



# The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe

*Jenny Oliver*

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## **The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe** Jenny Oliver

When Annie White steps back onto Cherry Pie Island, it's safe to say her newly inherited Dandelion Café has seen better days! And while her childhood home on the Thames-side island idyll is exactly the same retreat from the urban bustle of London she remembers, Annie's not convinced that Owner of The Dandelion Cafe is a title she'll be keeping for long. Not that she can bear the idea of letting her dedicated, if endearingly disorganized staff lose their jobs. Plus café life does also have the added bonus of working a stone's throw away from millionaire Matt and his disarmingly charming smile!

One (shoestring budget) café makeover, a few delightful additions to the somewhat retro menu and a lot of cherry pie tastings later, The Dandelion Café is ready for its grand reopening! But once she's brought the dilapidated old café back to life, Annie finds herself wishing her stay on the island was just a bit longer. She always intended to go back to the big city...but could island living finally have lured her back home for good?

## **The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe Details**

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Author : Jenny Oliver

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## From Reader Review The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe for online ebook

### Mindy says

I absolutely loved this book. It was a lovely little slice of literary pie (pun intended).

After reading a few fairly serious stories, I was ready for something light, enjoyable and fun, and this is exactly what I found in this one. With it's less than confident, easy to identify with main character, Annie, we're taken on a lovely journey to Cherry Pie Island, a small community where Annie grew up, where her family still lives, and where the cafe her father left to her is still serving amazing cherry pie. The cast of characters is diverse and interesting, and there is a lovely sense of community among them that draws us in. It's an entertaining story, with a touch of romance that is sweet, but not overly so. All the elements (characters, back story, lovely setting) worked together to create a nice little escape from reality, and I will definitely be reading this entire series in the near future.

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### Jane says

Advance copy sent to me via Netgallery

First book by Jenny Oliver i have read, i enjoyed this so much that i have preordered the next 3 beeks in the series.

It's a very quick easy read which you could read in one sitting.

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### Jeannette Nikolova says

You can also take a look at the review in my blog WondrousBooks

*\* I received the book through NetGalley and this is the honest review I'm providing. \**

**As far as summaries go:** Annie inherits the Dandelion Cafe, famous for its cherry pies and considers selling it but then decides to breathe some life into it and bring back the magic it used to possess in her childhood. She has the help of her millionaire neighbour, his teenage son, a very scary-looking but darling waitress and a passionate Latino cook. Her family is also part of this wonderful, cherry-flavoured adventure, starting from her kind and sweet mother and ending with her annoying brother who also happens to have a heart from time to time.

So, welcome to...

Oh, wait... wrong story.

But actually, for those of you who have watched **Pushing Daisies**, I recommend this book, I really do! It has the same colorful and adorable atmosphere. Actually... maybe it's food that does this. When I think of pies and sweets and ice cream I get fuzzy all over.

Now, I have a couple of things that I need to mention in this review, which are in no particular order and don't have much of a connection, so I'll just throw them out there:

**.One:** As I mentioned above, I really liked the entire setting of the book. Jenny Oliver has a knack for descriptions, I'll give her that. I could just imagine myself walking in the dusty cafe, with its dirty windows and chipped cups. But I could also imagine the smell of the "actually not bad coffee" and almost taste the pie. *(Sadly I DID NOT eat cherry pie at all while reading. Which is sad. If I was a bad person I'd just take a star off the book for giving me food cravings. But I'm not. We'll get to the minus sides later.)*

What is strange is that I could picture just about everything in the book, but not its actual setting. For the life of me I could not will myself to accept that this is in fact England. I could probably put some blame on **Pushing Daisies**, to be honest. But overall, it was all very *colorful*. I've been to England. It's BEAUTIFUL. It's amazing. It's lovely. It's inspiring. But when I think of it, I see it somewhat dulled. As if through a curtain of rain. And don't imagine that I say that as a bad thing. America, however, is all colors and no matter how hard I tried to convince myself of it, this book was sort of set in America for me.

**.Two.Three:** Characters, characters, characters. There is so much to be said about them. I should probably try to separate this part to sub-parts, but the characters are one aspect which consists of a couple of aspects. Still with me?

*Annie:* I mostly liked her when she was interacting with the other characters, but as a stand-alone person, I couldn't really connect with her. It's not just that she's older than me, that is rarely a factor and it depends entirely on the characters. It's that she's older than me and acting like someone much younger than me. I'm sorry if someone finds this offensive, but after all we are talking about an honest opinion. I do not think that it's bad for a person to live their life to the fullest, no matter the age. But one should still be responsible and somewhat appropriate. I cannot imagine a world in which I would wear sequined tights, let alone wear them ten years from now. And don't take this too literally. There is a metaphor hidden in those tights. Too often "living life" is mistaken with "running away from responsibility and acting like a child". So Annie's only redeeming quality for me is the fact that at one point she does try to be responsible.

*&Connections:* What really did not do it for me in the book, is the fact that everything is very fast resolved. Yes, this is quite the short book, which is both good and bad: good, as it doesn't take you a week to read about three events and actually look for them in a sea of useless information and artistic expression; bad - it does not allow characters to grow on their own - they have to be nudged far too obviously by the author. The narrative and stories don't just flow, you see Oliver's hand forcing everyone to act the way she needs them in order to tie up the story nicely.

*And it's my opinion that the best of books are those you can lose yourself in, forget that they are books and forget that they have an author.*

So this is basically why I knocked two stars off. I could go on about each and every character, but I'm not actually writing a novel based on the novel, so I'm going to summarize: The characters are adorable, really, really cute. And that's just it, they don't seem real enough and you cannot really put yourself in their shoes.

**.Four:** There was this one scene that really got to me, though. I absolutely loved it and it also broke my heart. I don't think I'm going to say anything too spoilery, but if you don't want any information about the book, skip the rest of this paragraph. {My absolute favourite part about this book was the scene in which Annie remembers her father when he gave her the car money and left. It really hit something in me. It's heartbreaking to imagine someone leaving you like that. Even if it was not your last meeting at all. It was beautiful and lovely and sad.}

**Overall:** I didn't give it higher rating, because characters are really important to me, but aside from that, I enjoyed **The Grand Reopening of the Dandelion Cafe**. It has fun and it's really sweet and such a nice way to spend a few hours.

**Warning!** May give you cravings for cherry pie!

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## **Katey Lovell says**

I've read a few of Jenny Oliver's books and there are two things I've really enjoyed about them - the way she writes about community and the descriptions of food. Honestly, there's no one else who can make my mouth water so much purely through their writing!

I absolutely loved *The Parisian Christmas Bake Off* when I read it a few years ago and also found *The Little Christmas Kitchen* and *The Vintage Summer Wedding* were good reads, although didn't captivate me in the same way. However, with *The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Café* Jenny Oliver had me hooked from the very first page - she's back to her baking best!

Firstly, I loved that Annie had a past. She's not broken by it, but it's there - an ex-husband from a Vegas wedding, an insecurity built on her father's preference for her brother over her, a lack of money management skills... I felt that by knowing more about Annie's history I empathised with her plight as she fought her inner battle over what to do with the café she's inherited. Should she stay and revamp it? Is it financially viable? Or should she sell it and allow developers to change the landscape of Cherry Pie Island forever?

Of course, this is a romance so there's a love interest (Hello Matt!) Annie and Matt's friendship develops

throughout the book and it's a cute and believable progression. Both characters had baggage from their pasts but I was cheering this couple on and willing them to get together!

But the absolute highlights for me were the deliciously tempting descriptions of food being sold in the café and Jenny Oliver's charming tidbits of information about the café's homely interior. Even by the end of the book it's nothing swish, but that adds to the delightful normalcy of it. It's exactly the kind of place you hope to stumble across for friendly conversation and a bite to eat, and is the perfect fictional retreat.

I'll definitely be back for another slice of cherry pie as the series continues. Mine's a large slice with cream please, Annie.

I received this book via netgalley in return for an honest review.

This review was first posted at [www.bookswithbunny.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.bookswithbunny.blogspot.co.uk)

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### **Rachel Gilbey says**

Thank you to Carina UK and Net Galley for this e-ARC. This is my honest review.

Annie White comes back to Cherry Pie Island after inheriting the Dandelion Cafe. She had a slightly misspent youth, and since Cherry Pie Island is a close knit community, everyone remembers her past indiscretions. She initially doesn't want to take have much to do with the cafe, and its seen better days.

She spends a day in the cafe, and meets Matthew, a man she remembers from high school, who has done incredibly well with his life. And slowly she decides to give the Dandelion cafe a chance.

This is a lovely opening book in the series, which can be read in just a couple of hours. This is the first of 4 books about Cherry Pie Island, and I get the feeling that different characters will be the focus of each of them, and I look forward to getting to know them all a lot better over the up coming months.

This is a cute little story, without too much depth, written in Jenny Oliver's really nice style.

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### **Becky says**

3.5 stars.....Cute story about Annie, a successful young woman who returns to her home town island. She was left a little cafe & it is in disrepair & business is poor. Child hood friends appear, people from the past & family are all in this book. It was sweet & I may read the sequel. I very simple & predictable story.

I received this ARC copy from net galley for a fair & honest review-thanks net galley!

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### **Cora ? Tea Party Princess says**

**5 Words: Loyalty, memories, love, family, community.**

This was a truly gorgeous read, and I loved every moment of my experience of Cherry Pie Island. I can't wait for the next book so I can jump back in!

I found that this book was very much a feel-good, fun, flirty book, perfect for cheering up even the dreariest of afternoons. It was relatively quick to read, and although I wanted more I was happy with how it ended.

The island is just adorable. It's a gorgeous little place that I just want to go to. Please. Now.

Annie accomplishes so much and as a reader I really felt for her. Jenny Oliver really goes all out and drags you into the very soul of her characters.

That ending? It was a little shocking and although one part of me wishes it had ended differently, I feel that that ending was perfect for the story.

Now, I'm off to find some cherry pie. And I don't even like cherries.

*I received a copy of this for free via NetGalley for review purposes.*

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### **Elaine says**

Another delicious romance from Jenny Oliver! Annie White grew up on Cherry Pie Island but left to develop her own design business. Now she returns to see 'The Dandelion Café' which she has recently inherited. She hasn't decided what she's going to do with it. Her brother wants her to sell it. The people working there hope she won't. She never does what her brother wants . . . On a totally shoestring budget she works with the islanders to rejuvenate the café, rekindling relationships along the way with family and friends - and a pug!

This is book one in the series and is a delightful story with great characters looking for the recipe for love and happiness - delectable! I really want to read more books in this series and will certainly be looking out for their release! I highly recommend this brilliant, chicklit and will certainly be looking out for other books by this author in future!

Thanks to the author, publishers and NetGalley, too, for letting me read this book in exchange for an honest review.

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### **Sheerie says**

I really enjoyed this book and find it easy to give it 5 stars, a brilliant start to The Cherry Pie Island series. It contains family trials and tribulations and the same amongst a close knit community. I loved Annie who has inherited The Dandelion Cafe from her father and after much soul searching has decided to give it a chance and gives it a revamp on a shoestring. The spark from Matt, know to her from her childhood, helped her come to the right decision. I eagerly await the next book and am off to the supermarket to buy a cherry pie!

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## **Sally Stackhouse says**

I thoroughly enjoyed reading this good. It was well written, it had a good flow to it, I loved all the characters and the descriptions were so good I felt I was there.

A lovely read.

Four and a Half Stars

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## **Kim says**

I received this copy from Carina Uk and Net Galley and it is titled The Reopening of the Dandelion café.

Annie has been left the Dandelion café on Cherry Pie Island (on Thames side). But it's a struggling concern and has seen better days. BUT it is known for it's Cherry Pie- can that save their business.

She decides it's worth reopening the café and collects various discarded shelves and baking items to make it a shabby chic café. Her mum even makes some pretty curtains to go with the new look.

She still wants to return to her 'day job' in the city and sees this as a temporary stay- but the islanders draw her in and the 'brooding male' is another reason to stay! He buys her a really thoughtful present for opening day- and the story has a really feel good feeling about it.

It's part of a series which is advertised as readable as stand alone books aswell. I can't wait to read the rest of the series.

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## **Rebecca says**

Originally reviewed on <http://beccasboooks.blogspot.co.uk/>

Let me start off by saying that it was so incredibly lovely to envelope myself within a brand new Jenny Oliver-esque world, and I don't think the author could have introduced her brand new Cherry Pie Island series in a more welcoming, inviting and wonderful way. I'd also like to thank the fabulous Sara Veal for getting in touch with me in regards to hopping along on the blog tour, and for providing me with a review copy in exchange for a fair and honest opinion. Despite having been book-blogging for almost near on two years, the utter thrill and excitement of being invited along for a book tour (especially when it's an author that you've read and loved) never, ever goes away. NEVER!

My past experiences of Jenny's books have left me yearning for more. I associate Jenny with having the uncanny ability to force hunger upon readers through the power of words, myself included, especially food of a sweet and delicious nature, food that really, really gets your taste-buds tingling. The author's descriptions of not only food, but settings and characters as well, are absolutely fantastic, and thankfully, this radiates throughout all of Jenny's previous novels as well as her latest. Which is why, as well as adoring the title and cover of the The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe, I just could not frickin' wait to see what Jenny had in store for her readers next (and to salivate over whatever sugary goodness was on the menu).



It goes without saying that Jenny's cover for *The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe* is superbly evocative. That hazy blue sky, the boats resting on the sand, the lighthouse, and of course, last but by no means least, the adorable little cafe with that oh-so-cute red-and-white striped awning that reminds me of sunshine, ice-cream and sandcastles. Just the sight of the cover had me dreaming up all sorts of gloriously satisfying holiday imaginings, children running along that sandy shore, someone peeping down from the top of the lighthouse. Don't you just love when a cover has your mind running wild with all sorts of dreamy scenarios? Coupled with Jenny's delightful title, I really do think that it is the perfect package.

From the moment *The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe* begins, Jenny hooks the reader immediately into the world of Annie White, and the dilemma that she finds herself facing. She has inherited the rather tired-looking Dandelion Cafe, but despite knowing that she isn't up to the job of sprucing it back up, she can't seem to let it go. Filled with childhood memories of the island's famous Cherry pie, and spurred on by the thoughts of her father, Annie gets a plan together, and embarks upon the journey of bringing the Dandelion Cafe back to life. I'm a sucker for a renovation story, for a flurry of childhood memories, and for a heroine who is determined to prove everyone wrong. Annie had made a few mistakes in her past, but let's face it, who hasn't? But for some reason, certain family members just couldn't seem to let them go. Annie had, for the majority of her life, not been able to feel truly capable of achieving anything, mainly due to her showy-offy brother who seemed to be the best at everything. So when she takes on the job of taking care of the Dandelion Cafe, her brother's sarcastic comments turn out to be the fuel to her fire. She's more determined than ever to make Dandelion Cafe better than it's ever been before, even if the staff are a tad difficult at times.

Everything about *The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe* was pulling, tugging, and worthy of the arm-ache. Cherry Pie Island was atmospheric, full of that cosy feel that comes alongside family and memories and home-cooking, as well as yummy desserts! I adored watching Annie as she took the steps towards the reopening of the cafe, and not only that, but it was wonderful to watch her grow as a person and character, too.

Becca's Books is awarding *The Grand Reopening of Dandelion Cafe* with five of my yummy cupcakes! I utterly, utterly loved this book, and as the first book in the Cherry Pie Island series, it's proved a very promising beginning. I am now eagerly awaiting book#2, and quite honestly, it cannot come soon enough! Bravo, Jenny!

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## **Fi says**

Every now and then I feel the need to read something that I know will soothe my weary brain and *The Grand Reopening of the Dandelion Cafe* is one such book. The first in a series of four books being published this year it's the story of Annie, a little cafe that she has inherited and her motley collection of relatives including a brother who can do no wrong and an overbearing mother.

Having worked her to establish her own business the last thing Annie wants to do is come home to the island to look after a cafe that had been her 'spot' with her late father and famous for its cherry pie. She does though and it turns out to be the best thing she could ever do.

Sulky teenage boys in bands, smouldering single dads, best friends with secrets and spending time with estranged family lead Annie to make long-lasting decisions that ultimately affect more than just herself. *TGRofDC* is a great read that will make you smile and wish for your own slice of cherry pie.

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**Rachel Cotterill says**

Charming story of one woman's return to her childhood home. Made me cry.

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**Donna Irwin says**

A lovely easy pleasant read

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