

Lovely, Dark, and Deep

Justina Chen

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

Lovely, Dark, and Deep

Justina Chen

Lovely, Dark, and Deep Justina Chen

What would you do if the sun became your enemy?

That's exactly what happens to Viola Li after she returns from a trip abroad and develops a sudden and extreme case of photosensitivity -- an inexplicable allergy to sunlight. Thanks to her crisis-manager parents, she doesn't just have to wear layers of clothes and a hat the size of a spaceship. She has to stay away from all hint of light. Say goodbye to windows and running outdoors. Even her phone becomes a threat when its screen burns her.

Viola is determined to maintain a normal life, particularly after she meets Josh. He's a funny, talented Thor look-alike who carries his own mysterious grief. But the intensity of their romance makes her take more and more risks, and when a rebellion against her parents backfires dangerously, she must find her way to a life -- and love -- as deep and lovely as her dreams.

Lovely, Dark, and Deep Details

Date : Published July 31st 2018 by Arthur A. Levine Books


ISBN : 9781338134063

Author : Justina Chen

Format : Hardcover 352 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Contemporary, Romance, Realistic Fiction, Fiction

 [Download Lovely, Dark, and Deep ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Lovely, Dark, and Deep ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Lovely, Dark, and Deep Justina Chen

From Reader Review Lovely, Dark, and Deep for online ebook

Becky Osmon says

I sometimes think the authors of YA romance are just pulling issues/themes out of a hat and at first I really rolled my eyes at this one - she's got photosynthesis disorder (extreme sensitivity to light) and his twin brother just died in a car accident. But it was a really cute story - well written, witty and smart and bonus points for shout outs to nerd culture (Firefly Browncoats are featured).

Xueting says

After reading many 4- and 5-star reviews, I was excited to read this book. But alas, it was really not for me.

It was interesting to learn about photosensitivity and the many different types of photosensitive conditions. I also like the constant theme of crisis management (Viola's parents run their own international crisis relief organisation), and living in/with a crisis like being allergic to all light. Viola's also a unique character who does grow as she comes to terms with her condition. But the whole book was kinda stuck in one stage of Viola figuring out how to live with her new condition - learning the specifics of her individual type of photosensitivity, arguing that it's social suicide to wear a big hat/carry an umbrella everywhere she goes, her parents getting controlling, her freaking out about how controlling her parents are, trying to convince her parents she needs her life back... Rewind and repeat. It just kept going round and round. Don't get me wrong - all this struggle to adjust her life to her condition is necessary and realistic. But for a story, it was too repetitive, and I found myself skimming through the second half. There wasn't much of a plot going on.

If there's any plot that moves things along, you could say it's the romance between Viola and Josh, this guy she meets on the very day she discovers she's photosensitive right out in public. But their relationship developed really slowly and went in cycles too! Like, Viola just kept agonising over why Josh didn't text her back... asking herself if she's just making another mistake falling for him like she did with her player ex-boyfriend... and Josh keeps blaming himself for things that went wrong but he still does it again the next time anyway... (view spoiler)

I think it also has something to do with the writing. This book reminds me of "Everything, Everything" a LOT, and I haven't read that book yet, but based on the movie, it at least manages to keep me engaged and offer several turns in the story. In this book, I learned about photosensitivity thanks to the reproduction of Viola's constant researching, but that informative level overpowered any level of engaging plot, for me :/

Shenwei says

no rating for now, not sure if I feel comfortable rating it. full review in the drafts. long story short: I did enjoy it overall, but I have mixed feelings about the disability rep.

Grace says

** I received this book from the author through an instagram giveaway**

This was a great YA novel! After Viola comes back from a trip she becomes extremely sensitive to light, which makes living life like a typical high school senior difficult. This book explores her relationships and the struggles that come with college applications and life decisions. It is told through crisis-management proposals, lists, notes, and texts in addition to the regular narration, which keeps the read interesting.

Madison says

Lovely, Dark, and Deep by Justina Chen is a brilliant novel about chasing life even when what that life might be dramatically different from what you were expecting. Lovely, Dark, and Deep is beautifully written, with a likeable heroine and a nice mix of uplifting messages and humour.

Viola has her life all planned out - first travel overseas with her Aunt, then major in journalism before becoming an international foreign correspondent traveling to war zones and other dangerous places to expose and report the truth. But when Viola develops a reaction to the sun, her whole world shifts - first with sizeable hats and an abundance of sunscreen to blackout curtains and limited screen time. Her diagnosis coincides with meeting Josh - graphic novel writer, Thor-look-alike - who carries his own secrets and grief. Viola is sure that her condition will not limit her, but testing the boundaries brings many risks for which even Viola could never have planned.

I loved Justina Chen's North of Beautiful and Lovely, Dark, and Deep sounded like a perfect novel to recommend to readers who enjoyed Yoon's Everything, Everything and Gornall's Under Rose-Tainted Skies. While those two books focus on a girl's transition from life trapped inside (for various reasons) to exploring beyond their boundaries, Lovely, Dark and Deep starts with a character who has the whole world open in front of her only to have everything change when she develops a skin condition that means she can no longer plan holidays, follow her intended career path or even go outside in the sun.

I loved Viola's voice. From her little asides and comments, to her lists and humorous take on her parents and their crisis management ways, she makes for a very likeable protagonist and narrator. I also really enjoyed the meeting of her many talents and hobbies, from cooking to researching. Lovely, Dark, and Deep will appeal to many readers with its wide array of interest points, including cooking, graphic novels, writing, travel, and journalism.

Romance is a large part of Lovely, Dark, and Deep but it never overtakes the focus of Viola's story of coming to terms with her diagnosis and how she will let it impact her life. Lovely, Dark, and Deep is ultimately a coming-of-age story, about friendship, family, and love, about boundaries, grief, goals, dreams, overcoming challenges and living life no matter what.

I loved the symbolism portrayed through the formatting - each chapter page slowly darkening until reaching the deepest of black, and the text on those chapter title pages changing from black to white at a pivotal moment. The use of lists, segments from Viola's parent's Crisis Management Handbook and other little formatted sections from Viola (often humorous) make Lovely, Dark, and Deep all the more interesting, unique and enjoyable.

Lovely, Dark, and Deep is a wonderful YA contemporary novel about facing the challenges of life and learning to adjust, a celebration of love and the craziness of family, and a positive, diverse representation of disability.

The publishers provided an advanced readers copy of this book for reviewing purposes. All opinions are my own.

Find more reviews, reading age guides, content advisory, and recommendations on my blog Madison's Library

Kelly Hager says

I have been a fan of Justina Chen's ever since I read *North of Beautiful* and every book since has only made me appreciate her more. I've loved every book of hers that I've read, and this one is no exception.

I think we've all heard of this condition, but it's rare to see something about it in stories. (I've really only seen it in the movie *The Others*, which is probably not very comforting to people who actually have it.)

It's scary to think about how quickly your life can completely change, and that's really shown here. Viola goes from having the kind of life we all take for granted (being able to leave the house and do anything she wants, at any time, without thinking about it or taking precautions) to a life where she can only safely go outside at night, and even then not for very long. Even light through a screen can affect her. And I can't even imagine having to sit in the dark and not even be able to be on my phone or computer, or even watch TV. AND because this is so rare, they don't even know what caused the sudden onset.

But there's also a lot more to Viola than the sudden allergy to light. She's in love with the show *Firefly* and she's also hoping to be a foreign correspondent. She has so much passion for the world and trying to fix everything that's wrong. She's an inspiration and that's why it hurts so much when she starts to lose the ability to do the things she loves most, and in a lot of very real ways, her future.

But, of course, she soon finds a plan to get it all back. (Which I also love, because this girl is in the empire business.)

I love this book so much, you guys. SO MUCH. And I hope I don't have to wait long for another Justina Chen book.

Highly recommended.

Julia Bucci says

The story starts with Viola a healthy almost senior in high school and the reader experiences her diagnoses of photosensitivity with her. It reminds me some of *Everything Everything* - controlling parents and a diagnosis that traps the main character indoors. But Viola is older and has lived her life in the sun so she resists and fights back thru the process. Only to have her body fight back even harder.

I loved the characters in this book. A beautiful love story with Josh, who you can't help by love. Loving, overprotective, crisis-managing parents that only want the best for their daughter. A guilt-ridden used to be fun aunt. And a spoiled little sister.

Viola resists, succumbs, and rises again thru her diagnosis. Often asking why. She learns to always have a Plan B - and a Plan B has to be just as good as the Plan A.

Simi Sunny says

I swear, every synopsis I read, it leaves by surprise when I actually read the book, and this is one of them. I was grateful to read the book, because I can relate to the main character's situation, even though I don't have what she has.

This is about a girl name Viola, who wanted to be journalist, covering stories in foreign countries while being an advocate. But thanks to her condition (which is called solar urticaria), her parents are shielding her from the outside world and being cautious to keep their daughter safe. At first, I didn't understand Viola's behavior, because it seems like she's not taking it seriously with her condition, but I realized that Viola's only seventeen and is doing her best to live a normal life, despite how her parents are being protective of her. But with the help with the guy named Josh (who looks like Thor, guys), she's doing her best to live her life.

When Viola was first diagnosed, she's not used to all this. It's all new to Viola and she was doing her best to adapt. But no matter how hard she tries, everyone whom Viola loved and cared viewed her as "sick" and started to pity her. Even Viola's parents were not helping her because of the way they were treating her. I thought maybe her parents knew that it's not right for them to all pity and give them special treatment, considering that they're crisis managers.

Important fact: in the medical field, you can't give patients pity, even when they're grieving for their condition. Even if they lost or have broken a limb, you can't pity them when people are upset about their condition. You have to be more empathetic and treat them as if they're normal human beings (which they are). There is a difference between being pity and empathetic.

Empathy: showing an ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Pity: Feeling sorry for someone of their suffering and condition.

And I know how Viola feels, because I have over-protective parents who don't want me to go outside a lot without them; they're scared if I get hurt, since they have watched a lot of news. And just like her, I took risks (not something like Viola did), until I gave in to my parents words. I was afraid to get hurt again by people. But hey, how will I know if I'm going to hurt again?

At least later on in the story, Viola learns to adapt while testing herself (because of course you have to go out, even if you have a condition). Plus, Viola is being considerate with her parent's feelings while making arrangements with her and her parents (I love it). Now, Viola figured what she wants to do while working things out with her condition.

I've really enjoyed story. One thing that stood out to me was how the language was quirky because, of course, Viola's a nerdy girl (in a good way). I like how the author is doing that while trying to adapt to formal writing style.

Hope you guys enjoyed my review on this book. Maybe you guys have enjoyed the book as much as I do.

Paige Dan says

This book is about finding the beauty in life no matter what is thrown at you. It's a sweet story and it's one I

enjoyed overall.

Character development- lovely. Even Roz grew up the tiniest little bit.

Readability- My biggest hold up. Since this book is about a girl with photosensitivity the first page of each chapter is a shade of increasingly dark gray. By the end of the book the type has changed to white on black paper but the last 10 or 15 chapters before that color change makes the pages very challenging to read. It was an interesting idea but it's not executed well enough to really work.

Timelessness- There are constant references to the show Firefly which is already 10 years old. It's a cult classic though, so maybe that doesn't affect timelessness?

I had one other complaint about the book. The author uses parenthesis to add unspoken words A LOT throughout the novel. There are a few places that this is well used but it's just too much. Once I noticed it I couldn't stop seeing the parenthesis everywhere and it grated my nerves a bit.

Overall this is a story I know my students will THOR-oughly (that'll be hilarious after you read the book!) enjoy. It's one I'll be happy to talk about and promote.

Tressa (Wishful Endings) says

Loved, loved, loved! Review posting tomorrow.

Moon says

You know how they tell you to write the book you'd like to read and haven't found? For me this is the book I wanted to read but hadn't found. However, I did not write, instead Justina did.

We follow Viola's story through this book, she is a browncoat, which in geekspeak means a fan of Firefly, and is also crazy about doing bake sales for charity (that is something I am not that familiar with except as a concept but all the food she cooks throughout the book made me hungry and I wish we had some recipes to go with it). Then as she is having a normal day, she collapses and voila, turns out she is allergic to the sun (and light).

Now, in case you didn't know, I am photosensitive myself (I was born like this) and I have written a little about it on a reality check post (up on my blog). And I really want to highlight that this book does a wonderful job at representation of photosensitivity. It is well researched, it is good at explaining how it affects and changes your life (it was very interesting for me, since I have adapted to it as I grow, rather than having to do so in one go, and I kept nodding at the things they would try and going "yeah, done that") and it is also a good story. It follows her journey to coping with her new life, and how her family relationships change, but it also has a romance subplot which I enjoyed (even if at times it was quite sweet) that in itself deals with loss and grief.

Lovely, Dark, and Deep is a very uplifting book, it keeps reassuring you that you've got this regardless of how many lemons (or killer sunrays) life throws at you.

Vicky Who Reads says

4 stars

I really enjoyed reading *Lovely, Dark, and Deep!*

It's a really good young adult novel for the **younger YA readers** (although it doesn't mean older readers can't appreciate it either) and something **I wish I had available to read when I was a tween going on teen** looking for books that weren't VAMPIRE VAMPIRE VAMPIRE to read.

Viola and her struggles are **super relatable**. As an Asian-American teen, I felt like this was such a good representation of one end of the Asian parent scale--parents might not be super school-focused, but they can be **so overprotective**.

And Viola's parents aren't even that unbelievable. They're a **tad exaggerated** due to their crisis-managing job, but a lot of what they did is **exactly what my parents would do** if I was in the same situation.

I did think Viola was a little immature and a bit young, but **her youth makes it more accurate** as she's not the super mature adult-acting teenager that's never like real life but somehow permeates the young adult genre.

YA is filled with characters who are basically grown ups in teen bodies (especially with things like fantasy) and it makes our expectations on how to act unrealistic. But I feel like **Viola is a really solid representation of what teens really are like**. We care too much about school and college and we don't go on adventures in crazy places and we're a little silly and immature sometimes.

I thought the whole photosensitivity premise was really cool and I actually liked how Chen wrapped up the whole book and the photosensitivity part. The way Viola takes charge and in the place Chen finishes the story has a lot of meaning and it's **one of the only contemporary endings that I felt like suited the book**.

There were two things I wasn't really keen on. One was Viola's passion to be a journalist abroad. I just **didn't find her journalism desires to feel grounded or explained enough**, and I continuously wondered *why* she wanted to go into journalism. If what I read of Viola & her journalism desires was a college essay, I would have denied her because I just didn't understand where her passion really came from.

It felt like the same few justifications were being repeated, and I wish Chen went a little more in-depth with that.

The other thing I wasn't super into was some of the intercharacter relationships, specifically the one with Josh. **I wasn't really into Josh and he felt kind of bland** to me. It was more like Josh was a plot point rather than a romantic-interest character. So a really great coming of age story, but a meh romance is what I'm really trying to say.

I also kind of wish some of the other character relationships were expanded on more, but it is a short book and would have taken the focus off of Viola, so I understand why they weren't more hashed out.

Overall though, I think this was a really strong read with a relatable and age-appropriate main character and a heartwarming coming-of-age. Definitely recommend to contemporary fans (especially if you like reading about baked goods...)

Thank you so much to Jean Book Nerd and Justina Chen for the advance reader's copy in exchange for an honest review!

Blog | Instagram | Twitter

Allana says

Through some very weird circumstances, Viola develops a condition that doesn't allow her to be in any kind of light for too long. Her dreams of saving the world slowly shrink away because of this condition, how can she save the world if she can't even go out into the sun? As this is happening, she meets Thor aka Josh. At first, she just assumes that he's just a typical player due to past events in her life, but he slowly proves her wrong and shows him a really adorable side of himself. I liked being in this story, I enjoyed seeing Viola grow while dealing with her emotions plus all the changes happening to and around her because of her condition. I loved how she found her place and found a new path that she loved by the end. I definitely recommend this book and I think it's a good one if you enjoy mental health reads!

Laura Gardner says

Thanks to @scholasticinc for the free book to share with @kidlitexchange ! LOVELY, DARK, AND DEEP by @authorjustinachen comes out on 7/31/18 and is book 2 for my #30booksummer !

????????/5

~*~*~*~*~*

Viola Li (biracial Asian/white) is a senior in high school who develops an extreme case of photosensitivity (allergy to light) after a trip abroad to Africa with her aunt. Her crisis manager parents put their professional skills to work to manage her condition and soon Viola is wearing huge hats and staying in dark rooms. This puts a bit of a damper on her burgeoning love life with comic artist Josh, as well as her future plans to become a journalist. When her condition is revealed to be much worse than she thought, all Viola's dreams are at risk.

~*~*~*~*~*

Here's what I liked:

1. Totally hilarious parent-child interactions in which both employ research and negotiation skills to their advantage.
2. A really lovely, slow-burn romance built on ideas (Viola helps Josh research his comic on photosensitive Persephone and is not shy at all in her criticism)
3. Witty banter that is flirty and fun
4. Food! Viola loves to bake for advocacy bake sales, Souper Sundays to watch football games and any other occasion. My mouth was watering as I read.

Recommended for grades 8+.

Great readalike to Everything, Everything by @nicolayoon

~*~*~*~*~*

#bookstagram #book #reading #bibliophile #bookworm #bookaholic #booknerd #bookgram #librarian #librariansfollowlibrarians #librariansofinstagram #booklove #booktography #bookstagramfeature #bookish #bookaddict #booknerdigans #booknerd #ilovereadng #instabook #futurereadylibs #ISTELibs #TLChat

Tess says

4.75 stars
