

THE NEW YORK TIMES #1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR

DEAN
KOONTZ

The
Eyes
of
Darkness



described, but they're worth mentioning:

- A bacterial infection resembling the "flesh-eating disease" of several years ago will arrive in 2010, transmitted to humans by almost microscopic mites undetectably imported on exotic birds. Known medications and antibiotics will be completely ineffective against this funguslike, extremely contagious disease, and its victims will be quarantined until it's discovered that the bacteria can be destroyed through some combination of electrical currents and extreme heat.
- In around 2020 a severe pneumonia-like illness will spread throughout the globe, attacking the lungs and the bronchial tubes and resisting all known treatments. Almost more baffling than the illness itself will be the fact that it will suddenly vanish as quickly as it arrived, attack again ten years later, and then disappear completely.

Strides in mental health in the first half of this century will be extraordinary, virtually eliminating the majority of the disorders

"I'm not interested in the philosophy or morality of biological warfare," Tina said. "Right now I just want to know how the hell Danny wound up in this place."

"To understand that," Dombey said, "you have to go back twenty months. It was around then that a Chinese scientist named Li Chen defected to the United States, carrying a diskette record of China's most important and dangerous new biological weapon in a decade. They call the stuff 'Wuhan-400' because it was developed at their RDNA labs outside of the city of Wuhan, and it was the four-hundredth viable strain of man-made microorganisms created at that research center.

"Wuhan-400 is a perfect weapon. It afflicts only human beings. No other living creature can carry it. And like syphilis, Wuhan-400 can't survive outside a living human body for longer than a minute, which means it can't permanently contaminate objects or entire places the way anthrax and other virulent microorganisms can. And when the host expires, the Wuhan-400 within him perishes a short while later, as soon as the temperature of the corpse drops below eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit. Do you see the advantage of all this?"

Tina was too busy with Danny to think about what Carl Dombey had said, but Elliot knew what the scientist meant. "If I understand you, the Chinese could use Wuhan-400 to wipe out a city or a country, and then there wouldn't be any need for them to conduct a tricky and expensive decontamination before they moved in and took over the conquered territory."

"Exactly," Dombey said. "And Wuhan-400 has other, not advantages over most biological agents."

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