

Living Dead Girl
Elizabeth Scott
Simon Pulse, 2008

Reviews

- [Kirkus Reviews](#) (“Living Dead Girl”, 24 June 2010): “Scott, best known for such chick-lit pleasers as Bloom (2008), breaks the mold with this harrowing tale of abuse leavened only by lyric writing à la Adam Rapp (33 Snowfish, 2003, etc.). When Alice was ten, Ray kidnapped her; five years later, Alice wishes only to escape by dying, as the last Alice did. But her freedom comes at a price—a new girl for Ray. Bit by bit, Alice reveals the depths of psychological and physical terror that hold her captive. Her voice is convincingly naïve yet prematurely aged; vivid but never graphic, details of the sexual abuse perfectly capture the way in which she has normalized her situation while still recognizing the truth. Ray is a complex abuser, perhaps a bit too psychotic but terrifying nevertheless; he himself was abused, and the logic of how his own past has shaped his present and his treatment of Alice never falters. Choosing Ray’s next victim does not provide a re-entry into empathy, a bold but believable choice. Scott provides neither easy answers nor a happy resolution, although the ending provides a grim sense of release. (Fiction. 16 & up)”
- [Booklist](#) (“Living Dead Girl”, 15 October 2010): “Scott gives the phrase emotionally wrenching a whole new meaning in this searing book.” (log in to view review)
- [Publishers Weekly](#) (“Living Dead Girl”, 8 September 2008): “Scott’s prose is spare and damning, relying on suggestive details and their impact on Alice to convey the unimaginable violence she repeatedly experiences. Disturbing but fascinating, the book exerts an inescapable grip on readers—like Alice, they have virtually no choice but to continue until the conclusion sets them free. Ages 16–up. (Sept.)”

Awards

- [American Library Association “Best Books for Young Adults”](#), 2009

Lists

- [All About Adolescent Literacy: Reading Discussion Guides “Living Dead Girl”](#)
- [International Reading Association: Young Adults’ Choices for 2010](#), 2010
- [Amelia Bloomer Project List: Middle Readers Fiction](#), 2009
- [YALSA 2009 Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers](#), 2009
- [YALSA 2009 Best Books for Young Adults](#), 2009
- [Booklist’s 50 Best YA Books of All Time](#), 2017

Response to challenges

- [Challenge Committee Notes from Rockwood School District](#): “She called it a tall tale- it is fiction, but it happens. It happens all the time and shielding children from it

is not the answer. These issues are on the news. The author does a nice job opening up on these topics. The challenger does not have a high schooler yet. What if they know someone who is going through this and they can help a friend out. Maybe not as dark as this, but something similar. Maybe experiencing a less horrific situation. Because something is difficult to read, doesn't mean we have to remove it." BOOK WILL REMAIN IN ROCKWOOD LIBRARIES

- **[A Reader's Ramblings](#)**: "I recently discovered Scott when I came across her book *Something, Maybe*. So when I saw her book *Living Dead Girl* on this years challenged book list I knew that I wanted to read it. I have very mixed feeling about this book. On the one hand it's horrifying and heartbreaking. It was hard for me to read, because it is a hard topic to think about. That is the power in Scott's writing. The book makes you squirm because you know it's right. That this happens to some people, that you might have seen them on the street, that you might have looked away. Not only was Alice taken and kept, but she encounters people everyday who should have stepped in, but didn't. Like I said, horrifying. That being said, it's a book that should absolutely be read. It reminds us to keep our eyes open to those around us. To really look and to give ourselves permission to help if we think something is wrong. If you don't, for whatever reason, there could be an Alice who is suffering. I think this book is magnificent and if you haven't read it, head to the library, this one is on the must-read list."