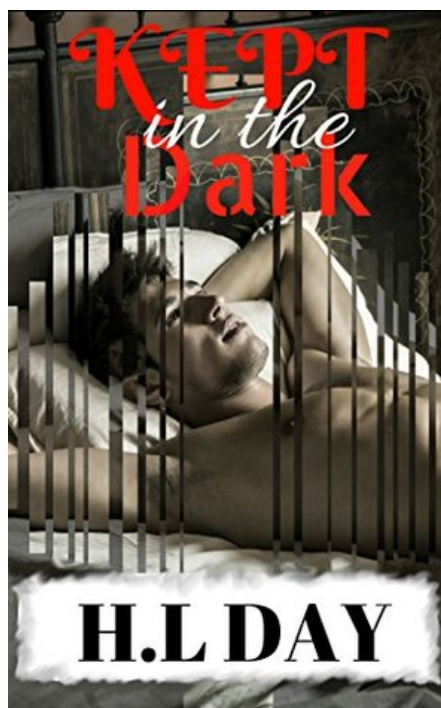




Kept in the Dark

H.L. Day

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Struggling actor Dean, only escorts occasionally to pay the bills. So, his first instinct on being offered a job with a strange set of conditions is to turn it down. No date. Don't switch the lights on. Don't touch him. I mean, what's that all about? What's the man trying to hide? Dean certainly doesn't expect sex with a faceless stranger to spark so much passion inside him. It's just business though, right? He can put a stop to it whenever he wants.

When Dean meets Justin—a scarred, ex-army soldier unlucky in love. Dean's given a chance at a proper relationship. He can see past the scars to the man underneath. He's everything Dean could possibly wish for in a boyfriend: kind, caring and sweet. All Dean needs to do is be honest. Easy, right? But, Justin's holding back and Dean can't work out why. But whatever it is, it's enough to give him second thoughts. They both have secrets which could shatter their fledgling relationship. After all, secrets have a nasty habit of coming out eventually. The question is when they do, will they be able to piece their relationship back together? Or will they be left with nothing but memories of bad decisions and the promise of the love they could have had, if only they'd both been honest and fought harder.

Kept in the Dark Details

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From Reader Review Kept in the Dark for online ebook

Tanja says

I was surprised by this book and in a very good way. I loved it. H.L. Day is a new-to-me author, and I am very glad I got to know her. It was an amazing story. Beautifully written with great characters and an intriguing and original plot. It could have been predictable, but the author managed to keep surprising me. Once I started reading, I couldn't put the book down.

Dean is a struggling actor, waiter by day and escort by night, who just goes that extra step further from being an escort to more. He can't say no to the money. He is kept in the dark by his client, figuratively and literally. Their meeting is a dark room with a minimum of words. But who needs words when hands can do the talking for you. And Jay is a master at stroking the best releases out of him.

Then Dean meets Justin, and there is an instant connection. Justin is badly scarred, but Dean sees more than puckered skin. Now he is torn between his attraction for the mysterious Jay and the gorgeous, scarred Justin. The story is told from Dean's POV, and although normally I am not a fan as I like to get to know both characters, in this story, it is done to perfection. It makes this story so much more special. As reader, I figured out rather quickly what happened, but that didn't diminish the pleasure I had reading this book. The reason for this is that the story is told from Dean's POV. He is kept in the dark, and by proxy, the reader as well. It was fascinating to read when and how the affair would unfold.

Dean and Justin got tangled up in a web of lies, and the ending could have been like any other book. But just like the rest of the story, it was that bit different and completely satisfying.

JustJen "Miss Conduct" says

I had a feeling from reading the blurb that this would end up being a sweet story, which isn't normally my go to type of story. However, I also love stories about healing, second chances, etc., and this one delivered that as well.

You can pretty much figure out what happens from the blurb, but there is a lot more to this story. Dean accepts the escort job with the strange rules – absolutely no lights, no touching, and very little talking. But the money is good, and Dean quickly realizes he is getting a lot more out of the strange visits than he expected. Even though the rules and mystery seem odd, and his best friend tries to get him to stop the now weekly appointments, Dean finds it difficult to stay away.

Not long after the appointments started, Dean and Justin meet while Justin is trying to get through another failed date. Dean, being a genuine nice guy, steps in and offers to date Justin, not caring about Justin's scars. Their relationship grows, but Justin's reluctance to take things further puts Dean in a bit of a quandry. If only he could get what he gets out of each relationship all in one, he would be set.

When the truth comes out, things take a bit of a down turn, and it takes a while for Dean to realize his wishes can be granted and he could have the best of both worlds. Throw in some miscommunication and some grovelling before things get back on track. There is a lot of back and forth for these two with Dean feeling guilty for continuing with his escort appointments while pursuing a relationship with Justin, and Justin flip flops on booking Dean and cancelling the appointments, but it is all good and comes from a good place. I loved getting to see these guys get the breaks they each so deserved and to find that with each other.

As I said, this was a sweet, heartwarming story that just makes you feel good and want to root for them the

whole time. It was clear that Justin deserved to have someone to love and Dean was perfect for him in so many ways. This was my first book by this author, and I will definitely be on the lookout for more.

Review written for Love Bytes Reviews.

Gabriella (Gabi) says

Imagine that you can't see, totally in the dark... and you're at the mercy of one man. You don't know how he looks like, who he is. Maybe he's a murderer, maybe he's just ugly or older than you're grandfather. But you don't even care, because that man makes you feel so good, and while you're lying underneath him, you can imagine that he's the sexiest man on earth, or the hot guy next door, who's doing all kinds of things to you. It's a bit scary, alone with a total stranger, but that's just makes it more thrilling. The creak of the bed when he shifts, the opening and closing of the nightstand's drawer, the grunts he makes, his breathing as it accelerates in time with your own, until you can't hold back anymore. Imagine that you can't see, totally in the dark, you're hands are bound... and you're at the mercy of one man....

That was just one snippet from the book. Don't get carried away, it's not about the sex. There's no BDSM, and stuff like that. It's emotional and extremely sensual.

I want that first sex scene to play out in real life!!! Only I wouldn't be so lucky. :D :P So hot!

This story called out for dramatics, the calm before the storm, big revelations.

Loved it! Loved it! Loooved it!

annob says

Several positive reviews from my GR friends made me want to read this book, and I wasn't disappointed. A rather adorable take on the theme of inner versus outer beauty.

The writing flowed easily, low angst and a lot of steam. The meetings with a stranger in total darkness was titillating, the rest of the story with the relationship struggles and failed dates a pleasant read too. It was a bonus to find a whole cast of side characters who all fit nicely into the plot. I will definitely check out the rest of the books by this new to me author.

AussieMum says

3.5 stars

I liked most of this. As a reader it's pretty easy to work out what's going to happen but Justin really tugged at my heartstrings and the writing was good enough to keep this interesting.

"...we had something really good. Both in here, and in the real world. You may have thought it was two separate things, two separate people, but I knew for much longer that the man I was falling for in the dark, and the man I absolutely and completely fell for in the light were one and the same."

Valerie says

This book took me completely by surprise, and I was blown away by how much I loved it.

Dean, who is a struggling actor, a waiter, and an escort, meets Justin through his escort job, although he has no idea. You'll have to read it in order to understand. Dean is the opposite of what you think of when you think of an actor. He's sweet, caring, and goes out of his way to make people comfortable and happy. Justin, who has burns from his time in the Army, is a little hesitant around others because they stare at his scars and never look underneath to the person he is.

I don't want to give too much of the book away because trust me, it's completely worth the read, but the relationship between Justin and Dean is original and the way it's written kept me reading the entire book in one sitting. There is miscommunication and how it's handled is a bit cliched, but while other characters won't admit they acted poorly, I was happy to see them taking ownership of their actions.

This is a wonderful book and I highly recommend reading Kept in the Dark. You won't be disappointed!

Fani *loves angst* says

4.5 stars

My suggestion would be to read this book without reading the blurb here in GR. I started reading last evening and could barely put it down so I could see where the mystery with 'Tuesday man' would lead. I'm very glad I was left in the dark for almost 50% of the book, it made the story fly for me and I think most readers would prefer it that way as well.

All in all, a delightful mix of The Truth About Riley and 'You've got mail', with just the right doses of angst and sweetness to keep it from becoming too dark or too sugary. I've already read and enjoyed A Temporary Situation from the same author, and now, after reading and loving this as well, I'm adding her to my auto-buy list.

Truuss says

Dean and Justin

Dean has more than one job. He works at a bar, is original an actor, but also works as an escort. When his escort boss calls him it's simple.... an address, no touching and everything in the complete dark. Simple....

The man in the dark whispers more than speak and his touch is very arousing... after he let Dean come hard he has to leave immediately....Dean thinks it's a one time thing only.... there is a next appointment....and the stranger in the dark wants him again...

Dean never had a second 'date' Again he may come hard but has to leave.... Dean is dying to touch but it's not allowed. His has to be inventive, he can listen, and smell...and feel....

When he accidentally touch the man pure because his head is high....it's all over... he has to leave and there

will be no new date...

Meanwhile Dean meets Justin an scarred ex soldier. Dean isn't impressed by the scars and sees a gorgeous man behind them. They date and have a wonderful time together...only something is off....with Justin. Both men have secrets and that's exactly in the end what's not working between them.... When all secrets are open on the table Dean is deeply ashamed and hurt and can't face Justin anymore. Justin has to go deepvery deep to reconnect with Dean.

A more than wonderful read. The point of view was good done. We as reader know more than Dean himself and that was for the dynamic awesome. It could have been predictable but it was absolutely not. The topic is considered done.

It was a very sensual and intense read. The personalities were engaging and when everything went down the way of redeeming was fabulous!

Written in a captivating and endearing way. Some part are hot and steamy and the building up of their relationship really really well done. I want to recommend this one highly!

Kindly received an arc from the author

Lyn says

Dean's behavior towards the end, ruined what would have been one the be best hurt/comfort reads for me so far this year. It's such a shame he selfishly focus on his hurt feelings instead of behaving like an adult.

Moony Eliver says

[the MC'

Xia Xia Lake says

I liked it. A cute, angsty and heartwarming story.

Dean is an aspiring actor with bills to pay. Acting is not so successful so he has to wait tables to pay the rent. When his car breaks down and other expenses come pilling in he takes a third job and becomes a male escort.

The chance of a double pay makes him accept a contract with peculiar rules: go to the client's house, get up the stairs, find the bedroom on the left and don't comment on the darkness inside. Don't open any lights, don't try to touch the client, just follow the instructions he gives.

Nervous and afraid he might meet Hannibal Lecter on the other side of the door, Dean enters the bedroom.

The client whispers (that was a creepy one) to take his clothes off and lay on a bed that would be found four steps in front of him. Then proceeds in giving Dean the best sex he ever had.

They would turn it into a regular weekly affair. Dean would wonder about the mystery of the man, why the darkness, why no touching, but none of his thoughts would bring him close to the truth. The truth about his client preferring not to be seen is sadder than he could have imagined.

I thought it was going to be a kinky book, but it was the opposite. I actually found the love story quite cute. There is this annoying moment near the end when Dean acts like a teenager but it all turns HEA in the end.

Wynne Katherine says

MC was way too immature for my taste.

It's like reading a high school boy going through puberty.

Not my thing.

DNF.

Blog : Bloggity Blog

Julia Begander says

I honestly don't get why this book has such great ratings...

Both characters had **major issues** (as in they were complete headcases) and their relationship was seriously fucked up.

Why on earth did I even finish that book?! I feel like I deserve an award for that...

Crystal N says

4.5 - I loved this one. So much sweeter than the blurb makes it sound like. It's still sexy as all get out, but I found myself smiling in this one. A lot.

Leyna says

2-2.5 stars maybe?

I should definitely rate books just right after reading them because the longer I sit and think about my review, the fewer stars I give;)

'Kept in the Dark' is a contemporary 'Beauty and the Beast' tale. My first thought: "I really enjoyed this one". But then I started to have second thoughts [and really I hate to have them ;)] and the results of my overthinking aren't that satisfying.

It's a very predictable and quick read but it really isn't this book's main flaw. It's the main characters.

You can't start a relationship by lying. And both Justin and Dean aren't without a guilt here. Justin, because he omitted the relevant fact that (view spoiler). Dean because he practically cheated on Justin with a mysterious man (view spoiler). Then he reacted immaturely when everything went out in the open. But after a long enough sulking we kiss kiss, have sex and everything is fine again ;)
