

The Dark Tower VII: The Dark Tower (7)

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Now a major motion picture starring Matthew McConaughey and Idris Elba

Creating "true narrative magic" (The Washington Post) at every revelatory turn, Stephen King surpasses all expectation in the stunning final volume of his seven-part epic masterwork. Entwining stories and worlds from a vast and complex canvas, here is the conclusion readers have long awaited--breathhtakingly imaginative, boldly visionary, and wholly entertaining.

Roland Deschain and his ka-tet have journeyed together and apart, scattered far and wide across multilayered worlds of wheres and whens. The destinies of Roland, Susannah, Jake, Father Callahan, Oy, and Eddie are bound in the Dark Tower itself, which now pulls them ever closer to their own endings and beginnings...and into a maelstrom of emotion, violence, and discovery.

At one point in this final book of the Dark Tower series, the character Stephen King (added to the plot in Song of Susannah) looks back at the preceding pages and says "when this last book is published, the readers are going to be just wild." And he's not kidding.

After a journey through seven books and over 20 years, King's Constant Readers finally have the conclusion they've been both eagerly awaiting and silently dreading. The tension in the Dark Tower series has built steadily from the beginning and, like in the best of King's novels, explodes into a violent, heart-tugging climax as Roland and his ka-tet finally near their goal. The body count in The Dark Tower is high. The gunslingers come out shooting and face a host of enemies, including low men, mutants, vampires, Roland's hideous quasi-offspring Mordred, and the fearsome Crimson King himself. King pushes the gross-out factor at times--Roland's lesson on tanning (no, not sun tanning) is brutal--but the magic of the series remains strong and readers will feel the pull of the Tower as strongly as ever as the story draws to a close. During this sentimental journey, King ties up loose ends left hanging from the 15 non-series novels and stories that are deeply entwined in the fabric of Mid-World through characters like Randall Flagg (The Stand and others) or Father Callahan ('Salem's Lot). When it finally arrives, the long awaited conclusion will leave King's myriad fans satisfied but wishing there were still more to come.

In King's memoir *On Writing*, he tells of an old woman who wrote him after reading the early books in the Dark Tower series. She was dying, she said, and didn't expect to see the end of Roland's quest. Could King tell her? Does he reach the Tower? Does he save it? Sadly, King said he did not know himself, that the story was creating itself as it went along. Wherever that woman is now (the clearing at the end of the path, perhaps?), let's hope she has a copy of *The Dark Tower*. Surely she would agree it's been worth the wait. -- Benjamin Reese

Stephen King is the author of more than sixty books, all of them worldwide bestsellers. His recent work includes *The Institute*, *Elevation*, *The Outsider*, *Sleeping Beauties* (cowritten with his son Owen King), and the Bill Hodges trilogy: *End of Watch*, *Finders Keepers*, and *Mr. Mercedes* (an Edgar Award winner for Best Novel and an AT&T Audience Network original television series). His novel *11/22/63* was named a top ten book of 2011 by The New York Times Book Review and won the Los Angeles Times Book Prize for Mystery/Thriller. His epic works *The Dark Tower* and *It* are the basis for major motion pictures, with *It* now the highest grossing horror film of all time. He is the recipient of the 2018 PEN America Literary

Service Award, the 2014 National Medal of Arts, and the 2003 National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters. He lives in Bangor, Maine, with his wife, novelist Tabitha King.

Other Books

Dissecting Stephen King. In a thoughtful, well-informed study exploring fiction from throughout Stephen King's immense oeuvre, Heidi Strengell shows how this popular writer enriches his unique brand of horror by building on the traditions of his literary heritage. Tapping into the wellsprings of the gothic to reveal contemporary phobias, King invokes the abnormal and repressed sexuality of the vampire, the hubris of Frankenstein, the split identity of the werewolf, the domestic melodrama of the ghost tale. Drawing on myths and fairy tales, he creates characters who, like the heroic Roland the Gunslinger and the villainous Randall Flagg, may either reinforce or subvert the reader's childlike faith in society. And in the manner of the naturalist tradition, he reinforces a tension between the free will of the individual and the daunting hand of fate. Ultimately, Strengell shows how King shatters our illusions of safety and control: "King places his decent and basically good characters at the mercy of indifferent forces, survival depending on their moral strength and the responsibility they may take for their fellow men."

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