



# Chosen

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The Bennet family changed dramatically when Mr Bennet nearly lost his life. The rekindled love between him and his wife encouraged a unifying bond amongst their five daughters. Their story unfolds as each eligible young lady walks down the aisle, taking her husband's hand and forever leaving the name of Bennet behind.

Fitzwilliam Darcy was a tormented man. His sister's recent accident and the lifelong difficulties she was now to face plagued him. While visiting his friend, Darcy crosses paths with a young lady. He is immediately captivated and soon seeks out an introduction and dance with Elizabeth Bennet. Could it be that his parents, though they are no longer with him, are leading him right to the arms of a family who can help both he and his sister heal from all they have suffered? Will the instant connection Darcy and Elizabeth both feel for each other be able to weather the storms that come when a secret past connection is revealed?

## **Chosen Details**

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Author : Sarah Johnson

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## **From Reader Review Chosen for online ebook**

### **Susan says**

In this Pride and Prejudice variation, a few years prior to the start of the story Mr. Bennet was injured resulting in a change in the Bennet family's behaviour. This is mainly the story of Darcy and Elizabeth, with minor stories of Jane and Mary.

Having just bought Part Three, I thought it best to re-read the first two in the series. Again I have enjoyed the story, and like that we read about the Fitzwilliams and Mary Bennet, and how conniving is Caroline Bingley.

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### **Carey Louise says**

I might give this a 2.5. I downloaded this book for free on Amazon and was excited to read more Pride and Prejudice fan fiction. Fan fiction is often hit or miss for me. For me, this was a miss. The character remained the same in name only. By eliminating all of the obstacles for Darcy and Elizabeth and offering only the slightest conflict for Bingley and Jane, the author forced herself to resort to the most obvious methods to move the plot along. Reliance on intuition and help from parents beyond the grave . . . it was too much for this reader. Also, many of the male characters' statements of love felt more like the effusive gushing of a adolescent girl than the sincere professions of love from an adult man. The only plot line that intrigued me was the developing interest between Mary and Darcy's cousin, Alex. However, I am not \$5.99 interested in reading any more of this story, especially since I read a review that mentioned it didn't get resolved until volume 3.

Bottom Line: If you indiscriminately love stories of Elizabeth and Darcy, you will likely love this book as well. It is better than many I've read. If you want more substance and development from your characters, plots, and themes; or you demand a modicum of similarity between the original Pride & Prejudice and fan fiction, this is NOT the book for you.

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### **Cindy says**

Loved this different adaptation of Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice". This storyline is totally different from the usual adaptations, which really made it more interesting to me. In this story, the Bennet family is totally different than Austen's characterizations. They are a very close and loving family because of a tragic carriage accident that almost caused them to lose Mr. Bennett. Darcy has also gone through a similar tragedy with his sister, Georgiana, who has lost the use of her legs due to a carriage accident caused by Wickham. Several of the characters have role-reversals from Austen's original work, but the storyline carries romance, mystery, and a sense of loyalty throughout the entire novel. All things work out well for Elizabeth and Darcy in the end.

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### **Blodeuedd Finland says**

This one was SO sweet. Everyone was so nice, except for Caroline. If you think she is bitchy otherwise, then

here, omg, the most annoying bitchy woman who I just want to punch in the face.

But everyone else was sweet. Because in this what if Mr and Mrs Bennet found their way to each other. So Mrs Bennet never turned into that annoying woman that she is. She was really nice, he was really nice.

Darcy meets Elizabeth, and does not insult her.

Bingley and Jane meet and are dull as always.

Mary is nice and meets a man, and I was all yay, but then dang! In book 3 we get to see that first. What???! I wanted that conclusion now. Here we just got Lizzy and Darcy. Such a shame. Cos it was sweet and fun.

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## **Sophie says**

First off, the writing. The language was generally very good and appropriate; it flowed well as I read. I did enjoy the author's style; we get to see into the thoughts of many different characters through this book which was really interesting as we got to know them all very well, but more on that later. As we see the perspectives of so many, there is a lot of switching between different points of view, but this was done well. Once I was into the story and used to her style, which didn't take long, the jumps between characters felt smooth and it was easy to keep up with.

Back to the multiple perspectives; as I said, it was really interesting to get to know so many characters in such detail, and especially to see into the thoughts of some more unusual characters. As a result of this, there are lots of conversations between a real range of characters. I enjoyed it a lot. Seeing more into the thoughts of Caroline Bingley was fun! And we get to know Mary Bennet a lot more, which I really loved. (But while it was a story with many characters, Darcy and Lizzy are still the main two!)

As well as this, we hear about the backgrounds and pasts of many more, which really gives them depth. However, I say we get to know the characters much better, but the characters we get to know are often very different from the ones that we know in *Pride and Prejudice*!

I was intrigued by the premise of this story. Illness and serious accidents can really alter a family. I know this myself from experience! It makes you re-evaluate your priorities and makes you realise what is actually important in life. This is why so many of the characters are so different, especially the Bennets. Although they are very different from the original, it was a nice change to see the Bennets actually getting on, and of course there are still aspects which are recognisable. Due to the circumstances, Mr Bennet's accident, the changes in the characters seem very reasonable and believable.

Some of the most interesting characters who have been most affected by the accident would be Mr Bennet himself. The way it has improved his relationship with his wife is really sweet, as well as seeing how it has affected his view on how he cares for his daughters. The Bennet family as a whole are a really close-knit family, which makes a lovely change; we get to see interesting relationships between other sisters like Jane, Elizabeth and Mary. Even Kitty and Lydia are much more subdued and even likeable!

The Darcys, as well, are affected by a similar accident which has befallen Georgiana. Poor Georgiana has been through a lot and I really felt for her. The accident seems to greatly alter Darcy's priorities and so when he meets Lizzy, his mindset is very different from canon.

The relationship built between Mr Bennet and Georgiana is very sweet as they can relate as both have been through a very similar accident. Mr Bennet also becomes like a father figure to Darcy, which is nice to see given Darcy has been without a father for so very long.

As well as Mr Bennet being very useful for the Darcys, whose accident has only just happened whereas Mr Bennet's happened a few years ago, Elizabeth also becomes a real comfort for Darcy as she had to experience what Darcy is going through when her father had his accident.

The characters really are different - I mean, even Mr Bennet and Lydia are getting on! Of course, the evil characters stay evil - that's Caroline, Wickham, the ones that we don't like, as well as some surprising new ones actually! Other particularly interesting changes to characters are others like Mr and Mrs Hurst who have a very sweet relationship. I have already mentioned Mary who has her own little story being set up in this one. (I will go into details about specific characters shortly.)

Aside from the changes in characters due to illness, another interesting aspect which I enjoyed was the idea of fate. Without wanting to give too much away, Darcy lost his parents very young and has been very lonely with a lot of responsibility ever since. As soon as Darcy meets Elizabeth, he feels an instant connection to her, as if it is his parents who have led him into her path, that it is his parents who have 'chosen' Elizabeth for him - hence the title! This made for some really, really sweet conversations and a very touching ending - but I don't want to give all the good stuff away! I would say that the Darcy, in this story, could be seen as a lot more sentimental and almost emotional, however it worked with the premise and didn't feel out of place - I'm telling you, serious illness makes you rethink what actually matters! (And I have to say, the sentimental Darcy is really rather cute - some of the things he says to Lizzie are just adorable! You will love him!)

As is hinted at in the blurb above, Darcy and Lizzie do have a slight past connection - another reason why he feels an instant connection to her. It is kept as a bit of a mystery and I was intrigued throughout the story trying to work out what exactly the connection was - it kept me hooked, but I don't want to spoil it for you!

Right now to some more specifics about characters, and of course we must begin with the hero and heroine!

Although Elizabeth has been through much as a result of having to deal with her father's accident, she is still the witty, high-spirited Elizabeth that we know, expect and love. One big alteration is that she likes Darcy straightaway - no pride, no prejudice, no misunderstandings for a change! Something I particularly enjoyed about getting to know this Elizabeth was the past memories of her childhood which really showed her character. There was some lovely stories about her climbing - and getting stuck in! - trees! We also learn of her Grandma Bennet who she was very close to, and the stories painted of their time really helped you see how it shaped her into the Lizzy we know, and it was sweet to have a glimpse into the young Lizzy.

I have already mentioned that Darcy is quite different from the rather proud man that we expect. But you can't help but feel sorry for him as you read his thoughts about his past and how he had to deal with the passing of his mother, and then his father and all the responsibilities as a result of becoming Master of Pemberley so young, and now the accident with Georgiana! His thoughts and feelings are particularly well described. Again, seeing into the thoughts of Darcy is always interesting as he is quite an elusive character until very much towards the end of *Pride and Prejudice*. You really get to know this Darcy, and although he is different, he is still a Darcy we can easily fall in love with - I did pretty much straight away!

I mentioned early that Elizabeth liked Darcy immediately, as did Darcy with Elizabeth. They get off to a much better start, and do dance at the Meryton assembly! I have now read a few variations where the relationship between Darcy and Lizzie is a lot smoother and the problems come from other areas rather than

misunderstandings between themselves, and I really like to read this. Their courtship and relationship through the first half of the story is very sweet - Elizabeth helps to bring Darcy out of his sad state of mind as a result of Georgiana's accident, and Darcy is very, very charming! Some of the conversations they have are really just too cute, as well as often very funny! Another thing I always enjoy in the book is when Darcy and Elizabeth engage quite a lot before the end - I much prefer that to them marrying on the last page of the book! They get engaged almost in the middle of this book, I believe, and it was lovely to see how their relationship changed once they were engaged, and don't worry, the second half is far from boring - the drama doesn't stop as they have other problems to face, but at least they could face them together! I don't know what else to say other than Darcy and Elizabeth are just adorable. They are very much a young couple in love - and we all like to read a happy Darcy and Lizzy don't we?!

Now aside from Darcy and Lizzy, the beloved characters such as the Bingleys obviously still come into the story. Beginning with the not so charming Caroline Bingley - she is as scheming and awful as we want her to be and expect her to be. Bingley, on the other hand, is just Bingley - very much in love with his angel, Jane. It was a lot of fun to see into the thought of Bingley a bit more; for one, about his feelings for Jane, but also about his opinion on his own sister, Caroline! As I already mentioned, Mr and Mrs Hurst are surprisingly lovely and have a really sweet and very different relationship and I enjoyed it. They aren't too keen on Caroline either, and this resulted in some funny scenes and conversations!

I have already touched on Mr Bennet and how he plays a role in the story, but one of the most interesting and enjoyable changes has to be the relationship of Mr and Mrs Bennet. We know that Mr Bennet was attracted to a pretty face and a lively disposition when they were younger, but it is lovely to see the love they would have felt initially, at least for a little while on some level, rekindled. Seeing them work together as parents – and very successfully – to their daughters was really lovely.

Back onto Georgiana; I have already mentioned how it is impossible not to feel sorry for her. The accident has left her incapable of walking, and they are unsure if she will ever walk again. Her development in the story as she comes to terms with her disability is touching and her relationship with Elizabeth and the other Bennet daughters, particularly Mary later in the story, is just wonderful. I always like to get to know Georgiana better as she seems like such a lovely girl in *Pride and Prejudice*. I am greatly looking forward to seeing how her story continues in the other novels of this 'Leaving Bennet Behind' series.

As well as the characters we all love, there are some wonderful new additions to the story. Colonel Fitzwilliam, of course, still comes along but so does his delightful brother Alex Fitzwilliam. It was lovely to see Fitzwilliam with a brother; there was a lot of fun brotherly banter going on! Alex himself was a wonderful character and became quite a major part of the story in his own way and takes quite an interest to one of the other Bennet ladies, and I'm greatly looking forward to see how that goes on in the future stories!

Another new addition is Lord and Lady Rosebery, The Fitzwilliam parents. They were lovely. Their relationship with their son, as well as with their nephew and niece, Darcy and Georgiana, was very nice to see. We really don't meet much of Darcy's family so it was nice to get to know him more through some of his nicer relations - we don't get the best impression from Lady Catherine!

Darcy and Elizabeth are the central characters of this book, but the story which will be picked up in Volume II, Jane and Bingley, is touched on through this book as well, as is the one which I believe will be central to Volume III, Mary's story. The way she has set up all these other plots and also some other exciting mystery which hasn't been resolved has certainly kept me into wanting to read the next volumes once published, to find out what happens to the other Bennet girls and how they leave the name of Bennet behind. She certainly has me hooked!

I really have enjoyed the story and as you can probably tell, I can't wait for the next volumes of this series. Back on this story in particular, I really enjoyed the better start between Darcy and Elizabeth as well as the relationship between Mr and Mrs Bennet. The idea of how illness can affect so many and change the attitude of so many was really interesting to read about. All the new characters were lovely and the fact that we get to know so many of them so well was brilliant and quite different as many variations I read very much focus on just Darcy and Elizabeth, and at a stretch Jane and Bingley as well.

There was mystery, drama, plenty of romance, humour and brilliant characters - what more could I ask for? I am on tenterhooks waiting for the next instalment in this wonderful story - but don't panic, although this is Volume I in a series, this story has its own happy ending, no cliffhangers - for Lizzy and Darcy at least!

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### **Susan says**

Chosen, the first volume of Leaving Bennet Behind is a Pride and Prejudice variation telling the story of Elizabeth Bennet and Darcy.

What if Mr Bennet was involved in an accident several years prior to the start of the story, which changed his attitude as a father from the indolent man he was to one that protected his daughters and wife.

With the meeting of Darcy and Elizabeth before the Merton Assembly how does this effect their futures. This is the tale of those few months after the assembly.

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### **TaNeshia Washington says**

I thought this was a great book and I was excited that the price was marked at \$0 when bought it. I have nothing to complain about. It is part of a series so I will have to get the other two parts to find out what else happens. I thought this book was very sweet. I got teary a few times. This book has no Wickham seduction drama which I thought was great. The Bennets were not vulgar and Darcy gets the girl. This story was perfect. Don't get me wrong, there was drama but it was subtle and kept me wondering what was going to happen. It is not necessary to read the other two parts. It ends with Darcy and Elizabeth's happily ever after, which is a good stopping point. I however have to know what becomes of the other characters and whether they get their happily ever afters as well. I recommend this sweet tale to all.

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### **Madenna U says**

This Pride and Prejudice inspired story has Elizabeth and Darcy interacting while she is lost in the woods not too far from her home, but without an introduction. They learn each other's names at the Assembly and are inseparable from then. They have an immediate connection and feel as though they were Chosen for each other by their relatives watching over them. There is a good amount of spirituality throughout as two find their happily ever after - even through a big secret.

This story has out of character versions of almost all the Bennet family with names and backstories. It also provided a fun and supporting family for Darcy. Caroline was her very evil self, no Wickham, and strangely Aunt Philips is a bit off. There were quite a few aspects to the plot that were there to set up for future books in the series.

Normally, I don't think this story would have appealed to me. However, the best part were the relationships between Darcy and his cousins and Elizabeth and her sisters. The way the author was able to communicate the love in the respective families was by far the best part of this book.

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## **Beth says**

### **Beautiful adaptation**

In reading this, the events are streamlined...we don't go through the painful assembly and Mr Collins...and no Wickham. What is left is a beautiful story about two people who probably never would have come in contact with each other if not for events beyond our control. An accident which leads two people to meet briefly. Another accident that damaged a young girl. An accident that changed the entire feel of Longbourne. Gone is that chaos and the instability of the younger Bennett girls. Beautifully written...even Caroline Bingley isn't as horrible as usual...she's still quite devious though.

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## **Katherine says**

In this version only 3 of the 5 Bennet daughters are out in society and the Bennets have a wonderful marriage. This is all due to a near death experience Mr Bennet had so Elizabeth doesn't seem to have relations to be ashamed of. Darcy is determined to marry for love as his parents wanted him to do and he struggles with his feelings as Georgiana was in an accident that left her unable to walk. Darcy meets Elizabeth when she becomes lost and is immediately drawn to her as though his parents were directing him to her. He is captivated by her beauty and her laugh so at the first assembly he seeks her out for a dance. So there is no slight against her character but rather someone else says it against Mary. nwe get to know a different version of Mary in this novel which I enjoyed although her story is open even at the end so I hope there is a part 2 to read. Elizabeth and Darcy have an easy path to love but when the Gardiners realize who she is marrying and when Darcy's uncle Matlock realizes who Elizabeth is there is a secret that may tear Darcy and Elizabeth apart on their wedding day. Caroline is a scheming character in this novel but her aim is no longer Darcy but his cousin Alexander who has a title (lord) but I'm the process she causes problems for Jane and Bingley. Poor Mary in this novel, I really hope her knight in shining armour clears up the misunderstandings in part 2.

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## **Jeanah says**

What if a terrible accident occurred in the Bennet family 5 year prior to Our Pride and Prejudice? How would that change Mr. Bennett and therefore change to future for his wife and daughters? How would the Bennet family look with an attentive loving father and husband as its leader. I liked this glimpse of what "should have been"? It is cute to see each of our character flourish and grow. I also enjoyed the spiritual depth that surrounds the story with Elizabeth and Darcy. I only gave it a 3 because although I enjoyed it and will continue reading the other two, I thought their was still so much that could have been done to make it more exciting.

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## **KRISTEN LAWRENCE says**

### **Not worth the effort**

I will start by admitting I couldn't finish this book. The characters were so far removed from the original, but not in a good way. The way it was written from everyone's thinking perspective was a math e rs

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## **Gail Frisby says**

### **Loved it**

Cannot wait for the next book, hope it's as well written and juicy. I usually like an epilogue but understand since this is a series.

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## **Leslie says**

This is an alternative P&P what if that removes all the Pride and Prejudice, adds more characters and more angst; of a different sort, and has all of the nastiness thrown at Lizzy transferred to Mary and said by other characters.

Many of the characters are much changed; Mrs Bennet (Susannah) has been through a lot a lost heir, the near death of her husband and is much calmer. Mr. Bennet (Henry) is much more involved with his family. Lydia and Kitty are not out; although they are allowed to participate in family parties and calls.

Lizzy & Darcy are quickly in love; while Jane and Bingley are more hesitant. Darcy is distressed because Georgiana's incident at Ramsgate caused not just the loss of her spirit but physical injuries which may be life long.

New characters include the Earl and Countess of Rosebery, Viscount Primrose and Charlotte's brothers. Missing in action are Colins, Wickham and Lady Catherine (view spoiler). There is plenty of angst including a secret that could tear our happy couple apart.

Caroline has her claws out but again directed at Mary not Lizzy or Jane.

Note I bought this book almost 2 years ago. When it recently popped up on a few friend's reviews I was reminded I already owned it.

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## **Sheila Majczan says**

This is a sweet variation to Pride and Prejudice although it seems to omit both those traits from our dear couple's personalities.

Darcy and Elizabeth meet early in the book as Elizabeth wanders farther than ever before in her morning

walks as a newly built bridge provides her access to areas not explored. When she finds she is disoriented and comes upon a gentleman on a horse she asks for help with directions. Although he is new to the area Darcy is able to direct her and offers to escort her. She turns him down due to priorities of society...BUT he thanks GOD for his meeting with someone in whom he now has an interest. The author does use fate (or God's Plan) in this story and we learn it is more than just this one incident.

As other reviews have disclosed the actors from canon are all present in this story but they do have different personalities at times. Significant and already mentioned are ODC but Mr. and Mrs. Bennet are a surprise. Oh, she can be just as fluttery and nervous as in P&P but in this tale Mr. Bennet has changed, mostly due to a significant accident and a brush with death. He now takes a much greater interest in all that is going on around him and he makes an effort to better his relationship and his influence upon his wife. And when young men come to call he is much more eager to learn of their background and their intentions. He also heeds advice about undesirables in the community and the need to protect his daughters.

Caroline Bingley, again, plays a significant role BUT this time her words and actions are taken to heart by one previously insignificant little mouse of a young lady. Col Fitzwilliam's unmarried older brother, Alex, is introduced. Guess who catches his attention immediately? Oh, Caroline does try to latch onto him, but is her maneuvering going to be successful in this tale? It is interesting to see her at work on another prey.

Georgiana's accident is not just any old accident - the cause of such and the outcome and the lasting effects add much to the progress of events. Additionally, about half way through the story relatives, learning of Darcy's and Elizabeth's attachment to each other begin to ask each other, "Should we tell her?" "Does he remember?" OK, so now we have a mystery! And it is not answered that quickly. Aunt and Uncle Gardiner and Lord and Lady Rosebery play a role in explaining that situation.

We get to read of Mary's thoughts, feelings, anxieties and reactions to others in this story. We learn to care about those affecting her and not just her sisters are at fault here. As others have stated her story is not brought to a climax here but hints are that it will be addressed in future books. (I did go to the other book descriptions to satisfy my curiosity about that.) You will find yourself drawn in and cheering for her happiness. Additionally, the old adage about eavesdropping and its evils come into play for Mary.

There is really little angst in this story and although there are thoughts of how one person's physical presence affects the heart beat or the breathing pattern of one I found it was presented with little chemistry presented. It is there but handled in a very sweet description rather than with fire and passion.

I do plan to buy and read the next two books in this series. And I recommend this one to lovers of JAFF.

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