



Olive Juice

T.J. Klune

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It begins with a message that David cannot ignore:

I want to see you.

He agrees, and on a cold winter's night, David and Phillip will come together to sift through the wreckage of the memory of a life no longer lived.

David is burdened, carrying with him the heavy guilt of the past six years upon his shoulders.

Phillip offers redemption.

Olive Juice Details

Date : Published April 26th 2017 by Dreamspinner Press

ISBN : 9781635335026

Author : T.J. Klune

Format : ebook 132 pages

Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Contemporary, Lgbt

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From Reader Review Olive Juice for online ebook

Sheri says

This is not easy to do. **cringes** I hate writing poor reviews.

My last TJ book was not a successful read for me *but* the one before that was my book of the year read. Soo, I was hoping to wipe the slate clean per say, and start over. And yet, I find myself frustrated and upset when this story finished...again. I can't honestly say I enjoyed **any** of it.

It's complicated and choppy but I understand this is intentional. I'm okay with that.

It's confusing and sad and so angst heavy without any balance. **This** does not work for me.

I usually love my angst, but you gotta give me something to make it better before it's over.

If my heart is going to be battered and bruised, I expect, no I **need** it to be soothed.

I like to FEEL when I read but I don't like anguish upon anguish without any solace.

Break my heart if you must but you had better put it back together.

What I can tell you:

This story involves three people.

Something tragic has happened. That's all you know.

The trail tries to lead you astray, to a different path. You will presume it's something that it's not. When you discover the truth, it's crushing.

This story felt like an accident. **A tragic accident.** The severity similar to an amputated limb. And after we experience the agony of the trauma, a band-aid is placed on the truncated extremity. It wasn't enough. Not even close.

I can't tell you much more. Except a romance it is not.

I appreciate the quality of writing but good writing does not automatically generate good stories. This story hurts in the worst way and left me sad and depressed.

Therefore I can't rate it any higher.

Rachel Reads Ravenously says

Well, I just spent the last hour like this:

I loved this book. DON'T READ SPOILERS, GO IN BLIND!

What a beautiful and heartbreaking story! This reminded me a bit of a play; I know Klune had a blog post referencing a one shot scene but honestly this felt like something you would see on a stage. Extremely well written, Klune is obviously very talented and there's a reason why I will read anything he writes.

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Lisazj1 says

This story got 5 stars from me just because of how much it made me *feel*.

Alisa says

I work with terminally ill people and sometimes when I walk into a house the grief is so thick that you can literally feel it. The air is heavy with it. That's what reading this book felt like. When I leave those homes I struggle to push the grief off of myself. And that's what it felt like when I was finished with this book.

I'm struggling with what else to say. I know the author recommends people go into without reading reviews etc so I'm going to keep this short (& spoiler free). This book is told from David's point of view as he tries to find his way out of the grief and loss he's experiencing. You find out in pieces what has brought David to the place he is at in the beginning of the story. And....your heart will break for him. (& it has nothing to do with terminal illness btw)

This is a hard book to rate. I'm giving it 5 stars because I think the writing was fantastic and deserves it. If I based it on enjoyment of the book.....I don't know. This was a very hard read for me. David's grief is so heavy I felt like I was drowning in it too. The reason for his grief was super hard for me to read. His grief was based on my worst nightmare. I cried in places and twice I had to stop reading and take a break before I could get back to it.

The one thing I want to stress is this is not a romance. It is a love story though. A story about how true love can find it's way even in the darkest days. There was a lot of pain in this story but also a lot of beauty. Be ready for a heavy read.

BWT (Belen) says

No spoilers, okay? Because you have to go into this blind, okay? **Seriously, please don't read any spoilers because you'll miss out on the total emotion of this story. Seriously.**

Okay. **That was fucking heartbreaking.** Sure there's a happy-ish kind of ending, but the reality of the story (of how this happens every day) leaves me...*bereft* and just kind of...*shattered*.

"This needs to stop," Phillip finally said.

David thought about ignoring him.

Instead, he said, "What does?"

"This." He sounded frustrated. "You. Existing like this. Like you have nothing else. Like everything was taken from you."

It might as well have been, but David didn't say that aloud. He wasn't cruel. At least not anymore. "I don't know how else to be," he said, admitting more than he wanted to. "This is all I've got right now. I'm sorry if that's not enough for you." Okay, yeah, maybe a little cruel.

"That's not what I mean and you know it."

“Do I?”

This is so well crafted, it's almost like a movie script where I could *see* it in my mind. This beautiful, fragile, wonderful, horrible, worthwhile life together. **Seen solely through David's POV, it renders your heart in two while still giving glimpses of hope and redemption and love and perseverance.**

*Because the not knowing was the worst thing of all.
When you didn't know, you were stuck in this limbo.
You didn't know who to focus your anger on.
Your confusion.
Your fear.
Your anguish.
So it went wherever it could, that focus.
And sometimes, it went toward the wrong person.*

I just want to find David and Phillip and give them long hugs.

Look, A+ for the writing. I mean it. Total aces, even though this damn near killed me, because TJ Klune knows how to weave a story. He knows how to pull your heart out, stomp it into little pieces, and then pick it up and cradle it and piece it back together...and while this hurt, it is brilliant. Absolutely brilliant.

If you love a good Hurt/Comfort story and can stand some heartbreak and maybe even some wookiee cry face...**buy this.**

For my review of the audiobook click [here](#).

Advanced Review Galley copy of Olive Juice provided by Dreamspinner Press in exchange of an honest review.

This review has been cross-posted at [Gay Book Reviews](#).

Renée says

There is no way to write a review for this book. Stay far, far away from spoilers, readers! I am a spoiler whore. There is no spoiler tag that I won't uncover. It doesn't take anything away from my reading experience, and I just **have to know**. Do not read spoilers for **THIS** book. And shame on reviewers who give anything away.

Because of reasons, this is the most gut-wrenching story TJ has written, for me. From my perspective and life experiences. I didn't Wookiee Cry Face, though it was a close call with leaky eyes and I'm a stubborn woman who can compartmentalize like nobody's business.

What is the book even about? Welllllllllll.....there's a reason the blurb is so vague. You have to go into it

blind. It's about several things, and I'm going to be vague too. It's about two men finding their way back to each other. It's about second chance romance. It's about life's tragedies and those fallouts.

There is no TJ humor to be found in this one. This is a **dark** book. Probably his darkest, imho, though I'm sure that's debatable. There are no smexy times - it wouldn't have gone with the themes here **at all**. Just trust on that.

TJ has proven time and again that he can write anything. This would qualify as "anything." He's amazingly talented. But I can't say I **enjoyed** reading this book. I'm still in awe of his writing capabilities.

Above all, this book is about hope and never giving up.

R * A Reader Obsessed * says

4 Hearts

I agree with the majority of the people out there regarding all the pros and cons of this story and to definitely avoid any spoilers if possible.

Is it angsty? As all get out.

Will you cry? If you have a heart, yes.

What about the writing? Phenomenal.

Is there romance? Well... there's definitely love. So much love and how that can tear someone apart and put them back together.

There's no doubt Klune is talented, and now I realize that he can definitely do more than silly, funny, poignant. This was a kick in the proverbial balls, as it stabbed me repeatedly in the chest. It will definitely move you. It was raw, heartfelt, and I suppose in away, all about surviving to live another day. I honestly had no clue what this was about and that was both good and bad.

If you want to feel something, and feel it strongly and deeply, then give this a go. I didn't enjoy it, but I *appreciated* it.

On a side note, my official rating won't reflect how I feel about the audio. There's something about Derrick McClain that was horribly reminiscent of Mark Westfield (the only narrator I've ever dnf'd) but to a lesser degree, and I gritted my teeth throughout the entire 5 plus hours of this audio. Obviously, this is all very subjective because many loved his narration, but what I heard was McClain ending pretty much every sentence with a forced grunt that drove me absolutely bonkers. I sampled the rest of his works and some had it to a varying degree, while others did not, ones that I'd probably enjoy. So, take this with a grain of salt - opinions vary greatly and what might work for some, won't for others. It's quite the testament that despite my negative feelings toward the audio, Klune's genius still strongly shines through!

Thanks to the author/publisher for the audio in exchange for an honest review

Mary says

Phenomenal piece of writing.

Dia says

5 STARS

How can T.J. Klune break your heart in 130 pages? Read this book and you'll find out.

I've read this one right after finishing a very light and funny story. The angst here took me by surprise. I wasn't ready for so much heartbreak, but we never are, right?

I dived in clueless and I'm really glad I did. This book is really sad, but what I loved most here is the way the story is revealed, with tiny pieces, until we get the whole puzzle. And what a story it was!

Somewhere along the way I got a BIG surprise. I didn't expect what the author had prepared for us. I thought I figured out the characters and their pasts, but I didn't for a second think about what David and Phillip were to each other.

I shed some tears while reading. It's impossible not to. I told my husband that I don't think we always appreciate all the people in our lives. We never stop and think about how our life would be without them. And also, tell them how much they mean to us. We never know if we're going to see them again.

I absolutely adored the writing style, but this isn't something new. And the ending was better than I could have hoped. After all the sadness and angst, we get hope.

Olive Juice, T.J. Klune!

CrabbyPatty says

This is my first TJ Klune read, and it broke my heart. I have read reviews of his other books and thought "yeah, I should add TJ Klune to my list and read him sometime" never realizing that I was missing out on an amazing author.

This book is subtly and beautifully written. It leads the reader down a path where we *think* we know the cliched destination, but then reveals we were mistaken. It's like the first time viewing "The Sixth Sense" or perhaps "Leaving Las Vegas" (not saying that this book is anything like these movies), it's just that you needed to go into those movies fresh, without any preconceptions. Resist delving for spoilers, and read this book. 5 stars.

.Lili. says

I don't know what to write. Olive Juice by TJ Klune shattered me. As TJ mentioned in his blog post, this book is one that a reader must go into blind. No spoilers, no expectations- just go in and experience. It reads like a poem, one that no matter how painful it becomes you won't be able to put down; you'll feel compelled to see it to the end. It's a bittersweet story about life and second chances. I don't have much more than that. A few days after finishing it and I'm still digesting. I keep wondering what was going through his mind when he was writing it?

The only thing I can say is that this is a brilliant piece of literature. I'm kind of in awe honestly.

That's all I got.

? Todd says

Little deaths.

TJ's latest story was all about those, where small parts of your soul die piece by piece with each repeated blow, which made this book **extremely difficult for me to read**.

As far as internal angst goes, this one definitely wins the Gold Star Family medal.

Throughout the story, we got **fleeting, momentary glances of a shared life that had previously been good**. Great even. Better than great. Amazing.

Then it was like taking a deep breath and diving back underwater again.

For more of those little deaths.

I must admit that when I first began reading the story, **my initial assumptions as to what was actually going on were way off base**. As in, *'I thought we were headed to Kalamazoo, but ended up in Fairbanks'* off.

Yes, TJ is a sneaky bastard, that one.

Mostly, this story was about when "**THE MOST TERRIBLE THING IMAGINEABLE**" happens.

How you survive it.

The awful things that you say, which can never, ever be unsaid. And **the immeasurable collateral damage** that ensues.

Then, hopefully, finding a way to hang on and bring yourself back from the brink of oblivion.

If I didn't know better, I'd think that TJ had been secretly attending **Amy Lane's Angst Master Class**. And I'm not even joking here, folks.

While **this was not a happy story, it was a compelling read** and I would say that I liked the book quite a bit. However, I'm not sure if that '*like*' would fall into the '*enjoyed*' category -- given the nature of the terrible event on which the story is predicated.

All things considered, I'm rating this story at **around 4.25 stars** and close the book thankful that, as the story says, "*At least it didn't happen to me.*"

And I pray to God that it *never* does.

My ARC copy of the story was provided by the publisher in exchange for a fair, unbiased review.

Heather K (dentist in my spare time) says

I will try to be as **spoiler-free** with this review as I can be, but, honestly, I never put spoilers in my reviews.

Now, here is the rub: **I'm giving this book 4-stars for writing quality but I didn't actually like this book much at all.** Olive Juice was like getting punched in the face.

Unlike some other reviewers, I knew EXACTLY what the plot-line was going to be right from the start. I'm talking at 5% in, my shields were UP. My shields were so high up, in fact, that I barely felt emotion during the story. I sort of recognized emotion from afar, but I had already removed myself to Pluto by that point.

Some things to know:

This book has absolutely no sex content in it.

It is angsty beyond angsty.

It is not a romancy-romance.

You only get one MC's POV.

It is interesting to me that I gave this book 4-stars yet I couldn't wait for it to end. I just *knew* that I wasn't going to get my neat, little, happy cherry on top, and I simply had to power my way through it. Pain on top of pain on top of pain.

Why this book merits a high rating from me is simply due to the writing. T.J. Klune is a truly talented author, and this book was meaningful and thoughtful and so freaking timely. Really, T.J. writes his guts out, and the book was lovely in the way that a heart-breaking poem is lovely.

Beautiful writing, but give me a happy T.J. book next, please.

Copy provided in exchange for an honest review

Jewel says

This will be a completely spoiler free review. It'll also be short because I want to make sure it stays spoiler free. My advice would be to stay away from spoilers of **any** kind before reading this book. The emotional impact will be so much greater and more meaningful if you just let the story unfold as you read it.

I didn't know much about *Olive Juice* before I read it. Just the blurb and TJ's blog post, so, you know - not a lot. I didn't know what to expect.

When I started reading, I could tell it would be heavy. That, even though it's fairly short, I would still feel all the feelings. How could I not? This is a story written by TJ Klune, we're talking about here.

So whatever my expectations and thoughts were as I started reading, the story still turned out different. And there were tears. I didn't ugly cry, but it was close (I'm a cold hearted bitch). I wanted to ugly cry though, I really did (I am also a touch stubborn).

Olive Juice is a bit bittersweet. It's about two men finding their way. It's about love. And life. And uncertainty. It's about holding on and letting go. And love. Did I mention love?

Dammit, TJ, I still want to cry. I guess your job is done. I can hear you cackling from here.

ARC of Olive Juice was generously provided by the publisher, in exchange for an honest review.

T.J. says

Updated 4/26/17:

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Cover by Reese Dante:
