



Longbourn's Songbird

Beau North

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South Carolina, 1948 - Elizabeth Bennet is looking forward to a life of few surprises on her family's farm. Longbourn is a place of comfort and quiet security, a haven from the heartache of her past, where she can sing to heart's content, comfortable in the cage she's built for herself.

When Charles Bingley buys the property neighboring Longbourn Farms, his best friend Will Darcy sees an opportunity he can't miss. The postwar economy is booming, and the young, ambitious tycoon is determined to reap the benefits...until a chance encounter in the Netherfield woods changes everything, making him question the man he is, and the man he wants to be.

If Will can look beyond his own rigid expectations, can Elizabeth learn to forgive and live fully, free from her cage? Longbourn's Songbird is a vivid reimaging of Jane Austen's *Pride & Prejudice*, shining a spotlight on the opportunities and injustices of postwar America, a spellbinding tale of loss, of love, and of letting go.

Longbourn's Songbird Details

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Author : Beau North

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From Reader Review Longbourn's Songbird for online ebook

Nicole Barton Sasser says

4.5 Stars

"Modern" JAFF is not really my thing. Out of the MANY *Pride and Prejudice* related books I have read, only a handful are modern adaptations. Yes this is set in the 1940's, but in comparison to the original time period, I would consider it "modern." That being said, I LOVED it. I never envisioned my beloved characters in this time period, nor the American South as a setting, but it fit surprisingly perfect.

A must read for any and all JAFF lovers!

Christina Morland says

Longbourn's Songbird captures the essence of *Pride and Prejudice* while telling a unique story full of complex and interesting characters. Elizabeth, Darcy, and several other P&P characters take very different journeys in this post-WWII retelling, yet they all confront Austen's big question: is it possible to love another before you understand yourself? There's not a single character in this novel that felt flat or uninteresting. Even the "villains" have life about them. I was riveted from start to finish!

Mark Brownlow says

A delightful Pride & Prejudice adaptation set in the US just after WWII, with a wonderful twist that leads to a memorable "Don't do it! Noooo, he's done it!" moment for the reader part-way through: a real "read the words through your fingers" passage.

I thoroughly enjoyed the author's storytelling and writing style. She is not afraid to touch on subjects that make the book more than "just" a story, too, covering issues such as post-war trauma and an LGBT relationship with sensitivity and anchoring these topics nicely within the plot.

(Also, bonus points for making Mr Collins even more unlikable than in the Austen original.)

Ceri says

This review was first published on Babblings of a Bookworm: <http://babblingsofabookworm.blogspot....>

Largely, stories based on Austen's 'Pride & Prejudice' are either variations or sequels that are set in contemporary times to Austen's story, or they are modern retellings set in the present day. I've read a very few stories that move the action to the early 1900s (Karen M Cox's depression-era '1932' and Mary Lydon Simonsen's 'Mr. Darcy's Angel of Mercy' and 'Darcy Goes to War: A Pride and Prejudice Re-Imagining', set in the First and Second World Wars respectively, are a few that spring to mind), so I was keen to read an

Austenesque novel set in an unfamiliar era. 'Longbourn's Songbird' is set post-World War II, in the late 1940s, in the USA.

In many ways I went into Longbourn's Songbird expecting something a little different from the story that I got; what I'd thought the story was probably about was Elizabeth being some sort of singer, and hence unsuitable for Darcy, and maybe some sort of complication relating Darcy's time in the war, however, I was wrong on both of those counts. Instead, though Darcy's family has been affected by the war, he was working making munitions and so was never deployed overseas, and while Elizabeth sings at parties and so on, she is the daughter of a well-to-do landowner and not doing it to earn a living. I was also expecting the dynamics between them and the story arc to follow more closely to Austen's story. They don't, but this is by no means a bad thing. The couple have real magnetism, which Darcy at least is aware of and fighting against before they are even introduced and although the story has events which parallel events in 'Pride & Prejudice' they are not always in the same order and don't have the same effect. Rather than this being a modern P&P update I felt this was more the author exploring some facets of society in the late 1940s threaded through a P&P inspired tale.

Racial division was only touched on very lightly, but the story explores some other potentially challenging issues in an entertaining and thought-provoking way naturally as the story unfolds. We look at some of the attitudes facing same-sex relationships, post-traumatic stress disorder, domestic violence and mental abuse and the difference in how we perceive some medical conditions. Attitudes really change over time, and reading this story reminded me of how much attitudes have changed to some of these things even in the last 20 years or so, and even then they were a world away from the time period of this book. There wasn't much of a graphic nature in any of these themes so the mood of the book stayed on the whole quite lighthearted. This is primarily a romance, but with serious themes forming a part of it.

The characters weren't quite the same as Austen's either. Darcy was far less proud, which isn't surprising as that is a harder quality to excuse than in Austen's day of strict social strata. The story is probably more from Darcy's view than Elizabeth's, which also helps you become fond of him even when your mind is screaming at him to stop! Elizabeth is a likeable character, and her sisters were nicely fleshed out, I thought the Bennet family as a whole were kindly portrayed and nicely realistic. Each of the sisters had personality, the parents were flawed but basically good people and Lydia was far less annoying than in many books. The Bennets here felt like a family:

"Oh, but what about Clark Gable?" Jane asked, making all of the women at the table—Mrs Bennet included—sigh dreamily. It was the only thing they all agreed on.

In the Bennet house, Clark Gable was the great unifier.'

I have read books where the main potential 'baddies' of 'Pride & Prejudice' – Caroline, Collins, Lady Catherine and Wickham – were real caricatures of themselves and quite two dimensional as a result, but here they were portrayed as people, which I thought was so well done. On the whole, these characters are quite similar to their 'Pride and Prejudice' origins, having the same main flaws, although one character was markedly different from Austen's creation. This character was quite chilling in that I could see that type of character actually existing in real life (shudder!).

Another theme that is touched on in this story is heartbreak; whether to give yourself over fully to love or whether to protect yourself. Both of our main characters wrestle with this theme, as do some of the secondary ones, and all for slightly different reasons and with different levels of self-esteem. I thought this was a poignant quote, though I won't spoil things by telling you who it's in relation to:

'The truth? She had never permitted herself to have feelings for anyone because what kind of future could she offer a man?'

As I said earlier, although there are some themes (such as sex and violence) which might give you pause, there are not graphic scenes. There is some swearing, but it's not especially prolific. I was quite shocked when Georgiana dropped an f-bomb though!

I would certainly recommend this book to other Austenesque readers – I found it gripping, thought-provoking and romantic. I thought the balance between the heavier subjects and the romance was very good, because the subjects were explored without making the story feel weighted down, and in fact, there was also patches of humour throughout the book. I enjoyed the fact that although I had an idea of where the story would end up, I had no idea of what might happen on the way and whether or not I'd like all parts of the journey. I really enjoyed the story, and read it in one evening. The only thing I would have liked to have seen is a bit of an epilogue – I had to imagine my own instead! I'd rate this as a five star read.

Joana Starnes says

A delightful blend of the familiar story-line with unexpected and exciting twists, new paths and different interactions.

The setting is neither Regency nor modern-day but an inspired middle ground between the two. Thus, while the characters have more freedom to express their feelings, they still face the constraints of a traditional society and the hardships of a very recent war.

The original PnP characters are sympathetically and skilfully developed and the author makes you care for all of them, not just Elizabeth and Darcy. I particularly liked the affectionate portrayal of Mr and Mrs Bennet; the different conflict and resolution in Jane and Bingley's relationship; the fact that Charles has a backbone and is treating Darcy as an equal; that Mr Collins has no claim to Longbourn and his name and Darcy's have absolutely nothing in common. I loved Georgiana's maturity and humour and her reaction to her brother finally sharing his errors and his troubles. I loved Charlotte and Anne and the ever so moving twist at Rosings. I even felt sorry for Miss Bingley and Mrs Hurst and, in a strange way, also for [Lady] Catherine, lost as she is in her vanished world.

The interactions between Wickham and Darcy were priceless, especially the unexpected and very entertaining scene of the pair of them sharing a drink and talking freely, almost congenially, before Wickham gets his comeuppance and Darcy has the satisfaction of planting his fists in the other's smirking face. But the main reason why I loved this story is the raw emotion that practically leaps off the page. Flashbacks into Darcy's youth – his love for his mother, his heartache and loneliness after losing his parents. The heartbreakingly flashbacks into Richard's past – the man he was before the war, his bond with his brother and the non-relationship with his father, the dreadful traumas that have inevitably altered him. I loved how, in this story, Richard's character has greater depth, great passion, and a very troubled past. And most of all, I was overwhelmed by the revelations about his love life, which I did not see coming, and my heart bled for everyone concerned. Their deeply moving and profoundly human reactions to their troubles, as well as the perfect resolution, made for a fabulous read, and I can't wait for more from this author.

Mary says

Imagine,if you will,a book that welcomes you with open arms from page one, that envelopes you with its compelling storyline, that has you,at times,full of angst,raw with emotion,smiling cheekily and laughing out loud at the dialogue between our dearest couple.....

Imagine starting this roller coaster of a ride and being so captivated that you feel you can't waste time eating, drinking or sleeping-such is your desire to finish the story,to find out what happens next,to read the final word and sigh with relief when all the trials and tribulations have at last,been happily resolved.....

Yes,dear reader, such was my experience with this book. I loved reading it and highly recommend it.

Ms North you have a unique gift and I find myself happily looking forward to your next book!!

Tracy (A Good Novel) says

Full disclosure--I was asked by Beau to help proofread the new edition and I'm in the acknowledgements, but my five stars is in no way influenced by my role. I adored this book and it's absolutely the best and most socially-conscious modernization of P&P I've ever read.

Debbie Brown says

This is a VERY impressive, compelling book.

For starters, the writing flows beautifully without any glaring editing errors. That's no small accomplishment in itself within this genre!

In addition, it has all the elements from the original that JAFF readers love, with the characterizations essentially intact despite the changes in era and country. Darcy's cousin, Richard Fitzwilliam, has a larger role, and the sequencing of many key Pride and Prejudice events is changed somewhat but placed very logically within this story. Elizabeth and Darcy have a number of personal issues to work through as well as their conflicts with Caroline Bingley and George Wickham. Mr. Collins is a particularly intriguing antagonist - somewhat different than the original, but still holier-than-thou and devoted to Catherine deBourgh.

However, I found the most interesting aspect of this book was the thought-provoking subject matter introduced within the context of the American South in the late 1940s: sexism, domestic abuse, post-war PTSD, racism, facing life-threatening illness at a young age (diabetes), and even an LGBT relationship and homophobia. With all this going on, this is way beyond the usual retelling of P&P, making it difficult to predict. Even Darcy and Elizabeth's HEA seems seriously at risk when her former love (a very sympathetic character) comes between them.

Beau North really has written a winner here. Readers without any previous familiarity with Pride and Prejudice can enjoy this excellent book as much as JAFF readers. I highly recommend it to everyone!

Claudine DiMuzio / Just Jane 1813 says

Curious to see the new cover for one of my favorite JAFF stories? Stop by Just Jane 1813 to see what's next from Beau North and for a great giveaway!

<http://justjane1813.com/2017/08/22/be...>

Sheila Majczan says

This was a fantastic read. I could not put it down and will say "ditto" to the comments the other two reviewers (as of 10/30/15) state. This author has an excellent writing style. She not only handled the variation of canon from Pride and Prejudice in a new and enthralling manner but also addressed some very controversial subjects. Now, having read so many (over 300) variations in JAFF, I can usually anticipate where a story is going from the book description or from the text as I am reading along. However, this author totally surprised me with some events.

As stated in the book description we are reading a variation mostly set in post WWII in the Deep South here in the States. (There are some flashbacks.) As my mother's family is from that area I have made many visits there AND my parents were married in the early days of the USA's involvement in the war so I can relate to many of the social mores of that era. Some of the topics in this book are not only controversial but at that time would have been viewed as dirty dark little secrets. Kudos for incorporating them into this story!

What do I mean you may ask? As the one other review states, we read of a family with a history of child abuse (emotional and physical). We read of the effects of an ongoing illness, which to this day and age continues to be a serious problem for many...that is, diabetes. We read of spousal abuse, which in those days had basically no relief for the one abused. Women were considered the property of their husbands. And then there is the issue of Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome: a continuing issue for many of our armed services personnel. But this particular issue is not limited to those who have served during in armed conflicts. Plus, we read of homosexuality, which has only in the last several decades or so come out of the closet as an accepted normal lifestyle. (I remember when it was taken off the list by the American Psychiatric Association as an identifiable "condition" of mental health.)

The characters we know and love are portrayed in this story with depth and very human "faults". I loved how they became open with their feelings and at times how they fled those same feelings in anguish and heartbreak. Yes, this story (for me) had more heart ache, more heart break than what I call angst. I had a lump in my throat very early @ 9% on my kindle: "Someday some lark is gonna spell you with a song, Will Darcy. She'll call you with music, and you'll be as good as lost." (Reading it in the book description did not hit me like reading it in context.)

I had raised eyebrows as I read of one man's Peeking Tom incident. And loved the descriptions of how he is

drawn like a magnet to a songbird during her performances...one with almost laughable clumsiness! On the other hand, we also read of his heroic efforts as health issues threaten dire consequences.

One man, one character is so compelling with all of his issues. (I don't want to name him as it would SPOIL part of the story.) We have to have D&E together for our happy ending but at the same time there was a part of me which said "she was so good for him, she helped him heal". Bingley comes into his own in this story with his determination, despite drawbacks, despite advice from Jane herself. So glad he got a chance to "handle" that sadist, as it must have helped him heal from some of his and his sisters' traumatic history.

Phrases which melted my heart or had me gasp: "The cat's out of the bag, sweetheart. I know your big secret and guess what? I love you anyway. I'm walking into this with my eyes wide open." And @ 57% "Oh, Lizzie" and then as we read about a tattoo! Additionally, at about three-quarters of the way in we find ourselves waiting for "two shoes to drop" as events from canon give us a hint that we may know what is coming.

This tale does have many of canon's characters, but for some their behaviors have changed. Aunt Catherine, Wickham, Caroline, all of the Bennet family make their presence known; some with greater gravity than others. The Fitzwilliam family is not left out. The names of P&P's towns and estates have been transplanted to North and South Carolina.

There is a lot on which other stories could be built. I like the way the author told us that "He would....": referring to future events in his life, to acts of heroism, but in her own way and with her own format, telling us of that dear man's future....did he burn the photo? My heart continues to ache for him.

This is a MUST read for me and I highly recommend it!

Sophia says

A story set in the late '40's American South all by itself would have been enough to grab my britches, but stir in Jane Austen's Pride & Prejudice story and my interest rose to a fever-pitch. This was one of those stories that doesn't ease one in and let them get comfortable. It grasps one by the senses. I laughed, I sighed, I nearly cried, and I had moments of despair and triumph. I absolutely could not put this book down. It was a romance and a re-telling, but it was also so much more.

I felt like it was the story of several women that happen to have romantic entanglements or at least erotic encounters as they find their way clear to their own brand of happiness. Not that the men don't play good, interesting roles, too, but this was where my mind focused and how it processed the story.

So, I'm going to do a bit of something different with my summary. I'm going to summarize the gals that caught my attention and made me feel oh so many things. Bear with my quirks!

There is Lizzie Bennet, spitfire and non-conformist who has lost her way. She is content with her home on the farm, her family, and her simple life until one Fitzwilliam Darcy jostles her out of her fog and gets her good and angry enough to engage with life again- particularly if it is sparring with the wealthy arrogant, annoying jerk. Just when she starts to heal, her past rears up and shatters more than one person's happiness.

Next, there is Jane Bennet, oldest and most beautiful of the Bennet sisters. Jane carries a disease in her body

that made no promises how long she would live. This puts a death knell on a marriage and children as far as Jane is concerned. Thus it nearly crushes her when she falls for the lively, handsome Charles Bingley who buys Netherfield Plantation because it is close to his construction contracts with the military. Charles is everything she could want in a man and she enjoys their time while knowing there is an expiration date on anything really developing.

Charles' sister, Caroline accompanies him when he moves to Meryton. She is snobbish and cruel, conniving, and set on having her way. She settles for cheap, tawdry encounters and dreams of a life of wealth to distance her from her dark past. Something is broken inside her and the milk of human kindness just isn't there. She will do whatever it takes to have Fitzwilliam Darcy, the biggest catch of them all.

Charlotte Lucas, mayor's daughter and best friend of Lizzie, dreams of escape from her overbearing, sometimes abusive mother who hides a cruel side behind her public face. Charlotte wants out so badly that she latches on to the worst possible man for escape. Lizzie suspects why Charlotte doesn't even try to find a compatible guy and it breaks her heart for Charlotte's future chances. Charlotte must walk her own path and hopefully find a ray of happiness in the dark.

And finally, there is Georgiana, William's sister and a woman before her time because of a youthful mistake in love and in trusting old family friends to have her best interests at heart. She has done her penance and now is emerging into the world shy and terrified that she can't judge characters and will make another big mistake. It is the misery of her usually taciturn brother and the relapse of her mentally fragile and broken cousin that force her to step up and be there for the men in her life that were always there for her.

So, there were many threads in this story. William and Lizzie had the main roles, but everyone else had some pretty strong secondary parts. I like what the author did with the modernization aspect of characters, setting, and plot. Pride & Prejudice's tale, characters, and scenes was clearly there while also the offering of something fresh and original.

I liked what the author did with Mr. and Mrs. Bennet along with Colonel Fitzwilliam, Mr. Collins, and Anne deBourgh. Again, I knew them, but yet these characters weren't pale copies of the originals, but their own vibrant personages. This Collins made the hair stand up on the back of my neck just as this Colonel Fitzwilliam's pain broke my tender heart. Anne shocked the pants off me, but then it really, really worked and I was in awe of the brilliance. Truthfully, I could go on and on about each characterization because I felt this was where it was at. This and the historical setting. Honestly, I love my romance, but it wasn't the foremost aspect of the story for me.

The story has an edgier tone and doesn't apologize for being set in the age its in. I've not had much truck with the South other than week-long visits from time to time, but from what I've observed and heard from others, this background felt authentic.

There were so many other elements in the mix that had their place in this time and place. Jim Crow laws and attitudes, PTSD, women finding their place after the men came back from war, women and children's recourse when in an abuse situation, what was deemed cause to be institutionalized (shudder) for 'treatment', and the aftershocks of the Great Depression among other things.

Probably not the story for people with strong sensibilities to racy romance and activities, taboos like homosexuality, and triggers to child abuse and domestic violence.

As to that racy romance business, for those looking for the payoff of the stormy, sizzling romance full of passion and conflict? This is the book for you. Past hurts, misunderstandings, outside interference, former lovers, and present complications make for a hard fought romance for a few couples, but especially William

and Lizzie. That end feeling of hope, triumph, and rightness was so worth what it took to get there.

To wrap it up, this was fantastic. It is a standout read of the year for me. I can easily recommend it to a wider audience range: the Austenesque lover who wants for something grittier and spicier and in a different way, to those who like their historical romance set in the nearer historical eras, and to the women's fiction fan who enjoys seeing broken characters grow and triumph.

My thanks to Meryton Press for providing the book in exchange for an honest review.

Abigail Bok says

From the opening scene I knew I was in for an exhilarating read—no sweet Austenesque romance here: “By the time Will Darcy realized his mistake, it was already far too late. He stood hidden in the shade of an ancient oak tree, fingers gripping the rough bark as he watched the girl peel off her dress.” We watch the unknown woman as she disrobes and takes a skinny dip in a pond, the scene captured through Darcy’s reactions as he remains frozen in place, hypnotized by what he sees. It is an emotional scene captured in kinetic language that drags the reader right into the heart of the story.

The setting for this re-visioning of the *Pride and Prejudice* story is South Carolina just after World War II. The Bennets own a large cotton farm, and Darcy’s friend Charles Bingley has just bought a nearby property. All the usual characters are assembled, though some (especially Jane and Elizabeth Bennet’s younger sisters) pass through leaving little trace. While all the familiar plot points are checked, however, Beau North has done a thorough job of rethinking who the characters might be in 1940s USA; so there are many surprises and revelations as the main plot unwinds.

Darcy and Elizabeth become attached much sooner in this version, and it requires a major plot twist to keep them apart till the end. Social issues are touched on (which I appreciate because it grounds the characters in time and space) and some of those issues play a crucial role in the lives of certain peripheral characters. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet are not as detached or as silly, respectively, as they are in the original. There is more passion (though only a little explicit sex) and more acting out than was possible in a story set in the early nineteenth century, which has the effect of magnifying the characters while not for the most part violating their essential natures. The recently ended war casts a long shadow over the action.

One major difference from the original pleased me less than it would most readers: the story is told from multiple points of view, so we have considerable exposure to the inner lives of several characters. Many readers like to hear Darcy’s thoughts, but I tend to prefer him to be more of a mystery; and even noncentral characters get their chance to explain themselves.

I was very impressed by the energy and depth of this adaptation, and by the vigorous prose of the author. Beau North has created a gripping world and populated it with real people. The southeastern setting was richly realized (though I had a bit of trouble from time to time with the slang) and the manners felt era-appropriate. Altogether a very satisfying entry in the Austenesque category!

Meredith (Austenesque Reviews) says

Heart-wrenching and Soulful

TYPE OF AUSTENESQUE NOVEL: Pride and Prejudice Retelling

SETTING: 1948 Meryton, South Carolina

MAIN CHARACTERS: The Bennet Family, Will Darcy, Charles Bingley, George Wickham, Leland Collins, Charlotte Lucas, Richard Fitzwilliam, Anne de Bourgh, Georgiana Darcy

WHY I WANTED TO READ THIS NOVEL:

I love seeing Pride and Prejudice in different time periods and settings and I was interested to see how the setting of the Deep South post-World War II would impact the characters and situations from Jane Austen's beloved novel.

WHAT I LOVED:

- Soaked In the Time Period: Pecan picking, cotton plantations, Clark Gable, jazz, segregation, and changing attitudes – in big sweeping themes and small everyday details this story represents life in small town, USA post-World War II. The change, the culture, and the challenges of that time were not only well-represented, but subtly and skillfully woven into the tapestry of this story, giving readers a very rich and profound understanding of the world these characters were living in. I loved how this was accomplished, I could tell Beau North spent a lot of time researching and that a lot of thought went into the creation and shaping of this novel.

- New Conflicts: It isn't just about pride and prejudice, my friends! Changing the setting changes the types of conflicts these characters face – having poor dowries and disapproving relations doesn't present the same obstacles as they did during the Regency Period. So instead, Ms. North introduces new conflicts that were indicative of her setting. Such as a soldier suffering from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, a sister living with a life-threatening illness, an abusive and violent family member, and a couple who hide their love because it is considered socially unacceptable. While these added a little more darkness and weight to Jane Austen's "light and bright" tale, I found myself appreciating the realism and honesty they brought to this story.

- I Didn't See it Coming: During the first half of the book we learn that something significant happened to Lizzie several years ago – something that has changed her and made her want to hide away at Longbourn. When this secret is revealed my jaw dropped to the ground. I didn't see it coming and I loved it! Talk about a surprising twist! The tension and emotion that surged through the story at this development was incredibly palpable and skillfully rendered. Wow!

- Little Spots Of Sunlight: With a tale that tackles difficult situations and realities, I thought it was brilliant that Beau North made a point to add little touches of happiness that would make readers smile. These little happy moments, like witnessing the relationship between Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and the truth of George Wickham's elopement with Lydia, were sweet moments of light that brought about a wonderful balance for this tale.

- A Stirring Love: I love it when Darcy and Lizzie's love is depicted as big, ungovernable force. It hits them hard, triggers their passionate nature, and cannot be denied. My favorite parts of this story was seeing Darcy under Elizabeth's spell – how he admired her personality and actions, how he was so crazy in love that he

acted irrationally. His love for her was a powerful thing to behold.

WHAT I WASN'T TOO FOND OF:

...So yeah....just gonna leave this one blank.

WARNING: Due to the use of some profanity, mild violence, and adult situations, I'd recommend this story for Mature Audiences.

CONCLUSION:

Longbourn's Songbird is a soulful and poignant Pride and Prejudice retelling that encompasses a much bigger story than Darcy and Elizabeth fighting and finding love. Emotive, deep, and sincere – this debut novel is well-deserving of all the praise and accolades it is receiving! I highly recommend!

Austenesque Reviews

Dung says

Beautifully written P&P re-telling set in the 1940s. The language and the writing is superb. The story really takes you on an emotional roller coaster through the experience of the characters.

This is the author's debut novel, but second book I've read! Truly talented writing and I can't wait to read more from her in the future.

Vaarin says

I got stuck on this book, which has never happened to me before... Some encouragement got me back on track and I am so happy I did.

This book is like nothing I have read before. The ambiance was very special (loved it) and it had so many facets that I believe I will love it even more when I reread it.

I loved that the author did not lead me, over explained or passed judgment but left it to me, as a reader to make up my own mind. Highly appreciate that.

The book jumped some back and forth in time which makes it wise to pay attention to the dates.

Most of the framework from canon can be recognised and the twists and turns that were made to modernise it was brilliant and plausible.

The opening scene was sheer genius as Darcy espies Elizabeth, swimming in a pond. He never makes himself known though and they meet a couple of months later where he insults her.

Darcy fights his attraction and come off, not only as distant and aloof but really arrogant. The fact that he is there to offer to buy Longbourne is not making him more palatable to Elizabeth... Darcy's interference with Bingley and Jane was kind of adorable despite the fact that he was utterly wrong.

The turning point in her esteem comes when he saves Jane and the relationship is developing nicely when

Elizabeth's long lost love returns. That is where I got stuck... Heart-wrenching as it was, I am so glad I got back on track.

Darcy is dealing extremely poorly with the revelation and hurts Elizabeth in a most shocking scene. Hated it and loved it equally.

Elizabeth falters a bit too but her solution I adored. Choosing herself...

The anguish Darcy experience when he realises what his done was beautifully written and the road to HEA was saucy and passionate.

Charlotte's story really tugged on my heart strings. Collins was a piece of work and her true love surprising. The Lucas family had a lot of skeletons in their closets.

The Georgiana/Wickham debacle had an interesting twist to it and so did Lydia/Wickham.

Caroline crawled under my skin as a parasite but there is a sad reason behind her behaviour which orders her some leniency.

Richard was a major character as a war hero with a lot of ghosts in both his past and his presence.

I absolutely adore this book.

Heartily recommend this book!
