



A Face in the Crowd

Stephen King , Stewart O'Nan (co-author)

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An alternate cover edition can be found here.

Having recently given us Faithful, Sai King and Stewart O'Nan are apparently more than "casual" weekend Baseball Fans; they have taken the final step to become true Baseball Warriors.

Dean Evers, an elderly widower, sits in front of the television watching baseball. Suddenly, a Very Surprised Dean Evers recognizes sees someone from the distant past who should no longer be with the living. This goes on for some time, with Evers seeing face after face of people in the past (and *of* the past), always in the same seat just behind home plate.

. . . Spoiler is where this blurb ends, but be forewarned; this work has twists which are Quite worthy of the "hit team" of Stephen King and Stewart O'Nan.

A Face in the Crowd Details

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Author : Stephen King , Stewart O'Nan (co-author)

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From Reader Review A Face in the Crowd for online ebook

Trudi says

This is *good* my fellow Constant Readers, just not...*wow*. I can't speak of O'Nan's work, but for King this is a fairly familiar and predictable story idea. The execution is *nice*, the prose tight and strong, but unlike countless other times in my life, he just didn't blow my skirt up with this short novella.

Still, it's always such a joy to slip into King's world, his rhythmic use of language, his crystalline images and always effective creation of dread and unease. It's perhaps morbid of me to consider that I have way less unread King ahead of me than behind me. In that context, every new thing is precious in its own way, even this simple story about love of the game (baseball that is) and the sharp regrets that come with the measure of a full life.

Pedro says

Muy buen relato. No puedo decir mucho porque es muy cortito, pero me entretuvo y me mantuvo concentrado todo el tiempo. Lo único es que en parte ya me imaginaba el final, pero aun así me gustó mucho la historia ya que me encanta lo sobrenatural y siempre es agradable probar a King en otro género que no sea el horror. Algún día leeré algo de Stewart O'Nan para ver qué tanto de él tiene lo que acabo de leer.

Jamieson says

Dean Evers is lonely.

Having recently lost his wife, he has moved to a Florida condo and has been filling his time with meaningless tasks, cooking meals for himself, books and baseball. The baseball games on television help to fill his nights when he is missing his dead wife the most.

One night, while watching the Rays duke it out against the Mariners, the game takes on a whole new meaning for him when he sees someone who couldn't possibly be at the game. Sitting in the third row, right above the umpire, is his old dentist Dr. Young.

Dean thinks this is impossible, absolutely impossible, but he can't look away, even though Dr. Young must have passed away fifty years ago. However, there is no mistaking the coke bottle glasses, the pack of Lucky Strikes in the pocket of his shirt.

The next night, there is another game on. Dean tries to avoid watching by enjoying a Harlan Coben novel but his hand reaches for the remote anyway and turns the television to the game to see who else from his past might appear to him...

To say anything else would be to give away more of the plot and this is a novella that you have to experience rather than read. I thought I had the story pegged out plot wise, but King and O'Nan had me fooled. This is

not your average day at the ballpark.

Whatever you think is going to happen doesn't happen and the result will leave you breathless. I finished this novella in practically one sitting and it's an amazing read. Not only is it incredibly well written, there are plot twists you won't see coming a mile away.

King and O'Nan write seamlessly together, so it's never clear who wrote what. That doesn't matter, though. What matters is the story is good. It's better than that; it's flat out amazing and King and O'Nan have written a home run of a novella.

What surprised me most, for such a short read were two things:

First, the depth of character. We spend the entire novella with Dean Evers and, at the end of its fifty pages, we know him. We know what makes up his character, internal and otherwise and I found myself aching for him and the choices he made throughout his life. Pulling off that kind of depth in such a short span of pages is an incredible feat and King hasn't always been so successful in his eBook originals (I'm thinking of the enjoyable but lackluster *Mile 81* here).

However, King and O'Nan succeed incredibly well with *A Face in the Crowd*. You are drawn into Dean's world and it is an eerie, haunting work that will stay with you long after you've finished reading it.

Which brings me to the second thing that surprised me most: how genuinely frightening the novella was. As I've said, the plot twists keep you on the edge of your seat and, by the novels end, you have absolutely no idea what is coming. And what comes is nothing short than one of the best endings I have ever read in a novella, mostly because it came right out of left field.

King and O'Nan could have gone over the top horror or gross out horror, but instead, they went with honest to goodness psychological terror; because they have written such a great character in Dean Evers, and we are drawn so well into his world, we feel his fear. It is our own.

By the novels dénouement, nothing about baseball will ever be the same for Dean Evers. In fact, nothing will ever be the same for him again.

I was absolutely thrilled with every aspect of this book. It's well told with a compelling protagonist and brilliantly drawn secondary characters, a plot you won't see coming a mile away and an ending that will leave you breathless with shock. Stephen King and Stewart O'Nan hit it out of the Park with *A Face in the Crowd*.

So take me out to the ball game, buy me some peanuts and cracker jacks, I don't care if I ever come back...

Matt says

Stephen King's short story leaves you wondering from page 1 and shaking your head by the end, as he recounts a tale that sets America's pastime on its head, or at least its fans. When our main character sees long-ago friends and family on screen while watching 'the ball game', no one knows what to expect. King weaves a detailed tale and has you wondering as only he can, until you reach THE END.

Not exactly a mystery, a horror, or much of anything other than fiction, King entices the reader with much baseball lingo and a backstory that rings true for many retired folks. Well worth the 30 min read and full of interesting character foundation, though it need not go anywhere, save for another trip to the Diamond.

Kathy says

This is a classic Stephen King book! Dean Evers is an avid baseball fan and watches all the games. When he starts to see familiar faces sitting in the stands behind home plate things start to get wierd. These people shouldn't be there at all. What does it mean? Things are only going to get wierder! Well done, Uncle Stevie! :)

Mmbacon says

I think we absolutely take for granted how lucky we are to have such a great living legend author as King among us. He's so often pigeonholed and lumped in one category or the other. He scare us (It), makes us hope (Rita Hayworth And The Shawshank Redemtion)and causes us take inventory of ourselves and the content of our heart (The Green Mile). He's versatile. My kid's kids will read his stories in their literature books. They will have realized how lucky we were.

Face in the crowd is a fairly predictable little tale. What's amazing about this story, and almost any King story, is the spell King casts over the reader. Its fast acting and powerful. One paragraph into the story, you've blocked everything else out. It's just Constant Reader and the story. It's really that simple. It's a short read, with a satisfying ending, but for me A Face In The Crowd highlights beautifully Kings master ability to 'Tell The Tale,'

Lou says

I felt i was amidst a scrooge tale of sorts, with a revisiting of the protagonists ills but the circumstances prove to be even grimmer with a stephen king twist on a story that has the main protagonist as an average guy whose a avid baseball fan.

Was shorter than i desired but a nice little supernatural baseball story.

Review also @ <http://more2read.com/review/a-face-in-the-crowd-by-stephen-king-stewart-onan/>

Delee says

3.5

I used to be a huge baseball fan in the 80's. The Blue Jays were my team. My mom and my brother were fans as well- and in baseball we formed a bond. Watching the games on T.V and seeing the games up close and personal in Toronto- warm beer and crappy hot dogs never tasted soooooooo good. But then my brother moved to Atlanta and became a Braves fan, and I moved out of the Toronto area, where Blue Jays fans were

hard to come by...and my love for baseball just faded away.

When I came across A FACE IN THE CROWD I really wasn't sure if it was going to be for me- A story about a man watching a ball game? Hmm I don't know- but the nice thing about e-book singles is they don't cost a lot, and they are over before you know it- so really there is not a lot to lose in trying...

[image error]

Dean Evers is lonely widower living in Florida- He recently lost his wife to a stroke, he isn't close to his son, and he doesn't have many friends left to fill the void. Evers life now consists of learning to cook for himself, reading thrillers and watching baseball- to distract himself from the sudden absence of his wife.

One night while watching the Rays take on the Mariners- he sees a familiar face in the crowd- The face of his old childhood dentist- who couldn't possibly be alive. The next night another face appears, and a pattern starts to take shape- as people from Evers past keep on coming.

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A FACE IN THE CROWD for some reason reminded me a little of a scary version of the 1950s T.V show- This is Your Life and a little of A Christmas Carol- with only the ghosts of the past streaming in to remind Dean the way he treated some of his loved ones and acquaintances.

An entertaining story for fans of King and O'Nan. This was MUCH better than I expected. I love when that happens!

Carol says

A short e-read about loss, death and a look back on how you have treated people in your life that will definitely make you think about the past. The baseball setting made it more interesting for me.

Becky says

BAAAAASSSSSEEEEEBBBAAAALLLLLL!!!! *shakes fist*

I like baseball. Well, I like watching it. Not really reading about it, so the fact that King loves writing about it is... Well, I forgive him. He's King.

But thankfully, this story was less about the baseball than it was about the guy watching baseball. And though this is a very short story, only 32 pages on my Nook, it was a good one. Not great, and not really up to the standards that I've come to expect from King, but good.

I think it just lacked a little something to really bring it to life. Maybe it was the length that worked against it. We got a rough sketch of the characters in the story, but King's characters are usually masterpieces, and I found myself wanting to know more about them.

Still, for what this story is, it's good. Entertaining, a quick read, and not all baseball stats and plays, which I was kind of dreading.

He made me want to read a Harlan Coben book too, which is always a plus. Thanks for the rec, Papa King!
:D

Nataliya says

I almost did not read this book because of baseball.

Seriously, I fail to understand this sport (my European-born brain must be lacking a baseball neuron, I suppose)¹. 'Twilight' pseudo-vampires engaging in this American pastime did not help this sport win credibility with me, so you can at least partially blame Stephenie Meyer, I guess.

¹ Seriously, my facial expression when people start discussing baseball around me is akin to the facial expressions of my American colleagues when I started singing praises to biathlon during the Winter Olympics.

My feeble attempts at garnering enthusiasm (*Hey, it's skiing and shooting! It's USEFUL!*) were met with carefully blank stares. See below.

The best approximation of abovementioned facial expression that internet could provide.

Whatevs. The greatness of Ole Einar Bjoerndalen is clearly not for everyone.

But then I thought - hey, it's Stephen King writing about baseball, and that combo somehow worked amazingly for me in *The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon*, and I should be open-minded, and why the hell not?

I needn't have worried. Baseball is just a backdrop in this very short story and could have been replaced by any sport that has major televised coverage. Even though ice dancing as a backdrop may have not been quite appropriate for the tone King is trying to set.

This story for Stephen King's Constant Readers is nothing new - but there's nothing bad about that. It's more psychological than horror, as we came to expect from Uncle Stevie. It has trademark brilliant narrative voice slowly creating an uneasy atmosphere - because King is excellent at believable and relatable narration that makes you feel that you're sitting around a campfire listening to a bit of carefully crafted spookiness. The ending is actually a bit subdued as far as King goes, but manages to hold its own.

Where this story does shine is characterization - something we may not necessarily expect from a short

story *this* short (the page count is a bit inflated by including excerpts from King's *Talisman* and *Black House*). By the end of it you *know* Dean Evers - in a way he wouldn't want you to know him, surely. His loneliness and sense of loss and - of course - inner ugly monsters lurking under the seemingly ordinary shell. As he watches a parade of people from his life on the TV screen - those people all dead, by the way - and is reminded of the ugliness that was always present in his life, you get a nagging feeling that despite superficial similarities, there will be no saccharine-sweet ending of *A Christmas Carol*, nossir.

All in all, it was an enjoyable short read. Bring on more baseball stories! (*Ok, I may be kidding here, I'm not yet ready for that*).

3.5 stars. Good. Not amazing, but good.

Jon(athan) Nakapalau says

Wow! I will never be able to watch a baseball game again without thinking about this story!

Franco Santos says

Un cuento bastante malo y aburrido. Proponía una muy buena idea, pero me terminó resultando muy tedioso. Tiene un buen final, aunque yo por lo menos me lo esperaba.

Lo debería haber leído a la noche. Tengo problemas para dormir y este relato es el mejor soporífero.

Amar says

Nakon smrti svoje supruge, Dean Evers zivi pomalo tmuran zivot i vrijeme provodi gledajuci baseball utakmice. Prilikom jedne utakmice , primjeti u publici jedno poznato lice. Nista cudno , samo sto je ta osoba mrtva vec skoro 40 godina.Ovdje pocinje prica o greskama koje je Dean Evers ucinio u svom dugom zivotu...

Prica je FENOMENALNA . Toliko sazeta prica, toliko zanimljiva prica sa tolikom dubinom na samo 40 strana...to samo moze King. Ima i par scena , od kojih sam se najezio .No necu nista dalje pisat, uvjerite se sami .Topla preporuka!

Mouthful Of Books says

Eine gutgeschriebene Kurzgeschichte, die sprachlich und erzähltechnisch überzeugt. Besonders das Ende hat mir sehr gut gefallen.

Kritikpunkt: Wer sich mit Baseball nicht auskennt, wird sich teilweise langweilen.

