



The Bad Place

Dean Koontz

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Frank Pollard is afraid to fall asleep. Every morning when he awakes, he discovers something strange--like blood on his hands--a bizarre mystery that tortures his soul. Two investigators have been hired to follow the haunted man. But only one person--a young man with Down's Syndrome--can imagine where their journeys might end. That terrible place from which no one ever returns.

The Bad Place Details

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Author : Dean Koontz

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From Reader Review The Bad Place for online ebook

Becky says

I read this book for the May group read for the Dean Koontz Group, of which I'm currently a member. Unfortunately, I can't really say that I liked this one at all. It seemed to me that it was both lacking and overdone at the same time. Lacking in characterization (which is important to me), but overdone in drama and strangeness.

Dean Koontz is not the best character writer. This is a big deal for me, because characters are my vehicle to the story. I don't care how great the plot is, or how unique the story, if I can't put myself in the shoes of a character, even as an observer, it doesn't work for me. And this one didn't work for me.

I couldn't care about any of the characters for much (say like 90%) of the story. Toward the very end, I started to care about Bobby, and to a lesser extent, Julie, simply because at the very end, they seemed to become a little more than the cardboard cut-outs that they had been. Not liking a character is not the end of the world for me and I can still enjoy a book with unlikeable characters, although it's difficult at times, but not *caring* about the characters is a deal-breaker. If I can't identify with, and at least care about ONE character, even if it's simply to wish them dead, that's a problem. You'd think that this last situation would apply to Candy Pollard, our socio- and psychopathic murderer, but no. His habits and appetites were appalling and sickening, but as I didn't care about the people they were applied to, I didn't care that he was applying them. It was too distant, too impersonal, too fictional.

On top of the missing spark of life in these characters, I was actually offended by the characterization and description of one of them, a character with Down Syndrome. I probably won't explain this well - I haven't been very eloquent today - but essentially I felt like Koontz's description/characterization of this "special" character was derogatory and old-fashioned and out-dated and condescending. Thomas, the character I'm referring to, was constantly referred to as a "moron" both in the general narration and in the sections of the story that were from Thomas's point of view. Thomas also referred to himself as "dumb" so many times that I lost count. Literally. During the discussion of the book, a friend mentioned that he did not feel that this was condescending or meant in an insulting manner, but rather just as a member of a particular group refers to themselves in identification. I don't know if it is meant to be insulting or condescending (I hope not), but to me it came across that way. *shrug*

This is the second Koontz book in a row that I've read which started with a character waking up and having no idea who or where they are. I think that this could be a kind of running theme with Koontz, simply because it plays on our fears of losing our identity and our hold on reality. This loss of self is more frightening to many people than death.

Another commonality that I noticed is the undertone of religion in the book. This comes in many shapes and sizes, from religious "avengers" exploiting a perceived connection with God in order to rid the world of sinners, to people who have and are content with their (Christian based) faith, to those who are just discovering that there may be something more than nothingness, which Koontz portrays as a surety but his characters aren't yet enlightened about.

There's also more than a little supernatural stuff in this one, some that I could accept, and one thing in particular that seemed incredibly out of place to me, namely the diamond mine. What the heck? The explanation for the supernatural stuff in this book seemed mighty far-fetched as well, more like Koontz's idea of what could have caused it than any scientific proof.

I didn't care for this one, honestly. Thinking back now, I can't think of anything that I really liked about the story. *sigh* I can see how this would appeal to some people, but I'm just not one of them.

Der-shing says

The first time I read this book I was in 8th grade, and wasn't exactly brimming with literary experience. Now I'm 26 and just read it again for the second time... my god, I can't believe how awful this book is. I'll be fair and mention the positive first: the "bad guys" are rather... unique. You won't find characters like them in other books. And I thought their psychology, the plot twist at the end, and some of the strange powers that they have and places they get to were pretty interesting. THAT BEING SAID. The rest is trash. Dean Koontz pulls out all the stops here, piling on his favorite things: Asians (especially Vietnamese boat people), the mentally disabled, a duo of boring protagonists. As an authentic Asian person (wow) with a mentally disabled brother, I find his writing EXTREMELY annoying. He stereotypes his characters with a lot of "good" characteristics, but it's still stereotyping. Yes, Asians are quiet and tend to have a great work ethic. Except when we don't, because we weren't all pressed from some special mold. Moving on. Dean also can't go a book or two without giving the mentally disabled some kind of super power, which is a pretty shitty consolation prize if you ask me. Why can't they just be the awesome people they are? Unless you just wrote him in to yank on the easiest heartstrings. Before I stop ranting I'll mention the duo, who have some of the worst written dialogue in the world. They are utterly hateful people who justify their morally gray decisions by claiming to be "the good guys." I mean, yeah compared with the alternative, you are wonderful people. But in real life I'd be tempted to throw both of them under a bus. It's a sad day when you root for the generously besacked psycho at the end to finish all of them off. And then on top of all of that, Dean still can't one sentence without some ill-thought out metaphor ("the grass was as dry as sand, and twice as brown"). This guy gets paid good money for this, people. If I were you'd I'd skip this book unless you are in the mood for tearing your hair out.

Kathryn says

This book was a nice change from Koontz usual stuff. The main character's dilemma is intriguing: he teleports randomly and without control, finds unusual stuff in his pockets (and occasionally blood on his hands) and has no memory of who he is, where he's been, or what in God's name is going on. That alone would make this a good read, but there's also some pretty fascinating bad-guy characters, like the vampire-like killer, his psychic and decadent sisters, and their devoted, lunatic, deceased mother. I'd also like for Koontz to further explore the strange worlds that the main character travels to. That planet made of jewels and bugs certainly deserves another look, or at least some more explanation.

The only thing that keeps this book from getting a higher score is the personalities of the characters. Everyone is so damn two-dimensional, it's as if the characters go around with a little title floating over their heads: "Evil", "Good", "Greedy", "Saintly", "Doomed". It's the same problem I've had with all of Koontz's novels; he tries to draw an 88-crayon story with three colors.

Thanasis Papageorgiou says

7,5/10

Κυρ?ως γιατ? οι προσδοκ?ες μου ε?χαν πι?σει π?το, καθ?ς δεν πολυσυμπαθ? τον συγγραφ?α και ?τι ?χω διαβ?σει μου φ?νηκε απ? κακ? εως αδι?φορο. Αλλ? ?ταν λ?γο διαφορετικ? απ? τα υπ?λοιπα. Δεν ?λειψαν β?βαια οι απ?στευτες ευκολ?ες στην πλοκ?, αλλ? π?ρασα καλ? διαβ?ζοντ?ς το.

Jennifer says

[Incestuous relations that lead to a hermaphrodite, who self-impregnates herself (hide spoiler)]

Dustin Crazy little brown owl says

Holy Wowzers! Certainly one of Dean Koontz's best. Similar to Cold Fire, but The Bad Place is more bizarre & disturbing. An impressive Cross-Genre novel with Romance, Mystery, Sci-Fi, Horror, Fantasy, Suspense etc. This is the Dean Koontz storytelling that I love.

Erin ? *Proud Book Hoarder* says

The Bad Place is an unpredictable, surprising novel with more strengths than weaknesses. The characters are written well and in depth; the suspense and horror are strong, the drama is high when shown - I even cried at one scene involving Thomas.

The middle and end paid off big time, keeping me flipping through the pages. On bad points, The Bad Place was a little hard to get into because of how outlandish the story was at first. I was confused, and didn't want to dig that much to get 'into it'. The pace was hurt a bit at first for this reason, but it quickly sped up when I got the just of what was going on. I didn't warm up to the novel until a few chapters had passed, and then I was caught, ensnared in the trap Koontz had so artfully weaved. Heart-stopping action was continuous, pounding itself mercilessly upon the pages, keeping the story going full blast.

As always, Koontz's style of writing is strong and impactful. His way with words is fantastic. As always with his work, it injects real lessons, and one thing rings clear when reading this: Life is hard, life is rough, but it is still life, and because of this, we have no choice but to grin and bear it, surviving as best as we can.

I recommend this book highly to all Koontz fans; just endure the storm for awhile, then it pays off.

Trisha says

"Not funny ha ha, funny weird".

That is a quote from this book that my friends and I used to repeat constantly in high school. "The Bad Place" is actually the first Koontz novel I ever read, and it got me hooked - rightfully so. I still love this book and have re-read it a few times.

It only loses one star because there are other Koontz novels I prefer over this one. It's not one of my all-time favourites, but it's pretty close, and it holds sentimental value.

EDIT: I should add that I went back on my original word and gave it 5 stars. I had to!!

Beverly says

My thoughts:

I read a lot of Koontz when I was younger. 13 books in a couple weeks once, had to quit reading his stories because I started to be afraid to go out in the dark by myself - I got over it! I was thrilled when I got this audio book as a gift even though I had read it during what I called my "Koontz phase." Many of the books had run together in my memory because I read so many in such a short period of time, but this one always stood out as truly scary and one of my favorites. I was shocked at how much of the story had been lost by time and I found myself driving out of my way so I could listen longer in my car.

Koontz has created a wonderfully imaginative, dark story of evil at its finest. But what stood out the most for me were the characters. Koontz has given us astounding characters, my favorite being Thomas. The development of Thomas is sheer brilliance. Thomas has Downs Syndrome and lives in a care facility. The insight and understanding that went into the creation of Thomas is incredible. All of the characters are fantastic. They are well developed, cleverly written and span such a wide scope of personalities, abilities, and characteristics that it is hard to imagine that someone could create them and they seem as if they are truly real people. The evil that is Frank's brother Candy is terrifying. His sisters are frightening on a whole other level. The doctor that we meet is evil of another kind, and I found myself revolted by his part in the family history and him as a person. Koontz has a way writing his characters so you love and hate them as readily as Bobby and Julie do in the story.

The setting of the story varies as Frank "travels" and we learn about the places that he goes. The descriptions of the people, places and things that are encountered on the travels are vivid and clever. Koontz is a master wordsmith and draws the reader into the story with his language, creativity and imagination. Well worth the read - or the listen.

Cody | codysbookshelf says

With *The Bad Place*, Dean Koontz did something he's never done before — gross me out. This book had me gagging on multiple occasions, especially toward the end. "Four testicles." Need I say more?

Written during what many consider Koontz's peak period (which most tend to agree was from 1983 to 1995 or so), I went into this novel with relatively high expectations and was not let down. This makes for my tenth or eleventh Koontz read, so I don't claim to be well-versed in his works yet . . . but this novel seems to lack most of what reviewers complain about when reviewing DK (e.g. the overwhelming sentimentality, laborious moralizing, repetitive/genius dog characters, et cetera). Yeah, it had some goofy-ass dialogue and I do not think the relationship between the two main characters was believable AT ALL, but I enjoyed myself. Koontz's works are not so much about the characterization as the thrill of the ride. *The Bad Place* grabbed me from page one and didn't let go. There were no lulls in the story, and almost every character was enjoyable to read about. I especially dug Thomas. Man, I loved that kid.

This is one of the few books in which Koontz seems totally comfortable writing straight-up horror. A few scenes genuinely scared me. A lot of blood flows and the body count was shockingly high. As well, the mystery was exceptionally intriguing. I was kept guessing until the final chapter, which is quite the rarity

(especially when reading books by this author). Despite its few flaws, The Bad Place is an enjoyable read and quite appropriate for the Halloween season.

Kostas Papadatos says

Τη πρώτη φορά που πιασα στα χέρια μου το συγκεκριμένο βιβλίο το παρήσα στις εκατό πρώτες σελίδες, μου φάνηκε αλλόκοτο, πριν λγες ημρες του δώσα μια δεύτερη ευκαιρία. Λοιπόν, αποκατάσταση βλάβης, οι -Νχτες τρμου- αποδεχτηκαν τελικά διαμάντι.

Ο Φρνκ Πλάρντ κθε πρωξ ξυπν σε μρη περεργα με χρία βαμνα στο αμα, βαλτσες γεμτες χρματα, πντα με την ασηση του φβου στα ψη χωρς ωστσο να θυμται το οτιδποτε. Οι νεντκτιβ Μπμπι και Τζολία Ντακτα αναλαμβάνουν να διαλευκνουν την υπθεση ακολουθντας τις νυχτερινς του εξορμσεις.

Η πλοκή πως πντα σε κθε βιβλίο του Koontz είναι καλοδουλεμένη και κρατ αμεωτο το ενδιαφέρον του αναγστη, η δράση είναι κλιμακωτή και οι χαρακτες παρλο που είναι για τα σδερα (μοναδική εξαρεση το ζευγαράκι του βιβλίου που είναι απλ λιγτερο τρελό), είναι απολαυστικό.

Το ερωτικό σκλος στα βιβλία σου βρε Koontz θλει λγο δουλτσα. Είναι απολαυστικός δε λω οι ατκες σου αλλ βρες μου ναν, ENAN, που χει πετχει τον στχο του τσι:

-ταιριζουμε καλύτερα απ δυο κομμτία παζλ. Ταιριζουμε πως το βσμα με την προζα-, και -μεγλο βσμα, στεν προζα, καλ επαφ- και συνεχζει ο τροβαδορος του ρωτα με το κλασσικό -αργτερα θα ελγξω τις καλωδισεις σου-.

Συγγμη αλλ τσι δε πδηξε ποτ κανες (ο Σκης ο υδραυλικς ταν φαινμενο εντξει). Αυτ είναι το ερωτικό κλεσμα μιας τοστιρας και ενς στφτη, του Ρμποκοπ και μιας σοφος με διακπτη, χι πντως ανθρωπων.

Μαυτ και μαυτ το βιβλίο είναι διασκεδαστικότατο πντως.

Arah-Lynda says

I hate putting down a book once I've started it, until I have turned that final page. But in life sometimes exceptions must be made and this is definitely one of those times.

What can I say? This book, this story, simply did not connect with me in any way. I suppose that the concept does indeed have promise, but what ever little bit of interest it was successful in generating within me has wicked out.

The characters are beige, the scenes are beige, the writing is blah, blah, blah, full of cliché, beige and I do not care about any of it.

One thing Dean Koontz got right is that this is The Bad Place that no reader ever wants to visit.

Listen up critics, I can and have stopped reading this book.

Ashton Gibbs ♥ BB&B says

The Bad Place - Dean R Koontz

Let me just start by saying that I would actually consider this is 3.5 stars than just a 3! :)

Frank pollard awakes at night, in the middle of an alley, with nothing but his confusion and panic. His mind is a complete blank; he can't remember who he is, doesn't recall how he got in the alley, and doesn't know who to turn to for help. **He knows nothing but his name.** Every time Frank goes to sleep, he wakes up with things he can't explain – valuables in his pockets, blood on his hands – and has no recollection of his nightly travels. Afraid of his own actions, Frank enlists the help of Bobby and Julie Dakota, a husband-wife investigation team. After initially considering his story absurd, the Dakotas delve deeper into the enigmatic life of Frank Pollard and begin to **uncover an increasingly bizarre and risky world threatened by a mysterious madman known as Candy**, who simply thirsts for the blood of animals, humans, and in particular, Frank.

There is no denying that Koontz is **a fabulous writer with a magnificent, imaginative mind.** He can string words together in the most amazing way, and his stories run smoothly and quickly. However, despite being brilliantly descriptive and using great imagery, I found it greatly difficult to vision or connect with the characters. I found that although I wanted to know what how the book would end, I wasn't particularly worried about what would happen to the main characters. In fact, I found myself caring more about the secondary characters such as Clint and his wife, and Thomas and his roommate.

That being said, Candy and his sister were terrifyingly intriguing characters, and Julie's Down Syndrome brother was simply wonderful and endearing. A lot of insight and understanding clearly went into writing chapters from his point of view, and Koontz did an incredible job of writing from the mind of a lovable, endearing man suffering with Down Syndrome. His character development is brilliant to witness and we see him become stronger than one could have guessed.

One final nit-pick from me is that there seemed to be a couple of loose ends left by time I reached the ending. I was left confused about the strange bugs, the peculiar planet and the creepy UFOs we get to witness a couple of times. Personally, I felt it had no purpose and the story would not have suffered without it. It left me kind of like **huh?**

The concept of this book, I think, is a brilliant one, and the blurb reads fabulously. Unfortunately, I just feel it wasn't executed as well as I'd have liked it to have been, and I didn't find myself believing the story. I love books with paranormal aspects, other worldly moments, indulgently horrific scenes and imaginary components, but the author *has to make me believe it*, and in this case Koontz didn't exceed in doing so.

Had it not been for the brilliant concept, Koontz magnificent writing, and Thomas's wonderful character, I would have rated this lower. Quite simply, this book just didn't keep me hooked. I found it easy to put down

and didn't find myself **needing** to read just one more chapter before bed. Sorry! :(

DeAnna Knippling says

I haven't read a lot of Dean Koontz, but I called this one from the beginning: the good disabled versus the bad disabled! The good disabled are the ones who accept their places in society! And their limitations! If they have powers, they don't use them for their own benefits! And the bad disabled ask for too much! They use their disabilities like superpowers! They are monstrous! In case you don't get how monstrous disabled people can get, let's throw in some incest! cannibalism! and hermaphrodism!!!!11!!!

Ah, Thomas. Thy name is Dobby Dobbs.

Then there was the whole weird "I like Asian people" plotline.

Just...WHUT.

The writing was good but not engrossing, the way some other Koontz stuff has been for me. The plot was okay. I ended up skimming. I liked the opening and the main characters--but felt that things slid into a predictable routine after the first third of the book.

Mike (the Paladin) says

I would like to start this review with "okay" but anyone who's followed my reviews knows I do that a lot, so I will try to refrain. I probably won't succeed, but I'll try.

I've read a lot of Mr. Koontz works. My late wife was a big fan and over the years we ended up with quite a large collection of both paperbacks and hard covers, but when the Koontz group decide to read "The Bad Place" I discovered I didn't have a copy.

My daughter (who has also read a lot of Koontz)said that she thought Jeanie (my wife) hadn't cared for this novel. I believe I can somewhat understand that.

Don't get me wrong, this isn't a bad book, but by the same token it's not a "real" good book. Dean Koontz has written A LOT of books. They run the gamut from top notch reads that I love to terrible dreck that I never want to see again. This one falls somewhere in the center.

Mr. Koontz began publishing in the early 70s this book was published in 1990. His books (largely) take place in a fictional multiverse where many of the stories "touch" or are related.

His writing also carries a lot of themes that continue from book to book along with ideas and also characters. The characters in his books can become familiar and in reading many of his works (some of us) start to see these characters repeat themselves, or at least versions of them. What we see here are some ideas and (indeed) some characters that were developed more in later books.

As for my reaction I found my attitude changing slightly as I read the book, but in the end, I just couldn't care about the characters here as I do some of Koontz' (Koontz's?) other works. I vacillated on the rating for

the book, but finally decided on 3 stars. It's a pretty good book, but I probably won't reread it...not great, not one of his best, but I didn't want to go all the way down to a 2.
