

HATER

David Moody/Gollancz/£18.99/Out now

★★★★★

A genetic switch flips in the heads of one in three people and the world is plunged into ultraviolent genocide on a massive scale.

THERE ARE THE BOOKS you want to read, and those that you don't. Then there are those rare books that you don't 'want' to read but as soon as you scan your eye across the opening page they haul you in, force you through every agonising encounter and then spit you out like a piece of used gum. David Moody's *Hater* is just such a book.

Initially the story focuses on Daniel McCoyne and his pervasive hatred for his life. Poverty exasperates the perpetual grind of a soulless job, an antagonistic boss and a demanding

family capped by a belligerent father-in-law. It's a bleak world view – even before everything starts to fall apart – but one that cleverly transcends wallowing in self pity thanks to Moody's intuitive

DID YOU KNOW?

This is actually a re-publication of *Hater*. The original was part of Moody's own Infected Books – a vanity imprint he used to give titles away for free, thus generating publicity around them. The fact that *Hater* has now registered on the radar of such luminaries as Guillermo del Toro just goes to show the power of Moody's novel approach.



characterisation. Danny's role of downtrodden hero trying to do the right thing is perfectly portrayed and you can't help but care for him and for his vulnerable family members.

It's also a surprising book that revels in skewing the reader's

preconceptions and forcing them to question the solidity of their own moral standpoint. Initially Danny sandbags his hatred against his miserable life. Then, as the book progresses and the term 'hater' is coined

by the gutter press for those infected, the reader finds themselves on increasingly unstable ground. Who are the haters? Who are the hated? It is a beautiful mechanic that unravels all 'common sense' opinions with a delightful economy and precision.

Make no mistake about it, this is humanity seen through a frighteningly dark lens, and while we may be unsettled by what we read, it's the job of books such as this to make us confront the allure and repulsion of our taboos. Love it? Hate it? It really does not matter. Not to read it and not to have some form of opinion... Well, now that would be hateful. **Jonnie Bryant**

