

The background features a complex network of white circular nodes connected by thin purple lines. The nodes are scattered across the frame, with some forming distinct geometric shapes like triangles and polygons. The overall aesthetic is digital and interconnected, set against a gradient background that transitions from a deep purple at the top to a bright pink at the bottom.

# The Outsider

Written by Stephen King

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Published by sanmarco-sf

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# The Outsider

By Stephen King

## The Outsiders

Evil has many facesâ€¦, maybe even yours in this #1 New York Times bestseller from master storyteller Stephen King!

## The Outsiders Cast

An eleven-year-old boy's violated corpse is discovered in a town park. Eyewitnesses and fingerprints point unmistakably to one of Flint City's most popular citizens—Terry Maitland, Little League coach, English teacher, husband, and father of two girls. Detective Ralph Anderson, whose son Maitland once coached, orders a quick and very public arrest. Maitland has an alibi, but Anderson and the district attorney soon have DNA evidence to go with the fingerprints and witnesses. Their case seems ironclad.

## The Outsiders Book

As the investigation expands and horrifying details begin to emerge, King's story kicks into high gear, generating strong tension and almost unbearable suspense. Terry Maitland seems like a nice guy, but is he wearing another face? When the answer comes, it will shock you as only Stephen King can.

I've been reading Uncle Stevie for about 35 years now, and there's been plenty of peaks and valleys in my fandom. This time out he found a whole new way to disappoint me.

A young boy has been brutally murdered, and all the clues point directly at Terry Maitland. This is shocking because Terry is a happily married family man and all-around good guy whose coaching of youth sports has made him one of the most popular and respected people in town, and there's never been the slightest hint of any kind I've been reading Uncle Stevie for about 35 years now, and there's been plenty of peaks and valleys in my fandom. This time out he found a whole new way to disappoint me.

A young boy has been brutally murdered, and all the clues point directly at Terry Maitland. This is shocking because Terry is a happily married family man and all-around good guy whose coaching of youth sports has made him one of the most popular and respected people in town, and there's never been the slightest hint of any kind of criminal behavior from him. However, with both forensic evidence and multiple witnesses there is no doubt that Terry abducted and killed this child so Detective Ralph Anderson has him arrested in the most public and humiliating way possible.

The problem is that there was so much evidence pointing at Terry that Ralph didn't bother nailing down his whereabouts when the crime was committed, and Terry has an iron clad alibi that makes it impossible for him to be the murderer. Yet for every piece of evidence that shows that Terry couldn't have killed the boy there's another equally damning one that positively shows that he must have done it. How could a man be in two places at once?

The infuriating thing about this book is that the first half had a lot of promise. King seems to have been inspired by the Harlan Coben style of thrillers whose hooks generally revolve around circumstances that seem impossible. (In fact, Uncle Stevie even acknowledges this by actually having Coben himself be a plot point in the book.) And this works for a while as King builds up the scenario with an intriguing mix of clues and witnesses that both absolutely prove that Terry must be the murderer while also making it utterly impossible for him to have done it.

There's a huge problem with that though. When Harlan Coben writes his books the resolutions are based in reality, not the paranormal. So for each one he has to come up with a plot that leaves you scratching your head and then provide a solution to it that's satisfying. What Uncle Stevie did here is to create the puzzle part which he adds layer after layer to it, but then he essentially just says "Oh, yeah. It was a supernatural monster. And now here's a completely different book about trying to

catch it.â€•

You can certainly do a story that mixes police investigations with the unexplained. The X-Files is the obvious example of this, but that series would generally show us the weird stuff in the opening scene every week then they would try to unravel it for the rest of the episode. We all knew going in that the supernatural and aliens were on the table so thereâ€™s no point in spending time to make the viewer think there might be a non-fantastic answer even if Scully usually tried her best to find it.

Since this is a Stephen King novel with a red-eyed monster on the cover a reader should know from the start that something spooky is in the mix. Yet, he gives us absolutely nothing about that angle for the first half of the book. He plays it straight like heâ€™s writing a regular crime thriller, and he put in so much time and effort on it that he actually managed to make me forget at times that the ultimate answer would probably be a ghoul of some kind. So itâ€™s like heâ€™s teasing us that there is some kind of Sherlock Holmes style solution to this puzzle, and I found it incredibly unsatisfying when the supernatural stuff showed up to explain it all.

The extra sad thing is that Uncle Stevie has done this plot before, and he did it better there. The Dark Half has a main character who is suspected of murder, thereâ€™s physical evidence showing he did it, and itâ€™s only an airtight alibi that saves his ass. Yet, in that book we know from the jump whatâ€™s going on so it all flows together naturally, and itâ€™s just one piece of a larger story rather than half a novel spent developing a mystery that is essentially not a mystery at all when you remember that youâ€™re reading Stephen King.

The second issue I had with this is that this is linked to the Mr. Mercedes trilogy. I didnâ€™t care for those books, and if Iâ€™d have known that this had anything to do with them I wouldnâ€™t have read it. I thought that series was done so to have a character from them show up at the half way point here as a surprise and then play a major role in the proceedings felt like false advertising. Another irritating aspect is that (And this has spoilers for End of Watch) (view spoiler)[ I found Bill Hodges in those books to be a reckless jackass who did nothing except get innocent people killed before he finally died himself. But the goddamn hero worship of him by Holly here made me nuts. He was a shitty detective and nothing special as a person. Iâ€™m glad heâ€™s dead, and I didnâ€™t need constant references to how awesome she thought he was. (hide spoiler)]

At over 500 pages itâ€™s also way too long with not enough happening except for a whole lot of yackity-yacking going on amongst characters. Thereâ€™s a tremendous amount of repetition with people restating the facts about the initial problem of Terry being in two places in once, and then during the monster phase thereâ€™s endless jibber-jabber speculating about it. Dialogue has never been a particular strength of Kingâ€™s, but all his worst habits are fully on display here so itâ€™s extra bad that the book mostly consists of conversations.

I also found myself nitpicking a lot of stuff here. Now that heâ€™s over 70 years old Uncle Stevie seems to struggle writing younger people these days. Terry is described as being under 40 yet at one point his

wife is remembering how they used to listen to Beatles albums in his college apartment, and she idly wonders if John Lennon was dead by then or not. A guy who is 40 today was born in 1978. John Lennon was murdered in 1980. So Lennon had been dead for almost two decades by the time Terry was in college. That's the musing of an aging Baby Boomer, not someone under 50.

Ralph also seems to be somewhere around 40 years old yet when he's trying to figure out a restaurant name from a torn scrap of paper he has to go to his wife to have her run the internet search for him. I'm pretty sure that a detective whose job involves research and information gathering is capable of using Google. And it's not even that Ralph is anti-tech or computer ignorant because he uses an iPad regularly through the book. Again, this seems like an older person's way of thinking about the internet, not someone who would have been using computers since his first day with the police department.

I also found the main break that finally gets the plot moving toward the supernatural stuff to be highly unlikely. (view spoiler)[Ralph has been in contact with the cops in Ohio about trying to track the stolen van that Terry supposedly got on a trip there. Yet, somehow even though a guy who works at the hospital Terry was visiting his father in was also accused of a high profile child murder, no one ever notices the link before Holly? Wasn't Ralph supposedly working on tracking Terry's movements in Ohio? You'd think he'd look for similar crimes as part of that, but he apparently doesn't know how to use Google so maybe that explains it. (hide spoiler)]

King tried doing plain thrillers with the first two Bill Hodges books, but he struggled mightily with plotting them so he threw in the towel with the third one where he went full-on supernatural again. This one feels like he thought he had a great idea for another crime novel, wasn't really sure how to resolve it, started writing it anyway hoping he'd figure it out, and then when he couldn't he just threw up his hands and made it all about a monster. I won't be reading another crime based book by him. Unless he tricks me again. ...more

## The Outsiders Movie

There was one rock-hard fact, as unassailable as gravity: a man could not be in two places at the same time.

Stephen King amazes me. Here, he has managed to turn a 300-page story into a 560-page story by leading us on a long-winded wild goose chase while waffling on about almost everything, but somehow, though it seems hard to fathom, I could not put this cracktastic shit down.

If you are thinking about reading this because you like mysteries and thrillers and have seen this in the latest mystery There was one rock-hard fact, as unassailable as gravity: a man could not be in two places at the same time.

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If you are thinking about reading this because you like mysteries and thrillers and have seen this in the latest mystery/thriller bestsellers: don't bother. It's not really for someone who's looking for old-fashioned mysteries. But if you're a fan of King's slow, meticulously-detailed climb to the creepy good stuff, lots of characterization that probably wasn't needed, and 200 pages that could have been cut but are compelling anyway - step this way.

It sounds like I'm being negative, but King is just his own brand. He drags things out, he goes on and on about minor plot points, and yet he manages to keep literally millions of readers hooked on his every word. I would wake up in the middle of the night to feed my baby and find myself reaching for this book and squinting at it in the darkness. And then not being able to sleep after.

The Outsider sets up a scenario that immediately piqued my interest - an horrific crime against a child (warning for graphic sexual violence); evidence all pointing to one man; said man has an airtight alibi putting him hours away when the crime was committed. So... what's the deal here? Is Terry Maitland an innocent man being accused of a terrible crime? Or has he constructed a perfect alibi for himself? And, if so, why did he leave so much evidence pointing to him?

I love how King taps into the minds of everyday people and families. He creates horror stories out of the mundane, out of small town people living small town lives, and out of questions we've probably all wondered about-- is there life after death? What if you could go back in time? And, in this case, what if all the evidence of a crime points to someone who couldn't possibly have done it? What if you were accused of a crime you didn't commit?

I want to stress again that this is a Stephen King book, and not your average thriller, so be prepared for some straddling of the line between our world and the supernatural. Also, a character from the Mr. Mercedes trilogy pops up here, which I wasn't expecting. I never even finished the first book of that



series, but I didn't need to know those stories for this book to make sense.

Like most King stories, I had a whole lot of fun reading this. I mean, I say "fun", but I lost a lot of sleep over the creepy shadow man. King sure knows how to craft a perfectly skin-crawlingly eerie scene \*shudders\*

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King has done it again! The last time I was this enthralled with one of his books was Finders Keepers. While I do read a lot, it is not often I find a book that I don't want to put down at all. In fact, the biggest selling point is that I am in no way, shape or form a morning person. Dragging myself out of bed is the greatest challenge of my day. But, I woke up early, without an alarm, when I had about 100 pages to go because I was so into it I couldn't stop thinking about it and wanted to finish it. King has done it again! The last time I was this enthralled with one of his books was Finders Keepers. While I do read a lot, it is not often I find a book that I don't want to put down at all. In fact, the biggest selling point is that I am in no way, shape or form a morning person. Dragging myself out of bed is the greatest challenge of my day. But, I woke up early, without an alarm, when I had about 100 pages to go because I was so into it I couldn't stop thinking about it and wanted to finish it!

This is basically a combination of King's old school horror stories with his more recent mystery books (Bill Hodges trilogy). When you read it you might be surprised at how true this statement is. I will just leave that statement out there with no spoilers - you'll see!

Really, my only criticism of the book is the ending. It felt a little off, flat, and awfully convenient to me. However, the book as a whole was so awesome, it barely affected my enjoyment.

King fans rejoice! It's another great one. The master still has it! ...more

## The Outsiders Characters

The Outsider by Stephen King is a 2018 Scribner publication.

Classic, quintessential King-

An eleven-year-old boy is found brutally murdered and strong evidence points to Little League coach Terry Maitland. Detective Ralph Anderson is particularly outraged and makes the fateful decision to arrest Terry in public, creating a media sensation in the process. But, as the investigation begins to unfold, doubts and alternative evidence make Ralph question Terry's guilt. As the mystery deepens the horror

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“Reality is thin ice. But most people never fall through until the very end.”

Now, plenty of people have reviewed this book, and King certainly doesn't need any help from me in promoting his novels, I just had to add my own complimentary comments about this one. This book reminded me of why, when I was a teenager, I was always the first in line to buy a new SK novel, why I absorbed them as fast as possible, then read them again and again and again. King has a way of building a complex puzzle, while creating characters readers are sure to respond to, either in a good or a bad way, and then proceeds to scare the crap out of us. The action picks up right at the beginning, building and building, first as a standard mystery and police investigation, then segues into the stuff that will keep you up at night.

King is always funny, always a bit sarcastic, and likes to poke fun here and there, sometimes good naturedly, and sometimes with a more caustic tone, while also addressing serious issues from time to time without becoming preachy. His passages featuring fellow author Harlan Coben, was especially fun and entertaining. (Although, you may want to refrain from asking Coben if he knows who the killer is from the start, or if he figures it out as he goes along- I think that question has been asked and answered, and Coben could be weary of it. ðŸ˜Š)

King's basic style is still working, is still relevant, avoiding the traps of standard formulas and clichés authors of his generation, who have clogged up the NYT bestseller lists for the past forty years,

are prone to. However, as Karin Slaughter points out in her otherwise glowing review for the Washington Post-

“If you can accept that a contemporary man in his late 40s recalls quoting ‘Our Gang’ with his kid brother instead of the Fonz or even Pee-wee Herman, you’re in for a hell of a ride. LOL!

My only regret is that I did not realize Holly’s character was connected to the Mr. Mercedes trilogy, and I’ve been meaning to read those books for a long time. But, on the plus side, I feel more motivated to get started on it sooner, rather than later.

This book will remind readers of why Stephen King is the master, and always will be.

4.5 stars ...more

SIGH... Many people are going to love this book. Probably most of them will love it for all (or at least some) of the reasons that I did not. And that's OK. If you want to read reviews praising this book there are already many of them out there you may enjoy.

Mine will not be one of them. This is apparently, going to be Episode #4 of my review series that is slowly but surely becoming "Maybe Stephen King Should Have Retired at 65." Definitely with spoilers and curse words and ranty bits. Reader SIGH... Many people are going to love this book. Probably most of them will love it for all (or at least some) of the reasons that I did not. And that's OK. If you want to read reviews praising this book there are already many of them out there you may enjoy.

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Stephen King has always had peaks and valleys in his career. You can't please all of the people all of the time. For instance, *Cujo* is one that doesn't really work for me, because the stream of consciousness style doesn't fit the narrative or story. But the STORY is still compelling and interesting, if you can look past the writing of it. But to me, the last 6-7 years' worth of King's output has ranged from "good with some lame aspects" to "Yawn with a side of OH OKAY!" to "WHAT THE FUCK IS THIS GARBAGE AND WHY DID EVEN A SINGLE DAMN TREE HAVE TO DIE FOR IT??"

His last really good book was *11/22/63*, written in 2011. Since then, all of his stories AND the way they are written feel the same. Stagnant. Boring. Recycled and reused. The characters aren't interesting, and ever-increasingly, they all seem to be the same person. They all talk the same. They all act the same. The villains are the same. And they are boring. The writing style, something that King used to experiment with, has become so predictable that I literally wait for the events that I know will come.

For instance... In this book, there are lots of witness interviews pertaining to the crime. We have a range

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of people, from a 9 year old girl (and her mom), to a mid-30s (I'm guessing) Ex-con, ex-addict (are you ever really an ex at that though?) bouncer- excuse me, "Security Specialist" or whatever, to a elderly man, and an elderly woman, to a Native American woman cab driver. And every single one of them sound exactly the same. Not just the content, but the WAY OF SPEAKING. The way of being so attentively helpful as to come across as almost cringeingly servile. "Am I doing it right? I'm not in trouble, am I?" Like a bunch of dogs expecting their master to kick them, and doing everything they can to BE A GOOD DOG.

ALL of them. Even the kid. Exactly the same.

Or, another for instance... Inevitably, there will be introductions between characters, and regardless of how many times these people interact, it ALWAYS starts out formally, and then one of them will instruct the other to "Call me Bill" or whatever their name is, repeat 3 or 4 times over a few chapters, and then FINALLY we can move on once everyone is on the same page about Bill being Bill.

At least until we shift perspectives to another character... then we have to go through that ALL OVER AGAIN. New Character Is New, and doesn't know Bill. So of course they will address him formally as Mr. LastName until Bill makes the appropriate bureaucratic request for New Character to adopt a casual acquaintance first name basis, signed, presented to the appropriate department in triplicate, and gotten the submission receipt as well as their parking validated. THEN New Character can address Bill as Bill.

Even in the most intense scenes... injured, and pinned down by a gunman, we have characters literally saying things like "And since we're pinned down by a lunatic with a rifle, why don't you just go ahead and call me [name]". BECAUSE REALLY??? Is this REALLY the time to worry about what someone CALLS YOU?

BUT WAIT! Because the ENDLESS DISCUSSION about the nature of the big baddie, and the fact that he has multiple 'identities' (for lack of a better word)... whenever speaking of him, one must use ALLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLLL OF THE THINGS THAT ANYONE HAS EVER CALLED HIM... just so everyone, but the reader MOST OF ALL, is on the same page as to who is being referred to.

LEST WE BE CONFUSED.

20% of this book is probably spent on discussing what to call other characters. So. Fucking. Boring.

Speaking of the big baddie, and things being boring as fuck... This latest one was defeated with a few impotence jibes and a weighted sock. I wish I was joking.

When I started this review, I was fairly confident that I would be giving this book a decent 3 star rating. But the more I think about it, the more I don't see that happening. It COULD have gone that way for me. I mean, there are some really interesting themes that COULD have been explored and built upon and fleshed out - like the nature of humans to disassociate themselves from people different from them,

regardless of how long they've known the person, based on any accusation of being different. The tendency of fear, mainly the fear of POTENTIAL for harm or danger, to cause the ranks to close, the accused to be shunned, if not attacked or killed, simply on the basis of accusation and fear. The breakdown of rule of law could have been explored. Mob mentality. The easy corruption of friendly minds to fearful foe who feels entirely and completely justified in acting decisively in what they would call self defense, or frontier justice, or just plain vengeance... despite everything they know about the person otherwise.

It would have improved this story GREATLY in my opinion had any of these themes been explored in any real way. It's mentioned, touched upon, and used as a convenient plot conveyor belt, But that's all. A device to move the story from point A to point B.

In truth, this story feels hollow. King's last 6-7 years worth of books have felt this way to me, in varying degrees. The ideas are there in these books, but the substance is not. Except Mr. Mercedes. That book was just absolute fucking shit from the first word and nobody will ever convince me otherwise.

As such, I just need to get this out of my system...

FUCK THIS BOOK not only for crossing over into the Mr. Mercedes (AKA ABSOLUTE SHIT) series, AND recapping it all for me, multiple times, AS THOUGH I WASN'T ALREADY PRETENDING IT DOESN'T EXIST BECAUSE I DO NOT WANT TO FUCKING READ IT AND DO NOT CARE ONE DAMN BIT ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS, but for ALSO USING THE WHOLE SECOND FUCKING HALF OF THE OUTSIDER TO REMIND ME OF WHY THE FUCK I HATED THAT BOOK SO DAMN MUCH.

From the fat shaming, to the casual sexism, to the regular backhanded "compliments" tossed Holly's way (that she's EVER SO GRATEFUL FOR, but also modestly embarrassed by) and so much more, I am reminded of all the things I hated in that book. Now, generously presented in this one. YAY.

And lest you, review reader, if you're still with me at this point of my ragerant, think that I'm just carrying a grudge against Mr. Mercedes... well, okay... you'd be right.

But, ALSO here. I'm not being unfair to The Outsider because I'm still feeling some kind of way about...that fucking shitty OTHER book, because we have ALL of the stereotypical King traits that now irk me so much when I see them in this one too!

Fat shaming of Bill Hodges! When Alec learns he's dead, he automatically assumes it was due to his weight, which was a WHOPPING 30 pounds overweight. HA HA! IN YOUR FACE THOUGH, ALEC. It was cancer. Fuck you and your assumptions.

Fat shaming others! The poor murder victim's mother was described as being 50 pounds overweight,

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with "fat arms" and "considerable stomach", and literally died covered in lasagna. Remember those middle fingers from above? Just... carry one with you as we go along and apply as needed. This situation seems like a good time to do so.

I honestly wonder what Stephen King thinks of people in the 300 or 400lb + range. Because, from the way that he writes about weight, it's like he expects for anyone who weighs more than 200 lbs to just drop dead immediately when the scale tips over from the 199 to the 200. Yes, Stephen. There are fat people, and it's generally unhealthy... I GUARANTEE YOU WE KNOW IT. For fuck's sake... STOP FUCKING WRITING CRUEL AND HUMILIATING SHIT ABOUT PEOPLE WHO ARE OVERWEIGHT INTO YOUR BOOKS, YOU ABSOLUTE DICK.

That said, let's move on to the casual sexism! Should be fun. Remember Sleeping Beauties and how totally WOKE Stephen King was? Yeah. Me either. (And yeah, I went to Bad Punville. Sue me.) This book contains all of the old stand-bys.

Women as domestic fairies - complete with all of the caretaking that you'd expect. OH, you're having people over. No sense ORDERING FOOD, I'll MAKE something. That's what the wimmin is good for. Sammitches.

Sure, we see a man cook, but he does it badly. Always breaks the egg yolks. Tsk. You failure. Sure, we see a man go to the grocery store... with a list from his wife. And "her" coupons, which the man is chided by another man about... Hope you didn't forget them. The ol' ball and chain will have your head if you forgot that 20 cent off coupon for Charmin. That's her HOUSE MONEY. Don't fuck with it. We see women clutching their husbands when they are frightened. OH SAVE ME, YOU BIG HUNK OF MONSTER KILLER.

We see ONE token female police officer... conveniently pregnant to the point of bursting, so she never needs to actually be in the story at all.

We see man after man after man AMAZED at the mere competence of a woman. And we see that woman reject and downplay their grudging acknowledgement of her. Because everything she knows, she learned from a man - even how to live.

Fuck off with that noise.

This book... Ugh. Still not as bad as Absolute Shit... though not for lack of trying. The only thing it was missing was Mr. Jive Talkin' Jerome. I don't know if I would have made it through had he been in the book too, honestly. I might have set my fucking kindle on fire.

I really had hoped that this book was going to be a return to great characters, great storytelling, great STORY. But it wasn't anywhere close to those things.

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As a police procedural/thriller, it was lame. Never once did I feel concerned about what would happen or who it would happen to. The title gives it away that the main suspect is innocent, right from the start. I knew he would have to die... though I figured that it would be in a sort of "I'M THE REAL ME - SHOOT HIM!" situation. That would have been more exciting than what we got.

As a police procedural/thriller compared to Absolute Shit... It's better. But marginally. I can't think of anything that I liked, other than the potential of the story. And... considering that this is from a man I've been reading since I was a kid... that just doesn't cut it for me.

Too bad. This really could have been something.

Edit to add this, which I commented on my friend Kemper's review, and then decided, screw it, I'm tacking it on to mine. Here we go:

I took a shitton of rage notes on my kindle about [the technology in this book feeling like it was written by someone completely out of touch], but then forgot to include any of them in my review because it was like 2 am and I was too pissed off to even care. LOL

But seriously, in 2018, Holly uses MAPQUEST?? Seriously? No the fuck she doesn't. She uses Google Maps like everyone else.

Also, Trivago (which is a meta aggregation site that searches all of the major online booking companies for you, finds the best deals, and then links you to where the deal is from so you can book it. This is literally my industry.) King would have us believe that Holly is savvy enough to use TRIVAGO for her search (rather than just using a search engine to find the restaurant and then what the hotels are around it)... but then just call the hotel directly to book.

So many issues with this. Trivago has a very basic search. You enter the city, and your dates. That's it, then you can narrow down by amenities, star rating, neighborhood. She'd have a hard time finding the SPECIFIC hotel she wanted on their site.

But my main issue is that Holly has social anxiety, which means SHE WOULDN'T CALL ANYONE if she could avoid it. She'd book that shit online. AND... Why bother using an aggregation site like that if you're just going to call the hotel directly. You no get good rate that way. You get good rate booking online deals.

Ugh... it was like this was written by a 70 year old or something. ...more

## The Outsider Stephen King

"Reality is thin ice, but most people skate on it their whole lives and never fall through until the very end."

An eleven-year-old's body is found in a park following a brutal murder. Eyewitness accounts and fingerprint evidence point to the popular Little League coach and teacher, Terry Maitland. But Terry also has an alibi for the time of the crime...

MY BOY'S STILL GOT IT. I straight up loved this book from the very first page until the final words. King proves once again that he is the master "Reality is thin ice, but most people skate on it their whole lives and never fall through until the very end."

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MY BOY'S STILL GOT IT. I straight up loved this book from the very first page until the final words. King proves once again that he is the master when it comes to horror and suspense. This book had me feeling disturbed and unsettled on a few occasions, whilst also having me sending frantic messages to my BG friends like "What the eff just happened?!"

Those first 2-300 pages were simply unputdownable. It was so addictive that I was seriously considering booking days off work so that I could just fly through it. But it's also so good that I wanted to take my time and really savour being in a great King book. There were twists and turns galore, and at no point could I really predict what route King would go down. I love King most of all when he is completely unpredictable.

One of my favourite things about King's writing is those scenes that really just feel so simple. And by that I mean different characters or family members just chatting in the kitchen over a coffee. He has a way of making seemingly "bland" parts of the story really damn interesting. He just knows how to craft these characters we care about and have them interact in a way that feels real. He doesn't need to be building constant suspense or throwing scares our way to hook your attention. It's the more quiet moments in his books that I live for. And there's plenty of those in here as well as the crazy, exciting, unsettling parts. A couple of scenes in particular had those little hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. He's STILL killin' it.

I really liked these characters a lot more than those presented in *Sleeping Beauties*, these ones actually did feel more memorable. We also got to see the reappearance of a certain King character that I found very exciting. I was just fangirling all over the place. Connections and crossovers within the King universe will always please us Constant Readers.



I've warned everyone on my instagram numerous times... but if by some chance you're reading this and you haven't read The Outsider yet OR the Bill Hodges trilogy, I strongly recommend reading the Hodges trilogy first. You're doing yourself a HUGE disservice if you don't! If you have zero interest in ever reading the trilogy then work away, but if not... you will be MAJORLY spoiled. And no one enjoys that shit.

I just feel so happy that King is still writing and releasing books of this quality. I get a bit pissed when people throw shade on King's more recent stuff and say things like "Oh I much prefer classic King". Would you want your favourite band to keep releasing albums over and over that have the same kind of sound? No, I want my bands to evolve and change, just like I want King to. He is constantly trying different things, or different genres. He doesn't rest on his laurels, he's always trying to challenge himself and I respect that. Thankee-Sai.

Probably my favourite book of 2018 so far - all the stars! ...more

3.5? 3.75?

This started off really good but it slowed down towards the end. I was happy there was some connection to the Bill Hodges series (which I liked a lot and recommend you read first since there are some spoilers here!) but I was overall underwhelmed.

Recommend it but it's not for everyone.

## The Outsiders Summary

I loved the first half of this book so much, I hardly knew what to do with myself. I just wanted to be reading every minute of the day. Don't get me wrong, the second half was good, it just didn't impress me quite as much.

I'm not going to rehash the plot, because today, only one week from the release date, there are already hundreds of reviews that do that. I'm just going to give a few of my thoughts and impressions:

The first quarter of this book was outstanding. It reminded me of all the reason I loved the first half of this book so much, I hardly knew what to do with myself. I just wanted to be reading every minute of the day. Don't get me wrong, the second half was good, it just didn't impress me quite as much.

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The first quarter of this book was outstanding. It reminded me of all the reasons I love King in the first place. Then the second quarter? It was even better! I know that my mouth dropped open when I was reading quite a few times and who doesn't love being surprised? The third quarter brings us Ms. Holly Gibney, (who was probably my favorite character from the Bill Hodges crime trilogy which began with Mr. Mercedes), but the pacing began to slow. The fourth quarter just got draggy and I wanted things to wrap up.

Overall, I was prepared to go all fangirl over this book and at first THE OUTSIDER deserved that and more. By the time we approached the denouement, I was still enjoying myself, but not as much. Perhaps it's because I expect so much from King and it's just not possible for anyone, even him, to live up to my expectations? Perhaps, it's because I was also reading CARRIE at the same time for a book club meeting, and that short novel reminded me how lean and mean King can be?

Whatever the reason, I do recommend THE OUTSIDER, I just can't give it my highest recommendation. Even so, a 4 star King book is worth 2 or 3 of most other author's 5 star books, so you should still read it! I hope you enjoy it, if you do! ...more

Lately I've been wondering if I'm not compatible with Stephen King's newer novels. I've really enjoyed working through his backlist, and I am here for all the 80's/90's old school horror and sci-fi, but the newer brand of SK and I just haven't clicked. I was sorely disappointed in Sleeping Beauties last year, so I was hesitant to pick up The Outsider immediately. After waiting a few months and giving the hype time to die down, I finally decided it would be the next pick on my unread shelf to div Lately I've been wondering if I'm not compatible with Stephen King's newer novels. I've really enjoyed working through his backlist, and I am here for all the 80's/90's old school horror and sci-fi, but the newer brand of SK and I just haven't clicked. I was sorely disappointed in Sleeping Beauties last year, so I was hesitant to

## The Outsider

pick up *The Outsider* immediately. After waiting a few months and giving the hype time to die down, I finally decided it would be the next pick on my unread shelf to dive into. Guys, I am SO glad I picked this up; *The Outsider* has given me faith in the new brand of King and the reassurance that it's ok not to click with an author's every piece of work.

## POSSIBLE MINOR SPOILERS BELOW!

I had been warned ahead of time that this wouldn't be a straightforward crime novel, and I think that guidance helped me place my expectations in just the right place before embarking on this strange and fascinating journey. The book felt like it was divided into two separate stories, yet connected centrally in a way that flows and is understandable once you've read the book. Part police procedural, part old school horror, this book was entirely compulsive and satisfying. We begin with a beloved local father figure accused of a horrific crime (TW for graphic descriptions of child murder, sodomy, pedophilia, and desecration of a body), and I was pleased and a bit shocked at how well King transformed a seemingly straightforward investigation into a thrilling page turner. After some major plot twists, the characters begin to realize that something beyond the natural is at large, and I think this is where he lost some readers. (In most of the negative reviews I've seen it's been the supernatural aspect that was a turning point.) Surprisingly, I really enjoyed the inclusion of folklore and found this to be a fresh, new way to spin an old formula into something unique and memorable.

I don't want to say too much about the plot, but I did find it interesting how he loosely tied this to the Bill Hodges trilogy. I would love to see this as the beginning of a new trilogy featuring (view spoiler)[Holly (hide spoiler)] and Ralph, so if the Stephen King angels are listening, this is my formal plea. Initially, I was going to give this 4 stars, but the fact that I finished this book days ago and haven't stopped thinking about it and fleshing the details out in my mind over and over proves that it was a 5 star experience for this reader. I'd love to chat about this one with some other folks who have read it!  
...more

## The Outsider Hbo

This was my favorite book of 2018  
and I never wrote an actual review for it. This haunts me.

Am I the only person this happens to?

In an effort to appease some of my guilt, let me get a few thoughts down:

I really enjoyed the topics explored in this book. Particularly, the idea that sometimes the court of public opinion is much more unforgiving and harsh than any court of law.

I also enjoyed how King showed vignettes of various characters, all flawed, in the town where our drama unfolds. He described so well the way the main event affected various people like when a stone gets thrown in a pond. It created ripples spreading out and enveloping many lives. I loved this. It reminded me a bit of the way things roll out in *Needful Things*.

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The Outsider

And of course, most of all, I loved my second favorite character from The Bill Hodges trilogy making an appearance!

I knew it was going to happen and I waited and waited and waited and then...

Reunited and it feels so good!!!

The supernatural elements were also fantastic in my opinion. There were classic King scenes that gave me absolute chills and left me wanting to leave the light on when I went to bed.

I would definitely recommend reading The Bill Hodges trilogy first. If you do and you don't like it, this may not be the book for you. Maybe. I don't know. I'm on the fence. I think for people who are huge fans of that trilogy, it makes this book extra special.

I suppose you could read this on its own, I just can't attest to what your experience will be. For me, half the thrill was getting a character I thought I would never see again back in my life.

I know I will end up reading this again someday. I love to reread King books. Most likely if I do read it again, I will read the entire BH trilogy with this one added on the end.

Original: This officially wins my 'Favorite Book I Read in 2018' prize. Forever may it reign.

So, this sort of counts as a review right?

I annotated and everything but how do you review perfection?

Just, how?

...more

YES! My first super favorite of 2018! REALLY good stuff here....BAFFLING stuff....CREEPY crawling chilling stuff.....and most of all....Stephen KING excellence in storytelling stuff! Just another murder - Just another mystery - Not by a long shot! At first, I thought, hmmm....something so different from the KING this time around, but then after a disgustingly heinous murder of a young boy....and the arrest of an important, well respected man....came a shocker. Holy Crap! Now What? We're not e YES! My first super favorite of 2018! REALLY good stuff here....BAFFLING stuff....CREEPY crawling chilling stuff.....and most of all....Stephen KING excellence in storytelling stuff! Just another murder - Just another mystery - Not by a long shot! At first, I thought, hmmm....something so different from the KING this time around, but then after a disgustingly heinous murder of a young boy....and the arrest of an important, well respected man....came a shocker. Holy Crap! Now What? We're not even half way....then IT begins.We get some horrific and violent facts from an autopsy report, hear about scary dreams, poisonous nightmares, and weird visions depicting inexplicable possibilities....even a likeness to a POE story and a quote from a Sherlock Holmes tale. "Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth.".....A. Conan Doyle. THEN.... more deaths, more outlandish clues. "Anything is possible---anything at all." Investigative help is desperately needed, hence the appearance of a brainy, eccentric favorite character of mine from KING'S past novel, FINDERS KEEPERS who ultimately takes charge and is by no means new to the extraordinary, mind-boggling, inconceivable or grotesque. She and her analytical ways enlighten ALL with her beliefs and past experience opening up a whole new world of monsters, darkness and death for her new compadres.GREAT READ! - - BUT..BUT..BUT.....if you plan on reading the Bill Hodges trilogy, do so first....if not, you're good to go!</b> 5 BIG ONES for me! ...more

## The Outsiders Ponyboy

### Blurb

An unspeakable crime. A confounding investigation. At a time when the King brand has never been stronger, he has delivered one of his most unsettling and compulsively readable stories.

An eleven-year-old boy's violated corpse is found in a town park. Eyewitnesses and fingerprints point unmistakably to one of Flint City's most popular citizens. He is Terry Maitland, Little League coach, English teacher, husband, and father of two girls. Detective Ralph Anderson, whose son Maitland once coached

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As the investigation expands and horrifying answers begin to emerge, King's propulsive story kicks into high gear, generating strong tension and almost unbearable suspense. Terry Maitland seems like a nice guy, but is he wearing another face? When the answer comes, it will shock you as only Stephen King can. |

I love Stephen King and in this novel, he has finally come back. I loved his older books and this one filled me with excitement and the horror kept on coming. Things just don't seem to be seen as they are suppose to be. This one actually scared me. If you are after a good scare, I highly recommend this book.

If you loved the Bill Hodges Series, this one will be a big treat. It was a big treat for me. I suggest to read The Bill Hodges Series first and you will get a big surprise when you read this. If you don't want to read the series, I guess that would be fine because it's just the character development I think that you will be missing.

This one made my top ten list of 2018. ...more

Stephen King has done it again with a powerful story that pulls the reader into the middle and will not let them go. Mixing his ability to write mysteries with a long-established foundation for the supernatural, this novel will impress the dedicated reader ready for an adventure like no other. When a boy's body is discovered, murdered and sexually assaulted, many of the witnesses and evidence

point to Terry Maitland. The town's baseball coach, Maitland was described by many to be the salt of the earth, though Detective Ralph Anderson cannot discount all the information that he has at his disposal. Wanting to make a show of Maitland's arrest, Anderson seeks to have Maitland taken into custody during a high-profile baseball game, in front of much of the town. While Maitland professes his innocence, Anderson turns a deaf ear, sure that the forensics are irrefutable. A solid alibi exists for Maitland being a fair distance away, with equally persuasive alibi witnesses and physical evidence, though Anderson chooses not to give this much merit. How can a man be in two places at once and does DNA lie? Anderson and others around him seek to explain this, but things go horribly wrong during the arraignment and Maitland's innocence is now a footnote to a larger issue. When the evidence is extrapolated by a guilty Anderson, who cannot rest until he knows the truth, all eyes turn to Dayton, Ohio, where Maitland spent some of his time with family. A call is placed to the Finders Keepers Detective Agency, where one Holly Gibney is now running the show. Gibney, eccentric as ever, is curious and agrees to take the case, poking around and asking the right questions. She soon discovers that there is more to Terry Maitland than meets the eye and the case is blown wide open. What follows is a series of events that turns the small town of Flint City into the centre of a larger and more disturbing mystery, with ties to a piece of Mexican folklore. Is there a way to be in two places at once? Who is the mysterious man that appears in the dreams of many around town, making threats of violence? King offers up answers to these and many others in his latest piece of stunning fiction. Those who can stomach Stephen King will surely love this book, though his trademark meandering might turn the less than prepared off reading this stellar novel!

I will be the first to admit that it takes a certain kind of reader to enjoy Stephen King. His masterful ability to tell a story is surrounded by layers of tangential writing and minor characters seeking their time in the spotlight. However, if one can handle this sort of storytelling, there is a core tale that is almost addictive and one cannot walk away without being impacted. King does a masterful job here, focussing his attention on many people throughout the piece. Terry Maitland receives strong character development throughout the early portion of the novel, his life dragged through the mud as the accusations against him pile high. He seeks to clear his name, though the evidence appears to make this close to impossible. Ralph Anderson and Holly Gibney, though not the only others who share a significant amount of the spotlight, are two that will not soon be forgotten by readers. Anderson is the police official seeking justice over all else and not wanting to let his gaffes hang too long around him. Those who have read some of King's recent material will know Gibney to be a central character in his Mr. Mercedes trilogy, where her unique style seems to have made its mark. Gibney divorces herself from the socially acceptable world and tells things as she sees them, no matter the consequences. Scores of other characters dot the narrative and push it forward, keeping the reader enthralled and wanting more, their characteristics sometimes a flash in the pan, but always appreciated. The story itself is complex and entertaining, full of King's strong research and curious tangential commentary



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The Outsider

on life. What appears to be the thread the narrative will follow is soon abandoned for a different pathway, but one the reader can enjoy without too many mental gymnastics. I understand how many may not have liked this piece or found it too... odd for their liking. I know all too well that King can be difficult to digest and it takes a certain type of reader to understand him. That being said, I cannot praise this recent piece enough and await the next novel to see what else he has in store.

Kudos, Mr. King, for another winner. While I have been critical of some work you produce, you always keep me guessing and wondering what you have in mind when I crack open another of your pieces of writing.

Love/hate the review? An ever-growing collection of others appears at:  
<http://pecheyponderings.wordpress.com/>

A Book for All Seasons, a different sort of Book Challenge: <https://www.goodreads.com/group/show/...>  
...more

## The Outsiders Quotes

I haven't read Stephen King in about 20 years - not since he pissed me off with It, when he made me read a nasty child-orgy as a reward for making it through about 1000 pages. Earlier this month I read his On Writing: A Memoir of the Craft in the hopes of getting some writerly enlightenment, and was disappointed. But that's neither here nor there. I decided, after being enticed by many positive reviews, and with the intention of giving the King another chance, to see what it would be like reading his fiction again, at this point in my life.

The beginning started off with a bang. A gritty police procedural, with a more-than-intriguing plot of a man who was, according to fingerprints and DNA, in two places at the same time. How is it possible? Who committed the atrocious child murder? I was hooked, and pleasantly so. I enjoyed the doppelganger mystery, as well as allusions to Edgar Allan Poe's story William Wilson.

But then, as things progressed, I started getting scared. Not an I can only read this in a well lit room kind of scared. Nope. It was a different kind of dread that plagued me. It was I'm really worried I'm not going to like this scared. Even more specifically, it was this better not go all supernatural on me scared.

I love dark things. I love being freaked out, shocked, disgusted. I love barely being able to open my eyes for fear of the words or images in front of them. And, in case you're wondering, I've loved Stephen King in the past. I have vivid memories of reading The Shining in the corner of my bedroom as a teenager, in living, pulsing fear so delicious it was almost an out of body experience. I suppose I was trying to chase that dragon by picking up this book. But I'm more of a fan of books like The Shining, Carrie, Dolores Claiborne and Misery where the real monsters are HUMAN. That is soooooo much scarier than some creature that appears out of nowhere, in a lazy magician's trick.

So, much of the 2nd half was like listening to a balloon slowly losing air, with a long, slobbery hiss. King put on the hard sell - begging us to buy this story, which just served to emphasise the farfetchedness of it. Over and over, he begged, please dear reader, just for the day, you have to BELIEVE.

And I just didn't.

I tried. I tried to keep an open mind. But it was too much. I didn't believe, and didn't much care for the supernatural threat. The ending was borderline cheeseball, despite the fact that I quite enjoyed the character of Holly, who astute King readers will recognise from the Bill Hodges series.

It didn't help that the thing is over 500 pages. It was way too long, and could have been condensed easily. He could have cut a ton of repetition (just one minor example is the constant comparison of one character to Alfalfa because of his cowlick - we GET it, already).

I know I'm in the minority here, and once again, I'm not going to win the popularity contest. This book is widely praised - and by many of my favourite Goodreads friends. Perhaps I'm just not suited to Stephen King's books. Perhaps the dragon I'm chasing just won't be caught. After all, how can you beat that thrill, that initial discovery of the dank and dark, at age sixteen? I still have utmost admiration for Stephen King, who, in his 70s, continues to put himself out there and expand his incomparable body of work. For me though, this novel just didn't deliver. ...more

4 Stars

King does it again! Simply masterful.

Young Frankie Peterson is dead. His death was brutal: gruesome, horrific and completely senseless. All evidence points to Terry Maitland, beloved Little League Coach, as the murderer. His fingerprints are all over the crime scene and eye-witnesses place him with Peterson moments before his death. Enraged by the viciousness of the crime, and convinced of Maitland's guilt, Detective Ralph Anderson arranges for the public arrest of Maitland: in front of 4 Stars

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Can a person possibly be in two places at once? Wouldn't you say that it's physically impossible? (I know for a fact that it's not seeing as I've actually done it. I once straddled the state lines of Kansas City, Kansas and Kansas City, Missouri - "I thought it was pretty cool - being in a city that had the same name but in different states!? Wowza!) That said, I will admit that Stephen King's take on this subject is FAR cooler than mine).

Thereafter, Terry's wife, and a few others do whatever they can to prove his innocence. The path it leads them down is most extraordinary. Would you expect anything less from Stephen King? Perhaps my own eyes played tricks on me.

## The Outsider

Joining them is Holly Gibney (of Mr. Mercedes/Finders Keepers fame (which I admittedly couldn't get through, though I tried and tried)). Her tactics may be unorthodox, but her results are bonafide.

There are things seen and unseen in "The Outsider." Something in particular was enough to creep this girl out for the duration. Someone actually. A man who gave me jitters and whose eyes I hope I never see staring into mine.

Frightening, harrowing and riveting, I was immediately drawn into this crazy novel and I went in blind, which I highly recommend. This started out as a mystery and then it changed into something else entirely. It is to Stephen King's credit that he can do that and do it successfully.

His mind works like no other and you never know what you will encounter or how his writing will impact you: one minute you're holding your breath in the deep end, terrified a monster is going to pass you by, the next your eyes snap open, the shock has hit you and spasms wrack your body over and over. His ideas rock my world and they always have. Somehow, I know I'm not alone.

While I loved the premise of "The Outsider" and was scared and completely shocked by the twists and turns, I felt that the storyline petered out a bit towards the end and it left me wanting just a tad. The characters however, were full of fierce determination, strength and lots of heart. What I learned is that if I lose something or get into trouble, I would be lucky to have Holly Gibney by my side and so would you.

Thank you to Stephen King for continuously keeping me entertained since I was a pre-teen. Thank you also for giving a shout out to you know who - that was awesome! In case it's not obvious, your imagination continues to amaze me. Whenever I think I need to let my imagination run a little wild, I read one of your books and I think, heck no, you do it enough for all of us.  
Published on Gooreads, Amazon, Twitter and Instagram on 6.23.18. ...more