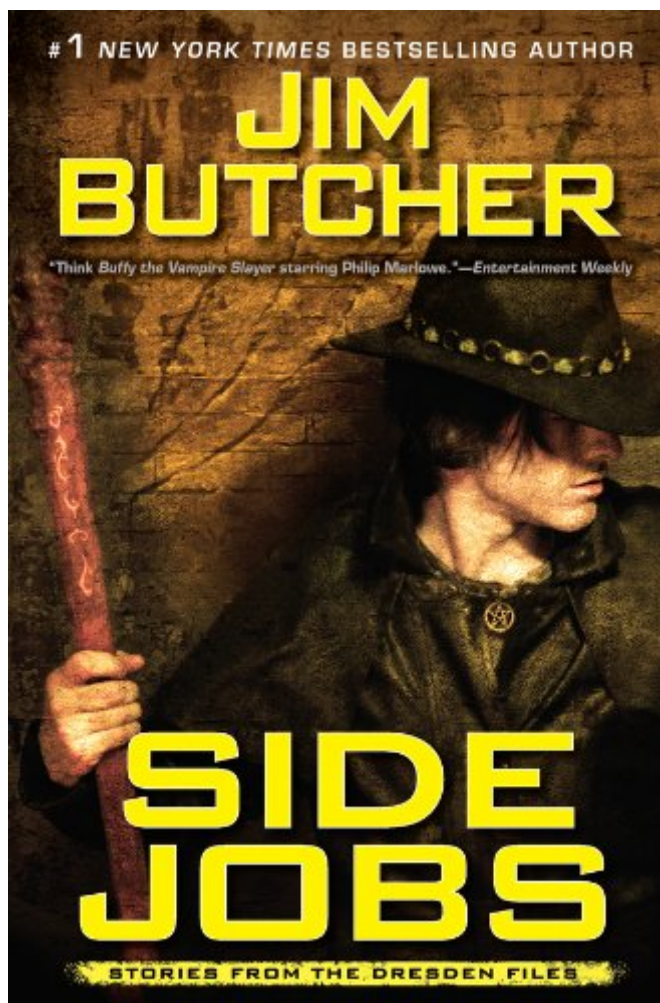


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Side Jobs (Dresden Files)



Synopsis

With tales ranging from the deadly serious to the absurdly hilarious—including an original story for this volume—Side Jobs is a must-have collection for every devoted Harry Dresden fan. As Chicago's only professional wizard, Harry Dresden has had cases that have pitted him against insane necromancers, power-hungry faerie queens, enigmatic dark wizards, fallen angels—pretty much a who's who of hell and beyond—with the stakes in each case ranging from a lone human soul to the entire human race. But not every adventure Harry Dresden undertakes is an epic tale of life and death in a world on the edge of annihilation. Here, together for the first time in paperback, are the shorter works of #1 New York Times bestselling author Jim Butcher—a compendium of cases that Harry and his cadre of allies managed to close in record time. One of the giants of urban fantasy delivers some great stories in this volume. This is a great collection, featuring a hero who's proven himself over and over again, as well as delving into the odd corners of his fascinating and fantastic world. Highly recommended. —SFRevu

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Customer Reviews

I had to do an average of the stories I read here which came to 4.5 stars, which is pretty darn great for me. I am a total Dresden junky, love me some Harry! Each story gave me another side of Harry, in some instances a side I may not have had a chance to see before since the situation occurred outside the main novels. There was not one story I would give less than a three and most were at least a four. The writing was always tight, even if the first story was a little less detailed, it was still well worth the time. Each story seamlessly flowed into the next advancing and opening the story along with the characters. There were three stories which I enjoyed more than others and gave five stars. The first story was *It's My Birthday, Too* which revolved around Harry's half brother and the fact that Harry really does not know how to deal with family issues. I liked this one because it shows how close Thomas and Harry have grown since finding out about each other. It's not every day you discover the only other family you have is a vampire. Thomas is helping one of his employees with a LARPing group at the mall, Harry is delivering his gift, and something very bad is about to happen. My second favorite story was *The Warrior*, which had the retired knight Michael in it. When Michael and the knights were first introduced I was very happy to see them. Here was something I had never seen before and some very interesting people. Someone seems to be targeting Michael and his family, sending pictures of them to Harry as a warning. While Harry tries to find out who is after the ex-knight, Michael does not fear for himself but his family. What this person wants could cause more trouble than solve it. The final favorite in this anthology of good stories was *Last Call*. Finally a chance to get a closer look at Mac. A psychic compulsion is placed on the crates containing his beer which of course transfers to the beer itself. Harry was just planning on having a beer and a steak sandwich but finds utter chaos and a plot that needs to be solved before all hell breaks loose. All I can really say is that it is Harry Dresden and I love Harry in all his sarcastic, gloomy, sad sack, wizardly ways. If you have enjoyed the Dresden Files in the past this will only make you want more.

More for Dresden fans than for people just starting the books, these stories add depth to many of Harry's friendships and relationships. Most of the stories were previously published in anthologies that I didn't buy so it was nice being able to read them all. The novelette *Backup* is one that I picked up and really enjoyed. The stories start with the first, previously unpublished Harry Dresden short story. It reminds me of looking at school photos in a way. You can see the progression of both Mr. Butcher's ability to write a short, tight story and of Harry Dresden as a character. The stories go into more depth about the Alphas and about Thomas, explaining a lot more about Harry's relationship with them. There is also a lot of great Harry and Karrin interaction. *Aftermath* didn't answer the big

questions, but since so many of the short stories developed the main characters in *Aftermath*, it was a good look at how they could work with each other. The stories aren't as dark as the series has become. Some of them were thoughtful, exploring themes of responsibility and consequence of choices. There were many laugh out loud moments, the humor that you expect in this series. It's just a snack to tide readers over until the next novel, but it's a very satisfying snack.

This was a great way to get back into this series after taking a few months off (needed to catch my breath after *Changes*). For those who may not know - *Side Jobs* is NOT a full-length Dresden Files book, it's an accumulation of all of the short stories and novellas Butcher had written in the Dresdenverse up to this point. I'm not going to review each story (some were as short as 5-6 pages), but suffice it to say I really enjoyed them all. If you've come this far (13 books), then I assume you are a huge fan of everything that makes this series great, which means you'll enjoy them too. I do want to call attention to a few of the stories that stood out to me, though. 'Restoration of Faith' was great, simply because we finally get our 'When Harry met Murphy' moment. You know you wanted it. 'Backup' was enjoyable, because we finally got a story from the perspective of someone other than Harry - his brother Thomas. It was very interesting/hilarious to see Harry from someone else's perspective. This story also stands out because it details much more about the Oblivion War, something I expect to come much more into play in the following novels. 'The Warrior' was probably my favorite story of them all, but then again I am openly biased towards the Carpenter family. I had been impatiently waiting to find out what happened to Michael following the events of *Small Favors*, and this story did not disappoint. Many people point to Harry and Thomas's friendship as the best in the series, but my money is always on Harry and Michael. This story was everything that makes Dresden Files my favorite series. Finally, we have 'Aftermath', which is exactly what it sounds like. It is the story of the first couple of hours after the events at the end of 'Changes', from the perspective of Karrin Murphy. The best part of this story was getting inside Karrin's head (didn't think I could love her more - I was wrong), but honestly the story didn't do much for me. Maybe it will be better once I get Harry's side of things in 'Ghost Story'. Either way, I would encourage any new reader to NOT skip this book on your way to 'Ghost Story', tempting as it may be. There are some great stories here, and more than anything it just so nice to enjoy things the way they were before 'Changes', because you know nothing will ever be the same now. This book (and series) get my highest recommendation.

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