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Michael Kenton is a middle-aged man living in middle-class comfort with wife Lisa and daughters Millie and Katia. Drifting complacently towards retirement, Mike's world is turned upside-down when he is thrown unexpectedly onto the career scrapheap.

While Lisa's career sky-rockets, Mike slobbs around in his track suit playing guitar, rekindling his teenage love affair with pop music. Knowing Lisa wouldn't approve, he plots a secret 'comeback' at a grimy Crouch End bistro where music executive Ben, desperate and out of time, asks if he can enter one of Mike's songs into the Eurovision Song Contest. With nothing to lose, Mike focuses on Eurovision but quickly finds himself staring down the barrel of low level fame. His crumbling marriage now page five news, he must choose between his musical dream and mending his broken family, a task complicated by the re-appearance of ex-love of his life Faye.

A laugh-out-loud comedy about love, family, friendship and Euro- tack by acclaimed stand-up and comedy writer Simon Lipson.

Song In The Wrong Key Details

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From Reader Review Song In The Wrong Key for online ebook

Kathy says

Simon Lipson's *Song in the Wrong Key* is a humorous and sometimes poignant novel about a middle-aged man whose life is in a downward spiral. To read my review in its entirety, please visit <http://www.bookreviewsandmorebykathy....>

Nilda McLaughlin says

I received this book from a goodreads giveaway. It was a good story. I don't know if I would call it "laugh out loud" funny, but the main character was a believable goof. I loved that he was a great dad, and really wanted to be with his kids. That was his most endearing quality. I enjoyed the way he got in caught up in life. Weather he was on the up or down, his main way of living was to ride the tide. A bit more sad of a story than I expected, but the funny parts were really funny.

Debsb Debs_b_hotmail.com says

I received an author-inscribed copy of "Song in the Wrong Key" as a "First Reads" winner. I really enjoyed this story of a stuck-going-nowhere IT man/father/husband who begins the ride of his life just when he thinks he's hit bottom. The author's style is wry and witty, and thoroughly British, with lots of Brit references that I, as an American reader, didn't always get, but could figure the gist of fairly easily.

As a former theatre major in college, I could understand and identify with the protagonist's coming back to music, and falling into performing again, and the resultant high that comes from being before a loving audience.

I enjoyed the book greatly, and eagerly look forward to Simon Lipson's next endeavor (or "endeavour" for those who spell Brit). I appreciate having received a copy of "Song in the Wrong Key" through Good Reads First Read, and would highly recommend the novel to anyone who has ever wondered "whatever happened to.....", "what would I do, if given the chance....?" and "Oh, wait... what the hell do I do NOW?"

Well done, Simon - you brought a well-limned character to funny, wry life. Kudos!

Daryn Hardy says

Having been very fortunate to win this book on a good read's giveaway I was hoping it would be a mildly reasonable read but as it was a freebie I wouldn't have been too worried if it had turned out to be a stinker. Therefore I was more than pleasantly surprised to discover that Simon Lipson is an extremely talented writer who has woven a wonderfully soulful, funny and credible story around the life of Londoner Mike Kenton, IT underachiever, and his search for his long buried musical dream in the aftermath of a mid-life career crash. The quality of Simon's writing is easily on a par with anything you'll read from any rom-com authors such as

Nick Hornby, Tony Parsons, Mark Haddon or David Nicholls and he really did have me laughing out loud at several points during the story (much to my embarrassment while I was on the train). If you've ever had an unrequited love or dream never pursued or hidden away your real passion in life and got a 'real job' instead then this lovely little book will have you cheering for poor Mike all the way as he stumbles along on his path to personal redemption. I thoroughly enjoyed every page of this truly heartfelt book and later in the year will be eagerly looking out for, 'Stand-up', the author's next offering.

Dana says

It's nice to finally read an author in the romance (?) genre who doesn't subscribe to what I've seen as the "cliche" of romantic fiction. I enjoy getting a male perspective. Mr. Lipson is a skilled writer. He's taken care with his word choices, didn't settle for lazy sentence structure, and he tells a good story.

I'd not read anything in the romance, chick-lit, genres before I found out that's the genre I write (lol). Now, I'm searching for authors who do it well and from whom I can learn the nuances from. I'll be adding Mr. Lipson to that list, and am looking forward to reading his next release.

Shantanu says

A simple plot and narrative, written in an amazing, bitter sweet style, that makes it endearing to the very last page. Touches on family, friendships, loss and every human emotion that we will perhaps experience with great insensitivity.

Adriana says

This one really teeters between 4-5 stars, and since half stars are not allowed, I'm going to give it the benefit of the doubt and give it a 5. It really is as good as anything by Nick Hornby.

A Song in the Wrong Key is a funny/sad, heartwarming/heartbreaking story about what happens when you suddenly realize that the life you've been quite content with isn't really the life you wanted. Mike Kenton is going through a bit of a rough patch. His 20 year marriage has stagnated and he's just been laid off from a job he lost his passion for years ago while his wife's career is taking off. To help take the edge of the desperation he feels at being unemployed, he turns to music, which had been his passion during college, but which he sensibly gave up when it came time to grow up and lead a productive life. And then suddenly, everything seems to turn in his favor. Does Mike finally get to live his dreams? Will he be able to fix his marriage? Does he even want to?

Mr. Lipson does an excellent job of capturing the angst of a socially awkward adult trying desperately not to fall flat on his face as he tries to salvage what's left of his dignity given the situation he finds himself in. Mike's story unfolds as Mr. Lipson masterfully describes Mike's relationships: with his wife, his children, his best friend, and his old college girl friend (not girlfriend), for whom he had unrequited feelings which he never really got over. I can relate to Mike on so many levels and as a result found myself rooting for him as life just sort of happened to him. I also felt the bitter sting of every slight, rejection, insult and outrage, whether real or imagined. This is definitely one writer I will keep an eye on.

I find it odd that as an American woman, the contemporary books and characters I most strongly identify with have all been written by British men: Emma from One Day (actually, anything by David Nicholls), Annie from Juliet, Naked (by Nick Hornby), and now Mike Kenton from A Song in the Wrong Key.

I found Mr. Lipson to be a bit of a logophile (I had to look that up!) because despite the fact that I don't consider myself a slouch in the vocabulary department, I came across several words in this novel that I was unfamiliar with, in addition to the slew of British slang, some of which my Kindle's "look up" function didn't know what to make of. Not a bad thing, but I was a little disconcerted by it. Nothing like being forced to keep looking up words to make one's conceit feel completely misplaced! : P

So on that note, I'll end with an innocent, non-retaliatory, non-judgmental query of Mr. Lipson: Lionel Richie? Seriously?

Hamilton says

"Song In The Wrong Key" was hilarious, sarcastic, and well-written! Definitely a comedy that deserves applause. I'm not a huge fan of books that are riddled with cursing and sexual adventures so I might have given it one less star, but the voice of Michael Kenton was real and uproariously clever. Never a dull moment, I dare you not to laugh :)

Russ King says

Mike's life free-falls as he loses the respect of his daughters, disgraces his wife and insults his best friend. A chance event sees him returning to his student days of playing guitar and singing to people in restaurants. He even checks up on his unrequited love from university on Facebook. All of a sudden there is a chance he might be involved in the tackiest music event in the world – the Eurovision song contest.

Lipson creates believable characters and events and despite humiliating his main character he infuses his writing with lots of natural humour. The book has a cracking ending with an intriguing insight into the experiences of second-rate celebrity and the inner mechanics of the Eurovision song contest.

It's a book for everyone who enjoys the prospect of a second chance, of a return to teenage dreams and the realities of how quickly things can change – both for good and for bad.

Strangely enough it is the Eurovision experience climax that will appeal to everyone; yes everyone. There is something there for true fans and real haters of the Eurovision experience as Mike goes from nil points in his life to ... ah that would be telling!

Philippa Peacock says

I absolutely loved this book, brilliantly observant. A real page turner, or swiper if you've got a Kindle. It made me laugh and cry simultaneously.

I just hope this author keeps writing, I want to read more.

Peacock

Mindy says

Song in the Wrong Key is funny, with dry wit, terribly sad, and a totally charming story about love, loss, and finding your way. Simon Lipson has taken a topic that could be deadly dull and turned it into a must read.

I give this story 4 out of 5 clouds.

This product or book may have been distributed for review; this in no way affects my opinions or reviews.

Carol W says

Michael's life is ticking along nicely. Married to Lisa with 2 little girls and a career in IT.

One day all that changes when he is made redundant at the age of 42. He knows at his age it will not be easy to find another job. He takes on the role of looking after the girls whilst job hunting. As he sits at home all day searching the internet for that elusive dream job, his dreams of being a pop star resurface.

Michael picks up his guitar and the old talent stirs. He plays a few 'gigs' in a local bistro just to reignite the passion. Just as Michael hits rock bottom in the unemployable stakes, one of his 'gigs' brings the opportunity to have one of his own songs entered into the Eurovision Song Contest.

Simon Lipson gives Michael a very honest, if sometimes a little 'too much info', narrative. Michael's highs and lows really do come through in the writing and I felt those moods. I laughed out loud at the very dry British humour and I rolled my eyes at his 'bloke' behaviour.

This fly on the wall tale of domestic life and marriage is a real page turner that will have readers laughing out loud.

There is adult humour so if you are easily offended this may not be the book for you.

4.5 out of 5 for me!

Review copy. This did not influence my review in any way.

Desiree Jiselle says

I received a copy of this book through "Goodreads First Reads" and found it to be a true delight to read. Lipson tells the heartwarming story of Michael Kenton, a man who lost his career, marriage, and self worth. At the end of the day he finds light at the end of the tunnel when he revisits his first loves, music and a close university friend.

"Song in the Wrong Key" will resonate with any reader that has found themselves at a crossroads in life. You'll cry with Mike when he is at his bleakest moment. You will cheer him on when he finds his way out of obscurity and becomes somewhat of a hero.

Stephanie Dagg says

At first glance, the story outline is almost sad. Personable Mike Kenton loses his job and that's the final nail in the coffin of his crumbling marriage. He moves out of his nice house, away from the two daughters he adores, and settles into a poky flat. He turns to his music again, and is spotted by music executive Ben in a tatty bistro. Ben asks if he can enter one of Mike's songs into the Eurovision Song Contest. Does this rocket Mike into superstardom and solve all his personal problems? I don't want to give too much of the story away, but it's not predictable. The book is too realistic for that. A couple of other women emerge to complicate things further too.

This is an incredibly well-written book. Mike is portrayed so realistically – his love for his kids, his depression, his nerves, his indecisiveness. The dialogue is modern and natural i.e. down to earth and there's plenty of swearing! Five year old Millie is one of the worst culprits, a nice touch. Mike gets a taste of stardom but he keeps his feet firmly on the ground, like the book does.

Amazon summarises the book as: A laugh-out-loud comedy about love, family, friendship and Euro-tack by acclaimed stand-up and comedy writer Simon Lipson. I agree, but there's more to the book than that. You're also almost in tears at times, and the stage fright descriptions seriously make you feel ill.

Entertaining all the way through, this is an excellent read by a top-rate author.

Marie says

The description of Song In The Wrong Key intrigued me so I decided to enter the first-reads giveaway and to my surprise I was a winner! This is a story of Michael Keaton, husband and father who loses his job and ends up going back to singing. I enjoyed this book and its message.
