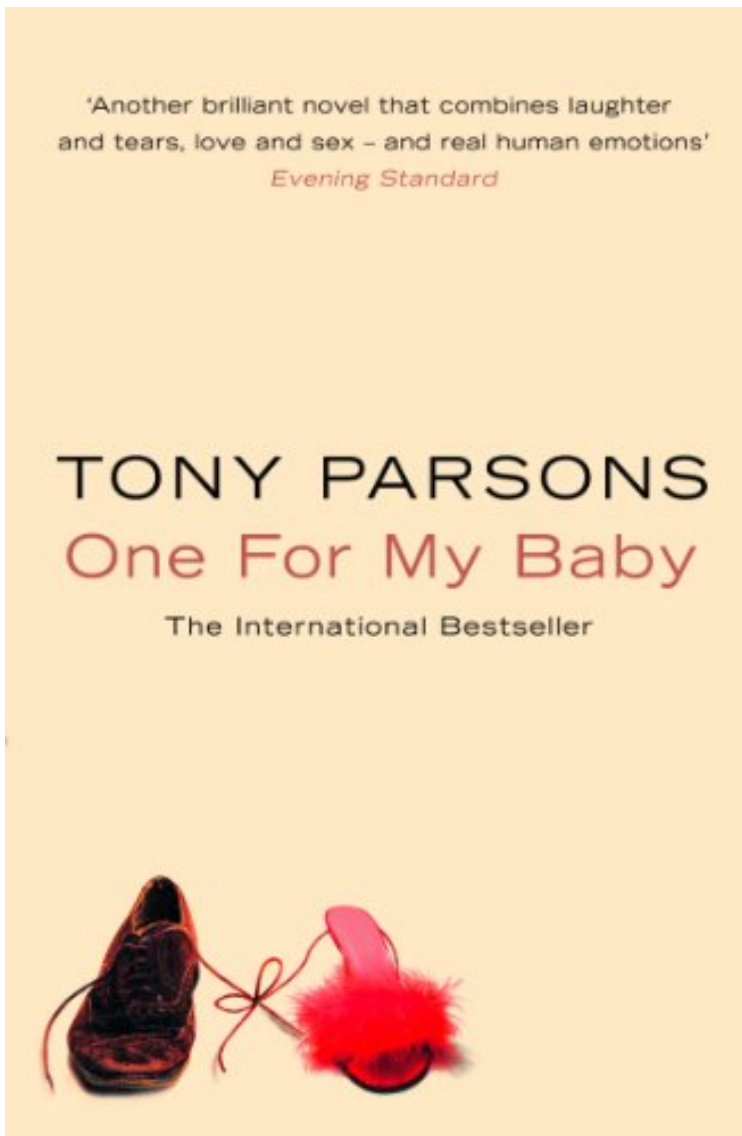


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One For My Baby



Par Tony Parsons
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Par Tony Parsons : One For My Baby before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised One For My Baby:

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Description : Description du produit How many times can we love -- truly love -- in the course of one lifetime? Alfie Budd found the perfect woman. Then he lost her. And he doesn't believe you get a second chance at love. Returning to London after a brief, idyllic marriage overseas, Alfie Budd finds his world collapsing around him -- his parents' marriage, his grand-mother's health, his own ambitions for his career. If only he could pick up the phone and call his beloved Rose, the wife he lost. But Rose is gone forever. Believing his chance for love has passed, Alfie takes comfort in a string of fleeting affairs while he teaches at Churchill's Language School. But then Alfie meets two people who help him to start putting his broken heart back together. One is George Chang, the old Chinese man he sees practicing Tai Chi in the park every morning. Surrounded by his strong, loving family, George Chang teaches Alfie more than Tai Chi. The other is Jackie Day, a single mother who needs Alfie's help in completing her education so she can go back to college. But what happens when the teacher starts falling for his student? Can Alfie give up meaningless sex

for a meaningful relationship? Will he ever have a family life like the Changs'? And how much room in our hearts do we really have for love? Like his runaway bestseller, *Man and Boy*, Tony Parsons's new novel is full of laughter and tears, biting social comment and overwhelming emotion. It is a book about love, family, sex, Tai Chi and the human heart.

A novel about men, love and relationships by the author of the Book of the Year, *Man and Boy*. Alfie Budd found the perfect woman with whom to spend the rest of his life, and then lost her. He doesn't believe you get a second chance at love. Returning to the England he left behind during the brief, idyllic time of his marriage, Alfie finds the rest of his world collapsing around him. He takes comfort in a string of pointless, transient affairs with his students at Churchills Language School, and he tries to learn Tai Chi from an old Chinese man, George Chang. Will Alfie ever find a family life as strong as the Changs? Can he give up meaningless sex for a meaningful relationship? And how do you play it when the woman you like has a difficult child who is infatuated with a TV wrestler known as The Slab? Like his runaway bestseller, *Man and Boy*, Tony Parsons's novel is full of laughter and tears, biting social comment and overwhelming emotion. In *One for My Baby* Hong-Kong-based language teacher Alfie Budd is about to ingest several gallons of the stuff. Returning to London to nurse a broken heart, he finds a world he barely recognises. Terry Wogan plays REM on Radio Two, there are Tai Chi classes on Highbury Fields and the England of Alfie's youth seems a distant dream. Alfie's father is now sporting disco gear and pitifully clinging onto his relationship with a Czech au pair half his age. Alfie's mother, meanwhile, cares a great deal about her rose bushes and not at all about getting her husband back. Dazed by these changes, Alfie drifts--on a cloud of Tsingtao beer and Sinatra-fuelled reverie--into a new teaching job and into a string of pointless affairs with his students. But a man can only drift for so long before he starts to sink--and Alfie must learn some bitter lessons before he can regain the happiness he once knew in Hong Kong. Tony Parsons' second novel deserves to match the phenomenal success of his first, *Man and Boy*--although there are reasons why it might not. *One for My Baby* lacks the cutesy appeal of single fathers bringing up sons and some readers may find it--with its double portion of deaths and mid-life depressions--a more demanding read altogether. The book deals with tough realities, with people who have ceased to love themselves and each other, with snobbery and prejudice and the acute loneliness of city life. But the tale is redeemed, ultimately, because humour and warmth pervade even its darkest corners. The laughable antics of Alfie's father are balanced beautifully by George Chang, Alfie's serene and dignified Tai Chi instructor. And while our hero's journey is an arduous one, we are invited to laugh with and at him and never to pity him. Mr Parsons deserves praise for creating a book that is not merely different to his first but also bigger, tougher and cleverer. --Matthew Baylis From Publishers Weekly

This third novel from the author of the immensely appealing *Man and Boy* is the amusing story of sad sack Alfie, who has returned to London from Hong Kong following the death of his wife, Rose, the one and only true love of his life, in a scuba diving accident. Alfie, 34, is given to making sensitive, introspective remarks such as "she was my reason" and "That's what love did to me. Love messed up my heart." An affable enough fellow, he's barely living life in his skin as an English language teacher at Churchill's International School, narcissistically sleeping with his students while trying to cope with his parents' breakup and his grandmother's illness and death. Of course, he gradually comes out of his sleepwalking existence to recognize the error of his ways and begin down a path of spiritual fulfillment that includes tai chi instruction and the insight of professional TV wrestler the Slab and his book, *Smell the Fear, He-Bitch*. There are some lovely moments in the novel, when the author subtly reveals the details of Alfie's loss, mixed in with some clever humor, such as when he plays on the class differences between Alfie's lawyer pal Josh and Alfie's cleaning woman girlfriend, a romance that heads somewhat predictably in the direction of *Pygmalion* and *Educating Rita*. At its best, the novel is enjoyable fluff. One only wishes the author had created in Alfie a more dynamic character worthier of the reader's sympathies. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.