



Shadowfires

Leigh Nichols (Pseudonym) , Dean Koontz

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A woman's relief over the death of her husband gives way to mind-numbing terror in this shockingly suspenseful thriller.

Rachael's request for a quick and clean divorce enraged her husband. She had never seen Eric so angry, so consumed by pure and terrifying hatred. Then, in the heat of the moment, Eric was struck down in a traffic accident. His death was instantaneous. Shocked and relieved, Rachael had nothing left to fear. Until Eric's body disappeared from the morgue—and Rachael was stalked by someone who looked like her dead husband...

The #1 New York Times bestselling author of Demon Seed and The Eyes of Darkness presents a novel of pure terror in which a woman is stalked -- by a man who looks exactly like her dead husband..."Holds readers spellbound". -- Booklist

"His prose mesmerizes...Kontz consistently hits the bull's-eye". -- Arkansas Democrat

Shadowfires Details

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From Reader Review Shadowfires for online ebook

melydia says

(unabridged audiobook read by Jonathan Marosz): As Rachel and Eric leave the offices of their divorce lawyers, they are arguing viciously about the settlement. Eric gets so angry he storms off directly into oncoming traffic, where he is killed by a garbage truck. After the initial shock wears off, Rachel gets incredibly paranoid and hangs out with her boyfriend Ben, actively not telling him things. When Eric's body disappears from the morgue, her paranoia becomes a reality: Eric's not really dead! It gets a little silly from there, blending unlikely genetic theory with bizarre theology on the afterlife. It's a chase story through and through, with Ben and Rachel spending the bulk of the book not telling each other things while fleeing Eric, the local cops, and the feds. Koontz is usually good for quirky characters having bizarre adventures, but this time he was a little short on the adventure part. It was really nothing more than one big chase scene, that didn't even tie up the majority of the issues it raised by the end (namely, the consequences of the characters' actions, the mental waffling over which had been a big part of the plot). So yeah: dig Koontz, not so big on Shadow Fires. (Interestingly, this is the last novel he wrote using a pseudonym. Maybe that should have been a clue.)

T. says

It's a story about chase, exhausted in all its forms: a woman runs away from her ex-husband, good cops go after mad men, haunted pasts attempt to wreck the present, a lunatic sweeps a trail of secrets, a monster flees from his humanity, and love pursues the probability of surviving despite the odds.

But I'm making it sound much better than it actually is -- this is one of my least liked works by Dean Koontz. The whole act of reading the book has become something of a quest in itself, of whether I can finish the story before I curl up and die with boredom.

It isn't so much as the foot race - if you map the locations they're pretty much banal - it's the elaborate attempt of the characters to explain themselves to me that is annoying. As a reader I'm inside their heads way too much: I have no opportunity to be excited, to try to guess what they must be feeling, to let my imagination roam free as to why they behave this way.

It's as if Koontz profiled his characters obsessively, and had a pressing need to put everything about them in the book, right down to their birth certificates. They're all a mess in my brain. Even minor characters get to have a back story just so their late heroic acts by the last few chapters can be justified.

What I wanted more of, and have appreciated in great detail, was how Eric has transformed from human to monster. It's gory and disgusting but also terribly, terribly fascinating to read about the dark pleasure of succumbing to the animal inside his body. His struggle over whether to walk like a man or slide on his belly and burrow somewhere deep is rock-solid delicious to read. I also like how he deviates from his logical plans and doesn't have control over hunger, lust, rage. A book exploring that is cause for awesomeness.

If only Koontz focused on this, instead of exalting Ben, whose white-knight image I could care less about, I'd be a satisfied reader. Ben is just fodder for the half-baked love story. I mean, c'mon - Rachel is a tough bitch, even when scared, and I bet you she can kill a monster, especially if it's her ex-husband come back from the

dead. Lord knows, a divorce is good enough reason to want to chop off some balls.

I suppose I should be more forgiving, as Koontz wrote this novel in his early years under the pseudonym Leigh Nichols. So I'll give him plus points for ripping out Whitney's prosthetic leg and making him crawl out in the mud, with only one arm and one leg left.

Mephistia says

I am really starting to love Koontz's writing. This is a great read, completely worth your time. Koontz seems to have a thing about good vs. evil, with both being active, personified forces. It's a rare thing in today's writing, when "evil" is often merely the absence of "good", or where the "evil" inhabits more of a moral gray area.

This was written in Koontz's early years, and is also published under the pseudonym of Leigh Nichols. While the villain and heroine are both clearly portrayed within their roles, it doesn't have the strong spiritual undertone that pervade his later books, such as Darkfall.

Rogue says

This is the kind of story that drew me to Dean Koontz, his finest works are filled with very possible terrors, things that could happen in our world, and each tale is spun in such a way as to cause a very real emotional response from the reader, be it horror, disgust, or fear. For a time this story gripped me in a way his work hasn't done in a long time, right up until the very real became slightly absurd and fantastical. I guess I must have grown up a little too much, and found a cynical element within myself that no longer bounces with joy, grinning in delight at the pure terror one of Dean Koontz's books could deliver.

I must be getting old. :(

Jackie Jameson says

Actually REREADING...Just KNEW this had to be Dean Koontz or Stephen King. Great story all together, but my favorite characters are Jerry Peake and Julio Verdad, (Spanish for Truth). They really ARE the whole book and why I was REREADING. I have a hardback with JUST Leigh Nichols listed as author. What interested me was how stupid the cover looked for such an intelligent book. The cover is DUMB, like some 70's bad op art. When I first read it I felt sorry for the author to be packaged so inappropriately. I guess I can stop feeling sorry for freakin' Dean Koontz, the millionaire. I'm glad he went on and had a career!

Alex Gherzo says

Based on my limited experience (he has written a great many books and I've only read a few), Dean Koontz has a way of starting off strong and then letting the excitement and interest he created dissipate as his books go along, eventually leaving the reader begging for the book to just end. Such is the case here. Shadowfires

grabbed me early on, but so much of it dragged that I had to push myself to get through the book. Even when the book got boring, there were flashes of greatness here and there, but they just weren't enough.

Rachael Leben, while in the midst of a bitter divorce, witnesses her soon-to-be-ex-husband Eric die in a traffic accident. But her boyfriend observes her acting strangely: she jumps at every noise, she feels herself being watched, and she starts carrying around a gun. Then the body disappears from the morgue, two girls turn up dead, and it seems Eric Leben may not be as dead as once thought.

Spoilers...

The opening chapters of the book are excellent, giving us characters to care about and a very interesting mystery. What happened to Eric's body? Rachael seems to know, but Ben is trying to piece it together. Then he has to figure out what Rachael is hiding and why she won't talk to him. It's handled well early on, and the answers aren't obvious. Was the bus accident really an accident? Did Eric's company steal his body? Was a morgue attendant in on it? Or is Eric somehow still alive? These questions are answered pretty early on, and once they are the plot stops being able to sustain itself. The biggest problem is that so much of it takes too long. When Rachael and Ben investigate Eric's office and his bachelor pad it seems to go on forever, and not much comes of it. But this is nothing compared to the insane volume of pages dedicated to their investigation of Eric's cabin. This sequence takes up almost a hundred pages, and it feels like wheel spinning. And after all that time, there's no confrontation at the damn cabin! They never even see Eric, and his sneaking around isn't handled well because we don't know he was doing that until after Rachael leaves. The finale in a ramshackle Las Vegas motel is a little better, but not particularly thrilling. At least it moves, though. Koontz has had similar problems in other books (the lethargic river ride in *Dark Rivers Of The Heart*, the investigation of the house in *Odd Thomas*), but here it's just crippling.

As a theme, the cycle of abuse is handled well. The two main villains of the story, Anson Sharp and Eric Leben, are an abuser and a victim of abuse, respectively. Sharp is a handsome, charming guy who wears a suit, commands respect and is protected by society (although he becomes a coward when someone stands up to him, in a terrific sequence). Nobody would suspect him of abuse and no one would believe anyone who accused him, so the terror he causes is allowed to flourish. Eric is a former victim, and every avenue of help was denied him. No one believed his uncle was hurting him, and when he finally cracked and did something about it, he was told he was wrong (I'm really glad Koontz pointed the finger at religion as perhaps the greatest enabler of abuse). As he grew older, he developed a hatred for women (the objects of his lust, as he was the object of his uncle's), a need to hurt them to make himself feel powerful. And his abuse was also what drove him to try to defy death; he was told his abuse was sexual promiscuity and he would go to hell for it, and no matter how rational he became in his advancing age that pious threat stuck with him (another way religion victimizes people). When he is resurrected, he becomes more and more violent, graduating from beating women to actually raping them. And as he goes on, he begins to transform into a literal monster, an outward manifestation of what the abuse has done to his soul. In the end, the rot of his evil eats him alive from the inside, destroying him as slowly as it destroys real life victims. Sharp, on the other hand, is shot just as he's about to kill others, and he's shot by a man who knew he was a pedophile and a murderer but kept quiet. The only way to stop the cycle from continuing is for people who know what's going on to stand for the victims and make these disgusting thugs pay for their crimes.

The characters were mostly good. Rachael seems a little bit too perfect at first (she's getting divorced from a

multimillionaire and asks for no money or alimony? Yeah, and I'm Julius Caesar), but Koontz writes her in such a way that you believe it. Eric, on the other hand, is a creep from the beginning, and while he is eventually humanized through his past, it doesn't stop him from being scary (although the monster descriptions weren't; Koontz doesn't come up with particularly interesting creatures in my opinion, a problem that dealt a serious blow to *Phantoms*). Ben starts off nice and likeable: he's got a thing for the 30's and 40's, he clearly loves Rachael, he's a Dudley Do Right type. But the explanation for his fighting ability is kinda weak. I was expecting him to have some kind of hidden darkness that would cause conflict between him and Rachael, like maybe Sharp sent him to watch her but he fell in love and now wants to help her. Instead, he was just in Vietnam. That's it. Like a shorthand for explaining why he can go up against Sharp and not be killed immediately (and get them out of that office when the scene finally comes to an end). I was also disappointed when he started speaking in the same slightly-haughty way Rachael did. I liked it when she did it because I thought it was a neat character trait of hers, but when Ben started doing it I realized it's because Koontz doesn't have much of an ear for dialogue (or naturalistic dialogue, anyway). Julio Verdad and Reese Hagerstrom were a fun diversion on occasion, and a very welcome respite from the dull main story. Sharp was a great villain, without a single redeeming quality. He's the type that's so evil you don't really want to know what he'll do next, you just want to see him finally get what's coming to him. I also really liked his assistant, Peake, a decent man forced to choose between protecting himself and protecting others.

I also have to credit Koontz with knowing how to write a pretty great sex scene. Even the early coitus interruptus was very well done. They're not overly graphic, but they're very erotic.

There are some really good things in this book, but so much of it is so boring I don't think I can recommend it.

Susan says

The only book by Dean Koontz I've ever read that I detested!

Amy Maddess says

No words for this masterpiece ♥?♥?♥?♥?♥?♥?

Michael McFarland says

Not very good at all.

In the late 80's and early 90's, I devoured Dean Koontz by the fistful, probably reading 16 to 20 of his books (some of which I actually debated upgrading to hardcover editions) in a 5-year time span before finally burning out on him thoroughly and completely.

Now, as I reread one of these novels every year or two, I wonder what the hell I was thinking? The characters (usually described in terms confined to the card aisle at Hallmark) are virtually the same in every book, the bad guys variations on the same theme (government conspiracy, anyone?), and the logic and

motivations directing his characters are often terrible.

So why 2 stars instead of 1? Nostalgia, I suppose. When Dean launches another detailed description of interior design or landscaping flora or clothing by brand-name, something inside me starts to giggle. Add to that the sudden and jarring inclusion of a five-syllable word that feels like it was taken off a Word-of-the-Day calendar, and how can you not love the guy?

As for this book in particular, it's guilty of all of the above, and to boot it runs at least 250 pages too long. Not one I'd recommend to anyone.

David says

In the late 1980s, just after the publication of this book, Dean Koontz decided to consolidate his pseudonyms and just publish everything as himself. He was not at peak popularity, but getting close.

Koontz made a deal with Dark Harvest, a small publishing company nobody has cared about in years, located in Illinois.

Koontz reprinted his Leigh Nichols books in new hard covers. The covers were illustrated by Koontz friend Phil Parks.

The covers themselves are amazing. They are probably my favorite book covers I've come across. Inside the book are a bunch of illustrations to go with the stories.

It just so happened that the public library in Carol Stream managed to get at least 4 of these titles added into their collection. So, when a kid from the 6th grade class next door started bringing them in and showing them off.. I knew I had to get a piece of the action.

In addition to my infatuation with Stephen King, I started reading up every Koontz book I could find.

Those Dark Harvest versions of these books have stuck with me. I have been tempted whenever I go back home, to see if these still sit on the shelves at the old library. I've imagined what it would be like to just take them home and never bringing the back. (But it know it is wrong!!!)

Now that I am an adult, every now and then I think about trying to track them down and finally adding them into my collection. In terms of Dean Koontz books, they are somewhat rare, and probably well favored by big fans of the author. In terms of literature as a whole, they're probably not that big of a deal.

Even so, one of these Dark Harvest editions can cost a pretty penny. Usually the ones that I come across as

asking for \$50 or more. Not the most practical for a book I mainly want to keep on my shelf and flip through now and again.

When I go to used book stores, I always check the Koontz hardcovers, never expecting any of them to show up.

Yet... this summer I got insanely lucky. A Half Priced Books store in Cincinnati had "Shadowfires" and they only wanted ten dollars for it. I can only imagine that the person who sold it, and the people who priced it didn't have much of a clue what it was they had.

I am thankful for that.

Shadowfires was the one Dark Harvest book I didn't get to see as a kid. The cover is probably the silliest of the bunch, but it is still captivating. The interior illustrations are dark and moody and of Park's consistent quality. Finding this book, for me, is a huge deal, and it is in AMAZING condition!

So now I have it, and the hunger for the others grows.

As of this writing, before I have started my re-read of this book, I realize that this is one of the Dean Koontz books I have nearly no actual memory of. It was never a particular favorite of mine, and I cannot recall the plot just by thinking about it. I keep getting this one mixed up with the time traveling Nazi book (the first Koontz book that I remember feeling disappointed with ((but not the last))).

Now that I have re-read the book...

I feel like I remember bits and pieces, but not a whole lot from when I was a kid. Overall, it isn't a terrible Dean Koontz book. It is quite a bit better than a lot of the more modern stuff he is writing. This book hails from that era of "Scientists push too far to create an advancement and end up making a monster instead" type story.

If you haven't read this one before, there are far better worse books to read. (The Taking, Your Heart Belongs to Me, What The Nights Knows, every Odd Thomas book after the first). Though somebody coming in hoping for something amazing... this isn't amazing.

It suffers from being a bit too melodramatic at times (which is how Koontz rolls) but with this book in particular it suffers from too many characters. The two good guy cops and the DSA agents didn't need to be in the book at all, you would have had the same exact story

Fred says

Koontzland Group Read - December 2017
Read Koontz in December: this is #3 out of 4 - done

A good chase-and-escapes book with scenes never ending.

In Orange County, California - Dr. Eric Leben(42) & Racheal(30) are leaving their divorce lawyer's office. Dr. Eric Leben has been 1 year separated from his wife, Racheal. He is seen being hit by a garbage truck as they both walk out of the lawyer's office. Eric's dead body is transferred into the hospital morgue. But then missing when the morgue slab is open.

Did he really die? Did he walk out? Did someone take him?

Eric has always been arrogant but she humiliated him turning down his power & money. The divorce was due, he always beat her, separated for 1 year & Ben Shadwat(37) has been her "new" boyfriend for the last 5 months (runs a successful real estate business).

Eric beat & killed other young girls, such as, Sarah & Becky. His "Wildcard" project is a genetic alteration carrier to stop aging, tests reincarnated dead mice back to life. Was he the "test" to bring dead humans back to life, himself after the crash?

Typical last scene, Dr. Eric Leben, Anson Sharp (DSA agent), Lt. Verdad, Det. Peake, Det. Shadwat, Racheal & Ben fight to the end - who gets killed. Does Dr. Leben get away to fight again? Does he really get killed?

And an unusual end to a Koontz book.....(view spoiler)

YouTube Shadowfires 1 Soundtrack (page 1 -267) 9:29 = <https://m.youtube.com/watch?t=706s&am...>

YouTube Shadowfires 2 Soundtrack (page 268-509) 8:50 = <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=ZcF9M3a...>

Bark says

This was one of the earlier Koontz novels that I somehow missed in my youth. It tells the tale of a genetic genius named Eric who, after an ugly argument with his soon to be ex-wife Rachel, dies in an accident. But this is a Koontz novel so you know he doesn't stay dead . . .

Before long Rachel and her new love interest Ben are on the run from a resurrected Eric and men who will do anything to keep Eric's status a secret.

Koontz has always been hit or miss with me and I'm sad to say that this book was more of a miss. I'm a big fan of monster books and zombies but this book focused more on the action which bored me. Not helping matters was the mostly unlikable cast of characters and the unbelievable dialogue.

And shall I mention the "love scene"? How could I not? It still has me creeped out. When Rachel and Ben finally give in to temptation Koontz describes their happy ending as "*Ben emptying copious measures of himself into Rachel*". Sounds rather painful to me. I imagine his organs melting down from the burning heat of Rachel's womanly bits. It's here my mind begins to drift and set up a new plot twist. One where Ben expires from all of this sexual bother and losing of himself and Rachel, so sexually frustrated, is forced to hook back up with zombie Eric. Hey, he may be rotting and smelly but at least he has more life left in him than boring self-satisfying Ben. Oops, I think I just turned this into a Richard Laymon novel.

Anyway now that I'm completely off track, I'll just end this by saying that I would have enjoyed it more if it

had focused more on the changes Eric the "monster" was going through and spent less time on the snoozy chase scenes. It would've helped too if there were less time agonizing about every thought and motivation passing through many of the dull characters heads (especially Ben and his nemesis whose name has escaped me).

I probably would have enjoyed this more when I was a lot younger or if I hadn't read so many romances over the years.

Fonch says

Well the first, that i want to do it is present my excuse (apologise) to the persons who follow my reviews (the four women who bear me :)) for not translating my previous review to the English, which in my opinion was an insult to the majority members of Goodreads, that unfortunately do not speak spanish. The review i have in my mind, i have the intention that it was like the miniskirt, which have to be short and it has to show, teachs in spanish :-(. This irreverent comment was pronounced by a saint a humble priest of a small village called Encinas de Esgueva, which from my maid who looked after to me when i was a child.

I had a big interest to read Dean Koontz because all my old knowns knew that i am a catholic collectors writers, but my good friend Julie Davis, whom i send a hug bear for her and their family advise to me that i read to this author. I had read three novels "Mr. Murder", and "Eyes of darkness". But of this three novels that i have read to this author the best novel that i have read is this "Shadowfires" despite rating with three stars i consider that Dean Koontz is one of best horror writers of the pesent age. The strong points that i like of this novel were 1º The intelligent reflections of the war of Vietnam of one of the characters the patriot Ben Shadway (recently i am interested to read "The Lost Mandate of Heaven: The American Betrayal of Ngo Dinh Diem, President of Vietnam" was written by Geoffrey Shaw about the figure of the catholic president of South of Vietnam Ngo Dinh Diem) in this novel Koontz wrote a lucid analysis of the Vietnam War and the the disaster consequences of the exit of United States of Vietnam, and Camboy, 2º I like the critc of Dean Koontz to the villains of the story Anson Sharp, and Eric Leben. Sharp with the spend of the time had converted in Eric Leben, although in my opinion Leben was more human than Sharp. The critic against the fascination of the future is totally right. Because a lot of dictatorship the Nazism, Fascism, and comunism are based in the obsession for the future and praise the new and destroyed the tradition. 3º Other thing who liked to me are the constant reference to the author in this case signed with a pseudonism Leigh Nichols to the literary favorites writers Agatha Christie, Dashiell Hammet, John Le Carre, Fredrick Forsyth, and author that i would like to read Buckley JR. Neither it is a bad to the reference to the cinema stars the 80 was positive is neoCaprian age with their failures. Although i disagree with Koontz-Shadway i am not a big fan of the rearing twenties because a lot of mistakes of our age produced in the twenties of the pasr century May of 68 is a sad consequence of the rotten seed of tweties :-(. 4º Other virtue is the face of the main characters Mrs Rachael Leben, Ben Shadway, Vida, Haggerstrom,Whitney and partially Peake against a lovecraftian creature whom has converdted Eric Leben. I love like an old Role Playing Games th reference to the author to the game Dungeons and Dragons in the desert of Nevada. It is interesting the beloved that Dean Koontz show to their fans in "Mr. Murder" for example he created to the nice character Clocker. But the thing that i like more of this novel was that in this case the catholicism of this author is evident in the rest of the novel i had read his catholicism was implicit. Although th styles of these writers were so different i know that Dean Koontz is a big fan of my favorite writer G.K. Chesterton, Which are one of the factors who attracted the fond for Dean Koontz. We looked the importance of the religion in the belief of Rachael Leben (catholic) and his exhusband Eric Leben who was protestant evangelic. I do not say but the females characters of Dean Koontz are strong and they have personality without losing his femen gender, besides there are a bit eroticism. Rachael Leben reminded to me powerfully to Tina Evans the main charactor of "Eyes of

Darkness". The final combat against Leben although is more physical than spiritual, also have a spiritual quarrel. The defaults, unfortunately exist. Some parts of the novels i find problems to advance, in some occasions the novel was incredibly long. In some occasions repeat i have the feeling that i read this novel i experiment a Deja Vu, but if the process is right, why have you change it?. Well two lonely characters face a monster created by a secret organization controlled by the government, at last they defeated the monster, and they are assisted when the government officer try to kill them. The plot is similar to "Mr. Murder", even i liked more the stage of "Mr. Muder", than "Shadowfires". The terrible truth is that i hate Las Vegas i preferred the quiet Sect Church of "Mr. Murder". Moreover the reflections of Dr. Leben were so borings although i considered necessities to follow the evolutions of this character to the convert in a lovecraftian creature.

In a conclusion is a very good story above the average. Dean Koontz demonstrated that he was more than outdone pupil of Stephen King. I have the feeling than i have to read more and that i have not arrived to read their best literary creations. A teacher in my school used to say that i was an outstanding student, i suppose that Dean Koontz is destined to be an outstanding writer for me. The last i would like to compares the novels of Dean Koontz and Stephen King with the novel "Crossfire" was written by Miyuki Miyabe (i would like to read a review of this novel).

At finally i expect that this review assist to Dean Koontz to be republished in my country Spain where he was published during the 70s, 80s, and less the 90s in the place of the garbage literature that the publishing usually publish in Spain.

Bueno lo primero, que quiero hacer es pedir disculpas a mis seguidores por no haber traducido mi anterior crítica al inglés "El padre Elías en Jerusalén" (lo que es una falta de respeto a la mayoría de los usuarios, que no hablan español). Esta crítica tengo planeado, como dijo un buen sacerdote de un pueblecito de Encinas de Esgueva en Valladolid, que sea como las minifaldas cortas y que enseñen.

Yo ya tenía un gran interés por Dean Koontz, pero la insistencia por leerlo se lo debo a mi gran amiga la escritora Julie Davis. Le había leído tres novelas "Espejo mortal", "Ojos de la oscuridad". Pero de todas las que le he leído esta es la mejor, y dónde se me ha forjado la opinión a pesar de calificarla con 3 estrellas de que Dean Koontz es uno de los grandes escritores actuales. A mí me ha gustado esta por varias razones 1º Su visión realista, de lo que supusó la Guerra del Vietnam vista desde la óptica de un patriota como Shadway, también se analiza el desastre que supusó la salida de Estados Unidos de Vietnam, que fue desastrosa para Vietnam, y Camboya, 2º Me gusto mucho la crítica que el autor hace a los grandes villanos Leben, y Anson Sharp, aunque a pesar de su aspecto monstruoso me pareció más humano Eric Leben. De todas formas Sharp con el tiempo se hubiera podido convertir en un Leben. La exaltación del futuro, y lo nuevo era una enseña de gobiernos totalitarios como el fascismo, y el comunismo, por lo tanto esta reflexión por parte de un Dean Koontz que escribe con pseudónimo es todo un acierto. 3º Otra cosa que me ha encantado son las referencias de Koontz a sus escritores favoritos gracias a Peake referencias a Agatha Christie, Dashiell Hammet, John Le Carre, Frederick Forsyth, Buckley Jr. (a quien estoy deseando leer). Tampoco están mal las referencias cinefilas, aunque yo a diferencia de Shadway no sea un amante de los años 20, que para mí son un sinónimo del desastre que iba a representar Mayo del 68 para Europa, 4º Otra gran virtud sea el combate con la criatura Lovecraftiana con la que se enfrentan Shadway, Rachael Leben, Vida, Hagerstrom, Whitney, y parcialmente Peake. (me gusto mucho la referencia que Koontz hace al juego Dungeons and Dragons cuando Rachael huye de su monstruoso marido en el desierto de Nevada). Es interesante el cariño que muestra Koontz por los amantes de la fantasía (fue lo que me encantó de esta novela y de "Espejo mortal" encarnado por el simpático personaje de Clocker), 4º Lo dejo lo último porque es lo que más me ha gustado en esta novela por fin Koontz por medio de Rachael, y parcialmente por medio de Eric Leben la importancia de la fe religiosa en sus personajes. Sé que Koontz es un gran admirador de G.K. Chesterton una de las cosas que me conquistaron, aunque su literatura sea muy diferente. En esta novela, ya no está implícito el catolicismo como las otras y el combate entre Rachael, y su marido es tanto físico como espiritual.

Los defectos, también los tiene. En algunas partes se me hizo un poco pesada por esa razón no le puse cuatro

estrellas (porque estuve dudando hasta el final), también las novelas que le he leído son muy parecidas personajes solitarios enfrentados a engendros creados por una organización secreta mundial que controla el gobierno. De hecho aunque más romántico el final es muy parecido al de "Espejo mortal" gustandomé más el escenario de "Espejo mortal" en una Iglesia abandonada de una secta, que las Vegas. También son un poco pesadas las reflexiones del Dr. Leben aunque sean necesarias, para ver como degenera y se convierte en un monstruo.

En resumen la historia aunque ya vista es muy interesante, está por encima de la media. Dean Koontz demuestra que es algo más que un alumno aventajado de Stephen King. Tengo la sensación de que aún me queda mucho por leerle, y que me queda lo mejor. Como me decía un profesor del colegio es un hombre que estoy seguro está destinado a ser uno de mis escritores favoritos. A mí me gustaría comparar las novelas de Dean Koontz y Stephen King con la que he leído muy recientemente "Crossfire" de Miyuki Miyabe de la que estoy deseando escribir una crítica. Confío en que esta crítica guste a los fans de Dean Koontz, y ayude a que este escritor, que fue muy editado en mi país en la década de los 70, 80, y parte de los 90 vuelva a ser editado en lugar de la morralla que se edita actualmente.

Brett says

It more or less goes without saying that Koontz books aren't very enjoyable, but this one is actually one of the ones that was relatively fun. It's a pretty basic creature feature. Once the plot is set, you know what you're going to get; there isn't much in the way of suspense.

This novel revisits Koontz's obsession with secret experiments and genetic tampering. His concerns have not exactly turned out to be prescient. The characters are same basic stock you'll find in any of his work and the writing is lackluster and annoying. The plot revolves around a guy coming back from the dead and mutating into a lobster or something. His valiant and selfless ex-wife must fight him off, with the help of the supportive and understanding new boyfriend. So we're not breaking any new ground here, but still, it's more atmospheric than some of his other novels and not unreadable.

Rebecca McNutt says

If you're a horror or psychological thriller fan, you'll definitely want to read this! *Shadowfires* is like a more modern version of *The Monkey's Paw*, and it's **so creepy!** I loved its old-school campfire story style, really far out. :)

Jim C says

My rating is 3.5 stars.

This novel is about what happens when man is not careful with science and it goes amok. A recently divorced husband is killed but refuses to die and he is after his ex-wife. This book had a mixture of horror and thriller. If you have read Dean Koontz before, you will recognize his theme of the chase between evil and good. The first half of the book was really enjoyable as it was more suspenseful and enticed me to continue reading. The second half veered towards the horror aspect and lost its pace of suspense. That is the reason I knocked down my rating from 4 stars. I would recommend this book as it crosses all genres of

horror, thriller, and and little of science fiction.

Korynn says

To be fair, I didn't read this book. I mostly skimmed it, ignoring the subplots about the detectives (human interest) and the government dark ops (horror) and stuck to the main plot: what to do if your abusive controlling soon-to-be ex-husband comes back from the dead and mutates into a giant iguana? I would have been more than happy to just stick to the suspense of whether or not her husband had come back from the dead but apparently that wasn't enough. Koontz had to run with the concept by abandoning it three feet from the entrance and going the secret evil government conspiracy project route which is just so hard to cobble together believable details and just gets more and more ridiculous. There are a couple of sex scenes with the protagonists who are beautiful beautiful people and a rape by a giant iguana. Koontz writes beautifully timed suspense though, he is a obviously a master of leading the reader further on with will-they/won't-they/what's- next/do-they-get-away and I have to admire him for doing that quite well. But the plot is laughable and the pseudo-psychology pointless and the sub-plots unnecessary.

Mark R. says

A man and woman, recently romantically involved, driving, running, and crawling away from a sadistic killer linked to secret government work. Pretty standard setup for a Dean Koontz novel, "Shadowfires" is not one of his best nor one of his worst.

The main problem with the book is that it's about a hundred, hundred-fifty pages too long. The ending, while satisfying for the most part, is dragged out particularly long, and I feel a lot of the energy was gone at around page 300.

Still, not a bad book. The villain in this one is a genetic scientist who is killed in the first chapter, but is able to come back to life, constantly mutating, due to an injection of his own new serum that the government organization known as the Defense Security Agency is highly interested in.

Marsha says

Published in the late 80's, this tale of genetic engineering gone horribly wrong could be something read in the newspaper in just a couple of years.

When a brilliant and powerful man with a fear of hellfire discovers a genetic life extension mechanism using experimental rats, he throws all of his resources into perfecting it. Much to his amazement, not only do the genetic modifications extend life but they also resurrect the dead experimental animals. However, once brought back to life, these rats behave in odd violent ways leading ultimately in their second deaths.

Unperturbed he ventures on. While having an argument with his soon to be ex wife, he inadvertently darts in front of a truck and is killed immediately. The fun begins when an embarrassed corner must confess that the body seems to have gotten up and walked away.

With unexpected twists and a high creepiness factor, Shadow Fires entertains, thrills, and moves at a dizzying pace.

Sarah says

I know that the reviews for this book have been mostly negative, but I am going to break with that and give a positive review. I really enjoyed Shadowfires. Yes, the book had a VERY unlikely premise, and it required a huge suspension of disbelief. But many horror books do. The story was so fast-paced that it kept me turning pages quickly to find out what would happen. The "good" characters were very likable. I really rooted for them and cared about what happened to them. That is essential for any horror story. A good horror story must have characters you believe in and feel for. Also, the characters were smart- there was not one single point in the book where they missed doing something that I had thought of. The author dealt with the premise of the story in a logical manner and had obviously thought through all the objections or logical problems that could have been perceived by the reader. I hate it when the main characters of a horror novel are "dumb" and miss the obvious solutions to their problems- that did not happen here. Nor did Dean Koontz leave any obvious plot holes. It was easy to feel myself in the characters' shoes and they did, in every case, what I would have done (and even sometimes things I would not have thought of) Shadowfires was a good adventure story, a cat and mouse chase with multiple players which rocketed along until a huge confrontation at the end, and I found that confrontation to be satisfying. Overall, a satisfying read. It was very effective as a horror novel.
