



Light The Hidden Things

Don McQuinn

Download now

Read Online →

Light The Hidden Things

Don McQuinn

Light The Hidden Things Don McQuinn

This is an alternate cover edition for B0087308ZY

From award-winning author Don McQuinn comes *Light The Hidden Things*, a poignant and beautiful story that will resonate with anyone who has loved someone struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder. ??

Carter Crow has been wandering the country for years, denying and fleeing from the terrors of PTSD. When the retired Marine rolls into the quiet mountain town of Lupine, he doesn't expect it to be more than a temporary distraction. However, after meeting the strong and beautiful Lila Milam, his carefully controlled guard begins to drop. A tentative bond starts to kindle between them, but Crow's troubles and Lila's own struggles threaten to smother the flame just as quickly.??

Something about Lila and the people of the peaceful town tugs at Crow, but he's driven to run again, escaping the grief and pain that stalks him. This time, however, he's unexpectedly confronted with a stark choice: accept the love and support being offered, or let the trauma of his past finally engulf him.

??Don McQuinn explores the difficult subject of post-traumatic stress disorder with the skill of a great writer and the depth of understanding of a retired US Marine. If this book can help just one person whose life has been touched by PTSD, then he has accomplished his mission as an author.

Light The Hidden Things Details

Date : Published June 2016 by Raven's Call Press (first published May 28th 2012)

ISBN :

Author : Don McQuinn

Format : Kindle Edition 279 pages

Genre : Romance, Contemporary Romance, Contemporary, Christian, Business, Amazon, War, Military Fiction, Fiction

 [Download Light The Hidden Things ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Light The Hidden Things ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online Light The Hidden Things Don McQuinn

From Reader Review Light The Hidden Things for online ebook

Katherine says

I loved this book so much! Great insight into PTSD. I wish the story line would continue! I want to see how Crow gets the help he needs and what happens with Bakes!

Julie Ferguson says

Light the Hidden Things is Don McQuinn's latest book and one that I read late into the night. It tells the story of a retired Marine afflicted by PTSD who refuses treatment and who is befriended by a small town in Washington State, in particular a woman. Her love for this conflicted, good man sets the stage for his recovery and their relationship to thrive.

McQuinn wrote it for all the military wives who struggle as their men go to war and play such a part in their return home to normality.

It's a strong book that shows much more than it tells. Much hovers in the shadows, but a careful reader will discover all of it.

I loved the book, admired it, and cried a bit too.

Wonderfully crafted and researched, this novel should be read by everyone, not just those in or around the military families.

Highly recommended. Kindle only.

Gita Sturtevant says

Wow

one of the finest written read experienced ever with my other favorite synching forward. both keepers and must be read. I have been to and lived in Seattle and loved a marine.. this brought back all my feelings of love and hope and forgiveness.

Jack Remick says

Don McQuinn's
"Light the Hidden Things"
A Structural Review

I like novels built on archetypes. I like it when the author knows he's built a novel on archetypes. I like it when the writing brings the archetype to life in a character and the character reveals secrets and wounds, lost love, and nightmares of blood-lust. I like it when the author of a novel creates the work on archetypes built on the Fundamental Theorem of Fiction—The Triad. I'll come back to that idea in a while.

We no longer celebrate scars. We want our wounded warriors to be invisible. We want them to disappear.

When the Protagonist of a novel is a Warrior whose last battle is an inner struggle we have the modern warrior returning home and we learn that the wounds don't all show, the scars are hidden, the secrets buried deep. We have a name for it, but we choose the acronym instead—PTSD—because we don't celebrate battle wounds and scars.

A Warrior returns. He's wounded. He needs to heal, but his Love is dead, his family destroyed, his psyche a mess. The Warrior returns carrying with him all the pain and blood-lust of battle. His solution is solitude. Become a vagabond. Live in an Airstream. Float on the wind.

McQuinn has written a novel of that Warrior's Return and it places his story in the long history of the Warrior's Return.

Kazantzakis opens his epic "The Odyssey—A Modern Sequel" with this—

And when in his wide courtyards Odysseus had cut down
The insolent youths, he hung on high his sated bow
And strode to the warm bath to cleanse his bloodstained body.
Two slaves prepared his bath, but when they saw their lord
They shrieked in terror, for his loins and belly steamed
And thick black blood dripped down from his murderous palms;
Their copper jugs rolled clanging on the marble tiles.
The wandering man smiled gently in his thorny beard
And with his eyebrows signed the frightened girls to go.
For hours he washed himself in the warm water, his veins
Spread out like rivers in his body, his loins cooled,
And his great mind was in the waters cleansed and calmed.

The list is long, the lessons painful, the warriors all wounded:

The Manchurian Candidate
Coming Home
Home of the Brave
The Sun Also Rises
The Middle Parts of Fortune
The Memoirs of George Sherston

If fiction is the artful infusion of the past into the narrative present, the past must reveal itself in small bits and pieces, but what does it reveal? René Clair has written that American cinema is about the formation of a couple.

American fiction, in the 21st Century, is about the formation of a family. McQuinn's novel is about the formation of family. Not always the family we expect, but a family nonetheless.

The basic unit of family is a dyad—two people connect to end their loneliness—but fiction is built on the Triad. Inherent in the triad is conflict, and, in fiction, conflict must be resolved for the character arcs to be complete. The triad is what makes fiction work. McQuinn understands this perfectly and he works out his triads with expert efficiency.

The Fundamental Theorem of Fiction calls for the resolution of the triadic structure. We're not talking "love triangle" here. That's just one aspect of the triad, a triad that implies betrayal, anguish, the ripping apart of the couple by the intrusion of a third. McQuinn goes deeper than that.

He has built "Light the Hidden Things" on a series of triads that have to be resolved if the Protagonist is ever to find peace and take his place back among the living. I want to focus on the two major triads that form the spine of this novel.

Carter Crow, the returning warrior, is among the living dead. He is cloaked in a cocoon of solitude: "A man earns his solitude." McQuinn writes. But in his solitude lies the conflict—a broken triad in the past shoots Crow into the present alone, angry, demon-filled and hungry for love.

First Triad: The Past-
Crow—Patricia—Joe.
Patricia, Crow's dead wife.
Joe—his dead child.

A broken protagonist, his family destroyed, hits the vagabond trail, his only companion a dog, Major—the perfect companion for a wounded warrior. The two of them form the basic dyad of family, but something is missing and Crow knows it. This leads to the second of the major triads:

Second Triad: The Present-
Crow—Lila—Vanderkirk.

Here McQuinn gives us the foundation of family and its root is biological. Lila wants to be loved; Crow needs an anchor; Vanderkirk wants Lila. To resolve that triad and the conflict, Crow and Lila must first fix the broken family triad.

McQuinn fuses the two women—Patricia and Lila—in Lila's interior monologues when the "spirit" of Patricia, Crow's dead wife, visits her. This sets up the resolution of that triad:

Crow—Lila—Patricia

"His face could have been metal.

"I made her stop wanting to live. My profession – we (warriors) leave the people we love, go kill other people. They kill some of us. The ones we love wait and worry. When we come back, we're different. Those loved ones – the wives, in particular - they surround us. Like a fortress, you know? They hold off everything that wants to break us. Sometimes they..."

He choked. The metal mask cracked for an instant. Reality swept across his features. What Lila saw made her gasp. He went on.

"Some take on too much of us. It's what happened to my Patricia."

"She never said that." Again, Lila spoke without thought. The words shocked her, visibly shocked him. Crow hesitated, then, defensively,

"The life I made her live is what brought that on."

"She chose you. She knew who you were."

Once Crow resolves the Lila-Patricia conflict, his road to salvation opens up:

"Without warning, something hard and cruel gripped him, as shocking as any roadside bomb. Half his mind screamed at him to dive for cover while the other half struggled to find a reason for something akin to terror on a peaceful country road. Truth, when it came, was bullet-brutal. He cared for her. He wanted her to care for him. He was lonely."

Having let Lila into his life, Crow has let go of the past and now he has to beat Vanderkirk in order to win Lila.

The symmetry of McQuinn's writing shows how completely he understands the nature of the triadic structure to build his novel:

A man and two women:
Crow—Patricia—Lila.

Two men and woman:
Crow—Lila—Vanderkirk.

The story lies in choice, female choice: Lila must choose between the Warrior—Crow, and the Snake Oil Salesman—Vanderkirk. Male choice—Crow must choose between the dead woman, Patricia, and the

breathing embodiment of love—Lila.

In the third of three great rituals in this novel, Crow vanquishes Vanderkirk in ritual combat. Only by reliving the past can Crow vanquish his demons. It is difficult to ignore the explosion of blood-lust in this moment at the end of *Light the Hidden Things*:

“At the sight of the onrushing Crow, Van let Piers fall and seized the staff of an encased flag. He aimed the glinting brass spearhead and charged, bellowing like a bull. For Crow it was bayonet drill. He turned sideways, pushing at the shaft. The point slipped harmlessly past. Van hurtled on. Crow, in total control now, smashed a forearm into Van's forehead. Van's head snapped back. He slammed to the floor. Incredibly, he rolled away, gaining distance in order to stand and fight more. Two steps had Crow standing over Van. Now he was the one holding the flagstaff. He crouched, taut, the point wedged into the hollow at the base of Van's throat. Skin puckered dead white around the gilded metal. Crow's face was a mask, huge-eyed, teeth bared in a pure animal snarl. Rigid, Van stared into it and gibbered terror. The thing howling in Crow's head brought unbearable pain. He screamed agony and fear. The voice he believed he'd vanquished long ago raged its triumph. It told Crow to kill.”

In that brief battle, Crow overcomes his past, opens up his life, rejects his inner demons. Here he stands in archetypal splendor over his beaten enemy, a warrior with a spear held to the throat of the fallen. This image is indelible—and here we see the “wandering man”, like Kazantzakis' *Odysseus*, coming to grips with his past. Here we see Raymond Shaw of *The Manchurian Candidate* vanquishing his devils.

“The voice sang of killing to be free. Somewhere far away a woman called Crow. He ignored the sound, but only for a moment. It called again. The howling retreated. The murderous voice cursed the woman. Crow turned from Van. The red tunnel sought her out. Lila's features were contorted, pleading. When Crow looked into her eyes they twisted his soul. Spinning away from that, he concentrated again on the spear point, savored the blood lust devouring his mind. Then, shivering violently, he stepped back and broke the weapon across his thigh. As he threw the broken pieces down the voice in his head shrieked as if he'd stabbed it. The tunnel disappeared.”

And Crow is home. His past resolved, the competition beaten, his love returned:

“I want to make you happy. I want to wake up mornings and know I can call your name and hear your voice when you answer. I want to see you smile. Laugh. Hold you in my arms. I love you. I'm asking you to marry me.” He stepped closer.

“Yes.”

It flew out of her mouth so joyous she wasn't sure she'd actually spoken. Crow kept talking, as earnest as before.

“...I'm not just a used-up old grunt; I'm pretty handy...” He stopped. His eyes widened. “Did you say yes?”

Lila rose, came to him. She was pretty sure if she looked hard enough she'd see sparks popping off her skin. She said,

“Yes, I did, and yes, again. Yes forever. I want to be your wife.”

He beamed. It faded quickly when she held up a warning finger. She took a deep breath and rushed the words. “There's a condition. I want you happy. I want to make you happy. I can't do that - not completely - unless we go head-on at this PTSD issue. We'll beat it. Together.” The grin was back.

“I never thought I could talk about it, not to anyone. I wanted to ask you what I should do. You'd work with me? If you would, I can do anything they tell me to do. I love you. If you're beside me...” He shook his head, a man too full of hope to believe his luck. Lila laughed out loud, wrapped her arms around him. She said, “I never want to be anywhere else.”

This novel is a love story. It is a warrior's story. It is a novel about the effects of war on men and women. It is a novel about broken families and the deep need we have to form family. It is a very human novel.

Sandy says

It just didn't grab me. Gave up.

Iola Richardson says

Great book

Lenora Good says

This is not the "usual" McQuinn book. The books I've read by him have been space operas and adventures. They've had their share of adrenaline. This book is gentle, and touches on a difficult subject, PTSD. While it doesn't get into the clinical aspects of PTSD, it does show what someone living with it goes through; how it affects them and those around them. I think this book is a marvelous book for anyone who is either living with PTSD, or knows and loves someone who is.

The primary protagonist, Crow, suffers from PTSD. He's a war vet who has seen more than any human needs to see of death. Fortunately, we don't have to relive a lot of what he does. Crow—a loner, and his dog Major, come to a small town in the Washington Cascades, not too far from Seattle. Here, Crow meets people who help him face his demons to get them off his back.

Dare I make a generalization here? Dare I say Crow is like many men who have PTSD in that he knows he's broke, but he'll fix it himself? He doesn't need help. He's a Marine.

There is no "ah-ha" moment when Crow realizes he needs others; there is no "ah-ha" moment when he is suddenly "fixed." We travel with him as he comes to the realization he really does not want to be a loner any more, he wants companionship, and he wants friends to stand by him and help him.

The chapters of this book are written in the point of view of whoever is narrating that chapter. Most are written by either Lila, who has her own demons or by Crow. Some people find this type of writing irritating, I for one, enjoy it.

I would have liked to know just a little more about how Crow's wife died, and a little more about Joe, their son. Crow spent a lot of time thinking about them, to have their stories not tied up in a neat ribbon at the end. (Yes, I like happily ever after in my fiction.)

McQuinn has a tremendous vocabulary, and he uses it to full advantage. I've seldom read a book with such delightful turns of phrase as this one.

Liza says

[I was really hoping Vanderkirk would get nailed for some of the crap he did, but the PI didn't get to finish his presentation, so who knows. Maybe he did, but it would've been

Melanie says

While this book is not completely bad, it is absolutely nothing like what I expected. In fact, in these terms it was actually pretty disappointing, but maybe it was the fact that I knew what I wanted to read that ended up making this book seem rather dull. As it happens, the book does not focus on the recovery process of a soldier who has been psychologically wounded by war. In fact, the book, doesn't even focus on a single character. And while I'm not opposite to several characters in a romance, the fact that most of the are not exactly relevant for the story makes it seem very slow-paced and, in some moments, even boring. Characters that had the potential to be relevant to the story end up as some sort of background/supportive characters, specially Vanderkirk, who only seemed to be in the book because it needed a contemporaneous villain to serve as an obstacle for the main couple (as if they didn't have enough problems to face).

The main character, Crow Carter, had everything to be an interesting one and ended up being under-developed. He had PTSD, but sometimes you forget this because his romantic interest, Lila, drowns his story with her seemingly irrelevant problems. Okay, maybe "irrelevant" is too strong to define her problems, but comparing her dreams of building a memorial for her deceased relatives just for the sake of the whole things doesn't really seem to be more important than a guy who has served in the army and is haunted by the memories he gathered in combat.

I'm not the biggest fan of how Lila was developed. I'm not into stereotypes of fragile, obstinate girls who are actually able to solve every single problem using the power of love. Wait, did I say obstinate? For most part of the book, she doesn't really know what she wants to do with her life. She hesitates and her resolve wavers at every single difficulty she finds and has several mood shifts, which becomes annoying after a while.

This book is not horrid. In spite of the usual grammar errors that seem to be a constant problem for Kindle eBooks, it is actually deep and poetic in a way. But a sappy romance with lots of angst and a silly ending is definitely not what I wanted to read.

Janga says

I read this one after it was recommended by Jenny Crusie on her blog. It's a good one.
