



The Rest of Us Just Live Here

Patrick Ness

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A new YA novel from novelist Patrick Ness, author of the Carnegie Medal- and Kate Greenaway Medal-winning *A Monster Calls* and the critically acclaimed Chaos Walking trilogy, *The Rest of Us Just Live Here* is a bold and irreverent novel that powerfully reminds us that there are many different types of remarkable.

What if you aren't the Chosen One? The one who's supposed to fight the zombies, or the soul-eating ghosts, or whatever the heck this new thing is, with the blue lights and the death?

What if you're like Mikey? Who just wants to graduate and go to prom and maybe finally work up the courage to ask Henna out before someone goes and blows up the high school. Again.

Because sometimes there are problems bigger than this week's end of the world, and sometimes you just have to find the extraordinary in your ordinary life.

Even if your best friend is worshipped by mountain lions.

The Rest of Us Just Live Here Details

Date : Published September 27th 2016 by HarperTeen (first published August 27th 2015)

ISBN : 9780062403179

Author : Patrick Ness

Format : Paperback 317 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fantasy, Contemporary, Fiction

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From Reader Review The Rest of Us Just Live Here for online ebook

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

This is my first Ness book, and maybe I picked the wrong book.

Don't get me wrong. This book wasn't *bad* bad, not in a way that would make me rant and rage about how awful it is. It just wasn't to my taste. His writing style doesn't connect with me. The book was weird, and, dare I say it before a legion of Ness fans with pitchforks descend upon me, really boring.

I just don't get it. Again, not my style. I prefer excitement, a definable plot, well-written emotions and interactions, and this book was a lot of strangeness and too much dialogue and characters I couldn't connect to.

I like my books with a purpose, and I suppose the esteemed Patrick Ness' style is just not for me.

Jesse (JesseTheReader) says

I was a bit disappointed with this book. I found myself comparing it to *A MONSTER CALLS*, which I know I shouldn't have, because they're completely opposite books from tone to message. At the same time though this book offered up different things that I enjoyed. We have an excellent diverse cast of characters & the story itself was rather unique. It's just that something about it fell flat for me. I still need time to gather my thoughts, but expect a video review soon!

C.G. Drews says

Oh wow, oh wow, oh wow. **This book is incredible and emotional and relatable and OH WOW.** How does Patrick Ness write like this?! (Answer: he is a wizard.) I've loved *A Monster Calls* and *A Monster Calls* and *More Than This*. So I was like 99% sure that I'd adore *The Rest Of Us Just Live Here*. But I didn't actually know what it was ABOUT, except it was NOT about "The Chosen One". And I had noooo idea it was about families and sibling relationship and end-of-school and anxiety. So, give me a moment. I just need to hug this book and pronounce it a new favourite.

"Not everyone *has* to be the Chosen One. Not everyone has to be the guy who saves the world. Most people just have to live their lives the best they can, doing things that are great for *them*, having great friends, trying to make their lives better, loving people properly. All the while knowing that the world makes no sense but trying to find a way to be happy anyway."

It's set in the kind of world that's HAD all the weird superhero stuff happen. But it happened in the last generation or no one really believed it or it got covered up as some sort of accident. So everyone *believes* in

supernatural stuff, but they don't. (Am I confusing? TELL ME THIS MAKES SENSE.) Which I think is an epic story world. Although, there was lots of weight on the fact that there's "indie kids" and "normal kids". I guess (and asked around) that "indie kid" just means the hipster kid. So the Peter Parker kind of dude? Anyway. That threw me because I'd never heard the term "indie kid" and it was weird. BUT ANYWAY.

This story focuses on a foursome of completely-incredibly normal kids. Except, of course, for the tiny fact that they're not.

So can we talk about the characters?! YES AND PLEASE AND THANK YOU.

+ **Mikey:** He's the narrator. He's, like, incredible. He's the quiet one, the one who feels replaceable. He has serious OCD and unrequited love with his sister's best friend and, he's just adorable. The way he loves his sisters and takes care of them?! I ADORE HIM.

+ **Mel:** Yes, the entire family has names that start with M. Worse, their last name is Mitchell. Nuuuuungh. (Although I think that's done on purpose.) SO. Mel has had anorexia...basically anxiety. The family is built on anxiety, it's really sad and entirely relatable. I really connected to both Mel and Mikey. Their relationship is SO CLOSE, and they're there for each other when the other is having an anxiety episode. I love sibling relationships. Have I ever mentioned that?! I LOVE 'EM. I also really loved that the book wasn't *about* Mel falling into anorexia again. It was about her journey of moving forward. A lot of the time I feel like books are continually about the decline into the abyss. So it's nice when they're about the hard crawl upwards.

+ **Meredith:** She's the 10 year old, youngest. And she's adorable. She's passionate and clever (like, she's a genius) and I LOVED how the teens included her. It wasn't a "oh my gosh, I haaaate it when my little sister is hanging around". They all loved her and took care of her. It was so so sweet. FJDAJKLS TO THIS ADORABLE FAMILY.

+ **The Mitchell Parents:** yeah, except they were dead losses. Which is odd considering how wonderful their children are. Hmm. The father is an alcoholic who's basically mentally checked out of the family. The mum is so deep into politics nothing else matters for her.

+ **Jared:** I liked Jared. He was a really epic best friend for Mikey. He's gay and big and kind and totally there for Mikey with his anxiety. They make it clear they're *not a couple* although you can definitely see they love each other. I guess they love each other in a family way. Buuuu...I had my doubts sometimes. I also got SO MAD at Jared several times. (view spoiler)

+ **Henna:** Okay, out of the foursome (Mel, Mikey, Jared and Henna) I really didn't like her the most. I felt like she lead Mikey on at the same time as friendzoning him. I think their relationship was interesting...not quite romantic. Very unrequited. But yet...so unique and different. IT'S COMPLICATED. But it actually was! Their feelings were. And, duuuude, that's refreshing to read, okay? Henna was black and vibrant and had parents who were missionaries and she was half Scandinavian.

There is a lot of diversity. Which is great. And it was natural and interesting and flowed.

Despite the "superhero" background...that's all it is. A BACKGROUND. It seriously doesn't dive into that side of things. Each chapter starts with this paragraph about what the superheroes are doing...nearly a cliche stereotypical monologue. Which I found insanely interesting. And then it'd get back to the complex and difficult and filled with anxious worried lives of the foursome. I LOVED IT. **I loved how the author handled anxiety.** I loved how the story was focused on family and moving on and growing up and *love* -- but the complicated kind of love. It's not a massively fast story, but it's addicting.

OH IT'S SO ADDICTING.

I felt so emotionally invested. I connected to, like, all the characters (but the Mitchell family particularly

stole my heart) and I just felt the book was suffocatingly perfect. Like, if you've ever experienced anxiety -- THIS book gets it right. And plus the writing is just gorgeous. It's heavy on the dialogue and doesn't waste time and knows how to hook you in with just a few words. It's a little big magical and yet 100% real. (Trust me, that's totally plausible.) There's weirdness and normality.

WHAT ARE WORDS?! JUST GO READ IT. This is one you *need* in your life. Just have chocolate on hand. I need chocolate. SOMEONE GET ME CHOCOLATE.

breaks down sobbing over perfectness of book

Emily May says

2 1/2 stars.

Here's one thing for certain: **Patrick Ness is a total Buffy fanboy**. Or possibly he hated it, but either way he paid enough attention to seemingly frame an entire book around the concept of "The Chosen One" and - specifically - Xander's quote from season 7:

"They'll never know how tough it is, Dawnie, to be the one who isn't chosen. To live so near to the spotlight and never step in it."

This is a book about the people in the background. The ones who aren't "indie kids" with names like Satchel and Finn. The ones who do not get chosen, never discover their secret powers, never fall in love with a vampire, and neither save nor destroy the world.

Each chapter opens with a short synopsis on what the "indie kids" are doing. Whether they've opened a supernatural portal, been contacted by immortals, or died. From these small paragraphs emerges a humorous parody of "The Chosen One" genre, before the chapter continues on with the everyday lives, loves, anxieties and mental health of the not chosen.

It's a clever and interesting concept, and yet I was more in love with the idea of it than the actual execution. If I wanted to sum this book up in a single sentence, I would say: **Ness wrote a book about the boring, everyday kids and it was... kind of boring and everyday**. I wish that wasn't the case, I really do.

Especially because I generally love everything Ness writes. But, if I'm being honest, by far the strongest parts of this book were the small paragraphs at the start of each chapter.

Not that the normal kids are without sensationalism - not at all. Their lives are filled with eating disorders, OCD, car crashes, absent parents and unrequited love. But, even though the book is well-written on a technical level, I did not find their stories very compelling, or the characters themselves particularly interesting. Ness has succeeded in writing a book about people who do not stand out at all. I'm already forgetting about them.

I feel like credit should always be given where it's due, though, and I will say that Ness has written a **fantastically diverse book**, in all senses of "diverse". I applaud him for doing so. And I also applaud him for being one of the few YA authors to write sophisticated fiction that will make teenagers think and take them to places they can't get from the mainstream bestsellers.

I will continue to be excited when I see Ness has an upcoming release, but this one didn't quite do it for me.

Rebecca says

Read this review and more on my blog!

In a nutshell: Another unique and wonderful book from Patrick Ness with an interesting perspective - it's *not* the "Chosen One".

Patrick Ness is without a shadow of a doubt one of my top auto-buy authors, especially when it comes to his YA books. I love them and I was so excited about this book. I'm still excited - not only to revisit the story with a future re-read but for you guys to soon enjoy it when it officially hits shelves! Luckily it met my expectations and the more I think about it, the more I appreciate what Patrick Ness did with this book. Is it my new favourite by him? No, but it's *very* good!

I find that descriptions of Patrick Ness' books rarely give them justice but think of a realistic novel with a Buffy episode backdrop. The beginning of each chapter briefly shows the reader what the Chosen One is up to, but we actually don't follow their story. What were the other pupils of Sunnydale up to while Buffy and the Scooby Gang were saving the world? What about other Hogwarts students? This is Patrick Ness' genius almost satirical take on common YA tropes, while focusing on the realistic issues of protagonist Mikey and his family and friends. It covers relationship drama, OCD, eating disorders, absent parents, and so on, with a diverse cast of characters. My favourite was Jared - Mikey's gay best friend who has an affinity with cats - but I appreciated how real and normal the characters felt. Their flaws and relationships were well written. It felt authentic and relatable, with nice spots of weirdness and fun. Such a refreshing read that doesn't fit easily into one "genre".

I flew through this book and I didn't want it to end. It's very different from his previous books and perhaps more "ordinary", but as always there's dashes of his signature style that's unique and kind of odd at times (in a good way.) There's a nice balance between humour and seriousness. Some of the themes can be pretty intense, but I especially appreciated how the mental health element was portrayed.

It's a great Young Adult book in how it deals with being "ordinary" and having realistic issues. I know that I often as a younger teen looked up to the "indie kids" in popular fiction and craved that kind of excitement. *Of course* when I started a new school I was going to instantly make new friends, get a hot mysterious boyfriend and save the world. (Reality: I was invisible and spent a lot of the time at library reading books.) The Rest of Us Just Live Here tells us a story that's more closer to home of the kids in the background who are just as extraordinary in their own way. I think it's pretty awesome and I highly recommend it, whether you love Patrick Ness already or you're new to his books.

Source: Edelweiss

I received this book from the publisher via Edelweiss in exchange for an honest review (though I'm totally going to buy a hard copy as soon as I can justify spending money on a book I've already read and read it again)

Initial Review:

I'll write a full review closer to the release but for now, here are my initial thoughts:

I really enjoyed this book. Patrick Ness is one of my favourite authors and I've been excited about this from the moment it was announced. Immediately I fell in love with the concept. It's the kind of book I've been wanting to read for years and it didn't disappoint. It's not my new favourite Patrick Ness book but it was a really, really great read. I loved the start of each chapter, the subtle humour concerning YA tropes, the reality of the characters and their lives, and generally the writing itself. It's a Patrick Ness twist on a YA contemporary novel with a Buffy episode backdrop. The mix of humour and emotion was spot on. I really appreciated the way mental health was handled, the relationships with the characters, their flaws, and Jared in general. Haha the cats! I really loved him.

I'd highly recommend checking this out - it's a refreshing and brilliant read with diverse and real characters. While you wait for the release date, be sure to read the author's other Young Adult novels if you haven't already! *A Monster Calls*, the *Chaos Walking* trilogy and *More Than This* are all amazing.

Also I adore both covers. I'm pretty sure I'll end up buying both of them.

karen says

"I wonder what was going on last night. With the lights."

She shrugs. "Probably some apocalypse."

the problem with writing a book like *More Than This* is that you then have to write a book *after* *More Than This*.

and i was a little apprehensive about this one. my copy has this cover:

which makes it look almost like a middle grade book, and i was concerned that it wouldn't live up to the mind-shattering acrobatic metafiction that was *More Than This*.

and it doesn't. nothing ever will.

but that doesn't mean this isn't a great book all on its own.

this book plays with the literary convention of the "chosen one," - those who are set apart from their peers and tasked with a responsibility no less than that of saving the world. and they wrestle with this burden and forgo having a normal adolescent life because they are the only ones who can do what needs to be done and they fight evil and deputize their friends in the struggle and still manage to pass their math tests.

this book is not about the chosen ones.

this book is about the blurry kids in the background of the wide-angle shots - the ones who are just hurrying to class.

it's about these people:

they attend the same school as the chosen ones, and they witness the horrors that seem to follow "the indie kids*" around, but they are uninvolved in their exploits, in their occasional demises. on the sidelines, all they can do is remark is that *"They better not blow up the high school again."*

the trials of the indie kids open each chapter, with a brief synopsis of what is going on in their struggle while the book itself is primarily concerned with bringing the blurry kids into the spotlight to show that, yeah, there's a portal of doom opening in the gymnasium, but other things are happening in what would ordinarily be the background, and those struggles are every bit as challenging as the ones centered around the portal. people have eating disorders, OCD, distant or absent parents, unrequited love, car accidents. and these things *matter*.

*"Not everyone **has** to be the Chosen One. Not everyone has to be the guy who saves the world. Most people just have to live their lives the best they can, doing the things that are great for **them**, having great friends, trying to make their lives better, loving people properly. All the while knowing that the world makes no sense but trying to find a way to be happy anyway."*

it's a great blend of fantasy and contemporary fiction, as the separate storylines overlap and commingle: jealousy and zombie deer, the alzheimer's of a beloved grandmother and strange blue glows, bickering and bombs, prom and portals. there's a little cheating, since one of the "normal" kids is also a descendant of the goddess of cats and has a couple of powers of his own, but for the most part, the problems are familiar ones, and they are dealt with in mortal ways.

being a long-time lover of cheesy teen horror movies, and having finally caved last year and watched buffy, there were plenty of nods, references, and allusions to the chosen one genre that i really appreciated, but i appreciated even more ness' little reversals.

*"Now you're **sure** we're not going to be ritually murdered?...Prom night. Group of diverse teens. Remote cabin..."*

... "That's not the story that's happening," Mel says to him. "We're not the kind of people that story happens to."

it's a fun, clever book, and while it's no More Than This, it's way more than it appears.

* an rare unfortunate decision on ness' part, IMHO.

well, he hasn't failed me yet.

and *the God of mountain lions???*

even if that's just a figure of speech, i'm sold.

come to my blog!

Kai says

“We’re just as screwed up and brave and false and loyal and wrong and right as anyone else.”

A boy with the simple wish to finish school, and maybe even kiss the girl he's been in love with forever. If it just weren't for all those strange things happening: sudden blue lights in the sky, animals coming back to life and the popular kids always playing heroes.

3.5/5 stars

What a refreshing and funny concept for a novel!

As always it took me a while to get into it. The first few pages, the many characters and all the tiny side-comments that you don't understand (yet), because you don't know anything about the characters so far. It was weird, beautiful, confusing and so many other things. There's no denying that Patrick Ness is one of the best writers of our time.

Find more of my books on Instagram

Darth J says

So, since this got a bunch of good reviews, I decided to pick this up. Just my luck that Target would have autographed first editions of it:

The basic premise of this book is that the main characters here are the background players in everything else. The funny thing is that this story, while YA, makes fun of YA tropes and bloated subgenres like vampires or demigods or immortals and kids "dying beautifully of cancer". That's the whole joke about this book is that it's poking fun at how airheaded YA culture can be sometimes, how teens can mindlessly go after the next big thing and turn it into a plague that destroys their brain cells while parents pretend it isn't happening.

It's as if the camera were to pan away from Bella and Edward and start following Anna Kendrick and all of the other nobody characters (but without all of the tryhardness of IRL Anna Kendrick that gets really obnoxious). The Rest of Us Just Live Here is about the people who have to watch from the sidelines and are never part of the larger story, which is probably why this book is very popular: it speaks to all the people who weren't popular in school.

Aj the Ravenous Reader says

“Not everyone has to be the guy who saves the world. Most people just have to live their lives the best they can.”

If there's a word that would best describe author, Patrick Ness, it would be ingenious. True, the story may

not have the most adventurous plot but the premise sure is brilliant and completely original. I have personally never thought about the side characters, the ordinary people watching Katniss and Peeta fight for their lives in the hellish arena...

...or the kid watching Spiderman fight the bully at the school hall.

I doubt anyone has ever thought about them, like really thought of them until Patrick Ness.

This creative story is inventively about a group of teenage non-heroes, the none “Indie” kids who try to just live their ordinary lives in a small town where zombies, soul eating ghosts and vampires are daily ordinary occurrences and where the Indie kids die off one after the other but which isn’t a huge deal because the non-heroes are not really affected, unless they become one of the “casualties.”

At first, I found the story kind of weird and confusing because of the unique structure with a small side story about the Indie kids at the start of each chapter, but not long after (when I finally got the hang of it), I started to really enjoy it because the writing is surprisingly easy and funny to read. The lack of action in the plot makes perfect sense because the focus of the story is the personal struggle of the individual characters who may not have been chosen as heroes but who are still heroes of their own lives.

I was surprised at the amount of social issues that were effectively tackled in the novel despite the light and comic tone. I was also impressed at the fullness of the development of the characters despite the relatively few pages (for a sort of apocalyptic novel) and satisfied at the conclusion that would make this standalone contemporary/slight apocalyptic novel one of a kind.

Lastly, I learned from the Author’s Note that the author auctioned off the chance to have the winner’s name in the book for a Red Cross fund raising project to help the countless victims of typhoon Haiyan that devastated the Philippines in 2013. ;,) I think I officially love Patrick Ness now. <3

Thanks to Will’s excellent review that made me read the book. Do check out Neil’s awesome review too.

Will M. says

Contemporary YA is not my genre, but this novel was an exception. I prejudged it based on the first few chapters, but as the plot developed, I started to like it.

This is a novel about a group of friends who wants to have a normal life. They just want to graduate before the school blows up. Mysterious and paranormal things get in their way, but they did all they could to succeed.

What was most striking to me was the fact that Ness managed to incorporate a lot of serious issues in this

novel. It was supposed to be a fun novel, but it was both fun and eye opening. He tackled multiple issues like depression, anxiety, and more. The novel was a mixture of laughter and sadness. Near the end was the part of sadness creeping in.

I really liked how the characters developed and how they were connected to each other. I always ask for a novel with good characters, and this one has that. the transformation of the main character was commendable. He became a lot independent and wise, as compared to what he was in the first few chapters.

The plot was light and straightforward. The premise didn't wander off from its promise, so it's not disappointing in that aspect. The plot was too simple though, for me. Ness could've added more interesting elements, and that would've made me give this a higher rating.

4/5 stars. Impressive new novel from Patrick Ness. I enjoyed most of his other novels, so it wasn't a surprise that I enjoyed this one too. It's always a whole lot of guessing when it comes to Ness. Like how I kept on guessing how the novel was going to end. Things didn't go my way, but I liked how he ended things.

Lola says

I AM IN COMPLETE DENIAL.

No way this book was written by the one and only Patrick Ness.

That was some real crappy romance. Of all the romances in the world, this one really sucked. Bland. Cliché. Tedious. Uninteresting. Unexciting. Sleep-inducing.

Catriona (LittleBookOwl) says

Really enjoyed this! I liked how it poked fun at the "Chosen One" trope, and we see quite a diverse set of characters.

Neil (or bleed) says

The Rest of Us Just Live Here is a weird-and-not kind of book. I mean it's weird because it's not about the Chosen Ones (or the indie kids as this novel called them) and it's not weird because it's not about the Chosen Ones. (You got me?)

In this world we live in, we would rather read a kick-ass hero/heroine who saves the world than reading a bunch of ~~boring~~ kids who want to graduate high school, no? This is the main concept of this book. So, if you're not into this kind of novel, you will probably not enjoy this one. (But who knows, right?) Me? I really did enjoy and appreciate this novel. Because, I kinda relate to the main characters' feelings. And I can share the same sentiments with them.

But seriously, this book is weiiiiiiird because the main characters (not the indie kids) were living their ordinary lives in a world where there's something strange and extraordinary is happening. Something that include Immortals, Gods, zombie deers, etc. If you think about it, this is cool even you are just the ordinary kids who wants to graduate and not the Chosen Ones who will save the town or the world.

As a reader who can't really describe things well, I found myself captivated and fascinated by this book. The original plot, the beautiful writing, the diverse characters, the intriguing setting, the funny dialogues, the mystery, the lessons and insights. All of it. I love them all. But, I do really love how Ness tell this story. The emotion inserted in every word that made my reading experience so so damn good. *The Rest of Us Just Live Here* seemed ordinary but actually, it is extraordinary.

As a conclusion, I think the book's main goal is to impart the insight of living your life to the fullest, in a cliche-or-not way. Which you shouldn't forget that even you aren't a hero that will save the world, you are the hero of your life. You are extraordinary and most importantly, you are loved. By many.

Brigid ☆ Cool Ninja Sharpshooter ☆ says

Short Review:

This is a Patrick Ness book—so, of course it's good. It's very different from his other books, but I like that he writes something new and I never know what to expect. I wasn't as blown away by it as I was by the *Chaos Walking* trilogy, *A Monster Calls*, or *More Than This*, but it's still great—intriguing concept, good writing and characters, a fun and emotional story. There's kind of a "Manic Pixie Dream Girl" plotline that is mainly the thing that took away from the book for me, but otherwise I really enjoyed it!

Full Review:

~coming eventually~

Before Reading:

7/7/15:

So I got a mysterious package in the mail yesterday, and GUESS WHAT IT WAS?!?!?!?!

high-pitched screaming

My friend got her hands on an ARC and she sent it to me!!! BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE.

IT'S SIIIIIGNED.

Sorry my iPod takes such crappy/grainy photos, but it says "to Brigid, in absentia, from Marietta" (Marietta is my friend's name. :D)

So yeah omg I'm so excited to read it. A;KD;SJF;SDJFJ!!!

5/5/15:

OH MAN I hadn't seen the cover before! When did that come out? Well, it's awesome. I love it.

Also it has a release date. August 27th. YESSSS. (That's probably the UK release date, though ... but I will get my hands on a copy of it somehow. I WILL.)

10/22/14:

WAIT, WHY THE HELL DIDN'T I KNOW ABOUT THIS UNTIL NOW? OH MY GOD.

"Not everyone has to be the Chosen One. Not everyone has to be the guy who saves the world. Most people just have to live their lives the best they can ... All the while knowing that the world makes no sense but trying to find a way to be happy anyway."

WHAAAAAAAAAAAT?

"What if you lived in a world a lot like a YA novel? Where people you know have already battled vampires and zombies and soul-eating ghosts and whatever this new thing turns out to be? What if you just want to go to prom and graduate before someone goes and blows up the high school again?"

"I wanted to write a novel for anyone trying to live a normal life in a world gone mad, for anyone who actually has bigger problems than the end of the world (again), for anyone who needs to find out that there are many different kinds of extraordinary."

WHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAT?

I NEED IT. I NEED IT NOWWWWWWW.

Source

Raeleen Lemay says

There were definitely elements of this that I enjoyed, like the diverse set of characters and the way it was poking fun at "Chosen One" stories, but the whole thing fell pretty flat for me. I love Patrick Ness's other books, but this one didn't really do anything for me.
