

# The life story of dean koontz



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I really believe that everyone has a talent, ability, or skill that he can mine to support himself and to succeed in life. These wise words come from an author with a passion for thrilling his readers through various accounts of suspense and horror. Dean Koontz has become a multi-#1 New York Times bestseller throughout his hard work as an author.

His history prior to achieving his goals is a story that would fit perfectly into a storybook itself. His words on pages are beautiful, and the stories he tells are incomparable to any other horror author of this time. Now that he has obtained the life he always dreamed of, one might say he is living his best, most thrilling life possible. As highly acclaimed as he might be, Koontz hasn't always lived the most lavish of lives. His background looks a lot like that of the average American. In Everett, Pennsylvania on July 9, 1945, Dean Koontz was born. Though he was an only child, his life was far from privileged. He once said, There are so many demons in me I could write for another 100 years. So what are these demons? What haunts the man whose whole life is centered around putting the stories of other peoples' haunted lives on paper? Koontz grew up in a very poor community, and he considered his mother his best friend. This was because his alcoholic father was very mentally unstable with questions of schizophrenia tormenting his brain. These mental ailments seemed to allow the alcohol to take over, causing him to abuse Dean and his mother. The alcoholism destroyed the family, as his father could never keep a job and was referred to throughout Everett as the town drunk. Though this put a damper on the innocence of his childhood, Dean never let the failures of his father hold him back from his dreams (Barry, Christyn). He even said, in reflection of his nightmare of how

he grew up, When I was a kid, writers were my heroes because they took me out of that awful house.

Books were an escape from the violence of the household and the poverty. Koontz claims that he began his career at the young age of eight-years-old. It was at this young age that he began writing short stories, which he took to family events and sold them to his relatives for spare pocket change (Dean Koontz Biography). He continued writing as an escape throughout grade school and high school. After graduating high school in 1963, he went to work at a grocery store and enrolled in classes at Shippensburg State College ( Dean Koontz Exorcising Demons, Finding Happiness ). After graduating college in 1966 with a Bachelor's of Arts degree in English, he won his first award for his writing: the Atlantic Monthly Creative Writing Award, which he won for a short story called The Kittens (Dean Koontz Biography). That same year, married his high school sweetheart Gerda Ann Cerra. Not long after obtaining his degree, he accepted his first job. This was working with the Appalachian Poverty Program, through which he worked hands-on with children who came from similar backgrounds as him. He also worked at Mechanicsburg Area Senior High School as an English teacher. Though work kept him rather busy, he maintained the hobby of writing in his free time, being sure to never let his passion for words die out. Filling notebook after notebook with short stories, Gerda began to notice that the jobs he was working just were not capable of filling the void in his soul that only writing could complete. After realizing this, she put an offer on the table; an offer he couldn't refuse. She told him that he could quit his jobs and she would support him financially for five years if he would work adamantly

towards achieving the writing career he always dreamed of (Dean Koontz Biography). Naron 2 His first published novel came around just a mere two years later, a sci-fi novel titled Star Quest. After this, he continued to write within the science fiction genre for several years.

Finally, in 1971, Koontz found his true niche: horror. His novella *Beastchild* quickly earned a Hugo Award nomination, and that was just the motivation he needed. Writing under various pen names such as Deanna Dwyer, John Hill, K. R. Dwyer, and Brian Coffey he began producing novel after novel within the genres of horror, gothic romance, and mystery (Dean Koontz Biography). His writing is not something he takes lightly, however. When asked about his writing methods, Koontz said, I can't go on to page two until I can get page one as perfect as I can make it. That might mean I will rewrite and rewrite page one 20, 30, 50, 100 times. I build a book the way coral reefs are formed, on all these little dead bodies of marine polyps, you know? Now, Koontz has sold more than 500 million books worldwide, some of which are considered classics of horror. He has published over 50 novels over the years, all of which keep the reader on the edge of the seat, eager for each turn of the page. His words paint pictures in a way no other author quite can. His books have been published in 38 different languages, and fourteen of his novels have been found in the number one spot on the bestseller list (About Dean). One of his most highly favored books, *DemonSeed*, is a classic. It was released in 1973 and later completely rewritten and readapted in 1997.

The original and the rewrite follow the same storyline, but with a completely altered point-of-view. The book has been described as both creepy and smart, where the original is favored but both are enjoyed (Somers, Jeff). Odd

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Thomas is potentially his most highly acclaimed novel of his entire career. After its publication in 2003, this novel has brought five sequels, many graphic novels, and a major film. Many people call this his breakout character, and is a suspenseful and surprising story that follows Naron 3 the character who breaks his own rules to understand and obtain the truths he seeks (Somers, Jeff). Many readers also enjoyed his 1987 novel Watchers, a thriller with a twist of science fiction. This novel, though eerie and strange within the genres it falls, also pays homage to many serious matters that are deeply rooted in the soul of Koontz. Throughout this album we see a character who is deeply affected by mental illnesses, similar to those of his father throughout his childhood. This novel has long been considered a classic thriller and has been highly acclaimed since its publish date (Somers, Jeff). In 1995, his novel Intensity was published. This was a book that began from the very first page and was pedal to the metal from cover to cover. Through several mysterious twists and turns, the story leaves the reader in awe that words on a page can paint such a vivid, thrilling picture, almost like film on paper (Somers, Jeff). Koontz and his wife never had children in fear that the mental ailments of his father were hereditary. Instead, they fell in love with golden retrievers when he researched service and guide dogs for his novel Midnight.

Through this research, he began working with Canine Companions for Independence, a non-profit organization that allowed him to see the service dog training process. Through this quickly building rapport, Koontz and his wife adopted their first fur baby, Trixie, a golden retriever. Koontz donates millions of dollars to Canine Companions for Independence; all revenue from

several of his novels profit the organization. Since Trixie passed away in 2007, Koontz and his wife adopted another golden retriever named Anna (Barry, Christyn). After the passing of Anna, he and his wife adopted yet another golden retriever, which they named Elsa (About Dean). Today, one could find Koontz in one of his three southern California homes. He and his wife eat dinner at their favorite restaurant, Zovs, each and every night without fail where they Naron 4 can partake in a hobby they love to share together: ballroom dancing (Barry, Christyn). Throughout a traumatic childhood, he built an absolutely beautiful life for himself, one that the average person could only dream of. After the sacrifice his dear wife made for him to allow him to pursue his dreams, his career took off quickly and has yet to slow down. Novel after novel, best-seller after best-seller, Koontz has truly created a life out of a storybook for himself and the woman he loves. It is obvious that he has paid her back tenfold for the loving sacrifice she made so many years ago. The impact he has had throughout his life on humankind will continue to sing his name for generations to come. As he once said himself, Like all of us in this storm between birth and death, I can wreak no great changes on the world, only small changes for the better, I hope, in the lives of those I love.