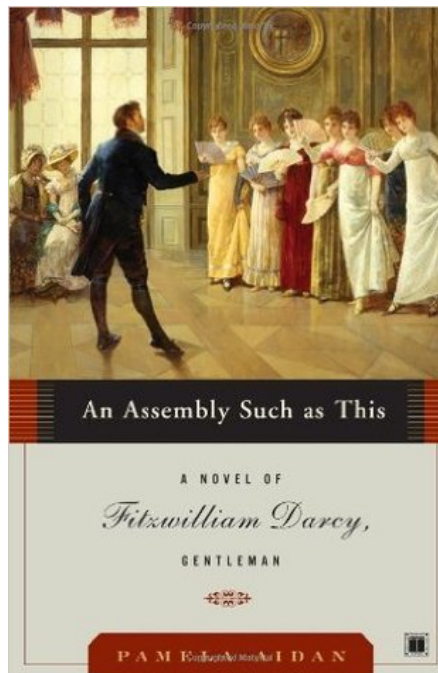




An Assembly Such as This

Pamela Aidan

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"She is tolerable; but not handsome enough to tempt me."

So begins the timeless romance of Fitzwilliam Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet in *Pride and Prejudice*. Jane Austen's classic novel is beloved by millions, but little is revealed in the book about the mysterious and handsome hero, Mr. Darcy. And so the question has long remained: Who is Fitzwilliam Darcy?

In *An Assembly Such as This*, Pamela Aidan finally answers that long-standing question. In this first book of her *Fitzwilliam Darcy, Gentleman* trilogy, she reintroduces us to Darcy during his visit to Hertfordshire with his friend Charles Bingley and reveals Darcy's hidden perspective on the events of *Pride and Prejudice*. As Darcy spends more time at Netherfield supervising Bingley and fending off Miss Bingley's persistent advances, his unwilling attraction to Elizabeth grows—as does his concern about her relationship with his nemesis, George Wickham.

Setting the story vividly against the colorful historical and political background of the Regency, Aidan writes in a style comfortably at home with Austen but with a wit and humor very much her own. Aidan adds her own cast of fascinating characters to those in Austen's original, weaving a rich tapestry from Darcy's past and present. Austen fans and newcomers alike will love this new chapter of the most famous romance of all time.

An Assembly Such as This Details

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Author : Pamela Aidan

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From Reader Review An Assembly Such as This for online ebook

Miss Clark says

This 1st volume in Pamela Aidan's fresh and entertaining trilogy that tells the story of Pride and Prejudice through the eyes of Fitzwilliam Darcy, *Gentlemen*, is enjoyable. The new characters that she creates, like Darcy's Shakespeare-quoting valet Fletcher, who is probably my favorite character of the entire trilogy, and Darcy's best friend Dy Broughm, are welcome additions. The deeper insights given to Georgiana's situation, the idea that she suffered a depression, and her character in general and her loving relationship with Darcy, as well as Darcy's deep resentment and hatred of Wickham, and his reasons for taking Bingley away from Jane are something that one would hope to find in a work like this. Take the events of the parent novel and give a spin on them that fits canon, but plays with it at the same time.

The only thing that I really disliked was that I rather thought Darcy *too* besotted with Elizabeth. The writing turned a little too sappy for me at times and I would have preferred less mooning over Elizabeth's fine eyes or the way that she distracts him. The only big drawback in my opinion.

Otherwise, fine incorporation of P & P dialogue, etc. Aidan stays fairly true to all the characters, imho.

Susan says

How ungrateful I must seem! This book was a Valentine's Day gift from my husband, intended to delight a complete Austenophile like me. And I was indeed enchanted with the first few chapters, for they tell the story of Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy from the gentleman's point of view. Part of the great charm of *Pride & Prejudice* lies in the mystery surrounding Mr. Darcy. What are we to think of this quintessentially stiff-upper-lipped toff when he inexplicably snubs the sparkling Miss Bennett, only to later plead for her hand in marriage?

I wasn't bothered by the lack of mystery in *An Assembly Such as This*. I thought that the story was remarkably fresh, despite having read P & P multiple times. And I was impressed by Pamela Aidan's writing style, as it had just the right Regency-era tone without a touch of self-consciousness. So why did I award this story just three stars, even though I was fully prepared to love it? Just this--it suffers from an excess of detail. I don't care to read about Mr. Darcy's every movement from the moment he awakens to the moment he falls into bed eighteen hours later. So much time is spent describing Mr. Darcy's every thought and action that the story of *Pride & Prejudice* is stretched into a trilogy, of which *An Assembly Such as This* is but the first.

But for that one flaw, this story would easily have rated five stars. But don't pay too much attention to my criticism--I still plan to read the second and third books of the trilogy!

Kirk says

First read 9/28/2014

Congrats book and author.....another star!!!! I was skeptical when this

was suggested as an Austen in Boston read for this month. My "memory" of the book was hazy at best. And....."Darcy Darcy Darcy" but some of the interactions between Darcy and valet....priceless! I might go on to read parts two and three.

Holly (2 Kids and Tired) says

I have yet to find an attempted Pride and Prejudice sequel to be worth my time. This novel is the first that really does the story justice. While this book isn't a sequel, it's a wannabe adaptation: the first of three novels which basically retell the story of Pride and Prejudice from the viewpoint of Mr. Darcy. A viewpoint that Austen readers have wondered about since the novel was published. This one ends after the ball at Netherfield, with Darcy and Miss Bingley conspiring to remove Charles from Hertfordshire.

While Aidan manages to capture some of the language of the time, she doesn't attempt to be Jane Austen and I appreciated that. Most of Darcy's story is, by necessity imagined, but the author has a good grasp of Mr. Darcy. Her interpretations are believable. I enjoyed the little details, such as when Darcy purchases books for his sister, one of them is "Sense and Sensibility". That was a fun little addition. His interactions with his valet and household staff serve to portray him as the kind master his housekeeper alludes to in the original novel.

Aidan is most definitely a fan of the Jennifer Ehle/Colin Firth version of Pride and Prejudice. (Thank goodness for that, because I can't abide anything that refers to the Keira Knightley farce.) It's very easy to picture the scenes from the film as you read the book. One even wonders if her adaptations come from Colin Firth's Darcy, more than Jane Austen's Darcy. Still, I can recommend it with no reservations.

Leslie says

This is book one of three retelling P&P from Darcy's perspective. It begins with the arrival at the Meryton Assembly and ends with Darcy in London after separating Bingley and Jane. Overall I found the pacing to be glacial, the details to be unnecessary and the characters insipid.

I can't figure out this Darcy; does he have Asperger's? In some situations he seems perfectly able to have normal social intercourse and in others acts stupidly awkward. Also I cannot determine his relationship with his valet. The valet is annoying and overbearing.

There is nothing specifically objectionable about the writing until you encounter a snippet of JA's brilliant prose and then the remainder of the book seems to dim. I doubt I will read the other two in the series unless they are free

Ashley says

This is a retelling of the story of Pride and Prejudice written from the point of view of Darcy. It is broken up into three novels instead of the original one and I felt like it was a bit stretched up and filled with "empty calories".

I think I picked this book up for same reason that most people do - because we love Jane Austen and there just isn't enough of it so we hope we can find another entrance into the regency period that will be as good.

Unfortunately this wasn't. It comes across as a book so obviously written by a modern author trying to sound period and it is a bit awkward. The language comes across a bit clunky and forced. Even more than the language my real reason for not really liking this book was that I found I preferred for Mr. Darcy to remain a bit of a mystery. Part of the genius of Austen that I didn't realize until reading this book is that Austen doesn't really go into great detail in developing his character. By the end we know that he is kind and generous and a gentleman and that he loves Elizabeth, but not much more about his likes and dislikes and relationships and the result is that the reader gets to fill in the rest and everyone (at least every female reader) ends up with their own picture of the ideal man which is why we all love Mr. Darcy. I really disagreed in many instances with the author's portrayal and felt like she had put herself in a no-win situation.

Cassie Young says

Okay, This was LAME. The whole series. Being an avid Jane Austen fan, when I heard that there was a good addition to the list of P&P sequels and spin-offs, I was all gung-ho on reading them. I even bought them at Costco, I was so sure they were going to be good. Boy was I wrong! I was either gagging or gafawing the entire time. Aidan dwelt far too long on Darcy's 'Passion'. About every other page was riddled with his sighs and his "Heart thudding against his rib-cage", and his inability to say anything to her about it. I hated this. There was no really falling in love. We meet Darcy, in the next chapter he's in love, and so for the rest of the series we get to suffer through his little idiocies of love-sickness. Now, don't get me wrong here, I'm a hopeless romantic, but it has to be Romantic, not just Mushy. :) It was almost embarrassing! Don't read these. It almost tainted my view of Mr. Darcy. *gasp* Cassie

Colleen says

I tend to shy away from modern books whose authors take off where a classic author left off, in this case, Jane Austen. That sequel to "Gone with the Wind" sounded horrendous (although, admittedly, I didn't read it). This author seems like a pretty good writer. She copied the language of Jane Austen's day, although at times she seemed to be straining too hard, making it sound unnatural. Knowing "Pride and Prejudice" as well as I do, it's fun to hear the story from Darcy's point-of-view. My biggest complaint, though, is that the book was just plain boring at times. My eyes would glaze over and I would read a page or two without really reading it. I think the author must have done a lot of research before she wrote this book and felt the need to insert a lot of it into her book. Zzzzzz.....A lot of the book goes nowhere. Darcy meets with his steward and goes over his business interests which leads to...nothing. Darcy meets up with a college friend which leads to...nothing. Unfortunately, when Elizabeth Bennet isn't in the picture, Darcy's life is, well, BORING. The worst part was towards the end when Darcy and Bingley attend a soiree where Darcy tries to get Bingley's mind off of Jane Bennet. The passage wanders around from place to place at the party and it isn't interesting, it doesn't make much sense, and it's filled with cliched characters. Darcy and Bingley are led into a secret room where only "special" guests are invited, but it's never clear what they're doing there and Darcy and Bingley just leave. Then they wander into the ballroom where the host's daughter-in-law arrives in scandalous attire which causes many women to faint. But the author never explains the attire. Then Darcy bests some man in a cravat-tying contest. What is a cravat-tying contest? Never explained. And who cares? I'm not sure whether I want to read the next two books.

Brittnay says

In my opinion, Katharine's review was way better written than the book and a lot more entertaining. I THOROUGHLY agree with every single word Katharine said. It's like Aiden was trying to be (not mimic, like she actually wanted to BE) Jane Austen but added her own flair of bad writing. I think that was a total disgrace of the beloved character Jane Austen wove so deeply into our hearts and something I could have written when I was 11.

Let me begin with less is more. There were way too many details about *absolutely* nothing, and it seemed to me that she was just trying to fill pages by yapping on about bow ties, a horse (yes, an actual horse with a human personality) and that book Mr. Darcy was reading! Every page in *Pride and Prejudice* served a purpose in the general storyline of the book, but this book... half of it was utterly pointless. You're right, if she took out the unnecessary fluff, she could condense the series to one very small, badly written book.

In addition to all those stupid little details, she also added stupid little characters too. What was the deal with Fletcher by the way? She (excuse me, he...Half the time I couldn't tell if he was a man or a woman) really didn't make his character clear, and he totally served NO purpose in the book.

Don't even get me started on the wording. I hate it when authors use big words and have no idea what they mean. I'm an avid reader, and all those words certainly didn't make reading her book more enjoyable. And her sloppy sentence structure...well lets just leave it at that.

Does anyone have any suggestions for a better Darcy novel??

Charmaine Anderson says

This is the first of a trilogy by Pamela Aidan. I read them all quickly and loved them so much 2 months later I decided to read them again slowly as I missed the characters so much. I am a *Pride and Prejudice* junkie. I have read a number of the P&P sequels. This is the only one worthy of my time.

Pamela Aidan produced a look into Mr. Darcy's heart and mind concerning all the events of the Austen story. No one can write like Jane Austen but Pamela Aidan did a good job of creating a Mr. Darcy in language, manner, and character that was very satisfying to me. The second book has some fun intrigue as Darcy spends a week in an ancient castle, with some old classmates, after he decides he must look for a wife in the ranks of society in order to forget Elizabeth. The last book gives more satisfying details into the stories conclusion. Aidan intruduces some new characters and gives us deeper insight into the Austen personalities. I learned a few things from Mr. Darcy in his self examination. The books portrayed a Darcy that Jane Austen would have approved--with values and good character.

Elizabeth says

I read this because a friend picked it up for me at a thrift store and because I am so obsessive-compulsive that I feel a need to read through to the end of any book that I begin. (This is the first of three volumes, but my compulsiveness does not, fortunately, require me to read the rest.) This is not a bad book, but it is a book decidedly not to my taste and unlikely to be to the taste of about half of the people who pick it up.

This book aspires to fill in the blanks of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* by telling the story from Mr. Darcy's point of view. If your only contact with Jane Austen's classic is the BBC/Masterpiece Theatre version with Colin Firth, this book may well suit your purposes. Much of the inspiration for the character of Darcy comes from the non-Austen scenes in the dramatization (Darcy fencing, Darcy riding a fiery horse, Darcy luxuriating in a bathtub . . .). [Author: Pamela Aidan] has built on these images and provides more detail than Austen ever thought necessary to illustrate the opulence of Darcy's fortune and the restraint of his taste. In this manner, Aidan takes us to the point where Mr. Darcy has taken his friend away from Netherfield and the attractions of the Bennett sisters and been followed by Bingley's sisters.

Lovers of Austen's writing will be cheered in the early chapters to come across much dialogue lifted verbatim from the original, but as the book progresses and Darcy leaves Netherfield for London, these become less common. Once Aidan leaves Austen's text behind entirely, one is allowed to imagine that one is merely reading about a character who happens to share his name with Austen's creation. Aidan's Darcy is much more prone to sighing and catching his breath than Austen's Darcy (he is almost asthmatic in his inability to breathe properly), and, for all the time spent with his man of business, does not seem to have a lot of business to conduct. Part of the problem with comparing Aidan's Darcy with Austen's, of course, is that all readers of Austen will imagine a Darcy to suit their tastes, so providing a hero straight out of a Regency novel (in the modern sense of "Regency novel") is unlikely to suit anyone who has read Austen.

Historically, Aidan is at pains to fit in as many physical details as possible, and to drop the maximum number of infamous names. A scene with Beau Brummel is apparently cooked up just so that Aidan can spend several pages describing how Mr. Darcy's valet prepared for his evening engagements and then list all of the other society scandals who show up at the gathering. A number of Aidan's historical details seem off-key, even if not absolutely wrong or impossible. A description of Darcy's shock at the sight of a waltz being danced at a society ball seems to be included in order to let readers know that waltzes were new in the 1810s, but waltzes were probably not yet being danced in England except on the stage and perhaps by people below the level of polite society in 1813 (or earlier as 1813 was merely P&P's publication date). On the other hand, they were danced on the Continent so should not be so utterly shocking to a well-traveled man such as Darcy. Aidan's ladies began swooning all over the dance floor in shock, but ladies did not start swooning en masse until after the waist-lines became more constricted than they were in Austen's day (and then mainly in literature). Darcy's and Georgiana's charitable gifts seem to be limited to giving to charitable societies, but for landed proprietors of the day, charity in one's own parish was probably much more important (see *Emma* for examples of local charity). Although someone as wealthy as Darcy might have actively managed investments in London warehouses (which sounds a lot like engaging in trade to me), it is more likely that his income came from land and from investments in stocks and securities. Most off-key is her presentation of Darcy as someone who is not actively seeking a wife but waiting for THE ONE to appear. Given Darcy's age (late 20s) and his responsibility for Georgiana's presentation in society, the practical need for a wife more likely would have caused him to take responsibility for hunting out a socially suitable (and lovable) bride. (Aidan seems to make the mistake of many in assuming that all marriages of the past were either society-defying love-matches or else craven exercises in loveless practicality.)

I would recommend this to someone who enjoyed reading historical romances, but not to a fan of the writing of Jane Austen.

Belinda says

"It was tolerable but not enough to convince me."

Pam - it was a great idea but you overwrote it.

No doubt it doesn't matter a jot, Pam has sold loads of these pretty crappy books, but here's why I didn't

enjoy it.

1) Too much information

2) Austen didn't write about politics - you should've left it out.

3) I was really only reading it to find out about D's reaction and thoughts to E, but we got huge amounts of info where D was in town, D was talking to his horse, D was yabbering with his valet. Snore.

4) Darcy comes across as a vain idiot when I think he was PERCEIVED to be so. In fact I think D is meant to be a kinder, warmer person than Austen appears to make him, as evidenced by the way he treats Georgiana, his servants, his friends. Austen is good like that, she's subtle. You have to peel back layers. This is why it's worth reconsidering Darcy or Mrs Bennett. So, his nasty condescending thoughts in this book by Pam don't ring true.

5) Really, this is only book ONE. God help me I'd never have started it if I'd know I had to wade through even more trite shite. Pam, you had plenty of room to tie this up. Austen did it; the fact you couldn't do it proves you're full of wind.

Don't read this.

Nicole D. says

WARNING: If you are reading this review I have assumed that you have read the original work which this book is a retelling of, Pride and Prejudice, if you have not this review contains spoilers.

Being inside Darcy's head is dream come true for Pride and Prejudice fans. The author captures the spirit of Darcy's thoughts perfectly and stays true to all the original characters of the novel. Which is a must for me in P&P fan fiction. Being inside Darcy's head is wonderful. You get a up close and personal look into his thoughts on everything from his parents, his estate, his friendship with Bingley, his sister, and see how he feels about every meeting with Elizabeth. My favorite part of being in his head was watching him sort out his very confusing feelings for Elizabeth. Seeing Elizabeth throw Darcy's eyes made me fall in love with him all over again. Watching his loving gentle protective care over his sister is so sweet. You can tell they both love each other very much.

You get to see Darcy in less formal settings and it really opens up his character which I loved. You see a whole new side of both Darcy and Bingley as they can be more free in conversation with each other when it is just them. You also get to see how Darcy and Bingley became friends which was something I always wanted more information on. Elizabeth's wit is in full view and the author's added conversation is what I imagine Elizabeth would say. As always I loved seeing Mr. Collins make a fool out of himself at the Bingley's Ball. I have always thought it must have been hard for Darcy to trick Bingley to not go back to Hertfordshire and Aidan's portrayal of Darcy's inner struggle was spot on.

The secondary character's Aidan has added are great and I think Jane herself would have loved them. One of my favorite new character's was Fletcher, Darcy's valet. I loved his humor and match making. Darcy's school friend Dyfed Brougham is a favorite new character along with Fletcher. His wit and humor won me over in a few paragraphs. I hope to see more of both of them in books 2 and 3

The author clearly did her research and has added gossip, conversation, and famous people from the Society of the time. I love those little touches. To me it makes the all the difference in a historical romance and

brings the time period to life. This is my second JA fan fiction I have read from Darcy's PoV and even though I loved the other, I love this one more as it gives me more scenes and insights not in the original novel. This looks to become a favorite with me and I highly recommend it to all P&P fans.

Rating: 5 out of 5

Content Rating: PG

Heat Rating: Clean

Laura says

I didn't realize this was a series. Ahhhhh. That being said I did like it but I'm not sure that I'll keep reading the other two. Maybe I'll read them as my pride and prejudice retelling next year.

BOOKSandCaffeine says

3.5 stars!

Ashley says

Although I enjoyed the beginnings of Darcy's side of the story in this book, I think it moved a bit slowly. Some chapters seemed dragged out, especially when Elizabeth wasn't present in the narrative. The scenes with them together are the most fun, since we see Austen's dialogue juxtaposed with Aiden's take on Darcy's mind. If this wasn't the story of Pride & Prejudice, I probably wouldn't have finished the series out, but I couldn't help continuing to find out what went through Darcy's mind in the rest of it. The third book absolutely makes it worth struggling through the first two.

Kylara Jensen says

OMG this book is so detailed.

Like SOOO detailed. Ridiculously so.

There are PAGES devoted to Darcy's cravat.

I love reading Austen retellings. I have read some GOOD Darcy povs and some horrible Darcy povs.

As for this one, it's somewhere in the middle.

It's not imminently readable. And it's not the language or the old-timey aspect. Austen would be easier to get

into. It's just boring.

Like take the events of one book:Pride and Prejudice and DRAG THEM ON into 3 books. By the end of this book we'd not even gotten to Christmas. Darcy and the Bingleys leave Netherfield and go to London. That's where we are. THAT'S WHERE WE ARE!!

I will say this is the most accurate retelling. Lots of historical details (so many!) and a timeline that matches P&P. There are things in London with Darcy going to parties and meeting historical figures (Caroline Lamb for one). Intriguing intrigues and so forth.

Darcy is kind of a douche here. We're in his head (3rd limited pov) and still his actions aren't tainted by Lizzie's prejudice and I still don't like him. And the insta-love he feels for Elizabeth I don't really like. I'm of the opinion that he likes the way she looks (Lively and witty and laughing,) and then the things she does, being smart and challenging him and caring for Jane bring about a slow burn love. Not this OMG she's so hot I have to have her!!

So I don't know. I kind of want to finish the series and I kind of don't. Would not recommend.

Fangirl Musings says

Pages Survived: 160

I'm so terrible. I don't WANT to say it, and I feel like a total unintelligent book-snob for feeling this way but...

This book was painfully boring. I know, I know. I should be more open minded, especially considering the fact that I've bitched for years saying I always wanted Darcy's perspective on the Pride and Prejudice story. Here I have it, handed to me on a silver friggin' platter and apparently my picky-ass brain says it's not enough. Go frackin' figure, right? Well, it's not.

"So what could possibly be wrong with this, Jacqueline?!" as I'm sure you're absolutely not asking yourself. The short answer is...Wait for it!...Not a single thing. Yeah, anticlimactic, I know, and so not helpful. But, the reality is there simply isn't something that I can point to and say with absolute certainty, "This! This thing, right here, is the downfall of this novel and all ye who write said thing shall collectively go off yourself!" The writing is great, truly detailed with vivid description that doesn't bog itself down with its own weight. The characters match their source material excellently. The plotting adheres wonderfully to the original with just enough deviation to keep it interesting.

I DON'T KNOW! Honestly, my biggest and best guess has to be the fact that I'm too much of a modern book snob. Yes, I know this is fanfiction and a retelling written by a modern author, but sadly I've become too used to stories where there's a heavy focus on the lead couple spending a good chunk of time together. Shhhh! *Dodges the thrown shoe.* Yes, I KNOW I'm a walking moron, especially when considering that's the antithesis of the Pride and Prejudice story and how dare I be so asinine as to use that as a criticism. I

know, I hate myself too.

So, what's the takeaway, here? Well, people, (as if anyone's actually reading this but we'll pretend so for my sake), the reality is I didn't like this book, and I want you to read it because it's marvelous and I'm a dipshit. As I said, this author did an excellent job at walking the line between source material and new material. Her writing is orgasmically well done, she gets the characters in a way that so rarely ever happens in fanfiction, and I should be slapped in the face for still not finding enough emotional drama between Lizzie and Darcy to keep me reading until the end. So, please, DON'T take my DNF-word for it, and go read it, humans. Dear book, please know...

Katharine says

After all I'd heard about this series, and the many recommendations I'd seen, I was kind of shocked to find how badly this was written.

This is supposed to be the best insight into the character of Darcy and instead we get inconsistency and pointless detail. In general, I disagree with the interpretation that has Darcy madly in love with Elizabeth about .3 seconds after insulting her at the Netherfield Assembly. But I could put up with that if it were done well. This Darcy swings confusingly from obsession with Elizabeth's every move, to childish irritation whenever she zings him. He's nothing even close to a realistic man, but rather a mish-mash of heroic clichés (he is the only person who can handle his high-spirited black stallion! Hee!) that reminds me of the imaginary games I used to play when I was twelve. Add in a few allusions to Darcy as played by Colin Firth in the '95 adaptation (twirl that pinky ring, Colin Darcy!) and you've got this reader, at least, snickering rather than swooning.

Elizabeth as seen through this Darcy's eyes is similarly a blend of irritating feminine tropes who would probably seem a lot more sympathetic if you turned her into a drinking game (sip every time the author describes her as "delicate"). It's as if the author had never actually observed a real person and how emotion would make that person act, but instead uses whatever literary or movie stereotype seems most appropriate. (People do not "quirk" their eyebrows nearly as often as she thinks they do, nor are snorts usually "delicate." *slurp*)

The book improves just a bit after Darcy gets to London and the author leaves Austen's narrative (and Darcy's obsession with Elizabeth) mostly behind. The Darcy-Bingley interactions are some of the better-written passages. However, the ton society bits seem out of place at best and farfetched at worst. It's a little difficult to buy Darcy as a rival to Brummel, even reluctantly, or hobnobbing with the scandalous Caroline Lamb. It's so much the antithesis to everything Austen wrote about. These scenes are a little more interesting than the rest of the book, but if the author wanted to write a high society regency, maybe she should have done that as an original novel instead of trying to shoehorn it into an Austen fic. I don't feel as though the London episodes do a whole lot to enlighten us on Darcy's character. They feel as though they were added because the author COULD, rather than with a purpose that fits into the narrative as a whole.

Plus, I would like to assume that Aidan did her research on the regency period, but I suspect it did not extend to much more than lots of Heyer – I caught some errors myself, and I'm no expert. (Come on, Darcy would have known what a waltz was, musically at least. They had 3/4 time long before they did the face-to-face

ballroom dancing. There's even a waltz mentioned in Emma although it's clearly meant only musically, not as in dancing style.) Heyer-ish slang also seems out of place in Austen. (Darcy is constantly calling Bingley a "gudgeon" which seems really odd for Darcy.)

Which brings me to language and style. The book reads as if the author had used a thesaurus for every fifth word, but only correctly about half the time. ("Unwittingly" does not mean what she thinks it means.) And yeah, Shakespeare had a great vocabulary too, but Ms. Aidan is missing the point that it's not really about how many different words you can use, but how WELL you use them. She certainly doesn't understand how to describe evocatively or effectively. I assume in some attempt to mimic the complexity of early 19th century writing, her style is a grammatic disaster, full of unnecessary passive voice, vague or missing antecedents, and pointless clauses wherever she can work in a few more adverbs. The problem is that Jane Austen's prose, while probably a little more complex than we're used to, is always clear and incisive and you usually don't have to read her sentences three times just to understand what she's getting at.

Let's look at a brief snippet to show what I mean about language and style.

"...The last to accept his cup, Bingley paused at Darcy's side and motioned with a quirk of his chin to the vacant seats next to Elizabeth and her sister. [No! Chins do not "qu岸" and pointing with your chin is rude and obvious.] Even as he silently declined the invitation, [how did he do that? shake his head? "qu岸" his eyebrow?] Darcy could not prevent or deny the bittersweet pull on his senses the opportunity presented. [See, getting trapped by a needlessly complex sentence structure -- "pulls" do not "present". They pull. This would be better: "Darcy could not deny a bittersweet pull on his senses." Much clearer AND more effective, although a bit cliched.] Determinedly, he took up a position somewhat apart from the others, from which he could safely bide his time. ["Determinedly" is like the most awkward adverb ever AND should be unnecessary -- SHOW NOT TELL.]

As it was, the conversation was consumed with the ball that Bingley had promised. [I don't like "consumed" here... it feels like the wrong word, too violent for the context. Perhaps "occupied" or "engaged".] Since the others were well aware of his aversion to the scheme, Darcy's opinions were not solicited, even by Miss Bingley, and he was left to his silent contemplation. [Unnecessary use of passive voice -- sentence would be stronger if it read "..., even Miss Bingley refrained from soliciting his opinion." Full stop. Last phrase is repetitive.] Relieved that he would not have to take part in a conversation fraught with traps that would militate against his plan, [Mixed metaphor! Traps do not "militate"!] Darcy breathed in the tangy scents of earth and vegetation. [Eh, in my opinion earth does not smell "tangy", which implies sour or citrusy. Pick fitting words! Don't just use the first one that comes to mind!] Suddenly there swept over him an acute longing. Pemberley! [Now, that's just cheesy. But whatever.]..."

If edited properly, these books could be one volume instead of three.

Tadiana ☆Night Owl? says

DNF at about 20%. This came very highly recommended by a couple of GR friends as the cream of the crop when it comes to Jane Austen take-offs, but it was *not* what I was expecting. It's a dead-serious retelling of the entire Pride and Prejudice story, from Darcy's point of view. What I read, I found rather boring. And Aidan takes three volumes to retell the whole story! This book just ends about 1/3 of the way through. O_o

I can see myself enjoying ~~this book~~ these books sometime later when I'm in a really serious need for an Austen fix. Now, however, is not that time.

