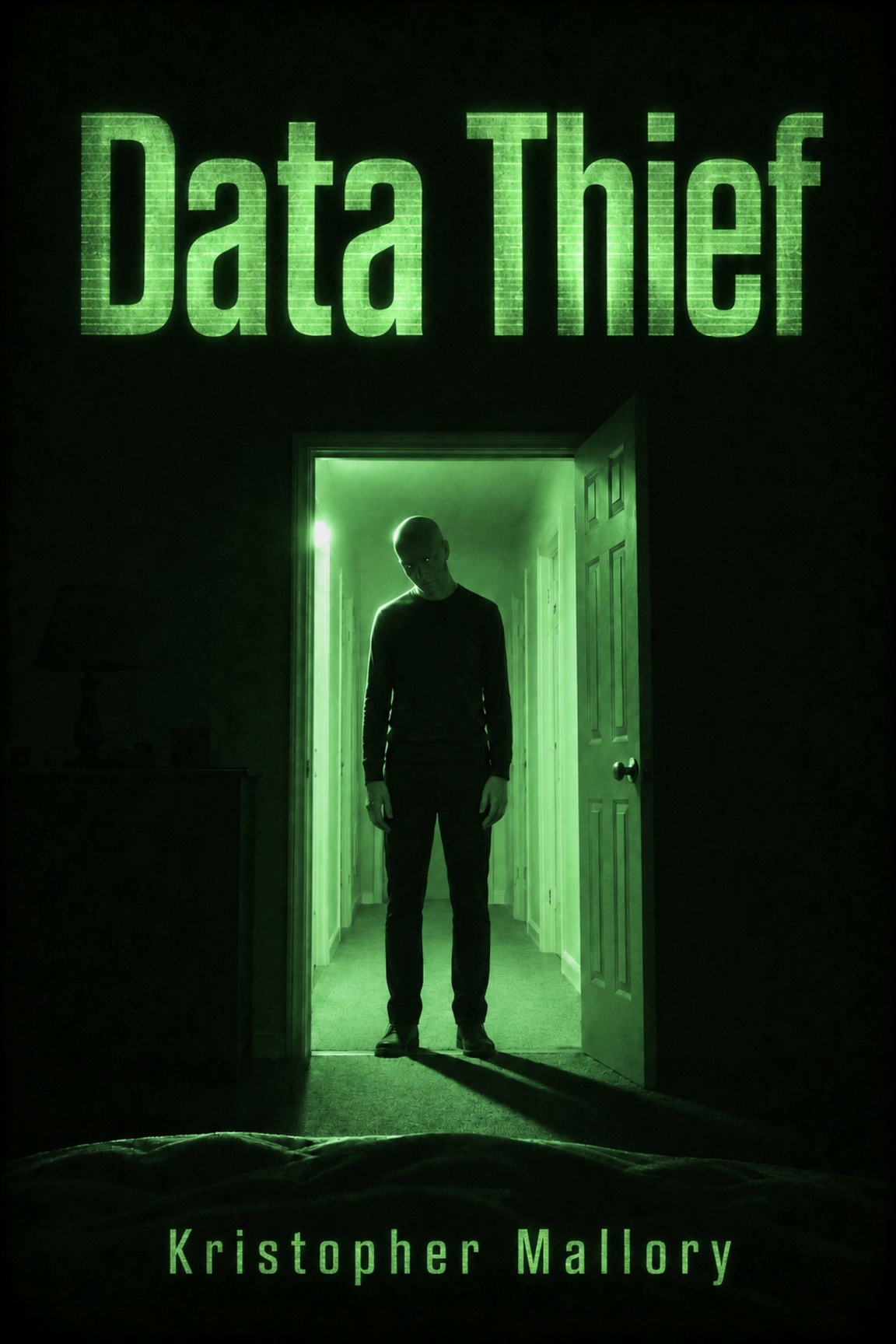
Data Thief



Kristopher Mallory

Data Thief

by

Kristopher Mallory

Data Thief

A Sci-Fi Horror Story

Copyright



www.StealthFiction.com

Data Thief

eBook Edition
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Disclaimer:

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are products of the author's imagination, or the author has used them fictitiously.

Other Releases by Kristopher Mallory

Gillian

Long-Term Investment

Wrong Way Charlie

Prepared Fresh

Road Trip Down A Dark Memory Lane

She's Not Human

Universal Transmission

The Little Old Lady

The Price To See The Dead

Attempted

A Gift Of Bone

Payphone

What People Are Saying about Kris's Stories

The Death Agreement:

"This is all so confusing and mind blowingly awesome." – *jesslikewoah*

I Know What They Are:

"This is absolutely amazing. Has me a bit paranoid as I get deja vu quite a bit, hopefully not too many good futures have passed me by..." – *Niamhel*

Master Stargazer:

"Hands down one of the best short sci fi books I have read, and I have read a lot." – *rickamente*

These Bad Dreams Combined:

"I have no idea WTF is going on here, but I'm fascinated!" – *ali*

Special Thanks

For the hard drives.

Table of Contents

Copyright
Other Releases
What People Are Saying
Special Thanks

Data Thief

About the Author
What’s Next?
Hear It Read Aloud
More from Kristopher Mallory
More from Stealth Fiction

Data Thief

“The 600 series had rubber skin. We spotted them easy. But these are new, they look human. Sweat, bad breath, everything. Very hard to spot.”

~ Kyle Reese, The Terminator (1984)

At midnight, I broke into the house I'd been watching for days. I knew the layout, knew where the data would be kept. Even after years of thievery, a salty liquid soaked through my Caucasian mask as I silently crept through darkened corridors, heading toward an open bedroom. Beyond, a deeper darkness awaited.

Silhouetted in the doorway, I allowed a low growl to slip from my throat. Inside the pitch-black room, a small cry answered my call.

"Shhhhhhhhhh," I whispered, silencing the sweet music of fear. "Shhhhhhhhhh."

Teeth clattered in the darkness. My excitement grew palpable as I drew closer to the shadow on the bed. I could smell clearly now. Disbelief. Desperation. Despair. All definable through the acrid mint and alcohol odor of vapor rub.

The old one wouldn't be a problem. Very few—young or old—had ever been a problem.

I touched the face shivering on the pillow, the flesh cold against the tips of my masked fingers. A sob and whimper were offered in reply.

"Shhhhhhhhhh."

The old one knew I had come to steal, just as I'd stolen from so many others. Those half-century-or-more-aged models possessed decades' worth of precious data. And it was so, so close to being mine.

Smiling, I dragged the old one onto the floor and enjoyed the long, terrified scream that no other would hear.

"Shhhhhhhhhh."

Oh, how I wanted to open the bloody casing right then and discover what treats awaited. But a proper scan takes time. Retention would be

required, and I needed to steal it all, needed to savor all of the bits, needed to enjoy each… and… every… byte.

THE END.



About the Author



Born near Baltimore, Maryland, Kris has been writing short fiction since he was a kid. First sharing his ramblings on Stealth Fiction and then on Reddit, where most of his stories were posted to r/nosleep. His stories have been featured on The NoSleep Podcast, Chilling Tales for Dark Nights, Tales to Terrify, and Horror on the Rocks. The recording of The Scarecrow Corpse, read by Markiplier, has been heard hundreds of thousands of times. He lives in Melbourne, Australia, with his wife. And occasionally, he turns into a strawberry.

More stories: StealthFiction.com

What's Next?

LET ME TELL YOU HOW I LOST MY EYES

A Short Story Collection by Sammy Fowler

Coming one day. Maybe. Probably not.

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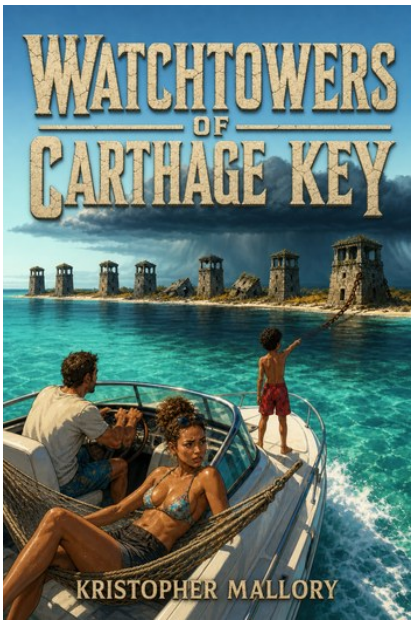
Hear It Read Aloud

Some stories are better heard in the dark.

Data Thief has a complete audio narration, read by Natasha, a digital voice. It runs 2 minutes and it's free: play it online, or download it as an MP3 or an audiobook with chapters.

Listen free at stealthfiction.com

More from Kristopher Mallory



WATCHTOWERS OF CARTHAGE KEY

This cosmic horror story is now available as an eBook. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

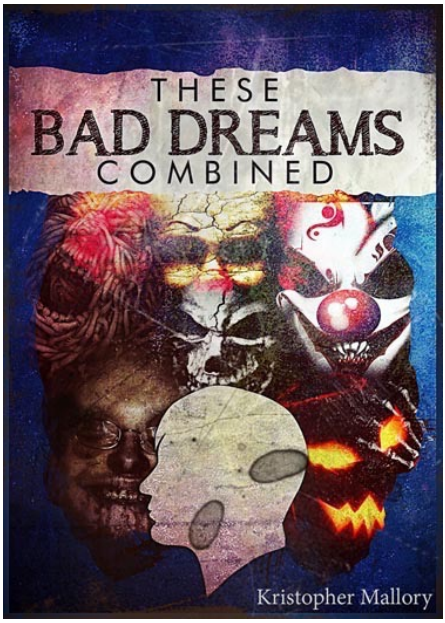
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Marc takes his girlfriend and her son out to an unnamed key far off the Florida coast, where six ruined watchtowers stand guard and nothing swims in the water.

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Praise for Watchtowers of Carthage Key:

"Mysterious ruins, otherworldly horrors, the narrator questioning his own sanity, and the setting itself is the monster - very Lovecraftian!" – *notoriouswhitemoth*



THESE BAD DREAMS COMBINED

This suspense thriller is now available. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

~~~~~

A man struggles to deal with severe nightmares. A new medical trial is his last chance at a normal life.

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Praise for These Bad Dreams Combined:

"I have no idea WTF is going on here, but I'm fascinated!" – *ali*



I Know What They Are

This short horror story is now available. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

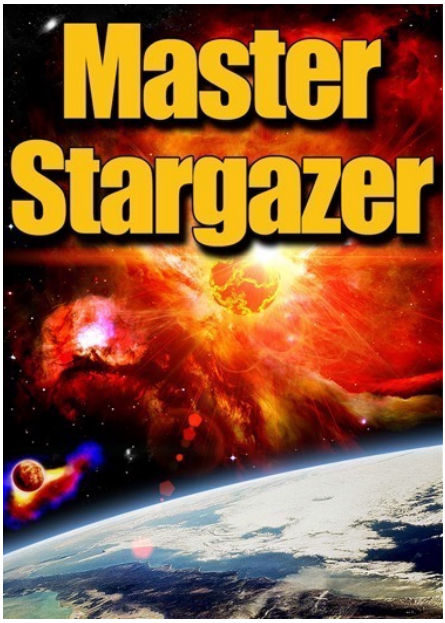
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A young woman interacts with the city's homeless population as she walks to work each morning. Her life takes a turn into strange territory when she meets a homeless lady wearing a lab coat and holding a sign that reads: I know what they are.

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Praise for I Know What They Are:

"Brilliant. Everything came together at the end and I got chills as I finished it. Well done." – *Asaroki*



MASTER STARGAZER

This sci-fi story is now available. For more information on this book, please visit Stealth Fiction.

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Deep below the polar ice cap, the last great research station stands on high alert. Hundreds of the station's personnel fiercely do their part to manage the impending disaster. They had practiced countless times, every worker drilled repeatedly until they were able to perform their duties with a cold robotic grace.

Now the time for drills is over; the culmination of the Stargazer's Thousand Cycle Plan is finally upon them. To the relief of all, the training held. There's no hesitation. Not a single worker deviates. Each member knows the consequence of failure is total destruction.

While the station's personnel fight to save the planet's population, the forty-second Master Stargazer stands over his garden, watching drops of water bead across leaves. He gently touches the seed pouch of his favorite flower, and the realization that the time has come hits him with
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unimaginable force. Fully aware that his heart is beating dangerously fast for a man of his age, he repeats the familiar mantra:

I must calm down if I'm to see this through.

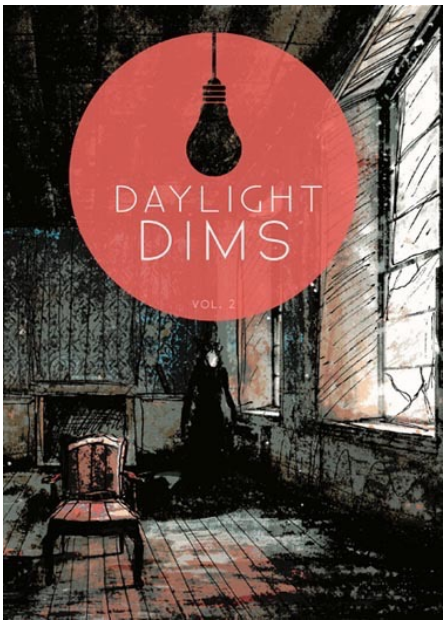
As the research station commander, Master Stargazer's job is to ensure all aspects of the Thousand Cycle Plan remain on schedule, and yet, he's the only staff member not where he's supposed to be. His place is on the command deck, but grief had overtaken him, so he had slipped into his office to give a final farewell to his beloved flora. For years, those plants had reminded him life exists somewhere high above the ice cap. Even now, they remind him it needs to be preserved.

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Praise for Master Stargazer:

"Hands down one of the best short sci fi books I have read, and I have read a lot." – *rickamente*
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More from Stealth Fiction



DAYLIGHT DIMS
VOLUME TWO

This horror anthology is now available. For more information on this book, please visit the Daylight Dims website.

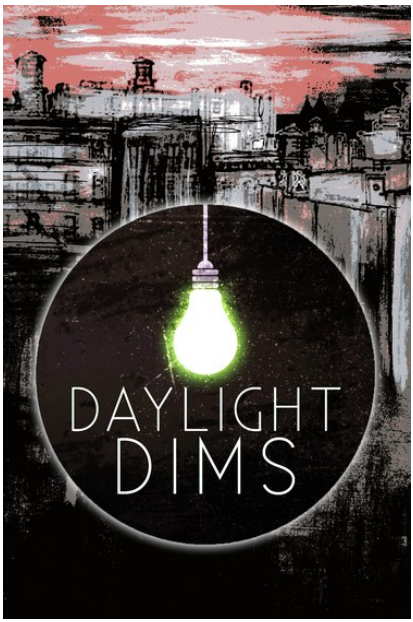
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Darkness descends again. Daylight Dims Volume Two features thirteen stories that cross the genres of surreal, dark fantasy, and heart-pounding dread. This annual horror anthology is guaranteed to twist your perception of horror. From the common, comfortable tropes to the more taboo, these handpicked tales have a literary aspect designed to showcase what true horror can be.

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Praise for Daylight Dims Vol. 2:

“This was probably one of the most entertaining collections of horror stories I've ever read. And I don't say this to suck up or to stroke any tail feathers. I was happy to have the opportunity to read through this before release, and I implore anyone on the fence about picking this up to do themselves a favor and take the plunge into the abyss. You will not be disappointed.” – *Human Gravy*



DAYLIGHT DIMS

VOLUME ONE

Second Edition — now with two new stories from the editors.

This horror anthology is now available. For more information on this book, please visit the Daylight Dims website.

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The editors chose 13 stories from over 100 premium submissions. DD contains some of the best horror around.

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Praise for Daylight Dims:

"This is a fantastic horror anthology. All 13 stories are exquisite. The book was not what I expected initially, as I thought that it might be all vampire or werewolf tales. Not so! These are original stories from authors of the macabre. From dark fantasy and pure suspense to classic horror tales, it shows the extraordinary scope of fantastical fright fiction. The stories in this anthology are a tour de force of fear, which will haunt you, terrify you, and stay with you." – S. Mahaffey, *"neverjudge"*