



Undertow

Andrea Speed

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In a world where a werecat virus has changed society, Roan McKichan, a born infected and ex-cop, works as a private detective trying to solve crimes involving other infecteds.

Now Roan is locked in a coma as the struggle between his human and werecat sides reaches a new extreme. All Dylan can do is sit, wait, and think.

Meanwhile, Roan's assistant, Holden, wants to shed his old street life and his relationship with Scott, but he can't seem to do either. Holden doesn't want a relationship with Scott but finds himself drawn to him all the same, even if he can never fully reveal his past.

With Roan out of commission, Holden looks into the murder of an old friend. At the same time, Fiona takes on a case about underground death matches between infecteds—one with connections to the Church of the Divine Transformation.

Finally Roan wakes only to discover that his shifts have new consequences. His lion's strength is growing, and he can't hide from it any longer....

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Undertow Details

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From Reader Review Undertow for online ebook

R * A Reader Obsessed * says

What stands out for me in this series is that in and amongst the heavy tone, depressing reality of hate, and the constant self loathing Roan has - this is probably one of the smartest, snarkiest, funniest series I've read.

At times, I'm equally tickled silly and horribly saddened about the fantastic adventures of Roan and company, and the second to the last book in this series was no different.

Suffice it to say everyone is evolving - Holden, Dylan, Roan. They're making some changes, opening their eyes to things they didn't want to face. But scary things are happening - I don't blame Roan for his fears or his bitterness. He chose the difficult path but it wasn't a difficult decision to make. He's making plans, settling his affairs, getting his ducks in a row. He pretty much has accepted the conclusion to what he deems is his inevitable demise. *His* only question that remains is will he go out in a hail of bullets and fire or quietly into the night?

"He was doomed anyway right? He got that completely. Which was why he'd just decided to give into the nihilism and stop worrying about it all. Fuck it. He'd make himself enjoy the human time he had left."

Let's hope he's wrong on both fronts.

Thanks Sofia, Sheri, Rosa, and Otila for the BR - looking forward and dreading reading the last book with all of you!

Tamika♥RBF MOOD♥ says

This book put me through the emotional ringer for sure. After all of the emotional pain of book 6, I was expecting to feel melancholy. It's not quite how I felt at the end. I think I felt resolve for myself mostly. I felt all of Roan's pain, and it was several times while reading this that I had to stop because I was crying uncontrollably. I get it, and I feel so bad and super protective over Roan. The two mysteries were good for different reasons but my review is based on the characters that's all at this point. Roan is tired. That's basis of this story. I think he's been tired for a while, maybe even before Paris. All the events and everything he had to do was the icing on the cake to me. I'm tired for Roan. I cannot imagine what he was going through, and in the book my heart went out for Dylan. I 100% believe if Dylan left Roan then Roan would commit suicide. No one can change my mind on that one. So I have book 8 left, and a few novellas but I'm not sure how I feel this close to the series ending.

I don't know how I feel about Holden at this point. My thoughts are all over the place, because unlike many characters Holden likes being himself. I don't know if it's selfish or a sociopath. He has the tools to be someone better, but I don't know if he thinks he's worth it, and that's what I'm getting from him. On the other hand maybe normalcy is starting out with a relationship. It seems to be the path that Scott and Holden are on. Either brings baggage to the table, and both of them seem so damn stubborn that it shouldn't work. Maybe

expectations are super low that they are willing to deal with whatever when it comes to being together.

Roan's vigilantism seems to catch up with him. I feel like I like/dislike the justice that he doles out. He is the only of his kind that is able to help people, but in helping people Roan loses his self, not just the lion surfacing and taking over, but Roan's moral compass seems to decline. I don't necessarily like who he becomes, but it's so unfair that it's an necessary evil. I honestly don't know how much more Dylan can take. It's a lot mentally & emotionally to be with Roan. I could never take Dylan's love away from him, but I feel like Dylan should re-evaluate his life. Is this what he wanted? How many more hospital visits, comas, and tears can you take. How much more personal attacks, and brutalization is enough for his sanity to still be in check.

I'm going to wrap this up because this down feeling I get with writing this review further proves my point of me loving and rooting for fictional characters. I would love to see Roan walk away from MK Investigations with Dylan and move away to open space off the coast of the Pacific Ocean. I pray book 8 gives Roan his peace that he so deserves.

Tamara (?) says

I loved the book, but because of that last scene, this is the only thing happening in my head right now:

Laura says

3.5 Stars

“This world was far weirder than most people gave it credit for, and while he knew it, he sometimes forgot it too.”

Undertow, book 7 in the Infected series, had so many highs and lows for me. Huge loves and disappointments. Smiles and eye rolls. But I still had fun. Haha...I can't help it. I love Roan's life. The swirl of chaos, violence, humor, weirdness, and love. It always seems to capture my full attention and heart.

My biggest disappointment with this leg of the journey was the repetitions and stalling. It felt like Ms. Speed was focusing on issues we already knew—Roan's lack of control over the lion, the medical unknowns, and his superhero role. It's time for Roan to make some big changes and decisions, but all the same questions, problems, observations, and pity party lines came out to play with no answers in sight. We need to move forward. I know Roan is slow to realize his own issues and emotions, but Come on! Let's do this! :D

Once again, I found myself leaning in closer to hear Holden's story. I click faster and faster to get to him. I hang on every clue and detail. Will the street kid turned high class escort finally leave the prostitute life? Does he love him? Does he say anything that's not a come on? Haha...So many questions still surround Holden and I can't wait to find out more. This icy hustler-vigilante-sidekick-puzzle of a man has stolen my heart!

And my reading heart and head love the similarities and parallels between Roan and Holden. Their journeys feel so intertwined to me. Such different men, but so alike in many ways too. They click and roll on the page with jabs, jokes, one liners, and energy. They are the perfect duo! From scary vigilantes to hilarious smartasses! I love watching them go at it on the page. Both Roan and Holden seem to live for the weirdness in life—thrive on the unpredictable energy and trouble. Ready to run off into the night at the drop of a hat or phone call. Roan has his people to protect and so does Holden. And both jackasses avoid talking about their feelings like pros! Haha...Men! But my favorite aspect of Roan and Holden is their heart. Huge heart whether they like to admit it or not. It still surprises me at times too. Even at book 7! Awhile back, Roan's compassion touched my heart so deeply when he checked in on Rainbow after a very difficult time. That one unselfish, beautiful, human act made me love him even more. Holden got me in this book with a move of his own...

(view spoiler)

Sooo...Undertow was a bumpy ride, but one that I can't get out of my head either. Where the hell is all this headed?

"Is the lion adapting to the human's mind, or is the human adapting to the lion?"

p.s. I missed Tank.

Kaje Harper says

This book only works as part of the excellent series it belongs to - do not start here. In this seventh book, we get to spend time with old friends. Holden in particular gets more on page time, and progression in both his personal life and his role as a high-octane Robin to Roan's Batman. This is a good thing - I really appreciate time spent with Holden.

The cliff-hanger ending of book six is resolved with a surprisingly low-key progression. In fact, although Roan moves forward in his increasingly amoral vigilantism, and escalates his battles with self-loathing as much as with the lion within, this book feels a bit status quo for Roan, and Dylan. This has a couple of mysteries, one fairly minor and swiftly resolved. There are some fun scenes with the country's coolest hockey team. Roan and Dylan share a few emotional moments, while still choosing to keep half of a wall between them about important issues. Publicity about Roan's unique status as an evolving viral-human hybrid, with the avalanche of disasters that could ensue, hovers but never falls. This is a nice series book, about characters I care for, but not one that breaks new ground for them. It feels like that's coming, though. Roan's secret can't be kept forever, and perhaps Dylan and Holden can gang up on Roan's damnable obsession with self-sufficiency.... next book?

Otila says

This book felt mostly like it was setup for book 8. There were no big revelations and it was mostly more unanswered questions. Those really aren't complaints, though. Just observations.

I really enjoyed it. I liked seeing more of Holden's POV and the hockey guys are always entertaining (I miss Tank!).

I'm anxious to see how all this is wrapped up in the next book.

Thanks to my BR buddies, R, Rosa, Sofia and Sheri. You guys make this experience better

Sofia says

[Since I started reading this the thought that Roan had to embrace his lion, accept him as part of himself, to have some peace, has always been in the background of my thoughts. The testing at the end of this story pushes the story towards that, so now I want to read

Emanuela ~plastic duck~ says

If you're reading this, you've probably read all the previous installments of this series and I don't think you need to be convinced to read this one too, because, if you're like me, you're totally in love with Roan by this point and you just care for him. I don't know if I have a clear idea of where the series is going, but I think I've never seen Roan so confused and also so on the verge of truly embracing his future until now. The book treads between dark moments of despair and brighter moments of enlightenment. It's elusive like Roan's lion, this incredible creature inside him that saves him and damns him at the same time. The relationship between Roan and his lion is the most interesting and unbalancing element of the series.

This is the 7th book of the series and I'm still invested in it as if it were the first book. It doesn't tire me, the characters evolve while the world of the book seems to strain just a little bit to accomodate all the developments, but it still challenges Roan, both in a positive and in a negative way. I'm still intrigued.

Next, pretty please...

Sheri says

I always enjoy my time with our poor tortured King of the PNR world.

I love Roan.

His life is such an endless train-wreck it simply makes for riveting entertainment.

However, this leg of his journey felt.....monotonous.

Ro is fighting a losing battle with the Lion. The cliffhanger of book six is resolved but then things pick right back up where they left off. Barely a trip in his step.

What's happening to him? Can he hold onto his human self?

His pain and suffering is worse. His self-loathing is worse. And the constant reaffirmation that Dylan is happy to pick up the pieces left in the wake of Roan's storms became trying. Okay, okay...he's willing to pay the heavy price of being married to the Hulk, if you say he's happy...I believe you. But I'd rather that you stop reminding us that he wishes he fell in love with an easier man. It makes my heart ache for him.

I was happy to see Matt's brief return yet longed for more time with him.

I absolutely adore the hockey boys. I missed Tank.

I was irritated and annoyed that Seb continued to call him to save the day when he could barely function.

I yearn for his peace and happiness that seems only a coveted dream for Roan.

Holden and Scott are an interesting mess...but I'm not holding any stock in their success, they are doomed for disaster. I'm still searching for the reason for Den's fan club, I just don't see it.

Their journey is nearing the end.

I'm anxious and nervous....and waiting for the last showdown.

***3.5 *somebody-please-save-him* stars ***

Thanks for another lovely buddy read ladies!

You're da best!!

Christy says

I've got to start this review off by talking about Holden and Scott. Whodathunkit? I was pretty hesitant about it when it started and I'm still not sure it'll last (at all) but I like it. I like them together. I actually think it's very healthy for the both of them. Huh. Will be interesting to see what happens. Of course this does ensure that the hockey guys are still hanging around. At least for a bit. Thank you, Ms. Speed!

Roan. Shouldn't have been surprised that he wakes up from a coma after a week and a half and checks out of the hospital, takes Dylan home, and heads to work. Amazing. You really don't know whether to kiss him or slug him. But the underground gambling/cat fight/snuff web site is a doozy problem especially as it's tied to the Church of the Divine Transformation. Those people are whacked and are never going away! And the closed case of the missing woman in Eastern Washington is quite the mystery.

Dylan. I think I realized part of my other problem with warming up to him. Dylan seems to make no effort to really get to know the people who are also involved in Roan's life. Holden, Fiona, Grey, Scott, Tank, etc. He seems to sort of stand back and look at them all as weirdos and I keep getting the whole "I'm better than you" vibe. I know that's not what he's really thinking/feeling but I guess I wish he'd try harder. Like I've said

before, it's probably just me.

What's going on with Roan and his crazy virus? I now have more questions than answers. Every time something new/strange/unbelievable/freaky is discovered it just opens up a whole new set of problems and questions. I love how the author is writing this plot line and I'm fascinated to see what the final result will be.

I'm sad because I've finished reading this book and I have no idea if/when there will be a next in the series. I really hate it when that happens. But the ending was amazing and I loved it! I can't wait for another book.

Rosa, really says

Yeah, this book reads like filler, or a stopgap, but it's *enjoyable* filler. It's like when you go out to eat and feel like being "healthy" so you order a big salad. Then some asshole points out that with all the calories in the cheese and bacon bits and the lack of any nutritional value in the iceberg lettuce, you could've just eaten a hamburger and fries. And you think, "why is this asshole talking to me?" and "shit, I could've had *red meat*." But, hey, it doesn't mean the cheese and bacon bits weren't yummy.

Some of the yumminess I enjoyed was Scott. Now, I have never been partial to Scott, mainly, entirely, because he put the moves on Roan. ROAN IS TAKEN, OKAY, SCOTT?!??!?? But after this little speech I'm willing to forgive him:

"How can you, as a gay man, do this shit? 'Oh, morons think we're all infected, so let's pick on the infected and make the morons like us again.' Newsflash, idiot--those morons who say all gays are infected are the same morons who say all gays molest children. They will never like you or approve of you. You're simply trying to sacrifice another minority to save yourself, when all you will really do is play their game and make yourself look pathetic. Congratulations, you're a softheaded pussy. The decision you have to make now is this: do you want to be a softheaded pussy in the hospital, or do you want to walk away and ponder your bad life choices without the body cast?"

Good sense followed by threats of physical violence--I like it.

(view spoiler)

So far this series hasn't disappointed me and yet I am skeptical that Speed can pull off some kind of Big Explanation for what's been going with Roan in just one book. I would've felt way more comfortable if we'd gotten a hint of some sort of answer in this book and then experienced Roan dealing with it in the last book, Infected: Epitaph. (hide spoiler)]

Btw, I really miss Tank. And now Grey? You give us these awesome characters, Ms. Speed, and we make friends with them and then you take them away! Hello? Matt?!? *sob*

3.5*? 3.7958*? Something like that.

And thank you BR buddies Sheri, Otila, R and Sofia! Mwah!

Em says

I've finally worked my way through all 7 books in this series and the great thing is that I don't have to wait too long before the new book book:Epitaph[20895677] comes out in November! I love Roan, Dylan, Holden and the rest of the gang and I am just hoping that things will work out for Roan in the end.

Ami says

Quick Information:

This book consists of two separate stories. Based on the free version, chapter 1 - 20 is titled "Meantime" while chapter 21 - 38 is titled "Undertow". Just in case if you think the flow between chapter 20 and 21 is a bit weird :)

Meantime: (Chapter 1-20)

Roan was locked in a coma and struggled between his lion and human side. Holden looked into a murder of an old friend. Fiona took case about underground death matches between infecteds. When Roan woke up, he went straight back to work and involved in both cases...

Holden got a little bit more spotlight here, since Roan was in a coma. And I loved that. I loved how he was confused with his relationship with Scott (Holden didn't do boyfriend!) but he realized that he liked being with Scott, and when he got toughen up from a job, he came to Scott's instead of his own place. I loved Grey, Scott's hockey buddy -- though I was sad that he got signed with the Flyers and must left Seattle.

Roan and Dylan was as solid as ever. It was interesting with this series because I loved Paris (Roan's first husband) and I thought Paris *was* the love of Roan's life. But at the same time, I knew that Roan also loved Dylan (and vice versa). Dylan wasn't a consolation prize and their relationship was good and comfortable and significant. I guess it showed how one's heart was capable of different kind of love. One of my favorite scenes would be in the hospital, when Roan first woke up and found Dylan in the room. Or when Roan apologized to Dylan for making his husband worried. It was beautiful...

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Undertow: (Chapter 21-38)

Although it is opened with Roan's police friend retirement party, this story moves to a different path altogether. No long after, Roan is hired by the daughter of a missing woman, who is considered as a 'probable' victim of serial rapist. This case have Roan and Dylan visiting a town where the woman used to live with her family. And after investigating, Roan finds out that the murderer was closer to home.

But to me, this one was pretty much like an afterthought mystery. It was solved pretty 'early' ... what followed mostly was Roan's struggling with his lion. It seems that his lion taking more control when Roan is semi-unconscious so he needs to check himself to the clinic, to see what is wrong with him. There are moments where Roan seems so vulnerable, when he seeks comfort from his husband, Dylan, and for me this

was heartbreaking.

The tone of this second part feels more somber. Roan needs to deal with his lion and the possibility that his lion may surface on its own and hurt the people he loves. There are a couple of chapters from Dylan's perspective in here too, and I felt closer to him as well.

There was also a development with Holden whose relationship with Scott was, well, moving to further point. It was funny to me, as well as endearing, how Holden doesn't know how to deal with this relationship with Scott. Holden doesn't do falling in love, and the way that he starts to care for Scott so very much infuriates the hell out of him. I was giggling when Holden moans over this issue to Roan. Scott totally destroys Holden's 'wall' *laugh*. Oh, and Holden finally gets his license, that is totally something to look forward to.

Dreamer says

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zUPpqg...>

4.5 stars Excellent characterisation but no sex, somehow you do not miss it in these books. Roan continues to fight the lion escaping from his control. Holden and Scott become an item.

'Dylan slipped his arms around him and held him tight, allowing Roan to cry into his neck as he kissed the side of his head and smoothed a hand down his back. "You're the best man I've ever known. "You're just a little too emo for your own good sometimes."

Plainbrownwrapper says

I am intensely fond of these books, despite their flaws (more on that later). Unfortunately, it feels as though the story isn't moving significantly forward in this one. Yes, Holden does make some advances in his personal and professional life -- but, for Roan, it seems to be mostly just more of the same.

As for flaws -- I've criticized Speed's prose in the past, and that's still somewhat problematic here. Nonetheless, I do think there's a notable progression since the first book in the series. She seems to have a better grasp on her previously-overflowing commas and run-on sentences, for one thing. There's still nothing polished about the way she writes, but she gets her point across for the most part.

Unfortunately, there are also other sorts of problems that have plagued her throughout the series. For instance, these books have always had consistency problems that should have been resolved before the books ever made it into print -- one example is a character who is described as having "liver failure" at one point, but then is said to have "kidney failure" later in the book. Another example regards Roan's tattoos. Roan already has a tattoo of the biohazard symbol, and at one point he considers adding a tattoo of the "medical waste" symbol -- even though "medical waste" and "biohazard" both use the SAME symbol.

These are careless mistakes that should have been caught. Though they don't usually have a huge impact on the story itself, they are distracting and damage the suspension of disbelief.

Also, I still dislike the series' pattern of breaking down each book into two distinct halves, with separate short mysteries in each half. Forcing mysteries into such short spaces prevents Speed from adequately

developing **any** of the mysteries, and fragments the plot arc over the course of the book as a whole. I wish she would take the time to expand ONE mystery plotline through an entire book -- these things would benefit from being given the room to breathe.

On the up side, I still love the way Speed handles angst and emotion in general. I'm not sure how she does it, but she does manage to make all those emotions real for me. For the most part she does a good job of bringing the characters to life.

Because of the lack of significant progression in this book, I can't give it 4 stars. I'm rating this one at 3.4, and rounding down.
