



The Diamond Lane

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When Mouse Fitzhenry returns to Los Angeles after spending 16 years in Africa as a film maker, she finds her life complicated by her mother's insistence that she and Tony, her long-time boyfriend, get married; her attraction to her old flame Ivan; and the films that both Tony and Ivan intend to make about her life. (Nancy Pearl)

The Diamond Lane Details

Date : Published April 1st 1993 by Overlook Books (first published May 1991)

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Author : Karen Karbo

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From Reader Review The Diamond Lane for online ebook

Alison Ingalls says

Did not finish.

Lydia Lewis says

This book was written 22 years ago and has held up very well. I really thought it would be more dated than it was. I think there is a lot of hilarious truth there!

Mamama says

I wish it had been better, but given the subject matter, not sure what I should've expected.

Dee says

This was also in the California section of Book Lust. I was still gorked on pain pills, but I liked this one about the indie movie industry.

Dulcey Heller says

3.5

Art Edwards says

There are many novels that start well, make it to page fifty, and slide into second rate writing. There are many more that make it part or most of the way through only to do the same. There are a select few that make it all the way to the end without once tilting south in quality. Then there are novels like The Diamond Lane, where it seems the author could go on at this peak level of wit and storytelling skill far beyond the last page. Karbo gives the impression of being a natural, and you, dear reader, are the lucky recipient.

Jennifer Blowdryer says

My mother Lenore turned me onto Karen Karbo, and this book is laugh out loud funny. Satirists get a raw deal, as far as being in literary Cannons, because they a. make it look easy and b. don't lend themselves to being caricatured. Russians in LA, don't miss out!

Danielle says

So, so fun. Read all her books, but start with this one.

Anthea says

The end was infuriating and a bit predictable (in a good way) but this could definitely be a Blockbuster. This book was written in a way to be pretty timeless, minus the perms. Cell phones and social media were not missed.

Enid says

I quit on page 60. This book seemed to be trying too hard- the author wanted it to be maniacally funny, but it just came off as maniacal. It seemed like a rip-off of Get Shorty to me. Blah.

Amanda says

Good writing. A story about 2 sisters and one of the sister's upcoming wedding. Though really, that very brief summary doesn't do it justice at all. There's so much to the book that it's impossible to summarize. Is it about 2 sisters? Is it about 1 woman getting caught up in the wedding industry and having to marry her longtime-boyfriend? Is it about the film industry in LA? Is it about indie movies? Is it about a woman who always feels left out and like life passed her by? Is it about a very dysfunctional family of 3 women? The diamond lane could represent the carpool line that is supposed to get people places faster if they carpool, but it inevitably gets clogged with single-passenger cars. Or is it about diamonds in weddings and how people can easily get carried away? I don't have any answers (even after reading the book), but it's a surprisingly good book that will stay with you for many years to come.

BrandyLee says

This was a surprisingly charming story that is surprising difficult to describe. You have a sister who has been in Africa away from her family finally returning home to L.A. where her sister has been stuck trying to succeed in a city that seems increasingly void of it. The characters defy their own stories by trying to take control of how it is told to others all while appearing to forget how to live their life in the first place. Like I said, hard to describe. It is a light and enjoyable book.

graham says

Incredible book, barely dated, why is this not a feature film?

I don't recall how I stumbled upon this one, but I'm so so glad I did. It kind of reminds me of *Get Shorty*, in that it's about how terrible and wonderful the film industry is. You will probably love it. Somebody should make it into a movie immediately.

Catherine at The Gilmore Guide to Books says

Life here was weighted with the vague feeling that if anything was happening, it was happening wherever one wasn't. Maybe that accounted for all the driving...Eleven million people scurrying around, trying to find the exclusive exciting event that would make them feel at the center of something big.

Mimi Fitzhenry is the type of living-in-Hollywood character who chooses to host book club because she had her apartment cleaned rather than pick up her sister, whom she hasn't seen in seven years and who is flying 21 hours from Nairobi. Mouse, the sister, is only returning because Mimi's phone call to her was so garbled that she thinks their mother is dying after being hit on the head by a ceiling fan. Mimi's take-away from the conversation is that Mouse is getting married, which she is not. These are just two small pieces of the foundation for Karen Karbo's witty delight, *The Diamond Lane*.

The rest of this review can be read at The Gilmore Guide to Books: <http://wp.me/p2B7gG-RE>

Jenny Yates says

I enjoyed this witty and occasionally farcical novel about Los Angeles, first published in 1991 and just reissued. You would think it would feel dated, this romantic comedy of errors written before cell phones took over the world, but it doesn't.

The two main characters are the sisters Mimi and Mouse, both in their thirties. Mouse is serious, minimalist, a documentary filmmaker who's been living in Africa for many years, and she goes through extreme culture shock when she comes back to gaudy, glitzy L.A. Her sister Mimi is totally immersed in the culture, and like everyone else, trying to make it big in the film industry.

Mouse returns because her mother, Shirl, has had an accident. (She's gotten brained by a falling chandelier in a restaurant.) Due to a bad phone connection, Shirl and Mimi are both under the impression that Mouse is about to get married, and as it happens, Mouse arrives accompanied by her film-making partner and lover, Tony. She isn't really into marriage, even though Tony has proposed to her a couple of times, but hating to disappoint her mother, she pretends it's true – and then figures “Well – why not?”

There's a certain amount of confusion that just comes from living in L.A. Both of them get involved in clandestine film projects which center around the impending wedding. Mouse's documentary project is bankrolled by an old crush, and when she tries to tell Tony, he won't go for it. But Tony can't bring himself to tell Mouse about his project, either – because Mouse is a stickler for accuracy, and he's taken their love

story and turned into an outrageous potential blockbuster. His meetings with various film bigshots are hilarious.

Some quotes:

< Mimi said even if Ralph was single she wasn't sure she'd marry him. This was a lie but she liked the way it sounded. She said she thought being married to Ralph was probably like being married to Kafka. Lisa said Kafka was better than nobody. A long conversation followed in which Mimi and Lisa thought of awful, famous men no one could pay them enough to be married to. >

< Therapy made Mimi feel like a failure. The shrink always thought she was guiding Mimi into uncovering her true feelings, when in fact the agonized look that crossed Mimi's face was often the result of her realization that she hadn't put enough money in the parking meter.>

< If Mouse's destination was within five miles, she walked, a plastic 7-up bottle retrieved from Mimi's garbage full of tap water, half a sandwich wrapped in a recycled swatch of crinkled aluminum foil stowed on her back in a knapsack. She claimed that true knowledge of a place could be gained only through the soles of one's feet. Twice in one day she was stopped by the police. What, they wanted to know, was she doing? Walking, she said. They remained suspicious. >

< He (Tony) was taken with L.A.'s fiddling-while-Rome-burned ambience, the populace cheerfully asphyxiating itself, building million-dollar homes that perennially slid to the valleys below. He admired Hollywood. >

There's a priceless section about a rich couple who have spared no expense to remodel a house so that it looks truly authentic. Here's a conversation about the house, between two admiring guests at a party:

<

"The walls were painted thirteen times, then wall-papered, then they scraped it off. There's something je ne said quoi about a wall that's had wallpaper scraped off. Gives it such a real feel. And the floors, have you noticed they're not even? They had them ripped up and relaid off kilter. Tooty didn't like them flat. That was too California, she said, flat and perfect."

"Someone said that when they finished the remodeling, Michael and Tooty were in France for a few months so they flew her parents out from Boston just to hang out, give it that lived-in feel. Her mother baked and her father smoked his pipe in front of the fire. I don't think they slept here, though. Tooty didn't want it that lived-in. Leaving that old-people smell on everything."

"The mildew is a nice touch, though."

"I love the mildew." >
