LOATHE AT FIRST SIGHT

why everyone loves an enemies-to-lovers

IT'S EVERYONE'S FAVORITE TROPE FOR A REASON!

The first enemies-to-lovers I ever read was a Draco-Hermione fanfiction. (And what about it??) It was obnoxiously called *Draco Malfoy and the Mortifying Ordeal of Being in Love*, and it is a semi-canonical romance between two characters who would never end up together. The story follows Draco, who has become an Auror (that's wizard-speak for cop), and he is assigned to protect Hermione as she works toward a very big, very important discovery.

I read all 200,000 words with pure glee, which surprised even me. I hadn't read much modern romance, and as a bit of a canon purist, I could never really wrap my head around Draco and Hermione getting together. I mean, Draco was a bully and a brat. His family was basically the wizard equivalent of Nazis! Sure, he made a couple of positive choices in the end (one of them being *not* killing his professor… not exactly worthy of a Medal of Honor), but there is nothing to suggest he did so out of anything other than cowardice. After the events of the book, we can pretty much assume he still believed in pureblood supremacy; he just wasn't willing to give up his life for it. (Sorry, canonically speaking, I'm a Ron apologist.)

But I must admit, all of this backstory does set the stage for some really interesting fanfiction. Draco and Hermione work perfectly for the enemies-to-lovers trope because anyone familiar with the series understands how fundamentally incompatible they are. Not only does he bully her relentlessly for the entire seven years they are at school, but they are also on opposite sides of a *literal war.* Their history involves plenty of betrayal, rivalry, and resentment — they are true enemies. To canonically pull off a pairing like this, fanfic authors have to answer some pretty tough questions. Like, what would it take for Draco to unlearn his beliefs? And what would Hermione need to see in him to believe he's capable of real change? These aren't easy to make believable, and how these questions are answered is important because this is where the tension is built. And in an enemies-to-lovers**, tension is everything.**



ENEMIES-TO-LOVERS HAS ESSENTIALLY BECOME A CATCH-ALL TERM FOR TWO CHARACTERS WHO, ON THE SURFACE, SEEM COMPLETELY INCOMPATIBLE.

The definition of enemies-to-lovers is pretty self-explanatory; it is two characters who shouldn't like each other, but in the end, do. The trope has become a bit flattened over time to include more contemporary subtypes like "hate-to-love" or "rivals-to-lovers." Let's face it, there aren't many opportunities in modern life to have a true enemy. I mean, the closest I've come is a neighbor with whom I got into a text fight and had to occasionally see her in the hall for, like, a year. I told everyone she was my arch nemesis. (Maybe we should have tried kissing…)

It's hard to say where the enemies-to-lovers trope originated, but it's probably safe to point to the origins of all storytelling — ancient mythology and Shakespeare. In Greek mythology, there is the story of *Pyramus and Thisbe*, two young lovers in Babylon, forbidden to marry because their families are bitter enemies. When they plan to elope, a series of tragic misunderstandings lead to their deaths. Sound familiar? It's the story that inspired Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. While we might not consider these stories to be enemies-to-lovers by today's standards, we can see how this structure creates the same narrative agony that defines the trope. The two characters may not be enemies themselves, but they are on opposite sides of something larger.

Both of these stories establish the framework that modern romances still use: love as defiance, love despite incompatibility, and the fantasy that connection can transcend any force. But while these stories gave us the enemies-to-lovers structure, it was Jane Austen who really perfected it.



THE BLUEPRINT

Originally published in 1813, **Pride and Prejudice** has since become the seminal text that most contemporary romances are based on today. The novel pioneered many familiar tropes — the unreliable narrator, miscommunication, and the slow burn. The story of Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy begins with mutual disdain. She finds him arrogant and dismissive. He finds her beneath his station. (Classic!) The novel takes the external obstacles of earlier stories and internalizes them instead. In this case, it is not their families that are keeping them apart, only their flawed perceptions of each other. His pride and her prejudices — *zing!*

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C. 8CE

The story of **Pyramus and Thisbe** from Ovid's narrative poem, *Metamorphoses*. While not enemies, this story of forbidden lovers creates the foundation of the trope: **love needs an obstacle**.

C. 1591

Shakespeare's **The Taming of the Shrew** offers the root of an **antagonistic courtship,** one where Petruchio "tames" Katherina.

C. 1595

Inspired by the story of Pyramus and Thisbe, Shakespeare's **Romeo and Juliet** further perfected the idea of **love versus the world**.

C. 1598

Much Ado About Nothing showcases Shakespeare's famous wit. Beatrice and Benedick nail the whole v**erbal sparring-as-flirting** thing.

1740

The original **Beauty and the Beast**, written by Gabrielle-Suzanne de Villeneuve, is the OG **captor-to-lover, monster-to-man fairy tale**.

1813

The modern blueprint is born. Where the former examples all had external obstacles, Jane Austen's **Pride and Prejudice** internalized them.

1847

Emily Brontë's **Wuthering Heights** is the red-flag antagonistic passion that really set the stage for dark romance.

1998-1999

The enemies-to-lovers trope hits the mainstream with rom-coms like **You've Got Mail** (business rivals to lovers) and **10 Things I Hate About You** (a retelling of The Taming of the Shrew).

2015-2020

The **romantasy** genre really hits its stride, supercharging the enemies-to-lovers trope with high-stakes world-building to fuel the antagonism.

2020+

The phrase "enemies-to-lovers" goes viral through the **BookTok** space, leading to a marketing dilution in the space.

They say no two emotions are more closely linked than love and hate. In a way, the two are more interchangeable than we may want to admit. This phenomenon can be attributed to the **misattribution of arousal.** This is the idea that when our bodies experience heightened physiological responses, we can sometimes incorrectly label the reasons for them. For example, when you meet someone for a first date, you may feel your heart racing and butterflies in your stomach. This may lead you to believe that you must have chemistry with this person — and hey, maybe you do! — but it is also pretty normal to feel nervous for a first date, and those same sensations are also a response to general fear and anxiety.

In a famous 1974 study, psychologists Donald Dutton and Arthur Aron (okay alliteration!) set out to test the theory that fear could be mistaken for attraction. They had men cross two different bridges, one stable and the other terrifyingly shaky above a canyon. On the other side, an attractive woman approached them to fill out a survey, giving them her number "in case they had questions." As a result, the men who crossed the scary bridge were far more likely to call her afterward. Dutton and Aron concluded that this was because the physiological response to fear — racing heart, adrenaline, hyperfocus — looks identical to our response to attraction.

While this study was primarily focused on fear, the same principles can be applied to animosity. Both fear and hate are considered high-arousal negative emotions, as they activate our nervous system in similar ways. When you are arguing with someone, obsessing over them, or unable to stop thinking about how much they drive you insane, it's normal to feel an adrenaline spike and an increased heart rate. As the saying goes, the opposite of love isn't hate — it's indifference. To hate something requires energy, and who has enough of that to waste it on something they don't care about? **Intense negative attention is still attention.** In an enemies-to-lovers romance, the passion is already there through the characters' hatred of each other. It just needs a little redirection!



What is ultimately appealing about this trope is that it places a lot of power on the concept of love. That we can become helpless against something so primal, so inevitable. This feeling has been romanticized in tragedies for centuries — *Romeo and Juliet, Wuthering Heights, The Phantom of the Opera, The Great Gatsby, Titanic*. During press for her movie *The Materialists*, Celine Song said the following about love: *"I really believe that love is a miracle when it happens, and it's mysterious as a miracle, and it's an ancient mystery."* Not to be a Miranda about the whole thing (the most sensible and realistic of the *Sex and the City* gals), but this is a mostly fictional concept.

Originating in medieval Europe, this kind of courtly love was essentially the romanticization of falling for someone unattainable. Think of a villager dreaming of marrying a prince, or a married noblewoman fantasizing about running off with the stable boy. Or consider the knight who wrote poetry and performed heroic deeds for a woman he could never have, and how noble we think he is for suffering in this way. To follow through on this type of love would most certainly end in tragedy. But isn't that what makes it so pure? The enemies-to-lovers trope borrows some of this framework as well: **the idea that wanting someone you can't have makes it more profound and meaningful.**

For women specifically, we often want to believe that love has the power to transform someone from a monster to a man. The original *Beauty and the Beast* was published in 1740 by Gabrielle-Suzanne Barbot de Villeneuve, and was written during an era when young women, especially aristocratic ones, had little say in whom they married. Marriages were often arranged for political or financial gain, giving little to no thought to the soon-to-be husband's temperament, attractiveness, or age. A woman might not even meet her betrothed until their wedding day! Stories like this primed young women to accept the reality that, inevitably, you will most likely be married off for reasons other than true love. This stranger will possibly be old, cruel and unappealing, but maybe — *just maybe!* — if you are kind, patient and loving enough, he will transform into someone you could love. Maybe your beast will be a prince in disguise!

"Love doesn't conquer all, but without love, nothing can be conquered."

The modern-day version of this is the adolescent dream that the moody bad boy will melt when he finally meets the love of his life — YOU! You are so gracious and so wise that you manage to see the *real* man underneath his cold, hard exterior! Go you! We call this the dreaded "I can fix him" syndrome, and as of right now, there is no cure. :/

> *"You are the bane of my existence and the object of all my desires."*

This line from *Bridgerton* captures this delusion perfectly. Anthony spends all season determined to marry for duty and explicitly not for love. He has decided that feeling things is weakness. (Classic!) Kate is immune to his charm and is personally invested in torpedoing his plan. These are two people loudly insisting they are enemies while we get to watch them slowly lose this argument in real time.

Costume dramas are catnip for this kind of trope because the setting naturally does a lot of the withholding for us. British high society is naturally filled with buttoned-up restraint! But once we strip away the empire waistlines and tailcoats, what we have is a brooding, emotionally unavailable man who transforms into someone supportive, communicative, and devoted.

Taking the "bad" man and turning him into a "good" one is ultimately the best of both worlds: the mysterious, brooding guy who is also supportive, communicative, and loving? Talk about a fantasy! It's fun in the show, of course, but it would be completely unhinged if someone actually said something like this to you. In real life, the emotionally unavailable guy usually stays that way, and the one who is *actually* obsessed with you is, well… go watch Curry Barker's *Obsession* and get back to me.





And yet, she persisted! For all the ways it curdles in real life, this fantasy endures for a reason. When it works, it *really* works. In fact, it works better than almost anything else in the romance toolkit. Hey, a trope can't survive from Babylon to BookTok on delusion alone! It does something to us that we just can't get enough of. Knowing something is a fantasy has never stopped a girl before, so, setting aside whether it is "good" "for" "society" for a moment, I want to know what makes it so satisfying in the first place.

CONTINUE READING FOR THE FOUR GEARS THAT HAVE KEPT THIS TROPE RUNNING SMOOTHLY FOR CENTURIES. →

1.

First, it's helpful that **the obstacle is already built in.** No need for overexplaining with an enemies-to-lovers romance!

Every good story runs on conflict: a protagonist needs to get somewhere or do something, but the pesky antagonist stands in the way. Frodo needs to destroy The Ring, but Sauron's forces are hunting him. McClane needs to save the hostages, but Hans Gruber stands in his way. Ahab needs to kill the whale, but the whale is, well, a whale.

In each of these examples, the obstacle is external – an evil entity, a bad guy, a giant man-eating whale. But romance rarely works that way. There's usually no villain that is physically barring the door between the two lovers, so in most cases, the antagonistic force has to come from somewhere else – *within*. **In romances, the obstacle and the prize are often the same thing.**

As the characters fight through, they aren't just clearing a path toward romance – the whole thing is the romance! Every wall lowered, every grudging inch of respect earned moves the plot and their love story at the same time.



'He looked surprised, displeased, alarmed.'



2.

Then there's **the anticipation**. Enemies-to-lovers offers readers an emotional journey. It goes from **irritation or hatred → to curiosity → to reluctant respect → then it slowly evolves into something more.**

Every rung of this ladder has to be earned, no skips! This all takes time to develop, and jumping from *"I hate you"* to *"I love you"* too quickly misses the entire point of this kind of narrative. It is through this anticipation that readers get to analyze every micro-moment — a lingering gaze, a small smile, a brief hand brush — and because they've been witnesses since square one, every one of these soft moments lands harder.

For many romance readers, the payoff lives in the wait. The anticipation is much more satisfying than the ending. We're here for the journey, not the destination.



"'Mr. Darcy, you must allow me to present this young lady to you as a very desirable partner.'"

3.

There's also the opportunity for sharp dialogue. Enemies-to-lovers is perfect for sharp, witty dialogue because these characters are guarded as hell. They aren't ready to be vulnerable yet, so they hide behind sarcasm and insults. It is through this verbal sparring that the characters can stay engaged with each other while pretending they are not interested. Call it plausible deniability!

> *"I'm only asking you this because I know you are morally corrupt and have no ethical standards," began Granger.*
> *"I would ask no other Auror what I am about to ask you."*
> *"Strong preface," said Draco. "I am flattered. Continue."*
> *"How do you feel about thievery?"*
> *"In favour," said Draco.*
>
> *— **Draco Malfoy and the Mortifying Ordeal of Being in Love***

Eventually, when the tone shifts and the banter softens and one of them says something that isn't wrapped under layers of sarcasm, that's when you know something has evolved between them.

4.

Once the shift happens and both characters have admitted their feelings for each other, you get the pleasure of **the retroactive reread.**

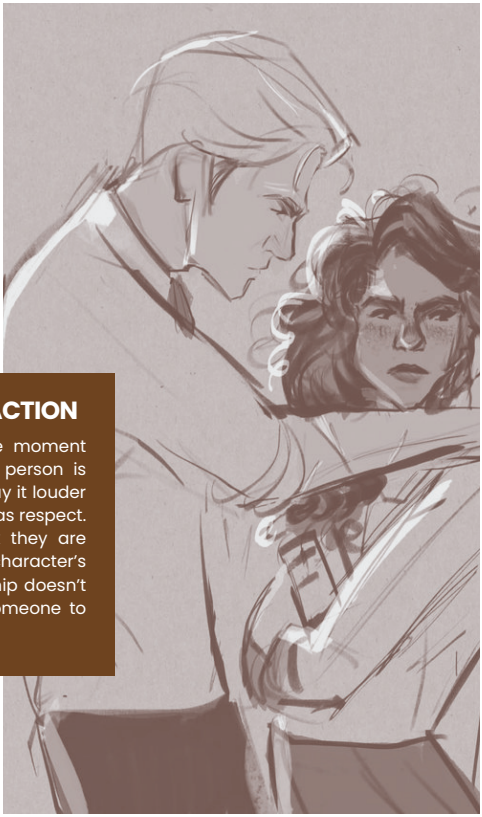
Much like a mystery novel, the ending immediately transports you back to the beginning. Suddenly, you have a new perspective. Now that every prior interaction has been recontextualized, readers get to go back and read between the lines of what the characters say and what they actually meant. Part of the fun is overanalyzing every detail between these two, hunting for evidence that their love was always there, no matter how slight. This is all part of the appeal!

The beauty of this trope is that it allows you to experience the story twice. The first time, you're hunting for hints and not sure where the two of them will land. (I mean, we have a pretty good idea, but still...). Then again with the full picture in your back pocket. What reads as friction the first time may read as longing the second. **We call that dramatic irony, folks!**



FOR THIS TROPE TO TRULY WORK, A FEW THINGS NEED TO BE IN PLAY:

Despite being one of the most popular tropes in romance, enemies-to-lovers seems to have caught a bit of backlash lately — but it's not necessarily because of the trope itself! Due to the rise of BookTok, phrases like "enemies-to-lovers" and "dark romance" have become marketing buzzwords, and publishers have used them as shortcuts to move units. Readers are picking up books that promise enemies-to-lovers only to get bickering acquaintances who fall into bed three chapters in. Readers aren't tired of enemies-to-lovers; they're tired of being lied to!



RESPECT HAS TO COME BEFORE ATTRACTION

The true midpoint of an enemies-to-lovers is the moment when they can no longer pretend that the other person is insignificant. This is crucial because — and let me say it louder for the folks in the back — attraction is not the same as respect. You can be attracted to someone and still think they are beneath you. (Just ask straight men!) If the character's relationship is only built on attraction, the relationship doesn't feel earned. You don't have to be respected by someone to sleep with them. (Just ask straight women!)

In *Draco Malfoy and the Mortifying Ordeal of Being in Love,* Draco and Hermione are forced into proximity, and neither is happy with this arrangement. Over time, they slowly begin to notice qualities in the other that they hadn't noticed before. (Begrudgingly, of course.) Hermione starts to see that Draco is competent and takes his job seriously. Draco sees that Hermione is brilliant and braver than he gave her credit for. But despite this growing respect, the conflict does not disappear. In fact, it becomes even more complicated. They still have history and ideological differences, only now they have to reconcile their old assumptions about each other with this newfound context. They are still enemies in many ways, but now they can no longer pretend that the other doesn't matter

IT NEEDS TO BE A SLOW BURN

One does not go from absolute hatred to undying devotion easily. It's a slow shift — and I mean slooow — and that's what makes this trope feel so satisfying. When it comes to enemies-to-lovers specifically, the real joy is in the anticipation. So, if your characters go from hating each other's guts to jumping into bed together in just a few pages, you've skipped over the only part that really matters. You've robbed your reader of the emotional journey!

And lastly, **both characters need to undergo meaningful change.** For their romance to feel earned, both characters need to confront their assumptions, beliefs, and loyalties — and they need to do it independently from each other.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, both Elizabeth and Darcy transform even though they believe they will never see each other again. Darcy realizes he has been arrogant and dismissive. He becomes more humble and considerate. Not because he thinks he will get Elizabeth back, but because her rejection forced him to see himself more clearly. Elizabeth confronts her own prejudice after reading his letter. She realizes she misjudged him, believing others' opinions, and let her wounded pride cloud her judgment. They do not change for each other, but it's through each other that they were able to become better versions of themselves. When they finally do come back together, they are no longer the same people from the beginning. They have grown, finally able to meet each other as equals. The resolution is not "love conquers all, no matter what," but rather that these characters did the internal work to become two people who could actually be together.

ARE YOU THE LOVE INTEREST OR THE RED FLAG?

YOU'VE READ THE BOOKS. YOU'VE SEEN THE MOVIES. BUT BE HONEST – IS YOUR OWN LOVE LIFE A SLOW-BURN MASTERPIECE OR A CAUTIONARY TALE? GRAB A GLITTERY GEL PEN AND LET'S DIAGNOSE YOUR SITUATIONSHIP.

THEY TEXT YOU "WYD" AT 1AM. YOUR REACTION IS...?

A. OVERTHINK FOR 40 MINUTES, DRAFT THREE REPLIES, AND ULTIMATELY GO WITH "NOTHING HBU?"

B. LEAVE IT ON READ FOR EXACTLY HOW LONG THEY LEFT YOUR LAST MESSAGE ON READ. THIS IS WAR.

C. REPLY WITH SOMETHING ANTAGONISTIC TO START A FIGHT.

THEY ACCIDENTALLY SAY SOMETHING REAL, WITH NO SARCASM. NOW WHAT?

A. SIT WITH IT AND SAY SOMETHING REAL BACK. THIS IS THE MOMENT.

B. CRACK A JOKE BEFORE EITHER OF YOU HAVE TO BE VULNERABLE.

C. SABOTAGE IT BY PICKING A FIGHT.

PICTURE THE ENDING YOU ACTUALLY WANT. WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

A. WE BOTH GROW TOGETHER. WE BOTH APOLOGIZE. WE MEET IN THE MIDDLE AS EQUALS. ROLL CREDITS.

B. TO BE DETERMINED. INDEFINITELY. PLEASE DON'T MAKE ME DEFINE ANYTHING. EVER!

C. I'M HERE FOR THE CHASE, NOT THE CATCH. ONCE THIS IS RESOLVED IT'S ON TO THE NEXT ONE!

THERE IS TRAGICALLY ONLY ONE BED. WHAT DO YOU DO?

A. BUILD A POLITE PILLOW WALL, THEN LIE AWAKE PRETENDING TO SLEEP.

B. MAKE A JOKE TO DIFFUSE THE SITUATION AND THEN NEVER TALK ABOUT IT AGAIN.

C. CLAIM THE WHOLE BED OUT OF SPITE TO SEE WHAT THEY'LL DO.

WHICH OF THESE MOST RESEMBLES THE ORIGIN STORY OF YOU TWO?

A. FORCED TO WORK TOGETHER ON A PROJECT, AND MONTHS LATER, HERE WE ARE.

B. WE'VE BEEN HANGING OUT FOR MONTHS AND I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT WE ARE.

C. I PISSED THEM OFF TO GET A REACTION AND I'VE BEEN CHASING THAT HIGH EVER SINCE.

WHAT *ACTUALLY* DRAWS YOU TO THIS PERSON?

A. UNDERNEATH IT ALL, I KNOW THEY ARE KIND AND THEY REALLY SEE ME.

B. THE UNPREDICTABILITY. THE SECOND THINGS GET DEFINED, I WANT TO RUN.

C. THE FRICTION! I LOVE THE PUSH-PULL. I WANT TENSION.

MOSTLY A'S

YOU'RE A SLOW BURN PURIST! YOU ARE UNBEARABLY ROMANTIC AND YOU'RE GOING TO MAKE US WAIT 300 PAGES BEFORE YOU TWO HOLD HANDS.

MOSTLY B'S

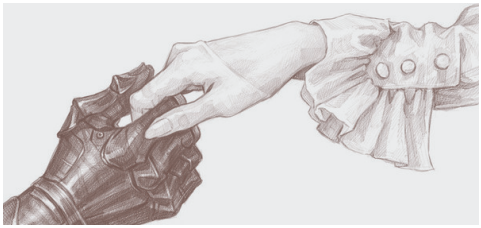
YOU'RE A SITUATION-SHIP LIFER. YOU HAVE REAL CHEMISTRY, BUT UNFORTUNATELY YOU WOULD RATHER BE A LITTLE MISERABLE THAN RISK THE TERROR OF A LABEL.

MOSTLY C'S

YOU'RE AN AGENT OF CHAOS. YOU DON'T WANT A LOVE STORY, YOU WANT A SPARRING PARTNER. YOU WILL BLOW UP ANY MOMENT JUST TO FEEL THE FRICTION AGAIN.

(TIE? CONGRATULATIONS, YOU CONTAIN MULTITUDES!)

While this trope has always had its place in the genre, it seems to have particularly found its stride in today's "romantasy" era. I'm not a connoisseur of this subgenre, but from what I can tell, it seems to be damn near a requirement at this point. Which makes a lot of sense considering that most fantasy worlds are already built on some kind of conflict — two rival kingdoms fighting for power, some kind of political conspiracy, class warfare, rebels versus an empire. In this context, it is more than just a matter of two people disagreeing with each other or having clashing personalities. This kind of external conflict naturally raises the stakes and creates some pretty satisfying tension.



Where I think some of the enemies-to-lovers stories can fall short is on **the fine line that rests between romance and toxicity.** This trope can easily dip into a territory that promotes harmful ideas. Like how someone who is causing you harm might actually be harboring deep feelings for you, or that cruelty can be affection in disguise. (It's giving *"boys pull your pigtails because they like you"* mentality...)

As I mentioned earlier, these stories were originally designed to prime young women to accept undesirable arranged marriages. It is worth recognizing that when a narrative slides into *"woman fixes broken man through kindness and patience,"* it is tapping into a deeply patriarchal tradition. The message in these types of stories is that the woman's feelings don't matter; only her ability to endure and transform him through her sheer goodness does. And if he doesn't transform? Well, maybe she wasn't special enough to unlock his good side...



It gets worse when the 'enemies' are not just rivals but are literally oppressor and oppressed. Using real-world trauma as a backdrop for a steamy romance? Big yikes! Of course, I understand the concept of a fantasy — as in, *not real* — but the thing is, these dynamics are real, and they are anything but romantic. Reducing real-world suffering to a romance suggests that oppression can be overcome if you're good enough, patient enough, and sexy enough. Just because something is a "fantasy" does not make it void of cultural context.

If one character holds a life-or-death power over the other — say, if one is enslaved and the other is the enslaver — we have to ask: **Are you trying to tell a complex, nuanced story about two people divided by culture, class, and society? Are you interrogating power dynamics, examining complicity, and grappling with the reality that love does not erase trauma?** Or are you using the aesthetics of oppression as set dressing for a fantasy where the oppressor's cruelty melts away because the oppressed person is just that special?

There is a fine line between complex and harmful. A complex story may be two people on opposite sides of a war, or a spy and the person they are supposed to be surveilling. These all have genuine tension, real stakes, and plenty of room for both characters to grow and change. A harmful story would be a person actively enacting violence on the other or supporting a system that dehumanizes a group of people. One asks if people on opposite sides can find common ground, while the other essentially asks if the oppressed could forgive their oppressor if they were hot enough. These stories are not only uncomfortable, but they also romanticize real suffering, trivialize historical atrocities, and perpetuate the idea that love can transcend anything, even systemic violence. Not to be a downer, but it really can't.

The truth is, some dynamics cannot be fixed by love, and most conflicts cannot be resolved by attraction. There are power imbalances so severe that any romance built on them is fundamentally unequal, no matter how much the author insists otherwise, because the core issue is not as simple as miscommunication or conflicting worldviews — it is systemic oppression. Attraction cannot erase a power imbalance, and love cannot undo slavery or reverse a genocide.

But hey, read what you want to read! The dark romance genre seems to have a thriving audience, so who am I to judge? (Okay, I'm judging a little. Y'all toxic!) I'm only saying that we can't pretend that a story being a fantasy means it exists outside of the culture that produced it. There is no escaping that the stories we consume shape us, so the least we can do is be honest about what we're consuming.

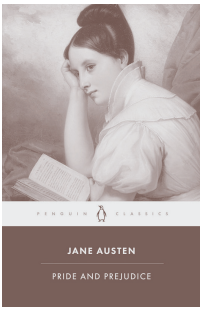
At its best, an enemies-to-lovers story is about transformation. It is two people who challenged each other and were forced to grow because of it. They became better versions of themselves through conflict, and through that, love was able to grow. Jane Austen understood this in 1813, and some of the best fanfic writers understand it today. The trope has endured centuries because it works!



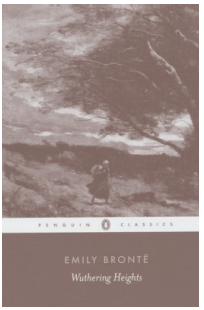
THE SLOW BURN PLAYLIST

- **You're So Vain** — Carly Simon
- **I Hate U** — SZA
- **Motion Sickness** — Phoebe Bridgers
- **R U Mine?** — Arctic Monkeys
- **bad idea right?** — Olivia Rodrigo
- **Daydreaming** — Harry Styles
- **Show Me How** — Men I Trust
- **Fade Into You** — Mazzy Star
- **Sparks** — Coldplay
- **My Love Mine All Mine** — Mitski

REQUIRED READING



PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
BY JANE AUSTEN



WUTHERING HEIGHTS
BY EMILY BRONTË



DMATMOOBIL
BY BRIDGITTE KNIGHTLEY

MISSED CONNECTIONS

PHILOSOPHY SNOB
YOU CORRECTED MY PRONUNCIATION OF NIETZSCHE AND I HAVE HATED YOU EVER DAY SINCE AND THINK ABOUT YOU EVERY NIGHT.

TO MY ARCH NEMESIS
YOU DISARMED ME AND THEN SMIRKED. I LET YOU WIN. REMATCH? SAME TIME, SAME PLACE. NO CHAPERONES.

A HEATHCLIFF LOOKING FOR A CATHERINE
TO THE WOMAN WHO TOOK THE LAST COPY OF *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* AND SAID "YOU WOULDN'T GET IT" – YOU WERE RIGHT AND I NEED TO KNOW WHAT ELSE I WOULDN'T GET. COFFEE?

TO MY ARCH NEMESIS
YOU DISARMED ME AND THEN SMIRKED. I LET YOU WIN. REMATCH? SAME TIME, SAME PLACE.

CAN WE SKIP TO THE GOOD PART?
LOOK, WE BOTH KNOW HOW THIS ENDS. YOU'LL INSULT MY THESIS, I'LL INSULT YOUR TASTE, AND IN APPROXIMATELY 300 PAGES WE'LL BE UNBEARABLE ABOUT EACH OTHER. CAN WE SKIP TO CHAPTER NINETEEN? I'M TIRED.

TO THE BARISTA ON 5TH
YOU SPELLED MY NAME WRONG ONCE AND NOW I KEEP COMING IN AND GIVING FAKE NAMES THAT ARE HARDER TO SPELL.

PARKING THIEF
YOU DRIVE A COMPACT SUV WITH A DENT ON THE PASSENGER DOOR AND A DUMB BUMPER STICKER. YOU PARK IN MY SPOT EVERY DAY. CATCH ME TOMORROW BEFORE I KEY YOUR CAR.

EVER HEARD OF HEADPHONES?
TO MY UPSTAIRS NEIGHBOR WHO PLAYS THE SAME FOUR CHORDS ON THE GUITAR AT 7 AM.

AVADEMIC RIVALS
YOU CALLED MY PAPER "DERIVATIVE." I'M NOT OVER IT.

TRIVIA NIGHT ON WEDNESDAYS
TO THE WOMAN WHO BEAT ME BY ONE POINT: I DON'T KNOW WHETHER TO MARRY YOU OR RUIN YOU. LET'S DISCUSS OVER DRINKS. LOSER BUYS.

THANKS FOR READING, DOLLS! AND IF YOU FIND ANY TYPOS, THEY WERE A CREATIVE CHOICE.