



## What the Night Knows: A Novel

By Dean Koontz

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#### #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

In the late summer of a long-ago year, Alton Turner Blackwood brutally murdered four families. His savage spree ended only when he himself was killed by the last survivor of the last family, a fourteen-year-old boy.

Half a continent away and two decades later, someone is murdering families again, re-creating in detail Blackwood's crimes. Homicide detective John Calvino is certain that his own family—his wife and three children—will be targets, just as his parents and sisters were victims on that distant night when he was fourteen and killed their slayer.

As a detective, John is a man of reason who deals in cold facts. But an extraordinary experience convinces him that sometimes death is not a one-way journey, that sometimes the dead return.

**Includes the bonus novella *Darkness Under the Sun!***

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## What the Night Knows: A Novel By Dean Koontz Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #563630 in Books
- Brand: Bantam
- Published on: 2011-10-18
- Released on: 2011-10-18
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 7.50" h x 1.50" w x 4.20" l, .82 pounds
- Binding: Mass Market Paperback
- 608 pages

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## **Editorial Review**

### Amazon.com Review

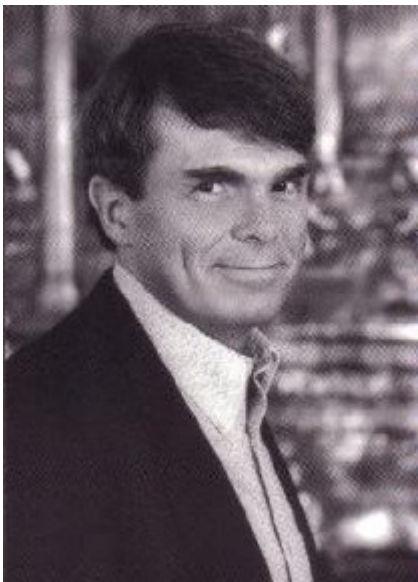
In the late summer of a long ago year, a killer arrived in a small city. His name was Alton Turner Blackwood, and in the space of a few months he brutally murdered four families. His savage spree ended only when he himself was killed by the last survivor of the last family, a fourteen-year-old boy.

Half a continent away and two decades later, someone is murdering families again, recreating in detail Blackwood's crimes. Homicide detective John Calvino is certain that his own family—his wife and three children—will be targets in the fourth crime, just as his parents and sisters were victims on that distant night when he was fourteen and killed their slayer.

As a detective, John is a man of reason who deals in cold facts. But an extraordinary experience convinces him that sometimes death is not a one-way journey, that sometimes the dead return.

Here is ghost story like no other you have read. In the Calvinos, Dean Koontz brings to life a family that might be your own, in a war for their survival against an adversary more malevolent than any he has yet created, with their own home the battleground. Of all his acclaimed novels, none exceeds *What the Night Knows* in power, in chilling suspense, and in sheer mesmerizing storytelling.

### **A Letter from Author Dean Koontz**



### **Villains and Vegetables**

Readers ask certain questions over and over again. Such as, "How often have you been institutionalized?" and "How does your wife sleep at night, knowing what kind of stories spring from your mind?" and "If you could be any kind of vegetable, what vegetable would you be?"

Because I found most schoolwork tedious, I felt as if I had been institutionalized for fifteen years-- throughout grade school, high school, and college. In the grim institution called high school, as a kid in a small town, my therapy consisted of reading novels and listening to rock-and-roll on tower-of-power radio

stations in distant cities. In college, my therapy was all-night pinochle tournaments. I cut more classes than Sweeney Todd cut throats.

My wife sleeps peacefully, thank you. She knows I'm basically a pussycat. We have been together since high school, and in all those years, the only living thing she has seen me cut is myself; any time I pick up the simplest tool or kitchen implement to do some minor household task, my blood will inevitably flow. I've been known to cut myself accidentally with something as seemingly safe as a rolling pin.

Sugar snap peas.

Another frequently asked question is "How do you create such bizarre yet convincing and terrifying villains." The glib answer is to say I watch the evening news. In fact, however, the antagonists in my novels create themselves, just as do the protagonists. I conceive a character around a seed of truth, some essential fact that lies at the core of him, then I give him free will, and I discover more about him as the story unfolds. Sometimes, when characters surprise me with their revelations, it seems as if they are indeed real, that I am writing in a kind of dream state that allows me to bridge this world with some parallel reality and tap the consciousness of people living

Alton Turner Blackwood, the villain of *Darkness Under the Sun* and of the forthcoming novel *What the Night Knows*, literally appeared to me in one of those exceedingly vivid dreams that are peculiar to many of us who, suffering allergies, take two or three Benedryl every night for too many weeks. Benedryl dreams are, in my experience, never flat-out nightmares. They generally do not have much in the way of storylines, but the people in them are so dimensional and so exquisitely detailed that they seem as real as anyone you would meet in real life. They are sometimes strange, as well, and menacing, though these are for the most part dreams without action, so their menace is implied.

The morning after the Benedryl dream in which Alton Turner Blackwood appeared (though he had no name in the dream), I wrote down a physical description of him, which I used word for word in the finished novel:

*He stood six feet five, scarecrow-thin but strong. His hands were immense, the spatulate fingers as suctorial as the toe discs of a web-foot toad, large bony wrists like robot joints, orangutan-long arms. His shoulder blades were thick and malformed, so that bat wings appeared to be furled under his shirt.*

As for how his face looks and as for the explanation of how and why such a specimen might be born: I'll let you discover those things in the novella and the novel.

Of the scores of evil characters I have created, none has so affected me as Alton Turner Blackwood. In spite of all his physical and mental strangenesses, I would not be surprised to see him one evening, walking along a lonely highway or perhaps standing under a lamppost across the street, still and watchful. Of all the eerie characters met in Benedryl dreams--many of them like people you might expect to see in Tim Burton movies--he is the only one who has made a second appearance in my sleep. And he's appeared three times. I don't know what to make of that. If his repeated appearance means anything, I guess I'll find out eventually.

Baby carrots are also cool.

From Publishers Weekly

In this less than suspenseful supernatural thriller from Koontz (*Breathless*), 14-year-old Billy Lucas's inexplicable slaughter of his entire family awakens the fears of homicide detective John Calvino, who as a child was the sole survivor of a similar family massacre. Though Calvino slayed the fiend who did the deed,

he has always worried that the killings were demonic in nature and that the evil spirit responsible would return and harm his wife and three children. Sure enough, after Calvino visits the psychiatric ward where Lucas is held, something starts to haunt every member of his close-knit clan, though improbably and conveniently they all fail to share this disturbing development with each other. The detective believes he has a deadline to thwart the force bent on repeating the earlier murders. The terror level never reaches that of similarly themed works such as the movie *Fallen*. Clunky prose (e.g., Andy Tane, a cop, "is figuratively and literally a horse") doesn't help. (Jan.)

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From [Booklist](#)

**\*Starred Review\*** John Calvino horns in on two fellow homicide detectives' case because it uncannily resembles the slaughter of his family two decades ago, which he, out on a surreptitious heavy date, came home to in the middle of the night, too late to do more than kill the killer. He has kept that night's details secret, so he's knocked for a loop when the present-day perp repeats verbatim one of the last things the Calvinos' murderer said. He becomes convinced that the murderer's spirit, leagued with a demon, has returned to execute a similar series of family-slaughters whose last victims will again be the Calvinos—his own brood. The evil spirit will follow the same schedule as 20 years ago, using persons its demon partner helps it possess as its baleful tools. Events start bearing John out, but there's a wrinkle in the murderer's plans. Koontz worked out a family-at-risk scenario in last year's *Relentless*; but whereas that book was breakneck-paced, science-fictional, riddled with screwball humor, and concerned about cultural politics, this novel is deliberate, highly supernatural, somber throughout, and motivated by religious dread—one of Koontz's weightiest performances. **High-Demand Backstory:** Koontz is Koontz; every library will need his newest. --Ray Olson

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Randall Blake:**

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#### **Edith Stewart:**

Playing with family in a very park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with buddies is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try factor that really opposite from that. A single activity that make you not sense tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you already been ride on and with addition details. Even you love *What the Night Knows: A Novel*, you may enjoy both. It is fine combination right, you still desire to miss it? What kind of hang-out type is it? Oh can occur its mind hangout guys. What? Still don't have it, oh come on its referred to as reading friends.

**Alice Edwards:**

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**Allison Morales:**

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