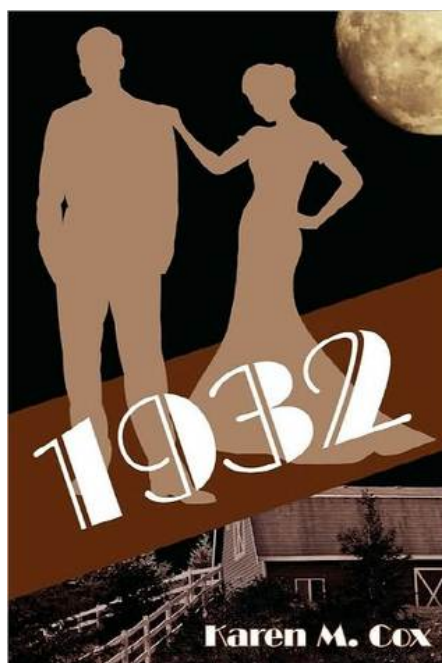




1932

Karen M. Cox

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..". the last man in the world I could ever be prevailed on to marry."When Elizabeth Bennet left Fitzwilliam Darcy with those words, she was a sheltered, naive girl who had never felt the sting of real poverty. What if her circumstances were more precarious? Would she still express herself using those harsh words? What if she were the victim of a raging storm of worldwide economic hardship that touched virtually everyone? How would the consequences of that hardship affect the other beloved characters of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*? If Elizabeth thought she was running out of options, what would happen then?

1932 is a twist on Jane Austen's classic tale. Elizabeth Bennet has always led a pampered existence as the daughter of a university professor in the Midwest until the safety of her world dissolves around her due to unforeseen adversity. Amidst the ensuing upheaval, what - and who - might she discover as she rebuilds a life for herself and her family in the sleepy, backwater town of Meryton?

1932 Details

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Debbie Brown says

This was my fourth time reading this impressive book, and I loved it just as much as I did in 2012 when I first read it. It captures the timeless love story of *Pride and Prejudice* as well as the harsh realities of life in the South during the Great Depression.

The Bennets must leave their Midwestern home when Dr. Bennet is let go from his position as a university English professor. He previously lost most of his savings due to the stock market crash, and there's no money to pay their mortgage. They move to farm country in Meryton, Kentucky, where Ed and Madeline Gardiner, Mrs. Bennet's brother and sister-in-law, are able to offer some assistance.

While much of the story is recognizable from canon, the changes work brilliantly. The marriage proposal by the wealthiest farmer in the area, William Darcy, lacks romance and Elizabeth Bennet's opinion of him is decidedly negative (as expected). Because of her family's desperate financial circumstances, she feels compelled to accept him. He understands she doesn't share his warm feelings but doesn't know she actually dislikes him. Despite her initial misgivings and although not exactly blissful, they start out reasonably content in their marriage. Unfortunately, "pride and prejudice" cause them to be less than completely honest with each other. This poisons their relationship and causes major problems, especially once George Wickham enters the picture.

All the characters are excellently drawn. Georgiana Darcy is given a larger role here as a single mother raising two small children with the help of their doting "Unca" William. There's a bit of mystery in her background, as she had disappeared and eloped, then returned to Meryton years later with her daughters but without a husband. The older of the two little girls, Maggie, is a bright little chatterbox who immediately makes friends with Elizabeth when the Bennets first arrive. Sheriff Richard Fitzwilliam is no relation to the Darcys, but he is the closest friend William has. Charlie Bingley is another friend who is much younger. He owns several mercantile stores run by his two aunts, Caroline and Louisa. (Yes, Caroline still has a thing for William, even though she's about 5 years older.) Jane Bennet works for the Bingleys in their Meryton dry goods store.

As for the other Bennets, Dr. Bennet is trying to revive Longbourn, the old Gardiner farm, which has been dormant for years. Mrs. Bennet, interestingly, is the only character who is different. Once they're in Kentucky and her life has purpose, she takes charge with a noticeable lack of nervous flutterings and organizes the household. (The home needs a LOT of work to be made livable.) Elizabeth starts out working at her Uncle Ed's veterinary practice before she marries William. Mary helps with housekeeping and the animals. Kitty and Lydia are the slowest to help and the quickest to complain about the family's reduced circumstances, and they're assigned to sell eggs at the Meryton market.

I honestly can't heap enough praise on this well-conceived and executed plot, these believable characters, and this excellent writing. The companion piece by the same author, *The Journey Home: A 1932 Side-Quel*, is just as good and goes into more depth about Georgiana Darcy's story. I highly recommend both books.

Leslie says

An interesting Americanized twist on P&P transporting many of our favorite characters, or at least their names, to Illinois and Kentucky, USA 1932.

I will say I probably over liked this book because in this version Darcy was 30 and Lizzy was 20 - which makes them about the same ages as my maternal grandparents were at that time and my maternal grandparents married in 1932.

The Bennets are living in or near Chicago when Mr Bennet, a college professor, loses his job and subsequently their home. The family is forced to move from the city to a non electrified farm house in Meryton, KY. Their first year is very hard since the Bennets arrived too late for planting and a small town doesn't have a lot of jobs for them.

There were times I felt the author tried too hard to shoe horn plot elements or names into the story. One of those is Jane getting a job at Netherfield; the local dry goods owned by the Bingleys. If it was called Bingley's we all would have gotten it Bingley is in trade after all. Jane seems to be more of a plot device than a character. After she gets her job she and Lizzy go to stay at the Bingley's home so they can make dresses for Miss Caroline and Miss Louisa; in this case Bingley's slightly older aunts not sisters. There was no need to them to stay there and it was merely an way to replicate a part of P&P that was unnecessary to the story.

The Bennets situation gets worse and worse as the year wears on and 1933 finds Mr. Bennet desperate. When Darcy suddenly and out of the blue proposes to Lizzy she decides to do what is best for her family and marry him. But they are virtual strangers and Lizzy is afraid to broach most subjects with him. She literally knows nothing about him, hasn't even seen his house. When they go to Nashville for their honeymoon she can't figure out why he wants to buy her fine clothes when as the wife of a farmer all she needs is jeans and boots. [I wanted to reach into the book and shake her]

There is a huge secret between them which is the identity of Georgiana's (later | former |ex) husband. Darcy freaks out when Lizzy asks about it and bans the subject. They muddle along having lots of sex but little else to build a healthy relationship. When Lizzy meets George Wickham in town she is immediately nice and friendly [another frustration with me, obviously Lizzy knew Georgiana and her daughters weren't friendly with this guy so why was she so forthcoming with him, is she a complete moron?] This leads to a big fight and she leaves Pemberley and goes back to the Bennets. Thus shoehorning in the Darcy writes Lizzy a letter which she can read and discover she has misjudged him. But they don't immediately reunite and she has a nice moment with Mrs. Bennet before deciding to talk to Georgiana. Which leads to a perilous situation for Georgiana courtesy of Wickham. And Lizzy & Darcy live happily ever after.

There were some historical inaccuracies and way too many modern morals imposed upon 1930s characters. One that really grated was Darcy telling Bingley it would be inappropriate or him to date an employee. No one thought that in 1930. No one. Hell no one thought that in 1960, 1970 and most of the 1980s. Another was Lizzy going to college to become a teacher and being denied her dream. A college degree wasn't a requirement for teachers until ... well I don't think it is now. I had teachers in the 1960s who graduated from high school in June and started teaching in September. Education was far from universal in the 20s and 30s. My grandmother left school at 12 to get a job and my grandfather didn't complete high school, but later got his GED.

The book contains some steamy love scenes between a husband and a wife. It is an interesting story that tries too hard. It also contains a lengthy, complicated epilogue set in 1970.

Elizabeth Bennet says

This book is not to be underestimated by the cover. I think it is a cleverly, surprising read. Throw out your traditional P&P as we are off to Kentucky where Pemberely ranch. Elizabeth is attending college in Chicago

during the depression when tough times befall her family. Broke and no where else to go the Bennet's rely on the Gardener's for aide. The history of the characters are switched around such as Mr. Bennet is a professor and goes by Dr. Bennet, Colonel Fitzwilliam is Sheriff Fitzwilliam. There are more adjustments to be sure and I do not want to ruin them all for you. I will just point out the things I loved in the book which will leave many a mystery for you as a reader to discover.

Lizzy and her sisters are adjusting to their new surroundings and from the start of her arrival is aware of Darcy. He is still reserved and introverted but there is a southern charm about him I loved. Lizzy and him reach an agreement early on but you get to watch them grow in love as a couple. The truly key point that needs made is that Darcy is a virgin. I loved the idea but it did make it awkward in the beginning for the pair to find their way.

*****REVISED 2017*****

I recently got the companion to this one. It does give you another layer to Darcy's pov when you compare the two stories. I do prefer the ending in the sequel better than in this one. This one gives you a detailed epilogue, which I love, however I prefer my story to end rather than leaving when a person passes away out of the mix. I am not referring to D/E but the sheriff. It was sad to know and put a damper on a hea for me.

This is not a clean read but it is not overall e explicit either. The one other thing I need to mention is the secrets the couple keep. I am never a fan but was relieved when things cleared up. It broke my heart when Lizzy left Pemberley and didn't take that risk to reach out to William. Enjoy!

Lynn says

Lovely story

Really enjoyed this story about Lizzy and Darcy set in the depression era. It was an interesting way to bring about the couple's meeting and misunderstandings. I look forward to reading more from this author.

Mary says

Do you know that tingle you feel with the slow dawning of realisation that the book you've started is going to give you hours of pleasure, is going to envelop, intrigue and enchant you from the very first page, is going to fill you with a happiness and a gratitude for the fantastic writer and their vivid imagination.....?

Well that's exactly how I felt when reading this book!

I loved it!

I could say more, but I won't -just trust me on this and treat yourself to this book-you won't be disappointed.

Anna says

I think this is quite possibly in the top five JAFF that I've ever read. Fully realized characters, a great setting that made perfect sense in context of the original story. Plus, it was just a damn good book! It really touched me and I could definitely see a re-read in the future.

Sara says

Beautiful story of love, friendship, family and life after the depression. I truly enjoyed the characters and the way the story unfolded. The characters were true to cannon and the romance was great. Very well done. One I will be reading again. Highly recommend.

Sheila Majczan says

I won a paperback copy of this book along with others from the raffle with The Darcy Monologue blog tour. And even though in reading books of this genre we are assured of our HEA, this was a page turner as the twists with events and characters were different enough not to be repetitive or boring.

Elizabeth, in this tale, has to deal with moving from one socio-economic class to another and in doing so is very sensitive about people's attitudes and opinions. She also moves from the big city of Chicago to the small farming community of Meryton, KY. So she has many adjustments. But again she makes a jump in judgment when noticing a scowl on the face of a gentleman who witnesses some of her family's unmannerly behaviors while on a train.

Her second encounter with this man is after she rescues a young girl from the edge of the train platforms. The child has a precocious sister who comes into play more than once. Not only does Maggie seem to play the role of Yenta but she also purposes the idea of reading books that might interest boys so that they will attend the story time Elizabeth starts in the library. Maggie's family history is one for which we turn pages...a secret, but READERS, if you know the original story; you may think you know where this is leading. Aha! Some parts do have new twists. Our original villain is here but not exactly as the man he was.

Darcy is again a man with many responsibilities and many facets to his character. He takes his roles very seriously. You will recognize this man and again fall in love with him.

Mr. Bennet is much more industrious herein. Upon losing his job as a professor he writes to and gains help from his brother-in-law, Mr. Gardiner. Additionally, Mr. B. seeks employment for those of his daughters with marketable abilities. I especially liked Jane here, with not only her business acumen but also her creative abilities which help in more ways than one. Lydia and Kitty selling eggs? Really? But they are still capable of getting into trouble. After all, are men's intentions towards the fairer sex any different one-hundred years after the time period in which P&P was set?

Mrs. Bennet has only a few "silly" ways here. She grew up in the farmhouse they move into and knows all about using an outhouse and pumping water at the sink. But the fact that they move late in the growing season is a big detriment to the ability to grow food for the table. Bean soup and cornbread can also fall short of keeping bellies full.

When Elizabeth learns that her father is considering sending a daughter or two to another town for employment purposes she does what was unthinkable in JA's P&P, - she considers marriage to save the family from being "thrown into the hedgerows".

I particularly liked the scene in the nightclub when a certain "gentleman" leers at Elizabeth clothed in a dress with a plunging back and then heads in her direction with two drinks in his hand (and remember prohibition). What to our wondering eyes should appear but the little green head of jealousy? Guess who falls victim to that feeling?

Aunt Caroline and Mr. Bingley have their parts to play and Caroline does not disappoint with her “drooling” over a certain eligible younger man but she is also playing a balancing act in trying to keep the talents of a new employee at the family’s disposal and in also attempting to keep that same employee in her “place”.

Georgiana and Sheriff Fitzwilliam are another story. Really liked what the author did here. I have always liked him. And he does not disappoint in his role as protector of the innocent. The drama in this part of the story is so much more exciting and suspenseful.

Yes, there are Mature Audience scenes but they are sweet with few graphic details. This is a treasure and I have to say I am looking forward to her newest book, *Journey Home*, which is a parallel story about Georgiana.

BTW: love the cover - it is perfect reflection of the times in which this book is set.

Norah says

I tend to stay away from *Pride and Prejudice* spin offs that are, in effect, glorified fan-fiction – anything with 'Darcy' in the title that promises raunchy sex post marriage or Lizzy's many babies etc – but I am always keen to read (or watch) a decent reimagining so long as it has an intriguing or refreshing premise. *Bridget Jones* was charming and silly, and Shannon Hale's *Austenland* made fun of its own readership. A retreat of sad Austen junkies who dream of bonnets and corsets and shirtless Darcy-figures. Hah! I have not read *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* – the title gives away enough of the story for me – however the concept is amusing in its juxtaposition.

1932 promised to take Austen's story to a unique time and place but, sadly, it lacked spark. It lacked characters anywhere near as complex and endearing as Austen's, or even Shannon Hale or Helen Fielding's.

The first third, at times, reads almost word for word with the script of the 1995 BBC miniseries. Occasionally I wondered about the issue of plagiarism; the miniseries script, unlike Austen's novel, is not public domain. "I don't cough for my own amusement," says Kitty in response to Mama's complaints, and her father replies dryly, "I think, once we are stopped, you may cough as much as you choose." Lydia whines to her mother, "But it is mine, you let her have everything that is mine," and Mr Bennet later asserts that, "here we have two of the silliest girls in all of the United States." (Eye roll.)

If I wanted to read a cheesy cut and paste of the BBC miniseries I would have consulted my own dusty diaries – the ones I scrawled in as a teenager while my finger alternated between the VCR's 'pause' and 'rewind' buttons.

I perked up once Darcy and Elizabeth *married* as the story was no longer yawningly predictable, however despite this turn of events the couple failed to captivate.

Elizabeth comes off weak and insipid. She whispers to herself (like a watered-down Scarlett O'Hara), "Where will we go? What will become of us?" Tears stream her cheeks. Her lip trembles. She smiles timidly. "Oh," she says.

Darcy, when he is not acting immature or sullen, behaves with an irritating sort of gawkish arrogance. "Inquisitive aren't we?" he smirks. His voice is condescending when he asks Lizzy, "And how would you know that?" Are we supposed to swoon over this man who snaps at his wife for asking a sensible question about her sister-in-law, who huffs and turns his back beneath the sheets in a tantrum? I wanted to slap him.

He is not a Mr Darcy, but a Mr Collins.

This Darcy is bumbling, odd and immature – there is nothing attractive about him – and this Elizabeth is pale and dull. But besides the lead characters (as if they can possibly be overlooked) the story is more than a little bit boring.

I doubt *1932* will be remembered as a decent Austen reimagining, but I would have liked, at least, to remember it as a fun and engaging read.

Ceri says

1932 is a 'Pride and Prejudice'-inspired story set in the US in the early 30s. Dr Bennet, a college professor, has lost his job due to the university cutting staff. Having made no arrangements to safeguard his family's future and having lost money in the crash & depression the Bennets' home is going to be repossessed. Bennet goes to his brother in law in desperation. Luckily, Dr Gardiner has a solution; the Bennets can relocate to Meryton, where the Gardiner family farm is, and try to scrape enough to live on.

On their arrival in Meryton, Lizzy first encounters Mr Darcy, a well-off farmer who she is sure disapproves of the whole Bennet clan. He lives with his sister Georgiana and her two small children. Lizzy goes to work for her uncle, who is a vet, and her path crosses again with Darcy when his animals need treatment. Jane gets a job working for Mr Bingley, a rich store owner who lives with his spinster aunts, Caroline and Louisa. Caroline is older than Mr Darcy (haha!), but still thinks she's in with a chance of becoming his wife, and she's just as sharp-tongued as in P&P.

The story loosely follows the plot of *Pride and Prejudice* but with one major variation. Lizzy's feelings towards Darcy start to soften, but they have distance between them, partly due to each of them being too proud, but also by secrets that both of them are keeping from each other.

One of the things I particularly enjoyed about 1932 is all the elements from P&P that are included. Aside from the characters, many of whom appear, we have a Netherfield ball, Hunsford, obnoxious proposal, and lots of dialogue that echoes dialogue from the original, added to a lovely romance. I'd really recommend this book, I absolutely loved it!

Meredith (Austen-esque Reviews) says

In this delightful and originaive variation of *Pride and Prejudice* we travel to new time period, the 1930's – a time of economic depression, poverty, Nazism, jazz music, and motor cars. The Bennet family resides in Chicago where Mr. Bennet earns a living as a English professor at Northwestern University. Unfortunately, due to the increased number of students drop outs, Mr. Bennet is let go from his position. The Bennet family is left with no other recourse except to retreat to their Uncle Gardner's abandoned farmhouse and work his neglected land in Meryton, Kentucky.

To continue reading, go to: <http://janeaustenreviews.blogspot.com...>

Claudine DiMuzio / Just Jane 1813 says

Review to follow...

Nissa | Of Pens and Pages Book Blog says

5 stars!

Review to follow.

Sheila Majczan says

This story was recommended and then loaned to me on kindle. I must remark that in reading so much JAFF most titles come to my attention by the use of familiar names or places from Jane Austen's works, i.e., "Darcy", "Pemberley", "Elizabeth Bennet" etc. The title of this book never came to my attention and the book description falls short on relating just how interesting this variation really is, in my opinion. I read it in one day and even though in reading books of this genre we are assured of our HEA, this was a page turner as the twists with events and characters were different enough not to be repetitive or boring.

Elizabeth, in this tale, has to deal with moving from one socio-economic class to another and in doing so is very sensitive about people's attitudes and opinions. And she also moves from the big city of Chicago to the small farming community of Meryton, KY. So she has many adjustments. But again she makes a jump in judgment when noticing a scowl on the face of a gentleman who witnesses some of her family's unmannerly behaviors while on a train.

Her second encounter with this man is after she rescues a young girl from the edge of the train platforms. The child has a precocious sister who comes into play more than once. Not only does she seem to play the role of Yenta but she also purposes the idea of reading books that might interest boys so that they will attend the story time Elizabeth starts. And Maggie's family history is one for which we turn pages...a secret, but READERS, if you know the original story; you may think you know where this is leading. Aha! Some parts do have new twists. Our original villain is here but not exactly as the man he was.

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Georgiana and Sheriff Fitzwilliam are another story. Really liked what the author did here. I have always liked him. And he does not disappoint in his role as protector of the innocent. The drama in this part of the story is so much more exciting and suspenseful.

Yes, there are Mature Audience scenes but they don't even stand out in my mind two days after reading this. This is a "hidden treasure" in that I am thinking there are others like me who haven't even heard of this title much less read anything about it. Try it - you'll like it!

BTW: love the cover - it is perfect reflection of the times in which this book is set.

Carole (in Canada) says

My Rating: 4.5*

This was Ms. Cox's debut novel into the world of Jane Austen fan fiction back in 2010. She took *Pride & Prejudice* and re-imagined it during the Great Depression and with a deft hand, she made it work beautifully. This time, however, the Bennets have lost their home, Professor Bennet has lost his job and the family has moved to Meryton, Kentucky to live on Mrs. Bennet's family farm that her brother, Ed Gardiner, has offered. The farm is in poor condition as is the house with no 'modern' amenities. Times are extremely difficult financially and emotionally. Each of the Bennet daughters must work to help provide money and/or provide help to sustain the family.

Immersing themselves in the community and church, Elizabeth catches the attention of the wealthy farmer, Mr. William Darcy. I found this Mr. Darcy more serious, 'Mr. Serious' as Elizabeth calls him, and a man of even fewer words. How they come together was not fraught with as many misunderstandings, however, the tension was there due to lack of communication.

I enjoyed how Ms. Cox adapted places, people and scenes in different ways that made them believable. We have a more developed Georgiana. Her oldest daughter, Maggie, is such a delight and has captured the heart of her Uncle Darcy. Wickham's role is different, but in character, he is very much the same and causes a 'day of reckoning' between Darcy and Elizabeth.

The writing is well done and the sexual chemistry is sizzling. There are some mature audience scenes, but they flow beautifully with the story.

"He pulled back as if to look at her face, and his low, smooth voice slowly covered her, like sugar cane

molasses running down a bottle."

I highly recommend this moving rendition of *Pride & Prejudice* set in Kentucky during the Great Depression.
