



## Undying (Undying, #1)

*Valerie Grosjean*

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## **Undying (Undying, #1) Valerie Grosjean**

This is a story of love . . . and zombies.

When eighteen-year-old college freshman Christian discovers his dormitory is crawling with the living dead, he knows he has a problem. But once he learns the whole country is overrun by the flesh-eating horde, he must race to protect what matters to him most.

Sixteen-year-old Iris, the girl he loves, is stranded eighty miles away, alone and completely unaware of the gruesome threat surrounding her.

Christian's plan is to evade the zombies, drive the distance to rescue Iris, and get them both to his family farm—where there are guns, fuel, and everything else they'll need to survive. His mission seems simple: Get the girl, get to the farm, and stay alive.

Things get complicated when Christian is forced to make an unthinkable choice between Iris and his family. Someone he loves must die, and he must decide.

## **Undying (Undying, #1) Details**

Date : Published October 15th 2013 (first published September 29th 2013)

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Author : Valerie Grosjean

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Genre : Horror, Zombies, Romance, Fantasy, Paranormal, New Adult, Young Adult

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## From Reader Review Undying (Undying, #1) for online ebook

### Sorcha O'Dowd says

You hear that spluttering and insane rambling and giddy squealing. That is me expressing my love for this book! Wow! What a thrilling read! One of my absolutely favourite books ever! Full review will be posted on my blog during my stop on the 'Undying' blog tour on the 10th February.

<http://www.oldvictorianquill.wordpress...>

You hear that spluttering and insane rambling and giddy squealing? That is me expressing my love for this book! Wow! What a thrilling read! One of my absolutely favourite books ever! This was my first forage into the world of Zombie apocalypses, because whilst the idea had always intrigued me, I always worried that I would be disappointed by what I encountered. I don't mind the blood and guts in these apocalyptic stories, but I knew that I needed something else that would really make me connect to the book.

Valerie Grosjean did that to perfection.

I needed to see the way that faith and desperation to protect loved ones helped the survivors continue to fight through their worst nightmare, I needed to see what made those not yet infected fight to keep each other safe, and to keep hope that they could survive this, and I wanted to see how such a dangerous situation, so scary, so life-threatening could turn people against each other, as escaping the apocalypse with their lives becomes the most important thing.

This book tied all these desires up with a nice little blood-thirsty bow, and I was in awe of the story long after I finished it, eagerly awaiting the second book in the series to know what happened to the characters I had connected to so deeply, as though I was depending on to help protect my own life.

Christian was an absolutely wonderful hero. I really enjoyed reading this story from a male perspective, as it made it clearer that whilst men put on an outward facade of strength and certainty, the fear still crawls inside them. It broke my heart when he was left to travel alone, having lost his roommate to the zombies after a bloody fight, and how his guilt piled up at not being able to save any of the other uninfected dorm members. I really loved his determination to get to his family, his strength and utter desperation to save his family although he couldn't save his friends.

The romance was beautifully entwined throughout this novel, and Iris became my favourite character. She was mature beyond her years, yet still held the youthful charm and hope that really struck with me. I wished throughout the book that Christian's feelings for her would be reciprocated, and growled with Christian when he discovered that Iris was held up in the house of her high-school crush. I couldn't help but laugh though as it gave some light relief to the terror and suspense of the story as we see that even in a Zombie apocalypse, little bits teenage angst still ran-through, like 'what if she liked this guy more than me?'

This is an absolute gem of a story, and I adored reading Christian and Iris' journey, and what they did to sacrifice themselves for those they love. It was heartbreakingly shocking and yet still hopeful throughout, with the end leaving me hanging with a squeal, excited thump of my heart, and immediate research into when the next book was to be released.

5 Stars and a definite recommended read. Even if you don't think the Zombie apocalypse story is your sort of

thing, I really think that this book will appeal to all romance lovers.

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### **Vidya-BooksAreMagic says**

Tomorrow is the day Christian is going to finally propose his love to Iris. He goes to bed thinking of all the possibilities of Iris' reaction, just to be woken up by the loud shriek of the neighbour. Before Christian comes to conclusion about what's going on, his roommate comes in. He says that his blonde neighbour bit him and although Christian thinks it weird at first, soon everything is clear that people are infected through water, dies and gets up a zombie. His first thought was to save Iris and his family. And that's what he does.

The writing and world building are great. The characters are relatable. Even the zombie apocalypse is convincing. There is very little romance thread going on. But, this is a horror book and you can't expect any other thing much.

The horror and gore in this book is great. It didn't scare me to my bones, but it sure made me fear the zombie apocalypse society and made me want to throw up at times.

If there is one thing I don't like about a novel, it's the repetitive storyline (exception to Jill Shalvis). That's the major letdown of this novel. I have read other zombie novels and there are very few that convinced me that the story is unique. Then there is other thing - the ending. Let's see I don't agree with this type of endings..

Other than these things, I liked this book and if you are into trying zombie novels, you can add this to your list.

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### **Ryan Snyder says**

Let's here it for another zombie book! I find that I am entirely too fond of the Post- apocalyptic genre- particularly zombies. I was incredibly excited to try a zombie book solely from a male's POV.

Christian is an 18 year old college freshmen who is planning to tell his best friend back home how he feels about her. That is.. until horrible things start happening to people. And although Christian is reluctant to say it, there is no denying what is happening. People are becoming mindless flesh-eaters. And no, it is not a bad batch of bath salt causing people to start turning on each other. There is only one explanation for what Christian witnesses as his fellow students and dorm mates attempt to eat his face. Zombies. And as terrifying as it is, he has to find a way to survive, even if it means killing the people who were once his friends. He has to get to Iris back home and save her.

Christian faces a lot of tough decisions in a short amount of time. The book is fairly fast- paced since the world is quickly deteriorating. A virus is spread by the water supply or other contaminated materials and now by biting or scratching from the infected. Christian is miles away from both his family farm and the girl of his dreams and has to fight his way through the infected to save both. The plot was pretty straightforward and tame, but the zombies were of the vicious variety. \*fist pump\* Ruuuuun, boy, ruuuuun! muahaha. I liked Christian as a character. I felt like maybe Iris did not quite grasp the whole "The world is dangerous

and mess" concept since she complained about a few silly things, but I forgive her. I suppose those were pretty confusing times for her. \*shrug\* But I enjoyed Christian far more than Iris. I am looking forward to the next book. I want to see where the author is going with the "virus" plot. (: Where will they go next? What will they do?

[Also if you can't handle death in your books, this book is not for you. In fact, you probably shouldn't be reading zombie books at all.]

All in all? A fast paced take on the old virus outbreak theme with a level- headed main character who wades through zombies to be with his lurve. (: I can dig it.

3.5/5

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### **Paige Bradish says**

I received Undying by Valerie Grosjean for a blog tour and this is my honest review.

Lately zombie books have been so huge that I actually have been putting off reading them because they've all been the same. Characters fighting off zombies and then theres some sort of crappy love combination. But Undying by Valerie Grosjean is unique and I loved reading it. The main thing that makes this book unique is because the love came before the zombies, and it is not instant love either. Usually like I said there are characters and the zombie apocalypse or something comes along, and then people fall in love. But the love before the apocalypse makes the book 10X better then other zombie books.

In this novel the main character Christian is a college student who is in love with a girl named Iris. He met Iris in high school when he was a senior and she was a freshman. The only thing is that Christian has not told Iris that he is in love with her. He plans to when he goes home for a weekend, but before he has the chance to the zombie apocalypse begins.

I liked Christian a lot because he was strong, and he kept a good head on his shoulders even when people were dropping dead all around him. Another reason why I say he is strong is because in the beginning Christian and his roommate did not even know what was going down. They had no clue that zombies even existed, and they did not believe that they existed either. Eventually Christian caught on and he made keeping himself safe, and getting to Iris and his family top priority which I love. He did not freak out when people started eating other people he stayed sane.

One of the things that annoyed me a little bit was that the first half of the book was really drawn out with Christian trying to figure out what was going on, and then realizing he needed to get home. Now if the whole book was like this it would not have annoyed me as much but because the first parts of the book was so drawn out, the ending happened in what seemed like two seconds. The book is pretty small so I think the author could have gotten away with drawing out the ending some more so that it did not seem so rushed.

Overall the book was great I loved the characters and the authors ability to make all of them seem so alive and real in my mind. I actually did not even realize that there was a prequel and a sequel to this book. I wish I had known about the prequel because I would have read that first but its alright I think I am going to read that sooner rather than later. Along with the sequel whenever it comes out!

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## **Becky says**

Reviewed on my blog, [Becky on Books](#).

Valerie Grosjean's love for zombie movies shines through every page of this novel. Its hero, Christian, often reflects it:

A current of electricity ran down my spine. I could feel someone back there, undead, ready to spring when I approached.

In a horror movie, that was exactly what would happen. A zombie would emerge and attack just as I passed its hiding place, cued by a sudden, loud burst in the creepy background music. Depending on whether I was the hero or just an expendable extra, I would either make a narrow escape or be eaten in a gory, detailed close-up.

\*\*\*\*\*

I could envision some less mechanically inclined mortal stopping at a gas station, just like she'd seen in the movies: She pulls in next to the pump. Stepping out of her car, she walks around to the tank and twists off the gas cap. Then she removes the nozzle, sticks it in the tank, and raises the lever to start filling.

When nothing happens, she realizes it's not going to work. The pump display is dead, but in desperation, she repeatedly pounds the unresponsive buttons on the lifeless unit and squeezes the handle on the gas nozzle again and again.

Finally, she's surrounded by a ravenous hoard of zombies.

Shaking her fist in the air as a final gesture, she yells into the heavens, "...but it worked in the movies. Curse you, Hollywood!"

She continues to shake her fist until a zombie rips it off. Blood and screams fade to black.

I really hoped that wasn't Iris right now.

*Undying* is a fast-paced, adrenalin-infused read. Just like the apparent virus that has caused the epidemic, everything escalates quickly for Christian in the novel, and the reader is left hanging on for dear life as the story hurtles along.

I'm not a huge fan of zombie culture--I've only read or seen a small sample of what's out there--but this story definitely kept my attention. It doesn't have an HEA, but instead ends on an "okay for now" note. (Two more books are coming--*Infecting* and *Relieving*.) Romance is definitely a small side note here--Christian is understandably concerned with survival and getting to those he loves, both romantically and in a filial way.

He has varying degrees of success with those goals.

Since we see everything from Christian's POV and since it took him a while to figure things out with is almost no information coming in from the outside, we don't really find out too much about the cause of the zombie infestation. We hear a little about its probable spread, and the rest we learn with Christian, through trial and error. It can be assumed that more will be revealed in later series installments.

In the meantime, don't read this--especially the beginning scenes--in a time and place where staying quiet is a necessity. The opening half of the novel in particular caused many a noisy outburst on my part--shocked laughter, horrified squeals, and much yelling at poor Christian--that had my current companion (my mother's cat--I was cat sitting at the time) worrying more than usual about my state of mind.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

Oh, and you might want to consider sticking to bottled water. I'm just saying.

Rating: C+ and 3 1/2 (very entertaining) stars

*I received an ARC in exchange for an honest review.*

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### **Aneta Bak says**

Undying is a fantastic first book to a perfect new series. If you're a fan of The Walking Dead then you will absolutely love this book and you need to read it right now.

When Christian wakes up a discovers that there is a crazy girl running down his dorm room biting people he and his roommate decide to investigate. Finding a dead body in one of the rooms and seeing it come back to life, they know that this is the beginning of a zombie apocalypse. It becomes Christians mission to find and help his best friend Iris whom hes just happened to love since they met. Can he get there in time, before its too late.

This story is absolutely fantastic. I love The Walking Dead so this was a definite read for me. And I must say that I was not dissapointed with the amount of zombies. This book was perfect in the sense where it had romance, adventure and zombies. There was a perfect balance to everything.

We defintiely see a lot of world-building. We go from seeing Christian in his dorm room, to him racing back home and breaking into houses. I feel like the amount of detail the author put into the descriptions and details on the world were just the right amount for the length of the book.

Christian was definitely a great character, I loved seeing the world from his point of view. I love how hes so caring, you can definitely tell just how much he cares about Iris and his family, and you do get a feel of how much he has suffered due to his mother's passing. I loved reading about him just talking about how he met Iris and how he decided to be friends. Even though I admired him for his love and passion, he definitely

seemed a little strange, there were times where he would say things that didn't really belong to the context, they were just kind of random, most of the time it was when he said I love you. This made him seem a little less realistic.

The beginning of this book was absolutely perfect, but closer to the end I felt like the book was being rushed a little too fast. I would have loved to get more detail with what happens with certain characters which I feel like we didn't get enough time with.

Either way, I really enjoyed this book, and I can't wait to read the next book in the series to find out what happens to Christian next.

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### **Laura Masciarelli says**

I'll preface my review by writing that I don't like horror. I don't like it for the same reason I don't like tearjerkers—I feel my emotions are being manipulated and fear is not the feeling I like to feel. But, it's Halloween and on Halloween, everyone likes a little horror.

As horror novels go, this one is a winner! I tried another zombie book to compare and there was no comparison—the other one went off the rails and this one was believable, scary, suspenseful and pretty horrible. There are skulls that are crushed under car tires, people screaming as they are being eaten alive by the undead and Christian, the hero of this story, being chased by zombies who have exposed bones and hanging flesh. Just as it's hard to look away from a car wreck, I couldn't stop reading.

Undying starts with Christian's college roommate being attacked. They barricade themselves into their room as protection from the mayhem in the hallway. The roommate succumbs, dies, dead. But then, Christian turns around and the roommate is alive, trying to eat him, with superhuman strength!

That very day, he had been planning on telling his friend, Iris, that he loved her. Christian barely escapes his roommate but the chase is on to get to Iris, 80 miles away, and bring her to the safety of his family farm!

Undying is more than pure horror. I was invested in the characters. Christian is entirely likable. His angst about revealing his love for Iris and whether she would return it is engaging. There is also a love triangle involving the high school popular guy—would Iris choose him instead of Christian? Plus there are dilemmas involving zombie politics—what if you have to leave a beloved family member behind because they were bitten and are turning? What if you have to kill a beloved family member who has already turned?

What I liked: Solid, likable characters, fast-paced, edge-of-your-seat horror.

What I didn't like: The story takes an unforeseen twist at the end and then leaves you hanging. Valerie Grosjean is walking the fine line between creating a series and a serial novel. (Don't get me started on a rant about how authors do not disclose they have written a serial novel and you only find out when the ending leaves you in the middle of a story.)

Overall: Five stars! A completely creepy, scary, zombie horror book, perfect for Halloween!

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## Dayla says

### Review first appeared on my blog: Book Addict 24-7

*I received a copy from the author in exchange for an honest review for a book tour hosted by Xpresso Book Tours*

Let me start by stating that *Undying* by Valerie Grosjean is one creepy read. Sure, the romance featured is pretty sweet (from the protagonist's perspective), but let's be clear here: the sweetness is over-shadowed by the pure awesome force of Grosjean's ability to create fear in the reader. By introducing zombies to her "isn't that sweet" story of our protagonist's upcoming lunch with his best friend, who also happens to be the object of his affection, Grosjean is taking your typical could-be love story to a whole other level. But hey, if the horror doesn't intrigue you, then maybe the quickly paced storyline, engrossing descriptions of the apocalypse, and the protagonist's will to find and protect those he loves will keep you entertained.

Christian is the protagonist of this bloody tale and he's on a mission to find the girl he loves, his family, and safety. Before I get into the exciting aspect of this novel, I'm just going to comment on Christian's love interest. Iris is a high school student who finds herself in the midst of a zombie apocalypse, but we don't get to see the world through her eyes, since this story is told from Christian's perspective, so the mystery of whether she's alive or not is unknown until we know the outcome.

What frustrated me about the romantic aspect of this novel was how Christian is so completely in love with a girl who is the least bit likeable. I'm going to stop here before I give too much away, but the few times that Christian does talk to her on the phone before the apocalypse happens doesn't exactly paint her as a saint who will reciprocate Christian's love.

Now onto the zombie bit (pun intended). There is one particular scene that I'm recalling at this very moment that I think will haunt me for a while. You know those horror films when someone you believe to be dead rises and is suddenly completely focused on you? Now imagine that said undead thing wants to chomp on you—cue the shivers.

Grosjean's novel may be short, but it does not cheapen the horror and terror of her version of the zombie apocalypse. The mixture of the two fear-inducing techniques of horror and terror make for a creepy read that will have you waking up in the middle of the night wondering if today will be the day that the world ends.

I'm a fan of zombie tales, even if they terrify me, so I obviously enjoyed this very much (ignoring the love story, which I honestly thought was a bit forced, especially considering that Christian's road trip could have been taken simply to see if his family was ok.) The catchphrase on the cover of the book, "A story of love...and zombies," is both genius (because it undermines our immediate reaction to the mention of a romantic tale) and a bit counterproductive (because the zombie aspect could have survived perfectly well without the romance, though it seems that the "love" aspect was just introduced to gain the attention of romantic lovers seeking a story of hero worshipping...but I digress.)

This was a good, quick read. If you like gory and bloody zombie tales, then you'll enjoy this one. I'm looking forward to the sequel, especially after the intense conclusion!

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## **Bella says**

The story tells us about Christian who had planned to confess to his best friend, Iris, his true feelings for her. But things started going wrong when the students in his dorm started turning into zombies and were wanting to eat him. Barely escaping from them, he found out about the zombie outbreak and he set on a mission to save the girl that he loves who was apparently 80 miles away from him, stranded and probably did not know about the mayhem. Along the way, he encountered situations by which he had to choose between his family or the girl that he loves and swore to protect no matter what.

I genuinely loved this novel. The whole of it. It was wrapped so perfectly for me. The execution of the idea was brilliant and the delivery of the emotions from the various characters felt so alive. I think those are the key points to a good zombie novel. I feel that the author had done such a fantastic job bringing out the empathy in us, the readers. I could just vibe the intense emotions that the characters felt.

In this novel, we get to see how different characters react when they found out their loved ones turned into flesh eating zombies. It's easier for us to tell others to leave their loved ones behind or that it's useless trying to save them or worse still, kill them? But when it comes to us, when we are put in that dilemma, are we able to perform what we advised? The author managed to describe the acuteness of the tension. It was really heart-breaking reading about how some of Christian's friends, family or someone he knew, evolving into those cannibals but engaging at the same time.

I adore Christian. He is such a likable and amicable character. He is not the sort of bad boy type. It's a good change to have a decent guy as the protagonist. It's refreshing. I do find the scenes involving him and Iris endearing. You could see just how dire it was for him to shield her from harm and how agonizing it was for him to hold on to his confessions until it was the right time to confide. They were in the middle of a zombie apocalypse and it was such an inappropriate moment to manifest acts of love.

I do like some of the minor characters in the story. For instance, Reno. He seems like an enigmatic character to me and I wished I could get to know him deeper. I like Michael, also known as Mike, too. He is the guy that Iris is crushing on. I didn't expect his character to end of like the way it did. I was hoping to see more of him because I feel that his character has a lot of potential for further development.

This novel consisted of 197 pages so for those of you ardent readers out there, this is a quick read. Highly recommended for those into that sort of books. While the novel is fast-paced, there is a consistent flow and excellent story development which makes the book an ease to read. It's not too quick so as to perhaps miss out or cut out important events.

The ending was something I did not foresee most definitely. It left me hanging and fathoming what would happen next. It would've been better if the ending was more solid. That is probably the teeniest tiniest fault that I have with the novel but other than that, I'm totally loving it.

I'm psyched about the prequel and following that the sequel! I would love to understand further how it all happened. How and what could've caused the zombie outbreak. While it was briefly mentioned and explained, it would be better to know the backstory of the situation. I also can't wait for the sequel because I want to know what happens next. I'm also hoping that some of the minor characters will reprise their roles because I see potential in them and I want to read more about them!

All in all, the book is excellent and I highly recommend this to those who loves zombie flicks! It's a

wonderful read!

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## Tracey (Life and Literature) says

*But the world had turned on its head, and the dead were no longer guaranteed peace. They walked like vengeful ghosts trapped inside lifeless bodies.*

Let me set something straight for you. I can't recall the last time I read a book that contained zombies, if I've ever read one at all in the past. And I certainly don't do gore or horror. I haven't watched a scary movie since I was, well, it's been a while. I'm the person that would be trying to cover my eyes and block my ears all at the same time. I'm a wuss, a chicken, whatever word you want to use, that's me. I even have to watch True Blood in the daytime because I'm so scared. And it's much less scary during the day right?

So what was it that drew me to Undying? First off, I think it was the gorgeous cover. So stunning!! The colours are just beautiful. Then there was the first line in the synopsis. "This is a story of love . . . and zombies." Okay, this could be interesting.

Undying is the story of Christian and Iris, the girl he loves. Although Iris doesn't know that yet, but Christian is ready to tell her. He has it all planned out. But those plans are thrown for a six when his college dorm is overtaken by zombies. When Christian learns that Iris is stranded by the side of the road near his hometown, he makes the decision to get home as fast as he can to save her. But before then he has to make it out of his dorm alive. With bodies falling all around him and more and more zombies popping up, the race to get to Iris is one that will be fraught with danger.

*His face held no emotion, no thought, no recognition, but a look that was becoming familiar. I recognized it now as hunger.*

When I was reading Undying, I found myself on the edge of my seat, eagerly turning the pages to find out what was going to happen next. Valerie Grosjean managed to have me in a constant state of anticipation as the story went from one zombie encounter to the next. The zombie scenes were gory and descriptive without being too horrific.

Whilst the basis of Christian's journey home was to rescue the girl he loves, romance wasn't a big part of the book. Christian's feelings for Iris were so obvious in the way he was desperate to protect her, but the constant threat of death doesn't allow for too many moments of romance.

The one drawback for me was that I didn't feel a great connection to Iris. With the story being told from Christian's point of view I just didn't feel like I got to know Iris very well. I believed Christian's love for her, but I didn't feel that anything was given back from Iris, so I'm really hoping in the next book to get a better understanding of her. Because seriously, who wouldn't love Christian. He was such a sweetheart and a great friend who has a really big heart.

The story finished rather quickly and on somewhat of an open ending, so I'm really keen to see what happens in the next book. Undying was a great read due to the suspense of finding out what would happen next.

3.75/5 Gory Zombie Stars

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### **Carrie Ardoin says**

I love zombie books..I mean, I REALLY love them. A good romance can sometimes draw me in as well, so the prospect of both in one book definitely had me excited to read Undying. While the novel awesomely delivered on the zombie front, the romance was severely lacking.

Christian Winter is a college freshman who is in thus far unrequited love with a high school junior. First off, I have to say this age difference bothered me a good deal. I know it seems like 2 years is not a big deal, but there's such a maturity gap between a high schooler and someone in college that it's not even funny. This is why so many relationships fail when one party goes to college.

Anyway, Christian has it bad for Iris. He is an English major and even writes poems about her. As I said, I love a GOOD romance. But this one was so very sappy. Christian fawns over this girl in a very girly manner. Some lines he has, I had to roll my eyes at. What makes things even worse is that Iris doesn't even seem to really like him even though he feels so strongly for her. She's actually kinda mean.

Christian is getting ready to go home one December weekend when all zombie hell breaks loose on his campus. After checking his voicemail and discovering that Iris is alive but stranded, he decides to go save her. This off the bat did not make sense. Do you think she was gonna survive for over an hour at a gas station in the middle of the zombie apocalypse?

I know it seems like at this point my rating shouldn't even be three stars. But let me tell you, when it comes to zombie violence, this book was awesome. And I don't mean that Christian is going around killing them either--as a matter of fact, he's kind of a puss and doesn't even THINK about securing a weapon until about 75% into the story. But the author paints a vivid picture of a town overrun with zombies, and leaves nothing to the imagination when describing how the zombies attack and the carnage they leave behind. It's disgustingly amazing.

All in all, I am glad I read this book if only for the zombie part of it. To me, Christian is a wimp and kind of needs a punch in the head. I don't actually like him and Iris together, and that's not good when you don't want a main character to get together with his love interest. I also lost any respect I had for him when he decided to have a moment of weakness and put Iris above his family.

I will definitely consider reading the next book in this series, and I truly hope the zombies don't stop coming.

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### **FicCentral says**

When Christian went to sleep last night, everything was perfectly normal. His roommate was out, probably to come home later with some nameless girl, he was planning on heading home for the weekend, and he had plans with the girl he loved. But then he wakes up to a nightmare.

They think it was someone on drugs, maybe the bath salts that the media was warning everyone about. But

when more than just the one girl down the hall goes for blood, when bodies are everywhere, when someone who was dead just minutes before rises up and attacks, Christian knows exactly what's happening. He may not entirely believe it, but he knows. Zombies.

Stealing his roommates car because his own is out of gas, he heads for home, heads for the last place Iris said she'd be, stranded on the side of the road with a dead car. If she's still alive, they can go to his parents' farm, a place with weapons and fresh water and a food supply. But the more undead he sees, the more it seems impossible...until he finds a note in Iris's abandoned car.

Honestly? It was a little too much gore for me. I was expecting "a story of love ... with zombies," like the synopsis promised. But what I got was "a story of zombie horror ... with infatuation and possibly unrequited love." And of course, someone behind the scenes resorted to the dreaded cliffhanger. So maybe I should say it's "a story of zombie horror ... with infatuation and possibly unrequited love ... and a really frustrating pseudo-ending." For me, cliffhangers quickly reduce my enjoyment of books, hence the not-so-perfect rating. I don't mind when a door is left open for another book, but when it all ends without really resolving the one big issue? Dammit! Then again, I suppose if I didn't like the story, it wouldn't have bothered me so much.

It wasn't the ideal book for me, but I have the feeling zombie fans will love it, especially those that don't mind getting half the story now and then waiting for whatever's going to happen next. When Christian was unexpectedly thrown into the role of hero, he was lost and desperate, and his escape from a horrific fate was sheer luck -- which I found wonderfully realistic. I mean, who among us would be even close to prepared if all order and society just vanished? *Undying* is a fast-paced, quick read filled with heart-stopping suspense and descriptive writing that plays out like a movie in your mind, placing you right in the center of the tense action. So even though I might have to skim through a few scenes next time, I may just have to check out the next book whenever it pops up.

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### **Melissa Cushing says**

I give this book 3 and 1/2 stars.

This book is well written, flows smoothly and even poetically at times, from chapter to chapter.... but there just seems to be something missing. I am all for a story that starts off action packed and "ready to rock" and get to the good stuff right from the beginning, but this book just seems to miss something for me. I do not feel that there is enough character and plot development..... although it does get better as the story goes on.... just not enough. I WILL read the sequel because the book leaves you on a serious cliff hanger ending and I need to know what happens for Christian and Iris going forward. I also honestly felt there was not enough "hope" to lean on in this story.... it just seemed everyone involved was being picked off quickly and that too.... bothered me. I do LOVE The Walking Dead and I do believe fans of that genre will like this book.... and this would be a GREAT book if there was more depth as far as the plot and characters go because as I already stated the author is gifted in the art of writing... it is plain to see when reading her novel, but I still have to give this 3 & a 1/2 stars because of the missing elements. The story was well written and edited and flowed beautifully.... I just needed more form the author as far as character and plot development goes. I will be looking for the release of the sequel(*Reliving*) and even the prequel(*Infecting*) to see where the author goes with this story.

Here is the synopsis of the book from Goodreads:

This is a story of love . . . and zombies.

When eighteen-year-old college freshman Christian discovers his dormitory is crawling with the living dead, he knows he has a problem. But once he learns the whole country is overrun by the flesh-eating horde, he must race to protect what matters to him most.

Sixteen-year-old Iris, the girl he loves, is stranded eighty miles away, alone and completely unaware of the gruesome threat surrounding her.

Christian's plan is to evade the zombies, drive the distance to rescue Iris, and get them both to his family farm—where there are guns, fuel, and everything else they'll need to survive. His mission seems simple: Get the girl, get to the farm, and stay alive.

Things get complicated when Christian is forced to make an unthinkable choice between Iris and his family. Someone he loves must die, and he must decide.

Check it out!

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### **Nicole Hewitt says**

This review and many others can be found on my blog - Feed Your Fiction Addiction

Don't let the pretty cover fool you, *Undying* is a gruesome zombie apocalypse story that will have you watching your friends and family for signs of undeadness (yep, totally made that word up).

#### **The negatives:**

The romance.

Reading the synopsis, you would think that this book is all about the romance. And it is - sort of. Throughout the book Christian is focused on his best friend, who he's been secretly in love with for the past year. The problem is that he's not actually with her for at least the first half of the book (we get a couple of phone calls, but that's all), so we don't really get a chance to see his love for her in action. Then, once the two are together, I struggled to figure out if Iris had any feelings for Christian at all (or at least non-friend feelings). There just wasn't any chemistry between them and there were very few scenes where the two of them made any sort of connection. So, we just kind of had to go on what Christian was telling us about his feelings, without really seeing the sparks between the two of them. This made it hard for me to really root for them as a couple. The book is a short, quick read - I would have preferred if it were a bit longer and we had some more moments between Christian and Iris.

#### **What I loved:**

The zombies.

While the romance in this book was lacking a bit as far as I was concerned, the zombie action was not. The book starts out with a bang - literally - and doesn't let up. Christian finds himself suddenly swarmed by zombies in his college dorm and barely makes his escape. Meanwhile lots of others, don't escape at all - and

the results are rather gory. Just the way a zombie book should be. These aren't slow-shuffling, lazy zombies either - you need to stay out of their way!! When Christian escapes the dorm, he's still far from safe and sound, and there were some interesting twists as far as who did and didn't become zombified by the end of the book.

Christian.

I thought that Christian was a very realistic hero. He was neither a superman nor a wimp - he was mostly a regular guy who found himself trying to survive and get to the girl he loved. I also thought that his feelings for Iris were believable, so I was sympathetic to his plight. (Like I said, I just didn't quite see those feelings reciprocated when he and Iris were together). I loved that Christian was an aspiring poet - his voice showed that poetic side of him without him coming off as flowery or overblown, which is a hard balance. My only gripe about Christian was that he seemed a bit oblivious when his dorm-mates started eating people - it took him a little too long to figure out that they were zombies! But, I was able to forgive that because, once he did figure it out, he acted pretty rationally and intelligently. Christian was a character I could root for!

The ending.

There was a twist at the ending that I thought was great and definitely made me interested in reading the next installment in the series!

*Undying* is a quick and entertaining read. While the romance in this book didn't have me completely enthralled, Grosjean still did a good job of crafting an interesting zombie story and I'm eager to see how it all plays out in book #2. I give it 3.5/5 stars.

*\*\*\*Disclosure: This book was provided to me by the author in exchange for an honest review. No other compensation was given. All opinions are my own\*\*\**

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## **Tracy Banghart says**

Review to come as part of the Xpresso Blog Tour

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Full Review

UNDYING is gory, intense, and heart-wrenching...I'd even say heartbreakingly at times. Valerie's evocative writing style calls up visceral images and emotions, as in this passage:

"They'd been replaced by the wraiths before us. Blood and feathers dirtied their hands, soiled their clothes, and befouled their faces. Their teeth were tinted a violent red."

She doesn't shy away from the real-world implications of a zombie apocalypse. One of the most riveting elements of the book was that her monsters weren't nameless, faceless beasts. They were the kids in Christian's dorm, the teacher he'd had in high school, a friend. Christian \*knows\* his new enemies, and that adds an emotional, gut-wrenching level to the story I wasn't expecting. I really appreciated that Valerie did this, even as it kicked me in the stomach. I thought about my teachers, my friends, their parents being turned into mindless killing machines and it made the scenario feel even more real and painful to me.

The action doesn't stop...it drags you forward by the teeth (har har) and you just have to keep reading to find out if Christian will save Iris and if his family is okay. The setup is such that those two things do NOT feel like foregone conclusions and, in fact, the climax of the story played out much different than I expected.

Christian as a character was great, though there were times when I didn't fully buy his male voice. He did have a compassion and value for human life that was a refreshing change on the typical "badass, shoot first ask questions later" male hero.

My only other gripe is that we don't get a sense of what caused the zombie virus or how it was transmitted before people started eating each other. For example, I believe at the beginning there's something about the water supply, but that's never fully fleshed out or explored. However, I read that the author is planning a prequel, so I imagine those questions will be answered there. And I'm certainly looking forward to the sequel and finding out how Christian and Iris's story ends!

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