



The Blackout

Stephanie Erickson

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The world is thrust into darkness and silence, but no one knows why.

Molly is an English professor at a local liberal arts college when the world suddenly goes dark. Her husband, Gary, is a corporate pilot on the other side of the country. Grounded by what appears to be a catastrophic power outage, he has no way to communicate with his wife, let alone get home to her.

Not knowing whether her husband is alive or dead, Molly struggles to adapt to her new environment: without power, running water, transportation, a stable food supply, or any long-distance means of communication. Without knowing the cause of the outage, Gary must decide whether to wait for things to go back to normal, or to make the long and dangerous journey home on foot. Both must learn to survive after the Blackout.

The Blackout Details

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From Reader Review The Blackout for online ebook

Valerie says

I thought this was an excellent first book. Interesting premise, likeable characters, realistic events, etc. It captured my interest and kept me reading. I liked that there were events that did not always turn out well. Real life does not always go smoothly, especially in a situation like a widespread blackout. I expect great things from this author and look forward to the next book.

Leslie Erkman says

3.5 stars really. I'm not sure why but I was a bit annoyed with her writing in the beginning. It wasn't meshing with me well. Although the story was good and kept me reading.

Either her writing improved after the first third of the book or I got over it.

I love the story line and was invested in the characters.

Molly and her husband is separated when the blackout happens. You get sucked in with their struggles with surviving and with Gary trying to get back to Molly.

I'm not sure how I liked the ending though. It seemed abrupt and incomplete. You wanted just a little bit more to wrap things up. Maybe she will write a sequel?

Over all it was a nice read that I surprisingly couldn't put down.

Ally says

The Blackout is a poignant illustration of what our lives would be without technology, shown through the lives of ordinary people.

While the strong bond between the main characters, husband and wife Gary and Molly, drives the plot, some of the most moving moments come from the supporting cast. I loved Molly's interaction with the children in her class, for example. Their adaptability and insight gave hope to the daunting circumstances. Jimmy Jean was another of my favorite characters. He acted as a support and a sort of father-figure to Molly, and I realized by the end of the book that I had come to depend on him in much the same way.

Gary's journey through the U.S. on his way back to his wife gives other examples of how humanity might deal with such an extreme situation. In his travels, Gary encounters savagery, military reactionism, and, in a few bright places, unexpected kindness. Molly's community shows the same diversity in microcosm, although they find a balance surprisingly well. I can only hope that my community would show the same spirit in similar circumstances!

Overall I found this a surprisingly hopeful and inspiring example of the "post-apocalyptic" genre. If you're looking for bleak, you won't find it here, but you will find a strong testimony to both the best and worst parts of human nature.

Craig Allen says

Fun read--3.5 stars. Imagine our world if everything electric, including batteries and cars-everything just stopped. That's the story here with main character Molly and her pilot hubby, Gary, who is stuck hundreds of miles away when The blackout occurs. How does civilization survive or does it? Kinda slow in the middle but enjoyed the writing style and dialogue. Wonder if there will be a sequel? I'd definitely read it. 3.5 stars.

Stephanie Daniels says

I did not expect to like this book as much as I did, but wow. I am a big fan of post-apocalyptic books, and this one took an entirely new view on the genre. It was fresh and new. And the best part was that the way everything played out was all totally realistic. Highly recommend this story!

Allison says

Meh. Cute story, and seems realistic enough as far as what might happen in this sort of quasi-apocalyptic situation. But it's very simplistically written, and uses an annoying amnesia trope.

I found that it read like a first draft. Needs a bit more polishing up and filling out.

Marysue Gulick says

I'm a bit biased, but Stephanie's book is really well put together. It gives plenty of food for thought about what people would face with none of the luxuries we take for granted today. One of Stephanie's strengths is in how she has her characters relate to each other. They are portrayed seamlessly, and the dialogue is especially realistic, sometimes funny, and totally believable. This book flows easily and is a relatively quick read. I highly recommend it!

Jeffery Moulton says

Okay, this book isn't that good. The writing is terrible, the perspective keeps shifting, the dialogue is unrealistic, the characters are one note, the plot is predictable, and someone needs to teach the writer how to "show not tell".. Oh, and for the most part the human characters don't seem to really represent the human race (who starts building a wall around their town after only 10 days of a blackout? Why not go for help or to find out if anyone else knows anything? And in 4 months they never had anyone stop by to start trade or just looking for answers or something? Really?). And don't get me started on the whole romance part, which felt so shoehorned in, it was ridiculous (she can't go a few months without her husband before lusting after a guy 10 years her junior? Really?).

But, even with all the flaws, the book was strangely compelling. For one thing, even though it kind of hit you over the head with them, some of the ideas and analysis of how humankind would react if it were to lose all

power were interesting and even thought-provoking. Mixing the plot with discussions about literature was a nice touch (who would have thought a discussion of *Pride and Prejudice* would be so apt in a post-apocalyptic world?). And even though the characters are all one note and Molly (one of the two the main characters) was something of an idiot, you cared about them.

In many ways, this book deserves to receive a lower rating, but it had so many redeeming qualities that I consider it a 3.5. It's bad while somehow being surprising and driving you forward. I was compelled to finish because I really wanted to know how it ended. And while the ending won't win any awards for daring or originality (or even believability), it was both effective and satisfying.

So do I recommend this book? Probably not, but I wouldn't dissuade anyone from reading it either. It's a mixed bag as a whole, but individual parts are surprisingly good.

Ashley says

I was anxious to read this after reading what it was about, I haven't read many books like this. The beginning didn't hold my attention, I had to push myself through. But then I got really into it and couldn't put it down! I really like that it was based on a little community coming together to do the best they could to survive and either ride it out or start up a new way of life. I enjoyed all the twists and turns Gary went through and even though I was expecting the end to happen like it did, I still enjoyed the way it came together. It was definitely a great read!

Rich Meyer says

"Vapid" is the best word I can use to describe this book. Predictable, dull, and way too similar to Pat Frank's *Alas Babylon* to be considered anything but a poor copy of that much superior and landmark novel. The modern world shuts down, but this two little communities don't run out of food at any time? Just a few vagabonds and thieves besetting the community. Mere months to build a four-mile wall around the community, with no heavy equipment? And, months after the event, enough of the power grid remains in perfect shape so someone flicks a switch and the power comes back on? No maintenance and everything just works again? Yeah, sure.

It's too bad. The threat of an EMP is actually quite real, but this fanciful portrayal of life after one is just far too unbelievable. The characters don't help matters by being cardboard cutouts, and the writing style is so leaden that a reader looks upon the advancing chapter numbers with the hope the next one will be the last. And then to have the whole thing wrapped up in a very unsatisfactory coda ... well, I probably won't be looking out for *The Blackout II: Electric Boogaloo* anytime soon.

Ari says

Ugh what rating to give? Writing was awful, kept switching tenses. The ending was far too abrupt... Seriously, that's it? Intriguing premise though.

Katie Sundahl says

fairly stupid. Not much to the plot, very predictable.

Jannah says

Review coming soon...

Jacob O'connor says

I feel a little guilty writing this, as if in a million years the author might stumble across this, but this might have been the worst book I've ever actually completed. There were typos, editorial errors, shifting perspectives, violations of omniscience. Really it served to make me appreciate how well written some of the other books I've read over the last year were.

I love these apocalyptic themes, though. They're popular these days. I guess we all feel like things have been going too well - progressing too quickly. Disasters like Katrina remind us how fragile civilization can be.

Stephanie Erickson had some cool ideas, and she thought of some elements that I wouldn't have. Still, the central catastrophe was pretty implausible. The characters were thin, and she failed to capture the suspense she was going for. This one wasn't for me.

Marion Moffat says

I liked the story line. There were some interesting ideas of what may happen in a apocalyptic world, but the book lacked depth, the characters were shallow, too "nice". Shame as I think it had potential
