



# Olive

*Dinah Maria Mulock Craik*

Download now

Read Online ➞

# Olive

*Dinah Maria Mulock Craik*

**Olive** Dinah Maria Mulock Craik

*'Sybilla considered beauty as all in all. And this child - her child and Angus's, would be a deformity on the face of the earth, a shame to its parents, a dishonour to its race.'*

First published in 1850, *Olive* traces its eponymous heroine's progress from her ill-starred birth to maturity as a painter and wife. The crippled child of parents who are disgusted by her physical 'imperfection', a curvature of the spine, Olive struggles to take her place in the world as artist and woman. Published three years after *Jane Eyre*, *Olive*'s swift fictional response to Charlotte Bronte's novel raises questions of family, race and nation. This edition also includes 'The Half-Caste', a story that confronts questions of miscegenation and racial prejudice in Victorian Britain.

## Olive Details

Date : Published February 3rd 2000 by Oxford University Press, USA (first published 1850)

ISBN : 9780192833266

Author : Dinah Maria Mulock Craik

Format : Paperback 384 pages

Genre : Classics, Romance, Fiction, Historical, Victorian, Literature, 19th Century, Drama

 [Download Olive ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Olive ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Olive Dinah Maria Mulock Craik**

---

# From Reader Review Olive for online ebook

## Laura McDonald says

I found this book while perusing the LibriVox free audiobook archives. The summary said it was "a Jane Eyre variant". Jane Eyre is one of my favorites, so my curiosity was piqued. The main character, Olive, is not an orphan like Jane Eyre, but she suffers from a physical deformity that acts as a similar social impediment. One of my favorite things about this novel is that the characters are realistic and believably flawed. Olive's parents react with disgust that grows barely to tolerance when first confronted with their only child's deformity. While sad, this is believable.

Olive is at first sheltered by an overprotective nursemaid. She grows up thinking absolutely nothing is wrong with her. When the nursemaid dies, she is left to find her own way and eventually discovers that she is different. It is a great shock to her, foremost to know that she is not attractive to men and will therefore probably never marry. But she handles it gracefully and is determined to blaze another path in a society that left women few options.

As the plot progresses, there are other similarities to Jane Eyre, though Craik's story takes some definite twists and turns of its own. I was reminded of another book with a deformed main character, Fanny Burney's Camilla. Camilla's sister Eugenia is deformed, but she is also an heiress. Eugenia therefore has a one-up on Olive in that should she never marry, her money will still give her a place in society.

Even though Olive is determined to support herself and be happy in spite of her hardships, she does find love in a very unlikely person. I was surprised when this love story popped out of nowhere, but not unhappily so. The last third of the book is dedicated to this romance--there is enough "he/she loves me, he/she loves me not" to make Fanny Burney proud. If annoying, it keeps the plot humming--I will say I was never bored!

---

## Marya says

Tedious, and so old-fashioned as to be frustrating.

---

## Patrizia says

Avevo letto, della stessa autrice, 'John Halifax, Gentleman', che mi aveva decisamente impressionato per il suo impianto monumentale; ma quegli spunti didascalici e religiosi che là potevano essere considerati tratti marginali (in un intreccio fortemente connesso con gli sviluppi della 'rivoluzione industriale') qui prendono totalmente il sopravvento, diventano il centro stesso del romanzo. Per non parlare di quel che viene qua e là detto del ruolo della donna, nonostante la scelta dell'eroina (una giovane pittrice, con una storia personale condizionata dalla propria menomazione fisica) promettesse sviluppi più interessanti. Quante figlie e nipoti di reverendi, tra i primi e gli ultimi decenni dell'ottocento, hanno affrontato le loro storie con spirito più intrepidamente laico, e, per giunta, con lo sguardo proteso verso un'auspicata parità di genere!

---

## Lee Lacy says

You're going to want to give up on this book. Don't.

Everything turns out okay in the end, but it is a long way there; it's not a woman's weepy; it's genuine tragedy and then redemption.

Here's a good quotation for a t-shirt:

"Alas! there is a madness worse than disease, a voluntary madness, by which a man—longing at any price for excitement, or oblivion—"puts an enemy into his mouth to steal away his brains."

---

## Anne Schilde says

I wanted to like this book. I tried hard to like this book. I'll let the author's own words explain why I didn't.

"...you may turn to the title page, and reading thereon, 'Olive, a Novel' may exclaim, 'Most incongruous -- most strange!'"

That pretty much sums it up. I read neither. For most of the book the protagonist was a mere afterthought in what turned out to be an insufferable amount of fluff wrapped around a so-so story that could have easily been told in about 40 less chapters.

You could see everything coming a mile away. Everybody in the story was sick, dying, or died. Add in what was positively the worst 10-page-long dialogue I've ever read, and constant digressions by the author to throw her own editorial commentary into a work of fiction and you have *Olive, a Novel*.

There were occasional gems - "Was her father mad? Alas! there is a...voluntary madness, by which a man--longing at any price for excitement, or oblivion--puts an enemy into his mouth to steal his brains." - that kept me reading but the two stars I did give it are mostly for one truly touching burst of emotional candor that wasn't worth what I had to go through to read it.

---