

The Undying

author: Anne Boyer

2026-07

Synopsis

authori¼š	Anne Boyer
readByi¼š	Amy Finegan
inLanguagei¼š	english

Award-winning poet and essayist Anne Boyer delivers a one-of-a-kind meditation on illness in the age of data - sharing her true story of coping with cancer, both the illness and the industry, in *The Undying*.

A week after her 41st birthday, the acclaimed poet Anne Boyer was diagnosed with highly aggressive triple-negative breast cancer. For a single mother living paycheck to paycheck who had always been the caregiver rather than the one needing care, the catastrophic illness was both a crisis and an initiation into new ideas about mortality and the gendered politics of illness.

A 21st-century *Illness as Metaphor*, as well as a harrowing memoir of survival, *The Undying* explores the experience of illness as mediated by digital screens, weaving in ancient Roman dream diarists, cancer hoaxers and fetishists, cancer vloggers, corporate lies, John Donne, pro-pain "dolorists", the ecological costs of chemotherapy, and the many little murders of capitalism. It excoriates the pharmaceutical industry and the bland hypocrisies of "pink ribbon culture" while also diving into the long literary line of women writing about their own illnesses and ongoing deaths: Audre Lorde, Kathy Acker, Susan Sontag, and others.

A genre-bending memoir in the tradition of *The Argonauts*, *The Undying* will break your heart, make you angry enough to spit, and show you contemporary America as a thing both desperately ill and occasionally, perversely glorious.

Reader's comments

comment 1:

â€"â€" ()