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Chick lit with a lady-loving twist

“The more people who can be open about who they love, the better the world will be”

Kiki Archer describes her novels as “chick lit with a lady-loving twist”. “They’re easy-to-read, by-the-pool, packet-of-crisps, bottle-of-wine type books.” They’re also hugely popular. Kiki’s first six novels all topped the lesbian fiction charts in the UK, America and Australia. Her seventh, *Lost In The Starlight*, reached number 35 in the mainstream fiction chart as well as number one in the lesfic category. “There was one point where I was positioned, no word of a lie, underneath Peter Andre and on top of Ed Ball. As a lesbian, I’m not quite sure how I felt about that.”

Lost In The Starlight tells the story of closeted pop superstar Honey Diamond and celebrity journalist Meg. My

DIVA CHATS TO BESTSELLING LESBIAN FICTION AUTHOR, KIKI ARCHER
WORDS ROXY BOURDILLON

girlfriend and I read it aloud together like the little lesbian geeks we are and loved every minute. It’s laugh-out-loud funny, warm and engaging, much like Kiki herself. To give you a taster, two of Kiki’s favourite characters from the novel are the holistic therapists named Svetty and Kuntse. Yes, she went there. I told you she has a cracking sense of humour.

As well as introducing us to a fabulously named cast of characters, *Lost In The Starlight* addresses the question of whether or not LGBT celebs should come out. Nobody knows that singing sensation Honey is gay and her controlling but well-meaning mother (think Jane Fonda meets Peggy Peabody) wants it to stay that way. Kiki

has her own views: “You should never force anybody out, but sometimes I do believe people in the public eye have a bit of a duty because the key to acceptance is visibility. The more people who can be open about who they are and who they love, the better the world’s going to be.”

An avid user of social media, Kiki can often be found online starring in hilarious YouTube videos and chatting with her fans. She explains, “All authors have to be like that now. It’s as if the reader isn’t just buying your book, they’re buying into you as well”. She doesn’t mind though. In fact, she reckons the best part of her job is hearing from readers and “knowing that somebody else has just read your book and they now know that world you’ve created”.

Kiki’s rise to success reads like a sapphic fairytale straight from the pages of one of her novels – from secondary school PE teacher to stay-at-home mum to bestselling lesfic author. It was when her wife was away working and her two children were tucked up in bed that Kiki started writing her first novel, *But She Is My Student*. “It was that typical thing of, everybody’s got a book in them. One evening I sat down and thought, ‘Well, I’ll try.’”

Inspired by an article she’d read about young adult fiction author Amanda Hocking making millions through self-publishing, Kiki released her book independently. “We were away skiing with the family. I suddenly started to see it climbing up the lesfic charts and then it got to number one. I just feel incredibly lucky and incredibly blessed. If you asked what my ideal job would be, it would be this.”

Kiki is currently working on a screenplay adaptation of her debut novel. She’s also already begun writing her next book, a fresh spin on the classic scenario of being secretly in love with your best friend. “It’s going to touch on all the anxieties. You cannot tell your best friend because it will ruin everything and then you get the odd glimmer of hope that there might be a future.”

As a newfound Kiki Archer addict, I can’t wait. **D**

Lost In The Starlight is out now (£9.99 paperback, £3.99 eBook).
kikiarcherbooks.com