

# RADICAL

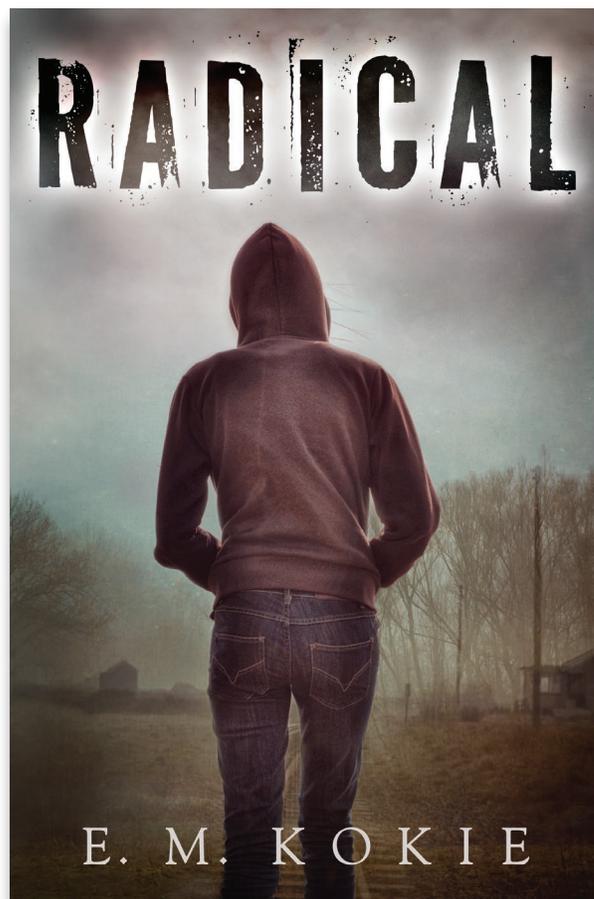
by E. M. KOKIE

## About the Book

Preppers. Survivalists. Bex prefers to think of herself as a realist who plans to survive, but regardless of labels, they're all sure of the same thing: a crisis is coming. And when it does, Bex will be ready. She's planned exactly what to pack, she knows how to handle a gun, and she'll drag her family to safety by force if necessary. When her older brother discovers Clearview, a group that takes survival just as seriously as she does, Bex is intrigued. While outsiders might think they're a delusional doomsday group, she knows there's nothing crazy about being prepared. But Bex isn't prepared for Lucy, who is soft and beautiful and hates guns. As her brother's involvement with some of the members of Clearview grows increasingly alarming and all the pieces of Bex's life become more difficult to juggle, Bex has to figure out where her loyalties really lie. In this gripping novel, E. M. Kokie questions our assumptions about family, trust, and what it really takes to survive.

## About the Author

E. M. KOKIE is the author of *Personal Effects*, an American Library Association Best Fiction for Young Adults selection. She lives in Madison, Wisconsin.



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## Discussion Questions

1. How much did you know about survivalist groups before reading this book? Did *Radical* change the way you look at survivalism and doomsday groups?
2. Do you think Bex's mistrust of the government is warranted?
3. What do Cammie and Karen and the girls at Clearview help Bex realize about herself and her interests?
4. In what ways are Lucy and Bex a good match, and in what ways are they wrong for each other?
5. How does Lucy play a pivotal role in Bex's acceptance of herself and her sexuality?
6. Despite her extensive preparations for a crisis, the collapse of Bex's world catches her by surprise since it comes from a place she doesn't expect: within her own family. What does this show her about preparation, crisis, and survival?
7. Was Bex's fear that Mark would kill her well-founded? If she hadn't made it to her room and blockaded the door, would Mark have seriously hurt her?
8. Bex isn't sure what might have happened if Mark hadn't gotten that phone call. Do you think she could have, or would have, killed him?
9. There's a huge difference between speaking against the government and making plans to act against the government. Similarly, there's a huge difference between making plans and following through with them. At what points in the novel does it become clear that Mark has progressed from talk to plans, and finally to action?
10. Bex's lawyer, Joan, is instrumental in changing Bex's life, and not just because she helps Bex avoid prison. In what ways is Joan a role model for Bex?
11. Bex is fiercely loyal to her family. Why does it take her so long to realize, with Joan's help, that they're not on her side?
12. The book shows many different perspectives on guns and gun control. Did reading *Radical* teach you anything about the debate over gun control, or help you better understand points of view you might not necessarily agree with?
13. How has Bex's outlook on the future changed by the end of the book?
14. Do you think Bex will ever forgive her family members? Will they ever forgive her?
15. What has Bex learned about loyalty by the end of the novel?



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