BENNET FAMILY
Mr. Bennet (L)
Mrs. Bennet (L)
Jane Bennet (L)
Elizabeth Bennet (L)
Mary Bennet (sm/m)
Catherine (Kitty) Bennet (sm)
Lydia Bennet (sm/m)

BENNET RELATIONS
Rev. William Collins (L)
Mrs. Gardiner (sm/m)
Mr. Edward Gardiner (sm/m)

BENNET’S SERVANTS
Mr. Hill (sm/m)
Mrs. Hill (sm/m)

MERYTON ENSEMBLE
Charlotte Lucas (m)
Lady Lucas (sm)
Sir William (sm)
Captain Carter (sm)
Mr. Denny (sm)
Mrs. Long (vsm)

BINGLEY FAMILY
Mr. Charles Bingley (L)
Miss Caroline Bingley (L)
Mrs. Louisa Hurst (sm)
Mr. Hurst (vsm)

BINGLEY SERVANT
Alfred (sm)

DARCY FAMILY
Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy (L)
Georgiana (sm)

RELATIONS
Colonel Fitzwilliam (sm/m)
Lady Catherine De Bourgh (L)
Miss De Bourgh (Non Speaking)

SERVANTS
George Wickham (sm/m)
Mrs. Reynolds (sm)
Mrs. Annesley
John (The Collin’s servant)
Servant 2
SCENE 1 - PARLOR – LONGBOURN – Day – Monday, October 7, 1811

MRS. HILL

(Setting out tea.) It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in want of a wife.

MR. HILL

However little known the feelings or views of such a man may be on his first entering a neighborhood, this truth is so well fixed in the minds of the surrounding families, that he is considered the rightful property of some one or other of their daughters. (Pours tea for Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. Then exits.)

MRS. BENNET

My dear Mr. Bennet, have you heard that Netherfield Park is let at last? Do you not want to know who has taken it? (Goes to close the door and sneaks a cookie for Lydia. Then closes the girls out.)

MR. BENNET

As you wish to tell me, I doubt I have any choice in the matter. (Lydia sneaks back into the hall and puts her ear to the door.)

MRS. BENNET

Mrs. Long says that Netherfield is taken by a young man of large fortune from the north of England; he came down on Monday to see the place, and was so much delighted with it that he is to take possession before Michaelmas. (Kitty enters and starts to giggle. Lydia pulls Kitty to the door.)

MR. BENNET

What is his name?

MRS. BENNET

Bingley.

LYDIA AND KITTY

(Whispering) Bingley. (Mary enters and before she can react the two girls pull her to the door.)

MR. BENNET

Is he married or single?

MRS. BENNET

Oh! Single, my dear, to be sure! (The girls react.) What a fine thing for our girls!

MR. BENNET

How so? How can it affect them?

MRS. BENNET

My dear Mr. Bennet, how can you be so tiresome! You must know that I am thinking of his marrying one of them. (Elizabeth enters and is shhh’d by the others. She stands aloof and then can’t help herself and presses her ear to the door.)
MR. BENNET

Is that his design in settling here?

MRS. BENNET

Design! Nonsense, how can you talk so! But it is very likely that he may fall in love with one of them, and therefore you must visit him as soon as he comes.

MR. BENNET

I see no occasion for that. You and the girls may go, or you may send them by themselves, which perhaps will be still better, for as you are as handsome as any of them, Mr. Bingley may like you the best of the party. (Jane enters and sees her sisters trying hard not to laugh. They all push her ear to the door.)

MRS. BENNET

My dear, you flatter me. I certainly have had my share of beauty, but when a woman has five grown-up daughters, she ought to give over thinking of her own beauty. My dear, you must indeed go and see Mr. Bingley when he comes into the neighborhood.

JANE

Who?

LYDIA AND KITTY

Bingley. (All the girls now have their ears pressed to the door.)

MRS. BENNET

Even Sir William is determined to go. Indeed you must go, for it will be impossible for us to visit him if you do not.

MR. BENNET

I will send a few lines by you to assure him of my hearty consent to his marrying which ever one of the girls he chooses, though I must throw in a good word for my little Lizzy. (Younger girls react. Jane stops them. As if by design they all go back to listening at the door.)

MRS. BENNET

Lizzy is not a bit better than the others, and I am sure she is not half so handsome as Jane, nor half so good-humored as Lydia. But you are always giving her the preference.

MR. BENNET

They have none of them much to recommend them: they are all silly and ignorant like other girls. But Lizzy has something more of quickness than her sisters.

MRS. BENNET

You take delight in vexing me. You have no compassion for my poor nerves.

MR. BENNET

You mistake me, my dear. I have a high respect for your nerves. They are my old friends these last twenty years at least. (Mr. Bennet opens the door, Kitty falls into the room, the rest just manage to catch their balance. The family sits down to various tasks. Elizabeth is putting new ribbon on her hat. Silence.)
MR. BENNET
I hope Mr. Bingley will like your hat, Lizzy.

MRS. BENNET
We are not in a way to know what Mr. Bingley likes since we are not to visit.

LYDIA
But you forget mamma that we shall meet him at the assemblies, and that Mrs. Long promised to introduce him.

MRS. BENNET
I do not believe Mrs. Long will do any such thing. She has two nieces of her own. She is a selfish, hypocritical woman, and I have no opinion of her.

MR. BENNET
No more have I and I am glad to find that you do not depend on her serving you.

MRS. BENNET
Don't keep coughing so, Kitty, for Heaven's sake! Have a little compassion on my nerves. You tear them to pieces.

KITTY
I do not cough for my own amusement. (Long silence.) When is the next ball to be?

LYDIA
To-morrow fortnight.

MRS. BENNET
Aye, so it is and Mrs. Long does not come back till the day before; so it will be impossible for her to introduce him, for she will not know him herself. Oh! I am sick of Mr. Bingley.

MR. BENNET
I am sorry to hear that; but why did you not tell me before? If I had known as much this morning I certainly would not have called on him. It is very unlucky; but as I have actually paid the visit, we cannot escape the acquaintance now.

MRS. BENNET
Oh, Mr. Bennet! What an excellent father you have, girls! (Mrs. Bennet runs up and hugs him. The girls follow suit; except Lizzy who regards him with amusement.) Lydia, my love, though you are the youngest, I dare say Mr. Bingley will dance with you at the next ball. (Exeunt.)

(MRS. HILL
(Clearing up.) If Mrs. Bennet could but see one of her daughters happily settled at Netherfield...

MR. HILL
And the others equally well married...

MRS. HILL
She should have nothing to wish for.
SCENE 2 - ASSEMBLY ROOMS - MERYTON – Night – Monday, October 21, 1811
(The local dance is in full swing. Dance 1)

CHARLOTTE
Mr. Bingley is good-looking.

MRS. LONG
And such a gentleman.

SIR WILLIAM
He has a pleasant countenance and an easy, unaffected manner.

LADY LUCAS
His sisters have an air of decided fashion.

ELIZABETH
His friend?

CHARLOTTE
Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy.

ELIZABETH
He has a noble mien.

CHARLOTTE
He has ten thousand a year.

SIR WILLIAM
He is a fine figure of a man.

MRS. LONG
He is much handsomer than Mr. Bingley.
(The Dance ends.)

SIR WILLIAM
Do you like our Meryton, Mr. Bingley? Do you not think there are a great many pretty women in the room? Which do you think is the prettiest?

MR. BINGLEY
Oh, the eldest Miss Bennet, beyond a doubt; there cannot be two opinions on that point. (Couples begin to form for the next dance. Mr. Bingley turns to Jane.) Miss Bennet. May I have the honor?
(They leave to dance. Dance 2)

SIR WILLIAM
What a charming amusement for young people this is, Mr. Darcy! There is nothing like dancing after all. I consider it as one of the first refinements of polished society.
MR. DARCY
Certainly, sir, and it has the advantage also of being in vogue amongst the less polished societies of the world. Every savage can dance.

SIR WILLIAM
Your friend performs delightfully, and I doubt not that you are an adept in the science yourself, Mr. Darcy. Do you often dance at St. James’s?

MR. DARCY
Never, sir.

SIR WILLIAM
Do you not think it would be a proper compliment to the place?

MR. DARCY
It is a complement which I never pay to any place if I can avoid it. (Pause)

LADY LUCAS
How do you find Netherfield, Mr. Darcy?

MR. DARCY
Mr. Bingley is pleased with the situation of Netherfield. (The dance ends. The couples disperse. Darcy goes to join Mr. Bingley.)

MR. BINGLEY
Upon my word I’ve never seen so many pretty girls in my life.

MR. DARCY
You are dancing with the only handsome girl in the room.

BINGLEY
Oh, she is the most beautiful creature I ever beheld, but her sister Elizabeth is very agreeable. (They have stopped at the edge of the dance floor but have not seen Elizabeth and Charlotte.)

DARCY
Perfectly tolerable, I dare say, but not handsome enough to tempt me. You had better return to your partner and enjoy her smiles, for you are wasting your time with me. (Bingley goes off. Caroline takes Darcy’s arm and leads him to another part of the room.)

CAROLINE
I have rarely seen a collection of people in whom there was so little beauty.

MRS. LONG
Mr. Darcy is proud.

MARY
Most forbidding.
LADY LUCAS
Disagreeable.

MRS. BENNET
Unworthy to be compared with Mr. Bingley

CHARLOTTE
One cannot wonder that so very fine a young man, with family, fortune, everything in his favor, should think highly of himself. If I may so express it, he has a right to be proud.

ELIZABETH
I could easily forgive his pride, if he had not mortified mine.

MARY
Pride is a very common failing, I believe. By all that I have ever read, I am convinced that it is very common indeed; that human nature is particularly prone to it, and that there are very few of us who do not cherish a feeling of self-complacency on the score of some quality or other, real or imaginary.

CHARLOTTE
You do not lose much by not suitting his fancy, Eliza, for he is a most disagreeable man, not at all worth pleasing.

ELIZABETH
I believe I may safely promise you never to dance with him.  

(SCENE CHANGE #1-2)

SCENE 3 - ENROUTE TO LONGBOURN – Night - same
(The Family is walking back from the ball.)

JANE
Mr. Bingley is just what a young man ought to be, sensible, good-humored, lively; and I never saw such happy manners, so much ease, with such perfect good breeding!

ELIZABETH
He is also handsome, which a young man ought likewise to be, if he possibly can.

JANE
I was very much flattered by his asking me to dance a second time. I did not expect such a compliment.

ELIZABETH
But that is one great difference between us. Compliments always take you by surprise, and me never. He could not help seeing that you were about five times as pretty as every other woman in the room. I give you leave to like him. You have liked many a stupider person.

JANE
Dear Lizzy!
ELIZABETH
I never heard you speak ill of a human being in your life.

JANE
I would not wish to be hasty in censuring anyone; but I always speak what I think.

ELIZABETH
I know you do; and it is that which makes the wonder. Do you like this man's sisters, too? Their manners are not equal to his.

JANE
Certainly not—at first. But they are very pleasing women when you converse with them. Miss Bingley is to live with her brother, and keep his house; and I am much mistaken if we shall not find a very charming neighbor in her.

ELIZABETH
I am not so convinced. But, as you say, Mr. Bingley is just what a young man ought to be. (The Bennet women enter Longbourn.)

MRS. BENNET
Oh! My dear Mr. Bennet, we had a most delightful evening, a most excellent ball. I wish you had been there. Jane was so admired. Everybody said how well she looked; and Mr. Bingley thought her quite beautiful, and danced with her twice! And she was the only creature in the room that he asked a second time. First of all, he asked Miss Lucas. I was so vexed to see him stand up with her! However, he did not admire her at all; He seemed quite struck with Jane as she was going down the dance. So he inquired who she was, and got introduced, and asked her for the two next. Then the two fourth with Maria Lucas, and the two fifth with Jane again, and the two sixth with Lizzy, and the Boulanger...

MR. BENNET
If he had had any compassion for me, he would not have danced half so much! For God's sake, say no more of his partners. O, that he had sprained his ankle in the first dance!

MRS. BENNET
Oh! My dear, I am quite delighted with him. He is so excessively handsome! And his sisters are charming women. I never in my life saw anything more elegant than their dresses. I dare say the lace upon Mrs. Hurst's gown—

MR. BENNET
I protest against any description of finery.

MARY
Mr. Darcy is not so well worth listening to as his friend, Mr. Bingley, is he? Poor Lizzy, to be only just tolerable.

MRS. BENNET
I beg you would not put it into Lizzy's head to be vexed by his ill-treatment, it would be quite a misfortune to be liked by him. Lizzy not handsome enough to dance with! I wish you had been there, my dear, and given him one of your set-downs. I quite detest the man.
LYDIA
I danced with Captain Carter twice. I hope to see him in the course of the day; he is going next morning to London.

KITTY
And I danced with Mr. Denny. Meryton is to be the militia headquarters for the whole winter. I know all of the officers' names and connections.

MR. BENNET
From all that I can collect by your manner of talking, you must be two of the silliest girls in the country. I have suspected it some time, but I am now convinced.

MRS. BENNET
I am astonished, my dear, that you should be so ready to think your own children silly. If I wished to think slightly of anybody's children, it should not be of my own.

MR. BENNET
If my children are silly, I must hope to be always sensible of it.

MRS. BENNET
Yes—but as it happens, they are all of them very clever. (Mrs. Hill puts out the light as all exit.)

SCENE 4 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Afternoon – Tuesday, November 12, 1811

MR. HILL
(Mr. and Mrs. Hill bring in tea.) Mr. Bingley inherited property to the amount of nearly a hundred thousand pounds from his father.

MRS. HILL
Miss Caroline Bingley presides at her brother's table—as does his eldest sister, Mrs. Hurst, who married a man of more fashion than fortune. (The family enters.)

A letter addressed to Miss Bennet, Ma'am. From Netherfield Hall.

MRS. BENNET
Well, Jane, who is it from? What is it about? What does it say? Make haste and tell us; make haste, my love.

JANE
It is from Miss Caroline Bingley. ‘My Dear Friend, If you are not so compassionate as to dine today with Louisa and me, we shall be in danger of hating each other for the rest of our lives, for a whole day's tête-à-tête between two women can never end without a quarrel. Come as soon as you can on receipt of this. My brother and the gentlemen are to dine with the officers. Yours ever, Caroline Bingley.’
LYDIA
With the officers! I wonder my Aunt Phillips did not tell us of Mr. Bingley dining with the officers.

MARY
Dining out, that is very unlucky.

JANE
May I have the carriage?

MRS. BENNET
No, my dear, you had better go on horseback.

GIRLS
Horseback?

MRS. BENNET
Because it seems likely to rain, and then you must stay all night. (A distant rumble of thunder.) (Mrs. Bennet and the Bennet sisters leave talking about what Jane should wear and Mr. Bennet leave to go to his study.)

MRS. HILL
Jane has not been gone long and it is raining hard. I am uneasy for her.

MR. HILL
If the rain continues the whole evening without intermission, Jane certainly cannot come back.

MRS. HILL
Mrs. Bennet will be delighted. (Exeunt.)

SCENE 5 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Morning – Wednesday, November 13, 1811

MRS. HILL
(Entering and waking Elizabeth up.) Good morning Miss Elizabeth, a letter from Netherfield.

ELIZABETH
Thank you, Mrs. Hill. (Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and the other daughters enter.) ‘My Dearest Lizzy, I find myself very unwell this morning, which, I suppose, is to be imputed to my getting wet through yesterday. My kind friends will not hear of my returning till I am better. They insist also on my seeing Mr. Jones—therefore do not be alarmed if you should hear of his having been to me—and, excepting a sore throat and headache, there is not much the matter with me. Yours, Jane.’

MR. BENNET
Well, my dear, if your daughter does die it will be a comfort to know it was all in pursuit of Mr. Bingley.

MRS. BENNET
Oh! I am not afraid of her dying. People do not die of little trifling colds. I would go and see her if I could have the carriage.

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KITTY
I would go and see her if I could have the carriage.

ELIZABETH
The carriage is not to be had; and as I am no horsewoman, walking is my only alternative.

MRS. BENNET
You will not be fit to be seen when you get there.

ELIZABETH
I shall be very fit to see Jane—which is all I want.

MR. BENNET
Is this a hint to me, Lizzy, to send for the horses?

ELIZABETH
No, indeed, I do not wish to avoid the walk. The distance is nothing when one has a motive, only three miles. I shall be back by dinner.

MARY
I admire the activity of your benevolence, but every impulse of feeling should be guided by reason; and, in my opinion, exertion should always be in proportion to what is required.

KITTY
We will go as far as Meryton with you.

LYDIA
If we make haste, perhaps we may see something of Captain Carter before he goes. (Lydia, Kitty and Elizabeth put on their outside wear and begin to walk.) SCENE CHANGE #1-3

KITTY
Lizzy, are you really going to walk alone, crossing field after field?

ELIZABETH
At a quick pace.

LYDIA
Jumping over styles, springing over puddles?

KITTY
Finding yourself at last in view of the house...

LYDIA
With weary ankles...

KITTY
And dirty stockings?
ELIZABETH
And a face glowing with the warmth of exercise. (*Kitty and Lydia exit one way and Elizabeth continues off the other.*)

SCENE 6 - DRAWING ROOM - NETHERFIELD – Later that morning - (*Mr. Darcy is sitting at the desk writing a letter, Caroline is hovering over him, and Louisa is sitting on the sofa with her husband who is napping. Mr. Bingley is looking at a book of poetry.*)

CAROLINE
You write uncommonly fast.

MR. DARCY
You are mistaken. I write rather slowly.

CAROLINE
How many letters you must have occasion to write in the course of a year! Letters of business, too! How odious I should think them!

MR. DARCY
It is fortunate, then, that they fall to my lot instead of yours.

CAROLINE
Pray tell your sister that I long to see her.

MR. DARCY
I have already told her so once, by your desire.

CAROLINE
I am afraid you do not like your pen. Let me mend it for you. I mend pens remarkably well.

MR. DARCY
Thank you—but I always mend my own.

ALFRED
Miss Elizabeth Bennet. (*Elizabeth enters.*)

ELIZABETH
Good morning.

MR. HURST
(Wakes.) My word.

ELIZABETH
Please pardon my appearance. May I inquire after my sister?

CAROLINE
Miss Bennet slept ill, and though up, is very feverish, and not well enough to leave her room.
LOUISA
Did you walk from Longbourn, Miss Bennet?

ELIZABETH
I did.

MR. HURST
I say.

MR. BINGLEY
You will want to be taken to your sister immediately. Alfred, please show Miss Bennet to her sister’s room.

ELIZABETH
Thank you. *(Elizabeth leaves. A beat.)*

LOUISA
She really looked almost wild.

CAROLINE
She did, indeed, Louisa. I could hardly keep my countenance.

MR. HURST
Very nonsensical to come at all!

CAROLINE
Why must she be scampering about the country, because her sister has a cold? Her hair, so untidy, so blowsy!

LOUISA
Yes, and her petticoat; I hope you saw her petticoat, six inches deep in mud, I am absolutely certain; and the gown which had been let down to hide it not doing its office.

MR. BINGLEY
Your picture may be very exact, Louisa, but this was all lost upon me. I thought Miss Elizabeth Bennet looked remarkably well when she came into the room. Her dirty petticoat quite escaped my notice.

CAROLINE
You observed it, Mr. Darcy, I am sure, and I am inclined to think that you would not wish to see your sister make such an exhibition.

MR. DARCY
Certainly not.

CAROLINE
To walk three miles, or four miles, or five miles, or whatever it is, above her ankles in dirt, and alone, quite alone! What could she mean by it? It seems to me to show an abominable sort of conceited independence.
MR. HURST
A most country-town indifference to decorum.

MR. BINGLEY
It shows an affection for her sister that is very pleasing.

CAROLINE
I can guess the subject of your reverie.

MR. DARCY
I should imagine not.

CAROLINE
You are considering how insupportable it would be to pass many evenings in this society; and indeed I am quite of your opinion.

MR. DARCY
Your conjecture is totally wrong, I assure you. My mind was more agreeably engaged. I have been meditating on the very great pleasure, which a pair of fine eyes in the face of a pretty woman can bestow. (Pause)

CAROLINE
I am all astonishment. How long has Miss Elizabeth Bennet been such a favorite? And pray, when am I to wish you joy?

MR. DARCY
That is exactly the question I expected you to ask. A lady's imagination is very rapid; it jumps from admiration to love, from love to matrimony, in a moment.

LOUISA
I have an excessive regard for Miss Jane Bennet, she is really a very sweet girl, and I wish with all my heart she was well settled. But with such a father and mother, and such low connections, I am afraid there is no chance of it.

CAROLINE
I think I have heard you say that their uncle is an attorney in Meryton.

LOUISA
Yes; and they have another, who lives somewhere near Cheapside.

CAROLINE
That is capital. (The sisters and Mr. Hurst laugh).

MR. BINGLEY
If they had uncles enough to fill all Cheapside, it would not make them one jot less agreeable.

MR. DARCY
But it must very materially lessen their chance of marrying men of any consideration in the world.
MR. BINGLEY
Alfred, as Miss Jane Bennet is feeling no better, my sisters and I feel obliged to invite Miss Elizabeth Bennet to stay at Netherfield. Please dispatch a servant to Longbourn to acquaint her family of her stay and bring back a supply of clothing.

ALFRED
Very good, sir. Will Miss Elizabeth Bennet be joining the dinner party? Or should another tray go up to Miss Jane Bennet’s room for her?

MR. BINGLEY
I am certain Miss Elizabeth Bennet will join us for dinner. Thank you, Alfred.

SCENE 7 - DRAWING ROOM - NETHERFIELD – That evening - same
(Elizabeth is reading a book. Darcy is writing a letter. Bingley, Caroline, Louisa and Mr. Hurst are playing loo (cards).)

LOUISA
Do you prefer reading to cards, Miss Bennet? That is rather singular.

CAROLINE
Miss Eliza Bennet despises cards. She is a great reader, and has no pleasure in anything else.

ELIZABETH
I deserve neither such praise nor such censure; I am not a great reader, and I have pleasure in many things.

MR. BINGLEY
In nursing your sister I am sure you have pleasure, and I hope it will be soon increased by seeing her quite well.

ELIZABETH
Thank you.

MR. BINGLEY
I wish my book collection was larger for your benefit and my own credit; but I am an idle fellow, and though I have not many books, I have more than I ever looked into.

CAROLINE
I am astonished that my father should have left so small a collection of books. What a delightful library you have at Pemberley, Mr. Darcy!

MR. DARCY
It has been the work of many generations.

CAROLINE
You have added so much to it yourself; you are always buying books.

MR. DARCY
I cannot comprehend the neglect of a family library in such days as these.
Neglect! I am sure you neglect nothing that can add to the beauties of that noble place. Is Miss Darcy much grown since the spring? Will she be as tall as I am?

MR. DARCY
I think she will. She is now about Miss Elizabeth Bennet's height, or rather taller.

CAROLINE
How I long to see her again! I never met with anybody who delighted me so much. Such a countenance, such manners! And so extremely accomplished for her age! Her performance on the pianoforte is exquisite.

MR. BINGLEY
It is amazing how young ladies can have patience to be so very accomplished as they all are.

LOUISA
All young ladies accomplished! My dear Charles, what do you mean?

MR. BINGLEY
Yes, all of them, I am sure I never heard a young lady spoken of for the first time, without being informed that she was very accomplished.

MR. DARCY
I cannot boast of knowing more than half-a-dozen, in the whole range of my acquaintance who are really accomplished.

LOUISA
A woman must have a thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing, and the modern languages, to deserve the word; and besides all this, she must possess a certain something in her air and manner of walking, the tone of her voice, her address and expressions, or the word will be but half-deserved.

MR. DARCY
All this she must possess, and to all this she must yet add something more substantial: the improvement of her mind by extensive reading.

ELIZABETH
I am surprised at your knowing only six accomplished women. I rather wonder now at your knowing any.

MR. DARCY
Are you so severe upon your own sex as to doubt the possibility of this?

ELIZABETH
I never saw such a woman. I never saw such capacity, and taste, and application, and elegance, as you describe united.
LOUISA
I know many women who answer this description. (Pause. Darcy goes back to his letter. Caroline puts down her cards. Pauses. She walks over to Elizabeth.)

CAROLINE
Miss Eliza Bennet, let me persuade you to take a turn about the room. I assure you it is very refreshing after sitting so long in one attitude. (Elizabeth gets up. Caroline links her arm and they start walking up and down.) Mr. Darcy, will you join us?

I would only interfere.

CAROLINE
What can he mean, Miss Bennett?

ELIZABETH
Our surest way of disappointing him will be to ask nothing about it.

CAROLINE
I require an explanation of your motives, Mr. Darcy.

MR. DARCY
You either choose this method of passing the evening because you are in each other's confidence, and have secret affairs to discuss, or because you are conscious that your figures appear to the greatest advantage in walking; if the first, I would be completely in your way, and if the second, I can admire you much better from here.

CAROLINE
Oh, shocking! How shall we punish him for such a speech?

ELIZABETH
Laugh at him.

CAROLINE
Mr. Darcy is not to be laughed at!

MR. DARCY
The wisest and the best of men may be rendered ridiculous by a person whose first object in life is a joke.

ELIZABETH
I hope I never ridicule what is wise and good. Follies and nonsense, whims and inconsistencies, do divert me, I own, and I laugh at them whenever I can.

MR. DARCY
It has been the study of my life to avoid those weaknesses, which often expose a strong understanding to ridicule.
ELIZABETH

Such as vanity and pride.

MR. DARCY

Yes, vanity is a weakness indeed. But pride—where there is a real superiority of mind, pride will be always under good regulation.

LOUISA

Your examination of Mr. Darcy is over, I presume, and pray what is the result?

ELIZABETH

I am perfectly convinced by it that Mr. Darcy has no defect. He owns it himself without disguise.

MR. DARCY

No, I have made no such pretension. I have faults enough, but they are not, I hope, of understanding. My temper I dare not vouch for. I cannot forget the follies and vices of others so soon as I ought, nor their offenses against myself. My good opinion, once lost, is lost forever.

ELIZABETH

That is a failing indeed! But you have chosen your fault well. I really cannot laugh at it. You are safe from me.

MR. DARCY

There is, I believe, in every disposition a natural defect, which not even the best education can overcome.

ELIZABETH

And your defect is to hate everybody.

MR. DARCY

And yours is to willfully misunderstand them.

SCENE 8 - DRAWING ROOM - NETHERFIELD – Next day – Thursday, November 14, 1811 (Mr. Bingley, Caroline, and Mr. Darcy are just finishing up breakfast.)

ALFRED

At Miss Elizabeth Bennet’s request, Mrs. Bennet has visited Miss Jane Bennet, sir, and she, with the rest of her daughters, would like an audience with you.

MR. BINGLEY

Thank you, Alfred. Show them in. (Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty, Lydia enter.) Mrs. Bennet, I hope you have not found Miss Jane Bennet worse than you expected.

MRS. BENNET

Indeed I have, sir. She is a great deal too ill to be moved. Mr. Jones says we must not think of moving her. We must trespass a little longer on your kindness.

MR. BINGLEY

Removed! It must not be thought of. My sisters, I am sure, will not hear of her removal.
CAROLINE
You may depend upon it, Madam, that Miss Bennet will receive every possible attention while she remains with us.

MRS. BENNET
You have a sweet room here, Mr. Bingley, and a charming prospect over the gravel walk. I do not know a place in the country that is equal to Netherfield. You will not think of quitting it in a hurry, I hope, though you have but a short lease.

MR. BINGLEY
Whatever I do is done in a hurry, and therefore if I should resolve to quit Netherfield, I should probably be off in five minutes. At present, however, I consider myself as quite fixed here.

MARY
That is exactly what I should have supposed of you.

MR. BINGLEY
I wish I might take this for a compliment; but to be so easily seen through I am afraid is pitiful.

ELIZABETH
It does not follow that a deep, intricate character is more or less estimable than such a one as yours.

MR. BINGLEY
I did not know before that you were a studier of character. It must be an amusing study.

ELIZABETH
Intricate characters are the most amusing. They have at least that advantage.

MR. DARCY
The country can in general supply but a few subjects for such a study. In a country neighborhood you move in a very confined and unvarying society.

MARY
But people themselves alter so much, that there is always something new to be observed in them.

MRS. BENNET
Yes, indeed, I assure you there is quite as much of that going on in the country as in town. I cannot see that London has any great advantage over the country, for my part, except the shops and public places. The country is a vast deal pleasanter, is it not, Mr. Bingley?

MR. BINGLEY
When I am in the country I never wish to leave it; and when I am in town it is pretty much the same. They have each their advantages, and I can be equally happy in either.

MRS. BENNET
Aye—that is because you have the right disposition. But that gentleman seemed to think the country was nothing at all.

ELIZABETH
You quite mistook Mr. Darcy. He only meant that there are not such a variety of people to be met with in the country as in the town, which you must acknowledge to be true.

MRS. BENNET
Certainly, my dear, nobody said there were; but as to not meeting with many people in this neighborhood, I believe there are few neighborhoods larger. I know we dine with four-and-twenty families. (Pause) Thank you, again, Mr. Bingley, for your kindness to Jane, and for troubling yourself with Lizzy. If it was not for such good friends I do not know what would become of her, for she is very ill indeed, and suffers a vast deal, though with the greatest patience in the world, for she has the sweetest temper I have ever met with.

MR. BINGLEY
I have given the housekeeper directions that every attention be paid to Miss Jane Bennet, and her sister.

CAROLINE
We all feel wretched for her. Alfred, would you order the Bennets’ coach?

MR. BINGLEY
If Miss Bennet is not decidedly better in the morning, Mr. Jones should again be sent for.

LYDIA
Mr. Bingley I must remind you of your promise on your first coming into the country to give a ball at Netherfield. It would be the most shameful thing in the world if you did not keep your promise.

MR. BINGLEY
I am perfectly ready, I assure you, to keep my engagement; and when your sister is recovered, you shall, if you please, name the very day of the ball. But you would not wish to be dancing when she is ill.

LYDIA
Oh! Yes—it would be much better to wait till Jane was well, and by that time most likely Captain Carter will be at Meryton again. And when you have given your ball, I shall insist on their giving one also. I shall tell Colonel Forster it will be quite a shame if he does not.

ALFRED
(Entering.) The Bennets’ coach is ready, sir.

MR. BINGLEY
Thank you, Alfred. Let me see you to your coach.

MRS. BENNET
Thank you, Mr. Bingley. Good day to you all. We are off to visit Lady Lucas and Sir William. What an agreeable man Sir William is, Mr. Bingley, is he not? So much the man of fashion! He had always something to say to everybody. That is my idea of good breeding; and those persons who fancy themselves important, and never open their mouths, quite mistake the matter.
PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
Adapted from the book by Jane Austin

(The Bennets and Mr. Bingley leave with Alfred. Caroline and Darcy remain.)

CAROLINE
I hope you will give your mother-in-law a few hints when this desirable event takes place, as to the advantage of holding her tongue; and if you can compass it, do cure the younger girls of running after officers. And, if I may mention so delicate a subject, endeavor to check that little something, bordering on conceit and impertinence, which your lady possesses.

MR. DARCY
Have you anything else to propose for my domestic felicity?

CAROLINE
Oh, yes! Do let the portraits of your uncle and aunt Phillips be placed in the gallery at Pemberley. Put them next to your great-uncle the judge. They are in the same profession, you know, only in different lines. As for your Elizabeth's picture, you must not have it taken, for what painter could do justice to those beautiful eyes?

MR. DARCY
It would not be easy, indeed, to catch their expression, but their color and shape, and the eyelashes, so remarkably fine, might be copied.

(SCENE CHANGE #1-4)

MR. HILL
Miss Elizabeth sent a written request begging Mrs. Bennet to send the carriage for her and Miss Jane in the course of the day.

MRS. HILL
Mrs. Bennet sent word back to Miss Elizabeth that they could not possibly have the carriage until next Tuesday.

ALFRED
Miss Elizabeth was positively against staying any longer. She urged Miss Jane to request the Bingley carriage; and that their original design of leaving Netherfield that very morning be mentioned.

SCENE 9 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Midday – Sunday, November 17, 1811

MRS. HILL
Jane and Lizzy were not welcomed home very cordially by Mrs. Bennet

MR. HILL
But their father was glad to see them. The evening conversation had lost much of its animation and almost all its sense by the absence of Jane and Elizabeth. (Pause.)

LYDIA
Several of the officers have dined lately with Uncle Phillips.

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KITTY
A private was flogged.

MARY
Does anyone know why?

KITTY
Probably for flirting with Lydia.

LYDIA
Do you know, my uncle Phillips talks of turning away Richard; and if he does, Colonel Forster will hire him. My aunt told me so herself on Saturday. I shall walk to Meryton tomorrow to hear more about it, and to ask when Mr. Denny comes back from town. It has actually been hinted that Colonel Forster is going to be married.

MARY
To whom?

MR. BENNET
I hope, my dear, that you have ordered a good dinner today, because I have reason to expect an addition to our family party.

MRS. BENNET
Who do you mean, my dear?

MR. BENNET
The person of whom I speak is a gentleman, and a stranger.

KITTY
Colonel Forster? Captain Carter?

LYDIA
No, I know. Captain Denny! Or, a new recruit?

MRS. BENNET
It is Mr. Bingley, I am sure! Well, I am sure I shall be extremely glad to see Mr. Bingley. Lydia, my love, ring the bell—I must speak to Mrs. Hill this moment.

MR. BENNET
It is not Mr. Bingley. It is a person whom I never saw in the whole course of my life. About a month ago I received this letter; and about a fortnight ago I answered it, for I thought it a case of some delicacy, and requiring early attention. It is from my cousin, Mr. Collins, who, when I am dead, may turn you all out of this house as soon as he pleases.

MRS. BENNET
Oh! My dear, I cannot bear to hear that mentioned. Pray do not talk of that odious man. I do think it is the hardest thing in the world, that your estate should be entailed away from your own children, and I am sure, if I had been you, I should have tried long ago to do something or other about it.
MARY
Mother, I have tried to explain to you the nature of an entail. I know you are bitterly against the cruelty of settling an estate away from a family of five daughters, in favor of a man whom nobody cares anything about, but father cannot do anything about it.

MR. BENNET
It certainly is a most iniquitous affair, and nothing can clear Mr. Collins from the guilt of inheriting Longbourn. But if you will listen to his letter, you may perhaps be a little softened by his manner of expressing himself.

MRS. BENNET
I am sure I shall not; and I think it is very impertinent of him to write to you at all, and very hypocritical. I hate such false friends. Why could he not keep on quarreling with you, as his father did before him?

MR. BENNET
He does seem to have had some filial scruples on that head, as you will hear, Mary.

MARY
‘Hunsford, near Westerham, Kent, 15th October. Dear Sir, The disagreement subsisting between yourself and my late honored father always gave me much uneasiness, since I have had the...”

COLLINS V.O.
...misfortune to lose him, I have frequently wished to heal the breach. Having received ordination at Easter, I have been so fortunate as to be distinguished by the patronage of the Right Honorable Lady Catherine de Bourgh, widow of Sir Lewis de Bourgh, whose bounty and beneficence has preferred me to the valuable rectory of this parish, where it shall be my earnest endeavor to

COLLINS V.O. CONT.
demean myself with grateful respect towards her ladyship, and be ever ready to perform those rites and ceremonies which are instituted by the Church of England. As a clergyman I feel it my duty to promote and establish the blessing of peace in all families; and on these grounds I flatter myself that my present overtures are highly commendable, and that the circumstance of my being next in the entail of Longbourn estate will be kindly overlooked on your side, and not lead you to reject the offered olive-branch. I cannot be otherwise than concerned at being the means of injuring your amiable daughters, and beg leave to apologize for it, as well as to assure you of my readiness to make them every possible amends—but of this hereafter.

MARY
“I remain, dear sir, with respectful compliments to your lady and daughters, your well-wisher and friend, William Collins.’ In point of composition, the letter does not seem defective. There is something very pompous in his style. The idea of the olive branch perhaps is not wholly new, yet I think it is well expressed.

MRS. BENNET
If he is disposed to make the girls any amends, I shall not be the person to discourage him.

SCENE 10 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – next evening – Sunday, November 17, 1811
MR. HILL
Mr. Bennet’s property consists in an estate of two thousand a year, which unfortunately for his daughters was entailed in default of a male heir.

MRS. HILL
Mrs. Bennet’s fortune, though ample enough for her situation in life, could ill supply the deficiency of his, she has only four thousand pounds in all. *(Enter the Bennets and Mr. Collins.)*

MR. COLLINS
Mrs. Bennet may I compliment you on having so fine a family of daughters; I had heard much of their beauty, but in this instance fame has fallen short of the truth. I do not doubt but you will see them all disposed of in marriage in due time.

MRS. BENNET
You are very kind, I am sure; and I wish with all my heart it may prove so, for else they will be destitute enough.

MR. COLLINS
You allude, perhaps, to the entail of this estate.

MRS. BENNET
Ah! Sir, I do indeed.

MR. COLLINS
I am very sensible, madam, of the hardship to my fair cousins, and could say much on the subject, but I am cautious of appearing forward. But I can assure the young ladies that I come prepared to admire them. At present I will not say more; but, perhaps, I shall when we are better acquainted—The dinner was most excellent; which of my fair cousins is owing the excellence of its cooking.

MRS. BENNET
We are very well able to keep a good cook; my daughters have nothing to do in the kitchen.

MR. COLLINS
I beg your pardon for having displeased you.

MRS. BENNET
I am not at all offended.

JANE
Lady Catherine, your patroness, I think you said she was a widow, sir? Has she any family?

MR. COLLINS
She has only one daughter, the heiress of Rosings. Rosings is a very extensive property.

MRS. BENNET
Ah! Then she is better off than many girls.
LYDIA
And what sort of young lady is she? Is she handsome?

MR. COLLINS
She is a most charming young lady indeed. Lady Catherine herself says that, in point of true beauty, Miss de Bourgh is far superior to the handsomest of her sex, because there is that in her features which marks a young lady of distinguished birth. She is unfortunately of a sickly constitution, which has prevented her from making progress in many accomplishments, which she could not have otherwise failed, as I am informed by the lady who superintended her education, and who still resides with them. But she is perfectly amiable, and often condescends to drive by my humble abode in her little phaeton and ponies. The garden in which stands my humble abode is separated only by a lane from Rosings Park, her ladyship's residence. Lady Catherine has asked me twice to dine at Rosings, and sent for me only the Saturday before, to make up her pool of quadrille in the evening. Miss de Bourgh’s indifferent state of health unhappily prevents her being in town; and by that means, as I told Lady Catherine one day, has deprived the British court of its brightest ornaments. Her ladyship seemed pleased with the idea; you may imagine that I am happy on every occasion to offer those little delicate compliments, which are always so acceptable to ladies.

MARY
Do these pleasing attentions proceed from the impulse of the moment, or are they result of previous study?

MR. COLLINS
They arise chiefly from what is passing at the time, and though I sometimes amuse myself with suggesting and arranging such little elegant compliments as may be adapted to ordinary occasions, I always wish to give them as unstudied an air as possible.

MR. BENNET
No one would ever think otherwise. Good night, Mr. Collins. (Exits).

MR. COLLINS
Mrs. Bennet, would you do me the honor? I think the time is right to speak about this most pressing issue. That is if the ladies would be so kind and excuse us for a moment.

MRS. BENNET
Yes, of course, Mr. Collins. Good night girls. (The Bennet daughters exit.)

MR. COLLINS
As you know I have a very particular and fortunate relationship with Lady Catherine de Bourgh. She has been of great assistance; she is a most active magistrate in our parish. The minutest concerns, about which I always consult her, she helps me settle. I value her advice above all else. Well, Lady Catherine has condescended to advise me to marry as soon as I could, provided I choose with discretion. Having now a good house and a very sufficient income, I intend to marry; and in seeking a reconciliation with the Longbourn family, I mean to choose one of your daughters, to atone for inheriting the estate, as I have found them as handsome and as amiable as they were represented by common report. I have a wife in view. I have the strictest notions of what is due to seniority; and for the first evening Miss Jane Bennet was my settled choice.
MRS. BENNETT
I wish to caution against choosing my eldest daughter. Jane, I must just mention, is likely to be very soon engaged.

MR. COLLINS
Ah, but I only have to change from Jane to Elizabeth. Elizabeth is next to Jane in seniority and is equal in beauty.

MRS. BENNET
Yes, I quite agree.

MR. COLLINS
Good evening, Mrs. Bennet.

MRS. BENNET
Good evening, Mr. Collins. (He exits.)

MRS. HILL
Mrs. Bennet might have two daughters married.

MR. HILL
Won’t Miss Lizzy be surprised?

SCENE 11 - LONGBOURN – to – MERYTON – Late morning – Tuesday, November 19, 1811

MR. HILL
Mr. Collins spent much of his life under the guidance of an illiterate and miserly father. He has been assisted by little education.

MRS. HILL
A fortunate chance recommended him to Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

MR. HILL
Fortunate indeed. (The family enters and takes their places.) Mr. Bennet is most anxious to get rid of Mr. Collins, and have his library to himself.

MRS. HILL
Mr. Collins followed Mr. Bennet into the study after breakfast. Mr. Collins talks, with little cessation, of his house and garden at Hunsford.

MR. HILL
Such doings discomposes Mr. Bennet exceedingly.

LYDIA
(Entering.) I am going to walk to Meryton to find out about Richard and to inquire when Mr. Denny will be returning from town. Would anyone like to accompany me?

MR. COLLINS

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I assure you that all the young ladies may go for I will happily attend them.

MR. BENNET
Thank you, Mr. Collins. I know the girls are most anxious to have you accompany them to Meryton. Should you need me, Mr. Hill, I will be in my library. (Exits.)

(The daughters gather their outer garments, adlibbing lines about ribbons, the weather, gossip, Mr. Collins, etc. and go off.) (Lydia notices Wickham.)

SCENE CHANGE #1-5

LYDIA
Kitty? Who is that young man, we have never seen him before. Good day Mr. Denny! Welcome back from town; did you have a successful trip?

MR. DENNY
I did indeed, Miss Bennet. May I have permission to introduce my friend, Mr. Wickham? Mr. Wickham has just returned with me from town, and has accepted, I am happy to say, a commission in our corps. Mr. Wickham, This is Miss Jane Bennet, Miss Elizabeth Bennet, Miss Catherine Bennet, Miss Mary Bennet, and Miss Lydia Bennet.

MR. WICKHAM
Ladies. It was the prospect of good society that was my chief inducement to enter the corps. I knew it to be a most respectable, agreeable corps, and my friend Denny tempted me further by the excellent society Meryton had to offer. I can see now that Mr. Denny did not exaggerate. (Darcy and Bingley are seen walking down the street.)

MR. BINGLEY
Good afternoon, Ladies. Miss Bennet. I was just on my way to Longbourn to inquire after your health and to give my personal invitation to you, and your entire family, for the ball at Netherfield, which has been fixed for the following Tuesday night.

JANE
Thank you, Mr. Bingley. I am certain we will all accept your kind invitation. (Pause) Mr. Bingley, Mr. Darcy, I believe you know Mr. Denny. This is Mr. Wickham.

MR. DENNY
Mr. Wickham has just come from London; he is to have a lieutenant's commission.

MR. BINGLEY
Welcome to Meryton, Mr. Wickham.

(Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham look at each other. Mr. Wickham, after a few moments, touches his hat in salutation, which Mr. Darcy deigns to return.)

MR. BINGLEY
Well, good day. I look forward to seeing you Tuesday week.

JANE
Thank you, Mr. Bingley.

ELIZABETH
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Good day. *(The family starts to walk. Mr. Wickham catches up to Elizabeth and Lydia catches up to them both.)*

**MR. WICKHAM**

How long has Mr. Darcy been staying at Netherfield, do you know?

**ELIZABETH**

About a month.

**LYDIA**

He is a man of very large property in Derbyshire.

**MR. WICKHAM**

Yes, his estate there is a noble one. A clear ten thousand per annum. You could not have met with a person more capable of giving you certain information on that head than myself, for I have been connected with his family in a particular manner from my infancy. You may well be surprised at such an assertion, after seeing the very cold manner of our meeting. Are you much acquainted with Mr. Darcy?

**ELIZABETH**

I have spent four days in the same house with him, and I think him very disagreeable.

**MR. WICKHAM**

I have no right to give my opinion as to his being agreeable or otherwise. I am not qualified to form one. I have known him too long and too well to be a fair judge. It is impossible for me to be impartial.

**LYDIA**

He is not at all liked in Hertfordshire. Everybody is disgusted with his pride. You will not find him favorably spoken of by anyone.

**MR. WICKHAM**

Is he likely to be in this country much longer?

**LYDIA**

I heard nothing of his going away. I hope your plans will not be affected by his being in the neighborhood.

**MR. WICKHAM**

Oh! No — it is not for me to be driven away by Mr. Darcy. If he wishes to avoid seeing me, he must go. We are not on friendly terms, and it always gives me pain to meet him, but I have no reason for avoiding him. A military life is not what I was intended for, but circumstances have now made it eligible. The church ought to have been my profession—I was brought up for the church, and I should at this time have been in possession of a most valuable living, had it pleased the gentleman we were speaking of just now. Yes—the late Mr. Darcy bequeathed me the next presentation of the best living in his gift. He was my godfather, and excessively attached to me. I cannot do justice to his kindness. He meant to provide for me amply, and thought he had done it; but when the living fell, it was given elsewhere.
ELIZABETH
Good heavens! But how could that be? How could his will be disregarded? Why did you not seek legal redress?

MR. WICKHAM
There was just such an informality in the terms of the bequest as to give me no hope from law. A man of honor could not have doubted the intention, but Mr. Darcy chose to doubt it. Certain it is, that the living became vacant two years ago, exactly as I was of an age to hold it, and that it was given to another man; and no less certain is it, that I cannot accuse myself of having really done anything to deserve to lose it.

ELIZABETH
What can have been his motive? What can have induced him to behave so cruelly?

MR. WICKHAM
Had the late Mr. Darcy liked me less, his son might have borne with me better; but his father's uncommon attachment to me irritated him, I believe, very early in life. He had not a temper to bear the sort of competition in which we stood—the sort of preference, which was often given me.

LYDIA
I had not thought Mr. Darcy so bad as this—though I have never liked him. I had not thought so very ill of him.

ELIZABETH
I do remember his boasting of the implacability of his resentments, of his having an unforgiving temper.

MR. WICKHAM
Almost all his actions may be traced to pride; pride has often been his best friend. Yes. It has often led him to be liberal and generous, to give his money freely, to display hospitality, to assist his tenants, and relieve the poor. Family pride, and filial pride—for he is very proud of what his father was—have done this. Not to appear to disgrace his family, to degenerate from the popular qualities, or lose the influence of the Pemberley House, is a powerful motive. He has also brotherly pride, which, with some brotherly affection, makes him a very kind and careful guardian of his sister, and you will hear him generally cried up as the most attentive and best of brothers.

LYDIA
What sort of girl is Miss Darcy?

MR. WICKHAM
I wish I could call her amiable. It gives me pain to speak ill of a Darcy. But she is too much like her brother—very, very proud.

ELIZABETH
I am astonished at his intimacy with Mr. Bingley! How can Mr. Bingley, who seems good humor itself, and is, I really believe, truly amiable, be in friendship with such a man? How can they suit each other?

MR. WICKHAM
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Mr. Darcy can please where he chooses. He can be a conversable companion if he thinks it worth
his while. Among those who are at all his equals in consequence, he is a very different man from
what he is to the less prosperous.

SCENE 12 – EXT. LONGBOURN - Dusk – Tuesday, November 26, 1811

MRS. HILL
Have you observed, Mr. Hill, that Mr. Collins has increased his civilities towards Miss
Elizabeth?

MR. HILL
I have heard him frequently compliment on her wit and vivacity.

MRS. HILL
Do you think Miss Elizabeth knows what Mrs. Bennet is up to?

MR. HILL
I think Miss Elizabeth chooses not to take the hint.

(Jane and Elizabeth enter and start to put their outer garments on. They are in mid-
conversation.)

JANE
They have both been deceived, I dare say, in some way or other, of which we can form no idea.
Laugh as much as you choose, you will not laugh me out of my opinion. My dearest Lizzy, do
but consider in what a disgraceful light it places Mr. Darcy, to be treating his father's favorite in
such a manner, one whom his father had promised to provide for. It is impossible. No man of
common humanity, no man who had any value for his character, could be capable of it. Can his
most intimate friends be so excessively deceived in him?

ELIZABETH
I can much more easily believe Mr. Bingley's being imposed on, than that Mr. Wickham should
invent such a history of himself as he gave me. If it be not so, let Mr. Darcy contradict it.
(Enter Mary and Mr. Collins conversing.)

MARY
I think it is no sacrifice to join occasionally in evening engagements. Society has claims on us
all; and I profess myself one of those who consider intervals of recreation and amusement as
desirable for everybody.

MR. COLLINS
I am by no means of the opinion, I assure you, that a ball of this kind, given by a young man of
character, to respectable people, can have any evil tendency. In fact I am so far from objecting to
dancing myself, that I shall hope to be honored with the hands of all my fair cousins in the course
of the evening; and I take this opportunity of soliciting yours, Miss Elizabeth, for the two first
dances especially, a preference which I trust my cousin Jane will attribute to the right cause, and
not to any disrespect for her.

JANE
Not at all, Sir.
LYDIA
Well, I am going to dance with Mr. Wickham for half of the evening.

KITTY
And I will dance with him for the other half of the evening.

SCENE 13 - BALLROOM - NETHERFIELD – Evening – same
(The ball is in full swing. (Dance 3) Jane and Bingley are dancing together, Lydia and Kitty are dancing with two officers, and Mary is dancing with Mr. Collins. Other couples are dancing.)

CAROLINE
(One corner of the room.) I should like balls infinitely better if they were carried on in a different manner; but there is something insufferably tedious in the usual process of such a meeting. It would surely be much more rational if conversation instead of dancing were made the order of the day.

LOUISA
Much more rational, my dear Caroline, I dare say, but it would not be near so much like a ball.

MRS. BENNET
(Another corner.) It is certain that Jane will soon be married to Mr. Bingley. He is such a charming young man, and so rich, and lives but three miles from Longbourn. It is such a comfort to think how fond the two Bingley sisters are of Jane; they must desire the connection as much as we do. (The Bingley sisters overhear, are taken aback, and move off.) It is, moreover, such a promising thing for my younger daughters, as Jane's marrying so greatly must throw them in the way of other rich men. It is so pleasant at this time of life to be able to consign my single daughters to the care of their sister, that I might not be obliged to go into company more than I like. I trust, with good wishes, that you might soon be equally fortunate.

LADY LUCAS
Careful, Mrs. Bennet, I believe our conversation is being overheard by Mr. Darcy.

MRS. BENNET
What is Mr. Darcy to me, pray, that I should be afraid of him? I am sure we owe him no such particular civility as to be obliged to say nothing he may not like to hear.

LADY LUCAS
For heaven's sake, Mrs. Bennet, speak lower. What advantage can it be for you to offend Mr. Darcy? You will never recommend yourself, or Jane, to his friend by so doing!

CHARLOTTE
(Another corner.) Bingley likes your sister undoubtedly; but he may never do more than like her, if she does not help him on.

ELIZABETH
But she does help him on, as much as her nature will allow.
CHARLOTTE
Remember, Eliza, that he does not know Jane's disposition as you do.

ELIZABETH
But if a woman is partial to a man, and does not endeavor to conceal it, he must find it out.

CHARLOTTE
Perhaps he must, if he sees enough of her. But, though Bingley and Jane meet tolerably often, it is never for many hours together; and, as they always see each other in large mixed parties, Jane should therefore make the most of every half-hour in which she can command his attention. When she is secure of him, there will be more leisure for falling in love as much as she chooses.

ELIZABETH
Your plan is a good one where nothing is in question but the desire of being well married, and if I were determined to get a rich husband, or any husband, I dare say I should adopt it. But these are not Jane's feelings.

CHARLOTTE
I wish Jane success with all my heart; and if she were married to him tomorrow, I should think she had as good a chance of happiness as if she were to be studying his character for a twelvemonth.

ELIZABETH
You make me laugh, Charlotte; but it is not sound. You know it is not sound, and that you would never act in this way yourself. (The dance ends. Lydia and Kitty run up to Mr. Denny.)

LYDIA
Mr. Denny. I have looked in vain for Mr. Wickham among the cluster of red coats here assembled.

KITTY
Lydia is going to dance with him for half of the evening, and me for the other.

MR. DENNY
I see. Mr. Wickham was obliged to go to town on business the day before, and has not yet returned.

KITTY
Did Mr. Bingley purposely omit an invitation to Mr. Wickham because of Mr. Darcy?

MR. DENNY
No, but I do not imagine his business would have called him away just now, if he had not wanted to avoid a certain gentleman here. Miss Lydia, may I have the next dance?

CAPTAIN CARTER
Miss Catherine?

MR. COLLINS
It is my intention; if I may be so bold, to remain close to you throughout the evening, Miss Elizabeth.
MR. DARCY
May I have the next dance, Miss Elizabeth? (Dance 4)

ELIZABETH
You may. (The dance begins. Silence.) I love a (name of dance).

MR. DARCY
Indeed. (Silence.)

ELIZABETH
It is your turn to say something, Mr. Darcy - I talked about the dance, now you ought to remark on the size of the room or the number of couples.

MR. DARCY
I am perfectly happy to oblige, please advise me of what you would like most to hear.

ELIZABETH
Very well. That reply will do for the present. Perhaps by and by I may observe that private balls are much pleasanter than public ones. But now we may be silent.

MR. DARCY
Do you talk by rule, then, while you are dancing?

ELIZABETH
One must speak a little, you know. It would look odd to be entirely silent for half an hour together; and yet for the advantage of some, conversation ought to be so arranged, as that they may have the trouble of saying as little as possible.

MR. DARCY
Are you consulting your own feelings in the present case, or do you imagine that you are gratifying mine?

ELIZABETH
Both, for I have always seen a great similarity in the turn of our minds. We are each of an unsocial, taciturn disposition, unwilling to speak, unless we expect to say something that will amaze the whole room, and be handed down to posterity with all the éclat of a proverb.

MR. DARCY
This is no very striking resemblance of your own character, I am sure. How near it may be to mine, I cannot pretend to say. You think it a faithful portrait undoubtedly.

ELIZABETH
I must not decide on my own performance. (Silence) When you met us there the other day, we had just been forming a new acquaintance.

MR. DARCY
Mr. Wickham is blessed with such happy manners as may ensure his making friends—whether
he may be equally capable of retaining them, is less certain.

ELIZABETH
He has been so unlucky as to lose your friendship, and in a manner which he is likely to suffer from all his life.

SIR WILLIAM
I have been most highly gratified indeed, my dear sir. Such very superior dancing is not often seen. It is evident that you belong to the first circles. Allow me to say, however, that your fair partner does not disgrace you, and that I must hope to have this pleasure often repeated, especially when a certain desirable event, my dear Eliza (glancing at Jane and Mr. Bingley) shall take place. What congratulations will then flow in! I appeal to Mr. Darcy: but let me not interrupt you, sir. You will not thank me for detaining you from the bewitching converse of that young lady, whose bright eyes are also upbraiding me.

MR. DARCY
Sir William's interruption has made me forget what we were talking of.

ELIZABETH
I do not think we were speaking at all. We have tried two or three subjects already without success, and what we are to talk of next I cannot imagine.

What think you of books?

MR. DARCY
Books. Oh, no. I am sure we never read the same, or not with the same feelings. (Pause) I remember hearing you once say, Mr. Darcy that you hardly ever forgave, that your resentment once created was unappeasable. You are very cautious, I suppose, as to its being created.

I am.

ELIZABETH
And never allow yourself to be blinded by prejudice?

I hope not.

ELIZABETH
It is particularly incumbent on those who never change their opinion, to be secure of judging properly first.

MR. DARCY
May I ask to what these questions tend?

ELIZABETH
Merely to the illustration of your character. I am trying to make it out.
MR. Darcy

And what is your success?

Elizabeth

I do not get on at all. I hear such different accounts of you as to puzzle me exceedingly.

MR. Darcy

I can readily believe, that reports may vary greatly with respect to me; and I could wish, Miss Bennet, that you were not to sketch my character at the present moment, as there is reason to fear that the performance would reflect no credit on either.

Elizabeth

But if I do not take your likeness now, I may never have another opportunity.

MR. Darcy

I would by no means suspend any pleasure of yours.

(The dance ends) (They bow to each other. Mr. Darcy goes off and Elizabeth remains.)

Mr. Collins

I have found out, by a singular accident, that there is now in the room a near relation of my patroness. I happened to overhear the gentleman himself mentioning to the young lady who does the honors of the house the names of his cousin Miss de Bourgh, and of her mother Lady…

Mr. Collins cont.

Catherine. How wonderfully these sorts of things occur! Who would have thought of my meeting with, perhaps, a nephew of Lady Catherine de Bourgh in this assembly! I am most thankful that the discovery is made in time for me to pay my respects to him, which I am now going to do, and trust he will excuse my not having done it before. My total ignorance of the connection must plead my apology.

Elizabeth

You are not going to introduce yourself to Mr. Darcy!

Mr. Collins

Indeed I am. I shall entreat his pardon for not having done it earlier. I believe him to be Lady Catherine's nephew. It will be in my power to assure him that her ladyship was quite well yesterday se'night. (Elizabeth watches as Mr. Collins interrupts Darcy.) Mr. Darcy! (The room stops. Darcy is surprised and turns round. Caroline sidles up to Elizabeth. In dumb show we see, during the conversation, Mr. Collins point Jane and Elizabeth out to Darcy.)

Caroline

So, Miss Eliza, I hear you are quite delighted with George Wickham! Your sister has been talking to me about him, and asking me a thousand questions; and I find that the young man quite forgot to tell you, among his other communication, that he was the son of old Wickham, the late Mr. Darcy's steward. Let me recommend you, however, as a friend, not to give implicit confidence to all his assertions, for as to Mr. Darcy's using him ill, it is perfectly false, for, on the contrary, he has always been remarkably kind to him, though George Wickham has treated Mr. Darcy in a most infamous manner. I do not know the particulars, but I know very well that Mr. Darcy is not in the least to blame, that he cannot bear to hear George Wickham mentioned, and that though my brother thought that he could not well avoid including him in his invitation to
the officers, he was excessively glad to find that he had taken himself out of the way. His coming into the country at all is a most insolent thing, indeed, and I wonder how he could presume to do it. I pity you, Miss Eliza, for this discovery of your favorite's guilt; but really, considering his descent, one could not expect much better.

ELIZABETH
His guilt and his descent appear by your account to be the same. I have heard you accuse him of nothing worse than of being the son of Mr. Darcy's steward, and of that he informed me himself.

CAROLINE
I beg your pardon. Excuse my interference—it was kindly meant. (They bow to each other.)

MARY
I will take this opportunity, while the musicians are taking refreshment, to sing a song for the assembly. I will sing The Last Rose of Summer by Thomas Moore.

(Mary sings.)
'Tis the last rose of summer
Left blooming alone;
All her lovely companions
Are faded and gone;
No flower of her kindred,
No rosebud is nigh,
To reflect back her blushes,
To give sigh for sigh.
I'll not leave thee, thou lone one!
To pine on the stem;
Since the lovely are sleeping,
Go, sleep thou with them.
Thus kindly I scatter,
Thy leaves o'er the bed,
Where thy mates of the garden
Lie scentless and dead.
So soon may I follow,
When friendships decay,
From Love's shining circle
The gems drop away.
When true hearts lie withered
And fond ones are flown,
Oh! who would inhabit,
This bleak world alone?

I will next sing The Minstrel Boy by Thomas Moore

MR. BENNET
That will do extremely well, child. You have delighted us long enough. Let the other young ladies have time to exhibit.

MR. COLLINS
If I were so fortunate as to be able to sing, I should have great pleasure, I am sure, in obliging the
company with an air; for I consider music as a very innocent diversion, and perfectly compatible with the profession of a clergyman. I have no reason, I assure you, to be dissatisfied with my reception. Mr. Darcy seemed much pleased with the attention. He answered me with the utmost civility, and even paid me the compliment of saying that he was so well convinced of Lady Catherine's discernment as to be certain she could never bestow a favor unworthily. It was really a very handsome thought. Upon the whole, I am much pleased with him. (Dance 5) Oh. Miss Mary, this was our dance. (Mary and Collins join the dance.)

ELIZABETH
What you have learnt about Mr. Wickham?

JANE
Mr. Bingley does not know the whole of his history, and is quite ignorant of the circumstances which have principally offended Mr. Darcy; but he will vouch for the good conduct, the probity, and honor of his friend, and is perfectly convinced that Mr. Wickham has deserved much less attention from Mr. Darcy than he has received; and I am sorry to say by his account as well as his sister's, Mr. Wickham is by no means a respectable young man. I am afraid he has been very imprudent, and has deserved to lose Mr. Darcy's regard.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Bingley does not know Mr. Wickham himself?

JANE
He never saw him till the other morning at Meryton.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Bingley's defense of his friend was a very able one, I dare say; but since he is unacquainted with several parts of the story, and has learnt the rest from that friend himself, I shall venture to still think of both gentlemen as I did before.

(The dance picks up speed and Bingley sweeps Jane off her feet to join the dance. Darcy/Caroline, Mary/Collins, Lydia/Carter, Kitty/Denny, Mrs. Bennet/Mr. Bennet, Lady Lucas/Sir William with Elizabeth watching.)

(SCENE CHANGE #1-6)

SCENE 14 - PARLOR – LONGBOURN – Late that evening – same
(As the family is taking off their outer garments...)

MR. COLLINS
May I hope, madam, for your interest with your fair daughter Elizabeth, when I solicit for the honor of a private audience with her in the course of this evening?

MRS. BENNET
Oh dear! Yes. Certainly. I am sure Lizzy will be very happy—I am sure she can have no objection. Come, Kitty, I want you upstairs.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Collins can have nothing to say to me that anybody need not hear. I am going away myself.

MRS. BENNET
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No, no, nonsense, Lizzy. I desire you to stay where you are. Lizzy, I insist upon your staying and hearing Mr. Collins. *(Mrs. Bennet and Kitty exit. Kitty comes back with Lydia and they listen at the door.)*

**MR. COLLINS**

Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth, which your modesty, so far from doing you any disservice, rather adds to your other perfections. You would have been less amiable in my eyes had there not been this little unwillingness; but allow me to assure you, that I have your respected mother's permission for this address. You can hardly doubt the purport of my discourse, however your natural delicacy may lead you to dissemble; my attentions have been too marked to be mistaken. Almost as soon as I entered the house, I singled you out as the companion of my future life. But before I am run away with my feelings on this subject, perhaps it would be advisable for me to state my reasons for marrying—and, moreover, for coming into Hertfordshire with the design of selecting a wife, as I certainly did. *(Mary comes by and Kitty and Lydia make room for her to listen as well.)* My reasons for marrying are, first, that I think it a right thing for every clergyman in easy circumstances (like myself) to set the example of matrimony in his parish; secondly, that I am convinced that it will add very greatly to my happiness; and thirdly—which perhaps I ought to have mentioned earlier, that it is the particular advice and recommendation of the very noble lady whom I have the honor of calling patroness. Twice has she condescended to give me her opinion on this subject; and it was but the very Saturday night before I left Hunsford,

**LADY CATHERINE V. O.**

'Mr. Collins, you must marry. A clergyman like you must marry. Choose properly, choose a gentlewoman for my sake; and for your own, let her be an active, useful sort of person, not brought up high, but able to make a small income go a good way. This is my advice. Find such a woman as soon as you can, bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her.'

**MR. COLLINS**

Allow me, by the way, to observe, my fair cousin, which I do not reckon the notice and kindness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh as among the least of the advantages in my power to offer. You will find her manners beyond anything I can describe; and your wit and vivacity, I think, must be acceptable to her, especially when tempered with the silence and respect which her rank will inevitably excite. As I am to inherit this estate after the death of your honored father, I could not satisfy myself without resolving to choose a wife from among his daughters, that the loss to them might be as little as possible, when the melancholy event takes place—which, however, may not be for several years. This has been my motive, my fair cousin, and I flatter myself it will not sink me in your esteem. And now nothing remains for me but to assure you in the most animated language of the violence of my affection. To fortune I am perfectly indifferent, and shall make no demand of that nature on your father, since I am well aware that it could not be complied with; and that one thousand pounds in the four percent, which will not be yours till after your mother's decease, is all that you may ever be entitled to. On that head, therefore, I shall be uniformly silent; and you may assure yourself that no ungenerous reproach shall ever pass my lips when we are married. *(Mary gasps. Kitty and Lydia shhh her.)*

**ELIZABETH**

You are too hasty, sir. You forget that I have made no answer. Let me do it without further loss of time. Accept my thanks for the compliment you are paying me. I am very sensible of the honor of your proposals, but it is impossible for me to do otherwise than to decline them. *(Mary
sighs relief.)

MR. COLLINS
I am not now to learn that it is usual with young ladies to reject the addresses of the man whom they secretly mean to accept, when he first applies for their favor; and that sometimes the refusal is repeated a second, or even a third time. I am therefore by no means discouraged by what you have just said, and shall hope to lead you to the altar ere long. (Mary leaves the room.)

ELIZABETH
Upon my word, sir. I do assure you that I am not one of those young ladies who are so daring as to risk their happiness on the chance of being asked a second time. I am perfectly serious in my refusal. You could not make me happy, and I am convinced that I am the last woman in the world who could make you so.

MR. COLLINS
When I do myself the honor of speaking to you next on the subject, I shall hope to receive a more favorable answer than you have now given me; I am far from accusing you of cruelty at present, because I know it to be the established custom of your sex to reject a man on the first application, and perhaps you have even now said as much to encourage my suit as would be consistent with the true delicacy of the female character.

ELIZABETH
Really, Mr. Collins, you puzzle me exceedingly. If what I have hitherto said can appear to you in the form of encouragement, I know not how to express my refusal in such a way as to convince you of its being one.

MR. COLLINS
You must give me leave to flatter myself, my dear cousin, that your refusal of my addresses is merely words of course. My situation in life, my connections with the family of de Bourgh, and my relationship to your own, are circumstances highly in my favor; and you should take it into further consideration, that in spite of your manifold attractions, it is by no means certain that another offer of marriage may ever be made you. I must therefore conclude that you are not serious in your rejection of me, I shall choose to attribute it to your wish of increasing my love by suspense, according to the usual practice of elegant females.

LYDIA
Jane, come down for there is such fun here! What do you think is happening? Mr. Collins has made an offer to Lizzy, and she will not have him.

ELIZABETH
I do assure you, sir, that I have no pretensions whatever to that kind of elegance which consists in tormenting a respectable man. I would rather be paid the compliment of being believed sincere. I thank you again and again for the honor you have done me in your proposals, but to accept them is absolutely impossible. My feelings in every respect forbid it. Can I speak plainer? Do not consider me now as an elegant female, intending to plague you, but as a rational creature, speaking the truth from her heart. (Enter Mrs. Bennet.)

MRS. BENNET
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What?

MR. COLLINS
You are uniformly charming! And I am persuaded that when sanctioned by the express authority of both your excellent parents, my proposals will not fail of being acceptable.

MRS. BENNET
Depend upon it, Mr. Collins, that Lizzy shall be brought to reason. *(Elizabeth exits)* I will speak to her about it directly. She is a very headstrong, foolish girl, and does not know her own interest, but I will make her know it. *(Exit Kitty, to get Mr. Bennet.)*

MR. COLLINS
Pardon me for interrupting you, madam, but if she is really headstrong and foolish, I know not whether she would altogether be a very desirable wife to a man in my situation, who naturally looks for happiness in the marriage state. If therefore she actually persists in rejecting my suit, perhaps it were better not to force her into accepting me, because if liable to such defects of temper, she could not contribute much to my felicity.

MRS. BENNET
Sir, you quite misunderstand me. Lizzy is only headstrong in such matters as these. In everything else she is as good-natured a girl as ever lived. I will go directly to Mr. Bennet, and we shall very soon settle it with her, I am sure. Oh! Mr. Bennet, you are wanted immediately; we are all in an uproar. You must come and make Lizzy marry Mr. Collins, for she vows she will not have him, and if you do not make haste he will change his mind and he not have her.

*(Exit Mr. Collins)* *(Enter Mr. Bennet.)*

MR. BENNET
I have not the pleasure of understanding you. Of what are you talking?

MRS. BENNET
Of Mr. Collins and Lizzy. Lizzy declares she will not have Mr. Collins, and Mr. Collins begins to say that he will not have Lizzy.

MR. BENNET
And what am I to do on the occasion? It seems a hopeless business.

MRS. BENNET
Speak to Lizzy about it yourself. Tell her that you insist upon her marrying him.

MR. BENNET
Let her be called down. She shall hear my opinion.

MRS. BENNET
Elizabeth! *(Enter Elizabeth)*

MR. BENNET
I have sent for you on an affair of importance. I understand that Mr. Collins has made you an offer of marriage. Is it true?
ELIZABETH

It is true.

MR. BENNET

Very well—and this offer of marriage, you have refused?

ELIZABETH

I have, sir.

MR. BENNET

Very well. We now come to the point. Your mother insists upon your accepting it. Is it not so, Mrs. Bennet?

MRS. BENNET

Yes, or I will never see her again.

MR. BENNET

An unhappy alternative is before you, Elizabeth. From this day you must be a stranger to one of your parents. Your mother will never see you again if you do not marry Mr. Collins, and I will never see you again if you do.

SCENE 15 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Afternoon – Thursday, November 28, 1811

(Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, and Charlotte are sitting in the parlor.)

JANE

The whole party has left Netherfield by this time, and are on their way to town—and without any intention of coming back again. You shall hear what Caroline Bingley writes. ‘I do not pretend to regret anything I shall leave in Hertfordshire, except your society, my dearest friend; but we will hope, at some future period, to enjoy many returns of that delightful intercourse we have known, and in the meanwhile may lessen the pain of separation by a very frequent and most unreserved correspondence. I depend on you for that.’

CHARLOTTE

It is unlucky, that you were not be able to see your friends before they left the country. But may we not hope that the period of future happiness to which Miss Bingley looks forward may arrive earlier than she is aware, and that the delightful intercourse you have known as friends will be renewed with yet greater satisfaction as sisters?

JANE

Caroline decidedly says that none of the party will return into Hertfordshire this winter. ‘I sincerely hope your Christmas in Hertfordshire may abound in the gaieties which that season generally brings, and that your beaux will be so numerous as to prevent your feeling the loss of the three of whom we shall deprive you.’ It is evident by this that he comes back no more this winter.

ELIZABETH

It is only evident that Miss Bingley does not mean that he should.
JANE

Why will you think so? It must be his own doing. He is his own master. But you do not know all. I will read you the passage, which particularly hurts me. ‘Mr. Darcy is impatient to see his sister; and, to confess the truth, we are scarcely less eager to meet her again. I really do not think Georgiana Darcy has her equal for beauty, elegance, and accomplishments; and the affection she inspires in Louisa and myself is heightened into something still more interesting, from the hope we dare entertain of her being hereafter our sister.’ Is it not clear enough? Does it not expressly declare that Caroline neither expects nor wishes me to be her sister; that she is perfectly convinced of her brother's indifference; and that if she suspects the nature of my feelings for him, she means (most kindly!) to put me on my guard? Can there be any other opinion on the subject?

ELIZABETH

Yes, there can; for mine is totally different. Will you hear it?

JANE

Most willingly.

ELIZABETH

You shall have it in a few words. Miss Bingley sees that her brother is in love with you, and wants him to marry Miss Darcy.

CHARLOTTE

No one who has ever seen you together can doubt his affection.

ELIZABETH

Could Miss Bingley have seen half as much love in Mr. Darcy for herself, she would have ordered her wedding clothes. But the case is this: We are not rich enough or grand enough for her.

MARY

She is the more anxious to get Miss Darcy for her brother, from the notion that when there has been one intermarriage, she may have less trouble in achieving a second.

ELIZABETH

My dearest Jane, you cannot seriously imagine that because Miss Bingley tells you her brother greatly admires Miss Darcy, he is in the smallest degree less sensible of your merit than when he took leave of you on Tuesday, or that it will be in her power to persuade him that, instead of being in love with you, he is very much in love with her friend.

JANE

Caroline is incapable of willfully deceiving anyone; and all that I can hope in this case is that she is deceiving herself.

ELIZABETH

Go to our aunt and uncle's in London. Let it be known you are there and I am sure he will come to you.

MARY

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A sensible solution. *(Silence.)*

CHARLOTTE
This morning Mr. Collins hastened to Lucas Lodge to entreated me to name the day that was to make him the happiest of men.

MARY
Charlotte, how can you tell such a story? Do not you know that Mr. Collins wants to marry Lizzy?

ELIZABETH
Engaged to Mr. Collins! My dear Charlotte—impossible!

CHARLOTTE
Why should you be surprised, my dear Eliza? Do you think it incredible that Mr. Collins should be able to procure any woman's good opinion, because he was not so happy as to succeed with you? I am not romantic, you know; I never was. I ask only a comfortable home; and considering Mr. Collins's character, connection, and situation in life, I am convinced that my chance of happiness with him is as fair as most people can boast on entering the marriage state.

MARY
Undoubtedly.

JANE
Mr. Collins's present circumstances make this a most eligible match. Congratulations, Charlotte.

MARY
I rate his abilities much higher than my sisters; there is a solidity in his reflection which has often struck me, and though he is by no means so clever as myself, I think that if encouraged to read and improve himself he might become a very agreeable companion.

CHARLOTTE
I shall depend on hearing from you very often, Eliza.

ELIZABETH
That you certainly shall.

Will you come and see me?

CHARLOTTE
We shall often meet, I hope, in Hertfordshire.

CHARLOTTE
I am not likely to leave Kent for some time. Promise me, therefore, to come to Hunsford.

ELIZABETH
I promise. *(Charlotte exits.)* *(Silence)* *(Mrs. Bennet, Lydia and Kitty enter.)*

MRS. BENNET
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(Holding a letter.) Oh, Jane. Mrs. Gardiner has invited you to town this winter.

JANE
I accepted Aunt Gardiner's invitation with pleasure. I might occasionally spend a morning with Caroline, without any danger of seeing her brother.

MRS. BENNET
Lydia, tell Lizzy that her aunt also invites her to accompany her uncle and aunt in a tour of pleasure which they propose on taking in the summer.

ELIZABETH
Lydia, tell mother I accept.

MARY
Who do you think Mr. Collins proposed to just this morning, Mother? Charlotte Lucas.

MRS. BENNET
Charlotte Lucas! This is your doing Elizabeth. It is very hard to think that Charlotte Lucas should ever be mistress of this house, that I should be forced to make way for her, and live to see her take my place in it!

MR. BENNET
(Enters) My dear, do not give way to such gloomy thoughts. Let us hope for better things. Let us flatter ourselves that I may be the survivor.

MR. HILL
The wedding of Charlotte Lucas to Mr. Collins took place and the bride and groom set off for Kent from the church door.

MRS. HILL
Mr. Wickham’s apparent partiality to Miss Elizabeth has subsided; he is the admirer of someone else. Miss King and her sudden acquisition of ten thousand pounds. I am glad Miss Lizzy did not involve herself, or him, in an affection, which the want of fortune would make very imprudent.

MRS. HILL
Miss Lizzy has too much sense. She would never disappoint Mr. Bennet.

ACT TWO
SCENE 1 - WRITING DESK – LONDON –written on Friday, January 11, 1812

JANE
My dearest Lizzy, The weather in London continues to be pleasant. My aunt Gardiner went into town today and I took the opportunity to call for Miss Bingley at Grosvenor Street. I did not think Caroline in good spirits, but she was very glad to see me, and reproached me for giving her no notice of my coming to London. I was right; my last letter had never reached her. I inquired after their brother, of course. He was well, but so much engaged with Mr. Darcy that they scarcely ever saw him. I found that Miss Darcy was expected to dinner. I wish I could see her. My visit was not long, as Caroline and Mrs. Hurst were going out. I dare say I shall soon see
them here. Yours, Jane

ACT TWO
SCENE 2 - HUNS福德 PARSONAGE – Day – Tuesday, March 10, 1812

SERVANT 1
When they left the high road for the lane to Hunsford, every eye was in search of the Parsonage. At length it was discernable. The carriage stopped at a small gate and Mr. and Mrs. Collins appeared at the front door.

MR. COLLINS
We know how little there is to tempt any one to our humble abode. Our plain manner of living, our small rooms and few domestics, must make Hunsford extremely dull to a young lady like yourself.

ELIZABETH
Not at all.

CHARLOTTE
The house is rather small but well built and convenient but everything is fitted up and arranged with neatness and consistency.

MR. COLLINS
Mrs. Collins deserves all the credit.

CHARLOTTE
The garden is large and well laid out.

MR. COLLINS
The cultivation of which I attend to myself.

CHARLOTTE
To work in his garden is one of Mr. Collins most respectable pleasures. I encourage him as much as possible.

MR. COLLINS
Miss Elizabeth, you will have the honor of seeing Lady Catherine this Thursday evening. I confess that I should not have been surprised by her Ladyship’s asking us on Sunday to drink tea. But who could have foreseen such an attention as this? Who could have imagined that we should receive an invitation to dine there so immediately after your arrival! But do not make yourself uneasy, my dear cousin, about your apparel. Lady Catherine is far from requiring that elegance of dress in us, which becomes herself and her daughter. I would advise you merely to put on whatever of your clothes is superior to the rest—there is no occasion for anything more. Lady Catherine will not think the worse of you for being simply dressed. She likes to have the distinction of rank preserved.

SERVANT 1
While they were dressing, Mr. Collins came two or three times to their different doors to recommend their being quick, as Lady Catherine very much objected to be kept waiting for her dinner.

(SCENE CHANGE #2-1)

SCENE 3 - SALON - ROSINGS – Evening – Thursday, March 12

CHARLOTTE
Your Ladyship. Miss de Bourgh. My friend and Mr. Collin’s cousin, Miss Elizabeth Bennet.

ELIZABETH
Your ladyship.

CHARLOTTE
It’s very kind of you to ask us to dine, Lady Catherine. (Mr. Darcy enters with Colonel Fitzwilliam.)

MR. COLLINS
Mr. Darcy! What an honor, Sir.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Darcy?

MR. DARCY
Miss Elizabeth?

LADY CATHERINE
You know my nephew?

MR. DARCY
I had the pleasure of meeting Miss Bennet in Hertfordshire while staying at Netherfield. Miss Bennet, allow me to introduce my cousin, Colonel Fitzwilliam.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
How do you do?

MR. DARCY
Your family is in good health I trust?

ELIZABETH
They are, thank you. My eldest sister is currently in London, did you happen to see her there?

MR. DARCY
Unfortunately, no.

LADY CATHERINE
Do you play and sing, Miss Bennet?
ELIZABETH
A little.

LADY CATHERINE
Some time or other we shall be happy to hear you. Do you draw?

ELIZABETH
No, not at all.

LADY CATHERINE
I suppose you had no opportunity. Your mother should have taken you to town every spring for the benefit of masters.

ELIZABETH
My mother would have had no objection, but my father hates London.

LADY CATHERINE
Has your governess left you?

ELIZABETH
We never had any governess.

LADY CATHERINE
No governess! How was that possible? Five daughters brought up at home without a governess! I never heard of such a thing. Your mother must have been quite a slave to your education. Without a governess, you must have been neglected.

ELIZABETH
We were always encouraged to read, and had all the masters that were necessary. Those who chose to be idle certainly might.

LADY CATHERINE
But that is what a governess will prevent, and if I had known your mother, I should have advised her most strenuously to engage one. I always say that nothing is to be done in education without steady and regular instruction, and nobody but a governess can give it. It is wonderful how many families I have been the means of supplying in that way. I am always glad to get a young person well placed out. Are any of your younger sisters out, Miss Bennet?

ELIZABETH
Yes, ma'am, all.

LADY CATHERINE
All! What, all five out at once? Very odd! And you only the second. The younger ones out before the elder ones are married! Your younger sisters must be very young?

ELIZABETH
Yes, my youngest is not sixteen. Perhaps she is full young to be much in company. I think it
would be very hard upon younger sisters, that they should not have their share of society and amusement, because the elder may not have the means or inclination to marry early.

LADY CATHERINE
Upon my word, you give your opinion very decidedly for so young a person. Pray, what is your age?

ELIZABETH
With three younger sisters grown up, your ladyship can hardly expect me to own it.

LADY CATHERINE
You cannot be more than twenty, I am sure; therefore you need not conceal your age.

ELIZABETH
I am not one-and-twenty. (Mr. Darcy shares a smile with Colonel Fitzwilliam) Mr. Darcy.

MR. DARCY
Miss Bennet.

LADY CATHERINE
What is that you are saying? What is it you are talking of? What are you telling Miss Bennet? Let me hear what it is.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
They were speaking of music, madam.

LADY CATHERINE
Of music! Then pray speak aloud. It is of all subjects my delight. I must have my share in the conversation if you are speaking of music. There are few people in England, I suppose, who have more true enjoyment of music than myself, or a better natural taste. If I had ever learnt, I should have been a great proficient. And so would Anne, if her health had allowed her to apply. I am confident that she would have performed delightfully.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
I believe you promised to play for us, Miss Bennet. (Elizabeth reluctantly sits down at the piano and starts to play. Lady Catherine takes no notice and talks loudly over the music.)

LADY CATHERINE
How does Georgiana get on, Darcy?

MR. DARCY
Georgiana plays with great proficiency.

LADY CATHERINE
I am very glad to hear such a good account of her and pray tell her from me that she cannot expect to excel if she does not practice a good deal.
I assure you, madam, that she does not need such advice. She practices very constantly.

**LADY CATHERINE**
So much the better. It cannot be done too much; and when I next write to her, I shall charge her not to neglect it on any account. Mrs. Collins you are very welcome to come to Rosings every day and play on the pianoforte in Mrs. Jenkinson's room. She would be in nobody's way, you know, in that part of the house.

**CHARLOTTE**
I thank you for your kindness, Lady Catherine.

**ELIZABETH**
You mean to frighten me, Mr. Darcy, by coming in all this state to hear me? I will not be alarmed though your sister does play so well. There is a stubbornness about me that never can bear to be frightened at the will of others.

**MR. DARCY**
You can not really believe I am trying to alarm you; I have had the pleasure of your acquaintance long enough to know that you find great enjoyment in occasionally professing opinions which in fact are not your own.

**ELIZABETH**
Your cousin will give you a very pretty notion of me, and teach you not to believe a word I say. I am particularly unlucky in meeting with a person so able to expose my real character, in a part of the world where I had hoped to pass myself off with some degree of credit. Indeed, Mr. Darcy, it is very ungenerous in you to mention all that you knew to my disadvantage in Hertfordshire—and, give me leave to say, very impolitic too—for it is provoking me to retaliate, and such things may come out as will shock your relations to hear.

**MR. DARCY**
I am not afraid of you.

**COLONEL FITZWILLIAM**
Pray let me hear what you have to accuse him of. I should like to know how he behaves among strangers.

**ELIZABETH**
Prepare yourself for something very dreadful. The first time of my ever seeing him in Hertfordshire was at a ball—and at this ball, what do you think he did? He danced only four dances, though gentlemen were scarce; and, to my certain knowledge, more than one young lady was sitting down in want of a partner.

**MR. DARCY**
I had not at that time the honor of knowing any lady in the assembly beyond my own party.

**ELIZABETH**
True, and nobody can ever be introduced in a ballroom.

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MR. DARCY
Perhaps I should have judged better, had I sought an introduction; but I am ill qualified to recommend myself to strangers.

ELIZABETH
Shall we ask him why a man of sense and education is ill qualified to recommend himself to strangers?

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
I can answer your question, without applying to him. It is because he will not give himself the trouble.

MR. DARCY
I certainly have not the talent, which some people possess, of conversing easily with those I have never seen before.

ELIZABETH
My fingers do not move over this instrument in the masterly manner, which I see so many women's do. But then I have always supposed it to be my own fault—because I will not take the trouble of practicing.

LADY CATHERINE
Miss Bennet would not play at all amiss if she practiced more, and could have the advantage of a London master. She has a very good notion of fingering, though her taste is not equal to Anne's. Anne would have been a delightful performer, had her health allowed her to learn.

SERVANT 2
Dinner is served, your Ladyship.

(SCENE CHANGE #2-2)

SCENE 4 - WRITING DESK – LONDON – written on February 11, 1812

JANE
My dearest Lizzy, four weeks have passed away, and I have seen nothing of him. I do not regret it; but I can no longer be blind to Mr. Bingley's inattention.

SCENE 5 - PARLOR - HUNS福德 – Day – Thursday, April 9, 1812
(Charlotte enters with Colonel Fitzwilliam.)

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
I have been making the tour of the park, as I generally do every year, and intend to close it with a call at the Parsonage.

CHARLOTTE
Colonel Fitzwilliam, welcome. Can I offer you a cup of tea? Do you certainly leave Kent on Saturday?
COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
Yes—if Darcy does not put it off again. But I am at his disposal. He arranges the business just as he pleases.

ELIZABETH
I imagine your cousin brought you down with him chiefly for the sake of having someone at his disposal.

CHARLOTTE
I wonder he does not marry, to secure a lasting convenience of that kind.

ELIZABETH
Perhaps his sister does as well for the present, and, as she is under his sole care, he may do what he likes with her.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
No. That is an advantage, which he must divide with me. I am joined with him in the guardianship of Miss Darcy. As for marrying, it is the dearest wish of Lady Catherine that Rosings and Pemberley be united in marriage?

ELIZABETH
Miss de Bourgh? Poor Miss Bingley.

CHARLOTTE
Miss Darcy is a very great favorite with some ladies of our acquaintance, Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley. I think I have heard you say that you know them.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
I know them a little. Their brother is a pleasant, gentlemanlike man—he is a great friend of Darcy's. From something that he told me in our journey hither, I have reason to think Bingley very much indebted to him. It is a circumstance which Darcy could not wish to be generally known, because if it were to get round to the lady's family, it would be an unpleasant thing.

CHARLOTTE
You may depend upon our not mentioning it.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
What he told me was merely this: that he congratulated himself on having lately saved a friend from the inconveniences of a most imprudent marriage.

ELIZABETH
Did Mr. Darcy give you reasons for this interference?

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
I understood that there were some very strong objections against the lady.

ELIZABETH
I do not see what right Mr. Darcy had to decide on the propriety of his friend's inclination, or
why, upon his own judgment alone, he was to determine and direct in what manner his friend was to be happy.

CHARLOTTE
But as we know none of the particulars, it is not fair to condemn him. It is not to be supposed that there was much affection in the case.

COLONEL FITZWILLIAM
It certainly lessens the honor of my cousin's triumph very sadly. Thank you, Mrs. Collins for the tea. I hope I will have the pleasure of seeing you both at dinner at Rosings this evening?

CHARLOTTE
You may count on it, Colonel Fitzwilliam.
(He exits)

ELIZABETH
To Jane herself there could be no possibility of objection, all loveliness and goodness as she is! Neither could anything be urged against my father, who, though with some peculiarities, has abilities Mr. Darcy himself need not disdain, and respectability which he will probably never reach. Charlotte, please convey my apologies, I have a headache; I cannot attend the party at Rosing this evening. (Exit Elizabeth)

SCENE 6 - WRITING DESK – LONDON – written on March 12, 1812

JANE
My dearest Lizzy, I confess myself to have been entirely deceived in Miss Bingley's regard for me. But, my dear sister, though the event has proved you right, do not think me obstinate if I still assert that, considering what her behavior was, my confidence was as natural as your suspicion. Caroline did not return my visit till yesterday; and not a note, not a line, did I receive in the meantime. When she did come, it was very evident that she had no pleasure in it; she made a slight, formal apology for not calling before, said not a word of wishing to see me again, and was in every respect so altered a creature, that when she went away I was perfectly resolved to continue the acquaintance no longer. I cannot but wonder, however, at her having any fears now, because, if he had at all cared about me, we must have met, long ago. He knows of my being in town, I am certain, from something she said herself; and yet it would seem, by her manner of talking, as if she wanted to persuade herself that he is really partial to Miss Darcy. If I were not afraid of judging harshly, I should be almost tempted to say that there is a strong appearance of duplicity in all this. Let me hear from you very soon. Yours, Jane.

SCENE 7 - PARLOR - HUNSFORD – Night – Thursday, April 9, 1812
(Elizabeth is reading Jane’s letter. The doorbell rings. Mr. Darcy enters.)

MR. DARCY
In vain I have struggled. It will not do. My feelings will not be repressed. You must allow me to tell you how ardently I admire and love you. (Pause) In spite of all my endeavors, I have found it impossible to conquer my feelings for you. I have had the highest regard for you almost from the first moment. In declaring my feelings for you I am going against the wishes of my family, my
friends, and my own better judgment. The situation of your mother’s family, though objectionable, is nothing in comparison to the total want of propriety so frequently, so almost uniformly betrayed by herself, by your three younger sister, occasionally even by your father. I know your family is inferior—our social situations are vastly different. I am well aware of the family obstacles; they have always opposed my inclination to you. I am so much in love as to wish to marry you in spite of all my objections. I hope that now I will be rewarded by your acceptance on my hand. Please, consent to by my wife.

ELIZABETH
I have never desired your good opinion, and you have certainly bestowed it most unwillingly. I am sorry to have occasioned pain to anyone.

MR. DARCY
And this is all the reply, which I am to have the honor of expecting! I might, perhaps, wish to be informed why, with so little endeavor at civility, I am thus rejected.

ELIZABETH
I might as well inquire, why with so evident a desire of offending and insulting me, you chose to tell me that you liked me against your will, against your reason, and even against your character? Was not this some excuse for incivility, if I was uncivil? But I have other provocations. Do you think that any consideration would tempt me to accept the man who has been the means of ruining, perhaps forever, the happiness of a most beloved sister? You dare not, you cannot deny that you have been the principal if not the only means of dividing them from each other—of exposing one to the censure of the world for caprice and instability, and the other to its derision
ELIZABETH CONT.
for disappointed hopes, and involving them both in misery of the acutest kind. Can you deny that you have done it?

MR. DARCY
I have no wish of denying that I did everything in my power to separate my friend from your sister, or that I rejoice in my success. Towards him I have been kinder than towards myself.

ELIZABETH
But it is not merely this affair on which my dislike is founded. Long before it had taken place my opinion of you was decided. Your character was unfolded in the recital, which I received many months ago from Mr. Wickham. On this subject, what can you have to say? In what imaginary act of friendship can you here defend yourself?

MR. DARCY
You take an eager interest in that gentleman's concerns.

ELIZABETH
Who that knows what his misfortunes have been, can help feeling an interest in him?

MR. DARCY
Yes, his misfortunes have been great indeed.

ELIZABETH
And of your infliction.
MR. DARCY
And this is your opinion of me! This is the estimation in which you hold me! I thank you for explaining it so fully. My faults, according to this calculation, are heavy indeed! But perhaps, these offenses might have been overlooked, had not your pride been hurt by my honest confession of the scruples that had long prevented my forming any serious design. But disguise of every sort is my abhorrence. Could you expect me to rejoice in the inferiority of your connections—to congratulate myself on the hope of relations, whose condition in life is so decidedly beneath my own?

ELIZABETH
You are mistaken, Mr. Darcy, if you suppose that the mode of your declaration affected me in any other way, than as it spared me the concern which I might have felt in refusing you, had you behaved in a more gentlemanlike manner. You could not have made the offer of your hand in any possible way that would have tempted me to accept it. I had not known you a month before I felt that you were the last man in the world whom I could ever be prevailed on to marry.

MR. DARCY
You have said quite enough, madam. I perfectly comprehend your feelings, and have now only to be ashamed of what my own have been. Forgive me for having taken up so much of your time, and accept my best wishes for your health and happiness. (He leaves.)

SCENE 8 - PARK – HUNSFORD EXT. – Morning - Friday, April 10, 1812

CHARLOTTE
(Looking out the window.) More than once has Elizabeth, in her ramble within the park, unexpectedly met Mr. Darcy. Once Mr. Darcy has met Eliza he will turn and walk back to the rectory with her. See here, he is waiting for her to come.

MR. DARCY
I have been walking in the grove some time in the hope of meeting you. Will you do me the honor of reading this letter?

ELIZABETH
I will. (He exits.)

MR. DARCY V.O.
Be not alarmed, madam, on receiving this letter, by the apprehension of its containing any repetition of those sentiments which were last night so disgusting to you. The effort which the formation and the perusal of this letter must occasion should have been spared, had not my character required it to be written and read.

Last night you laid to my charge two offenses. The first mentioned was that I had detached Mr. Bingley from your sister, and the other, that I had, in defiance of various claims, ruined the immediate prosperity of Mr. Wickham.

I had not been long in Hertfordshire before I saw that Bingley preferred your elder sister to any
other young woman in the country. But it was not till the evening of the dance at Netherfield that I had any apprehension of his feeling a serious attachment. My objections to the marriage were not merely those which I last night acknowledged. I remained convinced from the evening's scrutiny that though she received his attentions with pleasure, she did not invite them by any participation of sentiment. I acted to preserve my friend from what I esteemed a most unhappy connection. There is but one part of my conduct in the whole affair on which I do not reflect with satisfaction; it is that I condescended to conceal from him your sister's being in town. I knew it myself, as it was known to Miss Bingley; but her brother is even yet ignorant of it.

With respect to that other accusation. My excellent father died about five years ago; in his will he particularly recommended it to me to promote Mr. Wickham's advancement in the best manner that his profession might allow—and if he took orders, desired that a valuable family living might be his as soon as it became vacant. There was also a legacy of one thousand pounds.

Mr. Wickham wrote to inform me that, having finally resolved against taking orders, he expected some more immediate pecuniary advantage, in lieu of the preferment. He had some intention of studying law and that the interest of one thousand pounds would be insufficient. The business was therefore soon settled—he resigned all claim to assistance in the church, and accepted in return three thousand pounds.

For about three years I had heard little of him, when he applied to me again by letter. He had found the law a most unprofitable study, and was now absolutely resolved on being ordained, if I would present him to the living in question. You will hardly blame me for refusing to comply with this entreaty, or for resisting every repetition to it.

Mr. Wickham's chief object was unquestionably my sister's fortune, which is thirty thousand pounds; but I cannot help supposing that the hope of revenging himself on me was a strong inducement. His revenge would have been complete indeed.

For the truth of everything here related, I can appeal more particularly to the testimony of Colonel Fitzwilliam. I shall endeavor to find some opportunity of putting this letter in your hands in the course of the morning. I will only add, God bless you. Fitzwilliam Darcy

ELIZABETH
How despicably I have acted! I, who have prided myself on my discernment! Had I been in love, I could not have been more wretchedly blind! Vanity, not love, has been my folly. Till this moment I never knew myself.

MR. COLLINS
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(Entering with Charlotte, and the servant with Elizabeth's luggage.) There you are, Miss Elizabeth. It gives me the greatest pleasure to hear that you have passed your time with us not disagreeably. We have certainly done our best, and most fortunate having it in our power to introduce you to a very superior society from our connection with Rosing. The favor of your company has been much felt, I assure you by both Mrs. Collins and myself. Only let me assure you, my dear Miss Elizabeth, that I can from my heart most cordially wish you equal felicity in marriage. My dear Charlotte and I have but one mind and one way of thinking. There is in every thing a most remarkable resemblance of character and ideas between us. We seem to have been designed for each other.

CHARLOTTE
Promise you will visit again this time next year.

ELIZABETH
I promise. Thank you both for your hospitality. It has been wonderful seeing you.

(SCENE CHANGE #2-3)

SCENE 9 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Afternoon – Thursday, May 21, 1812

MRS. HILL
Mr. and Mrs. Bennet have been in frequent discussion about Miss Lydia’s scheme for the family to go to Brighton this summer to visit the Foresters and the regiment. Lydia has a great friend in Mrs. Forester; whether Mrs. Forester is a great influence has yet to be seen. But it is the last two weeks of the regiment’s stay in Meryton and I have heard Miss Lydia often exclaim that her heart will break.

MR. HILL
Mr. Bennet will rejoice to have Miss Elizabeth and Miss Jane home.

LYDIA
Now I have got some news for you. What do you think? It is excellent news—capital news—and about a certain person we all like! There is no danger of Wickham's marrying Mary King. There's for you! She is gone down to her uncle at Liverpool: gone to stay. Wickham is safe.

KITTY
She is a great fool for going away, if she liked him.

JANE
But I hope there is no strong attachment on either side.

LYDIA
I am sure there is not on his. I will answer for it, he never cared three straws about her—who could about such a nasty little freckled thing? I was in great hopes that one of you would have got a husband before you came back. Jane will be quite an old maid soon, I declare. She is almost three-and-twenty! Lord, how ashamed I should be of not being married before three-and-twenty! My aunt Phillips wants you so to get husbands, you can't think. She says Lizzy had better have taken Mr. Collins; but I do not think there would have been any fun in it. Lord, how I should like to be married before any of you; and then I would chaperon you about to all the balls.

MARY
Kitty and Lydia have been idle and vain. While there is an officer in Meryton, they will flirt with
him, and while there is an officer within a walk of Longbourn, they will go after him.

MRS. BENNET
Well, Lizzy, so the Collins’ live very comfortable, do they? And what sort of table do they keep? Charlotte is an excellent manager, I dare say. If she is half as sharp as her mother. There is nothing extravagant in her housekeeping, I dare say.

ELIZABETH
No, nothing at all.

MRS. BENNET
Yes, yes. They will take care not to outrun their income. They will never be distressed for money. And so, I suppose, they often talk of having Longbourn when your father is dead. If one could but go to Brighton for the summer.

LYDIA
Oh, if one could but go to Brighton! But papa is so disagreeable. (Mrs. Hill brings in a letter to Lydia.)

MRS. BENNET
A little sea bathing would set me up forever.

KITTY
And my Aunt Phillips is sure it would do me a great deal of good.

MRS. BENNET
Well, Lizzy, what is your opinion now of this sad business of Jane's? For my part, I am determined never to speak of it again to anybody. There is no talk of his coming to Netherfield again in the summer; and I have inquired of everybody, too, who is likely to know.

ELIZABETH
I do not believe he will ever live at Netherfield any more.

MRS. BENNET
Well, my comfort is, I am sure Jane will die of a broken heart; and then he will be sorry for what he has done.

MR. BENNET
(Entering.) I am glad you are come back, Lizzy.

LYDIA
Mother! Mother! Mrs. Forester has invited to take me to Brighton with them.

KITTY
I cannot see why Mrs. Forster should not ask me as well as Lydia. Though I am not her particular friend. I have just as much right to be asked as she has, and more too, for I am two years older.

MARY
Father, I would advise against this. I feel the necessity to point out all the improprieties of Lydia's general behavior; she can derive little advantage from the friendship of such a woman as
Mrs. Forster. In all probability Lydia will be more imprudent with such a companion at Brighton, where the temptations must be greater than here at home.

MR. BENNET
Lydia will never be easy until she has exposed herself in some public place or other, and we can never expect her to do it with so little expense or inconvenience to her family as under the present circumstances.

ELIZABETH
If you are aware of the very great disadvantage to us all which must arise from the public notice of Lydia's unguarded and imprudent manner—nay, which has already arisen from it, why do you not judge differently in the affair?

MR. BENNET
We shall have no peace at Longbourn if Lydia does not go to Brighton. Let her go, then. Colonel Forster is a sensible man, and will keep her out of any real mischief; and she is luckily too poor to be an object of prey to anybody. At Brighton she will be of less importance even as a common flirt than she has been here. The officers will find women better worth their notice. Let us hope, therefore, that her being there may teach her own insignificance. At any rate, she cannot grow many degrees worse, without authorizing us to lock her up for the rest of her life. In any event, you will be off with your Aunt and Uncle touring around Derbyshire.

(Lydia is dancing about singing, “I am going to Brighton.” Kitty is sniveling.)

(SCENE CHANGE #2-4)

SCENE 10 - HALL - PEMBERLEY – Early afternoon – Tuesday, August 4, 1812

MR. GARDINER
Mrs. Gardiner has a particularly strong attraction to Lambton. She passed some years of her life here. She has seen Pemberley before this and knew the late Mr. Darcy, by character, perfectly well.

MRS. GARDINER
If it were merely a fine house richly furnished I should not care about Pemberley myself but the grounds are delightful. They have some of the finest woods in the county.

ELIZABETH
We are certain the family is not in residence for the summer.

MR. GARDINER
I was told by the proprietor of our inn that the family is not in residence.

MRS. REYNOLDS
Welcome to Pemberley. I am Mrs. Reynolds, the housekeeper here at Pemberley. This room was my late master's favorite room, and these miniatures are just as they used to be then. He was very fond of them.

MRS. GARDINER
(Whispering) And of this place, Lizzy, you might have been mistress!

MR. GARDINER
Is your master absent at present?

MRS. REYNOLDS
He is. But we expect him tomorrow, with a large party of friends.

MRS. GARDINER
Lizzy, come look at these pictures. How do you like this picture?

MRS. REYNOLDS
This is a picture of the son of my late master's steward, Mr. Wickham. He was brought up by the late Mr. Darcy at some considerable expense. He is now gone into the army but I am afraid he has turned out very wild. And that is my master—and very like him. It was drawn at the same time as the other—about eight years ago.

MRS. GARDINER
I have heard much of your master's fine person. It is a handsome face. But, Lizzy, you can tell us whether it is like or not.

MRS. REYNOLDS
Does that young lady know Mr. Darcy?

ELIZABETH
A little.

MRS. REYNOLDS
And do not you think him a very handsome gentleman, ma'am?

ELIZABETH
Yes, very handsome.

MRS. REYNOLDS
I am sure I know none so handsome; but in the gallery upstairs you will see a finer, larger picture of him than this.

MRS. GARDINER
And is Miss Darcy as handsome as her brother?

MRS. REYNOLDS
Oh, yes, the handsomest young lady that ever was seen; and so accomplished! She plays and sings all day long. In the next room is a new instrument just come down for her—a present from my master; she comes here tomorrow with him.

MR. GARDINER
Is your master much at Pemberley in the course of the year?

MRS. REYNOLDS
Not so much as I could wish, sir; but I dare say he may spend half his time here; and Miss Darcy is always down for the summer months.
MRS. GARDINER
If your master would marry, you might see more of him.

MRS. REYNOLDS
Yes, ma’am, but I do not know when that will be. I do not know who is good enough for him.

MRS. GARDINER
It is very much to his credit, I am sure, that you should think so.

MRS. REYNOLDS
I say no more than the truth, and everybody will say that knows him. I have never known a cross word from him in my life, and I have known him ever since he was four years old.

MR. GARDINER
There are very few people of whom so much can be said. You are lucky in having such a master.

MRS. REYNOLDS
Yes, sir, I know I am. If I were to go through the world, I could not meet with a better. But I have always observed, that they who are good-natured when children, are good-natured when they grow up; and he was always the sweetest-tempered, most generous-hearted boy in the world.

MRS. GARDINER
His father was an excellent man.

MRS. REYNOLDS
Yes, ma’am, that he was indeed; and his son will be just like him—just as affable to the poor. He is the best landlord, and the best master that ever lived; not like the wild young men nowadays, who think of nothing but themselves. There is not one of his tenants or servants but will give him a good name. Some people call him proud; but I am sure I never saw anything of it. To my fancy, it is only because he does not rattle away like other young men. (Enter Mr. Darcy.)

MR. DARCY
Miss Bennet!

ELIZABETH
Mr. Darcy. I was told you were in London.

MR. DARCY
I'm not.

ELIZABETH
No.

MR. DARCY
Would you do me the honor of introducing me to your friends?

ELIZABETH
Mr. Gardiner, Mrs. Gardiner, this is Mr. Darcy, the master of Pemberley.
MR. DARCY
Your aunt and uncle, I believe. I am pleased to meet you.

MR. GARDINER
We are on a tour of the area and were told that Pemberley had some of the finest woods in the country.

MR. DARCY
Have you had the opportunity to view the grounds? I would be honored if you would allow me to show you around. Mrs. Reynolds, how nice to see you, will you let me know if you will be with him in a short while – please convey my apologies.

MRS. REYNOLDS
Very good, sir. Welcome home.

MR. DARCY
Please come right this way. (The group starts to walk.)

MR. GARDINER
Thank you, Mr. Darcy.

MR. DARCY
Are you fond of fishing, Mr. Gardiner?

MR. GARDINER
I am, Mr. Darcy. I see the appearance of some trout in the water, do I not?

MR. DARCY
Indeed, you do. While you are in Lambton please come and fish here as often as you choose. We can supply you with fishing tackle. I could point out parts of the stream where there is usually most sport.

MR. GARDINER
Thank you, Mr. Darcy. I would be delighted.

MRS. GARDINER
Gentlemen, I apologize, but I find myself fatigued by the morning exercise. Mr. Gardiner, may I have your arm for support?

MR. GARDINER
Of course, my dear. You will excuse us, Mr. Darcy.

MR. DARCY
Of course. There is a short cut back to the house just here, Mrs. Gardiner. We will get you back soon. Would a cup of tea help revive you?

MRS. GARDINER
Thank you, Mr. Darcy. It would. (Darcy offers Elizabeth his arm. She takes it. Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner walk some length behind them.) (A short silence)
MR. DARCY
May I inquire after the health of your family, Miss Bennet?

ELIZABETH
They are all quite well, thank you. I was told by your housekeeper that you were in London, Mr. Darcy, and you would certainly not be here till tomorrow.

MR. DARCY
I had some business with my steward that occasioned my coming forward a few hours before the rest of the party. They will join me early tomorrow; among them are some who will claim an acquaintance with you—Mr. Bingley and his sisters. (Elizabeth nods. A short silence) There is also one other person in the party who more particularly wishes to be known to you. Will you allow me, or do I ask too much, to introduce my sister to your acquaintance during your stay at Lambton?

ELIZABETH
I would be honored. (A short silence) Thank you, Mr. Darcy.

MRS. GARDINER
There is something a little stately in him, to be sure, but it is confined to his air, and is not unbecoming. I can now say with the housekeeper, that though some people may call him proud, I have seen nothing of it.

MR. GARDINER
I was never more surprised than by his behavior to us. It was more than civil; it was really attentive; and there was no necessity for such attention. His acquaintance with Elizabeth was very trifling.

MRS. GARDINER
I would not call it trifling.

SCENE 11 - DRAWING ROOM - PEMBERLEY – Tea – Wednesday, August 5, 1812
(The women are having tea; Ms. Darcy presiding with the assistance of Mrs. Annesley.)

ELIZABETH
Miss Darcy, how do you find your new pianoforte?

GEORGIANA
Please call me Georgiana, Miss Bennet. My brother has talked of you so often these last months that I feel as if I already know you well.

ELIZABETH
Your brother has been regaling you with stories about me? Please do not take only his account. Allow me to give you mine as well. I would be honored to call you Georgiana if you would return the courtesy and call me Elizabeth.

CAROLINE
Yes, there are so many Miss Bennets that it must be confusing for you. Miss Elizabeth has four
sisters – all of them are out in society at present. (Silence.)

MRS. ANNESLEY
Miss Georgiana has been practicing a great deal on her new instrument.

GEORGIANA
My pianoforte is the most beautiful gift I have ever received. I fear I have spent the entire day engrossed in music. My brother, I fear, spoils me.

CAROLINE
Pray, Miss Eliza, are not the Militia removed from Meryton? They must be a great loss to your family. (Mr. Darcy, unseen by the ladies, enters.)

ELIZABETH
Thank you for asking after the welfare of my family, Miss Bingley. They are all quite well.

CAROLINE
And Mr. Wickham? Have you heard much of him?

ELIZABETH
You yourself have given me the only news I have heard. I believe you said the Militia has moved from Meryton.

MR. DARCY
Excuse us ladies. We thought to intrude upon your gathering for just a moment. (The gentlemen enter) Mrs. Gardiner, may I introduce Mr. Bingley? And Mr. Gardiner, may I introduce Miss Bingley, Mrs. Annesley, and my sister Miss Darcy.

MR. GARDINER
Good afternoon. Pleased to make your acquaintance.

CAROLINE
Do you reside in Lambton, Mr. Gardiner?

MR. GARDINER
Unhappily we do not. My niece is touring with us this summer. By her association we are very fortunate indeed to be the recipient of Mr. Darcy’s hospitality while we are in the area.

MRS. ANNESLEY
Miss Georgiana will pour for you Mr. Bingley?

MR. BINGLEY
Yes, of course. Thank you, Miss Darcy. May I inquire after your sister, Miss Bennet?

ELIZABETH
Jane is quite well. Thank you for asking.
It is a very long time since I have had the pleasure of seeing her. It is above eight months. We have not met since the 26th of November, when we were all dancing together at Netherfield.

ELIZABETH
I believe it has been eight months.

MR. BINGLEY
Will you please tell her I asked after her?

CAROLINE
Tell her we all asked after her. Your sister was a particular favorite of mine. It is such a shame that we will not be going to Netherfield this summer.

MR. DARCY
Mr. Gardiner, will you be able to join Mr. Bingley and myself again at noon tomorrow for some more fishing?

MR. GARDINER
I will, Mr. Darcy. I thank you for the opportunity.

MRS. GARDINER
The Spanish chestnuts scattered over this intermediate lawn are lovely, Mr. Darcy.

CAROLINE
Oh yes, Pemberley is the most beautiful place. Mr. Darcy takes special care of Pemberley and of all those who reside here.

GEORGIANA
We were talking about the pianoforte you gave me, Fitzwilliam. I said you spoil me.

MR. DARCY
I do not. You are an accomplished musician, Georgiana. You deserve an instrument to match your abilities.

GEORGIANA
It is a lovely gift.

MR. DARCY
I am glad you are pleased with it.

ELIZABETH
I hope to have the honor of hearing you play. Your brother had the misfortune of hearing me play for a whole evening once.

GEORGIANA
He said you play well.

MR. DARCY
Aunt Catherine said you would be passable if you practiced. It is the only way to become more proficient, I am told.

GEORGIANA
Fitzwilliam, are you teasing Miss Elizabeth or myself? I cannot tell.

MR. DARCY
I am satisfied.

MRS. GARDINER
Thank you for the invitation to tea, Ms. Darcy.

MR. GARDINER
And for your hospitality, Mr. Darcy.

GEORGIANA
Miss Elizabeth, would you and Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner dine with us this evening? After dinner we could play a duet.

ELIZABETH
I would be honored. I must warn you that, though I will undoubtedly learn from the exercise, you may wonder at my inability to play in rhythm.

MR. DARCY
I will have the cook serve the excellent trout you caught, Mr. Gardiner. Your uncle, Miss Elizabeth, is a considerable fisherman.

GEORGIANA
Until this evening then.

MRS. GARDINER
Until this evening. (Mr. Gardiner, Mrs. Gardiner, and Elizabeth exit.)

GEORGIANA
Now if you will all excuse me, I am going to practice.

MR. DARCY
Thank you for entertaining my guests, Georgiana. I am certain they found you charming and your hospitality beyond compare.

CAROLINE
Oh yes. But that is without question; you are always the favorite, Miss Georgiana, in any society. (Georgiana exits with Mrs. Annasley.) How very ill Miss Eliza Bennet looks, Mr. Darcy, I never in my life saw anyone so much altered as she is since the winter. For my own part, I must confess that I never could see any beauty in her. Her face is too thin; and her features are not at all handsome. Her nose wants character—there is nothing marked in its lines. Her teeth are tolerable, but not out of the common way; and as for her eyes, which have sometimes been called so fine, I could never see anything extraordinary in them. They have a sharp, shrewish look,
which I do not like at all; and in her air altogether there is a self-sufficiency without fashion, which is intolerable.

MR. DARCY
I consider her to be one of the handsomest women of my acquaintance. (He exits.)

SCENE 12 – EXT. – PEMBERLEY- Same
(Darcy enters as Mrs. Reynold’s brings Elizabeth a letter.)

MRS. REYNOLDS
A letter for you, miss. It must be urgent, because they brought it here directly from the inn.

ELIZABETH
Thank you, Mrs. Reynolds.

JANE V.O.
Dearest Lizzy,
Something has occurred of a most unexpected and serious nature. An express came at twelve last night, just as we were all gone to bed, from Colonel Forster, to inform us that Lydia was gone off to Scotland with Wickham! Imprudent as the marriage between Mr. Wickham and our poor Lydia would be, we are now anxious to be assured it has taken place, for there is but too much reason to fear they are not gone to Scotland. Mother believes the worst, but I cannot think so ill of him. And as to my father, I never in my life saw him so affected. Father is going to London with Colonel Forster instantly, to try to discover her. What he means to do I am sure I know not; but his excessive distress will not allow him to pursue any measure in the best and safest way. In such an exigency, my uncle's advice and assistance would be everything in the world; he will immediately comprehend what I must feel, and I rely upon his goodness...

JANE V.O. CONT.

MR. DARCY
Let me assist you into your carriage. (Pause) Miss Bennet, are you all right?

ELIZABETH
I have just had a letter from Jane, with such dreadful news. It cannot be concealed from anyone. My younger sister has left all her friends—has eloped; has thrown herself into the power of—of Mr. Wickham. They are gone off together from Brighton. You know him too well to doubt the rest. She has no money, no connections, nothing that can tempt him to—she is lost forever.

MR. DARCY
Is it certain—absolutely certain?

ELIZABETH
Oh, yes! They left Brighton together on Sunday night, and were traced almost to London, but not beyond; they are certainly not gone to Scotland.

MR. GARDINER
And what has been done, what has been attempted, to recover her?

ELIZABETH
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My father is gone to London. But nothing can be done—I know very well that nothing can be done. I have not the smallest hope.

MR. DARCY
This unfortunate affair will, I fear, prevent my sister's having the pleasure of seeing you at Pemberley this evening.

ELIZABETH
Oh, yes. Be so kind as to apologize for us to Miss Darcy. Say that urgent business calls us home immediately. Conceal the unhappy truth as long as it is possible, I know it cannot be long.

MR. GARDINER
Come, Lizzy. Thank you for your hospitality, Mr. Darcy.

(SCENE CHANGE #2-5)

SCENE 13 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Late afternoon – Saturday, August 8, 1812
(Mrs. Gardiner, Elizabeth, Jane, Mary and Kitty are gathered in the parlor.)

MRS. HILL
It seems that Mr. Wickham is in debt to every tradesman in Meryton, and his intrigues, all honored with the title of seduction, has been extended to every tradesman’s family.

MR. HILL
Begging your pardon, Miss Elizabeth, but it seems that he is the wickedest young man in the world.

MRS. HILL
I always distrusted the appearance of his goodness.

JANE
Mother uses invectives against the villainous conduct of Mr. Wickham, complains of her own suffering and ill usage.

MARY
Blaming ever body but the person to whose ill-judging indulgence the errors of her daughter must principally owe.

ELIZABETH
Is father in London?

JANE
Yes, he went on Tuesday.

MRS. GARDINER
And have you heard from him?

MARY
He wrote a few lines on Wednesday to say that he had arrived in safety and that he should not write again till he had something of importance to mention.

MRS. GARDINER
What measures does your father intend to pursue, while in town, to recover his daughter?

JANE
He means to go to Epsom, the place where they last changed horses. His principal object is to discover the number of the hackney coach that took them from Clapham. It came with a fare from London; and as he thought that the circumstance of a gentleman and lady's removing from one carriage into another might be remarked he means to make inquiries at Clapham. He hopes it might not be impossible to find out the stand and number of the coach.

MR. GARDINER
(Entering with luggage.) Had Colonel Forester no apprehension of anything before the elopement took place?

KITTY
Colonel Forster did own that he had often suspected some partiality, especially on Lydia's side, but nothing to give him any alarm.

MRS. GARDINER
And did Colonel Forster appear to think well of Wickham himself? Does he know his real character?

JANE
I must confess that he did not speak so well of Wickham as he formerly did. He believed him to be imprudent and extravagant. And since this sad affair has taken place, it is said that he left Meryton greatly in debt; but I hope this may be false.

MARY
Lydia left a note for Mrs. Forester. It is quite long but the essential part, I believe is, ‘I am going to Gretna Green, and if you cannot guess with who, I shall think you a simpleton, for there is but one man in the world I love, and he is an angel. I should never be happy without him, so think it no harm to be off.’

MR. GARDINER
And your mother—how is she?

JANE
My mother is tolerably well, I trust; though her spirits are greatly shaken.

MRS. BENNET
(Entering) Oh! My dear brother! Why did the Foresters ever let her go out of their sight? I am sure there was some great neglect or other on their side, for she is not the kind of girl to do such a thing if she had been well looked after. And now here's Mr. Bennet gone away, and I know he will fight Wickham, wherever he meets him and then he will be killed. The Collins’s will turn us out before he is cold in his grave.

MR. GARDINER
Do not give way to useless alarm. It is not quite a week since they left Brighton. In a few days more we may gain some news of them; and till we know that they are not married, and have no design of marrying, do not let us give the matter over as lost. As soon as I get to town I shall go to Mr. Bennet and consult together as to what is to be done.

MRS. BENNET
Oh! My dear brother that is exactly what I could most wish for. And as for wedding clothes, do not let them wait for that, but tell Lydia she shall have as much money as she chooses to buy them, after they are married. And, above all, keep Mr. Bennet from fighting. I am frightened out of my wits—and have such tremblings, such flutterings, all over me—I can get no rest by night nor by day. And tell my dear Lydia not to give any directions about her clothes till she has seen me, for she does not know which are the best warehouses. Oh, brother, how kind you are!

MR. GARDINER
I will do what I can but I must recommend moderation to you, Gwen, in your hopes as well as in your fears. I am off. Look for word of me as soon as I get there. Come my dear.

MRS. GARDINER
God bless. (The Gardiners exit.)

SCENE 14 - PARLOR – LONGBOURN – Afternoon – Tuesday, August 18, 1812
(Mr. Bennet and the girls sit staring at the wallpaper.)

MR. BENNET
No post yet?

MR. HILL
Not yet.

MRS. HILL
The arrival of a letter is the first grand object of every morning’s impatience. Today will bring new of importance, sir, I can feel it.

MR. BENNET
Where is Mrs. Bennet?

MRS. HILL
She is upstairs. She will not leave her dressing room, sir. (Mr. and Mrs. Hill exit)

MR. BENNET
Mary, what are you reading?

MARY
Mr. Collins letter father. It arrived yesterday.
MR. BENNET
Yes, I remember. All right, don’t read it all; sum it up.

MARY
That is difficult with Mr. Collins, father. He sends his condolences – and Lady Catherine’s, I believe. His advice, and Lady Catherine agrees, is ‘to throw your unworthy child from your affection for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own heinous offence. Otherwise, this one false step in one daughter, will be injurious to the fortunes of all the others.’ (Silence.)

JANE
Do you suppose them to be in London?

MR. BENNET
Yes, where else can they be so well concealed?

KITTY
And Lydia used to want to go to London.

MR. BENNET
She is happy then and her residence there will probably be of some duration.

KITTY
If I should ever go to Brighton, I would behave better than Lydia.

MR. BENNET
No, Kitty, I have at last learnt to be cautious, and you will feel the effects of it. No officer is ever to enter into my house again, nor even to pass through the village. Balls will be absolutely prohibited, unless you stand up with one of your sisters. And you are never to stir out of doors till you can prove that you have spent ten minutes of every day in a rational manner. (Kitty starts to cry.)

MR. HILL
(Entering) A letter for the master.

MR. BENNET
A letter by express. Kitty, perhaps you would like to read it.

KITTY
Grace Church Street, Monday, August 2.
My Dear Brother,
Soon after you left me on Saturday, I was fortunate enough to find out in what part of London they were. The particulars I reserve till we meet; it is enough to know they are discovered. They are not married, nor can I find there was any intention of being so; but if you are willing to perform the engagements that I have ventured to make on your side, I hope it will not be long before they are. All that is required of you is, to assure to your daughter, by settlement, her equal share of the five thousand pounds secured among your children after the decease of yourself and my sister; and, moreover, to enter into an engagement of allowing her, during your life, one hundred pounds per annum. These are conditions which, considering everything, I had no hesitation in complying with. Send back your answer as fast as you can, and be careful to write
explicitly. Yours, Edward Gardiner

MARY
My dear father, I congratulate you.

MR. BENNET
There are two things that I want very much to know; one is, how much money your uncle has laid down to bring it about; and the other, how am I ever to repay him.

JANE
Money! My uncle! What do you mean, sir?

MR. BENNET
I mean that no man in his senses would marry Lydia on so slight a temptation as one hundred a year during my life, and fifty after I am gone. Wickham's a fool if he takes her with a farthing less than ten thousand pounds. How is half such a sum to be repaid? I will answer the letter. (Exits)

MARY
Unhappy as the event must be for Lydia, we may draw from it this useful lesson: that loss of virtue in a female is irretrievable; that one false step involves her in endless ruin; that her reputation is no less brittle than it is beautiful; and that she cannot be too much guarded in her behavior towards the undeserving of the other sex.

KITTY
I hope and trust they will yet be happy.

MARY
His consenting to marry her is a proof, I will believe, that he is come to a right way of thinking.

JANE
Their mutual affection will steady them; and I flatter myself they will settle so quietly, and live in so rational a manner, as may in time make their past imprudence forgotten.

ELIZABETH
Their conduct has been such as neither you, nor I, nor anybody can ever forget.

MRS. BENNET
(Entering with the letter.) My dear, dear Lydia! This is delightful indeed! I shall see her again! She will be married at sixteen! My good, kind brother! I knew he would manage everything! How I long to see her! To see dear Wickham too! But the clothes, the wedding clothes! I will write to my sister Gardiner about them directly. First I will go to Meryton and tell the good, good news to my sister Philips. And as I come back, I can call on Lady Lucas and Mrs. Long. An airing would do me a great deal of good, I am sure. Oh! Hill! My dear Hill, have you heard the good news? Miss Lydia is going to be married; and you shall all have a bowl of punch to make merry at her wedding.
MR. BENNET

They shall be married in London. Mr. Gardiner will attend. There will be no wedding clothes, let us come to a right understanding. Into one house in this neighborhood they shall never have admittance. I will not encourage the impudence of either, by receiving them at Longbourn.

(He exits.)

SCENE 15 - PARLOR – LONGBOURN- Midday – Wednesday, September 2, 1812

MR. BENNET

When I had first married economy was held to be useless, for of course, we would have a son. The son would cut off the entail as soon as he should be of age and Mrs. Bennet and the girls would be provided for. I wish I had made better provisions for my daughters, especially now that I am indebted to Mr. Gardiner for rescuing Lydia. Tell me, Mr. Hill, why did I agree to receive her and her horrible husband?

MR. HILL

I believe it was for the sake of propriety, sir. It would not look right if Miss Lydia, begging you pardon, Mrs. Wickham, were not noticed on her marriage by her parents.

MRS. HILL

If you do not admit her into the family again it might hurt the other girls, sir.

MR. BENNET

Hmmm. Thank you. When he comes show him into my library; we have business to attend to.

MR. HILL

Very good, sir. (Mr. Bennet exits.) Poor man, he has paid all of Wickham’s creditors here and in Brighton. It is a good thing Wickham has joined the regular army and that the two of them will be quartered in the North.

MRS. HILL

For Mr. Bennet and the other girls it is a good thing but it is hard on the Mrs. Oh, I hear the carriage pulling into the yard. (Mr. and Mrs. Hill exit outside. We hear Mrs. Bennet calling the girls down to greet Lydia and Wickham. We hear Lydia and Mrs. Bennet scream and then at the door Lydia announces that she must enter first and the family files in: Mrs. Bennet, Lydia, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, and Kitty.)

LYDIA

Ah! Jane, I take your place now, and you must go lower, because I am a married woman. Only think it has been three months since I went away but it seems but a fortnight. Good gracious! When I went away, I am sure I had no more idea of being married when I came back again! Though I thought it would be very good fun if I was. Well, mamma, what do you think of my husband? Is not he a charming man? I am sure my sisters must all envy me. I only hope they may have half my good luck. They must all go to Brighton. That is the place to get husbands. What a pity it is, mamma, we did not all go.

MRS. BENNET

Very true; and if I had my will, we should. But my dear Lydia, I don’t at all like your going such a way off. Must it be so?
LYDIA
We shall be at Newcastle all the winter. You and papa, and my sisters, must come down and see us. I dare say there will be some balls, and I will take care to get good partners for them all.

MRS. BENNET
I should like it beyond anything!

LYDIA
And then when you go away, you may leave one or two of my sisters behind you; and I dare say I shall get husbands for them before the winter is over.

ELIZABETH
I thank you for my share of the favor, but I do not particularly like your way of getting husbands.

LYDIA
Oh! Mamma, do the people hereabouts know I am married today? I never gave you an account of my wedding, I believe. Are not you curious to hear how it was managed?

MARY
I think there cannot be too little said on the subject.

LYDIA
La! You are so strange! But I must tell you how it went off. We were married, you know, at St. Clement’s, because Wickham’s lodgings were in that parish. And it was settled that we should all be there by eleven o’clock. My uncle and aunt and I were to go together; and the others were to meet us at the church. Well, Monday morning came, and I was in such a fuss! I was so afraid, you know, that something would happen to put it off, and then I should have gone quite distracted. And there was my aunt, all the time I was dressing, preaching and talking away just as if she was reading a sermon. However, I did not hear above one word in ten, for I was thinking,

LYDIA CONT.
you may suppose, of my dear Wickham. I longed to know whether he would be married in his blue coat. Well, and just as the carriage came to the door, my uncle was called away upon business to that horrid man Mr. Stone. Well, I was so frightened I did not know what to do, for my uncle was to give me away. But, luckily, he came back again in ten minutes’ time, and then we all set out. However, I recollected afterwards that if he had been prevented going, the wedding need not be put off, for Mr. Darcy might have done as well.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Darcy!

LYDIA
Oh, yes, he was to come there with Wickham, you know. But gracious me! I quite forgot! I ought not to have said a word about it. I promised them so faithfully! What will Wickham say? It was to be such a secret!

JANE
If it was to be secret say not another word on the subject. You may depend upon us seeking no further.
ELIZABETH
Oh, certainly, we will ask you no questions.

LYDIA
Thank you, for if you did, I should certainly tell you all, then Wickham would be angry. (Mrs. Hill enters.) Mrs. Hill, look at my ring, I am the first one in the family to be married. You must call me Mrs. Wickham now.

MRS. HILL
Congratulations, Mrs. Wickham, on your nuptial. The gentlemen are coming down, I believe. (Mrs. Hill exits. Mr. Wickham and Mr. Bennet enter.)

MR. WICKHAM
(Entering) I received my commission before we left London, and I am to join my regiment at the end of the week. We will be quartered up North. In Newcastle. We must leave shortly so we can arrive in good time.

MARY
The north of England, I believe, boasts some spectacular scenery.

MR. WICKHAM
So I have heard. I find, from Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner, that you have actually seen Pemberley, Miss Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH
Yes.

MR. WICKHAM
I almost envy you the pleasure, and yet I believe it would be too much for me, or else I could take it in on my way to Newcastle. And you saw the old housekeeper, I suppose? Poor Reynolds, she was always very fond of me. But of course she did not mention my name to you.

ELIZABETH
Yes, she did.

MR. WICKHAM
And what did she say?

ELIZABETH
That you were gone into the army, but she was afraid had not turned out well.

MR. WICKHAM
Did you see Mr. Darcy while you were at Lambton? I thought I understood from the Gardiners that you had.

ELIZABETH
Yes, he introduced us to his sister.

MR. WICKHAM

And do you like her?

ELIZABETH

Very much.

MR. WICKHAM

I have heard, indeed, that she is uncommonly improved within this year or two. When I last saw her, she was not very promising. I am very glad you liked her. I hope she will turn out well.

ELIZABETH

I dare say she will; she has got over the most trying age.

MR. WICKHAM

Did you go by the village of Kympton? I mention it, because it is the living that I ought to have had. An excellent Parsonage House! It would have suited me in every respect.

ELIZABETH

I hear that you actually declared your resolution of never taking orders, and that your were compensated accordingly.

MR. WICKHAM

You did? That was not wholly without foundation. (Pause.)

ELIZABETH

Come, Mr. Wickham, we are brother and sister, you know. Do not let us quarrel about the past. In future, I hope we shall be always of one mind. (Mr. Wickham nods.)

MR. WICKHAM

Thank you for you hospitality. We should be going.

MRS. BENNET

Oh, my dear Lydia, when shall we meet again?

LYDIA

Oh, lord! I don't know. Not these two or three years, perhaps.

MRS. BENNET

Write to me very often, my dear.

LYDIA

As often as I can. But you know married women have never much time for writing. My sisters may write to me. They will have nothing else to do. (Exits with Wickham.)

MRS. BENNET

I often think, that there is nothing so bad as parting with one's friends. One seems so forlorn without them.
MR. BENNET
This is the consequence, you see, Madam, of marrying a daughter. It must make you better satisfied that your other four are single. *(The family files out to wave at Lydia's carriage.)*

SCENE 16 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Morning – Sunday, October 4, 1812

MRS. HILL
The housekeeper at Netherfield has received orders to prepare for the arrival of her master, Mr. Bingley, who will be coming down in a day or two, to shoot there for several weeks.

MRS. BENNET
It is quite certain that Mr. Bingley is coming?

MRS. HILL
Yes, Ma’am, he comes down on Thursday at the latest, very likely on Wednesday. His sisters will not be coming with him.

MRS. BENNET
Thank you, Mrs. Hill. Did you hear that, Jane? Not that I care about it, though. He is nothing to us, you know, and I am sure I never want to see him again. But, however, he is very welcome to come to Netherfield, if he likes it. And who knows what may happen?

JANE
I assure you that the news does not affect me either with pleasure or pain. I am glad he comes alone because we shall see the less of him.

MARY
It is hard that this poor man cannot come to a house he has legally hired, without raising all this speculation!

MRS. BENNET
As soon as ever Mr. Bingley comes, my dear, you will wait on him of course.

MR. BENNET
No, no. You forced me into visiting him last year, and promised if I went to see him, he should marry one of my daughters. But it ended in nothing, and I will not be sent on a fool's errand again. If he wants our society, let him seek it. He knows where we live. I will not spend my hours in running after my neighbors every time they go away and come back again. *(Exits)*

KITTY
*(Entering)* I just saw him, from my dressing-room window; he entered the paddock; he is riding towards the house.

MRS. BENNET
For pity sake, Kitty, who?

KITTY
La! Mr. Bingley. There is a gentleman with him. It looks just like that man that used to be with him before. Mr. what's-his-name. That tall, proud man.
MRS. BENNET
Good gracious! Mr. Darcy! Well, any friend of Mr. Bingley's will always be welcome here, to be sure; but else I must say that I hate the very sight of him. Everyone, compose yourself.

MR. HILL
(Entering.) Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy.

MRS. BENNET
Thank you, Mr. Hill. Ask Mrs. Hill to bring tea. (Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley enter the parlor.) Mr. Bingley, how good of you to visit. You are welcome too, Mr. Darcy. Please do sit down.

Thank you, Mrs. Bennet.

MRS. BENNET
It is a long time, Mr. Bingley, since you went away. A great many changes have happened in the neighborhood. Miss Lydia is married and settled to Mr. Wickham. You must have seen it in the papers.

MR. BINGLEY
I did hear of it, and offer my congratulations.

MRS. BENNET
It is a delightful thing, to be sure, to have a daughter well married but at the same time, Mr. Bingley, it is very hard to have her taken such a way from me. They are gone down to Newcastle, a place quite northward and are to stay I do not know how long. Thank Heaven, he has some friends, though perhaps not so many as he deserves. (Silence)

MR. DARCY
I trust Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner are well?

ELIZABETH
They are very well, thank you for asking. And your sister, Miss Georgiana?

She is well, thank you for asking.

MR. DARCY
Thank you for the visit Mrs. Bennet, ladies.

MR. BINGLEY
You are a visit in my debt, Mr. Bingley, for when you went to town last winter, you promised to take a family dinner with us, as soon as you returned. I have not forgot, you see; and I assure you, I was very much disappointed that you did not come back and keep your engagement. Would Tuesday suit you? You may come as well Mr. Darcy.

MR. BINGLEY
Yes, of course. I did promise to have dinner with the family. Tuesday would suit me. Thank you. Good day. (Exits.)

MR. DARCY
Thank you for your gracious invitation. Good day. (Exits).

JANE
Now that this first meeting is over, I feel perfectly easy. I know my own strength, and I shall never be embarrassed again by his coming. I am glad he will dine here on Tuesday.

MRS. HILL
(Entering). He is come. Mr. Bingley is coming. He is, indeed. (Everyone has regained the same positions. They hear Bingley's voice at the door and he comes, for once, absolutely in control of his facial coloring.)

MRS. BENNET
Mr. Bingley. Did you leave something behind?

MR. BINGLEY
I did, Ma’am. If I might...

MRS. BENNET
Yes? (Silence) When you have killed all your own birds, Mr. Bingley, I beg you will come here, and shoot as many as you please on Mr. Bennet's manor. I am sure he will be vastly happy to oblige you, and will save all the best of the covies for you.

KITTY
What is the matter mamma? What do you keep winking at me for? What am I to do?

MRS. BENNET
I did not wink at you. I just want to speak to you. Oh, Mary and Lizzy, I want to speak with you too. Would you excuse us, Mr. Bingley, we just need to leave the room for a moment. (Mrs. Bennet, Elizabeth, Kitty, and Mary all leave the room.)(They all stand and listen at the door.)

MR. BINGLEY
Miss Bennet, Jane, for some time now. Jane, Miss Bennet, Jane, would you do me the honor...

JANE
Yes. Oh, yes. Yes.

MR. BINGLEY
Jane! I am the happiest... I need to speak with your father. May I? Where do I go?

MR. HILL
(Entering) I would be pleased to direct the gentleman, if that would be of assistance. (The family scatters so as not to be seen by Mr. Bingley.)

MR. BINGLEY
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Oh, yes, thank you, Jane. I will return shortly. Don’t change a thing. (Exits with Mr. Hill.)

JANE
Oh! Lizzy, why is not everybody as happy? He is gone to my father already. Oh! Lizzy, to know that what I have to relate will give such pleasure to all my dear family! How shall I bear so much happiness! (The rest of the family all come in and congratulate Jane.)

MRS. BENNET
Kitty, dear. Come help your mother get ready to go to town. I am in such a flutter, that I am sure I can’t write, Mary, I will dictate and you will write for me. We will need calico, muslin, cambric, and lace. I will settle everything with your father about the money later; he cannot refuse to purchase Jane’s wedding clothes the way he did poor Lydia’s. (Mrs. Bennet hugs Jane one last time and exits with Mary and Kitty.)

JANE
He was totally ignorant of my being in town last spring! I had not believed it possible.

ELIZABETH
I suspected as much. But how did he account for it?

JANE
It must have been his sister’s doing. They were certainly no friends to his acquaintance with me, which I cannot wonder at, since he might have chosen so much more advantageously in many respects. But when they see, as I trust they will, that their brother is happy with me, they will learn to be contented, and we shall be on good terms again; though we can never be what we once were to each other.

ELIZABETH
That is the most unforgiving speech that I ever heard you utter. Good girl!

JANE
Oh! Lizzy, why am I thus singled from my family, and blessed above them all! If I could but see you as happy! If there were but such another man for you!

ELIZABETH
If you were to give me forty such men, I never could be so happy as you. Till I have your disposition, your goodness, I never can have your happiness. No, no, let me shift for myself; and, perhaps, if I have very good luck, I may meet with another Mr. Collins in time.

MR. BINGLEY
(Entering.) I have had a short conference with your father. He gives his blessing. Your mother has asked me to stay for dinner. I have promised to do so. I am going shooting with your father this morning. I am the happiest man; you are perfect Jane. Perfect. I need to get my shooting gear; I will return shortly. Jane. I never thought I could be so happy. (Exits.)

MR. BENNET
(Mr. and Mrs. Bennet enter.) I have great pleasure in thinking you will be so happily settled, Jane. I have not a doubt of your doing very well together. Your tempers are by no means unlike. You are each of you so complying, that nothing will ever be resolved on; so easy, that every
servant will cheat you; and so generous, that you will always exceed your income.

MRS. BENNET
Exceed their income! My dear Mr. Bennet, what are you talking of? Why, he has four or five thousand a year, and very likely more. I was sure you could not be so beautiful for nothing!

SCENE 17 - PARLOR - LONGBOURN – Afternoon – Sunday, October 11, 1812

MRS. HILL
It has been just one week since Miss Jane was engaged to Mr. Bingley. The whole of Meryton has pronounced the Bennets the luckiest family in the world.

MR. HILL
Only a few weeks before, when Miss Lydia had first left Brighton, the family was marked out for misfortune. Ah, morning, Ma’am, Miss Elizabeth, Miss Kitty. Pardon me a moment; I believe I hear a carriage. Are we expecting anyone? Ma’am?

MRS. BENNET
No.

MRS. HILL
Where are Miss Jane and Mr. Bingley? Do they not want tea?

MRS. BENNET
They are out walking in the fresh air.

LADY CATHERINE
(Entering.) This lady, I suppose is your mother.

MR. HILL
(Entering.) Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Ma’am.

MRS. BENNET
Lady Catherine de Bourgh! What an honor...

LADY CATHERINE
And that, I suppose is one of your sisters.

MRS. BENNET
She is my youngest girl but one. My youngest of all is lately married, and my eldest is somewhere about the grounds, walking with a young man who will shortly become part of the family.

ELIZABETH
May I take the liberty of asking your ladyship whether you left Mr. and Mrs. Collins well?

LADY CATHERINE
Yes, very well. Miss Bennet, there seems to be a prettyish kind of a little wilderness on one side.
of your lawn. I should be glad to take a turn in it, if you will favor me your company. (Lady Catherine exits and Elizabeth follows.) (Silence.) You can be at no loss, Miss Bennet, to understand the reason of my journey hither. Your own heart, your own conscience, must tell you why I come.

ELIZABETH
Indeed, you are mistaken, Madam. I have not been at all able to account for the honor of seeing you here.

LADY CATHERINE
I am not to be trifled with. However insincere you may choose to be, you shall not find me so. My character has ever been celebrated for its sincerity and frankness. A report of a most alarming nature reached me two days ago. I was told that not only your sister was on the point of being most advantageously married, but that you, Miss Elizabeth Bennet, would, in all likelihood, be soon afterwards united to my nephew, my own nephew, Mr. Darcy. Though I know it must be a scandalous falsehood, I instantly resolved on setting off for this place that I might make my sentiments known to you.

ELIZABETH
If you believed it impossible to be true, I wonder you took the trouble of coming so far.

LADY CATHERINE
If! Do you then pretend to be ignorant of it? Has it not been industriously circulated by yourselves? Can you declare that there is no foundation for it?

ELIZABETH
I do not pretend to possess equal frankness with your ladyship. You may ask questions which I shall not choose to answer.

LADY CATHERINE
This is not to be borne. Miss Bennet, I insist on being satisfied. Has he, my nephew, made you an offer of marriage?

ELIZABETH
Your ladyship has declared it to be impossible.

LADY CATHERINE
It ought to be so; it must be so, while he retains the use of his reason. But your arts and allurements may, in a moment of infatuation, have made him forget what he owes to himself and to all his family.

ELIZABETH
If I have, I shall be the last person to confess it.

LADY CATHERINE
I am the nearest relation he has in the world, and am entitled to know all his dearest concerns.

ELIZABETH
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But you are not entitled to know mine.

LADY CATHERINE
This match, to which you have the presumption to aspire, can never take place. No, never. Mr. Darcy is engaged to my daughter. Now what have you to say?

ELIZABETH
If he is so, you can have no reason to suppose he will make an offer to me.

LADY CATHERINE
I am not in the habit of brooking disappointment.

ELIZABETH
That will make your ladyship's situation at present more pitiable; but it will have no effect on me.

LADY CATHERINE
My daughter and my nephew are formed for each other. They are destined for each other by the voice of every member of their respective houses, and what is to divide them? The upstart pretensions of a young woman without family, connections, or fortune. If you were sensible of your own good, you would not wish to quit the sphere in which you have been brought up.

ELIZABETH
In marrying your nephew, I should not consider myself as quitting that sphere. He is a gentleman; I am a gentleman's daughter; so far we are equal.

LADY CATHERINE
True. You are a gentleman's daughter. But who was your mother?

ELIZABETH
Whatever my connections may be, if your nephew does not object to them, they can be nothing to you.

LADY CATHERINE
Tell me once for all, are you engaged to him?

ELIZABETH
I am not.

LADY CATHERINE
And will you promise me, never to enter into such an engagement?

ELIZABETH
I will make no promise of the kind.

LADY CATHERINE
Miss Bennet, I am shocked and astonished. I expected to find a more reasonable young woman. I am no stranger to the particulars of your youngest sister's infamous elopement. I know it all; that
the young man's marrying her was a patched-up business, at the expense of your father and uncles. And is such a girl to be my nephew's sister? Is her husband, the son of his late father's steward, to be his brother? Heaven and earth, what are you thinking? Are the shades of Pemberley to be thus polluted?

ELIZABETH
You can now have nothing further to say. You have insulted me in every possible method. I must beg you to leave.

LADY CATHERINE
I take no leave of you, Miss Bennet. I send no compliments to your mother. You deserve no such attention. I am most seriously displeased. (Lady Catherine exits.)(Elizabeth enters the house.)

MRS. BENNET
Lizzy, is Lady Catherine not coming in to rest?

ELIZABETH
No.

MRS. BENNET
She is a fine looking woman. Her calling here was prodigiously civil. I supposed she called to tell us the Collin's are well. (Jane and Bingley enter from the outside.) Jane, Mr. Bingley, who do you think paid a call to Lizzy? Lady Catherine de Bourgh.

JANE
Lady Catherine was here? She came to speak with you? (Pause.) She must have been in the area and wanted us all to know that Mr. and Mrs. Collins send their regard, isn’t that so, Lizzy?

ELIZABETH
Yes.

MR. BINGLEY
She might have some business with Mr. Darcy. He is to come to Netherfield this afternoon. I expected him to call here before this; maybe some business with his aunt has delayed him.

MRS. BENNET
Mr. Darcy is coming here?

MR. BINGLEY
I thought so, yes.

MRS. BENNET
Any friend of yours is always welcome, Mr. Bingley.

ELIZABETH
I need to go for a walk. Jane, please, and Mr. Bingley, it is such a lovely day, would you walk with me?

MRS. BENNET
But they have just come back from a walk.

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Certainly.

MR. BINGLEY
With pleasure. *(Elizabeth, Jane, Mr. Bingley rush out of the house and almost run into Mr. Darcy. There is a moment of quiet and Jane and Mr. Bingley take themselves off a bit. Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy walk.)* *(Elizabeth and Darcy walk along in silence for a bit.)*

ELIZABETH
Mr. Darcy, I am a very selfish creature; and, for the sake of giving relief to my own feelings, care not how much I may be wounding yours. I can no longer help thanking you for your unexampled kindness to my poor sister. Ever since I have known it, I have been most anxious to acknowledge to you how gratefully I feel it. Were it known to the rest of my family, I should not have merely my own gratitude to express.

MR. DARCY
I am sorry, exceedingly sorry that you have ever been informed of what may, in a mistaken light, have given you uneasiness. I did not think Mrs. Gardiner was so little to be trusted.

ELIZABETH
You must not blame my aunt. Lydia's thoughtlessness first betrayed to me that you had been concerned in the matter. Let me thank you again and again, in the name of all my family, for that generous compassion which induced you to take so much trouble, and bear so many mortifications, for the sake of discovering them.

MR. DARCY
If you will thank me, let it be for yourself alone. Your family owes me nothing. Much as I respect them, I believe I thought only of you. *(Silence.)* You are too generous to trifle with me. If your feelings are still what they were last April, tell me so at once. My affections and wishes are unchanged, but one word from you will silence me on this subject forever.

ELIZABETH
Mr. Darcy, my sentiments have undergone so material a change since the period to which you allude that I receive with gratitude and pleasure your present assurances.

Then you will?

MR. DARCY
I will.

ELIZABETH

MR. DARCY
Dear Aunt Catherine! Her visit to you taught me to hope as I had scarcely ever allowed myself to hope before. I knew enough of your disposition to be certain that, had you been absolutely,
irrevocably decided against me, you would have acknowledged it to Lady Catherine, frankly and openly.

ELIZABETH
Yes, you know enough of my frankness to believe me capable of that. After abusing you so abominably to your face, I could have no scruple in abusing you to all your relations.

MR. DARNY
What did you say of me, that I did not deserve?

ELIZABETH
We will not quarrel for the greater share of blame annexed to that evening. The conduct of neither, if strictly examined, will be irreproachable; but since then, we have both, I hope, improved in civility.

MR. DARNY
I have your consent to go and speak with your father.

ELIZABETH
You do. I will take you to him now. (Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy enter the house.) (Mr. Darcy exits towards the library. Elizabeth sits in the empty parlor and waits. Very soon Mr. Bennet comes down.)

MR. BENNET
Lizzy, what are you doing? Are you out of your senses, to be accepting this man? Have not you always hated him? He is rich, to be sure, and you may have more fine clothes and fine carriages than Jane. But will they make you happy?

ELIZABETH
Have you any other objection, than your belief of my indifference?

MR. BENNET
None at all. We all know him to be a proud, unpleasant sort of man; but this would be nothing if you really liked him.

ELIZABETH
I do, I do like him. I love him. Indeed he has no improper pride. He is perfectly amiable. You do not know what he really is.

MR. BENNET
I have given him my consent. He is the kind of man, indeed, to whom I should never dare refuse anything, which he condescended to ask. But let me advise you to think better of it. I know your disposition, Lizzy. I know that you could be neither happy nor respectable, unless you truly esteemed your husband. My child let me not have the grief of seeing you unable to respect your partner in life. You know not what you are about.

ELIZABETH
I love him, father.

MR. BENNET
Well, my dear, I have no more to say. If this be the case, he deserves you. I could not have parted with you, my Lizzy, to anyone less worthy. (Elizabeth starts to go to Mr. Darcy in the library.) And if any young men come for Mary or Kitty, send them in, for I am quite at leisure. (Elizabeth exits.)

END