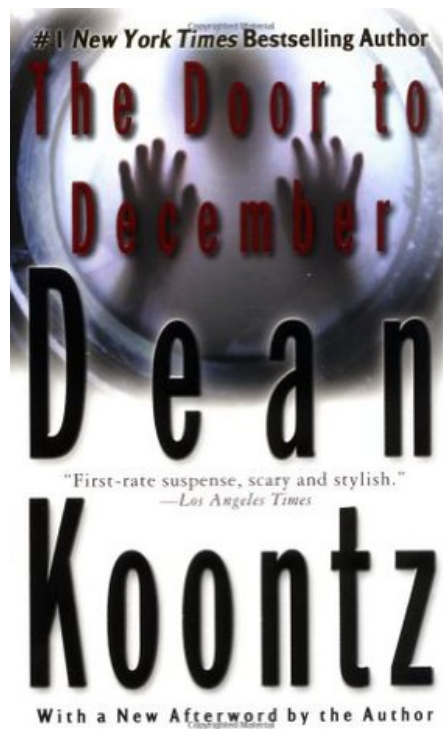




The Door to December

Richard Paige (Pseudonym) , Dean Koontz

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The #1 New York Times bestselling author delivers a truly suspenseful novel of a mother who must save her daughter from a threat she can hardly understand. What happened to nine-year-old Melanie during the six years she was subjected to terrifying experiments? And what is the unstoppable power that she can unleash from behind the "Door to December"?

The Door to December Details

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Author : Richard Paige (Pseudonym) , Dean Koontz

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Genre : Horror, Suspense, Mystery, Thriller



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From Reader Review The Door to December for online ebook

Henrik says

It's been more than 10 years since I last read a Koontz book... 'Tis gonna be interesting...

LATER:

Okay, now I've read it. And all in all it's a pretty good yarn. A thriller-horror type story where Koontz deftly entwines pshychology and elements of the occult to fine, fairly believable effect. And the ending is more satisfying than I remember from several of his other stories. That's great:-)

Unfortunately the plot was very obvious early on and it seemed incredible that the characters had to wade through 400 pages before realizing what was going on... But then again, they are supposed to live in a "real life" scenario, so it's probably true they wouldn't consider the occult implications as fast as the reader; most people in the real world wouldn't either. Nonetheless, for the reader (me) it was unnecessary; could have been executed better.

Dean Koontz, like Stephen King, spends considerable time developing his characters, and more so than many in this kind of mainstream fiction. That's a good trait for a writer, and it helps establishing a sort of emphatic link with the characters, so the reader is the more horrified/shocked/etc. whenever something happens to them. And I did like the characters, Dan the Cool Cop, Laura the Caring Mother, Melanie the Poor Kid and so on. But it annoys me that Koontz feels a need to pour syrup on top of it all--so we end up with cliched relations (of course Dan falls in love with Laura, and of course he is such a good spotter of character that he can see their flaws at a distance, even if he's never met them before). Changed a good thing to a rather sour experience:-)

I'd still recommend the novel, though. Just beware its flaws.

Maciek says

This is an old and rather obscure Koontz novel, originally published in 1985 under a pseudonym.

It's a pretty basic feature: Laura McCaffrey is reconciled with her daughter, whom her father kidnapped six years earlier. The police found the child in his laboratory - along with his mangled remains. Melanie, because that's the name of the girl, is overpowered by terror - and she can only say the cryptic phrase *the door to december*...strange things start happening, as Melanie's fathers colaborators start dying in gruesome ways. Police officer Dan Haldane rushes to help Laura and Melanie, hoping it is not too late...

The premise is intriguing enough to pull the whole thing off, though the novel suffers from predictability. Still, it's over 500 pages long and allows for enough suspense and twists to develop. It also comes from the 80's Koontz, a time when he didn't denounce the "horror" label, meaning it's far grislier and more violent than his newer works. His style is very descriptive and easy to read, the plot good enough to follow, which makes *The Door to December* an extended Twilight Zone episode. It borrows too much from Koontz's previous works to be truly notable, but it's not bad; good reading for your morning commute.

Ash says

i did not like this book at all.

this was my first Dean Koontz novel, and i must say after this book i don't think that i will be reading his work again. his writing style comes off as cheesy and long winded. and this particular story i found to be... silly.

i suppose it just wasn't my type of book...

Dustin Crazy little brown owl says

I liked Mr. Murder better, but this one is quite intriguing. Dean Koontz has penned tales of a similar theme in Cold Fire and Brother Odd, both of which I enjoyed immensely. I loved Dan Haldane, a character of witty humor. The Door to December was originally published under a pen name in 1985.

*We'll plunge into darkness,
into the hands of harm,
when Science and the Devil
go walking arm in arm.*
-as quoted in The Door to December

Emma says

No no no!

I knew how this was going to end less than 100 pages in. Still, I tried to forgive it that because I was enjoying the story.

I was disturbed and annoyed by the "autism" stuff. See also: Koontz asserts that autism is caused by child abuse. Not only that but autism is basically a fancy name for catatonia, I guess. I cringed every time he even used the word autism. Even still, I could overlook that due to the book's age.

Then the ending to Door to December is basically like, "THEN WE GAVE HER A HUG AND EVERYBODY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER."

Ummmmm NO. NO. That is NOT how you end a book. Whatever. This one is going in the incinerator.

Anyway, before all that garbage I was actually enjoying this story and its writing. So it gets a very generous two stars and a warning to never return.

Karen B. says

Dean Koontz writing as Richard Paige. This is one of Koontz' earlier novels and it is full of the same fire and excitement as those early books. Melanie is a nine-year-old girl who was abducted by her own father when she was three. She had been used by her father and his associates for psychological research particularly into

the realm of the unconscious. The men with her father have been brutally killed and her mother Janet, a detective, Dan Haldane and Earl, from a security agency are doing their best to keep the girl from encountering the same fate. She is autistic-like because of what was done to her and her mother, a child psychiatrist is working with her to try to reverse the damage. What is this mysterious force that is killing Melanie's abusers and from whom she might also be in danger? How are these brutal murders happening as it appears as if the bodies are being smashed to pieces?

No weapon is present at the murder sites and no clues are being identified. Dan is committed to keeping the mother and daughter safe, no matter what. I couldn't put this book down. Suspense continually mounts as in most Koontz novels and the answers seem to be something the reader can't imagine.

June says

I read The Door to December by Richard Paige (Dean Koontz) in order to see how Koontz's writing style has changed over the years (and also to see if he varied his plot-lines more 'back in the day.' Thankfully he did.). Written in 1985, this tells the story of Laura McCaffrey, a woman whose child was abducted six years earlier, by her ex-partner.

When the ex is found murdered, Laura is called by the police, and shortly after that a girl is found wandering naked in the street. This is a story of terrible acts inflicted on a child in the name of scientific research, and of a vengeful paranormal force hunting down anyone involved with those experiments. I sorta guessed the twist and that costs the book a star, but overall this was a pretty good read and it's easy to see why Dean Koontz was so popular back then.

Jay Schutt says

Another supernatural thriller from Koontz that kept me interested from start to finish. Very well done. An excellent read.

Japheth says

This book was filled with clichés and insults to autism. The clichés were enough to insult everybody's intelligence already so the interchangeable use of the terms "cationic" and "autistic" tipped this over the edge enough to earn negative stars if it were possible. Yes, I get how at the time this book was written there wasn't a lot of study on autism but that doesn't mean it's fair game to make stuff up about a very real condition.

This book was very predictable and easy to figure out within the first few chapters. The storyline had a lot of half baked dead ends. If that was to try to throw us in for a loop it didn't work. They were pointless at best. I would definitely recommend this book to my recycling bin.

The Face of Your Father says

It's not bad Koontz, It's not good Koontz.

It's not well written, it's not badly written

It's not fun, it's not boring

It isn't that long, It isn't too short

Male cop hero? Check. Strong female lead? Check. Abused child? Check. Experiments gone awry? Check. Wacky character names? Check (Ned Rink? Really?)

This is the Koontz checklist and he hits them all. Like I said, this isn't modern-day bad Koontz but it isn't classic era Koontz either (Twilight Eyes, The Voice of the Night, etc..)

Take a grape. Now roll it across the floor. That action has the same amount of impact on me as this novel.
1.6/5

Amelie Court says

Oh my, this has to be my favorite book from Dean Koontz. There is something about the Author, that he can delve into the thriller realm and just suck you in, and freak you out with every turn of the page.

I loved how descriptive he was when writing this book. I had many a sleepless night when reading this, but I couldn't seem to put it down, no matter how hard I tried.

This will always remain at the top of my list forever; Unless he comes out with something even better!

Move over Stephen King, you have been dethroned!

David Cain says

I've never read Dean Koontz before so I didn't know quite what to expect. I was...disappointed. Seems like a weak imitation of Stephen King. This book was SOOOOO predictable. I had figured out the "twist" ending in the first 50 pages and had to read the next 450 pages for my hunch to be confirmed. In fact, most of the plot twists were similarly predictable. Not sure who this book was aimed at, but my guess is either bored middle-aged housewives, or teenage boys. The whole "brainwashed sex slave" sub-plot was completely pointless, too. I guess this is an okay read if you're stuck on an airplane or need to kill some time, but otherwise you'd be better off looking elsewhere for entertainment.

Christopher Jones says

Better than the vast majority of his new books. With all the attention focused on a traumatized little girl and little (if any) focused on Koontz whining about how much he hates modern society or Hollywood, makes this book a winner.

Characters: Here they are alright, but still somewhat cookie-cutter. I read the book only a month or two ago and I've already forgotten the psychiatrist's name (she was one of the main characters, so that's really not good). I just checked and her name is Laura (same as the Lightning protagonist, which I didn't like). She is shy and withdrawn due to a bad childhood. Very common for a Koontz character.

Lt. Dan Haldane is far more interesting. He's serious with people that he likes, such as the psychiatrist, and generally jokes with the people that he does not, like his rival Cpt. Ross Mondale. Of course, being a Koontz character, he's tough and capable. No complaints here on that subject. He preaches about the state of the world a little bit, but this is 1980s Koontz and he doesn't get on his soapbox for too long.

Plot: The plot centers around the psychiatrist's daughter, Melanie. Melanie is deeply traumatized and catatonic after seven years in a deprivation chamber, and Laura must get her out of that catatonia, and find out what is the "Door to December" that her daughter keeps whispering about. However, Laura also realizes she's being hunted by the authors of Melanie's misery along with some unseen entity that is dispatching people with superhuman force. It is up to Lt. Dan Haldane to solve the case. It's a great plot, in my opinion, with mystery, a good smattering of action, and hints of sci-fi, just like *Lightning*.

Climax: Actually pretty bad, which was a surprise but not a big surprise with Koontz. The gap between the revelation (which you'll see coming from a mile away) and the final resolution is far too small, probably not more than five or six pages.

Prose: Somewhat mechanical. This really comes across in the way characters, like Laura, overthink to themselves. Like with *Lightning*, there are cases where Koontz could've used a 5 cent word in place of a 20 cent word. Still...bizarre, obscure words that nobody knows are extremely rare in here. As are long-winded metaphors and descriptions. You won't get a sense that he was writing with a thesaurus next to him (something that New Koontz more or less admitted in an interview), and trying really hard to impress people whom just want a good thriller with no bullshit.

The metaphors and similes here seem to be in a balanced amount.

"Hard spikes of cold rain nailed the night to the city."

This is the second paragraph. It does a good job illustrating the power of the rain and night sky without being verbose. Likewise the imagery used in *Door to December* all seems to be just enough explanation without over doing it, as he does in recent efforts.

It's perfectly readable, and I honestly wish Koontz would come back to this old style of writing. Highly recommended.

Rebecca McNutt says

Eerie, suspenseful and well-written, *The Door to December* is one of my favorite Dean Koontz novels lately and its originality never lets up. It's a really creative book and well worth reading, especially if you're a fan of horror or thriller novels.

Jennifer Waddell says

My absolute favourite read of all time! I don't really like the whole para normal stuff but by far this book is a hit! Unfortunate I read a lot of the reviews. Nobody was dissing autistic kids, remember folks he's a writer and a dam good one, he's not out there to put people down, I am a mother with two autistic children plus myself I carry the gene, people say to me all the time your full of shit when it's a known fact DNA approved that its what we were granted, being autistic myself I didn't feel the least bit offended at all and I think people are all too sensitive to this so called autism! I don't have a disability nor do my two boys, we simply think of it as a gift, to teach ignorant people we are just as good if not better then most! But to say that this author is

ignorant to autism! Do u even know him???

Colette Guerin says

Simply awful. I will go no further than to say that Mr. Koontz hasn't the least bit of an idea of what autism really is. The idea that autism is created by neglect or abuse on a parents part ie: the "refrigerator mother" theory developed by Bruno Bettelheim was discredited many years ago. It is a neurological disorder and the cause is yet unknown, it may be genetic, it may be environmental, it may have to do with vaccinations, but most likely it has a variety of causes making it difficult to find the source. Do not confuse catatonic with autism. It is offensive to take a child of abuse and neglect and intersperse autism in with her state of being, I don't care that you are writing a horror or occult novel or whatever you would like to categorize this as. Please know that if hard work, love, prayer and and making deals with God could cure a child from this disorder, my child would be attending college today and not a special education school. Some children find their way through the maze of autism, others don't. It's a puzzle. One of the many reasons puzzle pieces are used as symbol to represent the disorder.

Highly unlikely I will ever read another Koontz novel. Needs to do a little basic research. Wish they would take this book off the shelves.

Brett says

Another worthless Dean Koontz novel full of the usual Koontz crimes against writing: awful dialogue, characters with no complexity, and a "surprise" ending that I knew was coming on page 30 of this over 500 page novel.

This is supposedly a mystery/suspense story focusing on the efforts of police officer Dan Haldane to unravel a weird case that revolves around forced sensory deprivation of a nine year old girl. As usual in the Koontz formula, Haldane falls in love with the girl's mother and there is a ridiculous romantic subplot in addition to the asinine regular plot. Also extremely amusing was Haldane's interaction with his police superior. Supposedly Haldane is some kind of no-nonsense crime solver while his boss is a ladder-climbing, politically minded person that care more about his reputation than solving crimes. But when you read their conversations, it's really hard to tell which character to dislike more, though the boss does seem more willing to compromise and try to work together. Detective Haldane is a real jerk that does not deserve to be on the force, that much is clear.

Also, it was written under a pseudonym in the mid-eighties then re-released later under Koontz's name, always another bad sign when dealing with this author. There's really nothing to redeem this book, and it should be avoided at all costs.

Chelsea says

The Door to December by Dean Koontz

Although Dean Koontz has written several novels, The Door to December is the first one I have read by him. He started out as an English teacher and started writing books in his spare time. He has used several pen

names such as Aaron Wolfe and David Axton. Most of his novels are now published under his name though.

Door to December takes place in Los Angeles, California. It is a very suspenseful fiction novel. It has a mix of horror, mystery, and science fiction in it.

Melanie is now nine years old. Her father kidnapped her when she was three. He has tortured her. When she is found naked walking in the street, she is put under the care of her mother, who is a psychiatrist. Because of the torture she has endured, she is now pretty much autistic. Laura described her as being in a “catatonic” trance. When asked about what is wrong with her, she will say, “Please. No.” or that the door to December is opening.

Laura is Melanie’s mother. She is so happy that her daughter has been found. She has looked for her ever since she was kidnapped. She is sick over all the trauma that her daughter has endured and is determined to help her in anyway that she can.

Lieutenant Dan Haldane is a homicide detective. He is investigating all the murders that start happening after Melanie is found in the streets and her father is found dead. Murders keep happening. Dan likes Laura and Melanie. He vows that he will do everything in his power to keep them safe.

When her father kidnaps Melanie at age 3, Laura looks everywhere for her. Laura gets a call telling her that her daughter has been found and that Melanie’s father has found dead along with another unidentified man. The bodies had been beaten badly. Laura looks through the house with Lieutenant Haldane. They find a gray room, which has a sense-deportation chamber and an electric chair in it. By going through Melanie’s father’s notes, Laura finds that they did experiments on Melanie using the equipment in the gray room. Melanie has been much tortured and has not left the house in six years.

A man is found dead outside the hospital and was beaten badly. Lieutenant Haldane thinks that he was going to try and kill Melanie. One by one everyone who has been in the gray room is found dead. The victims are beat so severely that every bone is broken and the body is unidentifiable. The killer wants more than death and Lieutenant Haldane thinks Melanie will be next.

The theme of the story is that you should not hate yourself. Melanie hates herself. When Laura first tries to work with her, Melanie starts hit herself. Melanie threw a fit. This little girl hates herself and it is not even her fault. All the way through the book Laura is just trying to tell her that someone does loves her.

I liked this book, because of the suspense. It had more violence than I would have normally read and kind of sad in some parts. Overall, it was an okay book.

Page Count: 511

Genre: Horror/Mystery/Science Fiction

Obsidian says

Please note that I gave this book 3.5 stars, but rounded it up to 4 stars on Goodreads.

So I read this as my final book for Halloween Bingo 2016! This one was for the "It was a dark and stormy night" square. Lucky me for picking this to just read for the month of October and realizing as I read that most of the book takes place during thunderstorms/rain and the opening scene the main character (Laura) who arrives at a crime scene in the middle of the night during a torrential downpour. I also just realized that Koontz always seems to have his characters going to and fro while it is raining outside.

I read this book years ago in my 20s. I thought it was okay at the time, but something about it stuck in my craw and I couldn't figure it out until I re-read this. I did not like the character of Lieutenant Dan Haldane. We find out that he hid how bad a fellow officer was years ago due to some sort of messed up loyalty, and only then though he is initially indifferent to the character of Dr. Laura McCaffrey, he finds himself attracted to her after he sees her vulnerability. At one point he even notes he loves it when a woman is in trouble and he can save her.

The story starts off with Dr. Laura McCaffrey who is taken away by police car to a crime scene (don't get me started on this). She is only informed the police have found her husband who she was on the verge of divorcing 6 years ago. Her husband, Dylan, kidnapper their daughter and Laura has lost any hope of finding her missing daughter Melanie. Then Laura is told that her husband is dead and so are some others, and he was only living a few blocks from her this entire time (don't get me started on this). We find out that Laura is brought to the crime scene because Lt. Dan Haldane wants her to see the scene because he thinks that Laura's estranged husband was doing experiments on their daughter. From there, "Door to December" has Laura doing what she can to find out what happened to her daughter (she is eventually found wandering) and figure out what her husband and his friends were doing.

Laura is a child psychologist and plans on taking off in order to work with Melanie to help her. I actually liked the character of Laura, though I didn't really get any idea how she supposedly did hypnosis to her daughter and didn't get that her giving her daughter commands to tell her what was done to her was probably dancing around the crap her husband Dylan was doing to Melanie. I also don't know if Dean Koontz gets how hypnosis works, but that's a long topic for another day. I don't like how Koontz portrays Laura as a beautiful woman who someone doesn't get that she is beautiful and he has her as being awkward until she meets her husband. We also have Dan interjecting that she is attractive and he can't see how she can view herself that way. Blech. I thought Laura had more chemistry with her personal bodyguard Earl than she did with Dan. At least Melanie seemed to like him more too.

The character of Dan had a lot of backstory and I didn't think that any of it was necessary or needed. We know that Dan wants to save women who are in danger and he notes a lot of the time that he is attracted to Laura and wants to kiss her. Whatever dude.

We have Melanie in this story and I wish we had focused on her a little bit more. Instead Koontz has her as autistic except some of the time and it didn't even make sense.

There were a lot of secondary characters in this one (this book is over 500 pages) and besides Earl there were not a lot of them that I was too impressed with. We have Dan going around interviewing a lot of people and some of them are good and some are terrible people.

I think if the plot didn't include the FBI, LAPD, some international organization that is trying to take over the world, etc. the book would have worked better. The story only really shines when you start to realize what is happening to all of the bad people in this book.

The writing was okay, but sometimes Koontz is just way too melodramatic when describing something. Who knew there were so many ways to write about the rain. I also don't even know if the things he writes in the book about hypnosis, behavioral modification, etc. are even true. The hypnosis thing didn't even sound right to me.

The ending just kind of happens and we have everyone realizing who has been killing all of the people in the book. I feel like the story was also showing that Dan planned on being in Laura and Melanie's lives (shaking my head) and was probably already thinking of ways to romance her.

Susan (aka Just My Op) says

Unabridged audio. Perhaps it was the reading, but I didn't like this as much as most of Koontz's books. After her husband is found brutally murdered, a mother recovers her young daughter, who was kidnapped by her father and subjected to experiments. Mysterious murders and inexplicable happenings. OK at best.
