



Pride
and
Prejudice

Pride and Prejudice

by the Author of "Sense and Sensibility"

"It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife."

Summary: The Bennett family is blessed with five girls. But the entailment of the estate to their stuffy cousin the clergyman Mr. Collins, means all will need to marry well to be financially comfortable. **Jane Bennett**, the eldest, is a gentle beauty. **Elizabeth Bennett**, second oldest, is a lively, witty girl. Their parents encourage them to marry, though their silly mother Mrs. Bennett is obvious and crass about the hunt for husbands, encouraging younger sisters Kitty and Lydia to be brash and careless. They spend time with soldiers like the charming George Wickham. Elizabeth is the favorite of their intelligent, sarcastic father Mr. Bennett. When the wealthy gentlemen **Mr. Darcy** and **Mr. Bingley** come to town, Bingley and Jane are soon smitten, and sparks fly between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy. However, the characters of many people are judged wrongly and heartbreak is risked before happy endings can be found.

How to use this book: Read the paragraphs out loud.

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- Those marked "Scene" are to be acted out by the group.
 - Characters whose names are bolded appear in the scene. Supporting cast are played by GM or Jane Austen's player.
 - Those paragraphs in *italics* help set the stage for later scenes.
 - Special scenes occur occasionally - *Jane's life*, *Hunt/Parlor* and *Dance*.
 - Jane Austen's player will join this novel during Act 2.
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SUPPORTING CAST

Mr. Bennett - an intelligent gentleman, who loves his family but has little patience for the silliness of his wife and younger girls, but lets them do as they please. Mr Bennett is against the girls marrying purely for money.

Mrs. Bennett - a doting mother, intent on finding eligible bachelors for all her girls to marry. She is loud about her opinions about others, good and bad.

Lydia Bennett - the middle sister of the Bennett girls. The spoiled favorite of

Mrs. Bennett. She is headstrong, intent on pleasure, and ready to flirt at any time. A bad influence on her younger sister Kitty (Catherine) and deeply disapproved of by her religious, bookish and moralizing sister Mary.

Caroline Bingley - elegant and fashionable sister of Mr. Bingley. Has her eye on Mr. Darcy as a suitable husband.

Mr. William Collins - cousin to the Bennett sisters and heir to their estate. Holds a parsonage under the patronage of Lady Catherine de Bourgh whom he esteems above all others and speaks of constantly. Wants to marry and plans to pick one of the Bennett sisters to keep everything in the family.

Mr. George Wickham - a dashing soldier in the army stationed near where the Bennetts live. A great flirt and favorite with the Bennett girls, especially Eliza His parents dying when he was young, he was raised by his godfather, Mr. Darcy's late father. After running through the money left to him that was provided by Mr. Darcy, he tried to run away with Darcy's sister, Georgiana. Darcy stopped him and has never forgiven him.

Charlotte Lucas - Elizabeth Bennett's old friend. She is pragmatic about marriage and looking to marry comfortably if she can.

Mr and Mrs Gardiner - caring aunt and uncle of the Bennett girls. Spend time in London and Darbyshire, near where Darcy's estate Pemberly is located.

Lady Catherine de Bourgh - wealthy aunt of Mr. Darcy and patron of Mr. Collins. Wants Darcy to marry her daughter Miss Anne de Bourgh.

SCENES FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE

ACT 1

The Bennett family receive the news that a nearby estate has been rented to an eligible young man. Mr. Bingley. Speculation about marriages runs wild.

Mrs. Bennett pushes Mr. Bennett to call upon Mr. Bingley. He teases her until he admits that he already has done so. Mr. Bingley returns the call, but misses the young ladies.

Everyone attends a ball. Jane and Bingley dance twice together and are quite taken with each other. Darcy dances with Caroline Bingley,

but Elizabeth overhears him saying there is no one worth dancing with. When their host suggests he dance with Elizabeth, she declines.

Scene:

Aftermath of the Meryton Ball. At Netherfield, **Charles Bingley** is taken with Jane Bennett, having dance with her two times. **Darcy** and **Caroline** caution him to take it slowly. Caroline asks Darcy about the ladies at the ball, and he compliments Elizabeth Bennett.

Scene:

At the Bennetts' home, **Jane and Elizabeth** talk. Jane is in love with Bingley already, but feels unsure of his regard. Elizabeth reassures Jane, but rips into Darcy as rude and prideful.

Mrs. Bennett continues to scheme to get her daughters married. Jane is invited to Netherfield and Mrs. Bennett sends her to walk on a rainy day. Jane gets ill and is stuck at Netherfield.

Scene:

Elizabeth visits Netherfield to tend to **Jane**. **Bingley** is warm and welcoming. He spends time with Jane. **Darcy** is sharp and witty. He and Elizabeth spar about what makes a woman accomplished and it comes out that he compares everyone with his talented sister Geogiana. **Caroline Bingley** gets jealous, picking faults with Elizabeth and teasing Darcy for his attention to her. She just makes him compliment Elizabeth more.

HUNTING & PARLOR INTERLUDE

When you finish your scenes, gentlemen join the others to go hunting. Ladies to sew in the parlor. Mingle with characters from the other books and Jane Austen.

Men: write down what you've hunted to contribute to the feast for the dances, write down the feelings you cannot share.

Women: write down what you are making for other character's trousseaus, write down the feelings you cannot share.

ACT 2

(With Jane Austen)

Scene:

Mr and Mrs Bennett, Elizabeth and Jane welcome the heir to their estate, their cousin **Mr. William Collins**. He makes it clear he wants to marry one of the girls. Mrs. Bennett steers him towards Elizabeth.

Soldiers are quartered in a nearby town. Lydia and Kitty visit and meet several with whom they become friendly.

Scene:

Mr. George Wickham meets **Jane** and **Elizabeth** on a walk through the town. He flirts with Elizabeth and seems to dislike **Darcy**, who appears with **Bingley**. The men face off coldly and Wickham retreats.

Scene:

On a walk with the Bennetts, **Mr Wickham** tells **Elizabeth** his story of woe. She believes him and comes to truly dislike Mr. Darcy. He is friendly to her sister **Lydia** as well. Elizabeth relates this to **Jane** and she cast doubt on whether Darcy could have done something so wicked.

Wickham does not attend the dance.

DANCE

At the Dance:

Jane Bennett: Jane dances with Mr. Bingley twice. She is very taken with him inside, but keeps a very cool exterior. She asks Bingley about Wickham. She is embarrassed by her mother talking loudly about them being practically engaged (which they are not), and her sister Mary playing badly & being stopped rudely by her father.

Elizabeth Bennett: She dances with Mr. Collins, who then learns that his patron Lady Catherine de Bourgh is related to Darcy, and addresses him without a proper introduction. Of all things, Elizabeth is asked to dance by Darcy, and she does so thinking of the wrongs Wickham told her about.

Charles Bingley: Is pleased to be at the party, and delighted to dance again with the lovely Miss Bennett. His friends don't seem as taken with her, but he can't understand it. When Jane asks about Wickham, he lets her know Darcy did right by him.

Mr. Darcy: is fighting with his attraction to Elizabeth Bennett and succumbs enough to ask her to dance. He is unimpressed with Jane's care for Bingley and the manners of the Bennett clan.

REST BREAK

SCENES FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 2

ACT 3

The next day, Mr. Collins proposes to Elizabeth. She refuses, distressing her mother but pleasing her father. After failing with Elizabeth, Mr. Collins successfully wins the hand of Charlotte Lucas, a friend of Elizabeth. Charlotte reminds her of the financial security of marriage.

The Darcy and Bingley party leave abruptly for London, shortly after the dance. Word arrives that they are not expected back any time soon. Jane goes from worried to sad.

Kind relatives, Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner invite Elizabeth and Jane to stay with them in London. The girls hope to see Bingley there.

Scene:

In London, **Caroline Bingley** and **Mr. Darcy** try to persuade **Charles Bingley** that Jane Bennett does not love him, and that the family would be bad connections. Bingley resists but eventually accepts what they say.

Caroline calls on Jane and Elizabeth Bennett while they are in London. She is cold and unwelcoming. After she leaves, Elizabeth comforts Jane.

Time passes and the girls go back to their lives. Elizabeth has made a promise to her friend Charlotte to make a wedding visit. Elizabeth reluctantly does so.

While visiting Mr. and Mrs. Collins, Elizabeth sees that her friend is not happy. Charlotte uses gardening to give herself some room from her husband.

Elizabeth and the Collinses are invited to have dinner with the Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Darcy is there which is awkward.

Scene:

Darcy visits **Elizabeth** at the Collins' and proposes to her, despite all his misgivings about her lack of wealth and the poor breeding of her family, which he lists in detail to Elizabeth. She turns him down soundly, citing his terrible treatment of Wickham.

Darcy later gives her a letter outlining the true course of events causing Elizabeth to rethink everything. He also admits convincing Bingley to forget about Jane, explaining why.

Returning home, Elizabeth tells her sister about the letter. Everyone in their neighborhood has now heard the story from Wickham and so hate Darcy.

Elizabeth has the opportunity to learn more when the Gardiners invite her to travel near Pemberly, Darcy's estate. They visit it and it turns out he is there. His servants speak highly of him.

Scene:

Elizabeth describes Pemberly to **Jane**, and tells how different Darcy was. He was attentive to her and kind to their relatives. She begins to wonder if she has made a terrible mistake.

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SCENES FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 3

ACT 4

Lydia and Wickham elope - the family panics. Lizzie's uncle and Darcy rescue them, at great expense to Darcy but he makes Mr. Gardiner take the credit. The Bennetts learn the truth, however.

Scene:

Bingley and **Darcy** returns to the village and see **Jane** and **Elizabeth** at a dinner. Bingley is warm towards Jane, Darcy puts distance between himself and Elizabeth. Afterwards, Bingley asks Jane to marry him. She is overjoyed.

Scene:

Lady De Bourgh visits **Elizabeth** unexpectedly. She asks Elizabeth to tell her that she will not marry her nephew Darcy. Elizabeth refuses.

Scene:

Darcy visits **Elizabeth** and asks her to take a walk with him. He proposes and Elizabeth accepts.

SCENE FROM JANE AUSTEN'S LIFE 4

DANCE

At the Dance:

New couples enjoy each others company, mingle and dance and those of their acquaintances who have also found joy.

A feast is laid, bounty of the hunt.

Brides, collect your trousseau, gifts from your peers.

Jane Austen is a guest at this gathering. If there is time, find her to thank her for your sorrows and joys.