



The Devil's Cure

Kenneth Oppel

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One man's blood could hold the key to curing cancer. That man is a death row killer. And he'll kill again rather than give it to you. How badly do you want it? David Haines sits on death row, imprisoned for murdering leading research doctors in the name of God. Meanwhile, the brilliant oncologist Dr. Laura Donaldson battles a disease that kills just as ruthlessly, and in an ironic twist of fate, Laura discovers that the murderer may hold within him the cure for cancer. When she unwittingly helps Haines escape from prison, she and FBI agent Kevin Sheldrake -- a man with his own demons to overcome -- embark on a terrifying manhunt that takes them across the country and deep into their own troubled pasts. For both Laura and Kevin it is imperative that the killer be brought back alive -- but Haines would sooner kill himself and everyone else rather than offer his precious blood for medical science.

Kenneth Oppel brilliantly entwines three compelling characters in this masterfully paced thriller that moves seamlessly between the worlds of science and religion. *The Devil's Cure* will keep readers on the edge of their seats.

The Devil's Cure Details

Date : Published June 1st 2002 by Hyperion (first published 2000)

ISBN : 9780786889969

Author : Kenneth Oppel

Format : Paperback 496 pages

Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Cultural, Canada

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From Reader Review The Devil's Cure for online ebook

Kris says

I enjoyed 'The Devil's Cure'; it kept my interest from start to finish. 'The Devil's Cure' was Kenneth Oppel's first foray into adult literature and it was a successful venture! The story hinges around Dr. Laura Donaldson who thinks she may have found a potential cure for cancer in the blood of convicted serial killer David Haines. Haines is a religious fanatic on death row who refuses to let Dr. Donaldson draw and test his blood. When Haines escapes Laura and FBI agent, Kevin Sheldrake work together to re-capture the killer. Oppel has constructed a solid storyline designed to draw the reader into Laura and Kevin's lives. The plot is suspenseful and intriguing. He successfully combined mystery with the ethics of human research. I look forward to reading his next adult novel when it comes out.

Aryn says

Absolutely my favourite book now.

I was into it from the very first page, and stuck through to the end with adoration and suspense. It doesn't rush into things, it takes things slow, while also continuing to tell the story from multiple characters' points of view, which I think is really cool in novels.

And though we're dealing with a serial killer in the book with an insane occultish state of mind, I can honestly say I kind of loved him and was upset by his fate in the end of the book.

The only thing I'm disappointed in (unless there's a second book?? :D), is that we never find out if Sean's blood contains a cure like his father, and we never find out if Laura and the detective (I forget his name) hit it off/if she ever sees him again, and also that we never find out how Laura's sister is doing and if she lives.

If there's a second book, I'll be reading it pronto. If not, I really hope Kenneth writes one, because this story was phenomenal and drove my emotions and anticipation through the roof. Excellent read.

Shelby Suderman says

The Devil's Cure is an adult thriller. It tells the story of a doctor, Laura, one of the leading experts working on the cure for cancer, who discovers that a serial killer on death-row secretly carries the key to a cure in his blood. Just days before his execution, the man in question, David, escapes from prison, leading to a nationwide manhunt. The story is told mainly from the point of view of Laura, David, and Kevin, the haggard FBI agent who cracked the original case and apprehended David the first time around.

There's a lot going on in this novel. The theme of science versus religion and freedom of religion being one of them. David was a member of a religious cult (his violent ideas got him kicked out, though he never lost his faith), and said cult's views on medicine and how blood IS the soul means he's willing to do whatever it takes to make sure no cure is ever found through him.

I really appreciated the examination into cults in this novel, how they hook a person, how they keep you, and

the mark they leave on members fortunate enough to get out. I wasn't aware of the cult-aspect going into this, so that was a pleasant surprise.

I will say it's a very slow-burn at the start, though the payoff is excellent.

Jacob Wilson says

One thing you can definitely say about Kenneth Oppel is that his novels are always incredibly well researched. I learned more about cancer research and cults than I ever would have imagined, or even would have liked, to be honest.

Unfortunately, for a thriller, the suspense was left until far too late. The novel plodded along with semi-interesting characters until a thrilling conclusion, but it was almost too little, too late. Informative and not entirely unentertaining, but not something I would recommend.

An Odd1 says

Long. Slow. I forgot I had finished.

Doctor Laura overdoses on uppers and jealousy for cancer-ridden sister Sandra (on quack cures like Tijuana) as being always more "beautiful, irresistible" p223, popular, successful. Sandra gave her parents the sixteen photos on display p232; if Laura wanted more, she should have supplied them.

Killer's swoony fat penpal Gail obsesses on "stupid frizzy hair and her marshmallow face" p157, and gives him addresses for victims from her confidential job files. FBI agent Sheldrake fasts and prays, almost as crazy as target Haines, cooking full meals and dumping them straight into the garbage can for "penance .. suffering, self-mortification" to "enlightenment p245. How can he expect to be at the top of his mental and physical game for pursuit?

Slit throats spurt heavily. Haines "felt himself stir between his legs and bloat with an evil abandonment" p259 because Laura touches his arm. Gross. Putting thoughts in italics "*F-f-f-!*" p266 does not make them worth sharing. Are we supposed to get an understanding of psychopathic cult leaders who advocate killing doctors? Feel touched that two faulty experts in their fields connect? Congratulate Laura for growing up some when Sandra says "it's just not easy being your sister" p456? Ick all round.

The only reason to read is to find out if killer lives. Let me save you the trouble. (view spoiler)

Typos:

p32 "Wit were me" is "If it were"

p57 "tb have cancer" is "to have"

Annoying grammar glitch: every word ending with s uses possessive 's. I finally tried to ignore, with difficulty

p93,94 Andrews's to Andrews'

p102, 266, 363, 370 Haines's to Haines'

p107 Helms's to Helms'

especially when p504 finally says Walshes'

Kathy Plank says

Read this because I like his Airborn series, but this one was stupid. Plodding plot, no depth. Yuck. Not worth your time. If you like medical crime and mysteries, there are so many more good ones out there.

KatherineC says

Intense!

Betty says

Die Idee, die dem Buch zugrunde liegt, ist originell. Die Suche nach einem Heilmittel gegen Krebs. Das Gegenmittel vermutet im Blut eines Killers. Und während Laura versucht, das Gegenmittel herzustellen, gelingt dem mehrfachen Mörder die Flucht aus dem Gefängnis. Spannende Idee, spannend umgesetzt. Die zu Beginn geweckte Neugier hat mich bis zum Schluss nicht mehr losgelassen.

Brian says

Was a great read steady action and suspense. Only wish I knew more about some if the loose ends at completion of the book

Holly says

Kenneth Oppel is one of my favorite authors, but I think YA is really his forte. If I'm right, this is his one and only adult novel. It was good. The plot was engaging, and I really liked the philosophical tussle between religion and science that was at the heart of the book. I thought the characters were well-fleshed out and believable. There was obviously a lot of research that went into this book, both in the areas of cancer research, serial killers, and cults. I know that sounds like a strange combination, but it will make perfect sense if you read this book. I do think his YA novels are much more engaging and interesting, though. That's obviously his strength area because he SOARS when he writes YA. So, as much as I enjoyed this book, read it straight through without becoming bored with it, I hope Mr. Oppel continues to write in the area that best suits him. (And I hope he writes another Viktor Frankenstein book as his next one!)

Maggie Gordon says

Kenneth Oppel writes some outstanding YA books, but adult thrillers are obviously not his strong point. The

Devil's Cure is not a terrible book, but it's also not a very interesting book. The characters are bland, the plot moves very slowly, and nothing of consequence actually seems to happen. It feels very much like Oppel followed a how-to on thriller writing, but lacked the spark and suspense that this genre is supposed to have.

The novel is about Laura Donaldson, a cancer researcher, stumbling across a possible therapy for cancer in the blood of a man that is about to be executed for killing doctors. When she obtains a court order to take a sampling of his blood, an action forbidden by the convict's religion, he breaks free from prison, causing the FBI to get involved to try and get him back. The book's second protagonist is Kevin Sheldrake, the FBI cult specialist who tracked down and brought in David Haines, the doctor killer, after his first killing spree. Together with Donaldson, the two protagonists must try to predict what Haines is going to do with his new found freedom so that they can figure out a way to recapture him so that his blood can be studied.

All of the characters in this book are meant to be haunted individuals, tortured by their own failures and tragedies. However, readers never really see enough of their suffering to fully understand why they are meant to be so full of despair. There also wasn't a lot of interesting techno-babble behind the cancer issues, and in the end, Donaldson was no closer to her goal of finding a cure or therapy for cancer than she was in the first chapter. The love story was stale and not particularly believable, and there were many missed opportunities for more in-depth discussions of morality and religion.

Unfortunately, The Devil's Cure was a disappointment. It doesn't have any of the depth of characterization that Oppel's other books have, and it lacks the excitement and breakneck pace of a good thriller.
