

Summarized Text

And though the book puts great emphasis on mathematics and even includes a big section on important mathematical background knowledge, it contains too many errors in the mathematical formulas, so they are of little use. When the main character finally reaches something vaguely interesting, the discovery of an alien corridor, he takes a break from uncovering it to go have a day at the art museum and shopping with his girlfriend. Released late last month, *Dead and Alive* wraps up the author's modernization of the Frankenstein story four years later than originally planned. Reasons for the delay include Koontz's dislike of working with co-authors (both of whose names have been dropped from new printings of books one and two) to the effect of the real-life Hurricane Katrina on the story's New Orleans setting. Somewhere between 2005 and now, Koontz decided not to take the whole thing too seriously: What began as a pulpish horror/adventure story with humorous overtones has morphed into a full-blown farce, complete with a naked, dancing troll with a taste for bath soap and interminable scenes filled with wacky patter that would be more at home in a romantic comedy. Detectives Carson O'Connor and Michael Madison are reduced to supporting roles, nattering on about raising babies (they're now in love), eating and shooting guns. Koontz finds his footing in the final chapters, a Lovecraftian showdown between Frankenstein and his artificial creations inside a series of tunnels beneath a dump. After 352 relentlessly padded pages (I gave up counting how many times Koontz tells us that Victor's creatures gain their

memories through data-downloads), the Frankenstein series that began with so much promise limps across the finish line, a pale shadow of what it could have been.