

Ophelia Joined the Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs on to Facebook

Sarah Schmelling

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Sarah Schmelling : Ophelia Joined the Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs on to Facebook before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Ophelia Joined the Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs on to Facebook:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. One-liners aboundBy JAthey3 stars because it's clever. But repetitious and smug. Not the author; she's very knowledgeable, but the book quickly becomes an in-your-face Do you remember that? trial over all the classics we read. The tweeting format is cute, but one great book after another is delineated with smug one-liners, dozens for each work. Miss Havisham asks "What if you put on a wedding dress and no one came?" Holden Caulfield calls everyone phony but loves the ducks in the park. Magwitch is friends with Jagers and Wemmick. Marlowe worries, "Yeah, it's this really scary thing. What's the word I'm looking for?" and

Kurtz helps him out, "Horror. The Horror." James Joyce updates his status each hour of the day. Oscar can resist anything but temptation. Vonnegut calms down Billy Pilgrim with "So it goes." Ophelia joined the group Maidens Who Don't Float. (I thought she did, at least in the painting. Speaking of dubious claims, the one I spotted was "Miss Havisham joined the group Maidens Who Are Not Inflammable." Inflammable and flammable are interchangeable, the same thing, and Miss H. catches fire, doesn't she?) Lady Chatterley is "too Twentieth Century for all of you." Maybe I'm too 20th-century and out of date; other reviewers said they liked the . . . what was they liked? passing the test in allusion-recognition perhaps. So it goes. 9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. S. McGee Joined the Group Fans of Classics-Gone-Facebook By S. McGee Jane Austen says it is a truth universally acknowledged that in the depths of a recession, people need something to laugh about. Elizabeth Bennet posted a comment: OK, Jane, but did you HAVE to tell the world about all those ridiculous gifts Mr. Collins sent me, especially that Chai Cream Frappuccino? (And what is that, anyway?) William Shakespeare (through the best efforts of author Sarah Schmelling) has founded the Classics-Gone-Facebook Network. Miss Havisham, Humbert Humbert, Dr. Jekyll and Beowulf joined the network. Scrooge joined the network, but is rejecting friend requests. Huck Finn, Oscar Wilde and Ernest (call me "Papa") Hemingway have joined the network. Sarah Schmelling reports that Jane Austen is now friends with Helen Fielding, Kate Winslet, Hugh Grant, and 4,534 others, and is still wondering who all these people are and why they are all forming clubs to discuss her books. If I were one iota as clever and witty as Sarah Schmelling, I would try to write this review in the same Facebook style that Schmelling has used to celebrate and poke fun at her favorite literary figures (both authors and characters) as well as to settle scores with those she could live without. (To his disgust, Humbert's admin blocks his account for his yearnings over Lolita, while still allowing Lady Chatterley and the gamekeeper to continue with their antics.) I know my limitations, and will have to stick to the traditional format, however... Schmelling's first stab at turning literature into Facebook feeds was a hilarious reinterpretation of Hamlet that 'went viral' on the Internet a year or more ago. (The book's title comes from that.) From the moment when "Ophelia removed "moody princes" from her interests", I was hooked, and laughed so loud that I ended up with a severe case of hiccups that took at least an hour to cure. So I was delighted to learn that she was taking her talents to a wider stage and tackling a larger array of literary targets, and snapped up the book at the first possible opportunity. The result is clever in a smart way -- the kind of humor that feels more and more hard to find these days. It's likely to appeal to everyone from die-hard Shakespeare fans (Imogen wonders if she's trapped in a 'problem play') to those who all-too-vividly recall their losing battles with great works of literature in high school. (Odysseus adds 'Homeward Bound' his playlist, while Romeo misses out on a crucial personal message from Friar Lawrence, with unfortunate consequences.) Facebook itself doesn't escape a deft skewering at Schmelling's hands, as she creates an ersatz FB-style quiz, "Which Dystopia Are You In: 1984, Brave New World, or Social Media?" This is a great book to dip into when you need a laugh, and it's the first to really spoof the whole social networking phenomenon, with the proliferation of not-always-friendly 'friends', offbeat lists of "25 things about me" (Darcy, we learn, is fed up with being an archetype), and pokes (Gulliver gets lots of tiny ones from the Lilliputians.) It's simply one of the funniest books I've picked up in a long time, I'm glad that since it exists on my Kindle, I'll have it with me while I travel, ready to add a sense of perspective to life's idiocies. (It's also going to make a GREAT holiday and birthday gift for about half of my friends...) I've rated this 4.5 stars because not all the segments are of the same high caliber as the Hamlet news feed; nor do some of Schmelling's efforts at replicating the Facebook formula work as well as others -- the news feeds and status updates are great, the applications more uneven (why does Elizabeth Bennet throw a sheep at Mr Darcy??). Nor is this a book that you can sit and read from cover to cover without finding it a bit repetitive. Just pick it up, choose a chapter and jump into this bibliomaniac's delight -- discover what circle of hell you happen to be in, and take a look at the snaps Odysseus took on his way home. I've rounded this up to five stars because of the originality, wit and flair. Highly recommended to anyone who relishes intelligent and literate wit -- or anyone who just never understood all the fuss about Dickens and would really enjoy poking fun at Oscar Wilde. For Kindle owners: this is a surprisingly excellent book for Facebook. All the illustrations are very clear (a pleasant change from the usual experience) and the book format reproduces clearly. I wouldn't have any hesitation recommending the Kindle version just because the book isn't a traditional format. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Very Funny! By KPM My daughter and I love this book! When we purchased it, she and her cousin (both 10 at the time) were fighting over who got to read it. My daughter even got a Kafka question right on Jeopardy (that neither her father or I got, please note) because of this book. Even though she hasn't read most of the book referenced, she still found it entertaining enough that she now understands references to said books. Having read most of them (and being a Facebook addict myself), I found it downright hilarious.

Read Sarah Schmelling's posts on the Penguin Blog. When humorist Sarah Schmelling transformed Hamlet into a Facebook news feed on McSweeney's, it launched the next big humor trend—Facebook lit. In this world, the king “pokes” the queen, Hamlet becomes a fan of daggers, and Ophelia renounces her interest in moody princes. Now, what began as an internet phenomenon is a book. Ophelia Joined The Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs on to Facebook is a clever spoof of the most-trafficked social networking website and a playful game of literary who's

who. The book brings more than fifty authors and stories from classic literature back to life and online, and it is sure to have book lovers and Facebook addicts alike twittering with joy. From *The Odyssey* to *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, *Pride and Prejudice* to *Lolita*, Schmelling brings the conventions of social networking—profile pages, status updates, news feeds, games and quizzes—to some of literature’s most well-known works, authors and characters. What would Edgar Allan Poe, Jane Austen or James Joyce post on their “walls”? What would Gulliver, Miss Havisham or Captain Ahab say in a status update? After William Shakespeare welcomes all of these players into his network, mayhem quickly ensues: Elizabeth Bennet throws a sheep at Mr. Darcy Hamlet posts an event: *A Play That’s Totally Fictional* and *In No Way About My Family* Jane Eyre listens to “Hard Knock Life” on repeat The Lord of the Flies boys form a reunion group Ernest Hemingway questions the validity of the “Are you a real man?” quiz Mark Twain infiltrates Oscar Wilde’s profile page and challenges him to a “quip off” Oedipus works on his family tree Following everyone from *Frankenstein’s Monster* to *King Lear’s Fool*, Charles Dickens to Virginia Woolf, *Ophelia Joined The Group Maidens Who Don’t Float* is a loving spoof of our literary favorites, and a hilarious collection for a twenty-first century generation of readers. Long live the Classics: 2.0!

"Brilliant/Highbrow" --New York Magazine's Approval Matrix Bench Pick --The New Yorker, The Book Bench blog "[O]ne of the funniest and wittiest books I've read in years, and I highly recommend it to anyone who loves literature" --Curled Up With a Good Book "Ophelia Joined the Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs on to Facebook is the most ingenious and entertaining book about classic literature that I have ever read" --BookLoons.com About the Author Sarah Schmelling has written about entertainment, travel, and pop culture for The Washington Post, Spin, Paste, Salon, Newsweek, Real Simple, the Los Angeles Times, Variety, McSweeney's, and The Huffington Post. She lives with her husband and son outside of Washington, DC. *Ophelia Joined The Group Maidens Who Don't Float: Classic Lit Signs On To Facebook* is her first book.