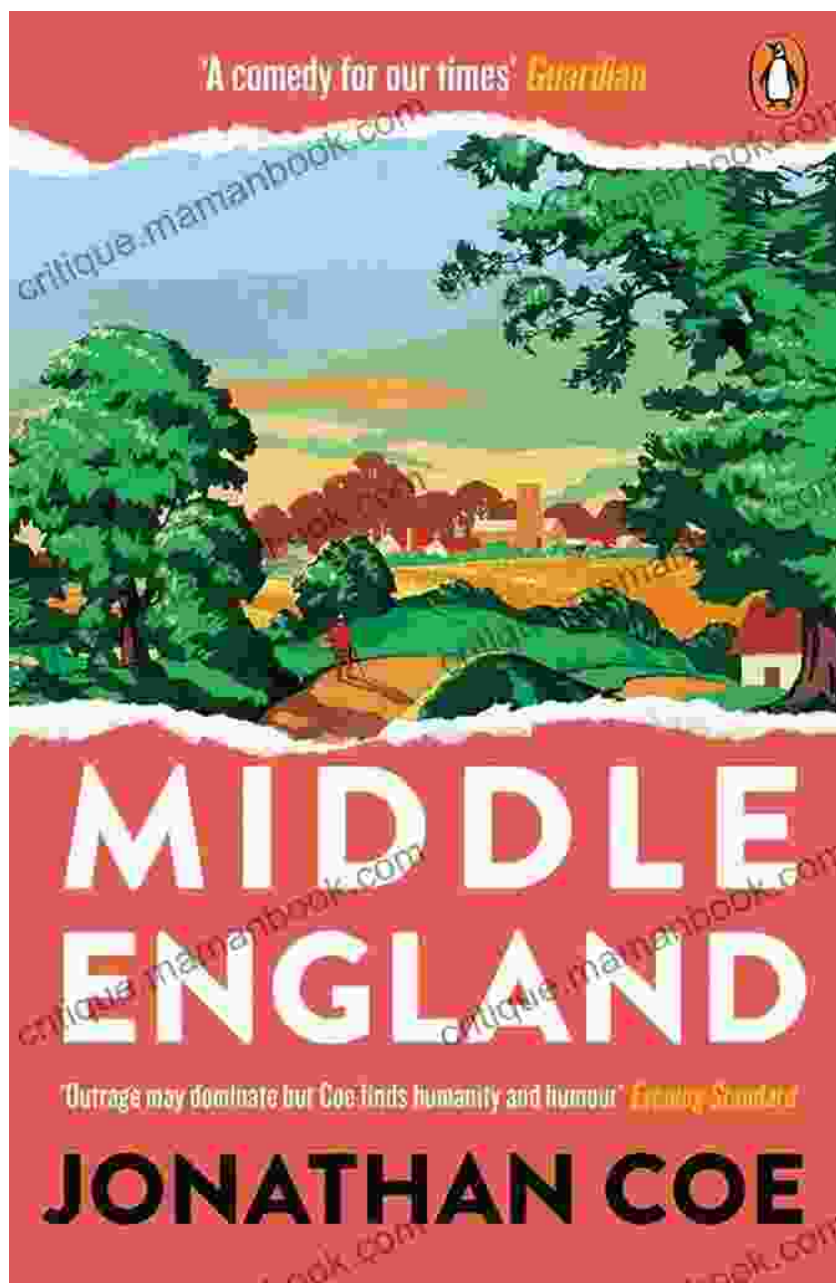


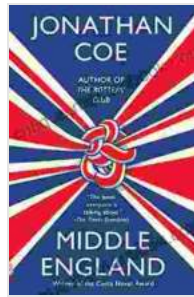
# Journey into the Heart of the English Middle Class: A Comprehensive Exploration of Jonathan Coe's "Middle England"



**Middle England: A novel** by Jonathan Coe

★★★★☆ 4.3 out of 5

Language : English



File size	: 1246 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
X-Ray	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 434 pages



Jonathan Coe's novel "Middle England" is a sprawling and ambitious work that tells the story of the Burgess family over the course of several decades. The novel begins in the 1970s, with the family living in a small town in the Midlands. As the years go by, the family's fortunes change, and they move to London and eventually to the country. Through it all, the Burgess family remains at the heart of the novel, and their story provides a unique window into the changing face of England.

Coe's novel is a rich and complex work that explores a wide range of themes, including family, class, and identity. The novel is also a powerful indictment of the Thatcher era, and it offers a devastating critique of the values that shaped British society during that time. However, "Middle England" is not simply a depressing novel. It is also a funny and heartwarming story about the resilience of the human spirit.

The Burgess family is a microcosm of the English middle class. They are a hard-working and ambitious family, but they are also struggling to keep up with the changing times. The father, Reg, is a factory worker who is made redundant in the early 1980s. The mother, Beryl, is a housewife who is forced to go back to work to help support the family. The children, Colin and

Karen, are both bright and talented, but they struggle to find their place in the world.

As the novel progresses, the Burgess family faces a number of challenges. Reg loses his job, Beryl is diagnosed with cancer, and Colin becomes addicted to drugs. However, the family also experiences moments of joy and happiness. Colin falls in love and gets married, and Karen becomes a successful writer. Through it all, the Burgess family remains a close-knit unit, and they learn to cope with the challenges of life.

"Middle England" is a powerful and moving novel that offers a unique insight into the English middle class. The novel is a must-read for anyone who wants to understand the complexities of British society.

## Themes

The novel explores a wide range of themes, including:

- **Family:** The Burgess family is at the heart of the novel, and their story provides a unique window into the changing face of England. The novel explores the relationships between parents and children, husbands and wives, and siblings. It also explores the challenges that families face, such as unemployment, illness, and addiction.
- **Class:** The novel is set in the English middle class, and it explores the ways in which class shapes people's lives. The novel shows how the middle class is struggling to keep up with the changing times, and it also explores the ways in which class affects people's relationships and opportunities.

- **Identity:** The novel explores the ways in which people search for their identity. The characters in the novel are all trying to find their place in the world, and they struggle with questions of who they are and what they want to do with their lives.
- **Thatcher era:** The novel is set during the Thatcher era, and it offers a devastating critique of the values that shaped British society during that time. The novel shows how Thatcherism led to increased inequality, unemployment, and social unrest.

## Characters

The novel features a large cast of characters, including:

- **Reg Burgess:** The father of the Burgess family. Reg is a factory worker who is made redundant in the early 1980s.
- **Beryl Burgess:** The mother of the Burgess family. Beryl is a housewife who is forced to go back to work to help support the family.
- **Colin Burgess:** The son of Reg and Beryl. Colin is a bright and talented young man, but he struggles to find his place in the world. He eventually becomes addicted to drugs.
- **Karen Burgess:** The daughter of Reg and Beryl. Karen is a bright and talented young woman who becomes a successful writer.

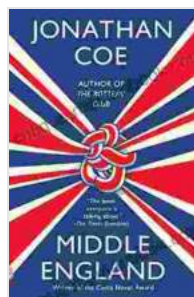
## Setting

The novel is set in England over the course of several decades. The novel begins in the 1970s, and it ends in the early 2000s. The novel is set in a variety of locations, including a small town in the Midlands, London, and the country.

## Style

Coe's writing style is clear and concise. He uses a variety of techniques to create a rich and engaging narrative. For example, he uses flashbacks to explore the past of the characters, and he uses humor to lighten the mood of the novel. Coe also uses a variety of literary devices, such as metaphors and similes, to create a vivid and memorable world.

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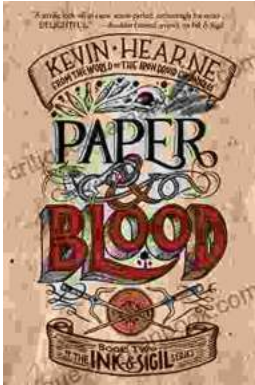
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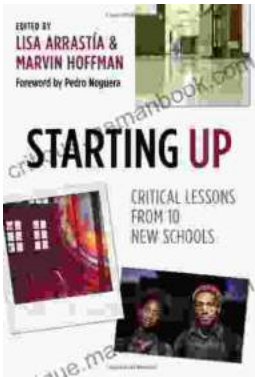
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