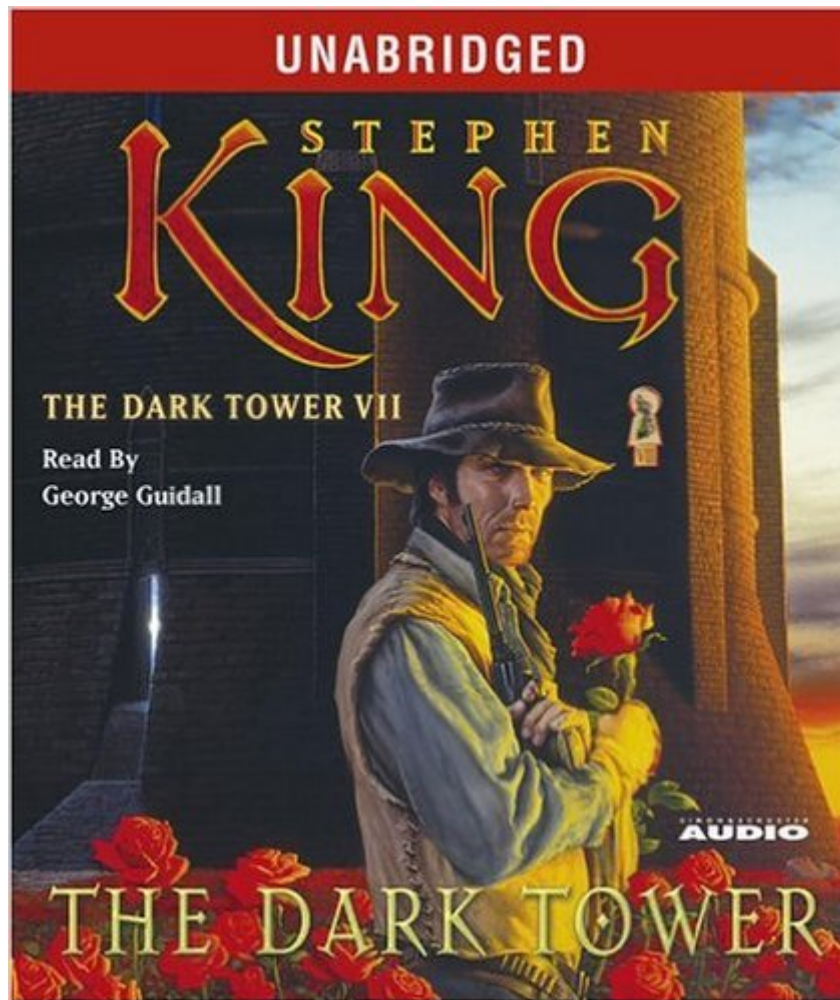


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The Dark Tower VII: The Dark Tower



Synopsis

All good things must come to end. Constant Listener, and not even Stephen King can write a story that goes on forever. The tale of Ronald Deschain's relentless quest for the Dark Tower has, the author fears, sorely tried the patience of those who have followed it from its earliest chapters. But attend to it a while longer, if it pleases you, for this volume is the last, and often the last things are best. Roland's ka-tet remains intact, though scattered over wheres and whens. Susannah-Mia has been carried from the Dixie Pig (in the summer of 1999) to a birthing room -- really a chamber of horrors - in Thunderclap's Fedic Station; Jake and Father Callahan, with Oy between them, have entered the restaurant on Lex and 61st with weapons drawn, little knowing how numerous and noxious are their foes. Roland and Eddie are with John Cullum in Maine, in 1977, looking for the site on Turtleback Lane where "walk-ins" have been often seen. They want desperately to get back to the others, to Susannah especially, and yet they have come to realize that the world they need to escape is the only one that matters. Thus the audiobook opens, like a door to the uttermost reaches of Stephen King's imagination. You've come this far. Come a little father. Come all the way. The sound you hear may be the slamming of the door behind you. Welcome to The Dark Tower.

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Customer Reviews

Well, this is a difficult review to write. Like many reviewers here, I've been reading this series from its inception, since I was a young man (about Jake's age). It has remained one of my favorite series, and each new volume was awaited with a barely containable anticipation. I agree with so many of

the glowing reviews of this book. And I agree with so many of the disappointed reviews of this book as well. I am completely conflicted. However, what it boils down to is this: The story lost the breadth and scope that made it so epic for me in the early volumes. The Tower was the center of ALL WORLDS! An infinite number of universes hung in the balance. This wasn't your average quest story, this was a story about ALL quests, in ALL times. King Arthur, Lord of the Rings, The Chronicles of Narnia, The Tain, Ulysses, the Good the Bad and the Ugly...all of these epics found an echo here. Billions upon billions of existences were hanging in the balance between what we were lead to believe was an epic evil (one that found its way into many of Kings stories) and the Gunslinger and his Ka Tet. The wheels of fate worked to bring about the central struggle of all times and places to a boiling point that we could not even begin to conceive of. How could the stakes get any higher? In all honesty, how could any writer fill such a grand expectation? In the first book, Roland has a vision, given him by Flagg, of ascending through the universes to emerge in a single blade of grass at the foot of a rose. The scope of what was at stake was never more beautifully crafted than that section of the first book. By the end of the tale, I can find no trace of that scope, that scale, those horrendous stakes. They are gone.

It looks like most reviewers have this pretty well covered, but I'd like to throw in my 2 cents, mostly because I've spent so much time reading these books and it just plain feels right. I'll start by saying that this book is not perfect, and there were times when I was convinced that the story would end horribly. So why do I give it 5 stars? I feel that what was good or great about the book is enough for me to dismiss what annoyed me about it. As with most reviews, there will be many SPOILERS ahead, so go read the book first if you haven't. I can cover what truly bothered me pretty quickly; King's importance in the plot and Flagg's death. Not that I need a 150 page battle between Roland and Flagg, but to be so easily dispatched by a child who would later prove to be absolutely no threat to Roland seems wrong. Was this really the best that Roland's lifelong enemy could do? I don't know, it just doesn't add up. As for King, I didn't like his part in the plot during Song of Susannah (narcissistic) and was hoping it would not dominate the final volume, which it doesn't. I will admit that it didn't turn out as bad as I feared (I half expected Stephen King to be in the top room of the Tower), and I do appreciate that it ties the story to reality through something other than the fictional Tet Corporation in NY. While this is nice, I could have done without King ever having been in the story. Others were bothered by the quick deaths of Mordred and the Crimson King. I wasn't. Mordred may have been powerful, but he was still a child; and a sick, dying child at that. He had to make an ill-advised move out of desperation, and I think it was wonderful that Oy was able to die defending

Roland.

One thing I have to say I like about S.K. novels, is that it is always interesting to see how he ends a story. At times he can scare the bejeebers out of you for 600+ pages then turn what should be scary into something quite funny. Case in point: "It" was a fantastic character study; we believed and became attached to the characters, and the Clown reached into all of our darkest fears. Then in the end it becomes a B Movie Giant Spider (ta da) foiled by a placebo (ta da) because the one girl in the story put out for everyone when they were kids (drum roll please)? I always get sucked into his stories because Stephen King is a masterful writer when it comes to developing characters. Roland, Eddie, Susannah/Odetta/Detta, Jake, Oy, even Blaine The Mono were superbly done. I can put up with the coincidental nature of Ka, and even the explanation of the duality of worlds. But, Sai King, if you build a sandwich this big, you gotta eat it! I won't belabor all the loose ends that weren't tied up, and I will admit that it tugged at my heart when each one of the major characters was taken out in the story. That was because the characters were well "drawn". But, alas, good writing demands a good ending. With you, Sai King, the journey is always quite good - But the coitus is always interruptus! Which brings me to Sai King's weakness (never a closing pitcher, alas). A "good" ending would have demanded that the Crimson King be more than Uncle Festus in a red cape. A more worthy adversary, someone who Roland would HAVE to battle with. But most importantly, a good ending would have given us some hint of why it would be so bad for CK to get in the Tower? Was he so powerful as a character that he wouldn't have just been sent off to his own la-la land to start over again?

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