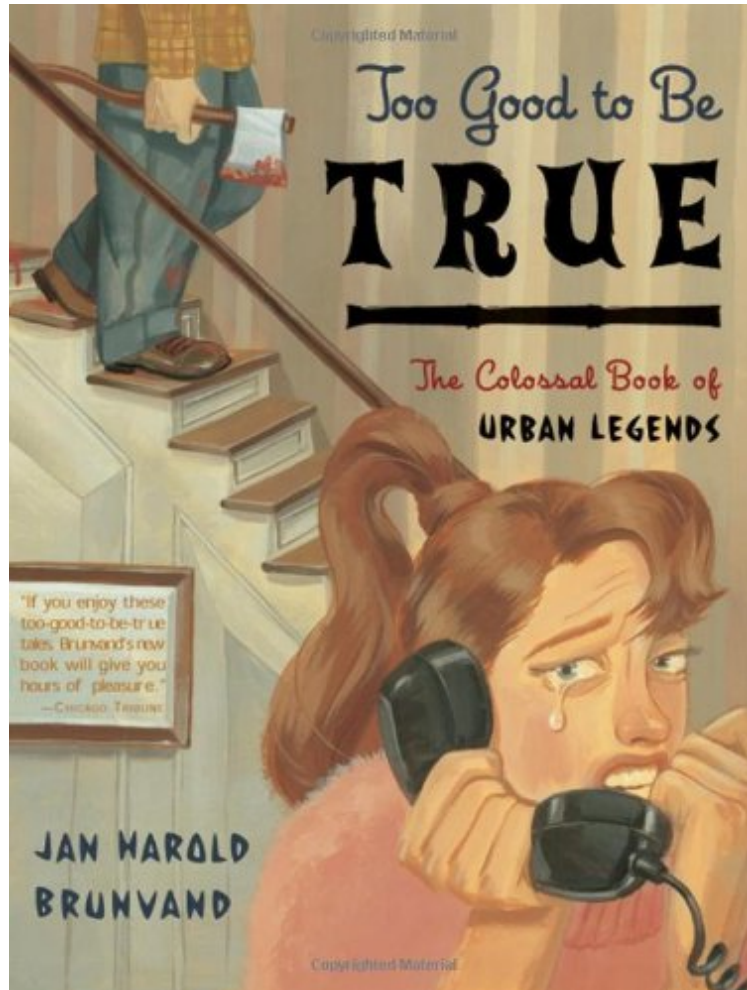


(Download pdf ebook) Too Good to Be True: The Colossal Book of Urban Legends

## Too Good to Be True: The Colossal Book of Urban Legends

Jan Harold Brunvand

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**Jan Harold Brunvand : Too Good to Be True: The Colossal Book of Urban Legends** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Too Good to Be True: The Colossal Book of Urban Legends:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Four StarsBy armeniousFun book full of UM's that I've heard over the years and some new ones.2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Fun and interesting readBy Richard PetersonMr. Brunvand's book is a delight to read simply as a collection of Urban Legends - the stories play on our love of fun, irony, mischief, coincidence or even morbid twists of fate. But anyone could compile a bunch of urban legends. The real meat of the book is in Mr. Brunvand's analysis of each legend, or group of legends. It is pretty amazing to see him trace the origins of each legend and pick apart the contents. Several of the legends actually have their root in real events, but most are pure fancy. Why do I give it only a four star rating? I save the fifth for truly outstanding books.

This one is fun, but not a must-read. Format of the book: The author divides the book into chapters based on the theme of the legends. Each chapter has many legends (from his "files"), interspersed with his analysis. In his analysis, he may talk about the feasibility of a legend, the origin, other occurrences of the same or similar legends in history, or sociological aspects of the legend. "Parental advisory": A few of the legends have some somewhat twisted sexual content. So bottom line: Fun book - it will keep you entertained and give you the upper hand next time someone tries to tell you one of these legends. 4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Colossal Book of Urban Legends By Stephen Arkanell For those who don't know, Jan Harold Brunvand has a column out in Salt Lake City, but has acquired a following all across the country, or rather the world. He is the leading scholar on the subject of urban legends, those sometimes funny and often terrifying stories you first heard on the playground or by the watercooler, which are always supposed to be true but can't be proved because they happened to a friend of a friend of a friend . . . This book, the "Colossal Book of Urban Legends" is really an updated combination of most of Brunvand's previous books, such as "The Vanishing Hitchhiker", "The Choking Doberman" and "The Baby Train". In other words, if you are going to buy this book, I doubt think you'll want to buy all the previous ones, though there might be a few stories in those not included here.

"If you enjoy these too-good-to-be-true tales, Brunvand's new book will give you hours of pleasure." Chicago Tribune A fabulously entertaining book from the ultimate authority on those almost believable tales that always happen to a "friend of a friend." Alligators in the sewers? A pet in the microwave? A tragic misunderstanding of the function of cruise control? No, it didn't really happen to your friend's sister's neighbor: it's an urban legend. And no matter how savvy you think you are, you are sure to find in this collection of over 200 tales at least one story you would have sworn was true. Jan Harold Brunvand has been collecting and studying this modern folklore for over twenty years. In *Too Good to Be True* he captures the best stories in their best retellings, along with their latest variations and examples of how the stories have changed as they move from person to person and place to place. To help you find your favorite, Brunvand has arranged the tales thematically. "Bringing Up Baby" is full of episodes of child-rearing gone wrong, including the grisly tale of the drugged out baby-sitter who mistakes the kid for a turkey. "Funny Business" showcases stories of infamous lapses in customer service, such as the story of the shockingly expensive chocolate chip cookie recipe. And "The Criminal Mind" features both brilliant --if they were real --scams, as well as the purported antics of the less mentally gifted. Whether you want to become an expert debunker or just have plenty of laughs, this book will surprise and entertain you. Illustrated throughout. "Informative and entertaining.... Brunvand has collected more than 200 of the most-repeated and best-known examples of modern folk-myth." Tampa Tribune "[N]ot only an entertaining anthology, but an excellent introduction to the study of folklore itself." Publishers Weekly "A fun read... . All the classics are here from the killer upstairs to the Kentucky Fried Rat." New City "Resonant stories that express our hidden anxieties ... make us laugh, [or] arouse our fascinated horror." San Francisco Chronicle Book Review "Informative and entertaining... . Brunvand has collected more than 200 of the most-repeated and best-known examples of modern folk-myth." Tampa Tribune "[N]ot only an entertaining anthology, but an excellent introduction to the study of folklore itself." Publishers Weekly 70 b/w illustrations

.com Have you heard the one about the new computer owner who mistook the CD-ROM player for a cup holder? Or the woman who thought her brains were oozing out of a gunshot wound, when the "truth" was that when her Pillsbury Poppin' Fresh can exploded, striking her on the head with the lid, the goo she felt was biscuit dough? Jan Harold Brunvand, professor emeritus at the University of Utah and author of numerous urban-legend collections, including *The Vanishing Hitchhiker*, *The Choking Doberman*, *Curses! Broiled Again*, and *American Folklore: An Encyclopedia*, has been studying urban legends for some 20 years, and his new book, *Too Good to Be True*, relates more than 200 of these indestructible tales. There are relatively recent stories based on modern technology, such as the classic microwaved pet, and yarns that have been making the urban-legend circuit for decades, such as the solid-cement-Cadillac story, which can be traced back to the 1940s, at least, involving a cement-truck driver who spies a new Cadillac convertible in his driveway and his wife talking to some strange man. He dumps his load of concrete on the Cadillac, but later discovers the stranger was a car dealer and the car was to be a gift from his wife, one she'd spent years saving her pennies for. The stories are grouped by subject, including "Dog Tales" and "Just Desserts," "Sexcapades" and "Losing Face." There are baby stories and work stories, criminal tales and college anecdotes, plus stories of mistaken identity, human nature, and technology. Brunvand achieves more, however, than a mere compendium of highly entertaining stories. He discusses the nature of urban legends--those almost believable, addictively retellable tales that always happened to a friend of a friend (FOAF, in folklorist parlance)--and for each individual story, Brunvand includes as much of its history as he has been able to trace, including newspaper accounts, alternative versions, and the story's natural cycle, that is, how many years, typically, between resurfacings. The result is an exceptionally engaging book and a great resource for debunking that next story, as heard from a friend by that unnamed acquaintance of unassailable honesty, that sounds just a little too perfect to swallow whole. --Stephanie Gold From Publishers Weekly If a story sounds too good to be true, well, then it's probably an urban legend. Brunvand,

the nation's leading authority on these contemporary folktales, draws from five previous collections (The Choking Doberman, Curses! Broiled Again!, etc.), from letters to his syndicated columns and from newspapers around the country, in this truly colossal anthology of horrendous and hilarious stories that sound as if they're true and most of the tellers believe are true, but somehow can never be verified. These are stories told by a FOAF (a friend of a friend) or a neighbor of the radio dispatcher who knows the deputy who talked to the doctor who treated 18 slash victims at the local mall. Many are familiar tales of the hook heard rasping against the car door handle, of alligators in the sewers of New York, of earwigs in ears and spiders in bouffant hairdos that this last traced back to the 13th century. Everyone will find at least two or three stories they could have sworn really happened. These are stories that turn up in every region of the country, every walk of life, and that invariably involve laughing paramedics, a dead grandmother stashed on the luggage rack, a fantastically cheap price for a Porsche or an exorbitant one for a cookie recipe from Neiman Marcus or is it Marshall Fields? In demonstrating how such stories spread, change and endure, and how certain kinds of stories attach themselves to certain franchises and products ("Kentucky Fried Rat" is an especially gruesome example), Brunvand has constructed not only an entertaining anthology, but an excellent introduction to the study of folklore itself. (Aug.) Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. From Library Journal Brunvand (The Choking Doberman, The Vanishing Hitchhiker) is the dean of urban folklore. For 20 years he has collected and documented tall tales swapped at social gatherings. This anthology embraces over 200 fanciful, amusing, and often exaggerated stories and beliefs that have, through repetition, become part of the American oral heritage. Brunvand invented the acronym FOAF (Friend of a Friend), the anonymous source of every tale. Everyone has a few favorite stories: alligators in the sewer and pets in the microwave are familiar to most folks. Collectively, this is the best gathering of urban legends extant. They have passed through generations and represent an important body of traditions, myths, folkways, and folksay. The tales are thematically arranged, e.g., "Bringing Up Baby" is an assembly of episodes of child-rearing gone wrong. Thoroughly researched and exhaustive, this fascinating work is characterized by impressive scholarship. Unconditionally recommended for all audiences. A Richard K. Burns, MSLS, Hatboro, PA Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc.