



Vivian Divine Is Dead

Lauren Sabel

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Filled with surprising twists and poignant moments, Lauren Sabel brings a fresh new voice to contemporary fiction with Vivian Divine Is Dead. Creepy, clever, funny, and romantic.

When a death threat arrives with teen celebrity Vivian Divine's fan mail, Vivian has no choice but to go on the run to Mexico. She soon discovers, though, that her Oscar-nominated performance killing villains on-screen did nothing to prepare her for escaping a madman in real life. Some people say he's a hero, others tremble in his presence, but one thing is clear: he won't stop until Vivian is in his grasp. Why didn't she pay more attention during those judo lessons for her role in *Zombie Killer*?

Vivian finds an ally in the mysterious and charming Nick. He is everything Hollywood boys are not—genuine, kind, and determined to see Vivian for who she really is. But even he seems like he can't be trusted—what could he be hiding?

Beat up, hungry, and more confused than ever about who she's running from, Vivian is living in a real-life blockbuster horror flick. But there's no option to yell "cut" like there is on set...

Lauren Sabel's *Vivian Divine Is Dead* is a creepy, witty, fast-paced adventure about family, fame, and having the courage to save yourself.

Vivian Divine Is Dead Details

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From Reader Review Vivian Divine Is Dead for online ebook

Dark Faerie Tales says

Review courtesy of Dark Faerie Tales

Quick & Dirty: Vivian Divine is Dead is a gripping masterpiece with a creepy, exciting premise.

Opening Sentence: My name is Vivian Divine.

The Review:

Vivian Divine is a child star. Her mother, Pearl Divine, was named World's Sexiest Woman multiple times and her father is one of the most successful directors in Hollywood. Her life should be perfect, but it's spiraled out of control. Her boyfriend Pierre was caught by the paparazzi kissing her best friend. Her mother was murdered and her father tried to kill himself, and would have if Vivian hadn't stopped him in time. And Vivian just got a note, the same note that her mother got days before she was murdered, that tells her of her impending death. Now Vivian must go on the run, trying to save herself from whatever had got her mother.

Vivian Divine is a fantastic character. She's like any other teenager, struggling with self-confidence while having to deal with what might be her death. Her emotions are described so wonderfully. Throughout the book, she finds strength in herself, and realizes that she isn't as weak as she seemed. And then there is Nick — the love interest, who by the way, I thought was perfect. This character is lovable and not too perfect, as some authors make the mistake of doing to their characters.

Right from the get go, we are immersed into Vivian's life and hooked almost immediately. I was so glued to the pages it was almost painful to shut off the light, since it was pretty late. It doesn't take long to really understand Vivian and sympathize with her. She has such a unique personality and yet is like any other adolescent on the face of the earth. There aren't many calm moments in this book, but when there is, it almost makes the peaceful moment more peaceful because of the chaos that usually occupies the chapters.

If I could say one downside of Vivian Divine is Dead it would have to be the mystery aspect. It was sometimes confusing to connect the dots and piece it together, but Vivian would already completely understand and be moving on. I wish that sometimes she had clarified. It wasn't that bad, but I certainly was confused a few times, make no mistake. It's a good thing the story was so enthralling that I didn't care too much! Sadly, though, that knocked it down one star to the still-killer four star rating.

Vivian Divine is Dead is an exciting thrill ride through the life of one child star just trying to stay alive. It has betrayal, mystery, and love on every other page, seamlessly threading together into an amazing novel. If you don't love this than I would be very surprised. Plus, you get to see more into the Mexican culture, which is lots of fun. Just a note: Spanish is used in this book, but if you have a basic understanding (cómo, bueno, etc.) than you should be good. Oftentimes it is translated but sometimes it isn't — keep that in mind. Otherwise, make sure to pick this up as soon as possible!

Notable Scene:

"We need to talk to you," Sparrow says, pushing through the reporters. Her whiny voice reminds me of the nights we used to stay up with Mar, listening to stories about first kisses and true love. Since Sparrow went

to an all-girls school and I was homeschooled by a private tutor neither of us knew much about boys, until I started dating Pierre. Before she stole him from me. "It was a mistake."

"Kissing my boyfriend was a mistake?" I shriek so loudly the reporters take a step back before lunging forward again. Get is together. Never lose your temper in front of a camera. I can see the headlines: Teen Star Slaps Former Best Friend in Fit of Rage. Career Plunges.

FTC Advisory: Katherine Tegen Books/HarperCollins provided me with a copy of *Vivian Divine is Dead*. No goody bags, sponsorships, "material connections," or bribes were exchanged for my review.

Olivia says

Awesome book for young adults!! It captures the essence of some real life issues teens go through and how they deal with them so it was very easy to relate to the characters and really feel like I was in the story with them. It was such a fast read because it was such a page turner! I kept wanting to know what happened next and couldn't seem to put the book down. Will definitely be recommending this to all of my friends as a must read! Will love to read more from this author in the future!!

Khanh, first of her name, mother of bunnies says

A line pops into my head, one I repeated dozens of times to get the right balance of hope and desperation that the Zombie Killer is known for. All that stands between me and the end of the world...is a bobby pin.

I have two, motherfuckers.

Vaya con dios, mi amigo.

No, that's not a quote from the book. It's my advice to you, it means "go with god, my friend," and you're going to need that advice should you insist upon reading this book.

It's one of those **so-bad-it's-almost-good** books.

It's insta-love, and that's pretty much it. We have omg HE'S SUCH AN ASSHOLE and YOU ARE A FUCKING MORONIC PRINCESS and then 5 seconds later I LOVE HIM. What the fuck.

Ok, so here's kind of a spoiler, but not really. The book is entitled *Vivian Divine is Dead*. I know that this is huge news. Shocking. Absolutely flabbergasting, jaw-dropping, and all of that good shit but **Vivian Divine doesn't die**.

I wish she had. The book might have been more interesting otherwise.

The Summary:

*I try not to think about the day Pierre and I first fell in love. It was a year ago, when we were wrapping up **Zombie Killer**, my blockbuster about an orphan who saves the human race.*

Sure, **Vivian Divine** may be a famous Hollywood movie star, Oscar-nominated by age 16, with a famous director father and the 3rd most beautiful (and very dead) mother (as chosen by *Time* magazine), but **as far as she's concerned, everything in her life has been about the movie *Zombie Killer*, in which she has acted.** Remember that movie.

But no really, her life kind of sucks right now because:

1. Mommy is dead, from MYSTERIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES
2. Daddy tried to kill himself from ZE PAIN
3. Her boyfriend, Pierre, just cheated on her with her much skinner best friend, Sparrow (not much of a best friend anymore!). Her heart is totally, irretrievably broken.

Pierre was the only one who could make me feel better, and the only boy who ever whispered, This is forever.

Oh yeah, and um.

4. Someone's sending her death threats. Hence the title of the book. Vivian Divine really, really thinks she's going to die.

And apparently, shit, it's true! People are trying to kill her! What's the poor Vivian Divine to do? **She's never attended school, she's never done a single fucking thing for herself.**

I hate asking for help. Luckily, I never have to. A team of specialists is paid to take care of my every need, to anticipate what I might want and have it prepared ahead of time. If they don't have the right brand of mango lip balm ready for me after a shoot, they're done.

So Vivian Divine is **totally fucked when her only way of escaping CERTAIN DOOM is to escape to Mexico!**

Ay, *caramba!* (I know there's supposed to be another exclamation mark before the Ay, but I'm too tired to look it up in Character Map, ok?)

So with a mysterious, awesome new disguise---you know how when you go incognito, you're supposed to look **plain and all that good shit so that you don't attract attention?**

I'm normally cute: big blue eyes, pouty lips, long copper curls. But this is gorgeous. My short black hair falls straight and glossy as a waterfall; my eyes are melting chocolate.

Someone forgot to tell Vivian Divine.

But it's ok, because the instant she meets trouble...**Vivian Divine falls into insta-love.**

Standing in front of me is the sexiest guy I've ever seen. His eyes are a rugged green, his black hair shaggy on his shoulders. His cargo pants hang off his slim hips, and a white undershirt clings to his chest. My personal trainer would kill for his body.

"Hola." I'm completely tongue-tied.

Nick is instantly contemptuous of her. This spoiled little princess who is clearly out of her league in the wilds of México. Such a fool. What could this toughened, experienced, battle-weary boy ever see in Hollywood Royalty Vivian Divine?

"You're a spoiled brat. You have no problems," Nick says. "You think your life's so tough, but your rich mommy and daddy take care of everything for you." He snatches my orange soda from my hand, takes the last sip, and tosses it into the trash. "You don't know what real pain is."

Uh huh! **YOU TELL HER, NICK!** Don't let that prissy little princess worm her way into her heart. And true to his words, Nick holds steady **for all of 5 seconds.**

"When I met you on the bus, I thought you were just another rich American," he continues. "But you're not. You're...different."

OH, NO, NOT THE D WORD!!!!!!!

But the romance aside, THERE'S STILL PEOPLE TRYING TO KILL VIVIAN DIVINE. Even in Mexico! But it's all good, **Vivian Divine was in *Zombie Killer*, remember?** Her experience from *Zombie Killer* not only helps her **endure wearing contacts** when she's donning her disguise...

*[She] finds me a pair of brown contacts, which I'm used to wearing, thanks to my months of demon-red contacts in *Zombie Killer*.*

And helps her **tolerate hunger** during her days on the run in Mexico.

*I've never been this hungry before (except for all-night shoots for *Zombie Killer*).*

But it helps Vivian to **prove herself** to Nick when he's being an asshat to her.

*Anger races through me, and I remember the judo move I learned for the all-night shoot of *Zombie Killer*. I'll show you petty problems.*

And it helps her to **protect herself** against the BAD BAD GUYS. Vivian is trapped in a moving car? It's all good. She can jump out of the car if she needs to, thanks to her experience with *Zombie Killer*.

*I've done it before. I jumped out of a moving car for a stunt in *Zombie Killer*.*

If someone tries to attack her, it's all good, because **she's learned judo** on the set of *Zombie Killer*.

*What if someone jumps out and attacks me? What do I do? I try to recall the judo moves I learned for *Zombie Killer*.*

If she needs encouragement...**Vivian can just remember her mother's words of advice...for acting in *Zombie Killer*.**

I remember my mom telling me the day before she disappeared, when I was filming the fight scene for *Zombie Killer*. In that scene, when the zombies had me almost beaten, the *Zombie Killer* realized that sometimes not fighting is as powerful as fighting.

MEXICO JA JA JA: The Mexico portrayed in this book can best be described in one word: stupid. People can eat rodents if they need to. **There are fucking mariachi bands everywhere.** They eat tacos every meal of the day. They eat cricket tacos. They speak in complete English sentences...but certain words have to constantly be in Spanish. A guy can speak for an entire paragraph in fluent English, but when he refers to his mother, it's always *mi madre*. Come on, now.

Divinely Insipid:

Hiding from a killer with an armed stranger in Mexico? Am I crazy?

Yes, yes you are.

Vivian Divine is Hollywood Royalty, which is the synonym for **I have no common sense whatsoever outside of what I learned in movies.** She has spent her entire life as an actor. She has never been to school. Her parents are famous and wealthy. She has always been waited on hand and foot. She doesn't know what it's like to be in the real world, so when she gets immersed into it, into the wilds of Mexico, of all things, she drowns. It takes a **big, strong man to protect her, because Vivian Divine can't do jack shit.**

All her experience is gleaned from movies. She sees a fucking house. It looks like a house in [insert movie here] that she's been in. It happens repeatedly. **To Vivian, Mexico looks like a movie set.**

I've seen this church before, I realize, on the studio's back lot. It's the "Traditional Mafia Church" set.

To Vivian, everything that happens is the equivalent of a movie scene.

It feels like my story's ending. It's a story with a tragic ending, one where the heroine starves to death on the side of a mountain, all alone, with only a lamb to keep her company.

And I must be frank, there's no other way to put it. **Vivian Divine, by rights, should have died because she is a fucking moron who wouldn't last 1.5 seconds in downtown LA, much less Mexico.**

The Romance: For someone who falls into insta-love so quickly, **Vivian Divine can't forget about her ex-boyfriend, Pierre.**

His eyes seem to breathe me in, all of me, not just little useful pieces like Pierre's used to do. But maybe I'm just imagining it.

I expect Nick to look confused, like Pierre did when I told him, but he's nodding like he understands.

If Pierre was here, he'd pretend he knew how to do it, burn himself, and then make me start the fire.

It's the complete opposite of Pierre's bathroom, which is stuffed with expensive colognes and hair gel, but then again, Pierre has more beauty products than I do.

I know all about sleeping pills. Pierre takes them to get a few hours of sleep before his shoots so that he won't have bags under his eyes.

All this happens throughout the book. She is constantly thinking about Pierre and comparing/contrasting them. Enough already. And then not a few days passes before Vivian Divine realizes...

I see your soul, I want to say, but I bite my tongue, and hope he sees mine.

The **insta-love** is terrible. Nick hated her in the beginning, and then for no reason at all, they start to fall in love right after she tells him the equivalent of I'M NOT AS SHALLOW AS YOU THINK I AM, **without any proof, without any character development whatsoever**. And before you know it, this happens.

"Nobody knows," Nick says. "But when the locals look at them, they see angels."

"What do you see?"

"Something even better," Nick says, looking right at me.

God won't help you. Watch a *telenovela* instead.

Phil says

This book is AMAZING in so many different ways! It was fast paced and kept me turning the pages which I loved! The suspense and emotion between the two main characters kept me interested and feeling like I was actually there with them. There was also such a huge plot twist towards the end that just blew my mind!! I loved loved loved this book and can't wait to read more from this author!!

Nasty Lady MJ says

To see full review click on the below link:

My Blog

Did I ever mention I wanted to write soap operas...

I'm sure I did.

This book is what gives soaps a bad name. In fact, I don't think I've seen a soap opera that is this messed up since the network was purposely trying to cancel All My Children and they had Dixie die by tainted pancakes.

God, that was a horrible storyline.

Vivian Divine read like that era of daytime television that many people have tried to forget its existence. To be honest, I wasn't planning on giving this book such a low rating, but the last act and its borderline offensive tone kept me from giving it a passable rating.

Yeah, based on the summary I should've known what I was getting into. But I expected the book to be zany fun. Instead of culturally offensive melodrama.

And yes, I said culturally offensive since its views on Mexico were...well, borderline offensive (to me at least). I'm from Texas and the Mexican culture plays a large part of the culture here. Unlike Vivian, I was well aware of what the day of the dead was. What basic Mexican cuisine is. And I can ask what is your name in Spanish without making an ass of myself.

Given that Southern California has a huge Mexican population too, you'd think Vivian wouldn't be so shocked with Mexican culture. But nope. Girl treats the country like it's a third world country. I think Sabel wanted sort of a Romancing the Stone effect which was why she had Vivian act like such an ignoramus, but here's the deal, Joan Wilder tried to absorb her culture to some degree and she had a right to be annoyed with Michael Douglass, he destroyed her expensive heels. Nick, he didn't destroy Vivian's shoes. Though he was a big little bit of a chauvinistic jerk.

Add the fact that their relationship is spurred by insta love....

You have a very annoyed reader.

And that's not even the worst thing about this book.

Emma says

4.5/5

REVIEW BY MOLLY 8:1

Vivian Divine is a child movie star, Her Mother, Pearl Divine is the best and sexiest movie star and her father is one of the most successful directors in Hollywood. Her life should be perfect, but it has spiraled out of control. Her Mother is murdered and her father tries to kill himself. A few days later Vivian gets the exact same note her mother did before she died, telling her she is next. Now Vivian must go on the run from whatever killed her mother.

Vivian, like any other teenager, struggles with self-confidence while having to deal with what might be her death. Her emotions are described wonderfully. Throughout the book she finds strength in herself and isn't as weak as she initially appears.

My favorite character has got to be Vivian as she is clever and thoughtful but also is a funny, making her a fun character to read about.

From the beginning I was immersed into Vivian's life and it was hard to put this book down. It doesn't take long to really understand Vivian and to empathize with her. She has a unique personality and yet is very down to earth. There aren't many calm moments in this book, but when there is, it makes it even more peaceful because of the chaos in the chapters.

The only downside and aspect I would change about this book would have to be the mystery within the plot, because it was sometimes hard to connect the dots and piece it together, but Vivian would already completely understand and move on, I just wished that she had clarified some of the points. It wasn't too bad but I certainly got confused at times.

Vivian Divine is a thrill ride following a child star who is trying to stay alive. It has betrayal, love and mystery on every page seamlessly threading together in an amazing novel.

I would defiantly read a book by this author again and I would recommend this book as 11+ as it has some bad language in it. I would give this book 4 ½ stars.

Laura Resau says

I loved this book! It's wildly original, unlike anything else out there in the YA world... which makes it especially delightful and worth reading. The writing is wonderful, and so is the voice... I would follow Vivian anywhere on her adventures (and hope to do so in a sequel!) The story is fast-paced and utterly intriguing, with romance and travel and adventure-- just what I look for in a novel. I was so impressed with this debut and look forward to reading Lauren Sabel's future books.

Rashika (is tired) says

****This review has also been posted on **The Social Potato***

***Vivian Divine is Dead* is so bad that it's almost comical.** I was craughing after finishing it. No joke. With its clichés and "coincidences", this book is like a big fat joke. This is something that would be a million times better on TV than on paper. When you write a book, it's important you close all the loop holes or at least attempt to. Unfortunately, that doesn't happen in this book. **What we have here instead are dramatic twists that are so predictable they just make you want to bang your head on a wall.**

Vivian Divine came from a perfect family. Her mother was voted Hollywood's most beautiful woman 3 times in a row. Her dad's one of the best directors in Hollywood and she herself was the youngest person to be nominated for an Oscar. She had a perfect boyfriend and a beautiful best friend (throw in some self-image issues, too, when she compares herself to her bff) but then her mother died (6 months before the start of the novel) and her father tried to commit suicide. They are trapped in a bubble of grief and no one can seem to catch a break. Her boyfriend cheats on her with her best friend (there's that trope), her life is in danger (ooh, another one) and now she must go on the run (YAY! Another one, too).

The one thing extremely off with the situation is how her bodyguard lets her go off on her own into the wild without any backup. NO ONE lets celebs go on the run on their own, never mind a celeb who's not even an adult (she is like 16!). I cannot believe Vivian never questioned that. She must have lived a VERY sheltered life.

Which is kind of evident from the fact that Vivian doesn't even understand the seriousness of the situation she is in. **The police may or may not be trying to hunt her down and she is on her way to another country to take refuge, yet she still manages to be self-important and goes around expecting everything to be handed to her on a silver platter.** Welcome to the real world, hon. But you know what? She is not 'that' bad; she realizes that the real world is completely different because like there are people who go to churches with enough gold to buy Beverly Hills but cannot afford to buy shoes. So, so sad. *sigh*

Vivian Divine also feels like people owe her. She commands people to help her, strangers that have no obligation to do so but should because she 'wants' them to. *shakes head*. She is a flip flop of a character. **I cannot actually decide what the author wants us to feel. Are we supposed to like her or are we supposed to be annoyed? Hell, what does Vivian even want herself?** I GOT NO IDEA because she cannot make her bloody mind.

The author tries to create a contrast between the environment and where our main character comes from, but the author takes it to the extreme, like to the extreme-extreme. It's kind of ridiculous.

Her family is surprisingly normal (like before everything went down the shitter) and I have no idea how I feel about that. On one hand it's a positive portrayal of families and doesn't follow the 'bad parents' stereotype (except her dad is overworked and doesn't give her enough time) but on the other hand, I feel like it just seems so weird that they are these famous Hollywood people and yet they appear extremely normal. This could be a result of my own bias but I definitely found the normalcy somewhat odd.

That wasn't the only thing that struck me as odd, though - the romance was off-the-charts weird. It was horrible. For the first day there seems to be hope that you might see a somewhat developed romance, but then the next day the L words are thought and it's just like a wtf moment. This book has a tendency to make you go:

Chloe would look pretty damn awesome as the cover of the book. **That also happened to be my reaction to the plot.** Plot? What plot? This is a soap opera with dramatic twists that can be seen coming from MILES away. It's not so much unpredictable as it is question mark inducing.

Vivan seems to arrive at the right places and strangers always seem willing to help her. She even compares this to how 'back home' people won't help an old lady cross the road and everyone seems to be nice here. Wait, wait, hold on a second; is this supposed to be the real world because where the fuck is the real world? COINCIDENCES LIKE THESE DON'T HAPPEN.

With all that said, the ending was actually pretty nice. I said that. Go ahead. Throw stuff at me (I have a tendency to do this). I was surprised by it but it did nothing to redeem the book. The book still sucked and I wished I could have my time back.

In all honesty, I really wouldn't recommend this book to anyone. **It's a waste of time and unless you're really bored and cannot find any books to read, skip this and read something that's been on your shelf since the dawn of time.**

Alex says

Fantastic read! This book grabbed my attention from the very beginning and kept it throughout the whole story. I was never bored with this book. It is very fast paced and it would be a great read for many teenage readers! I would recommend this book to any teenagers that are looking for a fast paced read. Great job!

Tara says

This novel is so impressive in so many ways that it's hard to know where to start writing about it. I could comment on the beautiful descriptive language that the author uses to evoke both Hollywood and rural Mexico. I could talk about the dark threats that hover over Vivian from the first page, keeping the tension thick chapter after chapter. Or I could focus on Vivian herself, and her journey from spoiled starlet to

determined, responsible young woman.

Put all of these elements together, though, and you have one of the most evocative and original YA debuts I've read in quite a while. Clear some space in your schedule before reading this one; you won't be able to put it down.

Jenny Goebel says

This book blew me away!

Bekka says

Couldn't finish. Continuity issues within the first fifteen pages and a lot of blahblahblahhhing on about a boy and true love and ugh. No.

Blythe says

more like Vivian Divine is Dead on Arrival amirite

(discussion review with Mel to come on the 6th)

Melanie says

Oh, what a book. Blythe and I did a discussion review on the blog.

What we didn't like:

- how forgetful it was (though that's sorta a good thing. LIKE WHO WOULD WANT TO REMEMBER SUCH A NIGHTMARISH NOVEL)
- how it tricked us and went downhill from chapter 1. The first chapter was actually decent
- how predictable and unsurprising the twists were.
- Vivian was a spoiled brat and was a total idiot. Whenever she was in trouble, someone was there to save her.
- apparently the love interest is the hottest guy she's ever seen. Because he's just so damn sexy, Vivian follows him around
- nothing is logical. Vivian's bodyguard ditches her to go on an adventure by herself even though she's a famous movie star.
- how Vivian is constantly comparing her ex with the new love interest. "It's like the author couldn't make Nick's merits stand on their own because they weren't enough to build a likable character or love interest around, so she compared his characteristics to an awful person's to make him look like some Jesus love interest."

Isamlq says

Vivian Divine is Dead. What an utter waste! It had me at the title but lost me somewhere after chapter two.

Too much like a telenovela, and this was despite the setting. That whole thing about doubt suspension being directly proportional to how entertaining something is still holds true, because things while unbelievable were also either frustrating or boring or some other negative participle. I just couldn't get with it!

Why?

Well, the lead for starters. Vivian Divine is not divine at all. There's a flatness to her that had me uninterested in what was going on (and there was a lot going on too). She is IT girl.. super star, power couple, Hollywood princess. You name it, she *was* it. Yet despite all that she read boring to me!

And frustrating too... because points of it had her all on top of her game then switch to some other bit and she's whiny and almost too-young in how she'd react. Hell, even the negatives to her weren't all that clear to me because I was simply uninterested in finding out.

The story too had me... feeling *something*. Just Think Telenovela: Handsome stranger meets beautiful girl with one of them on the run, both against a backdrop that starts all glitzy and Hollywood then shifts to something else totally. Then add mysterious threatening messages, death in recent past, publicized infidelity, and why not throw in absent parent syndrome. And let me not forget scary figures named Scars and then scarier boss-men who come out of nowhere. Simply? It's all too much.

Thank you, Edelweiss!
