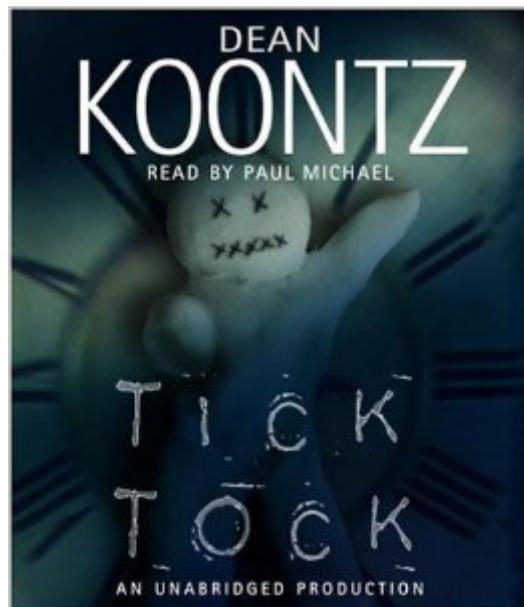


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# Ticktock



## **Synopsis**

Tommy Phan is a successful detective novelist living the American Dream in southern California. One evening he comes home to find a small rag doll on his doorstep. It's a simple doll, covered entirely in white cloth, with crossed black stitches for the eyes and mouth, and another pair forming an X over the heart. Curious, he brings it inside. That night Tommy hears an odd popping sound and looks up to see the stitches breaking over the doll's heart. And in minutes the fabric of Tommy Phan's reality will be torn apart. Something terrifying emerges from the pristine white cloth, something that will follow Tommy wherever he goes. Something that he can't destroy. It wants Tommy's life, and he doesn't know why. He has only one ally, a beautiful, strangely intuitive waitress he meets by chance "or by a design far beyond his comprehension. He has too many questions, no answers, and very little time. Because the vicious and demonically clever doll has left this warning on Tommy's computer screen: The deadline is dawn. TicktockTime is running out. From the Paperback edition.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The story centers around a Vietnamese author named Tommy Phan who writes detective novels. One night, Tommy receives a strange package on his porch. When he opens it, Tommy discovers that it is a rag doll. Unfortunately, things start to become deadly serious rather quickly. There is an evil demon inside the doll that breaks out and is obsessed with killing Tommy. Not only is the demon a deadly one, but it is also highly intelligent as well. It managed to leave Tommy a note on his computer that comprised of "The deadline is dawn. Tick tock... Tick tock". Now Tommy not only has

to survive the night without being killed, but he also has to solve the mystery of who sent the demon to him and why they want him dead. Over the years I have read most of Koontz's books. However, *Tick Tock* was always a book that I put off reading. The premise sounded like a rip off of the film "Child's Play", and I had heard some bad feedback on the book from certain people who had read the book. I finally decided to put my skepticism aside, and give *Tick Tock* a chance. I am so glad that I did, because it is seriously one of the best books that I have read in awhile, and that is just not limiting the criteria to Dean Koontz novels either. I am talking overall, and I read a lot of books. The book manages to hook you in from the first page and keeps you there until the very end. The suspense that this book brings is so intense, that it is almost unreal. However, although the demon may be scary and the suspense is almost overwhelming at times, the book's real appeal comes from Koontz's character development. Tommy Phan is one of my favorite Koontz characters.

Tommy Phan has just about everything he ever dreamed of: a successful career as a novelist, a brand new Corvette, and all the trappings that money can buy. His life would be perfect if only his Mother would stop making him feel guilty for forgetting his Vietnamese roots. When Tommy returns home one night, after a particularly bad nagging phone call from Mom, he finds an innocent rag doll lying on his doorstep and brings it in for a closer inspection. This is when things start getting really weird. In no time at all Tommy, an eccentric woman who saves his butt, and her chocolate lab whose favorite toy is a farting hot-dog, are running for their lives from the devil's spawn. They have until dawn to outrun the demon. I really have to read the unabridged version of this book. I hate knowing I missed even one hilarious word. Unlike Koontz's most recent releases that were sometimes painfully dark, twisted and so intense I couldn't read them alone *TICK TOCK* is a more of a screwball comedy that reminded me of some of my favorite campy B horror flicks. I had visions of *PUPPETMASTER* & *NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD* while reading and was reminded of my favorite kind of B movie demon: The beast that wouldn't die. This is not a criticism! There is nothing like a good campy B horror movie! Koontz creates the most likable off the wall characters: the guilt ridden down to earth Tommy Phan (I don't know anyone who hasn't experienced the "guilt" phone call), Deliverance Payne who continually surprised me with her strangeness, Scootie the face licker, and Tommy's Mom who has some of the most hilarious lines in the book. Which brings me to the dialogue - some of the funniest I've ever read. Too often humor can seem forced or stilted but never in this book.

Tommy Phan is a Vietnamese-American who, much to the dismay of his very traditional family, likes

to stress the American. Instead of going into the family business, Tommy earns his living as a novelist. His series character, Chip Nguyen (star of such memorable epics as *Murder is Bad Habit*), has become very popular, allowing Tommy to afford some of the finer things in life, like the aqua Corvette he purchases as the story opens. Tommy, who has lusted for such a car since the day he arrived in America, knows he should be ecstatic, but can't shake the feeling of foreboding that descends on him at the auto dealership. Almost immediately upon his return home, the doorbell rings. Tommy answers the door, and finds a rag doll lying on his doorstep. At first, he is concerned the doll may be some kind of warning from a local gang, angry with him for writing a series of unfavorable articles a few months earlier. That concern is short lived, however, as something (Tommy later dubs it the "doll snake rat-quick little monster thing") starts to emerge from the doll and attacks him. Tommy fends off the creature and abandons his home, but not before two mysterious messages abruptly appear on his computer screen--THE DEADLINE IS DAWN and TICK TOCK. Driving away, he concludes he is safe, but then the Corvette shudders, and he realizes the creature is in his car. He crashes, and flees on foot, pursued by the monster, who is growing at an alarming rate. He flags down a ride, and, in weird coincidence, is picked up by the aptly named Deliverance Payne, a flirtatious waitress he met earlier that day. Here, the novel takes a humorous turn. By introducing Del, Koontz adds a decidedly comic element to this previously grim story.

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