



The Swing of Things

Linda Keir

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Told from the dual perspective of a husband and a wife, *The Swing of Things* is a sexy, provocative, page-turning novel about a suburban couple who wants out of their routine—but will they take things too far?

Attorney Jayne Larsen loves her stay-at-home husband. Eric is attentive and a great father to their daughter. He's also unfailingly committed to their Wednesday date nights—but things have gotten too predictable.

Enter Theo and Mia Winters, the effortlessly cool, attractive couple who are the center of everyone's attention. They are blissfully happy and ready to share their secret for keeping things spicy. But there are rules. And breaking them has consequences. As Jayne and Eric explore a more modern definition of marriage, they are forced to confront whether they've given up too much in the pursuit of trying to have it all.

The Swing of Things Details

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From Reader Review The Swing of Things for online ebook

Lisa says

Thank you Lake Union Publishing for an e-ARC of *The Swing of Things* for an honest review. Jayne Larson is a hard working attorney who is trying to make partner at her firm. Her husband Eric stays home with their only daughter. When their marriage falls into a rut of weekly, predictable date nights, Jayne is tempted to mix things up.

I have to say, for a book about swingers, *The Swing of Things* is less sleazy than you might imagine. I am still conflicted about the ending which I will try not to spoil, but was not my favourite part of the story. If you have read it and want a chat, that would be wonderful. Other than the last handful of chapters, I thought *The Swing of Things* was a lovely look into a marriage that has become stale but still full of love. They mix things up in a very unconventional way and learn a lot about each other along the way.

The Swing of Things is available August 28, 2018.

Mark Stevens says

The Swing of Things is about sex, group sex, marriage, independence, bonds, freedom, routines, temptation, lust, boredom, reality, and fantasy all balled up in one taut tale told from two distinctly different perspectives—husband and wife.

The novel reminded me of that classic New Yorker cartoon of the couple getting married. Mid first-kiss at the altar, the groom is thinking, “Tim and Betty” while the bride is thinking, “Betty and Tim.” The title of the cartoon: Trouble Ahead.

Linda Keir—the joint writing team of Linda Joffe Hull and Keir Graff—takes us deep inside the heads of this suburban Denver couple, stay-at-home dad Eric and breadwinning attorney Jayne. Hull wrote the Jayne sections and Graff handled Eric’s perspective. Among the treats in the skillfully paced novel is seeing the same events from dueling points of view.

The book starts with the routines of “date night,” which includes well-rehearsed and somewhat monotonous, to Jayne, sexual routines. Jayne scolds herself for being ungrateful about Eric’s attentions and the predictable order of, um, activities. The couple is pondering a second child so six-year-old Sophie won’t grow up without a sibling. Jayne’s mid-romp thoughts are cluttered with her own self-analysis and wondering what’s missing from their alleged bliss. It’s pretty clear something is off; Jayne is frustrated with many things about their life together, right down to the painful degree of deliberation with which Eric spreads goat cheese on a cracker.

Eric, meanwhile, knows that child number two will extend his career as house spouse. Maybe good, maybe not. Besides watching out for Sophie, Eric earns beer money by teaching “acne-spotted high-school boys how to play guitar” and he gigs once a month with his band, The Cadillac Ranchers.

And then along comes Mia and Theo. After a casual potluck for the parents of first-graders there is an “unexpected” way to end the party. Only the “cool kids” are left at the party so a pitcher of mojitos appears and suddenly there is a skinny dip in the backyard pool. The spontaneous decision to shed clothes and jump in the pool puts a jolt into Eric and Jayne’s relationship. Soon, they find themselves being invited, after

careful screening, to swing.

The response to the invitation—and how Eric and Jayne dance around and negotiate with each other (and think through their personal concerns and desires)—is judiciously prolonged. Without leaving town or changing much else about their routines and work, they are suddenly strangers in a strange land. And they can have a piece of it if they wish. Goodbye vanilla, hello spice. For Jayne, the temptation is powerful. “Nothing in her life—not her job, not Eric’s predictable underemployment, and especially not their pretty home with its pleasant but wholly unremarkable backyard, complete with potted pansies and a Little Tikes plastic playhouse, offered anything to get truly excited about.”

And we’re off. Complications abound. Complicated relationships abound. There is jealousy. There are secrets, private yearnings, and new connections. There is a messy complication with Jayne’s professional life and a case involving fraud at a church. Yeah, trouble ahead. Changing partners regularly with the swingers prompts Eric and Jayne to reconsider their own values, upbringings, and moral codes. The swingers have their own strict rules (at least, on the surface) and now the temptation is to break some of the group boundaries as well. And given that Eric is now sleeping with women other than his wife, he wonders, what’s the difference in extending his circle of lovers to the fetching Bridget, a waitress with the “agreeably loose-limbed stride” who gives Eric ample attention when his band plays its monthly gig? Jayne, meanwhile, realizes she can pursue her own personal preference for a certain guy under the cover of the private club of tumbling, groping bodies.

All the bedroom action is starkly contrasted with the management of daily household life and Sophie’s needs, a burden that mostly falls to Eric. But even a field trip to the zoo encounters a display of mating giraffes. But of course.

Getting into the groove with the swingers, Eric and Jayne have discovered a place to disappear, to be themselves. Or have they? Eric and Jayne push the boundaries of the new world they have discovered and as they both realize, in their own ways, that they hadn’t given a thought to the possibility of ulterior motives or to the idea that swinging might define their “very existence” and infuse every other aspect of their lives. Just because there are rules doesn’t mean there is control. And just because they taste a certain kind of freedom doesn’t mean the outside world can be kept completely at bay, that there won’t be some kind of emotional debt come due.

Packed with sharp observations about suburban life and a gripping page-turner of its own for many reasons, including an unexpected mid-swing jolt of genuine suspense, *The Swing of Things* zips along (and unzips along, *ahem*) on the strength of its three-dimensional characters. The writing required genuine empathy, given the challenge of making husband and wife sympathetic and recognizable as they balance personal desires with the needs of the family unit. There are many pages of graphic sex. But at the core of the story are two human beings making their way in the world who decide to challenge routine and shatter the looming, dreaded sense of deadendness. They wonder about the bargains they have already cut with the world and wonder if it’s too late to try something new. Their search is real and the resulting entanglements, of all kinds, are equally visceral and painfully real.

Amanda says

So, this book was not great. I finished it, but barely. I won't spoil anything for you in case this book is your jam... it just wasn't mine. I'm obviously in the minority here because the average rating is well over 4 stars.

Jayne & Eric are kinda stuck in a marriage rut. The routine is the same & the heat has fizzled. Those of us who have been married (and have kids) can relate. Then enter Theo & Mia... the hot, hip couple down the block. Their parties seem to be more than just friendly cook-outs & oh boy are they ever. Jayne & Eric get involved with the swingers club & everything goes downhill from there.

You expect a lot sex in a book about Swingers, right? There was, but it wasn't hot. It was awkward at best & weird at its worst. All the "dirty" words for human anatomy were used at some point, but mainly it made me roll my eyes and/or snicker... due to the aforementioned awkward/weird scenes. There was a minor nod to how Jayne & Eric are emotionally handling their new "lifestyle", but I feel like there should've been more depth to this considering how the book wraps-up.

Then it kind of wanted to be a thriller, but not really. The authors tack on this story line about Jayne's job, but it really read like an afterthought. There was also no real resolution... it just conveniently faded away. It could've been woven into the rest of the story & made the book a lot more interesting. Maybe more clues. Or anonymous threats. Or anything to make it feel like an actual part of the story line.

**I received an ARC of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

Andrea says

It's sexy and fun and then at 70% in, it becomes a psych thriller. Excellent plot twists. Warning- there's a lot of sex as it is about swingers. I enjoyed this book! I received an early copy.

Katie says

I won this book from a goodreads giveaway!

I was excited to read a different kind of romance book from a new author. Though it wasn't for me. I just couldn't get into the characters and plot.

Victoria Johnson says

4-Sentence Synopsis: Eric and Jayne Larson's marriage needs some spicing up as their date nights have become overly predictable. After meeting Theo and Mia Winters, the Larsons realize that the key to a happy and adventurous marriage is to be a swinger. Eric and Jayne decide to test the strength of their marriage and attend the explicit gatherings each month. However, after a swingers' party gone horribly wrong, Eric and Jayne discover the alarming reason as to why they were originally invited to join the group and must decide if lust or love is more important to them.

Review: I considered putting this book down a third of the way through but I am glad that I pushed through. Some parts were a little too intimate for me and I find the idea of swinging pretty bizarre. For me, too much of the plot focused on the intimate relations at the parties when I was more interested in Eric and Jayne's outside lives. It took awhile of the plot to develop but about 70% of the way through the book things really started to get interesting. After an accident occurs, the book focuses less of the actual swinging and more on the group dynamic. The drama that followed was totally unexpected and elevated the book as a whole. I assumed there had to be some sort of twist in the plot, but all my guesses were wrong. I truly appreciate when an author is able to surprise me in a seemingly effortless manner. This book is definitely not for everyone, but it is a quick and interesting read if you are into adult fiction. Thanks to Lake Union Publishing for providing me with the opportunity to read this book and give my honest review before this title is published on August 28th!

Dawn (The Reading Column) says

Thank you to the publisher for the free review copy.

Lately I'm wanting to read more and more women's fiction novels because I find them entertaining, relatable and I'm a sucker for a couple whose marriage can stand up to the test of time. And I really, really like when a book gives me a glimpse into the intricacies of other people's marriages. **THE SWING OF THINGS** checks all of those boxes for me!

Jayne and Eric are like so many couples; they love their little family of three and hope to bring another child into the fold soon, they have a happy life in suburban Denver but they are so bored. Sex has become a weekly chore, err, scheduled date that has lost its spice. When cool, confident and sexy Mia and Theo invite Jayne and Eric into their tight-knit circle of alluring friends, dinner parties and skinny dipping at first followed by swinging, Jayne and Eric jump in with both feet.

This book is written remarkably well for a taboo subject. The sex scenes are hot and steamy while the overall vibe is tasteful and there are even some tender moments. There are a couple subplots toward the end that felt a bit disjointed to the story but I was fully invested long before so didn't detract from my overall interest.

Renee Rosen says

Review coming but in the meantime, add this to your shelf. IT'S FANTASTIC. I couldn't put it down!!!

Shannon says

Wowzers! This one is hot and steamy! This novel sucked me in immediately. By the third chapter, I was completely hooked. What can I say about The Swing of Things? It was very exciting and action-packed. And by action, I mean sex, sex and more sex! It follows Eric and Jayne, a married couple looking to spice things up in the bedroom and divert from their same old routine. So what do they do? They join a swingers club! Makes the most sense, right? Ha! Oh boy! I couldn't turn the pages fast enough with this one. It's definitely one of the most entertaining novels I've read in a long time. Thank you to NetGalley and Lake Union Publishing for this free digital advance readers' edition in exchange for my honest review.

Stephanie says

I won this ebook as a giveaway, so I am leaving an honest review.

The first half of the book is exciting and intriguing. Discovering how Jayne and Eric fall into this lifestyle was interesting and I enjoyed this aspect.

However, once the New Years Eve party accident happens, things go downhill from there. Turning this into a thriller really turned me off. Jeremy dying, the police investigating, and Jayne discovering Theo real self, all of it went into a direction that I didn't like whatsoever. I would have liked it a lot more if it didn't make this drastic turn.
