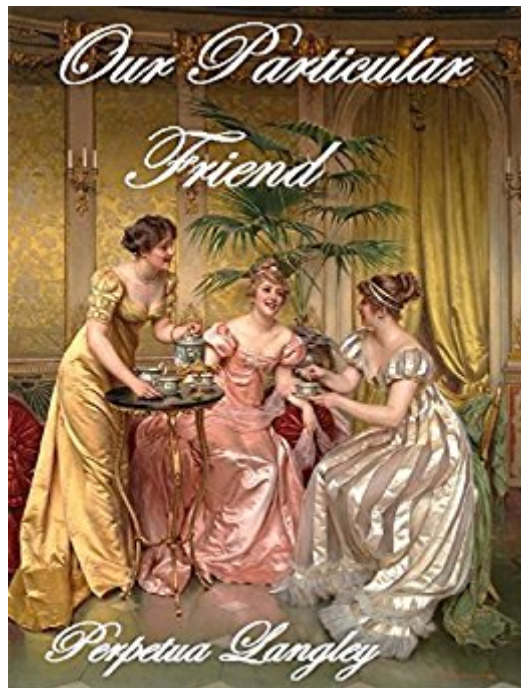




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Our Particular Friend - A Pride And Prejudice Variation (The Sweet Regency Romance Series Book 11)



Synopsis

Netherfield has finally been let and all in the environs of Meryton are gripped in endless speculation concerning the new arrivals. Elizabeth Bennet counts herself as one among them, the neighborhood has been dull of late. According to Meryton's most reliable source of gossip, the house will soon contain a certain Miss Caroline Bingley, her particular friend Marya Hoppenstack, their companion Mrs. Younge, Mr. Charles Bingley, Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy and Mr. Darcy's distant relation from Scotland, Mr. Hamish Mackay. At Mr. Bingley's urging, he and his friends appear at the Meryton assembly and the party are welcomed by all. All, excepting Elizabeth Bennet, who has managed to insult Mr. Darcy before he has even fully got himself inside the doors. She would have worked to appear more contrite over the mishap if Mr. Darcy had not seemed to glory in repeatedly pointing it out to her. As it was, the man made it impossible to accept defeat gracefully. After this ill-omened start, how on earth could anything promising begin? Amidst Elizabeth's mortification, Mr. Mackay is found to be a source of strange tales from Scotland, Miss Hoppenstack is not all she claims to be, Mr. Collins discovers his esteemed father was mistaken about a few things, Mary proves herself to be more than a musician and reciter of facts, Charlotte finds success without having to say a word, Lydia has a revelation, Wickham ensnares himself in a web of lies, Lady Catherine is subdued by one clever Bennet while she seeks to subdue another, and most importantly, Mr. Darcy has a plan.

#11 in The Sweet Regency Romance Series

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Customer Reviews

I love this author! She is creative and generally shows Darcy and Elizabeth in interesting lights. I didn't care for this version of Elizabeth. She was too harsh and impulsive in her speech. Her caring attitude towards her sisterly her from being a shrew. After being psychologically abused by his father, Darcy had a difficult time dealing with Elizabeth. Eventually, he was able to unwind. Wickham didn't elope with Lydia, but he elope with another character. All of the Bennet sisters married well.

I've had a smile on my face most of the way through this. Elizabeth's "cleverness" gets her into trouble repeatedly. She always recognizes this after the fact and repents, so I don't see her as the shrew that other reviewers have. Mary is astonishing. Lydia is saved from herself by a fortunate accident. Wickham meets a very appropriate fate. Even the throwaway remarks are funny. For example: Mrs. Bennet doesn't approve of anybody but herself taking to their bed. Or:

“Silly girls,” Mrs. Bennet said, rearranging a pillow under her head. “If one is sleepy, one had best sleep, not go traipsing around the garden.”

4.5 rounded up to 5 stars This author's definitely got the goods. She puts together a story where all the parts fit together like a jigsaw puzzle. Not like a mystery, but like a whole bunch of pieces that look like a jumble at first until the pieces all snap together and make one big cohesive picture. What makes me love her even more is the lovely sense of the ridiculous she always manages to bring into these books. There's enough Pride and Prejudice to satisfy the JAFF-lover in me, but there's enough whack-a-doodle going on to make me wonder what on earth will happen next. And she's done it again here. Mr. Mackay, the tale-spinning Scottish companion to Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy, is an absolute hoot. I love him. I especially love the wild tales he weaves. Mr. Darcy might tune them out, but I laughed-- out loud-- at every one. Mackay's elaborate stories have nothing to do with anything... except to misdirect his friends and the reader about his true character. We also have Miss Hoppenstack, a schemer to rival Mr. Wickham. In addition, she is to Caroline Bingley what Mr. Collins is to Lady Catherine deBourgh, and that is a shameless bootlicker. Caroline, of course, basks in the glow of all this false flattery and has never bothered to check on Miss Hoppenstack's

background. Nor has Caroline properly vetted Mrs. Younge, who is her paid companion. (Mrs. Younge has no history with Georgiana, and there's no Ramsgate in the backstory here.) When Mr. Collins comes a-calling at Longbourn, an interesting competition arises. Before he even arrives, Lydia decides to set her cap for him. She must always be the center of attention and believes Wickham is in love with her, too. Her interest in Mr. Collins is in order to be the first sister married, then run the household after her father dies and get to boss her older sisters. Since anything Lydia wants, Kitty automatically wants, the competition is on. Crazy stuff here! The Bingleys (including Caroline's friend Miss Hoppenstack and companion Mrs. Younge), Mr. Darcy and Mr. Mackay come to Netherfield, which sets the whole Meryton neighborhood agog. Unfortunately, gossip swaps the identities of Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley. At the Meryton assembly, Jane Bennet and Mr. Bingley meet and immediately connect. Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy also meet and immediately get off on the wrong foot. It's not because of Mr. Darcy this time. He is prone to being silent and solemn, but Elizabeth in this story is a real loose canon. I see more of her mother's influence on her than usual; Elizabeth often speaks before she thinks. Elizabeth has more wit and is more intelligent than Mrs. B, but she's far less tactful than we're used to. It's a brave plot choice since the author dances on the edge of making Elizabeth unlikable, and I expect some may not like her at all. I get it. The girl's got foot-in-mouth disease. Lots of 20-year-olds have it. Consequently, Elizabeth is the one commenting about the man she believes is Mr. Darcy (who is actually Mr. Bingley), which the real Mr. Darcy overhears. Darcy, not having Elizabeth's lively spirit, does not laugh it off but confronts her, putting her on the defensive and leading them both to spar. Later, a grand picnic hosted by the Bingleys on the grounds of Netherfield sets off a whole chain of events. During the picnic, Darcy and Elizabeth have a heart-to-heart which leads them to have warmer feelings toward each other until later, when Elizabeth receives misinformation that ticks her off at him again. Immediately after the Netherfield picnic, some characters head for Scotland. Others chase them. One character faints, gets a head wound, and is irrevocably altered afterward. And Netherfield is packed up and vacated, probably for good, according to Miss Bingley's note to Jane Bennet. There's lots more that happens over the course of this book. It's a fast-paced story, so you have to just hang on and hope this runaway train doesn't crash. And it doesn't. The only thing it lacks is much romance between Darcy and Elizabeth. It's not absent, but I think the book needs one or two more scenes where they're actually getting along to build up the angst a little better when they're in love and separated. I was too busy immersing myself in this wild ride to worry about credibility. Upon reflection, I can see there are bits of the story that don't hold up to scrutiny, but I don't care. It's well written, the characters are great, and it's just plain entertaining.

I absolutely love all of this author's books. She writes with both subtle and outrageous humor. While I didn't find Elizabeth to be a shrew, she definitely was erratic in her feelings and emotions. I felt it played a part in the humor and the majority of the misunderstandings between E&D. She completely owned her behavior. I loved the new character of Mackay. His image in my mind was fun, clever and lovable. I totally could visualize he and Charlotte as depicted in the epilogue. Go Charlotte! It was a pleasant surprise to see Lydia reform and have a happy ending. Wickham got what he deserved. If you have enjoyed this author's other works, you won't be disappointed. There is no real angst, beyond misunderstanding. No far fetched premise. Just a light and humorous twist on the original. It put a smile on my face and love in my heart. Awww.

I LOVE all of Perpetua Langley's takeoffs on Jane Austen. This one was probably my favorite. I do agree with Avid Reader's 5 Star review that Elizabeth was maybe a bit too harsh and impulsive and maybe not as likeable as I would have preferred but I'm still in for 5 Stars. I loved how the stories of the other main cast of characters were pushed forward and explored and tweaked about - in a unique way we wouldn't have thought to rearrange them ourselves! If you are a Jane Austen purist, go read *Pride and Prejudice* again but if you enjoy a charming fun true-to-the era spin on the original once in awhile, you won't go wrong here!

Some bothersome historical and cultural problems. One of the female characters wonders whether Mackay will wear his tartan. Scots were prohibited from wearing tartans after the 1745 rebellion (The Anti-Kilting Act). There would not have been titled persons with Irish surnames, such as a Lady Monaghan in England at the time. Many of the Scottish names the author uses are Irish names. Also, the author or the editor need to learn the difference between the singular, the plural, the singular possessive and the plural possessive. The plot was interesting.

I loved this p&p variation! It kept my interest all the way through! I am going to read it again right now!

Waiting for updates of stories you follow? This will fill the time. Darcy is filled with trepidation (gutless). Elizabeth is beyond stubborn and obnoxiously immature (bit-shee). There is no touchy-feely here, hardly any romance. The best character here, believe it or not, is Lydia. She provides the much needed levity and a link to canon.

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