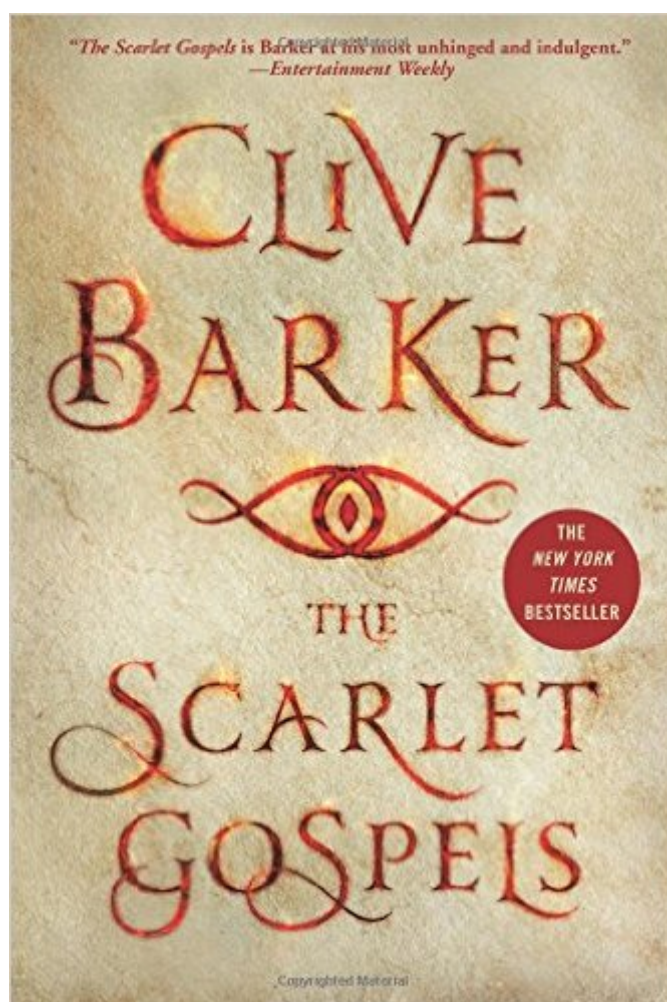


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The Scarlet Gospels



Synopsis

The Scarlet Gospels takes readers back many years to the early days of two of Barker's most iconic characters in a battle of good and evil as old as time: The long-beleaguered detective Harry D'Amour, investigator of all supernatural, magical, and malevolent crimes faces off against his formidable, and intensely evil rival, Pinhead, the priest of hell. Barker devotees have been waiting for The Scarlet Gospels with bated breath for years, and it's everything they've begged for and more. Bloody, terrifying, and brilliantly complex, fans and newcomers alike will not be disappointed by the epic, visionary tale that is The Scarlet Gospels. Barker's horror will make your worst nightmares seem like bedtime stories. The Gospels are coming. Are you ready?

Book Information

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Average Customer Review: 3.5 out of 5 stars Â Â See all reviewsÂ (367 customer reviews)

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Customer Reviews

It is difficult to comprehend how much of a disappointment Clive Barker's latest work is. He is one of the main reasons why I became so enamoured of horror fiction back in the late 1980s with his wonderfully wrought stories and their evocative imagery and language. His seminal "Books of Blood" and books like "Weaveworld", "Imajica" and "The Great and Secret Show" are amongst some of the best works of modern speculative fiction. When "The Scarlet Gospels" was first announced almost a decade ago it was talked up as a grand sweeping epic taking in the history of the Cenobites, Harry D'Amour, the fall of Hell and Pinhead as usurper. The infrequent noises that emerged over the intervening period indicated a grandiose and richly detailed work in progress. What we have on arrival appears to be a book that echoes what I currently feel after reading it, gutted. The narrative skips along quickly as Pinhead assassinates the world's magicians to gain their collective knowledge and challenges Lucifer for a new order. However it feels like huge chunks

of connective tissue like back story and characterization have been flensed from the bones of the story. What you are left with is a very lean book in terms of story and characterization that I found difficult to engage with or more importantly, enjoy. The book features a return match between Harry D'Amour and The Hell Priest (Pinhead to you and me, he isn't so fond of it) as the latter attempts to gain the power to overthrow and replace Lucifer who has been an absent presence in Hell for Millennia. There are still elements of the old Barker writing that I love that make you make you go "WOW" such as the prologue but for me, most of the dreamlike and evocative imagery and ideas that his writing has had seem to be absent.

First, let me begin by saying The Hellbound Heart is perhaps my favorite piece of literary fiction, in any genre. Everything about that novella is perfect, there is an incredible depth to the characters that is built in such a short time, the mythology was so unique and yet subtle, that you couldn't help but crave more. The dialogue was carefully crafted and only added to the beautifully written narrative. Every single one of these points was unfortunately countered and what is left actually to me seemed to be contrived as a mockery of what came before, and thus we have The Scarlet Gospels. So, first, something positive. Honestly, probably the only positive within this book was the prologue. The Cenobite we remember from THH is apparently hunting down and destroying every talented magician on the planet, taking from them anything that he can learn from or use to his advantage. This introduction keeps you entertained for a time. Then all of a sudden, the initial moment I realized that there was actually the possibility that I may not like something that I have waited what has seemed FOREVER for. Barker decided, despite the fact that he wanted to delineate from the story line and lore set forth from the second movie, to include the name "Pinhead" within this mythos. I know it seems something so trivial to explode over but it's not just a name, it represents a complete departure from what we all loved about this character. Everything that you remember from the first novella regarding him is gone. Because he has become one of the main characters within this story, Barker had to give him more substance, which unfortunately is what I think people loved about his character initially. He didn't have much.

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