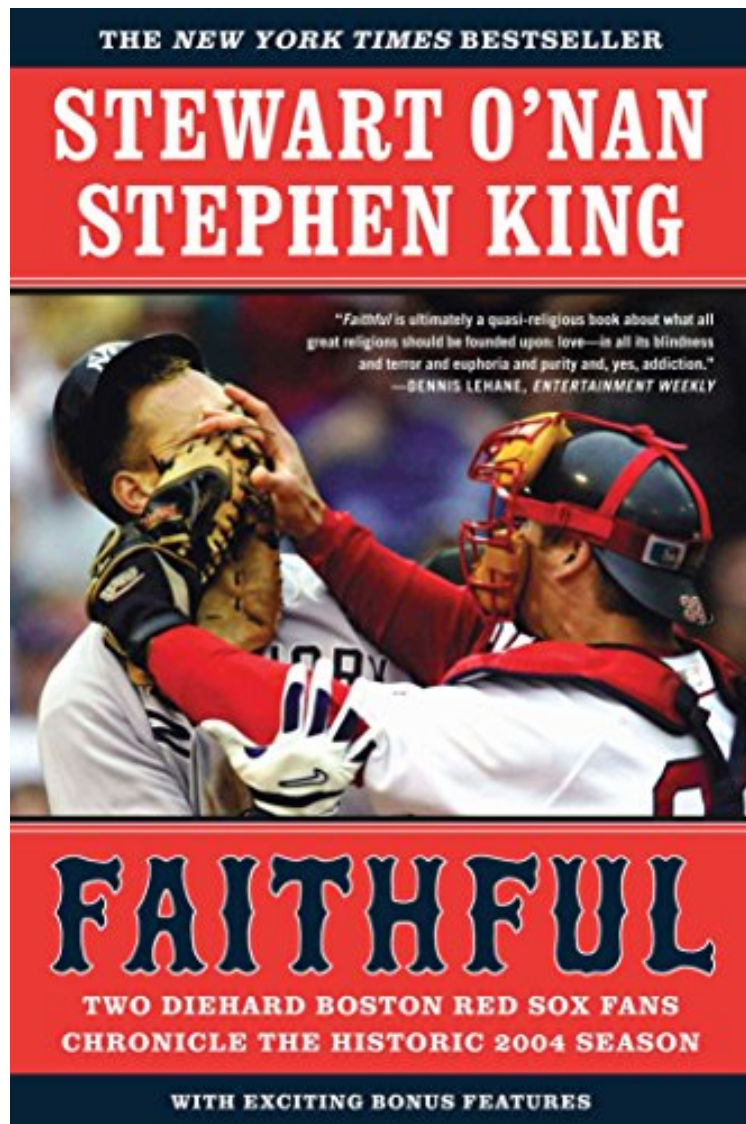


(Read now) Faithful: Two Diehard Boston Red Sox Fans Chronicle the Historic 2004 Season

## Faithful: Two Diehard Boston Red Sox Fans Chronicle the Historic 2004 Season

*Stewart O'Nan, Stephen King*  
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**Stewart O'Nan, Stephen King : Faithful: Two Diehard Boston Red Sox Fans Chronicle the Historic 2004 Season** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Faithful: Two Diehard Boston Red Sox Fans Chronicle the Historic 2004 Season:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. dirty waterBy David A. BaerIt's difficult to imagine a more unlikely book concept. And \*impossible\* to absorb the luck of its timing.Two novelists, quite unlike each other except for their

deep-structure attachment to the Boston Red Sox, trade emails over the course of a 162-game baseball season, supplemented--dramatically, gorgeously, gloriously--by a post-season that must be acknowledged as one of the all-time finest moment in sports. Back when some working stiff in an editor's office at Scribner's wrote the functional equivalent of 'Yeah, I guess we could do that ...', nobody could have suspected that the season during which horror-fiction monarch Stephen King and Fine Young Novelist Stewart O'Nan would begin trading emails at the outset of Spring Training would end up being the now incomparable (for Red Sox fans) '2004'. You see, Sox fans abbreviate calamity by the numbers: 1949, 1967, 1986, 1993 ... These are the numerals that circumscribe the domain in which Disaster has sunk its tentacles deep into the soul of the long-suffering citizens of Red Sox Nation. '2004' is another number, but so very, very different from all others. It gives its numerical title to the chapter in which Boston broke the long-standing Curse of the Bambino (so named by Boston Globe sportswriter Dan Shaughnessy, who gets no love in this book). What is more, the baseball gods allowed that 2004 would break the Curse in the most improbable fashion, climaxing on a cold October night in the heart of the Evil Empire when the Sox came back from a 3-0 deficit to finish off the Hated Yankees in the location that would allow maximum vindicating juice to surge. The Sox sweep of the Cards in the World Series is just an agreeable footnote to the Real Thing. O'Nan's obsessive, worrying prose dances with King's ironic, wizened, lyrical notes to record each moment, each game, each this-is-going-to-kill-us-(again)-in-the-end moment of the Sox 'Idiots' season, when--finally--all bets were off. The guys know baseball and, for this reviewer, their almost daily exchanges take one deep and helpfully inside this Game of Small Things. Each mortal on the Sox roster had his moment of apotheosis. O'Nan and King were there to register it in real time, all the while reminding themselves and each other that this could lead to nothing good. Yet it did: the Dauber, Manny, Big Papi, Pedro, the erstwhile misspelt 'Mr. Schill', 'The Tragical Mr. Lowe', the Moneyball-vindicating (or almost) Dave Roberts and his ALCS Game Six steal-while-the-whole-world-was-watching (with apologies to Chicago), Johnny Damon and his Disciples, Tek, Mystery Leskanik, a young and much-queried manager called 'The Coma' by his detractors ... On it went, chronicled day in and day out by Messieurs King and O'Nan while none of us imagined what was coming. Let me be frank: you've got to be either a very serious fan of the game of baseball or a moderately serious Red Sox fan in order to love this book. Otherwise it'll come off as a black hole of rather pitiful obsessive behavior, carried on by two men who have families and other matters that probably miss their attention. But if you fit in one of those categories, you might just love this book. '2004', after all, is no ordinary year for either of the classes of human being mentioned above. For Sox fans--full disclosure requires that this reviewer briefly flash his identity card--there can be no other like it. 2007 is a welcome appendix, but just that. The Curse--of which King, at least, is a passionate doubter, as he is of most things that flow from the acid pen of a certain Mr. Shaughnessy--was broken that year and nothing, in consequence, will ever be the same. For some, the descent from high drama to ordinary baseball has been a bitter pill to swallow. In candid moments, we kind of miss the suffering. A little. King and O'Nan take us back to a time when Everything Mattered and No Good was likely to come of any of it. Yet it did, Did it ever! The unabridged audiobook version is expertly read by Adam Grupper and Ron McLarty. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Spooky King and Kooky O'Nan wrote a beauty. By GMan This is a very good book written by two good men who happen to be Red Sox fans. How they selected 2004 to chronicle the entire season of Sox baseball, including spring training still amazes me. Both writers add 'Humorist' to their list of talents by writing Faithful. It was good to see how Spooky and Kooky spend their lives from April until November. They are good fathers and husbands whose families support their fanaticism. I gave Mr O'Nan the nickname Kooky because he is obsessed with catching baseballs and getting them signed. When he took a fish net on a ten-foot pole to a game his wife and kids walked behind him, pretending not to know him. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. As a Red Sox Fan this book helps me remember ... By bruce w. As a Red Sox Fan this book helps me remember the frustrations, joys and the ultimate winning of the first World Series for the Red Sox's.

Faithful isn't just about the Red Sox. It's also about family, friendship, and what it truly means to be a baseball fan and to bewell, faithful, come hell or high water (The Boston Globe). Of all the books that will examine the Boston Red Sox's stunning come-from-behind 2004 ALCS win over the Yankees and subsequent World Series victory, none will have this book's warmth, personality, or depth (Publishers Weekly). Early in 2004, two writers and Red Sox fans, Stewart O'Nan and Stephen King, decided to chronicle the upcoming season, one of the most hotly anticipated in baseball history. They would sit together at Fenway. They would exchange emails. They would write about the games. And, as it happened, they would witness the greatest comeback ever in sports, and the first Red Sox championship in eighty-six years. What began as a Sox-filled summer like any other is now a fan's notes for the ages.

.com Fans watching the 2004 baseball playoffs were often treated to shots of Stephen King sitting in the stands, notebook in hand. Given the bizarre events on the field, from the Red Sox's unprecedented comeback against their most hated rivals to their ace pitcher's bleeding, stitched-together ankle--not to mention the Sox's first championship in 86 years--you could be forgiven for thinking King was writing the script as he went along, passing new plot twists down to the dugouts between innings. What he was writing, though, along with his friend and fellow novelist Stewart

O'Nan, was *Faithful*, a diary of the 2004 Red Sox season. *Faithful* is written not from inside the clubhouse or the press room, but from the outside, from the stands and the sofa in front of the TV, by two fans who, like the rest of New England, have lived and died (mostly died) with the Sox for decades. From opposite ends of Red Sox Nation, King in Maine and O'Nan at the border of Yankees country in Connecticut, they would meet in the middle at Fenway Park or trade emails from home about the games they'd both stayed up past midnight to watch. King (or, rather, "Steve") is emotional, O'Nan (or "Stew") is obsessively analytical. Steve, as the most famous Sox fan who didn't star in *Gigli*, is a folk hero of sorts, trading high fives with doormen and enjoying box seats better than John Kerry's, while Stew is an anonymous nomad, roving all over the park. (Although he's such a shameless ballhound that he gains some minor celebrity as "Netman" when he brings a giant fishing net to hawk batting-practice flies from the top of the Green Monster.) You won't find any of the Roger Angell-style lyricism here that baseball, and the Sox in particular, seem to bring out in people. (King wouldn't stand for it.) Instead, this is the voice of sports talk radio: two fans by turns hopeful, distraught, and elated, who assess every inside pitch and every waiver move as a personal affront or vindication. Full of daily play-by-play and a season's rises and falls, *Faithful* isn't self-reflective or flat-out funny enough to become a sports classic like *Fever Pitch*, *Ball Four*, or *A Fan's Notes*, but like everything else associated with the Red Sox 2004 season, from the signing of Curt Schilling to Dave Roberts's outstretched fingers, it carries the golden glow of destiny. And, of course, it's got a heck of an ending. --Tom Nissley

From Publishers Weekly

Of all the books that will examine the Boston Red Sox's stunning come-from-behind 2004 ALCS win over the Yankees and subsequent World Series victory, none will have this book's warmth, personality or depth. Beginning with an e-mail exchange in the summer of 2003, novelists King and O'Nan started keeping diaries chronicling the Red Sox's season, from spring training to the Series' final game. Although they attended some games together, the two did most of their conversing in electronic missives about the team's players, the highs and lows of their performance on the field and the hated Yankees ("limousine longballers"). O'Nan acts as a play-by-play announcer, calling the details of every game (sometimes quite tediously), while King provides colorful commentary, making the games come alive by proffering his intense emotional reactions to them. When the Red Sox find themselves three games down during the ALCS, King reflects on the possibilities of a win in game four: "Yet still we are the faithful... we tell ourselves it's just one game at a time. We tell ourselves the impossible can start tonight." After the Sox win the Series, O'Nan delivers a fan's thanks: "You believed in yourselves even more than we did. That's why you're World Champions, and why we'll never forget you or this season. Wherever you go, any of you, you'll always have a home here, in the heart of the Nation." (At times, the authors' language borders on the maudlin.) But King and O'Nan are, admittedly, more eloquent than average baseball fans (or average sportswriters, for that matter), and their book will provide Red Sox readers an opportunity to relive every nail-biting moment of a memorable season. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. "Faithful isn't just about the Red Sox. It's also about family, friendship, and what it truly means to be a baseball fan and to be -- well, faithful, come hell or high water....The season was full of priceless moments, and King and O'Nan catch nearly all of them in amber." -- Frank Mosher, *The Boston Globe*"King and O'Nan are the kind of fans who make for great baseball companions: know-ledgeable, opinionated, funny, and irreverent." -- Bob Minzesheimer, *USA Today*"A sweet romance...the details are priceless." -- Kyle Smith, *People*"Faithful is ultimately a quasi-religious book about what all great religions should be founded upon: love -- in all its blindness and terror and euphoria and purity and, yes, addiction." -- Dennis Lehane, *Entertainment Weekly*