*Angel of the Underground*, by David Andreas review by Mylene Moreira

Akashic Books

*Angel of the Underground*, by David Andreas, is a novel that focuses on the genres of horror and mystery, which Andreas grew fascinated with in the spring of 1989. Andreas, who received a Master of Fine Arts degree from LIU Southampton, currently teaches English at several colleges as well as runs his own website, [splattercritic.com](http://splattercritic.com), where he presents several thousand of his own reviews. *Angel of the Underground*, which is Andreas’s debut novel, follows the life of a religious foster child after she is thrown into a problematic home after finding herself in the center of a string of murders.

The main problem in the novel arises within the first pages of the book after the main character, Robin, a fifteen year old foster child, describes the three deaths that have occurred before the start of the novel, which consist of three foster kids that were found murdered and with their left eyes missing after they disappeared from the Hartman Catholic Group Home. Right away, this information, and the use of gory details, captivate the reader’s attention by allowing the tension in the story to be introduced, which is a tension that remains consistent throughout the novel as the murders increase, and which dramatically increases as an unanticipated culprit is discovered. This tension, which is one amongst the many tensions that are present in the novel, such as sickness, the confusion that surrounds puberty, and physical abuse, is one of the main literary elements that drives this work, and a tool that Andreas uses with great skill and consideration. Therefore, these tensions help establish tones that include but are not limited to devastation, fear, anxiety, love, and loss. As the main character navigates through the emotional trauma that accompanies loss, the confusion and affection that surrounds her love interest, the unease and anxiety that results from the physical abuse she endures, and the fear and panic that goes hand in hand with the murders, she is able to experience a range of emotions that guide the reader through a spectrum of tones. Additionally, the first person point of view that is used allows the reader to experience her thoughts and emotions firsthand, and get a clear idea as to how her character develops throughout the book. By giving the reader the opportunity to get close proximity to her thoughts, Andreas is able to successfully develop Robin from a scared and troubled character to a strong and dependent character that is outspoken and not afraid to face the culprit responsible for the murders. Furthermore, the character array that is present in the novel is able to directly impact Robin’s characterization, which is influenced by an abusive, angry older man, a warmhearted and attentive love interest, a spiteful and impulsive boy, and a motherly and loving caretaker. Overall, the literary elements used in the novel are able to work together tremendously well in order to provide the reader with a novel that is horrific and mysterious yet lighthearted and hopeful.

Overall, this book targets a wide range of readers, although it would best be enjoyed by those readers that seek out horror novels that include vivid imagery and detail, particularly when relating to death and the gore that often accompanies it. Additionally, this book would appeal to an audience that is captivated by mystery novels and who enjoy the subtle yet impactful clues that surround unsolved crimes and eventually lead to an unforeseen yet extremely well done conclusion. The dark twist and bittersweet ending to the novel, however, would appeal to anyone that enjoys a clever and memorable resolution.