

**Creased up**



**Tickled pink**



**Gobsmacked**

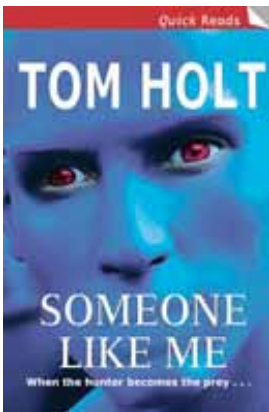


**Swept away**



Quick Reads

**Get hooked on books.**



# *Someone like me*

## Tom Holt



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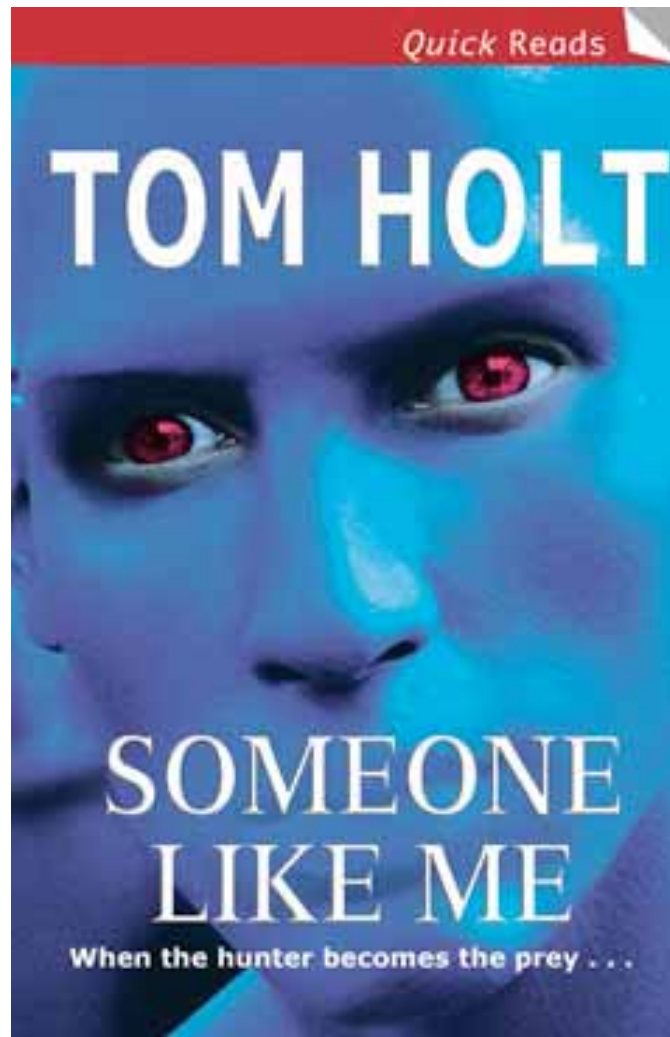
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### Acknowledgement

The learning materials to accompany the Quick Reads publications have been produced as part of The Vital Link’s Reading for Pleasure campaign, funded by the Department for Education and Skills and in co-operation with World Book Day. Our thanks go to the writing and editorial team of Nancy Gidley, Kay Jackaman and Moreen Mowforth.

**The  
Vital  
Link**

[www.vitallink.org.uk](http://www.vitallink.org.uk)



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**Blurb**

‘In a world torn apart by hatred and fear, only the strong survive.’

**Synopsis**

The story is set on Earth, some time in the future. A terrible event has taken place and humans are being hunted as food by ‘Them’. The main character is a hunter who has tracked and killed ‘Them’ for 15 years. He follows one of ‘Them’ into a tunnel and soon the hunter becomes the hunted. He has to rely on hearing, sense of smell and his expertise to survive, as the tunnels are dark places – in more ways than one! The ending leaves the reader with lots of unanswered questions, including who is more ‘human’?

The book is written in the first person and belongs to the science fiction/fantasy genre that has become increasingly popular in the last ten years.

The story contains violent scenes that some readers may find upsetting.

**Readability**

10/11 Level E3

## Tom Holt

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Tom Holt was born in London in 1961. At Oxford University he studied bar billiards, ancient Greek agriculture and the care and feeding of small temperamental Japanese motor cycle engines – interests that perhaps inevitably led him to qualify as a solicitor and emigrate to Somerset where he specialised in death and taxes for seven years before going straight in 1995. Now a full-time writer, Tom lives in Chard with his wife, one daughter and the unmistakable scent of blood wafting on the breeze from the local meat-packing plant.

### Orbit books

'When I was at university there was a pool table in the room behind the bar. We found that if we stuffed newspaper in the pockets, we could play all day for free. So we did, when we should have been working. The result of all this indolence was that when we came to take our final exams, the boys and girls who'd avoided the bar and stayed in the library working like hell all passed with flying colours; while the rest of us, who'd done nothing but play pool and have a good time, also passed with flying colours. So let that be a lesson to you'

**Tom Holt**

# Activity 1

## The Author – is he someone like me?

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>→ To help the reader's initial engagement with the book through knowledge about the author</p> <p>→ To develop reading skills for research</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p>Tutors can compile their own notes about Tom Holt or use the information about the author in these materials.</p> <p>Website addresses, pens, paper, pencils, internet access</p>
<b>Activity</b>	<p>The book title <i>Someone Like Me</i> is a lead into investigating what sort of person the author is.</p> <p>Use your notes about the author to introduce Tom Holt briefly to the group.</p> <p>Ask if anyone has read any of his books. Has anyone heard of filkmusic, which he loves?</p> <p>Ask the group to work in pairs or individually to find out more about Tom Holt as a man and as an author. The websites listed are good starting points. You may wish to suggest some specific headings that will help readers to focus their searches and organise the information to help when sharing it, e.g. hobbies, other books he has written, examples of filk music, views on science fiction/fantasy writing.</p> <p>Encourage the group to make notes or a spidergraph to record information. They may wish to highlight similarities or differences to themselves, e.g. male, likes science fiction, sense of humour.</p>
<b>Reflection</b>	<p>What have they found out about Tom Holt? Ask the group to share the information and add to their notes to build up a picture of the author.</p> <p>Do they think he is 'someone like me'?</p> <p>Discuss how knowing about 'the person behind the book' influences reader book choices and expectations.</p>
<b>Development</b>	<p>Introduce the book to the group and invite them to begin reading <i>Someone Like Me</i>. The information gathered about the author could be used to create a display to inform other readers about Tom Holt.</p>

## Activity 2

### “What am I?”

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>→ To encourage the practice and further development of interpretive reading skills.</p> <p>→ To introduce readers to subtext.</p>
<b>Resources</b>	<p>Handout 1: “What am I?” (Extracted from Chapter 2)</p> <p>Copies of <i>Someone Like Me</i></p> <p>Pens, paper, highlighter pens, computer</p>
<b>Activity</b>	<p>The main character tells the story from his or her point of view. The descriptions reveal more about the world he or she lives in.</p> <p>Have the group decided if the main character is male or female? What clues or information in what they have read so far has led them to this decision?</p> <p>Read the extract, either in the book or from the handout together. In it, the main character, who is the narrator, describes aeroplanes, cars and light bulbs without naming them. Ask the group to highlight the descriptions and identify the objects described.</p> <p>Discuss the significance of this. Can the readers think of other stories/films/TV programmes set in the future that have a similar theme, e.g. <i>Planet of the Apes</i>?</p> <p>Ask the group individually to create descriptions of two or three everyday objects, without naming them. Share some of the descriptions and ask members to name the object described.</p>
<b>Reflection</b>	<p>Writers often give readers clues to characters and plot, rather than stating things directly. Why do they do this? Does it make reading more, or less, interesting?</p>
<b>Development</b>	<p>Collect remaining good descriptions and put them onto cards (with the answer on the reverse) to develop into a game for others to play.</p> <p>It is clear that the world has changed. What do readers think may have happened?</p>

## Activity 3

### Sequel

<p><b>Purpose</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➔ To encourage the reader to reflect on what they have read</li> <li>➔ To build self-esteem and confidence in their creative reading ability.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources</b></p>	<p>Copies of <i>Someone Like Me</i> Flipchart, pens, paper</p>
<p><b>Activity</b></p>	<p>After readers have finished the book, they will find that there are some unanswered questions. These could form the outline for a sequel.</p> <p>Use the heading 'I want to know' and draw up a list of questions the group want answered.</p> <p>Discuss what could be developed in a sequel, which would answer some of the 'I want to know' list, e.g.</p> <p><b>Characters</b> – does 'he' have a name? Has 'he' made contact and learnt more about 'Them'? Who are 'They' and where did 'They' come from? How did 'They' learn to speak?</p> <p><b>Setting</b> – where do 'They' live and why?</p> <p><b>Plot</b> – what happens in the sequel? How would the sequel end?</p> <p>Ask readers to note down individually some ideas on what they would like to happen next.</p> <p>Share ideas.</p>
<p><b>Reflect</b></p>	<p>Reading stories creates pictures in our imagination. Discuss whether ideas that people came up with were very different from each other, or were there many similarities? What does that tell us about the book itself or what happens when we read?</p>
<p><b>Development</b></p>	<p>Create a storyboard for the next book.</p> <p>Some readers may wish to develop ideas for a <b>prequel</b> to explain what happened before the beginning of the book.</p> <p>The group could send their ideas to the author via his website or publisher.</p>

Handout 1

## “What am I?” activity

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### Chapter 2

**WHEN I WAS A KID**, my grandad was always going on about how it was before They came here. Of course, he didn't know what he was talking about. He was just telling me what his granddad had told him. Besides, I never listened much, because it sounded like a load of rubbish, stuff you could never believe. According to him, before They came, people used to fly through the air in the stomachs of huge steel birds, and scoot about really fast on the ground inside big steel beetles. Light didn't come from a fire or candles. It sort of trickled down a bit of wire into a little glass bowl hanging from the roof, and you didn't have to mess about with flint and tinder either. It lit itself.

Grandad said that it was just ordinary people like us who built the big cities and the tall buildings, and dug the tunnels where They live now. He said it was safe, back then. You could go anywhere you liked, even at night, with nothing to be afraid of except other people. He said that in those days there was just us and the animals. We'd wiped out all the predators that could harm us, except for a very few in faraway places, and that was why it was possible for the people back then to do all these wonderful things, because there was nothing out there to hunt us.

Back then, according to him, it was no big deal for people to live to be sixty. Well, you know what old people are like. They'll tell you anything, when you're a kid. But since I've been in this job, I've seen a lot of things that made me think about what he said. I've been in the tunnels, for one thing, and I'm damned sure they didn't dig them. I've gone out as far as the old town, where it's all overgrown and fallen down, and I've found bits of machines in the bramble-fuzz, or sticking up out of the dirt. I'm not saying I believe half of what Grandad told me, even now. All the same, it makes you think. For instance if what they tell us is true, and it was giants who built all the buildings and houses, how come the doors are our size, and not twelve feet high?

## Further development

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### Websites for background information on Tom Holt

Publisher's website direct to Tom Holt  
<http://www.orbitbooks.co.uk/orbit/holt-tom.asp?TAG=&CID=orbit>

Tom Holt Website sitemap  
<http://www.edlin.org/holt/sitemap.html>

An interview with Tom Holt about computers  
<http://www.orbitbooks.co.uk/orbit/holt-interview.asp?TAG=&CID=orbit>

A link to folk music can be found on the Tom Holt Website sitemap  
<http://www.edlin.org/holt/sitemap.html>

### Other possible activities

Explore the issues the main character faces and in particular the impact of finding that 'They' could talk.

Discuss his final decision not to share with others what he had learned.

Does the blurb accurately state the novel's final message?

Investigate the genre of sci-fi /fantasy .

Further work on setting: create a map of the tunnels and chart the significant places and events, e.g. leaving his sword at the entrance, the body in the tunnel, the larder.

Write a book review and send in to [www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk](http://www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk)

Write a newspaper report of the incident in the tunnels.

Compare *Someone Like Me* with *Hell Island* by Matthew Reilly (Quick Reads) e.g. similarity of themes and author background.

## More reading

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March title	Author	ISBN
<b>The Thief</b>	Ruth Rendell	0091796865
<b>A Woman Walks into a Bar</b>	Rowan Coleman	0099492288
<b>Blackwater</b>	Conn Iggulden	0091907039
<b>Star Sullivan</b>	Maeve Binchy	0752879545
<b>Hell Island</b>	Matthew Reilly	0330442325
<b>The Book Boy</b>	Joanna Trollope	0747582114
<b>Don't make me Laugh</b>	Patrick Augustus	1902934466
<b>Someone Like Me</b>	Tom Holt	1841494461
<b>Screw it, Let's Do It</b>	Richard Branson	0753510995
<b>How to change your life in 7 steps</b>	John Bird	0091907039
<b>Chickenfeed</b>	Minette Walters	0330440314
<b>The Team</b>	Mick Dennis with the Premier League	0552153729
May title	Author	ISBN
<b>Danny Wallace and the Centre of the Universe</b>	Danny Wallace	0091908949
<b>Desert Claw</b>	Damien Lewis	0099493535
<b>Cleanskin</b>	Val McDermid	0007216726
<b>Name You Once Gave Me</b>	Mike Phillips	0007216718
<b>Grey Man</b>	Andy McNab	0552154334
<b>I Am a Dalek</b>	Gareth Roberts/Dr Who	0563486481
<b>Poison in the Blood</b>	Tom Holland	0349119643
<b>I Love Football</b>	Hunter Davies	0755314700
<b>Winner Takes All</b>	John Francome	0755329481
<b>The Dying Wish</b>	Courtia Newland	0349119635
<b>Secrets</b>	Lynne Barrett-Lee	1905170300
<b>The Corpse's Tale</b>	Katherine John	1905170319

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See [www.quickreads.org.uk](http://www.quickreads.org.uk) for information on these and future Quick Reads

See First Choice library booklist at [www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk](http://www.firstchoicebooks.org.uk) for mainstream books selected against criteria for their suitability for emergent readers

Audio version of the Quick Reads are available from W F Howes Ltd as part of their Clipper Emergent Reader programmes ([www.wfhowes.co.uk/cerp/](http://www.wfhowes.co.uk/cerp/))

Other publications for emergent readers include those from Sandstone Press ([www.sandstonepress.com](http://www.sandstonepress.com)) and New Island's Open Door series ([www.newisland.ie](http://www.newisland.ie))

## Adult Core Curriculum References

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### Activity 1

#### The Author

##### Speaking and listening

SLIr/L1.1–.6 SLc/L1.–.4  
SLc/L1.4 important element  
required for reflection and  
feedback activities  
SLd/L1.1–.3

##### Reading

Rt/E3.5–.8 important  
elements for web searches to  
find relevant information  
about the author

##### Writing

Wt/E3.1  
Wt/L1.3

### Activity 2

#### What am I?

##### Speaking and listening

SLc/L1.4 important element  
required for reflection and  
feedback activities  
SLd/L1.1–.3

##### Reading

Rt/E3.1–.8

##### Writing

Wt/E3.1 Wt/L1.3

### Activity 3

#### Sequel

##### Speaking and listening

SLIr/L1.1–.6  
SLc/L1.–.4  
SLc/L1.4 important element  
required for reflection and  
feedback activities  
SLd/L1.1–.3

##### Reading

Rt/E3.1–.8  
Rt/L1.1–.5

##### Writing

Wt/E3.1–.3 Highlight Wt/E3.1  
planning and drafting  
Wt/L1.1–.6 Highlight Wt/L1.3  
presenting information in a  
logical sequence