



The Husband

Dean Koontz

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With each and every new novel, Dean Koontz raises the stakes--and the pulse rate--higher than any other author. Now, in what may be his most suspenseful and heartfelt novel ever, he brings us the story of an ordinary man whose extraordinary commitment to his wife will take him on a harrowing journey of adventure, sacrifice, and redemption to the mystery of love itself--and to a showdown with the darkness that would destroy it forever.

What would you do for love? Would you die? Would you kill?

We have your wife. You can get her back for two million cash. Landscaper Mitchell Rafferty thinks it must be some kind of joke. He was in the middle of planting impatiens in the yard of one of his clients when his cell phone rang. Now he's standing in a normal suburban neighborhood on a bright summer day, having a phone conversation out of his darkest nightmare.

Whoever is on the other end of the line is dead serious. He has Mitch's wife and he's named the price for her safe return. The caller doesn't care that Mitch runs a small two-man landscaping operation and has no way of raising such a vast sum. He's confident that Mitch will find a way.

If he loves his wife enough. . . Mitch does love her enough. He loves her more than life itself. He's got seventy-two hours to prove it. He has to find the two million by then. But he'll pay a lot more. He'll pay anything.

From its tense opening to its shattering climax, *The Husband* is a thriller that will hold you in its relentless grip for every twist, every shock, every revelation...until it lets you go, unmistakably changed. This is a Dean Koontz novel, after all. And there's no other experience quite like it.

The Husband Details

Date : Published May 30th 2006 by Bantam

ISBN : 9780553804799

Author : Dean Koontz

Format : Hardcover 400 pages

Genre : Thriller, Fiction, Horror, Mystery, Suspense

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From Reader Review The Husband for online ebook

Nahibya says

Estuvo bueno, la verdad. No fue increíble ni me cambió la vida, me molestaron varias partes, sobretodo el final, pero fue entretenido.

Vídeoreseña: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z-FIr...>

Maxine (Booklover Catlady) says

Suspenseful and brilliant, Koontz is the master with words indeed. Brilliant plot, fast paced and thrilling. I read this book expecting less after reading mixed reviews but whilst Koontz hasn't added his usually spooky side to things it's still a very well written book. I loved the twists and turns that stopped me from thinking I had things all worked out.

Natalie Monroe says

One would expect with a storyline revolving around an average Joe struggling to ransom his kidnapped wife back that it'd be super intense and keep me on the edge of my seat, right?

It dragged on and on and the writing wasn't something I'd expect from a bestselling author. It was sketchy and the dialogue at times was just plain awkward.

There were some moments that made me sit up, but those were far and in-between and mostly had to do with the wife, Holly. The husband, Mitch was a fucking pansy and I hated him even after he grew balls at the very, *very* end of the book.

The ending was a happily-ever-after of the likes that have not been seen since Breaking Dawn. I want **trauma**. I want **psychological pain**. Or at the very least, **signs of healing**. I don't want a chocolate syrup-coated sundae with fucking rainbow sprinkles. This is an Adult book, no? Then give me the bitter reality, don't airbrush it out. That's what I read romances for.

Needless to say, I will not be reading another Dean Koontz book anytime soon. Honestly, you'd be better off with Stephen King. Heck, even Christopher Pike would be more entertaining than this.

Sarita says

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Book Concierge says

Audiobook performed by Holter Graham
3.5***

Mitch Rafferty runs a small, 2-man, landscaping business. He's in the middle of planting impatiens in a client's yard when he gets a call on his cell-phone. His wife starts with "Whatever happens, I love you." Then the kidnapper gets on the line and demands \$2 million. There must be some mistake; he and his wife have less than \$12,000 to their name. But the kidnapper is adamant that "If you love your wife enough" Mitch will find a way to come up with the ransom in time.

Well, this was a wild ride! The formula is pretty standard, and I was pretty certain the "good guys" would win. Trouble is, who are the "good guys"? Koontz includes multiple twists in the plot so that every time I thought I had figured it out, I was proven wrong. The ending felt rushed and unfinished to me, but I definitely enjoyed the ride.

This is the first book by Koontz that I've read. It's not great literature, but it sure held my attention and I'll definitely read more from him. Especially when I'm in the mood for a fast-paced, entertaining thriller.

Holter Graham does a fine job narrating the audio version. He has good pacing and I believed in the characters as he voiced them.

Rachel says

I read this book in about a day, and I really enjoyed it. One of the things I love about reading a Dean Koontz book is that I can pretty much tell just by the fact that he wrote it that it will be a good read.

This book follows a man who is trying to ransom his kidnapped wife. It explores the elastic nature of human morality and is full of twists and turns. Mitch (the protagonist) is a simple gardener who finds his life turned upside down in the blink of an eye. He is forced to alter his entire perspective on good and bad, right and wrong in order to save the life of his wife.

This book doesn't have some of the mystical/sci-fi properties of other Koontz books, but it keeps the action up just the same.

There are several other authors that I have read over time who have become predictable in their plot devices and story lines, and I am pleased to say that after 20 years of reading Dean Koontz novels, he still surprises

me.

Also, I love that in the back of his book he gives his address for fans to write to, and if you listen to his podcast you know that he and his wife answer every letter that is sent. That is one good man.

Maciek says

This book contains the funniest simile ever: The man character drives his car and is accompanied by *The hobgoblins of wind*. Yes, HOBGOBLINS OF WIND.

Okay, so I've read *The Husband* when it came out and forgot it entirely. Deciding to write a review of it, I grabbed a paperback and began to read.

The Husband is one of those airport books that will keep your attention during the flight, but you can leave them on the plane without feeling any guilt. Character development is practically nonexistent. But it's all about the plot, eh? The book starts with a bang: A gardener's wife is kidnapped, and the kidnappers want 2 million dollars. Obviously, a gardener doesn't have such money, but the kidnappers are serious - they shoot an innocent passerby just to prove it.

It all gets better and better from here. As I was reading I kept saying "hey Dean, it's not bad, not bad at all!". Sure, the characters are bland, the villains are bland, but who cares, it's not a book that you'd read for school. The tension keeps increasing, and our gardener finds himself in situations that neither he nor the reader could have expected.

Until the end.

Koontz has been carefully building his house of cards to impress the reader, but at the very end he gets like "whew, who gives a crap anyway!" and blows the whole thing down. It crashes painfully and ruins the whole experience.

Because there's absolutely no need to even try to explain how the gardener got out of the mess he has made. He committed various things, illegal of course, and there are no repercussions. All we get is "3 YEARS LATER" 1 page epilogue where everyone is happy and sappy. Not one word is devoted to any sort of explanation. Which one might think would come, if there were whole pages devoted to Koontz's philosophy and the whole book was written in his "new" prose, short sentences being interrupted by paragraphs of some new-age bullshit. Yes, describing the inspirational grass is absolutely necessary, but satisfying the reader is not. You're wondering how Koontz will tie up all the loose ends? Here's your answer: he doesn't do it at all.

This could have been an enjoyable beach read, but Koontz decided to write another 50 books that year so he had to call it quits. Shame on you, Dean.

Todd Greene says

I've always thought of Dean Koontz as the master of psychological suspense. His novels are always full of

weird and over the top characters that he makes believable and then he puts them in situations which are weird and over the top and makes them believable.

This time around Dean changes things up a bit. He takes an average Joe and puts him in a seemingly no win situation. Mitch Rafferty, owner of a two man landscaping business gets the phone call no husband would want. Someone has his wife. That's the bad news. The worse news is, the someone wants \$2 million in 60 hours. He doesn't have that kind of money and they know it. Still, they're convinced he'll find away to get the funds. If he loves his wife. He loves her. No question.

The kidnappers tighten the screws from that moment on by first killing someone "innocent" so Mitch will know they mean business. Things go down hill for our hero from there.

One of the things I really liked about this story was how Dean shows two people who were raised in the same dysfunctional environment could respond to that upbringing in totally different ways. You'll have to read the book to find out what I mean. I try to never include plot spoilers in my reviews.

I gave a rating of 5 stars because I loved the story. Koontz is one of my all time favorite novelists. I dream of one day writing my own novels half as well as he does. However, this novel wasn't without its problems for me.

One, the scenes with the wife when she's held captive just didn't work for me. When I read the sections with Mitch it was like I was right there with him. Almost like what happened to him happened to me. With those sections devoted to his wife I felt somehow distant from the situation. I don't know why. I don't believe this is the desired affect Dean meant.

The second thing I didn't care for was just a pet peeve of mine and it didn't really take away from the story. Most stories have this same element in them. I've just never understood why. Here's what I'm talking about. The novel is 68 chapters. In chapter one Mitch learns of his wife's kidnapping. From chapter two on Mitch is doing everything he can to get her back. After all that can happen happens, we come to chapter 68. It's 3 years later and everything is normal again.

What's the rub for me? Mitch did some pretty terrible and even illegal things in an attempt to get his wife back. Seemingly, there were no repercussions for his actions. I know one would say he was justified, but I'm just not sure how the law would take this in the real world.

Maybe that's the point. It's not real life, it's a novel. And a great thrill ride it is.

Pick up a copy and see what you think. I believe you won't be disappointed.

Emily says

I found this book in the attic of a house i just moved into, after spending the day lugging around heavy boxes and sorting thru everything i thought why not take a break and read a few chapters, well turns out this is not one of those books you can read for a couple chapters at a time, as soon as i picked it up and started reading i found myself competely unable to stop! Before i knew it i had read the entire book anaware of how much time had passed!! It seems to me that the majority of the books Dean Koontz writes do this to me they are so well written and exciting i can never seem to put them down, i dont smoke im not a drinker but these books

are like my addiction! Even though the blurb on the back of the book wasn't something I would normally pick up I devoured every word until the very last one! I find DK creates the most amazing real feel characters the main characters you cannot help but like and the bad guys you cannot help but dislike, his writing technique is so wonderful that his words breathe life into each character making them seem more real than some people I know, anyways this book was exciting from the very first chapter. I Really liked Mike as a main character I wish more people could be like DK's main characters to live through such adversity in your youth and come out to be a modest kind and so very brave and strong he really would be the perfect husband hehe

Fred says

Koontz Group Read July 2017

July 2017 read - In my second read, it reminds me of "Gone Girl" by Gillian Flynn, where Nick Dunne is being led by Amy Dunne to her "phony" kidnapping & ransom.

In "The Husband" is Mitch Rafferty being led by real kidnappers? or is he just being led by his wife Holly Rafferty?

***My September 2014 read** - How does a husband running a landscaping business save a kidnapped wife for \$2,000,000? This shows how he needs to get others to get the money for him. The end is a "thriller" on how does the husband -or- wife save themselves when meeting the kidnapper/murderer? This would be a good movie. This was a NYT number 1 best seller on June 18, 2006.*

Character Notes:

"Big Green Landscaping" owned by Mitch Rafferty.

Iggy Barnes works for Mitch.

Lt.Det. Taggart & Mortonson.

Audio on YouTube - 9:32

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=MAG2j3J...>

ΔΕΣΠΟΙΝΑ Ντράκη says

Αυτός, ένας απλός κηπουρός, τρυφερός σύζυγος, καλός φίλος. Η γυναίκα του, μια απλή κτηματομεσίτης. Οι απαγωγές, ρεμβιλία που συμμετίζουν συνθώς σε κακουργηματικές πράξεις. Και οι απαγωγές αρπάζουν τη γυναίκα του κηπουρού και ζητούν απ' τον καλοκ'γαθο σύζυγο 2 εκατομμύρια δολάρια για να του δώσουν την γυναίκα του. Πρέπει να βρει 2 εκατομμύρια σε 60 ώρες. Μέχρι που μπορεί να φτάνει ένας γλυκός κηπουρός, που όμως αγαπά πολύ την γυναίκα του; Μπορεί να τα βγάλει πέρα με τους στυγνούς απαγωγείς, όταν το μόνο πλο που μπορεί να χρησιμοποιήσει είναι το κλαδευτήρι του; Ωραίο βιβλίο, γρήγορο με ένταση και νεύρο. Καμμάτια σχήση με τον Κόντς που ξέρω. Δεν έχει χυγός μεταφυσικό σε αυτό το βιβλίο. Θα το τελειώσετε

The book is divided in three parts, and I think that the first part is the more solid one of the whole book, since

you are in the same boat that the main character, the husband, you know only what he knows and that's a brilliant way to manage a thriller.

However, just at the end of the first part you started to know events of other places and from other characters so, many of the mystery is getting to lose its strength and with that a pretty good part of the excitement is getting weaker.

KEEP THINGS SIMPLE

I think that the basic premise was just enough to build a quite good thriller, the husband fighting alone against the world to save his wife.

However, the story gets more complicated reaching some too far-fetched levels, that in my opinion were totally unnecessary.

It saturated a story that it could way simpler.

I have to admit that some of the twists in the story have a lot of air of a Hitchcock film, that in my opinion it's a big compliment coming from me.

However, I supposed that all it's about expectations and some of those twists were against my initial expectations for the novel, so instead to increase my reading experience with the book, it got more erratic and/or harder to accept it.

KEEP THE PACE

While the book started with engines kicking to full speed, avoiding a singlee rest to the reader...

...when the second part of the book started, there were too many chapters, in my humble opinion.

In a plot that it could be solved a lot quicker and simpler, giving a better overall reading experience to the read, one ends with a book spreading more than necessary.

Finally, in the climax part (I won't spoil it, don't worry!), many of the main threat got weaker, and not by actions of the main character, so it's a bummer, and some interesting twists that were arising are left without exploiting their whole potential.

The story is solved too easy to my taste.

But I can't deny that I liked enough the reading of the novel, but definitely it could be quite better.

Christine says

I thought it started well... with a twist that surprised me and captured my interest. From there, it just got less and less believable. From a storytelling standpoint, it was marginal, but as a quality piece of writing it was much worse. It felt churned out, quickly crafted without much afterthought other than the meticulous use of landscaping vocabulary. I'll say this for it, though, there weren't a lot of words on the page so I didn't waste a lot of time getting to the end.

Amir Atef says

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we've your wife, you can get her back for 2 millions dollars ... cash

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Thomas says

ήταν ενδιαφέρον περισσότερο για το εάν θα μαγειρεύεις αρίσιο φασολάκια ή φακές αντ' για τη μορφή του μοιρου πρωταγωνιστή, τότε το λες και φιόσκο. Sorry, not sorry.

Edward Lorn says

THE HUSBAND Review This could possibly be the last good Dean Koontz novel. I only say "possibly" because I have yet to read **RELENTLESS**, which was published after this one, and do not hold high hopes for me liking it.

Written in 2006, three years after the stellar debut of Pico Mundo's paranormally-inclined fry cook, **THE HUSBAND** avoids all the typical Koontz trappings. There's no witty/sarcastic narrator, no uber smart Golden, no blond female lead, no unrealistic dialogue, absolutely zero filler, and not a hint of quirky, preposterous, mustache-twirling villainous types.

There's something truly fresh about this book, and I think what stands out the most is, Koontz actually managed to scare me again. There are more than a few scenes from the kidnapped wife's POV that chilled me to the bone. One especially terrifying chapter has the kidnapper's voice circling her in the darkness, drawing closer, drifting away, leaning in, ebbing... sometimes it's so close that she fears he's about to kiss her. I'm not doing justice to the scene, but suffice to say that, after reading it, I needed a space heater to thaw the blood in my veins. I haven't felt that way during a Koontz novel since reading **DRAGON TEARS** in 1993, and I think that novel only scared me because I was 13 years old. Back then, Barney the Big Purple Pedophile scared the shit out of me.

Our main character, Mitch, is a likable enough guy, but by the end of **THE HUSBAND**, he's a broken individual. He manages some pretty nasty and twisted things after finding out why his wife was kidnapped. If I'd been in Mitch's shoes, well... the song "Five Minutes Alone", by Pantera, comes to mind. Needless to say, I still rooted for the man Mitch became, but I was a tad more fearful of him than for him.

In the last Koontz book I read, the MC (a pastry chef) droned on and on about this baked good or that tasty confection. It was useless information, and as boring as turtle sex. Koontz is also known for describing at length plantlife in exceedingly banal prose. When I first started **THE HUSBAND** and found out that the MC was a gardener, I almost slammed the book closed. I thought, "Wonderful... now he has a reason to bore me to death," but I continued to read. Boy, am I ever glad I did.

The ending ties everything up nicely if a bit too quickly. But I think the finale only speeds by because the middle of the book is so well paced. Koontz had me on the edge of my seat for over 95% of this book, so much so that I didn't want the ride to end. Sweet baby Tom Cruise, I wish he still wrote like this. I did deduct half a star for the tacked-on final chapter. It read as if someone told Koontz: "You have to say something about what happened afterward. Toss in a one-page epilogue of sorts and call it a day." To which Koontz responded: "Fuckin' A. I'm on that shit like scars on John Wayne Bobbit!" The final thousand words of **THE HUSBAND** are so rushed and heartless you'll feel as if you've just been raped by a rabbit that suffers from premature ejaculation, leaving you with this final thought: "That was brief and uncalled for."

In summation, should you choose to read a Dean Koontz book from this century, pick up **THE HUSBAND**.

It won't win any literary awards, but it's a tense thriller by a former master of suspense. This is Koontz on his game, and it shouldn't be missed. Highly recommended.

Graham says

Although Dean Koontz isn't quite as successful as Stephen King, he's certainly been writing for a long time now, almost as long as King himself. In the old days he used to do supernatural horrors but these days he seems to have re-branded himself as a thriller writer, and there's no doubting that he's extremely prolific – I see new books coming out from him all the time. The Husband was released a couple of years ago and it's familiar territory for thriller fans: a seemingly innocuous man finds himself caught up in a whole heap of trouble when his wife is kidnapped and held for ransom.

What follows is a novel that's chock-full of twists and turns and an easy writing style that makes it an effortless read. The problem is that it all seems so familiar. I love thrillers but this type of 'ransom' plot really has been done to death, and the little tweaks and touches that Koontz adds to the plot don't really do anything new. I know there are no new stories left in the world but I think a little more imagination would have gone a long way.

Still, there are positives. The everyman hero is appealing and the characters well drawn. Koontz ably hides the motivation of supporting characters and you're never quite sure who's good or who's bad. The opening chapters of the novel are extremely suspenseful and packed with shocking surprises, and up to the mid-way point it's a bit of a rollercoaster read. Unfortunately, the book starts falling apart at around this mark as the author runs out of steam and resorts to hefty padding to up the page length. There's a whole monologue on fossil collecting to endure and lots of other unnecessary elements that don't really add much to the way of the story. The ending is also a little tired, as the bad guy and the good guy duel it out to the death and one of those "recurring villain" deaths so beloved of Hollywood horror movies where the bad guy keeps coming back to life. It's clichéd and a little dull, and it feels it.

So a great first half and a subdued second half equal a distinctly average novel. It's okay but far from the pulse-pounding read I was hoping for. Koontz, you can do better than this, and turning autopilot off would be a great start.

Dustin Crazy little brown owl says

I envy the simple life that Mitch and Holly have created for themselves. I agree with Holly's belief that we create our own realities (this idea was also presented in *By The Light of the Moon*, one of my favorites by Dean Koontz). I also believe in Mitch's belief that there is meaning to be found.

Having recently read *Intensity* of June 2017, and *The Husband* in July 2017 - I found a connection in the phrase "untouched and alive", Chyna's mantra. In *The Husband*, the phrase is reversed to "alive and untouched."

The Husband is better than *The Darkest Evening of the Year*, *Your Heart Belongs to Me* and *Breathless*, but not in the top-tier category of *From The Corner of His Eye*, *By The Light of the Moon*, *Cold Fire*, *False Memory*, *The Voice of The Night* ... just to name a few :-)

Favorite Passages:

"Maybe that's what a hero is - someone who instinctively does the right thing."

.... he seemed to be gaining for what he had lost, what so quickly healed the hole in him, was a capacity for awe, a deeper sense of the mystery of all things.

Then he pulled back from the brink of awe, to terror and to grim determination.

He had to do what he didn't want to do, because whether the sonofabitch was a carcass or unconscious, he possessed a weapon. Mitch needed a weapon. And quick.

A pair of synchronized spiders, his hands crept left to right across the surface, testing. He pressed gently, and then a little harder.

"YOU'RE A BAD SONOFABITCH, A BAD, BAD SONOFABITCH!"

James says

First Impressions:

What I liked about The Husband has to do with the husband's reactions to the news that his wife has been kidnapped and the kidnappers seem to have unlimited resources and can kill him at any time.

Plots (some spoilers):

His name is Mitch, and he lives a good life as a gardener. He knows he does not have the money. Later the criminals get him to get his brother Anson involved, who, it turns out, is a criminal himself. The kidnappers know this and want to pull one over on Anson.

Despite these criminals thinking they have it all under control, Mitch finds deep inside himself the balls to do something about it, including killing (in self defense, of course) and stealing to get the money together.

Dean Koontz does get into a sub-plot of Mitch and his brother and their relationship with their parents who had an unusual way of raising children, including a sense-deprivation room that was designed to "help" but really it was to break them. The book really does not explore this fascinating item very well. We meet his dad, Daniel, but his mother Kathy is barely mentioned and not at all developed. They were caricatures to me and not really well-developed, despite them being a critical influence on Mitch and Anson and their sisters (who are not even mentioned until near the end of the book and even then not developed).

The book does get into the criminal minds and only fully develops the last guy – the one with a spiritual bent and who has no problem killing people so that they may attain "ascendancy".

Holly is the kidnapped wife who we don't even meet until well into the book – at least not to any great

degree. She too has depth and needs to reach in for strength and is surprised to find that she too can be devious.

Why The Book Fails:

The book fails for me in touching on certain characters (Julian Campbell with his child porn business is never developed, so you have no sympathy nor care that the guy gets his later) and leaves a huge plot hole at the end (Mitch kills and steals and then near the last chapter he has kids and is friends with the Columbo-like detective – huh? What happened?). Too much landscape vocabulary to show us how smart and real Koontz is, but does not add to the tale.

Conclusion: Not Dean's best, though I do appreciate his writing a "straight" novel. However, I much prefer his supernatural stuff.
