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Cell: A Novel



Synopsis

The next call you take could be your last in this terrifying #1 New York Times bestseller by Stephen King—soon to be a major motion picture starring Samuel L. Jackson and John Cusack and now available from Encore for a great value! Where were you on October 1 at 3:03 p.m.? Graphic artist Clay Riddell was in the heart of Boston on that brilliant autumn afternoon when hell was unleashed before his eyes. Without warning, carnage and chaos reigned. Ordinary people fell victim to the basest, most animalistic destruction. And the apocalypse began with the ring of a cell phone—

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This novel has a great underlying premise: The human brain is an organic computer that has a basic operating system, which is capable of being erased. In the case of this novel, the erasure is triggered by a "pulse" that is sent out to millions of people through their cell phones. Those who do not happen to be using their phones at the time of the Pulse are spared. Those who are using their phones turn into zombie-like creatures who maim and kill one another and appear to be driven only by hunger and anger. The twist comes when the "normies" realize that the "phoners" (aka zombies) are sort of evolving over time. They appear to be developing more sophisticated traits that are, in some cases, superior to those of normal humans. For instance, they communicate via telepathy and move around by means of levitation. I would have liked to see this evolution idea further developed, perhaps even all the way to the point where the once inferior zombies become the next step up in human evolution, with the "normies" ultimately ending up in the same relationship as the Neanderthals may have been to Homo Sapiens. But, alas, that never happens. In fact, nothing

close to that happens because King leaves readers in the lurch by not bringing the novel to a satisfactory conclusion. I know that King often leaves the ultimate endings up to the readers' imaginations, and I appreciate that technique. But in *Cell* he really should have taken us a bit farther down the road, at least so we knew whether or not the "old" human programming could be rescued from some area of deep memory so some phoners could be restored to their former condition.

If for no other reason, I thank Stephen King for taking those five words which haunt tv commercials: "Can you hear me now?" and turning the phrase into something more than merely annoying..and into the realm of the truly ominous. While it might seem obvious to some of us that cell phones are horrible little devices, it still takes a pretty talented writer to write a book about evil spread by cell phones...and to keep readers riveted the entire time. I was one of those readers. Like King, I refuse to have a cell phone, an "electronic leash". No thanks. But I'm really digressing here. Back to *The Cell*. If you think you don't like King's "supernatural" or "horror" style, I'd urge you to give *The Cell* a chance. I read it from cover to cover in one sitting. I can't say it is the best book he's written but it was still a fine read and had many of the trademarks of King's superior writing - excellent characterization, an unpredictable plot and just enough plausability to make me think, "WHAT if?" What if there WERE some way to use cell phones to affect people's brains, to create insanity in our population, with results leading to the brink of civilization's collapse? It is to King's credit that he not only raises these questions but kept me wanting to find out what happened next, to see what happened to Clayton, a guy who happens to be away from home when all hell breaks out. By the time it does, I was already intrigued by this guy, someone who was trying to figure out a way to curry his estranged wife's favor, who had the usual worries and imperfections of the average man. He was no hero, just an ordinary guy, just trying to get by, thinking about his career and the next step in his day, the usual stuff..

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