



Pride and Prejudice – Extract taken from chapter 54

As soon as they were gone, Elizabeth walked out to recover her spirits; or in other words, to dwell without interruption on those subjects that must deaden them more. Mr. Darcy's behaviour astonished and vexed her.

“Why, if he came only to be silent, grave, and indifferent,” said she, “did he come at all?”

She could settle it in no way that gave her pleasure.

“He could be still amiable, still pleasing, to my uncle and aunt, when he was in town; and why not to me? If he fears me, why come hither? If he no longer cares for me, why silent? Teasing, teasing, man! I will think no more about him.”

Her resolution was for a short time involuntarily kept by the approach of her sister, who joined her with a cheerful look, which showed her better satisfied with their visitors, than Elizabeth.

“Now,” said she, “that this first meeting is over, I feel perfectly easy. I know my own strength, and I shall never be embarrassed again by his coming. I am glad he dines here on Tuesday. It will then be publicly seen that, on both sides, we meet only as common and indifferent acquaintance.”

“Yes, very indifferent indeed,” said Elizabeth, laughingly. “Oh, Jane, take care.”

“My dear Lizzy, you cannot think me so weak, as to be in danger now?”

“I think you are in very great danger of making him as much in love with you as ever.”

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They did not see the gentlemen again till Tuesday; and Mrs. Bennet, in the meanwhile, was giving way to all the happy schemes, which the good humour and common politeness of Bingley, in half an hour's visit, had revived.

On Tuesday there was a large party assembled at Longbourn; and the two who were most anxiously expected, to the credit of their punctuality as sportsmen, were in very good time. When they repaired to the dining-room, Elizabeth eagerly watched to see whether Bingley would take the place, which, in all their former parties, had belonged to him, by her sister. Her prudent mother, occupied by the same ideas, forbore to invite him to sit by herself. On entering the room, he seemed to hesitate; but Jane happened to look round, and happened to smile: it was decided. He placed himself by her.

Elizabeth, with a triumphant sensation, looked towards his friend. He bore it with noble indifference, and she would have imagined that Bingley had received his sanction to be

happy, had she not seen his eyes likewise turned towards Mr. Darcy, with an expression of half-laughing alarm.

His behaviour to her sister was such, during dinner time, as showed an admiration of her, which, though more guarded than formerly, persuaded Elizabeth, that if left wholly to himself, Jane's happiness, and his own, would be speedily secured. Though she dared not depend upon the consequence, she yet received pleasure from observing his behaviour. It gave her all the animation that her spirits could boast; for she was in no cheerful humour. Mr. Darcy was almost as far from her as the table could divide them. He was on one side of her mother. She knew how little such a situation would give pleasure to either, or make either appear to advantage. She was not near enough to hear any of their discourse, but she could see how seldom they spoke to each other, and how formal and cold was their manner whenever they did. Her mother's ungraciousness, made the sense of what they owed him more painful to Elizabeth's mind; and she would, at times, have given anything to be privileged to tell him that his kindness was neither unknown nor unfelt by the whole of the family.

She was in hopes that the evening would afford some opportunity of bringing them together; that the whole of the visit would not pass away without enabling them to enter into something more of conversation than the mere ceremonious salutation attending his entrance. Anxious and uneasy, the period which passed in the drawing-room, before the gentlemen came, was wearisome and dull to a degree that almost made her uncivil. She looked forward to their entrance as the point on which all her chance of pleasure for the evening must depend.

"If he does not come to me, *then*," said she, "I shall give him up for ever."

The gentlemen came; and she thought he looked as if he would have answered her hopes; but, alas! the ladies had crowded round the table, where Miss Bennet was making tea, and Elizabeth pouring out the coffee, in so close a confederacy that there was not a single vacancy near her which would admit of a chair. And on the gentlemen's approaching, one of the girls moved closer to her than ever, and said, in a whisper:

"The men shan't come and part us, I am determined. We want none of them; do we?"

Context:

Vexed – debate and discussed

Hither – to come towards

Easy Questions

1. At the beginning of the chapter, why was Elizabeth confused?
2. Who approached Elizabeth with a cheerful look?
3. Why would Elizabeth think Jane was in danger?
4. Where did Bingley sit on entering the dining room?
5. How did Bingley behave towards Elizabeth's sister, during dinner?
6. Mr Darcy spoke very little to whom during dinner?
7. What was Elizabeth doing at the crowded table?

Harder Questions

1. In the beginning of the chapter, Elizabeth went outside to 'recover her spirits'. Why was this? Explain your answer with a quote.
2. After Jane had her first meeting, she spoke to Elizabeth about it. Explain what the meeting was about and backup your answer with a quote.
3. At the dinner why was Mr Bingley hesitate? Explain your answer with a quote.
4. What was Elizabeth hoping would happen at dinner with Mr. Darcy? Explain your answer with a quote.
5. When the men approached the table where Elizabeth sat, what happened? Explain your answer with a quote.

GCSE type Questions

1. Look at each of these quotes below then explain what each quote means.

a) Elizabeth states Darcy is '**silent, grave, and indifferent**'

Explanation:

b) Elizabeth states '**If he fears me, why come hither?**'

Explanation:

2. During dinner, Elizabeth and Darcy were not sitting close together. However, she observed that he was sitting next to her mother. Why with the lack of conversation concern Elizabeth? Use a quote to back up your answer.

3. In the extract, Mrs Bennet was '**giving way to all the happy schemes.**' What did Austin mean by this? Use a quote to back up your answer.

4. Austin shows a change in Elizabeth's character. Explain how this is shown in the extract.

5. One of the girls whispers and says '**The men shan't come and part us, I am determined. We want none of them; do we?**' Explain in your own words, what this comment means?

Easy Answers

1. Elizabeth was confused by Mr Dacey's behaviour.
2. Elizabeth's sister Jane approached her with a cheerful look.
3. Jane is in danger because Bingley might fall in love with her.
4. Bingley sat next to Jane.
5. Bingley behaved with admiration for her.
6. Mr Darcy spoke very little to Elizabeth's mother.
7. Elizabeth was pouring coffee.

Harder Answers

1. Elizabeth wanted to 'dwell without interruption' about Mr Darcy and his behaviour.
2. Jane spoke about seeing Mr Bingley and 'I feel perfectly easy' and she likes that he 'dines here on Tuesday'.
3. Mr Bingley was hesitant because he was nervous about seeing Jane again until she 'happened to look round'. Then he sat with her at the table.
4. Elizabeth was hoping that Mr Dacey would talk to her during the evening and an opportunity would 'bringing them together'
5. When the men approached the table, a crowd of women surrounded the table so that there was not 'a single vacancy' next to Elizabeth.

*In harder questions, there are other possible quotes that can be used. Also note that no answers are given for **GCSE questions** at the moment*