



The Sky Beneath My Feet

Lisa Samson

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Being married to a saint isn't what it's cracked up to be.

Beth's husband won't be joining the family on vacation at the beach this year. He's not even joining them in the house. Instead, Rick has holed up alone in the backyard shed. Nobody knows exactly what he's up to. Maybe he's immersing himself in prayer. Maybe he's lost his mind. Maybe he's even the modern-day prophet or the saint the neighborhood artist imagines him to be. But while "St. Rick" waits for an epiphany, Beth will have to figure out what to do with herself and their teenage sons, possibly for the rest of her life.

What happens next is both uproarious and bittersweet: a peace march turns violent, her son is caught with drugs, and she embarks on an ambitious road trip that turns into something nearly surreal. Will Beth rediscover the idealistic woman she used to be, once upon a time? Can her marriage survive Rick's backyard vigil? Will anything ever be the same? And should it be?

Truthful, comic, heartbreaking, and magical in the very best sense of the word, *The Sky Beneath My Feet* gently tears the veil off our egos and expectations to reveal the throbbing, redemptive, and achingly beautiful life beyond and within us.

"*The Sky Beneath My Feet* is bright but unassuming. The protagonist totally enchants both one's spirit and one's mind with her shrewd insights and gentle humility. This is Samson at her best!" —Phyllis Tickle, author of *Emergence Christianity*

The Sky Beneath My Feet Details

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From Reader Review The Sky Beneath My Feet for online ebook

Anita Campbell says

I strongly recommend this book for a book club or individual reading. It's really a great book. Samson provides a reading group guide in the back, full of challenging questions for your book club gathering. I strongly recommend this book for a book club or individual reading. It's really a great book.

Lilly says

Eh.

Emma Barton says

Summer reading is officially moving forward, and the first book of the summer for me was Lisa Samson's The Sky Beneath My Feet. I had no idea what I was getting into when I began the book- normally, I'm not one for Christian fiction, but I found myself rather intrigued by this novel. The narrator was fun, down-to-earth, relatable, and struggling through life like the rest of us; a relatable narrator always gets me and drags me in, and Beth was no exception.

Beth's struggles include a preacher husband who's apparently going crazy (or so we all think), children she just doesn't seem to relate to, and beliefs she's trying to remember why she believes. I felt that her story was believable on every level- emotional, physical, and spiritual. We've all had days that seem like nothing more could go wrong, and that seems to be almost everyday for Beth. However, as the novel winds up, Beth, her husband, and children find peace and happiness in remembering the basics of christianity that their artist-neighbor Deedee teaches them- we are all souls and children of God who are struggling but working to be a little bit better.

Lisa Samson crafts a beautiful narrative that is a quick, enjoyable read. I felt that her characters were well rounded (Beth's husband is even so obnoxious at the beginning that I was sure I would never like him, but it turns out I liked him towards the end). Samson points to the simple story of life that everyone can relate to and illuminates the ways in which we can all come closer to our families, our society, and our God.

If you're interested at all, I would definitely give this book a quick read.

Angelia says

This is the story of Beth mother of two boys and wife to pastor rick, after a job opportunity her husband rick locks himself away in the back yard shed basically cutting himself off from his family, This was a slow read for me, and never really seemed to reach a climax

Ashley Bedford says

It didn't have a lot of content. Easy read, finished in an afternoon. Characters were not particularly relateable or interesting to me, and they could have been more developed. I did like the ending that showed the people instead of being worried about how they looked to everyone else, they changed their focus to what they can do for the people they had been looking down upon before. Faith without works is dead. Being in a garage doesn't make you a car, being in a church doesn't make you a Christian, or a good person even. Don't bother reading this book, but go find something to do for someone who needs it.

Shirley Sillars says

Full disclosure: I was in a hurry when I grabbed this book from the new fiction shelf at the library. I saw the title, read the book jacket blurb, liked the cover picture, and decided this was just what my overstressed mind needed: a beach read.

It wasn't until I got home and settled in with the book that I noticed the Jesus Fish (as Lisa Samson calls it) on the book cover. Then I scanned the reviews, mostly from the Christian publishing community. Holy hell, I'd borrowed a piece of Christian lit.

OK. As a self-proclaimed heathen, I had to make a decision here. I took a deep breath and decided to set aside my prejudice (not against Christians, but of such niche writing; I'm no more a fan of whatever "Buddhist literature" might be out there.) and see if I could just enjoy the story. Guess what? I did. It lived up to most of what it promised: a nice beach read, fast-paced, great character development, and it all wrapped up tidily in the end. It would make a nice Lifetime or Hallmark movie.

This story centers on a middle-aged, married woman of two teenaged sons whose world turns upside down when her MegaChurch minister husband goes on a vision quest, which when you take the spiritual aspect of it out of it, means he checks out. Everything in her organized life begins to unravel, and while the bubbling anger at her spouse builds to a rolling boil, the pot overflows when those around her, particularly the people who aren't part of her daily life, begin to regard her husband as almost saintlike. By doing nothing more than sit in a small shack, her husband has gained superpowers that turn around several lives in their small community. Meanwhile, she feels as if every good work she tries to do ends in embarrassment and failure. These attempted good works are part of how she copes with her new aloneness. With time on her hands, she sets out on a quest, too, to find her old self and the roots of her faith and character. Along the way she meets a number of characters far outside her comfort zone. In the end, all these divergent paths meet and make for a tidy ending.

Now, my gripes. The book teases of a "surreal experience on a road trip" and without spoiling anything, let me say that I was fairly disappointed with the so-called road trip and the developments of the last few chapters. There's nothing offensive in this novel but the author's agenda is clear. Given my tastes, this was a bit too squeaky clean for me. I think Samson crafts a good story that examines modern organized religion, compassion, tolerance and the evolution of personal faith. These are issues that cross belief systems.

I'm glad I took myself out of my comfort zone to read this book. It allowed me a peek inside the Christian circle.

Joan says

This is a very interesting novel. The first half was a bit slow and tedious for me but then it took off. This would make a good book for a reading group as there is much to discuss - everything from expectations placed on wives to kids taking drugs to being part of a political demonstration. This is like a coming of age story although the character is middle age. She does discover herself and what God has for her. See my full review at <http://bit.ly/17yA9m4>.

Joann says

SO boring!!!!

Pamela says

I think this book is written for Christian moms.

Monica says

I didn't realize this was "Christian" fiction when I picked it up (which is totally not my thing), but it was okay. Well actually, the first half was okay, but the ending was way too cheesy for my liking.

Susan says

Such a delightful, heartwarming story. I laughed out loud often while enjoying this book. Great story about a pastor and his wife taking separate journeys one October and arriving back together in metaphor. I could really relate to Beth, the wife. The ending was perfect. The narrator also performed admirably and added extra richness to this novel. I look forward to reading all I can find by this author.

John March says

I read this book because it won a Christianity Today book award in 2013 in the fiction category. I enjoyed reading this book for a few reasons. First, I enjoyed reading a story written from the perspective of a woman married to the "men's pastor" at a trendy mega church. Her commentary on their church was funny, even if it was a little expected. I also enjoyed one of the themes of the book, which is recognizing God in ordinary things and ordinary people. My frustration with the book came primarily from two places. I disliked the clichéd way the story ended and I thought there was a lack of depth to the marriage relationship between the "men's pastor" and his wife. After the "men's pastor" takes a prayer retreat, which drives his wife crazy, the resolution is utterly unsatisfying in its shallowness. They just make-up and she forgives him, but there isn't a lot of insight into the reconciliation between husband and wife. Then, the resolution of the book comes when

the two of them go into a poor area of the city and "save" a group of predominantly black, poor, and recovering drug addicts who live in a shared house. Sigh...it was a bit too heavy on the white-messianic narrative. The author tried to provide nuance and complexity to the cross-cultural encounter, but it was still hard to swallow as plausible or compelling. There were parts of the book that were very well written, and other parts that felt lacking. I found myself really liking some of the character development and the insights into the protagonist's life, but because of the above mentioned frustrations I ended up not loving it. In a phrase, it was just too clichéd.

Mary Ann says

I came across this book at the library while looking for a light read. I finished it in less than 2 days. Its highly enjoyable.

If you like the Yada Yada series, you'll like this too.

Valerie says

Not my favourite Lisa Samson book. I didn't particularly like any of the characters however I did like the growth of each of them throughout the story. I was a bit miffed at the attitude toward the Jesus fish on the bumper, if you are a Christian, then be a committed one!

Sheri Freeland says

I absolutely love reading Lisa Samson's books, this one was not a disappointment. I could so identify with this mid-life crisis mother and her teen-age sons. She nailed teen-age boys characteristics to a tee (she must have one), especially trying to connect with her youngest son with his birthday. I also identified with Beth's discontentment with her church, despite her husband being one of the pastors. My spirituality gets lost in the loud music, the seeker-friendly environment and the idea of a "holy huddle" of believers in a building that her church represented (the contemporary church of today). Lisa Samson's message of the "church" being outside the walls of a building and in the hearts and actions of people (the saints) came across loud and clear in this book. Yes, it all came together in the end which isn't always realistic but one of the reasons I like to escape into fiction. This book not only touched me because I could identify with Beth the wife, mom, friend and church member but because of the diverse and sometimes quirky characters in this book that had the distinctive Lisa Samson stamp on them. I have read every book she's written and will continue to do so as I think her writing in the genre of Christian Fiction is one of the best out there. She dares to write about authentic Christian people not the ones that the secular media writes about.
