



Being Light

Helen Smith

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Being Light is a surreal comic novel by the bestselling author of Alison Wonderland.

Being Light Details

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Author : Helen Smith

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From Reader Review Being Light for online ebook

Jaidis Shaw says

If you have had the pleasure of reading other works from Helen Smith, such as Alison Wonderland, then you will love reading Being Light. Since I enjoyed Ms. Smith's writing style in Alison Wonderland, I was excited to begin reading Being Light to see if it had the same quirkiness that I had grown fond of in Alison Wonderland. Helen Smith's Being Light does not disappoint! We start off by meeting Roy, who is abruptly carried away in a bouncy toy in strong winds. When it crashes, Roy believes his first thought and that is that he is dead and has woken up in heaven, as he finds himself in an angel's embrace. We follow his wife Sheila throughout the story who is dedicated to finding her lost husband even though her sanity may have been impacted a bit in the process. Being Light does involve other characters as well and even though their stories may make them seem unrelated at certain times, in the end it all comes together and we realize just how small the world really is. If you want a quick and easy read that is full of comedic quirkiness, then I suggest you give Being Light a read. I'm looking forward to reading more of Helen Smith's works!

Debra Martin says

I was lucky to win this book in a contest and looked forward to reading it. I wasn't disappointed, it was a quirky and fun read.

Michele Brenton says

I've read this book a couple of times now. It improves on re-reading and it was pretty darn good on the first reading to begin with.

The new cover design (my copy is one of the original covers) gives a much better impression of the contents. Bright, original full of colour and life. A fascinatingly quirky read. My mother enjoyed it too :)

Dawn Judd says

This was an interesting book. Right from the beginning Helen gets your attention, drawing you into the story. I found myself wanting to find out what would happen to Roy. Would he discover the truth? Being Light, like real life, takes people and events that are seemingly unrelated and twists them all together, showing us that everything is connected somehow. The lives of each of the characters started out looking like separate stories, that in the end, were neatly tied together. When I first finished the book, I thought it seemed a little unresolved. But after pondering it, I thought to myself that Sheila's reaction might be the same reaction I would have in that situation. In the end, each of the characters were shocked by what they found, and their reaction was realistic and uncomfortable. Helen did an excellent job of connecting the dots, so to speak. The writing is beautifully done, and entertaining throughout. I think anyone would enjoy reading this book.

Imogen Rose says

When Roy Travers floats away in a bouncy castle and then wakes up in the care of a stranger, he assumes that he has died and gone to heaven. His wife, Sheila, assumes that aliens have abducted him. So, in addition to taking to wearing aluminum wrapping at the tip of her ears (to ensure that she makes herself available to any extraterrestrial messages) she also enlists the help of a private investigator, Alison (from Alison Wonderland), to help her track him down.

Helen Smith takes on an amusing journey into the minds of her absurd, colorful characters. This is a fun read that kept me on my toes. This is not a book I felt I could put down and then easily pick up again, simply because of the POV changes. The voice changed often and sometimes unexpectedly, from paragraph to paragraph. So, I read it in two sittings and enjoyed it immensely.

Kathleen says

GOODREADS FIRSTREADS GIVEAWAY

Oh my, I feel put off by the cover but I'm ready to overcome my prejudices and dig in.

This book is a witty three-ring circus. Hang on to your popcorn and settle in for the big finale.

I am going to seek out more from this writer.

Anastasia says

Thanks for the win!!!

Scott Collins says

After reading Alison Wonderland, I too moved pretty quickly into this book. While the characters have some of the same crazy quirks and witty humor, there is a dark side to this Being Light that wasn't there in Alison.

I really enjoy the writing style, as it feels like real life. There seems to be a certain amount of chaos, but even in the disarray, our lives are all connected. Nobody stands apart from everyone else. Our existences are filled with cause and effect. I felt she did a great job of striking that point home, at least with me.

Thanks for the read and I look forward to more!

Alice Yeh says

In a style distinctly her own, Smith tells her story through scenes, shifting between several points of views before tying the incidents together neatly by connecting the seemingly isolated dots. In this case, upwards of

eight characters are involved in a story that centers not only on a missing man, but also upon animal rights, environmentalism, the definition of emotions, and attempted communication with aliens. As with Alison Wonderland, she maintains that tongue-in-cheek tone that lends dry humor to the nonsensical musings and actions of the players in this existentialist-style performance.

With the initial take-off of the man in the inflatable house, the basis for the title seemed quite clear. In the end, however, it turns out that "being light" means much more than flying away in a child's playground; rather, it involves the struggle to let go faced by each of the characters in their various situations. The depth of the application is a stronger means of drawing together these seemingly unconnected people than the physical links of blood or employment or sex. In short, this philosophical bent allows this complex comedy to work, though I was still tempted at times to start diagramming the cast in order to remember who each member was.

In spite of its status as a sequel, *Being Light* does not draw too heavily from its predecessor, focusing instead on the story at hand. The small references did make me smile, but on the whole, I enjoyed the fact that the novel was self-contained, as it allowed for a rich literary experience without having to go back over all that happened in a previous work. The climax, or finale, rather, left me feeling much as I did after a recent viewing of Monty Python and the Holy Grail: amused, bemused, and a trifle curious because of its open-ended nature.

Overall, Smith shows a comfortable command of language, adjusting the pacing of her paragraphs with ease. The verbiage is complex without being overbearing, the dialogue witty despite a propensity towards absurdity. There were a handful of instances where a semicolon would have been more appropriate than the comma that was actually used, however, and there were several lines where it was difficult to tell what exactly the speaker was getting at. Then again, perhaps this is more of a testament to my own inattention or inability to follow the thoughts of people who are quite a ways off from the beaten path.

This book may be inappropriate for those who prefer a steady stream of action from a single point of view. There, I said it. For those who enjoy stretching their minds a bit further and piecing complex story arcs together, however, *Being Light* promises a pleasurable romp through the darkly humorous dealings of Smith's creations.

Al says

It is unlikely *Being Light* is anything like any book you've read before. There are multiple casts of characters, which in the beginning seem unrelated. Keeping track of them all is a challenge at first. One thing they all have in common is they're ... I want to say crazy. Maybe not in the sense that they're certifiable, although we do have some belief in alien abduction, so I won't rule it out. But each has plenty of quirks and eccentricities. Although not a sequel in the normal sense, Alison Wonderland (from the book of the same name) and her boss, Ella Fitzgerald (how did that name slip past me when I read Alison?), each reprise their roles.

I've read all of Smith's books that are available for the Kindle. Each time the same things stand out for me. The plots are original, inventive, and (quick, find another word for quirky) idiosyncratic. But it is the characters and the humor that draw me in, not just in their situations, but also in how Smith describes them. For example, when I read, 'We don't have a leader, here,' says the leader of the group...', I did a double take and laughed. When Smith explains the reason for the conditions inside service station lady's restrooms, I flashed on several stories from women complaining about the same, and couldn't help but chuckle. I was amused by one character's concept of heaven as being "exotic and unfamiliar, the sort of place that is

unattainable for ordinary people, like Richard Branson's island in the Caribbean." These subtle humorous moments accumulate into a fun, enjoyable read.

**Originally written for "Books and Pals" book blog. May have received a free review copy. **

Ami Blackwelder says

Being Light by Helen Smith

Helen's writing is not for everyone, her style is kind of like sushi. An Acquired taste. I think people will either get it or not.

Told in present tense, this novel does not lack for anything as many novels do with authors attempting present tense. The flow still feels natural. A clever twist of characters whose lives intersect.

With Roy disappearing, Sheila, and Ella Fitzgerald and more, we meet some of the old characters from Allison Wonderland (Book one) and a few new ones. The author, Helen Smith, cleverly wraps up each chapter with delicious details about the vital characters to the story, one by one -chapter by chapter, so as a reader we can easily digest the plot and integral people in the story.

Carried from "Heaven to Earth" and back again, we get to know Roy, Sheila, Ella and others better. She also includes a nice poem called Colours and Cherry Lip Gloss in the chapters: Colours, and Cherry Lip Gloss.

For those of you Savage Fans you will love the thirteenth chapter entitled: Truly, Madly, Deeply:) She even includes some cool and humorous drawings in the following chapter.

Helen has a very interesting voice and one not to be missed. Her prose are cleverly woven interlocking the characters, for example with the way she incorporates the Cherry Lip Gloss poetry within the prose and as part of one of the characters details as well as bringing all the characters to the final culminating end.

Finding Roy was central to the plot, but in the journey we get to meet many different and quirky people.

She shows us how all of our lives intersect with wit, humor and a unique voice. It is a very different book from others out there. Just give it a go and see for yourself!

I enjoyed this read and recommend this to young and adult readers.

Reviewed by Ami Blackwelder
Author of The Shifters of 2040

Shawna Hansen says

Loved it! I'm a big fan of twisty tales and this one ended in just the right way. Masterful, interesting and rather thought-provoking between laughs. I'm a big fan of Helen Smith's!

Lea says

Although I found the characters interesting, I have to admit that I just didn't get this one at all. It could be because I haven't read the author's previous books, or perhaps because I'm not British, but the intertwining stories just didn't resonate with me. I kept thinking there would be a final resolution that would tie it all up into a neat little package for me, but this is definitely NOT that kind of book -- all of the relationships and all of the story lines are ambiguous and open ended. As I got closer and closer to the end of the book I felt a deepening unease that I would never know what happened in the end to any of these characters -- in that I was correct. Well written, but probably a better read for those who are more comfortable than I am with stories without a cut and dried ending.

Grace Krispy says

Roy Travers is helping a friend set up a bouncy castle when the unthinkable happens; Roy is taken into the sky by a gust of wind and he floats away on the castle. His friend finds that hilarious, and it is. Hilarious ...until Roy disappears and never comes back. Roy's wife, Sheila, will stop at nothing to get her husband back, and that includes wearing a tinfoil hat and using pebbles to communicate with the aliens who have (obviously) taken him. How far will Sheila go to get her husband back?

Written by Helen Smith, this is somewhat of a sequel to "Alison Wonderland," a story that really highlighted Alison's journey to self-discovery. Although Alison is part of "Being Light," she is merely one small member of the ensemble cast, and the story is about so much more than Alison's life. Each character is connected in some way to every other member, and it is Roy's disappearance and Sheila's search for him that forms the tie between them. Each character has his or her own story and motivations, but the search for Roy eventually brings the characters together in a satisfying ending that answers most of the questions that cropped up along the way, while still leaving an opening for the imagination.

With the author's gift for cunning prose that manages to point out the absurdities of life while mixing in bizarre (yet somehow believable) situations, this book is a treat. From the attention-grabbing first scene (and creative way to create the conflict), to the compelling final culmination (the last words in the book imply the perfect image), I was engaged every step of the way. Several of the characters had similar enough names that I had to concentrate to be sure I was thinking of the proper character (Jeremy-Joey, Sheila- Sylvia), and there were enough characters that it was sometimes a bit difficult to keep track of all the characters and their connections. But the well-planned pacing of the book brought those connections together in an utterly entertaining fashion, and everything made sense after all.

The author has a way of normalizing the offbeat, and wrapping it in a tight package that encourages the reader to look at life through a slightly different lens. Fascinating and delightful, this will appeal to those who like quirky romps.

4.5 /5 stars @ MotherLode blog

Jack says

I enjoyed this more than "Alison Wonderland" - it had the same unique style but felt more structured and complete as a novel.
