



Side by Side, Apart

Ann Galvia

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"You see what a strange circumstance it is." She felt some fleeting relief. You know our acquaintance has not been easy."

Elizabeth Bennet, --stubborn, quick to judge but slow to revise her opinions, and entirely prejudiced against the man who had just proposed marriage at Hunsford--awakens to learn she has been in an accident. Bedridden in an unfamiliar house, , she learns eleven years have passed since the last moment she can remember,

She finds herself a married woman, mother of four, an pregnant yet again. Her children are strangers, and most mystifying of all, Fitzwilliam Darcy is her husband! How could she have married a man she loathes?

Confined to the house by her injury, Mr. Darcy's company is inescapable. But is just being side by side enough to overcome their differences? What happens with Darcy, improved in manners and happily married to Mrs. Elizabeth Darcy is faced with an obstinate, bewildered Miss Elizabeth Bennet?

Side by Side, Apart Details

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From Reader Review Side by Side, Apart for online ebook

Madenna U says

Nice light read of how Mr Darcy remembers he and Elizabeth falling in love since she can't recall their life together due to an accident.

Talia says

Liked and didn't like. Loved the storyline, loved how she woke up, didn't like how everything was left unresolved.

Carole (in Canada) says

Amnesia is not a new premise for writers to use in their stories. It is, however, unique in this tale as it happens eleven years into the marriage of Elizabeth and Fitzwilliam Darcy. They have 4 children, with one on the way, when Elizabeth wakes with no memory after a serious injury and those years do not exist in her mind. All she seems to know is that Mr. Darcy appears to be in charge! The last man in the world she could be prevailed upon to marry due to his ungentlemanly like manner! How did this happen?

I am at a loss to write more of what is beautifully written within the pages of this book. I felt thrown back to the beginning of their acquaintance and I was starting from square one, but not sure if I would end up where I should. However, in my opinion, Ms. Galvia wants you to experience Elizabeth's loss of memory for yourself and how she struggles to come to grips with it. We don't get all the information we would like but neither does Elizabeth. Your sympathies are engaged for Mr. Darcy, as we all know how much he loves her. His shock at finding that all eleven years of their marriage are lost to Elizabeth and now she doesn't even like him! Yes, we meet each of the children and our heart breaks for them as their mother has no idea what makes each of them tick. We meet certain family members but not all. This is not a 'light' read and there is no 'miraculous' recovery. This is an emotionally provocative journey that truly tests them, but a journey that is well worth the taking.

I also want to note that the book cover is beautifully rendered as well. It certainly eludes to what is written within.

Sheila Majczan says

After eleven years of “wedded bliss” Elizabeth suffers a head injury which erases all those years and the happy times of courtship from her memory. Darcy proves how patient, generous and loving he can be in not knowing when their love might be rediscovered or even reestablished. She remembers only up to the Hunsford proposal and her hateful feelings towards this man who is intruding on her privacy. She notices immediately that she is pregnant so at some time she allowed him....but she can't remember even how that works.

He sends for M/M Bennet, answers questions and fills in blanks slowly and carefully as she is not only injured but also feeling totally overwhelmed by being in a place and with family (does she really have children?) who are both strange and of unknown qualities to her.

In discussing and explaining the history and circumstances about her family Mary's marriage becomes a topic. They banter back and forth about whether she married out of love or convenience. Charlotte's marriage decision is mentioned. At the end Darcy approaches her and (unbeknownst to him) answers a question that has unsettled her. ... "But you married for love. I would not have you think otherwise." She was glad to think of Mrs. Darcy as a woman who loved her husband.

Then as she interacts with her own children (and niece) she ponders how hurt they must feel as she has not made the emotional connection they must feel lacking. Could it be that she then realizes how Darcy must also feel this lack, even though he knows and understands the cause?

And then she begins to wonder where he sleeps but has not the nerve to be embarrassed at asking...what reason might anyone attach to that question? Upon learning where he has been sleeping she invites him to join her in her bed "as she has slept with her sisters with no ill effects" but he reminds her that she thinks of herself a virgin. He...well, now I am going to tell you to read the book.

Oh and you must prepare yourself as Darcy calls Elizabeth to his study and gives her three sealed letters, written in her handwriting. "...These are letters you wrote to me before the births of...." I am sure you can imagine the feelings these arouse in Elizabeth (and in the reader). These are letters that were written in case of the worst scenario. Is this morbid? (Yes, I was blurry eyed reading them myself.) She loved him. She had known that she loved him.

I read this novel first as "Bruises" and am only too happy to reread it so as to post my unguarded recommendation that you read this absorbing and fascinating novel. The exploration into their feelings is oh so well done.

Suzan Lauder says

Formerly known as Bruises on fanfiction serial posting sites.

Any reviews that say there's a sex scene are thinking of another novel.

Anna says

Check out my review on Diary of an Eccentric

Nissa | Of Pens and Pages Book Blog says

I read this at Fanfiction.net a while back when it was called 'Bruises'. Currently at 4.5 stars.

Will update my review once I've finished re-reading this.

Tamra says

5 stars for the beautiful cover! Even though I read on my iPad 90% of the time, I still enjoy looking at a beautiful cover. It seems book covers have been neglected, especially in the JAFF genre. What was written inside was just beautiful. I give it four stars because there were too many characters that weren't included. It would have been nice to see our old friends and foes. Overall an excellent read with a fresh new twist.

Vaarin says

Initially, very happy to find a sequel, I was somewhat disappointed on its contents.

Elizabeth wakes up after an accident, remembering nothing of the last 11 years. The last thing she remembers is the Hunsford proposal but not the letter. Confused, she suddenly finds herself married to a man she dislikes, is the mother of several children with another one coming. Darcy has the patience of a saint though. When he realises that Elizabeth does not remember her children or the love they shared, he treats her with love and respect. Doing everything in his power to help.

For the better part of the book, the story focus on reacquainting Elizabeth with the events we already know from P&P. I would have preferred it to evolve around the years we know nothing about as it was a bit boring to my jaded self...

I really liked the beginning, when she wakes up, as it has its funny moments and the last part, where there was something new to be had.

I wonder if there will be a sequel as the book ended a bit abruptly and there where a lot of loose ends still hanging...

Sophia says

What would it be like to wake up from a severe head injury to realize you have lost eleven years of your life? Elizabeth Darcy is now married and has children with the last man in the world she could ever be prevailed upon to marry. Darcy, her children, her servants, and her family all quietly work to help restore her memories and sense of self. It was fascinating, moving, and heartwarming to see this woman find herself and see her husband and family through new eyes.

I have read many amnesia romances and like what they did to a story, but this was unique because it was one of the few that I read for an after the happily ever after situation. It was like a middle-aged woman was getting a re-set right in the middle of a full life. The last memories she has of the man she calls husband is that she can't stand him and now he is her husband, father of her children, and she is pregnant with his child. Elizabeth must figure out how and why while trying to continue on with a life that she cannot remember. She is a mistress of a grand estate, a mother, and a wife. Though she has no feelings for this world and these people, she bravely decides to do her best and go forward.

The story is all from her perspective. It is like a mystery of sorts as she figures out her own life. Her biggest mystery is why did she marry Fitzwilliam Darcy. Darcy is taciturn and circumspect. She has to observe him carefully to see that her memory loss is his own deep loss. Slowly she figures out that the arrogant, hateful man she thought he was eleven years before was so very much in the wrong. It is his selfless acts, surprising kindnesses, and obvious love of herself and their children that slowly work on her.

This is a bittersweet tale in that it is a slow go and sad as Elizabeth has to learn to love her children and like and respect let alone love her husband. Nothing is easily discovered even if she questions her ladies' maid, her parents, her sister, her children, and her husband. It was a long road back and I found that as she found her way, I was really cheering her on.

It was a gently-paced story that had an authentic feel to the times. Propriety, language, taste, and activities were all just as would be for the time. It was a picture of family life for a wealthy landed family of Regency times.

Elizabeth is the central figure, but her family and staff were well-drawn. There are several scenes with her children. However, it is the growing romance with her husband that captured my attention most. Darcy is patient with her, but his love and passion are there smoldering and waiting.

So, this was a unique story that I found amazing and sweet. My first time with this author, but I doubt it will be my last. I would recommend this to sweet historical romance, historical fiction, and Austenesque fans quite easily.

My thanks to Meryton Press for the opportunity to read this book in exchange for an honest review.

J. W. Garrett says

Trying to remember the things she has forgotten: 4.5 stars

First I want to say the cover was most excellent. I mean...I loved it. The art work was exceptional. Elizabeth Bennet wakes up with a terrible headache and finds out that she has had an accident. She also has forgotten the last eleven years of her life. Not only does she find herself married to the haughty Mr. Darcy, but she is in the advanced stages of a pregnancy and there are several children of various ages that insist on calling her mama.

We know the background story of our beloved P&P and all the trouble that Elizabeth and Fitzwilliam went through in their journey toward their HEA. Well, all that is gone as Elizabeth no longer remembers that journey or their HEA. Elizabeth is very confused as to how she was prevailed upon to marry Mr. Darcy when she was so decidedly against him. How on earth do they have all these children? In her mind she was still a virgin. Why do they have Lydia's children? What happened to her life that placed her at Pemberley?

I loved this Darcy. I've never seen him in this light. He was no simpering, fawning, love sick moon-calf. I simply fell in love with him [all over again] just from his actions toward Elizabeth. This must be a painful time for him. He was so controlled and never let on that this had thrown a major wrench into his life and the lives of his/their children. It was painful to watch him quietly and calmly answer all Elizabeth's questions as she tried to sort out what became of her life and how she arrived where she was.

What changed her mind toward Mr. Darcy? The last thing she remembered was his haughty behavior at Netherfield Park, his separating Jane and Bingley, and his withholding advantages to Mr. Wickham. Nothing made sense and she would get a headache if she thought about it too much.

This was a slow and arduous journey for ODC. The language was most excellent. I enjoyed seeing the parenting philosophy that Darcy reminded Elizabeth that they had established with the children. The way the staff helped as Elizabeth recovered from her accident.

Mr. and Mrs. Bennet arrived and caused problems in the Pemberley routine as any visiting grandparent can. Mr. Bennet spent his time in the Pemberley library. Mrs. Bennet minimized Elizabeth's illness and other than telling her to do her duty, pretty much ignored her second daughter. She spent the majority of her time distracting the children from their studies and practice. It was hilarious how her thinking was so convoluted. That was Mrs. Bennet.

I was disappointed that to the very last chapter we saw very little improvement in Elizabeth's memory. There was no epilogue and not a lot to bring the conclusion to a smooth end. It was rather abrupt. What the heck happened to everyone?

Note added later: there was a nod to other Austen works in the names of the children and the governess. Try to see if you can find them. Also, the fact the Darcy's had sponsored a nephew in the Navy and had taken in another child was a nod to Mansfield Park. I loved finding those little extras.

Tina says

I have seen this story posted on AHA before under the name Bruises but I had not read it. Which I'm sort of glad I didn't because then I wouldn't have gone in to the story with fresh eyes. I have to admit that I like this story. It offers a look at the life of the Darcys eleven years after they have gotten married. It was very nice of them to give the kindness that they did to the Wickhams. Of course I would have loved to learn what has happened to the de Bourgh's and Colonel Fitzwilliam in the last eleven years. I sort of wanted to see the situation through Darcy's eyes. His internal turmoil at his wife not remembering the last eleven years must have tormented him greatly. In all this story is a fast read and should not be missed.

Christine Baglow says

Beautifully written and faithful to the original characters

I was very, very pleased with this story. The writing was beautiful and faithful to Austen's characterization and style. It is truly a fresh storyline and could best be described (I think) as a sequel. I loved this book and will definitely be rereading it in order to savor it better.

Leslie says

This is a book where I greatly enjoyed the concept but was disappointed by the execution.

This P&P sequel, set 11 year after Elizabeth & Darcy married, begins with Elizabeth hit upon the head by a sconce and recalling none of the past 12 years. Her last recollection is Mr. Darcy's dreadful proposal at Hunsford parsonage. But she is Mrs. Darcy mother of 4 and expecting number 5.

My displeasure in the book came in several segments. The first was that no one wanted to fill her in on her life.... which seemed stupid- so she was constantly 'stepping in it' by saying or doing something that offend or injured.

Then there was the inability of anyone sensible to visit. Lady Gray, aka Georgiana, is 50 miles away. And as Mr. Darcy says in P&P and what is 50 miles of good road; a half days journey. But it is too far for Georgiana to travel to her beloved and addled sister. Later in the book it is noted that Georgiana crosses her pages to save postage. Postage was paid by the recipient so Georgiana could have written her post on canvases in 6 inch letters and the Darcy's would never even blink.

And lastly there was Darcy. I did not like this Darcy his is a ill mannered buffoon. When Lizzy is delivered of her latest child he won't let her breastfeed so the child won't contract the bad humors that caused her memory loss - Oh F Off Fitzwilliam. (view spoiler)

The end of the story really bogged down and I found myself skimming through the endless conversation between Lizzy & Darcy

Meredith (Austenesque Reviews) says

What If a Head Injury Stole Eleven Years of Memories from Elizabeth Darcy?

After almost eleven years of wedded bliss, Elizabeth Darcy wakes up from a head injury not remembering anything beyond the Hunsford proposal. Darcy's offensive and arrogant proposal and her vehement rejection is the last encounter she remembers with the loathsome man she apparently married many years ago. With four children in their household and one on the way, Elizabeth's injury and memory-loss are taken very seriously. She is forced to submit to bedrest to protect her unborn baby and ensure her strength during its delivery. Elizabeth has much to learn about all the events of her life in the past eleven years, but the event she finds most unfathomable is how she became married to the last man in the world she "could ever be prevailed upon to marry" ...

Poor Mr. Darcy is forced to revert to one of the most painful times of his life. A time where his love was unreturned and his chances of future happiness seemed very improbable. His wife does not currently return any feelings of love and affection towards him. In fact, she very much mistrusts him, dislikes him, and perpetually assumes the worst about him. And that is where the crux of the problem lies:

"You cannot recall choosing me. You do not recall my making myself acceptable to you. Our joys, our triumphs, our fears, ours suffering are unknown to you. Elizabeth, you are trapped in a life you did not wish for, one you violently rejected." (page 158)

Gah!!! Isn't that heart-wrenching?!? And so like Darcy to see how all of this is perceived by her, to understand how she must view him, and to cautiously keep away in accordance with her unspoken wishes.

One of the things I loved most about this imaginative and poignant story was witnessing the tender and compassionate actions of a most incomparable Mr. Darcy. A Mr. Darcy that is utterly selfless and giving. A reflective Mr. Darcy that sees the flaws in his own character and upbringing and thoughtfully decides to do differently by his children. How easy it was to once again fall irrevocably in love with Mr. Darcy in this tale!

I applaud Ms. Galvia for dreaming up such a creative premise. Many authors show Darcy and Elizabeth deal with their misunderstandings and conflicts before becoming engaged or as newlyweds, but not many show Darcy and Elizabeth facing some discord and distance after several years of marriage. It was an interesting premise to explore, especially as it uncovers and slowly reveals the past experiences of these two characters. I thought the myriad of Elizabeth's feelings and reactions such as confusion, doubt, frustration, guilt, pity, respect, and admiration were all eloquently represented. I truly enjoyed the slow progression of Elizabeth's emotional development. Just because she loved Mr. Darcy in the past doesn't mean she can easily will herself to do so now. And with her expressive portrayal of Mr. Darcy's anguish and affection my heart felt his pain and was warmed by his exemplary devotion.

Another element I enjoyed in this tale were all the little details included to give readers some history of the Darcys' lives up until this point. I loved learning about their children and witnessing their individual personalities and proclivities. And being privy to some of the letters Elizabeth received and wrote was an exceptionally lovely touch; it revealed a lot about the past to Elizabeth and the reader. Nothing in this story was extraneous; it all helped fill in the gaps of the past and complete the picture of Elizabeth's life.

Emotive, articulate, and exquisitely rendered – *Side by Side, Apart* is a phenomenal debut release by Ann Galvia! It introduces some realism and turmoil into the Darcys' lives – which may not be everyone's cup of tea – but for my part, I often delight in *Pride and Prejudice* tales that are more inventive and daring. Especially when they are beautifully and thoughtfully composed like this one! I highly recommend!

Austenesque Reviews
