



The Exploits & Adventures of Miss Alethea Darcy

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The Exploits & Adventures of Miss Alethea Darcy takes readers back into the imagined family of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy. Their musical daughter Alethea makes a disastrous marriage to a man whose charming manners conceal an unpleasant nature. Flinging caution to the winds, she flees her marital home, masquerading as a gentleman, and accompanied only by her redoubtable maid, Figgins, she sets off for Venice to take refuge with her sister Camilla. But events -- always dramatic and sometimes dangerous -- conspire to thwart her plans. Before she can meet up with Camilla, chance and her love of music lead her into the world of Italian opera, while her encounter with the aloof and difficult Titus Manningtree, in Italy to pursue a lost Titian painting, is to change her life -- although fate has several more tricks to play before she can find happiness.

With wit, aplomb, and delectable style, Elizabeth Aston once again re-creates the world of Jane Austen, populating her novel with captivating characters firmly rooted in Austen's traditions but distinctly her own, resulting in another delightful comedy of manners, morals, and marriage.

The Exploits & Adventures of Miss Alethea Darcy Details

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Stacey says

I think I'd give this another 2 1/2 stars. There are about 1,000 characters in this book, but it kept me reading. I like this daughter but again feel like The Darcy's would never have married her off to that guy - Darcy simply would have done more research when it comes to husbands for his daughters!

Bridget says

A friend gave me this book, and I figured it would be an OK read. It was, but just *barely* OK, in my opinion. The main character is Alethea Darcy Napier, one of the daughters of Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. She has made an unfortunate marriage, as a result of being on the rebound from a relationship where her intended married another woman. Her husband, who is much older, and named Norris Napier, won her with his admiration of her musical talents. But it turns out that he is a terrible person, wanting to control every aspect of her life, and treating her very poorly.

As the book opens, Alethea and her maid Figgins are sneaking out of the estate house dressed as men to flee to Venice, where Alethea hopes to stay with her husband Camilla and her husband, who she feels will understand her predicament and help her. During the course of the book, they end up traveling with a group of other English people, one of whom immediately recognizes Alethea and is curious about why she is traveling dressed as a man.

I will admit that even though I wasn't crazy about this book, I read it to see what would happen. Overall, it was pretty predictable and the characters did/said/acted the way you would expect. I found it hard to believe that a girl/woman like Alethea would be the daughter of Lizzie and Mr. Darcy, because it just didn't seem to fit, as far as I am concerned. True, it brings into the limelight the position of women in the society of the time, and the limitations to their behavior and personal power, but that didn't work for me to move the story along.

The character of Norris Napier seemed to be simply a way to get to a story. (Besides, who the **** would marry someone with that name???) We never really get an idea of him, other than as an ogre. And the character that becomes involved with Alethea, Mr. Titus Manningtree, is so transparent, it isn't hard to guess what might happen.

I've read worse books, but this one just wasn't worth the effort in the end.

Vicki says

Not sure this was my favorite of the Elizabeth Aston books. The premise is a little more fantastical. Alethea is a very talented musician stuck in a horrible marriage to a man who abuses her. She tries to get escape to 2 of her sisters, who brush her off and tell her to go back to her husband. She dresses up as a young man and tried to flee to another sister in Italy. All the while trying to stay a step ahead of her evil husband. Eventually

it all turns out just fine, of course, but usually I enjoy the journey more than I did with this book. I think the dialogue is what's missing.

Eileen says

This book is so bad it's great. I mean, the cast of characters is enormous. The location is constantly changing. The author isn't held back by the whole "pride and prejudice" thing, misnaming Mr. Darcy's sister "georgina" when clearly, it's georgiana. Alethea is a ridiculous character and the time spent on the secondary "servant" characters is out-of-character for an Austen tribute (as Austen put servants in place to indicate a character's wealth but never gave them a meaningful role in the plot) and well, frankly, silly. With names like "figgins" and "bootle" one imagines she named her characters by peering into her pantry and altering the letters a bit. I suppose I should just be glad that we didn't end up with a "salla" or "Sm. Mesuringcup" ... However, this book provided for hours of amusement while my friends and I traveled in Italy. If you want a book that combines every possible plot line available in any variety of terrible romance novels (duels! art theft! a dashing hero who just happens to have a yacht!) and includes a few new ones (cross dressing! lecherous gay characters!), this is truly the story to pick up.

Robin says

Now that I've read three of these books I am detecting a pattern. They are very much written to a template. The Darcys seem to be plagued with women who run amok of societal convention and ruin themselves only to finally meet a man who sees beyond their disgrace and his own prejudices to love them and marry them. Alethea Darcy is a strong character and intriguing, but the final chapters seem to be written in shorthand the transitions in the relationships are so abrupt and the ending rushed.

I enjoy the period and the characters, but I can't decide if Austen would laugh or cry.

Tracy says

I enjoyed this novel much more than Aston's first novel: Mr. Darcy's Daughters. Aston toned down the sexuality in her writing and focused more on the story at hand. She must have reviewed Pride and Prejudice before attempting this novel because she stayed truer to Austen's style of writing. It reads like historical fiction, but the Austen characters still make their appearance.

Aston's theme in this book is "it's a small world." Characters cannot help but run into each other again and again, propelling the story along. I couldn't wait to see where the story would go next, and I had a difficult time putting this novel down. One skill Aston has picked up since writing her last novel is the talent of holding things back. She does not give us the story all at once, like in her last novel, but we are given it little by little. All is revealed eventually, with surprises no one could guess at. My only complaint is that Mr. and Mrs. Fitzwilliam Darcy give the impression of neglectful parents. They have yet to make an appearance in either of these novels.

Nikki says

Not sure if i enjoyed this book as much. It was good - but the writing was not so Jane Austen for me. A bit to much of how people act in modern day. Not terrible though..i will continue with the series.

In this delightful new chapter in the story of the Darcy clan, taken up by Ashton (Mr. Darcy's Daughters) where Austen left off, the youngest daughter of Elizabeth Bennett and Mr. Darcy is in a pickle. Having married in haste, Alethea is now repenting bitterly, languishing under the unspeakable treatment of her horrid husband, Norris Napier. She escapes in the company of her intrepid maid, Figgins, and dressed as young men, they hale off to Europe to find Alethea's favorite and most sympathetic sister, Camilla. On the way, unbeknownst to them, they are found out by Mr. Titus Manningtree, who's off to Europe to find a Titian painting of his father's that has gone astray. Appalled by Alethea's apparent total disregard for her position and the requirements of polite society, Titus is nonetheless impressed by her courage and pluck. At first out of duty and then out of interest, he comes to her aid time and again, seeing her safe back to England. Once there, however, it is discovered that her husband was murdered, and she comes under suspicion.

Alice says

Ce n'est un secret pour personne que ma lecture des Filles de Mr Darcy, le premier tome, ne m'avait pas vraiment convaincue. Mais je me suis dit qu'une fois les filles les plus sottes mariées, j'aurais plus de plaisir à découvrir la suite, et je ne m'étais pas trompée!

Une fois encore, il n'y a pas grand chose d'austenien si ce n'est le nom de Darcy: ni l'écriture, ni les sujets évoqués n'ont le moindre rapport avec ce que l'on pourrait lire dans Orgueil et Préjugés ou Emma. Il est donc d'autant plus facile d'occulter ce côté-ci et de s'intéresser tout simplement aux aventures palpitantes de cette jeune femme qui vient de s'enfuir de chez elle.

Et on ne s'ennuie pas une seconde: on traverse l'Europe en découvrant les Alpes, Venise ou encore le Portugal, on y parle de musique et de tableaux, on assiste à un duel et même à un meurtre. Et pendant tout ce temps, on s'attache à Alethea, on l'admire pour son courage et on a hâte de découvrir ce que le destin lui réserve encore.

J'ai également apprécié les autres personnages tels que Titus et Lady Hermione, qui sont bien plus agréables et mieux développés que ceux rencontrés lors du premier opus. D'ailleurs, le fait que nous suivions l'histoire selon deux points de vue différents est non seulement appréciable mais nous permet d'approfondir notre connaissance de la psychologie des protagonistes.

Alors bien sûr, certains sujets me gênent toujours un peu parce que ce n'est pas ce que l'on recherche généralement en lisant une histoire se déroulant à cette époque, bien sûr certains dénouements sont un peu faciles et bien sûr, l'histoire d'amour est cousue de fil blanc mais en refermant ce livre j'ai l'impression que je viens moi-même d'effectuer un voyage des plus intéressants.

En résumé, lorsqu'Elizabeth Aston laisse Jane Austen en paix, cela lui réussit bien mieux et soulage nos petits coeurs darciens!

Sharee says

Once again, I couldn't put this book down. I just love these novels despite the fact that they are extremely predictable and pretty similar to each other. What can I say, I love a happy ending.

Aubrey says

This book will keep you laughing for sure! My favorite line is "His soul was in his eyes as he smiled down at her; it wasn't a triumphant nor a knowing smile, but a smile that sprang to his lips as he read what was in her heart" (351). The pre-teen age group will eat it up, but as for the rest of us...

Sheila Majczan says

I read this long ago just after it was published, in paperback, and have been meaning to reread in order to post an honest review but this will have to do for now.

Jill Hill says

Like it's predecessor, "Mr. Darcy's Daughters", this is a somewhat entertaining read but it's no Austen, so don't go in comparing them. I don't seem to remember Jane Austen venturing into topics like flagellation, balls (and I don't mean the dancing kind), and cross-dressing heroines having to fend off the unwanted advances of lecherous, makeup-wearing homosexuals.

Kate says

Alethea Darcy flees an abusive marriage by cross-dressing and heads towards Venice to get help from her favorite sister. Many things happen.

This is very melodramatic. I found myself missing the intense research of romance novelists like Julia Quinn. I wished for Alethea to act like an abuse survivor, I wished for fewer modern turns of phrase.

Jeneale says

I have read all of the books in Aston's series, and this was my favorite. All of them were fun reads, but they followed much the same formula as Pride and Prejudice: girl meets boy from different life station, a lot of prejudice between them, they get over it and fall in love. This particular novel, though, has a little different

formula and feel. It's interesting to see Aston working with the language of Jane Austen. She does ok, but then again, there is no other Jane Austen!

Susannah says

I was a lot more forgiving of this book than Mr. Darcy's Daughters- probably because my expectations weren't as high. I still didn't love the fact that Alethea was being written as a Darcy Daughter (again, Elizabeth and Darcy are untouchable up on their pedestal), but once I ignored that fact, I was able to rather enjoy this book. It is quite a silly adventure. But I found myself genuinely interested in Alethea's fate, and by the end the book compelled me forward and I couldn't put it down. It was a refreshing surprise after having read Mr. Darcy's Daughters (although, it does help to have read the first one in order to get the complete story of Alethea.)
