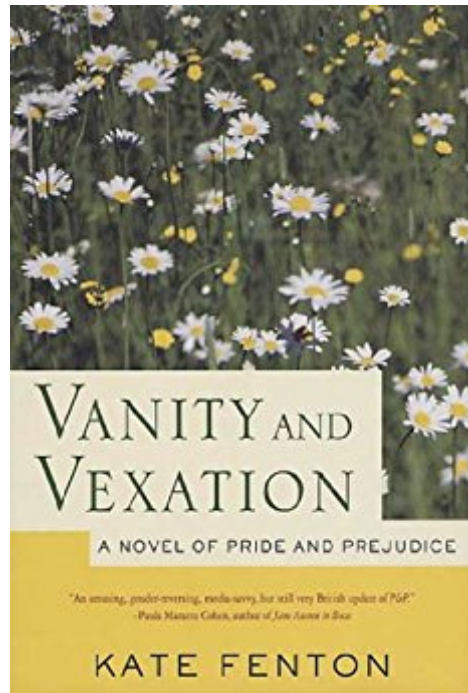


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Vanity And Vexation: A Novel Of Pride And Prejudice



Synopsis

A clever and cunning modern day retelling of the adored Jane Austen novel "Pride and Prejudice," reports Nicholas Llewellyn Bevan, impoverished novelist and occasional (reluctant) journalist, when a TV production company trundles into his sleepy North Yorkshire valley. Amusedly he watches these glamorous invaders combine the filming of Jane Austen's romantic classic with the much less modest pursuit, off-camera, of real-life romances with the locals. Under his very nose, his bashful handsome neighbor John is plucked out of a village dance by the famously gorgeous (and wealthy) leading actress, Candia Bingham, with whom he at once falls completely in love. Our would-be hero manages only to trip over the black-booted foot of the intimidating and imperious director, Mary Dance. So he's amazed---and a little bit alarmed---when her steely eye seems to be straying his way. A witty and entertaining update on Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen fans old and new will adore Vanity and Vexation's modern take on her sublime blueprint of the romance game complete with sex, money, and power. With an assured and respectful hand, in the context of the contemporary world, Kate Fenton has penned a riveting story with a hilarious twist. After all, it is a truth universally acknowledged that Hollywood taking an interest---better still an option---in a novelist's work is a surefire way to propel that novelist into serious sales figures and the bestseller lists.

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Customer Reviews

Vanity and Vexation reads very quickly. I read it in a day while home with a cold. The dialog is glib and sometimes witty and things sail along pretty well, but there are some aspects that leave one feeling flat when all is said and done. I finished the book, with a "that's it?" feeling. The transposition of the Pride and Prejudice plot and characters to 20th century Yorkshire worked for me. The Bennet contingent consists of the town locals, and the Darcy/Bingley group are the film company and cast who are in town to shoot the outdoor location shots for a television remake of P&P. Kate Fenton reverses the sexes of all the major characters. This worked for some but not for others. Mr. and Mrs. Bennet become the owners of the pub in the Yorkshire town. Bernard is behind the bar, not too swift, sometimes annoying, and lacking in tact. Sarah his wife runs the attached restaurant which serves gourmet, not pub, food. She is very sharp and isn't above making fun of her husband. I had no problem with them, nor with the Bingley sisters becoming the two lead actors in the film. Caroline Bingley's character becoming a narcissistic actor who thinks no one is as clever or attractive as he is, is quite good. Even Charles Bingley becoming Candia, the beautiful, flighty, but good tempered lead actress of the film was a successful switch. The Darcy-Elizabeth reversals were a problem. Darcy becomes Mary, the film's director, and Elizabeth is Nick, a critically acclaimed, but not best-selling, novelist. Fenton tries to swing the Darcy pride onto Mary while keeping her likable enough to accept as the hero, and I didn't buy it. Mary is driven as a director for her art by her ambition, and that is why she treats people like dirt, but yet that's OK because it was for her art.

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