From the humble heights of a Class-A pitcher's mound to the deflating lows of sleeping on his gun-toting grandmother's air mattress, veteran reliever Dirk Hayhurst steps out of the bullpen to deliver the best pitch of his career—a raw, unflinching and surprisingly moving account of his life in the minors. I enjoyed the visualizations, maybe a little too much, and would stop only when I felt I'd centered myself...or after one of my teammates hit me in the nuts with the rosin bag while my eyes were closed. Hilariously self-effacing and brutally honest, Hayhurst captures the absurdities, the grim realities, and the occasional nuggets of hard-won wisdom culled from four seasons in the minors. Whether training tarantulas to protect his room from thieving employees in a backwater hotel, watching the raging battles fought between his partially paralyzed father and his alcoholic brother, or absorbing the gentle mockery of some not-quite-starstruck schoolchildren, Dirk reveals a side of baseball, and life, rarely seen on ESPN. My career has crash-landed on the floor of my grandma's old sewing room. If this is a dream come true, then dreams smell a lot like mothballs and Bengay. Somewhere between Bull Durham and The Rookie, The Bullpen Gospels takes an unforgettable trot around the inglorious base paths of minor league baseball,
where an inch separates a ball from a strike, and a razor-thin margin can be the difference between The Show or a long trip home.

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