



## The Radleys

*Matt Haig*

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## **The Radleys** Matt Haig

The Radleys are an everyday family who juggle dysfunctional lives. Except, as Peter and Helen Radley know, but their children have yet to find out, the Radleys happen to be a family of abstaining vampires. When one night Clara finds herself driven to commit a bloodthirsty act, her parents decide to explain a few things.

## **The Radleys Details**

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Author : Matt Haig

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## From Reader Review The Radleys for online ebook

### Jennifer says

"Twilight" eat your heart out : )

In this immensely satisfying read Matt Haig presents us with the Radleys- a typical middle class English family that just happens to want to drink your blood. But like good Britons they are fighting against their baser instincts and leading an upstanding existence in a quaint country town. Having recently read Ian McEwan's "On Chesil Beach" the portrait of the, yet again, typically repressed Brits was especially on point.

But more than poking fun at the English stiff upper lip it was nice to see a vampire story with some actual blood in it's veins- one that gets down to the nitty gritty of what it would mean to actually be a vampire with out romanticizing it \*too\* much.

Ultimately, "The Radleys" was able to take this well-worn genre and have an entirely fresh take on it. It calls to mind something like what "The Sopranos" did for Mafia films or even a touch of "Shawn of the Dead"

So of course the next question is, sequel Mr. Haig?

note: this book was a Goodreads First Read

[http://sometimesjenniferreads.wordpre...](http://sometimesjenniferreads.wordpress...)

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### Wealththeow says

The Radleys are a normal suburban family with the typical problems such families have in novels: the parents live meaningless and boring lives and feel trapped and stifled by their marriage but don't have the courage to do anything about it, while their teenagers are disaffected and self-absorbed. They're also vampires, which I thought would add excitement and interest. 174 pages in, and this hope was not met. Instead it was page after page of characters' boring internal workings as they wish for connection and excitement. I skimmed the rest of the book; a lot of stuff apparently happens, but none of it gripped me. And I was disappointed that (view spoiler)

People who like literary fiction would probably like this book a lot more than I did. As fantasy stories go, I found it completely unsatisfying. I didn't care about the characters, I didn't like the minutia-obsessed writing style, and I didn't like the undercurrent of disdain for normal life that I felt running through it.

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### littlemiss\_emmxx says

This book is a library book. Little note to myself there incase I go looking for it on my bookshelves and can't find it at a later date.

Loved it. It is not your typical book about vampires. The ending was a bit of a surprise.

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## Mariana says

Ναι ωραία οι Ρέντλεϋ βρήκαν το νόημα της ζωής για ωραία και καλή ζουν τώρα ακολουθώντας τους στήχους του τραγουδιού "Σε ποιον αρθουμε για τους άλλους δεν θα μπορουμε" αλλά με την μύνα αυτο του παιδιού που κατασπράξε η μικρή κορολά των Ρέντλεϋ τ ακριβής γινε;; Τ συνβη με αυτην την οικογένεια;; Ο γικός της δεν ήταν καννας γιος και για αυτ που πγε να κνει θελε κρμασμα αλλά μια μύνα χάσε το παιδ της. Τ της επαν;; Θα μενει για πάντα εξάφανισμνο και μια ζω θα βασανζεται με τη σκψη τ συνβη στο παιδ της κι αν είναι κπου εκε ξω ζωνταν;; Μπως κατασκεάσε η αστυνομία καμι παρξενη ιστορία;; Αλλ πς δικαιολγησε το κατακρεουργημνο σμα και την παρξη του DNA της κοπελις;; Ναι ωραία δεν ήταν αυτ το βασικθμα του βιβλου οτε η μύνα αυτ ο βασικς χαρακτρας οτε καν διλογο δεν εχε απ άλλους μθαμε για εκενη αλλά υπρχε στο βιβλο η ιστορίας της, ήταν μρος της υπθεσης δεν γνεται να με αφνεις με τσα αναπντητα ερωτηματικμνο και μνο γιατ δεν είναι το πρσωπο που μας ενδιαφρει εδ!

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## Jessi says

The Radleys is a different look at the young adult Vampire situation that today's literature has going on. The Radleys are a mundane young couple with 2 teenage children living in a cute exceptionally boring village. Helen Radley is the mum, she seems to only tolerate her husband, has a bit more patience for the children and little to no interest in the emotional sanity of her family. To be honest Helen seems a bit distracted.

Peter Radley, the Dad and Doctor. He is sharp and useless and comes across as possibly the meekest character in the book or ever. That's right he is a scared red panda or the human form of it.

The children Clara and Rowan I found endearing and interesting, every ailment -they have it, they are never comfortable in their own skin and are exhausted everyday of their young lives, but they persevere and love each other. So when it comes out that Helen and Peter are vampires and have been living a life of abstinence (no blood at all) since they found out they were to become parents. Suddenly all the children's hellish health issues make sense. They believed drinking blood was wrong and they made their children suffer for it. This instantly causes me to hate the parents which I am not sure if that was the authors intention here.

I guess the neighbors should be happy I mean none of them have gone missing.Right?

Until one does and this is where the story gets good, a bit of gore and tension and then in a panic Peter calls his mysterious older brother Will to fix a sticky situation, Will is kind of a badass vampire. He has to be extremely good looking because he scores a lot of hot chicks... in a camper van.

I mean I would think twice if like Chris Hemsworth

pulled up in a caravan

and said "lets get out of here" I mean I would still go but there would be some hesitation. So Will is a very strong vampire who does not get the abstaining nonsense and encourages the children to be true to themselves and they are the better for it. So I immediately like him he is improving the children's way of life and they are actually happy and not in pain for the first time in their lives. So he is the hero! Nope, he is still the villain. But I'll not lie I like em bad.

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### **Denny says**

I've read many vampire novels (excluding the teen ones) that I felt I could not do anymore. However the Radleys renewed my faith that an original one could still be written. I usually shudder at pop culture references but this was so good I didn't even mind them.

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### **Anne says**

4.5 stars. The Radleys is an awesome story if you're looking for something a little out of the ordinary. Which I was.

The plot is pretty crazy in the way that only something in a suburbanish setting can be. Think, American Beauty, but with fangs. Cute, huh?

It's about the lies that you tell your spouse, the lies that you tell your kids, and the lies that you tell yourself. Mostly, though, it's about the consequences of repressing yourself just to fit in. I mean, there's got to be a *happy medium*, right?

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### **Phrynne says**

Matt Haig is turning into my newest favourite author! I especially love that he is English and that one of the major scenes takes place in a cinema in Thirsk. I always like it when I can say "Been there"! I did not meet any vampires though. Not that I know of anyway.

I thought this was a very amusing book with a slightly different take on the vampire life style. I enjoyed our insights into the Radley family and their attempts to live a life without drinking blood. Some of the quotes from The Abstainer's Handbook were hilarious. I was entertained by all of characters as they struggled with all the issues of a normal life made worse by the added problems caused by denying their true being.

A thoroughly enjoyable book which could be read by anyone, not just readers who like the para normal or who are looking for horror. There are vampires, there is blood and a touch of horror but basically it is a book about families and the ties that bind. Very well worth reading.

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### **Jackie says**

Yes, it's true. It IS another vampire book. But with some interesting new ideas about "abstaining" vampires (they don't drink blood anymore--just eat a whole lot of rare meat) and mixing in with society that keep it fun and fresh and the pages flying by. It's a British novel, so there are some interesting quirks there, as well. The

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basic premise is that two abstaining vampires--one a born vampire, one converted--have become your basic suburban couple with two teenagers--two vampire teenagers who have no idea they are vampires. Their pale skin and sunlight issues have been variously explained away to them. Until one night at a party when a boy tries to attack Clara, and she ends up pretty much eating him. Then the blood really hits the fan and 17 years of secrets start coming out. I found it quite entertaining, with bits of mystery, love story, and action/horror. But NC17 I'd say--not for Twilight teeny-boppers.

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### **Susan (aka Just My Op) says**

There are way too many vampire/zombie/living dead books available right now, but *The Radleys* presented itself to me as a fun book about a funny and warm family of reformed vampires, including a vegan. So I bit, pun intended. And I made it to about 150 pages before I gave up.

For me, this book was neither funny nor warm-hearted.

I've read some conflicting information - was this first published as a YA book and now there is an adult version? Or the opposite? The writing, especially in the beginning, seemed written for a young, or at least immature, audience, but too graphic for younger teens. That got a bit better as it went on. The characters seemed more like caricatures, too much like other, better known vampire characters. I still didn't like the characters after 150 pages and, more importantly, the plot was still boring me. Vegan daughter most definitely eats something not in her diet, family rallies around her, bad vampires, good vampires. And a mom who says things like "Now, me and your dad have been talking" and "Me and Peter want you to go." Is there a reason for such poor grammar? Not as far as I read. She is married to a doctor (who doesn't care about his patients); you'd think she would be able to string together a proper sentence.

I am sure there will be an audience for this book, but for those wanting a light and entertaining read rather than wanting yet another vampire book that takes itself too seriously, don't bother.

Two stars instead of one because I didn't finish it and it may be wonderful in the end. Also because it was something totally different than I was expecting, which is due to hype rather than the book itself. I was given a copy of this book from the publisher.

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### **Nina says**

You've got your suffocating suburbs with white picket fences and book clubs, and you've got your average blood-sucking family. Boom. (bnr. More of a worrying sizzle with a smell of burning flesh.)

Nice exploration of the issue (you can clearly see the issue, can't you?), but I could have done with some more in depth character development wrt the kids (who, as always, become overdramatic, simple-minded cardboard slabs when in the hands of a non-YA literary fiction writer) and Peter and less dillydallying on Helen's part (I have a hard time with middle-aged female characters unless they are badass bitches who shoot and high-kick people in the face, okay?), but that would have inevitably turned this into a 600-page tome, and not everyone is into that. (I am.)

Still a fun, engaging and sharply written novel to pass a couple days with. It won't take more, because it begs to be gobbled up quickly. I'm not a beach reader because I'm not a beach person, but I think this would make for a great beach read.

(I'm into parentheses today.)

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## Stephanie says

Excellent little story of family secrets and what happens when a tightly woven lie begins to unravel.

In this story, Peter and Helen Radley have moved out to a pleasant village in the English country-side to raise their children, Rowan and Clara. They wanted to escape their wild life in London and live a quiet, ordinary life with their children and live a peaceful, normal life... Well, as normal a life as you can have, when you are an Abstainer, a "non-practicing" vampire.

Their quiet life takes a decidedly non-quiet turn when teenaged Clara is attacked at party by another teen boy and goes vamp on him and kills him. Her parents are now faced with explaining the family secret to the kids, who had no idea they were vampires, and finding a way to cover-up this murder.

Lots of fun, good family drama, and a nice resolution. Recommended for folks who like vampire stories but don't want all the Twilight teen drama or vampire paranormal romance.

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## Cyna says

The Radleys is not exactly a paranormal romance. Both the back of the book and the introductory letter (in our ARC) by Free Press Senior Editor Amber Qureshi call it a 'domestic drama', or as Amber says, more of an American Beauty than a Twilight. This is an accurate description (I think - I barely remember American Beauty), and exactly the reason I fell in love with The Radleys by the end of the first chapter.

The writing here is solid. It flows, it's quick, light, and - oh God you have no idea how much of a wonderful relief this is - it's intelligent. There's no pandering, no painfully awkward witty exchanges that are trying too hard (and often failing) to be funny. The dialog is natural, and the characters speak the way normal people speak. In England, anyway. I can't emphasize enough how wonderful it is to read a vampire book with a tone that isn't dumbed down or soaked in angst, and doesn't take itself too seriously.

But again, calling The Radleys a "vampire book" isn't fair. The vampirism here is really incidental. Being a vampire - and all the blood, biting, and changing that go with it - really only serve as a stand-in/allegory for everything from alcohol to the suppression of basic aspects of human nature for the sake of conformity. And it's kind of awesome.

It's not perfect, though...

Read more at [You're Killing.Us](http://You're Killing.Us)

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## Kelly (and the Book Boar) says

Find all of my reviews at: <http://52bookminimum.blogspot.com/>

I was looking for a scary vampire story. You're probably thinking, "duh, *Salem's Lot*, you idiot!" Well

smartypantses, that was my first choice too . . . and then “The Cloud” ate it.

Whoever decided we should put our faith in clouds anyway? They aren’t very stable.

Anywho, since the geniuses at Amazon (all hail Amazon!) couldn’t solve my problem all lickity splitty like I demanded (don’t they know who I am? I have fives of followers who want to know what I’m reading), I decided to pick up another vampire book and prepared to get all scurrred with *The Radleys*.

Jokes on me! This one wasn’t scary at all . . . but it was **awesome**. *The Radleys* take all of the redonkulous things there are to complain about when it comes to vampire stories and turns them on their ear. To begin with, the Radley family members are vegetarians . . . .

No, not that kind. You know what I’m talking about. The dreaded vampire vegetarian . . .

No blood, no foul, right? Well, it was up until the Radley teens started pubing out and discovered some of their buddies might actually be “their own personal brand of heroin” . . .

Ahhhh, if only everyone could be as restrained as Edward Cullen and be satisfied to simply stalk the girl of their dreams . . .

Such is not the case with the Radleys, however, and a *little* accident happens . . . .

Leading the Radley parents to seek some outside help in order to ~~cover up~~ explain what’s going on with the children. Enter Uncle Will – who for whatever reason I pictured as something kinda like this . . .

Well, without the extra face on the back of his head and all that jazz. Thank you, brain!

Wes Bentley? Good right?

Wait, where was I? Oh yeah, making a picturebook.

So anyway, Uncle Will arrives to ~~save the day~~ introduce us to some more vampire clichés . . .

and eventually all the skeletons (figuratively, not literally) come tumbling out of the closet, resulting in a

most delightful twist on a book about family. Highly recommended to anyone looking for a different kind of vampire story.

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### **Maria Hill AKA MH Books says**

It's tough being a repressed middle-class British vampire. Review to follow soon I hope.

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### **Tressa says**

I thought I was tired of the vampire genre, but obviously not, not if the subject is treated as interestingly as in Matt Haig's *The Radleys*.

*The Radleys* is about a well-off suburban family living in England whose Bible is the *Abstainer's Handbook*. Helen and Peter have chosen to eschew blood so that they can live as a "normal" family. Their children, Clara and Rowan, are pale, anemic, and prone to skin irritations. They have no idea they're part of a vampire clan, until Clara is attacked one night by a lout from her high school. When she fights back and gets a taste of blood, she learns what she is. A nice vampire tale.

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### **SJ says**

Let's get one thing straight here, shall we? This isn't a book about vampires.

Okay, yes. It's a book which has vampire characters. I won't dispute that. But the book itself...that's not what it's about. Not the way I see it.

This is, instead, a book about family and relationships and love and how we love the people who hurt us, and hurt the people we love. It's a book about the blurry lines between our intrinsic nature and desires the way that we cope with those things. And it's about how you play the hand you were dealt.

All this is wrapped up in a clever, well-written, sharp voice with just enough hints of gore to keep you a little sick, but not so much that it ever over shadows the relationships in the story.

I'll admit, I found this to be something of an emotional ride. It was just SO. DARN. DEPRESSING...at times. I thought for sure it would end as low as it started. The ending was a real surprise for me, and worth the wait. This book really reminds me why I am an adult who reads young adult fiction.

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### **Nikoleta says**

Το βιβλίο Ρ'ντλε? δεν είναι ?να συνηθισμ?νο βιβλίο φαντασ?ας. Ο Haig έχει β?λει τους ?ρωες του, μια οικογ?νεια β?μπ?ρ που προσπαθ?ν να γ?νουν οι τ?λειοι συνηθισμ?νοι συμβατικο? ?νθρωποι, να ζουν στο τ?λειο μικροαστικ? περιβ?λλον, ? τουλ?χιστον να προσπαθ?ν να ζ?σουν. Το ενδιαφ?ρον φυσικ? είναι ?τι ?ταν δι?βαζα αυτ? το βιβλίο, δεν ε?δα τους Ρ'ντλε? ως β?μπ?ρ, αντιθ?τως τους ε?δα σαν ?λους εμ?ς... Και με ?πιασε μια μικρ? θλ?ψη. Είναι γεγον?ς πως ο συγγραφ?ας δημιο?ργησε μια σ?τιρα, κατ? ?λων αυτ?ν των ανθρ?πων που π?νε κ?ντρα στις προσωπικ?ς τους επιθυμ?ες τ?σο ?ντονα που μεταλλ?σουν την ?δια την προσωπικ?τητα τους μ?χρι στο τ?λος αυτ? που μ?νει να είναι τ?σο κοιν? και αδι?φορο που τ?ποτα πια δεν ?χει σημασ?α... Στην αρχ? σαν βιβλίο με εκνε?ρισε πολ?, δι?τι τα κεφ?λαια είναι π?ρα πολ? μικρ?, και το κ?θε κεφ?λαιο απευθ?νεται σε διαφορετικ? ?ρωα, οπ?τε με το που ?μπαινα στον κ?θε ?ρωα και στη συγκεκριμ?νη κατ?σταση με ?κοβε και με π?ταγε ?ξω γιατ? τελε?ωνε το κεφ?λαιο κ?πηγα?ναμε σε ?λλο με ?λλον ?ρωα και ?ντε π?λι απ? την αρχ?, β?βαια κ?ποια στιγμ? συν?θισα. Συνολικ? το βρ?κα πρωτ?τυπο και ενδιαφ?ρον σαν βιβλίο και ναι μου ?ρεσε αρκετ?.

3,5/5 αστερ?κια

## Marianne says

“I can control myself. Look, for God’s sake. Look at everyone. Everyone represses everything. Do you think any of these ‘normal’ human beings really do exactly what they want to do all the time? ‘Course not. It’s just the same. We’re middle-class and we’re British. Repression is in our veins.”

The Radleys is the third adult novel by British author, Matt Haig. Another novel featuring abstaining teenaged vampires? Well, yes, but this is Matt Haig’s creation, set in a North Yorkshire village: a world away from Twilight.

Seventeen years ago, Peter and Helen Radley became abstainers. They now eschew human blood, surviving on animal products, even if it means a reduced life expectancy, continual migraines, depression and low energy levels. With their two teenagers, Rowan and Clara, they try to live a normal, middle-class life in Bishopthorpe.

Despite their efforts to blend in, not everyone around them is convinced. Their next-door neighbours sense something, and Clara’s new friend, Eve Copeland, is recently arrived from Manchester with her ex-CID father who is casting a suspicious eye on the Radleys.

Rowan and Clara are themselves completely unaware, knowing only that something is not quite right: they’ve no energy, get skin rashes from sun exposure, can’t sleep, animals avoid them and the kids at school think they’re weird. Recently, Clara has undertaken to become a vegan, exacerbating the chance of an attack of OBT (Overwhelming Blood Thirst), a condition to which she has no idea she might be prone.

Then circumstances place her in a field on a Friday night with an insistent and very drunk young thug, and the inevitable happens. And when Peter’s older brother Will, a charismatic, practising vampire with an insatiable and indiscriminate bloodlust, turns up to help deal with the family’s crisis, things really get complicated.

In this tale, Haig gives the reader an original plot that showcases his talent for portraying everyday characters facing not-so-everyday situations. He describes the English village life to a T, even if Bishopthorpe only thinks it is: “A place which fools itself into believing it is the epitome of a quaint English village but which,

like most places, is really just one large fancy-dress shop, with more subtle costumes.”

The narrative, taking place over four days in May, is from multiple perspectives and is supplemented by quotes from *The Abstainer's Handbook*. There's plenty of dark humour, including the irony of a vampire who would be most people's nightmare, actually having nightmares himself. Haig's cops monitoring vampires (the Unnamed Predator Unit) though, are chillingly pragmatic when it comes to vampire kills.

Haig's characters develop and mature under the pressure of events, and he gives them some insightful observations: “The kind of thrill people get when something devastating happens, a thrill they never admit to, but which dances in their eyes as they talk about how bad they feel.” and “It felt strangely grown-up too, as though that's what being an adult was – the ability to know which secrets needed keeping. And which lies will save the ones you love.” are examples.

Certain Australian beer drinkers will be delighted to learn that VB (in this case, Vampire Blood) is a revered tippie in vampire society. Another brilliant offering from Matt Haig, this one is intelligent, clever and blackly funny.

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## Mizuki says

*The Radleys* is an enjoyable comedy about a family of vampires who tried hard to deny and hide their nature, but as their two children coming of age, keeping those kids ignorant is an impossible thing to do and the parents' denial and lies are backing fire...with a bloody, messy result. I enjoy the book, but I don't really like how in the end the blame has been put entirely on the 'evil, selfish vampires' and the supposedly 'good, conforming' vampires get off the hook without much soul-searching or moral dilemma.

Guess what *The Radleys* reminds me of? It's a B-rated movie called *The Hamiltons* (2006)  
LINK?<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0443527/>

Some Chinese description on The Hamiltons (wrote by me):??  
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