



Mad About the Boy

Helen Fielding

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Bridget Jones is back!

Great comic writers are as rare as hen's teeth. And Helen is one of a very select band who have created a character of whom the very thought makes you smile. *Bridget Jones' Diary*, charting the life of a 30-something singleton in London in the 1990s was a huge international bestseller, published in 40 countries and selling over 15 million copies worldwide. Its sequel, *Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason*, published soon after was also a major international bestseller. Both were made into films starring Renée Zellweger, Hugh Grant and Colin Firth.

Set in the present, the new novel will explore a different phase in Bridget's life with an entirely new scenario. As Helen Fielding has said: "If people laugh as much reading it as I am while writing it then we'll all be very happy."

Mad About the Boy Details

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From Reader Review Mad About the Boy for online ebook

Hannah says

The whole appeal of Helen Fielding's novels have been based on my absolute love for anything Jane Austen, and considering that Mr Darcy is "my guy", Pride and Prejudice retellings or modern remakes have always had a special place in my heart.

Granted, I enjoy the movie more so than the book, but at least I can still picture Colin Firth as Mark Darcy. That's not to say that the book isn't great - it is infinitely times greater than any other piece of chick lit out there, and that's the appeal of Bridget.

Bridget is someone I can turn to when I'm feeling down with my life. When sit down and assess how things are going and I realise:

So I turn to books and movies with HEA that make me swoon to try and feel good about myself. Bridget is always, always, that feel good moment. Whether it's in book or movie form.

In saying that, I will never pick up this novel.

Why? Click spoilers to find out why.

(view spoiler)

Joanna says

[
I was so excited about this book, and even hearing the Big Spoiler about Mark Darcy did not dim my enthusiasm. Bridget Jones at a new stage in her life, as a widow and a mother, it seemed like it could be an interesting idea. If Helen Fielding wants Bridget to be an older singleton, I do think th

Diane says

When I heard that Helen Fielding had written a third book about Bridget Jones, I was a bit perplexed because I wasn't sure whether the quirky antics of the scattered, 30-something Bridget would still be amusing in a 50-something mother. But it was surprisingly fun to read about her adventures in dating and parenthood. The book made me laugh out loud several times, and I often found myself smiling while I read.

The novel opens with Bridget excited about dating a younger man and writing a screenplay, in addition to being a single parent of two children. As you may have already heard -- and which is revealed early in the book -- Bridget's husband, the wonderful Mr. Mark Darcy, was killed in an accident while working in Africa, and now she is finally coming out of her grief and depression to start dating again.

I think so many women fell in love with the Bridget Jones books (and the delightful movie versions) because she allowed us to laugh at ourselves and our funny obsessions with dieting and men and self-improvement projects. It was smart of Helen Fielding to update the story because that generation of women has matured and now has other issues to deal with, and who better to help us cope with laughter than our dear old friend Bridget?

One new thing that Bridget tries is social media. She opens a Twitter account and quickly gets obsessed with how many followers she has. She feels pressure to tweet clever things, and then embarrassment after tweeting while drunk. And when she meets a young man on Twitter she likes to flirt with, she learns how much fun texting can be:

"The fantastic thing about texting is that it allows you to have an instant, intimate emotional relationship giving each other a running commentary on your lives, without taking up any time whatsoever or involving meetings or arrangements or any of the complicated things which take place in the boring old non-cyber world. Apart from sex, it would be perfectly possible to have an entire relationship that is much closer and healthier than many traditional marriages without actually meeting in person at all!"

In addition to the humor of modern life, there is also a sweet side to the story. Bridget genuinely loved her husband and was devastated by his death. Her plans for self-improvement and forced cheerfulness are so touching because she is desperately trying to be a good mum to her kids, even though she'd rather stay in bed, wallow in her grief and eat chocolate ice cream.

If you enjoyed the first two Bridget Jones books, you will probably like this one. There is humor, there is romance, and there is even a happy ending. I declare it to be v. v. good.

Charlie Darcy says

[Mark Darcy is dead and as my favourite character it didn't seem worth the grief (hide spoiler)]

christa says

Here is the least surprising sentence that I will write today: The new Bridget Jones book really, really sucks. But we all knew that, right? It all came together for series author Helen Fielding just once, admittedly more than it does for some people, but she's never again been able to find that same balance of characters, plot, truths and one-liners as she had in our introduction to this once-lovable, relatable and bumbling character.

Pity.

"Bridget Jones: Mad About the Boy" finds our foot-in-mouth lead at age 50 with two young children and, eeps, no Mark Darcy. He's dead. He died doing his do-gooder work. No spoiler alert. Fielding dropped this nugget before the book was released. So now B Jones is practically a born-again virgin, so say her indiscernible friends. They insist she get back in the game and toss a bunch of 2013 internet words at her to help her find a man. She latches on to Twitter and begins broadcasting her life to a steadily growing following. So now, in addition to units of alcohol and calories, she keeps track of her followers. As all of this is unfolding, she is working on a film adaptation of Hedda Gabler, though somehow she has gotten this project to the point of production meetings without knowing who wrote the original work, nor how to spell Gabler. So.

In Tweets Roxster, a 30-year-old who woos her in 140-or-less character flirtatious blips. Eventually they move to texting, then dating, then navigating the complexities of a relationship between an older-woman-with-kids and a younger-man-with-roommates. None of this is very interesting. Not the Twitter and text banter. Not the constant search for a babysitter -- which brings bad boy Daniel back into the scene in a way that isn't at all believable. Fielding writes the "toy boy" segments as though she's heard about Twitter and she's heard about text messaging ... she's just never done it or known anyone who has.

The ending is very predictable. Fielding employs a plot technique that worked the first time she tried it on Bridget, but now seems obvious and, frankly, pretty lame -- the same way it would if you or I were to dig back into a 20-year-old bag and test some of our old moves while wearing our current life. Pa-thet-ic.

Oh. Here's one thing, though. For what is supposed to be a comic novel, the sad parts are really well drawn and, well, really sad. Like, "Here. Attach this dumbbell to your soul" sad. At least twice, while Bridget was reminiscing about Mark Darcy, I felt just sick with the weight of it all. So that was weird.

Maybe years ago we all liked Bridget because we had grown up with the blonde, coup-driving, size 6 Wakefield twins and, suddenly, here we had Bridget and her granny panties, getting loopy on wine and weeping into the sleeves of her jammies. If she so much as tried to toss her hair she would probably end up in traction. She was a girl who aimed for an ideal and somehow ended up worse, but secretly better, than where she started. And ultimately she found a partner who wasn't looking for someone who can walk in a straight line without tripping over something. In fact, he found her clumsiness endearing. But first there was

a lot of loving to hate the wrong man and hating to love the right one. And everyone knows that shit is the marrow of being a 20-something.

Much of this book feels like it was written to be immediately adapted into a movie. A lot of the gags don't translate to the page and you can practically see Renee Zellweger's "too-proud-to-cry-because-my-undies-are-showing" smile.

I knew this book would suck, just like the second Bridget Jones book sucked. And maybe, upon rereading, the first one sucks, too. Who knows. But much like accepting a friend request from someone you haven't seen since the mid-1990s, curiosity won.

Rache says

Gahhhhh, Gahhhhh and more damn Gahhhhhhhhhhh

Let me preface my thoughts by saying that I'm going to pretend this book was never written, swiftly returning to a sweeter time when I believed that our gentle heroine received the happy ending she deserved from the end of book 2.

I would like to start every sentence with 'the very cheek' and 'how dare you' whilst making sweeping arm gestures but I don't want to continually repeat a theme, unlike a certain English Novelist that we all know.

Sooo then, let me sum it up quickly by saying - what a contrived, awful, pile of trite!!!!!!!. A complete travesty to the memory of the first two books. I'm almost offended that Helen would think that Bridget fans would enjoy the story/plot. Honestly. What was she thinking; 15 years, since the last book was published, 18 years total, of Bridget living in Helen's head and she felt the latest instalment was up to scratch, the best idea she could come up with, that she was doing Bridget's character justice???

I pooh pooh you Helen Fielding

Erin says

GAH! I'm so glad that the movie (Bridget Jones and Baby) and this book are distant relations. Thank goodness that movie making people know what will make a woman feel scorned! Mark+Bridget= forever! I had to stop at page 137 because I couldn't take it anymore. But I did skip to the end to read the last 50 or so pages to find out what happens. Also, Bridget J was often blunt and crude, but when did she get down right vulgar? I wish I had never read it!

Mara says

Helen Fielding and her iconic character, Bridget Jones are the grande dames of Chick Lit, and Mad About the Boy doesn't disappoint. In most ways, that is. As usual, I won't spoiler the plot or tell anything that you can't read for yourself online. Suffice to say, this book will make you laugh and cry at the same time. For us

'women of a certain age', it's easy to relate to the fact that Bridget's voice, and that of her partners in crime, doesn't change, that people don't change, just their life stage and circumstances do. And that's what I loved the most about the novel, aside from the fact that I've always adored Bridget's bumbling and somehow positively negative outlook on life.

If you love Bridget Jones, you will absolutely want to read this one, even notwithstanding the terrible horrible that happens which you can read about everywhere else but here. I do agree with some other reviewers that the end is a bit rushed, and tidied up to quickly, and we all know that with Bridget Jones, nothing is ever very tidy at all.

PS if you use social media at all, you will die laughing at Bridget's attempts to use Twitter.

If you'd like to see my full review, visit my blog <http://www.beniceorleavethanks.com/20...>

Sharon says

Diabolical.

Lovable, cuddly, foot-in-mouth, just-the-way-you-are Bridget is long gone. In her place is a 51 year old widow obsessed with finding a man (yes, still, - and while we're on the subject, what kind of a name is Roxster?!), losing weight (yes, still, - a referral to an obesity clinic at a size 14? Really Helen? Way to relate to a huge chunk of your original fans there...) and booze (mouthful of wine in the middle of a children's diarrhea/vomit incident? Really?)

As for "hilarious" - if you find nits, poo, vomit, technophobia and juvenile name-calling among parents funny, then you'll split your sides within the first 50 pages. Otherwise, you'll sit as I did, cringing for this ridiculous woman.

Just keep in mind when reading this that Bridget is no longer in her thirties and trying to work out where her life is going. She's 51, with children raised by a Nanny (even though she doesn't work) and a stupid boyfriend. Her friends haven't grown up either, and her mother is still commenting on her life even though she's now in her seventies.

Helen seems to think we've all forgotten who Bridget is - lines from the first two books and films crop up repeatedly. "Daniel, my former emotional f*ckwit boyfriend and Mark's former arch-enemy" or "Running around naked on his parents lawn". Look, I'm all for finding love and discovering who you are no matter what your age, but when these characters are supposed to be in their fifties and they're still having telephone conversations that involve the words "what colour are your knickers, Jones?" - it's time to stop reading.

Helen made a huge mistake getting rid of one of the most popular characters, but she made an even bigger one by writing this drivel in the first place. It's obviously written with the intent of being turned into a film, because it's lost all the sparkle of the first two books and instead is heavily reliant on visuals that will work in a Hollywood movie. The sentence "it's raining men" is actually in here. Repeat references to the Dalai Lama's twitter account and numerous mentions of checking for followers made me want to heave.

Awful.

Mimi says

[Mark Darcy is dead was a really stupid move. Mark and Bridget are interesting enough that you didn't have to kill Mark to make Bridget's life interesting and your readers didn't need to see her fall in love again. She's not supposed to love again. (hide spoiler)]

Cath says

I preordered it! So excited. It's ridiculous how people judge the book without reading it... The ratings should be blocked until the release...

I just read it! I love that Bridget still is the same beloved and funny Bridget we met before. I enjoyed her toy boy adventure, I really love the character of Billy and I think the ending didnt disappoint!

Its funny, exciting and so easy to read. Really enjoyable.

Kay says

After hearing what the book is supposed to be about and the direction it's supposed to go in,

Kate Hilton says

****Spoiler Alert**

Rarely have I seen a set of reviews as inconsistent as those for Helen Fielding's latest installment in the Bridget Jones saga, *Mad About the Boy*. I assume that much of the hostility derives from Fielding's decision to do away with the beloved Mark Darcy in a horrible accident, and to set the novel at a point in time five years later, when Bridget is beginning to recover from the shock of her grief. This is not classic chick lit in the manner of the original two Bridget Jones novels; there is romance, yes, but this is not the tale of a twenty- or even thirty-something looking for Mr. Right. Our heroine is still neurotic, but life experience has given her character more weight. Her experiments with social media (Twitter, internet dating) are genuinely funny, not because Bridget is hopelessly flaky but because she is middle-aged and struggling to re-enter a world that has moved on without her. Her efforts to lose weight and find meaningful work are less about attracting a man than they are about reclaiming a sense of self out of the fragments of a shattered life. And the search for love - the ultimate success of which gives the last third of the book a satisfying sweetness - is tempered and enriched by Bridget's relationship with and responsibility for her two adorable, fatherless children. So, while I've loved Bridget Jones for years, I feel closer to her now that we've both grown up.

Dina says

[Mark Darcy is dead?!? Dead?!? (hide spoiler)]

Kate says

No. of times cried: 2.5 (the 0.5 was tears welling, not spilling)

No. of chocolate bars consumed: 2

No. of times laughed out loud: eleventy bazillion

No. of Twitter followers: 518

No. of times I thought "I love Bridget": eleventy bazillion

No. of perfectly fitting endings for Bridget: 1

No. of scenes where I thought Bridget and I would be best mates IRL: eleventy bazillion (especially the nits bits)

4.5/5 Yes, shortest most useless review ever but to all the haters*, too bad, Fielding rules. The third installment for Bridget is brilliant (yes, even though it's true that Mark Darcy is dead).

*mostly those people that gave it one star on Goodreads without actually reading the book.

Deborah Markus says

A lot of reviewers think this book doesn't work because the premise is unrealistic. Because there are plenty of women Bridget Jones' age who are single mothers due to *divorce*, but very few who are widows.

Yeah, you know what I've noticed about the other two Bridget Jones books? They're one hundred percent *realistic*. The stuff that happens to Bridget is stuff all women of a certain age can relate to.

Like, remember that time Bridget's mom got involved with that sexy con artist wanted by Interpol? Oh! Or the time Bridget landed in a Thai prison thanks to a phony drug-smuggling charge? We've *all* been THERE! Seriously! We've all been in actual prison, in Thailand! That's why we read Bridget Jones books -- because we can all, like, relate so HARD!

pffft.

Please.

If you liked the other Bridget Jones books, read this one. It's as simple as that. Bridget is as endearingly baffled as ever, and she's a lot of fun to watch.

That said: Yes, I enjoyed the first two books more than I did this one. But that's because I'm shallow and picky. Bridget has two small children in this book, and Helen Fielding found it necessary to have a lot of extremely detailed descriptions of various bodily excretions. I just really hate that kind of thing.

Also, okay: Remember all the terrific scenes in *The Edge of Reason* with Bridget and her best friend's kids, where Fielding really nailed how kids talk and wrote some terrific dialogue for some very young characters? Well, she kind of fell down on that part of the job in this book. Bridget's daughter has a part-time lisp -- not an actual speech impediment, but one of those "I'm the author and I don't think readers will remember this is a really young kid unless I make her talk funny" tells that lazy writers employ. That got old quickly.

But I'm quibbling. This story is funny, and often genuinely moving. Oh, and guess what, reviewers from the New York Times, the L.A. Times, and any other papers who thought that women readers wouldn't be able to relate to a widow in her early fifties? I'm in my forties, and I found myself identifying fondly with many of Bridget's worries. She's intimidated by effortlessly glamorous moms. She can't figure out how to use the remote now that they all look and act like advanced-physics calculators. She worries about her weight and then feels guilty about being so shallow. She knows she should eat healthy, but wants to eat the yummy bad stuff because, hello? Yummy.

I can relate.

Karen Chadwick says

I found the endless text speak, twittering etc very, very annoying and incredibly difficult to read, quite frankly I felt it was a lazy way of writing, and a means of padding.

Bridget's character (in this book) is completely unbelievable, very immature and totally one dimensional. Extremely poor characterisation, and with an underdeveloped paper thin plot.

Maybe this is a minor niggle, but I found the name "Roxter" to be the literary equivalent of nails down a blackboard.

Helen Fielding now says that she intends to bring Darcy back, in my opinion, this is backtracking and damage limitation as the backlash has been major.

It's not quite Bobby coming out of a shower, but it's not far off and I think it shows a major disregard for the buying public.

I paid 13.99 euro for this in Ireland, and frankly I would love to get my money back, rather than this feeling of being ripped off.

Writing (and it's appreciation) is a subjective thing, there is rarely a consensus of opinion, no matter what genre, but honestly, lazy writing is not to be supported.

D says

high 2s

a moderate disappointment. at times fielding really brings it (exploring grief and loss), and seeing the adult incarnations of bridget's pack of besties makes me smile. but mostly i was fatigued by our hapless heroine: the neuroses that used to seem charming just come off as ridiculous in a woman of her age. her self-sabotage, narcissism, and failure to launch were cringingly Rorschachian as i read her in my twenties. but she's fifty-one now, and she simply comes off as sad and unhinged.

i'm not saying that women are forbidden their insecurities and flaws after so many birthdays. not at all. what i *am* saying is that bridget has evidenced ZERO personal growth since we checked in with her last. her immaturities and weaknesses are just as pronounced at fifty-one as they were at thirty-something, if not more so. which is sad. dysfunctional. toxic. antithesis of charming.

and her Male Consolation Prize this go 'round? no, thank you. he's a gruff, judgy asshole-bully. i suppose i put up with similar from mark darcy because (1) he'd known bridget her whole life and maybe sort of seemed like he had a right to his opinions (not to mention she WAS sort of a dick to him in that opening scene -- you know, the one with the Sad Reindeer Sweater?), (2) he reversed said opinion so charmingly -- and convincingly, over time -- once he (and we) were shown how winning she could be, and (3) he's marck fucking darcy. he gets a PASS, people. (do i NEED to even remind you about the wet man blouse? yes. you're welcome.)

but this guy? Prince Charming 2.0? a total fuckwit. he smirks and glowers, his sole function, evidently -- besides *** MINI SPOILER *** nicely filling out a pair of heather gray track pants *** END MINI SPOILER *** -- to underscore how hopeless and ridiculous bridget is. awful. painful. MEAN.

AND THEN? he pulls a complete 540 (more than a 180 [<-- see what i did there?]) and *dares* to offer us a sad knock-off of the "i like you -- just the way you are" line, which would be awesome, except for that I DIDN'T BELIEVE A WORD OF WHAT HE WAS SAYING. because all he's done up 'til that point is rag on bridge and point out how ludicrous she is and how much she should be ashamed of herself. but now because fielding is approaching her word limit we're supposed to believe that he magically actually finds said insanity charming? enough to base a FUTURE on? and note, please, that fielding has done LIT-rally nothing, chris praeger, to show us up 'til now how bridget is actually charming and not certifiable.

no. it was a mess psychologically, this book. it read as if fielding were reworking her winning formula (messy heroine meets cute and hates gruff hero; haplessness ensues; he recognizes her charm under the lint and mocha stains; she's flattered; they live happily ever after) but had forgotten to (1) show us enough of the hero to make his psychological journey credible and (2) actually remind us that bridge is likable.

le sigh

still, go ahead, kids, and read it if you tittered over the first two titles. there's enough to keep it from being a complete waste of pulp.

(ALSO: while *Bridge the First* = *Pride and Prejudice* and *Edge of Reason* = *Persuasion*, i didn't identify this as an austen revisitation in any way. am i wrong, readers? what'd i miss?)

Fabian says

No, not as disappointing as Stephen King's newer sequel, "Dr. Sleep." But boy does the minutiae build up quickly to a bunch of nothingness-- not even contemporary British stuff is of any interest here. No, but Fielding SHOULD be commended for killing off a perennial favorite, vaulting our cute Brit into the world of dating once more. Why, oh why is Jonesey such a fan of Twitter & texting? Could you make her any less... generic? Even her likability factor suffers considerably.

This is simply not v. good.

But of note, that this pesky heroine can survive not one but TWO sequels almost unscathed is testament to her overall amazingness.

P.S. Watching "Bridget Jones's Baby" made me sad--a total annihilation of character, themes, blah. It sucked ass.

Heddus Blackwell says

Number of days expected to take to read this book: 1, number of days actually took to read this book: 9, number of times expected to be able to put down this book: 0, number of times actually put down this book: 100+

I loved Bridget Jones; I avidly read the weekly column before the books came out and excitedly awaited the release of the third book. As all fans are aware, Bridget's appeal was that women, whatever their background, could identify with her. Sadly, this is no longer the case: she is a wealthy widow, does not work (her ludicrous attempts at screenwriting can't be counted as work and they most definitely can't be counted as being funny), has a nanny and a cleaner yet constantly whinges about her hectic life, easily loses 3 stones in 13 weeks and bags herself a toyboy 21 years her junior. Most of us would struggle to relate to her and this, perhaps, reflects the probability that Helen Fielding's life now is very far removed from that of most women. The thirty something Bridget was imperfect, insecure and loveable; the 51 year old Bridget is just a silly mare who needs a bloody good talking to by someone who lives in the real world as opposed to her (once entertaining) ridiculous friends. Had Mark Darcy lived, it's very difficult to imagine that he would have put up with such an annoying creature. This is the main reason that the book just doesn't work the others being that the attempts at amusing social commentary about matters such as competitive parents and domestic technology have been done before and that the book has obviously been written with the film in mind. Up until the last 50 pages I was going to rate it 2 stars (v generous owing to nostalgia). However, as the predictable ending, with its clumsy parallel with 'Pride and Prejudice' (yet another one), unfolded, I nearly threw the book on the fire and so could only award it 1 star.
