



The Darcy Legacy: A Pride and Prejudice Variation

Joana Starnes

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Pemberley's ancient halls harbour many secrets. Which one will affect Fitzwilliam Darcy and the love of his life? How is Mr Bennet to enjoy the comforts of a well-stocked library, when his wife's premature demise had left him with the task of finding suitable matches for their daughters? And what of a misleading encounter on a muddy lane in Hertfordshire, that renders a country-town assembly rather more tolerable than some might have thought?

Shades of mystery, meddlesome relations – not least a drenched Adonis – raillery, old errors and a very recent union make for a challenging courtship when Fitzwilliam Darcy is not on his own ground. Yet when love is the reward, challenges make it more worth the earning.

“A fraught courtship? So, let it be fraught,” Colonel Fitzwilliam said with a nonchalant flourish of his hand. “A good challenge never hurt anyone.”

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From Reader Review The Darcy Legacy: A Pride and Prejudice Variation for online ebook

Christina says

Huge fan of Joana Starnes!

This one is vastly different from her previous work. Proof she can challenge herself and produce quality we expect from her prose. Perfect mix of whimsy, paranormal, intrigue, and romance. Does not disappoint!?

#JustReleased

Debbie Brown says

I received an ARC with no promise of a review, favorable or otherwise. Opinions are my own.

Ms. Starnes always finds new and excruciating ways to put Mr. Darcy through the wringer, and this book is no exception. I do think this time she has crammed one too many different elements into her story, but I'll get to that later in my review.

As the story begins in Hertfordshire, things are a bit different for the Bennet family. Mrs. Bennet has been dead for several years. Mr. Bennet, now raising his five daughters alone, is an involved parent rather than hiding away in his study. Lydia and Kitty are not out. Mr. Collins' attentions are directed away from Jane and Elizabeth and toward the more suitable Mary, to everyone's satisfaction, and thus the middle Bennet daughter is the first Bennet sister to marry when she becomes Mrs. Collins

Mr. Darcy comes to visit Mr. Bingley at Netherfield, and he is easily bewitched by Elizabeth Bennet. The book sticks with Darcy's point of view in this section, and he thoroughly enjoys all his interactions with the fascinating young lady. Before long, though, the sense of duty drilled into him by his parents starts to assert itself. Although he wishes he could have her as his wife, Elizabeth just is not an acceptable match. He also is concerned about Bingley marrying so disadvantageously. Therefore, Darcy follows the usual pattern of convincing his friend to leave Jane behind, just as he is abandoning his own desire to marry Elizabeth.

Meanwhile, Lydia's ungovernable high spirits assert themselves. Her foolish actions create enough gossip in Hertfordshire that Mr. Bennet eventually finds it prudent to bring his entire family on an extended visit with Mary and her new husband in Hunsford. Their presence changes the dynamics between Rosings and the parson's family by marriage, especially when Lady Catherine realizes the beneficial effects on her daughter Anne. A lovely twist in the plot is revealed to Darcy through a letter from Anne to Georgiana at Pemberley.

Ms. Starnes literally adds a whole new dimension by incorporating the ghostly spirits of the departed Mr. and Mrs. Darcy into the story. They watch over their offspring but are chained at Pemberley and frustratingly limited in their ability to intervene when Georgiana or Fitzwilliam need help. George and Anne Darcy also have some issues to work out in their own relationship. It's an entertaining side story that turns up in the beginning and end, and also at a particularly relevant moment in the middle of the story for young Mr. Darcy.

When Darcy goes to Rosings for Easter, he's finally ready to pursue Miss Elizabeth and has plenty of co-conspirators in Georgiana, Colonel Fitzwilliam and his cousin Anne. Unfortunately, we then get to see him at

his most inept, fumbling and tongue-tied. Also, in contrast to how she behaved when Darcy was in Hertfordshire, Elizabeth doesn't seem to have any desire to spend time with him now. Lady Catherine's unrelenting presence makes it even more difficult for him to approach her. Darcy is not the only one frustrated by Lady Catherine's delusional insistence that he and Anne WILL marry. During this time, the POV gives us glimpses into Elizabeth's thoughts and feelings, some of which are surprising but not unbelievable. Mr. Bennet's wit and irreverence add a nice touch to the goings on.

It's around the 75% mark when the book takes what I feel is a wrong turn. It abruptly shifts from a delightful Regency romance with some humorous paranormal elements to a mysterious whodunnit. Even more unforgivable, the reader is not allowed a fair opportunity to guess the culprit. Over the course of several chapters, there is a crime committed in Rosings, a hunt commences to determine who is responsible, and the villain is apprehended. We are provided with the obligatory red herrings. The perpetrator, when cornered, confesses with a bitter litany of grudges against the household, none of which is relevant to the rest of the story.

Once this detour resolves, the primary storyline resumes, with Lady Catherine continuing to insist upon her way in all things. (Honestly, those mystery chapters could be ripped right out of the book without having any impact on the surrounding events.) I love the turn the story takes here, and supernatural guardians rejoin the action as things march on to the conclusion and a very satisfying HEA.

The plot gives us lots of Darcy-and-Elizabeth time, which means plenty of yearning, angst and "the feels." Ms. Starnes really knows how to turn on the heat without getting into MA territory. There's one particularly hot kiss that just about made steam rise up out of my kindle!

The quality of Ms. Starnes' writing is absolutely excellent. Her characterizations, including interactions and conversations among the characters, rival the very best in JAFF. Unfortunately, I have to point out one overused phrase, as someone's lips always seem to "twitch." (I actually did a search--There are 26 references to lips twitching throughout the story.)

I really, really love about 85% of this book, which would be worth a solid 5 stars from me if that strange 15% of mystery hadn't plopped itself down in the midst of a whopping good romance. It's well worth your time to read despite the unwelcome interruption, and I'm sure there are many who won't be bothered by it a bit.

Kasia Burlakoff says

A beautiful and touching mixture of humor and sadness, written in inimitable Joana Starnes style. A few unusual twists, that kept me on the edge on my seat. I loved all the characters, but my favorite was Mr. Bennet - here at his best.
Highly recommended.

wosedwew says

Love, thieves, and fear, make ghosts. ~ German Proverb

“The Darcy Legacy” is a story of love (of course), thieves (or thief) and ghosts.

The ghosts are the best part!

Our story of the spirit world begins with the death of George Darcy. His newly-departed spirit is surprised to encounter the spirit of Lady Anne who still resides at Pemberley, keeping watch over her children. Some marital issues never disappear, even after death and the deceased Darcys encounter obstacles to their Happily-Ever-Hereafter. I loved an early scene with Wickham! The Darcys never did agree about him.

The spirits of the dead hallow a house for me. ~ Mark Twain, 1909

The Spirit World is active in the first and last sections of the book with a notable interference in the middle. The Darcys are trapped at Pemberley and so are not able to join their children on a journey to Rosings where they meet (again for Darcy) with the Bennet sisters.

The story branches away from canon in that Mrs. Bennet has also passed away some years ago. We still have Darcy advising Bingley against a marriage with Jane Bennet. We still have Lady Catherine insisting that Darcy will marry her daughter. We still have a Disastrous Hunsford Proposal, mitigated slightly by supernatural assistance.

And in the end – another spectral appearance! Loved it!

"We don't believe in ghosts, Mrs. Phipps."

"Don't matter if you believe in them or not. If they're there, they're there."

~ Joan Lowery Nixon

Jenny says

I absolutely loved this... For me, Joana Starnes is absolutely one of the best in this genre and this story does not disappoint. It's very different to everything else she has written but continues to have the depth and writing style I just love!

We start this tale with the death of George Darcy and soon realise death is not the end. Enter Lady Anne Darcy, who has remained with her children at Pemberley. The paranormal aspect of this book is superbly done, the humour at the end with all those who didn't make it is just lovely and a bit of a tear jerker!

The relationship between Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam is brilliant. The banter between them had me laughing out loud so many times! The reader is privy to the discussion between Darcy and Bingley when he gets persuaded against Jane. It was just heart breaking!! Poor Mr Bingley!!

The relationship between Darcy and Elizabeth is brilliant... he gets it wrong, as usual, but we have the added commentary of his parents which reduces the angst despite his suffering. The relationship between them grows beautifully, and although Darcy suffers, it's not too much - and I think he might have enjoyed it a bit!

There are some real surprises in this tale... at times it is wildly different to Jane Austen imagined but follows the general pattern of it in a really clever way.

I loved this and didn't want it to end. Definitely a keeper and one to read over and over again. I cannot recommend this highly enough!

Anna Fitzwilliam says

The plot was very interesting, but, IMO, it was weirdly developed. First we had the fantastical element, what was very entertaining. But suddenly the fantastical element was abandoned and I even forgot there had ghost in the story. Then there had a murder attempt out of nowhere, that I felt had zero connection with the plot. Then, the ghosts again!

But what really annoyed me was the fact that Darcy only came back to courting Elizabeth due to her changed circumstances and this was never confronted.

A great author, but I didn't really enjoyed this book, unfortunately.

Gail Frisby says

Loved it

This was good book, I think I want to get a print copy too. I loved the spirit world of the story, and Mrs Bennet was very much the same . Home run Ms Starnes, love your books.

Ceri says

Review and giveaway here: <http://babblingsofabookworm.blogspot....>

J. W. Garrett says

“The greatest legacy one can pass on to one’s children and grandchildren is not money or other material things accumulated in one’s life, but rather a legacy of character and faith.” –Billy Graham

This review may contain spoilers: Rating clean.

How to review this work? Where do I begin? First, I want to say that I love Joana Starnes’ work. I adore her style of writing and have read all of her books. Next, I must say that this story is very different from her other works. There are so many threads that I don’t know which to address, attach a ‘Spoiler Alert’ to or simply tackle it head on.

Family: “The most important thing in the world is family and love.” –John Wooden

This story centers around family. The Bennet family has vastly changed due to the passing of Mrs. Bennet years before. Mr. Bennet now has to trouble himself and we see him becoming more involved in the raising

of his five daughters. Never fear though, the influence of Mrs. Bennet still lives on in her sister Mrs. Philips. However, canon takes a different turn when it looks like history will repeat itself due to her actions, influence and attempts to 'help' find suitable matches for her nieces. When she suggested that Jane ride to Netherfield on horseback, Mr. Bennet, in his infinite wisdom, steps in to save Jane from a drenching and sends her in the carriage instead. Little changes are noted throughout this story as canon history, as we know it, is changed.

Note: It was mentioned that the distance from Longbourn to Meryton was three miles. Canon [chapter 7] states that Longbourn to Meryton was one mile and to Netherfield was three miles. When Jane fell ill, Lizzy set off for Netherfield with Lydia and Catherine [Kitty] walking with her. They went on into Meryton and Lizzy went the rest of the way by herself. Lizzy is famous for walking the three miles from Longbourn to Netherfield.

Mr. Bennet: "I am blessed to be a proud father of a daughter." –Adnan Sami

We really focus a lot on this Mr. Bennet. He is central in the lives of his daughters and makes decisions that are for their improvement. It was a surprise... no, a shock as to the decisions he chose for their future. Mr. Bennet's wit and sarcastic turn was on full display as he was given free rein in this work. In previous JAFF stories we only have a glimpse of his range of intelligence. Poor Darcy and Bingley suffered at his hands. The funny part was he was harder on Darcy than he was on Bingley. This was a chess game from start to finish. I loved the banter, the looks exchanged between father and daughter and the satisfaction of Mr. Bennet putting Darcy through his paces while sketching his character. That acorn [Lizzy] didn't fall from the tree. What a hoot. Poor Darcy.

Mr. Collins had to be diverted and Mr. Bennet was brilliant in his machinations as he steered him in another direction. That worked out very well indeed. Mrs. Bennet could have taken lessons from this maneuver.

The younger girls weren't a huge focus but had their say in many situations. They were really minor background support characters. Some of the story dragged a bit due to filling in information. There are 36 chapters with an epilogue.

Lady Catherine had her say in all things pertaining to Anne and the Bennet girls. The threat to Anne's health was a big shock and the revealed secrets from the past were totally OMG moments. I did not see that coming at all. Lady Catherine was tossed on her backside by this blow.

(view spoiler)

"Now I know what a ghost is. Unfinished business, that's what." –Salman Rushdie, *The Satanic Verses*

When I was looking at the cover... I thought it looked a bit crowded with a lot of people from different eras due to the clothing and hair styles. I wondered what that was about and what part they played in our story. My answer came later in the story. What fun. That little touch of paranormal was not expected but it added a bit of humor, angst, drama, and a touch of sadness. However, it was nice to see that some things could still be resolved even in the afterlife. I can't say any more without giving spoilers.

I received this book as a gift with no expectations of a review favorable or otherwise. The views expressed are my own and are my honest opinion.

Leslie says

This is a fun, exciting, original P&P what if with ghosts. Things are a little different. Mr. Bennet is a widower. Mr. Collins marries Mary Bennet. The author explains the difference between heir apparent and heir presumptive (squee). Mr. and Mrs. Darcy are real, albeit phantasm, characters in the story. Mr. Bennet's second marriage is shocking.... and we will get to a HEA for ODCS.

Why not 5 stars? Around 46% the story, which had been zooming along, literally ground to a halt and pages were filled with a scene, the reaction to the scene, the discussion with various characters, resentment, inanity... until I put the book away and read something else before girding my loins to finish it. Once past that aberration the plot picked up pace again and kept on chugging. Toward the end there were some plot twists that got a bit absurd... okay a lot absurd.

Also there was a big build up to Caroline Bingley coming to Kent and then the story all happens off the page and is related after it occurred which really disappointed me. I meant who doesn't want to see a Lady C / Caro bout?

Elizabeth Hossenlopp says

I liked it, quite a bit. The romance was beautiful. The ghosts were interesting. Not sure if I enjoyed them as much as the rest of the story, but I'm glad I read it.

Nicole Clarkston says

This paranormal romance from Joana Starnes breaks all the rules! Side-splittingly funny, touching, with just the right amount of angst and mystery, I stayed up into the wee hours to finish it. We have a thoroughly besotted Darcy, an slightly offended Elizabeth, and any number of helpful relatives trying to push the couple together... even from beyond the veil. What a pure delight! I always know I'm for an incredible story with Joana Starnes. She does Darcy angst so masterfully, and her prose is absolutely delicious. You must pick this one up!

Vaarin says

I adored the first quarter, I loved the thrilling middle and the intriguing end but the inbetween parts was a tad slow and reflection-heavy, hence the deduction of a star.

The ghosts was a high-light in this story. Not of the gothic kind though but highly entertaining.

Entering some years prior to canon, we learn something of the Darcy's backstory.

The visit to Netherfield and the retreat was there but there was twists and turns. Soon the story left for Rosings where much of this story unfolded and we left the timeline of canon. Still some framework was intact with twists in new and unique ways.

The anguish and angst I usually connect with Starnes was not as pronounced in this story who had a lighter feel, despite the ghosts.

Heartily recommend this book!

ana darcy says

4.5 stars

review and giveaway (until the 16th July 2018) here <https://myvicesandweaknesses.wordpress...>

Sheila Majczan says

11/28/18: I just finished listening the this book now on Audible while I did my morning 1/2 hour walk.

I have been thinking over what I want to say in this review for the last day. I hope I do it justice. Joana is one of my favorite JAFF authors. I love her prose and she has the ability to approach her variations with unique premises. This one was no different as she now enters the sub-genre of the paranormal in the lives of ODC.

Yes, we enter this story reading about the death of George Darcy and his experiences upon entering the afterlife. He meets his wife, Anne, and soon learns that they can read each other's thoughts. This has some reinforcing of good events in their lives on earth but they also learn some new sides to their spouse and they find limitations to where they can travel and with any communications with life on the other side of the veil. Sometimes they find that working together yields the result they wanted. Later in the story we also find Mrs. Bennet and another lady who in prominent in JA's story as part of the after life. The interactions and conversations between those who have passed are amusing...and sometimes totally satisfying. (You find wishes as to certain people being put down in canon being fulfilled here.)

The story builds slowly as background is not skimmed on in both worlds. Mr. and Mrs. Darcy's expectations about their offspring do not always match and while they observe Darcy's relationships with Georgiana, with Bingley and with Elizabeth we again learn what is expected of Darcy due to his position and his influences upon so many. However, we also learn that one parent wants happiness above "legacy" and its demands for Fitzwilliam.

Backtracking: Mr. Bennet is a widow. While Elizabeth does not marry Mr. Collins this also makes that need just a little less dire as there is no Mrs. Bennet to rant about the hedgerows. But on the other hand Mr. Bennet is forced to change some of his behaviors as to looking at providing for his daughters' future. A trip to Kent brings about many new considerations and you will be just a little taken aback when a marriage occurs at Rosings.

There are secrets and there are manipulations in various persons attempting to influence outcomes/pairings, etc. Anne learns she can make some decisions about the estate but also seeks to do so without having her mother figure out the real end she has in mind. Jane and Bingley, again, have separated and she finds herself not completely trusting his motivation when she learns he may visit the area. Why? That is part of the mystery as to the changes for the Bennet sisters.

There is one event I love in a communication between worlds. I must not hint at it here but please, do yourself a favor and read. I will say that as it happens a certain person is thought to have heat stroke due to "insane" babblings.

I enjoyed this story and can only say that there is much more which will delight you but which I dare not share here as I want you to have the pleasure of discovery as a new surprise...not hinted at by SPOILERS.
