



Lady Catherine's Necklace

Joan Aiken , Jane Austen (Creator)

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Joan Aiken, one of Jane Austen's most sparkling successors, takes up Austen's pen yet again, this time continuing where *Pride and Prejudice* left off in *Lady Catherine's Necklace*.

In Austen's classic novel, the arrogant Lady Catherine de Bourgh tried vehemently to prevent the betrothal of her nephew Mr. Darcy, whom she had intended for her daughter Anne, to the less socially connected Elizabeth Bennet. Defeated, she retreats to her grand estate-- Rosings Park. This enchanting sequel tells the story of what happens one balmy April day when a sudden blizzard disrupts the weather, causes a carriage accident, and affects the lives of all those involved in a most amazing way.

From out of the blizzard emerge the Delaval siblings. Miss Delaval, having twisted her ankle in the carriage accident, accepts Lady Catherine's gracious hospitality while she recovers. But the Delavals' presence proves disturbing to the entire household-- first causing the removal of two artists from their cottage home on the de Bourgh property, then meddling in Miss Anne's marriage plans. Suddenly, Lady Catherine is kidnapped, revealing some members of the household to be not at all what they seemed.

Lady Catherine's Necklace Details

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Emily says

i enjoyed the interpretation of the Lady Catherine de Burgh in this book and her daughter Ann. It gave them more humanity and likeability then Pride and Prejudice.

Jenine says

What happens to Jane Austen's minor characters after the events of Pride and Prejudice? What audacity. Lacking consistency of character and plausible plot but what a hoot.

Rachel says

I didn't enjoy this story anywhere near as much as I did "Jane Fairfax" by this author. I have always loved the Pride and Prejudice book, but this extended story didn't live up to expectations. Joan Aiken didn't grow the characters (Maria Lucas, Anne de Burgh, Colonel Fitzwilliam, and Lady Catherine de Burgh) as much as was needed. I was interested in two new characters, a brother and sister who end up at Rosings estate, but they ended up being a dissapointment before halfway through the book, and didn't add anything interesting to the rest of the book. The plot was VERY weak and didn't drive the story along as it should have. And there was a very weird, unexpected ending – everything was tied up on the last few pages in a very sloppy way. A dissapointing and dull story overall.

GSGS says

The front cover looked so elegant. Then I saw the words "Jane Austen" and I was all,

YEP!!!

Then having borrowed it, I realised that it was calling itself a "Pride and Prejudice sequel". And then my face kind of went all :/

Because really? P&P Sequel??? That doesn't raise my expectations to ridiculously high levels or anything.

All I'm saying is that this book could've just stood on its own without the "P&P Sequel" thing propping it up. They could've had totally new characters and it would've been fine.

As it was, I found the plot rather... dreary... and not at all realistic...

And it was just OK. I'll have forgotten all about it in a month's time.

So yeah.

Nikki says

Janeites are quite prone to rereading the six books she completed during her brief lifetime, and some of us can't be satisfied with that. Joan Aiken is one of several authors who have imagined either "what came next" or mysteries with the characters from Austen's books. In this one, the characters from *Pride and Prejudice* must deal with the disappearance of a necklace belonging to the obnoxious and snobbish Lady Catherine de Bourgh. A good effort and enjoyable, although not without anachronisms.

Wealththeow says

Kidnapping! Stolen diamonds! Suicide! Secret bastards! Secrets in attics! And yet, terribly dull. There is absolutely no point to this book, which supposedly continues the story of Catherine de Bourgh and her relations and hangers-on. I say supposedly because not only was this book dull, but *none* of the characters match their namesakes in *Pride and Prejudice*. Maria Lucas, who was last a shy girl overawed by Rosings, is now a sparkling wit akin to Elizabeth Bennet. Anne de Bourgh, latterly an ill, silent enigma, runs around befriending gay painters and doing heavy garden work with her illegitimate half-brother--wait, no, half-sister! Oh the unnecessary plot twists. The new characters are even worse, because they serve no purpose at all. Why does Aiken pay so much attention to the Delaval siblings (carbon copies of the Crawfords in *Mansfield Park*) if absolutely nothing happens due to them? Catherine's brother has Lady Catherine kidnapped so he can search Rosings' attic--and finds his old poems. Idiocy! There is no emotional weight to this story. The various revelations and shocking events go by without any of the characters appearing in the least surprised, let alone affected. A frustrating novel.

Alice-Elizabeth (marriedtobooks) says

My first completed read of 2018!... but it wasn't for me. As a massive Jane Austen fan, seeing in my local library a copy of a sequel to *Pride and Prejudice*, I leapt at the chance since the edition I found was quite pretty. However, during the reading process, it felt extremely disjointed and as a reader, I there wasn't a connection towards any of the main characters. This was marketed at YA so for teen readers but personally because most of the characters were adults, I felt this was better suited in the fiction section and not the teens section. One of the characters Lady Catherine de Burgh I really didn't like, she was first irritable and then weeping the next. By this point in the book (around page 120), I had lost interest.

Will most likely not be reading any more books by this author. The writing style wasn't what I was expecting.

Diane Bowden says

Charming and sharp edged. Aiken on Austen twists ever more so to the folly of humanity. Lovely to see Maria Lucas and Charlotte Collins together. Even better is the maturity of Anne de Bourgh and her triumphant escape to live her own life.

Erica says

I love both Joan Aiken and Jane Austen, so what could go wrong? This book, unlike Aiken's other tributes to Austen, falls flat. It follows Catherine de Bourg-- the nasty, scheming aunt of Darcy from Pride and Prejudice -- and her machinations to get her daughter married.

But instead of following some logical story line, Aiken weaves in various subplots about a gay couple (painters) who live on her estate, a kidnapping and other outlandish tales. It's all wrapped up neatly -- too neatly -- with a happy ending.

I was surprised. Aiken is a masterful storyteller, but this felt forced all the way through. I shall console myself by reading more Austen....

Leslie says

I love Joan Aiken! Lady Catherine's Necklace starts off kinda sweet and slow as molasses in winter. Then folks start misbehaving (in the most classy way of course, this is not a trashy novel). Different characters begin popping up from other Jane Austen novels but the setting is Rosings, the lovely estate of Lady Catherine de Bourgh and the story centers mostly around her, her Weird daughter, Anne, nephew Fitzwilliam and the Collins, including the unmarried Maria Lucas, who really shines. There are a few clever twists and surprises but they never get ridiculous and spoil the story. I found myself grinning ear to ear at the wonderfully unexpected ending. I never saw THAT coming! This is the second Austen inspired work of Aiken's that I've read and I'm delighted to know that the minute I finish writing this review I have another one waiting for me on my iPad. (Thanks Sourcebooks for all the free Jane on her birthday!)

Nichola says

I read this b/c I was impressed by Aiken's Jane Fairfax, and WOW was it a letdown. It is supposed to be a follow up to P&P, but somehow it seems to keep coming back to the gardener, and Anne DeBurgh and... nonsense. Ms Jennings (from S&S) shows up? A pair of gay artists are living in a cottage on the estate? Someone inherits stuff even though they are a girl and were illegitimate? Some one is raised as a boy b/c wet nurses get paid more for boys? Someone runs away to live in a cottage in Wales? These are not Jane Austen's characters, just some folks who have the same names.

Mo says

I find that authors of fan fiction frequently copy the original author quite blatantly. Here are 2 quotes ascribed to Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

"There are few people in England, I suppose, who have more true enjoyment of music than myself, or a better natural taste. If I had ever learnt, I should have been a great proficient. And so would Anne, if her health had allowed her to apply. I am confident that she would have performed delightfully." – Jane Austen, Pride and Prejudice

"She has a pleasing voice, I recall, and is proficient on the pianoforte, almost as proficient as Miss Anne would have been, had her health permitted her to learn the instrument." – Joan Aiken, Lady Catherine's Necklace

I call that lazy writing. The author has already glommed all of the characters, the least she can do is come up with her own dialogue.

Kate says

"As the Bennett family discovered in *Pride and Prejudice*, to be condescended to by Lady Catherine de Bourgh is an experience to be avoided if at all possible. But when Miss Priscilla Delaval and her brother Ralph are left stranded after a carriage accident outside the gates to Rosings Park, Lady Catherine finds herself not entirely averse to these uninvited guests.

"Her ladyship's nephew, Colonel FitzWilliam, is expected, but until then she has only her daughter, Anne, and the egregious Collins for company. But when news arrives of Mr Bennet's death, Mr Collins hastens away to protect his inheritance, leaving his wife alone only days before the birth of their third child. Mrs Collin's sister, Maria Lucas, is on hand to support her, but Maria has her own problems: for Colonel FitzWilliam is promised to Miss Anne, but could it be that Miss Anne's eye is turning elsewhere? And what is Priscilla Delaval up to?"

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Not a very good imitation of our beloved Miss Austen's style, or sense of humor. Miss Delaval is so obvious that her game is gaudily evident from the first few pages. Ralph convinces Lady de Bourgh to make changes on her estate that lead to very unfortunate results, and it almost seems as though the author had to invent this despicable situation to allow for one of the pairings at the end (where everyone -- well almost everyone -- wound up with the one they desired. Fortunately our hero was intelligent enough to recognize Miss Delaval's machinations and remain unimpressed and uncaptured.

It appeared that there were happy endings all round, but a closer examination reveals that one of Miss Austen's beloved characters turned out to have very big feet of clay. That saddened me; I am sentimental when it comes to the Jane Austen characters, and I now think less of this author for having plotted such a revelation of baseness in a hitherto beautiful character.

All in all, I can't recommend this book to any true Janeite, unless he or she is absolutely gasping for a Jane Austen fix.

Jori Richardson says

I normally try to avoid Jane Austen re-writes and sequels, and this book is a perfect example of my reason for doing do.

While it doesn't feature any of the major characters from "Pride & Prejudice," this book does focus on the family members of Darcy, and on the Lady Catherine de Bourgh. The book picks up where Austen's classic left off, and Lady Catherine's daughter Anne is still not married to any rich suitor. Deciding that second-best is better than nothing at all, she arranges for Anne to be married to Fitzwilliam, Darcy's brother.

There were also some bits about mysterious house guests, some romance that interfered with Lady Catherine's plans, and a kidnapping of Lady Catherine herself.

If all of these points sound interesting and you are wondering why I don't go into more detail about them in the plot, it's because they were anything but interesting. In fact, this entire book was decidedly and horribly boring.

It took me nearly a week to finish "Lady Catherine's Necklace," which is the longest I have taken on any book in a long time (besides Jonathan Strange & Mrs. Norrell - but that one was over 1,000 pages). So was this a huge, thick book? No, only 176 pages.

I never noticed anything in particular that was bad about this book, as in, specific points. It was more just a general disinterest in everything written there.

I certainly didn't spot anything good - and I kept looking in vain for just a few slightly redeeming pages, perhaps a pretty description or an insightful speech by a character.

None of the characters jumped out at me, and now only a few days after finishing, I remember most of them by name only, except for Lady Catherine de Bourgh. This, however, is because Austen already gave me such a picture of her. Aiken on the other hand did nothing to further it.

I was amused at how the inside cover of my edition, in praise of Joan Aiken, said that she was the expert of modern Jane Austen writing, and writes just like her, or "in the tone of" Austen. This is an outright lie, so please do not be drawn in. Aiken's shallow writing is nothing like Jane Austen, and nor is it even close.

Yet more false advertising was the title itself. Necklaces had nothing to do with the main storyline.

The plot seems to get wrapped up in itself, or rather tangled up, sending it very often tripping and reeling out of control. At many points I thought "wha...?"

I didn't bother to wonder too long at these instances, however, because I just didn't care.

Every single character could have been abruptly devoured by giant alien robot dinosaurs at the end, and I would have simply tossed it aside with an "eh."

In my opinion, Jane Austen should be left alone. Her works stand as shining literary beacons all by themselves. Please do not waste your time on this one.

End Note - Since this review paints Joan Aiken to be a terrible writer, I felt compelled to add a little note here. Aiken's book "The Wolves of Willoughby Chase" was a beloved favorite of mine as a child. I read it numerous times, and I still look back on it with the warmth that only a girlhood classic can draw up. Please do not let this terrible example of Aiken's writing stop you from rushing out to buy her classic children's tale for your children (or yourself).

Nancy says

Joan Aiken does a great job on an Austen era social-satire/ mystery with Lady Catherine's necklace. Lady Catherine de Bourgh, of Pride and Prejudice, is a bit hard to take (as she was in P&P) but once the story gets rolling, it's a fun ride all the way.
