



The Beech Tree

Don Phelan

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The Beech Tree introduces you to the lives of those who visited the tree and shared their lives, their loves, their hopes and dreams, beneath the tree's dark green canopy ... and their curious, inexplicable connection to one another.

The readers are introduced to Johnny and Margo, the first characters to visit the tree, just before Johnny ships off to fight in The Great War in 1918. We follow Johnny and Margo, Johnny's lifelong, albeit socially taboo, friendship with his friend, "Bullet Joe" Rogan, a pitcher in the Negro Leagues.

Johnny introduces his granddaughter, Debby, to the tree in 1957, an era of bobby socks, roller-skating carhops and Elvis music, and Debby meets Mason in 1967's Summer of Love, just before Mason is drafted to fight in Vietnam.

For 30 years, Debby wonders whatever became of the boy who changed her life.

Then she finds out.

Amazon Review:

Absolutely Fantastic by Rebecca Askew on June 11, 2016

"Definitely five stars. I'd give ten if that were an option. The characters were so real, I could see myself in each of them. The trains, the places, the philosophy, and the tree, were so poignant. I cried, laughed, and cried again. A truly excellent book. This is the kind of book that makes you better for having read it."

The Beech Tree Details

Date : Published May 5th 2016 by Don Phelan

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Author : Don Phelan

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From Reader Review The Beech Tree for online ebook

Terri A. says

The Beech Tree

Touching. Tragic. Triumphant.

If you read one book this year, make it this one. Phelan creates a cadre of quirky characters who, despite low expectations of them, rise to the challenges they face in consistently unexpected ways. The Beech Tree stands witness to these players in life's theater and we invited to be the audience. You will laugh, you will cry, you will stand up and cheer!

Jeff Mohr says

I don't do a lot of reading but I happened to see this and it looked interesting. I couldn't put it down.

Sara Lucinda says

****I received this book through a Goodreads giveaway in exchange for a honest and fair review.****

This is not the kind of book that I would normally pick up and read, but I actually really liked it. I love books that have such real life situations and characters that you can relate to on so many levels. I laughed and cried with everyone in this book. I've been to many of the places that the author describes so it was that much more meaningful to me. What a wonderful surprise of a book.

Lucy Kubash says

If you grew up on the west side of Michigan (or even if you didn't) you'll enjoy this book. It's full of details about the many small towns that dot the Lake Michigan coastline as well as landmarks that make them unique. But more important are the characters whose stories are tied to those towns and a huge beech tree where they once carved their initials. They are characters who will stay in your mind long after you've finished the book.

Petti says

A book about sweet, sad and touching stories. It hurt me to read some things and made me laugh out loud so it was successful in pulling heart strings. However it was a little confusing and I guess if you read it straight without trying to link the stories it would be better. I spent the first half of the book trying to figure what was what until I gave up and just read it for what it was... a good story.

Dave B. says

The preview caught my attention; the idea that a tree watched over generations of lovers who shared their romance under the tree. What I didn't expect were the gritty descriptions of real life struggles they faced. This book is sweet, funny and will rip your guts out just when you least expect it.

Karen says

From the book description ... "The Beech Tree introduces you to the lives of those who visited the tree and shared their lives, their loves, their hopes and dreams, beneath the tree's dark green canopy ... and their curious, inexplicable connection to one another."

It was confusing keeping track of all the characters and the story randomly slipped in and out of different periods of time in their lives.

2 stars out of 5

This book wasn't that bad, but it wasn't that great either.

Kathy Heare Watts says

A multi-generational tale that covers the lives of those who meet under the beech tree beginning with Johnny and Margo in 1918. Covering times of war, racial divide, love, hope, and dreams with the changing of times.

I won a signed copy of this book during a Goodreads giveaway. I am under no obligation to leave a review or rating and do so voluntarily. So that others may also enjoy this book, I am donating it to a senior assisted living facility.

Emily Y says

"You're really not what I expected, Old Man." This is one, small line in The Beech Tree best describes the book itself. Just when you think you're reading a lighthearted summer romance, it suddenly slaps you back into the reality of life. There are no superheroes, no divine intervention. Just real people facing real life with hope, courage and perseverance.

Robin Houghton says

A great emotional roller coaster of a book. You will be taken through all the trials and tribulations, laughter and love of the owners of the initials carved in the beech tree. Not content with just that, the author then

weaves all these lives into interconnectedness as the story progresses, and then finally when you least expect it, throws some wonderful twists into the mix towards the end. Entertaining reading that will draw you into every characters life, tissues needed for the tears of laughter as much as the sad moments.

Somehow, the author makes the unfairness of life readable, whether it be brutality, bigotry or racism, pointedly and atmospheric without overdoing it.

Nostalgic and emotional reading, short chapters make it ideal for those with a busy lifestyle who want to read for five minutes at a time, or holiday reading where you can just get stuck in and savour the intense feelings.

Rebecca Askew says

Absolutely Fantastic

Definitely five stars. I'd give ten if that were an option. The characters were so real, I could see myself in each of them. The trains, the places, the philosophy, and the tree, were so poignant. I cried, laughed, and cried again. A truly excellent book. This is the kind of book that makes you better for having read it.

Brett Beimers says

When I read good books, I get lost in the world the book describes and take in the conversation of the characters as if I were standing right there myself. The book transforms into a movie in my head. This happened to me while reading The Beech Tree. The time I spent in the world of this book was well worth my time. I was hooked right away and wanted to consume the entire book in one sitting. The biggest struggle was wanting to know how everything came together at the end, but not wanting the story to stop!

Tammy A says

Bold. Fearless. Poetic. Captivating.

I love it when a book goes where few others dare- the real, raw and intimate truth about ourselves as humans. Phelan's book sews together an unlikely cast of characters so well written you feel as though you could pick up the phone and call them. In fact, you'll want to call them as you hold your breath while they make mistakes, remember your own summer romance, cheer them on as they battle social injustice, and feel your soul welling up with cheers and tears as a guest on the shores of Lake Michigan looking on from under the beech tree.

Ruth Vanderhart says

Pretty obvious this was a self-publish. Fun reading a book set in West Michigan, but it never quite gelled. . .

Kristen says

While I thoroughly enjoyed the references to Grand Haven and surrounding areas I couldn't keep the characters straight. I feel like the author had too many. Each relationship vignette could have stood alone and made a wonderful book.

Nina says

I enjoyed this book about a Beech Tree on the sands of Lake Michigan and the story of the people that came to sit under the tree and craved their initials into it. The ending was beautiful, just a great read. What I didn't like was the author jumped from the past to present. It would have been great if he put the dates on the chapter page with the title. It was a bit confusing.

Medavis66 says

Enjoyable and nostalgic, The Beech Tree takes you through several mini-stories of those who have encountered life at the tree. There were times I had to revisit who was who in the storyline, as I got confused, but overall this is a nice story. I thought about places I've visited that others also have memories of and how we compare those recollections with each other when we talk about them. This was like a trip down someone else's memory lane. Very interesting.

ARC provided in exchange for honest review.

Jan Wollet says

Such an enjoyable summer read. Anyone who has grown up in West Michigan or vacationed here will connect even more.

Fred Mertzin says

When I saw The Beech Tree sitting on the kitchen counter, I thought it was just another of my wife's chick lit books. Boy, was I wrong. It was too cold and rainy to go out to a book shop so I picked it up. I found myself turning pages, Then Chapter 4 hit me right between the eyes and I found myself choking back tears. I laughed aloud, I cried, I darned near stood up and cheered. If you miss this book, you will miss one of the finest pieces of literature written in the past two decades.

Melinda M says

The Beech tree by Don Phelan is well written. The characters and scenes that he writes about are real enough

that you think you are an observer near where things are happening. If you are from Lake Michigan region, it will be familiar to you and if not, it will make you research the region. It covers from the early 20th century thru the beginning of the 21st century. All of the characters are real and everyone can relate to. It is a good addition to any reading list.

I received a copy of this book thru Goodreads Giveaways.
