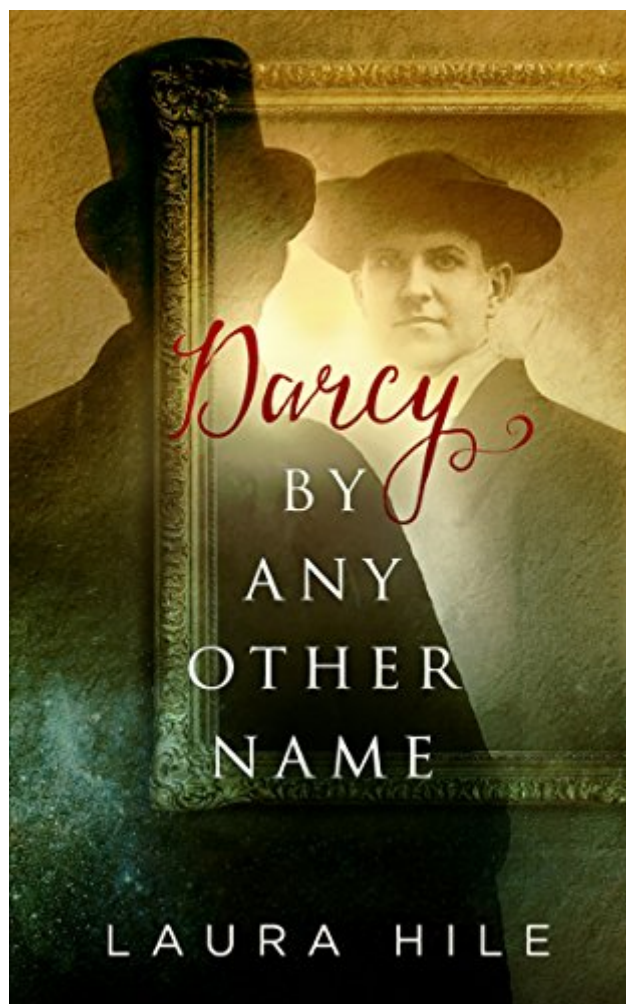


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Darcy By Any Other Name



Synopsis

At Netherfield, a glorious evening of music and dancing...But out in the garden two men are arguing, while a ferocious rainstorm swirls round. And then the unthinkable happens: a lightning bolt from heaven strikes. In that instant everything changes. Jane Austen's heartthrob hero becomes the bumbling Reverend Collins. Shorn of his fortune, his social standing, and his good looks, Mr. Darcy is trapped in Mr. Collins's body. And Mr. Collins wakes up to discover that he is master of Pemberley. Could there be anything worse? But the inner man is still Darcy. He is in love with Elizabeth Bennet. And now he is living in her house. Discover the Pride and Prejudice "body swap" that has readers laughing in surprise and delight.

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Customer Reviews

Oh boy. Where do I begin? Look I've read Ms. Hile's other works, so I knew there was a strong chance I'd like the book. But the supernatural... at Netherfield? Can't say I was confident that I'd LOVE it. I knew I'd like it. But love? Well, judge for yourself. I found out about the book and bought it. For later. But I got curious. So I read a chapter. Two. Four. SIX. I finally made myself put it away for

my own writing. Read seven and eight. Then I started using it as incentive. A chapter for every scene of my own I finished. Yeah. I know. Pathetic, right? But while you can put aside a "good" story, a great one takes over. I spent all afternoon devouring this book. It was, in a word, amazing! I couldn't put it down. When Kindle Cloud Reader SIGNED ME OUT at the climax, I almost created household panic with my growls and squeals. No. Joke. So what is so great about this book? I'll tell you. I'm obliging that way. Ms. Hile managed to take a very modern idea (Freaky Friday) and interject it into a familiar setting and all without making it seem hokey or ridiculous. She made me believe this happened--that the odious Collins and supercilious Darcy swapped bodies! She made me believe they were stuck there. She made me believe things that just don't fit. If that's not great writing, I don't know what is. There were tiny incongruities to the writing--turns of phrases that while probably period accurate (she is quite adept at her research) felt modern. In any other book, I might have knocked a star off for them. Or half a star. Maybe. But when I finished this book, I was so utterly thrilled and satisfied, the idea of giving it anything less than 5 stars--why, I cannot think of it without abhorrence.

I picked this up after reading the sample, intending to just get the flavor of more of the story before returning to another book I was already reading, but a funny thing happened. I never stopped reading! It just grabbed hold of me and wouldn't let go. It is NOT a short book, but I read it in one sitting and just loved it all. When Darcy and Mr. Collins both are struck by lightning and severely injured the night of the Netherfield ball, a Freaky Friday transformation occurs. When he finally wakes up, Darcy is confused to find himself apparently at Longbourn listening to the Bennet sisters talking and giggling in his bedroom. He gradually comes to the realization that his consciousness is trapped in Mr. Collins' body. He has no wealth, no prestige, he's a nobody in society, and he's already pegged as a fool by everyone in the Bennet household except Mrs. Bennet and Mary. However, the one advantage that he finds in this position is his proximity to Elizabeth and the fact that Mrs. Bennet encourages her to spend time with him. Certain as he is that his condition must be temporary, at first he attempts to mimic Collins' behavior, but gradually, as he becomes less optimistic about ever becoming "himself" again, his own personality asserts itself. This situation alone has lots of potential, and Ms. Hile ups the ante in many ways. She sends Lady Catherine to Netherfield to watch over her injured nephew, and then there's a snowstorm that prevents Darcy from getting to Netherfield to confer with Collins and strands Anne deBourgh at Longbourn for several days. Anne becomes bosom buddies with Lydia and Kitty, and you know that's not going to lead to anything good! Another medical problem emerges at Longbourn.

I first learned of this story as I discovered, followed and read Laura Hile's blogs about the elements of a good rom-com. She included many excerpts from this story, a Work-In-Progress, as she talked about each element on a separate blog. It was with great anticipation and finally with much satisfaction that I read this delightful story. As several other reviews warn: please allow a large block of uninterrupted time for reading as this tale is one you will not want to put down. (I was in my pajamas all day and had nothing on my calendar.) I have not read any other books by this author but will now have to do so as I find her writing to be first rate. Yes, Mr. Collins and Mr. Darcy are struck by lightning the night of the Netherfield Ball and wake up in the other's body and place of residence. Darcy awakens first and after determining what has happened walks, yes, walks, to Netherfield to warn Collins about this calamity and behaviors that will be expected in presenting himself as someone else in a believable manner. Changes in circumstances as to wardrobes is one of the facets of comedy herein. It is oh, so funny, to read how each now has to manage, especially Darcy. Part of what you may find surprising in this novel are the ethics displayed by a man of the cloth. While Darcy in settling into his new role also settles into a new relationship with Elizabeth and the others in residence at Longbourn (love the interaction with Hill) he never drops the honor in his actions. And he also, in having no promise that this new situation will ever correct itself, finds a way to plan for the future of the Bennet ladies. It was also very interesting to read of how Darcy tried to look for lessons from the Almighty in being struck by lightning.

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