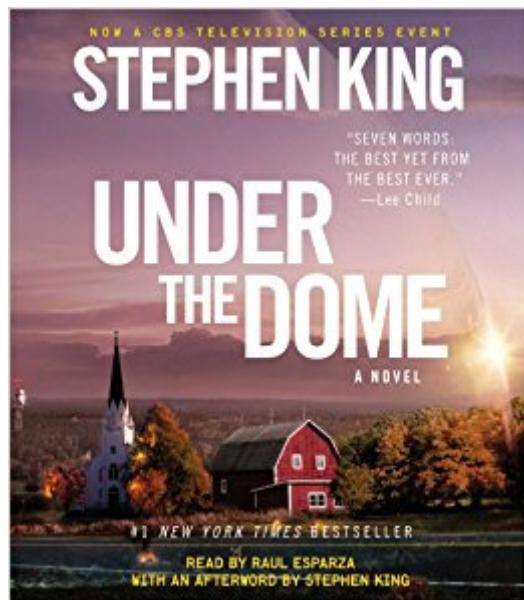


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# Under The Dome: A Novel



## Synopsis

Stephen King's tour-de-force with more than 100 characters follows the apocalyptic course of events when one Maine town is physically cut off from the rest of the world. On an entirely normal, beautiful fall day in Chester's Mill, Maine, the town is inexplicably and suddenly sealed off from the rest of the world by an invisible force field. Planes crash into it and fall from the sky in flaming wreckage, a gardener's hand is severed as "the dome" comes down on it, people running errands in the neighboring town are divided from their families, and cars explode on impact. No one can fathom what this barrier is, where it came from, and when—or if—it will go away. Dale Barbara, Iraq vet and now a short-order cook, finds himself teamed with a few intrepid citizens—town newspaper owner Julia Shumway, a physician's assistant at the hospital, a select-woman, and three brave kids. Against them stands Big Jim Rennie, a politician who will stop at nothing—even murder—to hold the reins of power, and his son, who is keeping a horrible secret in a dark pantry. But their main adversary is the Dome itself. Because time isn't just short. It's running out.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Exclusive: Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan Reviews Under the Dome Guillermo del Toro and Chuck Hogan share their enthusiasm for Stephen King's thriller, Under the Dome. This pair of reviewers knows a thing or two about the art of crafting a great thriller. Del Toro is the Oscar-nominated director of international blockbuster films, including Pan's Labyrinth and Hellboy. Hogan is the author of several acclaimed novels, including The Standoff and Prince of Thieves,

which won the International Association of Crime Writer's Dashiell Hammett Award in 2005. The two recently collaborated to write the bestselling horror novel, *The Strain*, the first of a proposed trilogy. Read their exclusive guest review of *Under the Dome*: The first thing readers might find scary about Stephen King's *Under The Dome* is its length. The second is the elaborate town map and list of characters at the front of the book (including "Dogs of Note"), which sometimes portends, you know, heavy lifting. Don't you believe it. Breathless pacing and effortless characterization are the hallmarks of King's best books, and here the writing is immersive, the suspense unrelenting. The pages turn so fast that your hand--or Kindle-clicking thumb--will barely be able to keep up. You Are Here. Nobody yarns a "What if?" like Stephen King. Nobody. The implausibility of a dome sealing off an entire city--a motif seen before in pulp magazines and on comic book covers--is given the most elaborate real-life alibi by crafting details, observations, and insights that make us nod silently while we read. Promotional materials reference *The Stand* in comparison, but we liken *Under The Dome* more to King's excellent novella, *The Mist*: another locked-door situation on an epic scale, a tour-de-force in which external stressors bake off the civility of a small town full of dark secrets, exposing souls both very good...and very, very bad. Yes, "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street," but there is so much more this time. The expansion of King's diorama does not simply take a one-street fable and turn it into a town, but finds new life for old archetypes, making them morally complex and attuned to our world today. It makes them relevant and affecting once again. And the beauty of it all is that the final lesson, the great insight that is gained at the end of this draining journey, is not a righteous 1950s sermon but an incredibly moving and simple truth. A nugget of wisdom you'll be using as soon as you turn the last page. This Is Now. Along the way, you get bravura writing, especially featuring the town kids, and a delicious death aria involving one of the most nefarious characters--who dies alone, but not really--as well as a few laugh-out-loud moments, and a cameo (of sorts) by none other than Jack Reacher. Indeed--whether during a much-needed comfort break, or a therapeutic hand-flexing--you may find yourself wondering, "Is this a horror novel? Or is it a thriller?" The answer, of course, is: Yes, yes, yes.

"...the blood hits the wall like it always hits the wall." It seems impossible that, as he enters his sixth decade of publishing, the dean of dark fiction could add to his vast readership. But that is precisely what will happen...when the Dome drops. Now Go Read It. --Guillermo Del Toro and Chuck Hogan

The Story Behind the Cover

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The jacket concept for *Under the Dome* originated as an ambitious idea from the mind of Stephen King. The artwork is a combination of photographs, illustration and 3-D rendering. This is a departure from the direction of King's most recent illustrated covers. In order to achieve the arresting image for this jacket, Scribner art director

Rex Bonomelli had to seek out artists who could do a convincing job of creating a realistic portrayal of the town of Chester's Mill, the setting of the novel. Bonomelli found the perfect team of digital artists, based in South America and New York, whose cutting edge work had previously been devoted to advertisement campaigns. This was their first book jacket and an exciting venture for them. "They are used to working with the demands of corporate clients," says Bonomelli. "We gave them freedom and are thrilled with what they came up with." The CGI (computer generated imagery) enhanced image looks more like something made for the big screen than for the page and is sure to make a lasting impact on King fans.

King's return to supernatural horror is uncomfortably bulky, formidably complex and irresistibly compelling. When the smalltown of Chester's Mill, Maine, is surrounded by an invisible force field, the people inside must exert themselves to survive. The situation deteriorates rapidly due to the dome's ecological effects and the machinations of Big Jim Rennie, an obscenely sanctimonious local politician and drug lord who likes the idea of having an isolated populace to dominate. Opposing him are footloose Iraq veteran Dale "Barbie" Barbara, newspaper editor Julia Shumway, a gaggle of teen skateboarders and others who want to solve the riddle of the dome. King handles the huge cast of characters masterfully but ruthlessly, forcing them to live (or not) with the consequences of hasty decisions. Readers will recognize themes and images from King's earlier fiction, and while this novel doesn't have the moral weight of, say, *The Stand*, nevertheless, it's a nonstop thrill ride as well as a disturbing, moving meditation on our capacity for good and evil. (Nov.) --This text refers to the Mass Market Paperback edition.

\*This review is for *Under the Dome: Part 2*, but has now merged reviews for the half-book with the all the ones for the full novel, which seems very confusing.\*In case you haven't read any of the reviews for *Under the Dome "Part 1,"* be aware....and BEWARE. This is NOT a sequel to *Under the Dome*. Greedy publishers have made a horrible decision to take the original 1,000 page novel and split it into two parts. If you fall for this and buy both Part 1 and Part 2, you will have paid more for the book than you would in some other formats, but the worst part of this is the treatment of those readers who don't like paying around \$20 or more for a new hardcover or around \$15 for a new large paperback, who wait for the smaller mass market paperback to buy a writer's newest book. Those readers now will have to pay the same amount as everyone else for the book because they'll have to buy two paperbacks at regular price to get the whole story. When I was younger, I didn't have money in my budget to buy brand new hardcovers, so when the small paperback finally came

out, I'd get it for about \$7 and be able to read the story. A few years ago, beginning with the book Cell, they increased the size of Stephen King mass market paperbacks and raised the price to \$10. That apparently wasn't enough, as now they want you to pay for two books to get one full story. It can't have anything to do with the quantity of pages in the book; they've printed regular sized, regular priced paperbacks before of the novels *It* and *The Stand: Complete and Uncut*. This boils down to misleading advertising and a desire to squeeze as much out of loyal readers as possible. Not a good move. \*\*Update\*\* It's nice to see that [has](#) finally added a "Product Alert" in the description of this half-book. It should have been done immediately upon the book's release, but I guess better late than never. Maybe not for all the people who got duped into buying it initially, however.

On a beautiful crisp autumn day in a recent October the small town (2000 population) of Chester Mill Maine is cut off from the outside world by a mysterious invisible force field. The town members cannot escape; when they try to breakout they are injured or killed by running up against the force field dome which keeps them strapped like mice in a mousetrap! This is the premise for this bestselling novel which has been turned into a CBS TV series. The long book runs to over 1000 fast turning pages; features a host of fascinating characters and is sure to grab your attention. You will hear stories of murder, rape, torture, political dictatorship, love hate and community solidarity against evil. The main characters are:  
a. Dale "Barbie" Barbara: A retired military officer who has been working in the town as a short order cook. He is named a Colonel in the army and is given command of the forces who wish to wrest power away from the corrupt political official running the town.  
Big Jim Rennie is a truculent, overweight and murderous politician who serves as the town's second alderman. He murders, thieves and controls the town of Chester Mill. His son Junior is a murderer and is dying of a brain tumor. Big Jim is one of Stephen King's greatest creations. He is a hypocritical Bible thumping monster. True evil!  
Julia Shumway is the editor of the small town paper who fights evil and falls in love with Barbara.  
Rev Piper Libby: The liberal clergy woman who organizes a rebellion against the rule of Big Jim. These are only a few of the characters whose stories are spun by King. The book is a parable of how quickly evil can raise its ugly head . Under the Dome reminds us that though we often feel like we are merely ants under the heel of government and alien forces we can unite for good. Love for others and caring for our neighbors is an important lesson in Chester Mill and everywhere. The book was a joy to read but once you begin on page one be prepared for a long sit in your chair! This is an important book which is one of the finest novels written by Stephen King. Highly recommended!

I had to look up Raul Esparza, no idea who he was or is, because his performance is just not good. First of all, he narrates so quietly that I have to blast it to hear it in my car, and his characterizations are just so irritating. He gives Big Jim Rennie a southern drawl sometimes, and they all live in Maine. There are just so many tiny off-putting things that I continue to be ripped out of the experience to focus on his voice. I'm sure he may be a fine television actor, I have no idea, but his narration is just not good at all. I really hope I get used to it because I do not want to quit. I've read the novel three times, I WANT to now listen to it. And no offense, Mr. Esparza, I could not get through King himself narrating Desperation.

Part One is amazing and totally enthralling...Part Two goes in a different direction that what you would think he intended to do with the rest of the story...was very disappointed with the second half of Under The Dome. For ME to say something negative about my favorite author is difficult, but I must be honest. It seemed to me in Part Two, that he just lost interest and just wanted to be done. Still a good story in the whole, just not what I expected from King.

Haven't quite finished yet, but I'm near the end. Amazing so far. I'm very glad I bought this book. Just finished the Dark Tower series, and I thought those were my favorite books, but Under the dome is now one of my favorites too. Good read. Got a lot of heavy situations. Read it! Thank you! (Side note, book came in great condition. Packaging was good.)

Classic King at his best. King is a true mastermind when it comes to grand scale storylines. I was really pleased with the overall development and plot of the story. It kind of reminded me a little of the Stand. The characters were compelling and the visual descriptors were vivid. Big Jim was by far a truly unique antagonist with a Trump style egocentric attitude. Highly recommend it if you are a true King enthusiast. Enjoy the DOME!!!!

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