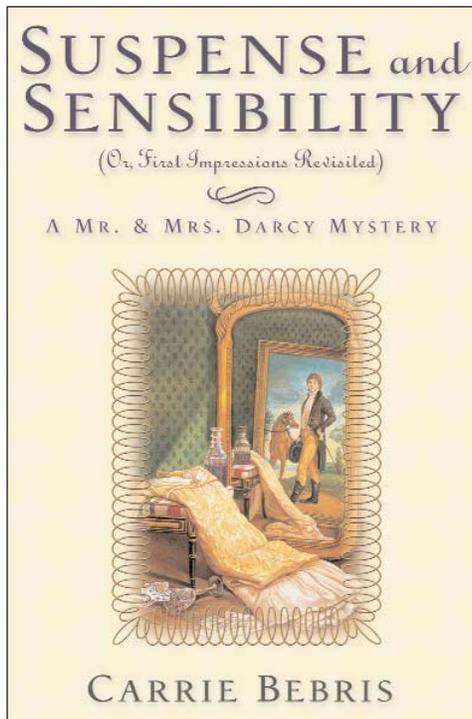


Carrie Bebris

Suspense and Sensibility



“Jane Austen fans who regret the author wrote only six full-length novels have reason to rejoice: Bebris’s second Mr. and Mrs. Darcy mystery is even better than her strong debut, *Pride and Prescience*.... The author smoothly combines characters from *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility* while remaining true to Austen’s originals.”

—PUBLISHERS WEEKLY, STARRED REVIEW

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Carrie Bebris began her career in publishing after previous roles as a newspaper reporter and college English teacher. She worked as an editor for fantasy publisher TSR, Inc., and wrote two fantasy novels before making her mystery debut in 2004 with *Pride and Prescience*.

Since then, she has written two more Mr. & Mrs. Darcy mysteries: *Suspense and Sensibility*, and *North by Northanger*.

Carrie holds a master’s degree in English literature with an emphasis on nineteenth-century authors, and studied Austen on the graduate level with one of the country’s most respected Austen scholars. She is a longtime member of the Jane Austen Society of North America and has taken research trips to England to enhance her understanding of Austen’s life and work.

Originally from Wisconsin, Carrie now lives in Ohio with her husband. When not writing, she enjoys time with her family, watching costume dramas on A&E, and indulging in her love of all things British. She is currently working on her next novel.

ABOUT THE BOOK

The second book in the Mr. & Mrs. Darcy mystery series, *Suspense and Sensibility*, is set in Regency England and features plenty of sharp dialogue and romantic interplay. The novel entangles some of Jane Austen’s best-known characters in intrigue with a dash of gothic atmosphere.

Persuaded by Mrs. Bennet to sponsor a London social season for Elizabeth’s sister Kitty, the Darcys reluctantly return to the glittering ballrooms and parlors of the fashionable world. There Kitty meets Harry Dashwood, the handsome young owner of Norland, and they quickly fall in love. But for the Bennet sisters, it seems the course of true love simply cannot run smooth. No sooner do Harry and Kitty announce their engagement than Harry begins to change. His disreputable behavior, unexplained

absences, mysterious gatherings, questionable new companions, and sinister activities lead all to wonder: Who is the true Mr. Dashwood—the respectable gentleman Kitty thought she knew, or the dishonorable rogue now reflected in the mirror? A clue from Harry's family tree sends the Darcys once more on a quest to discover the truth before history can repeat itself. For if Harry and Kitty are to have a future, the past must first be put to rest.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The book's subtitle, *First Impressions Revisited*, serves as a theme of the novel. Discuss first impressions in *Suspense and Sensibility*. What were your first impressions of Harry Dashwood and other characters, and did they differ from the impressions the characters made on each other? How were these impressions changed, or revisited, as events unfolded?
2. Another theme of the novel is that of seeing and reflection. How does each character wish to be seen by others? What events, actions, statements, and objects reflect his or her true nature? Are some characters better at "seeing" than others?
3. Is Sir Francis evil? Was he wrong to trap Harry in order to free himself from the mirror, or was he justified in escaping any way he could?
4. When Mr. Darcy tells Professor Randolph that he is not discontent, Randolph responds, "Everybody wants something, Mr. Darcy." Do you believe this statement is true? Is it possible for a person ever to be perfectly content?
5. After Harry is rescued, he accepts all blame for what happened. Is he indeed responsible?
6. What kind of future will Harry and Kitty have?
7. The book takes place primarily in London during the high social season. To what extent does this setting—including the constant background presence of the *ton*, or fashionable society—influence the story? What contrast do scenes at Pemberley and/or Norland offer?
8. Jane Austen fans might also recognize the subtitle as an echo of *First Impressions*—Austen's working title for *Pride and Prejudice*, the book upon which the Mr. & Mrs. Darcy mystery series is based. If you are familiar with Austen's novel and/or the first book in Bebris's series (*Pride and Prescience*), how does *Suspense and Sensibility* revisit characters and elements of those preceding novels? How has the Darcys' relationship—both as a married couple and as a sleuthing team—developed? Was this a satisfying sequel?

9. If you are familiar with Jane Austen's *Sense and Sensibility*, compare Bebris's representations of Austen's characters (the Dashwoods, Brandons, Ferrarses, and Middletons) with the originals.

PRAISE FOR *SUSPENSE AND SENSIBILITY*

"The story is witty and charming—a mixture of Austen and Nick and Nora."
—VOYA

"Somewhere in Regency heaven, Jane Austen blesses Carrie Bebris. Not only does Bebris perfectly render Austen's characters and the subtle tone of their relationships, she also captures, in exquisite detail, the Regency period. The ingenious plot lives up to the rest of this delightful novel."

—ROMANTIC TIMES BOOKREVIEWS TOP PICK