



The Intrigue at Highbury: Or, Emma's Match

Carrie Bebris

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On a dark road outside the village of Highbury, Mr. and Mrs. Darcy's carriage is hailed by a damsel in distress. Ever the gentleman, Fitzwilliam Darcy stops to aid the young woman, little suspecting that gypsies roam these woods, or that both the Darcys' possessions and the woman are about to vanish into the night.

The Darcys seek out the parish magistrate, who is having a difficult evening of his own. Mr Knightley and his new wife, the former Miss Emma Woodhouse, are hosting a party to honor the marriage of their friends Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax. The celebration turns sinister, however, when Edgar Churchill, uncle and adoptive father of the groom, falls ill and dies. The cause of death: poison.

The circumstances of another recent death in the Churchill family lead Mr. Knightley to suspect that Mr. Churchill's demise was no accident. When connections between the robbery and murder emerge, the Darcys and Knightleys join forces to investigate the crimes. Together they must work quickly to locate the source of the poison and the murderer's motive - before the killer strikes again.

The Darcys take center stage as the Regency era's answer to *The Thin Man's* Nick and Nora, searching for truth between teatimes, amidst the social swirl of Jane Austen's England.

The Intrigue at Highbury: Or, Emma's Match Details

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From Reader Review The Intrigue at Highbury: Or, Emma's Match for online ebook

D.w. says

Bebris once more provides us a fun look at the world of Austen taking her most beloved duo into the world of Mystery and Intrigue. It is forced though to provide reasons for the Darcy's to meet the main characters of other novels, in this case Emma.

Adding to the small intrigue we had with Frank Churchill's secret engagement to Jane Fairfax, we expand on the duplicity that was evident in the canon to create a mystery of murder and suspicions. This is well done should you be able to leave any love you have for particular characters at the door.

Here Mrs. Elton is even more condescending than she was in the original work as the woman's need to force herself above her station, (she is wife to the hired hand, not a lady whose husband owns a great and large estate)

If you put aside this, and the introduction of characters non-canonical who are introduced solely to link our protagonists to the editions tie-ins, then you can settle down for a good bit of fun that should last you a few hours. Each of these Mr & Mrs Darcy tales are that, a good bit of fun, but you have to put aside your perception of the canon and give into Ms. Debris' view. Do that and they are worthwhile indeed.

Heidi-Marie says

Oh my goodness. I really enjoyed this one, and I think because I could see and hear all of the characters straight from the 2009 "Emma" (which I adore!). I liked that Emma and Mr. Knightley played much more substantial roles in this book than other Austen characters have in previous books. I was a bit thrown by the switching between the 2 couples' work, but I liked that it made more people working together and the Darcys not always happening to be in the convenient places all the time which helped them solve the mysteries. Again I had my guesses, though I had no clue who my guesses referred to and was very surprised by the truth. I was quite pleased with the ending.

Bebris still amazes me with how well she keeps faithful to Austen's characters and works them all in. I'm also amazed with the variety of mysteries she has created, and that her writing talent keeps me interested, guessing, sometimes right, and still surprised. I do hope that the next book is not the last in the series. I'm loving this too much!

* Jennifer says

I actually think of this as a 3.5 star read, but I'm giving it 4 stars here because I'm not sure it's the books, or the author's fault.

This book's plot centers around Highbury and the characters from Jane Austen's *Emma*, one of the few remaining Austen books I haven't yet read. I think this hindered me with this story, as I had a terrible time

keeping the characters and which estates they belonged to, straight in my mind while reading. More than once I had to go back to previous chapters to remind myself "who was this person??. This was more pronounced due to the author's choice of opening the book from the perspective of Emma, before the Darcy's arrive on scene.

Once I finally got most of the characters straight in my mind, I really enjoyed the mystery - it was delightfully convoluted with more than a few likely suspects. Unfortunately the murderer stuck out a bit like a sore thumb for me, but it in no way detracted from my enjoyment of the unfolding mystery and clues. I really enjoyed the incorporation of word puzzles too, as I felt like I could "play along" more actively in solving the clues.

An enjoyable series and The Intrigue at Highbury isn't the worst or the best book of the bunch, but one I'd probably read again - *after* I read *Emma*.

Monica.A says

Trovandoci qui in compagnia di Miss Woodhouse (come si ostina a chiamarla il padre), non possono mancare sciarade e enigmi. Un peccato che, nonostante la storia sia ben articolata, s'intuiscano subito le vere origini di Mr Deal, un peccato anche per il finale, un po' debole e scontato, ma finalmente le indagini si svolgono sorseggiando una tazza di tè o mangiando una salutare farinata, senza le rocambolesche avventure dei precedenti capitoli.

P.S. Se persino Miss Bates riesce a sposarsi... beh vuol proprio dire che c'è speranza per tutte!

Christina says

Another intrigue from Jane Austen-esque mystery writer Carrie Bebris. This one, set in the Surrey village of Highbury, Mr and Mrs Darcy are set upon by robbers and find themselves yet again immersed in a murder mystery with all of Jane Austen's canon characters from our beloved Emma. The Darcy's and The Knightley's join forces to solve the case. I enjoyed the comradery between Mr Darcy and Mr Knightley... However, I thought maybe Emma overshadowed Elizabeth Darcy --because Elizabeth really wasn't given much to say for much of the novel. At least not until the end. And I thought it was a bit reaching that Darcy's carriage managed a 15 mile trek to and from TWICE in the same day -- with no mention of a change of horses. And I did not think the language of the gypsy people or common folk differed enough from the Quality set... But besides those small hiccups, all in all, an enjoyable read. Light-hearted banter and amusing tale of intrigue. As always love the relationship between the Darcy's. And thought the new characters introduced to the story added lots of color and flavor. Quite the page turner that kept me guessing til the very end!

Was especially delighted!! by the Epilogue when Bebris hints of Mr Darcy being "persuaded" to attend Elizabeth and his sister, Georgianna to the seaside in the Spring... If you've read the others in the series, this is a must. And if you haven't started the series yet, what's keeping you??

Jen3n says

Aw, man. I just can't help myself.

Yes: these books are fluffy. Yes: I only picked them up because I'm a bit of a 19th-century novel obsessive. Yes: these are sort of light-weight brain candy. Yes: the first book in this series is so awful that I actually threw it out when I was done reading it ... I am very glad I didn't read the first book until I read a couple of the others. I really am. YES: these books are embarrassingly underwritten and pandering to a particular type of reader.

I don't care. They're MY fluffy, pandering, light-weight brain candy. They're cute. Plus, and this is a big plus, the mysteries in this series are usually appropriately yet not unbelievably convoluted enough so as not to be obvious, and the author seems to have stayed true to her source material. I greatly appreciate that. It gets right up my nose when a modern author tries to write a sequel to a Jane Austen novel or write a book in the Bronte book-world and injects a lot of really irritating modern language and motivations into it.

Anyhoo: this one is, as seen in the title, set at Highbury right after Emma and Knightly's wedding. A series of murders occurs right as Mr. and Mrs. Darcy are forced to stop in the village due to being robbed on the road. Mystery solving ensues.

They really are nice books. If they remind me of anything, it's the Nick and Nora Charles stuff.

Recommended, despite all the self-deprecating and mild-embarrassment in the review above. If you like mysteries solved by urbane, witty, upper-class citizens, then this is for you.

Wow. That's really specific, isn't it.

Sophia says

It's been a few years since I read a book in this series and I was glad that someone from the Austenesque Lovers group picked it out for me to read.

The Intrigue at Highbury is book five in the Mr. & Mrs. Darcy Mysteries series. I think it would work alright standalone, but I encourage readers to get the series from the beginning. It's been fun encountering Jane Austen's fictional characters with each mystery acting as a sequel of sorts for each of Austen's novels and the Darcy's of Pride & Prejudice fame acting as the connecting thread through them all.

In this latest installment, Darcy and Lizzy are traveling to their cousins, the Colonel and Anne Fitzwilliam for a visit and to deliver the Fitzwilliam family christening gown. Along the way, they are robbed near the village of Highbury. The magistrate of Highbury, Mr. George Knightley, already has a situation on his hands when one of his party guests is murdered. Knightley needs help from an objective source so Darcy agrees to lead the investigation.

Emma Knightley is set on beating the odious Mrs. Elton in making a match for Miss Bates. Unfortunately, the wedding party for Frank and Jane Churchill where she hoped to introduce some eligible bachelors is

broken up by the untimely death of Frank's uncle. Emma is put out with her husband because he is treating Frank as a suspect even if he does stand to gain the most from the death.

Elizabeth Darcy is observant and uses her skills to assist her husband and the Knightley's discover the truth. Is it one of the gypsies? Is it the peddler? Or is the answer much closer to home for the people of Highbury?

It was a delight to return to the village of Highbury a month following the Knightley's nuptials in time for the newlywed Churchills return. The mystery was a cunning one and wove easily with the ongoing story of Austen's Emma. The author paid close attention to the detail of characters, setting, and meshing her story to the original. I chuckled because the characters were true to form and groaned as Emma attempted her matchmaking again and Mr. Woodhouse determined to treat Elizabeth as an invalid.

The blending of the Darcys into the Highbury cast of characters was fun. Loved seeing Darcy and Knightley strike up a friendship and seeing the two very different ladies in Elizabeth and Emma interacting.

There were two separate mysteries in the beginning, but investigation of one led to common ground between them. While I figured it out long before the big reveal, I still appreciated the rest of the story and seeing how it all played out.

All in all, I was well pleased with this latest installment and will not wait so long to progress to the next book in the series. Mystery and Austen lovers will find this book/series a delight.

Joy says

The Intrigue at Highbury is easily my favorite book of this series. It is also (not coincidentally) the one most well integrated with the Jane Austen novel referenced in the title. Not only do we meet all the beloved citizens of Highbury, we continue the story of Emma where it left off, with a new mystery connected to minor events of that novel. We even get large sections told from Emma and Knightley's point of view, rather than seeing everything through Elizabeth and Darcy's eyes.

The story begins when the Darcy's are robbed outside the tiny town of Highbury. Meanwhile, that town is bustling with intrigue. Mrs. Elton plans to marry Miss Bates to a mentally challenged farmer in order to keep her from becoming a charity case. Emma determines to find a superior match among the gentlemen invited to celebrate Jane Fairfax's marriage to Frank Churchill. An engaging peddler arrives in town, to everyone's delight, with plenty of wares and a few gypsy potions. And then old Mr Churchill dies in the middle of a dinner party at Donwell Abbey.

Maria Grazia says

The Intrigue at Highbury by Carrie Bebris

As you start reading, it seems you are back where you had to stop. They are all there, just like you left them at the end of Jane Austen's novel: Emma, now Mrs Knightley, and her fascinating loving husband, Mr Woodhouse, The Westons and The Eltons, Miss Bates and her mother, Harriet Smith now Mrs Martin, Jane Fairfax now Mrs Churchill with Frank, her husband. Pleasantly indeed" for the readers, though not in the

best circumstances, their lives cross with Mr and Mrs Darcy's and with that of handsome Mr Deal - who for the first time will make Miss Bates feel tongue-tied!

Plot summary

Mr and Mrs Darcy are looking forward to a relaxing stay with dear friends when their carriage is hailed by a damsel in distress on a dark road outside of the village of Highbury. Little do the Darcys realize that gypsies roam these woods, or that both their possessions and the woman are about to vanish into the night.

The Darcys seek out the parish magistrate, who is having a difficult evening of his own. Mr Knightley and his new wife, the former Miss Emma Woodhouse, are hosting a party to celebrate the marriage of their friends, Mr Frank Churchill and Miss Jane Fairfax. During dinner, Mr Edgar Churchill, uncle and adoptive father of the groom, suddenly falls ill and dies. The cause of death : poison.

When the Darcys and the Knightleys join forces to investigate the crimes, they discover that the robbery and Edgar Churchill's death may be connected...

My review

What I most appreciated, apart from this book being a real page-turner, is Bebris's hold on Austen's witty style. Just a couple of examples:

1. *"Emma would listen to Mrs Weston's counsel, then act as she generally did: precisely as Emma wished"* (p.31)

2. *"(Mrs Elton) You must be very happy in your new establishment.*

Harriet began to reply, but Mrs Elton's interest in her happiness did not extend so far as wanting to hear any assurance of it. Before Harriet had uttered two words, Mrs Elton brought the discussion back to her favourite subject – herself" (p. 121)

It is a brilliant mystery- story- including sharades, riddles and word games - in which eventually Emma finds a friend who is her intellectually equal, where our heroine proves her smart mind and her "talent at matchmaking" again. In this delightful series – this is the 5th issue - the Darcys take center stage in searching for truth between teatimes amid the social whirl of Jane Austen's England.

(closing) As you can imagine, The Intrigue at Highbury is a real feast for Janeites. If you haven't read the other Mr & Mrs Darcy Mysteries by Carrie Bebris, you may well start from this latest publication and, then, go back to discover the other ones: Pride and Prescience, Suspence and Sensibility , North of Northanger, The Matters at Mansfield.

As for me, I can't wait for Bebris's next Mr & Mrs Darcy Mystery inspired to my favourite among favourites: Persuasion!

Melissa says

This book surprised me. I was expecting this to be a good read, but i didn't expect an excellent read. The author, Carrie Berbris, explains on the cover that her premisis for the Mr & Mrs. Darcy mysteries is the "Thin Man" movies. I had to tell her, but Lizzie and Darcy are no Nick and Nora. Despite that Ms. Berbris seems to capture the Austen characters in a way i haven't read in awhile.

In this particular mystery we see Mr and Mrs. Darcy in Highbury after getting robbed on the road. There they find themselves entangled in a possible murder mystery. They of course they meet Emma and Mr. Knightly. I was quite surprised at how well the author managed to keep the "Emma" characters true to form. None of them acted out of character. Even Mr. Woodhouse, Miss. Bates, and the Eltons were in character. Something i highly applaud the author and made the story highly enjoyable.

The mystery of the story was quite well done. You knew at once "Miss. Jones" was involved in the robbing somehow, but it was quite a surprise she was involved in the murder as well. Add along some new characters and you have a really good book. I applaud the author as well for taking a side storyline that could have been soap operaish and turning it into a nice add one. I'm not going to spoil it, but it involves a "long lost family member". Whom that person is i shall leave a secret.

Final rating: 5 stars. Great story, staying true to most of the original Jane Austen characters, and for adding in some truly humorous parts. A "must buy" as well.

Kim says

Gearing up for the new release by Carrie Bebris, I decided to revisit one of my favorite books in the Darcy & Elizabeth mystery series.

First reading 6/14/2012

Second reading 6/18/2015

Georgiana 1792 says

Matchmaking Miss Bates

Molto carino questo nuovo caso dei coniugi Darcy, che stavolta giocano un *doppio misto* con i Knightley, ed in particolar modo con Emma ed i suoi enigmi.

Per fortuna i personaggi di Jane Austen non vengono *snaturati*: quando leggo questi romanzi preferisco che i colpevoli e le vittime siano fra i personaggi inventati dalla Bebris, non fra quelli austeniani, anche quando si tratta di Caroline Bingley, Henry Crawford o Fanny Dashwood...

Insomma, che non venga alterato il futuro che la Austen aveva stabilito per loro. E in questo caso non sono rimasta spiazzata dalla Bebris.

Tranne che per Miss Bates: a quanto pare a tutte le autrici di spin-off che se la ritrovano *fra i piedi*, viene in mente di rivalutarla/accasarla. Forse sperano che un marito metta fine al continuo cicaleccio!...

E il libro termina con un appuntamento:

Elizabeth e Georgiana decidono di portare la piccola Lily-Anne al mare, ma Darcy non ne vuole sapere.

Però... "*Forse potrei essere **persuaso***" afferma. Prossima tappa a Lyme Regis con i Wentworth?

Meredith (Austen-esque Reviews) says

After a month of perfect marital bliss, Emma Knightley is itching once again to try her hand match-making. Her latest victim, Miss Bates, is also being targeted by the pretentious and imperious Mrs. Elton, who has some match-making designs of her own. Emma, more mature and circumspect than she previously was, strives to save Miss Bates from the less than desirable and perhaps doltish prospects Mrs. Elton has in mind by introducing Miss Bates to some eligible bachelors during a dinner party she is hosting in honor of Frank

and Jane Churchill's recent nuptials. (Frank and Jane are marrying in London, but plan to travel to Highbury before removing to the Churchill estate, Enscombe, located in Yorkshire.)

The dinner party commences splendidly and everyone seems to be having a delightful time except for Frank Churchill's uncle, Edgar Churchill, who has unfortunately imbibed too much wine and is now creating a bit of a ruckus. However, what appears to be a mild case of intoxication ends up being something much more serious and results in the man's death.

On their way to Sussex to visit the newly married Colonel and Anne Fitzwilliam, Darcy and Elizabeth are robbed by some conspiring and sinister highwaymen in the vicinity of Highbury. The Darcys venture to seek assistance from the parish magistrate of Highbury, Mr. Knightley, in hopes that he may be able to apprehend the thieves and recover the precious heirlooms that were stolen from their carriage.

The night of disastrous dinner party is the same night the Darcys appear on Mr. Knightley's doorstep. Poor Mr. Knightley now has two mysteries to solve: a robbery and a murder, as Mr. Perry strongly suspects that Edgar Churchill died from the effects of poison. After learning that the Darcys have had some experience with suspicious deaths, what else can Mr. Knightley do but invite them to stay at Donwell and assist with the investigations...

Gypsies, secret engagements, riddles, inheritances-don't you think Jane Austen's "Emma" is wonderfully primed for intrigue? Carrie Bebris cleverly pens a novel that perfectly captures the charm and humor of "Emma" and infuses it with a riveting and challenging mystery. I immensely enjoyed the camaraderie and easy rapport between the Knightleys and the Darcys and I cannot think of more suitable companion for Emma Knightley than Elizabeth Darcy. The two mysteries were well developed and not at all cliché or predictable. There were many suspects in this investigation and I greatly enjoyed weighing my suspicions and judging their motives for myself.

"The Intrigue at Highbury" is a fantastic addition to Carrie Bebris's already outstanding "Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery Series," and in my humble opinion, it is her best novel yet! One aspect that I loved about this novel is how prominent the characters from "Emma" were. In Ms. Bebris's other novels where she integrates characters from multiple Austen novels, usually only a few characters are present and they often have very minor parts. However, in "The Intrigue at Highbury" we are deeply immersed with many of the delightful and lovable citizens of Highbury and many of them play a very active part in the mysteries.

True to the style of Jane Austen there are a copious amount of laugh out loud moments in this novel such as: long garrulous rambles by Miss Bates, the health concerns and anxieties Mr. Woodhouse, and narratives that are blended with a very wicked wit. I was very pleased with how clever and Austenesque the writing was in this novel.

To put it simply: I loved "The Intrigue of Highbury!" I highly recommend it to readers who enjoy Austenesque novels and I greatly look forward to rereading this novel many times in the future. I can hardly wait for Carrie Bebris's next installment where Mr. and Mrs. Darcy will encounter the characters from "Persuasion!"

Austeneseque Reviews

Laurel says

It is a truth universally acknowledged that in Carrie Bebris' clever Jane Austen inspired mysteries, whenever Mr. and Mrs. Darcy embark on a carriage journey across England they are sure to end up investigating murder in a country village inhabited by some one or other of Jane Austen's characters from one of her novels. This truth has become so well fixed in minds of her fans that we consider this devise our rightful property and any deviations would be insupportable. Happily, her fifth book in the series, *The Intrigue at Highbury Or, Emma's Match* does not disappoint opening with the Darcy's traveling to Sussex to visit recently married cousins Colonel and Anne Fitzwilliam. In Surrey along the London Road their carriage is hailed by a young woman in distress just outside the village of Highbury. What starts out as an act of kindness by the Darcy's quickly turns into a clever con by highwaymen who assault their coachmen and relieve the Darcy's of their possessions.

Determined to report the crime and recover their family heirlooms the Darcy's seek out the parish magistrate Mr. George Knightley who is having problems of his own. He and his new bride, the former Miss Emma Woodhouse, are entertaining a large party at Donwell Abbey in honor of friends Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill's recent London wedding. Among the out-of-town guests are Col. and Mrs. Campbell, newlyweds Mr. and Mrs. Peter Dixon and Mr. Edgar Churchill, the bridegroom's adoptive father. Many of the Highbury set are in attendance including Miss Bates, a woman of a certain age and no fortune whom Emma has taken it upon herself to rescue from Mrs. Augusta Elton's misguided matchmaking by introducing her to several illegible bachelors. The party is a great success until Frank's father Mr. Churchill has a bit too much to drink, promptly becomes ill and unexpectedly dies. There is nothing like a corpse at a party to quickly quell the merriment of a celebration. Emma's grand event has become the most infamous dinner party in Highbury history, and for all the wrong reasons. Moreover, Mr. Perry the apothecary suspects murder by poisoning and Mr. Knightley agrees.

Arriving at Donwell Abbey on the night of the ill fated party, the Darcy's relay the criminal events of the evening to Mr. Knightley who now has two crimes to solve. It is not long before they both see connections between the highway robbery and the murder and join forces to solve both crimes. High on their list on possible suspects in Mr. Churchill's death is his son Frank. Even though he is to inherit the Churchill fortune, other blood relatives could supersede him and dark family secrets are looming. On the other front, itinerant gypsies could be responsible for the robbery and are quickly connected to newly arrived peddler Hiram Deal who seems to have an abundant supply of merchandise and ample stock of gypsy elixirs potent enough to have killed Mr. Churchill. Throw in charades, riddles, secret anagrams, plot twists, red herrings, and many memorable characters old and new and you have one fast paced, witty whodunit that is sure to keep you guessing until the last page.

Readers of Jane Austen's novel *Emma* will recognize similarities in the underlying plot to our modern murder mysteries. Filled with charades, riddles, word games, secret engagements and the speculation surrounding Jane Fairfax's gift pianoforte, of all of Austen's novels, *Emma* lends itself seamlessly to a continuation with a full mystery plot. Carrie Bebris' skill at mining the original narrative for interesting coincidences to supplement her new story is amazing. In fear of spoilers I will not divulge my discoveries, but slyly allude to the fact that Mr. Knightley never liked Frank Churchill and was always suspect of his motives while others in the Highbury community could see no fault. That has not changed! Neither has the Austenesque wit as I found myself laughing at Mr. Woodhouse's continued anxiety over other's health and safety, Miss Bates' endless chatter and the Mrs. Elton vs. Mrs. Knightley showdown over who would secure a beau for Miss Bates first absolutely hysterical. Unlike the other novels in the Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery Series, the Darcy's take an equal role in sleuthing with the Knightley's and both the men and ladies as pairs

doubled the pace of the investigation. As always, Bebris' historical research and inclusion of medical matters, poisons and gypsie culture in the Regency-era was quite impressive. If she is fibbing, she is a credit to her profession!

Bebris has surpassed herself offering her finest novel in the Mr. and Mrs. Darcy Mystery Series yet. *The Intrigue at Highbury* will captivate Austen and mystery fans with its briskly paced continuation of Austen's Emma infused with enough sharp wit, clever underpinnings, devious relations and fearsome gypsie attacks for the most diehard fans. However, I will withhold my highest praise and strongest prejudice for the next novel in the series when the Darcy's travel to the seaside and meet the characters from Persuasion. Yay! Men in blue. La

Laure Ann, Austenprose

Brittany says

Actually 3.5 stars

So I started in the middle of this series. I started with Mansfield, which is actually book 4, and this is the second book I read of Bebris' mystery series, which is actually book 5.

I must say I liked this one much more than I liked the Mansfield book.

There were things I didn't like: I felt in trying to keep true to Jane Austen's characters, Bebris made Emma sound a bit more whiney than she probably would have been in these circumstances. It made her seem a bit unintelligent. I am also not a fan of how little romance and passion there seems to be between Darcy and Elizabeth. This seems to carry through all of her books. It may be a bit more realistic with the way she portrayed their relationship as man and wife, but it still felt a bit passionless.

Things I did like: I was very intrigued by the story itself. Darcy and Knightley make a pretty awesome team. I was switching between the different people I thought were guilty constantly, so that was interesting.

Overall - I will re-read this book in the future!
