



The Undertaker

William F. Brown

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Curiosity can kill more than cats, but when Pete Talbott found himself at the wrong end of Gino Parini's .45 reading his own obituary, it was a mystery he couldn't leave alone. From the cornfields of Ohio to the gritty slums of Chicago, a bloody kitchen in a Back Bay townhouse, New York's Washington Square, and the nation's Capitol itself, the hunt is on. Someone with a penchant for sharp scalpels and embalming tables is planting bodies under other people's names, and if Talbott doesn't stop them, he and his quirky new girlfriend Sandy Kasmarek will be next on the Undertaker's list.

Reviewer Comments on the Author's earlier novels:

The New Yorker: "A thriller in the purest cliffhanger vein . . . Mr. Brown's technique is flawless."

Publisher's Weekly: "Writing in the vein of Forsythe and Follett, Brown has produced a fast paced thriller . . ."

Worldwide Library: "William F. Brown has written a mesmerizing tale . . . making the unlikely seem all too real . . . explosive, fast paced action."

The Orlando Sentinel: "Brown's novel is a rainy-day adventure with each chapter ending with a cliff-hanging ending."

The Newport News VA Daily Press: "A thrilling tale of espionage. His novel never stands still for a second . . . An espionage thriller about a Cairo missile crisis you'll want to read right through in one sitting . . . Brown ought to start writing the film script now."

The Virginia Gazette: "It's the stuff of a real good read."

McNaughton Book Service: "Tightly plotted suspense in a fast-paced terrorist thriller."

South Bend Tribune: "An exceptional book of adventure, intrigue and history... strong figures . . . a well-constructed, powerful story that predicts certain Armageddon."

Richmond Times Dispatch: "Author hits the mark with his first novel."

The Undertaker Details

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From Reader Review The Undertaker for online ebook

Rick Molitor says

Good thriller

I thought that it started a little slow. Then It really got going. It was quick paced and quite interesting. The characters of Pete and Sandy meshed well. It was a good suspense read but with some good funny touches with the interaction of the two main characters. I hope there will be more.

L.E.Olteano says

You know what's the worst thing that could happen to someone that is sort of susceptible to conspiracy theories? Reading a well written novel that makes them go "A-HA!! I KNEW it!!!". This is one of those novels.

One of the end results of reading it is I got freaked out by how possible it felt this could be a real story. You ever have that feeling, after reading a thriller/suspense?

Anyways, the novel kicks off very strong, with what I think is one of the most memorable scenes (for me). I stayed clear of knives at home the day I read that lovely bit, that's how richly done it is. And then it got even better, multiple obituaries, mobsters, crazy Marines...the works. It was one exciting ride, that's for sure!

William F. Brown's style is great, that traditionally beautiful sort of writing, with a clear and strong voice. The plot is really smart, and really smartly put together. It has just the right tempo to keep me on the edge of my seat, but at the same time it's fun, and somehow light-hearted while thrilling too. A strange but memorable mix of emotions came up as I read.

Pete is that sort of guy that you'll want to marry and have kids with; if he were a real guy, of course. But he's a character, so second best option is to be sure a worthy woman gets to marry him and have his kids. I was very touched by Pete's feelings about losing his wife, Terri. I just went all "Awww!!!" in my head, I couldn't help it. I was very glad when he met Sandy, because by that time I was already planning to introduce him to single gals myself if he wasn't going to find someone :D That's how into the story I got.

The characters are really solid, lovable and fun, and some of them are detestable, sneaky, conniving little maniacs that you'll feel like strangling. But in the mids of all the tension, you'll find yourself chuckling. My favorite was obviously Pete, but Sandy came in close as second.

The two characters have an awesome chemistry, and Sandy makes the entire ride a lot of fun. She's that free spirited sort of woman that just makes it all exciting, the good and the bad. Pete needed that, I think; it took a strong, loyal, wisea\$\$ woman to shock him back into the real world.

I wasn't sure how it would all end, and I kept thinking the worst might happen. When the ending came, I was happy. I won't give any spoilers, but for me, it was a beautiful and touching ending. The last scene was just beautiful.

And, yes, as you well know by now, there's going to be some cover talk. I can't help myself! The cover is really strong, I think. It gives you just the right vibe for the read, and it does the novel justice. That is a great pick for a cover.

I do strongly recommend this to everyone that likes good old mystery, spiced with mobsters, hitmen, conspiracy, fast paced chases and awesome characters.

Louisa says

Wow! What an action-packed adventure! Lots of running, avoiding, and clever tricks! Loved it!

Extended Review Original Posted on Words I Write Crazy:

This was a really high tension-packed adventure novel. Full of threats, various tricks, like buying 2 tickets one way, then going again disguised for another, the way they wanted to go, and various chase scenes, well, yeah, this was a very clever book! I really enjoyed it!

Pete was a tortured character, he'd lost his wife, and saw her in clouds, since he'd promised her on her deathbed that he'd find someone new, and if he didn't, she'd haunt him, and so she did that. And then he gets caught in this mystery, where he and his wife have been buried again, only it's not them. It's people who've been murdered, and using names of deceased couples (or one single guy, which leads Pete to Sandy) who live far away, they bury the bodies. Pete only has his memories of his wife, so when a gun-toting assassin knocks in on his life with the obits of the fake Pete and Theresa Talbott, he dives straight into a mystery the size of several states, all the places mentioned in the description, yeah. A really great mystery!

I really enjoyed Sandy as a character, she was strong, tough, and smart, full of great little skills, like hotwiring cars, hair-styling, fighting, and photography. It was quite interesting to see her banter with Pete, since he was getting over his wife, that he would move on, and yeah, that was quite funny!

Loved this book, it was a lot of fun to read about all the tricks that they pulled to stay ahead of the bad guys, and the ending was so sweet! So check out this book!

Shelleyrae at Book'd Out says

William F Brown gets the combination of fast paced action, danger, humour and romance just right in The Undertaker. Peter Talbott finds himself embroiled in a murderous conspiracy when he investigates a suspicious obituary that names he and his late wife as the unfortunate deceased buried in Ohio. What begins as a personal crusade to protect his wife's name spirals into a cat and mouse chase across the country when Peter discovers the shady links between a lawyer, town Sheriff, funeral home and medical clinic. The only way to save his own life is to prove that Tinkerton and his associates, which include the mob, have been murdering and burying citizens under fake names in Columbus. On the run, the way he inadvertently involves Sandy, a victims ex wife, in his escapade and receives a surprising assistance from a gold chain wearing mob assassin. With no real idea whom they can trust, Peter and Sandy can only hope that someone can help before they end up in lonely graves under a strangers tombstone.

The Undertaker is a well plotted thriller that involves political intrigue, organised crime and multiple murders. Almost from the beginning the story races ahead at break neck speed as the protagonists are chased across America by some very determined villains. I really enjoyed the action but what made this so readable for me was the author's sense of humour that he infuses his characters with.

Peter Talbott isn't a traditional action hero - he is a computer geek who has spent the better part of the three years since his wife's death from cancer, empty and alone. His bitterness leads him to take chances when

most people would simply cut and run. Despite the physical nature of the novel, it's Peter's smarts more than his brawn that propels him out of the situations he finds himself in. He is a cavalier rather than brave but also quick thinking and resourceful.

Sandy is similar which is why the two make a good pair. Their banter is fun and the chemistry between the two a nice touch. I especially enjoyed that of the leads, Sandy, with a black belt in karate, is the one who was the more physically capable of the two.

The villains are suitably sociopathic - power hungry, corrupt officials and mobsters. The author successfully creates believable motivations and understandable pathos. Brown keeps the tension high by ensuring his characters are never sure who is on what side. I really enjoyed Gino who is both villain and friend.

I only had two minor complaints about the story. The first is the Prologue where the tenses aren't quite right, confusing me momentarily. The second involves Peter's search at the library where a computer whiz doesn't once use a computer for information on what he is looking for. Neither issues were enough to quash my enjoyment of the novel but they stood out to me.

This book is another example of independently published writing that deserves an audience. The Undertaker is an entertaining and exciting action thriller that I really enjoyed.

Wendy Hines says

Peter Talbot is a geek who is just going through the motions of life and has been for the past year since his wife Terri died from cancer. So he is stunned when one evening leaving for work, a large man slides into the passenger side of his vehicle and shows Peter two obituaries from the paper, his and his wife's.

The obituary states they were killed in a car accident in Ohio and the funeral is the next day. The man in the passenger seat, Gino Parino, urges Peter to forget about his visit, it is a misunderstanding. But Peter can't tolerate the idea of someone beseeching Terri's memory, so he calls into work and drives to Ohio.

No one attends the funeral, except Gino, who urges Peter to go back home and forget about it. He doesn't want Peter to get involved or to get hurt. But Peter can't leave it alone and begins to question the proprietor of Greene Funeral Home, who tells Peter that people have other people's names all the time and it is purely coincidence. Peter knows better, the details in the obit were his and Terri's lives and he knows they aren't in the cheap pine boxes sitting in the chapel.

Peter begins to feel alive again - anger and wanting to get to the bottom of the situation. He begins to investigate - his search leads him to obituaries similar to his and Terri's - nine in the past year. All of them involve the Varner Clinic, Greene Funeral Home, Oak Hill Cemetery and the honorable Ralph Tinkerton, esquire as executor.

He questions them, as well as the local sheriff. They all tell him a different story and the only words that seem to get a rise out of all of them is "Jimmy 'the Stump' Santorini, a mafia boss of eastern New Jersey. Peter is determined to put a stop to the scam or whatever it is that is happening. His investigation takes him to several states and to a woman named Sandy. But can he solve the case before he ends up dead for real this time?

The Undertaker is a thoroughly executed thriller that quickly captured my attention. Author Bill Brown's writing reminded me much of one of my favorite suspense writers, Brian Freeman. The characters are realistic set against a modern day world with believable situations. Quick-paced and solid, I would recommend The Undertaker to any suspense fan! I can't wait to read more from this very talented author!!

Debra Martin says

Peter Talbott is a systems engineer living in Boston. He is still grieving over his wife, Terri, who died a year ago of cancer. When a hit man surprises him in his car and shows him an obituary for both he and Terri, his anger spins out of control. How dare anyone disrespect the memory of his wife, never mind the fact, that he isn't dead. He goes to Columbus, Ohio to attend the bogus funeral and finds himself in the middle of a sinister plot involving an undertaker, the local sheriff and a high-powered lawyer. Instead of walking away and returning to his ho-hum life in Boston, Peter keeps digging around for more information. The more he digs, the more he uncovers and now his life is truly in danger. He races to piece the clues together and uncover the truth. If he doesn't do it fast, he'll be the next victim on the embalming table.

This is a fast-paced, action-packed story that doesn't let you catch your breath even for a moment. Just when you think the main character is safe, the author throws something else into the mix and the race is on again. The characters are well fleshed out and the descriptions of the cities make you feel like you're actually there running through the streets with Peter and his romantic interest, Sandy. I especially liked the Boston scenes although there isn't any elevated freeway anymore near the North End.

I read this book in 2 sittings. It could be excellent with the eyes of a good editor. I found a fair number of typos and felt like the dialogue could be crisper in some parts, especially the middle of the book. Some of the dialogue bogs down the action too much. I also thought that the petite 5' tall Sandy was a little unbelievable taking down the bad guys with her karate kicks. All in all though, this was a very good page-turner. If you like a lot of action, you'll definitely enjoy this book. Recommended.

Emily says

This story was delicious. Snarky and wired, cynical and funny, it was everything a good mob thriller should be and more. For me as a reader, a thriller needs to be able to make me forget that the violence is actually violence and that crappy people are just that and make me want to see how all the elements come together; The Undertaker certainly delivered on that promise.

Pete Talbott has the unfortunate problem of people never seeming to grasp that he's not dead. He was falsely reported as dead in a car crash in Mexico, and just when that was sorted out, he was reported as dead again, this time in a hospital in Ohio. Still reeling a year after his wife truly did die of cancer and with nothing else really keeping him going, he travels from Boston (where he now works) to Ohio to figure out what is going on and why this problem keeps popping up.

In terms of immediate well-being, it would have been much better for Peter to just go home and eat a coffee cake and take a nap. If he hadn't started down that road and started asking questions that made a lot of very powerful people very uncomfortable and sort of itchy, he never would have had about a million problems. He also never would have met Sandy; some might argue that the coffee cake was still a better option, and then Sandy would kick them.

Turns out there's something seriously rotten in the state of Ohio, as Peter Talbott is not the first person to die there under the circumstances set out in his (second, and also incorrect) obituary. Peter can't let sleeping dogs lie and goes to the library to do some research, and from asking the right questions he's able to piece together a rough sketch of the situation fairly quickly.

This quickly gets him into trouble with people who'd rather their extracurricular activities remain under the radar and sends him on the lam (I always wanted to write that!) and leads him to Chicago, where he hopes to gather more evidence to prove exactly what he thinks is going on.

That's where Sandy enters the picture. Sandy is one of my favorite characters in the story. She's funny, loyal, a total smartass, and not afraid to alternately take care of people or kick their teeth in, depending on what the situation requires. Sandy brings an emotional depth and hint of romance to a story that would have been adventurous but a whole lot of running around otherwise. Depth is good! Seeing these two hurting people overcome adversity (both internal and external) and figure out what they really wanted out of life was excellent. The ending was better than I could have hoped for, too. Just saying.

There is plenty of adventure to be had as we we careen towards the ending of this story; the author is firmly in command of the direction of the and nothing is left to chance. Every detail is important, and I caught myself doing the reader fist pump when I correctly figured out how a piece of the story fit into the bigger picture. I was sucked in as a reader and wasn't released until the story was over.

Elizabeth of Silver's Reviews says

Mr. Brown's book is an e-pub on Kindle, Sony, Nook, IBook, and all the others.

Two obituaries, two funerals....one stating he died in Mexico the other stating he and his wife died in Columbus, Ohio....but how could that be....Peter Emerson Talbot was alive and reading the obituary, and he had attended the funeral in Ohio. Attending this funeral sure ended up with a lot of trouble for Peter and also a lot of information that could put a number of folks behind bars. Something was pretty fishy about all of this.

The real Peter stayed in Columbus after "his" funeral and decided to check out obituaries for the past few months to see who had died and if there were similarities in deaths. He found quite a few obituaries of couples who died in unusual circumstances and who had no surviving relatives, but they all had the same funeral director and same attorney. Peter also found a lot of suspicious activity going on and decided to check out the offices of an attorney and a doctor who were involved....bad move, Peter.

Peter knew he got himself into more than he could handle and had to get out of town and mighty quickly, but how? He had no money, no clothes, and no car....they stole everything. He had some ideas, though. He had to bring these guys who were true criminals posing as honest citizens down.

Trying to be an honest citizen when the other citizens were not definitely wasn't a wise choice for Peter.

Peter made even more unwise choices, but he also made some right ones. Peter was witty, clever, and a character you will love.

Don't miss reading this book...it has a little bit of everything.....frightening scenes, clever twists and turns, love, and humor. I found myself laughing out loud, crying, and also being afraid for the characters.

The book was action-packed and fun despite the tense moments.

I am guessing the author is a fun guy with lots of adventures of his own. I truly enjoyed the book. 5/5

Yvonne says

Computer programmer, Peter Talbott, is still grieving after the death of his beloved wife, Terri. Lonely, he buries himself in his work until one day he finds himself held at gunpoint by Gino Parini. Parini not only shoves a gun in his face, but he also shoves an obituary in his face. The problem? The obituary is Pete's, but how could that be when he is very much alive? Then, Parini shows him Terri's obituary, except this is not her original one. Of course Pete is confused. The obituaries feature their exact details, so it's not as if it was someone else with the same name. The only difference is Pete isn't dead and Terri didn't die in an accident as the obit claims.

Pete is desperate to find out what is happening and why they are using his late wife this way. He begins an investigation which leads him across the globe from California to Ohio to Chicago to New York to Boston. He stumbles upon a plot so devious, he can't even believe it's real. He doesn't know who to trust but someone is killing people and burying them under other people's names. Pete can't figure out why someone would do something so horrifying.

Talbott comes face to face with some of the most evil villains – corrupt sheriffs, sneaky politicians, nefarious lawyers and deadly mobsters. As he tries to discover who else has been wronged in this way, he meets up with Sandy. Her former husband was a victim as well, but now Sandy's life is in danger, too. Can Pete save her? Can he save himself?

This book never rests and it never lets the reader rest. It's a constant struggle to stop the bad guys from killing them or hurting anyone else. Talk about a heart-racing book, this one is it! It's the type of book you just can't put down, you want to keep going until the very end. The characters are crafted perfectly and the storyline keeps flowing from page to page. Fast-paced doesn't even begin to describe it. Great drama, great adventure, great characters, and a great plot, what more do you need?

FTC Disclosure: The author provided me with a copy of this book to review. This did not influence my thoughts and opinions in any way. All opinions expressed are my own.

The Sunday Book Review says

If you like suspense, action and are into conspiracy theories, I recommend this book.

The story line was the first thing to grab me. Here is a man who lost his wife and everything he stood for and now someone is not only using his name but his dead wife's name to bury mysterious people. Not once, but several times! Having nothing else to lose, Pete travels around trying to find out not only who is doing this but why, while trying to get killed for nosing around.

The main character here, Pete, is likable. A bit dense sometimes, I end up rooting for him and worrying for him when he continues to put himself in danger with questionable men. I have to admire his persistence at finding out what people are getting out of this whole plot, yet at the same time I want to scream at him that he is way over his head and to just walk away.

William Brown did an excellent job in pulling me in and keeping my attention throughout the book. There wasn't a rest in the plot and more importantly, no down times. It was constant action and suspense.

Kathy Martin says

This was a taut, action-packed thriller that grabbed me from the first page and didn't let me go until the Epilogue. This is the story of an ordinary man who is dragged into a situation that he doesn't understand and who outsmarts the variety of villains.

Pete Talbott is just drifting through life after a series of personal blows. He loses his beloved wife after a long fight with cancer and then he loses his job due to downsizing and outsourcing. He moves from California to Boston to work with his brother-in-law at his software company. But one day, Gino Parani drops into his office, shoves a .45 automatic in his face, and makes him read his own obituary. It seems that he just died in Columbus, Ohio and was buried there. That was bad enough but the obituary also said that his wife Terri had died in the same accident. Pete is massively upset because this disturbs the memory of wife and he feels that the only thing he has to live for is her memory.

Going to a funeral in Columbus starts off a chain of events that has him targeted for death by two crime families and a rogue division of the FBI. There are lots of chase scenes and near death experiences as he tries to figure out what is going on.

Along the way, after he has run to Chicago, he meets Sandy Kasmarek who is the former wife of another of the men who had their identity stolen in this complex scheme. She, too, has faced a lot of difficulties since her ex-husband's death but she isn't grieving. She hated the skirt-chasing loser but had to be the one to settle his estate and assume his debts. She is quirky, funny, smart, and a karate expert. Pete first feels that he is betraying Terri when he starts to have feeling for Sandy. Sandy and Pete travel together on the run from the villains and both learn to rely on each other's strengths and come to love and trust each other.

This was an excellent thriller. I recommend it to those who enjoy political thrillers with lots of action and some romance too.

L.A. says

Article first published as Book Review: The Undertaker by William F. Brown on Blogcritics.

Using the names of others long dead to hide insidious crimes seems like an odd way to do business. The obituary Peter Talbot sees of his own and his wife's death in a Columbus Ohio newspaper is unbelievable. Not only is he not dead, but his loving wife actually did precede him in death, not in an auto accident as listed, but of cancer. Much of the information was correct but neither he nor his wife had ever been in Ohio. What is happening?

In The Undertaker by William F. Brown, we meet a remarkable man in Peter Talbot. His is a UCLA

graduate, was a lieutenant in the army and currently an aeronautical engineer with Symbiotic Software systems. Finding a strange man in his car, asking who he is and why he has the name of the dead man in the paper, make him understandably upset. The 45-caliber weapon in his face does not persuade him anymore than the obituary, yet when the man who introduces himself as Gino Perini exits his vehicle with a warning to leave it alone, he is anything but thrilled.

To him it is a smirch on his wife's name and he will not allow anyone to make a mockery of her memory. The obituary seems to belittle her life and he decides he will find out what is happening and have it retracted. As Peter begins his research, he finds a pattern of deaths set up much like that of his own.

Each obituary lists the same mortuary, the same attorney, and each of those who perished had no next of kin. The individuals involved are well respected and highly placed individuals, with backgrounds above reproach and in some cases part of the government. Part of the plot involves the mob, and as Peter comes forward with his objections and information, he is suddenly in the spotlight. Unaware of what he has begun, he is now on the run for his life. In researching one of the other alleged fatalities, he finds an old automobile, but one that holds a secret cache, one that others are willing to kill for. Those secrets as well as his smart mouth are about to get him killed. Can he trade those secrets for his safety?

While looking for answers he meets Sandy, one of the murdered victim's ex-wife. Initially she turns him in to those looking for him, not realizing they are not who they say they are. However once they know who she is, she must now work together with Peter on a solution to get the secret to safety. They are both in peril. This group known as Zero Defects will allow no one to stop them, all in the name of national security.

Ralph Tinkerton is the brains behind this bizarre murder ritual, and he will stop at nothing to plug the leaks. When Peter finds his friends dead, he decides he will do what it takes to get justice. Can he turn the tables on this group of killers before he or anyone else is killed? This secret is a high stakes game of cat and mouse, and the chases just keeps going on. Who will they turn to for help?

Peter is an angry man trying to get through life after the death of his wife. He holds her memory dear and feels that whoever took their identity to hide a murder, has besmirched her name, which he finds unforgivable. She had been the best part of him and he would not rest until he finds out what is happening. He is smart (rocket scientist) and takes good care of himself. He has also been very lucky and able to get out of several life threatening situations. However the goons following him will not give up, and he continues to try to find a solution.

Gino Perini comes and goes throughout the story. He is muscle for the mob, and the man who first got Peter involved in this charade. He is there in the wings just waiting for the right time to make his mark.

Sandy is a spitfire, with many surprises up her sleeve. After initially creating a problem for Peter by contacting the bad guys, she is now helping him try to control the damage. She is no longer safe, she knows too much. However, she has moves and tricks you cannot imagine. She is amazing and full of sparks that keep you entertained.

Brown does an amazing job of creating characters who are real. The humor is incredible, and the murders most foul. The characters have flaws that make them very relatable, and the story itself is quite wicked and very believable.

I would recommend this book for those who love a thriller, with action and suspense. If you enjoy humor and smart thinking you will enjoy the repartee, it is lightning fast and exciting. This would be a great book for a book club; it is full of discussion items. While the humor keeps it a bit light, make no mistake, these killers are formidable and without merit. The coldness of their methods will give you chills long into the evening.

This book was received as a free download from the author. All opinions are my own based off my reading and understanding of the material.

Vivian says

THE UNDERTAKER by William F. Brown has been classified as a "fast-paced thriller" and as a "cliffhanger." Yes, these descriptions are accurate but they don't paint the entire picture. THE UNDERTAKER is a cliffhanger and a fast-paced thriller that incorporates self-deprecating and irreverent humor for a laugh-out loud enjoyable read.

Peter Talbott was erroneously classified as dead a few years ago when his car was stolen and he was being "held" in a Mexican jail. At the time Pete was in mourning for his wife. After returning to the US and clearing up the error he loses his job. His brother-in-law Doug saves him by offering him a job in Massachusetts. Pete packs his bags, leaves California behind and drives to Massachusetts. His life is basically work and more work until the day he is handed an Ohio obituary notice that he has died once again, alongside his already deceased wife. Well Pete knows that it isn't possible for his wife to have died recently in a car accident when she died three years earlier from cancer. He does what any self-respecting person does, he drives to Ohio and attends his own funeral. He also uncovers a mess, possibly a government covert ops mess and/or a mafia mess but a mess nonetheless. Pete chases leads to Chicago and encounters Sandy Kasmarek, a photographer and kick-ass woman. Sandy and Pete quickly bond over the car chases and flying bullets.

THE UNDERTAKER is a quick read that captures the attention from the very beginning. Pete and Sandy may be an odd couple but their quirkiness and humor in the face of danger are what made this such an enjoyable read for me. If you're looking for a well-written, quick read that melds humor and thrills, then you need to add THE UNDERTAKER to your reading list.

Nancy says

Peter Talbott buried his wife in LA following her death from cancer; he assumed that was it for married life and Terri, whom he loved more than anything. Imagine his surprise when he is handed his OWN obituary, along with that of his wife in Columbus, OH many months after the real event. Coincidence? Probably not. Peter doesn't mind so much being "dead" but by putting his wife's name in the paper as well sets him off. Working for your brother-in-law has perks – like taking time off to drive from Waltham, Mass to Columbus to see what the hell is going on. He packs up his Bronco and off he goes to save the day. Peter has opened up something best left closed, it seems. He has mob gunmen after him, employees of the funeral home, a clinic and other businesses after him and no, they don't want to give him gift coupons. Turns out several people have died at the clinic, been entombed by the mortuary and had their monetary affairs dealt with by a Ralph Tinkerton, Esq. (aka "The Undertaker"). Mob bodies, mob hitmen, a loony lady named Sandy, one hitman with good intentions (I think?) make up a tale that you just can't pass up. The Undertaker may have you dying from laughter by the time it ends.

Martha Cheves says

The Undertaker – Review by Martha A. Cheves, Author of Stir, Laugh, Repeat and Think With Your Taste Buds Dessert

TALBOTT, PETER EMERSON, AGE 33, OF Columbus, died Sunday at Varner Clinic following a tragic automobile accident. President and founder of Center Financial Advisors of Columbus. Formerly of Los Angeles, a 1999 graduate of UCLA and a lieutenant, US Army Transportation Corps. By authority of Ralph Tinkerton, Executor (See also TALBOTT, THERESA JUNE, wife, accompanying). Funeral services for both at 2:00 PM tomorrow, Greene Funeral Home, 255 E. Larkin, Peterborough, Ohio. Internment, Oak Hill Cemetery, following.

‘That was me. I was Talbott, Peterson Emerson, 33 years old, and formerly from Los Angeles. I had graduated from UCLA and I had been a lieutenant in the Army. Coincidence? I didn’t think so. There was only one of me and I didn’t die in the Varner Clinic or anywhere else last Sunday. I was an aeronautical software engineer and I had never been to Columbus or heard of Center Financial Advisors much less been its President. Still, when you’re looking into a set of hard, dark eyes and a .45 automatic, it’s hard to argue the fine points.’

According to the papers, Pete Talbott was dead. He and his wife had both died in a car accident. But...Pete was very much alive and living in Boston. His death wouldn’t have bothered him that much if whoever was responsible for this notice hadn’t brought his wife Terri into the picture. Terri had died of cancer and this funeral notice was nothing but a lack of respect to her making him determined to get to the bottom of both notices. He would also have never learned of his own death had it not been for the big, burly man named Gino sitting next to him with a gun pointed at his head. He would also have never met Sandy whose husband had died a year before but apparently had just died again. Confusing? Imagine what they felt as they uncovered several deaths that had taken place at least twice.

Racing around the states, being chased by the very people who are supposed to protect them, Pete and Sandy find themselves being blamed for not only murders of innocent people but also those committed by the mob. As the puzzle starts to become clear, Pete and Sandy begin to understand why people are ‘dying’ twice. They also begin to understand who is behind this and why as they discover how high up the ladder the arm of ‘un’justice really reaches.

Have you ever read a book that keeps going and going and you see yourself running out of pages with no possibility of a ‘happy ever after’ ending? That is what I was facing with The Undertaker. As the pages ran out I could see no possible way for Pete and Sandy to escape cliff-hanger after cliffhanger. Could this be one of those books that simply don’t end with a smile. You’ll have to read The Undertaker and find out for yourself. I truly enjoyed sitting on the edge of my seat waiting for the ending.

Review Stir, Laugh, Repeat at Amazon.com Stir, Laugh, Repeat
