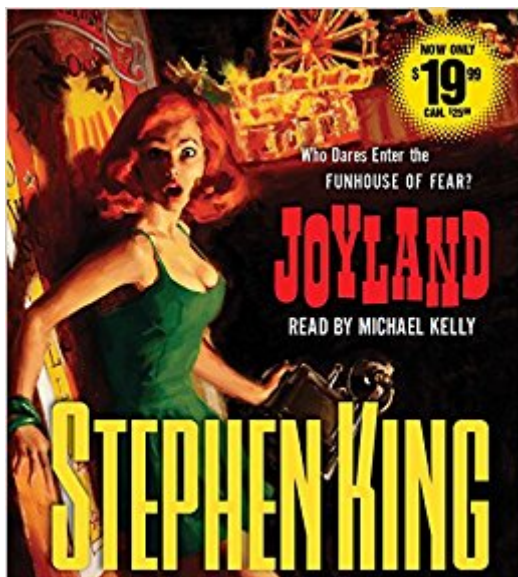


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# Joyland



## Synopsis

Stephen King's *Joyland* is now be available from Encore at a great low price! Set in a small-town North Carolina amusement park in 1973, *Joyland* tells the story of the summer in which college student Devin Jones comes to work as a carny and confronts the legacy of a vicious murder, the fate of a dying child, and the ways both will change his life forever. "It's a breathtaking, beautiful, heartbreaking book," said Charles Ardai, Edgar- and Shamus Award-winning editor of *Hard Case Crime*. "It's a whodunit, it's a carny novel, it's a story about growing up and growing old, and about those who don't get to do either because death comes for them before their time. Even the most hardboiled readers will find themselves moved."

## Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #1,277,273 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #54 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > ( K ) > King, Stephen #162 in Books > Books on CD > Horror #2260 in Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Unabridged

## Customer Reviews

An Best Book of the Month, June 2013: What a smart, sweet, spooky, sexy gem of a story. In this one-off for the *Hard Case Crime* publishing imprint, King has found yet another outlet and format (print only, a zippy 280 pages) to suit his considerable talents. All are on full display here in the story of Devon Jones--"a twenty-one-year-old virgin with literary aspirations | and a broken heart"--who spends the summer of 1973 at *Joyland* amusement park in North Carolina. Devon makes new pals, proves himself to the hard-core carny workers, saves a girl's life, befriends a dying boy (who has a secret gift), and falls for the boy's protective, beautiful mother. The first half of the story is sweet and nostalgic, with modest hints of menace to come. (Think: "The Body," King's novella that became the film *Stand By Me*.) Devon learns to sell fun and wear the fur (carny-speak for dressing as *Howie the Happy Hound*, the park mascot), but he also learns about

the woman who had been killed in the Funhouse, whose ghost still haunts Joyland. King has fun with the carny lingo--most of it researched and real, some of it invented. (The Ferris wheel, for example, is the chump-hoister.) The second half gets spookier, spinning into a full-on murder mystery--but also a love story, and a coming-of-age-story, with some supernatural fun woven in. More than a trifecta, this is King at his narrative and nostalgic best. A single-session tale to savor some summer afternoon. And then try not to keep thinking back on it. --Neal Thompson --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Michael Kelly begins his rendition of King's engaging short novel sounding pleasantly satisfied, if wistful, with just a twinge of regretâ "precisely the mood of Devin Jones, the book's protagonist. Now in his 60s, Devin recalls the details of how he spent 1973, working as a Happy Helper at Joyland, a slightly seedy North Carolina amusement park where, several years before his arrival, a young girl was murdered on a ride called Horror House. Kelly follows King's lead in fashioning a proper voice for each and every character, creating a delightfully unpretentious and winning listening experience. With this performance, it seems as if Kelly is himself responding to the advice given to new carnival employees by the sweetly paternal Joyland director, Bradley Easterbrook: Remember, the old man tells them, you're here to sell fun. A Hard Case paperback. (June) --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Great story from Stephen King. Might be the clean living, or, the morning walks with Mollie before hitting the keyboard. The clarity of the writing, the occasional insider nod to the reader and a laser focus on pacing polishes the King Diamond even more.

I have a confession to make: I'm not the world's biggest Stephen King fan. Know what? After reading this book, I'm sure a bigger fan now than I ever was before! JOYLAND is a book that can cross many genres. It could appeal to the romantic; to the mystery solver; the paranormal enthusiasts; and to the young adult and young at heart alike. It's the 1970's and college student and aspiring writer, Devin Jones, is in love with Wendy. Wendy, not so much. Devin decides to spend his summer working at Joyland Amusement Park in North Carolina where he meets a cast of characters more amusing and interesting than the amusement park itself! Add to that cast of characters the Stephen King twist of an unsolved murder begging to be solved and things just got REALLY interesting in that small town. Linda Gray was murdered in the "Horror House". Folks around town say that she still haunts that Joyland ride. On a rare day off from work, Devin and his

new friends, Erin and Tom (who also work at the park), decide to spend the day being visitors at the park rather than employees. Their plan~~to ride through the "Horror House" and see if there is anything to the rumor that it is haunted. For one of the three friends, things just got very real. Determined to solve this mystery of Linda Gray's murder, and mend his broken heart, Devin stays on at Joyland as a full time employee after the "rubes" of summer have long gone and the park is closed. The story unfolds as told to us from the Devin in years to come as he reflects upon that summer. Oh that summer. My book club chose this book as our Summer Group Read and we had quite the spirited (no pun intended) discussion. By all accounts, mine included, this book is Mr. King at quite possibly, his finest. I'm giving this book a 4.5 star rating. And if anyone at all is reading this that has any influence with Mr. King whatsoever, how about a prequel to this book? Please? I'd love to know that back story of Linda Gray and her killer.

Being a fan of Stephen King was one reason for my buying this book. The other reason was the Colorado Kid. I knew that Stephen King could write stories that are more than just supernatural in nature. This one is a great mystery from start to finish. Now there is a tiny bit of the supernatural in this story of a human monster, which is far worst than the claws and fangs type of monster. But it is more about the growing up of Devin Jones one summer and fall at Joyland an amusement park not as grand as its competitors, but one that has a ghost seen only by a few. Devin Jones finds out about the ghost and becomes intrigued by the mystery of her death. Spoiler alert I ain't going to tell you what happens, but by the end of the story you will know who but not why. If you like mysteries and Stephen King then give yourself a treat and pick up a copy and be ready for a thrill ride.

It's kind of a misnomer for this to be in the "Hard Case Crime" series as there's no real hard crime in this. Other books in the series have more of a noir flavor to them, but this is more of a coming-of-age story. Since it takes place in an amusement park, it makes me think of "Adventureland" or "The Way, Way Back." Basically a kid graduates from high school and spends the summer working at Joyland, an amusement park in North Carolina. Along the way he falls in love and learns about love and stuff. Since it's Stephen King there's a ghost and psychic powers a la "The Shining" involved as well. Most of the story is really well done. The part where the girl in the red hat chokes on a hot dog felt like a punch to the gut emotionally. The murder part is actually the weakest aspect of the story. The final confrontation felt so cliché that all the bad guy needed to say was "If it weren't for you meddling kids..." and it could have been an episode of "Scooby-Doo." Still, it's a very good book overall. More the Stephen King of "The Green Mile" or the Richard Bachmann

novels than "The Stand" or "It" or his horror novels. So don't go into it thinking it's a horror book. That is all.

Stephen King is BACK!!! That was my initial reaction to this little gem of a novel from the Master of Horror. Great story, likable and believable characters, and enough of the supernatural elements for which King is deservedly renowned kept me transfixed and reading into the wee hours of the morning. My only disappointment is not in this fine and gripping tale, but in the fact that it is the first and last Stephen King book I have enjoyed in a very long time. This spark of genius seems to be perhaps the last among the dying embers of the fires which once stoked King's passion and gift for writing stories that scared us silly and had us begging for more. I hope not.

This was the only Stephen King novel I have read. I know, I should be ashamed. He is a great writer. But this novel, while memorable, just lacked that blood splattered, sexual revenge, etc. pay-off that I expected. It is not a horror novel. It is not a noir detective novel either. It is a coming of age novel about a guy in the 70s who got his first summer job at a carnival. So no, it is not about the gal on the cover, to my great disappointment. However, it is about the old carney's and you got to love that.

Great book!! Kept me interested and wanting to do nothing more than read all day. I loved the characters and the relevance of all the details in the story. Loved how the emotional spin came in to play three quarters of the way through with little Mike. Sad ending, but necessary.

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Joyland

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