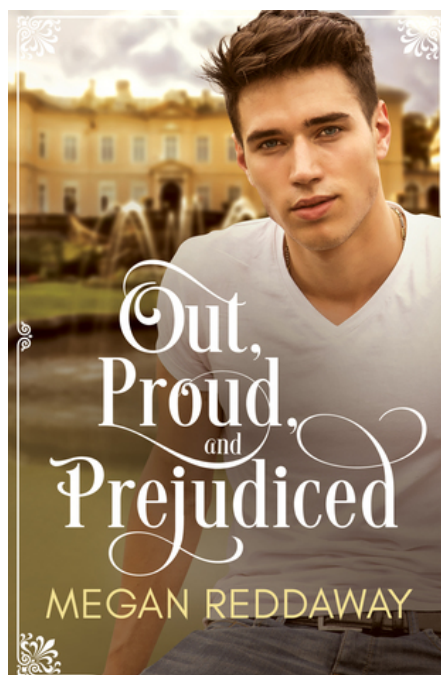




Out, Proud, and Prejudiced

Megan Reddaway

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Out, Proud, and Prejudiced Megan Reddaway

One's proud, one's prejudiced, and they can't stand each other.

Quick-tempered Bennet Rourke dislikes Darius Lanniker on sight. Darius may be a hotshot city lawyer, but that doesn't give him the right to sneer at Bennet, his friends, and their college. It doesn't help that Bennet's restaurant job has him waiting at Darius's table. So when his tutor recommends him for an internship at Darius's Pemberley estate, Bennet isn't sure he wants it. He's also not sure he can afford to turn it down.

Darius is a fish out of water in the small college town of Meriton, but something keeps pulling him back there. He's helping out a friend with business advice, nothing more. If he's interested in Bennet, it's not serious. Sure, Bennet challenges him in a way no other man has. But they have nothing in common. Right?

Wrong. Their best friends are falling in love, and Bennet and Darius can't seem to escape each other. Soon they're sharing climbing ropes and birthday cake, and there's a spark between them that won't be denied. But betrayal is around the corner. Darius must swallow his pride and Bennet must drop his prejudices to see the rainbow shining through the storm clouds.

A modern retelling of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

Out, Proud, and Prejudiced Details

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From Reader Review Out, Proud, and Prejudiced for online ebook

? percy ♡ says

ALL I CAN SAY IS THAT IF PRIDE AND PREJUDICE HAS THE SAME LEVEL OF ANGST AS THIS I CAN'T READ IT ANY TIME SOON BECAUSE I'M STILL RECOVERING FROM THIS ONE.

so, i don't know anything about pride and prejudice, so i can't compare this book to it or anything. but i really enjoyed it! there was a lot of romantic angst and drama, and not just romantic - there was just so much *drama*! i was kept on tenterhooks the whole time, even though i knew a HEA was on the horizon.

i knocked off a star because i thought it was a bit slow in places, and also because i'm kinda hard to please, but i definitely would recommend this. all the tension that had been simmering between bennet and darius just EXPLODES in the last couple of chapters and it's definitely worth the wait!

Sahitya says

This was a very interesting gay retelling of Pride and Prejudice. It's so much more of a slow burn than the original and has a very modern twist on the side characters and their lives. But there is also very less romance and I thought by the end, Bennett and Darius just started to get to know each other better. The writing is very easy flowing and I finished it in a single sitting but despite the enjoyable characters, I just felt that spark missing.

I would still recommend it to anyone who enjoys modern takes on P&P. You will not be disappointed.

haletostilinski says

A modern retelling of Pride & Prejudice but with it being M/M? Of course i had to snatch this up and read it.

It actually ended up surprising me, because the first 30% or so was...slow. Frustrating to get through for me. I get that it's following the basic outline of P & P, which is no doubt a veryyyy slow burn indeed, but for this is was just...too slow for me. It ended up being a little boring at times, and Darius (Darcy) wasn't there enough and their interactions weren't enough for me.

But then something changed, the story started to pick up, and as the juicy bits of P&P started to get retold in this story as well, it sucked me in. Darius and Bennett (Elizabeth) didn't have the greatest chemistry at first either, I felt. And I know Bennett is supposed to hate Darius and all that, but he's also, in this modern version, clearly attracted to him even though he doesn't want to be, but I didn't really feel that attraction. Until Bennett really started to fall for Darius.

Things happen in a similar fashion to P & P, just in a modern setting and with the names changed what (but still cleverly close to the originals in most cases). Like Whyndam (for Whyckam int he original, however you spell it) didn't run off with Darcy's sister, but he did do something even worse to Darius' half-brother - well his half-brother too. And I mean, for today's standards, running off with someone isn't quite as scandalous today as it was back then, so the change makes sense, but it sucks and it makes the guy even more scummy than in the original.

Jaime (Jane) is sweet and pretty and kind, and Tim (Bingley) falls for him, but all that stuff with Darius having a part in their separation but getting back together too was all there.

Plus, as it is modern times, we didn't get quite a bit more steam. It still wasn't great, but it's more than in the original book that's for sure lol (i think they don't even kiss it.)

So overall, a good retelling of the classic P&P, just pretty slow in the beginning, I think. Worth a read though! :D

Cadiva says

3.5*

This is a MM version of Pride and Prejudice so if you've read the original, you know what's going to happen here.

I was pleasantly surprised though by the clever twists on the characters to make them fit into this new narrative and I think overall it worked well.

The pace is quite slow though, and it was a while before we got to the meat of the story and I have to say, I don't have the same feeling with the source material so I've knocked a star off for that.

It also felt quite a bit more angsty than the original and didn't have quite the same wry humour as Austen did poking fun at Georgian society.

But, taken together, this is a great retelling of a classic.

#ARC kindly provided by the author in return for an honest and unbiased review.

Nina says

I am a huge fan of both Pride and Prejudice and M/M books so a P&P retelling with a LGBTQ twist? No brainer :)

And Out, Proud, and Prejudiced really was a lot of fun. We get pretty much all of the original characters in one way or another. We have Bennet and Darius as Elizabeth and Mr Darcy, Jamie and Tim are Jane and Mr Bingley (who is the only character where I couldn't figure out how the original name relates to the new one) but we also have Lydia and Kitty (Bennet's silly and slightly annoying roommates Leon and Kofi), Charlotte (who got to keep her name), Mr Collins (Callum) and many, many more. I loved how they all were definitely similar to the Jane Austen originals but were still also their own persons.

The basic story, too, follows pretty closely to the original but in the modern world with modern equivalents which I loved. There were definitely a few surprises along the way so it will still never get boring, even if you know Pride and Prejudice.

I loved the enemies to lovers dynamic between Bennet and Darius that was always at the forefront and that created some really intense scenes. I also really liked how honest Bennet was with himself in regards to Darius.

There are only two details I didn't love about this book. The first is Charlotte, who is just as practical with her life as you would expect from her but who also turned out to be a shitty friend in my opinion. And the second one is our villain's (whom I won't name in case someone hasn't read P&P yet ;) great scheme. That felt a little much and over the top. I admit it made for an exciting finale but yeah, maybe a tad too much.

Still, Out, Proud, and Prejudiced was so much fun! A must read for Jane Austen fans!

Truuss says

3.5 stars

Solid story. I must confess I skipped pages... yes I'm bad :(

Half way my attention drifted off, it had to much story.

I wanted more Darius and Bennett. O they were there, only not enough for me.

Again there was so much story around them, they almost drowned by it.

They didn't even fit together throughout 98% Sometimes a little here and there in the story. There was tension but it I would have loved more intensity.

In short: a good written story, on the slow side, al the personalities were well put down.

Even though Darius and Bennett were the main it didn't felt like it. There was so much going on.

I think there are others who will love and appreciate this story.

Kindly received an arc from the publisher

Sophie says

"Pride and Prejudice" is without a doubt the one book I have read the most often. So when I heard this was going to be part of the Classics queered project, I was as excited as I was worried - because those are some big footsteps to follow in.

And when I started reading this, it took me a while to be able to enjoy this mostly on its own - the first fifty pages I kept trying to figure who everyone was and what was going to happen there, and I was starting to get afraid I wouldn't be able to stop doing that, but then I found myself pulled into the story - so much so that I almost was gnawing on my nails trying to find the time to read on.

This is a modern, gay take on P&P, and I found it well done. Not all the original's plot points can be found "translated" here, but the important ones certainly are, and while I liked some parts better than others, I absolutely loved Bennet and Darius and the way their relationship developed in a current setting. Megan Reddaway definitely hit all the right notes there.

This was the first time in a while I couldn't stop reading, so this in itself is high praise. I really enjoyed it, and it made me happy, which is a very good thing.

(It also made me think about reading and the way I engage with texts, which is also a good thing.)

Laura says

Thanks to Wild Romance Books for providing a copy of an e-ARC of this novel in exchange for an honest review.

Ooh, this one was quite disappointing!

I loved the premise behind it - a modern, gay retelling of *Pride and Prejudice* (aka my favourite novel ever) - but the execution was lacking, and a lot of the changes the author made were upsetting.

I'll start with the things I really liked:

- Bennet (our Elizabeth) was a great protagonist. He was a lot like the original Lizzie, in that he's headstrong, prejudiced and very intelligent.
- Darius (our Darcy) was fantastic, very like the original Darcy. He was arrogant, proud, haughty, but he has a wry sense of humour that isn't apparent until Bennet, and the reader, gets to know him better.
- I loved the way the story was loosely based on and followed the original one, with it's own ... unique take on events. But it always went in the same direction, and for the most part, I enjoyed the author's modern takes (Bennet and Darcy bonding over rock climbing) and it was exciting to see beloved quotes remade but still recognisable.
- Jamie (our Jane) was just as sweet and lovely as the original, and Tim (our Mr Bingley) was cute and head over heels for Jamie.

The things I didn't like:

A lot of the plot, to be honest. While I appreciate that every author can make whatever changes they see fit in a retelling and can take the story down a different path, I really didn't like or appreciate the changes Reddaway made here - and that's not because I love *Pride and Prejudice*. It's because of the character of Giorgi (our Georgiana, Darcy's sister made brother in this novel).

I obviously can't go into much detail because a lot of my issues are considered spoilers but I will state what they are for other readers under the spoiler cut, because one would not typically expect to find these topics in a *Romance* book, of all genres.

Trigger warnings: (view spoiler)

I'll also mention my disappointment with one of the only three female characters of the novel. I know Catherine (Lady Catherine) and Annabel (Lady Anne) are not likeable characters in the original story, but Charlotte - who has always been my favourite - was vilified. At the beginning of the book, she was one of Bennet's best friends, but the decisions she makes in the novel were disappointing and angering - and something I see in so many m/m novels written by women: the female character acting in a way that makes the reader hate her, while we are pushed to love the male characters. Ugh.

I didn't understand the importance or need for Bennet's ex-boyfriend in the book. At all. He served no purpose. None. Unless ... was he supposed to be Mr Collins? Because that's what this book sorely lacked and needed: a Mr Collins.

Anyway, to say I was disappointed by this novel would be an understatement. I can't recommend this novel, not even to diehard P&P fans.

Trio says

Classic Brit lit, retold and centered around queer characters? I love it!

I was keen to read Megan Reddaway's *Out, Proud, and Prejudiced* because I knew the plot of Jane Austen's novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, could make an interesting gay romance. Reddaway keeps the story line fresh, and inserts some modern twists to make it relevant to twenty-first century readers. This book is so much fun; if you're new to this plot I promise you'll enjoy it. And for fans of the original? There are a few surprises here I'm sure you're going to appreciate.

It's been awhile since I read *Pride and Prejudice*, well over 20 years, but Reddaway's version brought it all flooding back. Jane Austen's protagonist Elizabeth Bennet, and her constant internal dialogue, second guessing herself and everything around her. As in the original, this version is also told entirely from the perspective of the new main character, Bennet Rourke. (Yes, very clever with the name, I agree.)

I couldn't help chuckling over Bennet's misinterpretations and snap judgments. He has the confidence of youth, believing he's infallible and has it all figured out. As the story progresses, and Bennet is repeatedly brought face to face with his misconceptions, his inevitable "aha" moment is charming.

Darius Lanniker, the reincarnation of the misread hero, Mr. Darcy, winds Bennet up like no one else. Born into wealth and privilege, Darius fits the ideal picture of the upper class British gent. Add in his arrogance, good looks, and fancy car, and Bennet has no trouble casting Darius in the role of villain. Bennet goes to comical lengths to cultivate this animosity, never giving Darius the benefit of the doubt.

There's an immediate attraction between Bennet and Darius. Constant bickering and traded insults just provide more fuel for the heat building between them. Each time they cross paths the sexual tension continues to increase... argh, will these boys ever work it out?!? It's a slow burn, but it's definitely worth the wait.

I don't remember most of the melodrama surrounding the secondary characters in *Pride and Prejudice*, but their complexity in Reddaway's novel is really something! No vice is left unexplored, and each misunderstanding just eclipses the one that came before. The story never stops moving.

Out, Proud, and Prejudiced is beautifully written, and I'm impressed by Megan Reddaway's creativity and insight. She brings some interesting aspects of modern British culture to light in this one and it works well with the story line. I definitely recommend this one to fans of the classic novel, but if you haven't read *Pride and Prejudice* you'll be no worse off.

Kristina says

4 Stars

I really enjoyed this book and while I've never read Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (I'm not really a Classics kinda Gal), I had fun following Bennet and Darius's story.

I loved Bennet's dedication to his schooling and friends. How responsible he was for a twenty-year-old was

refreshing. While he still made a little time for fun, his mind was always on what he needed to do to succeed in life.

Darius was a little harder to like (which, I guess, was the point) but he did have his moments. His dedication to his loved one was commendable, but that didn't excuse his attitude.

I wasn't attached to Bennet's friends or his family. I did enjoy the town and the visual that Megan created as she told this story, though.

The pacing was spot on and made it so easy to flow from chapter to chapter. There was no excess of extra descriptions like some authors are known to do. I hope to enjoy more of Megan's work in the future. Her work has made a very good impact on me and I sincerely hope others will enjoy it as well.

*** Copy provided to Bayou Book Junkie for my reading pleasure, a review wasn't a requirement. ***

Stella ?????? says

4.5 stars

I'm a huge fan of Jane Austen and in general of that era literature. *Pride and Prejudice* is one of my all time fave books. I saw and read everything related to the novel. More or less I liked them all. That's why of course I had to read this new release by Megan Reddaway, a new to me author. I thought I could enjoy the story but I wasn't expecting to love it so much. It was a lovely surprise.

I'm not going to focus my review on the plot cause the blurb tells you what you have to know and well, since it's about *Pride and Prejudice*, you know what to expect. That said, the book is really well done, written so well my reading flew easily, and to me, being English is not my first language, this happens only when the writing is great. The greatest surprise were the characters, apart from the fact I adore coral stories like this one, when there are quite a few characters to meet and love, the author did a good job and she let me know a little about all the second characters, some of them I loved, others I despised as I did in the original novel. Some true gems like Giorgio and Jamie caught my heart deeply with their pureness. And then Bennet and Darius with their parts followed the enemies to lovers trope and made my heart beating like Elizabeth and Darcy always do.

I want to highly recommend *Out, Proud, and Prejudiced*, it's not just a simple retelling, through all the reading I felt connected to Jane Austen's work, I could find all the elements I needed and everything was just right and fitting. I loved it.

Lisa The Novel Approach says

It has been many years since I read Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, but reading Megan Reddaway's modern version, *Out, Proud, and Prejudiced*, was so much fun. There have been numerous adaptations and retellings over the years of this much-loved book, both in print and on the screen, and it's amazing to see how well the story and characters hold up even two hundred years later. Reddaway's is a clever, modern retelling that follows the basic storyline of the original, with the most obvious nods being the character and

place names. Here the main characters are Bennett and Darius, and just as with the beloved Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy, they most certainly do not immediately hit it off!

The enemies-to-lovers trope is a favorite of many romance readers, and Reddaway nailed it with Bennett and Darius. When word gets around that there is a mysterious new gallery owner in town, and that he's rumored to be young and hot, Bennett's roommates are all atwitter. They convince Bennett to go with them to Rush, the once-a-month LGBTQ night at Meriton's only nightclub, so that they can check him out. Tim, the new owner of the gallery, is lovely, but the friend he brought with him? Not so much. Darius comes off as such a shit at first. Seemingly looking down his nose at Bennett, his friends, the town, their college, even Bennett's best friend, Jamie, who Tim is instantly taken with. Bennett decides on that first meeting that Darius is a pretentious asshole, and he does everything he can to avoid him.

Because Jamie and Tim are quickly falling for each other, however, the two men are constantly thrown together, eventually forcing them to acknowledge their attraction to each other, and surprising them with the things they have in common. I loved the super slow-burn between these guys. Reddaway did a great job easing them from intense dislike, to tolerance, to possible friendship and finally admitting their fondness for each other. I liked when Bennett had his epiphany that he perhaps judged Darius a bit too harshly, if not entirely incorrectly. And, when they figure things out at the end, it's so satisfying and perfect.

I loved the settings of Meriton college, Longbourn Manor, and Pemberley Hall, and I enjoyed what Reddaway did with the characters. Bennett's roommates Leon and Kofi were ridiculous and entertaining. I LOVED sweet sensitive Jamie, and Tim as well; they were so wonderful together. And, I could tell who the villain was going to be from the get-go. Red flags going up left and right with that one!

When Bennett finally lets go of his pride in order to solicit Darius's help at the end...Or...was he too prejudice and Darius was too proud...? (Bonus points to everyone who gets my silly You've Got Mail reference. Ha! ?) I think we can all agree that they each have elements of both pride and prejudice to overcome but, as I said, the ending was wonderfully done. I think, whether you're familiar with the original or not, there are many fabulous things to enjoy about Out, Proud, and Prejudiced.

Reviewed by Jules for The Novel Approach

Joyfully Jay says

A Joyfully Jay review.

3.25 stars

This story is a modern reinterpretation of one of my favorite books, Pride and Prejudice. Like many books that try to re-imagine Austen's classic characters and the themes of money, reputation, and social standing, it would have been a better story had the author not tried to follow the source material so closely. This is not a horrible book, but nor is it a really good one; it lies somewhere between a quick, light read and a character study of a truly unpleasant young man, but by using the framing of Pride and Prejudice, it becomes clumsy and dully predictable with nothing the characters say or do having any weight because their paths are already laid out for them. So, knowing the story as we do, it's up to the characters themselves to be interesting and... it almost works.

Bennet Rourke is living paycheck to paycheck to put himself through college, along with a small student loan. Work, his college classes, his friends, and his lack of a boyfriend are his primary concerns until he

comes face to face with Darius. It's not love at first sight or even lust at first sight. When Bennet sees Darius being rude to the staff at the gay club, he's offended and instantly turned off. Studying for a career in hospitality himself, he knows just how hard those people work — and this being a small town, he knows those people, personally. When he overhears Tim and Darius talking about the club it's a nod to the famous scene in *Pride and Prejudice*: "tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me."

Read Elizabeth's review in its entirety here.

Anna Butler says

Two secrets spilt here.

The first is that 'Pride and Prejudice' is one of my favourite books, and reading the innumerable variations on that great story is one of the guiltiest of all my guilty pleasures. Stressed and tired? Read a P&P variation. Need refreshing entertainment? Read a P&P variation. Going on a journey? Read a P&P variation. You get the drift. I follow a couple of fanfic sites with religious fervour, lapping up the myriad ways in which Elizabeth Bennet meets and eventually marries Fitzwilliam Darcy. P&P related stories are my ****jam****.

Riffs on famous books depend for their impact on the reader's familiarity with the source. I'll admit a bit of the delight for me was taking Megan Reddaway's characters and matching them up with the P&P originals, and comparing the events of her book against Austen's plot. I was thoroughly impressed by how she has taken the well-loved story and brought it into the 21st century and yet how well the characterisation and plotting points mesh with the original. I admit to squealing whenever I recognised a character, chuckling over the scene where the infamous Assembly insult is graphically and profanely updated, and laughing aloud (and scaring the dogs) at the Lady Catherine/Elizabeth confrontation remastered as Catherine/Bennet.

But let me hasten to reassure you that Reddaway isn't just slavishly copying Austen here. Yes, the links to the source are strong, but the whole book – characters, dialogue, plot – are infused with a freshness and vitality that reflect how unconstrained, mobile and diverse society now is compared to Austen's time. It has life, a joie-de-vivre that's almost palpable, it has potential tragedy and heartbreak, laughs and tears, with strong, quick-witted, sharp characters and a dextrous plot, all pulled together in Reddaway's skilful prose. This isn't a mere pastiche. This is a clever, intelligent and creative retelling of a beloved classic.

Which brings me on to the second secret: I don't read many contemporary stories. Mostly I want escapism, something far away from today. Hence the P&P variations, along with period detective/mysteries, historicals and, of course, sci-fi and fantasy. I don't naturally reach for a contemporary for entertainment. Few grab my attention to the point where I'm cross I have to put down the Kindle to take the dogs out or make lunch or do the laundry. But this contemporary, gay take on P&P? Couldn't put it down and truly resented Molly and Mavis today and their insistence on exercise just as I got to the exciting bit. I couldn't wait to get back to see what happens next.

Oh here. Have a bonus confession: I don't often keep the ARCs I'm sent when I do one of my (rare) reviews. Many books don't wear well, don't stand up to constant rereading. But this one? Yeah. I'll be buying this one for keeps.

All in all, this is a wonderful, funny, and touching book. I really can't recommend it highly enough.

Julie (*Happily Ever Chapter*) says

3.5 stars

I'm a big lover of all things Pride and Prejudice, so when I saw a MM romance based off of P&P I knew I needed to read it. I loved seeing some of the little details from the original. There were some things, or characters that I didn't love quite as much as others, but overall I really enjoyed this retelling.

I loved how the setting followed closely to the original, but had a much more modern edge to it. There was still all the angst, drama, and misunderstandings. It was fun seeing some of the characters come to life in new ways. My favorite thing about this one was the hate to love story between Bennet and Darius. It was done so well. This was a really slow burn (if you've read P&P then you probably understand why) but we do get a little steam from them in the end.

One of the biggest issues I had with this one: Charlotte. She was the worst "best" friend ever! What she did was pretty unforgivable in my opinion, but it all gets swept under the rug like it's no big deal. She takes a new man's side of the story and basically tells Bennet to just deal with it. No! Not cool. The fact that she even went after Bennet's ex is pretty messed up too. He explained the bad blood between them before they even got together.

Even with my little pet peeve with Charlotte's character, I still really enjoyed this story. It was fun to read one of my stories in a new way. I'm excited to read more from this author.

*I received an ARC of this title via NetGalley in exchange for an honest review. All opinions are my own. *
