

## HATER

David Moody  
St. Martin's

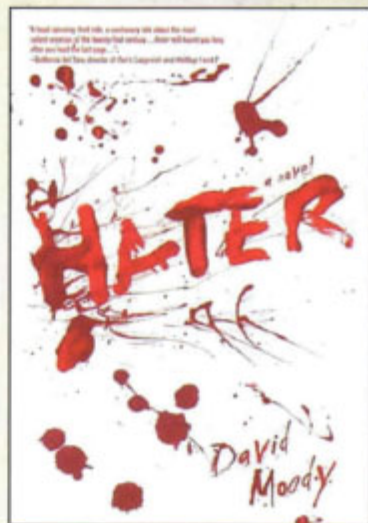
Danny McCoyne has a miserable job, a drab flat and a dull family. Every day is exactly the same until the day that isn't, when everything (and everyone) around him changes in a pandemic maelstrom of paranoia and bloodshed.

*Hater* opens with the defeated McCoyne going through the motions: watching the clock at a job he can't stand, living cheque to cheque, trying to do the right thing. But there's an es-

calating violence in the streets and the TV news has begun to take on a different tone. People are turning on each other for seemingly no reason and carrying out barbaric acts of violence. A bricklayer bludgeons a teen to death with a hammer, an old woman is speared with an umbrella by a complete stranger, a young girl caves in her friend's face with a rock, a soft-spoken husband strangles his wife with the belt of his housecoat – something is happening and it's spreading rapidly.

Haters. They're cropping up everywhere and without warning. Gripping the country in a stranglehold of panic, they force McCoyne and his family to construct a safe room and hunker down, praying it doesn't inflict one of them next. One third of the population has turned. Is it an airborne virus? Something in the water? Or just raw human evolution? No one seems to have the answer but the media is advising to stay inside and keep an eye on each other. *No one* is safe.

Less zombified than the rage virus from *28 Days Later*, but with victims and violence more human and darkly realistic, *Hater* is an intense read that will mess with your head and your loyalties – more than once as the walls close in. Moody knows how to temper tension to maximum effect and punctuates it with enough nerve-racking brutality that you'll be looking over your shoulder for a week after reading it. The writer originally self-published *Hater* in 2006 and even managed to sell the film rights, without an agent, to Guillermo del Toro. If the movie can capture the essence of the book, Moody may end up with a real epidemic on his hands.



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