



The Light of the World

Randi Black

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*****This book contains crude language and graphic, consensual scenes of rough sex, spanking, and anal play. It is not intended for younger readers!!!*****

****This book is the standalone follow-up to **Miss World**, but you do not have to read MW to enjoy this one.****

It was 1995 in the Southern California wasteland.

I was barely legal and far from innocent. I loved The Gun Club more than I loved Walter, my high school sweetheart. He was the only person who knew why I stopped singing and playing guitar after what happened to me when I was 16. But even an engagement ring couldn't save us after what he did to me that one afternoon.

I used to worry that college would come between us, but I never thought it would happen on move-in day.

That was the day I met Franz : a tall, handsome 23-year-old ex-jock from Germany. He was so not my type, but the more I got to know him, the more I knew he was the right guy for me. And after Walter betrayed me for the last time, it was time for me to break up with him and be with Franz for good. I never thought he'd be a safe place for me to explore my darkest sexual fantasies. Nor that he'd be a kindred spirit who knew exactly what it felt like when someone ridiculed your musical aspirations.

We gonna start playing music together and be who we were meant to be. Nothing and no one was gonna stop us.

Not even Walter.

The Light of the World Details

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From Reader Review The Light of the World for online ebook

Jennifer Ricketts (Donnie Darko Girl) says

I received a review copy of this book for my stop on the blog tour at Donnie Darko Girl.

The Light of the World takes place in 1995, which music wise was the height of the decade for me. In the fall of '95, I was a freshman in high school, so while the subject of this novel is intense, the cultural references of that time were a fond trip down memory lane for me. I feel so old saying that since it's been nearly twenty years.

Kimmy is Chinese American, and I can't tell you how happy I was to read about a character from a different background than mine! There isn't enough diversity in books, so it was refreshing. Black wrote this story in a way that was believable and gave insight into the Chinese American culture in an organic way that added to the story rather than detracting from it.

To say that Kimmy has been through a lot would be an understatement. At the age of sixteen on the same day Kurt Cobain was found dead, she was sexually assaulted. The Light of the World does not shy away from dealing with her trauma as it shouldn't - otherwise, it would be trivialized and this is most definitely not a trivial matter.

Kimmy's fiance, Walter, treated her horribly and even made fun of the imaginary friend she used to cope with the sexual assault. He doesn't want her to go away to college, but I'm so glad she did anyway. She feels suffocated with him, and I can see why. I really didn't like him, and although she begins cheating on Walter with Franz, I had my suspicions Walter was also cheating on her.

During Welcome Week at her college, she meets Franz, a handsome German man. He's a few years older than her, but they find they have music in common and are sexually compatible. Be prepared for explicit sex scenes! Just saying. Franz is gentle with Kimmy, and I fell in love with him, too. No matter how many times she tried to ignore him or push him away, he remained patient. She wanted to be with him, but she was afraid of how much she wanted him.

The Light of the World is gritty, messy, and raw - Kimmy's life lays bare for all to see. I was swept up into her story and am definitely picking up the previous novel, Miss World, to read.

Jessica says

Having read Black's first novel in the Kim Ho series, Miss World, I was prepared for the sex, drugs and rock n roll that makes up The Light Of The World. In this book, Kim leaves her strict Chinese family and her abusive fiance behind to go to college. Her dream is to become a rock star, but her life plan is to major in History to become an archivist because "archivists make it last longer." At the end of Miss World, Kim's boyfriend Walter, who helped her to heal and move past her violent rape, had gone from sweet and supportive to controlling and abusive. There had only been hints of it in Miss World, but I had never been a Walter fan, so I wasn't surprised. Kim is in that state so many people find themselves in of not wanting to admit a relationship is dead and gone, despite knowing that it is.

Enter Franz. Franz is a tall, sexy German with an accent who looks like a Viking. At first Kimmy is put off by his strong physique and short blonde hair, immediately writing him off as a jock, until he proves himself a

huge punk rock fan with a deep love of The Gun Club, Kimmy's favorite band.

Okay, so here's the thing...Franz is meant to be the Romantic Hero in this steamy, smutty book, but if you stop to consider what women are swooning over in popular books like 50 Shades, Franz is refreshing. Where Christian Grey is controlling and manipulative, Franz is open, giving and supportive. With his help, Kimmy finally dumps Walter and goes on a path of true healing with a partner she can trust absolutely. The path happens to include a bunch of rough, wild sex that a 50 Shades fan would NOT be able to deal with, but Franz is Good, Giving and Game as he helps Kimmy process her demons. There are also many cute moments of the two of them teasing each other, having inside jokes about t-rexs and hanging out with Franz's cute white cat, Wolffi. And did I mention he looks like a Viking? Girl. Crack.

The plot sometimes takes a backseat to sex scene after sex scene (*fans self*), but it's still there, lurking in the background until it jumps out of the pages in a sneak attack. What has Walter been hiding from Kimmy? Is Kimmy getting too into the drug scene? What if the authorities find out that she's the Lollapalooza '94 "riot grrrrl" that incited a huge fight that sent her rapist to the hospital? Will Kimmy be able to get over her insecurities from a lifetime of abuse to truly accept that Franz is the real deal? Will they be able to start a band? And seriously, wtf is up with Walter?

If you remember the 90s, have ever dealt with abuse or know someone who has, and like it when it's smutty, go order a copy (or download) The Light Of The World. Kimmy Lee is waiting for you.

Dave Sippel says

Having read the first book in the Kimmy Lee series, I can say that "The Light of the World" feels very different from it's predecessor. That is actually a fitting thing to happen, as the surroundings that Kimmy lives in have changed dramatically from the first book.

"Miss World" was a fast paced book that kept the drama coming in young Kimmy's high school life. She hardly had time to think as her life presented hit after hit. The drama of the abuse that she faced from her parents, school mates, boyfriends and others was enough to keep the story flowing. She hardly had time to think and neither did the reader. My complaint with "Miss World" was that we didn't get into her mind as all of this was going on.

Now in college, Kimmy is away from her parents, her abusive fiance and has a supportive room mate and boyfriend. However, the years of being controlled by her parents and the fear of her fiance are still present in her life. Franz is a tall, charming student from Germany that Kim is immediately attracted to on the first day of class. She is soon going on road trips to Hollywood with him, doing cocaine and having very rough sex. As dangerous as the violent sex is, she finds it empowering and liberating. Her dangerous college lifestyle does give her a new-found confidence, which is useful when her past comes back.

I could relate to Kimmy in some ways. We were roughly the same age in 1995 (I was starting high school in the fall of that year as she was starting college) and remember many of the mid 1990s events and pop culture that she referred to. As a male reader, I sometimes sympathized with Franz more than Kimmy. The argument between he and his father at the dinner table wasn't about her, it was a private matter between father and son. She had little reason to think that Franz was being bad to her. Still, after years of having her parents do her speaking for her, it is understandable that she was sensitive to Franz not letting her speak to his father herself.

My frustration with the book was that it focused so much on her sex life and musical dreams. I understand

that she was healing herself and taking back her power as an independent human being but the focus on sex and music felt a little repetitive. The plot felt a little thin at times. Increasing the presence of the side characters would have made her world seem more realized.

Still, the fact that everyone got what they deserved (for better or worse) was a welcome ending. Kimmy went through a lot of crap in her short life and it was rewarding to see her achieve her dreams despite it all.

Sharrice says

The Light of the World was definitely not like anything I have ever read before. Kimmy deals with a lot during her first year college and her story was definitely different. I enjoyed the references and the humor. The story was somewhat dark and I had a wee bit of difficulty in the beginning understanding what was going on but the author really cleared everything up. I was so happy I got t chance to read this. The romance was definitely steam worthy and I really liked Franz. Walter was...ew and Kimmy's parents were very messed up.

Anna says

Kimmy starts college after some pretty traumatic stuff happened her during her high school years. She was sexually assaulted, sought revenge against her rapist in a public format, and is trapped in an engagement with her high school boyfriend who still has a year left of high school. In college she meets an older student from Germany and they quickly realize their attraction towards one another and Kimmy realizes that she has a compatibility with Franz that was not there with Walter. She begins to discover things about herself and let herself be interested in and explore things that she used to care about before her life was shaken up.

Kimmy and Franz have intense chemistry and they are obviously very sexually compatible. I liked seeing Franz being patient and kind with Kimmy as she allowed herself to explore different facets of her sexuality in a way that made her feel safe. I will mention that I didn't read the book that came before this one (Miss World), so I don't have a history with Walter that might serve to give me any first-hand positive experiences with him. Based on just learning about him in this book, I can easily say that I don't like him. On the one hand, I felt that a lot of the behaviors and dysfunctional ways that he and Kimmy interacted were a little crazy. On the other hand, I think this makes the book feel a little more real since teenagers in real life don't make good healthy choices all the time. Especially when trauma, and strong cultural parental expectations are thrown into the mix.

I went through both high school and college in the 90's, so there were a lot of nostalgic triggers for me in this book. I found some of the writing a little choppy at times, but not to an extent that it disengaged me from the story. All in all, I enjoyed that there were some really unique characters and situations presented in this book. The characters were complex and interesting and made both good and bad choices for themselves just like people do in life as they are coping, growing, and experiencing. In a genre where a lot of characters and story lines are very similar, this one stood out. I would read more by this author in the future

*An ARC was provided in exchange for an honest review

My Secret Book Spot says

The Light of the World by Randi Black
3 out of 5 Stars

I'm not even sure where to start with this one...choppy, blunt, excruciatingly awkward Kimmy is the epitome of this book's style. The writing style is blunt, choppy, awkward and for me not really super enjoyable. I gave the book 3 stars because I appreciated Black's storyline and plot. I really liked Franz and his sweet soothing personality especially in contrast to Kimmy and Walter's spastic, obnoxious, trying to be introverted, but they don't understand the definition, extraverted selves. I found Kimmy's constant need to be "in your face" and rebellious extremely juvenile especially in her advice to her roommate and it made me wonder what Franz saw in her.

The things I enjoyed were the honest sincerity of Kimmy's issues with her body and her family. How she accepted the opinions of others but was trying so hard to work against them in herself, to maintain her own value as a person and her own belief system, even if others were shallow and hateful. I also really enjoyed her willingness to talk about her experiences with Kevin and Walter, how she felt and what she went through. Even if she didn't tell her parents, she didn't bottle it up and let it destroy her. With that said, it was pretty much all she talked about. So it became overwhelming in the story.

Overall this is a book you'd have to judge for yourself. If you like a more adventurous style of writing than give it a try, because this may be your next five star read, for me it was just okay.

A complimentary copy was given in exchange for an honest review

Pepper, My Secret Book Spot

Greta is Erikasbuddy says

I lived for the 90s. Probably because I am a product of that decade.

No, I wasn't born then (even though if you want to compliment me and say I look 20 then you can go right ahead) but that was the era of my teenage years.

This is what made this book so special to me. It was a big blast from the past. But I didn't do cocaine. And ummm... I was allowed to drive.... And my boyfriend didn't have a cat cuz he had a dog. Oh! And I didn't go to college. But this book was still special to me, dang it!!

I got this book in advance from the author cuz I'm mega cool and she knows I like things like the 90s, and dinosaurs, and cats, and fart jokes, and music that Kimmie likes to complain about but I love.

HEY! Check out my senior quote!

I found this book to be much better than the first of it's series. Is it a series? Well, Miss World by Randi Black (yeah... same author) was the first book where you meet Kimmie, her family, and Walter.

Kimmie is a Chinese American who lives in California. Her parents are super duper Chinese. That's not racist. They just are. I mean, it's a freaking culture shock when I read about her family. But I come from white couch potato stock.

"Miss World" takes place during 1994-1995 when Kurt Cobain dies and we learn how that time in Kimmie's life really influenced her. In "The Light of the World" it focuses more around Kimmie's first semester of college of 1995 and how she meets an uber hot German dude named Franz.

Now, I know what you are thinking. Hans and Franz?

Yeah, I was thinking that too. But no Hans. Although, Franz was not a little girly-man! So, there are similarities.

And as another SNL from the 90s timewarp. There is a part where Kimmie and Franz go to a music store and I'm thinking "OMG!! Wayne's World". No seriously... You'll think that too. You just have to read the book to tell me I'm right. Cuz you will. She doesn't get denied "Stairway" but she should. So, just pretend that part is in there and then tell me how "Wayne's World" it is.

Kimmie does a lot of growing in this book. Sure, she grew in the last book but I think she was more of a time bomb. A growing time bomb!! In this one Kimmie kinda chills out. Ok ok... she does almost become a drug addict. Well, not really.... Kind of... she could have.... but she grows into a more mature person on her way to womanhood. OMG! That sounded like a Summer's Eve commercial. You can pretend you didn't read that.

There's a freak-awesome cat in this book who's name is Wolfie. I enjoyed Wolfie. It drew away from the freaking dirty scenes. And I do mean DIRTY!! Omg! Are you looking for smut? Then this book is probably for you! I'm not big on smut and was screaming "NO NO NO!! Do not put your tongue there!! She probably pooped today and ewwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwwww!!!" But that's just me.

All in all, if you are a fan of "My So Called Life", or any of books written by Stephanie Kuehnert, or "The Weetzie Bat" series then this is the book for you. OH! You have to be interested in dirty books too. This is pretty dirty! But I think most New Adult is. So.... There you go!! Sexy 90s time!

Sadly, my time in the 90s wasn't so sexy. What I remember most was watching "The Crow" like million times. Also "Interview with the Vampire". A lot of the THEN HIPSTERS were reading that book. You know, the people we would call hipsters now who didn't want to do anything modern but wore leather jackets with studs and had those hair braid wrap things. Come on.. you remember them! Now, I did read

"Interview with the Vampire" and had a hair wrap thing (not for long. A 90s hipster got mad at me for having it) but I didn't have a leather coat.

Another thing I remember is Bevis and Butt-Head. I think that was pretty popular in 1995. OH! And Soul Asylum. They were pretty big then. So was Tom Petty. But he's a huge rock star that will never die (don't you judge me!!). I also loved Better than Ezra. HAHAS!

So, now that you know how cool I was... GO BUY THIS BOOK!! Cuz then you can be cool to and learn how we did it in the 90s!
