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Needful Things: A Novel



Synopsis

Now available for the first time in a mass-market premium paperback editionâmaster storyteller Stephen King presents the classic #1 New York Times bestseller about a mysterious store than can sell you whatever you desireâbut not without exacting a terrible price in return.âThere are two prices for this. Halfâand half. One half is cash. The other is a deed. Do you understand?â • The town of Castle Rock, Maine has seen its fair share of oddities over the years, but nothing is as peculiar as the little curio shop thatâs just opened for business. Its mysterious proprietor, Leland Gaunt, seems to have something for everyone out on display at Needful Thingsâinteresting items that run the gamut from worthless to priceless. Nothing has a price tag in this place, but everything is certainly for sale. The heartâs desire for any resident of Castle Rock can easily be found among the curiositiesâin exchange for a little money andâat the specific request of Leland Gauntâa whole lot of menace against their fellow neighbors. Everyone in town seems willing to make a deal at Needful Things, but the devil is in the details. And no one takes heed of the little sign hanging on the wall: Caveat emptor. In other words, let the buyer bewareâ |

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Many of Stephen King's readers (including some of the author's diehard fans) agree that the author's novels lost some of their pizzazz around 1987 or so. Although King's ability to create believable characters has remained strong throughout his career, he seems to have grown tired of the horror themes that inspired his earlier works. Needful Things is a bright spot among the post-Pet

Cemetery novels. Despite the formidable length of the book, King's tale of a curio shop that caters to people's innermost desires is captivating from beginning to end. As another reviewer pointed out, the premise of the story is not exactly original--but this doesn't make *Needful Things* any less entertaining. The story is set in familiar King territory: the small town of Castle Rock, Maine. SK interweaves a number of complex subplots within the dark underside of small town life. Near the climax of the tale, the story switches rapidly from one subplot to another, practically compelling you to turn the page to discover what happens next. Although I liked *Needful Things* overall, there were a few points that could have been improved:--SK once stated in an interview that he would go for the gross-out if he couldn't scare the reader outright. (I am loosely paraphrasing a very old interview here.) Many of Stephen King's earlier works contained some genuinely spooky scenes. (Who can forget the woman in the bathtub in *The Shining*?) However, SK's later works tend to rely increasingly on B-movie gore. *Needful Things* contains a few too many descriptions of blood and guts, and a couple of scatological references that could have been omitted. I'm an adult and I've read worse, so these passages don't bother me--but this isn't the kind of writing that King enthralled me with in *Salem's Lot* and *Carrie*.

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