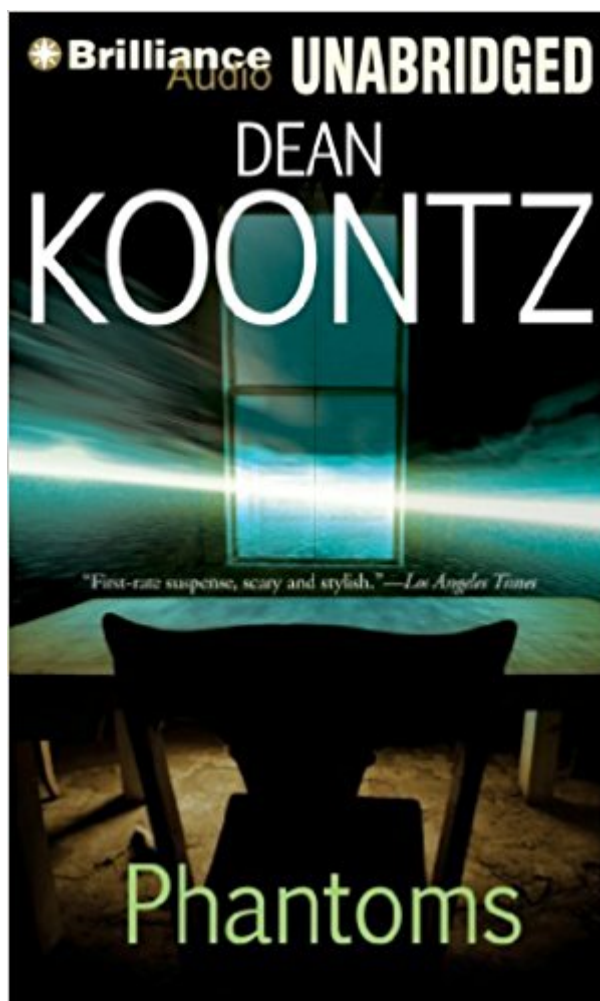




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Phantoms



Synopsis

They found the town silent, apparently abandoned. Then they found the first body, strangely swollen and still warm. One hundred fifty were dead, three hundred fifty missing. But the terror had only begun in the tiny mountain town of Snowfield, California. At first they thought it was the work of a maniac. Or terrorists. Or toxic contamination. Or a bizarre new disease. But then they found the truth. And they saw it in the flesh. And it was worse than anything any of them had ever imagined.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The lights are on in Snowfield, California, a cozy ski village nestled in the Sierra Madres, but nobody seems to be home. When Dr. Jenny Paige returns to the small town, she finds tables set for dinner, meals being prepared, and music playing in living rooms, but there's no trace of the people who put the water on to boil or set an extra place for company at the dinner table. As she explores the town, Paige finds friends and neighbors felled by a mysterious force--the bodies show no visible signs of violence or disease, and no known plague kills victims before the ice in their dinner drinks has time to melt. But the deep quiet that surrounds her offers few clues about the fate of the town's inhabitants. Dean Koontz's *Phantoms* strikes fear in readers from the very beginning. The mystery deepens, paving the way for a chilling journey toward the truth. If you plan to catch the film version, starring Ben Affleck and Peter O'Toole, remember that you'll be experiencing this terrifying story in a dark theater. So bring an arm to grab! --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

“Scary and stylish.” • Los Angeles Times “First-rate” | scary and plausible. • Publishers Weekly “Gruesome and unrelenting.” • Stephen King “Stunning. *Phantoms* is an instant classic.” • Chicago Sun-Times “Koontz has outdone himself.” • Philadelphia Daily News More Praise for Dean Koontz “Dean Koontz is a prose stylist whose lyricism heightens malevolence and tension. [He creates] characters of unusual richness and depth.” • The Seattle Times “Tumbling, hallucinogenic prose....” “Serious” writers...might do well to examine his technique.” • The New York Times Book Review “Lyrical writing and compelling characters...Koontz stands alone.” • Associated Press “In every industry there exist artists that are not only unforgettable, but know their craft better than the rest. Dean Koontz...is among these artisans.” • Suspense Magazine “[Koontz] has always had near-Dickensian powers of description, and an ability to yank us from one page to the next that few novelists can match.” • Los Angeles Times “Perhaps more than any other author, Koontz writes fiction perfectly suited to the mood of America...novels that acknowledge the reality and tenacity of evil but also the power of good...[and that] entertain vastly as they uplift.” • Publishers Weekly --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The story starts off with a quick taste of fear and danger, then slows things down with a car ride conversation between two sisters. This is the pattern the author adopts for much of the story; a brief moment of true terror, followed by a long cool down. Characters spend large portions of the story sharing anecdotal stories about themselves as they try to cope with the stress of what’s happening. These backstories help to lull the reader, preparing them for the next fresh scare. The scares themselves are vivid and well done, with careful attention to graphic details that bring the horror to life. Unfortunately that’s all the story ever amounts to. At first the rationed scares help to populate every shadow with an unseen threat, but over time it becomes clear that a true attack will only come once an allotted span of time has passed, and some characters cannot die. To his credit the author makes a valiant effort to make every character feel real, and it is in the characters that this story shines, but the central plot of the novel runs a bit thin. Large portions of the book are spent waiting. The story masterfully manages information, providing just enough to spark new questions, but once the mystery is solved the answer turns out to be

simple and rather crude. The resolution feels less like a climax and more like an obligatory cleanup afterwards. *Phantoms* is a good demonstration of suspense, but suspense also builds up expectations. The greater the hype around a question, the stronger the answer must be. +Strong Suspense+Strong Description*Complex Characters*Slow Pacing-Weak Plot2/5

The same scenario happened here which happens with so many Koontz and King books. So often their books start out with a few stunning chapters, clever, scary and promising, preventing the reader from putting the book down. Here, the ancient premise of timeless, Earth-haunting Evil is used, and I was soon drawn into the story. The characterization is excellent, as always with both Koontz and King. But (and I really mean: this happens with several of their books) it's as if they reach a point where they're not sure where to take their story to: how to end it believably. I always feel that their books should be edited to be slightly shorter. Although the slowly-unravelling end was scientifically clever, I could eventually no longer suspend my disbelief ... This creature or creatures, or millions-of-years old "thing", was simply too implausible. If this had happened in a science fiction story playing out on an alien planet ... yes, it might be better. Here, on Earth, it was all a bit much. However, I do like Koontz and I did finish the book. If you have a lively imagination (I do have it too!) you will enjoy it. Even if the last part is a bit hard to swallow.

Not all of Dean Koontz's books are of the horror genre. But most of his books have a monster feel to them. He is very good at making humans appear as monsters. His book *Intensity* scares me immensely. It probably was the first book, and maybe only, that had parts that made me sick to my stomach. It wasn't the gore that made me sick but the acts that one man could do. *Phantoms* is more of a science fiction book. A whole town in California has disappeared. Jenny is a doctor who has picked up her sister to bring back to Snowfield, California to live with her after her mother has passed on. The whole town is either dead or missing. Jenny cannot even come up with a cause of death for the bodies they can find. The local Sheriff in Santa Mira is called to come investigate. Lisa and Jenny do not leave because they are unsure if a biological agent or disease has caused all of these deaths. The first half of this book is truly frightening. You don't know if the devil or a man-made disease has caused the death of a whole town. It truly has a creep factor and at times I was actually scared while reading it. The last half wasn't as scary as the true monster is brought into life. I do not want to give any spoilers to this book so I won't go into that. This book closely resembles *The Mist*, which is a 1980 novella by Stephen King. I have not finished this novel but the vibe is kind of equivalent. I think the ending could have been better but overall *Phantoms* was a very

enjoyable read.

I read all Dean Koontz books and this one told them all for nightmare reading and chills. Really a page turner.

There are many Koontz books that I love, including this one now. It's incredibly entertaining and well written; as much as any and more than most of his books I've read to date. I finished it very quickly. Not a boring moment. The heavy supernatural element to this book is great, something I wish the Author would always embrace. Within the last month I've also read Ashley Bell (One of Koontz's newest) and Lightning (another of his classics). Both of which are great, but Phantoms is better! This is why I've been a fan for a decade.

Forgive me for saying this book completely blew my socks off! It was so enjoyable in so many ways. As a fan of horror and suspense novels this book added another element by linking a physical embodiment of evil with both science fiction and religion. To me Koontz was able to perfectly combine modern day science with religion to create one stunner of a horror/suspense novel. Some of the reviews of this book I have read say the book can be slow in some areas. I did not find this to be the case whatsoever. Dean Koontz's style of writing makes it impossible to put any of his books down - they are all "page turners." Expect to have a few sleepless nights while reading this book. Both because of how frightening it is and because you just can't put it down. He always leaves me wanting to find out what happens next. So far, my two favorite books written by Dean Koontz are WATCHERS and PHANTOMS. In that order. Only because to me, PHANTOMS was extremely scary. While I like to be scared, WATCHERS, encompasses to a greater extent the idea that good will conquer evil. In PHANTOMS, the evil is scary, is very realistic and is everywhere! In summary, buy this book! You won't regret it!

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