



## The Falmouth Connection

*Joana Starnes*

Download now

Read Online 

# The Falmouth Connection

*Joana Starnes*

## **The Falmouth Connection** Joana Starnes

Just as Mr. Darcy finally decides to propose to the enticing Miss Elizabeth Bennet, she is summoned to Falmouth, to meet a relation she never knew she had.

Thus, the ill-starred Hunsford proposal is avoided – but before he could even begin to understand his luck, adverse circumstances hasten to conspire against him, and Fitzwilliam Darcy is compelled to follow the woman he loves to the far reaches of Cornwall, into a world of deceit and peril where few – if any – are what they seem to be...

## **The Falmouth Connection Details**

Date : Published October 21st 2014

ISBN :

Author : Joana Starnes

Format : Kindle Edition 303 pages

Genre : Romance, Historical, Historical Fiction

 [Download The Falmouth Connection ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Falmouth Connection ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The Falmouth Connection Joana Starnes**

---

## From Reader Review The Falmouth Connection for online ebook

### **Talia says**

Not my favorite but good. Nothing by this author can be bad but I found myself lacking concern and care about any of the characters. I do not know why this did not engage me as there was plenty going on. It didn't mesh. I am sure to try it again in the future though. I may like it more then.

---

### **Nicole Clarkston says**

No spoilers here, just a dreamy sigh and a half-eaten bar of chocolate to testify to this amazing story. Joana never disappoints! Her romance is so delicious, her angst is so natural, and each word is so carefully chosen to leave the reader with shivers and pounding pulse. Never stop writing, because I need some more of this Darcy!

---

### **Nicole Barton Sasser says**

3.5 Stars

---

### **Madenna U says**

In this Pride and Prejudice variation, Elizabeth is called from Hunsford to visit a remote relative and meet up with her family. Darcy, not able to deliver his planned proposal, offers his carriage and escort with the Colonel. The Colonel is the one who informs Darcy that his method of proposing is insulting. That is just the beginning!

This book had constant action and did not lag at any point. It changed from one person's view point to another. It has mystery, sword fighting, danger, perseverance, and love. The story does provide Elizabeth and Darcy a happily ever after but they certainly earn it!

---

### **Meredith (Austenesque Reviews) says**

Poor Darcy, he receives so many depressing blows in this Pride and Prejudice variation! First, the day before he plans to propose and secure his future happiness, Elizabeth is called away to meet a distant relation in Falmouth. Then when he decides to propose anyway, he is prevented by all sorts of interferences – Mr. Collins, Colonel Fitzwilliam, inclement weather, etc. And then...when Elizabeth seems like she might welcome a visit and proposal from Darcy in the future, the very next day brings about a whole different attitude in her. Why is she upset and standoffish with Darcy?

When poor Mr. Darcy learns the reason why, he hightails it to Falmouth to set things right, but he has a lot

going against him – trying to fine Elizabeth’s aunt’s home without having the address, a newly bestowed inheritance, and a worthy, wealthy, and titled rival who has in the span of a few short weeks earned Elizabeth’s respect and possibly her regard... Suddenly all the wonderful things Mr. Darcy has to offer and give Elizabeth don’t seem as valuable or magnanimous as what she already has...

How I LOVE Joana Starnes’s portrayal of Mr. Darcy! Without a doubt, her depiction of a feeling, privately emotive, and intensely passionate Mr. Darcy is quickly becoming one of my favorites. The way Ms. Starnes expressively denotes every myriad of feeling and thought of Mr. Darcy is to be commended. (I think she takes delight in torturing him!) Mr. Darcy’s anguish, sorrow, hope, and yearning can not but be tangibly felt by the reader. As I read this novel, my eyes were stinging with unshed tears and I could feel my own heart swell with sympathy and love for Darcy’s pent-up emotions and suffering. Ahh, so romantic! Such palpable and evocative prose!

Besides her swoon-worthy and ardent Darcy the other aspect I most enjoy with Joana Starnes’s writing is the originative and varied alterations she creates with these characters. Tired of reading similar variations about Darcy’s unsuccessful first proposal in Hunsford Parsonage or Lydia causing trouble just as Darcy and Elizabeth are about to reach an understanding? Try a variation by Joana Starnes – she adeptly invents new thoughtful premises and scenarios for our dear couple. With The Falmouth Connection, I especially enjoyed the visit to Cornwall and new characters she introduced. These new characters were well-drawn and interesting, and the scenery around Cornwall so vividly and breathtakingly described.

If I was in the mood to be persnickety, (which I know I can be sometimes) I might say that seeing more about the smugglers and their activities would have been interesting. This sinister gang of nefarious individuals were a great deal overshadowed by Darcy’s emotional upheaval and internal struggles. But in truth, I really have no cause to repine... I think Ms. Starnes employed her page time much better. ;)

Brooding, fervent, persevering, frustrated, protective, and brave – Ms. Starnes’s depiction of Darcy in this novel is everything that is admirable and worthy, proving that Mr. Darcy is indeed the penultimate romantic hero! But readers must be warned to prepare their hearts before they read this novel because not only does Darcy steal tempting kisses in the night, but he also valiantly and capably brandishes a sword to safeguard his beloved Elizabeth... \*faints away in a swoon\* <3

I can hardly wait to see what Joana Starnes does with Mr. Darcy next! Like Ms. Starnes’s previous Pride and Prejudice variations, The Falmouth Connection is exquisitely and expressively written, and most certainly not to be missed!

---

## **Sophia says**

### **Audiobook Review**

Timely advice, a trip into Cornwall, a rival, secret goings on, and unrequited love lead to a sweet romantic adventure in this Pride & Prejudice variation tale.

I had a good time with this story from first to last. It engaged all my emotions it seemed. I was amused by a series of blunders and mishaps, saddened by the unrequited love and heartbreak moments, and sighed with pleasure over the romantic scenes. The hero, Darcy, really blunders and struggles in the beginning. He's so cocksure and arrogant. I enjoyed how the author showed his flaws and strengths and gave him some good

growth moments. The heroine, Elizabeth, has her own personal epiphany, too. Seeing them work through so much really had me rooting for them. The rival part was an interesting development. I think how this played out involved my only niggle about the story.

I enjoyed the bit of intrigue and adventure next to the romance part which suited the Cornwall setting where things are not what they seem. The big climax was built up to and worth it coming back to back with the turning point in the romance and other story threads. The denouement came down slowly which was good so things could be settled and understood. I was startled by a few of the minor characters' story lines, but not in a bad way. Elizabeth's little sister Lydia was a surprise. There is an interesting finish for her that I'm still not sure how I feel about it because it was a twist that I didn't see coming.

I experienced The Falmouth Connection in the audio format. Stevie Zimmerman was a fantastic match for this story. She caught the tone, pace, and the characters so well. The dialogue between characters was particularly well done.

All in all, this variation of a classic took things on a fun romantic suspense style adventure. I think those with some familiarity of Jane Austen's Pride & Prejudice will get the most out of the story since it assumes the reader knows a bit of what came before the beginning of this story. I enjoy each new outing with the author's works and will definitely be going back for more. I would recommend this to sweet historical romance fans and/or those who enjoy classical story retellings.

---

### **Beau North says**

Ms. Starnes continues to astonish with her beautifully detailed anguish. "Poison. Poison. Every thought was poison." Ripped me to pieces. A fun spin on an old tale, with gothic overtones and an adventurous spirit. . Plenty of excellent twists and turns, the newer characters did not feel forced or shoehorned in as original characters sometimes do. A most satisfying conclusion (and a surprising one for the character who is ever my favorite). I thoroughly enjoyed this book.

---

### **Mary says**

Audiobook-narrated by Stevie Zimmerman.

Dear Reader,

This was simply a wonderful rendition of this story, narrated by the multi talented Stevie Zimmerman.

We are privy to the inner voice of a selfishly self assured and arrogant Darcy, condescendingly attempting to gain a moment with Ms Bennet to hear the affirmative fait accompli she'll undoubtedly respond with, on hearing his proposal.

Lizzy, preoccupied with her departure and journey to Cornwall, is unable to properly sketch his character, such varying sides of his personality does he display.

But, all is not as it seems in the beautiful Cornish setting and a turbulence of minds, emotions and expectations play out to an audience of traitors, fiends and ne'er do wells!!

Peppered both with angst and heart stoppingly romantic interludes, this Cornish adventure-filled tale is one that must be read and listened to, in order to fully appreciate the depths of raw emotion, grief, fear, tension, heartache and yes, love!

A fantastic story in its own right, Stevie's narration transforms it to a higher plain. Listening to her transition from the deep, somber, earnest and quite often desperate tones of Mr Darcy, to the delightful light and oft times serious, self questioning Lizzy, from the airy and quite insightful Lydia to the solemn Lord Trevelyan, one would be forgiven for thinking a number of people voiced these wonderful characters instead of the distinctive and remarkable Stevie Zimmerman.

Well done to both Joana and Stevie for such a satisfying and enjoyable audiobook experience! ??

I was lucky enough to win this audiobook on Janet's blog Moreagreeablyengaged. Thank you for such a special prize!

\*\*\*\*\*

Paperback edition.

I have read a wealth of pride & prejudice variations over the last 6 months but this book is definitely one of the BEST !!

Starnes shows us the vulnerable Darcy - from seeing him being overly confident of being accepted by Lizzy to the crushing realisation that all his previous hopes and dreams have been for nought. We witness his love, desire and arrogance mirrored against his utter heartbreak when he realises that she just doesn't love him. This being a p&p variation, we do get our HEA but we must wait for Starnes to weave her tale of anguish and uncertainty.

This book is compulsive reading - a fantastic page turner. It pulls at the heart strings and makes the reader sigh and alternatively shout "oh no!" in parts. A beautifully written book, I highly recommend it.

---

### **Sheila Majczan says**

July 2017: I won an audible version of this favorite book and listened to it while at times reading along on my borrowed KU copy. I did note that there are revisions which in no way changed my loving everything about this book. The garden scene remains one of my favorite reads out of many books and I have read of many others agreeing with that opinion.

I have to say that this is a wonderful book, I have read the author's other books and while I enjoyed them, do believe that this one is her best. The prose is true to Jane Austen's time, the descriptions, both of setting and of points of views are so enthralling one wants to take one's time to read every word, to NOT rush nor skim over the pages in an effort to reach the end.

I don't want to type any spoilers but, as the book description states, this is a variation that picks up at Rosings & Hunsford and varies in that Darcy does reveal to Col. Fitzwilliam his intentions towards Elizabeth. As we proceed Darcy, as usual, gets some advice from Col. Fitzwilliam but that self-same person giving out the advice is also the one to apply a hatchet job to Darcy's plans unknowingly!

Providing transportation in his carriage for Elizabeth to meet up with her family on their way to Falmouth where the Bennets are to finally meet a long lost aunt of Mrs. Bennet's, Darcy finds time and again his attempts to propose are stifled by man, by weather, by circumstances and then by his learning of her true feelings during the journey and shortly after he follows them to that locale.

Joana Starnes' language and descriptions of Darcy's tangled and frustrated thought processes are captivating. I found myself with tears in my eyes with the bittersweet events, with the turns of discovery, with the fatal stab in his heart's emotions. And then Elizabeth has some discoveries of her own to make and not from a letter written after a refused proposal. I do not have a Face Book account so didn't get to see the photos of Cornwall posted there, which Dave mentioned, but my imagination did draw some vivid pictures from the words herein.

I highly recommend this book. An interview with the author along with a review posted on Austenesque Reviews made it clear that this is a book not to be missed by JAFF readers. Author Joy Dawn King lent this to me...so graciously!

---

### **Rita Deodato says**

<https://frompemberleytomilton.wordpress.com/2018/07/10/the-falmouth-connection-by-joana-starnes/>

The Falmouth Connection is a breath-taking love story that begins with Darcy's visit to the Hunsford Parsonage a few days before he intends to propose to Elizabeth.

During this visit, Mr. Darcy discovers Elizabeth is to leave Kent the next day to join her family in Cornwall, and visit a mysterious great aunt. He offers to assist Elizabeth in her travel, and Col. Fitzwilliam, finding this strange, is able to get Darcy to admit he intends to ask for Miss Elizabeth's hand. It is during this confession that Col. Fitzwilliam discovers how Darcy could ruin everything if he were to propose with his current mind set, and tries to make him see how Elizabeth would react to such a proposal. I liked this turn of events as it prevented Mr. Darcy from ruining his proposal without changing him in essentials.

Elizabeth agrees to travel with Mr. Darcy and Col. Fitzwilliam and during the carriage ride she is able to see, for the first time, multitude facets of Mr. Darcy, which is something I always find delightful. I love to read a book that allows me to understand how, why and when Elizabeth started to change her mind about Mr. Darcy. For me, as a reader, it is important to know why she loves him or to see her fall in love with him, and that is something we encounter in The Falmouth Connection.

After their voyage, they arrive at Basingstoke to meet with the Bennet family, and Elizabeth finally realizes Mr. Darcy loves her and will most likely propose to her. I must tell you that this scene is one of the best moments I have ever read! I loved every single moment of it; from thinking exactly what Mrs. Starnes wrote, to laughing out loud at the third "good heavens"!

Seeing Elizabeth relive every moment she shared with Mr. Darcy in a different perspective, and seeing her realize everything that was right in front of her eyes all along, was marvellous. I also loved the chemistry and intimacy of their last scene at the inn in Basingstoke, it is one of those I will hardly forget.

But of course it is too soon for our beloved characters to find their HEA and Elizabeth leaves to Falmouth. Mr. Darcy is so passionately in love with her that he decides to follow her to Cornwall, and it is in this part

of the country that we will find romance, broken hearts, a rival for Mr. Darcy, but also adventure, suspense and mystery.

Mrs. Starnes takes this plot into a whole different stage and creates an innovative different story that completely deviates from the original but that keeps the characters as truthful to themselves as Jane Austen wrote them. The book is chaste and clean but overly romantic and emotional with a depth that can only be found in Mrs. Starnes books.

The Falmouth Connection is very focused in Darcy and Elizabeth which is also something I truly love in a book, but some of the other characters were exceptionally written as well.

I don't think I have enjoyed a scene with Mrs. Bennett so much as the one Joana Starnes wrote on the day Mr. Darcy paid his first visit. I loved reading everything about it. Mrs. Bennett's reaction to the first unexpected visit was fun to read, but adding the second unexpected visit was brilliant. In this passage we will see Mrs. Bennet's perspective, and being in her head and seeing the way she constructed her thoughts on the eligibility of her daughters, to see how she contrived the idea that it was Lizzy that would suit Mr. Darcy, and to see that she would aid in their reconcile was absolutely wonderful.

The way this character was described in this scene made me love her for everything that she was, and to have her prattle knowing she was doing so out of an inability to entertain a gentleman such as Mr. Darcy, was magnificent.

The scenes between Darcy and Elizabeth are electrical. Joana Starnes surely knows how to transmit their chemistry into the pages of her novels, and this was no exception. Between the encounter in Landennis, the meetings at the cove and the balls, I wouldn't know how to choose my favourite moment. In fact, this review was one of the hardest I have had to write because there were too many things I wanted to talk about, and I ended up cutting many paragraphs because the review was getting too long.

I'm looking forward to read Mrs. Starnes next book as I am certain it will be just as good. Joana Starnes is, in my opinion, one of those writers with an innate talent who just cannot get it wrong, her books are always a turmoil of emotions and a pleasure to read, with something that is definitely an added value: a quality writing that is hard to see nowadays.

The Falmouth Connection did not disappoint and I recommend it to any reader looking for a quality book to read.

---

## Ceri says

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

I was so excited to see that there was a new book by one of my favourite Austenesque authors, Joana Starnes. I've read and thoroughly enjoyed two of her books this year, 'The Subsequent Proposal' and 'The Second Chance', both of which mix characters from other Austen books in with our favourites from 'Pride & Prejudice', but 'The Falmouth Connection' is a variation featuring only characters from 'Pride & Prejudice'.

What if... Elizabeth was called away from Hunsford before Darcy could propose? That is what happens here,

an estranged relative of Mrs Bennet has summoned the whole Bennet family to her estate in Falmouth. Darcy is determined to propose and desperate to get a chance to do so before Elizabeth leaves. Elizabeth has to meet her family at Basingstoke, some 80 miles or so from Kent, which has caused the Collinses a dilemma, as they don't want to send her unescorted. When Colonel Fitzwilliam offers to solve the problem by escorting her en route to returning to his duties in Portsmouth, chaperoned by a maid, his cousin quickly speaks up, and offers to take them both, knowing that this unprecedented behaviour will require some explanation to the Colonel.

Colonel Fitzwilliam is supportive of Darcy's choice of future wife, but unimpressed by his arrogance and utterly aghast at the thought that he is planning to make Miss Bennet aware of his condescension in overlooking her family being so far beneath him:

*"Go and propose to her by listing all her failings and see what good it does you! Do not imagine though that I will spare you the 'I told you so'!"*

During the journey, Darcy is unable to find an opportunity to speak privately to Elizabeth, but unfortunately the Colonel does, and, as per his role in 'Pride & Prejudice', while trying to further his cousin's suit, instead he manages to drop him right in it instead! The gentlemen deliver Elizabeth to her family and leave. We see a very perceptive side to Lydia here, who, in the space of less than 24 hours manages to make Mr Darcy aware of his blunder in splitting up Bingley and Jane and also channels her mother's matchmaking intuition and instantly sees something that Lizzy has been blind to:

*"Oh Lizzy, just think – and he said you were not handsome enough to tempt him. Oh, what a laugh! Who would have thought it? Mr Darcy!"*

*"Hush, Lydia!" this time Elizabeth and Jane urged, both at once, and Jane stared at her sister in concern, as Elizabeth's mouth literally fell open.*

Unable to propose, and slowly coming to the realisation that that the lady he loves might not feel any affection towards him and that she might also be extremely angry with him, Darcy decides that he needs to set things right for Bingley as soon as possible, and moreover, that he needs to head for Falmouth, to see what he can do to recover the situation. There, after a delay in discovering the exact location of the Bennets, he discovers three problems. Firstly, he has a rival for Elizabeth's affections, his nemesis Wickham is working as a steward at a neighbouring estate, and something very fishy is going on.

This was quite different from Joana Starnes' previous books but I was absolutely riveted by it. Darcy's slow realisation of the hash he'd made of things was almost painful. Since Darcy doesn't make his proposal rudely, and knowing and pitying him for his unreciprocated feelings rather than being taken by surprise means that the 'Hunsford' moment wasn't full of vitriol and indignation as in canon, but just utterly heartrending. I thought the emotion in this story was fantastic, Darcy's despair, Elizabeth's anger and later her sadness for the pain she's had to cause, and lots of romance. The story was certainly not lacking in action, and we even got a swordfight! There were also some fisticuffs, which were unfortunately off page, as it involved a character I would love to see being a bit more active! On the downside, I felt that some of the romantic feelings did evolve a bit too quickly, which to be fair, is something that is actually addressed in the book. I would have liked part of the story to take place over a few days rather than a single night so that the feelings could develop at a slightly slower rate. I also wasn't convinced by one of the pairings without seeing much of the couple together.

One of the things that I've noted before in Ms Starnes' books is that she gives Mrs Bennet some sympathetic treatment – often in JAFF Mrs Bennet is portrayed pretty harshly, which I think is a shame, as I think Austen

views her affectionately. Here, Mrs Bennet doesn't play much of a role, but she warms markedly to Darcy when she sniffs a potential suitor in him. This reversal of attitude from 'Pride & Prejudice' really tickled me:

*"Well! I trust you know that you are always welcome at Landennis, Mr Darcy," she offered warmly, "and at Longbourn of course, when we return to Hertfordshire, though I have no notion how soon that would be." She fanned herself, then pursed her lips and added, pointedly, looking straight over Bingley's shoulder: "And I suppose you can bring your friends, if you so wish..."*

We saw some character development of two characters in need of it too, Mr Bennet, who realises he needs to question his parenting, and I was also pleased to see Lydia being given a chance to redeem herself, as the life she had committed to in 'Pride & Prejudice' was not likely to lead to much happiness or respectability. I would definitely recommend reading this book; there is action, intrigue, despair, joy, and so much romance. I found it thoroughly enjoyable, and I'd rate it as a 5 star read.

*\*I received an ARC of this book from the author for my honest review.*

---

### **Claudine DiMuzio / Just Jane 1813 says**

#### **Another fabulous P&P variation!!!**

First things first... JAFF lovers can't go wrong reading a book by Joana Starnes. Now that I have finished her fourth, and final book, for now, I can confidently write that her work belongs to a class of well-written, beautifully crafted stories that are humorous, engaging and ever so romantic!! This is top-tier JAFF!!!

Secondly, the way she twists and turns ODC's fates in a book of pretty substantial length, is nothing short of genius. The dialogue, the misunderstandings, the unique plots and the great settings in England selected for her stories, all contribute to the wonderful stories she weaves together.

Lastly, the characters in her books stay so true to canon. From one book to another, her P&P characters feel true to Austen's intent. Lydia in this book is a bit of a redeemed character, but it's done gradually and with great outcomes. Her keen and bold assertions initially help Elizabeth realize Darcy's love and esteem for her, even though these feelings are shown, of course, in true Darcy fashion. The scene at the inn, where Lydia describes what a man in love acts like will be a long-time favorite of mine.

Now that I have a rainy Sunday ahead of me, I dread not having another Starnes JAFF title to have and to hold throughout this day... But when her new book comes out this fall, I will download it on my Kindle the minute it's published!

---

### **Carol Perrin says**

#### **The Falmouth Connection**

Saved by his instincts and his overwhelming desire to protect Miss Elizabeth Bennet, Darcy was saved from a miserable life without Elizabeth in his. The unfortunate Meryton Assembly and Bingley's removal from

Netherfield still take place, but Darcy's discussion with his cousin prevents the infamous Hunsford proposal. Called from Kent to meet her family in Basingstoke, Elizabeth is taken by coach by Darcy, Fitzwilliam, and her maid, Sarah. While Darcy takes Fitzwilliam to Portsmouth for duty, he failed to get each direction in Falmouth, Cornwall. Armed with nothing more than the great-aunt's name, Mrs. Pencarrow, Darcy tries to find Elizabeth. Locating her weeks after arriving in Falmouth, Darcy is unprepared for the cold reception at Lindennis estate. Besides, a rival, Lord Trevellyan, seems to have won Elizabeth's regards. Unfortunately, he doesn't know that Fitzwilliam shared Darcy's efforts to separate Bingley from Jane so her refusal, while not quite as harsh as the Hunsford refusal in Austen's beloved *Pride and Prejudice*, hurt Darcy none the less. Darcy cannot seem to withdraw especially after hearing a rather strange conversation between Trevellyan and his men. By the time of Trevellyan's ball, Bingley has arrived in Falmouth. Neither Elizabeth nor Jane are happy to see them, but when Jane and Elizabeth disappear from the ball, along with the host, the two love struck heroes move off to protect them at Lindennis. With the mystery and intrigue around Lord Trevellyan's clandestine disappearance from his own ball, Darcy's intuition pays off, he protects Elizabeth, and her feelings take a turn for the better. The morning after finds more than one HEA occurring within the Bennet household. Caroline Bingley is not too happy to find out that the Bennet sisters are an heiress, and after inviting herself to Falmouth, returns home with her tail between her legs bemoaning the existence of the Bennet family. Well written story, and Joana's Darcy was exasperating and loveable at the same time. As a reader, one really felt his pain of hurt and rejection.

---

### **J. W. Garrett says**

Dark, sinister, blood curdling scream in the night 4.5 stars.

This was a roller-coaster from beginning to end. Darcy experienced every emotion known to man. From total exhilaration, when he thought Elizabeth returned his love, to abject despair when he realized she didn't. My heart was broken along with his as he walked away from Elizabeth thinking it was for the last time. At one point I had to put the book down because I needed a respite from the grief and despair.

This JAFF was so different in tone and feel that I didn't want to put it down; however, I had to eat and sleep. Joana Starnes knows how to wring out the very last emotion you have in your arsenal and then she digs deeper still.

The financial security of the Bennet family took a sudden change for the better from a distant relative on Mrs. Bennet's side of the family. Mrs. Pencarrow was her mother's sister and therefore, her aunt. She being a wealthy widow with no children, informed Mr. and Mrs. Bennet that she had bestowed on each of their daughters a dowry substantial enough to secure their futures. She then informed them that her estate was being left to Elizabeth. Her reasons were revealed in a back story that she told only to Elizabeth. Her wealth was explained as Starnes introduced historical facts relating to mining and industry and the financial benefits of an earlier time.

Financial security for their daughters calmed a nervous Mrs. Bennet immensely as she thought of future suitors. And it calmed Mr. Bennet as he realized it would NOT be available to Mr. Collins as part of the entail. He then took a long hard look at his life and how he had neglected his family.

There was a dark and sinister thread that ran throughout this story. You knew something was coming and you didn't know from what direction it would spring forth. When Wickham arrived you knew dark and dangerous deeds would be the result of his presence. I loved the duel and how it came about. Starnes was a

master at building tension in the story, whether sinister, sexual, emotional or joyful. I was a wreck as I read through the tension.

Having said that...I think the story began to fall apart as it built toward the climax. It became confusing and was a bit anticlimactic as the story unfolded. There were so many threads running at the same time that it felt rushed and didn't fully develop as the climax approached.

I realize the story was the POV of ODC. Since a lot of the climax happened off sight...the only way we could know what happened was a simple retelling. I suppose it had to be that way. ODC was not present to see the action, so couldn't give their perspective. To be in anyone else's head would have exposed too much before the final reveal. Starnes only told us what we needed to know at that time. Brilliant!

Lord Trevellyan was an enigma. I could not decide whether to like or dislike him. There was something about him that gave me pause and I had a dreadful feeling about him. Starnes worked such a twist with him and those around him that I kept waiting for the ax to fall at any moment. Sometimes things are simply what they seem. The secret of the cove was interesting as he told our characters about the decades of smugglers, pirates, and thieves that had haunted the area.

Caroline gave a short appearance as she tramped all the way to Cornwall to cause trouble. Her devious plans to separate Bingley from Jane and her attempts to snare Darcy all came to a crashing head. It was a hoot.

Colonel Fitzwilliam was a surprise; I didn't see his HEA coming at all, even though Starnes gave us clues [watch those clues]. It happened rather quickly and I was so stunned. Who knew that was even a possibility? I liked how it ended. I think Starnes did an excellent job with what she chose for him.

Everyone's HEA was explained in the last several chapters and was better than an epilogue.

---

### **Eliza Baum says**

This is my second Joana Starnes book (the first being Mr Bennet's Dutiful Daughter), and I was once again impressed by the sheer quality of the writing. The way she paints Darcy's emotional turmoil makes it beautiful, in spite of its sadness. I loved how you could follow the gradual change from his arrogant confidence to that rock bottom place he faces later. Elizabeth was also nicely portrayed, but hers simply wasn't as poignant.

My one complaint is that Elizabeth's change of heart felt very quick. I realize that quite a bit of time passed between their start in Kent and the end, but a large portion of that time was spent (view spoiler)

However, I can easily forgive that, because the rest of the story was fabulous. Also, I adore a good hurt/comfort plot, so having Elizabeth (view spoiler) is right up my alley. There wasn't *quite* enough substance to the Wickham plotline in general, but I found I didn't care.

Oh. I did find the Lydia(view spoiler) a little silly, but it wasn't enough to detract from my enjoyment.

And, as always, Stevie Zimmerman is a fabulous narrator. She's the reason I chose to download this book on

audible next.

---