

Part I

Chapter 1 **A new neighbor**

It is a well-known fact that a single man with a plenty of money must be in need of a wife. He may not know this, but neighbors with unmarried daughters are quite sure of it. So imagine the arrival in a neighborhood of a man who is single, rich and young. Imagine its effect on Mrs. Bennet who has four unmarried daughters.

“My dear Mr. Bennet,” she said one day, “Netherfield Hall has been let at last.”

Mr. Bennet continued to read his newspaper.

“Don’t you want to know who’s taken it?”

“You’re determined to tell me, and I’m ready to hear you,” he said.

“Well, then, it’s been taken by a rich young man called Bingley,” she said excitedly.

“Is he married or single?”

“Why single, my dear, and with 5000 pounds a year. What a fine thing for our girls.”

“Indeed, and how can it affect them?”

“My dear Mr. Bennet, how can you be so annoying? You must know that I’m hoping he’ll marry one of them.”

“Is that his intention in settling here?”

“Intention? Nonsense,” exclaimed his wife. “But it’s surely quite likely that he may fall in love with one of them, and so you must visit him.”

Mr. Bennet returned to his paper. “I don’t see the need. You and the girls can go. I’ll write him a note to say that I agree to his marrying whichever of the girls he chooses. Though perhaps I ought to recommend Elizabeth to him. They are all silly girls, but she has a little more sense than her sisters.”

Mrs. Bennet complained that it was impossible for her to call on a single gentleman. But her husband wouldn’t agree to visit Mr. Bingley. He was a strange mixture of clever jokes and long silences. Even after twenty-three years of marriage she didn’t understand him or his jokes. But

wife. Nor did he tell her after his return. But as he sat with his family that evening he talked continually of dances, of Mr. Bingley, of introductions. At last his wife could bear it no longer.

“I’m tired of Mr. Bingley! I don’t ever want to hear his name again,” she said.

“I’m sorry to hear that,” her husband replied. “But why didn’t you tell me before? If I’d known this morning I wouldn’t have called on him. But since I have, we can’t now escape knowing him.”

Mrs. Bennet’s joy can be imagined. But her husband didn’t stay to observe it. Nor could she find out from him what Mr. Bingley was like. For this, annoying though it was, she had to go to her friend and neighbor, Lady Lucas. From her she learnt that he was good-looking, charming and fond of dancing. And that was not all. He planned to attend the next public dance in the nearby town of Meryton with a party of family and friends.

Chapter 2

The dance and after

The Bennets were not rich, but they lived comfortably with servants at Longbourn, their house in the country. Mr. Bennet received 2000 pounds a year in rent from his land, and his wife had a little money of her own.

However, the situation was worse than it seemed because of a lawyer’s agreement, made years before by Mr. Bennet’s grandfather. Since Mr. Bennet had no son, the property, when he died, would pass to a distant cousin. His daughters would have nothing unless they married. This explains the great hopes of Mrs. Bennet.

So when Bingley left for London she was alarmed. Was he not coming to the dance, then? Her friend, Lady Lucas, calmed her. He had only gone, she said, to gather a party for the dance. The next report was that he was bringing twelve ladies – bad news for the ladies of Meryton. But he finally arrived at the dance with only four other people: his two sisters, the husband of one of them, a Mr. Hurst – and another gentleman.

Mr. Bingley was, certainly, good looking and very friendly. But his

danced with her elder daughter, Jane, not just once, but twice.

Her sister, Elizabeth, was not so lucky. Because there were not enough gentlemen she had to sit down for two dances. During this time Mr. Bingley left the dance-floor to speak to Darcy, who was standing near.

“Why aren’t you dancing?” he asked. “I’ve never seen so many attractive girls in all my life.”

“You’re already dancing with the only really attractive one,” Darcy replied, looking towards Jane.

“That may be true,” said Bingley, “but one of her sisters sitting just behind you is also very pretty.”

Darcy turned. “Bearable,” he said, “but why should I dance with a girl nobody else wants to dance with?”

When his family arrived home, Mr. Bennet had to listen to his wife describing every lady’s dress who Mr. Bingley had danced with dance by dance. “If only,” he said, “he’d broken his leg in the first dance!”

But Mr. Bennet just had to mention Mr. Darcy. “You should have seen him standing there alone, thinking himself so important. ‘Bearable’, indeed!”

Next morning, Jane expressed her surprise at Bingley asking her to dance a second time.

“It was no surprise to me, since you were by far the prettiest girl in the room,” replied Elizabeth. “He seems very pleasant. You’ve liked worse men.”

“Dear Lizzy, you shouldn’t say such things.”

“It’s true,” said Elizabeth, “you have such good sense, but you don’t seem to see people’s faults. Do you like his sisters?”

“They’re very pleasant, when you talk to them.”

Elizabeth *had* talked to them, and didn’t agree.

They were fashionable London ladies who could be charming when they liked. But they were proud. They looked down on the country society of Meryton.

A week after Elizabeth talked about Jane to Charlotte Lucas, her closest friend, Mr. Bingley’s admiration for Jane was growing. Jane liked

“He doesn’t know her like you. She should try harder to attract him. Then, when she is sure of him, there’ll be time enough to fall in love with him.”

“That may be a good plan for a girl who only wants to get married,” Elizabeth said. “But Jane isn’t like that. She’d never marry somebody she didn’t love. Just now she doesn’t know him, or her own feelings.”

“I don’t think one *can* know a man before marriage, and it’s better that way. If people knew all about the person they were going to marry, they wouldn’t do it.”

“You say that,” said Elizabeth, laughing, “but you know you’d never act like that yourself.”

But while Elizabeth was twenty, Charlotte was twenty-eight, and like her friend had little money to expect from her family. And also she was not so pretty. She sometimes felt she was getting too old to find a husband.

From that time Elizabeth watched her sister and Mr. Bingley closely. Perhaps because of this she hardly noticed that someone was watching her. But one evening at a party at the Lucas’s house it became quite clear. Whoever she spoke to, Mr. Darcy was always near.

“What does he mean by listening to my conversation?” she said to Charlotte. “If he continues, I’ll let him know what I think. He’s listening for things he can make joke about with Mr. Bingley’s sisters.”

The truth was different. As Darcy saw more of Elizabeth, his ideas began to change: she might not be exactly beautiful, but she had nice eyes. As for her conversation, it was not like fashionable London talk. But there was something very attractive in her easy, laughing manner. Later that evening, as he was talking to Sir William Lucas, she happened to pass by.

“Miss Eliza,” said Sir William to Elizabeth, “you’re not dancing. Mr. Darcy, you can’t refuse.” He took her hand to give to Darcy. He, though surprised, was very willing to take it. But she pulled it away.

“Please, Sir William,” she said, “I don’t want to dance. Mr. Darcy is only being polite.”

“This is hardly politeness,” Sir William said, “for who would refuse a chance to dance with Miss Bennet?”

attractive a certain young woman is.”

“Indeed?” said Miss Bingley in a softer voice. She smiled and looked into his eyes. “And who is she?”

“Miss Elizabeth Bennet.”

“Miss Elizabeth Bennet? I’m astonished. How long has she been a favourite? When’s the wedding to be?”

“That’s exactly what I expected you to say,” said Darcy. “A lady’s thought jumps straight from admiration to love, and from love to marriage.”

Chapter 3

Mrs. Bennet’s good idea

One morning a few days later, a servant arrived at Longbourn with a letter for Jane.

“Well, Jane, who’s it from? What’s it about? Tell us, my dear,” cried Mrs. Bennet impatiently.

“It’s from Miss Bingley,” Jane replied. “The gentlemen are going out to dinner with the officers from the regiment that has its camp at Meryton, and she asks if I can have dinner with her and her sister. Can I take a carriage?”

“No, my dear,” said her mother, who was disappointed that Jane would not see Mr. Bingley. “You’d better take a horse. It seems quite likely to rain, and then they’d have to ask you to stay the night.”

Jane did not like this idea, or the reason for it. But since her father said that the carriage horses were needed on the land that day, she had to go on horseback.

In fact, Mrs. Bennet’s plan succeeded all too well. Soon after Jane left it began to rain so heavily that she arrived quite wet. It went on all the evening and she did not return. But when next morning a note arrived to say that she was ill in bed, Mrs. Bennet’s plan did not seem so clever. Elizabeth was worried and decided to walk to Netherfield to find out how

Her shoes and stockings were dirty, and her hair was blown by the wind. But the exercise had given life and color to her face, and the gentlemen noticed this, and not the dirty shoes.

Jane was not well, and did not improve during the morning. So Elizabeth was grateful when Mr. Bingley asked her to spend the night at Netherfield too. After dinner, as soon as she went to sit by Jane, Bingley's sisters began to talk about her: about her manners, her conversation, her ideas, her clothes – none of which pleased the ladies of Netherfield. Only Jane, among all the Bennets, was good enough to praise.

"She's a very sweet girl," said Mrs. Hurst, "and I wish with all my heart she could find a good husband. But with such a family and no money there's little chance of it. Her mother has no sense at all."

"You should meet the uncle and the aunt in Meryton," laughed Miss Bingley.

"And they've another uncle who is a merchant in London," said Mrs. Hurst.

"If they had twenty uncles like that, it wouldn't make the Miss Bennets any less attractive," said Bingley, who was not happy with this talk.

"True," said Darcy, "but it must still make it more difficult for them to marry men with good position in the world." Bingley was silent, but his sisters continued to amuse themselves with their friend's relations for some time.

Later that evening while Darcy was writing a letter Miss Bingley was trying to make him to talk to her.

"How happy your sister will be to receive a letter from you!" she said. But Darcy went on writing.

"How very fast you write!"

"You're mistaken. I write very slowly."

"Please tell your sister that I long to see her."

"You asked me before, and I've already done so."

Just then Elizabeth entered the room. She had thought it only polite to join the company, and not sit with her sister all the time.

"Miss Eliza Bennet," said Miss Bingley as soon as she appeared, "let's

join them. But he shook his head and said: "There can be only two reasons for walking up and down like that. It's better if I stay here."

"What can he mean?" Miss Bingley said.

"Why, he means to laugh at us," said Elizabeth, "and the best way to prevent him is not ask what he means." But Miss Bingley had to ask, for she could not disappoint Darcy in anything.

"You are walking up and down," Darcy explained, "either because you have secrets to discuss, or because you want me to admire you. But if the first is true, you can't really want me; and if the second is true, I can see you much better from here."

"Oh!" cried Miss Bingley. "How shall we punish him for such a speech?"

"Surely it's easy for someone like you who knows all his faults," said Elizabeth. "Laugh at him."

"Mr. Darcy has no faults. He's not to be laughed at."

"Not to be laughed at! That's a very unusual advantage, and I hope it remains unusual. I wouldn't want to know many people like that," said Elizabeth.

"Miss Bingley's too kind," said Darcy. "I have my faults. I only try to avoid the foolish ones."

"Such as pride?" Elizabeth asked.

"Pride *may* be a fault in someone who has nothing to be proud about," he said. Elizabeth smiled. Turning to Miss Bingley she said: "If pride is no fault, he has no faults."

"But I have," said Darcy. "For example, I find it hard to forgive people once I lose my good opinion of them. My dislikes are strong. That's surely a fault."

"Hatred is a fault. Oh, yes. Hatred is a good fault to choose. I can't laugh at that."

"Everyone has some fault like that," said Darcy.

"And yours, you say, is a readiness to hate people."

"And yours is wanting to misunderstand them. Or might I call it prejudice?"

At this point Miss Bingley grew tired of a conversation which she was

enough.

Chapter 4

A visitor

Some days later, while the Bennet family was having breakfast, Mr. Bennet produced another little surprise.

“I hope,” he said to his wife, “you’ve planned a good dinner today, as I’m expecting a guest.” – “Who do you mean, my dear? I don’t expect anybody today – unless perhaps Charlotte Lucas stays. And I know my dinners are better than any she has at home.”

“The person I mean is a gentleman, and I’ve never seen him before in my life.” This news produced all the excitement that Mr. Bennet had hoped for. “Some weeks ago I received a letter from my cousin, Mr. Collins, who, as you know, will become the owner of Longbourn when I die.” – “Oh, that man!” cried Mrs. Bennet. “I can’t bear to hear his name. Why does the law allow him to do this to us?” She continued her loud complaints on his favorite subject of hers for some time, while her daughters tried to calm her.

“If you allow me to read this,” said Mr. Bennet, “you may learn why he’s coming.” He read aloud:

Dear Sir,

The quarrel between you and my father has always caused me unhappiness; and since his death I have often wished to end it. You will be pleased to hear that I have now made up my mind. Last Easter I became a parson and was appointed by the noble and honorable Lady Catherine de Bourgh to the care of this village. As a parson, I think it is my duty to spread peace. Therefore I hope that the question of Longbourn will not make you refuse my offer of friendship. I am deeply sorry that I will one day have to take over the home of your respected daughters. I apologize to them, and hope I may reduce this harm – but of this I will speak later. If you are willing, I shall present myself to your family on Monday next at four o’clock. I should like to stay twelve days as Lady Catherine has most kindly allowed me to be absent for this time. I remain, Dear Sir, your

And why he apologized because Longbourn would pass to him? “It’s not his fault – and if he could prevent it, he wouldn’t. Do you think he can be a very sensible man?” “I don’t, my dear,” said her father. “He seems an interesting mixture: humble and self-important at the same time. I quite look forward to meeting him.”

To the younger Bennets the only interesting visitors were young officers from the camp near Meriton – not parsons. But Mrs. Bennet’s hatred of Longbourn’s future owner suddenly and strangely seemed to disappear.

Mr. Collins arrived exactly on time. He was a tall, serious, heavy-looking young man of twenty-five, with the manners of someone much older. He talked continuously to Mrs. Bennet, praising everything he saw, from her daughters to the dining-room furniture. Only when he praised the house itself was she upset. She could not forget that one day it would be all his. During the dinner Mr. Bennet said little. There was no need, for Mr. Collins had much to say. But when later they all returned to the sitting room he asked his guest about Lady Catherine and her house, Rosings.

This was a subject Mr. Collins was ready to talk about all night: how she had already asked him to dinner twice, and sent for him to be the fourth person at a game of cards; how she had planned shelves for his upstairs cupboards, and advised him to get married.

“Does she have any family?” asked Mrs. Bennet.

“One daughter – with a great deal of property.”

“Ah!” cried Mrs. Bennet. “Then she’s luckier than many girls. What’s she like? Is she beautiful?”

Mr. Collins gave some thought to his answer. “She’s a most charming young lady. Lady Catherine herself says that Miss de Bourgh has more real beauty than other girls, because she looks more truly noble. She’s not, however, in good health and her education has suffered. But she’s perfectly polite.”

“It’s sad that her health prevents her from mixing in society. As I told Lady Catherine myself, the world of fashion has lost one of its brightest jewels. I like to make little remarks like this. They please the ladies, and

Chapter 5

Mr. Wickham

Any advice of Lady Catherine to Mr. Collins was a command. He had to get married, and that was why he had come to Longbourn. He had heard that his cousins were pretty girls, and had come to marry one of them. Nor did he change his mind when he saw them, and by the end of his first evening he had decided on Jane. But Mrs. Bennet made him think again. She approved his marrying one of her daughters, but she had to warn him – Jane might soon be marrying someone else. In the time it took for Mrs. Bennet to put a log on the fire, Mr. Collins's feelings flew from Jane to Elizabeth. Elizabeth, he thought, might be acceptable. That morning the girls decided to take Mr. Collins to visit their mother's sister, Mrs. Philips, in Meriton. This plan was strongly approved by Mr. Bennet, who had been troubled by Mr. Collins's company since breakfast.

When they reached the town Lydia and Catherine looked up and down for somebody they knew. They did not have to wait long. The attention of all four girls was soon caught by two men across the road. One was a young officer called Denny that they already knew. The other, not in uniform, was a stranger, and unusually good-looking. Pretending to be interested in a shop window, Lydia crossed the road and placed herself in their path. In this way they all met Mr. Denny's friend, who was about to join the army.

This friend, Mr. Wickham was as charming as he was good-looking, and they all stood there talking for some time. It was such a pleasant conversation that they did not at first hear the sound of horses. It was Bingley and Darcy riding towards them. When they stopped, Bingley explained that they had been on their way to Longbourn to invite them to a dance at Netherfield. But Elizabeth was not listening. She was watching Darcy, and was very much surprised by what she saw. As soon as he saw the stranger his face turned white. Mr. Wickham seemed equally unhappy at this meeting. The two gentlemen raised their hats to each other, but neither said a word. Clearly they had met before.

although her aunt knew most of what happened in Meryton, she could not tell them any more about this gentleman.

The next evening, after Mr. Collins's long apologies for leaving his hosts alone, he and his cousins drove off to the Philips's house at Meryton. Mr. Collins looked round. The room, he said, was quite like the small summer breakfast room at Rosings. This did not at first sound like praise to Mrs. Philips. But Mr. Collins was kind enough to tell her more about Lady Catherine's house, and she began to understand that Mr. Collins was doing her a great honour.

As soon as the other gentlemen came in with Mr. Philips, Elizabeth knew she had not been wrong to admire Mr. Wickham. His looks, his manners, his conversation put him far above the other officers. Here at last, unlike Mr. Darcy, was a true gentleman. When the card tables were put up, he preferred to sit with Lydia and Elizabeth. At first Lydia took all his attention, for she was a talker like her mother. But she also liked cards, and at last she went over to the tables, leaving Wickham along with her sister. Elizabeth knew she could not introduce the interesting subject of the meeting with Darcy in Meryton. So it was lucky that Mr. Wickham began by asking how long Darcy had been at Netherfield.

"About a month," she replied. "I believe he has a fine house and a great deal of land in Derbyshire."

"He has – and nobody could tell you more about Pemberley and the Darcys than me. I've known that house and family all my life. So you may wonder," he went on, after seeing her surprise, "at the unfriendly meeting we had yesterday. Do you know him well?"

"As well as I shall ever want to. I don't think he has a pleasant character," said Elizabeth.

"I've known him too long to be able to judge him fairly. But many people would disagree with you. They're easily influenced by money and rank."

"Not in this neighborhood. Nobody likes him here."

"I wonder," said Wickham, after a pause, "how long he's likely to stay."

“I’m a disappointed man. I wasn’t brought up for the army but for the Church. Old Mr. Darcy promised me a good position in the Church. But when he died and this position became free, his son gave it to someone else.”

“But how could he act so badly?” cried Elizabeth.

“He’s jealous. You see, my father looked after old Mr. Darcy’s property, and I was brought up and educated with the son. Perhaps I was too much of a favorite of the old man. I think his son has never forgiven me.”

Elizabeth remembered Darcy’s words at Netherfield about his unforgiving character. “What sort of girl is his sister?” she asked.

Mr. Wickham shook his head. “It makes me sad to speak badly of any Darcy, but she’s like her brother – good-looking, but very proud. I used to play with her when she was a child, but she looks down on me now.”

“I’m surprised by his friendship with Mr. Bingley. Surely he must know what sort of man Mr. Darcy is.”

“Perhaps not. Mr. Darcy can be charming when he likes – especially to those he thinks are his equals.”

Just then the card party began to break up, and Elizabeth asked Mr. Collins how he’d done. He replied that he had lost every game. “But I don’t mind. I don’t have to worry about the loss of five shillings – thanks to the goodness of Lady Catherine de Bourgh.”

Wickham looked up at the sound of that name. Later, taking Elizabeth aside, he asked how her cousin was connected with that lady, and she explained.

“You may not know,” he said, “that Lady Catherine is Mr. Darcy’s aunt. Her daughter will be very rich. It’s thought that she and Mr. Darcy will marry, and so bring together two large properties.”

Elizabeth smiled to think of Miss Bingley’s hopes.

Next morning Elizabeth told Jane what she had learnt about Darcy. Her sister was surprised. She could not believe that Bingley would choose the kind of friend described by Wickham. She did not know what to think.

“I know exactly what to think,” said Elizabeth. “I know the kind of man that Mr. Darcy is.”

especially when it's given by a gentleman of good character like Mr. Bingley," he said. "I hope for the honor of dancing with all my cousins. Indeed, I would like to take this opportunity of asking for the pleasure of the first two dances with you."

Elizabeth was speechless. She had quite expected Mr. Wickham to ask her for just these dances – and to have Mr. Collins instead! But there was no escape.

Worse followed. Rain kept the Bennets inside for days. So she was prevented from seeing more of Wickham. Worse still, it was becoming clear that Mr. Collins was taking an uncomfortably close interest in her. Surely, he ... but, no, that was impossible.

Chapter 6

The dance at Netherfield

Elizabeth dressed carefully for the dance. For this was the night when she must win Mr. Wickham's heart.

But all her hopes depended of one thing – that Wickham would be there. So imagine her feelings on entering the room and finding he was not. Had Darcy persuaded his friend not to invite him? Later she learnt from Lydia that this was not so. Wickham had left for London on business (he had told his friends). But she knew the real cause of his absence was Darcy.

However, anger against Darcy was soon replaced by feelings of different kind. Mr. Collins was coming to claim her for his dances. He was no dancer, and what followed was misery. It was hard to say which was worse: the many times that he trod on her foot, or the apologies that followed. But the dance ended at last, and she ran to Charlotte to tell her all her troubles. But she had hardly begun, when another gentleman came to ask her to dance – Darcy. She was too surprised to refuse. For some time they stood silent on the dance-floor, waiting for the music to begin. Elizabeth made some remark to which Darcy replied. Then the dance started and there was more silence.

"It's your turn to say something now, Mr. Darcy," she said. "I talked

So they remained silent, until Darcy asked if she often walked to Meryton.

“Quite often. When you met us the other day we had just been making a new friend,” Elizabeth replied.

“Mr. Wickham is always able to make friends,” he said coldly. “But he doesn’t find it so easy to keep them.”

“He’s been unlucky enough to lose your friendship, and is likely to suffer for it all his life,” she said.

The dance ended. Both dancers felt glad not to have to continue the conversation. Darcy led her to a seat next to Miss Bingley, and went off in anger: but anger that was more against Wickham than Elizabeth.

“So, Miss Eliza,” said Miss Bingley, “your sister has been asking me about George Wickham. I hear you’re quite delighted with him. But you may not know that his father was old Mr. Darcy’s servant. Let me warn you, as a friend, not to believe everything he says. He has harmed Mr. Darcy. I don’t know how, but I do know that Mr. Darcy cannot bear to hear his name. I pity you, Miss Eliza. You’ll find out your favorite’s true character in the end.”

“So far as I understand you, Mr. Wickham’s only fault is that his father worked for old Mr. Darcy,” said Elizabeth coldly.

“I beg your pardon,” said Miss Bingley as she got up and walked away. “I was only trying to be kind.”

“Insulting girl,” said Elizabeth to herself. “She knows nothing, but believes everything Darcy says.”

But now a very excited Mr. Collins was coming towards her. Surely he could not want another dance?

“I’ve made a most important discovery,” he cried. “In this very room tonight is a close relative of Lady Catherine. I must offer him my respects at once.”

“You’re surely not going to introduce yourself to Mr. Darcy?” Elizabeth cried.

“Indeed I am. I believe him to be Lady Catherine’s nephew. It’s my duty to introduce myself, and tell him that she was quite well two weeks ago yesterday.”

Darcy received me most politely.”

It was at supper, however, that Elizabeth’s most painful experience took place. She had been avoiding her mother all evening so as not to hear her talking. But now she found herself seated between her mother and Lady Lucas, with Darcy not far away.

Mrs. Bennet could only talk of one thing – her hopes of Jane’s marriage to Bingley. She never got tired of repeating its advantages: that Mr. Bingley was so rich; that Bingley’s sisters loved Jane so much, and that the younger daughters might meet other rich men.

Elizabeth knew that Darcy could hear this, but it was useless to try to make her mother speak more quietly. “What’s Mr. Darcy to me?” she thought. “We owe him nothing.” But even Mrs. Bennet stopped talking at last, and Lady Lucas found comfort in some cold chicken.

Mrs. Bennet returned home happily certain that in three months Jane would be settled at Netherfield. She was equally sure that her second daughter would soon be Mrs. Collins. But she did not care so much about this. For Elizabeth was her least favorite child.

I. Checking Comprehension

1. Answer the questions:

1. Where did the Bennet family live? What money did the family live on? How large was the family?
2. What made Mrs. Bennet and some of her daughters so excited when Mr. Bennet told them he had called on Mr. Bingley?
3. What was the difference between Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy? What made their arrival so important for the ladies of Meryton?
4. What did Jane think of Mr. Bingley’s sisters? What was Elizabeth’s opinion of them? What was the sisters’ opinion of Mr. Bingley? Mr. Darcy?
5. How did Darcy’s ideas of Elizabeth begin to change?
6. What kind of man was Mr. Collins? What impression did he make on people? What did he mostly choose to speak about?
7. What made Elizabeth get interested in Mr. Wickham? Who provided

2.Put the sentences in the right order to make the outline of the events in Part I.

1. Mr Wickham's leaving for London.
2. The Bennet family.
3. Darcy's writing a letter to his sister.
4. Mr. Wickham's conversation with Elizabeth during dinner in the Philips's house.
5. Elizabeth's most painful experience during the dance at Netherfield.
6. Elizabeth's walk to Netherfield.
7. Mr. Collins – a visitor to the Bennet family.
8. Miss Bingley's warnings concerning George Wickham.
9. Elizabeth's expectations of the dance at Netherfield.
10. A visit to Mrs. Philips and the Bennet girls' new acquaintance.

3.Choose the right item.

1.Mr. Collins lived ...

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| a) in Netherfield; | b) at Longbourn; |
| c) in London; | d) in the country of Kent. |

2.Mr. Bennet had £ ... a year.

- a) 10000; b) 2000; c) 5000; d) 8000.

3.Mrs. Bennet got the desirable information of what Mr. Bingley was like from ...

- | | |
|-----------------|-------------------|
| a) her husband; | b) her daughters; |
| c) Lady Lucas; | c) Mrs. Philips. |

4.The public dance in the nearby town of Meryton was very successful for ...

- a) Elizabeth; b) Lydia; c) Jane; d) Charlotte.

d) began to change his ideas of her and wanted to know her better.

6. When Sir William asked Mr. Darcy to dance with Elizabeth the young gentleman ...

- a) was willing to do it;
- b) was unwilling to do it;
- c) agreed only being polite;
- d) refused to do it.

7. Mrs. Bennet was against Elizabeth's walking to Netherfield because...

- a) she thought Eliza might fall ill;
- b) the weather was very nasty;
- c) the way to Netherfield was long and dangerous;
- d) the people at Netherfield could look down on her for walking across muddy fields.

8. Mr. Collins decided to marry because ...

- a) it was required of him socially;
- b) he had fallen in love with Elizabeth;
- c) Mrs. Bennet talked him into marrying one of her daughters;
- d) That was Lady Catherine's advice.

9. At the Philips' house in Meryton it was ... who introduced the subject of their meeting with Darcy.

- a) Elizabeth;
- b) Lydia;
- c) Mr. Collins;
- d) Mr. Wickham.

10. Elizabeth dressed carefully for the dance at Netherfield because she wanted ...

- a) to win Mr. Wickham's heart;
- b) to win Mr. Darcy's heart;
- c) to win Mr. Collins's heart;
- d) to get as many invitations for dance as possible.

4. Say who in Part I is characterized in this way.

1. His looks, his manners, his conversation put him far above the other

same time.

4. She might not be exactly beautiful, but she had nice eyes. As for her conversation, it was not like fashionable London talk. But there was something very attractive in her easy, laughing manner.
5. She was twenty eight, had little money to expect from her family. Also she was not so pretty. She sometimes felt she was getting too old to find a husband.
6. He was a strange mixture of clever jokes and long silences.
7. She was not as clever or educated as her husband. She was also easily upset. Her pleasures were visiting, talking and clothes.
8. He was good-looking, charming and fond of dancing. He was a rich young man with £ 5000 a year and very friendly. Soon he made himself popular with everybody.
9. She was very pretty and had good sense, but she didn't seem to see people's faults. She used to hide her feelings under cheerful friendliness which she showed to everyone.
10. They were fashionable London Ladies who could be charming when they liked. They were proud. They looked down at the country society of Meryton.

II. Discussing the Text

1. Explain why in Part I:

1. Mrs. Bennet was quite excited that Netherfield had been let at last;
2. Mr. Bennet was one of the first to visit Mr. Bingley the next morning after the latter's arrival;
3. Mrs. Bennet became alarmed when Mr. Bingley had left for London;
4. Mr. Darcy who attracted so much attention at the beginning was less admired later on;
5. Mr. Darcy did not want to invite Elizabeth for a dance in the town of Meryton but was quite willing to do it later;
6. Mrs. Bennet was glad that Jane had to go to Netherfield on horseback;

10. Miss Bingley thought Mr. Darcy has no faults.

2. *Add more details to these:*

1. "I hope," said Mr. Bennet to his wife, "you've planned a good dinner today, as I'm expecting a guest."
2. The Bennets were not rich, but they lived comfortably ... However, the situation was worse than it seemed ...
3. Mr. Bennet was fully satisfied. His cousin was even more foolish than he had hoped.
4. "As I told Lady Catherine myself, the world of fashion has lost of its brightest jewels – I like to make little remarks like this."
5. This was the subject Mr. Collins was ready to talk about all night.
6. "Nobody could tell you more about Pemberley and the Darcys than me."
7. Elizabeth smiled: "If pride is no fault, he has no faults."
8. Mrs. Bennet's hatred of Longbourn's future owner suddenly and strongly seemed to disappear.
9. "You may not know that Lady Catherine is Mr. Darcy's aunt."
10. Miss Bingley: "Let me warn you, as a friend, Elizabeth, not to believe everything Mr. Wickham says."

3. *Say what happened:*

1. in the neighborhood of Longbourn that made the ladies of the Bennet family excited;
2. during the public dance in the town of Meryton;
3. during a party at the Lucas's house;
4. to Jane when she went to Netherfield to have dinner with Miss Bingley and her sister Mrs. Hurst;
5. to Elizabeth during her stay at Netherfield while Jane was ill;
6. while Darcy was writing a letter to his sister;
7. when Mr. Collins arrived at Longbourn;
8. when Elizabeth and her sisters were walking with Mr. Collins to their

2. The situation of the Bennets was worse than it seemed because of a lawyer's agreement, made years before by Mr. Bennet's grandfather.
3. "A woman may often want to hide her feelings for a man," said Charlotte, "to stop people talking. But if she hides them too well, she'll lose him."
4. If people knew all about person they were going to marry, they wouldn't do it.
5. A lady's thought jump straight from admiration to love, and from love to marriage.
6. Pride may be a fault in someone who has nothing to be proud about.
7. At Meryton in the Philips's house Mr. Collins said the room there was quite like the small summer breakfast room at Rosings.
8. "I'm a disappointed man. I wasn't brought up for the army but for the church."
9. Elizabeth had been avoiding her mother all evening so as not to hear her talking."
10. Mrs. Bennet returned home happily certain that in three months Jane would be settled at Netherfield. She was equally sure that her second daughter would soon be Mrs. Collins. But she didn't care much about this for Elizabeth was her least favorite child.

5. Give a talk on one of these topics. Mention the indicated points.

1. The Bennet family: the place where they lived, the money the family lived on, interests of all the members of the family, the way they spent their time, their relatives.
2. The Bingleys: Mr Bingley and his sisters (Miss Bingley and Mrs Hurst), the difference between the sisters and their brother, their attitude to the Bennet family, to Meryton society.
3. Mr Collins: the relationships to the Bennet family, the present position, the real and declared aim of his visit to Longbourn, his ideas of life and his attitude to the nobility, his favourite topics of

at Netherfield.

5. Elizabeth Bennet: her appearance, her parents' attitude towards the young lady, her ideas of her own mother, her feelings for Jane, her sense of humour, her manner of leading the conversation, her ideas of Mr Darcy, Mr Bingley, Mr Collins and Mr Wickham.
6. Jane Bennet: her appearance, her mother's plans about her future, her attitude to people, Elizabeth's opinion of Jane's affection for Mr Bingley, Elizabeth's success during the dances.
7. Maryton society: people who were of some importance in the neighbourhood, their interests, the way of their living.
8. Mr. Darcy: the interests of local people in the gentleman, certain changes in the opinion, his attitude to the local society, to Miss Bingley, to Elizabeth, to Mr. Wickham, his way of leading conversation.

6. *Compare these characters:*

1. Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley.
2. Elizabeth and Jane Bennet.
3. Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet.
4. Mr. Darcy and Mr. Wickham.

7. *Act out the talks between:*

1. Mr. Bennet and Mrs. Bennet before the public dance;
2. Elizabeth and Charlotte about Jane and her possible marriage;
3. Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth Bennet at Netherfield;
4. Mr. Bennet and Mr. Collins on the day of his arrival to Longbourn;
5. Mr. Wickham and Elizabeth Bennet at the Philips';

Madam,” he said to Mrs. Bennet, “that you will not mind my speaking to your daughter Elizabeth in private.”

“Oh dear – yes, certainly – I’m sure Lizzy will be very happy – come, Catherine, I need you upstairs,” said Mrs. Bennet, picking up her pins and needles.

“Mother, please don’t go – I’m sure anything Mr. Collins has to say can be heard by anybody,” said Elizabeth.

“Nonsense, Lizzy. I want you to stay and hear Mr. Collins,” said her mother and left the room.

“Believe me, my dear Miss Elizabeth,” Mr. Collins began, “your modesty only adds to your charm. Without this show of unwillingness you would be less attractive to me. But let me put your mind at rest. Your mother has given her permission for this little talk. The subject of it can be no secret to you. Almost as soon as I arrived here, I chose you as the companion of my future life. But before I let my feelings run away with me, let me give my reasons for getting married.”

He then went on to do this. First he thought it right for a parson to set a good example. Secondly he thought marriage would add to his happiness. Thirdly, and most important of all, Lady Catherine advised it.

“A gentleman like you, Mr. Collins, should marry,” she had said. “Choose carefully. Choose a lady for my sake – and for your own sake choose an active, useful sort of person. Bring her to Hunsford, and I will visit her.”

Mr. Collins said he was sure Elizabeth would suit Lady Catherine perfectly. For she would surely treat the great lady with the respect which her high rank deserved.

“Now,” he said, “it only remains for me to express the full strength of my feelings for you. I care nothing for money, since I know that you have none – except, of course, for the £1000 at four per cent which will be yours when your mother dies. Be sure that I shall never say a word of complaint about this when we’re married ...’

Elizabeth had to interrupt him at this point. “You forget, Sir, that I haven’t yet given you an answer. Let me do so now. I’m greatly honored by your offer, but I’m afraid it’s impossible for me to accept it.”

receive a different answer.”

“Surely, Mr. Collins, I have made my answer clear enough,” said Elizabeth.

“I still prefer to think that your refusal, dear cousin, is not serious. My reason is that I have so much to offer: my position in life, my connection with the de Bourgh family. After all, having so little money, you may not receive any other offer of marriage. I cannot really think you will refuse me in the end.”

Elizabeth could do no more to change Mr. Collins’s beliefs, so she let him. Mrs. Bennet, who had not been far away, now came in to give him her best wishes. Mr. Collins was still sure of his success, but when Mrs. Bennet heard what her daughter had said, she was not so satisfied, and said: “She is a silly girl. She will not listen to other people who know best.”

“If she is that sort of girl,” said Mr. Collins, “perhaps she would not do for Lady Catherine.”

“Don’t worry, Mr. Collins. She is only silly sometimes. Leave her to me,” replied Mrs. Bennet, and she went straight to Mr. Bennet’s library.

“Oh, Mr. Bennet,” she said, “we are all in confusion. You must come and make Lizzy marry Mr. Collins. She says she won’t have *him*, and he may change his mind and not have *her*.”

Mr. Bennet remained calm. He sent for Elizabeth and said: “I understand that Mr. Collins has made you an offer of marriage and you have refused it.” Elizabeth agreed. “And your mother says you must accept him.”

“Yes,” cried Mrs. Bennet, “or I’ll never speak to her again.”

“Well,” said Mr. Bennet, “you have a hard choice. If you refuse Mr. Collins, your mother won’t ever speak to you. If you accept him, *I* shan’t speak to you.”

Elizabeth smiled. She would not have to marry Mr. Collins. But her mother was disappointed. During the next few days she continued to threaten or persuade. The problem was what to do with Mr. Collins. He was determined not to return to Hunsford before the day planned, and Elizabeth found it uncomfortable to talk to him. However, help was near.

were no long speeches. Charlotte was ready to accept his offer of marriage. Her parents agreed, and Mr. Collins was back at Longbourn before midday.

The Bennets had noticed his absence, but received no explanation, even when he left for home the next day. However, when Mrs. Bennet said she hoped to see him again at Longbourn, he surprised them. He said he would like to come and stay again very soon. Mr. Bennet, who did not wish for such a quick return, asked if he thought Lady Catherine would let him leave Hunsford again. But Mr. Collins did not seem to think this a difficulty, and after long speeches of thanks, drove off.

Mrs. Bennet at first thought he was planning to return to make an offer to one of the younger girls. But later that day Charlotte came to tell Elizabeth her news, followed a little later by her father. Elizabeth was upset. How could Charlotte accept a man like Mr. Collins? But for Mrs. Bennet it was worse. Now she had to listen to Lady Lucas talking all the time about the coming marriage of her daughter. Even worse was the thought of Charlotte taking her place at Longbourn after the death of Mr. Bennet. However, her husband had a word of comfort for her.

“Let’s hope for better things, my dear,” he said. “Perhaps you may die before me.”

Chapter 8

Disappointments

If Elizabeth was upset by Charlotte’s marriage, Jane was much more upset by events at Netherfield. Soon after the dance, Bingley had to go to London. Then Jane received a letter from Caroline Bingley. She said her brother’s business was taking longer than expected. She and her sister had left Netherfield to join him.

This was bad news. But the second letter brought worse. The Bingleys would not return that year. She said her brother was sorry he had not had time to see his friends before he left. She also mentioned Darcy’s sister. She clearly hoped Bingley would marry her.

It was some days before Jane showed this letter to her sister. “I’ll forget

“I don’t accuse Bingley of trying to deceive you – only of weakness. He’s too much influenced by his sister and Mr. Darcy. She wants him to marry Miss Darcy. Also Miss Bingley wants to marry Mr. Darcy. She thinks one marriage may lead to another. She followed her brother to London to persuade him not to return.”

Elizabeth did not go on. She knew it was painful. But their mother never stopped talking about it.

Mr. Bennet treated the matter lightly. “So, Lizzy,” he said, “your sister is disappointed in love, I hear. But she mustn’t sorry. It makes a girl interesting to her friends. Perhaps you could arrange for the same to happen to you. There are enough officers in town to disappoint every girl in the country. Wickham could be your man. He would disappoint you admirably.”

In fact, Wickham tried to make Jane feel better. Everything he had told Elizabeth about Darcy before, he now told to the others. It was his opinion that Darcy was the real cause of Jane’s disappointment. Help also came from Mrs. Bennet’s brother and his wife who arrived as usual to spend Christmas with them. Mr. Gardiner, the London merchant, was an educated man, quite different from his sister. His wife, too, was a sensible woman who had always been close to Jane and Elizabeth. After describing the latest London fashions, she had to listen to all their troubles.

“I don’t blame Jane,” said Mrs. Bennet, “for she would have got Mr. Bingley if she could. But Lizzy! It makes me mad to think she might have been Mrs. Collins by now. The result is that the Lucas’s, who always think of themselves before anybody else, will now have a daughter married before me. But I’m very glad to hear what you say about long sleeves.”

Later, alone with Elizabeth, Mrs. Gardiner said: “I’m sorry for Jane, but these things do happen. Poor girl, she’s easily hurt. Do you think it would help her to come back with us and stay in London for a while? However, she mustn’t think she’s likely to see this young man. We live in a very different part of town, and we don’t know the same people.”

“So much the better,” said Elizabeth, even though she could not think that Bingley’s love was dead.

Careful. I've nothing to say against Mr. Wickham, who seems an interesting young man. And if he had money, I don't think you could do better. But two people without money would not make a good marriage."

"My dear Aunt, you're being very serious."

"Yes, and I hope you'll be serious too."

"Well, then, have no fear. At present I'm not in love with him. But he is by far the most attractive man I've ever met. And where there's love, you know, young people are rarely held back by lack of money. How can I promise to be wiser than the rest? But, yes, I'll be careful."

Soon after Jane and the Gardiners departed for London, Charlotte and Mr. Collins were married. Before she left, Charlotte asked Elizabeth to come and stay with her in the spring. Elizabeth did not refuse, but she did not expect pleasure from a stay with Mr. Collins.

Letters came from Jane in London. She had called on Caroline Bingley. But it was four weeks before Miss Bingley called on her. The visit was short, and the visitor's manner made it clear that their friendship would not be continued. Even Jane could no longer avoid seeing Miss Bingley's true character. Jane's unhappiness was plain, and Elizabeth was worried.

Meanwhile, Wickham's interest in Elizabeth had become less. He now admired another girl. The reason for his admiration was the £ 10000 that had just come to her from her grandfather. But Elizabeth refused to be upset by this. She knew he would have chosen *her* if she had had £ 10000. It was natural for a young man like him to marry money and obtain independence, she said. She did not stop to think how different her opinion of Charlotte in the same situation had been.

March came, and the visit to Hunsford was talked of again. By then Elizabeth felt quite ready to see Charlotte again, even though Sir William and Maria, Charlotte's sister, would also be going. She would have to listen to their empty conversation in the carriage. But they would spend a night in London at her uncle's, and so she would see Jane.

Jane seemed pleased to see them, although their aunt said that she was often very unhappy. Mrs. Gardiner also found time to speak to Elizabeth about Wickham.

“Take care, Lizzy,” said her aunt. “That sounds like disappointment.” But seeing that her niece was upset, she said that Mr. Gardiner was planning a trip to the Lakes in the summer. Would she like to join them? She accepted with delight. To see the Lakes had for long been the dream of her life.

Next day Hunsford appeared just as it had been described. Mr. Collins immediately took them on a tour of the house. As he spoke, Elizabeth felt he was directing his remarks particularly at her. Perhaps he wished her to feel what she lost refusing him. At dinner, Rosings was the main subject of his talk. “On Sunday you’ll have the honor of seeing Lady Catherine at church,” he said. “I needn’t say that you’ll be delighted with her manners. She behaves quite charmingly to my dear Charlotte.”

Next morning Elizabeth was in her room when she heard Maria calling excitedly outside the door. “Oh, my dear Eliza, do come to the window! There’s such a sight to be seen.”

She followed her and saw two ladies in the light carriage talking to the Collinses at the garden gate.

“Is that all?” cried Elizabeth. “I expected at least that the pigs had got into the garden. Who are they?”

“Why,” said Maria, “it must be Miss de Bourgh and Mrs. Jenkinson who looks after her. Just look at her. I didn’t expect her to be so thing and pale.”

“She’s very rude to keep Charlotte out in this cold wind. Why doesn’t she come in?”

“Oh, Charlotte says she hardly ever does. It’s a great honor when she comes in,” said Maria.

Elizabeth began to think about this unhealthy girl with her bad-tempered look. Yes, she would make the perfect wife for Mr. Darcy.

At last the carriage moved on, and Mr. Collins came in, rubbing his hands delightedly. “We’re all invited to dinner tomorrow,” he said. “Who could have expected such attention as this so soon after your arrival? This is true de Bourgh politeness.”

clothes between the different ranks of society.” Even when the ladies had all gone to their rooms, he came several times to their doors telling them to hurry. Lady Catherine did not like to be kept waiting. The result was that Maria arrived at the great house in a state of terror, and even her father felt nervous.

They passed through the entrance hall, where Mr. Collins unnecessarily pointed out the high ceiling and several large statues. They then followed the servants through a smaller room to an enormous sitting room, where Lady de Bourgh, her daughter and Mrs. Jenkinson were sitting.

Their hostess was a tall, large woman with a face of strong character. She did little to make their visitors feel at home or to forget their lower place in society. She spoke as someone who knew she was right. And every remark showed a strong belief in her own importance. Wickham’s description had been just right. Her daughter was quite different. She seemed without character. She spoke little, and when she did, had nothing interesting to say.

Dinner was very grand with all the servants and silver plates that Mr. Collins had promised. He sat at the end of the table opposite Lady Catherine, and loudly praised every dish as soon as it appeared. Elizabeth wondered how Lady Catherine could bear so much praise. But this was something she never got tired of. There was little real conversation. Mrs. Jenkinson spent all her time trying to make Miss de Bourgh eat, Maria was still too frightened to speak, and Sir William only repeated Mr. Collins’s praises.

When the ladies left the gentlemen and went back to the sitting room, there was nothing to do but listen to Lady Catherine talk. This she did without stopping, giving her opinions and advice about everything. At last she turned her attention to Elizabeth. How many sisters did she have? How old are they? Were they likely to get married? Were they good-looking? Where had they been educated? What carriage did their father keep? Elizabeth felt the impoliteness of her questions, but answered without showing her feelings.

Lady Catherine was not at all satisfied with the education of the Bennet girls. “No teacher? How was that possible? Four daughters brought up at

how many families I have helped in this way. I've placed four nieces of Mrs. Jenkinson in good families. Mr. Collins, did I tell you Lady Metcalf called yesterday to thank me? She finds Miss Pope a treasure. 'Lady Catherine,' she said, 'you've given me a treasure.'

When the gentlemen joined the ladies again, the company sat down to play cards. At Elizabeth's table little was said. But at the other table their hostess was again talking most of the time – mainly about the other player's mistakes. Mr. Collins was talking for the rest of the time – agreeing with Lady Catherine, thanking her for every point he won, and apologizing if he won too many. Sir William still said little. He was too busy storing his mind with things to remember about life at Rosings, so he could tell his family. When the de Bourghs were tired of playing cards, a carriage was ordered, and their guests were sent away.

In the carriage Elizabeth was asked by Mr. Collins about their evening. For Charlotte's sake she tried to make it appear more enjoyable than it had really been. But even this did not satisfy him, and he continued to talk about Lady Catherine's politeness until bedtime.

Sir William left after a week, and the Collinses and their remaining guests settled down to the quiet country life of Hunsford. Mr. Collins spent much of his time gardening, and when Miss de Bourgh drove by, he would call out excitedly to the others.

Sometimes Lady Catherine herself called. During these visits she would ask what they were doing, advise them to do it differently, try to rearrange the furniture or scold the maid. Rosings gave Elizabeth little pleasure, but she found life otherwise quite pleasant.

Just before Easter she learnt that Lady Catherine was expecting guests – her nephews, Mr. Darcy and a Colonel Fitzwilliam. It would be interesting to see Darcy with Miss de Bourgh. It would show if Wickham was right about the plan for them to marry. The visitors' arrival was reported by Mr. Collins, who had spent all morning walking in the lane in order to bow to their carriage when it appeared. The next day he hurried off to Rosings, eager to show his respect.

An hour later Charlotte looked out of the window and was astonished

did ask Elizabeth about her family. In answering she mentioned that her sister was in London, and asked if he had seen her. She noticed that he had looked a little confused as he said he had not.

Two days later they were invited to Rosings. It was noticeable that they were not as welcome as before, when they were the only company; and Lady Catherine talked most of the time to Darcy. Fitzwilliam, though, was glad to see them. Life at Rosings was dull for him. He much preferred to talk to Mrs. Collins's pretty friend. Indeed, they talked with such spirit that at last his aunt turned round.

"What's that you're saying, Fitzwilliam?" she said. "What are you talking of? What are you telling Miss Bennet? Let me hear what it is?"

"We are talking of music, Madam," the Colonel said.

"Of music! Then speak louder. It's my greatest delight. I must share in the talk if you are speaking of music. There can be few people who enjoy music more than me. How is Georgiana getting on, Darcy?"

Darcy replied that his sister was making progress.

"Tell her from me, she cannot hope to be good unless she practices a great deal. I've told Miss Bennet this several times. She's welcome to come here every day and play on the piano in Mrs. Jenkinson's room. She would be in no one's way in that part of the house."

Darcy looked ashamed at this remark, and his aunt went on to other subjects. But when later Elizabeth began to play, he drew away from the others and sat down behind her.

"You're trying to frighten me, Mr. Darcy, by coming over to hear to my play," she said.

"Frighten you? I think you sometimes enjoy stating opinions that you don't hold," he said.

Elizabeth laughed, and said to Fitzwilliam: "Your cousin means that you shouldn't believe a word I say. How unlucky to meet someone who uncovers my real character here, where I hoped to be believed. But it's unwise of you to do so, Mr. Darcy. I may say things about you that will shock your relatives."

"Tell me more," said Fitzwilliam. "I'd like to know how he behaves among strangers."

“Shall we ask the reason for this?” said Elizabeth.

Fitzwilliam smiled. “We won’t try,” he said.

Elizabeth went on: “If I don’t play the piano well isn’t because I don’t practice enough?”

“All right,” said Darcy, laughing. “I understand. Bring me young ladies and I’ll practice to please you.”

During the evening Elizabeth several times observed Darcy’s manner towards Miss de Bourgh. He gave no sign of any loving interest in her. She began to think that Miss Bingley did not yet need to give up hope.

Next morning Elizabeth was alone in the house writing a letter when the door-bell rang. Thinking it might be Lady Catherine, she put the letter away to avoid her questions. But it was Darcy, alone, who appeared. He seemed as surprised as her, saying he thought the other ladies were also in. He then sat down, and there was a short conversation followed by silence. At last he began to talk about the Collinses, and said how lucky Charlotte was to be so near her family.

“Near?” said Elizabeth. “It’s almost fifty miles.”

“What’s fifty miles of good road? Only half a day’s journey.”

“I still wouldn’t say that Charlotte was settled near her family.”

“I suppose,” continued Darcy, “that you wouldn’t like to live so far from Longbourn.”

Elizabeth could not understand where this conversation was leading, but was saved from making a reply by the return of Charlotte and Maria. Darcy stayed a few more minutes then left.

“What does this mean?” asked Charlotte as soon as he had gone. “My dear Eliza, he must be in love with you, or he would never have called like this.”

But when Elizabeth told her of his silences, she agreed that it was not very likely. However, Darcy continued to make visits, though always with his cousin. Fitzwilliam, attracted by Elizabeth, clearly enjoyed these occasions. But why did Darcy come?

“Yes – if Darcy doesn’t change his mind again. He arranges things just as it pleases him.”

“I don’t know anybody who enjoys pleasing himself more than Mr. Darcy,” said Elizabeth.

“Don’t we all, when we can,” replied Fitzwilliam. “It’s just easier to do it when, like him, one is rich. We who are poor have to do what other people want.” Elizabeth laughed. “Surely the sons of lords need not suffer too much. Seriously, does lack of money really prevent you from doing what you want?”

“Not in small things. In bigger ones younger sons *may* suffer. They cannot always marry who they like.”

“Unless they like rich women – which they often do.”

“Men in my rank of society,” said Fitzwilliam, “can’t often afford to marry without some thought of money.”

“Is this,” thought Elizabeth, “meant for me?” Not wanting him to think she was affected by his remark, she laughed and went on: “But if your cousin needs someone to give orders to, I’m surprised *he* doesn’t marry. He does, though, have a sister. As she is under his care he can tell her to do what he wants.”

“Ah, but you’re wrong,” said Fitzwilliam. “He has to share the care of his sister with me. His father left both Darcy and myself in charge of her.”

“And does she give you much trouble? Young ladies of her age are not always easy to control. If she is a true Darcy she, too, may like to please herself.”

As she spoke, Elizabeth saw Fitzwilliam looking at her quite seriously. She realized that by accident she had come too close to the truth.

“But I’m sure she’s charming,” she continued. “She seems a great favorite of some ladies I know, Mrs. Hurst and Miss Bingley.”

“Their brother is a great friend of Darcy.”

“Oh, yes,” said Elizabeth, “Mr. Darcy is a great friend of Mr. Bingley, and takes a good care of him.”

“Why, yes,” said Fitzwilliam, “From something Darcy said, I think he

“That’s quite possible,” replied Fitzwilliam, “But it would make my cousin’s success seem much less.”

Her companion left her at the house with much to think about. Now she knew it was Darcy who had destroyed her sister’s hopes rather than Miss Bingley. Jane herself could not have been the reason for Darcy’s actions. It was his own pride. He could not allow his friend to marry into a family which he looked down on. These thoughts brought on a head-ache. She could not go with her cousins to tea at Rosings.

Alone in the house later that evening, she heard the door-bell rang. To her amazement Darcy walked in. After rather hurriedly asking how she felt, he started walking up and down the room. Then, turning suddenly, he said in a voice that he could hardly control: “I’ve struggled against my feelings, but it’s no use. I have to tell you that I love you.”

Elizabeth’s astonishment was now complete. She could only sit there helplessly while Darcy asked her to marry him. He spoke well, but not in a way that was likely to persuade her. He spoke of his feelings about her family not being equal to his. He said a lot about how he had tried to fight against his love for her. He spoke, too, of his anxiety, but Elizabeth saw no signs of this. He did not seem to expect a refusal.

When he had finished she said: “It’s usual to thank gentlemen who come with an offer of marriage, for it’s a great honor to a lady. But in this case I don’t think I can. I’ve never asked for your love, and you don’t really want to give it to me. I’m sorry to cause unhappiness to anyone, and I can only hope that yours will not last long.”

Darcy leaned back against the fire-place. His face was pale with anger. For some moments he could not speak. At last he said: “Is that your only reply? Or am I not allowed to know why you refuse me?”

“I might equally well ask,” said Elizabeth, “why you chose to insult me by saying that your love me against your will. But I have other reasons. You know I have. Even if I *had* loved you, do you think I would have accepted the man who ruined my sister’s happiness? You know you separated her from Mr Bingley.”

She paused to see the effect of her words, but he showed no signs of

calmly than before.

“Anyone who knows about his misfortunes can’t help taking an interest in him.”

“His misfortunes!” said Darcy with a bitter laugh. “Oh, yes, his misfortunes have been great indeed. And this is your opinion of me. I could have pretended just to love you without saying anything else. But I hate to hide my feelings, and I’m not ashamed of them. Could you expect me to feel pleased with your relations, whose rank in life is so much below my own?”

Elizabeth had to control her anger: “There was no way in which you could have made me accept you. From our first meeting I was struck by you pride, your self-importance, your carelessness about the feelings of others. From the very beginning I was quite sure you were the last man on earth I should want to marry.”

“You’ve said enough,” said Darcy. “I understand your feelings for me, and can only be ashamed of the feelings I have for you.” With those words he left.

Elizabeth cried for half an hour. Her astonishment, however, went on growing. She could not understand how she had affected Darcy in this way. Next day she woke still feeling upset. After breakfast she went for a walk round the edge of the park, not wanting to meet anyone. But as she stopped by the gate Darcy appeared, holding a letter, which he put into her hands. He bowed, and left her, while she opened it then and there with shaking hands and read:

Do not be afraid that I shall repeat the offer I made last night. I neither want to upset you, nor to appear foolish. My hopes are best forgotten. But since you made certain remarks about my actions and character, you must let me answer them.

You accuse me of two things: first, that I separated Mr. Bingley and your sister without any thought of their feelings; secondly, and worse, that I was unjust to Mr. Wickham. I hope when I have explained, you will no longer blame me for either. But if I hurt you again, I can only say that I must be honest.

There were other reasons why I acted as I did. Your family's position in society is one. This did not seem to worry my friend as much as it worried me. But also – it hurts me to say this – I often found the manners of your mother, your younger sisters, and sometimes even your father, hard to accept.

After my friend left for London, I talked with his sisters. Finding that we thought alike, we decided to follow him. There I pointed out the disadvantages of marrying your sister. These did not influence him. But when I told him my opinion of your sister's feelings, he decided not to return to Netherfield.

I do not know what Mr. Wickham has accused me of. So I had better explain that his father was an honest man who served my father well. Because my father had a good opinion of the son, he gave him a gentleman's education, intending him to enter the Church. But I was of the same age, and knew him better. I could see that he was bad from the beginning.

When my father died he left Mr. Wickham £ 1000, and asked me to give him a good position in the Church, as soon as one became free. But Mr. Wickham did not think he was suited to the Church, and I agreed. He suggested I should give him money to study law instead, and I agreed to this, too. He went off to London, where he spent the money on wild living. Then, two years later he came to me, asking for that place in the Church. I refused, and he became insulting. I did not see him again until last summer in Meryton.

There is something else you should know about Mr. Wickham, but this must be a secret. When my father died, he left my sister in the care of Fitzwilliam and myself. About a year ago we took her away from school and settled her in my London house. We employed a certain Mrs. Young to look after her. However, we did not know that this lady had once known Mr. Wickham. He soon became a visitor, and with Mrs. Young's help set out to make my sister fall in love with him. Having known her as a child, it was not too difficult for a man like him to persuade her run away with him. Luckily I found out in time.

Mr. Wickham's sin was, of course, my sister's money. But revenge

reasons for breaking up their friendship made her angry. He showed no regret for anything he had done.

But when he spoke of Wickham, her feelings became confused. She wanted to disbelieve him, but as she reread the letter it became more and more difficult to blame him. True, he gave no proof of his accusation against Wickham, but neither could she prove him wrong. She tried to remember examples of Wickham's good deeds or kind words, but could only remember good manners.

When she read about Darcy's sister, she remembered her conversation with Fitzwilliam. She remembered, too, how Wickham had boasted that he would not be driven away from the Netherfield dance by Darcy. Yet he had allowed this to happen. Also, it was only after Darcy and the Bingleys left Netherfield that Wickham had started to spread his stories widely. As for Darcy, though all agreed that he was proud, only Wickham had ever said he was unjust. Elizabeth began to feel shame. She had always been proud of her judgement of character, and had blamed her sister for only seeing the good. But who had been more blind?

Thinking of Jane made her return to the letter. At least, this part of his explanation could not be believed. But on rereading it she again felt unsure. Charlotte, too, had seen what Darcy described. Jane did not show her feelings openly. As for the remarks about her family, these hurt. But could she deny them?

Thinking these thoughts, she walked for two hours before returning home. There she learnt that Darcy and his cousin had called to say goodbye, but could not stay.

I. Checking Comprehension

1. Choose the right item.

1. Lady Catherine lived at ...
a) Longbourn; b) Rosings; c) Hunsford.

2. Colonel Fitzwilliam was Lady Catherine's ...
a) brother; b) uncle; c) nephew.

though invited at Rosings were ...

- a) as welcome there as before; b) more welcome than before;
- c) less welcome than before.

5. Elizabeth thought that Darcy was proud, self-important and ...

- a) careless; b) clever; c) witty.

6. After Elizabeth re-read Darcy's letter she felt ...

- a) she had been blind; b) unsure; c) Darcy was not writing the truth.

2. Say "true", "false" or "I don't know".

1. Mr. Collins thought that Elizabeth's unwillingness to accept him made her less attractive.
2. There was only one reason for Mr. Collins to get married.
3. Mr. Collins liked the fact that Elizabeth would not listen to other people who know best.
4. Mrs. Bennet accepted the fact that Elizabeth wouldn't marry Mr. Collins with perfect calm.
5. Charlotte was not witty at all.
6. Wickham knew a lot of things about music and literature.
7. Mrs. Gardiner thought Jane could see Mr. Bingley in London.
8. Elizabeth did not want to join the Gardiners in their trip to Lakes.
9. Mr. Collins never spoke of Rosings after Elizabeth arrived at Hunsford.
10. Elizabeth liked Lady Catherine and her daughter very much.

3. Put the sentences in the right order to describe Elizabeth's stay at Hunsford.

1. The travelers spend a night in London at Elizabeth's uncle's.
2. Lady Catherine asks a lot of questions and gives a lot of advice.
3. Both Darcy and Fitzwilliam show a lot of interest in Elizabeth.
4. Darcy brings Elizabeth a letter.
5. Lady Catherine's nephews arrive at Rosings.
6. Mr. Collins takes his guests on a tour about his house.

11. Colonel Fitzwilliam tells Elizabeth some facts about Darcy and his sister.

4. Say who in Part II is characterized in this way:

1. He is too much influenced by his sister and Mr. Darcy.
2. He is a man of thirty, not good-looking but in every way gentleman.
3. She is a woman who speaks as someone who knows she is right.
4. She is a sensible woman who has always been close to Jane and Elizabeth.
5. She is a girl without character, who speaks little, and when she does, has nothing interesting to say.
6. She likes to see a difference in clothes between the different ranks of society.
7. She is a girl who is easily hurt.
8. She is unhealthy girl with a bad-tempered look.
9. She is a tall, large woman with a face of strong character.

5. Answer the following questions.

1. What made Mr. Collins propose to Charlotte? How did the members of the Bennet family accept that news?
2. There were a lot of disappointments in Meryton that season, weren't there? What was Elizabeth upset by?
3. Where did Jane spend the winter? What made her accept Mrs. Gardiner's invitation? Did she manage to see any member of the Bingley family? What was the result?
4. When did Elizabeth go to Hunsford? What were her first impressions of the house, of the host? In what way were they received at Rosings? How did the guests feel during the visit? What was the hostess like? What was her daughter like? What did Lady Catherine prefer to talk about?
5. What kind of life did the Collinses and their guests lead after Sir William's departure? Who came to visit Lady Catherine before Easter? What made Charlotte feel astonished when Mr. Collins came

Darcy's interest in Miss de Bourgh? How often did Fitzwilliam and Darcy visit the Collinses? What in your opinion made their visits so frequent?

7. What did Fitzwilliam tell Elizabeth about Darcy and his sister? about Mr. Bingley? What made Elizabeth stay at Hunsford and not to go to tea at Rosings with her cousin? Who visited her that day?
8. In what way did Mr. Darcy speak of his love for Elizabeth? Did he expect a refusal? Was he angry when he got one? How did Elizabeth explain her refusal to him?
9. How did Elizabeth feel after Darcy had left? Where and when did she meet him later? What did he give to Elizabeth? What were the main points mentioned in the letter? How did Darcy explain the fact that he had separated Mr. Bingley and Jane? What did he write in his letter about Mr. Wickham?
10. What did Elizabeth feel while reading the letter? What were her feelings when she read what Darcy had written about Wickham? What made Elizabeth rather believe Darcy and feel shame? How did Elizabeth's opinion of Darcy's explanation concerning Jane change after she re-read the letter? What did she learn when she returned after two hours' walk?

6. Add more details to these.

1. The next day Mr. Collins asked Elizabeth to marry him.
2. "You have a hard choice: if you refuse Mr. Collins, your mother won't speak to you. If you accept him, I shan't speak to you."
3. Charlotte was kind enough to sit and to listen to Mr. Collins. She had her own reasons for behaving as she did.
4. Elizabeth was upset by Charlotte's marriage.
5. Jane was upset by the events at Netherfield.
6. Help came from Mr. Bennet's brother and his wife who arrived as usual to spend Christmas at Longbourn.
7. Mrs. Gardiner couldn't help noticing how much Mr. Wickham and Elizabeth were together.
8. Meanwhile, Wickham's interest in Elizabeth had become less

1. Elizabeth refused Mr. Collins.
2. Mr. Collins was determined not to return to Hunsford before the day he had planned;
3. Charlotte was eager to sit and listen to Mr Collins whenever he wanted to talk to her;
4. Elizabeth decided to visit Hunsford;
5. Elizabeth dislike Lady Catherine and her daughter;
6. Mr. Darcy and his relative visited Hunsford so often;
7. Elizabeth refused Mr. Darcy;
8. Elizabeth began to have doubts of Mr. Wickham;
9. Elizabeth began to change her opinion of Mr. Darcy.

2. *Say:*

1. what happened in Longbourn which made Mrs Bennet disappointed;
2. what happened to Mr Collins after Elizabeth had refused him;
3. how Mr Bennet treated the matter of the Bingley's not coming back that year;
4. who tried to help Jane to overcome her disappointment in love and how they did it;
5. how Elizabeth accepted the fact that Wickham's interest in her had become less;
6. what struck Elizabeth in Lady Catherine;
7. what was unusual in Darcy's remarks about Charlotte when he had a talk with Elizabeth in Hunsford;
8. what made Darcy write to Elizabeth and what the letter was about.

3. *Comment on the following and if possible give your own opinion.*

1. "Let's hope for better things, my dear," he said. "Perhaps you may die before me."
2. All the next day Mr. Collins could talk of nothing but Rosings ... The result was that Maria arrived at the great house in a state of terror, and even her father felt nervous.
3. Mr. Darcy could not allow his friend to marry into a family which he looked down on.

4. Give a talk on one of these topics.

1. Mr. Collins's idea of getting married.
2. Charlotte's reasons of being kind to Mr. Collins.
3. Disappointments in the Bennet family.
4. A visit to Hunsford.
5. Lady Catherine's manner of treating people: a) her equals, people she was interested in; b) her unequal;
6. Darcy's pride.
7. Darcy's letter to Elizabeth.

5. Compare these characters:

1. Mr. Darcy and Colonel Fitzwilliam;
2. Elizabeth and Charlotte;
3. Lady Catherine and her daughter.

6. Act out the talks between:

1. Mr. Collins and Elizabeth while he was proposing (ch. 7);
2. Mr. Collins and Charlotte (ch. 7);
3. Jane and Elizabeth discussing Mr. Bingley's decision not to return (ch. 8);
4. Elizabeth and Mrs. Gardiner discussing the state of things at Longbourn (ch. 8);
5. Maria and Elizabeth (ch. 8);
6. Lady Catherine and Elizabeth at Rosings (ch. 9);
7. Elizabeth and Darcy while he was proposing Elizabeth (ch. 10);
8. Darcy, Fitzwilliam, Elizabeth and Lady Catherine during one of the evenings at Rosings (ch. 10).

Part III

Chapter 11
Lydia's wish

mother and daughter alike. Elizabeth was wondering. Suppose she had accepted Darcy's offer. How would Lady Catherine de Bourgh received the news? Not with great joy, she thought.

She had re-read his letter till she knew every word. When she studied the expression of his thoughts, she was angry with him. When she studied the thoughts themselves, she was angry with herself. For he was often right. Her younger sisters did behave badly. Her father would not control them, and her mother did not even see the need. They were uneducated, lazy and only interested in their appearance.

At last came the end of their stay at Hunsford. Lady Catherine wished them a good journey and invited them back to stay with the Collinses next year. Miss de Bourgh held out a pale, thin hand for them to shake.

"It seems only a few days since we arrived," said Maria, as their carriage drove off next morning. "Yet how many things have happened!"

"A good many, indeed," replied Elizabeth sighing.

"We've dined nine times at Rosings, besides having tea three times. What a lot I'll have to tell!"

"And I," thought Elizabeth, "what a lot to hide!"

Two days later Elizabeth, Maria and Jane left London. As they entered the town where Mr. Bennet's carriage was waiting for them, they saw Lydia and Catherine looking out of the window of an inn. The sisters proudly showed them a table set out with a cold lunch. "This is a surprise," said Catherine. "We're paying for you all."

"But you must lend us the money," added Lydia, "as we've spent ours on these hats. They're not very nice, but it won't matter much what we wear this summer since the regiment is leaving in two weeks for Brighton, and I do so want Papa to take us there for the summer. It would probably hardly cost anything."

"We have some other news for you," Lydia went on. "About a person we all like – dear Wickham. There's no danger of his marrying that girl after all. She's gone to her uncle's in Liverpool. Wickham is safe."

"I'm sure he never cared three pence for her," said Catherine, "the nasty, snotty little creature."

everything he had said about Wickham, but felt she could not mention Bingley. It would be more that Jane could bear.

Even Mrs. Bennet never mentioned Bingley to Jane. "Well, Lizzy," she said, "what's your opinion of this sad business of Jane's? For my part I'm determined never to speak of it again to anybody. I told my sister Philips so the other day. He's a very unkind young man, and I don't suppose there's the least chance of getting him now."

"I don't believe he'll ever come again."

"Well, it's for him to choose. Nobody wants him to come. The only good thing is that Jane may die of a broken heart, and then he'll be sorry."

But Jane's sorrows were soon equaled by those of Lydia and Catherine. For these were the last days of regiment's stay in Meryton.

"What's to become of us! What are we to do!" they exclaimed. "How can you go about smiling, Lizzy?"

Their loving mother shared their sorrows. She remembered how she had suffered twenty-five years before. "I'm sure I cried for two whole days when Colonel Miller's regiment went away."

"If only we could go to Brighton!" cried Catherine.

"If only!" said Lydia. "But Papa is so cruel."

But there was a sudden end to Lydia's sorrows. Mrs. Forster, the young, recently married wife of the regiment's colonel, asked her to stay in Brighton with her. She had always found Lydia good company. Lydia's joy, her mother's delight and Catherine's jealousy cannot be described. As for Elizabeth, she felt her father ought to stop the plan. Brighton was not safe for a wild girl like Lydia, and Mrs. Forster was not the sort of woman who could protect her. But Mr. Bennet only said: "Lydia will never be happy until she's made a fool of herself somewhere. Isn't it better that she should do it in Brighton than in Meryton?"

"But what Lydia does, Catherine imitates. Don't you see how their behavior harms Jane and myself?"

"Whoever knows you and Jane," said Mr. Bennet, "cannot think badly of you for having two silly sisters. We'll have no peace if Lydia doesn't go to Brighton, so let her go. Colonel Forster is a sensible man and will keep her out of real trouble. Besides, at Brighton the officers will have better

“Very different – but I think Mr. Darcy improves.”

“You mean his manners. I dare not hope that his true character has improved,” said Wickham.

“Oh, no,” said Elizabeth, “his true character, I believe, is very much unchanged.” Wickham looked doubtful.

She added: “I mean that the more one knows him, the better one understands him.” Wickham by now looked definitely unhappy. He said very little more to Elizabeth that evening.

After Lydia and the regiment went, life became much duller. There were fewer parties. Catherine remained dissatisfied, and Jane was still unhappy. Elizabeth thought more and more about her trip to the Lakes. However, two weeks before they were due to depart a letter arrived. Mr. Gardiner had a lot of business. There would not be enough time to go to the Lakes, so they decided to go to Derbyshire. This was a disappointment. But Derbyshire was very beautiful. It also had many fine houses – including Pemberley. But that, of course, was not a house she cared to see.

Chapter 12

Derbyshire

In August, the Gardiners collected Elizabeth and drove on to Derbyshire, where they spent several very happy weeks. They traveled about visiting great houses, beautiful rivers and attractive old towns.

One evening, while planning the next day’s journey at their inn, Mrs. Gardiner remarked that Pemberley was not far away. “Wouldn’t you like to see a house you’ve heard so much about?” she asked. “They say the grounds are delightful.” Elizabeth did not say yes or no. She would quite like to go, but dared not risk seeing Darcy. Next morning she talked to the maid and learnt that he was not at present living there. So she agreed to go.

They entered the park, and after driving for some time through beautiful woods, came out on to higher ground. There, across the valley, on the far side of a lake, was the great house. It would be something

day! Meanwhile they had stopped in front of some family pictures.

“And that,” said the woman, “is my master.”

“It’s a very fine picture,” said Mr. Gardiner. “But, Lizzy, you can tell us whether it’s like him or not.”

The housekeeper’s respect for Elizabeth increased.

“Does the young lady know Mr. Darcy?” she asked.

“A little,” Elizabeth said.

The housekeeper needed no more encouragement to talk about her master, and how she wished he would spend more time at Pemberley. “If only he would get married! But I don’t know who’s good enough for him.” Mrs. Gardiner smiled, but the housekeeper shook her head.

“I say no more than the truth, and anybody who knows him will say the same. I’ve never heard an angry word from him, and I’ve known him since he was four.” This was amazing. But she had more to say: about his gifts to the poor, his fairness to the farmers who rented his land and his kindness to his sister. “This account of him is quite different from that of your friend,” whispered Mrs. Gardiner.

When they had seen the house, they were handed over to a gardener who was to show them the grounds. As they waited away, Elizabeth stopped to admire the front of the house. Then, from round a corner suddenly appeared its owner. It was impossible to avoid him. Their eyes met, and they stood there, completely still. Darcy was the first to move. He came forward and spoke – not with perfect control, but with perfect politeness. She hardly dared lift her eyes to his face. She was so ashamed at being found there. At last Darcy seemed to have nothing else to say, and after a moment’s silence made his excuses and walked away.

The Gardiners had recognized Darcy from his picture, and expressed their admiration. But Elizabeth was not listening. Why had she come here? It was the worst thing in the world. Did it look as if she was throwing herself on him? He must have only just arrived. If only they had left five minutes earlier!

As they walked by the lake her thoughts were still of Darcy. How his behavior had changed! No longer his old stiff manners, but true politeness. She did not understand. What was now passing through his mind? In spite

When Mrs. Gardiner felt tired and took her husband's arm, Darcy and Elizabeth walked on ahead. She could not wait to explain that she had thought he was away. He explained that, having so many guests to prepare for, he had thought it better to return a day earlier. Among these guests were Bingley and his sisters. He also asked if he could introduce his sister to her. She refused his invitation to enter the house, and they stood talking until the others appeared. There was much that she wanted to say, but so many subjects seemed forbidden.

"I was surprised," said Mrs. Gardiner, as they drove away. "He has perfect manners. I wonder how you came to think him so unpleasant?"

Elizabeth had agreed that Darcy should bring his sister to call on the day after she arrived. She was surprised, therefore, to see their carriage appear outside the inn the very next morning. He could not even wait a day. Her aunt and uncle were amazed. They could no longer explain it in any other way. Mr. Darcy must be in love with their niece.

When Miss Darcy arrived, Elizabeth was surprised to see that she was even less at ease than herself. Georgiana Darcy was tall, quite pretty, not at all proud, but clearly unused to company. She could only with difficulty be made to talk. Bingley also came, as friendly as before. His behavior to Georgiana did not suggest that his sister's hopes of a marriage were likely to come true. This did not prove that he still had some feeling for Jane. But he did, when the others were talking among themselves, ask how she was in a serious voice.

After the visit she did not have to fear curious questions from her uncle and aunt. Could she even have answered them? How did she feel about Darcy? She had stopped hating him long ago. She was ashamed of having hated him. More than that she did not know.

That evening Mrs. Gardiner remarked that Miss Darcy's call should be returned the next day. Only one thing made Elizabeth uncomfortable. Caroline Bingley would be here. She would not welcome her at Pemberley.

At Pemberley next morning conversation was not easy. Georgiana was

had understood the unspoken name, and was upset. Miss Bingley knew nothing of Wickham's connection with Georgiana.

After Elizabeth and her aunt had gone, she said more. "It's amazing that she was thought to be beauty in Meryton," she said to Darcy. "I believe even you thought her pretty once."

"Yes," said Darcy, after remaining silent through several similar remarks, "and now I think she is the most attractive woman I have ever met."

Meanwhile, Elizabeth returned to the inn and found a letter from Jane. It contained the most worrying news. Colonel Forster had written to say that Lydia had run away – with Wickham. It was first thought that they had gone to Scotland to get married. But Colonel Forster, after trying to follow their movements, thought they were still in London. Mr. Bennet had gone to London and needed Mr. Gardiner's help. Elizabeth jumped up and ran to the door to find her uncle. But just as she reached it, a servant opened it and Darcy appeared.

"Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "What's the matter?"

She sent the servant to fetch her uncle and burst into tears. It was some minutes before she recovered enough to tell him what had happened.

"I might have prevented it," she said. "If only I'd told my family what I knew about his character!"

Darcy hardly seemed to hear. He walked about deep in thought until Mr Gardiner appeared, then he left. Elizabeth wept again. Lydia had destroyed her hopes of Darcy's love and respect for ever.

Chapter 13

A wedding

They traveled fast, reaching Longbourn by dinner-time the next day. Mrs. Bennet received them as might be expected: with tears, wild attacks against Wickham, but mostly with complaints about her own sufferings. Mr. Gardiner told her not to get alarmed. He would go straight to London, he said, and talk to Mr. Bennet.

The Gardiners left next morning, and from then the Bennets could only wait for news. Mrs. Philips called sometimes “to give them comfort”, as she said. But since she never came without fresh stories of Wickham’s unpaid debts, she always left them feeling worse.

A letter from Mr. Collins contained the same kind of comfort. Lydia, he kindly pointed out, would be better dead than living in her present state. However, her parents must not think themselves wholly to blame, for Lydia must have been bad by nature. He said he pitied them. Lady Catherine, to whom he had told the news, also pitied them. “She agreed with me that this fault in one daughter will harm the chances in marriage of the others. How lucky I am to have escaped a closer connection with your family last November!”

Mr. Bennet finally returned, but with no news of the missing pair. His wife was not too pleased. “What! Have you come without Lydia?” she cried. “Who is now to fight Wickham and make him marry her?”

Then two days later came another letter from Mr. Gardiner with better news. Lydia and Wickham had been found. “They are not married,” he wrote, “but if you do what I have promised for you, they will be. All you have to do is to agree to pay Lydia £ 100 a year.” He went on to say that Wickham’s situation was not as bad as they had believed. When all his debts had been paid there would be enough money left to buy him a place in another regiment at present in the North of England. He advised Mr. Bennet to stay at Longbourn. Lydia would be married from his house in London.

“So you’ll agree to this,” said Elizabeth.

“I must,” her father said. “There are only two things I want to know: first, how much money your uncle has paid Wickham, and secondly, how I am ever going to repay your uncle.”

“Money!” cried Jane, “whatever do you mean?”

“I mean that no man of any sense would marry Lydia for £ 100 a year. Wickham’s fool if he takes her for a penny less than £ 10000. I can’t repay half that.”

“I can’t believe our uncle can spare so much money,” said Elizabeth. “He has children of his own.”

neighborhood. It would have been more interesting if Lydia had *not* got married. But even as it was, there was plenty for all the old ladies to talk about. Mrs. Bennet was now thinking of a house for Lydia. "Haye Park might do, if only the Gouldings would leave, or the great house at Stoke, if the sitting room was not so small. But Ashworth is too far off."

Mr. Bennet let her run on until the servants had left the room, then said: "Before you choose a house for your daughter, Mrs. Bennet, let this be understood. There is one house in this neighbourhood where they will not be received, and that is Longbourn."

That was Mrs. Bennet's first shock. The second was when he told he would not give a penny for new clothes for Lydia. She could not understand. Not to have new clothes for a wedding was more shameful than running away and living with Wickham for two weeks.

The wedding day arrived. In spite of his hard words, Mr. Bennet had been persuaded by Jane to let the Wickhams come on to Longbourn from London, and stay a few days before going north to join his regiment. Their reception at Longbourn was mixed. Mr. Bennet was very cool, while his wife was full of joy. As for Lydia, she sowed no shame for the trouble she had caused. All she could think of was her new position of a married woman: showing off her ring to the servants, and claiming a more important seat at the dining-table. Wickham, too, was perfectly at his ease.

While the Wickhams stayed Elizabeth tried to avoid them as much as possible. Perhaps that was why she failed to hear Lydia's description of her wedding. But her sister could not bear that anyone should not hear her story, and finding Elizabeth alone one day, told her everything. Elizabeth sat there half listening, until Lydia said something very interesting.

"My uncle was so late coming to take us to the church," she said, "that I got quite frightened that he wouldn't come at all. But then I thought Mr. Darcy could always give me away ..."

"Mr. Darcy!" cried Elizabeth. "Was he there, then?"

"Why yes – with Wickham, you know. But I quite forgot. That was a secret, and I promised not to say."

"If it was a secret you need say no more," said Elizabeth, but she could not leave Darcy's presence at the wedding unexplained. She wrote to her

end he had to accept Darcy's conditions. These were that he would pay Wickham's debts and buy him a place in another regiment, if Wickham married Lydia.

Darcy had then told Mr. Gardiner what he had arranged. He said he did not want it to be known that he had given money to Wickham. He wanted it to appear that Mr. Gardiner had done so. Mr. Gardiner had not liked this arrangement, but Darcy had forced him to agree.

Elizabeth sighed. What did Darcy mean by all this: to take this trouble for a girl like Lydia; to meet and discuss with the man he most wished to avoid? How much she wished for his respect! But it was too late now.

Chapter 14

A return

The departure of Lydia was a sad event for Mrs. Bennet. But she was not to be unhappy for long. Good news was on the way. The housekeeper at Netherfield had received orders to prepare the house for his master. While her mother excitedly began to plan dinners, Jane felt only anxiety and alarm. She did not dare to hope and risk another disappointment.

"As soon as Mr. Bingley arrives at Netherfield," said Mrs. Bennet to her husband, "you *must* call on him."

"You made me call on him last year, promising he would marry one of my daughters. But it all ended in nothing. I shan't waste my time again," he replied.

She then said that she would ask him to dinner whether Mr. Bennet called or not. However, before she could do this, and only two days after his arrival at Netherfield, Bingley was seen riding towards the house – but not alone. Catherine shouted from the window:

"There is a gentleman with him, Mama. It's that man who used to be with him before – that tall, proud man."

"Goodness!" said her mother. "Mr. Darcy – so it is! Well, any friend of Mr. Bingley is welcome here, but I must say that I hate the sight of him."

She received Bingley with great friendliness. Too much friendliness, Elizabeth felt, compared with the cold politeness of her welcome to Darcy.

While Bingley gave his good wishes, Elizabeth did not dare lift his eyes to see how Darcy looked.

“He husband has now joined another regiment,” Mrs. Bennet went on. “It shows he has *some* friends.”

As this was directed at Darcy, Elizabeth’s misery and shame increased. In fact this visit, and a dinner the following night for the two gentlemen, gave her no joy at all. Darcy hardly said anything, and was not as natural and at his ease as he had been at Pemberley.

“If he comes here only to be silent,” she complained to Jane, “why does he come at all?”

Meanwhile, Mrs. Bennet thought only of trying to leave Jane and Bingley alone together. After Mr. Bennet had gone off as usual to his library, she would sit looking hard at her other daughters as a sign to make them leave the room. But Catherine often did not understand these signs and would ask her mother what she wanted, while Elizabeth took no notice of them.

In any case Bingley refused to be hurried. He wanted to choose his own time and place. But in the end he did indeed ask Jane to be his wife. Jane’s feelings do not need to be described. As for her mother, Lydia and Wickham were quite forgotten. Jane was now her favorite child. Mr. Bennet, too, was in his own way delighted.

“I’m sure you’ll be very happy,” he said. “Each of you thinks so much of the feelings of the other that you’ll never agree to anything. You’re so kind-hearted that every servant will cheat you, and so ready to give that you’ll never have enough money.”

Chapter 15

An unexpected visit

One morning, a week after Bingley asked Jane to marry him, a large carriage drawn by four horses stopped outside the house. It was too grand for any of the neighbors. So the ladies were prepared to be surprised when the door opened and their visitor was shown in. It was Lady Catherine de Bourch.

“I should be glad to take a walk in your grounds, if you would give me the favor of your company.”

“Go, my dear,” cried Mrs. Bennet, “and show Lady Catherine everything. I’m sure she’ll enjoy the rose garden.”

It soon became clear, however, that enjoyment was not the purpose of Lady Catherine’s visit. “I’m quite sure you know the reason for my visit here,” she said.

“Why, no,” said Elizabeth in surprise.

“Miss Bennet, although you may choose to be insincere, I do not. Let me come to the point. A most alarming report has come to my ears. I hear that you have hopes of marrying my nephew, Mr. Darcy. This cannot, of course, be true.”

“If you know this story to be untrue, why did you come so far to tell it to me?” Elizabeth asked.

“To make sure that the report is publicly denied.”

“But by coming here you’re likely to make the report more widely believed – if such a report exists.”

“Miss Bennet, I must have an answer. Has my nephew made you an offer of marriage or not?”

“If he has,” said Elizabeth, “I shan’t tell you.”

“Understand this. Such a marriage can never take place. Mr. Darcy is to marry my daughter.”

“If that is so, you need have no fear that he would ask to marry me,” said Elizabeth.

Lady Catherine paused a moment, then replied: “The arrangement between them is of a special kind. They were intended for each other from childhood. It was my wish, and his mother’s. These wishes are not to be upset by a young woman like you. So tell me, is there, or is there not, an agreement between you?”

“No.”

Lady Catherine looked more pleased. “And do you promise never to enter into such an agreement?”

“I shall make no such promise,” said Elizabeth.

Lady Catherine then turned her full anger on her. She raged on about

Next morning the affair came up again when her father approached with a letter in his hand. "I'd like you to read this," he said. "It amuses me a great deal. I didn't know I had two daughters about to marry."

Elizabeth's face reddened. Could it be from Darcy? Surely he would not write to her father before speaking to her.

"You'll be surprised when you hear of your admirer," her father went on. "The letter is from Mr. Collins. I shan't waste time on his good wishes to Jane and Mr. Bingley, but listen to this: 'Your daughter Elizabeth may not long remain unmarried. The young gentleman who admires her has very advantage as a husband – and yet, let me warn my cousin. We believe that his aunt, Lady Catherine does not look on this affair with a friendly eye.'"

"So, my dear," said Mr. Bennet. "Mr. Darcy is your man. Could there be anyone less likely? Mr. Darcy, who never looks at any woman except to find a fault – who probably never looked at you at all. Really, I wouldn't give up Mr Collins's letters for anything."

He laughed. But Elizabeth felt more like crying. Her father was wrong to think that Darcy had so little interest in her. But was he so wrong? If he had still been interested he would have spoken by now.

Bingley was now a daily visitor to Longbourn, where he spent the mornings with Jane. But one day, a week after Lady Catherine's visit, two horsemen appeared. "Why!" cried Mrs. Bennet. "Here's that unpleasant Mr Darcy again with dear Bingley. I'm sorry, Lizzy, but I think you'll have to talk to him today."

It seemed a good idea for all of four of them to go for a walk. So they set off two by two along the lane. Elizabeth and Darcy went faster than Jane and Bingley, and quite soon they were some way ahead.

This was the first time since Pemberley that they had been along together, and Elizabeth could not wait to say what she knew of Darcy's part in Lydia's marriage. But when she tried to express her family's thanks, he stopped her. "Don't talk of your family," he said. "Whatever I did, I did for you alone."

great deal. So Darcy did not have to be silent. Indeed, far from being silent he went on to express his feelings to her very fully. These would not have pleased his aunt, but they pleased Elizabeth more than anything had ever pleased her before. He also explained why he had decided to risk a second refusal. On her way through London his aunt had called and tried to make him promise not to marry her. It was this which had encouraged him to return.

They had walked for two hours without knowing where they had been. Then as soon as they returned, Darcy went straight to see Mr. Bennet. It was some time before he reappeared and asked Elizabeth to go to her father. Mr. Bennet looked serious. "Lizzy," he said, "are you determined to accept this man? I always understood that you hated him."

It was not easy to persuade him that her feelings *had* changed, and that it was Darcy she loved, not Pemberley or £ 10000 a year. She also told him about the part Darcy had played in Lydia's marriage. "If it had been your uncle's doing," he said, "I should have had to pay the money back. But these violent lovers always want their own way. I'll offer to pay him tomorrow, but I know he'll talk wildly about how much he loves you, and that will be the end of it."

When Mrs. Bennet heard the news she was for a time quite unable to say anything. She got up, sat down again and when she spoke could only say: "Goodness me! Lord bless me! Dear me! Who would have thought it? And is it really true? Oh my sweetest Lizzy! How rich you will be! What jewels, what carriages you'll have! Jane's is nothing to it – nothing at all! Such a charming man! Oh Lord!"

What is left to say? Elizabeth and Jane were married, and Bingley bought a property in Derbyshire close enough to Pemberley for the sisters to visit. Catherine, warned by the example of Lydia, improved. Lydia's story was less happy. Never settled, always short of money, she depended on help from her sisters. Wickham never gave up hope that Darcy would some day make his fortune for him. At the same time he continued to blame him for all his troubles.

The letter that Lady Catherine sent to Darcy on his marriage was so

I. Checking Comprehension

1. Put the sentences in the right order to describe Elizabeth's visit to Pemberley.

1. Elizabeth agreed to visit Pemberley as she knew Darcy was not at present living there.
2. The housekeeper showed them Pemberley.
3. Elizabeth refused Darcy's invitation to enter the house.
4. Then, from round the corner suddenly appeared Mr. Darcy.
5. Darcy asked Elizabeth to introduce him to her friends.
6. The gardener was to show them the grounds.
7. In August, the Gardiners and Elizabeth drove on to Derbyshire.
8. At the end of the lake Elizabeth and the Gardiners saw Darcy approaching them again.

2. Say "true", "false" or "I don't know" (chapter 12).

1. Elizabeth's younger sisters were uneducated, lazy and only interested in their appearance.
2. Lydia and Catherine spent 40 pounds on their hats.
3. Jane was glad that Elizabeth had refused Mr Darcy.
4. The Gardiners did not have enough time to go to the lakes.
5. Pemberley stood on the far side of the lake.
6. The lake was not deep.
7. Elizabeth wanted to be mistress of Pemberley very much.
8. The Gardiners did not like Mr Darcy.
9. Darcy asked if he could bring his sister to call on Elizabeth.
10. Georgiana Darcy was clearly unused to company.
11. Going to Pemberley to turn the call Elizabeth did not feel as ease.
12. Elizabeth returned to the inn late as might.

3. Say who in Part III is characterized in this way:

1. a person who gave gifts to the poor and showed fairness to the farmers;
2. a pleasant elderly woman;

- company;
8. a tall proud gentleman to whom Mrs Bennet offered only cold politeness;
 9. “You are so kind-hearted that every servant will cheat you, and so ready to give that you’ll never have enough money.”
 10. a man who never looks at any woman except to find fault;
 11. a woman never settled, always short of money, depended on help from her sisters.

4. Answer the questions.

1. Who met Elizabeth in London?
2. What did Elizabeth tell Jane about her visit to Derbyshire?
3. What helped Lydia to get to Brighton?
4. What made Wickham look alarmed during his conversation with Elizabeth when she spoke about her stay at Hunsford?
5. How were Mr. Gardiner’s plans for the summer changed? What was Elizabeth’s reaction to that change?
6. What made Elizabeth agree to visit Pemberley?
7. How did the housekeeper’s opinion of Mr. Darcy differ from Elizabeth’s idea of him?
8. What impression did Mr. Darcy produce on Elizabeth’s relatives?
9. What happened to Lydia?
10. On what condition did Mr. Darcy agree to marry Lydia?
11. What was the reaction of people to Lydia’s wedding?
12. In what way did Mrs. Bennet receive Mr. Bingley and Mr. Darcy?
13. What made Lady de Bourgh visit the Bennets? How long did she stay? Did she leave disappointed?
14. How did the Bennet sisters settle after their marriages?

II. Discussing the Text

1. Say why in Part III:

1. Elizabeth told Jane nothing about Bingley when she came back home;

6. Elizabeth thought that Lydia had destroyed her hopes of Darcy's love and respect for ever;
7. Wickham agreed to marry Lydia;
8. Mrs. Bennet was shocked when her husband informed her of Lydia's future;
9. Darcy had arranged everything about Lydia's marriage;
10. Mrs. Bennet was full of great friendliness towards Mr. Bingley;
11. Mrs. Bennet treated Mr. Darcy with cold politeness;
12. Lady Catherine de Bourgh visited Longbourn.

2. Add more details to these:

1. In August, the Gardiners collected Elizabeth and drove on to Derbyshire.
2. Then, from round a corner suddenly appeared the owner of Pemberley.
3. Elizabeth had agreed that Darcy should bring his sister to call on the day after she arrived.
4. Elizabeth returned to the inn and found a letter from Jane.
5. The news of Lydia's coming marriage spread quickly through the neighbourhood.
6. Darcy said he didn't want it to be known that he had given money to Wickham.
7. Elizabeth introduced her mother to Lady Catherine de Bourgh.
8. "Your daughter Elizabeth may not long remain unmarried," wrote Mr. Collins.
9. Bingley was now a daily visitor to Longbourn.
10. Lady Catherine called on Mr. Darcy and tried to make him promise not to marry Elizabeth Bennet.

3. Say what happened:

1. at the end of Elizabeth's stay at Hunsford;
2. during the last days of the regiment's stay in Meryton;
3. during Elizabeth and the Gardiner's visit to Pemberley;
4. when Elizabeth arrived at Pemberley to return Miss Darcy's call;

10. to Mrs. Bennet when she heard the news of Darcy's proposal.

4. *Comment on these:*

1. At last came the end of Elizabeth's stay at Hunsford. Lady Catherine wished Elizabeth and Maria a good journey and invited them back to stay with the Collinses next year.
2. As the housekeeper of Pemberley showed Elizabeth and the Gardiners round the house, Elizabeth could not help comparing it with Rosings. There, everything was for show. Here was a house to live in.
3. "There are only two things I want to know," said Mr. Bennet. "First, how much money your uncle, Elizabeth, has paid Wickham, and second, how I am ever going to repay your uncle."
4. The news of Lydia's coming marriage spread quickly through the neighbourhood. It would have been more interesting if Lydia had *not* got married. But even as it was there was plenty for all the old ladies to talk about.
5. Mrs. Bennet received Bingley with great friendliness. Too much friendliness, Elizabeth felt, compared with the cold politeness of her welcome to Darcy. Bingley himself appeared pleased, but at the same time, uneasy.
6. "Miss Bennet," said Lady Catherine, "although you may choose to be insincere, I do not. Let me come to the point. A most alarming report has come to my ears. I hear that you have hopes of marrying."

Summing Up

1. *Give the name(s) of:*

1. the Bennet sisters;
2. the person who has rented Netherfield;
3. his married sister and his unmarried sister;
4. Mr. Bingley's best friend;
5. Elizabeth Bennet's friend;
6. Elizabeth's aunt;
7. Darcy's sister;

3. Choose one of the female characters of the book and describe her in detail giving your own opinion of her:

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Elizabeth Bennet; | 7. Georgiana Darcy; |
| 2. Mrs. Bennet; | 8. Miss de Bourgh; |
| 3. Jane Bennet; | 9. Miss Bingley; |
| 4. Lydia Bennet; | 10. Mrs. Hurst; |
| 5. Charlotte Lucas; | 11. Mrs. Hurst; |
| 6. Lady de Bourgh; | 12. Mrs. Philips. |

4. Choose one of the male characters of the book and describe him in detail giving your own opinion of him:

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|
| 1. Mr. Bennet; | 5. Mr. Wickham; |
| 2. Mr. Collins; | 6. Mr. Fitzwilliam; |
| 3. Mr. Bingley; | 7. Mr. Gardiner. |
| 4. Mr. Darcy; | |

5. Answer these questions:

1. What kind of parents were Mr. and Mrs. Bennet? What do you think of their methods of raising children?
2. Did Bennet sisters have much in common? In what way were they different? Which of them appeals to you most?
3. What do you think of “husband hunting”? Is the problem relevant nowadays? Is it as important as it used to be? What has changed in the life of women since the time described in the book?
4. Can you describe your attitude to Lady de Bourgh? What do you think of such people? Have you ever met such people in life? What are their characteristic features?
5. Do you like Jane Bennet? Do you see many imperfections in this character? Do you think it is good to be so kind-hearted? Is it an advantage? Give your reasons.
6. Have you ever met such people as Mr. Collins? How can you characterize him? Why do you think people disliked him? What adjectives will you choose to speak of him?

9. Can you say that Elizabeth is independent? What does it mean?

Consolidating the material
(final discussion)

1. Give your opinion:

1. The novel “Pride and Prejudice” was completed in 1797 and originally it was called “First Impressions”. What do you think made the author change the title? In what way did the new title reflect the essence of the book better?
2. Whose pride and whose prejudice was Jane Austen referring to? Is there less pride and prejudice at the end of the story?

2. Get ready to discuss:

1. Charlotte Lucas said, “Happiness in marriage is simply a question of chance”. Do you agree with her?
2. Elizabeth Bennet disapproved of her sister’s relationship with Mr. Wickham. She believed that the girl was completely lacking in morals if she could live with a man without being married. Would she have been of the same opinion if she lived two centuries later?
3. Thorough knowledge of music, singing, drawing, dancing and modern languages was a must for the education of an accomplished lady of Jane Austen’s age. Was there anything else essential for young ladies’ up-bringing?

3. Get ready to give a brief talk on one of the following topics:

1. Jane Austen: her family, her life, her literary work and heritage (consult Encyclopedia Britannica if necessary).
2. Relationships and manners of the English middle class as described in the novel.
3. Popular social events and public entertainment of the early 19th century aristocracy in England.

6. Write an essay: “Marriages and the rules of polite society of Jane Austen’s age.”

List of Literature

1. Jane Austen. *Pride and Prejudice* (adapted by John Turvey). – Longman Group UK Limited, 1991.
2. Longman Classics. Мировая классика на английском языке. Под ред. проф. О. В. Афанасьевой. – М., ЦентрКом, 2000.
3. Enjoyable English Classics. Любимые классические произведения на английском языке. – М., Жизнь и мысль, ООО «Русское слово», 1999.

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