



Spies and Prejudice

Talia Vance

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Fields' Rule #1: Don't fall for the enemy.

Berry Fields is not looking for a boyfriend. She's busy trailing cheaters and liars in her job as a private investigator, collecting evidence of the affairs she's sure all men commit. And thanks to a pepper spray incident during an eighth grade game of spin the bottle, the guys at her school are not exactly lining up to date her, either.

So when arrogant—and gorgeous—Tanner Halston rolls into town and calls her “nothing amazing,” it's no loss for Berry. She'll forget him in no time. She's more concerned with the questions surfacing about her mother's death.

But why does Tanner seem to pop up everywhere in her investigation, always getting in her way? Is he trying to stop her from discovering the truth, or protecting her from an unknown threat? And why can't Berry remember to hate him when he looks into her eyes?

With a playful nod to Jane Austen, *Spies and Prejudice* will captivate readers as love and espionage collide.

Spies and Prejudice Details

Date : Published June 11th 2013 by EgmontUSA (first published January 1st 2013)

ISBN :

Author : Talia Vance

Format : Kindle Edition 304 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Mystery, Romance, Contemporary, Spy Thriller, Espionage, Retellings

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From Reader Review Spies and Prejudice for online ebook

Melanie says

2.5 stars

Thank you Egmont USA for sending me this copy. No compensation was given or take to alter this review.

"I don't get paid to have fun. I get paid for proof."

The first impression I got from this book was the title. *Mission impossible* theme song immediately went off in my head. So if we were to go with that mysterious, tense music, Spies and Prejudice fell short of what I was hoping for. I'm no fan of titles that are a mock up of classics, yet somehow, I decided to pick it up and see what I'd think.

Mixed with quirky names, humour, mystery and a complicated romance, Spies and Prejudice was somewhat just satisfying enough to keep me reading the entire time. By no means dauntingly horrible or fantastically flawless, this is a book fans of Veronica Mars will be yearning for. After all, what could possibly go wrong in a teen spy novel?

Strawberry Fields lost her mother when she was eight years old. It was always ruled out to be a tragic accident. But what happens when Berry finds a document that may discuss otherwise? As the mystery becomes more confusing, we come across the unnerving Tanner who is practically stalking Berry at every turn. Could he possibly has something to do with this mystery?

Berry, our main character was a tolerable character, but no means my favourite. Her personality was solid, filled with sassiness, humour and straight forward. Normally, I'm no fan of this mix but Vance drew Berry's character far better than my first impression. She doesn't care about the small issues or her looks, she cares about the life changing and significant segments of life which I appreciated.

Another point I relatively enjoyed was the connections between Berry and her best friend, Mary Chris Moss (get it?!) as well as between her father. For this best friend relationship, it wasn't all sunshines and cupcakes, we had a point where the connection was rather tense and shaky which could only outline the authentic-y of them. Berry and her father, seemed like a normal father-daughter connection at the beginning, but like the best friend one, there are so many more layers to explore and feel for.

Our love interest, Tanner pretty much shows up first thing in the book. Snarky, arrogant and teasing, I wasn't exactly shipping this couple at all. It's a bit like angst to a less horrifying level. The chemistry between them felt rather surreal to me and I was just not feeling much, unfortunately.

Spies and Prejudice was rather disappointing but still bearable. Despite my distance with the romance, Tanner and idea, a pretty good shot. Recommended to people who are looking for a cute, light read. (I know, a million people have said it but its true!)

Lulufrances says

This book is utterly endearing.

I honestly don't know why the average rating is so low.

This might be a solid 4 star read for me usually but somehow I got really attached to this story.

I had to give it 5 and I regret nothing :D

It's the perfect mix of Stephanie Plum meets Enthusiasm (one of my all time favourite books) and a nice dose of Pride and Prejudice.

Add a very lovable cast (apart from maybe one or two exceptions but, *hello*, someone has to be the villain) and an interesting plot and hey: you've got a great novel!

Seriously, this had all sorts of elements in one and it was such a refreshing read!

I recommend this :)

Victoria Scott says

Before I read SPIES AND PREJUDICE, I felt like I was sleep walking through books. But Talia Vance's writing style has a way of grabbing you by the shoulders and shaking you awake. Her characters feel as real as your own family, and her voice crackles with energy.

I enjoyed absolutely everything about SPIES AND PREJUDICE, but the thing I loved most was the edge-of-your seat ending. I can't wait to see what Vance comes up with next!

Bry says

Inspiration is a tricky thing - seeing something, hearing something, watching something - all of these things can jump start new, excited, and completely original ideas. It can also lead to some good ideas that may not be original but are still totally worthwhile as fan fiction where the author acknowledges the original inspiration.

I think this book would have been so much better if it had just tried to stand on its own feet with a few tweaks to make it a bit more original. My problems at the beginning of this book was that I could not stop comparing it to the television show Veronica Mars which is also about a blonde in high school whose mom is gone, works for her dad's PI business, has a big dog and a brainy girl friend and a goofy boy friend. At the same time it was marketed as making a playful nod towards Pride and Prejudice by having 2 guys - one stuck up and one fun and playful - the stuck up even insults the main character to the fun one and of course she overhears it. Thankfully the Pride and Prejudice hintings end by about the first quarter of the book. The Veronica Mars ones continue for about 3/4's though before the book attempts to be its own.

I like fan fiction, I read a lot of it, I do, but this was so off. It was marketed as one major franchise when it actually took after another which was not acknowledged at all.

ALL OF THAT ASIDE....the story was okay I guess. It had tons of cliché moments and unbelievable moments. And then there was the plot. I mean let's start with the fact that the plot supposedly hinges on the death of Berry's mother, but in reality it centered around the production of an energy drink. Such a lame plot

line. The sad part though was the plot holes you could drive a truck through.

(view spoiler)

Ug....and SO MANY MORE. Also the names. Holy hell. The 2 main girl characters were Strawberry Fields (she went by Berry and supposedly her mother was a HUGE Beatles fan) and Mary Chris Moss (say it out loud...I'll wait...did you do it? Are you disgusted? I am. Apparently she was born on Christmas Eve and the author claims that her parents had a wicked sense of humor - WHICH THE FATHER NEVER DISPLAYS IN THE REST OF THE DAMN BOOK).

DESPITE EVERYTHING - I admit I kinda enjoyed it. Don't get me wrong, it has a lot of issues, and needs a lot of plot points filled and downright changed, but it was a crazy easy way to pass the time on my bus trip from Boston to New York. I won't read any sequel that might come out though (not that I think there would be one since, well see Spoiler #9 above).

Hmmmm that whole review came out a bit more harsh than I thought it would...didn't realize it had gotten to me that much!

Darkphoenix says

Update:

I finally finished it and it was pretty disappointing and not particularly memorable.

The blurb kinda reminds me of Veronica Mars.. Is it just me or have others also felt the same????

Update:

I'm gonna stick with the original inspirations: Veronica Mars and Pride and Prejudice.. I'll probably come back to this book and read it again because i was very impatient when i did read it. but not anytime soon..

Ash Wednesday says

3 STARS

This may have been an Inception moment. Because it sure feels like I just read a book about the movie in Tammara Webber's book about an adaptation of Pride and Prejudice in high school except this had a side serving of Veronica Mars and no Reid Alexander in sight (boo!).

Instead we have Strawberry Fields (don't worry she was just mostly Berry in this book), a high school junior who helps out in her dad's Private Investigation firm following cheating husbands and boyfriends alike. She was on a stakeout with her friend, ~~Jane~~ Mary Chris, when they run into the new guys in school Ryan (Mr. Bingsley) and Tanner (Mr. Darcy). Pride and Prejudice shenanigans ensue interspersed with Berry running into a trail of clues that may lead to the ever elusive truth about her mother's death.

I'm pretty sure modern adaptation of anything is a kiss of death on any book. Especially when you announce it with the title. This would've been an easier sell if it didn't. It's almost like this was asking for some hurt. I'm not a hard core Jane Austen fan but however brilliant you may "adapt" the scene, it will always come sub-par to the original.

Which is a pity because despite the story's predictability, it was a pretty entertaining read... When Berry and Tanner weren't being annoying asshats to each other. True, it does become distracting when while the story is unfolding, I'm playing connect the dots with P&P figuring out who's who and what scene is a mirror of what, but there was enough original ideas mixed in to keep me interested. The dialogue was believable, the humor wasn't forced (courtesy of Jason, the gay friend) and the cheese was kept to the barest minimum (Pemberley? Really?).

Midway through, the P&P parallels took a back seat for the spy stuff. I did like that it didn't take the predictable route with regards to the case but it did get a little confusing with the addition of Drew in the mix who felt like a forced Mr. Wickham. There were a lot of wtf's in the mystery of Berry's mother's death particularly (view spoiler). Though I found it funny that a recurring witness was getting paid tens and thousands of dollars by the big players when she willingly spilled to Berry for the price of a makeover and 80 dollars worth of moisturizers.

I used to like heroines like Berry. My 15-year old self would read her as a strong and independent girl. And having issues that damaged her enough to push people away by hitting or pepper spraying them gives her depth. I used to be charmed when the brooding, hot guy sweeps her off her feet, fixing all her damaged parts little by little, smirk by smirk, kiss by kiss.

Thirty-something me would just see her as a bitch acting out on all her drama. What happened to just being nice? The implausibility of a guy like Tanner adds salt to injury. We all know guys won't understand you at first sight, and try to fix you and fall in love with you when you act out on your crazy because you took him to mini-golf and laser tag. That's bullcrap. There's a romantic somewhere in the dark depths of my soul (really, there is) but I refuse to be fed this trope anymore than I already swallowed in my foolish youth.

I would probably give this a higher rating if the P&P reference was kept in the blurb and out of the title. And recommend to mature readers of this genre who may have some hankering for a novelized CW teen drama.

Copy provided by Egmont USA via Netgalley in exchange for an unbiased, honest review.

Vampire-lk says

3.5 stars!!!!

I loved the modern take on this beloved classic story!!!! I was laughing & loving piecing together who everyone was in this plot line!!!! Pemberley is the security firm's name that is clever placing the classic names in modern context!!!!!! Though all it's faults towards ending being rushed I felt like it was a great nod

to the classic!! I wanted to know about who Drew worked for & why?! Especially the part about her mother it feels like a loose end & an unnatural cliffhanger with no chance of sequel so that played a huge role in why I only rated it so so compared to earlier updated that I loved the novel! I still do which is why one should read it if they love the Austin classic! Just the ending as I said fell flat & that had a bad impact on the overall consensus of this novel! I read anything to do with Austin or the Brontë sisters!!!! Remakes are suppose to be a bit different anyways so it was overall ok!

Jacob Proffitt says

Good book. Well written, interesting characters, exciting plot. I think it might have done better, though, if it hadn't invoked *Pride and Prejudice*. Even if that isn't taken as a challenge or a reason to find fault or a way to setup comparisons the author is unlikely to be able to deliver, it still functions as an invitation to find similarities, parallels, and match elements of the book to one of the greats--and that just isn't going to go well.

Which is a real shame in this instance because the story really is outstanding and the characters are interesting (and earn that interest in the face of comparisons to *Pride and Prejudice*) and the plot is a whole lot of fun. If it had stood on its own and let readers merely suspect that it was cribbing elements from Austen, I feel its score here would be much higher and I *know* that my own rating would be at least one star and possibly two better.

Unfortunately, having that comparison in mind robbed me of a lot of anticipation by giving away some plot and character development elements and thus ruining the buildup and neutering key reveals. And I couldn't help picking apart all the ways the story *isn't at all* like Austen (like dialogue, setting, and pacing--not to mention many story elements as well). (view spoiler)

In the end, the book is far more *Veronica Mars* than it is anything else and would have done a lot better invoking that comparison rather than one it had no hope of living up to...

Heather says

****This is an ARC review. Any excerpts and quotes are taken from an advance copy and are therefore subject to change before the final print****

Meet Strawberry (Berry) Fields (clearly mom and dad were Beatles fans.) Berry is a savvy high schooler who moonlights at her dad's private investigation firm. She's so good at catching philandering spouses and insurance scammers that her dad has let her stake out and handle her own jobs since she was fourteen. They key is to be dogged, super observant, and have a knack for guessing what the target's move will be before (s)he makes it. And being a teenager is actually a bonus, because nobody ever pays attention to kids. Berry's best friend Mary Chris Moss (yes, that name does read Merry Christmas) is the Q to Berry's James Bond, coming up with clever gadgets to help Berry catch her mark in the act.

But when Berry accidentally witnesses Mary Chris's father exchanging what looks to be secret information regarding the suicide of Berry's mother a couple of years earlier, Berry finds herself in a very tough spot. She needs to know why Mr. Moss is discussing her mom's death, a death that Berry and her dad have struggled to

believe was a suicide from the start. Berry doesn't want to betray her best friend but until she knows more about what Mr. Moss is up to, she keeps quiet and does some digging on her own.

Spies and Prejudice is a light, cute, perfect for summertime read. The blurb says that it is a "playful nod to Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*" and it is, to a degree. There are a few similarities but this book reminded me much more of Ally Carter's *Heist Society* books with teenage spies instead of teenage con artists and thieves.

There is a cast of fun characters, with the most developed being protagonist Berry. I liked Berry a lot. She was no nonsense and serious about things, but she was also a teenage girl who misses her mom. She was a loyal friend to Mary Chris, even when she made some stupid decisions that in turn negatively impacted their friendship. It was nice to read a character that wasn't completely angst ridden and ruled by her emotions, yet still acted like a teenage girl.

The plot was entertaining, there were parts that I easily predicted but others that I didn't. There is a good amount of action and the pacing remained constant. *Spies and Prejudice* turned out to be a quick read because of this.

There is a romance written in. Like *Pride and Prejudice* there are two persons of interest, Tanner and Drew, but it's clear from the start which boy Berry is crazy about, even when she denies it loudly to everyone around her including herself. I actually enjoyed both the male leads. Both are keeping secrets and it was fun to try and guess who was being the most genuine and who had the best intentions when it came to Berry.

Vance's writing was great. It was a smooth read and the dialogue was authentic, well, authentic for a teenage spy book:)

Overall I enjoyed the book. Was it mind blowing in complexity or did it have tremendous stick-with-you-until-the-day-you-die characters or romance? No, not really. But it was entertaining, it was light and it was a good book to read between really heavy, emotional books.

No idea if this is a standalone or the first in a planned series, and the book has a definite solid ending (no cliffhangers.) There are some revelations towards the end that lead me to believe there could be more to the story if the author chooses to move forward. We'll see. Fans of teenage caper stories or those looking for a quick and enjoyable beach read would enjoy this one for sure:)

Kim says

Pride and Prejudice meets spies? HELL YEAH. When I first heard about Talia Vance's *Spies and Prejudice* my first thought was, "How is this the first time someone's thought of this?!" With the ever-growing popularity of James Bond and other spy thrillers, it makes sense that we introduce the world of young adult readers to Jane Austen's most popular work with exploding tennis bracelets and walkie-talkie watches. Teens imagining a world of corporate espionage that they can take part in!? I'd say you've caught them as readers - hook, line, and sinker.

As a private investigator, Berry Fields has seen it all. She specializes in cheaters, men who have affairs and

think that they can get away with it. Within her own personal life she has little use for men. This is partially because of her profession and partially because of a spin the bottle incident in eighth grade that left her as somewhat of an outcast after pepper spraying a boy in the face. So, when the handsome Tanner Halston catches her eye, she immediately dismisses him, as is her usual standard procedure. This is fine for Tanner, who calls Berry "nothing amazing." However, despite this seemingly nonchalant attitude that they share, both Berry and Tanner seem to be running into each other more and more often as Berry attempts to investigate her mother's mysterious death. Will she be able to stay focused or will Tanner's insistence on barging into her activities drive her crazy?

First and foremost I have to give Vance major kudos for not beginning *Spies and Prejudice* with a variation of the opening line of *Pride and Prejudice*. As much as I love *P&P*, I feel like the continued use of its opening line is no longer creative or unique. Therefore, when I tell you that I enjoyed this book from page one you'll know I'm not lying. Berry (the Elizabeth of the story) is a lot of fun. She's quirky, smart, and an awesome PI. Her investigating methods are not always the most morally correct actions, but she does what she has to for her cases. Tanner (the Darcy) is definitely adorable and completely socially awkward.

I have to say - *Spies and Prejudice* is an extremely enjoyable read. It's a cleaned up version of *P&P*. What I mean by this is that it's been modernized and anything deemed too extraneous has been cut out. What's left is a fast paced spy thriller complete with spies, gadgets, explosives, mystery, and danger! One slight detraction was that there were times that I felt the characters' spying/hacking abilities were slightly unrealistic, but this didn't derail the adventurous spirit of the novel. The story flows quite well from page to page, making it difficult to put down. It's the perfect book for your teen to bring to the beach this summer!

Kimberly (Reflections of a Book Addict)
Originally Posted: <http://wp.me/p18IIL-1OJ>

Misty says

Slightly under a 4, I guess? I had some issues with believability, but that didn't stop me from enjoying the hell out of this.

Video review on this one:

Jill says

yes yes yes yes yes YES!

This is one of the best spy books I have ever read for several reasons.

1. Berry is AMAZING, and she's not one of those girls who knows she's pretty and uses it, more like the opposite.
2. She doesn't just fall for Tanner, heck, she doesn't even trust him.
3. Tanner has the whole tall, dark, and handsome thing down.
4. They have all this cool spy gadget stuff, but not in the cheap way.
5. There are so many characters that are great, then you want to kill some, feel sorry for some, and just generally be involved with their lives.
6. The author has a interesting sense of humor with the main girl characters names.

7. The whole plot keeps moving and at the end you left thinking, "Wait, What?" (From shock not confusion)
8. Its not at all what you would expect, but in a good way.
9. Lulu is so freaking adorable. (The dog)
10. IT IS A BOOK ABOUT SPIES!!!

Please read this book. Despite one paragraph that was a little odd (like in any good book), this book is b-e-a-utiful and it was really fun to read.

Sophie Riggsby / allthingsequilateral says

Review and Giveaway posted on Page Turners Blog on 6/3/2013

I think by now you guys realize how much I love Jane Austen and, of course, I may also have a slight ~~obsession~~ fascination with spies. So imagine my delight when I saw that a favorite author of mine Talia Vance (author of the *Bandia* series) wrote something that was titled *Spies & Prejudice*. If you assume I filed that under: #whee; you were right.

So then as I started to read it, I realized that yes, there was that familiar plot rhythm from my beloved *Pride & Prejudice*. Perhaps there was more so a familiarity in the cast of characters, but to my surprise this was a mystery plot. And I loooooove those especially when they involve corporate espionage, and when a number of characters are potential suspects. The mystery in question is one that grabbed me from the start – was Berry's mom's death really a murder? I immediately understood why the spy-savvy Berry couldn't let that case drop until she found out the absolute truth.

So, let's talk about Berry. I love a super-smart protagonist and one that can think on her feet. I'm not going to be the only pointing this out, but if you loved Veronica Mars' character as much as I did, just wait until you meet Berry. She's inexhaustible in her search to find out the truth and along the way, she will drop her share of snarky remarks. A good spy story always has a great secondary cast of characters and in Mare and Jason you will find the kind of support that is found only in the deepest of friendships. There's one more thing that Talia adds and it's the feeling of loss. Her mother's death left Berry fighting so hard to hold onto memories, those concrete ones of her mom that appear to be slipping away every day. These moments are so well written that they add a depth to the story that I simply didn't expect. But, they are also the moments that made Berry feel like a real person to me.

And then, there's the romance. I know what you're thinking where, oh, where is Darcy? I think I could write a thesis on the subject of this classic character and the sighs he's inspired. I also think Talia already submitted this thesis because she writes the Tanner and Berry scenes so beautifully. In fact, there's this wonderful awkward scene where Tanner inadvertently wounds Berry with an insult that caused me to recall one of my favorite scenes in P&P. In a nod to the classic, the romantic tension between Berry and Tanner certainly scorches off the page.

Turn on that fan, pour yourself a glass of iced tea and sit back and read this adorable, tension-filled mystery. Berry Fields is now one of my favorite spy girls. And Tanner, well umm, just wait until you meet him.

Valerie says

So the beginning had promise. I wanted so much to like this and I even told myself that I should try not to compare it too much to *Pride and Prejudice*, but I did. I feel like the the whole P&P aspect of the book was placed just so there would be some sort of tension between the main couple. If I hadn't thought to compare it to P&P then I *might* have given it more credit. However, I still don't think I would've loved it.

The basic gist of it is that Berry spies for clients (of her father's) who think their spouses are cheating on them. In comes Tanner and his brother; she doesn't like him because she called her nothing amazing or something to that effect. Then there is a sort of mystery with her mother, what *really* happened to her? Berry wants to find out.

Berry says when she first sees Tanner that his looks make him arrogant, a prime cheater, etc. She acts like she is above his good looks but then seems to like him solely on physical attraction. How does that work? She stops reminding me of Elizabeth after about a quarter of the way through. She does something in particular with her friend Jane that, I felt, was not at all what Elizabeth would be like. Even if I were to drop the comparison, I still wouldn't have liked what she did to Jane. I know that sounds vague but I'm trying to make this spoiler free.

I would've like to see Berry spend more time with Jane doing spy stuff and less time hating/lusting over Tanner. The whole *I need to find out about my mother* bit was not handled (in my opinion) very well. Some aspects were interesting but Berry just got on my nerves.

Nafiza says

I really liked *Silver* by Talia Vance so I snatched this up at ALA midwinter. I thought it was a retelling but the person at the booth told me it had more to do with spies than the Jane Austen novel. Which didn't bother me at all because I really like spy stories and for the most part, I liked this one too.

I liked Strawberry Fields and her best friend Mary Chris Moss (not joking, those are their names). I liked the love interest and I liked the how vulnerable Berry was despite her badass fronting. The book is fluff, pure entertainment. It could have been a lot more. Had the pace been slowed down and the author taken more time to develop both the character and the narrative, the novel could have had a lot more substance. The pace is too fast. Things happen at a dizzying speed.

I did like how Berry's mistreatment of her best friend is addressed and there are certain consequences. I did not like the fact that the boy best friend is half-Japanese and gay. Not because I have trouble with his ethnicity or his sexual orientation but because it is so common to have the requisite POC character as a best friend and a gay best friend is the oldest plot device ever.

Also the plot is rather thin with gaping holes that appear when you question it. However, honestly, this is pure entertainment. If you don't question the details and just read it for fun, you will be satisfied. Tanner is pretty hot. And the friendship between the girls is really strong and heartwarming. So if you have time and want to read something fun, this may be it for you.
