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Doctor Sleep: Shining Book 2



Par Stephen King
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Description :

Prsentation de l'diteurAn epic war between good and evil, a gory, glorious story that will thrill the millions of hyper-devoted readers of The Shining and wildly satisfy anyone new to the territory of this icon in the King canon. King says he wanted to know what happened to Danny Torrance, the boy at the heart of The Shining, after his terrible experience in the Overlook Hotel. The instantly riveting DOCTOR SLEEP picks up the story of the now middle-aged Dan, working at a hospice in rural New Hampshire, and the very special twelve-year old girl he must save from a tribe of murderous paranormals. On highways across America, a tribe of people called The True Knot travel in search of sustenance. They look harmless - mostly old, lots of polyester, and married to their RVs. But as Dan Torrance knows, and tween Abra Stone learns, The True

Knot are quasi-immortal, living off the 'steam' that children with the 'shining' produce when they are slowly tortured to death. Haunted by the inhabitants of the Overlook Hotel where he spent one horrific childhood year, Dan has been drifting for decades, desperate to shed his father's legacy of despair, alcoholism and violence. Finally, he settles in a New Hampshire town, an AA community that sustains him and a job at a nursing home where his remnant 'shining' power provides the crucial final comfort to the dying. Aided by a prescient cat, he becomes 'Doctor Sleep.' Then Dan meets the evanescent Abra Stone, and it is her spectacular gift, the brightest shining ever seen, that reignites Dan's own demons and summons him to a battle for Abra's soul and survival . . .

Extrait Doctor Sleep CHAPTER ONE WELCOME TO TEENYTOWN

1 After Wilmington, the daily drinking stopped. Hed go a week, sometimes two, without anything stronger than diet soda. Hed wake up without a hangover, which was good. Hed wake up thirsty and miserable wanting which wasnt. Then there would come a night. Or a weekend. Sometimes it was a Budweiser ad on TV that set him off fresh-faced young people with nary a beer gut among them, having cold ones after a vigorous volleyball game. Sometimes it was seeing a couple of nice-looking women having after-work drinks outside some pleasant little caf, the kind of place with a French name and lots of hanging plants. The drinks were almost always the kind that came with little umbrellas. Sometimes it was a song on the radio. Once it was Styx, singing Mr. Roboto. When he was dry, he was completely dry. When he drank, he got drunk. If he woke up next to a woman, he thought of Deenie and the kid in the Braves t-shirt. He thought of the seventy dollars. He even thought of the stolen blanket, which he had left in the storm drain. Maybe it was still there. If so, it would be moldy now. Sometimes he got drunk and missed work. Theyd keep him on for awhile he was good at what he did but then would come a day. When it did, he would say thank you very much and board a bus. Wilmington became Albany and Albany became Utica. Utica became New Paltz. New Paltz gave way to Sturbridge, where he got drunk at an outdoor folk concert and woke up the next day in jail with a broken wrist. Next up was Weston, after that came a nursing home on Marthas Vineyard, and boy, that gig didnt last long. On his third day the head nurse smelled booze on his breath and it was see ya, wouldnt want to be ya. Once he crossed the path of the True Knot without realizing it. Not in the top part of his mind, anyway, although lower down in the part that shone there was something. A smell, fading and unpleasant, like the smell of burned rubber on a stretch of turnpike where there has been a bad accident not long before. From Marthas Vineyard he took MassLines to Newburyport. There he found work in a dont-give-much-of-a-shit veterans home, the kind of place where old soldiers were sometimes left in wheelchairs outside empty consulting rooms until their pee bags overflowed onto the floor. A lousy place for patients, a better one for frequent fuckups like himself, although Dan and a few others did as well by the old soldiers as they could. He even helped a couple get over when their time came. That job lasted awhile, long enough for the Saxophone President to turn the White House keys over to the Cowboy President. Dan had a few wet nights in Newburyport, but always with the next day off, so it was okay. After one of these mini-sprees, he woke up thinking at least I left the food stamps. That brought on the old psychotic gameshow duo. Sorry, Deenie, you lose, but nobody leaves empty-handed. What have we got for her, Johnny? Well, Bob, Deenie didnt win any money, but shes leaving with our new home game, several grams of cocaine, and a great big wad of FOOD STAMPS! What Dan got was a whole month without booze. He did it, he guessed, as a weird kind of penance. It occurred to him more than once that if hed had Deenies address, he would have sent her that crappy seventy bucks long ago. He would have sent her twice that much if it could have ended the memories of the kid in the Braves t-shirt and the reaching starfish hand. But he didnt have the address, so he stayed sober instead. Scourging himself with whips. Dry ones. Then one night he passed a drinking establishment called the Fishermans Rest and through the window spied a good-looking blonde sitting alone at the bar. She was wearing a tartan skirt that ended at mid-thigh and she looked lonely and he went in and it turned out she was newly divorced and wow, that was a shame, maybe shed like some company, and three days later he woke up with that same old black hole in his memory. He went to the veterans center where he had been mopping floors and changing lightbulbs, hoping for a break, but no dice. Dont-give-much-of-a-shit wasnt quite the same as dont-give-any-shit; close but no cigar. Leaving with the few items that had been in his locker, he recalled an old Bobcat Goldthwait line: My job was still there, but somebody else was doing it. So he boarded another bus, this one headed for New Hampshire, and before he got on, he bought a glass container of intoxicating liquid. He sat all the way in back in the Drunk Seat, the one by the toilet. Experience had taught him that if you intended to spend a bus trip getting smashed, that was the seat to take. He reached into the brown paper sack, loosened the cap on the glass container of intoxicating liquid, and smelled the brown smell. That smell could talk, although it only had one thing to

say: Hello, old friend. He thought Canny. He thought Mama. He thought of Tommy going to school by now.

Always assuming good old Uncle Randy hadn't killed him. He thought, The only one who can put on the brakes is you. This thought had come to him many times before, but now it was followed by a new one. You don't have to live this way if you don't want to. You can, of course... but you don't have to. That voice was so strange, so unlike any of his usual mental dialogues, that he thought at first he must be picking it up from someone else; he could do that, but he rarely got uninvited transmissions anymore. He had learned to shut them off. Nevertheless he looked up the aisle, almost positive he would see someone looking back at him.

No one was. Everyone was sleeping, talking with their seatmates, or staring out at the gray New England day. You don't have to live this way if you don't want to. If only that were true. Nevertheless, he tightened the cap on the bottle and put it on the seat beside him. Twice he picked it up. The first time he put it down. The second time he reached into the bag and unscrewed the cap again, but as he did, the bus pulled into the New

Hampshire welcome area just across the state line. Dan filed into the Burger King with the rest of the passengers, pausing only long enough to toss the paper bag into one of the trash containers. Stenciled on the side of the tall green can were the words IF YOU NO LONGER NEED IT, LEAVE IT HERE. Wouldn't that be nice, Dan thought, hearing the clink as it landed. Oh God, wouldn't that be nice. 2

An hour and a half later, the bus passed a sign reading WELCOME TO FRAZIER, WHERE THERE'S A REASON FOR EVERY SEASON! And, below that, HOME OF TEENYTOWN! The bus stopped at the Frazier Community Center to take on passengers, and from the empty seat next to Dan, where the bottle had rested for the first part of the trip, Tony spoke up. Here was a voice Dan recognized, although Tony hadn't spoken so clearly in years. (this is the place) As good as any, Dan thought. He grabbed his duffel from the overhead rack and got off. He stood on the sidewalk and watched the bus pull away. To the west, the White Mountains sawed at the

horizon. In all his wanderings he had avoided mountains, especially the jagged monsters that broke the country in two. Now he thought, I've come back to the high country after all. I guess I always knew I would.

But these mountains were gentler than the ones that still sometimes haunted his dreams, and he thought he could live with them, at least for a little while. If he could stop thinking about the kid in the Braves t-shirt, that is. If he could stop using the booze. There came a time when you realized that moving on was pointless. That you took yourself with you wherever you went. A snow flurry, fine as wedding lace, danced across the

air. He could see that the shops lining the wide main street catered mostly to the skiers who'd come in December and the summer people who'd come in June. There would probably be leaf-peepers in September and October, too, but this was what passed for spring in northern New England, an edgy eight weeks chrome-plated with cold and damp. Frazier apparently hadn't figured out a reason for this season yet, because the main drag Cranmore Avenue was all but deserted. Dan slung the duffel over his shoulder and strolled slowly north. He stopped outside a wrought-iron fence to look at a rambling Victorian home flanked on both sides by newer brick buildings. These were connected to the Victorian by covered walkways. There was a turret at the top of the mansion on the left side, but none on the right, giving the place a queerly unbalanced look that Dan sort of liked. It was as if the big old girl were saying Yeah, part of me fell off. What the fuck. Someday

it'll happen to you. He started to smile. Then the smile died. Tony was in the window of the turret room, looking down at him. He saw Dan looking up and waved. The same solemn wave Dan remembered from his childhood, when Tony had come often. Dan closed his eyes, then opened them. Tony was gone. Had never been there in the first place, how could he have been? The window was boarded up. The sign on the lawn, gold letters on a green background the same shade as the house itself, read HELEN RIVINGTON HOUSE. They have a cat in there, he thought. A gray cat named Audrey. This turned out to be partly right and partly wrong. There was a cat, and it was gray, but it was a neutered tom and its name wasn't Audrey. Dan looked

at the sign for a long time long enough for the clouds to part and send down a biblical beam and then he walked on. Although the sun was now bright enough to twinkle the chrome of the few slant-parked cars in front of Olympia Sports and the Fresh Day Spa, the snow still swirled, making Dan think of something his mother had said during similar spring weather, long ago, when they had lived in Vermont: The devils beating his wife. 3

A block or two up from the hospice, Dan stopped again. Across the street from the town municipal building was the Frazier town common. There was an acre or two of lawn, just beginning to show green, a bandstand, a softball field, a paved basketball half-court, picnic tables, even a putting green. All very nice, but what interested him was a sign reading VISIT TEENYTOWN FRAZIER'S SMALL WONDER AND RIDE THE TEENYTOWN RAILWAY! It didn't take a genius to see that Teenytown was a teeny replica of Cranmore Avenue. There was the Methodist church he had passed, its steeple rising all of seven feet into the air; there was the Music Box Theater; Spondulicks Ice Cream; Mountain Books; Shirts

Stuff; the Frazier Gallery, Fine Prints Our Specialty. There was also a perfect waist-high miniature of the single-turreted Helen Rivington House, although the two flanking brick buildings had been omitted. Perhaps, Dan thought, because they were butt-ugly, especially compared to the centerpiece. Beyond Teenytown was a miniature train with TEENYTOWN RAILWAY painted on passenger cars that were surely too small to hold anyone larger than toddler size. Smoke was puffing from the stack of a bright red locomotive about the size of a Honda Gold Wing motorcycle. He could hear the rumble of a diesel engine. Printed on the side of the loco, in old-fashioned gold flake letters, was THE HELEN RIVINGTON. Town patroness, Dan supposed.

Somewhere in Frazier there was probably a street named after her, too. He stood where he was for a bit, although the sun had gone back in and the day had grown cold enough for him to see his breath. As a kid hed always wanted an electric train set and had never had one. Yonder in Teenytown was a jumbo version kids of all ages could love. He shifted his duffel bag to his other shoulder and crossed the street. Hearing Tony again and seeing him was unsettling, but right now he was glad hed stopped here. Maybe this really was the place hed been looking for, the one where hed finally find a way to right his dangerously tipped life. You take yourself with you, wherever you go. He pushed the thought into a mental closet. It was a thing he was good at. There was all sorts of stuff in that closet. A cowling surrounded the locomotive on both sides, but he spied a footstool standing beneath one low eave of the Teenytown Station, carried it over, and stood on it.

The drivers cockpit contained two sheepskin-covered bucket seats. It looked to Dan as if they had been scavenged from an old Detroit muscle car. The cockpit and controls also looked like modified Detroit stock, with the exception of an old-fashioned Z-shaped shifter jutting up from the floor. There was no shift pattern; the original knob had been replaced with a grinning skull wearing a bandanna faded from red to pallid pink by years of gripping hands. The top half of the steering wheel had been cut off, so that what remained looked

like the steering yoke of a light plane. Painted in black on the dashboard, fading but legible, was TOP SPEED 40 DO NOT EXCEED. Like it? The voice came from directly behind him. Dan wheeled around, almost falling off the stool. A big weathered hand gripped his forearm, steadying him. It was a guy who looked to be in his late fifties or early sixties, wearing a padded denim jacket and a red-checked hunting cap with the earflaps down. In his free hand was a toolkit with PROPERTY OF FRAZIER MUNICIPAL DEPT Dymo-taped across the top. Hey, sorry, Dan said, stepping off the stool. I didnt mean to Sall right. People stop to look all the time. Usually model-train buffs. Its like a dream come true for em. We keep em away in the summer when the place is jumpin and the Riv runs every hour or so, but this time of year theres no we, just me. And I dont mind. He stuck out his hand. Billy Freeman. Town maintenance crew. The Rivs my baby. Dan took the offered hand. Dan Torrance. Billy Freeman eyed the duffel. Just got off the bus, I imagine. Or are you ridin your thumb? Bus, Dan said. What does this thing have for an engine? Well now, thats interesting. Probably never heard of the Chevrolet Veraneo, didja? He hadnt, but knew anyway.

Because Freeman knew. Dan didnt think hed had such a clear shine in years. It brought a ghost of delight that went back to earliest childhood, before he had discovered how dangerous the shining could be. Brazilian Suburban, wasnt it? Turbodiesel. Freemans bushy eyebrows shot up and he grinned. Goddam right! Casey Kingsley, hes the boss, bought it at an auction last year. Its a corker. Pulls like a sonofabitch. The instrument panels from a Suburban, too. The seats I put in myself. The shine was fading now, but Dan got one last thing. From a GTO Judge. Freeman beamed. Thats right. Found em in a junkyard over Sunapee way. The shifters a high-hat from a 1961 Mack. Nine-speed. Nice, huh? You lookin for work or just lookin? Dan blinked at the sudden change of direction. Was he looking for work? He supposed he was. The hospice hed passed on his amble up Cranmore Avenue would be the logical place to start, and he had an ideadidnt know if it was the shining or just ordinary intuition that theyd be hiring, but he wasnt sure he wanted to go there just yet. Seeing Tony in the turret window had been unsettling. Also, Danny, you want to be a little bit farther down the road from your last drink before you show up there askin for a job application form. Even if the only thing they got is runnin a buffer on the night shift. Dick Halloranns voice. Christ. Dan hadnt thought of Dick in a long time. Maybe not since Wilmington. With summer coming a season for which Frazier most definitely had a reason people would be hiring for all sorts of things. But if he had to choose between a Chilis at the local mall and Teenytown, he definitely chose Teenytown. He opened his mouth to answer Freemans question, but Hallorann spoke up again before he could. Youre closing in on the big three-oh, honey. You could be runnin out of chances. Meanwhile, Billy Freeman was looking at him with open and artless curiosity. Yes, he said. Im looking for work. Workin in Teenytown, wouldnt last long, yknow. Once summer comes and the schools let out, Mr. Kingsley hires local. Eighteen to twenty-two, mostly. The selectmen expect it. Also, kids work cheap. He grinned, exposing holes where a couple of teeth had once resided. Still,

there are worse places to make a buck. Outdoor work dont look so good today, but it wont be cold like this much longer. No, it wouldnt be. There were tarps over a lot of stuff on the common, but theyd be coming off soon, exposing the superstructure of small-town resort summer: hotdog stands, ice cream booths, a circular something that looked to Dan like a merry-go-round. And there was the train, of course, the one with the teeny passenger cars and the big turbodiesel engine. If he could stay off the sauce and prove trustworthy, Freeman or the bossKingsleymight let him drive it a time or two. Hed like that. Farther down the line, when the municipal department hired the just-out-of-school local kids, there was always the hospice. If he decided to stay, that was. You better stay somewhere, Hallorann saidthis was Dans day for hearing voices and seeing visions, it seemed. You better stay somewhere soon, or you wont be able to stay anywhere. He surprised himself by laughing. It sounds good to me, Mr. Freeman. It sounds really good. 5 Done any grounds maintenance? Billy Freeman asked. They were walking slowly along the flank of the train. The tops of the cars only came up to Dans chest, making him feel like a giant. I can weed, plant, and paint. I know how to run a leaf blower and a chainsaw. I can fix small engines if the problem isnt too complicated. And I can manage a riding mower without running over any little kids. The train, now... that I dont know about. Youd need to get cleared by Kingsley for that. Insurance and shit. Listen, have you got references? Mr. Kingsley wont hire without em. A few. Mostly janitorial and hospital orderly stuff. Mr. Freeman Just Billyll do. Your train doesnt look like it could carry passengers, Billy. Where would they sit? Billy grinned. Wait here. See if you think this is as funny as I do. I never get tired of it. Freeman went back to the locomotive and leaned in. The engine, which had been idling lazily, began to rev and send up rhythmic jets of dark smoke. There was a hydraulic whine along the whole length of The Helen Rivington. Suddenly the roofs of the passenger wagons and the yellow caboosene cars in allbegan to rise. To Dan it looked like the tops of nine identical convertibles all going up at the same time. He bent down to look in the windows and saw hard plastic seats running down the center of each car. Six in the passenger wagons and two in the caboose. Fifty in all. When Billy came back, Dan was grinning. Your train must look very weird when its full of passengers. Oh yeah. People laugh their asses off and burn yea film, takin pitchers. Watch this. There was a steel-plated step at the end of each passenger car. Billy used one, walked down the aisle, and sat. A peculiar optical illusion took hold, making him look larger than life. He waved grandly to Dan, who could imagine fifty Brobdingnagians, dwarfing the train upon which they rode, pulling grandly out of Teenytown Station. As Billy Freeman rose and stepped back down, Dan applauded. Ill bet you sell about a billion postcards between Memorial Day and Labor Day. Bet your ass. Billy rummaged in his coat pocket, brought out a battered pack of Duke cigarettesa cut-rate brand Dan knew well, sold in bus stations and convenience stores all over Americaand held it out. Dan took one. Billy lit them up. I better enjoy it while I can, Billy said, looking at his cigarette. Smokingll be banned here before too many more years. Frazier Womens Clubs already talkin about it. Bunch of old biddies if you ask me, but you know what they saythe hand that rocks the fuckin cradle rules the fuckin world. He jettted smoke from his nostrils. Not that most of them have rocked a cradle since Nixon was president. Or needed a Tampax, for that matter. Might not be the worst thing, Dan said. Kids copy what they see in their elders. He thought of his father. The only thing Jack Torrance had liked better than a drink, his mother had once said, not long before she died, was a dozen drinks. Of course what Wendy had liked was her cigarettes, and they had killed her. Once upon a time Dan had promised himself hed never get going with that habit, either. He had come to believe that life was a series of ironic ambushes. Billy Freeman looked at him, one eye squinted mostly shut. I get feelins about people sometimes, and I got one about you. He pronounced got as gut, in the New England fashion. Had it even before you turned around and I saw your face. I think you might be the right guy for the spring cleanin Im lookin at between now and the end of May. Thats how it feels to me, and I trust my feelins. Probly crazy. Dan didnt think it was crazy at all, and now he understood why he had heard Billy Freemans thoughts so clearly, and without even trying. He remembered something Dick Hallorann had told him onceDick, who had been his first adult friend. Lots of people have got a little of what I call the shining, but mostly its just a twinklethe kind of thing that lets em know what the DJs going to play next on the radio or that the phones gonna ring pretty soon. Billy Freeman had that little sparkle. That gleam. I guess this Cary Kingsley would be the one to talk to, huh? Casey, not Cary. But yeah, hes the man. Hes run municipal services in this town for twenty-five years. When would be a good time? Right about now, I shd think. Billy pointed. Yonder pile of bricks across the streets the Frazier Municipal Building and town offices. Mr. Kingsleys in the basement, end of the hall. Youll know youre there when you hear disco music comin down through the ceiling. Theres a ladies aerobics class in the gym every Tuesday and Thursday. All right, Dan said, thats just what Im going to do. Got your references? Yes. Dan patted the

duffel, which he had leaned against Teenytown Station. And you didnt write them yourself, nor nothin? Danny smiled. No, theyre straight goods. Then go get im, tiger. Okay. One other thing, Billy said as Dan started away. Hes death on drinkin. If youre a drinkin man and he asts you, my advice is... lie. Dan nodded and raised his hand to show he understood. That was a lie he had told before. 6 Judging by his vein-congested nose, Casey Kingsley had not always been death on drinkin. He was a big man who didnt so much inhabit his small, cluttered office as wear it. Right now he was rocked back in the chair behind his desk, going through Dans references, which were neatly kept in a blue folder. The back of Kingsleys head almost touched the downstroke of a plain wooden cross hanging on the wall beside a framed photo of his family. In the picture, a younger, slimmer Kingsley posed with his wife and three bathing-suited kiddos on a beach somewhere. Through the ceiling, only slightly muted, came the sound of the Village People singing YMCA, accompanied by the enthusiastic stomp of many feet. Dan imagined a gigantic centipede. One that had recently been to the local hairdresser and was wearing a bright red leotard about nine yards long. Uh-huh, Kingsley said. Uh-huh... yeah... right, right, right... There was a glass jar filled with hard candies on the corner of his desk. Without looking up from Dans thin sheaf of references, he took off the top, fished one out, and popped it into his mouth. Help yourself, he said. No, thank you, Dan said. A queer thought came to him. Once upon a time, his father had probably sat in a room like this, being interviewed for the position of caretaker at the Overlook Hotel. What had he been thinking? That he really needed a job? That it was his last chance? Maybe. Probably. But of course, Jack Torrance had had hostages to fortune. Dan did not. He could drift on for awhile if this didnt work out. Or try his luck at the hospice. But... he liked the town common. He liked the train, which made adults of ordinary size look like Goliaths. He liked Teenytown, which was absurd and cheerful and somehow brave in its self-important small-town-America way. And he liked Billy Freeman, who had a pinch of the shining and probably didnt even know it. Above them, YMCA was replaced by I Will Survive. As if he had just been waiting for a new tune, Kingsley slipped Dans references back into the folders pocket and passed them across the desk. Hes going to turn me down. But after a day of accurate intuitions, this one was off the mark. These look fine, but it strikes me that youd be a lot more comfortable working at Central New Hampshire Hospital or the hospice here in town. You might even qualify for Home HelpersI see youve got a few medical and first aid qualifications. Know your way around a defibrillator, according to these. Heard of Home Helpers? Yes. And I thought about the hospice. Then I saw the town common, and Teenytown, and the train. Kingsley grunted. Probably wouldnt mind taking a turn at the controls, would you? Dan lied without hesitation. No, sir, I dont think Id care for that. To admit hed like to sit in the scavenged GTO drivers seat and lay his hands on that cut-down steering wheel would almost certainly lead to a discussion of his drivers license, then to a further discussion of how hed lost it, and then to an invitation to leave Mr. Casey Kingsleys office forthwith. Im more of a rake-and-lawnmower guy. More of a short-term employment guy, too, from the looks of this paperwork. Ill settle someplace soon. Ive worked most of the wanderlust out of my system, I think. He wondered if that sounded as bullshitty to Kingsley as it did to him. Short terms about all I can offer you, Kingsley said. Once the schools are out for the summer Billy told me. If I decide to stay once summer comes, Ill try the hospice. In fact, I might put in an early application, unless youd rather I dont do that. I dont care either way. Kingsley looked at him curiously. Dying people dont bother you? Your mother died there, Danny thought. The shine wasnt gone after all, it seemed; it was hardly even hiding. You were holding her hand when she passed. Her name was Ellen. No, he said. Then, with no reason why, he added: Were all dying. The worlds just a hospice with fresh air. A philosopher, yet. Well, Mr. Torrance, I think Im going to take you on. I trust Billys judgmenthe rarely makes a mistake about people. Just dont show up late, dont show up drunk, and dont show up with red eyes and smelling of weed. If you do any of those things, down the road youll go, because the Rivington House wont have a thing to do with youIll make sure of it. Are we clear on that? Dan felt a throb of resentment (officious prick) but suppressed it. This was Kingsleys playing field and Kingsleys ball. Crystal. You can start tomorrow, if that suits. There are plenty of rooming houses in town. Ill make a call or two if you want. Can you stand paying ninety a week until your first paycheck comes in? Yes. Thank you, Mr. Kingsley. Kingsley waved a hand. In the meantime, Id recommend the Red Roof Inn. My ex-brother-in-law runs it, hell give you a rate. We good? We are. It had all happened with remarkable speed, the way the last few pieces drop into a complicated thousand-piece jigsaw puzzle. Dan told himself not to trust the feeling. Kingsley rose. He was a big man and it was a slow process. Dan also got to his feet, and when Kingsley stuck his ham of a hand over the cluttered desk, Dan shook it. Now from overhead came the sound of KC and the Sunshine Band telling the world thats the way they liked it, oh-ho, uh-huh. I hate that boogie-down shit, Kingsley said. No, Danny

thought. You dont. It reminds you of your daughter, the one who doesnt come around much anymore. Because she still hasnt forgiven you. You all right? Kingsley asked. You look a little pale. Just tired. It was a long bus ride. The shining was back, and strong. The question was, why now? 7 Three days into the job, ones Dan spent painting the bandstand and blowing last falls dead leaves off the common, Kingsley ambled across Cranmore Avenue and told him he had a room on Eliot Street, if he wanted it. Private bathroom part of the deal, tub and shower. Eighty-five a week. Dan wanted it. Go on over on your lunch break, Kingsley said. Ask for Mrs. Robertson. He pointed a finger that was showing the first gnarls of arthritis. And dont you fuck up, Sunny Jim, because shes an old pal of mine. Remember that I vouched for you on some pretty thin paper and Billy Freemans intuition. Dan said he wouldnt fuck up, but the extra sincerity he tried to inject into his voice sounded phony to his own ears. He was thinking of his father again, reduced to begging jobs from a wealthy old friend after losing his teaching position in Vermont. It was strange to feel sympathy for a man who had almost killed you, but the sympathy was there. Had people felt it necessary to tell his father not to fuck up? Probably. And Jack Torrance had fucked up anyway. Spectacularly. Five stars. Drinking was undoubtedly a part of it, but when you were down, some guys just seemed to feel an urge to walk up your back and plant a foot on your neck instead of helping you to stand. It was lousy, but so much of human nature was. Of course when you were running with the bottom dogs, what you mostly saw were paws, claws, and assholes. And see if Billy can find some boots thatll fit you. Hes squirreled away about a dozen pairs in the equipment shed, although the last time I looked, only half of them matched. The day was sunny, the air balmy. Dan, who was working in jeans and a Utica Blue Sox t-shirt, looked up at the nearly cloudless sky and then back at Casey Kingsley. Yeah, I know how it looks, but this is mountain country, pal. NOAA claims were going to have a noreaster, and itll drop maybe a foot. Wont last longpoor mans fertilizer is what New Hampshire folks call April snowbut theres also gonna be gale-force winds. So they say. I hope you can use a snowblower as well as a leaf blower. He paused. I also hope your backs okay, because you and Billyll be picking up plenty of dead limbs tomorrow. Might be cutting up some fallen trees, too. You okay with a chainsaw? Yes, sir, Dan said. Good. 8 Dan and Mrs. Robertson came to amicable terms; she even offered him an egg salad sandwich and a cup of coffee in the communal kitchen. He took her up on it, expecting all the usual questions about what had brought him to Frazier and where he had been before. Refreshingly, there were none. Instead she asked him if he had time to help her close the shutters on the downstairs windows in case they really did get what she called a cap o wind. Dan agreed. There werent many mottoes he lived by, but one was always get in good with the landlady; you never know when you might have to ask her for a rent extension. Back on the common, Billy was waiting with a list of chores. The day before, the two of them had taken the tarps off all the kiddie rides. That afternoon they put them back on, and shuttered the various booths and concessions. The days final job was backing the Riv into her shed. Then they sat in folding chairs beside the Teenytown station, smoking. Tell you what, Danno, Billy said, Im one tired hired man. Youre not the only one. But he felt okay, muscles limber and tingling. Hed forgotten how good outdoors work could be when you werent also working off a hangover. The sky had scummed over with clouds. Billy looked up at them and sighed. I hope to God it dont snow n blow as hard as the radio says, but it probably will. I found you some boots. They dont look like much, but at least they match. Dan took the boots with him when he walked across town to his new accommodations. By then the wind was picking up and the day was growing dark. That morning, Frazier had felt on the edge of summer. This evening the air held the face-freezing dampness of coming snow. The side streets were deserted and the houses buttoned up. Dan turned the corner from Morehead Street onto Eliot and paused. Blowing down the sidewalk, attended by a skeletal scutter of last years autumn leaves, was a battered tophat, such as a magician might wear. Or maybe an actor in an old musical comedy, he thought. Looking at it made him feel cold in his bones, because it wasnt there. Not really. He closed his eyes, slow-counted to five with the strengthening wind flapping the legs of his jeans around his shins, then opened them again. The leaves were still there, but the tophat was gone. It had just been the shining, producing one of its vivid, unsettling, and usually senseless visions. It was always stronger when hed been sober for a little while, but never as strong as it had been since coming to Frazier. It was as if the air here were different, somehow. More conducive to those strange transmissions from Planet Elsewhere. Special. The way the Overlook was special. No, he said. No, I dont believe that. A few drinks and it all goes away, Danny. Do you believe that? Unfortunately, he did. 9 Mrs. Robertsons was a rambling old Colonial, and Dans third-floor room had a view of the mountains to the west. That was a panorama he could have done without. His recollections of the Overlook had faded to hazy gray over the years, but as he unpacked his few things, a memory surfaced... and it was a kind of surfacing, like some nasty organic artifact (the decayed

body of a small animal, say) floating to the surface of a deep lake. It was dusk when the first real snow came.

We stood on the porch of that big old empty hotel, my dad in the middle, my mom on one side, me on the other. He had his arms around us. It was okay then. He wasn't drinking then. At first the snow fell in perfectly straight lines, but then the wind picked up and it started to blow sideways, drifting against the sides of the porch and coating those He tried to block it off, but it got through. those hedge animals. The ones that sometimes moved around when you weren't looking. He turned away from the window, his arms rashed out in gooseflesh. Hed gotten a sandwich from the Red Apple store and had planned to eat it while he started the

John Sandford paperback hed also picked up at the Red Apple, but after a few bites he rewrapped the sandwich and put it on the windowsill, where it would stay cold. He might eat the rest later, although he didnt think hed be staying up much past nine tonight; if he got a hundred pages into the book, hed be doing well. Outside, the wind continued to rise. Every now and then it gave a bloodcurdling scream around the eaves that made him look up from his book. Around eight thirty, the snow began. It was heavy and wet, quickly coating his window and blocking his view of the mountains. In a way, that was worse. The snow had blocked the windows in the Overlook, too. First just on the first floor... then on the second... and finally on the third. Then they had been entombed with the lively dead. My father thought theyd make him the manager. All he had to do was show his loyalty. By giving them his son. His only begotten son, Dan muttered, then looked around as if someone else had spoken... and indeed, he did not feel alone. Not quite alone. The wind shrieked down the side of the building again, and he shuddered. Not too late to go back down to the Red Apple. Grab a bottle of something. Put all these unpleasant thoughts to bed. No. He was going to read his book. Lucas Davenport was on the case, and he was going to read his book. He closed it at quarter past nine and got into another rooming-house bed. I wont sleep, he thought. Not with the wind screaming like that. But he did. 10 He was sitting at the mouth of the stormdrain, looking down a scrubgrass slope at the Cape Fear River and the bridge that spanned it. The night was clear and the moon was full.

There was no wind, no snow. And the Overlook was gone. Even if it hadnt burned to the ground during the tenure of the Peanut Farmer President, it would have been over a thousand miles from here. So why was he so frightened? Because he wasn't alone, that was why. There was someone behind him. Want some advice, Honeybear? The voice was liquid, wavering. Dan felt a chill go rushing down his back. His legs were colder still, prickled out in starpoints of gooseflesh. He could see those white bumps because he was wearing shorts. Of course he was wearing shorts. His brain might be that of a grown man, but it was currently sitting on top of a five-year-olds body. Honeybear. Who? But he knew. He had told Deenie his name, but she didnt use it, just called him Honeybear instead. You dont remember that, and besides, this is just a dream. Of course it was. He was in Frazier, New Hampshire, sleeping while a spring snowstorm howled outside Mrs. Robertsons rooming house. Still, it seemed wiser not to turn around. And safer that, too. No advice, he said, looking out at the river and the full moon. Ive been advised by experts. The bars and barbershops are full of them. Stay away from the woman in the hat, Honeybear. What hat? he could have asked, but really, why bother? He knew the hat she was talking about, because he had seen it blowing down the sidewalk. Black as sin on the outside, lined with white silk on the inside. Shes the Queen Bitch of Castle Hell. If you mess with her, shell eat you alive. He turned his head. He couldnt help it. Deenie was sitting behind him in the stormdrain with the bums blanket wrapped around her naked shoulders. Her hair was plastered to her cheeks. Her face was bloated and dripping. Her eyes were cloudy. She was dead, probably years in her grave. Youre not real, Dan tried to say, but no words came out. He was five again, Danny was five, the Overlook was ashes and bones, but here was a dead woman, one he had stolen from. Its all right, she said. Bubbling voice coming from a swollen throat. I sold the coke. Stepped on it first with a little sugar and got two hundred. She grinned, and water spilled through her teeth. I liked you, Honeybear. Thats why I came to warn you. Stay away from the woman in the hat. False face, Dan said... but it was Dannys voice, the high, frail, chanting voice of a child. False face, not there, not real. He closed his eyes as he had often closed them when he had seen terrible things in the Overlook. The woman began to scream, but he wouldnt open his eyes. The screaming went on, rising and falling, and he realized it was the scream of the wind. He wasn't in Colorado and he wasn't in North Carolina. He was in New Hampshire. Hed had a bad dream, but the dream was over.

11 According to his Timex, it was two in the morning. The room was cold, but his arms and chest were slimy with sweat. Want some advice, Honeybear? No, he said. Not from you. Shes dead. There was no way he could know that, but he did. Deenie who had looked like the goddess of the Western world in her thigh-high leather skirt and cork sandals was dead. He even knew how she had done it. Took pills, pinned up her hair, climbed into a bathtub filled with warm water, went to sleep, slid under, drowned. The roar of the wind

was dreadfully familiar, loaded with hollow threat. Winds blew everywhere, but it only sounded like this in the high country. It was as if some angry god were pounding the world with an air mallet. I used to call his booze the Bad Stuff, Dan thought. Only sometimes its the Good Stuff. When you wake up from a nightmare that you know is at least fifty percent shining, its the Very Good Stuff. One drink would send him back to sleep. Three would guarantee not just sleep but dreamless sleep. Sleep was natures doctor, and right now Dan Torrance felt sick and in need of strong medicine. Nothings open. You lucked out there. Well. Maybe.

He turned on his side, and something rolled against his back when he did. No, not something. Someone. Someone had gotten into bed with him. Deenie had gotten into bed with him. Only it felt too small to be Deenie. It felt more like a He scrambled out of bed, landed awkwardly on the floor, and looked over his shoulder. It was Deenies little boy, Tommy. The right side of his skull was caved in. Bone splinters protruded through bloodstained fair hair. Gray scaly muckbrains was drying on one cheek. He couldnt be alive with such a hellacious wound, but he was. He reached out to Dan with one starfish hand. Canny, he said. The screaming began again, only this time it wasnt Deenie and it wasnt the wind. This time it was him.

12 When he woke for the second timereal waking, this time he wasnt screaming at all, only making a kind of low growling deep in his chest. He sat up, gasping, the bedclothes puddled around his waist. There was no one else in his bed, but the dream hadnt yet dissolved, and looking wasnt enough. He threw back the

bedclothes, and that still wasnt enough. He ran his hands down the bottom sheet, feeling for fugitive warmth, or a dent that might have been made by small hips and buttocks. Nothing. Of course not. So then he looked under the bed and saw only his borrowed boots. The wind was blowing less strongly now. The storm wasnt over, but it was winding down. He went to the bathroom, then whirled and looked back, as if expecting to surprise someone. There was just the bed, with the covers now lying on the floor at the foot. He turned on the light over the sink, splashed his face with cold water, and sat down on the closed lid of the commode, taking long breaths, one after the other. He thought about getting up and grabbing a cigarette from the pack lying beside his book on the rooms one small table, but his legs felt rubbery and he wasnt sure theyd hold him. Not yet, anyway. So he sat. He could see the bed and the bed was empty. The whole room was empty. No problem there. Only... it didnt feel empty. Not yet. When it did, he supposed he would go back to bed.

But not to sleep. For this night, sleep was done. 13 Seven years before, working as an orderly in a Tulsa hospice, Dan had made friends with an elderly psychiatrist who was suffering from terminal liver cancer.

One day, when Emil Kemmer had been reminiscing (not very discreetly) about a few of his more interesting cases, Dan had confessed that ever since childhood, he had suffered from what he called double dreaming.

Was Kemmer familiar with the phenomenon? Was there a name for it? Kemmer had been a large man in his primethe old black-and-white wedding photo he kept on his bedside table attested to thatbut cancer is the ultimate diet program, and on the day of this conversation, his weight had been approximately the same as his age, which was ninety-one. His mind had still been sharp, however, and now, sitting on the closed toilet and listening to the dying storm outside, Dan remembered the old mans sly smile. Usually, he had said in his heavy German accent, I am paid for my diagnoses, Daniel. Dan had grinned. Guess Im out of luck, then.

Perhaps not. Kemmer studied Dan. His eyes were bright blue. Although he knew it was outrageously unfair,

Dan couldnt help imagining those eyes under a Waffen-SS coal-scuttle helmet. Theres a rumor in this deathhouse that you are a kid with a talent for helping people die. Is this true? Sometimes, Dan said cautiously. Not always. The truth was almost always. When the time comes, will you help me? If I can, of

course. Good. Kemmer sat up, a laboriously painful process, but when Dan moved to help, Kemmer had waved him away. What you call double dreaming is well known to psychiatrists, and of particular interest to

Jungians, who call it false awakening. The first dream is usually a lucid dream, meaning the dreamer knows he is dreaming Yes! Dan cried. But the second one The dreamer believes he is awake, Kemmer said. Jung

made much of this, even ascribing precognitive powers to these dreams... but of course we know better, dont we, Dan? Of course, Dan had agreed. The poet Edgar Allan Poe described the false awakening phenomenon

long before Carl Jung was born. He wrote, All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream. Have I answered your question? I think so. Thanks. Youre welcome. Now I believe I could drink a little juice.

Apple, please. 14 Precognitive powers... but of course we know better. Even if he hadnt kept the shining almost entirely to himself over the years, Dan would not have presumed to contradict a dying man...

especially one with such coldly inquisitive blue eyes. The truth, however, was that one or both of his double dreams were often predictive, usually in ways he only half understood or did not understand at all. But as he

sat on the toilet seat in his underwear, now shivering (and not just because the room was cold), he understood much more than he wanted to. Tommy was dead. Murdered by his abusive uncle, most likely.

The mother had committed suicide not long after. As for the rest of the dream... or the phantom hat he'd seen earlier, spinning down the sidewalk... Stay away from the woman in the hat. She's the Queen Bitch of Castle Hell. I don't care, Dan said. If you mess with her, she'll eat you alive. He had no intention of meeting her, let alone messing with her. As for Deenie, he wasn't responsible for either her short-fused brother or her child neglect. He didn't even have to carry around the guilt about her lousy seventy dollars anymore; she had sold the cocaine he was sure that part of the dream was absolutely true and they were square. More than square, actually. What he cared about was getting a drink. Getting drunk, not to put too fine a point on it. Standing-up, falling-down, pissy-assed drunk. Warm morning sunshine was good, and the pleasant feeling of muscles that had been worked hard, and waking up in the morning without a hangover, but the price of all these crazy dreams and visions, not to mention the random thoughts of passing strangers that sometimes found their way past his defenses was too high. Too high to bear. 15

He sat in the room's only chair and read his John Sandford novel by the light of the room's only lamp until the two town churches with bells rang in seven o'clock. Then he pulled on his new (new to him, anyway) boots and duffel coat. He headed out into a world that had changed and softened. There wasn't a sharp edge anywhere. The snow was still falling, but gently now. I should get out of here. Go back to Florida. Fuck New Hampshire, where it probably even snows on the Fourth of July in odd-numbered years. Halloran's voice answered him, the tone as kind as he remembered from his childhood, when Dan had been Danny, but there was hard steel underneath. You better stay somewhere, honey, or you won't be able to stay anywhere. Fuck you, oldtimer, he muttered. He went back to the Red Apple because the stores that sold hard liquor wouldn't be open for at least another hour. He walked slowly back and forth between the wine cooler and the beer cooler, debating, and finally decided if

he was going to get drunk, he might as well do it as nastily as possible. He grabbed two bottles of Thunderbird (eighteen percent alcohol, a good enough number when whiskey was temporarily out of reach), started up the aisle to the register, then stopped. Give it one more day. Give yourself one more chance. He supposed he could do that, but why? So he could wake up in bed with Tommy again? Tommy with half of his skull caved in? Or maybe next time it would be Deenie, who had lain in that tub for two days before the super finally got tired of knocking, used his passkey, and found her. He couldn't know that, if Emil Kemmer had been here he would have agreed most emphatically, but he did. He did know. So why bother? Maybe this hyperawareness will pass. Maybe it's just a phase, the psychic equivalent of the DTs. Maybe if you just give it a little more time... But time changed. That was something only drunks and junkies understood. When you couldn't sleep, when you were afraid to look around because of what you might see, time elongated and grew sharp teeth. Help you? the clerk asked, and Dan knew (fucking shining fucking thing) that he was making the clerk nervous. Why not? With his bed head, dark-circled eyes, and jerky, unsure movements, he probably looked like a meth freak who was deciding whether or not to pull out his trusty Saturday night special and ask for everything in the register. No, Dan said. I just realized I left my wallet home. He put the green bottles back in the cooler. As he closed it, they spoke to him gently, as one friend speaks to another: See you soon, Danny. 16

Billy Freeman was waiting for him, bundled up to the eyebrows. He held out an old-fashioned ski hat with ANNISTON CYCLONES embroidered on the front. What the hell are the Anniston Cyclones? Dan asked. Anniston's twenty miles north of here. When it comes to football, basketball, and baseball, they're our archrivals. Someone sees that on ya, you'll probably get a snowball upside your head, but it's the only one I've got. Dan hauled it on. Then go, Cyclones. Right, fuck you and the hoss you rode in on. Billy looked him over. You all right, Danno? Didn't get much sleep last night. I hear that. Damn wind really screamed, didn't it? Sounded like my ex when I suggested a little Monday night lovin' might do us good. Ready to go to work? Ready as I'll ever be. Good. Let's dig in. Gonna be a busy day. 17

It was indeed a busy day, but by noon the sun had come out and the temperature had climbed back into the mid-fifties. Teenytown was filled with the sound of a hundred small waterfalls as the snow melted. Dan's spirits rose with the temperature, and he even caught himself singing (Young man! I was once in your shoes!) as he

followed his snowblower back and forth in the courtyard of the little shopping center adjacent to the common. Overhead, flapping in a mild breeze far removed from the shrieking wind of the night before, was a banner reading HUGE SPRING BARGAINS AT TEENYTOWN PRICES! There were no visions. After they clocked out, he took Billy to the Chuck Wagon and ordered them steak dinners. Billy offered to buy the beer. Dan shook his head. Staying away from alcohol. Reason being, once I start, it's sometimes hard to stop.

You could talk to Kingsley about that, Billy said. He got himself a booze divorce about fifteen years ago. He's all right now, but his daughter still don't talk to him. They drank coffee with the meal. A lot of it. Dan went back to his third-floor Eliot Street lair tired, full of hot food and glad to be sober. There was no TV in

his room, but he had the last part of the Sandford novel, and lost himself in it for a couple of hours. He kept an ear out for the wind, but it did not rise. He had an idea that last night's storm had been winter's final shot. Which was fine with him. He turned in at ten and fell asleep almost immediately. His early morning visit to the Red Apple now seemed hazy, as if he had gone there in a fever delirium and the fever had now passed.

18 He woke in the small hours, not because the wind was blowing but because he had to piss like a racehorse. He got up, shuffled to the bathroom, and turned on the light inside the door. The tophat was in the tub, and full of blood. No, he said. I'm dreaming. Maybe double dreaming. Or triple. Quadruple, even. There was something he hadn't told Emil Kemmer: he was afraid that eventually he would get lost in a maze of phantom nightlife and never be able to find his way out again. All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream. Only this was real. So was the hat. No one else would see it, but that changed nothing. The hat was real. It was somewhere in the world. He knew it. From the corner of his eye, he saw something written on the mirror over the sink. Something written in lipstick. I must not look at it. Too late. His head was turning; he could hear the tendons in his neck creaking like old doorhinges. And what did it matter? He knew what it said. Mrs. Massey was gone, Horace Derwent was gone, they were securely locked away in the boxes he kept far back in his mind, but the Overlook was still not done with him. Written on the mirror, not in lipstick but in blood, was a single word: REDRUM. Beneath it, lying in the sink, was a bloodstained Atlanta Braves t-shirt. It will never stop, Danny thought. The Overlook burned and the most terrible of its revenants went into the lockboxes, but I can't lock away the shining, because it isn't just inside me, it is me. Without booze to at least stun it, these visions will go on until they drive me insane. He could see his face in the mirror with REDRUM floating in front of it, stamped on his forehead like a brand. This was not a dream. There was a murdered child's shirt in his washbasin and a hatful of blood in his tub. Insanity was coming. He could see its approach in his own bulging eyes. Then, like a flashlight beam in the dark, Halloran's voice: Son, you may see things, but they're like pictures in a book. You weren't helpless in the Overlook when you were a child, and you're not helpless now. Far from it. Close your eyes and when you open them, all this crap will be gone.

He closed his eyes and waited. He tried to count off the seconds, but only made it to fourteen before the numbers were lost in the roaring confusion of his thoughts. He half expected hands perhaps those of whoever owned the hat to close around his neck. But he stood there. There was really nowhere else to go. Summoning all his courage, Dan opened his eyes. The tub was empty. The washbasin was empty. There was nothing written on the mirror. But it will be back. Next time maybe it'll be her shoes those cork sandals. Or I'll see her in the tub. Why not? That's where I saw Mrs. Massey, and they died the same way. Except I never stole Mrs.

Massey's money and ran out on her. I gave it a day, he told the empty room. I did that much. Yes, and although it had been a busy day, it had also been a good day, he'd be the first to admit it. The days weren't the problem. As for the nights... The mind was a blackboard. Booze was the eraser. 19 Dan lay awake until six.

Then he dressed and once more made the trek to the Red Apple. This time he did not hesitate, only instead of extracting two bottles of Bird from the cooler, he took three. What was it they used to say? Go big or go home. The clerk bagged the bottles without comment; he was used to early wine purchasers. Dan strolled to the town common, sat on one of the benches in Teentown, and took one of the bottles out of the bag, looking down at it like Hamlet with Yorick's skull. Through the green glass, what was inside looked like rat poison instead of wine. You say that like it's a bad thing, Dan said, and loosened the cap. This time it was his mother who spoke up. Wendy Torrance, who had smoked right to the bitter end. Because if suicide was the only option, you could at least choose your weapon. Is this how it ends, Danny? Is this what it was all for?

He turned the cap widdershins. Then tightened it. Then back the other way. This time he took it off. The smell of the wine was sour, the smell of jukebox music and crappy bars and pointless arguments followed by fistfights in parking lots. In the end, life was as stupid as one of those fights. The world wasn't a hospice with fresh air, the world was the Overlook Hotel, where the party never ended. Where the dead were alive forever. He raised the bottle to his lips. Is this why we fought so hard to get out of that damned hotel, Danny? Why we fought to make a new life for ourselves? There was no reproach in her voice, only sadness.

Danny tightened the cap again. Then loosened it. Tightened it. Loosened it. He thought: If I drink, the Overlook wins. Even though it burned to the ground when the boiler exploded, it wins. If I don't drink, I go crazy. He thought: All that we see or seem is but a dream within a dream. He was still tightening the cap and loosening it when Billy Freeman, who had awakened early with the vague, alarmed sense that something was wrong, found him. Are you going to drink that, Dan, or just keep jerking it off? Drink it, I guess. I don't know what else to do. So Billy told him. 20 Casey Kingsley wasn't entirely surprised to see his new hire sitting outside his office when he arrived at quarter past eight that morning. Nor was he surprised to see the

bottle Torrance was holding in his hands, first twisting the cap off, then putting it back on and turning it tight again had that special look from the start, the thousand-yard Kappys Discount Liquor Store stare. Billy Freeman didn't have as much shine as Dan himself, not even close, but a bit more than just a twinkle. On that first day he had called Kingsley from the equipment shed as soon as Dan headed across the street to the Municipal Building. There was a young fella looking for work, Billy said. He wasn't apt to have much in the way of references, but Billy thought he was the right man to help out until Memorial Day. Kingsley, who had experienced good ones with Billy's intuitions before, had agreed. I know we've got to have someone, he said. Billy's reply had been peculiar, but then Billy was peculiar. Once, two years ago, he had called an ambulance five minutes before that little kid had fallen off the swings and fractured his skull. He needs us more than we need him, Billy had said. And here he was, sitting hunched forward as if he were already riding his next bus or barstool, and Kingsley could smell the wine from twelve yards down the hallway. He had a gourmet's nose for such scents, and could name each one. This was Thunderbird, as in the old saloon rhyme: What's the word? Thunderbird!... What's the price? Fifty twice! But when the young guy looked up at him, Kingsley saw the eyes were clear of everything but desperation. Billy sent me. Kingsley said nothing. He could see the kid gathering himself, struggling with it. It was in his eyes; it was in the way his mouth turned down at the corners; mostly it was the way he held the bottle, hating it and loving it and needing it all at the same time. At last Dan brought out the words he had been running from all his life. I need help. He swiped an arm across his eyes. As he did, Kingsley bent down and grasped the bottle of wine. The kid held on for a moment... then let go. You're sick and you're tired, Kingsley said. I can see that much. But are you sick and tired of being sick and tired? Dan looked up at him, throat working. He struggled some more, then said, You don't know how much. Maybe I do. Kingsley produced a vast key ring from his vast trousers. He stuck one in the lock of the door with FRAZIER MUNICIPAL SERVICES painted on the frosted glass. Come on in. Let's talk about it. Revue de presse King's own supplies of creative steam show little sign of being depleted. (The Sunday Times) King is a very remarkable and singular writer. He can catch dialogue, throw away an observation or mint a simile, sometimes, brilliantly . . . Storytelling is everything - and by golly does he know how to carry the reader. (Observer) DOCTOR SLEEP is King expertly returning to the milieu of his most beloved novels, combining not just elements from the original THE SHINING but themes and imagery familiar from King's books, including CARRIE, SALEM'S LOT, FIRESTARTER and IT. It also has a structure King has often utilised before, with a group of essentially good people having to band against a gang of baddies but within this structure King works masterful variations, showing just with a brilliant storyteller he is. When King is on form, as he is in DOCTOR SLEEP, he has no rivals for sheer page-turning suspense. It is as addictive as anything he has written: a triumph from the world's finest horror novelist. (Sunday Express 2013-09-29) It's a gripping, powerful novel, all the more so for being patently heartfelt. (Financial Times 2013-09-21) DOCTOR SLEEP is a warm, entertaining novel by a man who is no longer the prisoner of his demons, but knows where to find them when he needs to call on them. (Daily Telegraph) Thirty-six years on from his horror classic, THE SHINING, Stephen King's sequel shows he still has plenty of creative steam. (The Sunday Times) King has written a sequel, the tale of what happened to little Danny when he grew up. Need one say more? It cannot fail . . . the best thing to emerge from King's glittering, warped imagination is of mundane, small-town America corrupted by hidden forces . . . you cannot but respect his ruthless expertise as a storyteller . . . even those of us who would never freely pick up a Stephen King must genuflect to a master. (The Times) Stephen King's frightscapes are among the most incredible in literature, yet one believes in them unquestioningly. (Spectator) Terrifying and, as always, brilliantly-crafted tale, you won't be left wanting. But you may be left scared. (Sun) A magnificent sequel to one of the finest horror yarns written . . . Brilliant. (Daily Express) Highly anticipated sequel to his bestselling 1977 novel THE SHINING. (Daily Express Saturday Mag) Hopeful and hugely humane. (John Connolly Irish Times) DOCTOR SLEEP has a tightness, an economy, after some of the lengthier novels of recent years, but also a lightness of touch. It reads less like a horror novel than a thriller and ends on a scene of intimate and intense human contact, a gift of consolation at the moment of death. (John Connolly Irish Times) King is too skilled a storyteller for DOCTOR SLEEP to be anything other than unputdownable. (Mail On Sunday) Both an excellent sequel to THE SHINING and a strong novel in its own right, this is one of King's best books in the last decade. (SciFi Bulletin) Suspenseful, thrilling and packed with twists . . . an incredibly sincere piece of writing. (Time Out) It still grips, just differently than the original (Shortlist) King still remains the daddy of them all (Metro) The novel's deepest shiverings depend on no made-up devils. (Guardian) For the truth is, there are few writers who have such a way with character (and that character

delivered through authorial peeks into thought and feeling, is so important in his books) . . . Once his stories get their hooks into you, they're impossible to put down . . . The denouement of the novel takes place in autumn, and that's no coincidence. You can practically smell the leaf piles burning, their fragrant smoke mixed with that of funeral pyres. (Sfx.co.uk) King [is] a genius at transforming the ordinary into the utterly horrific. (Evening Standard) This is the master on top form, drawing his readers in with his amazing storytelling power - first with the tension, then with the richness and details of the scene-setting and characterisation. (Daily Mail) Book of the Week: King finds a mode of the supernatural that has a melancholic beauty while avoiding spiritualist blather (Guardian) [King] writes people and communities with searing acuity, and often touching compassion, coupled with tough and authentic understanding. The difference is, he also steps back, or sideways, through the gaps to hook out the slithery things and the creeping, gut-churning things at the corner of our vision. (British Fantasy Society)