



The Best of Stephen R. Donaldson

By Stephen R. Donaldson

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Although best known for such epic accomplishments as the ongoing *Chronicles of Thomas Covenant* and the multi-volume *Gap Cycle*, Stephen R. Donaldson has also written some of the most distinctive short fiction of recent decades. This generous collection brings together much of the best of that shorter work and provides an ideal showcase for its author's depth, versatility, and consummate literary artistry.

Included here are eleven stories and novellas that run the gamut from horror (*The Conqueror Worm*) to high fantasy (*Daughter of Regals*), from contemporary spiritual drama (*Unworthy of the Angel*) to action-oriented SF (*Animal Lover*), together with such uncategorizable gems as *The Killing Stroke*, with its unique combination of magic and martial arts, and *The Woman Who Loved Pigs*, an astonishing account of personal transformation and long-delayed revenge.

In settings that range from the deeply familiar to the wholly imagined, *The Best of Stephen R. Donaldson* offers a gallery of tales that have the resonance and moral complexity of compact novels. Beneath their often-gaudy surfaces, they show us very real people who confront, and sometimes overcome, extreme adversity, who struggle to find balance and harmony in an inherently chaotic universe. Each story is the clear product of a master storyteller. Each demands and rewards repeated readings. Together, they form one of the cornerstone volumes of modern fantasy, a book that will be read and treasured by Donaldson's many fans, and by anyone who values imaginative literature at its finest.

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The Best of Stephen R. Donaldson By Stephen R. Donaldson Bibliography

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Editor Bill Sheehan selects 11 short works by Donaldson, best known for his long-running Thomas Covenant series, for this retrospective, which is uncluttered by commentary from the author or editor. Published between 1978 and 1999, these fantasy and science fiction stories are generally gloomy but occasionally depict protagonists prevailing: the title character of "Daughter of Regals" overcomes conniving would-be usurpers, while the oppressive regime of the futuristic "Mythological Beast" can only fail in its quest to crush wonder. Sheehan belies the collection's title with the inclusion of some lesser stories, like the castration fantasy "The Conqueror Worm," but on the whole the restrictions of length force Donaldson to adopt appealingly disciplined prose while exploring intriguing ideas. (Apr.)

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Ricardo Bishop:

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