



Minority Report and Other Stories

Philip K. Dick , Keir Dullea (Narrator)

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Viewed by many as the greatest science fiction writer on any planet, Philip K. Dick has written some of the most intriguing, original and thought-provoking fiction of our time. This collection includes stories that will make you lough, cringe...and stop and think.

The Minority Report: a special unit that employs those with the power of precognition to prevent crimes proves itself less than reliable...

We Can Remember It For You Wholesale: an everyguy's yearning for more exciting "memories" places him in a danger he never could have imagined (basis of the feature film Total Recall)...

Paycheck: a mechanic who has no memory of the previous two years of his life finds that a bag of seemingly worthless and unrelated objects can actually unlock the secret of his recent past — and insure that he has a future...

Second Variety: the UN's technological advances to win a global war veer out of control, threatening to destroy all of humankind (basis of the movie Screamers)...

The Eyes Have It: a whimsical, laugh-out-loud play on the words of the title.

Minority Report and Other Stories Details

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From Reader Review Minority Report and Other Stories for online ebook

Lyn says

Minority Report and Other Stories by Philip K. Dick is classic PKD and well worth the short time to read.

Composed of the title story, We Can Remember it for You Wholesale, Paycheck, Second Variety and The Eyes Have It; it is a great read for a PKD fan and would be a great introduction for a new reader of his works. What is difficult to imagine is how far ahead of his time he was, and like so many other artists with this kind of anachronistic genius he paid for it in poverty.

Three of the stories have been made into major motion pictures and Second Variety must have been a great influence on the producers of The Terminator.

Rasheed says

The Minority Report (1956) **5/5**

We Can Remember It for You Wholesale (1966) **5/5**

Paycheck (1953) **5/5**

Second Variety (1953) **4.5/5**

The Eyes Have It (1953) **4.5/5**

Emily Randall says

The Minority Report

This was a surprisingly short story! After reading this I became somewhat amazed at how long the film version of this story manages to captivate its audience by 2 hours!! This is my first taste of Philip K Dick and I am am very interested to read more!

Imposter

This one is half as long as Minorty report and that story is short! These stories feel timeless and not at all dated. I can see aspects of some of the other novels written by Philip K Dick within them, perhaps a point he used for expansion!

Second variety

I almost feel that the author of the scorch trials has read this story and been influenced by it. The scorched environment and the spherical robots are all echos here. ...this is the longest story yet and full of twists and turns. An enjoyable read. So far all of these stories seem to have chain smokers in them...it'll be interesting to see if this carries on throughout the rest.

War game

Another fascinating read, condensed into a few pages but full of description and detail and suspense!

What the Dead Men Say

This is an interesting concept, along the lines of cryogenically freezing people maybe way before the time the story would have been written too as I believe it was mid 50's.....with a few twists and turns thrown in! This is actually the longest story in the collection and all rather unique!

Oh to be a Blobell

A very original tale, touching on issues like identity and loneliness with a twist! One of the first tales without chain smoking....but is there a reason for this?!

Faith of our fathers

Not one of my favourites in this collection but a take to make you paranoid!

We can remember it for you, wholesale

This seems to be the starting block for the story Total Recall!

A great bunch of short stories illustrating what an incredible imagination Phillip K Dick had!

Ayla says

A collection of short stories.

Minority report

the first, a good story, though I really liked the following stories more.

We Can Remember It For You Wholesale

I seem to be reading a bit about Mars lately and this story is about a man who wants to go to Mars and has suppressed memories of when he did, it gets really creepy when they try to implant his mind with a made of memory and it sounds like it's a true memory when he is questioned under the drugs.

Paycheck

Again deals with memories only it's about 2 Years of lost memory. Cool ending.

Second Variety:

This story was the basis of the movie Screamers

Machines making machines. Androids that are so believably humanoid that they are able to infiltrate bunkers and wipe out the enemy. Though I had a feeling that Russian girl was one. I thought Major Joseph Hendricks was just a little too gullible and too easily tricked.

The Eyes Have It:

Funny play on words

"His eyes rolled across the room"

"He gave her his hand"

Andrew Obrigewitsch says

This collection of short stories contains Minority Report, Total Recall, Paycheck and Screamers. So it quite a good collection, highly recommended to anyone that even slightly enjoyed just one of those movies. However the stories are different than the movies, quite different in some cases. The funny thing is, this is only the second book of Philip K. Dick's I have read, and the other I didn't enjoy that much. However this turned me into a fan. I can't wait to read more of his books.

Stephen says

4.0 to 4.5 stars. Five really good stories are included in this audio collection.

1. The Minority Report: An excellent story that has some significant differences from the movies version (which I also thought was pretty good)
 2. We Can Remember It For You Wholesale: Almost completely different in tone and content than the movie "Total Recall" on which this story is based. I liked the movie, but loved the story.
 3. Paycheck: A very good story though not as good as the other two.
 4. Second Variety: Another excellent short story with a very good ending.
 5. The Eyes Have It: The shortest story in the collection and my favorite. Funny and very smart.
-

Ryan Lackey says

PKD is amazing, and it's depressing to compare him to modern sci-fi authors. His short stories are probably his best work, as they present the weird, mind-twisting premise without distraction. These four short stories are among his best, and I think all (or at least 3 of them) have been made into movies.

Stuart says

Minority Report and Other Stories: 4 PKD stories that inspired movies

Originally posted at Fantasy Literature

Philip K. Dick is the classic case of a brilliant but struggling artist who only got full recognition after he passed away. Despite publishing an incredible 44 novels and 121 stories during his lifetime, it was not until the Ridley Scott film Blade Runner was released in 1982 that PKD gained more mainstream attention, and sadly he died before being able to see the final theatrical release.

A number of his short stories were adapted into feature-length films, and this audiobook contains "The Minority Report" (1956), which inspired the 2002 Steven Spielberg film Minority Report starring Tom Cruise, "We Can Remember It For You Wholesale" (1966), which was the loose basis for the 1990 Paul

Verhoeven film *Total Recall* and a 2012 reboot starring Colin Farrell, “Paycheck” (1953), which John Woo directed in 2003 and starred Ben Affleck, and “Second Variety” (1953), which was adapted in 1995 as *Screamers*, starring Peter Weller. This audiobook also includes an ultra-short whimsical SF story called “The Eyes Have It” (1953) that has no reason for being here. Instead, it should have included the short story “Adjustment Team” (1954), which was made into the entertaining 2011 film *The Adjustment Bureau* starring Matt Damon and Emily Blunt. That film had a lot of nice character development, and strong romantic chemistry between the two leads.

The audiobook narrator is Keir Dullea, a name that didn’t ring a bell but turns out to be none other than David Bowman from the iconic Stanley Kubrick film *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He does a good job with PDK’s material.

There’s no question in my mind that *Minority Report* and *Total Recall* are the most successful films that have been adapted from Philip K. Dick short stories (the other strong films came from his novels: *Blade Runner* was adapted from his novel *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and *A Scanner Darkly* was adapted from his novel *A Scanner Darkly*). But honestly, it’s quite a stretch to say that a 20-30 page short story can really form the basis for a feature film. That’s why marketing teams use the terms “inspired by” and “loosely-based on” to distance the films from their source material. That often stems complaints by the author or fans when filmmakers produce a real stinker, which happens all too often.

So the first thing you’ll notice is that these short stories are dramatically different from their film versions. Of course they are. Normally you have a 200-300 page novel that a writer will adapt for the screen, usually going through dozens of versions throughout the filmmaking process. And frequently the job of a skilled screenwriter is knowing what aspects and characters to cut from the story that still preserves the core narrative of the original, while also allowing room for the visual aspects of film to be emphasized over some of the background details of the story.

But if you are trying to make a 20-page story into a 90-minute film, you need to do the opposite, adding whole new characters or storylines to make a complete story. So it wouldn’t be fair to judge the film adaptations based on the story that provided it inspiration. And that’s why I will look at the short stories in this collection and their film adaptations as separate creations below.

"The Minority Report"(1956) short story — I think this is one of the most intricate and thought-provoking stories that PKD ever wrote. John Anderton, the head of the Precrime unit, is a believer in the criminal justice system, which has reduced crime by almost 100% by using the predictions of three ‘precogs,’ whose visions of possible futures allow the police to apprehend suspects before they commit crimes. It seems to be a perfect system, until one day Anderton receives the ‘precog’ report that he will kill a man named Leo Kaplan that he has never heard of. To prove his innocence, he goes on the run and his assistant Ed Witner takes over and seeks to bring him to justice.

The excitement of the story lies in Anderton hunting down the ‘minority report,’ which is a dissenting report when not all three ‘precogs’ see the same future event. While on the run, Anderton approaches his wife for support, is confronted by Leo Kaplan, learns what motivation he might have for killing Kaplan, realizes that Witner and he are not necessarily enemies, and has time to question whether the ‘precog’ crime prevention is really a ‘just’ system, whether it negates human free will, and whether right and wrong can exist if people are prevented from making their own choices. The story has all the classic PKD themes of paranoia, betrayal, and moral conundrums. The resolution of the story involves three separate ‘minority reports,’ each intricately connected to the other, and Anderton’s decision and its consequences are very different from the Spielberg film version.

Minority Report(2002) film — This Steven Spielberg film is very successful because it takes the ideas of

the story and then builds a complete future society around them. The film makes significant changes to the story details, but preserves the core moral questions that PDK raised. The visual details are very striking, with washed-out blacks and whites that give it a unique look. The biggest changes are to Anderton's wife, the greater involvement of one of the precogs in providing Anderton help in clearing his name, and a completely new subplot involving Witner, Anderton's boss Lamar Burgess, and a murder from the past that has been carefully covered up.

The resolution of the film version is much more Hollywood than the story, since there is never any question that Anderton is a good person seeking justice who is wrongly accused. Questions about the justification of the precog system are not as prominent, and the moral dilemmas of Anderson's final decision in the story are missing. But as a thought-provoking and pulse-pounding SF thriller, it's a pretty impressive achievement.

“We Can Remember It For You Wholesale”(1966) short story — This story is only 22 pages long, and is a far cry from the big-budget, special effects-laden and hyper-violent Schwarzenegger extravaganza from Paul Verhoeven. Basically, the story version covers just the opening third of the film, before Arnold gets to Mars. Douglas Quail is a typical nobody who dreams of going to Mars. He decides to visit Rekal Incorporated, which implants false memories that feel real, and requests one in which he is a secret government agent. But when the Rekal staff begin the procedure, they discover that he already has real memories of being a secret agent on Mars, but they have been erased from his conscious mind. They decide the best recourse is to leave his memories alone and send him on his way. However, his real memories are surfacing and suddenly he is confronted by two police officers intent on killing him for knowing too much.

Unlike in the film, the Rekal staff are not killed in painful and graphic ways, Quail's wife is not a sexy but treacherous Sharon Stone, and there is no action-packed chase as he tries to escape his enemies. Instead, Quail cuts a deal with his pursuers that he will agree to have his memories erased if they promise to leave him alone. But when he returns to Rekal for the procedure, they discover an even deeper embedded memory that reveals exactly how important Quail is to the safety of Earth. It's a pretty far-fetched development, but keep in mind this is a 22-page story and PDK never anticipated that it would be expanded into a blockbuster SF action film starring a Austrian former bodybuilder who would later become governor of California. Sometimes truth is stranger than fiction!

Total Recall (1990) film — What's left to say about this film? It's directed by one of my favorite directors, who made one of the best futuristic cop films of all time, 1987's Robocop, as well as 1997's satirical take on Robert A. Heinlein's classic military SF novel Starship Troopers (1959). Total Recall was one of Verhoeven's greatest moments, pairing Arnold Schwarzenegger at the peak of his acting powers (I can't believe I just typed that) with a propulsive, action-packed, ultra-violent romp through a future Earth and Mars. Its satirical and black humor were augmented by the complex plot involving real and false memories, so it could be enjoyed on a basic visceral level as well as a more cerebral one. I'd have to say that Total Recall is one of my favorite SF action films, but it is so different from the story that it wouldn't be fair to compare them.

“Paycheck” (1953) short story — This is another PDK short story about erased memories, a hero on the run trying to unravel the meaning behind a series of mysterious objects, surrounded by people who may be allies or enemies. In that sense, it shares many elements with the above two stories. It's about an engineer named Jennings who accepts a secret contract with Rethrick Construction, under the condition that he will be given a fat paycheck in two years time, but will have his memories erased of his confidential work. However, when he wakes up, his paycheck is not the big wad of cash he expected, but a bunch of seemingly-useless trinkets.

The story revolves around Jennings using each of the trinkets one by one to get him out of various scrapes, all leading to a showdown with the owner of Rethrick Corporation. I won't reveal the details of who gave him the trinkets and why, but it does involve many of PKD's favorite themes. And while the story is well

constructed, I thought it was a bit too predictable once the basic conceit was revealed. In addition, the resolution of the story wasn't particularly impressive. Considering how many stories PKD has written, I'm not really sure why this was deemed film-worthy.

Paycheck (2002) film — This was not a good SF film, unfortunately. More than anything, casting Ben Affleck as a whip-smart engineer who prepares an intricate series of clues based on knowledge of future events is just painful to watch. Affleck's acting skills are abysmal (I think his directorial skills are infinitely better, based on *Gone Baby Gone* and *Argo*). Here his leading-man charisma was non-existent, and his chemistry with Uma Thurman was sometimes embarrassingly off. The other problem was handing this vehicle to John Woo, a HK director best known for super-high body count action flicks starring Chow Yun Fat. He's made the transition to Hollywood, but only to make kinetic but ham-handed films like *Face Off*, *Hard Target*, *Broken Arrow*, and *Mission Impossible II*. So basically the film takes the basic plot elements of the story for the first 30 minutes, and then adds 90 minutes of mindless and fairly boring chase scenes and mayhem. Strangely enough, even the action scenes are quite tame when you think about the brutality of *The Killer* or *Hard Boiled*. Overall, this was a very forgettable film and shouldn't really be associated with PKD.

"Second Variety" (1953) short story — This is one of PKD's best, a surprisingly tense and chilling story about a future nuclear war which has reduced civilization to rubble, but the war continues thanks to "claws," which are self-replicating robots that attack any human being and slice them to bits with whirring blades. They were made by the US against the Russians, but they have apparently begun to make newer versions of themselves to be more effective killing machines, including humanoid forms. The entire time I listened to this I was reminded of James Cameron's *TERMINATOR* films, since the 'claws' ruthlessly try to infiltrate the remnants of humanity hidden in bunkers, and wreak havoc when they get in. The story focuses on several characters who are trying to identify the unknown "second variety" of humanoid robots, and we can see all the classic paranoia over who is human and who is robot, which would later be explored in greater depth in *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* and *Blade Runner*.

Screamers (1995) film — I didn't know this film existed until I read up on "Second Variety," and it looks like a low-budget, direct-to-video type flick released in 1995. The film stars Peter Weller, but it gets only 30% on Rotten Tomatoes, and having watched the trailer, it looks really, really bad, a typical SF B-movie with grainy cinematography, whirring blades, screaming soldiers, and cheesy music. I just can't make myself watch this.

Jacques Bezuidenhout says

Great collection of shorts that form the bases of some very nice movies.
The most outstanding thing is how long ago these were written.

Nicely paced, and nice clear separation between stories.
I probably like *Minority Report* and *Paycheck* them most out of the lot.

Individual reviews on each book:

The Minority Report

We Can Remember It for You Wholesale

Paycheck

Second Variety

The Eyes Have It

Lidens says

I'd rate all 5 short stories between 4-5 stars. Four of these have been adapted into movies. I found *Second Variety* to be a fantastic sci-fi thriller. *Paycheck* was also wayyyyy better than the movie, which isn't too surprising. The last story, *The Eyes Have It*, is a super short, super punny story.

I've read some of Dick's other stories and I usually enjoy them a lot. It's amazing how creative a paranoid mind can be. It's probably good that Dick never lived to see the way the world is now.

Jeff Norris says

Great classic sci-fi

Zeo says

Audiobook version contains:

The Minority Report

We Can Remember it for You Wholesale

Paycheck

Second Variety

The Eyes Have It

This is kind of a book of short stories in two acts. It's carried by a question of human control by larger bodies, exploring several possibilities through that. (And PKD is as sexist as I discovered him to be when I first tried reading him years ago with *The Dark-Haired Girl*, but I was prepared this time!)

The first act is the first three stories, and these focus on memory. *The Minority Report* - I saw the movie so long ago all I really remember was superfancy touchscreens and umbrellas and the like so I can't say how much they actually share. The memory question here is one of remembering the future and making it visible to people in the present, and the story asks what happens in attempting to predict the future with a need for accuracy on which lives depend, and what happens to those people working intimately with such a prediction system. The human control bodies in this story are the state and the military, perhaps underscoring the idea of a clash of control depending on who takes the majority at any time. I find the idea of a minority report fascinating, and the idea of future prediction systems impacting each other like so many mirrors to be brilliant. The majority of the meat of the story was related to this state/military powerplay that is focused on the risk of a military with wounded pride, which seemed a little weird as it seemed to be presented with sincerity as the story of what the lead character (as part of the state) should do to fight back when his pride is wounded. I just don't get that the irony is intended. Female archetype: Professional Woman, Stabbing You In The Back (And Then Moaning In Fear And Meekly Doing What You Say When Shit Gets Real), in the role of Wife.

In (also made into a movie) *We Can Remember It For You Wholesale*, memory is artificially implanted in the present to give the illusion of being naturally acquired in the past as well as being naturally acquired in the past and artificially covered up later. The human control body here is balanced between a secret service type

power, who aims to maintain the secrecy of certain memories, and a company that aims to make money off of people's desire to have in memory things they can't have in reality. Dick plays with the question of what happens when memories of important things we've sought out are erased, and fakes out the followup to suggest that this story was a long way of introducing an even longer and more disturbing one. Female archetypes: Horrible Shrew Wife, in the role of Wife; In The Future We Spraypaint Our Boobs and Call It Gucci, in the role of Receptionist.

Paycheck (I guess this was a movie too but I didn't see it?) may have been the inspiration for the puzzle adventure genre, from HHGTTG to *Myst* and on; actually, in reading it, I was reminded of a novelization-styled walkthrough of *Riven* that I read back when it came out because I had access to the book and not the game, and was more interested at the time in the story than doing the puzzles myself (and what the hell was I thinking). I think this story is what a lot of those puzzle games are trying to be. The memory here is still in the past but has been surgically excised; the control, a corrupt and possibly military-controlled state whose power is only impeded at the door to a business. And hey, up until the final sentence with its rapey promise, it's an exciting puzzle as the lead character attempts to put together the clues he's hand-selected in order to gain control over his life, out from under both state and corporate ownership. Female archetype: I Am More Than The Meek Clerk You Thought I Was Because Daddy Has Power, in the role of the subject of rapey promises receptionist, or lipsticked officebound face of the company separate from the people who do the real work, or something.

Second Variety (...also a movie) starts the second act. Memory isn't hidden or removed here; if anything, people remember what life was like only too dearly before the robots that are *taking over*, *ahhh!* Seriously though, it starts with a post-apocalyptic wasteland back when post-apocalyptic sci fi was about present intimate fears rather than popular video game aesthetic, and it's kinda intimidating. The militaries, American and Russian, that are present in the story are really only present in memory, and the half-dozen characters that show up in the story are suggested as some of the few remaining alive. Human control here is in fact between humans and robots. The struggle here becomes about trying to remember humanity as the lead character finds himself one after another finding that (view spoiler). The sci-fi-ey premise of the story is one so popular that as I saw it coming together I thought "oh jeez, one of these stories? Who cares!" before I realized this is probably the story that invented that whole genre, but it ends on a note that I haven't seen maintained as other writers have attempted to redo it - and I think it's a note that really matters. Depressing, disheartening, paranoid, thrilling story. Female archetype: Smart Tough Woman Who Is (view spoiler), in the role of the kickass Russian soldier who seems to be the only character skilled and together enough to get out alive.

The Eyes Have It is not a movie! It's about five minutes (maybe a couple pages?) of wordplay exploring pieces of English phraseology not meant to be taken literally. Cute, and a good cooldown after the high intensity of the last story. Female archetype: She's In Danger With Those Horrible Aliens, No Wait, She's One Of Them, in the role of vehicle of the English language.

Glad I'm giving PKD another go all things considered. Keir Dullea gives a solid reading in the audiobook version.

Spinster says

I read *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* a while ago, wasn't impressed, and since then I've received complaints about not liking Dick. I thought I'd give it another go with this audiobook but it appears I'm just not feeling Dick. I liked the concepts of these short stories, partly the execution too, but I don't think Dick is for me and that's that.

Some details in all the stories felt outdated, which is understandable, but it bugged me that space colonies were a thing and yet these technocrats dealt with punch cards. And from the little I've read so far, Dick is *really* not down with women. Every protagonist is male and every female is more or less bitchy or a bitch. He seriously didn't understand how women worked or refused to even try, and in either case I just got annoyed and frustrated with how much was put into the scifiness and how little into the characters.

As stories most of these worked really well as a basis for something else. To my understanding many have become movies and I get it. With a little work they could become something because the ideas are nice, it's just something about Dick's style that doesn't work for me.

The Minority Report - I'm just going to say this. The movie was better. The movie was also greatly different from the short story, not in bad ways but there was a whole another level of depth than in Dick's version.

We Can Remember It For You Wholesale - Can I say "lame" without all Dick fanboys attacking me? The idea was OK but it ended up as just really predictably silly.

Paycheck - Paycheck was probably my favorite, even though the main character's actions left me confused and a little repulsed. I mean, he was happy and even proud of being a selfish thief and potential rapist... Ew.

Second Variety - The most traditionally scifi-y of the bunch, what with all the androids and AI and stuff. A very boy story that didn't exactly win me over.

The Eyes Have It - This was the only story I reacted to. It wasn't deep or insightful but it was funny and playful. And very very short.

Peter says

This collection is the author's short stories that have been turned into movies. I've watched three out of the four movies and enjoyed most of them, so I was quite keen to read the 'source material' and compare the two (or three as in the case of the Total Recall movie and its reboot).

As you'd expect from short stories from an influential author, the core ideas behind all the stories are really clever and creative. It was fun seeing how those ideas were used pretty much verbatim and then built upon to create screenplays. Some of the worlds built up in such a short space of time were beautifully vivid and compelling, making me sad that they weren't explored more in written format. However, most of the stories were let down with rushed plotting, boring characters, stale dialogue and disappointing endings.

On that note though, you do have to consider these were written in the 1950s, so one should take those criticisms with a grain of salt. The ideas behind the stories have actually held up remarkably well. This collection is well worth a read, especially if you've seen the Minority Report, Total Recall and Paycheck movies.

Reviews to individual stories below

The Minority Report

We Can Remember It for You Wholesale

Paycheck

Second Variety

The Eyes Have It (This is a super-short short story, with no movie adaptation or plot really, so I didn't consider it in the main review)

Q says

So basically all the male characters in these stories are complete idiots. But man, "Second Variety" is creepy. And the SF anachronisms are delightful.
