

A Big Little Life

By Dean Koontz

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***NEW YORK TIMES* BESTSELLER**

In a profound, funny, and beautifully rendered portrait of a beloved companion, bestselling novelist Dean Koontz remembers the golden retriever who changed his life. A retired service dog, Trixie was three when Dean and his wife, Gerda, welcomed her into their home. She was superbly trained, but her greatest gifts couldn't be taught: her keen intelligence, her innate joy, and an uncanny knack for living in the moment. Whether chasing a tennis ball or protecting those she loved, Trixie gave all she had to everything she did, inspiring Dean and Gerda to trust their instincts and recapture a sense of wonder that will remain with them always. Trixie lived fewer than twelve years; in this wide world, she was a little thing. But in every way that mattered, she lived a big life.

CBS Sunday Morning featured A Big Little Life *in a rare interview with Dean Koontz that focuses on his philanthropic efforts with and affection for dogs. View it here:* http://youtu.be/40bWUc6k_J8

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review
Guest Reviewer: Ted Kerasote on Dean Koontz's *A Big Little Life*



Ted Kerasote *is the author of several books, including* Out There, *which won the National Outdoor Book Award; the national bestseller* Merle's Door: Lessons from a Freethinking Dog*; and* Pukka: The Pup After Merle.

Anyone who has read Dean Koontz's novels (my favorite is *Watchers*) knows that he can tell a gripping tale while being perceptive about dogs, an insight made more noteworthy by the fact that Koontz didn't have a dog for the longest time. Finally in 1998 he and his wife Gerda corrected this omission by adopting Trixie, a Golden Retriever and trained assistance dog, who had been forced by elbow problems to retire in her third year of service. It was the happiest forced retirement imaginable--for Trixie, for the Koontzes, and for all of us who are now privileged to read Dean Koontz's loving memoir of this remarkable being: *A Big Little Life*.

Like all great writers, Koontz has the ability to transform the ordinary--his daily life with Trixie--into the funny, the moving, and the sublime. Trixie's accidentally gashing him while they play fetch turns into one of the great set pieces of medical comedy as Koontz ends up in the emergency room with a lacerated hand. On another occasion Trixie's saying "baw" for "ball"--straining to say it, but saying it nonetheless--becomes a memorable recounting of all of our attempts to communicate with beings from another species. And Koontz's simply watching Trixie move, her lithe golden body shimmering and flashing in the sun, takes on the quality of the divine as he expresses what so many of us have subconsciously thought about our own dogs: "The more I watched her, the more she seemed to be an embodiment of that greatest of all graces we now and then glimpse, from which we intuitively infer the hand of God."

It is no exaggeration to say that Trixie was the hand of God for Koontz. He recounts his difficult childhood, his dysfunctional father, and the many challenges that he had to overcome on the road to becoming a world-famous novelist. But with that fame came commercial caution: telling stories in the same old familiar way and a consequent dulling of his creativity. Then came Trixie. With "baws" and balls, with warning him of fires and intruders in the house, with humor, with stoicism, and with unflinching love, she restored his diminished sense of wonder and impelled him toward taking new risks with narratives, themes, and characters, the very ones millions of us now enjoy.

“Some dog, huh?” he says.

“Some dog, yes,” we must agree, also concurring when he adds, “The only significant measure of your life is the positive effect you have on others.”

For all of us who have had our lives made better by our dogs, or for that matter by any loving being, *A Big Little Life* is a welcome reminder of the power of love to turn our hearts into mirrors, reflecting compassion back into the universe--as Trixie most surely did for Koontz and Koontz now does for us.

Review
“[A] love letter to his golden retriever.”—*People*

“Read this book to be entertained, uplifted and deeply moved.”—*The Bark*

“A humorous, poignant portrait of [a] remarkable dog.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“One dog book that everyone . . . will deeply enjoy.”—*Booklist* (starred review)

“A delightful read. . . an unusually effective brief for the joy that dogs bring us.”—*The American Spectator*

“A tender, insightful, loving homage . . . an inspirational book of love, hope and humor.”—Bookreporter.com

About the Author
Dean Koontz, the author of many #1 *New York Times* bestsellers, lives in Southern California with his wife, Gerda, their golden retriever, Elsa, and the enduring spirit of their goldens, Trixie and Anna.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Mohammed Thomas:

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