

No Light

Devi Mara

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"Name?" he demanded.

"Sarah Mackenzie." She swallowed hard. She would be like the ones who had fallen, her remains something to be cleaned from the floor.

"Age?"

She tried not to tense when he brought his face to her neck and inhaled deeply.

"Twenty-two." The lie tried to stick in her throat.

He pulled back and gave her a dark look. "Try again."

"Eighteen," she whispered, tensing when his lips pulled back from his teeth in a shark smile.

"A lie, Sarah? How nice that you are not as innocent as you look."

In The Corridor, there are the immortal Dems and the human handlers who guard them. When the leader of the Dems gets a handler straight out of training, she is not expected to live beyond her first day. She is everything he hates and he is everything she fears, but an accident permanently binds them together. With corruption growing among the humans and the threat of war, they must escape The Corridor and find common ground in a place with No Light.

No Light Details

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From Reader Review No Light for online ebook

Rosalie Williams says

This was an extremely pleasant surprise. From the beginning of the book the dark descriptions set the scene for a frigid future. Sarah has had to replace her older brother as a handler of the Dems, an immortal race of aliens imprisoned by humanity. Far more powerful than humans, and sporting a deep hatred of the entire race, things don't look good for the tiny Sarah and her new job with one of the most violent of the Dems. But as Sarah learns more about the world of the Dems, it becomes clear there is far more about their imprisonment—and her prisoner—than anyone expected.

There were monsters here. Monsters who wore the skins of men.

You wouldn't be able to tell from the cover, but the writing in this is extremely good. Aside from the fact that the author uses commas entirely inappropriately, however by the end it was easy to ignore their existence and enjoy the content. This is the first prison book where the two main characters have actually had a bad relationship to begin with. It's not insta-love, not even close. Farran is positively horrid, and plays the part of a violent prisoner extremely well. There is a lot of violence against Sarah by him, and in the beginning I was questioning the possibility of them ever being together. But if I could say one thing about this book, it's the phenomenal character development. Every single main character changes throughout the course of the book, and usually for the better.

''I wasn't sure if you would come for me,'' she whispered.
''I will always come for you.''

The only critique I have is that some parts of the book—especially the dialogue—could be rather unclear at times, particularly in the beginning. Some bits of the plot didn't come across as well as they could have. The other issue I had was with Sarah. Now to be fair, I see why her behavior was what is was, but how weak she is really became annoying sometimes. Lately all the empowered heroines have been bothersome, because not every girl has some special ability or deep-rooted power that will eventually surface so she can kick ass. Some women are just normal, and get scared, and can't do karate, so I was open to a character who was a little more normal than the typical heroine these days. But, she could have stood up for herself a bit more. Baring that in mind, she did gain self respect throughout the book, and that was a big part of her change in the story.

Overall this was a very original storyline I haven't read yet, and it was a book I read in one day. Be aware that parts will be confusing at times, but the conclusion is well crafted and sums everything up quite well.

Fridayschild2012 says

To be honest I have not finished reading this book and currently at around 18% in reader. But God, the h makes me cringe. Her only major dialouge is 'i'm sorry', that statement is repeated at least 15 times till now. I just want to snap off her neck. I have read many books with TSTL hs', but this one is the first where the h is too stupid to speak!

The word building, sentences everything is done well and flow is easy to read, but whenever the h comes

into picture, the pace drags, which is unfortunate as she is a central character:(

I will read this, but probably not at my usual pace. Disappointing as of now.

Shelley says

This is a tantalising tale, one that as you are reading it draws you in and makes you absolutely intrigued as to what is going on.

Sarah works as a Handler in the Corridor looking after Dems. Her family have looked after the same Dem for years. She is only the 4th women to work on the Corridor. She isn't supposed to have the job, that was supposed to go to her older twin brother. She forms a strange bond with the Dem in her charge, one that neither of them really understand to begin with.

The book is very interesting but there are times when you are left wondering what is actually going on as key information is not explained. They talk about a Dem contract, others, the founding and the hunters: all of which are mentioned but not explained which is slightly frustrating. It's still a good book but could have done with slight improvements

Kelly says

I enjoyed this book a lot. Many of the reviews I read stated how they felt the character Sarah was too weak with all her "I'm sorrys" and such. I completely disagree. From reafing the story and learning of her life you come to understand what makes her like this, why she is meak and has no real back bone. But the wonderful part of this book is seeing her character grow and get stronger and more confident.

I do agree with the reviews I read that stated that they wish their was more information on the Dems and why they originally came to earth however since this is only the first installment of the series I figure at some point it will be explained more then it was.

Melissa Dukes says

What happened?

the entire plot is very confusing... with the author giving certain details of a foggy background throughout of what happened to this race or why they were imprisoned in the first place, but even in the end you are left with more questions on why... I think it would have been great if the author spent more time setting the foundation and then exploring the actual emotions / reasoning behind the characters emotions or changes thereof. overall I was into it, but after finishing it I was severely disappointed with all the loose ends which should have been tied up.

Cass says

OK....I REALLY ONLY HAVE ONE COMPLAINT ABOUT THIS BOOK gggrrrr! Sara has got to be the most, weak heroine I have ever read about. REALLY !!! She has no back bone or fire. I am truly disgusted with this caricature. OK just had to get that off my chest! On that note, I'm pleased with the rest of this book. This was a really a great book!!

Liz johnson says

I really enjoyed this story for its genre. It is romantic but it is not steamy. I didn't mind though because I loved the story. The romance and the tension was enough, to hold my interest without the raunchy sex I have become accustomed to. I am not saying I wouldn't mind a bit more of that in a future book, if at all possible, now they are in an established relationship it would be appropriate to the story, however the story stands on its own without this.

The world building was very interesting. I thought the believe systems and hierarchies within the world were great. I liked the idea of this ancient and long lived civilisation and there views of the human race. It will be interesting to see how this continues in the next book.

I admit I found the heroine Sarah frustrating at first, she was very timid and kept apologising all the time, but after a while that did stop and also it kind of played a small part in the plot.

The world building was amazing in my opinion.

Sarah had literally one week of training to become the handler to a very dangerous alien called Farran. She was never meant to have that job, her twin brother was, so she missed years of training. If you know that you might understand the mistakes she keeps making at first. She has also been brought up to be second best so she has additional issues.

Farran is stunning in my opinion as the leader of the Dems race on earth. At first when reading this I couldn't help but thinking of Doms and their submissives. Dems / Doms get it? Not sure if that was what the author was thinking of but that was the vibe of the story, even though it didn't go forward that way in the traditional sense. So in other words this was not an erotic tale but that was the tone to me. It was sexy. Farron was arrogant, strong and considering he was the slave, the captive, he was in command.

There was humour in the story and also Sarah became stronger as it progresses and she was a likeable character.

I liked the fact that she was not TSTL. I hate heroines who do stupid things that would get anyone else killed but are always saved only because the hero loves them even if they dont realise it yet. Her reaction, though at first annoying, were realistic.

There was a good story in the Dems fight for freedom and the human /Dem dynamic. Cant wait for the next one.

Sadie Forsythe says

This book was at best OK. The actual writing itself is fine, though it needed another edit, but the story is so full of inconsistencies, insubstantial world-building, poor character development and absent emotional

growth that it pains me to discuss it.

I'll start with Sarah. For 2/3 of the book, she is such a limp noodle, so weak and scared of everything that she literally can't even communicate in complete sentences, just stutters and apologies. Then for the last 1/3, she miraculously, with no apparent instigation for change, becomes a strong-willed, brave, stand-up for herself and those she loves, fighter and I was left thinking, 'this is not the same girl.' Her character was wholly inconsistent.

Then there is Farran. He too has an instant and unfollowable change of temperament. For 2/3 of the book, he's gruff and unfeeling, hates humans and barely tolerates Sarah. Then, he morphed into an expressive, demonstrative, lovely man. What? How? Why?

The plot...it makes no sense. The Dems are imprisoned on what I assume is Earth. They are bigger and significantly stronger than humans. They can see in complete darkness, heal almost instantly and are maybe psychic. But they are guarded by a single person with nothing more than a stun gun. What's more, they always seemed to be alone with that guard, or at least Sarah and Farran do.

Plus, it's inferred that Sarah is assigned to Farran because she's the only day guard in the current training class, therefore the only one available. But what makes a day guard, morning guard or night guard different is never addressed. If it's just preference for time of shift (and it's shown guards can change shifts) why does it matter? Even more to the point, couldn't someone cover the shift long enough for Sarah to at least get trained?

Plus (again), if a Dem has three guards, why is the day guard the only one referred to as 'his handler?' What about the other two, do they not count and if not, why not? Nothing about the prison-setting, handler/guard set up makes any sense. NOTHING.

Then there is the Marking (which I suppose is intended as the romance). Farran marked Sarah by accident. That's right he didn't mean to and he even actively disliked and was disgusted by her at the time and for most of the book. But that marking, which should take years to develop is unusually strong, but we're never told why. And in and among all this being disgusted by Sarah and Sarah being terrified of Farran, they're supposed to have fallen in love. I saw no indication of this until BAM love. But it's anyone's guess what it's based on. She'd hardly even been able to speak to him and he did nothing but snarl and bark at her.

Then there is the world-building...oh, wait, no there isn't. There really isn't any world-building to speak of, sorry.

There are also some really cliché scenes. For example, the alternative love interest taking her clothes shopping and changing the ugly duckling into a beautiful swan with the help of his riches and a good sales girl. Meh. This same theme is echoed in Farran picking out Sarah's clothes for her. Because, obviously, what a girl looks like and how she visually presents herself is sooo important.

Lastly, (or the last thing I'll mention for fear of appearing to attack a book) some of the plot-devices are extremely obvious. As an example, Farran has no problem understanding humanity or communicating. (In fact, for much of the book I wondered how everyone did communicate so easily—newly arrived aliens even using English when conversing among themselves, for example.) But toward the end he is painfully dense and unable to understand why he's ineffectively communicated an important point, which leads to Sarah running out and committing the requisite TSTL acts and obviously needing rescue. The set up on that scenario was so obvious I could have provided bullet points before reading it. Similarly, Sarah's inability to

see the obvious so that the author could drag it out as a big 'Ta-Da' at the end was worth at least one eye-roll.

The writing does have an appreciable eerie feel to it. I liked Farran's Colonels. They were funny. I liked that Luke seemed to have a little grey to his character. He genuinely seemed to want to help Sarah, but was in too deep to be able to do it. I liked that the Dems actually committed violence that supported the claim that they were dangerous, as opposed to the reader being told they're dangerous but never seeing anything to prove it. I'll even grant that the boook lacked the normal NA angst about sex, for which I'll thank every literary god there is. So, it's not that there wasn't anything I liked about the book. But the dislikes outnumbered the likes by a significant amount. (And the totally sappy ending was my final straw really. *shudder*)

Anna says

I did not fully understand what was happening throughout most of the story and not a lot of facts have been given here, but surprisingly the book did not only work for me, it had me completely engrossed in the story trying to figure out what was what and I practically flew through it.

The writing was great and I liked that all those things that usually annoy me were somehow presented in a way that did not bother me at all.

I had an amazing time reading it and I fully intend to pick up the next book in the series.

C.M. Lema says

I found No Light by accident and let me tell you. I am one happy girl right now.

Let's begin with the stairs, scary scene it got me hooked

they gave me the creeps, but then again nothing on The Corridor is harmless.

Meet Sarah

She is duty bound to take her injured twin's post on The Corridor, which is the prison to an inmortal species called Dems. As a guard she is supposed to see to the Dem assigned to her at The Corridor. Lucky for her she gets Farran, the leader, the most violent Dem. She has alot against her, she is nervous due to this being her first assignment, she is physically weak due to her parents abuse and neglect, and she is unsure of herself as well. She has a strong sense of right and wrong and her loyalty is off the charts. She is set to guard Farran, her superior knowingly setting her up for failure but she doesnt fail. She ends up being marked by Farran. Farran's feelings for Sarah are confusing yet something tells him he can't lose her even if he feels such dislike towards humans.

I loved this story it is different from the usual sci-fi romances out there, it just gets a hold of you, it has action, romance, mistery. I cant wait for the next installment.

Jen > says

I love finding hidden gems and No Light by Devi Mara was such a find. I was intrigued by the description

and other reviews of the book, but didn't really know what to expect. I've never read anything quite like this novel, so it is difficult to classify. I would describe No Light as romantic, futuristic, science fiction, but it has an almost Gothic feeling to it. There is something sinister afoot and you're pulled into discovering it along with Sarah from the get go.

I loved the mystery surrounding the Dem, an alien race imprisoned in The Corridor, an underground facility on a futuristic Earth. Sarah works there as a novice handler, and she is assigned to the Dem, Farran (coded Black, as being highly aggressive and volatile). He is a high-ranking General in the Dem society, which is based on hierarchies of respect. This is an immortal alien culture, and it is engrossing to discover along with Sarah the intricacies upon which they function--especially what it means to be Marked by a Dem.

This is in no way an erotic story, with only one non-descriptive bedroom scene, but the sexual undercurrent is strong throughout the book, and I simply had to keep reading to discover what would happen next. I didn't really mind the lack of eroticism at all because I was so otherwise engrossed with this book, and as such I highly recommend you read No Light for yourself--especially if you want to experience a cross-genre futuristic, science fiction, Gothic romance like nothing else out there.

Solmarie says

The Corridor

I have to admit I'm a little surprised at just how much I actually enjoyed this book. In a place called The Corrider remain an alien race in captivity. After six centuries of imprisonment their leader Farran has come to expect no surprises. Until the day Sarah Mackenzie walks in with a new batch of handler recruits. The oldest child of every family must become a handler and that task has fallen onto her shoulders. She is put in charge of Farran, the deadliest of the Dem. She makes mistake after mistake and still he doesn't kill her. He hates her and all of humanity for his imprisonment but after accidentally (or so he thinks) marking her as his "marked" things get complicated. There is corruption all around them just waiting for a mistake. When I first read the bio on this book I assumed it would be more sci-fi like. Instead what I got was a world of intrigue that grew on me the more I read. The author sucked me in to the point I was sad to see the story end. I felt a part of the story. I would really like to see a follow-up to this one.

Deborah Cheng says

I sort of expected it to be a boring sci-fi novel, but after reading a chapter into it, it started to peak my interest and it was hard to put the book down. I like the plot of the book, however, some of the characters I disliked very much including the heroine, who not very brave and was made a little too weak for my liking since she stutters too much and apologizes a lot. But I like how the author kept the dems, a race of nonhuman creatures, even if they look human, shrouded in mystery, making you want to keep reading to find more more about them, wanting to know how they came to this world and the reason why. It's a page turner, reeling you in, wanting to know what happens next. It's a little confusing at first in the beginning, but it starts to make more sense as you keep reading on. It's a work of literature; unique and amazing.

namericanwordcat says

This book made my head hurt. I read the whole thing mad.

The book is written so at first we have no idea what is going on. The heroine understands very little and we get to know even less that she does.

It is all very foggy. Then we learn more but never really enough. Then, the badass immortal alien prison falls for a dish towel heroine who isn't really but how would we or he know.

They take forever to have sex which makes sense given the prison revolt and all but it is still super odd in terms of romantic love.

A more fog rolls in but the action picks up.

The tone has a lot in common with horror romance but not.

So, I was compelled by something to finish the book and was happier by the end but disgruntled feeling that writing played games with me and I never attached to anything.

Then, I read the next book in the series which is much clearer.

So, I wouldn't recommend this book. I some how got sucked in the vortex of trying to figure it out but didn't enjoy myself and I need joy.

Anita Lock says

Nineteen-year-old Sarah Mackenzie is thrust into the underground prison system of The Corridor, where the Dems, an immortal alien race of brawny giants, are held in captivity. Not becoming of her petite stature, Sarah has taken over the precarious position of her twin brother, who lies comatose in a hospital. Now a Handler and the only woman who works in The Corridor, she is in charge of a six-foot-seven-inch cantankerous Dem named Farran. After a vicious altercation, Farran unintentionally marks (or transfers some of his healing power onto) Sarah, and in a matter of hours her horrendous wounds disappear. The strange encounter not only leads her to research this so-called tainted breed, but what, if any, is the association between Dems and the mysterious deaths in the Mackenzie genealogy. Unbeknownst to Sarah, her curiosity and special marking coincides with a chain of events that could lead to the complete annihilation of her people, the Ameretats.

In her debut novel, the first in the Dems Trilogy, Devi Mara spins a story unique to her "cross genre romance" writing style. Penned in third person, No Light is set during the year 2024 in a place on earth called Ameretat. The balance of society there is questionable since its citizens don't see anything wrong with slavery, and in this case, the Dems. But some people, most notably those of the Mackenzie family, feel differently about these aliens. It is their differences that have earmarked them as troublemakers, which Sarah is not aware of until she learns the truth from her clandestine investigations.

Among her tight list of protagonists and antagonists, Mara covers a wide persona spectrum, each with annoying qualities to rub readers just enough the wrong way yet entice them to keep rooting for the weak ones to get stronger and vice versa. Sarah is constantly making mistakes in The Corridor, especially her biggest faux pas of incessant apologies to Farran. Though her fumbles are nothing less than maddening, there are other aspects to her quirkiness that makes her rather appealing. Farran's abrasive personality is only matched by his condescendence. Yet there is a soft side that slowly pops out as he gets to know Sarah. Keane, Sarah's supervisor and Lonan, Farran's brother, are, no doubt, villainous to the nth degree.

Much of Mara's plot is edgy. Scenes in The Corridor – underground – are rigid and sterile, and complement perfectly with Sarah's fragility against the uncompromising Farran. The same goes for scenes set in the city – above ground – during the dead of winter. Both settings leave readers feeling unsettled. Mara adds to the icy atmosphere by using conversational language is chopped off and often left for readers to inference. Amid the disconcerting surroundings, Mara keeps her storyline fresh and moving by including an undercurrent of romance between Farran and Sarah's love-hate relationship, and another possible suitor, Luke Williams. Interspersed with tender as well as comedic moments that appear out of the blue, Mara does a stellar job of incorporating elements associated with enslavement, such as power struggles and war.

No Light is entertaining and riveting, and I give it a rating of 5 out of 5 stars. Mara's narrative offers a refreshingly creative twist to romance with absolutely no clichés. The second book in this trilogy, Darkness Blooming, is also earmarked for 2014. And though No Light has no closing cliffhanger, this reader is definitely looking forward to the next in the series!

Anita Lock, Freelance Book Reviewer