

Pride and Prejudice

Synopsis

Nineteenth-century nineteen-year-old ELIZABETH BENNET has a whole host of problems: a socially inattentive father (MR. BENNET, 50s), an endlessly chattering mother (MRS. BENNET, early 40s), one sister (MARY, 17) who spouts aphorisms as she pounds on the piano, two other sisters (KITTY, 16, and LYDIA, 15) who swoon whenever an Army officer walks into the room, and her own quick tongue, any one of which might deprive Elizabeth or her lovely older sister Jane (20) of the rich husband necessary to save them from being thrown out of their house when their father dies. What's a nice gentleman's daughter to do?

When wealthy humanity-lover CHARLES BINGLEY (mid-20s) and disdainful FITZWILLIAM DARCY (late 20s) rent a nearby manor house, Mrs. Bennet goes crazy with matchmaking fever, jeopardizing Jane's romance with Bingley by her room-deafening speculations. She also insists that Elizabeth marry the first man who proposes to her, her unctuous cousin MR. COLLINS (25), a clergyman who has known her for less than a week, but feels bound by the ironclad will of his patroness, LADY CATHERINE DE BOURGH (60s) to bring a gentlewoman home to his vicarage with all possible speed. With such a delightful prospect to offer her, Mr. Collins at first refuses to believe Elizabeth's refusal. What other man, he asks her, is likely to propose to a girl so portionless, however charming?

After the family's reputation is ruined by Lydia's seduction by a dashing army officer (MR. WICKHAM, late 20s), can Elizabeth make her way in the adult world, holding true to her principles and marrying the man she passionately loves, or will her family's prejudices doom her and Jane to an impecunious and regretful spinsterhood?