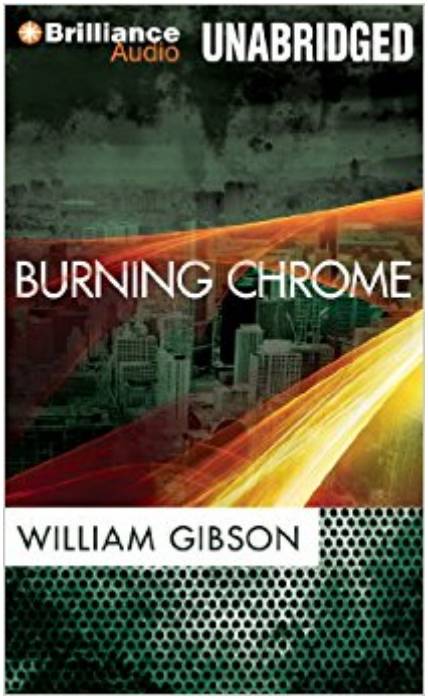
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Burning Chrome



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Synopsis

William Gibson’s dark visions of computer cowboys, bio-enhanced soldiers of fortune, and hi-tech lowlifes have won unprecedented praise. Included here are some of the most famous short fiction and novellas by the author of Count Zero and Neuromancer.

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Customer Reviews

Ten brilliant, streetwise, high-resolution stories from the man who coined the word cyberspace. Gibson’s vision has become a touchstone in the emerging order of the 21st Century, from the computer-enhanced hustlers of Johnny Mnemonic to the technofetishist blues of Burning Chrome. With their vividly human characters and their remorseless, hot-wired futures, these stories are simultaneously science fiction at its sharpest and instantly recognizable Polaroids of the postmodern condition. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In his enthusiastic description of the ’30s and ’40s "moderne" style of industrial design (featured in one of these stories), Gibson might be writing about his own work: "The change was only skin-deep; under the streamlined chrome shell, you’d find the same Victorian mechanism . . . . It was all a stage set, a series of elaborate props for playing at living in the future." That dexterous, shallow artifice has won Gibson awards and fervent fans (especially for his first novel, Neuromancer but beneath it is something old, worn and tired. Thus "Johnny Mnemonic," whose body computer stores secret information, is just a variation of Mr. Memory from The 39 Steps. Gibson’s gangsters, corrupt industrialists, young techies and lowlifes eager to belong to any in-group that will have them, are

cliches without conviction. This weak collection of 10 short stories seems to have been rushed out to cash in on Gibson’s current popularity. Paperback rights to Berkley. Copyright 1986 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I haven’t read any William Gibson before, and I’m glad I’ve had a chance to correct this mistake by reading this anthology. A few of the stories here simply mesmerized me. The way in which Gibson uses words -- a detail here, a detail there -- and soon an entire world is contracting in electric shocks and breathing at you from the pages.The idea behind many stories is "high tech / low life," telling stories of people who’d stepped out of the slums, denizens of the underworld, a world where even the residents of a derelict space station in the story "Red Star, Winter Orbit" seem as shabby and rundown as the station they inhabit. But at the end, all of the stories here (and one might argue, all stories in general) are ultimately about people and their struggle with the world contrasted against their struggles with themselves and each other.I liked the three last stories in the anthology the best, with "Dogfight," written in collaboration with Michael Swanwick, being possibly the most depressing story I’d ever read. It’s also one of the best.No sentence is ordinary; details flourish; cyberjoints crack. If you like SF, if you like cyberpunk, if you like good stories ... read this book.

Brilliant, seminal writing. Some claim that this is Gibson’s very best work; I don’t agree, but it’s amazing how he really came flying out of the gate as a polished, sophisticated author. I’ve been reading F. Scott Fitzgerald’s early short stories, and it’s fascinating to see his improvement and evolution as a writer. Gibson seems to have started near the top of his game; amazing.If you haven’t read anything by William Gibson, this is the perfect place to start, since the stories are brief and accessible. Johnny Mnemonic and Burning Chrome give the best preview of his later work. But I’m very enamored of New Rose Hotel and Fragments of a Hologram Rose. It’s amazing how prescient they seem now; it feels like the events depicted could happen in the next five years, possibly sooner.If you are already familiar with Gibson’s work and haven’t read Burning Chrome yet, what the hell is wrong with you?!? Drop everything and read it now.

I love this book, and I recommend it strongly to anyone who has already read Neuromancer. Neuromancer is also amazing, and as a continuous novel has better continuity, world building and consistency compared to this collection of short stories. The strength of Burning Chrome is also the inherent weakness of a short story collection, that the stories cover a broad swath of Gibson’s career and give glimpses into different themes and aesthetics he works with and is fascinated

by.I've read this book at least 5 times over the past 10 years, and at different points in my own life almost every individual story has been my favorite story from the collection at one point or another, as my own perspective and interests change over the years. This is the highest praise I can give a short story collection.

Perhaps Burning Chrome's biggest flaw is that it was so influential that a lot of elements from this collection have be reused and reinterpreted hundreds of times. I am going back and reading Burning Chrome and most of the story elements seem cliched now. However, I think context is very important for appreciating this work. Unfortunately, I was born ten years after this book was published, and I have almost no sense of the context. From the introduction of this book, it seems that Sci-Fi was facing a drought of sorts in the late 70s/early 80s, and Gibson brought some fresh things to the table. Apparently, one of his major style contributions was combining low life and high tech. That is a recurring theme throughout these stories. However, that idea seems so pervasive in Sci-Fi now, it's not as fresh as it probably was.I have read Gibson's (much) more recent work, Pattern Recognition, and greatly enjoyed it. However, Pattern Recognition is a novel and the pacing is excellent. Perhaps this is a gripe I have with the format of short stories in general, but I always felt unsatisfied with the brevity of these (Burning Chrome's) selections. I read the entire book in a sitting, so I did not have a lot of time to mull over each story (something I will probably not do next time I read a short story collection).Overall, I gave it 3 Stars: It's okay. I was entertained, and I really loved the settings that Gibson situated his stories in, but I wanted to spend more time in them.

Gibson's noteworthy early anthology is of short stories. It is always startling to try to get into the narration in future speak. Somehow, no matter how strange the language, you figure out what the story is about and enjoy it almost immediately. He last story is the best, working on several levels and making you interested in the lives of some unsavory-in-any-age protagonists. a classic

These are Gibson's short stories, so they're what you expect - early product that show the signs of the master of the craft he will become. Couple classics, couple meh, but for Gibson fans you should read it, for the genre fans it's worth it, too. If you're thinking of reading Gibson, or only familiar with his more current offerings, just start with Neuromancer and see if you like the cyberpunk novels, cause while the various series build on themselves and stand alone well, they owe much to Neuromancer and it's series - it is the one that sets the stage for it all.

This book is a collection of short stories by Gibson and various collaborators. The stories are fine for the most part, but I am just not a short story guy. The most interesting thing about reading the short stories is the comparison with his novels written about the same time. The neo-noir sensitivity is found in both the novels and short stories. That factor did not surprise me as the stories are generally contemporary with his early novels. Lovely work. We even meet Molly (Sally) from Neuromancer (Mona Lisa Overdrive) or one of her twin successors, in one of the stories. Very cool since I like the character.But, if your taste run to short stories and sci-fi, you will not want to miss this one. enjoy.

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