



The Understorey

Fisher Amelie

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“Let’s start this place on nonexistent fire.”

“Promise.” She sucked in an excited breath.

We closed our eyes and I placed my feverish mouth to hers. Immediately, violent, zealous flashes of shimmering flames climbed to the furthest point, trailed like rain down the pitched ceiling and spilled down the walls, gathering at their feet, pools of fervent, bubbling, silvery liquid electricity, before evaporating into nothing.

Elliott Gray is incomplete, scrambling through the dark on his hands and knees, blindly feeling for the switch it would take to bring the peace he’s forever been searching for.

Julia Jacobs is unhappy, missing a noticeable piece of her soul, a naked canvas with vivid paints at her disposal but no brush to assemble the vision.

At a young age, courtesy of an unknowing Elliott Gray, Julia tastes the burn of heartache and since then, has silently vowed to her heart that it would never be susceptible to such pain again but when Julia and Elliott discover they share a supernatural connection that’s never been revealed before, Elliott makes it his life’s goal to convince her they are fated. He knows, if she only gave him but one chance to prove himself, she would not be afraid but when Elliott’s best friend Jesse Thomas turns out to be much more than meets the eye, it’s all Elliott can do to hold on to his new love, while attempting to survive an enormous threat on their future.

The Understorey Details

Date : Published April 17th 2011 (first published April 15th 2011)

ISBN :

Author : Fisher Amelie

Format : Kindle Edition 336 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fantasy, Paranormal, Romance, Paranormal Romance

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From Reader Review The Understorey for online ebook

Jenny - **TotallybookedBlog** says

This book was delightful. I've been trying to find a word for it and that's what I've come up with. Jules and Elliott are just gorgeous and this book left me seriously feeling all warm and fuzzy.

At times I had to keep reminding myself that they were only 18 because their endearments made them seem like an old married couple but they were just wonderful in their interactions.

I absolutely recommend this book to anyone who loves a great romance.

The prologue will pull you in and there are definitely moments that pull at the heart strings.

I can't wait for the next book - if only I could find out when it is due out - have exhausted all searches trying to find out.

This book was just beautiful.

Not to mention Elliott listens to Muse Map of Prolemique to give him motivation before a game - a man after my own heart! Nothing like a bit of Muse to motivate the soul. The playlist for this book is awesome.

Karen says

Firstly I want to mention The Understoreys cover. I love the wispy smoky colours on the black background – they really stand out and it looks so pretty! Before I read the book I had no idea what it was meant to be, now I realise that it symbolises the supernatural element of The Understorey, but without giving away some of the plot, I can't tell you more.

I had a few mixed feelings over this book. Some aspects I adored, others I didn't, but the ending really blew me away! The descriptive passages throughout the book were excellent and I could visualise each setting and character perfectly. I especially loved the main characters 'special place'. It just sounded so beautiful and peaceful. Ahh.

I loved how the book is written from the male main characters point of view, which made a nice change and I enjoyed Fisher's writing style. For the main part it flowed nicely along, but there were occasions when I wasn't sure which character was actually speaking and I got a bit confused. The first third of the book was sweet and I enjoyed getting to know both the main characters in this story – Julia and Elliot and watching them get to grips with each other and their very unusual 'power'.

The Understorey is a romance with supernatural undertones and I enjoyed the romantic element and I loved that Elliot had such 'old fashioned' views on how to treat a girl. By the second third of the book though the romance became a bit overbearing and it began to irritate me when they were using soppy names every time they talked to each other, which lessened my enjoyment of an otherwise excellent plot.

Once I hit the final section things really started to hot up and it got pretty creepy! The images some of those last scenes brought to my mind gave me the shivers and I just couldn't turn the pages fast enough. Then, just as I thought it was safe to sigh with relief at what I thought was a nice happy ending, Fisher decided to throw one last sentence at me that left me shouting NOOOOOOO! Yes guys, this book ends in a cliffhanger!

Adriana says

Wow what can i say about this book. Let me say that i love Fisher Amelie and anything she writes i love, and this was just as expected a master piece. I finished this book in one sitting that is how much i loved it.

Jules and Elliott were best friends when they were little until the 7th grade when suddenly Elliott stopped talking to Jules and broke Jules's heart. Then on the first day of their senior year every thing changes, and suddenly Elliott wants every thing to do with Jules and he will do anything for her.

I loved that it was told in Elliotts POV. I loved everything about this book i cannot wait to see what happens next.. I recommend this to everyone i recommend all of Fisher's books to everyone..

Hydie says

This book was fabulously refreshing. I loved the fact that it was not about vampires, or werwolves, or any other infectious supernatural creatures. It was about unrequited love. The love shared between the two main characters is what many would kill to have. I don't want to give anything away for those that have not read this book yet, but let me just say it is a book that I would highly recommend to friends. This book is one of a kind! I can't wait for the next one...

Meghan says

(2:00am at night) Well Im freaked the eff out..

Update: After some nightmares and sleep I liked this book, the ending was full on and the "present" she got from Jessie freaked me out (Im a woos, my bedroom is described exactly like Jules' and it was late at night ok.)

Was definetly worth the read. Loved the begining of the book especially. "Delightful" huh Jen!

Lindsay says

For those hindered by the first few pages trying to decide if you want to continue...please do. I really wanted to like LIKE this book and feel bad for 3 stars, but I just couldn't muster up 4. What makes it worse is seeing how everybody has really liked this one so far. I really LOVED the characters, their interaction as well as the writing style. Sharp witty comments and reference to pop culture were great. AND, it was super cool to see nearly the entire book from the male perspective. I think it was just the bulk middle of the story that I didn't like and felt dragged on for ages with sappiness (and I like some sap) with no action in the book until the very end. I was also disappointed that there wasn't any development with the supernatural side of their

relationship...they just kinda took it at face value. I was waiting for something else out of it that never came. Julia also seemed to "give in" to Elliot a lot faster than I thought she would. I wouldn't have liked it if she gave him the cold shoulder for too much longer, but all that anger was just gone in an instant. I also thought Tucker might have more to do with the story than he did. Overall, I would say that I will continue this series, but will have other things on my read list before I get to it.

Vanessa Booke says

The Understorey is a sweet YA novel about love, friends and soul mates. Fisher Amelie does a wonderful job by going into great detail with her characters and the setting/events within the novel. The prologue quickly engages the reader and gives you the notion that things will not end so well in this story. I must say I enjoyed Amelie's writing style and her attention to detail is what really saved this book for me. I did not like the slow build up of the story, it felt way too slow. I found myself skimming pages several times because I wanted the story to progress faster. One thing I did enjoy was the point of view the story was told from. It begins from Elliot's point of view. I found this refreshing, most of the time YA romance novels are told from a women's perspective. Although, I also found it interesting that parts of the story were told from Julia's point of view overall, I found her personality a little annoying. The dialogue between characters was lacking, the conversations felt fake. The dialogue didn't flow naturally between the characters. I must say Elliot's character is definitely what every high school girl wants, he is super sweet and charming. I can definitely see young adult readers liking The Understorey. It's similar to a young adult version of a Nicolas Sparks book because of its overflowing sentimentality. Although it does come with a dash of suspense.

Cassie says

I loved this story! It was sappy and completley romantic...sure to melt even the hardest heart.

Steph says

I'm sorry I really did want to enjoy this book. I tried. What is their spark? The references to their "electricity" started to mean nothing because that wasn't going anywhere. Basically when their parents say "it's hormones!" it's the best explanation the author gives.. So that's what I went with. The problem I had with that though is Elliot is too perfect and too pure to ever have a single hormone ever! He hangs out with cripples and feeds poor women and children! Oh and helps pregnant teens.. Until he holds a girls hand for the first time. One hand holding session and that's all Elliot wants to do, talk about love and hold friggin hands. The book is mostly told from Elliot's point of view which at first seemed like a nice change of pace, but I kept thinking how silly it was he NEVER had an impure thought or desire, he checked out her hair and makeup more than any boyfriend would or should. Half the book was him envying her cutesy hats or something or other. Even though it's told from elliot's view I can't shake that the thoughts and emotions are very very feminine. It just wasn't convincing, I might have liked it if it was just done from Jules perspective. The way they go into these long drawn out speeches on every page about how lovely and kind and blahblahblah the other one is.. Ugh it's so friggin annoying!

Emilee the Hipster Kitty Kat says

Hmmmm... Honestly I'm not to sure what I should say. Overall this book was pretty good. Just not what I was expecting. This book was advertised as a "paranormal romance", but besides the fact that they were both born on Leap day, and by the end of the book had figured out how to read each others emotions, or some other jazz like that, it wasn't. It really read more like a Young Adult romance (which, by the way, I have never read before. So I guess I could say that reading this was completely new to me). But if those where the only problems, then it probably would have gotten a higher rating. No, none of those were not the main problem.

The main problem was the fact this book had a happy ending.

Yes, you heard me correctly. I just critized a book for having a good ending. ME, who if confronted with a bad ending, will brood on the couch, curled up in the fetal posision, for days on end.

Now, please do not think I have lost my mind; for you see I have a reason.

What is that reason you ask?

I read this book for one reason, and one reason only.

This book was said to be tragic. I mean, come on, at the begining of the book it had a note from the author saying (something to this effect) What if I told you I know of a very sad story? Would you stick around to hear it told? And if you knew this narrative was the saddest one you would ever hear?.... Ect, ect. So I read this and I thought "Cool. A REALLY sad book; I am bored so maybe I'll will read it." And after much deliberating (which was somewhat like this "Shall I read it?" "No, I shall NOT" "But I REALLY want to!" "Well you want to do ALOT of crazy things, but you don't do them (most) of the time!" "To bad I'm reading it. So please shut your speaking hole and brace yourself for sadness.")

And after convincing my mom to endulge my reading ~~addiction~~ habit, I bought the book and gleefully anticipated heartbreak.

The book started all right. I mean, besides the whole "I just saw you, but I love you" stuff, (view spoiler) but that aside, they were sort of... cute. I mean, a wee bit sappy, but, then again, everything is sappy to me.

They were interesting, too. The main girl, whats-her-face... Oh great, now I have to go look it up... Jules! That's her name! So anyway, Jules was cool. She was funky, and freespirited.

You know, like me.

The book was told primarily by Elliot (I now have the book open, which I probably should have done in the first place) which I can only be happy about. I mean, he was nowhere as cool as Jules, but he had good lines and was rather goofy. And, since it was seen from Elliot's eyes, I didn't have to hear how awesome and charming he was. (I must admit I prefer dark and brooding dudes, to good ole' Southern boys Strike that. I

prefer the dark and brooding to all types.) So, the begining was good. But, once they became a couple...

Well, it got really... really... *Slow*. And I suddenly found my self *buried* in romantic mush.

Sigh.

And the further I got the more romantic it got.

It was like watching one of my mother's romantic comedies. It just wasn't for me.

But I trudged along, thinking "Don't worry your pretty, lil' head off, it *has* to get depressing soon, it HAS to!" So I keep reading. After all, something has to happen. Something creepy, sad, and paranormal!

"Hey, maybe she'll be kidnapped by crazy, dark Elves!"

But, alas, there was no Elves.

So I keep reading, until somewhere at the end (which, generally, is when climaxes happen) when BOOM! Something happened!

Yes! Something that had the potential to be heartwrenching! But... Nope, nothing. They were *fine*! The book ended with them all fine! And HAPPY!

WHAT THE HECK, MAN! Where was the tragic ending I was hoping for?! I didn't read this book to be happy! If I wanted to be happy and all fuzzy on the inside I would read Jane Eyre!

I read this with the express purpose of ruining my mood! I wanted to be sad! I wanted to curl up on my bed, listening to Slow Life by Grizzly Bear! I wanted to be sobbing into my Ben and Jerry's ice cream! I want to rant to my poor, long suffering mother about how life is unfair! But I didn't get the chance! Because this was a HAPPY book!

DARN YOU, FISHER AMELIA! WHY!?

So, besides the fact the the summery was full of *crap*, it was good. Fisher Amelia was a good writer. She wrote funny banter, and the characters were quick witted and quirky.

If you're in the mood for fluffy, non paranormal, Ya paranormal romance, then I suggest, yes, good ahead.

Now if you can excuse me, I must go read something heartbreakin. (Or maybe not)

Julia says

Rating: 4.5ish :)

my prelude

Have you seen *Big Fish* or *Moulin Rouge*, or any other Tim Burton or Baz Luhrmann films? How they make you feel a strange out of body experience, or like you're watching life unfold while you are in a tank of water like Houdini? And a pull tugs at your clothes, your hair, your limbs, and you're not sure why, but this strange feeling makes the sight irresistible.

This was my *Big Fish*. I loved it so much. And throughout the first hundred pages, I kept thinking to myself "This is so strange." Because between Elliot and Julia (YES my name, I know, I'm estatic like the crazy narsastic bookworm I am), their utter devotion was beyond intense and their reactions were sometimes extreme, which a lot of times are things that just rub me wrong. But here? My word. I was enthralled. After about a third of the way things started to get more heated, and by half way I was so used to this oddities that my brain was complete focused on the impending danger and the suspence that kept me constantly moving around (making my kitty quite mad that her lap kept wiggling).

But, my point. I love Fisher Amelie to death. And I *loved* getting to see this side of her through her writing. It had the same creativity and musical beat that her other stories have, but it was quirky and darker than her other novels, which gave it a very interesting twist. It is also paranormal, rather than her other two contemporary.

the story

Its starts off with foreshadowing. Very scaring foreshadowing. Foreshadowing with guns and iniment death.

Then we meet Elliot. He has known Julia his whole life; they even used to be friends until 7th grade. Now it's the beginning of their senior year of high school, and as Elliot see's Julia walking down the hallway, he can't take her eyes off her. More than that he's buzzing. When she brushes past him, a jolt of electricity pulses through him. He knows she felt it too, and in his desperation to figure it out, he wants to talk to her, only she won't listen.

Then we meet Julia. We relive their meeting through her point of view, and my god does she feel it too. But she doesn't want to; she can't. She has been the social outcast for years because of *him*. She lost her friends, and had nobody to turn to except for Sawyer who occasionally would talk to her in the hall. Everybody else thought she was too strange, or too weird. She listened to bands nobody else knew, and wore belly-dancing skirts over her jeans.

Despite Julia's mixed intentions to both evade and sense that spark of Elliot's nearness, somehow they can't escape each other. Elliot is going crazy with the need to talk to her and Julia is struggling against her will to

hide when he is near so he doesn't find her. But when finally the walls break down between them, they realize that as happy as they might be with their new found connection, there are others who aren't so happy, and that threat is much bigger than either of them realize.

the fun stuff

The first part of the story as I alluded to is lived through twice, once in Elliot's perspective and once in Julia's perspective. For the most part, the rest of the story is from Elliot's perspective except for a few key scenes.

The book is partially paranormal because of the connection between Elliot and Julia, but everything else is very real. What I love though is it still has real crazy – not superhuman paranormal crazy, but good old fashioned serial killer type crazy (except there is no serial killer here – that was just an example).

The type of love in this story is the type of love in the *Significance* series by Shelly Crane – it can be a little over the top at times, but as I mentioned before it is swallowed in this overarching “*Big Fish* effect” which makes the little lapses in support behind the relationship (even though it is sort of there) unimportant. So yes, it's intense, but at the same time, it's critical to the story. As I love to point out every so often, this is why fiction exists – to create these amazing original stories that we just love to love. It doesn't need to be “perfect” according to what is in the real world, because really it is perfect – it is true to itself, and however the story is written is how it is supposed to be written (by the author).

Now that I've stopped making sense, my one quick thing: the only thing that drove me a tad nuts was the pet names – not necessarily that there *were* pet names but that there were so many different ones that it felt odd coming out of their (nonexistent) mouths. I think I just wanted a little more consistency with the names, or maybe I just didn't picture them as pet name people – I'm not sure. But, that's just something I thought of.

AND WHEN IS BOOK TWO COMING? I WANT IT!

Shelly Crane says

I am all about the love!

The story is told from the boy's POV which was very intriguing. I've only read a few books like that. The build up and story between the two main characters was just beautiful. I loved them completely. The whole 'we don't know what's going on here but we're gonna go with it' approach made me love it even more. I am so happy that Fisher didn't dwell and debate forever on how they didn't understand what was happening between them. They just went with it and enjoyed being together.

The writing was fluid and articulate. Beautiful. If you love to let the author explain exactly how someone feels about something or the way someone describes situations or conversations then this book is for you.

Elliot is a teenage boy who's in love. Jules is half lovely half crazy. For me it was pretty spot on for how two suburban unsupernatural characters that we are in their heads would act like. They were spontaneous and silly and tried to be as rational as teenagers could be.

Some other reviewers complained about the dialogue, that it was unrealistic, but have you heard emo teenagers speak lately?? That's exactly how they talk! The feel of being smart and cool in your own right was

one of my favorite parts of the story.

Fabulous story Fisher!!

Chrissy says

It took me a while to read this as I felt myself a bit bored. I have no clue why Jules and Elliot share some kind of mystical thingy, or what the point or purpose there is for it. It seemed like just some random addition to make this qualify as a paranormal story without there ever being a reveal of any information on the thing. Basically, it just is, and the reader is to go along with it and just accept it without questions.

I read in the Glassheart Chronicles that another couple ends up with their own weird link. Again, no clue why, what, or how it's even there, it just is. I DON'T GET IT. What is it? Why do these people have this, why them? How did they get it? What does it signify? What is the purpose of it?

I didn't dislike the story, I just want answers. It drives me crazy when a big part of a book has no explanation or even hint as to a reveal of any kind. The Ylem was like that for me. After reading that one, I still had no clue what a Ylem was at all. It's something special, but no clue other than that.

Toally frustrating and kept me from being pulled into the story enough to really care.

Tess says

review to come soon on my blog tessmw.blogspot.com...i kind of have to wrap my head around the book first cause its a little whelming :) 8/10/11

Alrighty now I think I have wrapped my head around it...since it has been 5 months since I read the book the first time. I think it just took me the second time through.

Okay so The Understorey was totally my favorite book of 2011...then Callum & Harper came out, and now it is my favorite, but I guess what I can say by that is Fisher is Awesome!!!!

For me to read a book twice is a pretty big deal, I just don't enjoy books twice very often, and I rarely have the time to do it, BUT with this book it was awesome a second time. I really loved reading Jules and Elliott's love story again, and I was able to pick up on some more of the little humorous details that I didn't see the first time through.

Now let me tell you about the Brilliance of it.

So lets talk about the Romance because if you're like me that it a pretty big deal...

I absolutely love Jules and Elliott! Elliott is the social superstar. He could get any girl he wants, he is the football star, and he is hotttt. Julia is the social outcast. She dresses to her own style, beats by her own drum, and she reads at lunch (LOL i love this because if my friends would let me I would too). They were friends as kids, but now that they are in high school, they have grown apart. Then one touch changes everything.

Oh they are just too cute how they get together and try to figure out why they have this electric touch. YAY for the paranormal aspect of this book! I heard a few people saying how the book is slow at the beginning, but in my opinion I think it is essential for their love story. I think the slow growing love that Jules and Elliott have in the beginning is in preparation for the intensity at the end. It would seem a little crazy for them to be that way towards each other, if their relationship hadn't had time to develop.

Oh I mentioned before Jules & Elliott go through a lot...hello conflict...

What an awesome villain Fisher wrote, who would know that such a sweet author could write such an evil character. He scared me out of my mind, and I had to keep reading because I knew if I slept I might have nightmares. Let me just say once you get to a certain point close to the end you won't be putting the book down!

The majority of the book is written in Elliott's point of view which was really interesting since there just aren't many books like that! It was especially enjoyable since Elliot was a gentleman and had that old-fashioned charm about him! He is definitely my book boyfriend :)

I totally recommend this book if you love cute romance stories :) with a little bit of thrill at the end!!!

Michelle Leighton says

These characters are so likeable, by the end of the book, you feel as if they are the kids you went to school with and saw only yesterday. The love between Elliott and Julia is so extraordinary, it's as unique and electric as the gift that they share. And then there's the climax of the book. I don't want to write any spoilers, but let's just say it's quite the page-turner. I can't wait for the next book. Great job, Fisher!
