



Darcy's Passions: Fitzwilliam Darcy's Story

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Regency England speaks of love and romance when Darcy's Passions brings to life once again Jane Austen's classic love story. An interpretation of Austen's Pride and Prejudice, Darcy's Passions tells the story from Mr. Darcy's point of view. When Fitzwilliam Darcy comes to Hertfordshire as a service to his best friend Charles Bingley, who has recently let the Netherfield Park estate, Darcy assumes the locals will possess "vulgar" country manners. So, when the opportunity arises, he refuses to dance with Elizabeth Bennet at the Meryton Assembly; however, from that moment, the woman's charms possess his every waking and sleeping minute.

Obsessed with Elizabeth Bennet, Darcy places himself in a position to learn more about her while realizing his social status will not allow him to marry her. He manipulates Bingley and others in order to spend time with her. He tells himself Elizabeth Bennet is simply a "diversion" from the lack of society he finds in Hertfordshire. However, if she is only a diversion, then why does he dream of her as mistress of his estate? Why does he seek her out as a friend for his shy, withdrawn sister? Why does he allow her to speak to him with a saucy attitude? Why can he not even breathe when she is in the room? Why does a raise of her eyebrow or an enigmatic smile or the smell of the lavender she wears create havoc with his emotions? His duty to his family and his estate demand he choose a woman of refined tastes. Yet, what his mind tells him he wants and what Darcy's heart knows he needs are two different things.

Darcy is a man in turmoil. He loves a woman he first denies as being worthy, but it is he who is found wanting when Elizabeth Bennet refuses his proposal of marriage because he does not conform to her standards of a "gentleman." Devastated, he must transform himself into the man she learns to love and respect. With the help of his cousin, Colonel Fitzwilliam, and his sister Georgiana, Darcy learns before he can find real love with Elizabeth, he must first love himself, and an emptiness he has never been able to acknowledge must be filled. Along the way, Fitzwilliam Darcy discovers himself - the master of Pemberley, but also a man who graciously accepts the love and respect of others.

Fitzwilliam Darcy in the original Pride and Prejudice is a very major "minor" character. He, obviously, is the hero of the tale, but the reader never really knows how he creates the changes we accept as part of his personality all along. He is a man who has lived his whole life among strangers; he has never felt he belonged. He has a respected position, and he has done all the things to be counted as a success in the world, but he possesses an emptiness, which Darcy cannot define. We never see his vulnerability, his loneliness, and his passions. In the year from the time Darcy first meets Elizabeth Bennet until she accepts his second proposal, he is only in her life for a little over three months - from Michaelmas in late September to the Netherfield Ball in late November, for a fortnight at Rosings, and less than a week at Pemberley. What did he do during those separations to replace his desire for Elizabeth? How did he complete his transformation? What occupied his time? To whom did he turn for comfort and support? How did he become the hero and not the villain of the tale?

Darcy's Passions takes Fitzwilliam Darcy from his initial meeting with Elizabeth Bennet through the many misunderstandings, which define their relationship, eventually leading through her acceptance of his proposal. Unlike Austen's summary, the courtship, the honeymoon and the marriage become part of Darcy's transformation as the book takes the reader back to Pemberley, showing Elizabeth claiming a "niche" in the estate's history while Darcy learns love and control are not the same thing. When he nearly loses her for

good, Darcy gives up the standards he has known all his life and accepts that the Pemberley

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