



Attempting Elizabeth

Jessica Grey

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Kelsey Edmundson is a geek and proud of it. She makes no secret of her love for TV, movies, and, most especially, books. After a bad breakup, she retreats into her favorite novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, wishing she had some of the wit and spirit of Elizabeth Bennett.

One night at a party Kelsey meets handsome Australian bartender Mark Barnes. From then on, she always seems to run into him when she least expects it. No matter how Kelsey tries, she always seems to say the wrong thing.

After a particularly gaffe-filled evening around Mark, Kelsey is in desperate need of inspiration from Jane Austen. She falls asleep reading Darcy's letter to Lizzy and awakens to find herself in an unfamiliar place that looks and sounds suspiciously like her favorite book. Has she somehow been transported into *Pride and Prejudice*, or is it just a dream?

As Kelsey tries to discover what's happening to her, she must also discover her own heart. Is Mark Barnes destined to be her Mr. Darcy? In the end, she must decide whether attempting to become Elizabeth is worth the risk or if being Kelsey Edmundson is enough.

Attempting Elizabeth Details

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From Reader Review Attempting Elizabeth for online ebook

Calatasde says

<http://bookerlikeahooker.blogspot.com...>

Hello Guys! First I want to be honest with you. I never read Pride&Prejudice in my 20 years life. And I don't when I'm going to read. However I was heard all characters in the book. I can't say I like those things also I can't say I don't like.

Therefore I love the story.I love Kelsey.She's such a smart person.Somewhat she manage the time travel to novels. Everyone wants that right? When I was reading I little bit jealous her.

I wasn't sure what to expect at first, but Kelsey quickly won me over with her nerdiness and her love of staying home with a good book (most likely Pride and Prejudice, her favorite). I absolutely loved that she was more Darcy-like than Lizzy-like! Attempting Elizabeth is the story of Kelsey Edmundson, a literature grad student who doesn't know where her life is going. After a bad break up, she is distrustful of men and of herself.Luckily she finds herself in the her favorite novel.

Unbelievable! That's the word I would use to describe Attempting Elizabeth! I truly loved this story! I felt it had a fun uniqueness about it. I loved the whole novel jumping aspect of the story, but there was much more to it than that...I don't know if I can say anything about it without giving anything away. But I will give it a try!Attempting Elizabeth gives a whole new spin to P&P. I loved it.Author Jessica Grey takes the story of Darcy and Elizabeth and brings it into modern fandom. She wraps the story of Kelsey and Mark in a crunchy coating of geeky goodness. This is a story for the sci-fi, cosplay, Star Wars-loving ardent admirers of Jane Austen.

Helen says

In Chick Lit ratings - this was loads of fun, a sensational weekend read. There is so much to like about this book - being able to relate to the fact you would like to escape into your favourite novel; how well Grey replicated P&P scenes word.for.word that bought much authenticity for traditional fans; embracing your inner geek and longing to 'smack down' Lady Catherine; the cleverness of modern day sarcasm in Regency England just rocks! Being Caroline Bingley was a real hoot; and coming to see our own Darcy in the here and now. Great fun for light, fluffy and loads of fun!

Stephanie says

DNF-ed at 58%. I almost never DNF a book this far into it, but I just really can't make myself care about it. The concept is interesting, but I don't think it was executed that well. And the main character is really annoying. I put it down a few days ago to read something else and I'm not at all interested in picking it back up, so I'm calling it.

Nancy Kelley says

Is there anyone who can truly say they've never wanted to be someone else? We've all had moments--sometimes stretching into days or even months--when the drudgery or misery of our own lives couldn't hold a candle to the "perfect life" of our favorite fictional characters.

Imagine what would happen if, during one of those periods, you actually leapt into the life of that character. That's what happens to Kelsey Edmundsen after a string of embarrassing encounters with Mark Barnes.

Kelsey was still licking her wounds after a bad break-up when she and Mark met. Somehow, even though he's attractive and smart and funny, she always seems to say the wrong thing to him. After a particularly bad evening, she falls asleep reading *Pride and Prejudice* and wakes up as Georgiana Darcy. Through a string of P&P leaps and conversations with Mark, she finally comes to realize that being Elizabeth isn't all it's cracked up to be, and being Kelsey *maybe* isn't the disaster she's come to think it is.

There is so much to love about this book, I can't really contain myself. First, both Kelsey and Mark are richly drawn, real, flawed characters. Kelsey is deeply insecure and Mark has just the right amount of confidence to sense that insecurity but not understand it. The tension that creates is phenomenal, as she tries to explain to him what it's like to be a person you don't particularly like and he tries to make her see that he likes her just the way she is.

Second, Grey's knowledge of *Pride and Prejudice* makes this a great companion to the book. She understands what motivated the characters, beyond just the simple dialogue (or often indirect dialogue) in the book. The scenes with Georgiana were especially perceptive, since that entire escapade takes place offstage and before the main action of the book. Working from what little we know--Ramsgate, Wickham, Mrs. Younge, Darcy interrupts--she created a scene that fits perfectly with the tone of the novel.

One tricky thing with sci-fi/fantasy is the necessity of creating rules for your magic or futuristic science and sticking with them. Though Kelsey never fully understood how book-jumping worked, there was a pattern she could follow to get into a scene and then later to get out when she was ready. These mechanics remained true throughout the book, up until the end. When they changed, there was a reason for the change that makes sense.

Additionally, this book is like geek nirvana. First there's all the references to other works. These sly little post-modern moments are delivered with all the love and good humor of a long-time geek and fangirl, and if you read Grey's bio, you discover that indeed, she is both. The quotes at the beginning of each chapter are yet another referential moment, and they perfectly set up the action to follow. Kelsey herself is a dyed in the wool nerd, one who will point out it's Han-shot-only, not Han-shot-first. She's the kind of nerd girl we're all told the hot nerd guys are dying to meet.

I've personally wanted to be Elizabeth ever since I was 14 years old, so I could easily relate to her continued jumping into *Pride and Prejudice*. After all, if you got really really close to your dream, so close you realized the dream might be possible after all, wouldn't you be willing to give up everything for one more shot? The difference is, Kelsey's dream is to be someone else. The story can only end when she dreams about being herself.

I recommend this to Austenesque readers, especially those who enjoy the half-modern, half-Regency post-modern stories like *Me and Mr. Darcy*, *Austenland*, *The Man Who Loved Jane Austen*, and *Searching for*

Captain Wentworth.

Five stars

Meredith (Austenesque Reviews) says

Kelsey Edmundson is an obsessed, geeky, Jane Austen fan-girl. After a bad breakup or a disappointing day she doesn't watch romantic comedies with a pint of ice cream, she turns to her beloved *Pride and Prejudice* to mend her broken heart and soothe her sorrows. After a particularly disastrous night of trying to get over her perfectly horrid ex-boyfriend, Kelsey once again retreats to the well-worn pages of *Pride and Prejudice*. Except that this time she somehow ends up in the pages of *Pride and Prejudice*. Like actually in a scene from the story and in the body of one of the characters! Talk about living out your geek-girl fantasy!

So what does Kelsey do when she discovers she is able to jump into characters and scenes of *Pride and Prejudice*? She does what any Jane Austen fan-girl would do! She tries to jump into Elizabeth Bennet, of course! Which, unfortunately is not as easy as one would hope. This novel-jumping ability didn't come with a reader's manual, so Kelsey is kind of learning things by trial and error. And even though she gets a good grasp of navigating the lives of Jane Austen's minor characters, the rules of the game all seem to change when she inhabits the body of Elizabeth Bennet...

To continue reading, go to: <http://janeaustenreviews.blogspot.com...>

Angela says

Refreshing and entertaining, Jessica Grey's *Attempting Elizabeth* is more than just a clever retelling of a beloved classic, it's a story of self-discovery and letting go. Oh, and a hot Aussie who will steal your heart. How can you go wrong?

Anna says

Review originally posted on Diary of an Eccentric

Jessica Grey's *Attempting Elizabeth* follows Kelsey, a 23-year-old student in California who is a bit obsessed with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*. She's convinced that no guy in her life could ever measure up to Mr. Darcy, and reeling from a breakup with a Wickham-type, Kelsey doesn't quite seem to know who she is and what she wants. She has her own mortifying *Pride and Prejudice*-like moment at a party, in which she insults Mark, the hot Australian bartender, only to learn that he's a friend of her roommate's boyfriend, and now she can't seem to avoid him.

Kelsey and Mark constantly butt heads, though the more she learns about him, the more her opinion of him begins to change. After an incident that takes her back to her recent failed relationship, Kelsey aims to take her mind off her troubles with a book. *Pride and Prejudice*, of course. She falls asleep while reading Darcy's letter to Elizabeth and somehow ends up in the book itself. Soon Kelsey finds herself navigating this alternative world, her desire to become her favorite heroine in all of literature, and her feelings for Mark

while trying to determine what is real — and, most importantly, trying to find herself.

Attempting Elizabeth was a fun and fast read. I'm sure a lot of us voracious readers have wondered what it would be like to step into our favorite books or inhabit our favorite characters. Would we stay there if we had the chance? Would we try to alter the events of the novel? Would we miss what we've left behind, or worry about ruining our favorite stories? And wouldn't it be fantastic to meet the characters and see them as the author pictured them while writing? It was fun to follow Kelsey through Pride and Prejudice as she learns important truths about herself through her experiences as Austen's characters. I couldn't help laughing out loud when Kelsey said or did things that were very unlike Austen's characters. Their reactions were thoroughly delightful.

There were times when Kelsey got on my nerves, but that made her feel more real to me. Overall, it was a creative, sweet love story that kept me wondering throughout. Although I felt the book ended somewhat abruptly, I liked how Grey made the supernatural aspects of the story seem believable. I also liked that such a lighthearted read on the surface had some deeper meaning underneath, namely the significant impact that books can have on our lives, shaping our understanding of ourselves and the world around us.

Angie says

I have over 80 Austen adaptations on my Kindle App - this one may be the most original of the bunch. We all may want to be Elizabeth, but who are we really? Is Darcy what we want or what we need?

Author Jessica Grey takes the story of Darcy and Elizabeth and brings it into modern fandom. She wraps the story of Kelsey and Mark in a crunchy coating of geeky goodness. This is a story for the sci-fi, cosplay, Star Wars-loving ardent admirers of Jane Austen. I can imagine that Jane would fit in perfectly with Kelsey and Tori ordering Chinese Food for breakfast and arguing passionately that Han shot first and why it's so important to the narrative.

Let go of your preconceptions and enjoy 'Attempting Elizabeth!'

Amanda says

Such a fun read! I thoroughly recommend it to Austen lovers and romantics at heart as a lovely way to while away a few hours. I admit to shedding a few happy tears at the end and finished the final word with a big smile on my face. Very feel good book!

Brandee (un)Conventional Bookworms says

If you love Pride & Prejudice, like I do, you MUST read Attempting Elizabeth. I could stop my review right here because 'nough said, right?!? But y'all know I'm chatty about books ~ especially anything relating to Jane Austen or Pride & Prejudice, so let me tell you why you'll love Attempting Elizabeth, whether you're a Jane Austen fan or not.

Kelsey Edmundson is kinda nerdy when it comes to pop culture. She's a Star Wars fangirl, as well as a geek

about action movies and literature. She is an English Lit grad student, focusing on the Regency period. It's no real shock that she'd be an Austen fan. Nor is it shocking she'd turn to Austen, and her favorite heroine, Elizabeth Bennet, when she's feeling awkward and in need of some of Elizabeth's spirit. A few months after suffering a humiliating breakup, Kelsey meets Mark Barnes. For some reason, she always says or does the wrong things around him. Although Mark might be a worthy beau, Kelsey feels as though she always ends up with the rakes when it comes to relationships. She wishes she were more like Elizabeth Bennet, witty and confident. Kelsey decides it's time to stop her habit of always falling for the Wickhams in the world and finally find her Mr. Darcy. Along the way, she just might learn something about the merits of being yourself.

Much of the novel is spent 'in' the pages of *Pride & Prejudice*. I don't think you'll be lost if you've not read it, but it definitely adds to the pleasure of the novel, if you have. I don't want to go into the hows and whys of the book because it would ruin the experience. But I will say that I wouldn't mind Kelsey's unique ability to 'jump' into her favorite novel. Also, I truly enjoyed seeing Kelsey's transformation, with a little help from Elizabeth Bennett, from awkward geek-girl to confident young woman.

Honestly, lit lovers and Austen fans should rejoice! Ms. Grey does an excellent job of blending pop culture references, movie trivia and literature references, along with *Pride & Prejudice*. I'll admit that I enjoyed all the P&P scenes. I delighted in the descriptions of the 'off-screen' scenes Ms. Grey included. I enjoyed the analysis she did of the book, and where characters had turning points in the development. And I loved the commentary on the scenes and characters Kelsey provided, with the inside knowledge of someone intimately familiar with the story.

Again, if you've not read P&P, certain elements may be lost to you, but you'll still find the overall story enjoyable. Attempting Elizabeth is entertaining, well-written, and well paced...except for the ending. There were a few facets of the ending that I felt were rushed. But the story is original in it's navigating around the *Pride & Prejudice* story and it is a lot of fun.

Favorite Quotes

"I was cruising, at a very high rate of speed, toward a complete Austen fangirlmeltdown." Loc 825, eARC

"I would trade use of a limb to be Elizabeth Bennet." Loc 1584, eARC

"Haven't you ever read *Pride and Prejudice*? I asked, horrified. Kelsey, I'm a guy." Loc 2982, eARC

**I received an eARC of this book, as part of a blog tour, in exchange for an honest review.

Melissa Buell says

Pride and Prejudice is my favorite book so when I saw that Jessica was writing ATTEMPTING ELIZABETH, I had a nerdy freak out! ;-) I loved this story! Kelsey, the main character, reminds me of myself (which might be why I liked her so much...). I love the idea of jumping into P&P and being one of the characters. (Sort of like *AUSTENLAND* but different.) And Mark! A great love interest! Oh, and there's kissing. "Is this a kissing book?" Yes, yes it is. But not in a tawdry way. In a romantic way that is just right.

Recommend for: older teens, adults. Lovers of Austen, romance novels, "new adult" novels.

Marijayne Stegman says

One of my all time favorite Austen fan fiction books. Loved the way the story of the modern characters were woven together with the Austen classic. I absolutely fell in love with the characters and was rooting for them 100%. Their relationship was so authentic and imperfect but ultimately perfect.

Berls says

I received this book for free from Xpresso Book Tours in exchange for an honest review. This does not affect my opinion of the book or the content of my review.

My Initial Reaction...

As one of the biggest *Pride and Prejudice* (*P&P*) fans out there (I've read the book 17 times in as many years!), *Attempting Elizabeth* was a book I had to read. I was nervous though, since Jessica Grey was going to be taking a lot of license with a story and characters I've grown to love. Not only was she creatively retelling the greatest story ever written, but she was letting her main character go into *P&P* to interact with and be the characters; characters I've grown to know on a very personal level over the years. This could have been a disaster, if Grey didn't know her stuff! But thankfully, she does and every moment inside *P&P* was a treat for me.

The Characters...

Any serious *P&P* fan will realize pretty quickly that Kelsey, the main character from who's point of view *Attempting Elizabeth* is told, is a creative twist on Mr. Darcy. I absolutely loved this, since it was very unexpected. I figured she would be Elizabeth. But Kelsey is the aloof and distant one, who probably seems pretty full of herself to those who don't know her and makes a ridiculously prejudiced judgement about Mark, the love interest in the book. I could easily turn into a crazy fan girl right here pulling up all the little details that Grey managed to work in to really make this characterization work, but I'll simply say Grey knew what she was doing. If you're hyper aware like me, you'll see it. If you're not, you'll still enjoy it, because Kelsey is a lovable character. She's your typical nerdy girl - working on her MA in literature, lover of Star Wars, and lacking any internal filter. She either speaks her mind or shuts down completely (just like Darcy, I might add - which is why he comes off as so proud).

Mark I suppose was supposed to be the modern day twist on Elizabeth. Even though I can make parallels, they aren't as overwhelming for me as the Darcy-Kelsey connections, but I think that's because this isn't his story. Regardless, I did find him to be an immensely likable character. First off, he's hot. Secondly, he has an Aussie accent. So on a very superficial level, he's great. But behind the surface, he's just this really sweet, friendly guy. He's a history teacher, who loves what he does. He and Kelsey get off on the wrong foot, though and you can't help but wonder if they'll ever get it right. Even though I was convinced that this was a *P&P* retelling, enough was different that I was still not sure how things would develop. I knew I hoped they'd make it work, because I really liked Mark and I hoped he'd give her a few more chances to get it right.

The Story...

When we meet Kelsey she's getting over a bad breakup. Her boyfriend - Jerkface Jordan as he's affectionately called - had an affair and Kelsey is realizing that she seems to always hook up with the George Wickhams (the womanizer of *P&P*) of the world. It's put her into a bad mood and all she wants to do is lose herself in a good book. Her best friend, Tori (who is pretty much Bingley if any *P&P* fans were wondering), insists that she come with her to a party. This party will make *P&P* fans giddy with all the parallels to THE ball where Darcy and Lizzy first meet. It's at this party that Kelsey meets Mark and judges him because he's slinging drinks. And that he overhears her making rude remarks about him to Tori. (Like I said, giddy!) Anyway Kelsey's put her foot in her mouth and after that whenever they're thrown together (which is often since Tori is dating one of his friends) things are awkward.

One time, when Kelsey isn't obsessing about how much she's messed things up with Mark, whom she can't seem to get out of her head, she sits down to read *P&P* and falls asleep reading a scene about Darcy's sister Georgiana. And she ends up in that scene, as Georgiana. I loved this tip into *P&P* since Kelsey is trying to figure out what's happened to her and decides to tell off some characters that I think every *P&P* fan has wanted to tell off at least once. You also wonder how in the world she's going to get out of the book, because she's definitely stuck in the wrong body. She needs to be Elizabeth, not Darcy's sister! I won't tell you how, but she manages to get out and she tries going in over and over so that she can be Elizabeth. This turns out to be difficult and I had a blast wondering if she'd ever manage it, seeing her appear as different characters, and falling into memorable scenes from my favorite book. Grey has written this so well that if you're a *P&P* fan you'll immediately know what's going on, but if you aren't, there's enough detail and explanation that you'll have no trouble following.

Concluding Sentiments...

So if it's not ridiculously clear by now, I loved this book. I'm having a seriously hard time restraining myself from talking about all the parallels and neat twists on such a classic book. It's an original enough love story that you don't have to love *Pride and Prejudice* to enjoy it (hell, you don't have to have even read it). But, if like me, you're a huge fan, this will be non-stop fun. I think I may be rereading this alongside my annual re-read of *P&P* from now on!

Leslie says

Is an interesting P&P sci-fi what if that has the main character, Kelsey, able to jump into scenes from Pride and Prejudice. Become a character and inhabit that character's world. Her first accidental immersion she becomes Georgiana at Ramsgate, giving us insight into the scenes JA didn't write. It is a little bit Ground Hog's day in that if she significantly deviates from the approved plot she will have to go back and do it over until she gets it right. She spends a lot of time as Georgiana until she figures out how to 'write herself out' of the book. You would think once bitten, twice shy but our intrepid heroine wants to be Lizzy so she jumps into the book again and again, once ending up as Lydia and the next as Caroline Bingley. But finally she gets it right and gets to be Lizzy at Rosings. But then she somehow pulls her modern dream guy, Mark into her 'experience' and he not being an Austen fan girl begins screwing up the story. Eventually she and he find their way out

What I wasn't thrilled with

The main character Kelsey she is a 23 year old college student from a well off family living in the 21st century. But she is awkward and tongue tied around men. She is a self professed nerd but then tries to pretend she isn't. She gets all nervous around the hot guy in her timeline, Mark, and is trying to keep her real self hidden. So like I said she is modern, do real modern women still act like this? In 2017 if you are a nerd into zombie films and light bondage there's a dating site for you. We fly our freak flags proudly. I can't imagine not wanting a guy to know I was a huge Star Wars fan or that I liked Die Hard. There's even a line in the book where one of the modern day male characters says "I don't know a lot of girls who like Die Hard" Seriously I've never met a women who didn't like Die Hard. It is one of my favorite Christmas films, Die hard, Lethal Weapon, Gremlins and National Lampoons Christmas Vacation. But Kelsey gets all weird around guys like its 1810 and if she doesn't marry she will live in the hedgerows. She also starts the book by saying she seems to only date Wickhams. Maybe you are getting shitty guys because you are trying to conform to what you think guys want rather than what you really are and it's karma. Or since you are lying about yourself you are getting liars back. If you are old enough to live on your own, be in graduate school you are old enough to be yourself, its a hard act to follow.

Myra (Pieces of Whimsy) says

Review first published on my blog, *Pieces of Whimsy*

I adore Pride and Prejudice so when I read the synopsis for this novel I immediately wanted to read it! And I'm glad I did.

I really liked the different views we got of Pride and Prejudice, thinking about the story from other characters' point of views. Just like Kelsey, I've read P&P numerous times and I didn't pick up on the name similarities between George and Georgiana. I think it would have been quite amusing to read about George and Georgiana Wickham (if they'd married). ;)

I liked Kelsey, and though some of her flaws and the stupid things she did grated on my nerves I still found her to be a likable heroine and I was definitely rooting for her and Mark! I would've liked more of a back story for her character. We got a few bits here and there, but I didn't feel like I really knew her. But, I could definitely relate with her awkwardness around Mark and her geeky loves!

Mark was awesome! He was sexy as hell and had a great personality to boot, the only problem I had with him was his Australian accent. I live in Australia and though I know a lot of other people (non-Australians) find the accent sexy, having to listen to it all the time really puts you off. This didn't make me like the book any less, it's just odd for me to see the words 'sexy' and 'Australian accent' in the same sentence. No offence to any Aussie accent lovers out there!

I really enjoyed the plot, I wish I could be sucked into P&P, at least for a little while! A few bits were quite predictable, when Darcy began acting strangely I knew what was up, but that didn't take away from the story at all. This was a fairly quick read and the story was nice, I especially loved the fantasy, book-entering, parts!

Now, all this talk of P&P has made me book-hungry! Guess I'm gonna have to reread it again..!
