

DARCY
I no longer presume to advise my friends. I have found that it is seldom wise to do so.

He has moved, and now stands behind her, as they both watch the departure through the French window.

ELIZABETH
So you had no advice for Mr. Wickham just now ?

DARCY
He tells me you will be seeing little of him and his wife at Longbourn.

ELIZABETH
So it seems. His regiment is stationed in the North. But there is quite a mystery attached.

DARCY
A mystery ?

She waves to the departing phaeton, then turns to face him.

ELIZABETH
Yes. How did he find the money to purchase his commission ?

DARCY
I understood your Uncle helped.

ELIZABETH
I have reason to believe not.

DARCY
Indeed. What reason ?

ELIZABETH
The simplest one of all. He does not have the money.

DARCY
I see.

ELIZABETH
Have you any idea who it could be, Mr. Darcy ?

DARCY
Perhaps he wishes to remain anonymous.

ELIZABETH
Perhaps.

She moves away. A long pause, then she speaks, her back towards him.

(quietly) Why did you do it, Mr. Darcy ?

DARCY
I, Miss Bennet ?

Slowly she turns. Then, smiling, she nods.

You, Mr. Darcy. Why ?

A pause. It is obvious she knows..

DARCY Well - after all - his father served my family well. And besides....

ELIZABETH Besides ?

DARCY I could not bear the thought of you being unhappy.

ELIZABETH My family owes you more than we can ever repay.

DARCY If you would thank me, let it be for yourself alone. Whatever I did - I thought only of you.

ELIZABETH Of me, Mr. Darcy ?

DARCY (quietly - with great sincerity) I think only of you all the time.

ELIZABETH I think of you too; with gratitude.

DARCY Do you believe I want your gratitude ? (Then, quietly) Miss Bennet - you are too generous to trifle with me. At Hunsford I asked you a question. If your feelings are still what they were, tell me so at once. My affections and wishes are still unchanged; but one word from you will silence me on this subject forever.

ELIZABETH I can only say, most humbly, that my sentiments have undergone so material, so radical a change since that time, as to make me accept with gratitude a love that my stupid pride would - in any lesser man - have killed.

DARCY Elizabeth. (He takes her hand, and raises it to his lips) Dear, dearest Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH Oh dearest, I was so afraid I had lost you.

DARCY Could you love me ?

ELIZABETH Could you forgive me for being such a fool, for so long ?

DARCY I can but try. (He smiles)

ELIZABETH (nodding) Lydia promised to get me a husband in Newcastle.

DARCY Perhaps you would have done better up there. And if you dare agree...

But she is not listening, just gazing at him.

ELIZABETH Mr. Darcy...

DARCY Yes ?

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ELIZABETH Would it be very forward to say - you have not kissed me yet ?

DARCY Very !

Smiling, he takes her in his arms.
At this moment, the door opens and
MR. BENNET appears.

MR. BENNET Did I leave my snuff box... (He sees them) No I did not !

And as quickly as he came, he is
gone again.

DARCY Now I shall have to speak to your father ! Unless you would
rather go to Newcastle ?

ELIZABETH There is at least one reason why I will do better with you.

DARCY Yes ?

ELIZABETH We have already learned our first lesson together. To face
our problems without pride, dear Mr. Darcy.

DARCY And, you may add, without prejudice, dear Miss Bennet.

He offers her his arm. With only
slight mock formality she takes it.
And, as they move towards the door
together, the

CURTAIN SLOWLY FALLS.

THE END