



Undertow

Elizabeth O'Roark

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Maura Pierce seems to have everything – a bright future, a trust fund and a boyfriend who can't wait to settle down. It almost seems like enough until Nate Sullivan comes home. Nate – her childhood best friend, her first love. The boy who left without a trace one night and broke her heart. When their attraction threatens the future she and her parents have so carefully crafted, loyalties will be tested and secrets will be uncovered. Giving in may cost her everything. But how do you resist the only thing you've ever really wanted?

Undertow Details

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Author : Elizabeth O'Roark

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From Reader Review Undertow for online ebook

Jodi Nichols says

I picked this book up for free and I absolutely loved it! This is one book that will leave me with a hangover! It was just the right amount of emotion as well as hotness to make it amazing! I loved Nate and was very much all for him during this whole story. Maura is just stuck in a lifestyle that she both loves and hates, but cannot bring herself to get out of it all to do what she wants. All of the characters from this story are amazing but I truly love Nate!! Amazi.g story and wish there was more to it after that ending :-)

Jenny - TotallybookedBlog says

3.5 Stars

Jenny: I did enjoy Undertow and I loved the back and forth, past/present flashbacks telling the story of the lost love between Nate and Maura.

This was a story of second chances and finding your way back to the one person who held your heart, took care of your heart and then destroyed it. It is of lies, deception and healing and it was a very well told story with just the right amount of all the elements we love in a romance story. What did you think G?

Gitte: I enjoyed this story, it was sweet and romantic with a great dose of angst. It was beautifully written and as you know I'm a sucker for a second chance romance. I thought the flashbacks were flawlessly written and what we learnt broke my heart. I swooned and then my heart broke. Great storyline!

'In that moment, I wanted our old friendship back. But I wanted so much more too. Instead, all summer, I had nothing at all.' – Maura

Jenny: Nate and Maura were childhood friends, with Nate being slightly older than Maura and seeing her as a little sister, that is until she grows up and their friendship blossoms into something more. These two were soul mates. Destined to be together until the night Nate leaves and breaks Maura's heart. Just what it was that drove Nate away is told through flashbacks and present meetings?

Maura has never recovered from the love nor the hurt Nate caused her. She's tried to move on in the five years since she's seen him with no success.

After five years, she begins a relationship with another childhood friend, Ethan which appears to be something of substance. But is it? For me G, there was only one man here and that was Nate. He was divine and I was hanging on to find out what transpired between him and Maura to drive him away, were you?

Maura and Nate's story was well told and it broke my heart when past indifference's came to light. Whilst I enjoyed it, unfortunately Undertow didn't give me that gripping wow feeling but it did keep me invested to the end. I absolutely adored Nate, though I have to admit I became frustrated with Maura a few times. I couldn't understand her thought processes at times and I really felt for Nate in all this. Undertow was

a sweet and sad story about miscommunication, deceit and finding your way to that one person who will always own your heart.

‘What I see when I look at him is, inexplicably, pain. A mirror of my own.’ – Maura

Just as the story felt like it was dragging we were treated to an epilogue that was a real winner for and one that left me feeling satisfied. What about you G? How much did you love that epi?

Gitte: The epilogue was brilliant, it pulled me right back in and it salvaged a lot of frustration for me. Because, oh Jenny, Maura drove me nuts and I have to say she’s one of the reasons I just couldn’t mark this story higher. Unfortunately, her character grated on me through most of the story. She was a pushover, a hypocrite, a whiner and the fact that she went along with behaviour she knew to be wrong well...I just didn’t get her at all.

“What is with you people? You’d think you were in the Mafia the way you all cling together.” – Nate

Saying that, I did feel really sorry for her over the angsty and emotional miscommunication.

‘We have both changed, but in this moment that doesn’t matter to me at all I want to step back toward him, into him, and forget that five years have passed.’ – Maura

The other issue I had was the fact that it took so long before anything was resolved. It started to drag, then suddenly everything happened and became really rushed. Good thing the epilogue rocked, because it totally did! Overall, I enjoyed this story and I loved Nate and in the end I guess Maura too went quite a way in redeeming herself.

“Don’t you want to know there is one person in the world who knows exactly who and what you are and loves you because of it and in spite of it? ...”Don’t you want to know that there’s someone who will fix you when you’re broken.” – Nate

ARC supplied by author in exchange for an honest review

Lady Vigilante (Feifei) says

3 stars!

I guess I’m in the minority with my thoughts and feelings about this book.

Second chance love stories have always been my downfall. I love them, I crave them, I *need* them in my reading lists to maintain some form of sanity. I was intrigued by the book cover and blurb so I immediately jumped at the chance to read this book. To say I was disappointed in the characters and story plot would be an understatement.

The book is about 22 year old Maura who has the “perfect” life: sweet boyfriend, nice trust fund, and a bright future as a lawyer. Though she hides it well, she is still heartbroken and emotionally stunted after her

first love, Nate, ups and leaves her with a heartbreaking letter as his only notice. I usually love these kinds of plots! But for reasons listed below, the story didn't work for me. I will say, though, the author has a fantastic writing style! I could really tell Maura was cut deeply by her failed relationship with Nate.

“There are literally a thousand words in the English language that destroy me. Innocent words, common words – ocean, canoe, fort, UVA, beach, baseball, virginity. If I could remove them all from the dictionary I would. I wonder how long it will take before every single reminder of him doesn't blow through me like some kind of natural disaster, taking away every vestige of happiness I was feeling the second before?”

This book starts strong. I appreciated the past-present POVs that shed some light on Nate and Maura's unique relationship. The (bad) turning point for me was around 41% where it became okay for your married brother to screw around with your friend, when you JUST realized your family was a controlling freakhouse, and when your hometown is the modernized version of the 1800s, where arranged marriages and rich-trumps-poor events happen. I get that the setting, the plot played an important role in this book, and it worked for many readers out there, but for me, it was a jumbled mess. Too much 'look-but-don't-touch,' resulting in cheating, betrayal, and a case of 'who can one-up each other's jealousy' sex scenes.

Still, I would have rated this book higher, but one *tiny* detail made me bump it down to 3. I absolutely despised Maura. She is the ultimate anti-heroine I've read about. At first, I could sympathize with her situation, stuck between sweet boyfriend and old love, shouldering her family's expectations. She soon lost whatever backbone she had and my respect for her withered.

STOP HERE if you don't want any plot-related spoilers. Please keep in mind this is my take on the book events and doesn't reflect the general consensus.

Scenario 1: Nate and Maura resolve their past differences in, like, 3 pages, which isn't ideal but fine; however it's SO obvious that they still have feelings for each other. What do they do? They decide to be FRIENDS, that's what. Actually Maura decided that. So what happens when she sees Nate out with other girls? She gets all jealous and has fury sex with Ethan. And then 200 pages later, they're sadly telling each other they can't be together. What I don't understand is why? I mean, how could they have a chance to be together when Maura NEVER thinks of breaking up with Ethan in the first place? Not until it's the end of the book????!! HUGE communication gaps, eek!

Scenario 2: Maura almost gets raped by Graham, a childhood acquaintance. And her reaction to it????!! Ugh, seriously, I face-palmed. Just to be fair, let's let Maura tell the story, hmm?

“If I'm going to have to go through the rest of my life running into Graham I don't need everyone in the world knowing it happened. And how am I going to explain that you were there to save me? Ethan's jealous enough as it is.”

Like whaaaaaaat?! Do you see what I mean? Do you see my frustration and problem with this character? Granted, it's taken out of context, but she almost gets raped and all she cared about at the moment was her image and Ethan's feelings????!! GRRR. Honestly, Nate was the best character in the book, with flawless qualities, but even he could not block out my disgust for Maura's wishy-washy personality and weak beliefs.

There are a lot more examples of what I didn't like, especially that messed up family of hers, and how she *always* caves into their demands but that would ruin the entire book so I'm not going to say much about that. Overall, I tried to enjoy the story. I really did. I connected with the author's writing style, as you can tell because her words made me experience such rage and frustration, but I COULD NOT connect with Maura.

Too weak. Too indecisive. Too...just too much to handle. Though the ending was supposed to make me shout for joy, by that time I just didn't care what happened to her to cheer. I was only concerned about Nate and his poor taste in women.

Back to what I was saying in the beginning, this book just wasn't for me.

Copy kindly provided by author in exchange for an honest review.

Adelle says

My friend and I buddy read this book. What a complete waste of time that was.

I'm going to honest and say I hated everything about this book. It's harsh and blunt, but it's the truth. Every single character is a horrible person and makes awful decisions, especially the main character. There are so many problematic elements in this book that I don't even know where to begin.

Maura and Nate were childhood best friends who fell in love, until Nate suddenly leaves her and disappears, breaking her heart. Five years later, they see each other for the first time. Nate treats Maura awfully for unknown reasons, and even when we find out those reasons, they're still horrible people who honestly deserve each other. The main character is a hypocrite. The guy she was dating is a liar. Her main love interest seems only interested in sleeping with her yet claims he loves her. It's a problematic mess that infuriated me the whole way through.

I feel a tad guilty for completely bashing this book, but it was that bad.

Sbell says

1 HUGE EYEROLL STAR

The only thing I liked about this book was our hero Nate. He did not deserve Maura and all her hot mess.

The question that burns my mind the entire time I am reading this book is, Does Maura have a golden vagina? Seriously, every man in this book wanted her. Wanted to be with her, or marry her, one even attempted raping her. Maura had the personality of a baked potato. She was boring. Never standing up for herself, or for Nate. Always following what others wanted her to do, how others wanted

her to live, and all the while making excuses for her silly behavior in her mind.

She spent 98% of the book in a woe-is-me vegetated state, seemingly to want Nate. But, I didn't believe this. How can Maura supposedly pine for her great love Nate, when she is screwing Ethan? She is a couple with Ethan, she can't orgasm with Ethan unless she thinks of Nate. Who does this?

Maura's character is an insult to my intelligence, and the only reason I kept reading was thinking perhaps I missed something? I could not wrap my head around what Nate could have possibly seen in her. She wasn't that friendly, sweet, giving towards him. And when her and Nate both realize that their breakup was due to family influence, you would think Maura would run to the "great love of her life", yeah? Well no, not our heroine, our heroine runs off to Paris with Ethan, because that is what her family would want. Proceeds to have sex with him for 2 days straight, and justifies this in her head with "this is what her family wants".

I could go on, but I won't. I hate wasting my time on books like this where I am supposed to root for my couple, but I can't see past the poorly written heroine. Nate deserved better than this...I deserved better than this!!

Having ranted, I see this book has tons and tons of 5 star reviews, so go and decide for yourself! Good luck

Wolfie says

[When Maura and Nate had sex for the first time Maura finds out that Nate has been with other women. But Earlier in the story Nate got MAD that Maura kissed other men. That just broke my heart when Maura found out that he didn't stay faithful. I mean, come on they WERE in a "relationship". Not an ideal one, but one nonetheless. (hide spoiler)]

Cam says

I almost stopped reading this one about 1/4 of the way through, but I ended up sticking it out. It did get more interesting, especially once most of the secrets came out and the main characters were left to figure out how to deal with the consequences of those revelations.

The book's good points are that it was interesting, finally, starting about 25-30% of the way in. I found myself wanting to know if Maura and Nate would ever get a 2nd chance together, and that curiosity drove me to finish the book, despite my general dislike toward both of them. Towards the end, I actually found myself sucked in, staying up way past bedtime to find out how things worked out for everyone. It ended fairly happily and the author wrapped up all the side plots pretty tidily and satisfactorily, in my opinion.

Now, the not-so-good points. The characters were very one-dimensional. So much so that I never really came to care for either of the main characters (and disliked the rest). The main characters and all their friends were perfect portrayals of typical Gen-Y-ers: self-centered, casual-sexing, shallow, amoral, binge-drinking, foul-mouthed, entitled. For this reason, they were all a bit repulsive to me.

Then there was the editing (or lack thereof). There were a good handful of random extra words that didn't get removed; likewise, there were random missing words. Nothing a skilled reader can't read around, but it's unprofessional and leaves an amateur feel in its wake. Also, there are at least a half-dozen instances of misuse of the word "I" in place of "me". For instance, the author repeatedly used the phrase "Nate (or whatever random person) and I", when the proper use should've been "Nate (or whatever random person) and ME". Example: "It was very awkward for Nate and I." Wrong! Correct use would be "It was very awkward for Nate and ME." I counted quite a few instances of this same misuse, which, despite its common misuse amongst the populace, is inexcusable in professional written work.

Granted, I paid nothing for this book, as it was a freebie for Kindle, but that's kind of the point. No one would (or should) want to pay for a book that is full of usage errors and other such mistakes.

Overall, it was "okay". The plot itself was interesting, but I would've enjoyed it so much more had the characters been more admirable and likable.

Nerea Nieto says

I can't even start to express how much I loved this book. My latest reads didn't catch my attention, I had little time to read (on the subway mostly), so I had like two hours a day (if most) to read, but with the rest I had no intention on keep reading (I had so much stuff to do!). With *Undertow* it was totally different I HAD TO KEEP READING! It was impossible to turn it down!

And how could I? Elizabeth writes WONDERFULLY. Bravo! I can only say that! Her writing is appealing and you suddenly connect with Maura, the protagonist and the rest of characters!

I didn't have a crush on Nate, but he was definitely the guy for her - I loved this couple! I really loved the first half of the book, when the flashbacks of their old times together appear! It was a great way of creating mystery about their relationship: why did they break up if they were meant for each other? In the second half of the book the flashbacks disappear and we only live the present - when we'll finally find out why and so many other things!

"(...) And I really believe that once you've found that person," he says, turning from Brian to lock his gaze onto me, fierce and unapologetic, "then no matter how many times you've separated, you'll find each other again and again."

Highly recommended! It is a light read, but so deep and well written! Go and read it NOW!

"Don't you want to know that there is one person in the world who knows exactly who and what you are and loves you because of it and in spite of it?" he asks. "Don't you want to know that there's someone who will fix you when you're broken?"

Gitte TotallyBookedBlog says

Jointly reviewed on: <http://totallybookedblog.com/2013/10/...>

Jenny: I did enjoy Undertow and I loved the back and forth, past/present flashbacks telling the story of the lost love between Nate and Maura.

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'In that moment, I wanted our old friendship back. But I wanted so much more too. Instead, all summer, I had nothing at all.' – Maura

Jenny: Nate and Maura were childhood friends, with Nate being slightly older than Maura and seeing her as a little sister, that is until she grows up and their friendship blossoms into something more. These two were soul mates. Destined to be together until the night Nate leaves and breaks Maura's heart. Just what it was that drove Nate away is told through flashbacks and present meetings?

Maura has never recovered from the love nor the hurt Nate caused her. She's tried to move on in the five years since she's seen him with no success.

After five years, she begins a relationship with another childhood friend, Ethan which appears to be something of substance. But is it? For me G, there was only one man here and that was Nate. He was divine and I was hanging on to find out what transpired between him and Maura to drive him away, were you?

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'What I see when I look at him is, inexplicably, pain. A mirror of my own.' – Maura

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"What is with you people? You'd think you were in the Mafia the way you all cling together." – Nate

Saying that, I did feel really sorry for her over the angst and emotional miscommunication.

'We have both changed, but in this moment that doesn't matter to me at all I want to step back toward him, into him, and forget that five years have passed.' – Maura

The other issue I had was the fact that it took so long before anything was resolved. It started to drag, then suddenly everything happened and became really rushed. Good thing the epilogue rocked, because it totally did! Overall, I enjoyed this story and I loved Nate and in the end I guess Maura too went quite a way in redeeming herself.

"Don't you want to know there is one person in the world who knows exactly who and what you are and loves you because of it and in spite of it? ..."Don't you want to know that there's someone who will fix you when you're broken." – Nate

Jenny: 3.5 Stars

Gitte: 3.5 Stars

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Ashleyjo says

To be only 253 pages, this book took me a while to get through... I can only compare it to what I imagine it would be like to swim across a 6x6 hole filled with wet sand.

I'm a sucker for second chance romance, and I'm a sap when it comes to first loves, especially when it all involves characters from two different worlds finding a way to overcome the odds. So I should *love* this book~ sadly, I didn't, though.

Here's what's wrong....

1. Maura.

She has zero backbone until the very end, and even then it's only because someone else (Nate) is holding her spine upright.

She is constantly judging other characters and musing at how horrible they are as humans - her brother cheating, Nate's using women, the rich in her community trying to keep the poor segregated and destroy their access to the beach, betrayals by various characters, etc. Yet, she herself stoops to use Nate's 'townie' status as an insult. She cheats. She settles into a relationship of connivence and uses Ethan as a buffer. She stands by with knowledge of betrayals and cheating, not only not doing anything, but remaining friends with the people sleeping with a married man. The list goes on, but basically she's a hypocrite.

2. TOO much Fucking Other Characters

There's just too much f'ing of other characters for me to really root for a second chance. Misunderstandings and lies of the past are cleared up, which should be the moment all f'ing other people is ceased, but instead readers still have to read about the MC's screwing other people and even SAYING I LOVE YOU TO SOMEONE ASIDE from who we are supposed to be rooting for here. Not cool!

3. Poor Writing Habits

I hate when an author uses 'I saw x,y,z emotions cross his face, but didn't know what it meant' blah blah. It's a cop out to CONSTANTLY do that. Use f'ing dialogue, actions, etc to CONVEY what the character is feeling & thinking. Reading all these various looks and her quizzical analysis of them grew very tiresome.

4. The Monotony

It becomes monotonous and slow slow slow slow slow to basically repeat the same exact scenes over and over she ponders life, she goes to a bar, she sees Nate, she gets pissed he is w someone else, she screws her bf, she goes to bed, she ponders life, she has some type of encounter with Nate, she goes to the bar, she's pissed he is there with someone else, she screw her boyfriend, On and on this pinwheel goes, occasionally throwing out some random tidbit of info or circumstance that will progress a HEA.

5. Nate.

Nate never fights for her. To be this all-consuming love, he basically just stands there while he waits to see how the fuck the book will end lol.

6. A Lot Of Info That's Not Relevant

Ethan's sister, for example, what did her scenes add to the story? Nothing. It tells me nothing about any of the MC's, doesn't pertain to any plot or subplot points, etc. Its useless info and screen time.

The Good

?

About all I can say is...

I did appreciate the smooth way the author switched from present to past in the initial chapters.

The twists weren't shocking by any means, but they were done well enough to add a little suspense here and there at the end.

Conclusion

A shit load wrong and not much at all to redeem it.

Katie says

I LOVE this book. I am now struggling through work today because I sat up all night to finish it. If you love books by Tammara Webber, Samantha Young, Jessica Sorensen, etc. this is one for you! I really liked Maura, the main character, and, obviously, LOVED her former boyfriend NATE. Nate and Maura meet again when Maura returns to the beach town where she spent her summers as a child. Maura is being crushed by the life and expectations put upon her by her parents. As you get glimpses of her past, you begin to understand why she was never able to get over Nate, and longs for a life she does not think is possible. I got completely sucked in. . .

Shelly hammett says

I love stories that are centered around the beach and summertime. There is just something nostalgic about them. Two childhood friends grow up and fall in love what could be wrong with that, except Maura comes from money and Nate is the housekeepers son. Her family doesn't want them together

SueBee★bring me an alpha!★ says

FREE on Amazon US today (10/1/2016)

Stand-alone.

BLURB:

Maura Pierce seems to have everything – a bright future, a trust fund and a boyfriend who can't wait to settle down. It almost seems like enough until Nate Sullivan comes home. Nate – her childhood best friend, her first love. The boy who left without a trace one night and broke her heart. When their attraction threatens the future she and her parents have so carefully crafted, loyalties will be tested and secrets will be uncovered. Giving in may cost her everything. But how do you resist the only thing you've ever really wanted?

FREE: <https://www.amazon.com/Undertow-Eliza...>

FREEBIES are often good for MORE than one day, I have gathered all my FREEBIES on a special shelf:

Kindle-freebies (currently over 500 books)

<https://www.goodreads.com/review/list...>

Karen says

Very well written. I was surprised that it was a debut book by this author. I think there is family pressures such as described in this book and class status but being true to yourself is a good lesson.

Debi says

boring. repetative. cliche'
