



A Light in the Dark

Marla K. Benjamin

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One couple begins a Monday much like any other, but an arbitrary moment quickly sends them on a course of turmoil and uncertainty. Dez Parker, a former professional football star, and his fiancé, Sabrina, a divorced tax lawyer, have spent two years carefully carving out their future together. But nothing is ever guaranteed. When Sabrina disappears from her office parking lot, a city-wide search is launched. The case goes cold from the beginning and the only way for Dez to cope is to retreat into memories, relying heavily on his best friend, Alex, while he waits for a miracle. Three days later, Sabrina is found and in the days and months that follow, she and Dez attempt to navigate through a new normal of sleepless nights, mood swings, and relationship missteps. A uniquely crafted love story, layered with doubt and determination, A Light in the Dark is a daring and willful account of one couple's struggle to regain a future amid the fallout of three fateful days in October.

A Light in the Dark Details

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Author : Marla K. Benjamin

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From Reader Review A Light in the Dark for online ebook

Chris Montez says

Beautiful first novel by an Omaha writer. Hope she writes many more.

Molly says

If we could give half-stars the rating would be 2.5 stars. Remember when your English teacher always told you "Show me, don't tell me." This book is a lot of telling with (IMO) a lot of needless dialogue that does nothing to move the plot along. The details I really wanted, the ones that would have sucked me into the book, were missing. I found the topic intriguing, but the execution wasn't the best. This is a debut novel, so hopefully the author will learn from the experience and hit a homerun next time.

Claire says

I was a little hesitant to read this book, after reading the back cover copy. It seemed like a pretty dark story, and I'm flat out not a fan of dark stories. I like happy endings, unicorns and rainbows, you get the idea. But I DID read it, and I'm so very glad I did. This isn't really a story about the trauma that Sabrina goes through, or at least, not about the three days that she was held captive and tortured. That's merely the starting point. The real story here is the way back from such a horrific experience. It's the journey that Sabrina endures as she tries to fight her way back to her original self, and the effects on the rest of the characters who are forced to endure alongside her. It's about how one seemingly small decision can have gargantuan ramifications on not just your life, but the lives of everyone who cares about you. This story is told from alternating points of view, giving us insight into the turmoil of both lead characters. There isn't a single character in the entire story (with the exception of the kidnapper) that isn't likable, very human, and accessible to the reader. And frankly, if you don't love Dez, with his gentle soul and steadfast loyalty, I don't think there's much hope for you. Definitely a page-turner, and one that keeps the reader invested right to the very last sentence. Not your typical romance, but a story threaded with love and devotion in every possible aspect.

Jas says

Fear, sorrow, hope & rebirth. Just a wonderful book.

Angel Hatfield says

Sabrina sat at a small table waiting for her fiance Dez. Sabrina sat at The Coffeehouse. Sabrina practiced tax law and Dez owned a gym not far from The Coffeehouse just like the firm Sabrina worked for was not far from The Coffeehouse. It was The Coffeehouse where Sabrina and Dez had met nearly two and a half years ago. Dez had played professional football for twelve years before he retired. Sabrina tended to overstep her

bounds with Dez's thirteen year old daughter - Olivia. With Dez at her side she felt like she could do anything. It didn't take Dez long to find out Sabrina forgot things like losing her keys. Dan was Sabrina's best friend and fellow lawyer at the firm. Dan called Dez and asked if Sabrina had walked to Dez's for lunch as she had missed a meeting and her cell phone was on her desk. Then Dan ended the call. Then at 4:30 Dan called Dez back and Dan told Dez he hadn't seen Sabrina that she had not gone back to her desk. Dan said her bag and car were still there but not her purse. Then Dan said he was going to seek out security something wasn't right. Then Dan and Dez went to check Sabrina's car and saw her purse on the ground near the driver's side rear tire. Sabrina was held for three days tortured and raped. Sabrina now has to deal with PTSD and she is trying to find her way back to herself. Dez is by her side but also has a lot to get through. This was a good book and I enjoyed reading it. It was a good story about very dark emotional subjects. It definitely keeps your attention. It also pulls at your heartstrings. I was glad Sabrina made it out alive but felt horrible for she went through like I was actually there and Sabrina was a friend. Which is a good thing and I tip my hat to the author. It was a hard book to really enjoy but I am glad I read it. It did drag at times and repetitive at times but didn't really take away from the story. I was really glad this showed what Dez went through as I felt that was important also as he stood by Sabrina. I recommend this book.

Truuusje says

** I received an ARC from Netgalley in exchange for an honest review **

A Light in the Dark tells the story of Sabrina and Dez and how they cope after Sabrina gets brutally kidnapped and raped. I loved the concept and I think it could've resulted in a beautiful book. Unfortunately, the writing lets it down. There just isn't any depth to the emotions. In fact, it doesn't even read like there are emotions; it's more a detached description of people's day-to-day lives. And so much of it doesn't seem relevant at all to the story, which makes the book drag. I skimmed through certain parts and if I hadn't felt obligated to finish the book for this review, I probably would've given up at the 30% mark.

Another issue concerns the characters. They all seem very well-rounded, and that doesn't really improve matters. We read about Sabrina's struggle, but we don't feel it. She just moves from A to B to C in the coping process, until she's all happy again of course.

This book had so much potential but didn't deliver. Two stars.

Peggy says

I really enjoyed this book. You felt the characters emotions throughout the whole book. Very powerful.

Gina Melton says

Superior writing! Fell in love with the characters. Couldn't put this book down. I would give it 10 stars if that rating was available. I'm an avid reader and this book captivated me.

Lisa Jensen says

"Awful, horrendous things happen to unsuspecting people every day. There is just no way around it."

A Light in the Dark has likable and relatable main characters, Sabrina and her fiancé Dez. The story focuses on how their lives change following the kidnapping and rape of Sabrina. The story is told alternately from both Sabrina's and Dez's perspectives.

While a difficult subject to explore, the story is written in such a way that it is easy to read. I found both Sabrina's and Dez's stories to depict authentic struggles and emotions.

I appreciate that the author took into consideration that Sabrina was not the only one who was a victim of her assailant's actions. This story has given me a better appreciation for the struggle of survivors and their loved ones. The ending leaves me feeling hopeful.

Everydayreader1 says

An ordinary work day that began like any other--and suddenly the lives of Sabrina and Dez are changed forever by Sabrina's abduction. The aftermath of the abduction and the complexities of rebuilding their relationship make this a great love story of commitment to one another.

I fell in love with these characters. And their strength and determination made me want to keep reading to see them through the process of rebuilding their lives. The author did a great job with the subject matter of PTSD and its aftermath.

Jan says

What a wonderful book. Takes you through a roller coaster of emotions as Sabrina struggles to be the survivor of her ordeal. Amazingly well done.

Baba says

2 stars. DNF @51%

Due to personal reasons, I no longer review books that get less than three stars from me. In order that I can remember *why* a book didn't work out for me, I've decided to file them accordingly. Meaning, I had to extend my shelves substantially.

Quotes for your perusal

The trees behind them were full and green and the sky was an impossible blue, bringing out the blue of their eyes. It brought tears to her.

"Me either," Adam said with a sad smile and a tear hanging out of one eye.

He watched her slowly come out of her nightmare. He held her, trying to fight off the tears puddling in his eyes.

(...)

It was all his fault. He had turned off the light. Sabrina, please forgive me.

Aside from the tears *puddling* his eyes, it was just too melodramatic.

34 x you guys

"You guys talk, right?"

"I love you guys."

"Hi. You guys want to step over here for a sec?"

All quotes are taken from the pre-published copy and may be altered or omitted in the final copy

ARC courtesy of Boutique of Quality Books via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review

Maggie says

A Light in the Dark is the debut novel of Maria K. Benjamin and it has a compelling story with some problems along the way. The story is about a brutal kidnapping of a woman and her following struggle to regain a normal life along with her fiancé. It's told in the third person but it follows both points of view. The beginning is gripping and the author is very honest about the violence, the challenges and the emotions the characters have to endure, and it being a story of struggle and recovery, I believe the author made a bold choice to tell it. The fear and the sense of loss, the anger and the sense of disbelieving conveyed by the story makes you want to continue and be with these characters along the very difficult path ahead.

Nevertheless, the story becomes a little repetitive and the narrative becomes very slow after a certain point, not because the recovery is necessarily slow but because it loses itself in a kind of unnecessary feel-goodness. The characters become more flat and the range of emotions you would expect them to experience is greatly reduced. They are all good, all understanding and the story moves all to softly to a cliché ending. The narrative tells how all is well and does not show it, and a really difficult struggle (that the author tries hard to show it and is successful sometimes in showing it) becomes a little shallow. It's a difficult story to tell, and I commend the author for choosing it, but by focusing in clichés and easy emotions it does not ring very true in the end.

Many thanks to NetGalley for a copy in return for an honest review.

