



Tunnel Vision

Keith Lowe

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Andy's obsession with the London Underground is interfering with his life. On the eve of his wedding, he makes a drunken bet that challenges him to travel through every single Tube station in just one day. Only by completing the entire map will Andy retrieve the Eurostar tickets he needs to get to his wedding in Paris. At 1 AM, Andy's fiancée, Rachel, will be on the Eurostar, with or without him.

Not just an unpredictable story about one man's peculiar passion, Keith Lowe's exceptional debut draws us effortlessly along on a deeply personal journey through chaos, commitment, and love.

Tunnel Vision Details

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Author : Keith Lowe

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From Reader Review Tunnel Vision for online ebook

Sam says

I like to read books about where I'm about to travel so picked this up. It sounded like a fun, entertaining read about a person on public transit. One can witness so much about humanity on public transit so I thought his story might reflect this and it did. It was entertaining, a bit stressful at times, but overall was a quick, fun read. There were some times where he lost me a bit in the details of the underground, but i can see how others might appreciate it.

Soho_Black says

If you are or have ever lived or worked in London, or have ever visited, there's a fair chance you've been on the Tube. Chances are you've only ever used it to get from one place to another and not looked at all the places you could go to. This is especially true if you're using the tube at rush hour, where your main concern is to get to your destination and get your face out of the armpit of the person standing next to you. Who cares where you can go when getting to where you need to be is so smelly and distasteful?

Andy's done something a bit stupid. He's taken on a bet that even Tony Hawks would have derided as being too absurd. He's bet that he can visit every station on the London Underground in a single day. Having been talked into the bet whilst drunk, at stake are his credit cards, his passport and his honeymoon tickets. For as if taking the bet on doesn't appear stupid enough to begin with, Andy is due to be getting married tomorrow and if he doesn't win, it's not likely to happen. Essentially, he's bet his entire future against the Tube.

Starting at Morden at 5 a.m., we follow Andy through the whole of the Underground in a race against time, points failures and delayed trains. We see him accompanied by a tramp, who attaches himself to Andy and follows him around for the whole day. We get glimpses of Rachel, Andy's fiancée, as she prepares herself for the big day and wonders what on earth Andy is up to and where he is.

Perhaps surprisingly for a story that is essentially a race against time, it's not really a fast paced read. This is largely because for the majority of the story, it's simply two people sitting on the Tube chatting as they travel from place to place. Whilst the reasons for them travelling might be fairly interesting, the actual journey isn't. There are parts where the pace picks up a little, largely while Andy is running from one platform to another to change trains, but that's about it.

It also feels that the bits involving Rachel have been added in to make things a little more interesting. With these included, it's no longer a story of two blokes on a Tube, it gives it a little wider interest, turning what is more or less a travel book into something a little more human and well on the way to being a work of bloke-lit. However, it seems to fall a little between the two, feeling as if it's trying a little too hard to be more popular.

It succeeds slightly more as a book that would appeal to Tube users. Whilst there isn't enough for it to be for Tube buffs as such, there's a few little nuggets of information that may enlighten the casual traveller or commuter. However, although this group will have more of an understanding of the problems Andy faces on his journey, it's unlikely that many of us will have experienced them all, and certainly not all in a single day, which makes the whole thing seem a little unrealistic.

The book's main failing, however, is in the characters. Andy is more of an anti-hero than a main character. It's difficult to get involved with the bet as Andy isn't presented as a person you can sympathise with or care about. You know he has a lot at stake, but you just think of him as a bit stupid for taking the bet on in the first place and even more so for when he took it on. Whilst many of us may be able to identify with Andy, very few of us would ever even think about trying what he's doing, much less do it.

If you've never been on the London Underground, there is really little to recommend this book. It's not terribly well written and it's trying a little too hard. You won't be interested in the bet that makes up the story and if you're a fan of either chick-lit or bloke-lit, you'll most likely be disappointed in the watered down attempt at that genre that "Tunnel Vision" provides. If you're not a fan of either genre, this will hold no interest for you at all.

If you have used the Tube or, even more so, if you use it regularly, this might hold some interest. Not for the story itself, but to see Andy's journey as it intersects your own. It's a little like watching a travel programme that has a segment on somewhere you've been to, as you can watch it and say "ooh, we went there!". It's likely to have a brief fascination, but no real interest.

It's not a book you can really sit down and enjoy, more one to be picked at occasionally. It's one you can pick up and put down very easily which would make it ideal reading for your Tube journey to and from work, if it were any good. If you're likely to be interested in seeing your regular journey in a book, it has that novelty value, but doesn't provide much pleasure beyond this and once the initial fascination has passed, there's nothing of substance left.

This review may also appear under my name at any or all of www.ciao.co.uk, www.thebookbag.co.uk, www.goodreads.com, www.amazon.co.uk and www.dooyoo.co.uk

Lori says

Pretty cool idea....

Making a bet with a bud that you can travel the entire london underground subway in one night, collecting the stamps or whatever to prove it, the night before your wedding.

And to have that friend make multiple attempts to hang you up in the process.

I know literally nothing about subways, but i found this book highly entertaining, and interesting.....

Read it. Read it. Read it.

Book Addict Shaun says

This is one of my favourite books and I have lost count of the number of times that I've read it. The thing that made me want to read it in the first place is the fact that it's set on the London Underground. I am a self-confessed tube nerd, I love everything about it and spend most of my time on trips to London on the Underground and I'm not ashamed to admit it. Most people go to see the sights but I've seen them enough times. I just love everything about the Tube.

The storyline here involves Andy who bet his tube geek friend Rolf that he could travel the whole system (not entirely true as this book was written in 2001 and so Andy misses out a lot of the Jubilee Line and the whole of the DLR [which I love]) in 24 hours. At the end of the 24 hours he needs to meet Rachel so they can catch the Eurostar to Paris.

Unfortunately the majority of the characters bar one are pretty weak. The best character for me and the star of the book is Brian. Brian is a tramp who Andy bumps into at his first station of the day and Brian sort of latches onto him and follows (and eventually helps) him throughout the day. At first Andy thinks Brian is a plant by Rolf but eventually comes to trust him and realise that it's better to do the system with someone else than alone. And of course for the reader it is much better for Andy to have somebody with him as it would be quite boring reading about him travelling around by himself. I didn't like the character of Rachel and the character of Rolf sounding revolting. And as this is supposed to be one of my favourite books I didn't even like the main character, Andy much. However the main character for me is the tube and that is what makes me keep wanting to read this book.

Unfortunately for Andy he picked the worst day to travel the tube. He runs into the most annoying and unbelievable situations that you can't help but laugh. In all the times I have travelled the tube I haven't once had a delay, in fact a train has always arrived within seconds or minutes of me arriving at the station. Of course this would be different if I lived there and travelled every single day but for the sake of this book Andy had the absolute worst luck he could have had.

The ending of the book felt quite rushed but it was fairly satisfying. I loved the chapter with Brian at the end and I'd actually have liked an Epilogue which perhaps looked at the characters years down the line. Anyone who has been to London has seen a tramp of some sort and most people including myself pass them by without a second thought, but a lot of them are just like Brian. Normal people who have been dealt a bad hand, it is easier to end up like that than some people are aware of and reading about a tramp as nice as Brian makes you look at them twice.

Overall probably not a five star book and if you don't have even the slightest interest in the Underground then this probably isn't the book for you but I always enjoy reading it, especially before a trip to London.

Marieinsweden says

Kul om Londons tunnelbana. Ett "måste" för Londonresenärer och tågnördar.

Stephanie says

I first read this back when it first came out in 2001. Back then MTV was publishing their own books, and this was one of them. I read most of them back then: The Perks of Being a Wallflower, Fake Liar Cheat, Brave New Girl, Don't Sleep With Your Drummer, Dog Run, and others.

I remembered I really enjoyed the story. I remembered how it ended, but couldn't remember much about how the story got to the end. So right before my trip to London I decided to reread it.

It was a lot of fun to read again. It made me laugh and I also got annoyed too at times. Some moments came back to me right away and others I couldn't remember how Andy and his new friend, Brian, get out of the pickle they're in. I had forgotten what a jerk Andy could be, but I liked how on their journey (see what I did there?) Brian gradually helped him to see what was really important.

I could not help but feel Rolf would be great friends with Sheldon Cooper on The Big Bang Theory. Such similar characteristics and both love trains way too much.

Sometimes Rachel annoyed me and I wanted someone to tell it to her straight, but I also could empathize with her because Andy did do some stupid things.

Now having experience the Tube myself I will go back and reread some passages with a clearer picture in mind.

4 out 5 Tube stations

JuliaEvelin says

A books which makes your heart raise. Follow the character through all the stations and lines of London Underground. Our hero made a bet with his friends that he could travel all of London Underground on 24 hours. The catch; he's getting married in Paris the day after and can't miss the train. If he does he will loose the love of his life, forever.

It's a fun story which not only takes you on a unique adventure underground, you'll also follow Andys life and the moments which led to this and why its so important he doesn't miss the train to Paris.

As an Londonlover getting to travel around in London is pure magic. The book is well written. A real page turner, mostly because you just have to know; Does he make it?

Ahalya says

I chose this book for my dad who is an AVID train enthusiast. And I fell in love with this book. Anyone who understands how anyone could find travelling in trains a sport, will like this book. It's got very interesting snippets of information about the history of the railways and the Underground in UK.

Lorenzo says

This book explore's a man's journey into finally crossing the threshold of maturity, yet jeopardizing his relationship/wedding with one final dare to visit every stop on the London Underground. Thought provoking and full of interesting characters on this subway adventure.

samantha says

this book made me want to acquire as many subway maps as possible.

Eva-L says

Underhållande och fint om tunnelbanan. Inte lika bra om relationer och lite för många mjuka kvinnobröst.

Book Addict Shaun says

I love this book. I always read it before I go to London. For a fan of the London Underground it is a must-read. Andy has to travel to every station the day before his wedding after a drunken bet with a 'friend' who is in possession of his passport, honeymoon tickets and credit cards, all of which have been hidden in various stations across the network. Andy meets a tramp called Brian along the way who you can't help but end up liking. And you can't help but root for Andy along the way and hope it all comes good in the end. The best way to read this book is in 24 hours as that's the amount of time (roughly) the book is set. It's a funny but touching book.

Hope says

Not a very good book. I'm actually surprised that it got published. The entire book is about London underground trains and two men's journey on them. There was never a climax to the story whatsoever. To be honest, the storyline was pretty boring which made it very hard to finish the book. I would not recommend this book.

Nicolette Kittinger says

If this book has one thing to teach you (if "you" are a writer), it's how to make your story and your narrators believable authorities on a topic.

I've never given the London tube system much of a thought, but the author of this book has made it so I don't have to. Why? Because the author did his research, he knew what he was talking about. He took his time to fuse facts with his fiction.

Authority. It's a good thing to have, whether you're writing fiction or nonfiction.

sisterimapoet says

Not particularly profound or clever but a great little page turner. Lowe has done something quirky and neat with the setting and premise of the story, but has not scrimped on his characters or his writing, which many attempting the same feat might have done. The end fell a bit flat but the journey was great fun.

