

Hating Valentine's Day



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From Publishers Weekly Rushby channels A Christmas Carol into this Valentine's Day tale about one Liv Hetherington, a single wedding photographer whose distaste for February's signature holiday prompts a spectral intervention-of the Dickensian kind. Though her father, her roommate and her boss all disapprove of Liv's no-time-for-dating lifestyle, this Valentine's Day our heroine is determined to lay low-that is, until she's visited by the Marley-esque ghost of a deceased co-worker. (A true horror for single women, Rushby's ethereal guide is an old lady who devotes all her affection to cats.) Thereafter, Liv greets a trio of ghostly visitors with little skepticism as they show her Valentine's Days past, present and future. Because Rushby narrates the novel from Liv's point of view, she often repeats the salient plot points several times: that Liv was abandoned by her ex-boyfriend, that she's living in dreams of the past, that her new suitor is genuinely a nice guy. The book's humor is similarly over-explained. When Cupid calls a woman's skirt "materially challenged," Liv repeats his observation a few sentences later: "her skirt's not quite as long as it could be." It's as if the author doesn't trust her readers to get her jokes or her narrative arguments. (She also hammers home the Dickens connection with frequent, heavy-handed references to the tale.) The repetitions drag down the book's momentum and smother much of its humor, dulling what might have otherwise

been a clever remake of a classic tale of transformation and self-discovery. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. From Booklist Many singletons will likely find themselves sympathizing with wedding photographer Liv Hetherington, who can't stand cherubic cupids and blind dates. Liv is still recovering from being dumped two years ago by her boyfriend, Mike, who broke up with her on Valentine's Day to go back to his ex-wife. She is thankful when her friends and family decide that this year they won't try to set her up for the big day. Despite her reluctance, she may have found a man all on her own--Drew, a charming friend of her flatmate Justine. But Liv isn't sure she is ready to trust another guy after Mike, so enter the ghost of Liv's deceased coworker, Mrs. Batty-Smith, who tells Liv that she is going to be visited by three spirits, ghosts of Valentine's Day past, present, and future. Anyone familiar with Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol can probably guess where the story is going, but Rushby does offer a funny, charming twist on a well-known tale. Kristine HuntleyCopyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved See all Editorial Reviews

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