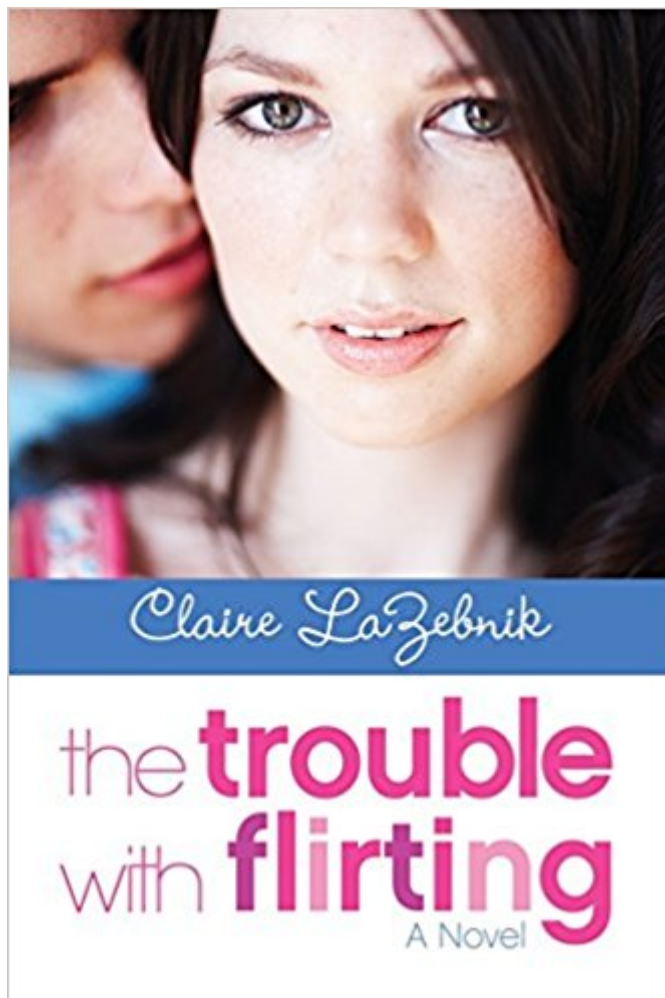


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The Trouble With Flirting



Synopsis

Franny's supposed to be working this summer, not flirting. But you can't blame her when guys like Alex and Harry are around. . . . Franny Pearson never dreamed she'd be attending the prestigious Mansfield Summer Theater Program. And she's not, exactly. She's working for her aunt, the resident costume designer. But sewing her fingers to the bone does give her an opportunity to spend time with her crush, Alex Braverman. If only he were as taken with the girl hemming his trousers as he is with his new leading lady. When Harry Cartwright, a notorious flirt, shows more than a friendly interest in Franny, she figures it can't hurt to have a little fun. But as their breezy romance grows more complicated, can Franny keep pretending that Harry is just a carefree fling? And why is Alex suddenly giving her those deep, meaningful looks? In this charming tale of mixed messages and romantic near-misses, one thing is clear: Flirting might be more trouble than Franny ever expected.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Gr 8 Up-In this light, romantic tribute to Jane Austen, the setting is a theater program for high school students at Mansfield College, and the plot focuses on who is courting whom. Franny Pearson is surrounded by talented teens who are attending a six-week program to hone their acting skills. Franny, however, is there to work as a seamstress for her Aunt Amelia, the college's costume director. Most of the self-centered, insecure teens are seeking a love interest to complete their summer fun. When Franny meets an old friend, Julia Braverman, she recalls the crush she had on

Julia's older brother when she was in eighth grade and is delighted to find out he's there, too. Spending time and sharing meals with the actors when she is not working, Franny enjoys the attention she receives from Alex but is confused as to why he would then choose to spend most of his time with beautiful Isabella. Meanwhile handsome, irresistible Harry flirts with all of the females willing to fall at his feet, convincing Franny that he's not to be trusted. Still, she has a wonderful time with him on one of the group's outings and the two become a couple. Enter Alex. Once again he touches Franny's heart, and she is left trying to figure out who is two-timing whom and what her role is in the summer's complicated relationship configurations. If you need enjoyable beach reads for teens looking for airy intrigue and affairs of the heart, this volume works.-Joanne K. Cecere, Monroe-Woodbury High School, Central Valley, NY (c) Copyright 2013. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

At the Mansfield Summer Theater Program, there are two exceedingly good-looking boys and many pretty girls. You do the math. High-school junior Franny is spending the summer as a costume assistant to her aunt (money is tight at home), but that doesn't stop her from finding herself in a love triangle between a beautiful specimen • Harry Cartwright and Alex Braverman, the aforementioned hotties who are students at the program. Julia, Alex's sister, sums things up: "Let's go somewhere where you can draw me a diagram so I can figure out who's going out with whom, because it's all getting way too confusing." It's just as well the program is concentrating on Shakespeare's plays, as the mixed messages and mistaken intentions translate well to the goings-on between the students. As the program and character names suggest, this is based loosely on Jane Austen's Mansfield Park. Readers looking for quirky drama types won't find them here; it's beautiful people as far as the eye can see. The summer theater theme and breezy tone make this best for reading from the comfort of a beach chair. Grades 7-10. --Ann Kelley

I had really high hopes for this book in the beginning, and since I read *Epic Fail* and liked it I thought this would be good as well. 3 reasons why I DON'T like this book-1. The male leads in this book, Alex and Harry, had no charm to me (or it was too much try-hard charm that turned me off of them completely). I did NOT like them at all. They had no appeal to me. This was a deal breaker for me, because when I read books like these I want to fall in love with the male character. I didn't. 2. There was no real connection to who Franny ended up with in the end (I won't tell you who, but I might as well should, because you should not waste 9 something dollars on this book) 3. Franny (the

main character) comes off as spoiled and annoying to me. One example of this is she doesn't appreciate her aunt who's giving her a place to stay and paying her to work during the summer. This is just annoying. OVERALL-Don't buy this book. I don't want you to waste 9 something dollars on badly written characters and a poor like-triangle (yes, I mean like, not love).

Maybe 3.5 stars for entertainment value. This was a fun quick read about a summer for Franny Pearson. She's between her junior and senior year of high school and goes to work for her Aunt as a costume assistant for a summer theater program. She meets some fun new friends and reconnects with some old ones too. She has a busy and exciting summer working hard, making friends, flirting, and falling for two guys. There are a few crazy turn of events and Franny finds herself in new uncharted places. This was a fun read that had me laughing several times throughout. It is fun and flirty and an easy read. It drew me in and made me laugh - I enjoyed it thoroughly after I got through the first one-third. It had a bit of a slow take-off.

Other reviewers have said this has a better ending Jane Austen's book and I agree. Part of me loves reading "updated" classics and part of me hates it because we pretty much know how the story is going to play out unless the author changes it. I really enjoyed this story and how the author retold a classic story. The story sucks you in from the beginning and it keeps you entertained throughout. I've only read Mansfield Park once because I hated the ending. No spoilers because maybe you didn't want Mansfield Park to end like I did but I think Franny did much better than Fanny. I feel like this author gave the heroine self-respect. I would give this book a PG-13 rating because it does talk about hook-ups and there are some implied things going on but I applaud this author for not describing anything with unnecessary graphic details. Thank you!! If you like this I recommend *Solving for Ex*

To date, Claire LaZebnik has published four refreshing and clever Young Adult retellings of Jane Austen's novels *Epic Fail* (Pride and Prejudice), *The Trouble With Flirting* (Mansfield Park), *The Last Best Kiss* (Persuasion) and *Wrong About the Guy* (Emma) and I sincerely hope she continues to write more! In this insightful and authentic retelling of Mansfield Park, Franny Pearson is a rising high school senior from a non-wealthy, divorced family looking for a summer job. Her mom arranges for her to assist her aunt with making and altering costumes for a summer theatre program at Mansfield College. Upon arrival Franny recognizes some familiar thespians *Julia Braverman*, a friend she lost touch with, and her brother *Alex*, who she had a

monster-crush on several years ago. Franny hopes a little romance might finally happen between her and Alex this summer, but her hopes are dashed as he seems to be immediately attracted to the sophisticated and gorgeous Isabella Zevallos. Franny's feelings of disappointment and dejection start to disappear when super-flirtatious and fun Harry Cartwright starts paying her some serious attention over the other girls, the question is are his intentions as serious?

Claire LaZebnik has a wonderful talent for adapting Jane Austen's characters and themes into a story that is relevant, current, and accessible to Young Adult audiences today. It never feels forced or as if she is trying too hard. Her characters embody the right blend of maturity and youthfulness, sincerity and blitheness, seriousness and irresponsibility and I am overall impressed with the language and intimate understanding she revealed. Just like Amy Heckerling (*Clueless*) astutely understood high school students in 1995, Claire LaZebnik gets high school students of this generation. One aspect of this story I greatly enjoyed was seeing the contemporary reincarnations of Jane Austen's characters. I liked seeing a flirtatious Henry (Harry) with questionable sincerity, a good-guy Edmund (Alex) who is guilty of being indecisive and sending mixed signals, a Marie and Isabella (Maria and Mary) who are appropriately desperate for male attention, and a Julia (Julia) who is unsurprisingly insecure and selfish. Readers who haven't read *Mansfield Park* may not pick up how wonderfully these modern updates emulate their Regency counterparts, but I did, and I greatly appreciate the author's creativity. I especially loved that Harry's character had an extra special twist to it! As with many people who exude a strong and loud persona, there is always more hidden behind their mask. Those who cannot abide Fanny Price and find her priggish and dull will be delighted to find this representation of Fanny a little different. Franny is quirky, witty, unaffected and charmingly sarcastic. But, since she is at the theatre program as an employee and not a student, she still is an outsider looking in. While I have no issue with Jane Austen's timid and virtuous heroine, I did find myself, for the most part, enjoying this alternate spunky version of Fanny. However, one aspect of her character that I wasn't too fond of is her relationship with her aunt, (who is more of a complainer than a cruel shrew). Franny spoke negatively about her aunt several times and didn't seem to appreciate anything her aunt did for her "such as her job, requests for time-off, free room and board. I know teenagers are often self-centered at this stage, but I found Franny's lack of consideration and appreciation towards her aunt to be disappointing and uncalled for. These modern-day retellings by Claire LaZebnik are very deserving of praise and attention in both the Austenesque and Young Adult communities! I love the creative and perceptive ways she updates Jane Austen's novels and brings out a story that is captivating and real to young audiences!

I cannot wait to get my hands on The Last Best Kiss and Wrong About the Guy!Austen-esque
Reviews

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