



UR

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Reeling from a painful break-up, English instructor and avid book lover Wesley Smith is haunted by his ex-girlfriend's parting shot: "Why can't you just read off the computer like everyone else?" He buys an e-book reader out of spite, but soon finds he can use the device to glimpse realities he had never before imagined, discovering literary riches beyond his wildest dreams...and all-too-human tragedies that surpass his most terrible nightmares.

UR Details

Date : Published February 12th 2009 by Storyville, LLC

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Author : Stephen King

Format : Kindle Edition 61 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction, Short Stories, Fantasy, Science Fiction

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From Reader Review UR for online ebook

Adam Light says

Nice little side trip into the land of King wherein the protagonist purchases a Kindle, in an attempt to win back the affections of his ex-girlfriend. He should have stuck with good old paperbacks!

Brian says

Update. 2.1.18

Reading The Book of Lost Tales by Tolkien, the first book of the twelve in the histories of middle earth. In Tolkien's earliest conception, he creates a magic sun, called "Ur."

Read this in King's newest collection. I loved this story. It reminded me of how much I loved experiencing the Dark Tower world. The premise: guy buys a Kindle and connects with the DT world. Imagine your favorite authors in other worlds. They have more novels. I looked at my favorites of favorites shelf and felt the obsession of the idea. Steinbeck, Dumas, Tolkien, Jordan, Twain. Imagine reading novels they never wrote or even read in this world! I'm glad this Kindle's not real. I'm not joking. I'd be in my counsellors office for a new addiction, and maybe some antipsychotic medicine for embracing delusional realities. Excellent read! Classic King. The story starts slow but ends well. I've found the best way to enjoy King -- read other writers. If you compare King with King you may be disappointed because his style changes over the years. Compare him with other authors and see how great he stands out. I can't read King too much because he ends up my sole source of fiction. I also try to write like him and that never works.

Elizabeth Sagan says

Duuuuude. I don't know whether I should give it 4 or 5 stars. This is straight outta...

I even listened to the same song that I associate TDT series with (which is Heaven & Earth by Two Steps From Hell if you're interested).

This is one of those stories when you think gosh, I wish it happened to me (at least in the beginning). What would you do if you'd have a Kindle and you could download the works of all the authors from all the parallel worlds? I honestly would starve to death because, really, who needs food?

Imagine having 3 other Harry Potter books, The Winds of Winter and A Dream of Spring and the last book in The Kingkiller Chronicles. By the way, have you checked Rothfuss' review of the last one? It's one of the most popular reviews on Goodreads and it talks about time travelers. But I know they aren't time travelers. They're people who own an UR Kindle and Stephen King is to blame because all things serve the Tower.

This is me fangirling. Omg, this book was so good.

So maybe 5 stars is the right choice.

*

P.S. – typing up one of those books and publishing it isn't an option (yeah, I thought of it, they thought of it too). The Paradox Laws will fuck you up and The Dark Tower world isn't a merciful one. How about total annihilation?

Nik says

..... what the hell is this crap?! If you check out my reviews you'll know I am a serious SK fan, for over 12 years I have practically devoured any and everything he's written and while I can't list them all among my favorites, I will say I usually can find SOMETHING in them that garners a bit of affection for the story. Not with this dreck, I have never been more disappointed! I was so excited to find an SK novel exclusive to Kindle readers, and just like Charlie before me I could hardly contain my joy at finding my "golden ticket." I checked out the reviews and they were mixed but I usually make my own decisions about things like this so I ordered it anyhow... I should have listened to the reviews. It's almost as if he said "How can I exploit the success of my more popular novels without actually doing any real work?" Also why the Kindle infomercials, if this story is only available on Kindle doesn't it stand to reason that we already have a Kindle we're reading it on?! If I wanted a product description or quick start guide I would have read the crap that came in the box when I brought my own (possibly with much more satisfaction than this novella.) Such a disappointment (I know, I know, repetitious but true) and I KNOW my favorite author can do better. The book I'm currently in the middle of Full Dark, No Stars is a testament to that.

EDIT After my cooling off period I have come back to add on ONE additional star because I did like the premise of alternate dimensions and realities and an endless mine of untapped literary gold. That's like bookworm porn so 2 stars for that SK.... but none for the rest of it.

Kathryn says

UR started kind of slow for me. At first it wasn't too interesting. Then, all of sudden, it picked up and I enjoyed it. I like the Dark Tower relation, and the idea of alternate realities. If you've read The Dark Tower series by King, you already know about this. Anyways, *UR* is a nice, quick read, with an interesting idea for a storyline.

Delee says

3.5

Lou says

"Kindle Ur King"

I confess! I have committed a sin I have avoided reading novels from The Grandmaster writer Stephen King! I repent! I will make my upmost effort in reading my way through The Dark Tower series, one book a month minimum.

King was one of the first to delve into publishing via the kindle from this genre. This novella will be looked upon in the future as the genesis of the kindle era. His talent is to turn anything into a craft from kindle to Riding the Bullet. Great creative story.

EXCERPT " Does this gadget of yours have a smell?" "Nope," Henderson replied. "Not really. But when you turn the pages...here, with this button...they kind of flutter, like in a real book, and I can go to any page I want, and when it sleeps, it shows pictures of famous writers, and it holds a charge" "

" "The Tower trembles; the worlds shudder in their courses. The rose feels a chill, as of winter." "

" What seemed major—what loomed over his life and very sanity—were the riches hidden within that slim pink panel of plastic. He thought of all the writers whose passing he had mourned, from Norman Mailer and Saul Bellow to Donald Westlake and Evan Hunter; one after another, Thanatos stilled the magic voices and they spoke no more. But now they could. They could speak to him. He threw back the bedclothes. The Kindle was calling him. Not in a human voice, but in an organic one. It sounded like a beating heart, Poe's tell-tale heart, coming from inside his briefcase instead of from under the floorboards, and— Poe! Good God, he had never checked Poe! "

<http://more2read.com/?review=ur-by-stephen-king>

Becky says

While I was listening to this one, I said to a friend on Google Chat, "You know... it's crazy how much Stephen King affects me.

I'm listening to this audio book and I have a knot in my stomach out of nervousness." This about sums up what I love about Stephen King. Even in his shortest stories, he is able to take me out of my world and transplant me into the one he's created. He's able to make me not only know his characters, but care about them and root for them and worry for their well-being.

I wish that this was something that more authors understood. It's not enough to tell me a story if I don't like or don't understand the characters in it. It's not enough to craft a complicated or ingenious plot if I can't identify with the people in the story enough to put myself in their place. I have never had an issue with identifying with a King character. I may not like them, but I don't have to like them, because, like real people, they have a life of their own and do with it what they will. What they do is organic and true to their characters, and isn't shaped by King into something fake to fit the storyline.

I don't mean to harp on like this, but it always amazes me how much I fall in love with King's characters --

especially after I've read other books where the characters are flat, lifeless things that just move from scene to scene doing whatever the storyline requires without a personality or free will of their own. Alright... harping to stop..... Now.

I loved the concept of this book, and it thrilled me to no end seeing the King universe tied into the story. The connection didn't feel as unplanned as some of his other books do, more like he sought to write a book that tied in the Dark Tower series with a story about a Kindle, but even so it was pretty cool. I loved the concept of what the UR edition Kindle could do. I would absolutely be searching out more of King's works... I would have to cover the Kindle in plastic to avoid ruining it by drool, but still... I would be in heaven.

If you haven't read this one, I recommend it. It's a short read, the audio is great, and it's a mind-trip, like most of the DT stuff is. :)

Jordon Greene says

My First Stephen King Read

I've meant to read a Stephen King story for some time, so this one became my first when a fellow reader suggested it. I have to say, they were right. It's great! I would have never imagined a story about a Kindle like this and then what I'm assuming is a cross tie in with some other works of King's that I've yet to read. Definitely a great Stephen King story to start off with.

Ruth Turner says

(Collected in The Bazaar of Bad Dreams)

I attempted to read his story a few years ago and gave up in disgust before I was even halfway through. It didn't make much sense and I was bored witless.

Second attempt, the beginning is still slow, and it still bored me witless but I persevered and managed to finish it. Not a great read but certainly rates higher than some of his other short stories I've read recently.

CONNECTIONS:

Pot 'o Gold (Rest Stop)

The Dark Tower:

Beneath the welcome message was a picture—not of Charles Dickens or Eudora Welty, but of a large black tower.

“The Tower trembles; the worlds shudder in their courses. The rose feels a chill, as of winter.”

“If there were dreams (of pink Kindles, women in roadhouse parking lots, or low men in yellow coats), he did not remember them.”

“All things serve the Tower,” the man-thing in the yellow duster said, and touched the hideous button on its coat with a kind of reverence. Both wore buttons bearing a red eye.

From The Stand - It looked like a black stone so dark it seemed almost resinous and pitchy. There was a red flaw in the center of it, and to Lloyd it looked like a terrible eye, bloody and half-open, peering at him.

This is in no way a connection, but... “And James Patterson’s probably written one (book) since he got up this morning!” she said, and went off chortling.” *snicker*

Belinda says

Strictly braincandy. Yummy, yummy braincandy. I do love Stephen King. Trust King to not only be an early adopter of new technology where reading and writing are concerned, but to be so totally immersed in it that he treats his fellow Kindle addicts to a delightfully personal novella!

This story was just plain fun. Mild-mannered English prof. finally breaks down and orders himself an e-reader: A Kindle. It arrives, in PINK, and with no instructions...and "experimental" features guaranteed to make every bibliophile drool. Just one example...what IF, on some plane of existence, Poe lived another 30 years, and published NOVELS?

But as with most things King, this gift comes with a price, and someone's gonna pay. And as an added bonus for King's Constant Reader, this story, like many of his others, has Dark Tower mythology woven throughout. Brilliant.

Michael says

I'm not quite sure what there is to say here. While King is one of my favorite authors, I'm not an apologist. Among some of the best books I've ever read are some real clunkers.

This... this is something special. And by special I mean horrible. Not since Dan Brown have I wanted so badly to throw what I was reading across the room. I could not, of course, as I was reading on a Kindle.

The Kindle shilling and advertisements are shameless, which is all the more frustrating as one can only read the damn thing on a Kindle - why give us the infomercial at the same time?

Sales pitch aside, this is still some of the most disappointing King work I've read. Perhaps having to write this with a deadline he reached into his protagonist hat and pulled out what seems to be the only tile (an

English teacher who is writing a novel in his spare time), though to King's credit our hero is not, this time, from Maine. Blah blah blah Red Sox mentioned blah blah SPOILER Dark Tower dropped in at the end etc etc.

Trudi says

The Tower trembles; the worlds shudder in their courses. The rose feels a chill, as of winter.

I love this quote and I love this story! Not only is it a giant HEAP of fun, it's filled to the brim with Dark Tower references right down to an appearance by the low men in yellow coats - **yes! more please!**

The premise is pure King, and would have made an AWESOME *Twilight Zone* episode. I can just hear Rod Serling now:

Wesley Smith is a professor of literature and his mistress is the book. An unlikely impulse to purchase an electronic reader opens a window through which can be viewed infinite versions of time and space. If knowledge is power, then Wesley has just become the most powerful man in our universe. He has also just crossed over into the *Twilight Zone*.

Whether you're a fan of the Dark Tower novels or not, this is vintage King.

Blair says

UR is an extremely short novella, and also happened to be my introduction to Stephen King. The premise is pretty fascinating - a university English professor, Wesley Smith, orders an Amazon Kindle after a fight with his girlfriend, during which she rages at him for spending too much time reading books. When the device arrives (with alarming speed), it's inexplicably pink, and has a mysterious menu called 'UR Functions'. Wesley quickly realises that this menu gives him the ability to read a plethora of previously unheard-of works by famous writers. At first he assumes this is some kind of elaborate hoax, but the more he reads, the more he becomes convinced that the books are genuine, and that the Kindle offers a portal into alternate realities where they really have been written. But this discovery grows into an obsession and, of course, it comes at a price...

The story is a fun spin on the idea of ardent readers being hostile towards new technology, and the idea of having access to millions of undiscovered parallel-universe books by your favourite authors is thrilling - any book-lover can imagine how addictive this would be. It really is a short story, though, and although I loved the plot (especially the (view spoiler)) - and wished I could have explored the 'URs' further - I wasn't convinced by the characters and found some of the dialogue a bit off. Altogether, although this has made me interested in reading some of King's full-length novels, it hasn't exactly left me chomping at the bit to do so.

Oscar says

El profesor de literatura Wesley Smith decide un buen día comprar un Kindle, aunque no está muy convencido. El aparato que le llega es de color rosa, en lugar del típico blanco. Pero ahí no acaban las particularidades del dispositivo, que Wesley irá descubriendo poco a poco.

‘UR’ (2009) fue el primer relato digital de Stephen King, que escribió para promocionar el lanzamiento del lector de libros electrónicos Kindle, de Amazon. Si bien hay algunas pinceladas más que evidentes de publicidad dentro del relato, que a mí particularmente no me han molestado, se trata de una historia interesante y amena, con tintes de ciencia ficción y universos paralelos. Además, incluye algunas referencias a la serie de la Torre Oscura y a ‘Corazones en la Atlántida’.
