



Shattered

Dean Koontz

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RUN... OR DIE

The van was in back of them again. Closer this time. There could be no mistake--they were being followed.

RUN... OR DIE

But why? The question kept nagging at Alex and Colin as they left Philadelphia behind and sped toward their new home in San Francisco. Courtney would be waiting for them, ready to begin a wonderful new life with her husband, her brother...

RUN... OR DIE

Now, someone else is driving cross-country to see Courtney, too. Someone whose brain is rotting inside. Someone who knows their route, their stops, even their destination.

RUN... OR DIE

He's got an ax.

"Shattered catches you by the throat and won't let you go" --Chicago SunTimes

Shattered Details

Date : Published February 15th 1985 by Berkley (first published 1973)

ISBN : 9780425099339

Author : Dean Koontz

Format : Mass Market Paperback 289 pages

Genre : Horror, Fiction, Thriller, Suspense

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From Reader Review Shattered for online ebook

Edward Lorn says

I was once a kid, and my mother had this epic hideaway called the Great Book Closet. Inside this cabinet of curiosities, I would be introduced to the likes of Stephen King and Robert R. McCammon and Dean R. Koontz. I also found some Peter Straub and John Saul in there, but that holds no bearing on our topic today.

What *is* today's topic? Well, the old Black/Neon Koontz books, that's what. This is the era of Koontz material that was released in paperback by Berkley books in the 70s and 80s. There are numerous novels in this category, and every damn one of them is good. If you find a Koontz book with a black cover, a simple image on the front, and a bright-as-fuck font used for the title and byline, read that mo' frakker.

Shattered is a simple-as-balls premise. Despite what Goodreads' catalogue says, the books is only 215 pages. It's more of a novella than an actual novel, and should only take you about five hours or less to complete. What makes this book stand out in the crowd is its antagonist, George Leland. He's one of Koontz's best baddies. No over-the-top, chiseled-hot-bod-rocket-cock, shades-wearing foodie like we've received over the past twenty years. Leland's character is as well developed as Alex and Colin, and I love that I felt a bit bad for the bad guy during the ending. Oh, and the ending? Koontz nails it! (Hahaha, I crack me up. Inside jokes for the win!).

In summation: *Shattered* significantly skirts a shitty showing by simply shining. S-s-s-s-motherfucker! Read it.

Final Judgment: A Volvo with a gun rack.

Bettie? says

Description: *RUN... OR DIE. The van was in back of them again. Closer this time. There could be no mistake--they were being followed.*

RUN... OR DIE. But why? The question kept nagging at Alex and Colin as they left Philadelphia behind and sped toward their new home in San Francisco. Courtney would be waiting for them, ready to begin a wonderful new life with her husband, her brother...

RUN... OR DIE. Now, someone else is driving cross-country to see Courtney, too. Someone whose brain is rotting inside. Someone who knows their route, their stops, even their destination.

RUN... OR DIE. He's got an ax.

A month of Halloween 2015 reads:

- #1: 3* Nobody True by James Herbert: fraudio
- #2: TR The Horror Stories of Robert E. Howard: fraudio
- #3: AB Brain Child by John Saul: fraudio
- #4: 3* Domain (Rats #3) by James Herbert: fraudio
- #5: CR The Mourning Vessels by Peter Luther: paperback
- #6: 2* The Doom of the Great City: ebook short-story
- #7: 5* Long After Midnight by Ray Bradbury: fraudio
- #8: 5* The Dead Zone by Stephen King: fraudio
- #9: TR The Chalice: hardback
- #10: TR Seven Gothic Tales: ebook
- #11: TR Tales of Men and Ghosts
- #12: 2* Shattered by Dean Koontz: fraudio

Derek Gillespie says

Good, simple story.

Peter West says

The story to shattered is nothing out of the ordinary, not cunning or fantastic in any way. It's just an ordinary tale like many others. What makes this book good, is the way that an ordinary tale has been told.

Koontz writes in a very natural way. There's no pretentious sentences, no attempt to be smart or brilliant, no corny people or events, he just tells you the story - plain and simple. The characters and story are so down to earth and believable that you don't even have to try to believe in them - you just do.

It's hard to see, just by staring at the words, why Koontz's prose are so natural and flowing, but they are. This is a good entertaining read.

Greta is Erikasbuddy says

Summary:

Alex and Courtney just got married. Courtney is in San Francisco while Alex is in Philadelphia with he 11 year old brother Colin. Courtney is Colin's guardian ever since their parents died. The new family is now moving to California. Since Courtney is getting the house ready and got there early by plane that means Colin and Alex will drive the Thunderbird across country and maybe even bond a bit on the way.

George can't get his mind off of Courtney. Why did she leave him? How could she? Alex Doyle and her brother are in the way. If he was just to get them out of the picture then Courtney would love him again. Right?

Greta's Thoughts

WOW! What a ride!!

While this book is a bit dated the thriller/suspense/edge of your seat concept is timeless.

The story is very very well told. Once you get a bit of info where you think you have everything figured out you get to hear the other side and are then sent for another loop.

The best parts of "Shattered" was the car chase. It was just like that car chase in *Jeepers Creepers*, where if it was a movie you'd be screaming "Noooo!! Goooo!".

And then another great part was the motel scene where Alex is trying to figure out who was jiggling the doorknob. Again you scream, "Noooo!!!" but this time you add, "Have you never seen a horror movie, dude? Are you out of your freaking mind? Don't go in there!!"

It's totally awesome!!!

Things that I enjoyed about this book was how simplistically it was written. You get to hear the story as though it's being told around a campfire. I guess that would be narrative... and that's one awesome way of telling a scary story.

The other cool thing is... This could happen!! What's more scary than something that could actually jump out in the middle of the night and take your life in cold blood? Forget vampires... What do you do when you get stuck with a man and his ax?

Oh ye-ah! You hold on tight to the covers and make other arrangements... cuz you aren't going anywhere till you finish "*Shattered*"

Bandit says

Early Koontz is almost solely responsible for my horror obsession. Before I found out about all the other amazing writers now gracing (weighing down to the point of bowing) my bookshelves, I read Koontz. His writing has gotten softer with age and his books now keep piling up in my TBR list, but I am a loyal fan and the man can write.

Johnny says

If Koontz released "Shattered" today, I don't think anyone would know the difference. I even think many people would prefer it over his new books. Here we have a true high concept story, but with an element of mystery, strangeness, occultness, ... which is usually present in many a favorite Koontz novel but sadly enough missing from straightforward thrillers like "Velocity", "The Husband" and "The Good Guy".

The premise of this story is once again quite simple: guy and girl marry and move from Pennsylvania to California. Girl flies ahead to get the new house in order, guy drives the car across the country together with

the girl's 11 year old brother. Guy and brother are then tyrannized by girl's old suitor along the way.

It's kinda like Steven Spielberg's "Duel", except with two people in the car and an Automover van instead of a truck, and many more scenes at diners and motels.

What makes it so special, is the mental condition of said suitor. This villain suffers from some kind of disorder, presumably a brain tumor, which makes him far more dangerous than your average ex-boyfriend. Aggression, paranoia, hallucinations, amnesia, it's all there. You almost feel sorry for the guy, because you get this feeling that him behaving in this violent way isn't really his conscious fault. He wasn't born evil, he hasn't become evil due to a bad childhood or something. If one of his fuses hadn't blown, if his wiring hadn't short-circuited, nothing would have happened.

The main character Alex Doyle is your average Koontz hero. A simple guy, no special skills, minding his own business, trying to live his life to the best of his abilities, until he suddenly finds himself in a situation in which he's forced to act in ways he never imagined were in his range. Compare him to Mitch Rafferty in "The Husband", Jimmy Tock in "Life Expectancy", Dusty Rhodes in "False Memory" or Tommy Phan in "Ticktock".

His comedy sidekick is his young brother in law, Colin, whose presence is good for some great dialogue. But Colin is a lot more: he works as a mirror for Alex and helps him realize that he must stop being a little kid himself and act as a grown up human being.

I think this appeals to many male readers. Once in a while we look in the mirror and are amazed by the amount of wrinkles in the face, the gray in the hair, the weariness in the eyes. Because just below the surface, we all still feel like ten year old kids running around with our toys and playing with our friends.

But which fiction do we follow? The stories that teach us to finally grow up, get over our fears and face the world? Or the stories that tell us to stop thinking all that matters in life is money or a career and make us remember our childhood?

Marnie Krüger says

This being my first Koontz read, I was a tad disappointed. It was a very predictable tale and after chapter 2 I knew how the story would end. Not what I Expected! I was hoping for a Thriller-Mystery with a twist that would spin everything around and an ending that would leave me wanting more. After all the raves and compliments given to Koontz, I guess I picked the wrong story.

I did like Koontz's writing style nevertheless and I will try some of his other work, just not very soon.

Lisa M. says

When I was a young child, I tried to read several adult books (King, Koontz, Rice, etc). While I understood the books logically, I wasn't always able to commit to long plots or to understand the emotional weight of

what I was reading. (I guess being emotionally moved by the books and being able to connect with adult characters is a sign of aging!) I recently went to one of my state's largest book sales. I try to be careful about what I buy these days because I have over at least 200 books I don't want to part with, but I was indulgent and purchased a few Koontz volumes.

From the description I expected this book to have a paranormal twist -- like King's "Trucks." (I haven't read that one in years and can't recall if I liked it, but out of his many stories, that one stayed with me.)

"Shattered" does not have a paranormal element. Instead, it is about a woman's ex-boyfriend who began to experience psychosis (it is insinuated it may be caused by a brain tumor or other physical ailment). In his mind, he begins to idealize her, and believes if he is with her his life will become good again. He just has to eliminate her boyfriend and her younger brother, who she is raising. He plans to do this as the two drive cross country to meet her at their new house.

I enjoyed this book immensely. The themes were interesting and complex (not something you always get in the horror genre). For me, the novel is about how America was changing during the 60s/70s -- the idea of traditional masculinity (cops, soldiers), was being questioned. The narrator is a "commercial artist," wears his hair long, and wears flamboyant clothing. He identifies the fact that he has always had traits that were less masculine -- ie, being scared. This book presented him with the challenge of becoming more masculine to protect himself and his new family. I think the themes of questioning the social order are still relevant today.

That's another thing -- I was comparing this to Stephen King as I read it. I'm a huge King fan and I always associated the two in my mind. I was actually really impressed by this book, which was much more timeless than King's work. King's work is often dated with what seem like obscure pop references today -- not so with Koontz. I'm not ready to pick a new favorite, but I enjoyed this book and look forward to reading the others I purchased.

As a therapist and someone with their own mental health history, I do have to comment on the psychotic element of the book. Statistically, people who live with psychosis are less likely to be violent than those who are not. I found George's disorganized thought patterns to be reminiscent of people with psychosis I have worked with, though. If you take this part of the book with a grain of salt, it is a good book overall.

Stephen Gallup says

As sometimes happens on family vacations, things end up being too chaotic for me to do justice to the books I had packed along. Consequently, I cast about for something that can be read in a distraction-rich environment, and this time I ended up with *Shattered*.

(The only other time I've read a Dean Koontz novel was under exactly the same conditions.)

This one concerns Doyle, a young man driving cross-country with the 11-year-old brother of the woman he has just married. His bride has flown ahead to their new home in San Francisco — and it so happens that her deranged former boyfriend George is following them with the idea that he can reclaim her love if he eliminates the competition.

The 11-year-old notices immediately that someone seems to be following them. The situation is a game at

first, but things quickly become creepy and then downright scary.

The parts that violated credibility for me were (a) apparently Doyle knows nothing about the crazy ex-boyfriend's existence, (b) he avoids telling his bride what is happening on their nightly phone calls, and (c) he is unaccountably slow in seeking help from the cops.

The law enforcement side is another odd twist, in that the peace officers are concerned only with catching leftist radicals. Because Doyle has long hair, a card in his wallet saying he's a CO, a less-than-manly line of work, a nice car, and is bound for SF, cops in the heartland have no interest in helping him. One says, "I'm not a man you can call a pig one day and then run to for help the next."

I see this book was first published in 1973. When I drove cross-country in 1971, as a longhair, in the company of others like myself, everyone liked to trade tales about the rednecked cops they'd encountered. So I guess this aspect of the story is a relic of those times. Unequal enforcement of the law may still be with us, but today this variation just feels bizarre.

One other element of the story is Doyle's pacifism, the fate of which is what gives the book its title. I don't know. Maybe this is meant only as a slasher story like they used to air on late-night TV, but the business with the cops made me look for an underlying theme. All I came up with was that if the people who ought to ensure our security don't do their job, ordinary folks have to assume the burden — at the cost of the ideals they could enjoy in a better world. Maybe Koontz had that in mind, maybe not.

Maciek says

"Shattered" is an early Koontz title (1973), originally published under a pseudonym - K.R. Dwyer. Alex and Colin are on the move to Courtney, Colin's sister - and Alex's wife. The trip from Philadelphia and San Francisco seems to be going good, until Colin spots a van following them.

It's a short, but pleasant book. I enjoyed the setting - most of the book takes place on the road and in various motels. It's a nice book to spend 2-3 hours reading. The ending is a let-down, but it's rather common in his works.

I was surprised by racists undertones.

Robjr73 says

Soooo much better than Breathless or TickTock (2 of my more recent bad Koontz reads). This book is intense from page 1 til the end. Nothing unique about the story itself (psycho ex boyfriend stalks woman's family) so for that reason it's hard to give it five stars but Dean executes this baby well. These are the kind of books that MADE Koontz the "other big author who's name begins with K"

Mark says

Shattered, a Dean Koontz novel written under a previous pseudonym, K.R.Dwyer (stating the obvious but simply his initials backwards). In a funny way I could call this a re-read as I bought it many years ago when

it was first re-issued as a Dean Koontz title. This passed week I decided to head for some early Koontz and almost immediately realized that I have read this before. This time a review.

For those of you who have seen Spielberg's 1971 movie *Duel*, starring Denis Weaver, *Shattered* takes the same plot line. However instead of a big truck terrorizing an innocent man as he drives across the States, *Shattered* deals with a maniac behind the wheel of an Automover. The suspense is maintained in *Duel* because you never actually see the driver of the truck whereas within *Shattered* you get the story first hand from Alex and Colin, the victims, and from Leland, the crazed man chasing them.

Alex and Colin are driving from Philadelphia to San Francisco to meet up with Courtney in their new house. Courtney is Alex's wife and considerably older sister of Colin. She has flown ahead to get furnishings organised for the new home while the boys plan out a road trip.

The final scene of this book is over very quickly and possibly shows Koontz during his immature early years. Spending the time to build the suspense on the drive it feels as though he ran out ideas and finished the story in a hurry. There definitely was scope for a more intense, prolonged ending to the book. Obviously not a classic and will never make the top 5 of Koontz's novels but a decent read to pass the time and get you thinking. I would still encourage you to watch *Duel* ahead of this read.

Marsten says

No me ha gustado.

Me esperaba más del bueno de Koontz.

La historia es muy simple, monótona, sin muchas sorpresas ni giros muy inesperados, aunque eso si, es directa, sin muchas concesiones a la introspección de los personajes ni a farragosas descripciones; en esencia, acción y diálogos.

El final no es nada original. Uno de los personajes, Colin, no es nada creíble: el caval con once años parece demasiado maduro, adulto... Vale que lo pinta listo, pero tanto? Para más inri, la traducción es mala de narices, con expresiones y tiempos verbales ya en desuso, además de una puntuación algo extraña y forzada... O Dean R. Koontz aún no dominaba la literatura o el traductor, un tal Julio F. Yáñez, era malo. A lo mejor, el hecho que fuera una de sus primeras obras explica la baja calidad de la misma...

En definitiva, una novela prescindible.

Steven Godin says

Not the sort of thing I would normally read and this still remains the one and only Dean Koontz book that I have read to date, with so many novels under his belt it's a case of where on earth do you begin!. This was a pretty standard attempt at a cross country road thriller and ticks all the right boxes when it comes to tense and gripping thrills and chills but at no point does it break any new ground and in the end felt lame and predictable, reminded me a little of an early Steven Spielberg film called '*Duel*' and also '*The Hitcher*' springs to mind, this definitely felt like reading a B movie, the sort of film you would stumble across on TV in the early hours of the morning eating re-heated pizza!.

Bert says

So this was very much in keeping with a lot of my favourite movies from the Seventies, films like *Duel*, *The Car*, *Race With The Devil*, basically films where people get chased by maniacs in cars. And it had that post-Vietnam, post-Kennedy assassination paranoia and that sense of America in schism, all things i love, so i totally enjoyed this...but also it was obvs kinda trashy and not particularly stylish. This October i'm just going to read trashy horror. Or just trashy trash.

Solanaceae says

Wow I am still reeling from the shock...but sadly the shock comes only from having just experienced such an uninspired and poorly written story.

It's bland. The whole thing feels...just dull. So dull that I actually couldn't come up with a simile that would do the dullness justice. I'm sure Stephen King would have a field day with this though being the simile addict he is.

The characters are unrealistic (especially the 11 year old boy who basically talks and acts like an adult throughout) and they are SO dumb and SO annoying that you can't help but wish for them to die...horribly.

David Sodergren - paperbacksandpugs says

Despite an amazingly abrupt last chapter (wherein Koontz apparently forgets the premise of his own book), *Shattered* delivers plenty of good old fashioned pulp thrills.

I just wish Koontz would take things a bit further. You're writing horror, mate! Don't be shy!

Paul says

Fairly standard fare, but only my second Dean Koontz. Reminded me a bit of the film *Hitcher*. The formula for a thriller is run through pretty well. Psychotic (or possibly just physically ill) ex-boyfriend. New love in life, new start on the other side of the country, cute child (in this case eleven year old brother), who is very intelligent but "difficult" in an undefined sort of way. Why not get the girl to fly to California and let the lads do a road trip to bond. Then psycho ex-boyfriend can follow them. New boyfriend is obviously a planner who has the route set out with all the motels on the way. This means psycho can get hold of the route and follow them in a bloody great van. Cat and mouse chase ensues with its conclusion in California. Throw in some eye-popping coincidences, some spectacularly stupid law enforcement officers and a bit of general mayhem and there you have it.

I musn't complain too much, it's sent me to sleep for the past few nights (so much for the thriller bit!)

Fred says

August 2018 group read

Courtney (wife) was already in San Francisco. Alex(husband) & Colin(Courtney's young brother) travels in his Thunderbird from Philadelphia to San Francisco to bond closer.

Colin sees a Chevrolet Van (George Lehand) following them. After Colin seeing George with an axe, fear effects Alex in the cross-country chase too & he buys a gun in Carson City.

George was a killer of a State Trooper in his travels. But when they meet in the end... Was his purpose to kill Alex & get Courtney's love back? Find & punish Courtney for her betrayal of "love" to him?

The end of this Dean Koontz book has unexpected "love" scenes unusual in his books, he is my favorite author.

September 2014

The book was great but would the problem not occurred if the entire Doyle family - Courtney(wife), Alex(dad) & Colin(11 - Courtney's brother) travelled together in Alex's Thunderbird to San Francisco & avoid the problem with the Chevolet van tracking them?
-or- would George Leland just be there anyway?
