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Epic Fail



Synopsis

Pride and Prejudice goes Hollywood in this winning romantic comedy inspired by Jane Austen's classic. In her teen fiction debut, the author of *Knitting Under the Influence* goes back to high school for a tale of sisters, misinformation, and star-crossed love. Will Elise's love life be an epic win or an epic fail? At Coral Tree Prep in Los Angeles, who your parents are can make or break you. Case in point: As the son of Hollywood royalty, Derek Edwards is pretty much prince of the school—not that he deigns to acknowledge many of his loyal subjects. As the daughter of the new principal, Elise Benton isn't exactly on everyone's must-sit-next-to-at-lunch list. When Elise's beautiful sister catches the eye of the prince's best friend, Elise gets to spend a lot of time with Derek, making her the envy of every girl on campus. Except she refuses to fall for any of his rare smiles and instead warms up to his enemy, the surprisingly charming social outcast Webster Grant. But in this hilarious tale of fitting in and flirting, not all snubs are undeserved, not all celebrity brats are bratty, and pride and prejudice can get in the way of true love for only so long.

Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: HarperTeen (August 2, 2011)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0061921262

ISBN-13: 978-0061921261

Product Dimensions: 5.3 x 0.7 x 8 inches

Shipping Weight: 8 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.0 out of 5 stars 238 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #441,604 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #58 in *Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Loners & Outcasts* #80 in *Books > Teens > Romance > Romantic Comedy* #383 in *Books > Literature & Fiction > Women's Fiction > Sisters*

Customer Reviews

"Jane Austen fans will have fun finding the clever parallels in this contemporary take on PRIDE AND PREJUDICE, while Austen innocents can just sit back and enjoy the romance." (Polly Shulman, author of *ENTHUSIASM*) "I thoroughly enjoyed this charming tale about the joys and perils of going to school and navigating relationships with the celebrity set and their complicated offspring. Claire LaZebnik has done anything but fail." (Jen Calonita, author of

Will Elise's love life be an epic win or an epic fail? At Coral Tree Prep in Los Angeles, who your parents are can make or break you. Case in point: As the son of Hollywood royalty, Derek Edwards is pretty much prince of the school -- not that he deigns to acknowledge many of his loyal subjects. As the daughter of the new principal, Elise Benton isn't exactly on everyone's must-sit-next-to-at-lunch list. When Elise's beautiful sister catches the eye of the prince's best friend, Elise gets to spend a lot of time with Derek, making her the envy of every girl on campus. Except she refuses to fall for any of his rare smiles and instead warms up to his enemy, the surprisingly charming social outcast Webster Grant. But in this hilarious tale of fitting in and flirting, not all snubs are undeserved, not all celebrity brats are bratty, and pride and prejudice can get in the way of true love for only so long.

This retelling of pride and prejudice (for the younger YA set) was such a quick read that I finished it in a couple hours or less. This is not a knock against it -- it was compelling, most likely because it WAS a P&P retelling. It kept just the right amount of stuff from the original story -- maybe even a touch too much of the original story -- while mixing in new components and events to keep it modern. In this version, Darcy is a high school senior who is the son of a popular actress. Elise is the daughter of an obnoxious principle of a prep school which they both attend. It does a good job in replicating a society in which people are forced to intermingle by putting them into private high school together, a place where there are few enough children that friends of friends are almost literally forced to interact. Elise's mom and sister also lose some of the obnoxiousness which makes them so detestable in the original story and make them more realistic and also explain Elise's sympathetic response to both. Of note in this version is that the pride and prejudice appear to almost completely belong to Elise, rather than being spread between the two main characters. Also weird is how much Elise thought about Derek's mom being famous while pretending not to care. It's almost like she's one of those people who lives in NYC or LA and sees a famous person but pretends they don't care but it is also going to totally tweet about it or kinnear the person. Either way, I give this four stars for being good entertainment. I will note that I felt like this book is more innocent than many of the newer YA novels which I've read. Maybe that's not true, but it FELT that way. Perhaps this would be good for a slightly younger crew who wants to read high school stuff.

The GoodSo my first foray into a Contemporary read began because I got this one for a deal on ,

and I read that it's loosely based on *Pride & Prejudice*. I really loved the little aspects that were parallel to that story that I love so much. It really was like a modern day version. This was such a fun and cute read. It seemed like I read it very quickly even though it's over 300 pages. It was just what I needed at the time. Elise moves to a new school that is populated by the mega rich. She completely doesn't fit in. So why is she there? Her mom is the new principal. Amazing, right? She definitely didn't think so. Her dad is also a teacher there. Her family plays a large part in the story which is very refreshing. Her sister Juliana is her best friend and she is the 'gorgeous' one that everyone loves. She has two more sisters, one of which has a knack for being in trouble. Of course the other characters, especially the guys, play a key part in bringing the story to fruition. There was also a good dose of humor sprinkled throughout the banter. Epic Fail moves along in a similar fashion to P&P. I really enjoyed reading as the story progressed through this high school girl's life and the many changes she experienced. Each and every character had flaws, and they felt realistic and varied. The BadThere really wasn't much bad about it. It's not an epic book. It's cute and fun and has that familiar feeling since it parallels to *Pride & Prejudice*. The RomanceThe romance was a big part of the story. Elise isn't an easy girl to make swoon so it was entertaining watching the dynamics between her and the guys in the story. Her sister, Juliana, on the other hand falls pretty early in the book. I enjoyed the love interests and how everything ended up working out. ConclusionEpic Fail was just what I needed when I was looking for an easy read that was fun, cute, but still full of substance. It is a modern day *Pride & Prejudice*, but not every tidbit can be guessed if you've read that one. The dialogue is fun, and the characters are varied and interesting. Recommended.*Originally given 3 1/2 stars at JC's Book Haven

So I had just read *Me Before You* recently and enjoyed how engaging it was, how it was so easy to be drawn into the story and desperately want to see what would happen next. *Me Before You* has great substance to it, plenty of complexity, so when I read another book that was about high school kids immediately after...I was let down by how little that story challenged me, how little I responded to it in comparison. And then I read this one. While this was also a story about high school students, the protagonist's wit displayed as the story is shared from her point of view made me happy. I like sass and sarcasm, so naturally I enjoyed that, but it was also the way the protagonist viewed the people around her that I appreciated. The way I explained this book to my roommate: "It's a story that could be some funny teen drama movie, but a good one that's actually interesting...like *10 Things I Hate About You*" (Julia Stiles for the win with Kat Stratford's aggressive wit). And honestly, I noticed several little parallels to Jane Austen's *Pride & Prejudice*, what with characters' personalities

being difficult to figure out and the protagonist learning humility and understanding through the process of becoming more familiar with them. That aspect of this book made me VERY happy. Whether the author intended for the two books to be similar or not, I think it is a wonderful basis for a story. Also, my sister just finished school in Massachusetts and moved to the Mojave desert, so that was one fun little bit that I was able to relate to. (Definitely random and not very relevant in a book review, but I just thought that was cool.)

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