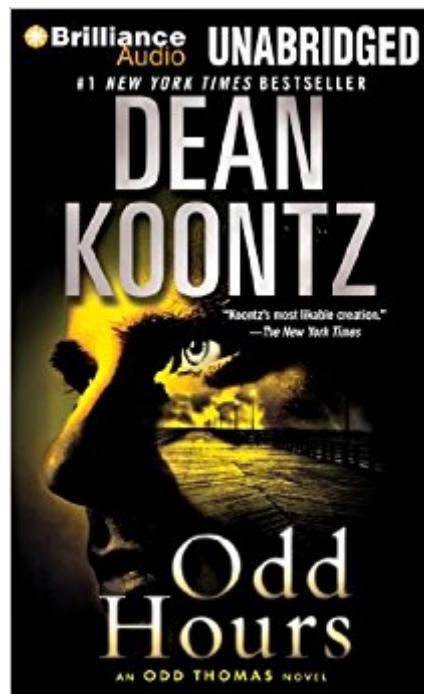


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Odd Hours (Odd Thomas Series)



Synopsis

“Koontz forges the kind of sweeping melodrama complete with screwball laughs, nail-biting moments, and surprises that is the bedrock of American narrative fiction.”

•BooklistOnly a handful of fictional characters are recognized by first name alone. Dean Koontz’s Odd Thomas is one such literary hero, who has come alive in listeners’ imaginations as he explores the greatest mysteries of this world and the next with his inimitable wit, heart, and quiet gallantry. Now Koontz follows Odd as he is drawn onward, to a destiny he cannot imagine. Haunted by dreams of an all-encompassing red tide, Odd is pulled inexorably to the sea, to a small California coastal town where nothing is as it seems.“One of the most remarkable and appealing characters in current fiction”a page-turning account“beautifully written”another literary home run.“• The Virginian-Pilot“Takes off at breakneck speed”a superb story from one of our contemporary masters.”

•San Antonio Express-News

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Exclusive Essay: Destiny and Odd Hours Odd Thomas came to me as a gift, the entire first chapter of his first book having poured out of me as I was in the middle of writing *The Face*. I wrote it by hand, though I never work that way, and I never hesitated to think what should come next. He was fully-realized in my mind from the moment I began to write in that lined legal tablet. With other stories and characters, I can identify the source of the inspiration, but not with Oddie and his books.

He just suddenly was. When I write about him, his narrative voice is so clear to me that I almost hear him in my head. For those among you who long have thought that I should be institutionalized, just relax: I said I almost hear him. Many times over the years, I said I would never write an open-ended series. Then along came Oddie, and he proved me wrong. Or so I thought. As I wrote the first chapter of Odd Hours, the fourth featuring my fry-cook hero, I realized that this was not an open-ended series, after all, but that it would conclude with six or seven novels. I now think seven. I suddenly saw the end point of his journey, the arc of it to the final book, and I was stunned.

Beginning with this fourth story, the stakes were being raised dramatically; Oddie was going to face far more physical and moral danger than previously; and he was going to mature toward the fulfillment of a destiny that I had not seen coming until that moment. Initially, I tried to argue myself out of the direction that Odd Hours was taking. I didn't believe that the first three books had put down a sufficient foundation to support the formidable architecture that I saw rising from it in the next three or four novels. When I began to reread the first three books, however, I quickly discovered that I had unconsciously paved the road that the series was now taking. I had thought I was writing a series with an overall theme about the power and beauty of humility. Indeed I was, but it was also something more than that; and Oddie's ultimate destiny will not be merely purification to a state of absolute humility, but will be that and something else I find quite wonderful. What lies ahead will be a challenge to write--or perhaps not. The character of Odd Thomas was a gift to me, and now I see that the entire architecture of a seven-book series was another gift that came to me complete on the same day Oddie arrived, although I needed time to recognize it. This world is a place of wonder, and life is a mysterious enterprise; but nothing in all my years has been more mysterious than Odd Thomas's origins and my compulsion to write about him. -- Dean Koontz

--This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

The fourth adventure of Odd Thomas, the young man haunted by the deceased who can also foresee potential murderous disaster, may not be the best--his eponymous initial outing is--but darned if it isn't the most purely entertaining. Observing Koontz's SOP, it starts with a bang and goes like a house afire straight through to the penultimate chapter (the last chapter cleans up). Odd goes out for a walk on the boardwalk to find the Lady of the Bell, a pregnant girl roughly his own age (21), who has appeared to him in a troubling dream. He succeeds, but then a blond gorilla and two skinny redheaded guys packing heat show up. When Odd touches the gorilla, he gets a flash of the dream. So does the gorilla, who is immediately, murderously suspicious, so Odd, after sending the girl packing, takes a header off the boardwalk. For most of the

rest of the book, Odd flees the three baddies, discovering that the local police chief and a liberal minister are in cahoots with them, until he reverses the procedure to prevent very serious destruction, indeed, aimed at regime change in America. Choosing so grandiose an objective for Odd, Koontz forges the kind of sweeping melodrama, complete with screwball laughs, nail-biting moments, and surprises, that is the bedrock of American narrative entertainment. --Ray Olson --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Something off in Magic Beach. Odd is back from his stay with the monks. He's in a town called Magic Beach. He encounters some people who've given Odd a bad feeling, one of them touches Odd and Odd is struck with a vision that's been haunting his dreams. Apparently the guy who touched Odd was struck with the same vision and immediately realizes there's something odd with Odd...Then the book really starts going, and doesn't seem to stop until the shocking end. We're also introduced to some new and very interesting people who've found their ways into Odd's life. This one was a phenomenal read.

In this case it should perhaps be seen as a bad sign that even the publisher couldn't come up with much to say about the plot of *Odd Hours*. It's pretty simple and straightforward—Odd has to stop an ugly group of people from wreaking devastating havoc with some extremely powerful weapons, and along the way he has to protect an enigmatic, pregnant young woman. Annamaria, the young woman, is a walking fortune cookie. She answers every question Odd Thomas throws at her with vague philosophical cliches. She doesn't even turn out to have all that much to do with the plot of the book, despite appearing prominently in *Odd*'s prophetic dreams of disaster. She disappears for most of the narrative. She's more annoying than enigmatic, and Odd's inability to get information out of her feels artificially prolonged. Much like book three, *Brother Odd*, this installment starts out slow. Unlike that book it doesn't pick up halfway through—it waits until much later in the narrative to evince any real tension and quick pacing. Added to the annoying character and dull pacing is a distinct carelessness with regard to the details of previous novels in the series. Early on in the book Odd says that he has no birthmark. Except, you know, for the distinct birthmark that is so central to his relationship with Stormy in the first book, *Odd Thomas*. Said birthmark even comes back into the picture on page 300 of this installment itself. Unfortunately that isn't the only error. Books one and two (*Odd Thomas* and *Forever Odd*) were flat-out delightful, and the second

half of book three (Brother Odd) was at least engrossing and engaging. Odd Hours doesn't pick up until the very end, lacks a colorful supporting cast, and contains continuity errors that make it seem like Koontz was phoning it in. It's a real shame.

Odd Hours by Dean Koontz This is the fourth book in the Odd Thomas series by Koontz. As usual Odd puts his own life in jeopardy to protect his friends (and society) from evil attacks by ruthless characters in this novel. Of course his ability to communicate with dead people and his supernatural abilities help him during his struggles. Among other concerns in this novel, Odd takes on some wicked police who plan a catastrophic disaster that would kill thousands and change the world. Odd (a fry cook) with the ability to communicate with the dead provides a very interesting, endearing and reluctant character who struggles to help those in need. His interactions with eccentric dead people also provide some levity. I enjoyed this book, but not quite as much as the previous three Odd books. I thought the life-threatening action in this book happened too soon, and the ending was not very satisfying.

You know, I'm still not sure why this series is a bestseller. The progression of these stories are not terribly fast-paced and are filled with some of the most meaningless dialogue I've ever read. Some of the stuff Odd talks about with his kooky friends have absolutely no bearing on the content of the main story and, frankly, it has since gotten annoying to read about the ghosts of dead celebrities and Odd's quirky philosophies. Still, I guess this story was okay since the threat posed was a higher risk to the public on a massive scale, but there was far too much silliness in this for me to take it seriously. The bad guys in this are morons and anyone serious about creating mass destruction wouldn't have taken a man calling himself "Harry Lime" seriously. Does "Harry Lime" even sound like a real name for a government official? It doesn't even sound like a real alias. Other than the bad guys, I'd say all but maybe one character - and that was the woman who gave Odd a gun - was absolutely pointless. The girl, Annamarie, he meets at the beach - pointless. His oath to protect her with his life - pointless. She might have been the one who pointed him in the direction he set out on, but with his psychic magnetism - as Odd Thomas likes to call it - I don't think he needed her at all to find his calling this time around. I don't know - I'm just not enthralled with this series. The last one, Brother Odd, was so bad I almost didn't read this one and while Odd Hours wasn't as bad as that one, I grew bored with it until about the last 10 percent and I only got interested then because I was at the end. As much as I'm coming to not like this series, I do see myself reading Deeply Odd because that one actually sounds interesting.

The book was well written (mostly) and had lots of Odd Thomas humor which I like, but even though the character names are the same, this is NOT an Odd Thomas book. Only in an indirect way would I consider it part of the series. This book took a sharp turn from the first three. I'm a big Odd Thomas/Dean Koontz fan, but have no interest in reading the rest of the series. This book also ended weird. Cliffhangers are good, but this one just didn't make sense. Too many unanswered questions throughout the book. Koontz wanted to create (I'm guessing) the typical element of suspense, but overdid it to the point of confusion and annoyance. The book is OK on its own; just don't expect it to tie in with the former books in the series. This book may be so different that it might be able to stand on its own without reading the first ones.

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