



Untethered

Katie Hayoz

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Sylvie isn't comfortable in her own skin. In fact, there are times she can't even manage to stay inside it. But if there is one thing she's sure of, it's her love for Kevin Phillips. She's willing to stake everything on it –her family, her friends, and possibly her soul.

Sixteen-year-old Sylvie has been best friends with Cassie forever. But everything is turned around when the boy Sylvie's loved since fifth grade falls for Cassie. Devastated, Sylvie intends to get Kevin by any means possible, even if it involves treachery, deceit, and the dark side of astral projection. She is positive her plans will give her what she wants, but she doesn't count on it all spiraling out of control.

Untethered explores the intoxicating and dangerous world of jealousy and obsession when coupled with paranormal ability. Finalist in Mslexia novel competition.

Untethered Details

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Author : Katie Hayoz

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From Reader Review Untethered for online ebook

Nora Black says

Could not put it down!!!

By Joshua Hern

When I picked up this book on a cloudy Thursday morning, I had a whole day planned... There was gym, a movie, running the dogs, making dinner... I'm pretty sure I may have abandoned my brother at school (don't worry he found his way home) Now at midnight with square eyes I have been on a paranormal journey that you can't afford to miss. I couldn't stop, the pages flowed, illustrated by beautifully formed metaphorical descriptions that turned the book into a 3D display. I felt like I was watching, not reading... On a journey through the growing pains of two young outcasts, fitting in, finding love and dealing with life's curve balls (along with a paranormal ability to leave ones body) The book captured the very essence of emotions from jealousy to love, from envy to greed, from hate to confidence and aligns it perfectly with a paranormal world that fits into the story like a puzzle.

You watch as two young girls who have been best friends-even sisters-deal with one growing and becoming popular while the other shifts into the background, consumed by shadows that are fueled by her best friend becoming the object of desire by the boy she's in love with. Using an out of body experience she hatches an evil plan that backfires leaving her a lot closer to the boy of her dreams then she ever wanted to be. Uncovering secrets, dealing with honesty and reaching a startling realisation about her life, this plot has enough twists and turns to keep you on the edge of your seat.

The book encompasses the world of teenagers as it is, with imperfections, bullies, beauty and vanity that everyone experiences in some form and weaves a plot that will keep you turning each page faster and more excitedly as you delve further in. The story reveals the friendship we all wish we had, tested not only by growth and development, but by something more sinister, hidden in a paranormal world that is intricately woven throughout the plot.

It delves into the most unconventional love story surrounded by family, status and real life situations all weaved into a journey that is breathtaking and touches aspects of horror, terror, inspiration and grief. I thoroughly enjoyed how the authors main character shifts from a normal teenager to a shadowy villain to the unwitting hero, making the tough choices! I could reveal more, but I've hopefully stoked your curiosity and you find a day to read about real life emotions and problems all soaked in a magical story and see a new perspective on how you look at life, love, friendship and what you see when you look in the mirror.

Wendy Storer says

Wow! Just finished reading Untethered and completely loved it. While it's billed as a story about astral projection, jealousy and obsession, it's so much more. As someone who usually only enjoys real life fiction, I got my fix for that too because Sylvie and her contemporaries have so many real life problems to deal with. Sylvie thinks that getting out of her body is a way to solve these problems - and wouldn't we all relate to that at some point in our lives? - and yet it only succeeds in making things worse. I read this in one session because I couldn't put it down. I laughed out loud in places and cried a bit at the end, but mostly I was just gripped. The characters are human, the plot is clever and perfectly paced, and the language is rich in a way that made me wish I could write like this...And underlying all this is a message about self-acceptance. Great stuff - everyone should read it.

Kerr-Ann Dempster says

I received this book for free in return for an honest review BUT I loved it so much I ordered a paperback copy.

I really enjoyed this novel. It's crazy how much I both hated and loved Sylvie. I wanted to smack her, shake her, call her a psycho, hug her. She took me for a ride! My hands down favorite thing about Untethered was the glimpses of the end that were sprinkled throughout the story. It kept me reading and dying to know how the story gets to that point. I've never seen that storytelling technique before and I loved it. While reading, I was so upset when the train would get to my stop and I had to get off and go to work. Anyway, I am definitely a fan of this author now and can't wait to read her second novel.

Toni says

This review is also posted at [My Book Addiction](#).

Let me just start by saying that Untethered really took me by surprise. I was interested in reading it, sure, but I had no idea what kind of greatness I was in for. I am still blown away by the extent to which I LOVED this book! It is pure awesomeness. Period.

I'm not sure which moral I would apply to this story: be careful what you wish for, or you don't know what you've got until it's gone. It's actually a perfect blend of both, wrapped up in a superbly written paranormal twist. When I first started reading, throughout the first several chapters or so, I thought, "OK, this is a good book," but there wasn't any real WOW factor yet. But once this story ramped up there was no stopping it! I stayed up until four in the morning to finish it. It was so awesome, I didn't even regret losing sleep. After three hours of blissful slumber, I grabbed myself two X-large coffees from Timmy Ho's and kept moving right along. This has been the best book hangover ever. I didn't even have the desire to start another book. I wasn't ready to swim out of the Untethered world and dive into something else just yet.

Sylvie Sydell is your typical [paranormal tendency-sporting] awkward teenager with only one friend to her name — her neighbor and childhood friend, Cassie. Sylvie spends her days being tortured by the cool kids in school, and drooling over the boy she's loved since he stuck up for her in fifth grade, Kevin Phillips. Unfortunately Kevin is one of the cool kids now and rarely looks in Sylvie's direction. Between that horrific

adolescent tragedy, and the fact that her parents have split up, which she thinks is her fault, Sylvie thinks her life sucks and would rather be anywhere, or anyone, else. As if that isn't enough, Sylvie's emotions are thrown into overdrive when her best friend, Cassie, blossoms into a beautiful girl over the summer and Kevin, the boy that Sylvie would do anything to be with, starts falling for her. Even Sylvie's little brother, Sam — a freshman at their high school who is small and dorky — becomes popular in the "cool kids" circle. What other choice does Sylvie have but to go off the deep end?

She commandeers every weapon at the local K-mart and just starts hacking people up. It's a bloody mess! They turn into zombies... No, I'm kidding! There are no zombies in this book. I don't even recall there being a K-mart. But the plan she comes up with in order to gain control of her life will blow your freaking mind. Sylvie's paranormal ability, added to her jealous rage and insecurity, makes her dangerous to everyone, including herself.

I read a lot of books that focus on badass heroines, so in the beginning of the book I remember thinking, "Jeez, this girl is so pathetic, and she's doing it all wrong! Everything. She's failing miserably at the game of life." Sylvie had Nelson, a sweet blue-haired guy with black painted fingernails fawning all over her in Art class, but she was so obsessed with Kevin she couldn't see it. I wanted to strangle her. I lost track of how many times I shouted at her during the course of this story. Her character development was incredible though. I quickly grew to love her, and was rooting her on as she made her transition to "the other side." What that means, well... you'll have to read it to find out. There are many sides to Sylvie Sydell, and in the end I enjoyed every one of them.

Untethered is a book for everyone. This is a true YA novel that I will let my young teen read. It's a coming of age story in a way I've never experienced before. It's a no-brainer to give this book a five star rating. Katie Hayoz has made my list of favorite authors!

Lorelei S. says

At first glimpse this seems to be a typical paranormal YA book set in a high school. Sylvie and Cassie are best friends who are experiencing tensions over a love interest, popular high school jock, Kevin. Sylvie has to deal with some very familiar issues - bullying at school, her parents' separation, and additionally what appears to be a strange undiagnosed illness that makes her an outsider with her classmates. When Sylvie realizes her "disease" could be a superpower her life unravels even further.

The astral projection aspect of this book is a welcome new direction in the paranormal genre. It's fresh and interesting and provides for some very exciting plot entanglements.

As you read on it quickly becomes obvious that this is also a deeper story about self-acceptance and friendship and relationships - between friends, siblings, parents and children, couples and classmates. About the dangers of romanticizing heroes and losing touch with oneself. The flaws of the characters are never glossed over but rather add more realism to the story which is intelligently written with a light and humorous touch. Katie Hayoz is the one with the natural story teller's superpower to move and entertain.

Faye, la Patata says

Update 1/10/2014: That new cover is absolutely breathtaking.

A copy was provided in exchange for an honest review. This did not influence my review in any way.

To tell y'all honestly, I wasn't expecting much when I read the blurb; in my eyes, it looked like it was another paranormal story where it would center on the romance, which I believe, is a little bit too common nowadays. But color me surprised — this book was actually pretty good! I started reading around 11:30 in the evening, and didn't stop until the sun was already rising at 5:30 — all in *one* sitting. That was how engrossed I was. Heck, I'll even go ahead and say it now: this book is better than a lot of published ones I've read this year.

I think what really made this book special to me was how it was able to make the plot character-driven, but at the same time fast-paced and full of suspense. I've read a lot of books that have tried to make their books so, and while some of them succeeded and did it nicely, many others just fail in the execution alone, so I was pleasantly delighted that Katie Hayoz incorporated it here effortlessly and beautifully. Kudos to that!

Using a 1st person narrative, the author was able to give us a clear and deep picture of the thoughts of the main character, Sylvie — her fears, frustrations, and insecurities. Every time she was sad about her parents separating, I couldn't help but feel sad for her, too. Every time she felt unconfident of the way she looked whenever she compared herself to her beautiful best friend, Cassie, I couldn't help but want to reach out and comfort her. Every time she was being bullied in her school with hoots of "Psycho", I couldn't help but want to punch something - anything - as if it could somehow make her feel better. I know, it's a bit weird, but the book's effect on me was a big magical. **I loved that even though Sylvie was quite the jealous, obsessed, angsty character, it didn't make me feel detached from her (because honestly, emo characters get on my nerves); it actually made me feel for her more. I sympathized with her. I placed myself in her shoes.** She did some questionable things, said some harsh words, made half-hearted decisions, but I understood what she was going through, and the character development that ensued afterwards - her acceptance, her realizing her self worth and the worth of the people around her - became more meaningful and fulfilling. One of the ending scenes was a bit bittersweet, and in some ways, realistic. Not everything has to end absolutely in a positive note given certain circumstances (and consequences), and we all need to realize that. Heck, not everything ends that way, period.

The plot that involved astral projection and out-of-body experiences was also quite original. That is, I actually haven't read something like this before, and I'm glad the first book I read that did have it, it was this, because I think *Untethered* did it splendidly. I really liked how this activity became very vital to Sylvie's life and to the story, how it became both a sanctuary and also a nightmare. I've actually been trying to experience this for a while now, but I think I'll have to take a few steps back. There are just some things in the world that are better left unknown. Do I believe in other planes and realms? Absolutely. Especially since I've had a lot of paranormal encounters myself (cups floating, waking up in the middle of the night to find a beheaded ghost beside me twitching in a reaaaally weird way...) so I do believe these kind of things are possible, and I'm glad there are authors out there writing PR stuff beyond vampires and werewolves.

All in all, I think this was an excellent read. I do believe Katie Hayoz is a promising writer, and I'll definitely read more from her in the future. There's a lot of character development, a lot of plot, a lot of drama and suspense that will keep you going to the last page. **Final verdict: 4 stars**

Lexxie (un)Conventional Bookworms says

This and other reviews are originally posted on my blog (**un**)Conventional Bookviews

Review: Untethered - Katie Hayoz Untethered is a novel that surprised me on many levels! The story, while having some ingredients that are invariably part of a young adult novel is so original. The paranormal that happens has nothing to do with werewolves or vampires, there are no witches or magic. But astral-projection is a big part of the story, and it is both a blessing and a curse to Sylvie as she tries to figure out how to deal with her parents' impending divorce, feeling like a pariah and seeing her best friend having become the most beautiful girl ever just over summer.

I hadn't even really planned on reading Untethered, but a week ago, I met with Katie for coffee, and we had so much fun! I loved her sense of humor, and how passionate she is. So this morning, I downloaded the sample and figured I'd give it a try. Before even finishing the sample, I clicked the 'buy book now' button on my kindle, and voilà I had Untethered in its full glory just waiting to be read! And read, I did. Suddenly, the kids were home from school, and I had read a whole book in just a few hours. There is both teenage angst and humor, and the character development is fantastic! Sylvie's epiphany is awesome when she realizes that her own life might not be as bad as she thought.

Sylvie is such a normal teenager, with her hangups about her friend being so much better than her, going as far as actually wanting Cassie's life for her own. The insecurities of a late bloomer who is going through some difficult patches is easy to identify with as well. As Sylvie continues to astral-project, she is sometimes accompanied by shadows, and they whisper things to her in a language she can't understand, until she suddenly does and makes a horrid decision in order to get the life she thinks she really wants, and deserves. Sylvie is also an artist, and in her art class she feels as close to normal as possible.

Through the intricacy of Untethered, the readers get to know Sylvie very well, but we also get to know Sam, Cassie, Kevin and Sylvie's parents. The writing is really good! I loved the flow of the story, and I also enjoyed the research Sylvie did to persuade herself she wasn't the psycho the mean-girls were telling her she was. Another thing I really liked in Untethered is that Sylvie's parents were present. Very often in YA, parents are not around, or if they are, they are not paying any attention at all to their children. Even though Sylvie's parents were separating, they were present for their children, and they actually had real conversations with them as well. Having the story be in 1st person present tense made a lot of sense, because it made it so that I felt what Sylvie was feeling exactly when she felt it. I also learned things at the same time as Sylvie, and I was just as confused by some things as she were. And with Sylvie being quite self-absorbed and very jealous, I was surprised to like her so much! Even if I didn't necessarily agree with what she was doing, I understood where she was coming from. And I also knew how she had talked herself into thinking it wasn't all that wrong...

As Untethered continues, the pace picks up more and more, as Sylvie really needs to find a solution to the sticky situation she finds herself in. And she also has to face both her jealousy and her guilt, while at the same time being honest and daring to ask for forgiveness. If you are looking for a YA story with an original plot, with paranormal elements that don't fit the norm, Untethered is the book for you! I will definitely pick up another book written by Katie – this debut is really strong!

Jennifer says

Also posted to Jen in Bookland

4.5 stars I received this book in exchange for a review. Really when I read the description I was just kind of eh on the idea. It sounded like it could be really annoying and I wasn't sure I would like it. I looked up other

reviews and the consensus seemed to be that it was great so I thought I would give it a try. I am so glad I did! From the first sentence I was hooked. Somehow Katie Hayoz managed to make a character (Sylvie) who doesn't see what is right in front of her face and can be kind of oblivious and stupid about things, but made her so I didn't find her completely annoying. Most authors do not manage that. Most times I cannot stand characters who are similar in characteristics to Sylvie. Usually there is a lot of eye rolling, yelling, and complaining to my husband going on about what is wrong with this character?! Sylvie though I actually enjoyed. I understood her reasonings and she was just really interesting to read. I still am kind of blown away by the fact that the author managed to pull it off so well, manage to write Sylvie in a way I didn't hate. It was great.

So what else did I like about the book? Well almost everything. The writing was really good, the characters were all wonderfully written, the plot was interesting and kept me asking what is going on?? Or what is going to happen?? and anticipating the next pages. I couldn't put the book down. Sylvie is always down on herself and thinks her bff is perfect, when you that is not the case. There is one line in the book that really stuck with me and summed up Sylvie excellently. Cassie said something about how Sylvie didn't like herself so she didn't let other people like her or see how great she was. It was so spot on that it just was like yes! That is it exactly! She is so down on herself she won't let anyone or believe anyone likes her even when it is obvious that they do.

I really can't say enough good things about this book. It was such a surprise that I enjoyed it so much. The story is also interesting with the whole astral projection thing. It was very different from anything else I have read, and the character all felt real. Definitely recommend reading it as it was a pleasure.

Carrie says

Sylvie is tired of all the doctors and tests that her parents insist on trying to figure out what is going on with her. For years Sylvie has had moments of passing out in which she leaves her body but no one has believed her and they think it's a medical condition. Once Sylvie learns of astral projection she makes it her mission to learn to control what is happening to her.

Sylvie's best friend since childhood, Cassie, blossomed over the summer and now has the attention of all the boys in school, even Kevin, the boy Sylvie has had a crush on forever. Jealousy brings Sylvie to take her astral projection to a new level but she has yet to learn of the dangers that could await her.

Untethered touches on a topic that you don't see too often, astral projection, the ability to leave ones body and explore while the body remains in an unconscious state. A rather fast paced read with an underlying message about learning self-acceptance and touching on the meaning of friendship.

The main character Sylvie is also not without her flaws which the story is based around, she's quite shy, jealous, insecure and just generally has low self esteem. I loved the idea behind the story but went back and forth on the characters in here as they all have their moments that anyone might become irritated at their actions.

Overall, even though I had my moments of doubt with liking the actions or characters here and there in the end I enjoyed this read.

I received a copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for an honest review.

For more reviews please visit <https://carriesbookreviews.wordpress....>

Amy says

This is a wonderfully written story. It grabbed me at the beginning and held my attention to the end. Untethered does a wonderful job at showing the stages of growth in young ladies who feel that they do not fit in. I enjoyed how the author put the lead character through stages of life that lead to a new understanding of her life and the lives of the people around her. I would recommend this book others who feel that there just has to be a way to change their life or to live the life of someone else.

Holly says

I have been wanting to read UNTETHERED since it was first released and I saw the blog tour happening on several blogs I follow. It sounded great and was receiving really good reviews from the bloggers I trusted, so it immediately went on my wish list. Then, this October, I lucked out and saw that the book was available for free, so I gleefully downloaded it and started reading. And I am SO GLAD that I did! The story of Sylvie, who is traumatized by the fact that her soul slips outside of her body without her control but who later gains control (of a sort) over her astral projection, is not only exciting but also subtly presents the reader with such a beautiful and uplifting message. I went through just about every emotion possible over the course of the book, but at the end I was left with such a sense of...well, there's no better way to say it than just, a feeling of PEACE.

I absolutely love this book, and I had such a good time reading it. I say that even though there were definitely times when my heart broke for Sylvie (and sometimes one or more of the other characters -- even certain ones I thought I hated), there were times I cried (it's true, I'm a baby when it comes to books!), there were times I was spooked out big time, and there were times I thought I would go crazy with the tension and suspense. So, it may sound weird to say I "had a good time" and enjoyed reading it -- BUT having my heart broken, being brought to tears, having goosebumps or finding my heart in my throat from the spookiness is EXACTLY what I WANT from a book! Not every person who writes a book can achieve these results with their writing, and to be frank I think it is even harder for an indie author because they do not have the benefit of a whole team of professional editors, proofreaders, and other publishing folks to help them refine and polish their book. HOWEVER, Katie is one indie author who has absolutely succeeded without the big publisher behind her; the support she received from family and friends, fellow writers, and beta readers, combined with her own immeasurable talent, has resulted in a 5-star book!

I truly feel that Katie put her heart and soul into this book -- into creating believable and relatable characters (even those we might wish we didn't relate to), a stellar and unique plot, a full and complete story, and all the things readers want to find in the books they read. The way she wrote in first person was brilliant; the reader couldn't possibly have been any closer to Sylvie without BEING Sylvie! On top of that, I honestly think that if you didn't go into this book knowing it was by an indie author, you would believe it was professionally published (and professionally edited). There were only a few errors here and there, and those that I did see were very minor (pretty much the same as you would find in most professionally-produced books from a big

publisher! I regularly find at least 3-5 errors in most books I read). I emphasize this because (1) I don't want anyone to forego reading this book just because it's indie, because this is top-notch writing, and (2) I read a lot of indie books and cringe when I see loads of errors, including rambling writing; unfocused plots; poor grammar, sentence structure, and spelling; stilted dialogue; story threads left unanswered and hanging; etc ad nauseum. So I just want to stress that I have no doubt a publisher could pick up UNTETHERED and turn around and put it on the market almost immediately, with very little editing -- it is that high in quality!

I firmly believe that just about anyone could pick up this book to read and find themselves at the end having felt all the feels I mentioned above and having fallen in love with the book as much as I have. I would absolutely, without a doubt, put Katie Hayoz on my list of auto-buy authors, and I can't wait until she has written something else I can read!! (Seriously, Katie, be it works-in-progress, emails, shopping lists...I'll read anything!!) I strongly recommend this book to those who love to read YA books, paranormal books, books with strong characters you can love (or hate!)....honestly, there aren't many readers I can think of to whom I *wouldn't* recommend this book! Please pick it up, give it a try, and then let Katie (and the rest of us) know just how much you loved it!!

One final thing before I go: I just wanted to give Katie props for the decision to change the cover. I actually liked the old cover and thought it was pretty, but oh my gosh THIS COVER... it's designed by Nathalia Suellen, who also did my two favorite covers ever ever ever (and I've been around for a long time, people!) - - for SPLINTERED and UNHINGED by A.G. Howard. I think she is truly an artistic genius, and her design here just perfectly captures Sylvie's story. I'm thrilled that Katie was able to work with someone so talented and that the outside of the book now truly matches the quality - and the beauty, and the genius! - of what's inside.

~ Rose ~ ?Desert Rose✿ says

I've never read a plot like this before, and it's certainly a creative one. The idea that of not feeling like you fit in your own skin is one I think most of us experienced as teenagers. In fact, the majority of the things that happen in this book, are things I think most of us can relate to (perhaps, without the obvious paranormal aspects, haha). Mixing that awkward, teenage feeling with astral projection was truly fascinating, and a combination that quickly sparks the imagination.

If given the choices and chances Sylvie had, with the things she was struggling with, who could act much differently? That's a wonderful question that's raised throughout the book, and makes this story completely captivating and moving. Seeing her inner war, and the personal struggles she had to face, brought her to life, and made her struggle real. This is a book that's sure to make anyone stop and think, and look at themselves a little closer.

I really enjoyed each of the characters introduced in this story. Every character is totally different, but also completely believable and relatable. I think anyone could find at least one person to relate to, and would be able to easily identify with this story. The author was able to make each person seem so real, make it so easy to see the situation from each person's point-of-view, and understand where they were each coming from. The way each character grows and changes, and the things they learn, are truly wonderful, and the heart of a great story.

One thing I absolutely *loved* is the way this book is written! It's one of my favorite writing styles, and in this book, it was done perfectly. It flowed smooth and natural, and made for a quick, wonderful read. The author easily managed to pull me in and make me feel for each character, and become instantly connected to the situation.

I love the overall story that takes place throughout this book, and the challenges that come up for each character. The unexpected turns, situations, and encounters between all the characters are perfect and natural. Filled with laugh-out-loud jokes, suspense, drama and excitement, this is a wonderful book for any YA fan.

*I was given a complimentary ebook copy of this book, from the author, to read in exchange for an honest review.

Jacqueline Patricks says

Thank you to the author for providing a free copy for an honest review.

First off I want to say how refreshing it is to read an Indie author who understands how to write in deep POV, this one being 1st person. It can be done in 3rd as well. For those of you who aren't familiar with the term, deep POV is a technique of writing that strives to thin line between reader and character by eliminating author narrative as much as possible. It's the difference between:

Normal 1st person POV:

I hate anchovies, I thought as I picked the creepy-looking fish off my pepperoni pizza. I scowled. It'll probably still taste like them too.

And

Deep 1st person POV:

I can't believe they screwed up my pizza. I hate anchovies! Each creepy-looking fish left a slimy film on my fingers and shallow, grease-filled divots in the mozzarella. Yuck! It'll probably still taste like them, too!

Not many are using it and fewer are using it well. So kudos!!! That, more than anything, pulled me in right away.

So for all those non-writer-readers out there who often wonder:

Why don't I like 1st person or 3rd person?

It's very likely not the POV you don't like, it's the technique or lack of writing ability of the author that's bugging you, but you're not able to put your finger on that. Well written books in any POVs should pull a reader in regardless.

But you might be one of those diehards that know what you do and don't like. That's okay too. :o)

Okay... so why 3 stars?

First the...

PROS:

- 1) Very well written in deep POV, 1st in this case
- 2) I saw no typos, so either there aren't any or I was pulled into the story so thoroughly that my brain skimmed over any minor ones. And I was very pulled in. I haven't been this engaged by an Indie in, well, never. So that's quite a feat.
- 3) Excellent character and world building. I was thoroughly invested in Sylvie, Cassie and their relationship. I also became invested in Kevin and Nelson, which will lead to other points in a bit. Both Sylvie and Cassie had highs and lows. Both were very human with plenty of baggage and flaws and redeeming qualities. We've all either been Cassie or Sylvie or wanted to be one or the other. Same with Nelson and Kevin. Though Nelson seemed to have fewer flaws, really we just never knew him as well. He could've been more outspoken for Sylvie, made his position more obvious. So lots of delicious gray to go around.
- 4) The first half had excellent pacing. I feel like it started off with a great hook and moved along nicely. Not too fast, not too slow considering we're in one head/narrative throughout. There wasn't too much exposition.
- 5) I frigging CRIED! Okay? You. Made. Me. F---ing. Cry!
- 6) The downward spiral of jealousy, selfishness, immaturity, self-loathing and sparks of love were just... WOW. This is why I love to write too. Capturing the essence of humanity. *cliche alert* Lightening in a bottle.
- 7) Nice explanations overall for astral projection. What ifs and all. Sylvie's ability worked nicely as a plot device without looking like a plot device.
- 8) Time line rearranging. I wasn't sure about this at first, but decided to go with Pro since it built some nice suspense by giving away a key bit of plot up front.(view spoiler)

Okay, so now for the...

CONS:

- 1) Cover was meh. If I had only the cover to make my decision on whether or not to read *Untethered* it would be a coin toss. It was just ... meh. I can see how it relates to the story, but the colors aren't eye-catching. The font is boring and disappears in thumbnail. The black hand and dark blue sky blend together too much. It's uninspiring. Very Meh. I've bought books just because of the cover art (and been disappointed and visa versa, so it matters and I'm a traditional artist from WAAAAAY back.)
- 2) This is a bit nit-picky. I admit it, but seriously!!?! Why??! She mixed exclamation points and question marks between 6-12 times throughout the book. I know. You're thinking. Really, J??!! Why is that a negative!!?? Because it's lazy, unprofessional writing. If you're getting your character's emotions through by resorting to this !?! then you seriously need to rewrite either the dialogue, the beats, the tags or the whole scene. This??!! should only be used in your text messages, emails and blog when you announce your next writing prezzie. OMG!!!!!! Can you believe it????!! Besides, when mixed with the rest of the top notch writing and grammar, they become literary speed bumps.

3) Pacing part two: Sylvie was so anxious and scared to fix what she'd done (no spoiler here) that she just kept not doing what she knew she needed to do? Sigh. Plot Contrivance! Author should've either reset the timeline or made Sylvie a bit less quick to change. I just didn't buy it. And it irked me. And the notebook? She has it, doesn't read it all in a timely manner, doesn't show it to you know who to help back up her story. Again... pacing and contrivance. It could've shortened things just having that as a better plot device... a realistic one at that.

4) Unrealistic character actions: Okay, so this is in part because I'm a paramedic, have been for 20 yrs. But I'm telling you, if any kid in any school had any episodes of unconsciousness/unresponsiveness, head injuries, or seizure-like behavior, the staff would be calling 911 **EVERY SINGLE TIME**. The teachers and staff wouldn't allow a MINOR to tell them "No, I'm fine, don't call my parents or 911," tralalalala! What? Um. No. I know this because I go into schools all the time for injuries and illnesses less serious than the above and including the above. Also, my husband is a teacher and knows how high the liability is for schools these days. Maybe I'm being annoying here, but considering many of the plot points were based on a MINOR telling adults what to do about her medical situation... Minors have zero rights outside of civil rights, etc. They cannot sign contracts. They cannot refuse medical aid. They cannot be released to their own care once authorities (including school officials) are involved unless the authority figure or parent releases the liability. This means that if anything worse had happened to Sylvie, her parents could've sued the shit out of the school district five hundred ways from Sunday. You know that medical paper you sign when you register your kids for school? That gives the school the legal right to make any medical/legal decisions for the health/welfare of your kids in lieu of being able to contact you. Do you really think any school or teacher these days would allow a minor to walk away? The school nurses especially. They call 911 for the silliest things. I just found it laughably unrealistic. There's suspension of belief (which I did because I really got into the story) but this happened over and over as characters had medical problems.

Sorry, rant over.

5) MAJOR PLOT HOLE: I'm going to spoiler tag this: (view spoiler)

6) The ending. Oh man. The ending. I cried and then I was ... abruptly disappointed. *That's it? It just stops? Some platitude about being a hero? A frigging text message? No face to face coda? I invested my emotions in these characters and that's all I get? Not cool, man. Seriously not cool.*

I can see why this is an award winner. There's so much to love here. Without the plot holes and the chopped off ending, I would've given it four stars. Five? well... P & P is a five for me. So you can extrapolate from there. This is when I would love for GR to have 1/2 stars, or 10 stars. But we get what we get.

Overall it was a pleasant afternoon read and I would recommend it to friends. Would I reread it? Probably not. But I'm definitely keeping my eye on this author. I'm sure her next books will be rocking!

Happy reading and writing!

J

Andrea ♥Ninja Bunneh♥ says

This book had everything I hate. The stereotypical cookie cutter crew. The gorgeous best friend, the unattainable boy (who falls for said best friend), the bitch that bullies our poor mc Sylvie, and the boy who actually likes Sylvie, but she is too obsessed with unattainable boy. And let's welcome Sylvie, our supposed heroine. The girl we should all fall for. She is self depreciating, depressed, blames all of the problems surrounding her life on her own being, and is just not likable. I know what you're thinking.

I thought that, too. Then I got over it. Why? Because this is a pretty damn good book.

This had to have been one of the most interesting YA reads I have had in a good while. It isn't full of rainbows, puppies, and unicorns. It is a dark story, full of unhealthy obsession, jealousy, and betrayal. It is about how far a person may go to get what they want, and how much of themselves they sacrifice to get there. It's realizing that you cannot possibly know someone until you *do*. It is also a story of maybe, just maybe, you can change who you are, and become who you were always meant to be.

This book is a journey, and with all the surface negatives it may have, I'm glad I went along for the ride.

Thank you to Ms. Hayoz for the arc.

No cookies were given to me in exchange for this honest review.

Solid 3.5 stars.

Karina says

“I love the library: the hushed voices, the smell of books, even the way the wrinkled old ladies behind the desk look at you like you’re up to no good.”

That moment when you literally left your body behind:

Sylvie Sydell is suddenly, uncontrollably, and unpredictably slipping out of her body.

Sylvie's best friend for already 11 years Cassie is now popular. Cassie changed for the better (or not?). After 11 years of being best friends and sticking with each other, Sylvie remains as the weird and awkward “psycho skinny Sylvie Sydell” while Cassie became popular, friendly and more beautiful. And she is now dating the ultimate love of Sylvie's life Kevin.

Sylvie's parents are separating. Sylvie blames herself for what is happening to her family. She thinks that if maybe she's not weird, or if she doesn't even exist at all, maybe her parents will still try. Maybe her younger brother Sam will still have a complete family. Maybe her parents are still together.

Sylvie loves art. She is an artist but also a total “loser” - if that's what you called people who almost have no

one in school but except for one or two. She has this incredible talent of identifying different shades of colors such as Ivory Black, Red Ochre, Burnt Sienna and more (which I find really cool). People think she is a “psycho” because of her sudden faints in fact Thori Thompson is calling her the “**psycho skinny Sylvie Sydell**”. She tips over her toes, then she’ll faint. She got hurt, then she’ll faint. She’s eating, then she’ll faint. She feels angry, then she’ll faint. Name it. All through these years, people have always believed that she’s just passing out, what they don’t know is she’s already slipping out of her body; suddenly, uncontrollably, and unpredictably.

Untethered talks about typical teenagers’ life that no one can ever truly understand except the teenagers of this generation ourselves, best friends growing up, families falling apart, love triangles, and obsession.

First of all, I hate how so in love – or should I say obsessed – Sylvie is towards this Kevin. She’s so obsessed with him to the point that **she is willing to give up everything just to have him**. The reason why Sylvie is so in love with this Kevin is so typical, totally cliché. Kevin saved Sylvie from some bullies on 6th grade. And because of that, the young Sylvie Sydell thought he was a hero and that’s it! 6 years passed and she still can’t get over it. Worse, she’s becoming more “in love” with this guy as the time goes by, even if he definitely doesn’t like her.

The story will open our eyes to the subject of astral projection. First things first, **I have read books about OBE (out of body experience) but never heard of astral projection**. Reading the blurb, I thought that this will be just another typical book about a soul being out of its body - one book that has the same concept is *Every Day* by David Levithan – but I was wrong. Astral projection is very different from that. And it’s not entirely safe – for your body and for your soul.

Although I’m already used to this kind of story – **love triangles, besties’ quarrel, and out of body experiences or OBE** - I still find this book gripping, intriguing, and worth reading. **It’s the kind of book I am looking for**. It’s the kind of book that has the power to get me out of a reading slump. I can actually finish it within a day if it wasn’t for the school stuffs, because it is just really a **page-turner**.

Every single page since the very beginning contains **too much emotions**. That’s the reason why I couldn’t even stop reading it. Every words used, are perfect. The only thing that I didn’t liked are the emotions the main character has. She’s too jealous, insecure, self-loathing, desperate. At first, I am really glad at how the emotions in this book can consume me, but as the time goes by I got pretty exhausted. Reading this eventually became very exhausting. I got exhausted on how **insecure, jealous, selfish, envious and self-loathing Sylvie** is to the point that I almost don not want to finish it. I got her point. I understand her but still, things could have been better if she did not let things happened, if she did not made things happened and if she did not let these emotions control her.

I love Sylvie’s character. Although she became a little bit frustrating and her thoughts became depressing, I still find her character so likeable. There’s something unique with this female main character that will make you love her even though she is really annoying and frustrating at some times. As a reader who knows what the heroine will do is already wrong and you can’t even yell at her saying “**SYLVIE DON’T DO THAT. SYLVIE DON’T DO THIS.**”, reading her journey of diving into so many troubles in her life that she created is still a very engaging and entertaining journey. **You will see her learn and that’s one of the reasons why you should read this. It will make you smirk thinking “I TOLD YOU”. It will also make you smile, laugh, roll your eyes, frown, blame her, and want to hug her.**

The writing is very good. It’s the kind of writing that makes me crave for more, need more. From the

relatable characters, the issues being tackled, the convincing plot, infuriating, annoying but still lovable main character and the narration, everything went perfectly altogether.

Lessons from Untethered?

? **People change.** No matter how you don't want them to, even if you stop them, people will still change. And so are you.

? Chapter 28 “**Watch What You Wish For** (Because you'll get something else altogether)”

? Telling the truth, because “**the truth will set you free.**”

? **Accepting reality.**

? **Love yourself. Embrace your flaws. Just love who you are.** No matter how ugly you feel, you don't have any idea how someone out there sees you so beautifully like you are such a precious gem. There's always someone out there, waiting for you to notice.

? **Be contented.** It may feel like things around you are not a loss, and that you don't really want and need them in your life, but once you lost them, you'll see and realize how grateful you should be.

? **Judging people will lead you nowhere.**

? We often think that we already know a person, what we don't know is what we're seeing is just the tip of the iceberg. **We need to dive deeper to truly and deeply know a person.**

This book has a very nice trick. I didn't saw it coming. I love the twist. It's shocking.

THE.ENDING.LEFT.ME.HANGING. **After reading the last lines of this book, all I can say is, “WHAT HAPPENED?”** BECAUSE OH GOSH, I JUST NEED A PROPER CLOSURE. I NEED A PROPER CLOSURE.

I'm giving a 5/5 stars for Untethered. A gripping, full of drama and slightly depressing read that talks about some teenager's issues. I recommend this to everyone but most importantly to teenagers. Surely most of you will relate BUT just a little reminder, you might not be able to take the emotions of Sylvie. But why not give Sylvie Sydell a chance?

“Blood sisters, blood sisters as long as we live. Always together, we always forgive.”

Disclaimer: Thank you **Xpresso Book Tours** for providing me a copy in exchange of an honest book review.
