

Monday, November 24, 2008
8:39 PM

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Dear Dean Koontz,

Hopefully you wouldn't mind my calling you 'Dean'. Mr. Koontz sounds slightly too formal for a fourteen year old to say. I don't mean any disrespect by that, sir. I highly respect you and your work. You may be wondering who I am and why I have written to you. Well, technically, typed. Computers do wonders, especially for my handwriting. My name is Kayleigh Doll, and I live in a homey town of Blair, Nebraska. And no, I do not have a huge compassion for corn. That stereotype, funny as it is, is untrue. But, enough about that, I wanted to express myself about my experience reading By the Light of the Moon. This was the first book, written by you, I had read.

I still remember finding myself bored to pieces on a summer evening, when I found a copy of the book in my parent's room. Once I picked it up, I couldn't put it down. Immediately, the characters related to my life. Shepherd reminded me so much of my kid brother, who also has the same autism. Though his are different, my brother has many little quirks that can irritate some people, and put a smile on my face. But, other times, I can't stand it. Even though I don't have Dylan's patience, I manage

Many physical differences are between Dylan and me, yet we have similar qualities in our personalities. We both have interests in art, though Dylan is most likely the better artist. Our sizes are deceiving. I am tall, not as tall as he is, but tall. And we are gentler then our appearances let on. But, other then similarities to characters, the book connected to my life. For one, before I had read the book, I somewhat gave up on personal writings such as poems and stories. After beginning to read By the Light of the Moon, my writer's block seemed to crash.

I was inspired in many ways of characters, conflicts, themes, and settings that I hadn't thought of before. That probably sounds a bit corny, but it is true. I'd been reading books made for my age group, more teen friendly. But I wasn't interested in books on teen purging and high school drama. The science fiction and horror elements

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drew my attention away from the rest. More detailed books, such as By the Light of the Moon bring out multiple emotional responses from me with each new page.

I remember, once, biting my lip in fear when Dylan entered the house of Kenny, the knife collecting lunatic high on drugs. I remember feeling helpless when Shep claimed to be scared in the bathroom stall, wondering what was bothering him so much. After I've thought about it, the entire book had an impact on me and my life. Not only did my writer's block fizzle out of my life, but I became more outgoing, and more creative in conversations.

A new confidence seemed to come from nowhere, and I looked at things in a new way. Not everything was as dull as I'd once thought it to be. When I looked at a plain piece of paper, my mind would map out a poem, a story plot, or some cartoon character just begging to be brought to life. The need to create and bring the impossible into possibility overwhelmed my actions. I suppose I lived in fantasy a bit, but I know the line between what's real and what's not.

I've read many of your books, but By the Light of the Moon remains quite special to me. Maybe because it's the first book of yours I've read or maybe because it has always had a strong hold on me. I admire your creativity and skills of writing, and one day I hope to put my own ideas into at least one novel into the public. I had a few questions and comments about the book, and hopefully these aren't questions you have heard hundreds of times before this.

For one, I've always wondered if there is a sequel to the book By the Light of the Moon. If so, I'll read it in less than a week. I have always wondered what became of the group and how they used their powers. Another thing I always wondered was what made Shep do what he did at the end. I was torn between whether leaving the mad doctor out in the freezing environment or to put him to proper justice. But I never expected the innocent Shep to make that decision.

Thank you, Dean, for all the books you have written, especially By the Light of the Moon.

From, Kayleigh Doll

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kayleigh Doll". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.