

Fiction

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demand—a "good thing," Dills said. Core Records, an independent label based in Austin, also handles Will and the Bushmen, Jet Black Factory and Vigilantes of Love.

The band has avoided touring themselves to death, opting to open for big acts like Morrissey, the Violent Femmes, New Order, the B-52s and Sting, bands which offer much larger audiences.

So far, Dills said, the tour has been successful, although the band members are still getting used to the long hours.

He said the crowds the band has encountered so far have responded enthusiastically.

"They're definitely different than our home crowd," he said. "But it hasn't been hard. They're going out to these clubs to hear something different."

The Return will open the show, which starts around 10 p.m. Admission is \$3.

King's new book receives a split verdict



**Stephen King
"Nightmares and
Dreamscapes"
Viking Publishing**

There was once a time when Stephen King's short stories represented his best work. Although his novels were often scary, they were also almost always somewhat long-winded. His short stories, however, were short, powerful, and very scary.

Ah, those were the days. King's latest book "Nightmares and Dreamscapes," his third collection of short stories, is very disappointing. It seems like King is scraping the bottom of a once very full well, but is now left with nothing but scraps and chunks of mud.

The book begins with "Dolan's Cadillac," a story about a man whose wife is killed by a mobster and how he gets his revenge by burying the mobster, car and all, in the Nevada desert. There is nothing exciting or scary about this story at all. The reader knows what's going to happen before it happens, so there are no surprises.

For the first half of the book, most of the stories follow this pattern. With the possible exception of "Suffer the Little Children," the stories in the first half of the book vary from boring to just plain bad.

King manages to redeem himself, somewhat, in the last half of the book. "Home Delivery," a take-



James Mensing/DN

off on the George Romero's "Night of the Living Dead," is a good solid story. It is followed by "Rainy Season," a nice little tale of terror about man-eating toads that drop from the sky one night every seven years.

"Crouch End" and "The Ten O'Clock People" are the two best stories in the book. "Crouch End" takes the Lovecraft Cthulhu Mythos to a new level of terror. A woman and her husband arrive in Crouch End, a suburb of London, and find themselves in another dimension, surrounded by evil children and a beast that lives underground.

"The Ten O'Clock People" takes

on one of King's favorite subjects: smokers. The world is being taken over by ugly fly-like aliens, and the only people who can see them are people who used to smoke a lot, but now don't smoke as much. It's a good story, and although it isn't really scary, it is very entertaining.

"The Fifth Quarter" is an obvious homage to Ray Bradbury. Four children, whose last name is Bradbury, manage to get rid of their evil step-father when their house turns into a rocket and blasts into space.

The last story of the book, "Head Down," isn't really a story, but a non-fiction piece that originally ran in "The New Yorker."

It tells the story of Owen King, Stephen King's son, and his teammates on the Bangor West baseball team, as they make their run for the state championship. This is the best writing in the book and captures the essence of what it is like to play in Little League. I won't reveal the ending, but it is well worth reading.

The first half of King's book borders on pathetic and the last half borders on excellence. With a cover price of almost \$30, I would only recommend this book to die-hard King fans, many of whom probably already own it. If you just want to read the good stuff, save your money and check it out from the library.

—William J. Harms

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