



*Under the Whispering Door* by TJ Klune  
Reviewed by Zoe



Stand Alone

The genre is Contemporary Fantasy/Queer Romance

### **Give a summary without spoilers!**

This whimsical novel centers the miserly Wallace Price, who, after a sudden and early death, finds himself in Charon's Crossing, a quirky and quaint tea shop with a strange purpose. Run by the handsome Hugo, the fiercely protective Mei and the charming Nelson, Charon's Crossing is a lovely place to spend your time in limbo. As he comes to grips with the life he barely lived, Wallace finds himself less and less willing to move on. It is a powerful story about grief, family, authenticity and what it means to live a good life, all wrapped in a beautifully queer romance and delightfully witty humor.

### **What drew you to this book?**

As a fan of TJ Klune's other bestselling work, *The House on the Cerulean*, I was already well-acquainted with the author's love for quirky, loveable and complex characters. This book did not let me down! I really appreciated the wholesome attitude this story had as it handled something so painful. When I read the description, I knew it would be for me, as I love deeply human stories that don't need to be dark and depressing to make you cry. The setting, characters and story are so simple and yet so beautifully rendered that it makes one ache to jump into the pages.

### **Did it remind you of something that you've previously read?**

This book reminded me a lot of one of TJ Klune's earlier novels, which I had already read- *The House on the Cerulean Sea*. Both books have similar romantic plotlines and social commentary is handled similarly, though the books have different messages. Themes of found family and redemption are present in both novels. *Under the Whispering Door* also reminded me of the show *Dead Like Me* through the ways it handles the concepts of death, the space between life and death, and how it applies humor to the subject.

### **To whom would you recommend this book?**

This is a great story for anyone who wants to read something simultaneously heart-warming and heart-wrenching. I would not recommend it to anyone who is

recently bereaved, as it may be too painful, however, I think most people would enjoy this novel. I imagine it would hold special interest to anyone who is queer, has a whimsical sense of humor, or who appreciates a good cup of tea.

**Overall, did you like it and would you recommend it to others?**

I loved this story and, in many ways, it has shaped how I think about life and death. I would definitely recommend it to others, as I think its lessons are universal and its message important.

**Anything else that you would like to add to this review? What made you choose it? Did you like the cover? Was it recommended to you? Did you find it at the library?**

I found this book through being a fan of the author already, but I also saw it recommended through Youtube videos. The cover is lovely, by the way. It's a very nice color and has a lot of interesting symbolism.