



Not Dead

R.T. Truehall

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Ulysses is not cool. He's a jerk actually-but at least he knows it-so nobody is more surprised than him when he's chosen to become a vampire. As he learns their history he soon discovers that vampires are nothing at all like Hollywood had him believing, in fact they're pretty much as messed up as humans. So when he's recruited to join this secret society, he is for the most part a willing (though largely useless) aid to his dry-witted, 800-year-old creator and mentor, Ellison. Ulysses quickly realises that he may have bitten off more than he can chew when, after being repeatedly belittled by his mentor, he's left feeling frustrated and lonely, and missing his old existence. What began as a simple catch-up with a friend ends in disaster when he accidentally takes a life, and the repercussions put both his and Ellison's lives in immediate danger.

Not Dead Details

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From Reader Review Not Dead for online ebook

Jaimedsworld says

This is not your typical vampire story... Don't expect sweet romance or even a back story you've heard before. The author did something new with this one and had a protagonist that talked to the reader. Through out the whole story it felt like a friend was talking to you about his crappy week. It may not work for some, but I enjoyed feeling a part of the story.

TheVampireBookworm says

I'm doing my silly dance around the room again. Because I was asked by THE AUTHOR to take a look at her book again. I feel so proud that people ask me for this. A) it makes me feel important in the vampire literary circles ;-)= B) it saves me money - don't judge, I'm a teacher - our salaries are a joke C) free stuff makes me as happy as a "sale" sign on the cute shoes I've been oggling for months. So, let's get professional and start with the review.

It's official. Aussies have a totally unique voice in vampire literature. I think I stated my suspicion when I was reviewing the Australian books in the past and now it got confirmed. This was so unexpected! The European vampire tradition is quite clear - vampires are to be feared, we love the Gothic elements. I think we've already overcome the shock after what the Americans did to the genre - the whole romanticization thing. And now the people from "down under" are showing us their twist to the genre. The impotent and useless vampires.

The story follows Ulysses, a total douche bag I wouldn't want to be friends with and honestly it seems that those few friends he has stay with him because of inertia (or any other power that keeps you going or not going because it's ever been so) rather than for his cheerful personality. He works a few days a week as a pizza delivery boy and his life centers about a bar called BAR. No other hobbies apart from sleeping with friends detected. There is nothing nice to say about him so when he gets turned into a vampire after a mature decision by a very very old vampiress (has this word finally reached the dictionaries or do I still have to use female vampire?), it comes as a shock. Who the hell would like to spend the next hundred years (that's how long you keep your creation with you) with this man (those of you who are familiar with Russian literature will surely know about "useless person, ?????? ??????")?!

But his creator tries to educate him in vampire matters (sometimes in a not so nice way - those of you who are sensitive to abuse shouldn't probably read this book) and even wants him to find a job. Because no, he hasn't miraculously got any superpowers overnight. It doesn't happen that way. Even blood is introduced slowly. And one's position in vampire society is gained painfully.

The fascinating thing about this is that vampires basically run the world - they decide who lives and who dies (they secretly control the population) and even in what way the person dies. That totally creeped me out!

You can guess that one of the worst crimes is for a greenie to kill a human who wasn't supposed to die. So when Ulyses does that, he and his maker get in hell of a trouble.

I tremendously enjoyed the book since it was different from the stuff I normally encounter. I must admit I didn't even mind when Ulyses was mistreated by his maker - somehow this happening to a character I didn't like didn't make me cringe in the least. The incident at the end however... if rape is a sore subject for you, avoid it. But if you are a tough cookie, like unusual things and want to see how a character who you instantly hate can keep you turning the pages, grab it. You won't regret your decision.

Oh, and I've nearly forgotten! The book I got is a paperback but the pages are so thick that it screams quality - and I was really reading it with my fingers pressed to its spine so that I wouldn't break it and mar the book

:)= Also, the cover is so shiny and reflective that when I was trying to take a picture of the book, all I could see was me with a camera on the cover, hence the weird angle I'm sporting here because no matter how many lights I turned on or off and where I went I can always see the person with the camera.

Kaita says

(Edit - I just read through the original message that R.T. Truehall sent me, claiming that her novel is in the Young Adult genre, which it is not. I'm not even sure if it is New Adult. I highly recommend visiting my Instagram page if you would like to see the reaction I received from R.T. Truehall after I reviewed this novel and asked a question.)

Alright.

I received this book from the author R.T. Truehall in return for an honest review.

Even though I greatly appreciate the gift and also recognize that writing a book is hard, I'm still going to be honest.

1.5/5

Here's the thing. And this does get quite heated.

I'm not against gritty books filled with gritty characters doing gritty things. Those kinds of books are my jam. When done right, I fucking LOVE them.

Not Dead, despite coming from an interesting concept, needed work.

Some things came up that made me think that not enough time was spent in research or execution.

An example is the fish going from festering nasty water bag immediately into a tank. I grew up with fish enthusiasts, and have worked in pet stores, and that fish would have gone into shock and died.

Secondly, Ulysses is supposed to be an asshole. This is stated MANY times. Really, he seems to be an indifferent idiot who puts himself first. Is he nice? Naw, not really. But he's not exactly an asshole, either.

There is also the topic of rape. There's a warning in the beginning of this book about rape being a thing.

Although Ulysses and Ellison state that she's consistently raped Uly, she actually hasn't (though the first time probably does count as rape, after that it gets a bit grey) Rape is unwilling. Being hard doesn't mean that he's willing, but wanting her does. Though Uly would like to be a bit more dominant in their sexual ventures, bad sex isn't technically rape. I've known people, male and female, who have been raped and their experiences were significantly different from Uly's.

!HEATED AREA!

And lastly, the feminism excuse that Ellison uses in defense for her raping Uly. Which, I must say, is a world of bullshit. If she had just been a woman who enjoyed being dominant, I would have had no problem. I've read about such a wide variety of controlling characters, I wouldn't have been phased. But to turn around and actually form this so-called "feminist" excuse... Raping a guy or treating a man like shit isn't feminism, that's being a cunt.

Overall, it needed work and a defined vision for the characters and direction.

Ashley Tomlinson says

This is a gritty book with gritty characters and I loved it. There were times that I questioned what I was doing reading a book like this but I shut that part up and continued reading. While I do agree Uly was kind of a jerk I don't think he as big an ass as he made himself out to be. He was just a bachelor living a bachelor life in my opinion. There is some violence and rape in this book so it's not a book for everyone but I'm glad I gave it a chance.

Ulysses is a twenty something-year-old guy that is scared of getting old. So on his birthday, he does what most single twenty somethings do, go get hammered with friends. This is not a typical birthday when he meets a beautiful stranger that takes control of his mind. She is a vampire and turns him. So now she is in charge of guiding and teaching of the ways of the vampires. All is going well until the unthinkable happens, Uly accidentally takes a life. That is strictly forbidden so now they both must figure out what to do and how to handle this situation.

At first, I didn't like Uly. I didn't like the way he talked or thought for that matter. I was just not a fan of him at all. Maybe it was the way some things were written. I'm sorry but I don't need to know how hairy your ass is or that you use the bathroom. I was put off but a lot of things that he did in the beginning. He grew on me and I ended up really liking him and was even impressed by him in the end. Ellison was an interesting character that's for sure. She was strong but I didn't like that she used feminism as an excuse for raping Uly. That was a stupid reason, not that there is a good reason for rape but that was just really messed up. The rest of the characters really were not important to me, they were outshined.

I thought the way the vampire virus was spread was very cool. There was no biting or draining of blood or anything like that which was unique. I really found myself enjoying everything when Ellison would explain Uly's new life to him. The author did a great job creating such an interesting rendition of vampires.

All in all, this was a good book. I don't think it would be something everyone would like but I did. I recommend it for people that want a gritty book about vampires.

Adriana (SaltyBadgerBooks) says

Please note this review contains spoilers.

Let me start by saying definitely a book not for me.... There a lot of things that I personally didn't like. But I'll start with the good before I get to the bad. I liked the different take on vampirism. Instead of being dead it's described as your body is too efficient to need to do certain things. Like your heart beating all the time. That was an interesting take. I also liked the idea of the whole under the radar jobs that vampires have.

Now the stuff I didn't like. First let me start by saying that I didn't feel like this book as a horror book at all. Honestly it seemed more like some sort of paranormal erotica... There was SO much sex. Both consensual and non consensual. The thing that bothered me the most was that they warn about rape scenes. But then they don't really follow up on the psychological damage that follows a rape victim. For example, Ellison basically

rapes Ulysses, but then a few scenes later he's with his other vampire friend. And they're nonchalantly just talking about how both of their vampire mentors rape them. Like no big deal, and then Ulysses still goes out to find sex. Being friends with a victim of sexual assault has taught me there are psychological damage that occurs after. I get that not every victim is the same, but from what I know is a lot are afraid of their rapist. Or just have a wall up around them when it comes to future sexual encounters. I appreciate the fact that male rape was brought up in this book, but I do not feel like it was properly addressed.

Other than the sexual stuff, I just don't feel like there was a lot of character development. I honestly tried to finish the book, but after a while I could not get into it. Especially after the whole nonchalant rape talk.

Chandra Claypool (wherethereadergrows) says

"This is not an ordinary vampire story." It certainly isn't! Ulysses is an asshole who, on his birthday, chases off his friends with his poor behavior and becomes "recruited" by Ellison, an 800 year old vampire who explains how they live in their society, work and are not as Hollywood would present them. He makes mistakes that ultimately puts himself and his creator in trouble.

I was highly entertained throughout this book. Found myself giggling at humorous moments and the ending left me wondering what was going to happen. Will Ulysses succeed in his new role?

Dorothy says

Attempted to read this novel 3 times this year and each time I ended up having to stop around a quarter of the way through. I guess this one just isn't for me. The main characters really grated on me and I don't think I'm particularly into paranormal anymore. I've heard of more people enjoying this one than disliking it, so I may just be the odd one out. ~unpopular opinion?

Maddie Decano says

"this is not an ordinary vampire story"~ as the first line of the book states.

i agree, this is about Ulysses- a newly turned vampire by the 876 y/o Ellison. his mishaps, unfortunate events being a new vampire, the struggle to fit in the vampire society, being an idiot and a jerk with dyscalculia. its a page turner and i really enjoyed reading it. ulysses is a f*cking idiot but you know, i like his character because of that. you should consider checking out this book guys!

Lynda Calnan says

What a great book. Vampires really aren't my thing but this book sucked me in from the first page. I found myself repeatedly thinking 'Huh, interesting - I've never thought about it like that but it makes complete sense now that you've explained the secret life of vampires in this way'. Truehall just tells it how it is. It's raw, it's real and totally believable. The characters are almost familiar because they're portrayed so authentically. I can't wait for the next book - Presumably there's going to be a whole series of them because

I'm hooked and left wondering more about the intricacies of how vampires coexist with us in everyday society. Nice one :)

Maja Diana says

Possible Triggers: Rape, violence, gore,

Also reviewed at www.bookishaddict.wordpress.com

I received a copy from the author in exchange for an honest review.

★ ★ ★ – Finished, and found it okay, but with room for improvement.

“Not Dead” is a not-typical vampire story. It has tons of gore, violence, and sex.

At his 27th birthday Uly was turned into a vampire. Under the guidance of his sexy—but violent—master Ellyson, Uly tries to maneuver his new existence. But when he accidentally kills a human, there's repercussions not only for him, but for Ellyson as well.

I honestly don't know how to properly review this book. At some level, I **loved** the backstory, the world, and to a degree even the characters... but at another level I just... don't.

Thoughts while reading:

- I liked that there's a trigger warning in the beginning of the book. I see this often on amazon descriptions, but I feel like more people should add it to physical books, as well.
- There is *a lot* of swearing and crude language, I'm no prude but I *personally* think that it could have been cut down significantly.
- Interesting vampire origin story. Weird turning method, although logical.
- Uly would be so much easier to like if he didn't refer to himself as an asshole all the time. It gets tedious.

This next part is what I like to call “The Spoilery Bit”. It's where I delve deeper into my thoughts on the book. Only continue if you don't mind spoilers.

First the things I *didn't* like and that I think could be improved:

◇ Even though I was warned, the rape scene where Ellyson forces Uly to have sex with her was unexpected—and uncomfortable to read. I could have overlooked it as I do with a lot of things that turns me off a book, but the fact that Ellyson later explains that she only did it to assert dominance over Uly as a payback for years of her gender being the victim? I almost threw the book away there. (But, I was almost done, so I prevailed)

Don't get me wrong. There's never a good excuse for rape. And it's a subject that needs to be dealt with delicately because it is a horrifying experience. And, using it just for kicks is wrong. The whole point of my mini rant on this, is that this scene wasn't needed. Ellyson could easily have asserted her dominance in another way.

And even the second rape scene could have been dealt with differently. Considering that Uly arrives only minutes after, the author could have achieved the same effect without using rape as a plot device.

◇ I am a fan of well-placed swearwords. They offer a lot of insight into the characters, and used well, it can enhance the story a lot. However, when on the second page there's *nine* swearwords alone in a small section, I think it's a bit over the top. It cooled a bit later on, which I appreciated, and I found it easier to enjoy after the first few chapters.

◇ The characters introduction. I admit: I *did* grow to like Ellyson and Uly better as the story progressed, but I really didn't like either of them at first. I found this to be a shame because had they been introduced differently, I'm sure more readers would pick up this book.

Now... What did I actually like?

◇ The plot. It isn't a particularly plotdriven story, but I liked what little it had. The whole ordeal with the murder, blackmail and then rescue was pretty neat.

◇ The back story. I'm a sucker for well-built worlds, but even more so, I love when there's a good origin story in there. I loved the idea that vampirism is a virus, and that it has existed for as long as humans. I loved that there was limitations, and that the vampires aren't just undead. Furthermore, the author added little fun snippets like how alcohol was accidentally invented. I appreciated the care that went into building this history, and those parts were definitely my favorite of the book.

◇ The characters. After the first horrible introduction, the characters did grow on me. I found Uly to be hilarious at times, and Elly was obviously not the worst vampire out there. But, the start took away a lot of the pleasure.

Recommended for:

I recommend this for fans of the more violent vampire genre. I liked the ideas behind the story, and while I wished things were done differently, it didn't take away from the fact that I found the book to be okay.

Lee Anderson says

Think of your stereotypical vampire- mythical, tactile, cold, coffin sleeping blood suckers. Truly Absurd!!!! Staying fictitious but more realistic, what if vampires looked just like us and were living among us? They weren't creeping around after dark sucking blood from your neck, but had harvesters and distributors? Had their own government and lived all over the globe?

Meet Ulysses, self absorbed total loser that has fallen off the social ladder. Not much going for him really. One night at the local Bar Ulysses meets Ellison (vampire aged 876) who appears to be, more or less, a normal human female.

Before Ulysses knows it, he's at Ellison's place getting a history lesson on vampires and is about to become

one.

I'm not going to spoil a good tale on Truehall's modern take on the vampire lifestyle but I can tell you it really gets you thinking what if...? And that I really liked.

I found this story not only dark & evil but quite humorous.

I have read reviews where some readers have been unhappy with the Rape Warning in the beginning of the book. As an Australian, where this book was written I agree with it being there. Here in Australia we have a high rate of domestic violence, domestic abuse and sexual assault. Women and men who have suffered this may not want to read a book that has characters dominating others.

If you find yourself in this situation or know of someone who is, you can call crime stoppers on 1800 333 000

Jane Frederick says

Couldn't stop reading

I loved this book, it had me engaged the entire time I didn't want to put it down. Great characters and story.

Nanette says

This is not your run of the mill stereotypical vampire tale. It exceeded my expectations in every way. Such a well thought out, well executed story. I brilliant first book and can't wait for her next offering :).

Beth Skye Denny says

This is not your typical vampire novel. It's not the classic Dracula and it's not the sparkly vampires of the Twilight universe. Nope, this is a new breed.

In 'Not Dead' we follow the story of Uly and boy is he an asshole.

He's a jerk to his friends and uses pretty much everyone around him. He does not get a stamp of approval on my friend intake application. But he's very interesting to somebody. Somebody with fangs and a need for a companion.

Picture his surprise when he meets his first vampire and she's letting him know that he isn't the boss...of anything. And he needs to get...da da dum! A job. In a vampiric based field. Or else.

I liked this book. You really hated the main character and slowly learned to tolerate him as he changes.

Yeah, yeah into a vampire and less of a crap being, but only slightly less.

The world of this vampire breed has new rules and throws the 'known' things about vampires under the bus, backs over them, and hits 'em again.

This book is brutal and vivid. Not for the kiddies.

There's action, danger, sex, sarcasm, and vomit. Yes, I did say vomit (can vampires really vomit?).

Plus a great segue into another book and I, for one, am interested to follow Ulysses continuing journey into this fascinating spin on the vampire genre.

* I received this book free of charge in exchange for an honest review.*

