



Underworld

Cathy MacPhail

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A school trip goes disastrously wrong when five troubled high school students find themselves trapped in an underground cave. Their best chance of escape is to stay together. But when a member of the group disappears, their hope of finding a way out starts to fade. Does one of the remaining four know more than he or she is letting on, or is there something evil lurking in the caves?

Underworld Details

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Donna says

First half of this book was a struggle to read, difficult to relate to the characters or setting, the storyline seemed shallow. The second half conveyed more realistic actions and emotions.

Olivia says

Whoa... This book was NOT good. Yeesh. It sounded interesting enough on the inner flap, but it was way too farfetched. I could have handled the students getting trapped in the cave. Had it been left at that, maybe it would have yielded a higher rating. However, bringing the giant worm into the story completely ruined it.

Raz says

This has the making of a good book. There are all the elements one would need - great characters, well-paced plot, description, action etc. - but they never seem to all be present at one point. Occasionally the plot will progress well and be beautifully written, but then the characters are all over the place and the speech is unrealistic. That being said, it is still readable and engaging, forming a bit of light relief from longer or more complex books.

Tori says

This book didn't really rise up to my expectations. It was given to me by my school for free for some event that I can't remember and it takes a while for you to get into it. Sure, it has tension and the atmosphere builds up quite a lot but I don't know, I didn't enjoy it as much as I thought I would.

Izzy says

There was a little bit too much going on which meant that the ending was rushed and a couple of the characters didn't have much presence. In fact, I did go, "Huh, seriously? Is that really the ending?" I had to look for a sequel because a lot of important things were left open.

The external conflict: Trapped in a cave where they may or may not be hunted by the Worm, a supernatural creature.

The internal conflict: How the characters treat and think of each other. The core of this book is about relationships.

There is one thing that niggled at me, though.

(view spoiler)

Katie GrazingPages says

Undeworld. Oh how I hated this book. What too harsh? Maybe, but let me explain why it holds such a dramatic impression. Now the idea behind the plot is pretty interesting. A group of teenagers are taken down into a cave on a school trip when the entrance to the cave 'caves' in and they are trapped. They then have to find a way out, without the help of their guide and that's when things really start to go wrong. A legend of a worm is also unnecessarily added to the plot which we then have to deal with. But for me the thing that really annoyed me about the book was the over use of the word Zonk! I now hate this word beyond belief. I'd start to enjoy the story then zonk, zonking, zonked or any other version of that word would be mentioned and my ears would ring and my blood would boil. Too extreme? No! Yes I fully understand that teenagers generally overuse words, and yes it is rather irritating but I can be irritated by that on my own, I don't need you, Cathy MacPhail, to remind me every two sentences. Plus what makes it even worse is that the term zonk is very outdated. I've always been a firm believer that certain things should be omitted from books, like the mention of TV shows for example, as they are too time specific, and speech is one of those things. Now I don't mean speech as in old english against 'new' english, I refer to speech as in slang. Slang is so quickly changed that within a year or less it can be outdated. But the word zonk is even worse. According to my Mum (the best source of knowledge) the word zonk was common when she was young and she's 50. Because of this super annoying word I cannot fully review this book as I cannot get past 'zonk' so if you care to brave it I'll leave you to make up your own mind about this book. But don't say that you weren't warned. Now I've only got to find something to do with this book as it's not going anywhere near my book shelf.

Erin Sterling says

Trying too hard to be creepy without succeeding. Flat characters and the story doesn't pick up for quite a while. Basic plot: the most unlikely of characters are forced together on a school trip (the rebellious punk girl, the nerdy guy, the asshole, the overly enthusiastic girl) that turns into something evil when they get stuck in a cave of terrible history.

Matthew says

Catherine MacPhail is one of my favourite authors. Her books often engross me for hours as she hooks me in with cliffhangers, three-dimensional characters, and original and creative premises. Yet, this "Underworld" tries far too hard to be macabre and unsettling, but is just mainly annoying, especially her overuse of the word, "zonking", which as we know, is a substitute for swearing. Nevertheless, I did enjoy reading it, and it wasn't complete utter tosh made by the devil himself, just annoying characters and F@*(^*G ZONKING! If I see that word again uttered by a character in any other novel, I shall obtain a large, very sharp machete and stab myself in the face with it, over and over in a continuous cycle. It falls short.

Clare says

This book had me laughing throughout and not in a good way. I was laughing at how terrible it was. It's full of over used cliches. The constant use of 'zonking' rather than swearing was cringe worthy. As someone who has worked with teenagers extensively I just kept thinking 'this isn't how teens speak' which is a problem in a lot of books I have read that is written by an older author. The use of the Scottish dialect I enjoyed however there wasn't enough of it. The tone of voice kept changing making the characters seem unbelievable. They were also all really annoying, I didn't root for anyone and found myself not caring if any of them lived or died.

The worst part was the 'big bad.' The blurb had sounded so promising and it could have went in many different directions instead it was a FUCKING GIANT WORM. Yes that is correct, the horror was a worm. No matter what you do you can't make a worm anything other than laughable. The book became an unintentional horror-comedy. You knew it was a worm from quite early on too as a supposedly 'scary' cook told the kids about it. I thought this was going to be a legend and what they were to face was something entirely different and a lot more terrifying as who gives away a detail like this so early? Alas no, you knew it was a giant worm and a giant worm it was. It's as if the author realised how ridiculous this was as you never even got a full description of it and why it was so scary or how it had come to be there and why. Was it a worm from hell? Was it some kind of evolutionary freak? Some kind of man made guard from the war (which was hinted at with the unnecessary flashbacks.) I'm giggling even as I type this, it was so zonking ridiculous.

Emma says

Not bad... but not *that* great either. I get the point of this book, but to me, it was trying too hard to be more than it was, and consequently, failing to meet those expectations. The cover looks pretty cool, and the blurb does leave the reader wanting to read on, but the simplistic writing style will make any regular reader over the age of 11 a bit disappointed, in that aspect at least. Having said that, if you're looking for a quick, half-decent story... why not try Underworld.

Abby Johnson says

I thought it was an okay book. First of all, it took a long time for me to become hooked in the book (about 3/4th of the way through). Also, I found it a little confusing because it was written in the UK, so there were some British words in it. The book was about five students, who were completely different from each other, getting chosen to go on a school trip, but things started to happen when they went into the caves. The students names were Alex, Fiona, Angie, Liam, and Zesh. They had to go through and overcome rock falls, bats, arguments, betrayals, fear, and many more things. For instance, their teacher Mr Marks became unconscious from the first rock fall, so they had to carry him the rest of the way. Some of them thought about just leaving him behind, but others wanted to take him along. The book did not end the way I thought it was going to.

Rebecca says

That was just bad! I did finish this book, but in a way I wish I had just quit it - that ending was just awful!

The overall storyline for this book was not bad - a bunch of teenagers on a school trip go caving and get stuck with rumours of monsters - in this case a giant worm! But it was very poorly executed!

I hated every single one of the characters in this book! They were all a bunch of annoying little shits! I didn't even like the teacher. As it went on I was rooting for the worm and hoping it was going to eat them all! Instead I got a really crappy ending!

If I could give zero stars I would but I'm stuck with one! Definitely one to avoid!

Gina Pooley says

This is the first of your books that I've read! I loved it straight away! My friend recommened it, she said it was "amazing" whcih I totally agree with! It was so good! It made me get such a strong picture with what was happening in the story, Loved it ao much, now one of my favourite books I've read, trying to read all of your books now! Love them so much! thanks :)

Mahshid Saghatchi says

not artistic and poor writing structure

Louise says

Underworld is about a group of kids that end up going on a school trip none of them wanted to go on. Axel - the school bully and thug. Angie - Fat, annoying and jolly. Fiona - a smoker and full of attitude. Liam - the nobody, weak and always the follower never the leader. Zesk - the know-it-all geek who loves himself. None of them get on or really like each other and Axel particiially dislikes the teacher taking them on the trip, Mr Marks who isn't fond of Axel either. Mrs Soams, the cook at the compound they are staying at tells them of the Local Legend of the Giant Worm, which lives in the caves they are going to be visiting. But it's just a Legend, or is it? There is an explosion in the caves, then a avalanche leaving them trapped in the caves alone. They way out if blocked. Mr Marks has been knocked unconscious. They group has to find a way out. With Mr Marks unconscious the group fights for leadership, turning on each other. Will they be able to make it out alive? Will the worm get them? Or will they destroy each other?

Really enjoyed this book. It had everything. It had a Lord of the Flies feel to it and it was also funny, scary, exciting and hard to put down. The characters where well developed and had great and very differnt personality's which played off each other, bringing humour and drama. Each character develops throughout the book, each on their own personal journey letting you get to know the characters well and why the are like they are. The book kept me hooked throughout, having no idea how it was going to end. Great story!

