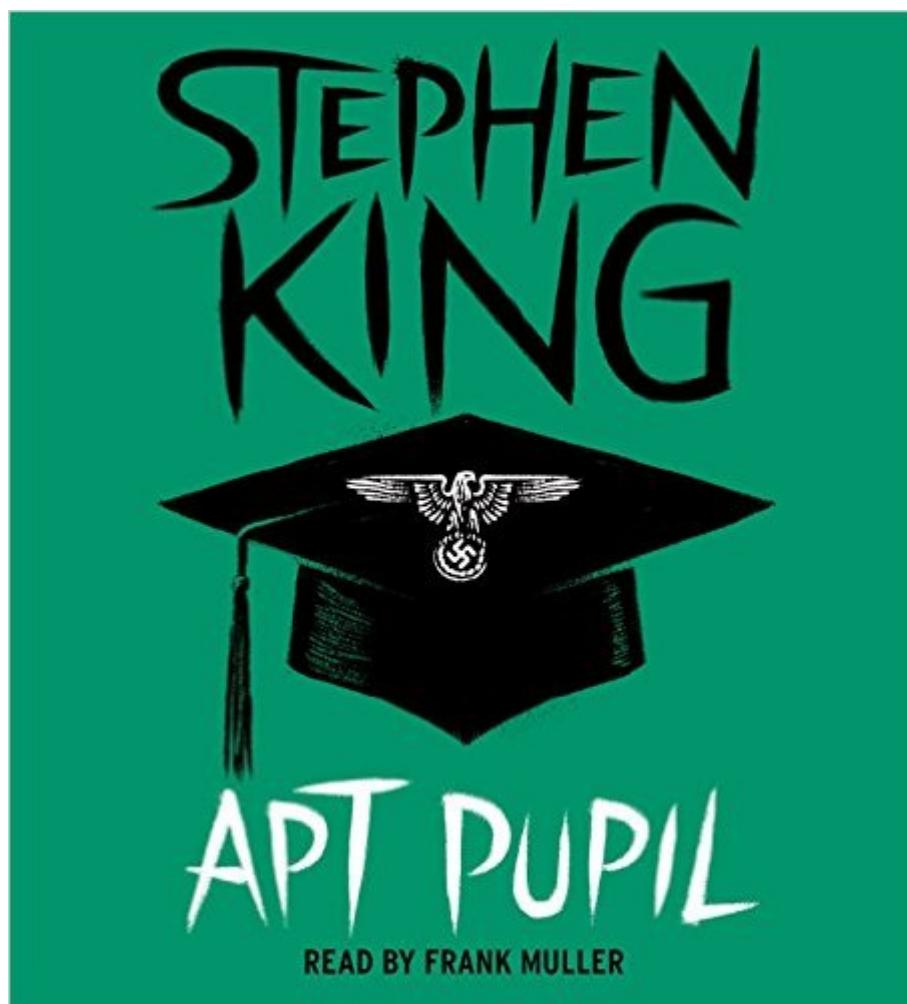


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# Apt Pupil



## Synopsis

Stephen King's short story "Apt Pupil" from the collection *Different Seasons* is now an Encore stand-alone CD for the first time. The inspiration for the film of the same name starring Ian McKellen about top high school student Todd Bowden and his obsession with the dark and deadly past of an older man in town.

## Book Information

Audio CD

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Shipping Weight: 7.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.2 out of 5 stars (See all reviews) (28 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #262,993 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #22 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > ( K ) > King, Stephen #41 in Books > Books on CD > Horror #504 in Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Unabridged

## Customer Reviews

Tom Bowden, when we first meet him, is a bright-eyed, charming, intelligent young man who is, in all respects, an "apt pupil," according to his teachers. His parents, whom he calls by their first names, are his pals more than parental figures, and have largely given him free rein in his young adolescent life. Since this is a King novel, though, naturally something about Tom isn't quite right - he has a dark secret. Tom is quietly obsessed with World War II, particularly the concentration camps and the methods used there to kill millions of people. Through diligent research and sheer coincidence, Tom has found one of the SS's best butchers living in his hometown under a new name and identity. Through blackmail, Tom persuades the old man to tell him many horrible tales of the camp he ran, in terrible detail. They enter into a truly dark and complex relationship, based on trust, distrust, love, hate and mutual compulsions. As the story progresses, the reader feels both empathy and disgust for each of the main characters, and is torn between many emotions as the plot unfolds. The result is a very disturbing study of a side of the human psyche seldom seen, and King does a very good job taking us into that hidden place. Squeamish readers should perhaps stay away from this story, as there are moderately-detailed descriptions of human and animal abuse and

murder, and anyone looking for a "happy, feel-good" story should definitely look elsewhere! I have to say it again, this is a really disturbing tale, not for the faint-of-heart; it left me entirely unsettled, which speaks very well for King's ability to get in there and push all of the buttons he was carefully poking around to find.

"You see how it is, guys..."And you'll see how very easily this story COULD be.PLEASE do not be discouraged by the film! I will say that they picked THE PERFECT Arthur and Todd, but the screenplay was an absolute disgrace to the novella. Discover the original story, and you'll understand why Stephen King's greatest strength lies in his presentation of characters and why the incredible things they do are COMPLETELY credible.Now a lot of people know that Stephen likes to "go on" a bit in some spots, and it might seem like that here, but please believe me when I say that in this story every word, or seemingly unrelated detour, all leads to a place that is horrifyingly just.The only thing that makes this amazing and disturbing story even better is the phenomenal reading by Frank Muller! His ability to ease you into the story is totally unparalleled, and he makes sure that ALL of the characters have their own distinctive voice, from Denker/Dussander's rich, rolling (and effectively eerie) German accent, to Todd's bright, sly pre-teen chirping; from a instinctive, worried mother to a father forehead-deep in his son's All-American shell, Mr. Muller makes Apt Pupil (an already very satisfying tale) the most PERFECT audio experience I've ever had everytime I listen to it. Sometimes I only wish I could drive around longer.....but then again there are those overpasses...

This novella is a very powerfull novella about obsession. It shows you what can happen to someone who gets to involved with trying to make a german remember the terrible crimes he committed in the concentration camps. The audiobook is read by Frank Muller. The way he reads this novel, really places the listener into the book. Once I started the novella, I could not stop it.

Dark. Disturbing. Unsettling. The novella Apt Pupil by Stephen King is all these things, and may be considered highly offensive by some. It's also excellently written and thought provoking. If you are a fan of King, particularly his non-horror writing, I highly recommend this novella. The story revolves around two characters. Todd is a teenager, smart and curious, hard-working and excels at athletics. He also has a different side that will be revealed throughout the story. He comes to meet and form a relationship with an older man, a man that in a previous time was the personification of evil, an active participant in the atrocities that took place in the Nazi death camps. Todd knows of

this evil truth, but instead of being repelled by it, finds it alluring, wants to know all the gory details of what transpired in the war. The story generally moves along at a brisk pace, with a few twists along the way. The ending, though perhaps not entirely unexpected, is nonetheless well done and full of suspense. Highly recommend. Also, if you like to listen to audiobooks, the great Frank Muller does the narration on this one, and as always, does a wonderful job.

Taken from the collection of tales, Different Seasons, Apt Pupil is a socially disturbing story that demonstrates why Stephen King's name has come to symbolise terror. Set in the safe, suburban surroundings of middle-class U.S.A., Apt Pupil centres on the intense desires of one teenager's curiosity and just how far the quest for knowledge can be taken before it becomes a danger rather than just an interest. Todd Bowden is an all-American senior school teenager excelling both academically and on the sports field, ambitious and determined he encounters a Nazi war criminal living unnoticed in his neighbourhood. Using blackmail he persuades Arthur Dussander to recount his experiences as a guard in the Concentration Camps, until Dussander evolves into something far more horrific than Todd could have possibly imagined. From being the 'apt pupil', Todd goes into freefall until he is forced to rely on Dussander for help, which is when the hunter becomes a weak and vulnerable prey. As tragic as it is horrific, Apt Pupil is an exemplary King work, incorporating the daily lives of the unassuming American public into a masterpiece of spellbinding, nerve-jangling twists and turns. When Stephen King begins to focus on the human rather than the sub-human, you know that something special is being born out of that dark void beyond his imagination. This creation is conceptually brilliant and delivered with immaculate panache, so much so that hours after the final page is turned you are still looking over your shoulder!

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