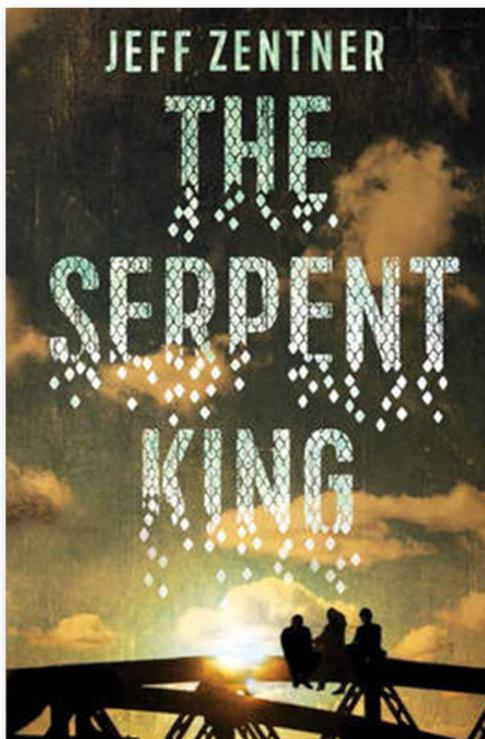


Helping you choose the best books for children

LoveReading4kids Reader reviews of **The Serpent King** by Jeff Zentner



Below are the complete reviews, written by the LoveReading4kids members.



Vikki Patis

Meet Dill, grandson of the Serpent King and son of the preacher man caught with child pornography on his computer and sent to prison, in part by Dill himself.

Suffice to say, Dill's life isn't the easiest.

Dill has had to wrestle with vipers his whole life—at home, as the only son of a Pentecostal minister who urges him to handle poisonous rattlesnakes, and at school, where he faces down bullies who target him for his father's extreme faith and very public fall from grace.

Dill lives in the shadow of his family name, struggling to resign himself to the life his parents chose. He wants more, but, when tragedy strikes, he's concerned

that the fight against the darkness will be too much for him.

Zentner writes exquisitely well for young people, but any adult who had a somewhat difficult upbringing can read and understand this book. It's inspiring yet heart-breaking, and will resonate with anyone who's ever had to decide what kind of person they wanted to be.

'The Serpent King' is a story of family, but not in the traditional sense. It's also about choice - choosing to follow your own path, choosing to break from your family. Choosing yourself.

Follow Vikki on Twitter: @VikkiPatis. Blog: <https://dracarya.wordpress.com/>

Humaira Kauser, age 17

Wow. This is probably the new hottest YA book of 2016! This book deserves so much praise!

Jeff Zentner has killed it with this book. I honestly don't know what to say, other than this book will be mine and many others, new favourite book of 2016. I'm telling you this book is going to be huge.

I loved the depth and complexity of the characters and I loved the writing, the prose, everything about this book.

Follow Humaira on Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/cookie_bookie/

Edel Waugh

*This is the story about a young guy called Dill and his two best friends, Travis and Lydia. These guys live in a small town in Tennessee where religious beliefs are strong in some families and the aim of most of the young is to get out of the town when they finish school. These three friends come from very different backgrounds but somehow their differences make their friendship solid. This is a bittersweet story about friendship, family, tragedy and hurt and how these kids stood by each other through it all. The way books and friends got them through hard times and gave them hope and saved them from the harshness of reality really touched me and the plot left me in tears at times. **This is one of those books that you remember long after finishing it. I recommend this to everyone as I can't praise it enough. Beautiful!***

Blog: <http://edelwaugh.blogspot.ie/2016/03/the-serpent-king-by-jeff-zentner-review.html?m=1>

Izzy Read, age 15

Dill, Lydia and Travis are a group of misfits- Dill is shunned for his father's crimes, Travis finds comfort from his violent home in fantasy books and Lydia is fast talking and a dreamer, already gaining fame from her fashion blog.

*I see 'The Serpent King' as **a tale of emotion and poverty in a small southern town, viewed from the eyes of those who do not want to be there. It made me laugh and cry simultaneously, and clawed me in,** even if it did mean I ended up finishing it around 1am! The characters were all relatable, with the struggles of growing up and moving on from high school ahead of them. It wasn't perfect-most debuts aren't- the plot flowed strangely*

and was under formed at times, but it was a beautiful coming of age novel that showed that your family doesn't define who you will become.

Blog: www.fromcovertocoverr.tumblr.com

Emma Hughes

I thought this book was good, I liked the characters, however the plot didn't interest me very much.

Lauren Coffman, age 16

Though the title at first made me slightly apprehensive, making me think of the supernatural and mythical, a genre I generally don't enjoy, I could not have been more wrong. **'The Serpent King' is engaging, heart-wrenching, exciting and so, so real.** It tackles so many issues that are each as important to the story as the next, all dealt with sincerely and with so much heart. This book deals with everything from faith to poverty, everything from abuse to death. But at the heart of it is the theme of small town life and a fear of the future, of the unknown, focusing on three friends with very different views of this, all living harsh realities that they wish to escape in one way or another, whether that means moving out or moving to the other side of the country. However fulfilling these dreams become more difficult than expected, especially for Dill and Travis. This book has so much to teach any reader, about friendship, family, faith and pain, and **Zetner's writing is utterly compelling**, vividly portraying the deep pain and gripping exigency to get out of Forestville through his words in this gut-wrenching story. I was with him the whole way, feeling Dill's pain and rejoicing in his triumphs, and I could not put it down. **The Serpent King is a fantastic book and an astonishing debut** from Jeff Zentner, who is definitely an author to look out for- I would beyond highly recommend this book.

Charnell Vevers

*Every so often a book comes along that manages to touch and move all those who read it, the kind of book you know people will still be talking about in years to come - **The Serpent King is one of those books.** Jeff Zentner has written the kind of contemporary novel that everyone should read, a book that will have you sobbing your heart out, that will touch you so deeply that you won't forget it. Dill is a main character who you can't*

help but feel for, he is dealing with so much - his trapped in small town and can't see a way out, his father is in prison and he feels judged by others for the actions of his father. He has two best friends, both who are so different to Dill and each other, but all three care for one another so deeply. Lydia is the girl Dill is crazy about, the best friend he doesn't want to see leave but at the same time he wants her to succeed. She's the breath of fresh air, the kind of person that others gravitate towards. Then we have Travis, who is different to everyone else and isn't afraid of that fact, he is proud of who he is and the things he likes, no matter what others say about it. This is a really intense read, and it may break your heart in places but it will also leave you feeling hopeful. I can't recommend this book enough, if there is only one contemporary novel you read this year then you need to make it The Serpent King.

www.reviewsfromabookworm.blogspot.co.uk

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