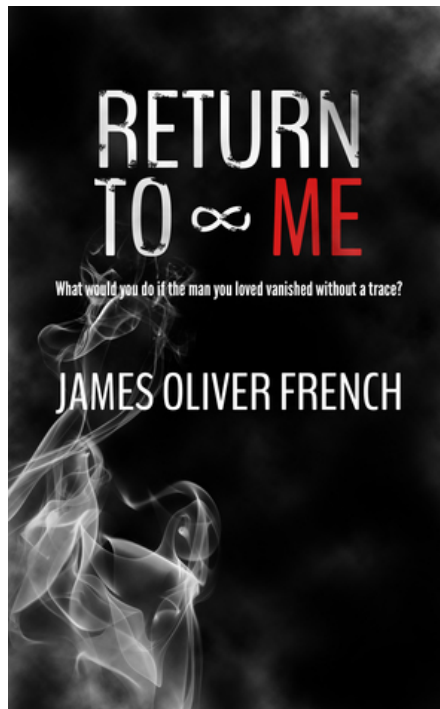




Return to Me

James Oliver French

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What would you do if the man you loved vanished without a trace?

Kyle and Todd meet at a party in their freshman year at college. They fall in lust at first sight, then deep in love. In spite of Kyle's melancholy past, their future together looks bright. Then Kyle disappears, leaving Todd heartbroken and alone, and their dreams in ruins. Fifteen years later, Todd is a successful but lonely psychiatrist. He still hasn't come to terms with the loss of his first love. When a dangerous amnesiac arrives at the hospital, Todd is forced to confront the past, and is driven to find answers to the questions that have haunted him all these years.

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Return to Me Details

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Genre : Romance, M M Romance, Sociology, Abuse, Lgbt, Gay, Contemporary

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From Reader Review Return to Me for online ebook

Gina says

Some stories simply stay with you, some you enjoy, but eventually the details slip your memory. This is one of those stories that will stay with me forever. It is definitely an emotional, difficult read, but it found a place in my heart and will stay there. The writing is excellent, the characters real and the story heartbreaking.

I will be following this new author.

Jeff Erno says

I'm not sure how to go about reviewing this book. It started out as what appeared to be young adult or new adult coming-out love story. The main character, a 20 year old named Todd, tells his first person narrative about meeting and falling in love with Kyle. Halfway through the story, Kyle goes missing, and the story jumps forward in time fifteen years. At this point it appears the story is a forced separation/reunion plot, but it takes another turn into the realm of science fiction. The ending (spoiler alert) is crushingly devastating, and having finished reading this afternoon, I'm still reeling.

I had some difficulty in the beginning half of the story relating to the central character. Todd's internal monologue irritated me a little, or at the very least, it disappointed me. He made statements about other characters, their appearance or overall affect, that seemed cruel and mean-spirited. At times he came across as shallow and snobbish, and I struggled to view him sympathetically.

When the tragedy occurred and Kyle went missing, my opinion of Todd grew exponentially. I started to really care about him, and I sort of liked his older, more mature self. I was positive he'd solve the mystery surrounding his boyfriend's disappearance, they'd be reunited, and I'd get my HEA.

NOT!

I'm sure I'll read more of this author's work because I think he's a great writer, but I'm not sure about this story. It left me feeling deflated, and when I read a love story, especially one I think is a young adult coming of age story, I really want that happily ever after, or at the very least a happy-for-now ending.

I don't want to trash the debut novel of an aspiring author, especially not one who is as talented as this. But I also don't want to give other readers the impression that this is a story that's gonna make them feel all warm and fuzzy. It's definitely provocative and quite disturbing. I encourage other readers to give this book a try, but just proceed with caution. Don't expect a wonderful, cheery Hollywood ending. 3.5 stars

Morgana says

This sounds sooo good! Wish I could read it NOW.

sigh November 23rd can't come here soon enough.

Shurrn says

A beautifully written story of love and heartbreak...

Just like that, the man I love, my first everything, the one I want to be with forever, has vanished without a trace.

(Spoiler Free Review)

GoodReads doesn't do half stars, but this is definitely a 4.5 for me.

I'm not even going to try to pretend this book didn't wreck me emotionally.

I smiled.

I laughed.

I cried real tears.

I fell in love with these two characters.

I felt the heartache and betrayal all the way to my bones...

I was left with a severe book hangover...

It takes phenomenal talent for an author to touch a reader so deeply.

We know from the blurb that the budding romance between Kyle and Todd is going to come to an end.

I assumed that this would be a fast and hot romance lasting a couple of chapters then jumping to present day. I was so wrong.

We watch an honest and beautiful love grow between these two characters for 47% of the book - yes, the hotness and impetuous youthfulness is there. After all, they are two college students navigating their way through their first relationship... But I knew that Kyle was going to disappear and break Todd's heart - It says it clearly in the blurb - so I read the first half of the book with a building dread, thinking that at any moment I would be mourning the loss of this sweet relationship between two characters it was so easy to fall for...

When it hit, it was a powerful thing - Kyle does indeed vanish without a trace, and poor Todd (as well as the reader) is completely devastated by the sudden shocking departure. Everything seemed to be going so well in their relationship...

Todd Chambers

It's like having your soul torn apart or your heart ripped out through your throat. Raw, bleeding and dying. I can't scream. I can't move. I'm numb... detached... hollow. I miss him so much, and I would do anything to get him back. Just to feel him next to me one last time.

The entire book is told through Todd's POV, so we keenly understand the euphoric high and the devastating low of the time he spends with Kyle. Todd went into college as a shy and inexperienced (though openly gay) man. Through his time spent with Kyle he comes out of his shell and fell deeply in love.

15 Years later...

Todd moved on with the help of his family and friends. Once it became clear that Kyle wasn't coming back, and that the police had no interest in pursuing his missing-persons case, Todd had no choice but to get his

shit together.

He completed his studies and became a Psychiatrist with his own successful practice, but he also volunteers his time at a local psyche-ward where the patients truly need his help and the state has little funding.

It's on his rounds at that facility when he encounters a man who has been passed off from ward to ward. He is an amnesiac John Doe who is prone to violent outbursts...

Kyle Hansen

*"You're a weirdo, Todd Chambers. Of course I want to be your boyfriend."
He seals it with a kiss.*

Fifteen years has left a hollow shell of a man behind, but he still retains the smile Todd fell in love with.

Kyle is finally back.

But this isn't the same man Todd once thought he'd spend the rest of his life with... The file on Kyle indicates that he was brutally attacked and spent time in a coma before being past around to various hospitals. He has no memory of Todd or much of anything else. Poor medical care and apathy among his doctors have created a case that Todd isn't sure he can solve.

Todd decides to do what the police refused to do fifteen long years ago: investigate the disappearance of his lover and best friend...

In the process he will retrace Kyle's steps, confront the pain of his past, and discover how and why Kyle left.

This is a story of young love and loss which will affect you long after you've finished. It took me a few days to sort out my thoughts before writing this review, and I can still feel Todd's loss.

Return to Me seamlessly blends romance and mystery and completely blew me away. Bravo James Oliver French; you have a new fan.

*****I was provided a copy of this book by the author in exchange for an honest review*****

Vivian says

This is not a romance. So forget that idea. Right now.

This is better categorized as a mystery, but it's emotional, intense and not action oriented enough to be a suspense. The problem is the format of the book; the first fifty percent reads like a romance. Straight up, contemporary college setting romance. A sweet double v card, new adult romance. The second half of the story disabuses the reader of that incorrect assumption. Honestly, the events in the book need to be shifted around so that the reader isn't confused and betrayed by the set up. Definitely an instance where chronological storytelling failed the story. It's formatted all wrong. Part One of the book is a big, fat red herring.

Language was another incongruence. There are smatterings of British English, yet Todd is never identified as

British living in Denver and LA. Additionally, I was a little disconcerted by the terms member and manhood, very old-fashioned for two young, if chaste men, even if one hails from a religious background. While this one is particularly florid in its purple prose and more so than other instances it demonstrates my point:

"Kyle grinds back onto my pole and swallows my manhood, inch by tumescent inch."

So my expectations were wrong. WRONG. So wrong that the last 15% of the book had me swearing at it. Betrayal. I felt played. There were two logical ways this story could go, but it went with the previously unmentioned Door #3-- WTF?! It's strange. Reordered and categorized as a suspense this would be good. But, its present manifestation and rendering is unsatisfying either as a romance or a suspense.

Overall, good storytelling cards, but dealt incorrectly.

Favorite quote:

"Never underestimate just how fucked up people in this world can be, and you'll never be upset when they disappoint you."

~~A copy was provided to me for a No Glitter Blown review~~

~~~Reviewed for Hearts On Fire Reviews~~~

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## Sara says

**I stopped actively reading this at 34% and skimmed the rest of the book.**

This is not a review, only a few thoughts.

This is written in the first person POV, which is always a hard sell for me, but it wasn't bad. The first half of the book was a sweet boy meets boy in college story of intsa-love to a promise of a long life together. I never full connected with either Todd our narrator, nor his boyfriend Kyle, as both were a bit two dimensional for me. I couldn't find the depth in them I was looking for. The chemistry with Kyle and Todd wasn't enough of what I needed. Yes, there were things that bugged me like the Brit speak used by two boys who were not from the UK, *but* I was attempting to get over that.

But then, Kyle disappears and the mystery happens. This story had bit of everything and the kitchen sink tossed into it. The first half was good, the second was filled with constant WTF moments all the way to the last WTFONYD moment that was unnecessary, in my opinion. I'll leave it at that.

Reading is a personal experience and for me this just didn't work. It was all over the place; I could never fully settle in and enjoy the story. I read the authors note at the end and tried to wrap my head around it all, but this could have been two separate stories: a NA romance with a dark twist and then possibly a Sci Fi with that element included.

\*\*\*Advanced Review Copy provided by the author in exchange for an honest review\*\*\*

## K says

The author, James Oliver French, gets it right when he says, *Return to Me*, is a story about love, loss, heartache, and acceptance. It's all of those things and I'll add determination, strength, and perseverance. This story does not have what I would call a happy ever after, but it certainly has a happy for now feel to it. Mr. French is a newly published author and thanks to the world of Facebook and bloggers, I may not have found this touching story, otherwise.

As the blurb states, Todd and Kyle, find each other during their first year at college and quickly became instant friends. It wasn't long into the friend status that they realized they were already becoming much more than close friends. Taking their relationship to the next level just cemented what they already knew.

They were falling in love with each other. Both, virgins, take time and care with each other learning all the ways to have sex and feel good while doing it. They stumble and fumble their way through giving and receiving. It's quite humorous and I can't help but laugh out loud at their misfortunes trying to lose their virginity.

***I lie there, patiently enjoying all the attention, but Kyle's efforts are proving fruitless. He keeps stopping to jerk himself off, but his poor penis has deflated to a shadow of its former glorious self. It looks like he's trying to shove a marshmallow through a keyhole. Losing your virginity shouldn't be this hard.***

Every time I read this line I get tickled, although, they probably don't find it funny. They, eventually, work everything out but I could so relate to their distress. The nerves and fear of the unknown will play havoc with your mind but Kyle and Todd are persistent and victorious. The joy they feel is definitely contagious because you, the reader, will more than likely be smiling from ear to ear, just as they are.

The story continues from here chronicling their time together, focusing on their relationship and friends and family. Kyle, however, doesn't have any family (none that want to see him) so he quickly forms an attachment to Todd's family, his friends, and they to him.

Kyle is a wrestler and a good one. He travels with the team frequently and is always practicing to be the best he can be. Road trips with the team are a common occurrence so when Todd doesn't hear from Kyle right away he's not too alarmed. Hours later, Todd is desperate for answers. He and his friends are scurrying to find any information they can. They reach out to the police but to no avail and you just know...you just know that the story is getting ready to crush you.

The story is told in two parts...Jump ahead 15 years and Todd, now a Psychiatrist, focuses too much on his job. He has never gotten over the disappearance of Kyle, also his first and only true love. Finding dates and keeping them is not on his list of importance. He knows he needs to put himself out there but he's not ready. If he ever will be, he doesn't know.

I felt like the story took a slow turn at this point. The author goes into quite a bit of detail outlining the day-to-day accounts and actions of Todd, his patients, and his life, which Todd admits himself, is pretty boring. He still has close contact with Felix and Georgina, his best friends from school. They, now married to each other, are his sounding board and his voice of reason. Thank goodness, he has them both because without their help and guidance I don't think Todd would have been as productive as he is. It's with their

encouragement and advice that Todd tries a little harder in the dating world.

The author tells us up front that Todd will have to face a dangerous amnesiac patient. You automatically assume that patient will be Kyle. I already had scenarios in my head of what would take place and how the story would play out. How I hoped it would play out. Wouldn't that be awesome after all these years for Kyle to come back, walk into Todd's outstretched arms, and have the life together they should have had?

Well...that would've been awesome but this is Mr. French's story and he had his own ideas. The story takes on a new excitement and suspense because you don't know, at this point, what is going to happen. Where has Kyle been all this time? What happened fifteen years ago when he disappeared? Will they eventually be able to be a couple and love each other for all eternity?

These questions will all be answered and I have to admit that even though the story fell a little flat for me in the middle it soon picked back up again keeping my attention focused solely on what was taking place. You need the answers as much as Todd does but unfortunately, just like real life, things don't always work out, as we would hope. Todd hires a private investigator to help reach some of these answers. The author takes you on this journey with Todd and the creativity and imagination of the details as they unfold were truly mesmerizing. I felt gut-punched with the horrific accounts that Kyle, alone and afraid, had to endure.

I admire James Oliver French for writing the story as it was meant to be. It would be so easy to write Todd and Kyle a happy ever after wrapping the story up with a nice little bow. I think sometimes authors are afraid to step outside the "norm" of what is expected and do what is intended. I've heard authors say this as well validating my thoughts in this respect. Mr. French doesn't conform to expectations and even though the story is heartbreaking and disappointing, at times, it was much more believable.

The overall execution of the story progressed nicely and every facet of Todd's journey was met with consideration and care. The originality of the storyline was refreshing and unique. There were a few chapters I felt could have been left out mainly because they didn't really add anything other than filler, but regardless, I was already hooked and couldn't have walked away without knowing what was going to happen. The author gave the side characters such as Felix, Georgina, and Todd's family a voice that impacted the story considerably. They all played an important and vital role in Todd's life.

I would definitely recommend this story if you like first loves, suspense, and angst. This story is not about hearts and flowers and more than likely tears will fall. It is a story of perseverance and realizing life goes on. Maybe not as originally planned but love can be found. Todd is hanging onto Kyle, hoping for a spark, a memory to resurface, any kind of recognition, but whether that happens or not, Todd finally realizes he has a life to live. How he chooses to live, it will be up to him and I think he knows it's time to do just that.

This is the first published book by James Oliver French and I am happy that I found it. I would definitely read more from this author.

\* I received a copy of this book in exchange for an honest review through  
<http://mmgoodbookreviews.wordpress.com> \*

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## Simon says

[ I know how difficult life can be when your first love dumps you (or so you think) and several years down the line, you hear they have died (hide spoiler)]

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## **Jamie ?? submits to books ?? says**

**???? 4 I Think You're Pretty Neat Stars ????**

*He whispers in my ear, "Would you like to come home with me?"*

For the first 40% of this book is an absolute sweet tale of two men finding each other and falling deeply in love.

*"Can I kiss you goodnight?*

*"Yes," he answers with a grin.*

*I lean in and kiss him softly.*

Kyle and Todd are amazing together with some steamy, hot sex after losing their virginity to each other.

As their love matures into a future, the unthinkable happens, leaving Todd shattered and so many questions unanswered.

As life continues on, Todd is forced into a life he had planned so differently. All plans of love and life together are no more.

The book fast-forwards 15 years and Todd has created a career of helping others but never finding the love he lost so many years ago.

The fate steps in, unraveling all the strength Todd has. He fights to save the man his heart forever loves, but fate is cruel and decides otherwise.

*"I can't help but cry. I don't know how to explain the hurt inside. I lost him once. By some miracle, I had him return to me ... and now he's gone forever."*

From sweet to heartbreaking, this is a great read. It is not what I expected at all. My heart was ripped open with the emotion that Todd experiences and the tortured life that his love Kyle endured by the hands of Hate.

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## **Ameena says**

**No Rating, DNF @ 30%**

When the Mcs starts to become just words to me and I can't connect to them and be invested in their story, I know then that I should stop reading.

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## Melissa says

I knew going in that this story didn't end on what one considers an HEA. And it wasn't a traditional HEA, but bittersweet with the promise of one later one. I loved Kyle and Todd; there were such an adorable and loving couple, both just starting out their lives (college, virgins, life). This story isn't for the faint of heart and I don't recommend reading this in public as for one, you will not want to put it down so stopping for chitchat won't do, and two, being seen throwing your e-reader might draw you too much attention.

As I said, I knew this story wasn't going to end the way I wanted, but I couldn't stop myself from wishing and hoping anyway. Life isn't fair, it really isn't, and this book just cements that fact. There are not nice people in this world and they often fuck it up with their negativity and small minds, and their fear. I can't say I understood why Kyle had been beat up - TORTURED, really - and had it not been for certain life choices made on everybody's part, perhaps Kyle's life would have continued on, none the wiser as to what may have happened.

But Todd and Kyle are torn apart, and the police are not willing nor interested in looking for Kyle when he disappears. I do have a problem though with Todd not doing more to look for Kyle. I can't believe he just listened to his family and friends when they told him Kyle simply ran away. Really? They all knew how in love these men were - or did they? I mean, if they really knew about how deep their love was, wouldn't they have fought tooth and nail to discover the truth? This whole thing could have been solved so much sooner and possibly saved Kyle. That's what I am upset about - Todd giving up. I will never understand how he could believe Kyle would just leave and never do anything about it, except go to the police one time. That is not realistic.

15 years later, Todd is a head shrink and treats his patients as well as pro bono work at a local facility. This is where he sees Kyle again who is transferred as a new patient. Todd recognizes Kyle and can't believe it's him. After suffering the attack years ago and not getting proper treatment after, Kyle's memories are gone. He can barely function and can't recall even events that took place moments before. He's been labeled violent and nobody took the time to actually look into his case. Except for Todd of course. I found it so sad that Kyle had been treated the way he was all those years ago. It's hard to believe he wasn't given priority care simply because the hospital didn't think he had insurance. His wallet was taken!! He had no ID, don't hospitals get those kinds of situations all the time? I can't believe all those patients would be sent off somewhere else. But what's done is done and Todd can only work with what he has now and he hires a PI (something he should have done 15 years before, but whatever) to look into Kyle's history. And he finds A LOT. It's unbelievable the stuff he found even after 15 years. Todd does his best to treat Kyle and work to get his memory back, but his efforts are truly cut short when Kyle is killed by another patient.

There is so much that took place in this book that was hard to believe; so many things had to happen for the events to turn out the way they did. And frankly, I saw most of what was going to happen a mile away; and I am not even talking about Kyle going missing (knew that from blurb), but the rest I predicted right when some stuff was introduced. And while that's not a bad thing exactly, I wish some of the events in this book had been different or more unique. Foreshadowing and all that I get, but don't give it away!

I love a good angst story and this has that for sure. There is a bright light at the end of this though with Todd on the brink of falling in love with a man he met months before. I think they will be happy together, but I also think Todd will never be the full man he was meant to be if Kyle hadn't disappeared. Kyle was Todd's first love, and you never get over your first.

## Tamika♥RBF MOOD♥ says

3.5 stars.

**Be forewarned people, this isn't a HEA. It is tragic, and it's not your conventional mm romance. If you do decide to read the story, please read the author's note after, It would probably make you feel better.**

I didn't expect to feel this mad or pissed off. I'm saddened by some aspects in the book. Don't get me wrong, I don't need a HEA or HFN in my books. I like tragedy, cheating, murder, death and destruction that's all me. I was just shocked that's all. I felt like we came along way and all we needed to do was pass the baton to the last runner and we would have won. Nope it didn't go like that. It went like runner 3 blew his knee out and we were done for the season. Okay enough with analogy's, too many damn chocolates before bed.

I was really lucky to read this arc before the book came out. In fact J.O.F wasn't even handing out arc's no more but I asked nicely! Ha, nice isn't ever equated to me. Back on schedule, he is a new author I was interested in. I really liked the blurb, but after reading he did point out that it said tragic. One thing him and I agreed on were people was possibly going to be pissed by the ending. If you find yourself raging mad like me, read the damn author's note. I instantly deflated afterwards, like well he warned us. I can't give away the plot that would be pointless. I can say I liked Todd & Kyle from the beginning. It did seem the time frame was a bit wonky, I had to keep thinking of their ages. I also definitely noticed the author's British wording in the book. It wasn't an issue, but noticeable to me.

I can say I didn't like the split in the book, we had these months of getting to know Todd & Kyle and seeing their love, to something happening and fast forward 15 years later. Like WTF, what happened after that night? Why wasn't more things be done? Was Todd satisfied what people were telling him? I kept reminding myself of the present day in book. It's 2014 he could have gotten answers. It didn't take almost 20 years for P.I., I just didn't see it. What I really did like was Linda, and that whole scene of understaffed and no room for patients. I don't buy for a second someone that is that extremely dangerous can get easily around patients in the psyche ward. That threw me for a loop and I was pissed. I thought that the last 50% of the book went extremely fast, I think we needed more minute details involved. I also think Samuel Christensen deserves to have his balls removed and sent to Maximum Security. I didn't like the smidgen of sci-fi that was in the book, I thought it threw the tone of the book off, but not that I'm thinking about it the author's note make sense a lot of it. I did cry at the end, I think my frustration was building with the situation and it just came out. All in all, I think J.O.F did a good job with his debut novel.

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## Gigi says

Good grief. I just read some of the reviews here and at Amazon and my stomach is in knots just from those! I don't think I'd be able to handle this one, even though I'm intrigued to know what happened.

Too dark, not enough romance. Just not for me.

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## Lori says

Review as previously seen at BMBR.

My update on Goodreads when I first finished reading this book was:

**"Oh fuck. I don't know if I love this or hate it....I do know I want to bawl my eyes out. Rating may change. Review when I can think straight at BMBR. Someone direct me to some fluffy happiness quick smart."**

A couple of weeks down the line...and I still don't know exactly how I feel. Ugh. This book KILLED me. I just can't work out if it was in a good way or not. Bear with me while I try and pull my thoughts into some sort of cohesive review.... The writing style was a big plus for me. it flowed well and there was great characterisation. The author is a natural storyteller and I was caught up in this story , always wanting to solve the mystery and find out what happened to Kyle. He has the knack of pulling the reader into the story and giving just enough information to keep us wanting more.

The story is told in two parts. The first part is when Todd and Kyle meet and we see them fall in love. I loved the first section of the book, I was completely caught up in the love story. Then Kyle disappears. Okay, I know this is in the blurb and, yes, I had read the blurb....but I'd read the blurb when the book first came through as a requested read, agreed to read it and then forgot what the story was about. I didn't re-read the blurb when the book came through, I just dove straight into the story. When Kyle disappeared wow - well this was my Goodreads update

"Oh. My. God. There goes my early night..".

Yeah, I was only going to read a little bit.... I was enthralled I couldn't read fast enough and NEEDED to know what happened.

So why am I dithering about what rating I should give it? I'm going to try and explain...without any spoilers. The mystery deepens, fifteen years later Todd is getting on with his life. He's a respected psychiatrist and has just met someone new who he's developing feelings for - and this is a big move for Todd because he'd never gotten over Kyle. He loved that man with all his heart and for him to just disappear broke him. Then, of course life happens and Todd finds himself in the middle of the mystery all over again. And it's at this point, during the resurfacing of this mystery that I became...not disillusioned...not angry...maybe upset? Purely because I wanted the resolution to go one way and the author wrote it a different way. It's not that Todd didn't get an HEA (or an HFN that the epilogue suggest is going to be an HEA).

It's not that the mystery etc wasn't solved...it just wasn't solved the way I wanted it to be. But it's not my story, I'm only along for the ride and James Oliver French is the one in charge of how this story ends. I just wanted it to end differently. My heart ached - it still aches - for Todd. I wanted to take the last quarter of the book and re-write it. A lot of it I'd have kept the same, but one thing I most certainly would have changed. I suppose the conclusion is that my hopes for the character didn't match up with the authors but that doesn't make this a badly written story or me a bad reader...it's just the way it is sometimes. For a debut novel, this is amazing.

Otherwise, there are some English to American phrases that didn't quite translate, mostly I didn't notice as I am English (though when I do notice these things it really BUGS me) but I know some American readers have. I also know that the author is making sure it gets a re-edit before it's published to fix this. And I have to say I LOVE the front cover, I would probably have chosen this book to read on the cover alone if the blurb hadn't drawn me in.

All in all a good read and one I'd recommend...but gird your loins if you're soft hearted like me!

## Macky says

How do I review this beautiful, bittersweet book without giving anything away? That's the question I've been pondering since I closed my kindle down, sobbing so much that I could hardly see to read the last couple of chapters! All I can say is that I finished it feeling so moved that for a day or so after, I found myself welling up just thinking about its heartbreaking content. In fact now that I'm finally putting my thoughts down in this review I can feel myself spilling over again. I know we always say "This book will stay with me for a long time", but I truly believe that Todd and Kyle's story will be one that lives up to that statement and one I'll remember forever. I went into it tentatively as I knew the nature of the story was going to be thought provoking and poignant but I didn't know just how much I was going to end up loving James Oliver French's debut novel, despite how much it shattered my heart into little pieces.

It's not that long ago that Mark reviewed a book that dealt with the same subject, albeit a different background storyline, but he had the same intense, emotional reaction as I did to this and I think it's because if we put ourselves in the same position as Todd, the MC; who's beloved Kyle vanishes without a trace one day, and imagine it's one of our loved ones disappearing abruptly and without warning, then that thought becomes so distressing your mind doesn't want to even go there. We all take it for granted that every time someone goes out to do normal, everyday things like popping to the local shops for ten minute to do a quick errand, they will always come back...but what happens if those ten minutes turns into hours...then days...weeks...months...years! The person you thought you knew and loved has disappeared of the face of the earth and you're left with no closure; no way of putting the pain of never knowing to rest. How do you cope with that type of loss and what questions must frantically haunt you every second that there's still no word from them! Why have they not come home? Where are there? Are they hurt? Why has this happened? Have they been taken? Was it planned? Is it something I did? And of course the most dreadful thought...are they dead? So many worries, so much anguish. Why? Why? Why? ...I just can't comprehend the pain, grief and heartache of living with all that on a daily basis. Just thinking about it now makes me feel physically sick...but then what happens if after fifteen years that person does turn up again under circumstances that are extremely upsetting in themselves, and the only way to get answers is as distressing as the years spent hoping for them to come home. How do you cope with all that?

This really is a story of two halves. The first sets quite a lot of seeds, dealing with how Todd and Kyle meet and become a couple, and it's this half of the story that because you know exactly what's going to happen, sort of lulls you into a false sense of security as you watch their romance grow quickly, and happily, into a love that you just know under normal circumstances would be the stuff of soul mates and happy ever afters. They encounter some conflict both inside and outside of their partnership but you never doubt that these two young, innocent men are destined to be together. They lose their virginity to each other, making their bond even more special and settle quickly into a deep loving relationship. This half is lighter, more reminiscent of a general, contemporary romance but of course as the reader we know that the 'lightness' is going to be short lived and I found myself constantly wondering if every time Kyle was away from Todd, was this going to be the time he doesn't come back...but every time he did, and their relationship just got tighter and more loving and I found myself even more on pins, because the anticipation of what was to come, was always hanging over the happiness they were experiencing, and when it did finally arrive, even though it wasn't particularly a total shock, it was still a heartbreaking moment and my own heart bled for Todd as he was left helpless, not knowing, and grieving. See rest of my review at : <http://bit.ly/11eW1nR>

