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Posted on 22 November 2019 By Richard Bachman

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Every time I re read this, with my old, ragged copy that s falling apart at the seams with masking tape and hope keeping it from completely collapsing into a pile of loose pages, I

fall a little bit in love with it I'm going to take it a novel at a time, because I love each and every one of them, even if it did take me a while to enjoy Roadwork as much as I do now, or at all, really, so let's get started. Rage, first of all I've always loved Rage, and I love that it's the first one in the bindup because it's so interesting I remember hearing a reviewer on YouTube describe it as Breakfast Club with a gun once, and that's just about the best description of this book that I've ever heard It follows Charlie Decker, who holds up his algebra class and they all have a lot of fun It's got that definite early King feel, and it makes me slightly angry and in awe because he wrote the thing when he was younger than I am now Like, God. Next up is The Long Walk, which is actually my favorite book Like, I re-read this thing at least twice a year, that's how much I love it and all of the characters and everything I love everything, to misquote Abraham on purpose because what he actually says wouldn't really work here I just really love all of the characters you meet along the way, and how they're all broken down completely before being shot in the head My favorite character fluctuates I was a die-hard Barkovitch fan for the longest time, that kid's hilarious, but now I've finally accepted the fact that my favorite is Abraham and also that Stebbins is dumb and that he will never be my favorite and I don't understand why he is liked because I hate that kid I could say a lot about TLW, but it's time for Roadwork See, I didn't like Roadwork the first time I read it Or the second time Or third time Or for a while after that But as I was re-reading this thing at least once a year, I ran into it at least once a year And somewhere along the line, I really started to appreciate it It's about this dude who's got a road ready to be built through his house and through his workplace, and he decides to take matters into his own hands and it's pretty fun As of today, it's still probably my least favorite, but I do really love it And last, The Running Man, which is honestly just a ton of fun I just love this one, and I love how fast-paced it is and how high the stakes are and even how interesting the world is See, both TLW and TRM take place in a dystopian world, but the world in TLW is distinctly similar to our own the only real differences seem to be the Walk and the Major, neither of which we obviously have But in TRM, King's created this almost entirely different dystopian world, and let me tell you how interesting it is to read this book in 2015, when most of the stuff in this book has already taken place Also, it's freaky to me that Ben Richards was born a month after I was Like that's freaky I don't even know it's just freaky But in the end, I really love these books, and I really love how all of the Bachman Books are told I love how depressing the ends are Roadwork and TRM have satisfying endings than Rage or TLW, but they're still not happy endings, really and I just love everything Everybody I love everybody. These four novellas are almost as good as their cousins from Different Seasons It's a shame that the Columbine Shootings have directly proceeded to the best of the four stories Rage, with its everyone can find some angle to relate to protagonist Charlie Decker, he who thrashed in his sleep whilst in the marescape of The Cherokee Nose Job being consigned to the ashbin of publishing history No shall the intrepid young reader experience the thrilling fractured mirror empathic pulses from the

original teen instigator of Let's Take the Class Hostage and Commence Playing Operation Mindfuck without seeking out older, shopworn editions In the light of events that happened in the past few decades, I suppose the decision is understandable, if, IMO, somewhat lamentable It may be that my memories of Rage are all the fonder as, one hash filled eventide during my eighteenth year, select passages from the narrative of Charlie Decker, read to me by a luscious lynx of a Croat, were accompanied by one of the finest, most leisurely handjob I've ever had the pleasure of experiencing that wasn't self administered she worked it like the shifter of a banana yellow Porsche 928 and until the day I die I will always, first and foremost, associate Rage with that pleasant sharing with a svelte story chum Ah, summer nights. The other three stories have no erotic recollections attached to them, alas, but nonetheless they remain damn fine stuff The Long Walk was suitably appealing to my temperament at that particular age and I can still recall the clenching induced by the whipcrack of a rifle as the first amongst these futuristic, neo gladiatorial stripling walking dudes was ticketed, though, of course, I knew it was coming King Bachman oftentimes has difficulty with his endings he's not a natural closer but the final sentences of The Long Walk are just really good The Running Man proved a far better experiment in dystopian pursuits than the rather goofy, Dawson's Cheek of a movie that was subsequently hatched under its rubric and the underrated Roadwork which, regrettably, has had nary a kind word written anywhere to acknowledge its depiction of a hands on cleansing of a particular built up blockage of modern blue and white collar frustrations, wherein midsize shop employees felt a part of a family, rather than processed positions or payroll number sequences possessed itself of a sweaty midwestern charm that I appreciated the with each further reading Still, it was the opening gambit of the savage explosive power of teenage torment contained within Rage that always drew me back it just won't be the same without Charlie Don't Mind If I Do Decker and his Ted baiting shenanigans greeting the curious reader and inveigling him towards Getting It On. Reason for Reading I'm in the process of re-reading all of Stephen King's works in chronological order I'm reading these books individually in the order they were published between his other works After having read through the entire book over the time period of a few years I've concluded that The Long Walk is my favourite novel here, which I do remember enjoying a lot the first time around also My least favourite was Roadwork, though I'll say I didn't not like any of them Taken together on average I rate the complete collection a 4 out of 5. Rage This is the first book Stephen King published under the nome de plume of Richard Bachman This is very different from the other books he had published at this time I'm not sure if it really fits in under any specific genre other than just fiction This is an angry story of an angry youth who, in his last year of high school, thinks he is going insane and one day takes his algebra classroom hostage at gun point after killing two teachers in the process The story turns into a Breakfast Club type of scenario as the hostages and the hostage taker tell stories and learn about each other Interesting story, well written and thought

provoking Even though some kid blamed the influence of this book on his real life school shooting and King later retired this book from ever being republished I still really do recommend it 4 5

The Long Walk I originally read *The Long Walk* when King released his omnibus of *The Bachman Books* in 1985 Of the four novels *The Long Walk* and *The Running Man* were my favourites and I was looking forward to this re read Initially, the book struck a chord with me because even back in the eighties I could imagine a world where game shows had turned to life or death Of course, now, in the 21st century, with reality shows that embarrass, degrade, hurt and sometimes seriously injure participants physically and or emotionally the life and death scenario is not so hard to imagine in today s death culture. In *The Long Walk* we are in a future America, which has a dictator and a military presence, we know only that some event happened in the past for things to turn out this way Boys from the age of 14 to 17 are allowed to enter the annual Long Walk, from which 100 contestants are chosen The event is a national spectacle and parts of it are aired on TV and millions of dollars are exchanged in bets on who will be the winner The book focuses on the race from one participant s point of view and we experience the physical, emotional and mental hardships and breakdowns that these boys suffer Penalty for slipping below 4 miles per hour during the walk results in a warning every thirty seconds, after the 3rd warning, there is a 30 second countdown and the loser is shot dead and carried away The game ends when one contestant remains alive I really appreciated the psychological insight into the Walkers as a whole group and as individuals the dynamics as they broke down into small groups, pairs and loners and the examination of the varying effects that the psychological and physical torture had on different individuals Probably my favourite of all the Bachman books, but I ll have to reread them all before I make a definite decision A reread that lived up to my expectations 5 5

Roadwork This is my first re read that I went into it with absolutely no memory of the story whatsoever And my copy only has some vague sentence about an angry man fighting back as a summary so I was none the wiser from that As I read, it really didn t come back to me either, which is strange as I completely remember the other three in this book. This is a hard book for me to review as it got better as I read it Honestly, I was quite bored for the first half and didn t really get hooked until close to the end when the excitement built This is a story that tries too hard to show the reader the mental breakdown of a man One who loses it and goes out guns blazing When we meet Bart he s already well down the road to no return, hearing a voice and talking with it The book takes a long time to slowly let the reader know who this voice is and what the whole story behind it is and this is part of the book s slowness and what made it such a bland read for the most part Now, even though I seem negative here the book wasn t bad in fact it was good This story is a thinker Bart is crazy when we meet him and in my mind the deeper he goes into his insanity the saner he becomes, until at the end of the book when he can be viewed as a madman, he is at his ultimate sanest moment in the entire book He has taken himself where he wanted to end up even though he didn t know it as far back as a few

years ago when the incident happened and he s enjoyed these last weeks getting there I was satisfied with the read at the end, even though I had a hard time really getting into it. This is the first Bachman that I truly felt was King. The writing style, the stream of consciousness, the dialogue are all classic King and thinking back I can see true fans of the time putting the clues together at this point and outing King as Bachman or at least suspecting with this book. When I read a King, I always look out for connections to other books and the only one I noticed here was one of the laundry machines was called The Mangler. This is the name of a machine perhaps even the title in a short story in Night Shift 3.5 5 The Running Man. This is the book that I was most looking forward to re-reading in this collection. The first time I read it, the movie hadn't been made yet and I found this an incredibly scary tale as it felt so real. More real than The Long Walk at that time, which is also a deadly game show sci-fi. This time it didn't affect me as much because it wasn't very believable in our time and age. King's vision of 2025 from his vantage point of 1982 just isn't possible. The world has changed too much since then. Pollution is no longer our major concern and all the smoking, etc just wouldn't fly any. However going beyond that, it is a good story. A government run state happily killing off its poor, sick and unproductive, so called useless people is a possible reality if the current death culture, eugenics centred society that exists today continues. This is a grim book with no hope. It starts off with us, and the main character, knowing he will die at the end. But it is a good chase story and I think it is a well written Bachman book. Unfortunately, the movie does spoil reading this for me now as I couldn't get Arnold Schwarzenegger out of my head as Ben, nor Richard Dawson as the TV Host. For those who don't know though the book and the movie may have the same basic plot a game show to the death but the similarity ends there. They completely re-wrote the plot and characters for the movie version so don't pass up the book because of your opinion of the movie. Interestingly enough, I found a reference to the King Universe here, when Ben ends up at an airport in Derry, Maine. I love looking for the connections between the books now that I'm reading these in chrono order but I knew Derry from future books such as It so I had to Google and see if this was the first time Derry was ever mentioned by King and technically, it is. It is debatable though because this was published as a Bachman book and in the same year, 1982, under his own name King published the collection Different Seasons which contains the novella The Body, which doesn't take place in Derry but does mention it in passing as a nearby town. So we can see King establishing his universe already and this is the year that astute readers should have made the connection between Bachman and King as he has now given it away. 4 5 It's been a good 10 12 years since I've read this one, and it was long overdue for a re-read. Especially considering the fact that the only story I could really even remember in even the vaguest way was The Long Walk. So I picked it up to give it another whirl. Not disappointed at all, but of course, that's no surprise. Rageslipped through the cracks in my mind, big time. I was browsing around online, and seen an article about this book of SK's about a school shooting that was no longer

being published I was like huh Didn't remember it at all Good thing I've got this edition for my collection It's the story of boy Charlie Decker reaching his breaking point Mentally unstable, he's got this deep, hateful rage toward his father going back to when he was a toddler Due to his mentality, he has some trouble in school, especially one time when he gets called up to the blackboard to do a problem, and the teacher makes fun of him So he busts the teacher in the head with a big wrench That sets in motion problems for Charlie, with the principal, with the guidance counselor, and with his father So one day he decides to use the gun he's been carrying around, and after lighting a fire in his locker, he proceeds to kill two teachers, and holds his classmates hostage But not with the intention of killing them Sure, he threatens it, but mostly he just wants to teach them a lesson of sorts Through the day, the kids learn things about each other, and themselves, culminating in some revenge taken out on another student Charlie ends up in a mental hospital, and that's probably for the best

The Long Walk is so far my favorite in this collection I love the characterization, the boys on this walk, Garraty, McVries, Stebbins, poor, sweet Scramm I definitely wanted information on what kind of world they were living in, how had this walk come about, what was going on with the Government, what and why was this Squad ing I can't imagine having to walk like this, endless, no stopping, no resting I'd die for sure I like how the boys handled it differently, and I liked how SK depicted the encroaching madness The only thing I didn't like was the ending What the heck He made it to the end, his mind had been slipping, but mostly seemed to be holding in there, then when he finally reached the end and won, I guess it was too much for his mind to handle I don't know, I didn't like how he just took off running Stop, man You won, you're done, lay down and rest, y know Otherwise an excellent story

Roadwork was another one I didn't really remember, but now I'm really glad I read it It may even be the new best in the collection I thought it was quite a good story, if a little slow in the beginning It's a day by day tale of a depressed guy, Barton Dawes, who just decides he can't take it any By all outward appearances, he's happy, good marriage with a pretty wife, nice house, a long time job at an industrial laundry But the city has plans underway to build a freeway extension that will go right through his neighborhood, destroying his home, and the plant he works at So inside, sort of subconsciously, he's freaking out He's supposed to be handling the deal on the new plant where his company will move to, and his wife thinks he's handling the finding of their new home as well He's balking at the idea of over 20 years of memories being bulldozed and paved over, especially when he thinks of his son who passed away That plays a big part in his breakdown rebellion He starts talking to himself, he spins a ton of lies, and eventually ends up losing his wife and job In place of going to work, he begins traveling up and down the freeway every day, and even stops to pick up a hitchhiker one day She ends up being a good part of his thoughts, and I liked her character though I really liked his wife Mary too He finds Sal Magliore, an Italian mobster type character, a little stereotypical, but easy to envision in my mind, and even sort of likable in a strange way, so not a terrible thing I guess

Bart has a plan to make his point and go out with a bang, and it works, if only for a short while I almost am surprised at how much I liked this story Reading the short little description on the back of the cover, I didn't think this would be one I would be real into, but it was an excellent surprise, and it's now a story I'll think about for a good while

The Running Man took me by surprise This was a great sort of dystopian story, where America has been sort of taken over by a TV Free Vee Network, and poor people are just fodder for the entertainment machine The main character, Ben Richards is poor, unemployed with pretty much no chances of getting a job, sort of angry and down in the dumps, his baby daughter sick with an awful case of the flu, and no way of getting medical help for her Their meals consist of a food pill for him and his wife, maybe some fake coffee, and fake milk for the baby On the Free Vee, there are game shows, brutal and even sort of sinister For example, Treadmill to Bucks where the contestants all have heart or respiratory problems They are put on a treadmill, and for every minute they walk while keeping up conversation with the show host, they win ten dollars Every couple of minutes, they'll be asked a question, and if they get it right, they'll get fifty dollars If they get it wrong, fifty dollars is deducted from their winnings so far, and the treadmill's speed is increased Contestants frequently have heart attacks and or strokes And that's just one of the tamer day time shows The prime time ones are even worse So Ben, with no other options, decides to go to the Network headquarters and sign up for a show He's just one of a long line of poor people waiting to sign up Finally, he gets in, and is put through a barrage of physical and mental tests, and is selected as a contestant He's one of six that get called up to the upper offices, and 3 of the six are led off one way, while Ben, a guy named Laughlin, and another guy get led off the other way Turns out, Ben has been selected to be the new man on the hit show The Running Man, a show where two guys in this case Ben and Laughlin are introduced to Free Vee audiences nationwide, and given exaggerated profiles of being anti social and anti establishment They have a 12 hour headstart before Hunters start coming after them, and citizens everywhere are encouraged to call in and report sightings, they get rewarded 100 for a proven sighting, and 1000 for a sighting resulting in the contestants death For every hour the men stay alive, they earn 100, and if they happen to kill a law enforcement official, they earn a 100 bonus Ben's desperate for the money for his family, and he has to trust that the people in charge will give it to his wife So with everyone on the lookout for him and hating his guts, he's released back into the city And oh yea, he has to mail in two 10 minute video tapes to the Network per day, or he'll forfeit the money, and the hunt will still be on Too bad the Network uses the postage stamps to locate Ben, despite saying that they wouldn't Ben meets up with some of his people the poor from the inner city and gains an accomplice who helps him elude the Hunters, if only for a short time But someone reports him, forcing him to make a run for it, getting him injured in the process He starts to take desperate measures, taking a hostage, and bluffing his way through roadblocks and onto a plane Here, towards the end, the story was really flying, I couldn't read fast enough, it was like barreling downhill toward a

river Ben discovers some terrible things on his last flight, and makes a dramatic last stand, with a fiery conclusion I loved the ending Loved it I won't give it away, but it was excellent, I was left with a big grin on my face, saying Hell yea All of these stories were great in my opinion, and having finished, I don't know if I could pick a favorite between The Long Walk, Roadwork and The Running Man A great collection of some early work by SK, and his younger style definitely is represented well here. This is a great collection of early Bachman stories written by Stephen King Rage, The Long Walk, The Running Man, and Roadwork I've reviewed them all separately, and some I've liked than others, but still, in my profession and expert opinion, it's hard to go wrong with King. This is a book of two halves Or rather, one third and two thirds I loved both The Long Walk and The Running Man,, but found Roadwork a bit bland It's a good thing they stuck it in the middle, because I may have just given up on it if it had been the last of the three stories included in this book But, as they say, two out of three ain't bad The Long Walk sees teenage boys doing just what it says on the tin walking And walking And walking The last one standing walking wins everything he could ever want, but to get there he has to outlast the other 99 participants, some just nameless faces, but some who become friends He has to watch them be shot when their three warnings are used up A sometimes horrific, heart wrenching look at the lengths to which human endurance can stretch Roadwork is about a man whose whole life is about to be torn apart so that a road can be built through the middle of it Literally His home and place of employment are due to be torn down, but he does nothing to relocate either I can kind of see why, with the memories attached to these places, but new memories can be made It dragged a little, really, and there seemed to be very little forward motion in the story There were interesting aspects, but I never really enjoyed reading it The Running Man again does what it says on the tin A man is put on the run, and he or his family will receive money for every hour that he evades capture This is a clever and suspenseful story and you can't help but root for Ben Richards, for the almost inevitable circumstances he finds himself in and the tenacity he shows whilst on the run. These books were all written by Stephen King under a pseudonym, but apparently people from the off suspected that it was him, and I can see why While the subject matters are sci fi than the average King book, they just feel like King Of course little things like the format and the Maine connection would have probably tipped off King fans of the time. Rage was so predictive I'm glad it's no longer in print, but equally glad I read it first. Some of King's best stories are in this collection, notably Rage, written years before Columbine, The Long Walk, which is like The Hunger Games without the love triangle or the optimism, and The Running Man, which is much darker and much better than the movie that was very, very loosely based on it These are all typically grim King stories, but without the supernatural flavor of most of his work.

Four Early Novels by

RICHARD BACHMAN

Author of **THE REGULATORS**

**THE
BACHMAN
BOOKS**

With a New Introduction by

STEPHEN KING

"The Importance of Being Bachman"

I love all 4 of King's novels found within The Bachman Books collection, but currently, I've

just re read THE LONG WALK a book I re read every single year Yes, it IS that good I never tire of it Every time I re read this work I m again stunned by the incredible amount of prescience possessed by Uncle Stevie It is as if he has seen a future vision of North America that actually could happen No supernatural stuff in this one just the all too real monsters of human beings and capitalism. Stephen King is a genius This story was published in 1979 yet written in the 1960 s and King predicted a future for humanity that, in many different facets, is scary in its accuracy The book takes place in America s future, where the televised event known as The Long Walk has become a TV sensation, game sports sensation, reality show sensation and BETTING sensation, with a whole economy wrapped up in this game of death known as The Long Walk For the annual Long Walk , 100 desperate, poverty stricken, teenage American boys are chosen after applying and going through a series of tests to walk Starting in Maine, they walk walk until only 1 is left standing The Prize Anything you want for the rest of your life A pretty appealing reason to enter, especially in THIS desolate future version of America but there IS the 99% chance the walk will kill you With army tanks soldiers following the 100 lucky boys, the Walkers must continuously walk at a pace of 4 miles an hour Dropping this speed for ANY reason fatigue, urinating defecating along the road, heatstroke, dehydration, broken shoes anything will give you a Warning There are other Rules that will also get you a Warning, like interfering with another walker, or leaving the route, for example Get 3 Warnings and you ll buy your ticket you ll be shot down dead on the road, as the massive Crowds watch in person and live on TV the very ultimate in reality shows What makes Stephen King such a prescient genius is that he wrote this story waaaaay BEFORE reality TV even EXISTED, before it was even a CONCEPT, and adds his own macabre ideas to the format People discovering this book for the 1st time could easily assume it was written in the early heyday of reality TV perhaps back when Survivor premiered as a breakout success viewers were enthralled with THAT televised contest but no KING WROTE THIS IN THE 1960 s Again, PRESCIENT GENIUS I can t stress this enough The setting that King crafts makes it clear that in this version of the future, America has become an unstable, impoverished, militaristic country of citizens living in fear one where TV s Long Walk contest isn t just an obsession, it s almost a new religion In fact, any citizens that dare voice negative opinions about TV s cash cow are taken off by the government Squads and killed One of many reasons the Squads will gladly execute people The Walk is not just a distraction for destitute denizens to avoid their harsh realities, it s also a means of allowing people to dare hope for better things Perhaps the Walker that you ve bet on will be THE Walker his win could change your fortune The 10000s of boys applying to enter the grueling, inhumane Long Walk are dirt poor and have nothing to lose, nor do the people betting betting on The Long Walk has now become the biggest money maker in the country Forget the lottery this barbaric, televised walking contest grants the government more than lottos ever did In King s dystopian future, the US economy runs on LIVE, televised, desperate children walking until they drop dead of exhaustion malaise, or die

from a bullet to the head for being too slow. Each year the Walk begins in Maine at the border of USA Canada, and the group walks south for as long as it takes. Often the Walk lasts over 5 days nights, going into the state of Massachusetts or farther. The game is run by The Major, a hard military figure, revered in the country and a giant celebrity Ray Garraty is our main character, and he is dubbed Maine's Own in press coverage of the Walk he's the lone entrant from Maine this particular year so he gets the unusual experience of walking through his home state with the Crowd on his side. The Crowd in this novel is basically another character to the story. Crowd is always, always capitalized in the book. Ray decides to be friends with his fellow Walkers, and it is through his lens that readers experience the Long Walk. King does many subtle yet great things so brilliantly in this book. Discussions of important issues like death, fame, love, race, politics, media, money, etc arise as the boys in the Long Walk talk the hours and days away. And, since these characters are literally walking towards death, having them talk about BIG IDEAS feels normal for their circumstances, and doesn't come across as preachy. Also, simply doing things like always capitalizing various words and phrases. The Long Walk, Crowd, Warning, Ticket, Squads, Cheer, etc make you yourself begin to question some BIG IDEAS. I have owned a copy of this book The Long Walk 3 times, and given it away to friends each time, because it is THAT good. I'm a PUSHER A BOOK Pusher, and I like to share when I've got the goods, lol BUT, I still have a copy of this novella in my paperback Bachman collection though, and this is one collection I will NEVER allow to Get a Ticket. Especially because it also includes the old story, Rage, which most editions do not carry any longer. This book is short and brutal and amazing. Jen from Quebec 0`Read? The Bachman Books? Best E Book, The Bachman Books Author Richard Bachman This Is Very Good And Becomes The Main Topic To Read, The Readers Are Very Takjup And Always Take Inspiration From The Contents Of The Book The Bachman Books, Essay By Richard Bachman Is Now On Our Website And You Can Download It By Register What Are You Waiting For Please Read And Make A Refission For You

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