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77 Shadow Street



Synopsis

The Pendleton stands on the summit of Shadow Hill at the highest point of an old heartland city, a Gilded Age palace built in the late 1800s as a tycoon's dream home. Almost from the beginning, its grandeur has been scarred by episodes of madness, suicide, mass murder, and whispers of things far worse. But since its rechristening in the 1970s as a luxury apartment building, the Pendleton has been at peace. For its fortunate residents—a successful songwriter and her young son, a disgraced ex-senator, a widowed attorney, and a driven money manager among them—the Pendleton's magnificent quarters are a sanctuary, its dark past all but forgotten. But now inexplicable shadows caper across walls, security cameras relay impossible images, phantom voices mutter in strange tongues, not-quite-human figures lurk in the basement, elevators plunge into unknown depths. With each passing hour, a terrifying certainty grows: Whatever drove the Pendleton's past occupants to their unspeakable fates is at work again. Soon, all those within its boundaries will be engulfed by a deadly tide from which few have escaped. Dean Koontz transcends all expectations as he takes listeners on a gripping journey to a place where nightmare visions become real—and where a group of singular individuals hold the key to humanity's destiny. Welcome to 77 Shadow Street. Praise for the narration of 77 Shadow Street by Dean Koontz, performed by Peter Berkrot: "Narrator Peter Berkrot opens the creaking door and invites listeners inside with a gentle, unassuming voice. Ignore that dark thing you saw out of the corner of your eye—it's just a trick of the light. Berkrot performs with skill and assurance as strange voices, eerie sights, and inexplicable things take over the posh mansion." • © AudioFile 2012, Portland, Maine

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Praise for Dean Koontz: 'A terrific pursuit story ... clever, up-to-the-minute, and riveting' Guardian
'There's surprise after surprise, including a killer finale ... a read-in-one-go novel' Independent on Sunday
'Velocity hits its pace from the first page and races through to a suitably climactic ending' Sydney Sunday Telegraph
'Dean Koontz is not just a master of our darkest dreams, but also a literary juggler' The Times
'Psychologically complex, masterly and satisfying' The New York Times
--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The books of Dean Koontz are published in 38 languages, and worldwide sales top 400 million copies. Eleven of his novels have risen to number one on the New York Times hardcover bestseller list, and several have been adapted into feature films and TV miniseries. Dean and Gerda Koontz live in southern California with their golden retriever, Anna, grand-niece of the famous and beloved Trixie.

Dean Koontz's 77 SHADOW STREET is not an easy book to describe. On the one hand, it's a fairly familiar haunted house tale in which generations of residents at a posh Victorian mansion are sucked into a terrible nightmare. On the other hand, it's Koontz's little jab at the modern world, which he sees as disintegrating around us, leaving us unprepared to combat the ultimate forces of evil. The house itself, once called Belle Vista and now the Pendleton, happens to have been constructed on something Koontz calls a "space-time trapdoor," which opens every 38 years to suck in the hapless people unlucky enough to be in the vicinity. This can be scary, if a bit derivative (you'll be reminded of THE SHINING, 1408, THE MIST, and even the TV series AMERICAN HORROR STORY). There's an evil presence called "One" (who wants ultimate dominion), and another called "Witness" (who will help him achieve it). There are creepy creatures galore, and a few really grotesque happenings. But somehow the novel didn't work for me. The biggest problem with 77 SHADOW STREET is the way Koontz tells his story. There is a huge cast of characters, which are introduced slowly over the first half of the book through a series of vignettes told from differing perspectives. At first it's difficult to keep track of all of them; it's also difficult to get very attached to any of them. Devon Murphy is a security guard still mourning the loss of his mother, Bailey Hawkes is an ex-marine investment counselor, Silas Kinsley is a retired litigation attorney who finds himself researching the history of the Pendleton, Twyla Trahern is a country music composer with a

precocious 8-year-old son, Mikey Dime is a hit man with psychopathic tendencies, the Cupp sisters are octogenarian cake-bakers, Sparkle Sykes is writer with an autistic daughter - the list honestly goes on and on (and I haven't even mentioned the characters from past generations of Pendleton residents). It's not that these characters aren't interesting - some of them are. It's just that there are so many of them, and the story jumps from one to the other in little mini-chapters which never allow the reader to become really invested in any of them. This makes it hard to care all that much what happens to them when things go crazy at horror house. Additionally, there is an amazing lack of dialogue in this novel. For almost the entire first half, Koontz's many characters are isolated from each other, each in his/her own apartment. The story unfolds from their many perspectives, with Koontz telling us what's happening, describing events, even summarizing conversations that we never actually get to hear. It's an odd way of telling a story, especially with so many characters involved. It leaves us, as readers, distanced from the core of the action, and kept separated from the characters we're supposed to root for. Ultimately, Koontz's story is interesting, and I can't say the book isn't worth reading. I grew tired of it, however, which isn't what I expected from a Dean Koontz thriller. And by the end, I wasn't invested enough in any of the characters to really care why all this was happening and what we were supposed to learn from it. "This world," one character says, "is a dark place, and hard." That much comes through very clearly in 77 SHADOW STREET. I was disappointed, however. Two stars for the novel; the additional one is for Mr. Koontz, whose books I have loved for decades. I will always be a fan.

As a huge fan of Dean Koontz, I could scarcely contain my anticipation while waiting for the release of his latest offering. I was looking forward to a heart-racing romp through the unknown with one of my favorite authors, so I cleared the decks of all book-interfering obligations, poured myself a glass of my favorite beverage, and settled in for a good read. I doggedly kept at it thinking "77" must just be a slow starter or that my mood wasn't right, but after all is said and done, this is one of the worst books I've read in a very long time. I don't normally write reviews, but I'm an avid reader of them, especially when approaching authors new to me. I've come to rely on my invisible friends to help identify the stars and the stinkers. When I find someone who likes the same books I do and for the same reasons, I'll go look at their other reviews for hints about what to read next. Folks, my disappointment with this book was so huge, that I found my voice. No, I take that back. I felt compelled to issue a warning to the virtual community of people who enjoy the written word: If you are looking for Dean Koontz, you will not find him here. Instead of being caught up in the suspense, my mind kept puzzling over how this book ever got published and what on earth was the editor

doing. Who kidnapped Dean Koontz and when will they release him? His reading public is worried and anxiously awaits his return. You can read the other reviews for a summary, but my personal experience is that I had a very difficult time reading this to completion. My thoughts would wander, I would need tea, I would need to call for a dental appointment, but mostly I needed many, many little mini-naps. When my snoring would wake me yet again, I'd have to check my notes before I could remember who occupied which apartment. I cared so little for the people caught in this haunted manse, that I had to have a crib sheet. Normally I devour Mr. Koontz's offerings as though in a single gulp, staying up far later than I should, attempting to cook with one hand while coddling the book with the other, ignoring family and social life just because I simply can't stop until he leads me breathless across the finish line. My usual experience is that finishing his books brings me blinking my way into reality aware that I've just had a terrific time. I've been known to tell people that I can't interact during the last 50 pages and they need to come back later. Unfortunately, this book just did not resonate in that way. I found myself actually eyeing constant companion, my Kindle, with a feeling of dread and finding more and more reasons not to read. If you knew me, you'd laugh when I tell you that scrubbing the grout in the bathroom at one point rated at a higher priority to reading yet another tedious chapter. The weirdest thing was that I felt guilty for avoiding this book, and the only way I pushed myself back into the story was by bribing myself that I could order something new and delightful for my Kindle, but first had to take my medicine and finish this book. Silly, huh? Mr. Koontz, if you read this, writing this review nearly broke my heart. I generally enjoy your work and I believe I have purchased everything you've written. It would be interesting to someday hear your thoughts on why this one just didn't work for readers like me.

I normally love Dean Koontz so I was very disappointed with this book and how boring it was. A few spoilers so only read on if you don't care if I spoil. The "One" wasn't the least bit scary, those chapters I wanted to skip past. It wasn't scary at all, and I didn't like how a lot of the good characters were the ones to bite the dust. Plus I found the sci-fi description of the time/space wormhole, etc. boring. Sorry Dean, normally I love all your stuff, but this one was just blah! I would have liked more elaboration on the past and history of the place. Also if this entity were so intelligent etc. why does it only come out every 38 years in one spot and one spot only, and only to those present in the house? Kinda lame. Not like a post-apocalyptic kind of takeover.

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