



## Threat of Scandal: A Pride and Prejudice Sequel

By Ayr Bray

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**“Ayr Bray perfectly shows how love can hurt as well as heal.”**

At twenty years of age, Georgiana Darcy embarks on her third season in London hoping to find true love. Things go terribly wrong when she is implicated in a scandalous affair with the Duke of Rothford and, though she is innocent of wrongdoing, London society shuns her and her reputation is in tatters.

For months the Duke has had troubles of his own; the last thing he needs is to be caught up in London’s latest scandal with a perfect stranger. The Duke is an honourable man, however, and does his best to clear their names and restore Georgiana’s reputation.

The Duke’s kindness and attentiveness ignite the kind of love in Georgiana she’s always dreamed of. She knows a peer of the realm could never marry a mere gentleman’s daughter, so she contents herself with simply being near him. But when a new scandal arises, she must leave London and the Duke or risk losing her reputation forever.

**“The after the wedding scene can be summed up in one word: Intoxicating!”**

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## Threat of Scandal: A Pride and Prejudice Sequel By Ayr Bray Bibliography

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## **Editorial Review**

From the Author

### **Excerpt from Chapter 3:**

Georgiana woke with spirits as gloomy as the grey skies outside her bedroom window. Yesterday all she could think about was the impact the news would have on her position in society. Today her thoughts ran a different course. She realized it was unlikely she would ever marry, and if she did it would most certainly not be for love. What man would willingly attach himself to a woman who was part of such a dreadful scandal, even if it was untrue?

After years of observing her brother and Elizabeth, she had become determined to find a love like theirs, but now her dreams were shattering around her. Georgiana sat up in bed and rubbed her weary eyes. Salty tears soon wet her palms. Lying back against her pillows, she draped her arm over her face, shielding her eyes from the world beyond her room, beyond her home. She didn't want to face anyone, not even her brother and Elizabeth.

Gathering as much courage and strength as she could muster, Georgiana left her bed and dressed for breakfast in her most comfortable morning gown. She descended the stairs slowly, her steps heavy with the weight of sorrow born upon her slender shoulders.

"Darcy, our only option is to buy her a husband." Georgiana's heart skipped a beat as the footman opened the breakfast room door just in time for her to hear her cousin's declaration. Halting in the doorway, she clasped her hand over her mouth to keep from crying out. Fresh tears stung her eyes.

"Begging your pardon, but I disagree," Elizabeth snapped. It was evidently a heated discussion going on at the breakfast table. "I think there are plenty of options. You are being selfish if you do not consider them all. In my opinion, it would be best if we remove Georgiana from London immediately and wait for the Ton to move on to maligning the next poor, unsuspecting soul. In a few months, six at the most, hardly anyone will remember any of this. If they do, we shall spend the following seasons in Bath, or even Brighton, rather than return to London."

With indignation rarely seen in her, Georgiana straightened her spine and entered the room to speak for herself. "I agree with Elizabeth. I will return to Pemberley. I will not allow you to buy me a husband. I would rather be a spinster destined to care for my brother's children than marry a fortune hunter."

Everyone's heads snapped around at the sound of Georgiana's determined but shaky voice. Fitzwilliam and Richard quickly stood to welcome her into the room as they exchanged hasty looks with each other.

"Good morning, Georgiana." Fitzwilliam eyed his sister warily.

"Good morning, brother," Georgiana said, though she did not think it was a good morning at all. Elizabeth handed her a plate and she began to dish up her breakfast.

Fitzwilliam turned his full attention to his sister. "We were just discussing our options for dealing with your ... situation."

"It sounds as if Richard has made up his mind to marry me off to the first man destitute enough to have me

for my dowry. Is that not correct, Richard?"

Richard wisely held his tongue.

Fitzwilliam was struck with a feeling of wonder over Georgiana's uncharacteristic outburst. He took it as a symptom of the terrible strain she was under and thought it best to try to placate her. "We have not made any decisions. If it came to that, however, you know Richard and I would find an honourable man to marry you. We would never hand you over to a fortune hunter. Do not you wish to marry and establish your own home and family?"

"Do not use my hopes and dreams against me," Georgiana cried. She did want those things, desperately, but was it worth giving up the freedom to choose her own husband in order to have them? What kind of life and family would she have if she had to buy a husband? If she married a man she did not love? Would the love of her children be enough to sustain her for the rest of her life?

"Brother, Richard," Georgiana said as she took a moment to assess each, "you may think it is prudent to buy me a husband, but you know it is my greatest wish to marry for love. I refuse"--her voice was thick with unshed tears--"to give up my dreams. I have done nothing wrong. I deserve happiness." Her tears could no longer be contained. Burying her face in her hands, she tried to hide them.

"Sweetling," Richard said gently, calling Georgiana by the pet name he had given her when she was no more than five years old, "you know I admire your fortitude. Before yesterday I was willing to allow you to remain single until the man of your dreams rode in on his white horse to sweep you off your feet, but circumstances have changed."

"I do not see how they have changed. Unless the rumours are far worse than Fitzwilliam led me to believe, my virtue is still intact. If that is not the case, then I shall never be able to show my face out of doors for the mortification it would bring me."

"He did not mislead you; your reputation with regards to that is safe."

"Well, then, I do not see why I need a husband."

Elizabeth was proud of Georgiana for the courage she was displaying as she stood up to her brother and cousin. She imagined the girl could not have shown the same courage four years ago when they had first met.

"Marrying is the quickest way to quell the rumours," Richard insisted.

"And the easiest, is it not? Is that why you want to marry me off, so you don't have to deal with this any longer than you must?"

Richard was aghast. "Georgiana, you know that is not true. I do not want this rumour to ruin you, and I truly believe the quickest way to save your reputation is for you to marry."

"I disagree. I think a quick marriage would only give credit to the rumour, perhaps even confirm it in the eyes of many."

Pushing away his empty plate, Richard stood. Georgiana could see the despair in his eyes. "I have told you what I think. I will not force you to marry, but I would also not have you lose your chance at the happiness of a family and children."

"I am not of your opinion. Women in far worse positions have been able to marry and have a family. I shall

just have to hope for the best."

"I am sorry I have upset you. It was not my intention." Richard nodded to Fitzwilliam and Elizabeth and took his leave without another word.

Georgiana picked at her food while Fitzwilliam and Elizabeth carried on a hushed conversation, about what Georgiana knew not, lost as she was in her own gloomy thoughts. Her heart told her she would be content to stay with her brother and Elizabeth forever. She could help with the education of her niece and nephew and any future children they may have. At the same time, her heart ripped in two when she thought of never having a child of her own, never having a little one call her mama.

Georgiana pushed her plate away, laid her head on her arms, and wept.

Elizabeth came around the table and took the seat next to her, rubbing her back while she spoke comforting words Georgiana could barely make out. The circular motions were soothing, and Georgiana submitted gratefully to her sister-in-law's ministrations.

At last, she took a deep breath and sat up. Her eyes were red and swollen, but determination shone in them. "Fitzwilliam, please make Richard see that he is wrong. I do want a family, but I have always hoped for a love match. I refuse to believe these rumours have ruined all my future chances of it. Do you understand my wishes? Will you support them?"

"Of course, my dear. We shall not discuss it again." He helped her to stand and pulled her into his brotherly embrace.

"Georgiana, we shall get through this. I promise," he whispered in her ear.

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About the Author

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"From an early age I have always been fascinated by the written word and the mood and atmosphere it creates for a reader; especially those books that affect me and transport me to some far-off place. These are the elements I strive to create in my books. My books in many ways record what most affects me: my feelings and experiences with family, friends, and those I have run into on my life's journey. My hope is that in my books you will find something that touches you, something which will resonate in your soul and remind you that you are strong and can overcome anything, especially if you have the support of loving friends and family." - Ayr Bray

Ayr Bray is from the Pacific Northwest, but travels as much as possible so she doesn't have to deal with the cold.

Ayr loves to hear from readers. Connect with her at her website [ayrbray.com](http://ayrbray.com) or on Facebook at [goo.gl/kAAO3u](https://www.facebook.com/kAAO3u).

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